

The Midnight File

Serbs fire missiles at NATO planes

SARAJEVO, Sept 15: Bosnian Serb forces fired two Sam-7 anti-aircraft missiles at NATO planes over eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina today, a UN spokesman said here. Neither of the missiles hit its target, he said, adding that the incident took place to the south of the Muslim-held enclave of Gorazde, reports AFP.

Beijing confce concludes

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en is roundly condemned. Rape of women in combat zones is branded a war crime.

(c) National governments, multilateral agencies and the private sector are encouraged to pump money into women's projects, especially 'micro-credit' for poor women entrepreneurs.

However, the flourish of closing ceremonies and talk of a new dawn masked deep divisions within the UN community, between European liberals and Muslim and Roman Catholic conservatives, as well as between rich countries and poor.

For critics, the lengthy late-night haggling sessions among delegates led to fudged text, and the risk that the promises will just stay on paper.

Delegates in the developing world were quietly angry at the relentless insistence of European Union countries on sexual rights.

Some felt that the EU was in effect promoting Western preoccupations with principles at the expense of poorer countries far more worried about being able to afford even basic counselling on contraception or facilities for sexual health.

There have been two fundamentalisms at this conference — liberal fundamentalism and religious fundamentalism," a Brazilian diplomat exclaimed to AFP.

When it came to putting hands into pockets, the wealthy industrialised countries fought off demands from the developing world to make specific commitments to boost financial help for women's projects.

The new president of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, warned that even existing aid programmes were at threat from the tight-money mood gripping many parliaments in the West.

He referred to promises to fund six billion dollars in concessional loans by the World Bank to the world's poorest countries.

"If that is cut, as it may well be, by a third or a half, we will have two billion or three billion dollars less to spend worldwide on issues that directly affect the subject of this conference."

Conservative Republicans in the US Congress want to slash the American contribution to the fund from 1.3 billion to 575 million dollars per year.

Beyond Beijing, the big question is whether the Platform for Action will be implemented, or join a thick stack of UN conventions, treaties and agreements that, in many countries, are lying on government shelves and gathering dust.

To start with, the document is non-binding, although activists hope that the prestige of the UN name — even if it is waning as the world organisation enters middle age — will act as a stick to recalcitrant governments.

Around 41 countries registered reservations or announced their intention to file them, mostly over the explosive section on health and sexuality, conference Secretary-General Gertrude Mongella told journalists.

And the Muslim-Catholic bloc also insisted the text carry a reaffirmation of the 'sovereign responsibility' of member states to implement the platform, 'in conformity with all human rights and fundamental freedoms and the full significance of and full respect for various religious and ethical values.'

Rafiq: caretaker

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Standing Committee.

On ratification of the Opposition-proposed caretaker government by next parliament, he said it will be highly risky if a single party fails to get two-thirds majority or more than one-third of the MPs of next parliament disagree on ratification.

"I am of the view that it is absolutely impossible to think that these political parties, who are now prescribing their formula, will ratify it in the given situation," said Barrister Rafiq.

"Where is the mechanism to force the required number of MPs of the new parliament to ratify the caretaker government? Who will bear the responsibility, if the ratification could not be done by parliament?"

The BNP leader feared that this would lead to absolute uncertainty, chaos and confusion, and no government would be able to afford such an uncertain, difficult and impossible situation.

The minister also disagreed to the idea of an interim government headed by the President, saying if the President is given executive power under article 48(2), it will contradict article 48 (3) of the Constitution.

Article 48 (2) says: The President shall, as Head of State ... exercise the powers and perform the duties conferred and imposed on him by this Constitution and by any other law.

While article 48 (3) says: In the exercise of all his functions, save only that of appointing the Prime Minister pursuant to clause (3) of article 56, the President shall act in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister.

The BNP standing committee member said parliament will not make any law which goes against the written provision of the Constitution.

Replying to a query about the 'doctrine of necessity', he said it is applicable when there is no solution to a problem under the existing Constitution.

Barrister Rafiq said that without going for a nominated caretaker government which is unconstitutional, fair election could be ensured by taking all other arrangements within the purview of the Constitution.

Mamata to boycott Rao's rally

NEW DELHI, Sept 15: The factional conflict within the West Bengal Congress has been sharpened on the eve of Indian Prime Minister and President, All India Congress Committee (AICC) PV Narasimha Rao's two-day visit there beginning today.

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Pabna clashes

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Of the injured, Nipa and Roskhana were taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital while the rest were treated in clinics in Pabna town.

In the other incident, two people, Taizan Sardar, 35, and Kheyal Sardar, 40, were killed on the spot and at least 21 injured when several hundred people belonging to two groups fought with fire arms and other lethal weapons over possession of a land in the town. The groups belonged to a former MP and a former pourashava chairman.

DSE trade

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rise in their prices.

A sampling of 17 frequently traded issues also showed the rising trend of share prices. Out of these issues, only three marked loss and one marked static position.

The issues of 6th ICB MF, Meghna Shrimp, Beximco Fisheries, BTC, BOC, Apex Weaving, Beximco Textiles, Beximco Ltd, Purabi Insurance, Shine Pukur Holdings, Square Pharma and Eastern Housing marked gain varying from Tk 6 to 10.

The issues of BD Lamps, Singer and Bata Shoe incurred loss by Tk five to Tk 175 in a week. The price of Beximco Pharma remained static.

Foreign investors were involved in trading of huge number of shares of Beximco Pharmaceuticals, which sold 3.35 lakh shares - more than one-fourth of the total trading of the week.

A diverse type of issues dominated last week's trading. They include: Ashraf Textiles - 52,750 shares, Apex Weaving - over 42000 shares, Beximco Ltd - 41,970, BOC - 40844, Meghna Cement - 39,205, Square Pharma - over 25,000 shares, Eagle Star Textiles - 22,250 and Quashem Silk 21,350 shares.

Bombs hurled at Banglar Bani office

By Staff Correspondent

Two bombs were thrown at the office of the Banglar Bani at Motijheel in the city at about 11 last night.

Banglar Bani sources told The Daily Star that a bomb was hurled from a white private car coming from Shapla Chattar area. Another bomb was thrown from an auto-rickshaw coming from the Danik Bangla area three minutes later.

Motijheel thana, when contacted, said a police team went to the spot on being informed of the incident. The team did not return till the filing of this report at 12 last night.

12 get life-term for killing one

BRAHMANBARIA, Sept 15: Twelve people have been sentenced to life imprisonment and 10 others acquitted in a murder case, reports UNB.

Court sources said the Additional District and Sessions Judge Binoy Kumar Bosh has also fined the accused Tk 1,000 each, in default to suffer one year more -RI.

Of the accused, 10 have been identified as Harun Miah, Mastu Miah, Saman Miah, Younus Miah, Kamrul Miah, Habib Miah, Abdul Basher, Darog Ali, Robu and Abdul Aziz.

According to prosecution, the accused killed one Kamal Khan of Jalshuka in Nabina-gar thana on Brahmanbaria-Nabinagar road on September 20, 1991.

The Judge after examining the witnesses and evidences punished the 12 and acquitted 10 others recently.



Awami League yesterday brought out a torch procession in the city to drum up support for countrywide 72-hour hartal beginning this morning. — Star photo

75 hurt in clashes

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Sadar hospital. The condition of three policemen and the boy was stated to be critical.

The other injured were admitted to different hospitals and clinics.

Witnesses said that the trouble started when a procession of local Awami League was passing by the local BNP office at Stand Road to drum up support for the hartal. The angry hartal supporters exploded 10 cock-tails in the Stand Road and Kalibari areas in the town and set ablaze two police motor cycle in front of the Town Hall. They also ransacked some shops, witnesses said.

Police lobbed several tear gas shells to bring the situation under control.

Our Barisal Correspondent reports: At least 20 people were injured in a clash between the activists of BNP and Jatiya Party in Bhola town yesterday evening.

Two of the injured were admitted to the Bhola Sadar Hospital in critical condition, sources said.

Witnesses said that the clash began when the JP activists chanted provocative slogans from a procession when it was passing by the local BNP office. The procession was brought out in support of the hartal.

Later, the BNP supporters attacked and ransacked the JP office.

In an incident at Khulna, three people received bullet injuries when a procession of the Awami League came under attack in the city yesterday evening, according to news agency reports.

Several shots were fired at the procession, brought out in support of the 72-hour hartal, near the Ferry Ghat, witnesses said.

Ex-Japanese FM Watanabe dead



TOKYO, Sept 15: Former Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe, one of Japan's best-known politicians both at home and abroad, died early today of heart failure at a Tokyo hospital. He was 72, reports AP.

Known for a wary sense of humour and blunt style of speaking, Watanabe also caused storms of protest overseas for comments which insulted American blacks and others which brought demonstrations in South Korean streets.

Several government officials are learnt to have stayed back in their offices.

Many leave Dhaka



A white carnation stuck in the barrel of a gun of a Bosnian Croat soldier as he and his comrades take a break in central Bosnian town of Sipovo yesterday. The soldiers captured the town from Serbs. — AFP/UNB photo

'Serbs showing signs of compliance'

BRUSSELS, Sept 15: NATO's top commander in Europe, General George Joulwan, said today movement of Serb weapons noted in Sarajevo did not constitute withdrawal, reports Reuter.

He told reporters that so far the movements constituted marshalling and assembly ... what we need actually to see is movement out of the area."

Joulwan said he was very heartened by the reports that Bosnian Serbs were beginning to comply with conditions for an extension of a 72-hour bombing pause announced by the alliance but he wanted to see 'concrete evidence' that the weapons were really on their way out of Sarajevo.

Meanwhile the international 'contact group' on the former Yugoslavia met in Geneva today for talks on an offer by the Bosnian Serbs to pull back their heavy weapons from around Sarajevo.

Another report says the first flight in more than five months touched down at Sarajevo airport today carrying three tonnes of wheat flour and French Defence Minister Charles Millon, witnesses said.

The airport last handled a flight on April 9, after which Bosnian Serb gunners who ring the airport withdrew their security guarantees.

Earlier Bosnian government and Croat forces rolled over Serb territory in north-west Bosnia today.

In Washington, President Clinton offered qualified praise for the Bosnian Serbs pledge, saying "I think we have a chance" at achieving peace. Clinton emphasized, however, that if the Bosnian Serbs do not comply with their commitments, the airstrikes will resume.

DOWN TO EARTH

Paucity Of Recreational Facilities In City

By A S M Nurunnabi

The paucity of recreational facilities is increasingly felt in Dhaka, poised to become the 21st megacity of the world. The big question that confronts a citizen after the day's work is how to pass his leisure hours or how to spend his holidays. In other metropolises around the world, people are known to enjoy blissful evenings or visit other entertainment spots which helps to shake off their feelings of a groovy life.

In the context of our social ethos, the recreational needs of the majority of the city dwellers are simple in nature. Yet in the frenzy of rapid urbanisation, we seem to have failed to provide for such simple recreational imperatives. The existence of open spaces and parks provides recreation in simple form. Now most of the city's important open spaces are no longer available for the citizen's recreational use, as they have fallen victims to the inexorable process of growth and development.

The city's parks are in a deplorable condition. Besides Suhrawardy Uddyan, Ramna Park, Usmani Uddyan and Chandrima Uddyan, there are about 22 to 25 small parks in the city. Most of these parks, including the major ones are gradually losing their usefulness, because of the growing presence of anti-social elements. The Sishu Park at Shahabag and another park called Shishumela at Shaymoli are so much crowded with elders and other undesirable elements that their attraction for children is much eroded. In the Sangsad Bhaban area, some tempting open spaces are available. But when evening sets in, the fear from anti-social elements looms large in this area also. The Balda Garden is another attractive entertainment spot, but its popularity is much affected by the constant traffic jams on its access routes.

Other recreational aspects cover the movies and the theatres. The movie world does not much attract the middle class viewers to the city's cinema houses because of their poor conditions and low quality of films exhibited there. Besides, it has lost much of its appeal on account of the burgeoning use of home videos and television with dish antennae.

As regards theatres, there is a lot of interest and enthusiasm for them. But the existing show houses are few in number. The Mahila Samity

and the Girl Guides Auditoriums are unable to meet the heavy demands made by a large number of theatre groups which have come into existence since independence. There is another auditorium within the precincts of the Usmani Uddyan which is reserved for select functions, not open to general public. City's cultural activities find scope also in the auditoriums of the German Cultural Centre, British Council, Public Library, Engineers' Institute, Shilpakola Academy, etc.

In other advanced countries, art galleries, museums and public libraries also provide an outlet for intellectual recreation. These facilities in our city are not developed enough to exercise notable pull with those having intellectual interests.

In the city's entertainment world, a major place is taken by sports and games. Those who are interested in games and sports find entertainment in the existing two stadiums. At these places and the play grounds adjacent to stadium No. 1, games of one sort or another are played everyday.

Nowadays, affluent sections and people of the upper middle class find entertainment in cultural programmes organised by big hotels and select clubs. Lately a large number of people both of higher and lower classes are seen to spend their free time in the newly mushrooming fast food joints, eating and gossiping in the absence of suitable opportunities for entertainment. In the posh neighbourhoods like Gulshan and Banani, youngsters are seen to pass their evening away sitting on the pavements or on the bonnets of their cars.

A new element has been lately added in the world of entertainment in the form of concerts on western pattern. Band music is now the heart throb of many young men and women. There are some band groups which have won the hearts of many. The more popular groups, among others, bear such names as Feedback, Soles, Miles, Prometheus, etc. These groups organise their concerts at many places, including the posh areas of the city. Attendance of large numbers of people at such concerts is a pointer to their increasing popularity.

The Dhaka Zoo at Mirpur occupies an important place in providing recreation to a

large number of people mainly comprising children. According to an estimate, an average of 10/15 thousand people visit the zoo everyday. The number goes up substantially during holidays.

Some people like to spend their free time in a manner marked by a typically Bengali phenomenon called 'adda' (group gossiping). It can take at venues such as drawing rooms, roof tops of houses, park benches, neighbourhood clubs and even vacant spaces beside busy roads. Some claim that such means of social intercourse exert a strong recreational impact.

The above outlines of recreational outlets presently available can hardly be rated as adequate for the teeming millions of the city.

In order to create a healthy environment in the life of the citizens of the city, there is need, as we stand on the threshold of the 21st century, for adopting appropriate planning and modern ideas in shaping up recreation-oriented infrastructure to meet the demands of the fast growing population of the city. In the opinion of some observers, in the existing state of city planning, there is limited scope for improving the situation.

However, there are some suggestions one of which recommends that the open space problem may be somewhat relieved if the entire area adjacent to the Dhaka University starting from the three leaders' mazars to Shahabag along the Suhrawardy Uddyan can be turned into a walkway with proper lighting arrangements. Public vehicles may be regulated on a certain hour. Mobile dining vehicles may roam about selling food items. Temporary book and handicraft shops can add to the attraction of the place. Another suggestion is that, as the Baily Road has become quite a place of public attraction for fashion, literature and theatre, this road may also be made into another promenade by blocking traffic at dusk and using the Circuit House Road as the bypass.

Some observers feel that in the light of our experience about the buoyant crowd at Baishakhi Mela (Bengali New Year's Fair) and Ekushyeh Boi Mela and other fairs, the city dwellers are expected to greatly appreciate the suggested recreational facilities to shake off their evening blues.

Rally on Save Dhaka, Clean Dhaka

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State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain joined the procession at the Zero Point from where he led one group upto Brothers Union Club at Gopibagh. Another group was led by Mayor Mohammad Hanif upto the Central Shaheed Minar. A third group was led by Prof M Shahjahan of BUET upto Shishu Park. The last group was led by Manzur ul Karim upto the Scouts Bhaban at Kakrail.

The rally and the procession were organised as part of the 'Save Dhaka campaign' initiated by The Daily Star earlier this year. The BUET later joined the campaign and helped organise two round table discussions on city problems.

Describing the aims and objectives of the campaign, Manzur ul Karim said time has come for citizens and social organisations to work together to keep the city clean. "Scouts will act as catalysts and organise the youth force at every ward of Dhaka city to start the 'Save Dhaka, Clean Dhaka' campaign from the next week," he said.

He urged the social and youth organisations to join the effort and also called upon the Dhaka City Corporation to come forward and coordinate with all these groups so that this campaign becomes a success.

Participating organisations

The participating organisations included members of Chinha Open Scouts Group, Dhakabasi, Dhaka Juba Foundation, Antaranga Mahila Samity, Biplobi Sangskritik Gosthi, Free Birds Club, Arani Juba Sangha, Maitree Samaj Kalyan Samity, Agradut Club, Dhaka Railway Scouts, Rover Scouts of Titumir College,

Dhaka University Rover Scout Group, Nakshineer Mahila O Shishu Unnayan Sangstha, Rangpur-Dinajpur Palli Sangstha and Nari Pragati Sangstha.

Besides, scouts and cubs of Ahmed Bawani High School, Armanitola High School, Dhaka Collegiate School, Islamia High School, East Bengal Institute, Graduate High School, St Gregory High School, Narinda Government High School, Nawabpur Govt High School, Jatrahari Bidyut Unnayan Board High School, Wari High School, Gandaria High School, Mittali Bidyupith, Faridabad High School, Suryamukhi Kinder Garten School, Dhanmondi Govt Boys High School, Mapleleaf International School, Mohammadpur Govt High School, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Govt Boys High School, St Joseph High School, Govt Science College, Tejgaon Govt High School, Staff Welfare High School, Shaheed Abu Taleb High School, Mohammadpur Bengali Medium High School, Mirpur Bahgia High School, Dr Shahidullah Adarsha Bidyupith, Rifles Public High School and College, Salimullah Muslim Etimkhana, University Laboratory School, Uddyan Bidyalyaya, BUET School, Govt Laboratory High School, BCSIR High School, Mirpur Govt High School, Bahsiruddin Adarsha High School, Manipur High School, Hazrat Shah Ali Model High School, Dhaka Residential Model College, Motijheel Govt Boys High School, T&T High School, Ideal School and College, Motijheel Model High School, Khilgaon Govt High School, Kadamtala Purba Basabo High School, Khilgaon Model High School, Willis Little Flower School, Shah Nurul Model High School, Segun Bagicha High School, Badda Alatusna High School, Civil Aviation High School and Nazrul Shikkalaya took part in the procession.

A photo feature on the citizens' rally and procession to be published tomorrow.

KL meet agrees

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firm commitment to support the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia. It condemned any attempt to undermine the territorial integrity of the republic. The ministers also expressed grave concern at the reduction of UNPROFOR in the UN safe areas of Bosnia. They agreed to provide additional troops and equipment to UNPROFOR to defend the safe areas.

They also outlined eleven elements which must be ensured and form integral part of any future peace settlement. These include the status of Sarajevo, the relationship of the 'entities' in Bosnia as envisaged in the Geneva agreement, with neighbouring countries, as well as the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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