

PM tells Turkmenistan minister

Tripartite accord to expand trade ties

The visiting Turkmenistan Minister for Economic Relations Orazov Meret Balramov yesterday called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

Welcoming the minister, Begum Zia said that the tripartite agreement between Bangladesh, Iran and Turkmenistan signed here during his stay, would expand and bolster trade and economic relations among the signatory countries.

The Prime Minister said Turkmenistan could import more Bangladeshi goods like jute, jute goods, tea, leather, cosmetics and readymade garments.

The Prime Minister observed that Turkmenistan could also consider to take Bangladeshi skilled and semi-skilled manpower to assist its 4.5 million people's development efforts.

She also mentioned that her government had been emphasising the private sector and Bangladesh-Turkmenistan might explore the possibilities of joint ventures in various fields including gas

and petroleum.

The visiting minister said that his country had wanted a very special relationship with Bangladesh as it was one of the first countries to recognise Turkmenistan.

Mentioning that the tripartite agreement signed here was very important to Turkmenistan, he hoped that it would help flourish the trade relations between the three countries.

Referring to his discussions with Commerce Minister M. Shamsul Islam and the FBCCI officials and meeting with President Abdur Rahman Biswas, he said that there were enormous opportunities of cooperations between the two countries.

"I am very impressed by the successes of Bangladesh. Education programmes especially food for education programme for the poor, girls stipend and tuition-free education programme and other social programmes initiated by you (Begum Zia) have already achieved successes", the visiting minister said.

Senior officials of both the countries were present.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited former acting President and Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed now under treatment at the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka yesterday. —PID photo

Germany to give Tk 406cr grant

Bangladesh will receive 75.00 million dm (Taka 210.00 crore approx) and 70.00 million dm (Taka 196.00 crore approx) totalling 145.00 million dm (Taka 406.00 crore) as grant from the Federal Republic of Germany FRG under bilateral financial cooperation agreement 1993 and 1994 respectively, reports BSS.

Abu Saieb, joint secretary ERD and Roland Grafe, charge d' affaires of the FRG in Bangladesh signed the agreements on behalf of their respective governments in Dhaka yesterday.

The amount would be utilised for implementation of the following projects and programmes.

Procurement of line locomotives for Bangladesh railway, Tangail infrastructure development project phase-II construction of cyclone shelters, reactive power compensation, promotion of small and medium sized private enterprises, primary education and non-formal vocational training and system loss reduction scheme.

Pirates loot valuables worth Tk 20 lakh

From Our Correspondent SIRAJGANJ, Oct 12: Pirates looted valuables worth about Tk 20 lakh after raiding an engine boat in the Jamuna river near Mokimpur under Belkuchi thana Tuesday night.

About 30 cloth merchants from Narasingdi and Narayan-ganj were coming towards Shohagpur market in Belkuchi thana when a group of 30 to 35 armed pirates attacked them.

Chuadanga

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Ashraf Huda, held a two-hour long meeting with the local political leaders and elites last night.

All railway policemen of Chuadanga were also withdrawn and sent to Syedpur today. Mahbubur Rahman, hawilder of the railway police, was suspended for his negligence to duty.

Railway police constable Lutfor Rahman and Kumarkhali thana constable Abdul Jabbar and one Bachchu were arrested Tuesday night for allegedly raping the 14-year-old girl Marzina.

In the meeting that began at 9 am last night, the DIG assured of stern action against the culprits and requested the political parties to put off their agitational programme.

The SP also informed the reporters that team from the Special Branch (SB) and another CID police team from Dhaka would investigate the incident.

Talking to The Daily Star tonight, the Deputy Commissioner of Chuadanga, Md Rafiqul Islam said, the overall situation of Chuadanga has improved since the authorities have taken up proper measures against the persons responsible.

The political leaders and elites also assured that they would extend their cooperation in maintaining law and order, he said.

The condition of victim, Marzina, is improving. Her guardians including her mother are attending her, said the DC.

Food Ordn

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"But lack of co-ordination among the ministries involved could not see the draft copy much further," said a high official of the Ministry of Health.

The working committee finalised a set of recommendations for amending the ordinance in April this year and forwarded it to the main committee.

According to a high official of the Commerce Ministry, who requested anonymity, the inter-ministerial committee would now decide whether to accept the recommendations and send the draft to the Ministry of Law for vetting.

He, however, noted that the committee may not be able to meet soon to consider the proposed amendments as the LGRD Minister has gone abroad for medical treatment and apprehended that it would be difficult to place it before the tenure of present parliament expires.

The Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, admitted that the situation regarding the food adulteration in the country was alarming. He said that something would be done shortly to amend the law.

Once the main committee approves the proposed amendments the Ordinance would then be placed before the parliament.

The Midnight File

Iraq deploys troops 20km from Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 12: Iraq has stationed a mechanized infantry division 20 kilometres from Kuwait which could pose a threat to the Emirate, the Commander of US forces in Kuwait said in an interview published today. But Major General James Taylor told the Kuwait Times newspaper that he had "no indications" Iraq planned to move the troops toward Kuwait, reports AFP.

Malaria claims 19 in Bandarban in 3 days

BANDARBAN, Oct 12: Malaria played havoc on the hill district killing 19 people in last three days and affecting thousands so far, reports UNB.

Health officials here said a naive or police force and a minor girl, who died at the Sadar Hospital on Wednesday, were among the dead.

The policeman, Suruzman, hailing from Nilphamari district, had been posted in the district.

Health Directorate sources in Dhaka, contacted by UNB, said a total of 41,395 people of the district had been affected since January this year, and 103 of them had died.

Of the patients, the blood of 26,149 were tested and treated.

Official sources here said at present some 20,000 people were being afflicted by the mosquito-borne disease.

The sadar hospital and all the six thana health complexes are learnt to have been filled with malaria patients, and there is no room for any more. Medicines are also in short supply.

Khaleda pays farewell call on Rafsanjani

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia made farewell call on the visiting Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani at state guest house Karotoa in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

The Iranian President enquired about the development of Bangladesh's thriving readymade garments industries, shrimp culture and sericulture.

He gave the Prime Minister an account of his visit to the port city of Chittagong and said that he was impressed to see the Chittagong export processing zone.

"Although it is a very short visit by you to Bangladesh, I hope it would be very fruitful for both Bangladesh and Iran", Begum Zia told Rafsanjani.

In response, Rafsanjani said, "I think the fruitful outcome of this visit would be complete after your (Begum Zia) visit to Iran."

The Prime Minister through him conveyed to Madam Rafsanjani good wishes and bade her *Khoda Hafez*.

Dacoity at N'ganj market

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANJ, Oct 12: A daring dacoity was committed at the Kamal Market at Tanbazar here late last night. The robbers decamped with booties worth about Tk. 11,50,000.

The dacoits entered the Anwar Jewellers after breaking the lock and looted 190 tolas of ornaments worth Tk. 11,90,000 and Tk. 31,000 in cash.

The guard of the market, Jashim, was missing after the robbery committed sometime after midnight, said police.

Agreements

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the cooperation between his country and Bangladesh in various fields.

He said Iran would seriously work for the implementation of the MOU. Answering a question he referred to the signing of an agreement between the two countries at the private sector for building a second oil refinery in Chittagong and said it was at the primary stage and details could be worked out later.

Hasina

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all situation in the flood affected areas is alarming and the government should be careful about it.

Replying to a question about seeking international help, Hasina quoted the Prime Minister as saying that there was no need for international help. "When the government is saying so, then what the Opposition can say."

About the 96-hour hartal called by the Opposition from October 16, Hasina said, "We will certainly exempt the vehicles carrying relief goods from the hartal." Relief work was never hampered by the hartal, she added.

Hasina said people want to know how many relief vehicles were stranded during the hartal hours. "We neither saw any relief vehicle during our long tour nor heard that any relief car was stranded during hartal hours."

Another ferry ghat at Aricha planned

The government plans to construct a new ferry ghat in Baruria, 9 km downstream of Aricha ghat, instead of shifting Aricha ghat to lessen increasing pressure of transportation.

This was stated by Shipping Minister MK Anwar yesterday when a 14-member delegation of Aricha Ghat Relocation Resistance Committee met him at his Secretariat office, sources close to the meeting told UNB.

He said Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) will construct the new ferry ghat for smooth and quick transportation of maximum number of vehicles.

More than 2,500 vehicles are ferried in a day through Aricha-Nagarbari and Aricha-Daulatdia routes to the northern and southern parts of the country.

According to a joint study of BIWTA and BIWTC, pressure of vehicles transportation is increasing by some 15 per cent every year. So the new ghat at Baruria will not decrease the business of Aricha ghat, the sources said.

The minister told the delegation, led by Convener of the Committee Hamidur Rahman Khan, to suggest further measures, if any, in consultation with local public representatives to ease transportation or ferrying of passengers and vehicles.

Titimir College principal held hostage for 3 hrs

By Staff Correspondent

About three hundred youths held the Principal and some teachers of Titimir College hostage for about three hours yesterday afternoon demanding admission of students beyond the newly introduced system.

The youths, said to be the students of the college at Mohakhali, gheraoed the Principal's room at about 1.30 and kept him and other teachers hostage till 4 pm, sources said.

Tehran-Ctg jt chamber

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Mines Dr Shams Ali Ardekani and CCCI President Sarwar Jamal Nizam.

Iranian Foreign Minister Dr Ali Akbar Belayeti, Rural Development and Reconstruction Minister of Iran Golum Reza Forouzesh, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharruf Hossain, members of Rafsanjani's entourage including son of Rafsanjani, Yaser Hashemi, local business dignitaries, leaders of different political parties and elite of the city attended it.

Earlier, flown from the capital by Iranian Boeing 707, Rafsanjani and members of his entourage landed at Patenga Airport at 10:15 am, where he was warmly received by Morshed Khan and city Mayor AHM Mohiuddin Chowdhury.

Rafsanjani later visited Eastern Refinery Ltd and the Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ).

Also today, the entrepreneurs from Iran and a group of leading businessmen of Chittagong signed here an accord on setting up an oil refinery and a liquefied petroleum gas unit under joint venture in the port city.

The memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed by Secretary General of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines Dr Shams Ali Ardekani and Salman Ispahani, Vice-President of Chittagong Stock Exchange, on behalf of the local sponsors at Chittagong Club in the afternoon.

President Rafsanjani witnessed the signing ceremony and hailed it. "Mubarakbad," said the visiting President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Bangladesh Energy Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharruf Hossain was also present to witness the event.

Amitabh's comeback

BOMBAY, Oct 12: India's top movie star Amitabh Bachchan announced a return to the screen today after four years in retirement, reports AFP.

Bachchan, who turned 54 on Wednesday, revealed his comeback plans to hundreds of cheering fans outside his villa in a posh Bombay suburb.



"I took a break for about four or five years. I needed it. But now I feel like working again. I am basically an actor and I want to get back to work," Bachchan told AFP by telephone.

Bachchan, whose Hindi films enjoy a following of millions around the world, said neither the name of his comeback film nor his role had been decided. "I have been contracted to do one film every year now to my company," he said.

He said he expected shooting for his comeback film to begin shortly.

5 hurt in clash on DU campus

At least five students of the Dhaka University were injured, two seriously, in a clash between two rival student groups during a band-show on the campus yesterday, reports UNB.

Of the injured, Zakir Hossain Shishir and Mahbubul Alam were rushed to the Dhaka Medical College and later shifted to Pangu Hospital.

Witnesses said the clash erupted following a trifling dispute during the programme organised by the Dhaka University Central Paribahan Parishad (CPP) on the occasion of freshers' reception and installation ceremony.

Thousands of students thronged the campus to enjoy the band-show presented by the country's leading band groups.

Camps have only 5 weeks' time

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position seats in Parliament by November 23.

On the other hand, as per constitutional provisions, the last date for the announcement of the schedule for fresh general elections is December 11 this year.

If there is an understanding between the contending political camps, the nation could avoid the costly by-elections.

Since there is no legal bar for staggering the by-elections, five opposition representatives for the proposed interim cabinet could be elected through the by-polls on or before December 17.

But in the absence of any understanding, the EC has to hold by-elections for 141 seats by December 17, while it has to hold fresh polls by January 5 next year.

The seats of the opposition MPs were vacated on June 20 this year due to their absence from the House, without leave of it, for 90 consecutive working days of Parliament since March 2 last year.

Initially, by-elections to the seats were due on or before the 16th of last month.

Because, according to Article 126 (4) of the Constitution, "An election to fill the seat of a member of Parliament which falls vacant otherwise than by reason of the dissolution of Parliament shall be held within ninety days of the occurrence of the vacancy."

The Chief Election Commissioner, however, deferred the by-elections by 90 days by invoking the 'Act of God' provision of the same article of the Constitution on August 9 last. Now, the elections are due on December 17.

If there is no understanding among the political parties concerned by the second week of next month, the EC has to announce the schedule for by-elections on or before November 23, because the process of holding an election involves at least 24 days.

Of the 24 days one day is for filing of nomination papers, one day for scrutiny of the nomination papers, who days for appeals against rejections, two days for consideration of the appeals, three days for withdrawal of candidatures, while the EC is legally obliged to publish

Nirmul seeks govt action against those glorifying Monaem Khan

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Samannoi Committee and the Ekattur Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee have urged the government to take stern action against those glorifying Monaem Khan, a war-time collaborator, as a 'shaheed'.

In separate meetings of these organisations in the city yesterday, speakers also criticised them for observing his death anniversary as a "martyr's day."

The central and the city chapter of the Nirmul Committee at a joint meeting yesterday resolved to stage a sit-in in front of the venue where an observance meeting is due to be held today and later organise a rally and a procession protesting the move to observe the death anniversary of Monaem Khan as a Shaheed, as it is announced by war-criminal Moulana Mannan today, then I will demand of the government to try me for that killing."

JCD-BCL clash at Khagrachhari College: 20 hurt

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Oct 12: At least 20 people were injured in a clash between two rival student groups at Khagrachhari College today.

Three of them whose conditions were stated to be critical, were rushed to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital while others admitted to the Khagrachhari Hospital.

Police said, the clash between the activists of the pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Awami League backed-Chhatra League started over holding a rally inside the college campus.

Peace march in city today

By Staff Correspondent

A peace march will be brought out in the city today demanding immediate settlement of the political crisis in the country.

Some citizens concerned over the current political impasse have arranged the march which will start from the Parliament Bhavan premises at 4 pm and end at the Central Shaheed Minar, says a press release.

Rafsanjani: Spl interest

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Ganges water issue and the political situation.

When asked what would he discuss with opposition leaders who are due to call on him today, he replied, "It is not my intention to interfere in the internal affairs of a country but as a friend I would advise understanding. I have already conveyed my friendly opinion to the Prime Minister during my discussions with her and I would convey the same opinion to the Opposition."

Rafsanjani said in a democracy it was quite natural that difference could arise at times, but this could be resolved.

Tranquility and calm in political arena was necessary so that leaders could attend to other problems, he noted.

Asked about the water issue which was mooted by Prime Minister Begum Zia during discussions, Rafsanjani said, "Apparently it seems to exist due to lack of understanding between India and Bangladesh. There is a need for a long term solution."

"We would like the two countries to sit across the table. We will make ourselves available for an understand-

ing. We hope there would be a peaceful solution to this humanitarian problem."

Replying to a question on the repatriation of stranded Pakistanis, the Iranian President, said he knew about it, and "it was a humanitarian issue" but Iran had received no particular request to mediate. He, however, pointed out that when Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto visits Iran, "the issue could be raised."

Asked about Kashmir issue, Rafsanjani said, "The right of the Kashmiri people should be restored. We do not find the atrocities, the military movement appropriate. The matter should see a settlement through negotiations."

Responding to a question if Iran would want to see an enlarged Security Council with the OIC represented by a member he said that it would be quite natural to support such a move. "It would give the Islamic countries a strong position."

He told a questioner that the US embargo could not bring any harm to Iran. "It has rather deprived the US. About 123 western companies have signed agreements with Iran despite the US sanctions. Besides national solidarity in Iran has strengthened because of the US action," he said.

In reply to a question he said "under no circumstances Bosnia-Herzegovina could be 'dismembered'. Iran would not object to any move that was accepted by the leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina, he added.

Iran favoured development of relations between the countries of the SAARC and the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) which included Turkey, Iran and Pakistan, he told another questioner.

'No order to implement fatwa against Rushdie'

By Staff Correspondent

Visiting Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said yesterday that there was a fatwa about controversial writer Salman Rushdie but that "there was no order for its implementation."

Replying to a question at a press conference, President Rafsanjani said, "A fatwa was issued. Fatwa is an expert opinion and it is a matter of jurisprudence — and there is nobody who can change it." He, however, added that there was no order for its implementation.

Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board

Urgent Notice

Request to register for Digital Telephone instead of Analog

- This is for information of all the applicants for Analog Telephones of Moghbazar, Nilkhet (Under Dhaka Telecom Region-South), Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Mirpur, Gulshan, Uttara Exchanges (Under Dhaka Telecom Region-North) who applied earlier, that those who have not yet received Demand Note may kindly register for Digital Telephone instead of their Analog Telephone Registration within 15 days of publication of this notice.
- Forms for registration may be obtained for South Region from the Assistant General Manager (Subscriber Service), Ramna Telephone Bhavan, Dhaka.
- For North Region forms may be obtained from the Assistant General Manager (Subscriber Service), 106, Kakrail, Dhaka.
- Those who will not register their names within the stipulated time will be considered as unwilling to get Digital phones. They will continue to be treated as applicants for Analog Telephones and their cases will be processed as and when feasible.

We are at your service

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