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17-point draft declaration

Security Council to be expanded



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia with President Bill Clinton before the reception hosted by the US President and Mrs Hillary Clinton in New York Sunday evening. — AFP/UNB photo

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 24: The United Nations marked half a century of existence today with an admission that the time had come for it to reform and modernise to remain a useful forum on the world stage, reports AFP.

In a 17-point draft of a final declaration for the Special Assembly, the United Nations said its mission of saving humanity from the scourge of war remained as vital today as it was at the end of World War Two.

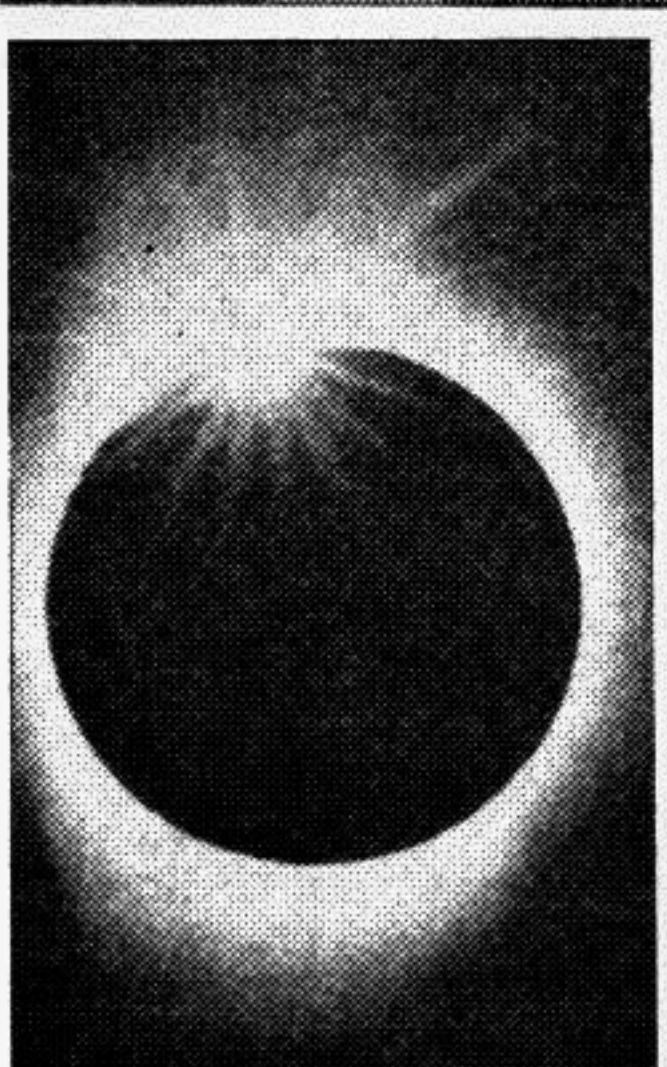
But the declaration, due to be adopted by the Special General Assembly, admitted that the United Nations required change from within if it were to fulfil that mission.

"It is essential that the United Nations itself be reformed and modernised," the declaration said.

"The work of the General Assembly... should be revitalised. The Security Council should, inter alia, be expanded and its working methods continue to be reviewed in a way that will further strengthen its capacity and effectiveness."

Some member countries, notably the United States, have charged that the United States

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The moon moves in front of the sun creating 'diamond ring' yesterday during the total eclipse. — AFP photo

Enthusiastic people thronged the north plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday to see the solar eclipse through a projector arranged by the Science Museum. — Star photo

Eclipse dims the mighty sun for some moments

By Staff Correspondent

Life came to a brief halt as millions of people across the country enthusiastically witnessed the century's last solar eclipse yesterday morning.

People crowded at rooftops and in streets and open spaces to see the moon eclipse the sun, briefly darkening the areas and pushing the mercury level down. The superstitious others stayed indoors abiding beliefs. Some offered special prayers.

Royal Bengal tigers and lions at the national museum roared and birds were chirping as they do during sunset. Other animals looked frightened and restless, said the curator of the Mirpur Zoo.

The solar eclipse was visible in the city from 8.04 am

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Defaulting directors

BB to seek vacation of stay order on notice

Bangladesh Bank will soon move to vacate the court order staying the effectiveness of the central bank's notice on four of the defaulting private bank directors asking repayment of overdue loans or lose ownership.

A senior official of the Bangladesh Bank, when contacted, told UNB last night that the Bank will move for vacation of the High Court stay order soon after the court ends its current vacation.

The high Court issued the stay order on Monday following a petition against the Bangladesh Bank notice by four defaulting directors -- two from Pubali Bank and one each from City Bank and National Bank.

"We will stick to our stance, we are discussing the matter with our legal experts," said the Bangladesh Bank official.

14th round of CHT peace talks today

From AKM Zahoorul Huq KHAGRACHHARI, Oct 24: The Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) has agreed to sit for the 14th round of dialogue with the government team tomorrow at Dudukchhari border venue in Panchhari thana of the district.

PCJSS, in a letter signed by Ushaton Talukdar, has conveyed the consent on October 9.

The government sub-committee on CHT had earlier made a proposal to PCJSS for continuing the dialogue in a bid to find a solution to the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) problem.

PCJSS in its letter reportedly requested the government to release nine tribal insurgents including tow villagers. They were arrested by the law enforcing agencies allegedly for carrying out anti-state activities and for extortion of tolls from the innocent people of CHT at gun-point from different places.

DSE MARKET


DSE price index: 894.11 (-0.82%)
Market capital: Tk 55.00 billion
Transactions in volume: 229583
Transactions in value: Tk 37.38 million

CSE MARKET

CSE price index: 431.25 (-1.67%)
Market capital: Tk 10069185680
Transactions in volume: 1925
Transactions in value: Tk 516989

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



City's Yawning Traps
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Hasina calls for UN move 'Stop arms race, divert money for the poor'

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday said that the United Nations should take initiatives to stop the production of all sorts of armaments and devote the money for the development of human resources.

"The total money should be spent for the homeless, the poor and the illiterate children to provide them with food, education, home, healthcare services and a secured life," said the AL president in her speech as chief guest at a discussion commemorating the 50th founding anniversary of the United Nations held at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium.

"Let us forget all our differences and all our animosities and work towards creating a happy and peaceful world," Sheikh Hasina appealed at the discussion organized by the Awami League.

A galaxy of discussants including envoys of four out of the five permanent member countries of the UN Security Council took part in the function with AL president member and the chairman of the party's sub-committee on foreign affairs, Abdus Samad Azad in the chair.

The panelist included US Ambassador David N Merrill, Russian Ambassador Eduard

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Khaleda, Mandela for strengthening economic ties

NEW YORK, Oct 24: South African President Nelson Mandela and Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday stressed the need for increasing trade and economic relations between the two countries, reports BSS.

The two leaders, now attending the UN summit, were exchanging views at the UN headquarters here.

Begum Zia referred to the recent visit of the Bangladesh delegation led by Post and Telecommunications Minister Tariqul Islam to South Africa and said it would help enhance economic relations between the two countries.

The South African President told Begum Zia that he was very keen to visit

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Serious traffic congestion at Aricha Ghat

MANIKGANJ, Oct 24: Sudden rush of loaded trucks, inadequate number of ferries and fall in the water level of the Padma-Jamuna have led to a serious traffic congestion at Aricha ferry ghat, reports UNB.

The congestion, also caused by the recent four-day halt, disrupted the road communications between the capital and 36 northern and southern districts, according to the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC).

The BIWTC sources said the congestion that began Sunday evening took a serious turn on Monday night.

The situation further worsened today with the arrival of a number of passenger

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High count of bacteria in city tap water

By Morshed Ali Khan

Three out of five random samples of tap water taken from different parts of the city recently were found containing high counts of harmful bacteria, according to tests done by the Institute of Public Health (IPH).

The samples contained 2,030 to 3,200 counts of bacteria in one millilitre (ml) of water while as per FAO specification the maximum limit is 1000 count, according to IPH scientists. Such high percentage of bacteria can cause serious gastrointestinal ailments.

The samples were collected from Chunawala Ghat and Dhaka City Corporation Staff Quarter in Islambagh, Chawkbazar under Lalbagh

thana, BNP Market and Kashem's Basti at Agargaon of the city. In the Chawkbazar sample we found 2,030 counts of bacteria in one ml of water; in the Chunawala Ghat and City Corporation Staff Quarter samples, some 2,500 and 3,200 counts of bacteria were found in one ml of water," said a senior scientist in the IPH requesting anonymity.

The samples of WASA's tap water were tested by the IPH following direction from the Directorate of Health. The IPH also tested the anti-bacterial bleach content of the water.

"In those places the water did not contain any bleach or

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Cargo supply to Nepal Ctg being used as transit port

After a break of five years Chittagong is now being used as transit port for supplying cargoes to Nepal, reports UNB.

Official sources said 100,000 metric tons of DAP fertilizer will be transported to Nepal through Chittagong Port by a Bangladesh private company.

The first consignment of 10,000 metric tons of fertilizer for Nepal arrived in Chittagong by ship MV Progress Excellence on October 14.

Summit Industrial & Mercantile Corporation has been appointed by the Nepalese government, Agriculture Inputs Corporation (AIC), Teku, Kathmandu, as agents in Bangladesh.

NEWS BRIEFS

ALCWC meets today

By Staff Correspondent

A meeting of the Awami League Central Working Committee (ALCWC) will be held today at 10 am at the party's central office with its chief Sheikh Hasina in the chair. Awami League general secretary Zillur Rahman has requested all working committee members to attend the meeting.

Maldives minister due tomorrow

Health and Welfare Minister of the Maldives Ahmed Abdullah arrives here tomorrow on a three-day official visit to Bangladesh. During the visit, the Maldives Minister will discuss with his Bangladesh counterpart Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf matters of mutual interest, official sources said here yesterday, reports UNB.

Housewife commits suicide

By DMCH Correspondent

A housewife committed suicide in the city's Azampur Madhyapara area yesterday. Masuda Begum, 25, committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling, police said. Police sent her body to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Rangpur businessmen observe strike

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Oct 24: The business community of the town observed a half-day strike today to press home their demand for regular supply of electricity. Businessmen and workers brought out a procession in the town and gheraoed PDB's resident engineer's office.

1028 more deportees from KSA arrive

Allegations of maltreatment, non-payment of salaries

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 24: The third batch of 1028 Bangladeshi deportees from Saudi Arabia returned here this morning on board an Egyptian flag vessel Mecca-1.

Most of the deportees had gone to Saudi Arabia from Sylhet and Cox's Bazar. They arrived after 17-day journey with a two-day halt in the Bombay port where 1000 Indian deportees landed, the returnees and officials said.

Talking to this correspondent one of the deportees Farid Ullah (53) alleged that many genuine Bangladeshi expatriates were also rounded up by Saudi police during their drive against illegal expatriates and deported. Legal Bangladeshi expatriates working there are now living in panic, Farid said.

Farid who worked there as a driver informed that he was rounded up by Saudi police on September 23 while he was taking food at a hotel at Jeddah. "I was sent to jail after arrest and then deported though I had genuine work permit (Ekama) but my transit pass (Oreka) for visiting Jeddah had expired", he said.

"I used to work in Abaha of Saudi Arabia. I went to Jeddah to see my son working there after taking a transit permit for 10 days," he said.

"I tried to convince the police that I had genuine work permit but they did not pay any heed to my appeal," Farid alleged.

Farid, who hails from Baniachhara of Sylhet, had gone to Saudi Arabia in 1990 with a 'service visa' after spending Taka 1,20,000.

Some of the deportees complained that majority of the Bangladeshi expatriates were deprived of their salaries by their Saudi employers. Illegal Bangladeshi expatriates engaged in construction works were the worst sufferers. Taking advantage of their illegal status, the Saudi employers threat-

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Transport workers clash in city: 14 injured

By DMCH Correspondent

At least 14 people were injured when two groups of transport workers clashed in Gulistan area in the city yesterday afternoon.

Of the injured, Ayesha, 30, Nasima, 7, Sahabuddin, 20, and Lal Miah, 35, were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Ayesha and Nasima received bullet injuries, while two others were injured in cocktail blasts.

They came to Dhaka from Sylhet and were injured just after they got down from bus near the Gulistan Cinema Hall, sources said.

The rival groups, who clashed for two hours from about 1:30 pm, used gun shots and cocktails. Transport movement was disrupted in the area.

Autonomous edn institutions Committee to set new admission rules

By Mizan Ali

Universities, medical colleges and institutions under the Bangladesh Institute of Technology (BIT) and other autonomous educational institutions are not likely to come under the purview of the directive issued by the Ministry of Education on changing admission rules, according to official sources.

The directive issued by the Ministry of Education says, "the government and non-government degree colleges shall admit students on the basis of marks obtained by candidates in the SSC and HSC examinations".

According to the sources, recently a committee has been formed under Monzurul Huq, Member of the University Grants Commission, to finalise the criteria for the admission of students in the autonomous educational bodies.

It is also learnt that the government has made recommendations to the committee to change the existing rules regarding admission in the autonomous institutions.

The directive issued by the ministry earlier on "admission rules" included all the educational institutions under it.

According to the sources, the ministry has already recommended amendments to the existing rules regarding admission in the autonomous educational bodies.

The sources disclosed that the autonomous educational

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RU Academic Council AL-Left Unity backed panel sweeps polls

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Oct 24: Awami League and Left Unity backed Panel won all 10 posts in seven categories of the Rajshahi University Academic Council elections.

The elections were held on Monday and the results published today.

The elected members of the Academic council are: Dr. Rustam Uddin and Professor M. A. Aziz for Board of Directors of Institute of Biological Science, Professor Sohrab Ali and Nasima Hossain for Board of Studies of Institute of Biological Science, Professor Lutfar Rahman for Bangladesh University Council, Professor Shamsheer Ali for Advisory Committee of Varendra Research Museum, Professor Abdus Sattar and Professor Abdul Bari for Planning and Development Committee, Professor Abdul Hafiz for RU Syndicate and Professor Golam Morshed for Finance Committee (Faculty Dean).



A recent fire at Islambagh in the city — Star photo

Bldg fire: Ignorance to blame for lack of safety measures

By Dr Nizamuddin Ahmed

The failure to incorporate a fire safety plan in the planning and design, construction and operative stages in any building is due to the existing ignorance and lack of awareness among government officials and agencies, owners, architects and engineers, much less the users.

In case of extensive damage by fire it is customary to delegate the blame on the carelessness of a user, the oft-blamed scapegoat "short-circuit," the non-availability of water, the delay in raising alarm, the inefficient extinguishing equipment, the incompetence of the fire services, etc. But, if people have died in a fire it is because the owner of the building did not provide in the premises a means of escape. It should be the responsibility of RAJUK, Municipal authorities, Fire Services, Factory Inspectorate and other administrators to ensure that owners do provide a safe environment.

In terms of effect on man, smoke is a more perilous threat than fire. Smoke can obscure vision, induce panic by hindering breathing and compel inhalation of toxic gases. Most of the people killed by fires in buildings have initially failed to find an exit because of smoke, and have later been poisoned by carbon monoxide gas or suffocated by lack of oxygen, long before they have been burnt by the flames.

Although heat can reach intolerable level in 90 seconds, a period of 2.5 minutes in internationally accepted as time allowed for escape because high hazard areas can be segregated or alternate escape routes can be provided. In very tall buildings a fully-compartmented fire cell or "refuge" may be provided at every fifth storey level because total evacuation is im-

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