

Crackdown on Bengali workers  
Karachi fish exporters  
losing Rs 40m a day

Star Report

The recent crackdown on the Bengali-speaking workers in Pakistan has led to massive losses in export earnings mainly affecting the fishing industry in Karachi, according to reports reaching from Pakistan.

On the other hand, the Pakistan Interior Minister, under pressure from the business quarters and members of parliament changed his tone and later issued another statement in that regard.

When thousands of Bengali-speaking workers employed in the Karachi fishing industry stayed away from work recently during the swoop on illegal immigrants, fish stock worth millions of rupees lay rotting at the Karachi Fishing Harbour, reported the Pakistan daily, The News.

Seafood processors and exporters claim that they faced a loss of around Rs 30 to 40 million each day because of the police action against the Bengali-speaking workers, termed by the authorities as illegal immigrants, it added.

The recent drive on illegal immigrants began when the Pakistani Interior Minister, Nasirullah Khan Babar, told the National Assembly that all illegal workers will be deported from that country.

The Pakistan government's crackdown focused primarily on the Bengali-speaking although hordes of Afghans, Iranians and Urdu-speaking Indians also illegally live in the country, besides a small number of Burmese, Sri Lankans and Arabs, the reports alleged.

The crackdown landed hundreds of Bengali-speaking workers behind bars. Those arrested were released after police allegedly extorted money from them. Some of the workers claimed that they paid up to Rs 50,000 for their release.

According to a Bangladesh Foreign Ministry official, most of these Bengalees are not holding Bangladeshi passports. However, they may apply for a passport and obtain one after establishing their Bangladeshi origin, he added.

Jubo League  
leader held  
with arms

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 22: A contingent of police led by the SP, Chittagong, in a pre-dawn raid in a house at Kadampur village under Raizan thana today recovered one LMG, one SLR, three rifles, about two hundred ammunition six magazines and 25 pieces of chargers.

Police arrested on Muslim Uddin Khan from his hide-out while other 'terrorists' managed to escape. Muslim is a leader of Jubo League, the youth front of Awami League, police said.

Report on flood submitted

The Expert Committee, constituted by the Water Resources Ministry to ascertain the causes of recent flood in the country's north-western region, submitted its report yesterday, reports UNB.

According to the report, high rainfall throughout the monsoon and abnormal hydrological events in the last week of September, 1995 in the country as well as the region's frontier areas were the major causes of flooding in the northern region.

It said slow drainage through outlet channels due to highstage in the Brahmaputra has caused the water congestion. The drainage is too slow to permit rabi cultivation over a large area.

The committee suggested a number of measures to check the recurring floods.

Raushan's condition further worsens

By Staff Correspondent

The health condition of Begum Raushan Ershad further deteriorated on the seventh day of her hunger strike.

Raushan Ershad started her fast unto death along with three other family members on 16 November demanding the shifting of her ailing husband from Dhaka Central Jail to a hospital. Ershad has been suffering from viral hepatitis since Nov 4.

Star staffer injured

By Staff Correspondent

Amran Hossain, a staff photographer of The Daily Star was injured when the Awami League activists went on rampage yesterday at the Bangabandhu Avenue, in the city protesting the announcement of by-elections schedule.

The photographer, while covering the event, received injuries in his back and the leg from cocktail blast. He was sent to the Dhaka Medical College for treatment.

Contraband medicine seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

Unclaimed luggage containing contraband medicine worth Tk 761,000 was confiscated by the airport Customs yesterday.

According to officials at the Zia International Airport, a false sticker of Thai Air was tagged with the luggage. Customs authorities, however, suspected that the luggage might have come through an Emirates flight that had a stopover in Pakistan, as the medicine were manufactured in that country.

According to the Customs officials the confiscated luggage contained 10,000 tablets of Valium 10 mg, 1400 tablets of Brimox, 11,800 tablets of Diamox and 16,650 tablets of Diabater.

Hasina

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Hasina asked what was the problem in accepting the demand for a neutral caretaker government when the PM herself spoke of a national government. "Resign by accepting the demand without any delay, dissolve Parliament and announce elections under a neutral caretaker government," she urged the PM.

Mentioning different by-elections held under the BNP government, Hasina said the Opposition had been agitating for a caretaker government because the BNP did not go for free and fair elections in the past.

In this circumstance, the announcement of schedules for by-elections, without considering how serious the present crisis is, has surprised and angered the entire nation, Hasina said. "What is the logic behind playing with people's money?" she asked.



Singer Runa Laila signed autographs at the Hotel Sheraton lobby yesterday for ticket buyers for her solo programme today. Film actor Nayeem seen taking her autograph.

Bosnia peace accord to be signed next month

From Masud Hasan Khan

WASHINGTON, Nov 22: The Bosnia peace accord, initiated by Balkan leaders in Ohio on Tuesday, will be officially signed in Paris, US special envoy Richard Holbrooke said on CNN today.

A peace conference is to be held in Paris in mid-December and is widely expected to be the venue for the formal signing of a Balkan peace accord.

A US official, however, suggested that a full-scale ceremony to sign the accord could take place in the United States and not in France as earlier planned.

Presidents of Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia initialed the detailed document of peace on Bosnia at the conference room of the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.

The talks, initiated by the US and supported by European Union and Russia, ends the 43-month long Balkan civil war which killed more than 2.5 lakh people and made another 20 lakh homeless.

According to US State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns, the dramatic breakthrough came after the Americans laid down the final draft on the table regarding major territorial issues, which Serbia and Croatia agreed to sign - leaving only the Bosnian delegation reluctant to go along the pact.

The key parts of the much-sought-after deal, born under intense deadline pressure by the US are:

- Division of territory, giving the Muslim-Croat federation 51 per cent of land and Serbs 49 per cent;  
- A single federal state with one president, a bicam-

eral legislature, a constitutional court and a single currency;  
- Pullback of troops behind NATO patrolled cease-fire zones within 30 days of formal treaty signing;  
- Sarajevo reunified within the Muslim-Croat federation and open to all citizens. Gorazde will be linked to Sarajevo by a secure land corridor. Brcko's status to be determined by arbitration within one year;  
- No indicted war criminals can hold political or military office in new Bosnia.

The agreement - third in a series after Cuddeiro Peace Plan and Vance-Owen Plan - was announced here in Washington by US President Bill Clinton.

LTTE downs air force plane with 60 aboard

COLOMBO, Nov 22: Tamil Tiger guerrillas today shot down a Sri Lankan air force plane with about 60 people on board, as soldiers tightened the noose on the rebel bastion of Jaffna by capturing a key highway, officials said, reports AFP.

The Antonov-32 plane crashed into the sea after being hit by a missile or heavy machinegun fire off the war-torn Jaffna peninsula, four days after an air force transport was downed in the same area, the officials said.

The An-32 disappeared from the radar at 6:40 pm (1310 gmt) as it was due to land at Palaly, the main military base in the region, about an hour after it had taken off from Colombo's outskirts.

Nat'l convention not acceptable: Suu Kyi

YANGON, Nov 22: Aung San Suu Kyi warned today that her opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) might boycott Myanmar national convention because it is "unacceptable" to most citizens, reports AFP.

She told a news conference at her lakeside home, where she was held for almost six years under house arrest until last July, that the NLD was still looking for dialogue with the ruling military junta.

"We continue to keep the door open for dialogue and discussion, but the convention in its present form is totally unacceptable to the vast majority of the people of Myanmar," said the Nobel Peace Prize winner.

AL, BCL

From Page 1

dent front, created panic by firing three shots and exploding at least 50 crackers demanding dissolution of the Parliament and fresh general election under a caretaker government.

Earlier the BCL held a meeting on the campus demanding release of its leaders and activists, arrested during the Oppositions' recent 6-day hartal programme.

The rally was addressed by among others BCL president Enamul Huq Shamim, Vice-President Mahbubul Huq Shamim, and its DU unit president Bahadur Bepari.

FBCCI concerned at political impasse

By Staff Correspondent

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) yesterday expressed concern that despite of repeated appeals to all political parties to come to a consensus, the country was fast heading towards a catastrophe.

FBCCI President Salman F Rahman in a statement said that the Fédération has "carefully noted the statement of the Prime Minister proposing the formation of a national interim government for supervising the next general elections and the ultimatum of the former Leader of the Opposition in Parliament to shut down all key installations of economic life for an indefinite period beginning December 7."

The statement said, "It was all the more frustrating when we see that areas of difference have already narrowed down in view of the Prime Minister's latest proposal for the formation of a national interim government. However, we feel a solution would be imperative if the Prime Minister were to clarify on the structure and composition of the proposed national interim government and whether such a government would be headed by a non-partisan person."

It appealed to the political leadership to resolve the crisis taking the public sentiment into account.

SIBL opens

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New private sector banks given licence in the country in recent years.

The function was also addressed by Hamid Al Gabid, Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC). Khorshed Alam, Governor of Bangladesh Bank, Prof MA Mannan, Chairman, Board of Directors of the SIBL and M Azizul Huq, Managing Director of the SIBL.

The President hoped that the SIBL would play its due role to alleviate poverty and complement government efforts to establish society based on the Islamic laws and values.

Secretary General of OIC Hamid Al Gabid in his speech said, the SIBL would be a model of joint venture bank for alleviating poverty in Bangladesh.

The OIC Secretary General thanked the Bangladesh government for giving permission to operate the SIBL.

Given the necessary political will and support, principles of the bank will be implemented successfully in Bangladesh which will serve as a model for other developing and least developed Muslim countries, Gabid said.

Khorshed Alam said banking system in the country is now passing through various reforms. "Quality lending has been focussed as one of the prime concerns for a sound and a healthy banking system." The SIBL's commitment to act as an agent for social change and to address the social problems is quite encouraging, he said.

MA Mannan said the SIBL will work basically on a distinctive socio-economic philosophy that will be quite different from the traditional financial institution.

The Midnight File

Deadlock over NATO's new secy-general continues

BRUSSELS, Nov 22: The deadlock over NATO's new secretary-general continued today as alliance ambassadors failed for the fifth time to establish a consensus on a single candidate, reports AFP.

Opposition to boycott

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time for the government. It has deepened the crisis and the opposition parties would resist it."

"Opposition will not take part in the by-elections nor will they join any elections under this government," he said.

Tofael further observed that the parliament had become "dead, illegal and a one-party House" after the oppositions resignation. "So we will not make it alive by taking part in the by-elections."

Tofael Ahmed, giving his reaction to the PM's offer of a national government, said: "It is an absurd and unrealistic idea. By broaching this idea, the PM has admitted that no election will be free and fair under her government."

Moulana Matur Rahman Nizami termed the announcement of the schedule for by-elections as a "farce". He added: "It's a ridiculous and provocative move against the Opposition."

On the PM's offer of a national government, Nizami said, "It can't be an alternative to a neutral caretaker government. Our demand is clear... elections will have to be held under a non-party neutral caretaker authority."

JP acting Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury said that the announcement of by-elections schedule would only complicate the problems. "We will certainly not take part in the by-elections."

Giving his reaction to the PM's offer for a national government, the JP leader said: "The concept of a national government is unknown to us and the Opposition have not raised any such demand."

Govt official mugged

By Staff Correspondent

One government official was mugged off Tk 1000 at gun point on Bashiruddin Road in Kalabagan under Dhanmondi thana in the city yesterday. Abdus Samad Al Azad, Assistant Commissioner of Taxes along with his friend were on a rickshaw while five gunmen suddenly stopped them and snatched his money bag at gun point.

British trade team

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by the turnkey contractor and the operations and maintenance contractor.

Like the other large scale projects, they are likely to observe that the debt could be managed from the cross-border and bilateral credit and this development and commercial institutions.

The Trafalgar House, represented by its Business Development Director Drek Ashburner, is likely to make collaborative ventures in the field of flood control and low-cost river crossings as it thinks Bangladesh is a country traversed by as many as 230 rivers.

Roger Gregory, MD of RG Foster Textile Machinery Ltd, may seek additional buyers for their machinery as the country's garment sector will need backward linkage industries after phasing out of the MFA in 2005.

Gregory's company has considered Bangladesh an important market for more than 10 years and has been running two offices in Dhaka and Chittagong, for almost 4 years.

CDC, which would be represented by M A Rahim, as learnt from sources, may pledge for investing by way of equity or help in mobilising co-investors and lenders by moderating the risks of individual investment for augmenting capital flows.

Although the rate of increase in export from Britain (60 per cent) out-paced the export from Bangladesh (33 per cent) in the first eight months of the current year compared to the corresponding period last year, Bangladesh enjoys a trade surplus with Britain, Bangladesh's exports to Britain amounted to about Taka 845 crore while Britain's exports to Bangladesh stood at Taka 390 crore in the January to August period.

Recently, Carain Energy signed an agreement with Petrobangla for exploration of oil and gas in the country and Midlands Power International signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Energy Ministry for private power generation projects.

Star Fashion '96  
The Daily Star Readers too become Fashion Judges  
For Eid '96 your favourite newspaper will organize a fashion competition in which YOU, THE READERS will be asked to judge the Best Design for Eid '96 in 7 categories of items.  
So, fashion designers start your creative work to win the hearts and minds of the Daily Star Readers.  
Enter STAR FASHION '96.  
(See page 11 for details)

AL, BCL  
From Page 1  
dent front, created panic by firing three shots and exploding at least 50 crackers demanding dissolution of the Parliament and fresh general election under a caretaker government.  
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The rally was addressed by among others BCL president Enamul Huq Shamim, Vice-President Mahbubul Huq Shamim, and its DU unit president Bahadur Bepari.

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