

Maryland talks to yield positive results : Syria

DAMASCUS, Dec 28: Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al-Shara has said he was optimistic about ongoing peace talks with Israel and hoped they would break a four-year impasse, reports Reuter.

"We can't predict the results of the talks now, but we are optimistic," Shara told reporters on Wednesday night shortly after the Syrian-Israeli talks resumed in Maryland near Washington following a six-month break.

"There is certainly seriousness from the Syrian side and the US sponsor and also from the Israeli side," he said.

"We hope the Maryland meetings would achieve results which would contribute in pushing the process towards a just and comprehensive peace and to give this optimism a real asset which all of us could see."

Syria's peace talks with Israel which opened over four years ago are stalled over the fate of the Golan Heights.

captured by Israel in 1967. security arrangements and future ties.

Syria wants full withdrawal and says security arrangements should be equal and balanced. Israel says, it will not reveal the scope of pull back until Damascus agrees to establish full normal ties with the Jewish state.

The last round of Syrian-Israeli talks broke off in June when army chiefs of both states failed to agree security arrangements which would back up a peace deal.

Meanwhile, France today offered its help in peace talks between Israel and Syria and called for talks to also open between Israel and Lebanon.

Theatre complex foundation laid

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahan Ara Begum yesterday laid the foundation stone of the national theatre complex in the city, reports BSS.

The theatre complex will be constructed at a cost of Taka 19 crore on one acre of land. A main theatre hall of 750-seat capacity and an experimental hall of 300-seat will be constructed at the complex.

Autorickshaw

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Meanwhile, organised groups in the BRTA office and brokers are reportedly involved in issuing fake autorickshaw drivers' licences.

Thousands of fake licences were issued over the last 16 years, with no record at the BRTA office, according to a section of autorickshaw drivers, owners and officials.

In the last five years, since 1990, the BRTA issued only 837 licences while the actual number of autorickshaw drivers in the city — mostly working in shifts — is more than one lakh.

10 injured in Sirajganj clash

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 28: At least 10 people were injured, four of them seriously, in a clash between two rival groups of people in Soyagobinda area in the town today, reports UNB.

Police said the clash erupted at about 10:30 am as one Nasiruddin along with his supporters attacked one Keramat Ali at Soyagobinda Primary School when the latter was mediating a feud between two rowdy student groups.

Seriously injured municipality commissioner Keramat Ali, Liton, 18, Likhon, 12, Kashem, 17, were admitted to Sirajganj General Hospital.

A case was filed with Sadar thana. Another report adds, two students were seriously injured in an explosion when they were allegedly making bombs at Alampur village in Kazipur thana on Wednesday night.

The injured Kaes, 20, and Kamruzzaman, 18, were admitted to Bogra Mohammad Ali Hospital. A case was filed.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing the foundation laying ceremony of Gazipur Adhunik Hospital yesterday. — PID photo

Training instt foundation laid in Gazipur Ebtedai Madrassah teachers to get govt allowance: PM

GAZIPUR, Dec 28: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia laid the foundation stone of a Madrassah Teachers' Training Institute here today to fulfil a two-century-old demand, reports UNB.

The institute will be constructed opposite to the Bangladesh Open University at a cost of about Tk 7.39 crore. It will have a 200-bed male teachers' hostel, a 50-bed females' hostel, an administrative academy and a mosque.

Speaking on the occasion, Begum Zia announced that from now on the teachers of the registered Ebtedai Madrassah (primary school level) will get Tk 500 per month as allowance like the registered primary schools.

Besides, she said, the Ebtedai Madrassah will be brought under the Education Ministry and its students will get books and other educational materials free of cost.

Begum Zia said the government has included general education in the Madrassah curriculum, creating scopes for Madrassah students to prosecute higher studies in medical, technical, engineering and general education.

She said the Islamic University was established with the objective to make the Madrassah students more skilled so that they could contribute to nation-building activities.

The Prime Minister said her government has not only allocated the highest budgetary allocation for the education sector, it has also taken various measures to improve the standard of education.

Session jam has already been removed and literacy rate is increasing due to development of the educational infrastructure, she added.

The Prime Minister said although many Islamic scholars had their education from Madrassah, but this education had long been neglected in this country.

Begum Zia said, "Islamic ideology and spirit should be flourished through making the Madrassah education closer to real life."

stable democratic society." **250-bed hospital foundation laid**
The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone of a 250-bed Gazipur Adhunik Hospital at Gazipur Chandana Chowrasta.

The hospital will be constructed on 11.03 acres of land by fiscal 1996-97 at a cost of about Tk 17.60 crore to be mobilised from domestic resources. The construction work will begin in the current fiscal.

Besides different wards and emergency departments, the hospital will have medicine, surgery, gynecology, eye and ENT departments.

Addressing the foundation laying ceremony, Begum Zia said her government has undertaken all-out measures to fulfil the five basic needs of commonman — food, shelter, clothing, health and education.

Infrastructure is being built in the country for the treatment of various complex diseases. After completion of this arrangement, none would have to go abroad for treatment in future, she added.

DU Syndicate demands arrest of Nuban's killers

By DU Correspondent
The syndicate of the Dhaka University at a meeting yesterday demanded immediate arrest of those involved in the killing of Nuban Ahmed, a teacher of the Department of Economics.

With Vice Chancellor Prof Emajuddin Ahmed in the chair, the meeting expressed deep shock at his death and granted Tk one lakh to the family of Nuban Ahmed.

Nuban Ahmed, who sustained severe injuries in his right eye and head on December 17 when some unidentified muggers attacked him with lethal weapons at the South Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) held a condolence meeting yesterday at the DU club bhaban.

Establishment of women's rights demanded

By Staff Correspondent
The Sammito Nari Samaj organised a rally yesterday in the city protesting repression against women and demanding the establishment of women's rights.

In a declaration read out at the rally, held at Shipahibagh under Sabujbagh Thana, Nari Samaj condemned all kinds of violence committed against women, including murders and rapes, and demanded immediate punishment of the criminals involved.

They urged the government to take steps to establish women's rights. They also called upon the police to promptly register cases of violence against women and reiterated their call for the removal of the Home Minister.

The rally was addressed by Mahbuba Begum, Krishna Chanda, Bela Nabi, Dr Naila Khan, Shima Das, Shahnaz Shumi and others.

Nirmul observes 'Hatred Day' today

By Staff Correspondent
The Ekatturer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee will observe "Hatred Day" today, the day Ghulam Azam became Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami four years back.

Addressing a workers meeting in the city Wednesday, acting president of the advisory council of Nirmul Committee, Shawkat Osman urged the people to observe the day expressing hatred to Ghulam Azam and Jamaat-Shibir clique.

The meeting in a resolution decided to hold a rally this afternoon at Central Shaheed Minar and set fire to an effigy of Azam, says a press release.

Police inspector

From Page 1
Rahat and Mansur Alam, both informers of police Rahat and Mansur were arrested at Shakhari Bazar on Dec 2 on charges of snatching and impersonating policemen.

According to the sources, it all started when Inspector Kamrul got a tip off from his colleague in Chittagong on Dec 1 over telephone that one Rafiq was arriving at the ZIA from Abu Dhabi with gold. The DB of Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) also sent an informer, Mansur to join Kamrul to intercept Rafiq at the ZIA, according to police.

Inspector Kamrul and informers Rahat and Mansur kept waiting at the ZIA from the morning of Dec 2. Meanwhile, Kamrul left the scene following a wireless call. But before leaving, he introduced Rahat to Mansur as a Sub-Inspector of the DB, DMP and handed over a set of handcuffs to Rahat, according to the police investigation.

After arrival, Rafiq and two other persons who received him at the ZIA, boarded an autotempo and moved out Rahat and Mansur followed them in an auto-rickshaw.

When Rafiq's autotempo stopped at the traffic signal at the Dainik Bangla crossing at about 10:30 am, the two swooped on Rafiq and his three companions saying they were DB men. Rahat brandished his licensed revolver and showed the handcuffs, the investigation said.

The three got hold of the two fake policemen, reached their destination at Shakhari Bazar and started shouting which drew people nearby who beat them up and handed them over to Sutrapolice.

The AN-26 transport, with its nine Ukrainian crew, took off for Kathmandu carrying spare parts for Russian-built MI-8 helicopters after it was thoroughly inspected by Indian authorities, they said.

The Midnight File

Russia wants to boost political contracts with KSA

DUBAI, Dec 28: Russian President Boris Yeltsin sent a message for King Fahd of Saudi Arabia on Wednesday and his emissary said Moscow wanted to boost political contacts with Riyadh, the official Saudi press agency SPA said, reports Reuter.

Bosnian govt, Serb forces withdraw from key areas

SARAJEVO, Dec 28: Bosnian government and Serb forces have withdrawn their forces from key frontline positions in and around Sarajevo in accordance with the Bosnian peace accord, French general Louis Zeller said today, reports AFP.

Zeller, commander of the Sarajevo brigade of the NATO-led implementation force (IFOR) in Bosnia, said the first phase — pulling back from strategic positions — had been carried through.

"Today in Sarajevo we can say that the first phase of the peace accords as signed in Paris on December 14 has been respected," he told a news conference on the frontline Vrba bridge here.

Workers Party

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ment and the opposition political parties.

"Constitution did not stand in the way of formation of a caretaker government through a consensus in 1990-91. Now also, it will not be a problem if a consensus is reached," he said.

"The present crisis is not a political one," Menon said. "An immediate solution is essential to continue the political and constitutional process."

Since the beginning of the political crisis, BNP has been ignoring the caretaker government issue on the pretext of the Constitution and it did not give any specific proposal to overcome the crisis, he said.

Menon also alleged that the role of the Election Commission was "biased". There are errors in the voters' list and one-third of it has not yet been printed, he claimed.

About the drive for recovery of illegal arms, Menon said the police can never be impartial under a party government.

The press conference was attended, among others, by Bimal Biswas, Saiful Huq, Abdul Matin, Abul Bashar, Anisur Rahman Mallik, Nurul Anwar and Shah Alam.

IDA credit

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and leasing companies, the mission estimated the demand of the Industrial Promotion and Development Company (IPDC) at 10.5 million dollars for the United Leasing Company at 12.6 million dollars and for IDLC at 5.5 million dollars.

Moreover, the SABINCO may also request for funds for its subprojects if IDA considers it eligible to be included in the project.

The environment covenant of the DCA has been changed and already an environment consultant has been appointed.

The Department of Environment (DOE) would forward to the IDA a draft industrial sub-sector specific environmental standards and guidelines covering at least three major industries in textile, fertiliser and cement sectors by April 1996.

The DOE will also monitor, analyse and record emissions from selected enterprises from among the three industries. However, DOE sources said the agency's existing manpower and logistics would be insufficient to carry out these tasks efficiently.

The evacuation from 40 positions - bunkers, trenches and buildings - was to have been completed by 2300 GMT Wednesday so IFOR troops could move in. It has been seen as a first test of goodwill by the belligerents after 45 months of devastating conflict in and around the Bosnian capital.

Earlier IFOR spokesman captain Frederic Solano said that "the two parties withdrew without any problem from the positions designated by IFOR."

The next deadline is January 19, when Serb and government troops are to have pulled back two kilometers from the confrontation line, leaving an IFOR-monitored separation zone between them.

EC directive

From Page 1
for illegal arms recovery across the country.

According to the Election Commission, they also recovered 85 bullets and 45 explosives, and arrested 683 people for possessing illegal arms and on other charges.

The nationwide hunt for unauthorised arms began on December 21 in a bid to create a secure environment for holding the coming national election in a free and fair manner.

LDF holds rallies today

By Staff Correspondent
The Left Democratic Front (LDF) will hold demonstrations and rallies at district and thana levels through out the country today demanding formation of caretaker govt for elections, says a press release.

ISLAMABAD, Dec 28: An Air India boeing flying from New Delhi to Dubai made an emergency landing at Karachi's airport today, the official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) reported.

Emergency landing of Indian plane

Noted poet Shamsur Rahman attended the function as chief guest while eminent educationist Prof Mustafa Nurul Islam was special guest.

Repeal of Act

From Page 1
Bangladesh Federation of Film Societies organised the discussion on the occasion of the World Film Centenary observed in the country as elsewhere around the globe yesterday.

Noted poet Shamsur Rahman attended the function as chief guest while eminent educationist Prof Mustafa Nurul Islam was special guest.

Shamsur Rahman recalled the standard of movies of his early age and regretted "nowadays we are deprived of seeing quality films." But, he observed, the film societies in the country had been able to sustain the trend of making good films.

Rahman, the leading poet of the country, hoped that his next generation would be able to see world class films in the country and thus they would establish the country in the map of world films.

Drama critic Syed Ahmed also took part in discussion. Sirajul Islam Khan presided over the function, which was followed by screening of 'Ashani Sangket', a Bengali film by noted film maker Satyajit Ray.

US deports 51,600 illegal aliens this year

WASHINGTON, Dec 28: The United States deported a record 51,600 illegal aliens during 1995, a 15 per cent increase over last year, under a Clinton administration crackdown, according to a government report, reports AP.

This is the largest number of illegal aliens removed in one year since the INS has been keeping figures," Paul Risley, a spokesman for the Immigration and Naturalisation Service, said Wednesday.

The report, to be released Thursday, comes as conservative Republicans in Congress push for measures to reduce legal immigration into the United States and to keep illegal aliens from US jobs by providing employers with information about potential workers' residency status through a federal database.

Immigration is expected to be a major issue during the 1996 presidential race as well, especially in border states such as California and Texas where anti-immigrant feelings have increased amid economic and job concerns.

Meanwhile, alien smugglers have become more sophisticated and aggressive, according to a report sent to the White House last month that describes a "growing trade in human cargo," according to The Washington Post.

The report blames official corruption and lax law enforcement in several countries — from China and Europe to Central America — for the flow of hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens worldwide, many into the United States, the newspaper reported in Thursday editions.



Ichiro Ozawa (L), newly appointed opposition New Frontier Party leader raises hands with out-going leader Toshiki Kaifu (C) and another candidate Tsutomu Hata during the party's general meeting in Diet in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP/UNB photo

India considering 'surveillance' of Pakistan-bound flights

NEW DELHI, Dec 28: The Indian government is contemplating "informal surveillance" of all Pakistan-bound flights, reports BSS.

The special committee headed by special secretary of Home Ministry VK Jain to probe the arms-drop in Purulia district of West Bengal is reportedly making it as one of its recommendations, according to a report published by The Asian Age today.

The report, however, said that the Indian government flights going to Pakistan were informally checked. Though Pakistan conducts informal checks of all flights to India, "Indian authorities have been behaving like good boys."

Other measures recommended by the committee include plugging loopholes in air defence security and measures regarding movement of private flights to stop recurrence of such incidents.

Regarding informal surveillance of all Pakistan-bound flights, the report quoting officials said that the government of India was considering reciprocal measures. "However, a view will only be taken by the committee of secretaries headed by the cabinet secretary which will be forwarded to the executive heads of various

countries as international conventions and practices are involved," the report said.

Meanwhile, the Jain committee is likely to submit at least as preliminary report of the widely publicised Purulia incident soon. Referring to the alleged involvement of Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan in the Purulia incident, the daily said, "though the role of ISI is yet to be ascertained but a number of facts significantly highlight the involvement of ISI."

AFP from Islamabad adds: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto today said India was making baseless allegations against Pakistan to divert attention from its nuclear test plans and domestic problems.

Benazir, addressing a gathering at Gojra in Punjab province, denied Indian claims that the Pakistani military's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) was involved in a mystery air-drop of weapons over eastern India.

"India has raised the bogey of Pakistani involvement in a bid to hide its plan to explode a nuclear device," the state-run radio quoted her as saying.

She said the Indian leadership was also trying to cover up its domestic prob-

lems including its failure in "suppressing the freedom struggle" in Kashmir.

New Delhi has denied a report this month by the New York Times which said US experts suspected India of preparing for a second nuclear test. India exploded its first device in 1974.

Benazir accused India of hegemonistic ambitions in the region, vowing that Pakistan would never accept such Indian designs.

She charged India with helping the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), a party representing Urdu-speaking settlers in southern Pakistan, which is blamed by her government for the unrest in the country's largest city, Karachi.

Meanwhile, a Russian AN-26 aircraft forced to land in India for suspected links with a plane that made a mysterious arms-drop took off for Nepal today after a four-day hold-up, officials said.

The AN-26 transport, with its nine Ukrainian crew, took off for Kathmandu carrying spare parts for Russian-built MI-8 helicopters after it was thoroughly inspected by Indian authorities, they said.

Civic Watch

From Page 1
would require amendment to the Constitution, the political parties would be required to agree in writing that the whole action would be ratified in the next elected Parliament, said the press release.

In its second alternate proposal, Civic Watch suggested that the country could be run by a neutral and non-political council of advisors after appointing any former MP of any political party as non-functional Prime Minister on conditions that the person agrees to resign from his party and refrain from taking part in the elections.

Any member of the dissolved Fifth Parliament willing to agree to these conditions could be considered as a choice for non-functional Prime Minister, said the release adding that this process would require no amendment to the Constitution.

Civic Watch said that as no sign of resolving the caretaker issue was being observed, it gave the proposals to facilitate the political parties with some way out so that the political parties could consider these suggestions in light of their respective stands.

It also suggested that if found necessary the Election Commission (EC) could again refix the election schedule.

FEMA for solution to political crisis

The Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) has laid emphasis on an immediate understanding between the Opposition and ruling party to ensure a participatory elections, reports UNB.

The FEMA at a meeting of its National Committee yesterday viewed that a fair and credible elections was not possible in a situation of confrontation and without the participation of all political parties.

The meeting reviewed the steps undertaken by the Election Commission like voter list, recovering illegal arms, transferring government officials, forming electoral enquiry committee and a code of conduct.

It observed that there were some flagrant violations of rules in elections campaign, including graffiti and soliciting votes, and urged the Election Commission to invite domestic as well as international observers to monitor all aspects of elections process.

Former Ambassador Fakrudin Ahmed presided over the meeting.

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"DRESS AS YOU LIKE" COMPETITION

Dress as you like competition will be held on 29-12-95 at 10.00 a.m. at Dhanmondi Abahani field. Interested spectators are cordially invited.

Open to all.

Editor: Mahfus Anam

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