

Rao cancels Punjab trip

Threat to life?

NEW DELHI, Jan 3: Indian Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao cancelled a trip today to the state of Punjab because of bad weather, officials said, denying that it was called off because of a reported threat to his life, reports AFP.

Rao had been scheduled to take a special aircraft to the Punjab city of Patiala, 200 kilometers northwest of here, but the flight was cancelled because of "dense fog," an official spokesman said here.

Rao had been scheduled to inaugurate the 83rd Indian science congress in the northern city and award prizes to scientists. She would have returned to the capital after three hours.

The Prime Minister last

visited Punjab in September after the car bomb assassination of the state's Chief Minister Beant Singh by Sikhs

was brought into the city from all over Punjab, India's only Sikh-majority state, and the conference venue, the university, was sealed off. Scientists were given special invitations to attend.

The spokesman said the visit was not called off for security reasons. "Not all," the official said. "It is because of weather."

The cancellation came some 10 days after Punjab police announced the arrest of three Sikh separatists who had allegedly plotted to assassinate the prime minister when he visited Patiala.

The police said explosives had been seized from the three men along with a remote-control device which was to have triggered the bomb.

Separatists, and officials had mounted unprecedented security in Patiala on Wednesday. Thousands of policemen

had been scheduled to

inaugurate the 83rd Indian science congress in the northern city and award prizes to scientists. She would have returned to the capital after three hours.

The Prime Minister last

Grilling after killing

My wife is still alive, Sharma tells court

NEW DELHI, Jan 3: A former Indian politician charged with murdering his wife and burning her body in a restaurant's tandoor oven claimed in court here Tuesday that his wife was still alive, reports AFP.

Sushil Sharma, the former president of the local youth chapter of India's ruling Congress (I) Party, started the New Delhi High Court with his claim.

The former President of the Delhi Youth Congress was arrested after nationwide manhunt and is facing trial for the gruesome murder, which sparked protests across India.

Sharma told judge SL Khanna on Tuesday that his lawyer, K G Bhagat, who died suddenly of a heart attack last month, had been planning to produce proof that his 29-year-old wife, Naina Sahni, was alive.

DNA tests conducted on the charred corpse found in

the open-air grill of a restaurant in a downtown hotel here on May 22 identified it as Sahni's body.

Two separate autopsies established that she had been shot.

Sharma told the judge that he had been receiving death threats and that the death of his Defence Counsel could be linked to his involvement in the high-profile case.

"Bhagat's death could be related to the threats he used to receive for taking up the case," Sharma said. He said his lawyer suffered a heart attack after arguing on the telephone with an unidentified caller.

Sharma has asked the court for special protection in prison and claimed to be the victim of a political vendetta.

He had been held in solitary confinement at a maximum-security prison here since his arrest in the city of Bangalore.

Firecrackers worth Tk 2 lakh recovered

By Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Jan 3: At least 30 people including 6 women were injured, 12 seriously in an armed clash between two groups of people over possession of *khas* land at Charborhan under Dhammin thana of in Patuakhali district yesterday evening.

Witnesses said, members of the Patuakhali Krishi Federation and the Bhumiya Krishik Samabaya Samity fought for about two hours for occupying 1200 acres of *khas* land.

Seriously injured Forkan, 30, Zakir, 36, Alam, 18, Khaleque, 60, Masarai, 55, Sababuddin, 47, Salma, 16, Anura, 35, Kohinour, 30, Runu Begum, 25, Sirin Begum, 18 and Selina, 27 were admitted to hospital.

Closed door meet

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He declined to elaborate his proposal.

The Information Minister was also unwilling to disclose Dr Wazed's suggestions.

Meanwhile, there was no formal meeting between the negotiators of the ruling BNP and the agitating Opposition yesterday.

Highlighting differences between the Republican

It was alleged that a section of unscrupulous traders in the area collected the firecrackers from different parts of the country for selling those on the occasion of the holy Shab-e-Barat, sources added.

However, the persons involved in the business fled away on the arrival of the police in the area.

ঢাকা ওয়াসা বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পানির অপচয় বন্ধ করুন। ম্যানহোলের ঢাকনা ছুরি রোধ করুন।

সম্মানিত প্রাহকবৃন্দের বিশেষ অনুরোধ সমুদয় বকেয়া পরিশোধ সাপেক্ষে সারচার্জ ব্যতীত পানি ও পয়ঃ অভিকর পরিশোধের সময়সীমা। সর্বশেষ ৩১ শে জানুয়ারী ১৯৬২ পর্যন্ত পুনঃ বর্ধিত করা হল।

পানি ও পয়ঃ অভিকরের বিল পরিশোধে ব্যর্থ প্রাহকদের সংযোগ তাৎক্ষণিকভাবে বিচুতকরণের জন্য কর্তৃপক্ষ পরিচালিত বিশেষ অভিযানের কার্যক্রম অব্যাহত রয়েছে। প্রধান রাজস্ব কর্মকর্তা ও ক্ষমতাপ্রাপ্ত কর্মকর্তা খেলাপী প্রাহকদের মালামাল ক্রোককরতঃ বকেয়া আদায়ের কার্যক্রম প্রহণ করছেন।

বকেয়া আদায়ের কারণে সংযোগ বিচুতি এবং পিডিআর এক্সেট্রে অধীনে মামলার বিড়ব্বন এড়ানোর নিমিত্ত ৩১শে জানুয়ারীর মধ্যেই বকেয়াসহ হালনাগাদ আপনার পানি ও পয়ঃ অভিকর অবশ্যই পরিশোধ করুন এবং নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যে বিল পরিশোধের জন্য প্রয়োজনে ঢাকা ওয়াসাৰ সংগ্রহ রাজস্ব আৰ্থিক অফিস বা প্রধান রাজস্ব কর্মকর্তা ও ক্ষমতাপ্রাপ্ত কর্মকর্তা (ফোনঃ ৩২৫২৪০) অথবা বাণিজ্যিক ব্যবস্থাপক (ফোনঃ ৩২৭২৪৫) এর সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

আপনাদের সেবার নিরোজিত
ঢাকা ওয়াসা



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina addressing a public meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday.

- Star photo

The Midnight File

32 Pak senators oppose US move against Iran

ISLAMABAD, Jan 3: Some 32 Pakistani senators opposed to a covert US programme against Iran today called upon the United Nations to check any move that could destabilise the Tehran government, reports AFP.

Time for compromise

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how much faith she has in the public's good sense to vote correctly. We have always done so in the past.

Then again the argument can be turned on its head and said, what is there for the opposition to lose if there is no chief, and the President heads a Council of Advisors? The most important thing is that the opposition and the ruling party will fight the election from the same level — outside the government. Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia will both contest the election as private citizens. This is a significant victory for the opposition and does set a level playing field.

The challenge of the moment is a historic compromise — for the people, for democracy and for a peaceful election. Whoever is seen to do more for that compromise will win the hearts and minds of the voters. Everybody wants an end to this political conflict. We are frustrated, and are tired. We refuse to continue to be a hostage in the hands of partisan politics which are no longer serving public interest.

But God's sake end this intransigence and go for a historic compromise on the two issues at hand, and leave the rest to us — THE PEOPLE.

What is the alternative if there is no compromise? There will be violence, loss of property and of course loss of lives. Both sides will say that the other side is responsible. Shout as you will, but in our eyes both will be judged as culprits. Will all that chaos, turmoil, uncertainty, unrest, violence and death do any good to any genuine political party?

The challenge, as we said, is to compromise. But do we have political leaders of vision, courage and sufficient love for the ordinary people to make that sacrifice? This challenge is particularly for Begum Zia and Sheikh Hasina, for only big leaders can compromise. Please trust the people, compromise, and go for an election participated by all. You both owe it to us.

RMG market

From Page 1
going that it was retarding the textile sector's development and thus delaying the establishment of its linkage with the RMG sector.

According to the review, textile sector in Bangladesh was enjoying the "heaviest" protection which reduced its competitiveness and thus encouraged smuggling of foreign fabrics.

To make Bangladesh's exports competitive with those of the neighbours, the World Bank review strongly advocated "appropriate" exchange rate in relation to competitor and removal of infrastructural constraints, including a chronic port congestion.

It also emphasized on streamlining the complicated Bonded Warehouse system which is at present burdening the garment factories with extra costs in the form of pay-offs.

The review pointed out that a medium to large garment factory required 12-24 interactions with the customs authorities every month for the release of raw materials and export of finished goods. Informal payments during the encounters cost a factory about Tk 250,000 a year.

IEH irregularities State minister heads new probe body

By Mizan Ali

Another probe committee has been formed with State Minister for Tourism Abdul Mannan heading it to investigate the irregularities in Islamia Eye Hospital (IEH) in the city.

The Health Director probe body found that one-man control, grouping and mismanagement led to chaos in the affairs of the IEH. The probe report was published on November 30 last.

Director of the hospital Dr Mustafizur Rahman went on leave a few days after the publication of the report.

The three-member committee will probe the mismanagement of services and facilities for patients and the conflict between the hospital management and the staff.

Two other members of the committee are the Director General of Health and a joint secretary of health.

Earlier, an inquiry conducted by a Health Directorate probe body found vari-

Senate okays bill but stalemate persists

WASHINGTON, Jan 3: Weary of the partial federal shutdown of federal government, the US Senate has voted to immediately return furloughed civil servants to work, reports AP.

House Republicans, however, stood firm against Tuesday's measure until President Clinton agrees to a budget-balancing deal, and after three hours of negotiations with Clinton, no such breakthrough was reported.

Saying "enough is enough," Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole got unanimous approval for a measure temporarily that would temporarily reopen closed government facilities while the budget talks continue.

Highlighting differences between the Republican

dominated House and Senate, House Speaker Newt Gingrich said he preferred to link an end to the 18-day-old federal shutdown a budget-balancing accord.

Gingrich, Republican of Georgia, and other congressional leaders met Tuesday night at White House in the latest round of talks over ending federal deficits by 2002.

When it was over, White House spokesman Mike McCurry read a bipartisan statement saying the bargainers had made "constructive progress" and would meet again Wednesday afternoon.

"I hope we can reach an agreement," Clinton said before the session. He called the Senate vote to return workers to their jobs "a very good sign" and urged the

House to do the same.

Gingrich said he would discuss the Tuesday evening meeting with rank-and-file Republicans on Wednesday. But earlier, he said the closure would end when there was a deal to balance the budget.

Jamaat

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Jamaat Secretary General Matiur Rahman Nizami told a party rally at the north gate of Baitul Mukarram mosque about 4 kilometers away from here this morning.

Of the dead, 4 were identified as Chand Ali, 22, Jamat Ali, 30, Jahidul 20, Hasibul 20 and rest could not be identified.

Twenty seriously injured passengers were admitted to the Jhenidah Sadar Hospital. The condition of injured Jahurul Islam was stated to be critical.

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Jan 3: Five

persons were killed and 40 injured when a Chuadanga-bound night coach fell into a roadside ditch at Jhaphapia, about 4 kilometers away from here in the afternoon.

The formula articulated by the Jamaat leader almost matched the last month's announcement by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia that her government might consider a council of advisors under the President if the "Constitution permits."

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