

Emergency in 8 US states : 20 killed Worst blizzards in 70 yrs



US President Bill Clinton (R) and First Lady Hillary Clinton wade through the snow on Sunday on their way to church in Washington, DC. Washington and the East Coast of the US are being hit by the first major snow storm of the season, with accumulation expected to be between 15 and 24 inches. — AFP/UNB photo

Tamil Tigers plan to kill Kumaratunga

COLOMBO, Jan 8: Security for President Chandrika Kumaratunga has been tightened further following intelligence reports of an assassination plan by Tamil rebels, news reports said Sunday, reports AP.

Additional security measures were put into force after the military intelligence received reports that four rebels had left France with aircraft parts that could be assembled into a plane, Colombo's Sunday Leader newspaper said.

The four Tamils in France had been employed in an aircraft manufacturing company, the newspaper said without naming the company or the rebels.

The paper quoted unidentified security sources. There was no independent confirmation of the threat.

Powerful long-range weapons have been positioned around the presidential palace and radars capable of detecting missiles and aircraft mounted on rooftops around her home and office, Sunday Times newspaper said.

The military fears that rebels possess ultra-light aircraft because government soldiers found aluminum structures of planes during the military's recent offensive.

Victims include President Ranasinghe Premadasa, Gamini Dissanayake, a presidential candidate and former Indian prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi.

The Daily Star was assaulted and his camera was snatched by some members of the law enforcing agencies while he was discharging his professional duties at Farmgate at noon. Later, his camera was returned but the film was taken away.

Bangladesh Photo Journalists' Association (BPJA) in a statement last night condemned the incident and demanded proper action against those responsible.

Inter-district bus service remained suspended while a few launches left the city's Sadarghat terminal in the morning.

Train communication in Dhaka-Chittagong route was more or less normal, but was badly disrupted in Dhaka-Northern region and Dhaka-Sylhet routes.

Two domestic flights of Bangladesh Biman were cancelled while the international flights operated normally, according to Biman sources.

Our Narayanganj Correspondent adds: Hartal was observed here more or less peacefully. Seven nomination papers were submitted at various offices of the EC in the district yesterday. A total of 16 nomination papers were submitted so far, according to the EC sources.

Our Staff Correspondent in Chittagong reports: Business activities at the commercial hubs of Agrabad and Khatunganj were badly affected due to the hartal. Cargo handling and delivery of goods at the port were also seriously hampered.

According to reports received from our correspondents, the first 18 hours of the hartal passed off peacefully in Khulna, Rajshahi, Pabna, Mymensingh and in some other districts.

A Staff Photographer of

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Solution is imminent, Opposition tells CEC

Star Report

Chief Election Commissioner Justice AKM Sadeque said last night that the mainstream opposition had requested him to "postpone" the elections.

Thousands of travellers were stranded at airports, bus terminals and highway rest stops. USAir said it can cancel about 1,100 flights serving airports from Washington north to Boston.

The storm closed the major airports for Washington; Baltimore; Philadelphia; Newark, New Jersey; and New York City, which also affected hundreds of connecting flights elsewhere.

Thousands of other people were without heat and light.

States of emergency were declared in all or parts of eight states, and hundreds of members of the National Guard were sent out to help.

In Philadelphia, where a record 26 inches was on the ground by nightfall, cab driver Sam Winder said he had to give up after six runs to the Philadelphia airport.

Most state offices and schools were closed today throughout the region. The United Nations also was closed today, and New York City cancelled classes for the first time since 1978.

At least 20 deaths were blamed on the storm, including five in Kentucky and five in Virginia. All of those were traffic deaths except for a 79-year-old Bridgewater, Va., man who had a heart attack while shoveling snow.

With the enactment of the continuing resolution, passed by both houses of Congress and signed by the US President, in the American Embassy in Dhaka has resumed its normal services to the public, reports UNB.

All furloughed American personnel have returned to work. The visa section will resume its operation in two steps, said a press release.

Today, applications for only three kinds of visas will be accepted: (1) student visas for those who must travel to the US for term beginning in January (2) immigration visas, and (3) DV-96 visas.

Tomorrow, the visa section will accept all visa applications. All other services at the chancery in Baridhara resumed yesterday.

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