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India creating hurdles in CTBT talks: Benazir

ISLAMABAD, Aug 9: Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto today lashed out at India, accusing it of creating hurdles in the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) talks currently underway in Geneva, reports AFP.

Expressing concern over India's "negative attitude" toward the negotiations, aimed at securing a global moratorium on nuclear testing she said "The forces creating hurdles in CTBT talks are being exposed."

"These forces do not want a solution to the proliferation issues," the official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) quoted Benazir as telling a news conference in the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar.

Pakistan has been cooperating for the multilateral or regional solution of the issue in the past and "we would continue to do so in future too," she said.

Her comments came as the Indian delegation in Geneva renewed its opposition to the treaty, claiming the draft was discriminatory.

The draft has been accepted by China while the other four declared nuclear powers — Britain, France, the United States and Russia — have also consented to it.

India says it would block the treaty unless the draft was modified and the draft was modified.

Benazir said unless India was brought on board, Pakistan would not feel it was in a position to sign the treaty, adding that Pakistan could never be oblivious to its defence needs.

On Thursday she led a gathering in northern Pakistan that "tension prevails in the region because of India's ever increasing military buildup."

Referring to the situation in Kashmir — a dispute which has been the cause of the two wars between Pakistan and India in the past — she said there was no question of Pakistan signing the CTBT unless India did so too.

Pak opposition call strike today

ISLAMABAD, Aug 9: Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto renewed today an offer for reconciliation talks with opposition parties, which have called for a protest strike tomorrow to begin a campaign against her government, reports Reuters.

The official APP news agency quoted her as saying in a speech in the northwestern town of Peshawar that her government wanted to "thrash out a solution to all problems with mutual consensus."

Benazir regretted that opposition parties had not responded positively to her previous offers of talks, adding that the government wanted to take them along on issues of national importance.

APP quoted her as saying that the opposition should come to the conference table so that viable solutions to matters facing the country today could be thrashed out.

No opposition response was immediately available. Political sources said the renewed call was likely to be ignored by the main opposition alliance.

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DOWN TO EARTH

City's Wholesale Markets

By A S M Nurunnabi

A network of main centres for supply of various consumable commodities — mainly rice, pulses, vegetables, fruits, fish, medicines, etc. — represents the commercial heart of the metropolis. Over the years, the network has steadily expanded with the growth of the various modes of transport — mainly road and water transports. The wholesale deals in various commodities have ramifications involving turnovers amounting to crores of taka.

Some of the important wholesale trading centres existing in the city's network may be enumerated as follows: The Badamtoli Bazar is an well-known wholesale trading centre of the country. Businessmen at this centre invest crores of taka in trading various commodities. The main characteristic aspect of business at this centre is future trading, an economic term which, in other words, means trading by making investment in advance payment on the basis of pre-determined price of a commodity one year in advance.

Trading in such advance investment covers mainly rice, pulses and fruits of various kinds. In this kind of trading, three parties are involved — the growers, the local traders acting as middlemen and the wholesale businessmen based at Badamtoli. Advance payment is made to the middle-men of a certain percentage — usually 25 per cent of the expected total value of a commodity. In the case of rice, such advance payment is made to the tune of Taka 2 to 3 crore in a year. In the case of fruits, particularly mangoes, such investment on the basis of pre-determined price is made one year in advance.

This kind of trading involves prospects of profit as well as risk of loss. Badamtoli is also said to be the largest fruit market in the country. Supplies of various kinds of fruits are made to the different parts of the country from this centre. Turnovers in this respect amount to a daily average of Taka one crore and fifty lakh.

Among the fruits, bananas occupy a more important place in that portion of the market known as Kalapatti where transactions to the tune of Taka 5 to 6 lakh are conducted everyday. This part of the market opens very early in the morning for conducting deals in various seasonal fruits, besides bananas. The bulk of trading at this place is completed by 7.30 am.

From economic and social points of view, this trading centre has great importance. In total transactions worth Taka 6 crore are conducted here everyday and more than 60 thousand families supporting about seven to eight lakh people depend for their livelihood on trading at this centre.

Since the trading centre is located near the Buriganga river, transportation of goods is rather easier and cheaper, although it involves a longer time in movement, as compared with movement by trucks. Most of the goods transported here are by boats or trawlers. Use of the land routes by means of trucks is also substantial. It is estimated that 75 per cent of the rice and fruit requirements of other parts of the country are supplied from this centre.

An important wholesale market for vegetables of all kinds is located at Kawran Bazar which serves as in other cases, as retail outlets for other city bazars. The minimum quantity for saleable commodities of various descriptions at this market is reportedly fixed at five pallas, a Bangla term used for weighing each scale-load. The overall environmental situation at this wholesale vegetable market is considered very deplorable. Most of the selling stalls are positioned in dingy surroundings. There are even allegations that bulk of the vegetables offered for sale here are washed in polluted water drawn from open drains.

Another important wholesale market lies at Shyambazar, where the sanitary situation is equally far from satisfactory.

A notable wholesale fish market is also situated at Kawran Bazar. The fish supplies at this centre are offered for sale through the agency of highest bidders. The whole business of selling is started very early in the morning when supplies from various routes start arriving and the transactions are completed within 2 to 3 hours. The environment at this wholesale fish market is unsatisfactory. This situation is particularly galling in view of the existence of a five-star hotel nearby.

Another wholesale fish market is located at Swarigat in the old part of Dhaka. Because of convenience of river transport on Buriganga river the fish market has been steadily growing in importance, often serving as subsidiary outlet for wholesale fish trading at Kawran Bazar.

An important centre for wholesale business in various consumer items is located at Moulvibazar. It is a densely populated business district, supplying wholesale requirements of various consumer items from all over the country.

The story of the city's wholesale trading will not be complete without mentioning the sprawling wholesale medicine market at Mitford. Requirements of supplies of medicines and drugs from within and outside the city are met here. However, the dark aspect of medicine trading at this centre is alleged to be rampant business in spurious and sub-standard drugs and medicines reportedly consisting in shady deals in villages and mufassal areas. Observers underscore the need for utmost vigilance and drive against such fake deals in medicines.

Move to end water crisis in city

The understanding and consensus between the government and the Dhaka WASA Officers-Employees Action Committee is expected to solve the crisis in the supply of water to city dwellers, reports BSS.

The understanding was reached at a meeting between State Minister for LGRD and Co-operatives Alhaj Syed Abul Hossain and the action committee recently according to an official handout issued yesterday.

The understanding would pave the way for implementation of the fourth project of Dhaka WASA at a cost of Taka 735.56 crore. It will be possible to supply 22 crore 50 lakh litres of water in the first year of the implementation of the project, another 22 crore 50 lakh litres in the second year and additional 100 crore litres in the third year.

This will meet the shortfall in the supply of water in the metropolis to a great extent and solve the hardship of the city dwellers, the handout said quoting the Dhaka WASA.

As per discussion and conclusion of the World Bank, a no-objection decision was taken to contract out Zone-4 to private sector and Zone-5 to the valid and lawful organisation on behalf of the officials and employees of Dhaka WASA. Consent was also reached to publish the report of bringing the officials and employees of WASA under pension scheme through a press release and gazette notification soon with the approval of the Law Ministry. The government decision to make WASA service pensionable has in the meantime been taken.

Representation of women in probe body demanded

A meeting of several NGOs held at the parliament members club in the city called for inclusion of women's representative in the proposed judicial committee to enquire the abduction of Kalpana Chakma, reports BSS.

The meeting presided over by Khushi Kabir suggested that incidents in the area prior to Kalpana's alleged kidnapping and opinions of those who observed the incidents should get due importance by the judicial enquiry committee, a press release said.

Besides four parliament members from Chittagong Hill Tracts — Kalpa Ranjan Chakma, Dipankar Talukdar, Bir Bahadur and Prof Athin, the meeting was attended by Barrister Lutfar Rahman Shah, Dr Hamida Hossain, Farida Akhtar, Advocate Idrisur Rahman, Rokeya Kabir, Meghna Guha Thakurda.

The meeting demanded withdrawal of army from hill tracts in the backdrop of the situation there and for strengthening the process of political settlement of the hill tracts issue.

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BB: Realise loans

From page 1

The banks should strictly evaluate project implementation schedule, technical expertise of investors, and marketing of products to minimise risk. It said project implementation has to be continuously monitored and release of loan tranche will have to be based on the monitoring.

The central bank has stressed on effective use of its central information bureau (CIB) by the banks to detect if any fresh applicant is a defaulter with another bank.

New entrepreneurs and I am not Speaker of only AL: Humayun Rashid

Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad, Humayun Rashid Chowdhury was given a reception by people of Sylhet town at the pourashava premises yesterday, reports BSS.

Speaking on the occasion Chowdhury said that he was committed to discharging his duty as the Speaker with total neutrality. "I am not the Speaker of the Awami League but the Speaker of all the 330 members of Parliament," he added.

He thanked the people of Sylhet for electing him in the last general election and iterated to fulfill his election commitment.

Dewan Farid Gazi, MP, Nurul Islam Nahid, MP, Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed, MP, Shah Azizur Rahman, MP, Mohibur Rahman, MP, Syeda Zebunnissa Haq, MP, Suranjit Sengupta, parliamentary affairs adviser to the Prime Minister, and Syed Moinul Ali, chairman of Moulavibazar Pourashava spoke at the function.

Badaruddin Ahmed, chairman of Sylhet Pourashava, who presided over the function, read out an address of welcome.

Earlier, Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury was greeted by hundreds of people when he arrived at the airport in the morning.

Chowdhury and other members of his entourage offered Juma prayers at the mazar premises of Hazrat Shahjalal (RH).

AIDS

From page 1

admitted to emergency department of the CMCH on Tuesday last.

The preliminary test of his blood at the hospital AIDS laboratory found him carrying HIV positive.

The patient slipped from the hospital by submitting discharge on his own.

When contacted, Dr A Q M Serzal Islam, acting head of the Department of Skin and Venereal Diseases told BSS that the unmarried patient confessed that he had sexual contacts with several women during his stay abroad.

Police have launched a massive hunt to trace the AIDS patient who hailed from Dharmapur village of Fatikchhari thana.



The Olympic flag arrived in Sydney yesterday, received from Atlanta's Mayor by New South Wales Premier Bob Carr (L) and Sydney Lord Mayor Frank Sartor (R). —AFP/UNB photo

Ultimatum

From page 1

the district), Dhaka Metropolitan area 6, Chapainawabganj 4, Meherpur 3, two each in Jhenidah, Madaripur, Jessore and Tangail, and one each in Bogra, Bhola, Kishoreganj and Mymensingh.

The government issued a 72-hour ultimatum for surrender of illegal arms, ammunition and explosives from 6 am on August 7 to 6 am on August 10 in a bid to rid the country of menace of terrorism.

DMC strike

From page 1

diate restoration of student politics on the campus, declaration of a date for the Student Union elections and compensation for those affected during clashes with Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists on July 10.

The DMC was closed sine die after a series of clashes between the activists of the JCD and BCL on the campus during its Golden Jubilee inaugural programme on July 10.

WB: Telecom

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It said the government should evaluate the cellular bids received in August last year and award the long-awaited new licenses.

Tariff concessions

From page 1

Dhaka was seeking tariff concessions. Indian exports to Bangladesh total about 1 billion a year, while it imports only 50 million worth of Bangladeshi goods.

Sobhan said India had assured him that within a week it would try to offer tariff concessions on about 20 items. India would consider similar concessions on the remaining goods, and still later offer even more favourable terms, he said.

The Bangladeshi diplomat said he hoped the two sides would resolve their dispute over the Ganges at "a very early date."

Sobhan said the two sides had agreed to try to reach a permanent agreement on how to share the Ganges water during its dry spell between January and May.

Sobhan said, "We have followed a very conventional line without linking it to any other issue." Efforts were focused on how the two countries will address sharing of water between the two countries for five months in the dry season, he added.

Hunger strike in city on Aug 14 demanding repeal of Indemnity Ord

By Staff Correspondent

A six-hour token hunger strike will be staged in front of the Jatiya Press Club on August 14 by Bangabandhu Adarsha Bastabayan Parishad, demanding repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance and trial of those involved in the "jail killing."

The Parishad, at a meeting at its office in the city yesterday, decided to stage the hunger strike from 8 am to 2 pm, says a press release. All interested people have invited to join the token hunger strike programme, the press release said.

Tamil rebels damage Filipino cargo ship

COLOMBO, Aug 9: A Filipino cargo ship was damaged in an explosion Friday, apparently from a sea mine set by Tamil rebels, off Sri Lanka's northeast coast, military officials said, reports AP.

The 17-member Filipino crew was reported safe, but seven Sri Lankan workers were wounded as they loaded cargo on the ship near the small harbor of Pulomaddai, the officials said.

The explosion damaged the stern of 13,700-ton "Princess Wave," flooding the engine room. The ship was anchored off shore and was being loaded with metals, officials said on condition of anonymity.

The vessel, which had been in the area for about a week, was due to sail for Japan early next week. The blast took place about 250 kilometres (155 miles) northeast of Colombo, the Sri Lankan capital.

The officials said they believed Tamil rebel frogmen attached an underwater explosive to the ship while it was anchored.

Similar incidents have occurred in recent years. Rebel divers sank a Sri Lankan cargo ship, "Ocean Trader," nearly two years ago off the northern Jaffna Peninsula. There were no casualties.

Americans advised to leave Burundi

BUJUMBURA, Aug 9: The US embassy in Bujumbura has advised US nationals to leave Burundi, spokeswoman Judith Kaula told AFP today.

Tendulkar takes over as Captain

From page 1

Azharuddin was often accused in the media of "not being focussed" after his highly-publicised romance with former Miss India and film star Sangeeta Bijlani and his divorce with Naureen, his wife of eight years.

Asked if Azharuddin's off-field escapades had prompted the selectors to sack him, Vishwanath said: "I cannot comment on that because I, as an Indian captain, never faced such a problem."

Vishwanath added that Azharuddin will be considered as a specialist batsman when the selectors meet again tomorrow to pick the team for the Sri Lankan and Canadian tours.

Eyes of 3 persons gouged out in Barisal

BARISAL, Aug 9: Rivals gouged out the eyes of three young men and abducted another youth following a clash over land dispute at a village in Kotwali thana on Thursday night, reports UNB.

Police said a group of 16 people from Babuganj thana of the district went to Lanchhari village to take possession of a disputed land on Thursday evening.

The clash began when their rival group tried to resist them. Twelve of the 16 men fled away and four took shelter at a relative's house in the village.

The rival group gheraoed the house, forced them out and gouged out the eyes of Dulal Hossain, Delwar Hossain and Mohammad Selim of Bailakhali village in Babuganj thana and left them in critical condition.

Police later recovered the injured this morning and admitted them to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

Another young man from Bailakhali village, Jasim was allegedly abducted by the group. Police could not trace him.

Factfile on Tendulkar

Following is a factfile on Sachin Tendulkar:

- Date of Birth : 24.04.73
- Tests: 41
- Batting: 60 innings, seven not outs, 2,911 runs, 179 highest score, 10 centuries, 14 half centuries. Average: 54.9 bowling: 486 balls, 20 maiden overs, 220 runs, four wickets, avg 55.0 best two for 10 v Australia at Adelaide 1991/92 catches: 33
- One-day internationals: 118
- Batting: 115 innings, 11 not out, 4,084 runs, 137 highest score, eight centuries, 26 half centuries. Average: 39.26
- Bowling: 39 wickets, 2,222 runs conceded, best four for 34
- Average: 56.97
- Catches: 35

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