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The World On Time

Food Summit ends

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"The very modesty of these goals is shameful," he said.

Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), which held a parallel meeting in Rome, said the summit's emphasis on world trade and increased food production would result in small farmers in developing countries being crushed as large agricultural firms increase yields with genetically engineered seeds.

One NGO delegate said today: "Poor countries have to learn to feed themselves."

Several delegates here said the time had come to stop talking and get down to work.

"Just get on with the job," was the message British minister for overseas development Baroness Chalker said.

She criticised the summit's host, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), for being inefficient, citing the summit itself as an example.

The United States said today

that achieving the right to adequate food was a goal or aspiration and not an international obligation on governments.

In a written reservation to a declaration, Washington also said it had not signed up to a summit target that countries should provide 0.7 per cent of their annual economic wealth in overseas development aid.

Reuters adds, protesters disrupted today's final news conference at the food summit and scuffled with security officials who moved in to eject them.

Several leaders including Castro watched from the podium as the demonstrators, numbering about half a dozen, were removed from the room. One protester shouted "this is a farce," as she was dragged from the conference hall.

The woman screamed out, "You are participating in a criminal process. She appeared to be trying to stuff a copy of the main summit declaration into her mouth."

This is a press conference, not a show," the summit's chief spokeswoman, Karen-Lis Svarre, said from the podium.

It was the second breach of security at the summit. Three women stripped naked in front of US Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman on Wednesday to protest against genetically manipulated soybeans at a news conference he held.

AL warns

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ety and play the role of a responsible Opposition.

Zillur Rahman said with the Indemnity (repeal) Bill passed, the killers of Bangabandhu should be tried in a special tribunal.

AL presidium member Begum Sajeda Chowdhury said Begum Zia should face trial for passing derogatory remarks about the Father of the Nation.

Presidium member Amir Hussain Amu said Begum Zia's remarks showed she was sympathetic to Bangabandhu's killers whom her husband Ziaur Rahman had rewarded with diplomatic assignments.

Mohammad Nasim told the rally that the nation was relieved of a stigma after 21 years with the passage of Indemnity (repeal) Bill.

Nasim, also the organising secretary of AL, said, "We are against taking revenge, but politics of killing, coup and conspiracy should end once for all to give democracy an institutional shape."

Mohammad Hanif criticised Begum Zia's reported remarks.

He said "AL is ever ready to take any challenge and face agitation both inside the parliament or on the streets."

Chinese local govt team due Dec 2

A 10-member high-level Chinese local government delegation led by Qi Jingfa, Vice President of All-China Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry is scheduled to arrive in Dhaka on December 2 on an eight-day visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The visit will take place in pursuance of the proposal made by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during her recent visit to China to forge and consolidate direct linkage and cooperation between the local government systems of the two countries.

Meanwhile, Chinese ambassador to Bangladesh Zhang Xujian yesterday called on State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Syed Abul Hossain at his secretariat office.

Welcoming the visit of the delegation Syed Abul Hossain expressed the hope that the government, which is working to wards introduction of a strong, effective and participatory local government system, would be benefited a lot by the Chinese experience in this regard.

Khaleda

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suring a renewal of 25 year treaty of servitude.

For this, the BNP leader said, the government has been out to provide India with transit facility as a replacement of the treaty that goes into termination next year.

"We will at any cost resist any effort of making the country a province of India by giving her transit through Bangladesh territory," she cautioned.

The Leader of the Opposition said all nationalist forces must be united and foil the conspiracy against country's interest through a united mass movement.

She expressed deep concern at the price-hike of agricultural inputs like seeds and fertiliser and alleged that the farmers were not getting fair prices of their produce.

Begum Zia said that the country's economy was facing a recession and reserve of foreign currency marked a sharp fall within the four months of Awami League regime.

The BNP Chairperson stressed the need for strengthening BNP and its front organisations from the grassroots level by involving people from different strata and creating able and new leadership.

Addressing the meeting, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury expressed satisfaction at the executive committee's approval of the decision of parliamentary party of BNP regarding abstention from the House.

Ex-Pak intelligence chief held Punjab Assembly dissolved

LAHORE, Nov 17: Pakistan's caretaker government today dissolved the provincial assembly in Punjab, after earlier disbanding assemblies in the country's three other provinces, officials said, reports AFP.

Provincial governor Tariq Rahim issued the dissolution order with the approval of President Farooq Ahmed Leghari, they said.

The order cites political instability among the reasons for the action, the officials said.

The dissolution came a day after more than half of the assembly's 248 members resigned their seats and the provincial chief minister, Manzoor Wattoo, stepped down.

The assemblies in Baluchistan, Sindh and North-West Frontier Province were dissolved soon after Leghari sacked Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and dissolved the National Assembly on November 5.

The dissolutions appear to be in line with Leghari's plan to hold new general elections on February 3.

Meanwhile, Pakistani police today arrested Masood Sharif, former chief of the country's intelligence bureau.

in connection with the killing of Murtaza Bhutto, estranged brother of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, officials said, reports AP.

Masood was handed over to the crime branch of the police and "investigation is under process" at a local police station, they said.

The former intelligence chief and eight other senior police officials including the local police chief Shoaib Suddle were accused by Murtaza's partymen of being involved in the killing.

Murtaza, 43, and his seven colleagues were killed in a police shootout near his Karachi residence on September 20.

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Roadblocks: Suu Kyi fails to meet supporters

YANGON, Nov 17: Myanmar's democracy leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, failed to meet supporters waiting beyond police roadblocks and at the capital's main pagoda Sunday, reports AP.

Last weekend, a motorcycle carrying Suu Kyi and the vice chairmen of her political party, Tin Oo and Kyi Maung, was attacked by government-organized mobs wielding sticks, pipes, rocks, chains and knives.

Bhasani

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The Committee for Observance of the 20th Death Anniversary of Moulana Bhasani organised the rally at Purana Paltan crossing with Dr T. Ali in the chair. It was addressed by left-leaning political leaders and intellectuals of the country.

They paid glowing tributes to the memory of the great leader for his uncompromising struggle for the case of the downtrodden working people throughout his life.

Describing Bhasani as a leader of unique character, Dr Ahmed Sharif said he never aspired for power as he believed that without changing the character of the state, the fate of the masses cannot be improved.

He said the objective of politics of the late leader was never for power but for the welfare of the masses.

Dr Sharif was critical of both ruling Awami League and the BNP for "pushing the country to politics of confrontation due to their selfish gains."

He also criticised those who were today claiming themselves as followers of the late leader saying they in fact have no commitment to Bhasani's ideals.

In Chittagong, speakers at a number of discussions here paid rich tributes to late leader.

A three-day programme under the auspices of Bhasani observance committee has begun in the city which includes milad mahfil, photo exhibition and discussion meeting.

Chittagong District National Awami Party held a discussion at its Dost building office while Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal held a meeting at Nasiman Bhaban office of the BNP.

Diarrhoea claims 4 more lives in Gournadi

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 17: Diarrhoea claimed four more lives in Khanjapur Union of Gournadi thana of Barisal district during the last 3 days, according to official sources.

The dead were identified as Saheen, 6, Sefah, 2, Shamim, 3, and Rab Mollah, 32. They were from Medakul and Dumuria villages of the union.

According to the official sources, at least 182 people were affected in the thana during the period. Seven medical teams are working in the area.

BCL activist beaten up in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Nov 17: A gang of terrorists kidnapped BCL activist Hasan, 20, of Daulatpur today.

They broke his left leg and cut off the tendon of the right leg after taking him to an abandoned house behind the Daulatpur kutcha bazar.

Police later rescued him but failed to nab the kidnappers.

Paddy production

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ment, a tough road is ahead," he pointed out. Firstly, growth in rice production must synchronise with the population growth which is expected to increase by 50 per cent in 2010 and secondly, soil fertility in the country has dramatically decreased, he said.

The Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council (BARC) earlier reported that, food production in 75 per cent of agricultural land was severely affected due to decline in soil fertility.

Fertility of more than 70 per cent of the 15 million hectares of arable land has been declining alarmingly for the last 13 years. Presence of organic matter in arable land should be at least 3 per cent but it is below 1 per cent now, the BARC report said.

Despite such an alarming fall in soil fertility, crop yield steadily increases due to use of more and more fertiliser which is increasing the production cost, the report had said.

While noting that the Bangladesh government had given highest priority to the agriculture sector, the FAO official said increased supply of high yielding rice varieties and other inputs, environment-friendly agriculture technology and localised research could ensure sustained development of the sector.

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Khaleda sued for her remarks

KHAGRACHHARI, Nov 17: BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia has been sued at a court here today for her remarks about Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at a recent party rally at Savar, reports UNB.

A local leader of ruling Awami League's youth front, Jubo League, filed the suit against Begum Zia accusing her of hurting the religious sentiment and infringing upon communal harmony in the country.

The BNP leader told the Savar rally on Nov 11 that "they (AL) are doing everything for their dadas."

The petitioner also accused Begum Zia of having said that the call for prayer (Azan) might be replaced by ulu dhuani or sankho dhuani.

Under Section 298 of the Bangladesh Penal Code, the petition case was lodged with a Judge of Khagrachhari Court. But the judge sent it to the Magistrate Court of ABM Nasirul Alam. Its hearing will be held on December 11.

In his plaint, district Awami Jubo League president Ali Akbar Siddiqui said BNP Chairperson's remarks hit the religious sentiment of the Muslim community and destroyed the atmosphere of communal harmony.

Meanwhile, Zoo authorities have forfeited the deposit money of five suppliers of animal feed on charges of 'irregularities'. Curator of the Zoo Md Afsar Ali said, The amounts of deposit were Tk 10,000 and above, he added.

"We have taken action against the suppliers of feed for guinea pigs, greens and some other species as irregularities were found in the supply," said the Curator. Two of them have already been served with final notice and "we have also put the meat supplier under strict observation," he said.

The Curator added that new tenders would soon be floated to pick new suppliers.

There were widespread allegations that the feed offered to the animals at the Zoo was sub-standard.

The skins of the four tigers which died last week were sent to a local tannery unit yesterday for processing, according to sources in the taxidermy section of the Zoo.

Meanwhile, the five-member committee formed to probe the mysterious death of four Royal Bengal tigers at the Zoo is likely to seek extension of its five-day time limit which expires today, a committee member said yesterday.

"The five-day time is not enough for us. Tomorrow, we will decide how many more days we need to complete the investigation," he said.

Miss World

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protesters. But I don't know who they are and where they are."

Hindu nationalists, women's groups and left-wingers have threatened mass suicides and fiery protests against the extravaganza, denouncing it as a western ploy aimed at subverting Indian culture.

Meanwhile, the troubled Miss World beauty contest in India has brought Miss Israel and Miss Lebanon together, but not in the same picture, the Israeli contestant told Reuters in Bangalore today.

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