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Silver Jubilee of Victory Day



11 women freedom fighters were awarded crests at a reunion of freedom fighters of Sector Number-2 at the Fine Arts Institute of Dhaka University yesterday.

From Page 1 addressed among others by Dr MA Wazed Mia, Sayed Hasan Imam, Salauddin Badal, Sheikh Abdul Kader and Osman Gani.

Muktijoddher Chetana Moch organized a discussion meeting of the Doel Chhatar in front of the Curzon Hall of Dhaka University.

The Dhaka University authorities have drawn up a three

Dhaka for consensus on issues in WTO declaration

Bangladesh yesterday called for consensus on issues to be incorporated in the declaration of the first ministerial conference of World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Singapore, reports UNB.

As the trade ministers of 127 member countries continued their efforts to finalise the declaration, Commerce Minister Tofael Ahmed said a consensus is needed so that new conditions do not cripple the economies of the least developed countries (LDCs).

Ex-minister Fazlur Rahman sued

The Bureau of Anti-Corruption filed a case yesterday against the former state minister of the BNP government, Fazlur Rahman on charges of misappropriation of money.

An inspector of the bureau filed the case with Ramna thana, police said.

The complainant said, Fazlur Rahman, while a state minister of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Women Affairs, misappropriated Tk 1.1 crore by abusing his official powers.

AI concern

[ret] A Rashid Khandaker, an absconding accused in the August 15, 1975 killing case, was arrested by police under the Arms Act. She was placed on police remand for interrogation in connection with the case.

In this regard Abbas mentioned that the AI was 'disturbed' by reports that Mehnaz Rashid, daughter of Zbaida Rashid was 'at risk of detention' on the allegation that she had taped her mother's conversation with her during a visit to the jail. 'If arrested, the AI would consider her a prisoner of conscience,' said the AI representative.

About the alleged abduction of Kalpana Chakma from her village home in Rangamati under the Chittagong Hill Tracts on June 12, 1996, the AI representative observed that the committee formed by the government to probe her disappearance has been extending its deadline. 'Delays of this nature are not in the interest of justice,' the AI representative added.

He also expressed concern over political killings and urged the government to ensure justice without delay. Abbas referred to the killing of Alaudin, an Awami League leader on June 19. Despite confessional statements of a key suspect in this case, thorough investigation in this regard is yet to be made, the AI representative added.

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Indian dailies give wide coverage to water talks

NEW DELHI, Dec 11: The official talks and issues on sharing the Ganges water between India and Bangladesh got wide coverage in today's Indian newspapers, reports BSS.

The Hindustan Times, an influential daily, in a report today said "a long-term Indo-Bangla treaty on the sharing of Ganga waters appeared to be on the cards today on the eve of Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda's talks with his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina Wajed."

"The exact period for which the proposed water-sharing treaty would be effective is to be decided at the political level," it said.

The prestigious daily, The Hindu, in a front-page story said "India and Bangladesh will sign a long term treaty — of 30 years — on the sharing of Ganges water, and with that will end, hopefully, an irritant that soured their relations from time to time and had the potential of increasing bilateral alienation. The signing of the treaty will be the hallmark of the activities during the Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's three-day stay here. Though complex, the water-sharing arrangement was worked out with an eye on the satisfaction of the two sides."

The Times of India in a story said India and Bangladesh may thrash out a long-term agreement for the sharing of Ganges waters during the 150-day January-May lean season. Expectations so far had been for a short-term pact. While expressing optimism, sources on both sides were tight-lipped about details of the agreement which is on the top of the agenda and on which depends the success of the historic visit.

Popular daily, The Asian Age, in a front page story said that "according to draft agreement scheduled to be signed between the two countries on Thursday, Bangladesh will get around 35,000 cusec of the Ganges water and the rest will be left for India (the quantity will be decided by the water generated). During lean period, 80 per cent of the flow will be left for Bangladesh and the remaining for India."

The Pioneer said, "Sheikh Hasina arrived in Delhi on a three-day visit which will be marked by a historic signing of water-sharing agreement of the Ganges river waters between the two countries." "External Affairs Ministry officials were burning the midnight oil working on the modalities of the agreement," it said.

The National Herald reporting the Bangladesh Prime Minister's arrival in India, said that during her visit, India and Bangladesh are expected to sign a historic agreement on sharing of Ganges waters. The water dispute has been a major irritant in the relations between the two countries, the daily said.

The High Court yesterday declared the detention of a Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leader illegal and ordered his immediate release, reports UNB.

S M Khalid Mahmud Shaheer, president of the Sher-e-Bangla Medical College, Barisal unit of JCD was detained under the Special Powers Act 1974.

A bench of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court comprising Justice Ruhul Amin and Justice Mohammad Asaduzzaman declared the detention illegal and unlawful, said a press release.

Mohammad Harmuj Ali Miah, father of the detenu, filed a habeas corpus challenging the detention on November 18.

Golam Mohammad Chowdhury Al appeared for the petitioner, Advocate Ferdous Akhter Wahida assisted him.

Zia: Independence

Criticising the participation of the Indian allied forces at the fag end of the Liberation War, Mir Shawkat viewed, "It was not needed at a time when we were very close to the victory."

Chaired by Abul Quasem Choudhury, the rally was organised by the BNP's labour front, Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal, in celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the Victory Day. Other BNP leaders including K M Obaidur Rahman, MP, Col (ret) Akbar Hossain, MP, Prof Jahanara Begum and Mirza Abbas also spoke on the occasion.

In his speech, K M Obaidur Rahman noted that the country's independence did not come overnight. "It came following the nation's long struggle that got new dimensions in its course from the 1952 Language Movement to the 1970 general elections through which Sheikh Mujib was given the nation's mandate," he said.

Referring to controversies on the proclamation of independence and the leadership in the liberation struggle, Obaid said, "Undermining Mujib or Zia would tantamount to undermining the whole nation."

Col (ret) Akbar alleged that distortion of the history of the Liberation War began after the post-Liberation AL government started spreading falsehood about the war.

All about Farakka & water-sharing

Salman Haider to Bangladesh in the first week of July. It was followed by a four-day visit of Indian External Affairs Minister I K Gujral from September 7 which raised expectations for a 'satisfactory water treaty' between the two countries before the onset of the coming dry season, beginning January.

Gujral's visit was followed by foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad's visit to India in September. Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak also paid a three-day visit to the Indian capital from October 28 and later met Jyoti Basu in Calcutta.

A Joint Committee of experts was set up by the two governments following Gujral's visit. The joint committee held at least 10 rounds of talks in Delhi till December 8.

Possibility of a water accord appeared on the horizon when Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of the Indian state of West Bengal paid a five-day official visit to Bangladesh from November 27.

Before leaving Dhaka after having two rounds of exclusive talks with Sheikh Hasina, Basu announced that a draft water accord was ready and that it would be signed during a summit between the Prime Ministers of Bangladesh and India.

HC orders release of Barisal JCD leader

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Court records statements of Ctg madrassah students

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Dec 11: A court recorded the statements of 25 students of a madrassah here today and later handed over 19 of them to their guardians, police and court sources said.

The remaining six students returned to the safe custody of Kotwali thana from the court as their guardians were yet to receive them.

These students were rescued by police on December 8 from the Tasbidul Quran Mohisunnah Madrassah at the rail station colony. Police arrested the principal of the madrassah, Maulana Saleh Ahmed and two other teachers on charge of torturing the students.

The principal and two other teachers will be produced before the court tomorrow as their three-day remand expires, police said.

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Hasina holds meetings with Indian leaders

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Welcoming the Bangladesh Prime Minister Gujral extended the hope that the Indo-Bangladesh relationship would continue to improve particularly in the economic field.

Gujral suggested some corrective measures including tariff decrease for Bangladesh items to narrow the existing trade gap between the two countries.

Gujral said India wants to develop economic cooperation with the SAARC countries and hopes SAPTA will be more effective.

Expressing her deep concern for the economic plight of the people of this region, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, we can only improve the situation through strengthening economic cooperation amongst ourselves.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina made a courtesy call on Sonia Gandhi (L), widow of slain Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at her residence in New Delhi yesterday. Sheikh Hasina's niece is seen at her left.

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Sheikh Hasina paid a courtesy call on Indian Vice President K R Narayanan and also met with Sonia Gandhi, widow of late assassinated premier Rajiv Gandhi, at her 10 Janapath residence.

The President of Congress(I), Sitaram Kesri during his meeting with Hasina expressed satisfaction over the Indo-Bangla relationship.

Kesri recalled with emotion the historic Liberation War of Bangladesh in which India extended help and support. He also recalled the role of former Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi in Bangladesh's liberation struggle.

Sheikh Hasina acknowledged with gratitude India's help in her country's Liberation War and said, "we also remember the leadership of Mrs Indira Gandhi."

General Secretary of Congress (I) Golam Nabi Azad was present during the meeting.

Former foreign minister of India Pranab Mukherjee, Speaker of the Lok Sabha P A Sangma, and Vice-Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha Dr Nazma Heptullah called on Sheikh Hasina at the Rastrapati Bhavan.

The Leader of the Opposition in Indian Parliament Atal Bihari Bajpayee later called on Hasina. They exchanged pleasantries and discussed various issues.

Young man stabbed to death in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent KHULNA, Dec 11: A young man was stabbed to death at Ahsan Ahmed Road under Kotwali Thana today.

Zahidur Rahman, 22, an HSC examinee of Sundarban College, was attacked by two unidentified assailants when he was going to market, police said.

He received serious stab injuries in his chest and died on way to sadar hospital. A case has been lodged by his father Bazur Rahman.

The cause of the killing was not known.

4-member body

From Page 1 Husain are the other members of the committee.

At the directive of the SEC, the regulating authority, the DSE and Chittagong Stock Exchange imposed a 10 per cent circuit-breaker first and then reduced it to 5 per cent rise or fall of share prices on trading day compared to the previous day's price. The brake was put after the market embarked on a wild bull run.

Officials said the committee would review the market situation and the fundamentals of different companies listed with the stock market and instruct the DSE to apply the circuit-breaker on selective basis.

The committee is likely to sit on Saturday to discuss the draft paper of the DSE and a final guideline may come out from the meeting, a competent source said.

Another committee, a surveillance team to check manipulation in the market, was not formed yesterday.

Two alleged dacoits held in city

By Staff Correspondent Police have arrested two alleged dacoits in connection with Tuesday night's robbery in a house at Sobhanbagh in the city.

Mohammadpur police during raids on Rayer Bazar and Moghbazar areas arrested the leader of an inter district gang of dacoits, identified as Sultan alias Kamrul, 22, and his accomplice, Humayun Kabir, 20, at about 6 am yesterday.

Looted goods worth about Tk two lakh, a revolver and a dagger were recovered from their possession, police said.

The armed gang looted money, gold ornaments and other valuables worth about Tk three lakh at around 10 pm Tuesday.

Sultan was arrested on June 22 in connection with robbery cases filed against him with Mohammadpur, Dhanmondi and Lalbagh thanas.

But he was released on bail recently, police said. Police were interrogating them.

Ghanaian leading in race for UN's top post

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 11: UN Undersecretary-General Kofi Annan on Tuesday obtained the required votes for the top UN post but faced one potential veto, thought to be from France, after unofficial Security Council balloting, reports Reuter.

Annan of Ghana, in charge of peacekeeping, led three other African candidates and was the only nominee to receive more than the nine votes needed to be elected UN Secretary-General.

But among the votes against him was a veto-bearing permanent member, not officially identified but believed to be France.

The other three candidates, Amara Essy of Ivory Coast, Hamid Algabid of Niger and Amadou Ould-Abdallah of Mauritania, each received two negative votes from permanent members, believed to be the United States and Britain.

The Security Council began balloting on Tuesday in an effort to select a new secretary-general to succeed Ghali.

Accord today

From Page 1 Minister Abdur Razzak, Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan, Water Resources Secretary ATM Shamsul Huda, Secretary to Prime Minister Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and Bangladesh High Commissioner to India CM Shaif Sami were present.

The Indian side External Affairs Minister I K Gujral and Foreign Secretary Salman Haider were present.

Sheikh Hasina recalled help and assistance rendered by India during Bangladesh Liberation War and said now it was the time to fight together to remove poverty and hunger.

She emphasised on a better cooperative approach to improving the lot of the common people.

Sheikh Hasina thanked the government and the people of India for their warm reception and hospitality extended to her and her entourage.

The Indian Prime Minister called for intensifying efforts to ensure strong relations between the two neighbours.

He emphasised on more economic cooperation between the two countries to the mutual benefits of their peoples.

Prior to the delegation level (talks Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called on Deve Gowda at the Hyderabad House during which the two leaders had one-to-one discussions.

Reception

From Page 1 of the Indian Prime Minister, she said adding "we will talk to you after everything was settled."

Asked whether transit issue was in the agenda of the talks between the two premiers, Sheikh Hasina said "you will know everything by tomorrow."

The ceremony over, Sheikh Hasina went to the Rastrapati Bhavan where she will be staying.

Deve Gowda later made a courtesy call on his Bangladesh counterpart. He stayed there for some time and exchanged pleasantries.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was accorded a rousing reception in New Delhi where she arrived from Aizmeer after offering ziarat at the maazar of Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti (R).

As the motorcade approached the gate of the Rastrapati Bhavan, the Prime Minister was given a hearty ovation by the cheering crowd who assembled on both sides of the city streets.

The important road islands of the capital were tastefully decorated with national flags of the two friendly countries. Big portraits of Sheikh Hasina were also hung there.