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Prospect of forming SAFE discussed

A two-day South Asian Employers' Symposium concluded here yesterday with an emphasis on exploring the prospect of creating a regional organisation to be called the South Asian Federation of Employers (SAFE), reports UNB.

The symposium, organised by International Labour Organisation in cooperation with Bangladesh Employers' Association (BAE), was participated by representatives from employers' associations from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh.

ILO senior specialist on employers activities Raphael F. Crowe and BAE Secretary General C K Hyder yesterday disclosed the decisions taken in the symposium which also focused on the active involvement of employers in the socio-economic issues affecting their respective countries.

The symposium covered a wide range of issues including poverty alleviation, employment, child labour, informal sectors, agricultural sector, human resource development, productivity, transmigration of labour, labour laws, industrial relations, economic deregulation, women and gender issues.

Participants in the symposium also discussed the areas of cooperation between South Asian employers' organisations and presented papers on redundancy, retrenchment, redeployment and retraining laws in the Asia-Pacific region.

The symposium resolved that South Asian employers' organisations (EOs) should be proactive, futuristic and dynamic in their approach to ensure that enterprises of the region can compete effectively in the global market.

The EOs shall exchange information in a structured manner to be determined on the basis of mutual needs and practical considerations to bring uniformity in their views and actions, the participating South Asian employers said.

They also suggested that the EOs should act as catalysts for changing negative attitudes towards the market economy and should cooperate among themselves in identifying modalities for achieving the same.

They said the EOs shall endeavour to meet each year in the sub-region, well ahead of the ILO in Geneva, for the purpose of exchanging ideas and evolving appropriate regional positions on relevant issues relating to the common agenda.

The EOs in the region along with those in other parts of the developing world should persuade the ILO to work more actively on issues and problems of transmigration of people, the symposium observed.

Representatives from ILO governing body, the International Organisation of Employers, ILO South Asia Multidisciplinary Team and two leading resource persons also took part in the deliberations.

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Johannesburg Test Aussies 628/8 declared

Sports Reporter

Australian captain Mark Taylor declared his side's first innings at 628 for eight on the penultimate day of the first Test against South Africa at the Wanderers in Johannesburg yesterday.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard Monday on the fourth day at the end of the Australian first innings against South Africa in the first cricket Test at the Wanderers:

Table with columns: SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 302, AUSTRALIA: First innings (Overtight 479 for four). Rows include Taylor b Pollock 16, Hayden c Cullinan b Pollock 40, Elliott c Adams b Donald 26, M Waugh c Richardson b Kallis 160, S Waugh c Richardson b Kallis 160, G Blewett c Adams b Klusener 214, Bavan not out 37, Healy c Kirsten b Adams 11, Warm b Cronje 9, Extras: b-1, lb-15, nb-10, w-4 30. Total (for eight wickets declared) 628. Fall of wickets: 1-33; 2-128; 3-169; 4-174; 5-559; 6-577; 7-613; 8-628.

Did not bat: Jason Gillespie and Glenn McGrath.

Table with columns: Bowling: O M R W. Rows include Donald 35 7 136 2, Pollock 32 3 105 2, Klusener 37 10 122 1, Kallis 21 4 54 1, Adams 52 7 163 1, Cronje 16 4 52 1.

Minor boy hurt in blast at DU hall

A minor boy was injured in a bomb explosion at the Dhaka University Zahurul Haq Hall ground yesterday morning, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the bomb went off at about 11 am when the boy, Ibrahim, 9, unwittingly picked up the abandoned bomb.

Ibrahim son of Abdul Jabbar, a gatekeeper of the hall, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with burn injuries in his right hand.

In another incident, a young man was injured in a bomb explosion at Bataala of Hajirabagh in old part of the city, DMCH correspondent reported.

Mamun, 16, suffered splinter injuries when unknown people exploded the bomb at a tea stall at about 5:30 pm. He was admitted to DMCH.

Textbook Board activities reviewed

The second meeting of the Public Undertaking Committee of the Jatiya Sangsad was held at the Sangsad Bhavan yesterday with its chairman Whip Prof Rafiqul Islam in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting reviewed the activities of the National Curricula and Textbook Board under the Ministry of Education. The legal basis and organogram of the organisation, its statement of accounts of the grants for the purchase of printing papers, paper and distribution expenses also came up for discussion.

Members of the committee Imran Ahmed, Fazle Rabbi, Mohammad Dabirul Islam, Kazi Shamsur Rahman, A K M Musharraf Hossain, Faruque Khan and Abul Kalam Azad attended the meeting.

Partex

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top official of the company, the 'fake deed of the so-called claimants' of the village on the land has already been rejected by a civil court.

He said they had also lodged a case with the assistant judge's court of Savar, seeking injunction on Partex which is scheduled for hearing on March 5.

But, he regretted, the group, to show the court an abnormal situation, went on terrorist acts on February 28 compelling the on-duty Ansars to fire 'blank shots' for their life security in which four people were killed.

Ansars

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for questioning the family members. Of the injured, five persons were under treatment at the Enam Clinic in Savar, one person at the Orthopedic Hospital and another person, who suffered injuries in his chest was admitted to the Chest Diseases Hospital in the city.

Police said that of the 32 arrested people, 19 were reportedly the security guards of Partex Group.

Three of the dead sustained bullet injuries in their backs which proves the armed men chased the villagers and fired on them, said police sources.

The CID was also investigating whether any other arms, other than the Ansars' point 303 rifles were used or not in the violence at Sadhapur.

NWADS workshop concludes 25 projects recommended

From Govinda Shil

BOGRA, Mar 3: The 'North West Area Development Study' (NWADS) workshop ended here today recommending some 25 projects from five different sectors for implementation in the region.

The projects will be taken up for implementation soon after the completion of the 'Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge' in the middle of next year.

Presided over by K M S A Kaiser, joint chief of the Planning Division and project director of NWADS, the concluding session of the workshop was also addressed by Yuriko Uehara, social sector specialist of the ADB and Forest Cookson, team leader of the project (NWADS).

Some 125 delegates from home and abroad took part in the 3-day workshop.

Japanese team

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by utilising natural gas, the minister said.

The minister further said that the present government is taking speedy steps to involve private sector in all development efforts. The government will welcome if Japanese business community comes forward to establish a private EPZ in Bangladesh, he added.

He also said the government is contemplating in establishing a sea port at private sector. The minister called upon the Japanese investors to set up joint venture projects in different sectors, particularly in power generation, gas exploration, fertilizer, composite textile and backward linkage industry.

Fire at 'Sadhana Oushadhalaya'

A fire broke out at the factory of Sadhana Oushadhalaya, one of the oldest ayurvedic medicine manufacturer in Bangladesh, yesterday, reports UNB.

Firefighters in their rapid operation brought the blaze under control within 10 minutes. The fire originated from a kiln of the factory at Gandaria about 1:30 pm.

Firebrigade headquarters officials estimated that the extent of damage would be about Tk 20,000. No casualty was reported in the fire.

Another report says: Property worth about several lakh taka were gutted in a fire at Baridhara in the city yesterday, official sources said.

The fire broke out at a semi-pucca house, known as Norder Sadar Bari, at GP Ka-28 in Baridhara at about 7:15 pm. On information, firefighters rushed to the spot and brought the flame under control after one hour of their hectic effort.

CID has taken up case

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sions dead and at least 25 others injured.

The minister, said CID had taken up the case for investigation and already submitted its preliminary. A detailed report would be prepared soon. Besides, the DC of Dhaka had asked a first class magistrate to carry out another probe into the incident, he said.

The Officer-in-Charge and a Sub-Inspector of Savar thana were suspended for their failure to take necessary action in time. Besides, departmental action would follow soon, the minister added.

Rafiqul Islam told the House that a group of villagers had attacked Ansar personnel posted in a camp on a plot of land at Sadhapur, five-km of Savar thana, around noon on February 28 and later four persons including a woman were killed. A private company, Partex Group, procured the plot to set up a housing estate there, he said.

But people of the village protested setting up of an Ansar camp and held a meeting there on February 26, which was also attended by local MP Dewan Salahuddin, the home minister said. The following day they dug

up at two points the road connecting the camp with Savar police station and at night they asked the Ansars posted there to leave the place.

On February 28 the minister said, people of the village thronged the plot and later the incident of killing took place. But the reason why Ansars had opened fire would be known once the investigation was completed, he noted.

As an immediate measure, the home minister said, he had asked the IGP to take necessary action and the SP of Dhaka visited the spot. Later, the Ansar camp was replaced by a police camp, he said, adding that 13 Ansars and 19 security guards of Partex posted there were arrested.

In a bid to stop recurrence of such incident and establish effective administrative control, a high-powered committee was formed and it would submit its recommendations within two weeks.

The home minister also said that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited the place yesterday and he accompanied her. The PM assured the victims' families of Tk 50,000 each as help and punishment of the persons responsible, he said.

No plan to set up diplomatic ties with Israel

The government has no plan to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, reports UNB.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad stated this in reply to a question from Shamsuzzaman Daud (BNP-Chudanga) in Parliament yesterday.

4 JCD leaders suspended from DU unit

By DU Correspondent

Four leaders of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), Dhaka University unit, have been suspended from the organisation for violating party decisions, sources in the JCD said.

The four joint convenors of the newly-formed DU unit committee, Sultan Salahuddin Tuku, Azharul Haq Mukul, Benzir Ahmed Titu and Mahmud Chowdhury Liton have been asked not to participate in any JCD activities for a month.

The rival factions of the JCD were locked in gunfights thrice last week for gaining control of the four JCD-dominated residential halls of the university.

It ventures cement plant to be set up in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 3: A joint venture cement factory will be set up in Chittagong by the entrepreneurs of Bangladesh and Turkey with a production capacity of six lakh metric tons.

This was disclosed by Turkish ambassador Kamal Ozkan Davaz at a meeting with President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) Jafarul Islam Chowdhury today at the chamber house here.

The ambassador noted that trade between Bangladesh and Turkey already rose to 100 million US dollars yearly.

He also visited Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ).

Housewife roasted alive

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 3: A housewife was roasted alive in a fire at Mambipara village under Kalapara thana of Patuakhali district last night.

Hazra Khatoun, 35, died while trying to save her minor son, 5, from the fire.

Witnesses said the fire that originated from kitchen suddenly engulfed the entire tinshed house.

The minor boy was admitted to the Barisal Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

1070 bottles of phensidyl seized

MANIKGANJ, Mar 3: Police seized 1070 bottles of phensidyl syrup and arrested a man for carrying the contraband item at Shibbalaya thana here on Sunday night, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, Shibbalaya police raided a coach and recovered 1070 bottles of phensidyl. One Abdur Razzak was arrested for possessing those goods. Police also seized the coach.

PM: Sadhapur

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Shahed passed SSC Examination and he was gunned down while passing by the area, said the grief-stricken elder brother.

Referring to repression on women in the areas during the melee, the Prime Minister said punitive measures would be taken against those who harmed women.

She informed them that new law is going to be introduced for protecting the rights of the womenfolk immediately with a guarantee of stern action against woman-bashers.

Hasina said her government had taken quick measures after the tragic incident. Already, 32 people have been arrested and others involved there would be brought to book.



A BNP worker injured in a bomb explosion during the party rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Star photo

Agitation to continue

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denied the recent attack on a BNP lawmaker and party supporters in Feni on February 26 while they were coming to join Begum Zia's public meeting there. He was also critical of the killing of '11 people' in firing by Ansars in Savar.

The Awami League government would not believe in law and order, he said, criticising the government's 'silence on the increasing crimes and deterioration of law and order.'

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan told the rally that on an average 15 to 20 people are being killed everyday after the present government has assumed power. 'Some of the killings are not reported in the newspapers,' he said.

He alleged that when the law and order was deteriorating alarmingly, police could not discharge their duties impartially in curbing crimes and arresting the criminals. 'Even the Home Minister cannot work independently.'

Bhuiyan criticised the government for filing false cases against BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia and thousands of party leaders and workers. 'If the government remains in power for five years, nobody will be spared from cases.'

Referring to the Chittagong Hill Tracts problems, he said if the government takes any decision that might endanger the country's independence, the country would not accept it.

Bhuiyan warned that the consequences of using the Bangladesh forces in combat

Repatriation of Rohingyas to be completed this month

Some 26,440 Rohingyas refugees in three camps are still awaiting repatriation and will be sent back to their homes in Myanmar at the end of this month, reports UNB.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad said this in a written reply to a question from Abdul Mukit Khan (Syhlet) in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

At the 21st senior official-level meeting between Bangladesh and Myanmar, the Myanmar authorities had assured that the repatriation process would be completed by March 31, the minister said.

SEC: Probe body

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widespread allegations that the whirlwind was sowed by certain speculators leaving thousands of small investors penniless, pushing the market to a near collapse.

At least 35 companies dealing in the two courses of the country were shortlisted by the SEC, the watchdog of the capital market as it began investigating the scam.

The probe committee visited the Dhaka Stock Exchange and the Chittagong Stock Exchange. It also interviewed a number of members of the bourses and others connected with the stock market.

Delhi to back Dhaka

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SAARC countries who are littoral states, Pakistan and Maldives, have also not been included in the IOR.

During the formative stage of the IOR, the Indian government in 1995 reportedly opposed the inclusion of several countries, including Bangladesh, in the alliance.

The concept of IOR formation revolved around the premise of forging a new economic block to provide a common platform for facilitation of commerce and removal of impediments for free and enhanced flow of goods and services with a view to augmenting and diversifying trade flows among member states under a new grouping.

The idea of the Indian Ocean Rim Grouping was first mooted during a visit of former foreign minister of South Africa P Botha to New Delhi in November, 1993.

The first meeting that floated the concept of the IOR was held in Mauritius in May, 1995. Those who were invited to

Palestinians observe strike

HEBRON, West Bank, Mar 3: Palestinians observed a general strike Monday to protest Israeli plans for a large Jewish housing project in east Jerusalem, the sector the Palestinians claim as a future capital, reports AP.

Throughout the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem, shops, schools and universities closed, public transportation came to a halt and workers stayed home from their jobs.

3 killed in Sylhet road accident, protestors block road

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Mar 3: Traffic on the Biswanath-Jagannathpur road remained suspended for the whole day today as thousands of people blocked the road to protest the deaths of three persons in a road accident. They demanded immediate arrest of the driver of the killer minibus.

Three persons were killed in a head on collision between a minibus and an autorickshaw at Mojnaganj last night. The deceased were identified as ex-UP member Akbar Ali, 52, Abdus Shahid, 32, and Khowaj Ali, autorickshaw driver.

Three of the injured were admitted to the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

Policeman stabbed

JESSORE, Mar 3: A policeman was critically injured when miscreants stabbed him at Ambattala in Sadar thana tonight, reports UNB.

Abdul Malek, a constable of Chowgacha thana, came under attack while coming to the town by his motorbike at about 8 pm.

The hoodlums snatched his belongings, including the motorbike, and left him in an unconscious state.

Local people sent him to Jessore Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.

RU Shibir begins 5-day strike tomorrow

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Mar 3: The Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS), Rajshahi University unit, has called a five-day strike on the campus from Wednesday protesting removal of Prof M Yousuf Ali from the office of the Vice Chancellor.

ICS leaders called the strike at a protest rally held this morning. ICS president Abdul Jabbar was in the chair.

ICS activists will also stage a sit in tomorrow in front of the Administrative Building.

The pro-Jamaat teachers of the university have also called a two-day strike from Wednesday.

British consortium

From Page 1

would give 1000 acres of land for a privately financed 'complete port project'.

Tim Steel, however, noted that political stability in Bangladesh is very important for a wave of foreign investment.

'Though I am not interested to interfere in domestic politics, I am little bit concerned over possible disruption in political stability here as the major opposition party has announced a month long street programme,' he said.

Highlighting the benefit of the private-sector port project, Tim Steel said this would bring significant benefits by reducing congestion, increasing efficiency in port-handling, generation of employment and introducing competition.

The TCM Chairman stressed the need for infrastructure development for attracting foreign investment in Bangladesh. The existing port facility is not able to otel foreign investment, he observed.

Mentioning his experience during the current 10-day visit to different parts of the country, meetings with officials and reading newspapers, the TCM Chairman said he was concerned over the political situation here.

He said foreign investment would come here on large scale if the government could ensure political stability which is the first precondition for foreign investment.

Tim Steel said he was visiting Bangladesh regarding TCM business in Bangladesh and also surveying the prospects of the use of hovercraft in the country.

He said his TCM company was venturing in various sectors including power, real estate, infrastructure development and other potential fields of investment in Bangladesh.

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