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4 accords likely during Vietnamese PM's visit

Dhaka and Hanoi are expected to sign agreements during the forthcoming visit of Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Kiet arrives here on Sunday on a two-day official visit to Bangladesh at the invitation of the Bangladesh Prime Minister.

Official sources said yesterday one agreement will be signed to set up a Joint Economic Commission (JEC) to bolster ties between Dhaka and Hanoi in different fields.

Another accord on cultural exchange programmes will be initiated during the visit.

A third agreement will be concluded between the Chambers of Commerce and Industries of the two countries to increase volume of trade between the two developing countries.

The fourth agreement is likely to be signed for exchange of news and information between two national news agencies.

Dhaka is attaching special importance to the visit of the leader of Vietnam which extended support to Bangladesh in its War of Liberation in 1971.

SSC exams

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from Khulna, three from Bhola, three from Bakerganj, nine from Wazpur, three from Barisal, one each from Narail and Pirojpur.

In Rajshahi Board, over 450 students were expelled from different centres for adopting unfair means on the first day of the examination. Control Room sources said.

This year about 7.42 lakh candidates sat under 5 boards for the examinations which are being held with a common set of questions introduced for the first time at the SSC level.

Among the examinees 4,30,247 are male and 3,11,614 are female. A total of 2,20,059 examinees are appearing in the examinations under Dhaka Board at 210 centres while over 1,98,358 candidates sat for examinations at 197 centres under Rajshahi Board.

In Jessore Board over 1,36,818 students sat for the examinations in 155 centres, over 1,22,673 examinees at 154 centres under Comilla Board and 63,953 students sat for examinations from Chittagong Board in 75 centres.

According to official sources, the examinations are being held at five centres outside the country for the examinees living abroad. The centres outside the country are at Jeddah, Riyadh, Doha, Abu Dhabi and Tripoli.

Rakkhibahini

From Page 1

and Deputy leader of the Opposition also took part in the debate which obstructed the Deputy Speaker from going ahead with the scheduled business of the private members' day. The chair repeatedly sought cooperation from both the sides to bring an end to the 'unexpected and unnecessary' debate.

The debate started when Col (ret'd) Faruk Khan of AL rose to protest a statement made on the previous day by Maj (Ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed of BNP who called the Rakkhibahini a tyrant force.

Formation of the Rakkhibahini as a militia force was the urgent need in the just-liberated country, Khan said, adding such forces were formed in many countries of the world.

The AL lawmaker noted that Ziaur Rahman also formed a similar force styled Armed Police Battalion which still existed.

Taking the floor, Maj (ret'd) Hafiz repeated his previous day's contention that the Rakkhibahini murdered 30,000 people and repressed the inhabitants in 68,000 villages. He also termed the Rakkhibahini a 'slaughter force'.

March 7

From Page 1

panied by a cultural and an administrative team, will carry the torch to 28 different places of the country and finally bring it to the independence day.

The torch to be carried by two freedom fighters, attired in check lungi and white gurney, with two others carrying the national flag, will touch Bangabandhu's birth place Tungipara on March 17, his birthday.

On March 26, the Prime Minister will formally declare the end of the programme receiving the torch at the memorial of independence in the Suhrawardy Uddyan and igniting the eternal flame of independence.

Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television will broadcast special programmes throughout the month of independence. Bangladesh Post Office will release a postage stamp valued at Tk four and a first day cover worth Tk six on March 7.

Japanese aid

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will receive the highest consideration of the Japanese aid agency.

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr SA Samad was also present on the occasion.

Meanwhile, the visiting Japanese annual consultation mission on loan yesterday assured continued Japanese assistance in development projects in Bangladesh.

The assurance came from the Japanese mission while its members met Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria at his office after concluding the annual consultation held in the city.

Senior Assistant for Loan Aid at the Economic Cooperation Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Futao Motai led the eight-member delegation.

The Finance Minister expressed gratitude to the Japanese government for continued support to the development efforts of Bangladesh. He sought greater cooperation from Japan in the development of the country.

Kibria expressed the hope that the excellent friendly relationship exists between Bangladesh and Japan would grow further in the years to come.

Prisoner dies in jail

KISHOREGANJ, Mar 6: An undertrial prisoner, accused of a murder, died at the district jail early today, reports UNB.

Jail sources said Maraj Mia, 55, of Dakshinpurbarhat Taratola village in Kotiadi thana reported severe chest pain at midnight and breathed his last on way to jail hospital at 12:25 am.

Maraj Mia had been in jail since October 1, 1995 on charge of killing a co-villager, Abdul Hekim, on May 25 the same year.

Repatriation

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Chakra was present during the briefing.

The delegation will hold another round of talks with the refugee leaders and Deputy Chief Minister of Tripura, Baidyanath Majumder tomorrow before leaving for Dhaka, the reports said.

The Bangladesh delegation earlier offered the government's 20-point economic package to the refugees for their return home.

The refugees leaders submitted to the Bangladesh delegation a memorandum containing 7-point demand which included peaceful settlement of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) problems through meaningful dialogue with Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS).

Migrant workers

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ment and other mutually beneficial activities for tackling the common problems of poverty eradication and social uplift.

The two countries have a cultural and trade agreement and these would be activated for greater interaction and exchange between the two peoples, he noted.

Ramos hoped that eventually it would be possible to have young Bangladeshis in large number in Filipino educational institutions under an exchange programme.

We have also to activate the Joint Economic and Joint Trade Committees between the two countries," he said and hoped that there would be joint chambers between the two countries, one based in Dhaka and the other in Manila.

The common goal, for both Bangladesh and the Philippines, he said, "was the growth of infrastructure and other supporting facilities so that the disadvantaged people could take benefit."

Ramos added, "We have a common goal for the empowerment of our people not only politically but also their empowerment economically."

Asked if there was scope for cooperation between SAARC and ASEAN, Ramos parried a direct reply and said that presently the trend was towards removing barriers and that it was possible to have cooperation among all Asian countries.

BUET admission test begins tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The written tests for admission to 11 departments under five faculties of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) begin tomorrow, says a press release.

A total of 6702 students will appear in the examinations for 700 seats. The classes will remain closed for three days from Saturday for admission tests. The names of the successful candidates will be published on March 23, the press release added.

NEWS BRIEFS

Khaleda's public rally in Jessore today

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in parliament Begum Khaleda Zia will address a public meeting at Keshabpur in Jessore district today, reports UNB.

She is expected to leave here by air in the morning and stay at Jessore Circuit House. After Jumaa prayer, she will go to Keshabpur by road and address the meeting at the local public maidan at 3 pm.

Chief Justice in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD, Mar 6: The Chief Justice of Bangladesh, Justice A T M Afzal arrived here yesterday to attend the first international conference of judges and lawyers which is due to begin in the capital of Pakistan today, reports BSS.

The three-day conference sponsored by the Supreme Court of Pakistan will be attended by five hundred delegates from home and abroad including Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and United Kingdom.

Dacoits loot Tk 3 lakh in Sylhet

SYLHET, Mar 6: A gang of armed dacoits looted valuables worth about Tk 3 lakh from a house in the town on Monday, reports UNB.

Police said a gang of dacoits numbering 10 to 12 entered the house of one Anhar Ahmed of Ghulapara at about 3 am and looted cash, ornaments and clothes at the gun point.

Population growth rate now 1.8

The current rate of population growth is 1.8, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), Parliament was informed yesterday, reports UNB.

Replying to a question by Sarwar Jamal Nizam (BNP), Health and Family Welfare Minister Salahuddin Yusuf said the government is planning to bring down the population growth rate to 1.5 by the year 2000.

60 pc blood collected from donors

Sixty per cent of the two lakh bags of blood collected by the government blood banks from January 1 this year came from the professional donors, reports UNB.

The blood from the professional donors was purchased for Tk 2 lakh, Health and Family Welfare Minister Salahuddin Yusuf said in reply to Jafrul Islam Chowdhury in the House yesterday.

Rest of the blood came from volunteers and the relatives of the patients. The volunteers donated 25 per cent of the blood and relatives 15 per cent, the minister said.

Ganges Barrage Opposition resolution rejected in JS

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Sangsad yesterday rejected an Opposition resolution seeking immediate construction of Ganges Barrage on the river of Padma, although the minister concerned admitted the necessity of erecting the barrage.

BNP legislator Shahidul Islam who moved the resolution said setting up of the barrage was imperative for the sake of facilitating irrigation in about 62 lakhs acres of cultivable land of the north-western region of the country. "Besides, it would increase navigability of a number of rivers which would eventually help increase the volume of riverine trade," the BNP lawmaker said.

Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak appreciated the BNP legislator for moving such an important resolution. "In principle, I am in hundred per cent agreement with the necessity of constructing the barrage," the minister said, adding that erection of the barrage would ultimately help remove multidimensional problems of livelihood of a total of 40 million people of the country.

The minister, however, requested the BNP legislator to withdraw his resolution on the ground that the government was yet to mobilise the resources needed to implement the project.

Quoting an 1984 estimate, the minister told the House that the construction of the barrage would cost at least 4.5 billion US dollars. He also told the House that the government had already opened discussions with the World Bank to get funds for this project.

However, the BNP lawmaker thanked the minister for recognising the importance of constructing the bridge, but he refused to withdraw the resolution.

At this stage, the Chair put the resolution to vote and the resolution was rejected by voice vote.

Operation map of Gen Niazi handed over

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh map used for military operations by the Pakistani forces in 1971 was handed over to the Muktijuddha Museum by Indian High Commissioner Dev Mukherjee in a simple ceremony yesterday, said a press release.

The huge map using one square inch for four miles was published in 1959, and was used by the Pakistani Army Commander Lt Gen A K Niazi for war planning and operations, the release added.

The map was preserved at the Indian High Commission here following the surrender of Pakistani forces on December 16, 1971.

Akku Chowdhury, the Trustee of the Muktijuddha Museum, welcomed the Indian High Commissioner on the occasion.

"The operational map would enrich the collection of the museum," Chowdhury said adding that it was the symbol of defeat of the Pakistani forces in the hands of valiant freedom fighters and the Indian allied forces.

Dev Mukherjee said that the Indian High Commission was handing over the map to the Muktijuddha Museum for showing regards to the efforts made by the people of Bangladesh to preserve and collect materials of the War of Liberation.

Silver Tiger Award conferred on Ramos

Bangladesh scouts yesterday conferred the highest scout award 'The Silver Tiger' on Philippine President Fidel Ramos in recognition of his exceptional services and extraordinary contribution to all-out growth and promotion of the scout movement in the Philippines and in the Asia-Pacific region, reports BSS.

Chief National Commissioner of Bangladesh Scouts Manzoor Ul Karim presented the award and certificate to the President Ramos at the State Guest House Jamuna.

National commissioners and key scout leaders were also present on the occasion.

Philippine FM calls on Azad

Visiting Foreign Minister of the Philippines Domingo L Siazon called on his Bangladeshi counterpart Abdus Samad Azad at his office in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

During the meeting, both the foreign ministers expressing the confidence that the existing relations between the two countries would further develop in the years ahead.

Recalling the support of the Philippines in favour of the liberation war of Bangladesh at the United Nations in 1971, Samad Azad expressed the hope that the Philippines would support Bangladesh for littoral partnership with ASEAN.

The Philippine foreign minister informed Azad of the present situation of the peace agreement signed with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in September, 1996 and hoped that Bangladesh would play an effective role in monitoring the implementation of the agreement as a member of OIC ministerial committee.

BNP accuses govt of harassing its workers

BNP Secretary General Abdur Manin Bhuiyan yesterday accused the government of harassing his party workers although they observed the March 3 demonstration in a peaceful manner, reports UNB.

In a statement, he alleged that police in an attempt to arrest former MP, Ilias Ali searched his residence in Sylhet town on the night of March 3 while Chittagong city Jubo Dal leader Surza Ali Chowdhury was detained on the day.

The BNP Secretary General made a pointed reference to the arrest of Chhatmohor thana BNP leader Shahjahan, attack on Chhatra Dal workers at Gafarganj Government College and filing of a 'false' case against DUCSU leader Milon Mehdi.

He also protested the attack on JCD leader of Pallabi thana Nasir Uddin Tushar and his mother. He alleged that Chhatra League activists were preventing the JCD workers from appearing in examinations at Dhaka Dental College.

The BNP lawmaker condemned all these incidents, demanded withdrawal of 'false' cases, immediate release of the arrested leaders of BNP and its front organisations and punishment of those responsible for terrorist acts.

Court asks BTV to telecast ad of 'Halal Saban'

A court here yesterday ordered an ad-interim injunction directing Bangladesh Television authorities to telecast the advertisement of Aromatic Cosmetics soap as 100 per cent Halal Saban, reports UNB.

The order came upon a petition submitted by the Director (Marketing) of Jamuna Group of Industries, parent concern of the manufacturer.

He filed a suit for specific performance of contract against the Director General of National Broadcasting Authority (TV) and also prayed for temporary injunction for telecasting the advertisement until disposal of the case.

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4 pvt members' resolutions introduced in JS

Four private members' resolutions were introduced in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, reports BSS.

Of the four resolutions, two were moved by Treasury Bench members and two by the Opposition BNP members.

Treasury Bench member Alhaj Moqbul Hossain moved a resolution for making Kuakatha in Fatuakhali, a modern sea resort while his co-lawmaker Nurul Islam Nahid proposed rehabilitation of Sylhet-Akhaura railway line.

Resolutions proposing establishment of BSCIC industrial estate at every thana of the country and setting up a cardiovascular hospital in Chittagong were moved by BNP's Shahiduzzaman (Beltu) and A B M Abul Kasem respectively.

Setting up of deep sea port at Ctg awaiting final approval, JS told

Shipping Minister A S M Abdur Rob said yesterday that the plan to set up a deep sea port at Chittagong was now awaiting final consideration of the government, reports BSS.

Replying to a question from Harunur Rashid Khan Monno (BNP-Manikganj), the minister said that the Netherlands Economic Institute with the technical assistance of the Netherlands government had conducted a feasibility study in 1977-78.

The survey, he said, had considered 12 points as suitable for setting up a deep sea port. The minister said recommendation was also made to set up the deep sea port at Patenga point after reviewing different aspects of the 12 points.

Rob said a techno-economic feasibility study for construction of deep sea port was formulated recently and sent to the Planning Commission.

PM to announce women's dev policy tomorrow

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to announce the national women development policy at a rally of some 15,000 women in the city tomorrow, reports UNB.

Women and Children Affairs Ministry will organise the rally marking the World Women's Day on Saturday, officials said.

State Minister for Women and Children, and Social Welfare, Dr Mozammel Hossain will preside over the function at the Engineers' Institute premises at 11 am.

A ministry-level committee was formed at a meeting yesterday to observe the World Women's Day. It also reviewed the overall preparatory measures of the March 8 programmes.

2 bodies found inside Mitford Hospital lift passage

By Staff Correspondent

Bodies of two persons including a teenage girl's were found inside the passage for lift in a nine-storey building of Mitford Hospital in the city early yesterday.

The bodies could not be identified, police said adding that the man was aged about 25 and the girl 18.

Police said some hospital staff on Wednesday night smelt bad smell that was coming from the passage.

Later, Kotwali police broke open the wall of the lift passage on the ground floor and recovered the bodies.

Police suspected that the youths fell into the passage a couple of days ago and died.

No mark of injury was found in any of the bodies, police said. The bodies were sent to the morgue for autopsy.

Shamsuddin Abul Kalam dead

Eminent litterateur Shamsuddin Abul Kalam died in Rome on March 4. He was 70, according to a message received in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

Shamsuddin Abul Kalam had been living in Rome since 1959. He authored more than 20 novels and innumerable short stories.

The writer had been suffering from heart and lung ailments, his friends in Dhaka said.

Born in 1926 in Barisal, Shamsuddin Abul Kalam was educated in Calcutta University. He later took higher degrees from Rome University. He also received fellowship of the Experimental Center of Cinematography, Rome.

He visited Europe in 1956-57 as a fellow of the UNESCO and settled permanently in Rome. Shamsuddin Abul Kalam contributed immensely to the cause of Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971.

He was awarded Bangla Academy award for literature. Some of his books including the "Shaher Bau" were published from Calcutta. Some of his acclaimed novels are "Onek Diner Asa", "Path Jana Nei", "Pali Matir Desh", "Jai Jangal", "Kansh Boner Kanya", "Jar Sathe Jar", "Samudrabashar" and "Nobanno".

19 shops gutted at Bhandaria

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 6: At least 19 shops were gutted in a fire in Sher-e-Bangla bandar area of Bhandaria thana under Perajpur district early today.

According to TNO, Bhandaria and Fire Service, the fire originated from an electrical short circuit and suddenly engulfed a vast area in the bandar.

Fire fighters from Bhandaria, Jhalakati and Barisal rushed to the spot and put out the blaze after two hours.

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- March 18: From Thailand
- March 19: From Singapore
- March 20: From Hong Kong

BENSON & HEDGES

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