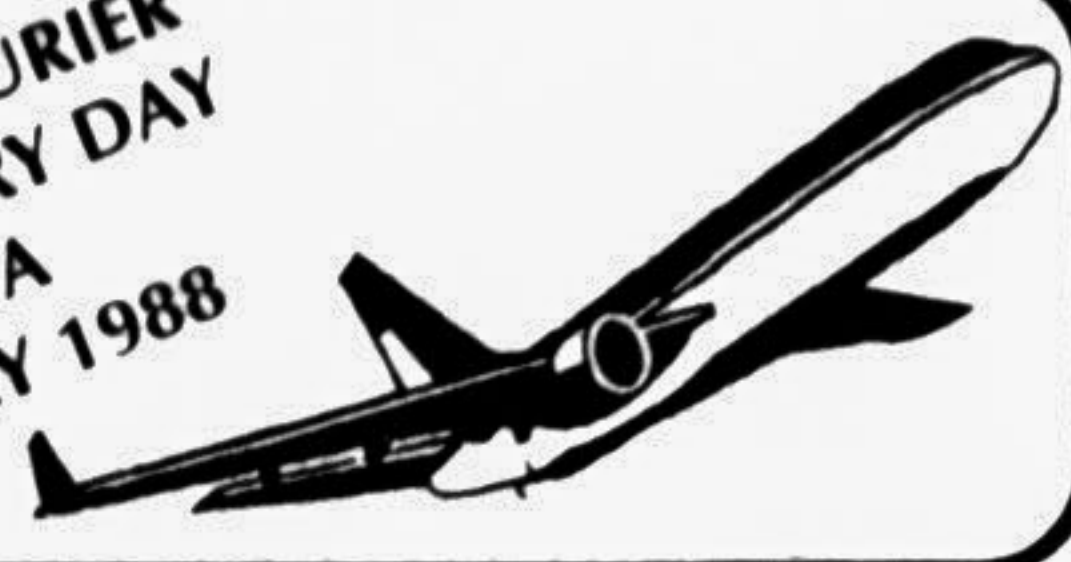


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Sharif to join three-nation summit if convened

TEHRAN, Dec 10: Nawaz Sharif, the prime minister of Pakistan, called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the conference centre yesterday evening, reports BSS.

Sharif, now attending the summit, thanked the Prime Minister Hasina for her thoughtful vote of thanks at the summit on behalf of the Asian group.

Sharif expressed regret for not being able to attend the three-nation summit in Bangladesh due to his country's internal problems. He said he would join the summit when ever it is convened.

Sharif said that the three-nation economic summit would help develop the socio-economic condition of the people living in the Sub-continent.

Hasina's meetings with Kuwaiti Emir, Arafat

TEHRAN, Dec 10: Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al-Sabah, now attending the OIC summit, called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Hafez Conference Centre here yesterday, reports BSS.

The two leaders called for strengthening economic cooperation between the two countries. They also resolved to work for further developing the fraternity of the Islamic Ummah.

Sheikh Hasina referred to the presence of Bangladesh Army personnel in the peace-keeping forces in Kuwait and said Bangladesh was ready to send more troops, if needed.

The Emir praised the role of the Bangladesh Army in maintaining peace and in sweeping mines in Kuwait.

The Emir extended an invitation to Sheikh Hasina to visit Kuwait. The Prime Minister also invited Sheikh Jaber Al Sabah to pay a visit to Bangladesh. The Emir accepted the invitation and said he was looking forward to visiting Bangladesh at a mutually convenient time.

Also at the conference centre, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Palestine President Yasser Arafat had a meeting last night.

Arafat thanked Sheikh Hasina for her speech at the summit. He also referred to his visit to Dhaka during the silver jubilee celebrations of Independence. He wished every success of the Bangladesh people under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina.

Sheikh Hasina wished continuous peace for the people of Palestine and success in their struggle against all oppressions.

Three presiding officers held

Three presiding officers have been arrested and suspended for two months from their services by the Election Commission, an EC press release said in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

They were Habibur Rahman, family planning officer and presiding officer of Binnakuli Government Primary School polling centre, Khurshed Alam, assistant thana education officer and presiding officer of Sohala Primary School, polling centre of Tahipur thana under Sunamganj district and Abdul Karim, Inspector of Krishi Bank, and presiding officer of Kurukpata polling centre of Alikadam under Bandarban district thana.

Pro-BNP, pro-Jamaat panels share posts in IUTA polls

KUSHTIA, Dec 10: The election of the Islamic University Teachers' Association (IUTA) was held today, reports UNB.

BNP-backed White Panel and pro-Jamaat-e-Islami Green Panel have shared the posts of the executive committee.

Dr Musharraf Hossain of white panel and M Sarwar Jahan of green panel were elected president and general secretary respectively.

Of the 15 executive posts, BNP-backed panel bagged 8, including vice-president, joint secretary and treasurer while pro-Jamaat got 7 posts with 6 executive members.

Shapla panel jointly backed by Bangabandhu Parishad and progressive minded teachers did not get any post in the election.

Some 143 voters out of 161 cast their votes from 8.30 am to 12.30 pm.

Meanwhile, the University authorities have postponed all the examinations scheduled for tomorrow due to unavoidable circumstances.



A BNP procession at Nayabazar in the city yesterday protesting the CHT accord.

—Star photo

Khatami offers help for economic cooperation

TEHRAN, Dec 10: Iranian President and Chairman of the 8th Islamic Summit Seyed Mohammad Khatami met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the conference centre here this morning, reports BSS.

Hasina congratulated Khatami for holding such a big conference. She also thanked the President for his excellent speech which she found very encouraging and full of useful suggestions for the Islamic Ummah.

Mohammad Khatami thanked the Prime Minister for attending the OIC summit. He also appreciated her thoughtful and inspiring speech delivered during the vote of thanks yesterday on behalf of the Asian group.

The President particularly mentioned that Sheikh Hasina being the lone lady among 55 heads of government and state deserved special consideration.

Khatami praised the prime minister for steps taken to improve the lots of women in Bangladesh.

He also offered help and co-operation for economic development of Bangladesh.

Sheikh Hasina referred to the low volume of trade between the two countries and suggested that there was scope to enhance it.

She said that in addition to jute, Iran can buy a number of other products like garments, tea, vegetables and fruits. She said that Iran could also recruit large number of skilled and semi-skilled workers.

President Khatami agreed to consider this suggestion.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, foreign secretary Mostafizur Rahman and Bangladesh Ambassador to Iran Syed Muazzem Ali were present.

Acting president of the party Amir Hossain Azam will preside over the meeting, a party press release said last night. Members of the ALCWC have been requested to attend the meeting on time.

A joint meeting of the front organisations of Bangladesh Awami League will be held at the party's central office tomorrow at 10 am.

Police said they were continuing a search to rescue the abducted man.

Police said last night that they were yet to rescue Zafar and arrest four other gang members.

Acting on a tip-off, a DB team raided the house of one Amila Begum at West Agargaon under Mohammadpur thana and arrested the gang leader Zakir Hossain and his accomplices Faruk Hossain, Zaved, Abdul Kader, Abdul Kalam Azad and Monir Hossain.

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BNP programme

From Page 1
on Chittagong Hill Tracts and make a fresh accord acceptable to all, reports UNB.

At a press briefing at the party office, he expressed deep concern at the situation prevailing in Khagrachhari and Rangamati hill districts.

Bhuiyan alleged that at least a dozen of BNP leaders were arrested in Khagrachhari while some masked men unleashed attacks on the people opposing the CHT accord.

He said leader of Sarbadalya Oikya Parishad Abdul Odud Bhuiyan has been missing since Tuesday night. He was either arrested or abducted, Bhuiyan alleged.

The BNP leader further alleged that at least 50 people were injured in attacks by police and terrorists while some seven people were arrested at Rangamati.

The press briefing was attended, among others, by K M Obaidur Rahman and Mir Shawkat Ali.

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Pabna Sramik League leader shot dead

PABNA, Dec 10: A local leader of Jatiya Sramik League was gunned down at his office in the town today, reports UNB.

Police said unidentified gunmen fired shots at AK Azad Chowdhury, 40, storekeeper of the local PDB, while he was working at his office at about 6.30 pm.

Chowdhury was rushed to Pabna General Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Tension was mounting in the area after the incident.

Azad's brother Rashedul Haq Ranju, president of pro-Awami League Chhatra League of Edward University College, was shot dead allegedly by Chhatra Dal activists on May 16, 1993.

Chowdhury was rushed to Pabna General Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

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Rape, abduction increase in city

Incidents of violence against women and children have increased alarmingly in the capital city, compared to other crimes, reports UNB.

Some 488 women and children fell victims of rape or oppression while another 183 were abducted during January-September this year, according to figures available from Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP).

In the same period, some 176 cases of murder and 73 of robbery were filed with different police stations in the city.

However, the human rights organisations claimed that the number of victims in the three categories would be higher, particularly in respect of repression on women and children.

The month-wise figures of rape and repression cases were: January-35, February-46, March-51, April-29, May-54.

June-56, July-47, August-46, September-45, October-39 and November-40.

Month-wise number of abduction cases were: January-25, February-16, March-25, April-10, May-18, June-15, July-13, August-9, September-21, October-19 and November-12.

In most of the cases, reports on the incidents were not submitted for lack of immediate action by police that caused loss of merit and evidence of the cases.

On December 4, a 10-year-old maid was tortured by a housewife, the spouse of a police sub-inspector of Sutrapur thana, in their Motijheel residence.

But despite personal intervention by the Home Minister, police are yet to arrest the housewife, Runa, who is absconding.

Debate over CHT accord SC help can be sought on legal complicity: Kamal

Gano Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday said solution to the debate over the recently signed accord on Chittagong Hill Tracts lies in a fruitful discussion and national consensus for the sake of national security, reports UNB.

If no understanding can be reached, help of the Supreme Court can be taken for the answers on complicated legal matter, she said addressing a public meeting at Paltan Maidan in the afternoon.

The Supreme Court holds the authority and right for giving solution to complicated legal matters as it has the power of giving