



BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia taking iftar with the orphans at an orphanage Narinda in the city yesterday. — Star photo

'CHT' accord does not violate unitary character of state'

Noted constitutional expert and President of SAARC Law Barrister Amir-ul Islam said the peace agreement on Chittagong Hill Tracts did not go beyond the constitutional framework, rather it was done on the basis of existing format of the local government institutions.

"It's a great success for the present government that it could reach and agreement within the framework of the Constitution by ensuring social and economic justice at a time when the Parbatya Chattagram Jano Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) was demanding full autonomy of CHT," he said in an exclusive interview with the BSS on Thursday.

Replying to a question, Amir-ul Islam said the peace accord is not violative to the unitary character of the state. The criteria of the unitary character as distinct from the federal structure is very much intact, he added.

Moreover, the concept of concentrated power is against the Constitution and that is why the Constitution mandates for separation of judiciary from the executive, he said.

The Constitution, as per Articles 59 and 60, has a provision to empower the local government while fundamental principles of state policy of the Constitution further mandate that "The state shall encourage local government institutions composed of representatives of the areas concerned," he pointed out.

Amir-ul Islam referred to a judgement of Appellate Division of the Supreme Court saying that each district must have a district council.

Former Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed in the judgement gave direction that since the 12th amendment and with the reappearing of Articles 59 and 60 of the Constitution, the local bodies "shall have to be updated in conformity with Articles 59 and 60 read with Article 152 (1) for the lawful functioning of the said local bodies."

The judgement further said, "The existing local bodies are required to be brought in line with Article 59 by replacing the non-elected person by election — with a period not exceeding six months from the date."

Barrister Amir said during the government of Begum Khaleda Zia, the instruction was followed as far as the four city corporations are concerned which were otherwise headed by appointed persons.

But, he said, the requirement for designating other local government tiers and constituting the district councils remained unanswered.

Barrister Amir said government of Begum Khaleda Zia took time for extension of the period. In fact, BNP apparently lacked commitment in establishing the local government administration, he observed. Although it did not raise any question about the local government in the three hill districts, it is now making a lot of noise, perhaps for their party interest, the constitutional expert added.

In this context, he commented on the present accord that "the parliament will need to designate regional council of CHT as an administrative unit within Article 152 (1) read with Article 59 of the Constitution and the law-making power of parliament in any respect has not been shrunk in any manner. Hence the question of any distortion of the unitary character does not arise, he added."

It has also been mandated in Article 11 of the Constitution that the effective participation of people through their elected representatives at all level of the administration shall have to be ensured, the constitution expert said.



Barrister Amir-ul Islam

tional expert said. He further said Article 59 provides that "the local government in every administrative unit of the republic shall be entrusted to bodies composed of persons elected in accordance with law."

When asked whether the proposed regional council in CHT be called administrative unit or not, Barrister Amir said the Constitution has itself defined the administrative unit under Article 152(1) whereby it "means a district or other area designated by law for the purpose of Article 59."

So, district is definitely an administrative unit and other areas may be created for the purpose of administration and for becoming an administrative unit designated by law, he said, adding which areas other than the district will be the designated areas within the meaning of Article 59 depend entirely on the parliament.

The SAARC Law President said the accord did not deprive the rights of the parliament.

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court has already laid down law by saying that the structure of the local government is left fully or completely in the hands of parliament, he said. Barrister Amir quoted from a judgement of Justice Mostafa Kamal that "no one can claim a vested right in any particular form or in any particular number of tiers of the local government."

He further quoted the judgement of the Appellate Division that "Within the framework of Articles 59 and 60, parliament retains the power of continually reorganising, restructuring and remodelling the local government institutions in the light of experiences gained to

meet the changing needs of changing time."

Amir-ul Islam said the people may now judge and the parliament can decide what are the changing needs with the changing time. "Our constitutional concept of local government has thus already received the concept of a progressive and dynamic flexibility depending on the political, economic, social, cultural and historic reality within the unitary form of the government."

Regarding the marking of law in parliament on the proposed regional council and its functions, he said the law has to be made in the parliament. Begum Khaleda Zia and her party could take the opportunity by participating in the discussion on CHT, he said. It (BNP) can play a vital role in making this law within the framework of the Constitution, he added.

He pointed out that the recommendations, including the formation of a regional council in CHT, made by the national committee led by former BNP minister Col (ret) Oli Ahmed on CHT affairs were also included in the present accord.

About the formation of CHT affairs ministry advisory council and appointment of a minister from CHT, Barrister Amir said it's nothing new. Both Ziaur Rahman and Ershad appointed advisors with the rank and status of a minister during their regime to deal with CHT affairs, he said, adding Binota Roy, Samir Dewan and Upendra Lal Chakma were appointed as advisors during the tenure of the two presidents.

He said the present accord that proposed for a separate ministry will, in fact, ensure accountability of the minister and the ministry on CHT affairs to the cabinet and the parliament.

He further said as per Article 55 (1) of the Constitution, the Prime Minister can appoint any minister as member of her team.

The regional council of CHT as proposed in the peace accord does not have any rule-making power, not to speak of any legislative authority... it does not also have any power to impose levy and tax, Barrister Amir said.

He said the regional council can only play the role of a co-ordinating body for the working of the district councils and a consultative body in case of making law relating to the affairs of the hill tracts. "The introduction of consultative role in the peace accord is not only very democratic but also in conformity with the constitutional practice," Amir-ul Islam said.

He pointed out that the then Government of Ershad formed local government councils in the three hill districts, the spirit of which is in conformity with Articles 9, 11, 59 and 152 of the Constitution. The present peace accord being in the same spirit has proposed more participatory mechanism by amending some laws of the local government councils, Barrister Amir said.

He further quoted the judgement of the Appellate Division that "Within the framework of Articles 59 and 60, parliament retains the power of continually reorganising, restructuring and remodelling the local government institutions in the light of experiences gained to

Call to contribute in spread of education

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury yesterday called upon all to contribute to the expansion and development of education in the country, reports BSS.

He said the well-to-do section of society could help the best by giving financial support and incentives to meritorious and the poor students.

Chowdhury was speaking as the chief at the scholarship distribution ceremony of Bangladesh Scholarship Council (BSC) at Shishu Academy in the city yesterday afternoon.

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed was present on the occasion as the special guest while National Prof Nurul Islam chaired it.

About 120 talented students from different institutions of the country won Taka five thousand each for their academic success in 1997.

The BSC, a non-government organisation in cooperation with Nippon Foundation, Japan, had distributed Taka 12 lakh during last three years among the poor and meritorious students.

Welcoming BSC initiatives and its founder chairman Ajit Barua, the Speaker said such type of private and organisational initiatives could help much for the eradication of illiteracy from the country. He said the amount of the scholarship whether small or big, can play a tremendous role in this regard. "The poor students were encouraged and financially supported by the scholarships," he said.

Referring to the success of

Kerala Province of India, in raising literacy rate, Chowdhury said it may be a great instance for all that integrated and sincere efforts can turn a backward region into an educated one within a very short time. In this regard he sought cooperation from all to make the government's commitment a success to free the country from the curse of illiteracy.

Prof Sayeed laid emphasis on a common education system and said the country could never be freed from the illiteracy if the existing multi-system was not dissolved.

The state minister said after the assassination of the father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975 the education policy in the light of Dr Kudrat-e-Khuda Commission report was thwarted which led to create anarchy in education sector. He said the plotters of the killings captured state power illegally and introduced terrorism in the educational institutions and black money in the politics.

In this regard he regretted that since then the politicians and the distinguished persons of society used to be respected in terms of the quantity of money they had instead of merit and honesty. He said this mentality should be changed for nurturing democratic culture in the country.

Prof Nurul Islam said financial help through scholarship can change the life of a poor student. He said this kind of timely support makes a student confident and free from tension.

First beauty contest in Bangladesh Apr 13

By Staff Correspondent

First ever beauty pageant competition in the country will be held on April 13 this year. A local entertainment firm 'Model Watch' will organise the competition titled 'Miss Rupashi Bangladesh'.

The April 13 competition in Dhaka would be preceded by series of beauty pageant competitions at divisional level during February-March period, says a press release.

Unmarried women who fall in the age range of 17 to 25 with a minimum educational qualification of SSC are eligible for applying for the competition. Aspirants have to submit their applications with three copies of colour photographs by January 20 to the address: 48-B, Parana Paltan, Dhaka. No entry fee is required. However, those earned fame in modeling and acting would not be eligible to participate.

Certain amount of proceeds from the competition would be given to Society for the Care and Education of the Mentally Retarded, Bangladesh (SCEMRB), the release says. Winners of the competition would take part in social awareness building activities in cooperation with SCEMRB, it adds.

Winners of beauty pageant, photogenic and personality competitions in six divisions will participate in final competition in Dhaka.

An advisory council and an executive council were formed in connection with holding the competition.

Members of the advisory council are, Tasmina Hossain, Ramendu Majumder, Asaduzzaman Noor, Geeti Ara Chowdhury, Afzal Hossain, Anisul Haq and Shakila Zafar.

Meanwhile, the six-member executive council was formed with Rezaul Islam Kollol as its convener and Nima Rahman as joint-convener and chief coordinator. Other members are, Ihtesham Uddin Ahmed, Mohon Rahman, Syed Iqbal and Anisur Rahman Mahmud.

Besides, separate committees were formed at divisional level as well.

UNB revamps computer system

The United News of Bangladesh (UNB) has recently revamped its existing computer system to take advantage of the latest information technology, reports UNB.

High-end machines (Pentium MMX computers) have been added to the existing network. Each of these systems is loaded with Windows 97, Microsoft Office 97 and other news service related custom software.

With this major systems upgrade, UNB continues to be the most technologically advanced news agency in South Asia. UNB was the first fully computerised news agency in the region.

A pilot project has already been completed to take UNB on the Internet — to extended its reach of media coverage and distribution. A leading web development firm, piwebworks, is currently looking after the project on behalf of UNB.

What's on today....



Shaikat Osman's birth anniversary:

On the occasion of the 82nd birth anniversary of noted litterateur a literary organisation writers and birth anniversary observance parishad will jointly hold discussion, musical programme and exhibition of paintings. Venue: Children auditorium of the Jatiya Jadughar. Time: 10 am.

Noted educationist Prof Anisuzzaman will preside.

Seminar: A seminar on 'Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord: Constitutional and Security Perspective' will be held. Time: 10 am. Venue: VIP Lounge of the Jatiya Press Club. The seminar has been jointly organised by the Institute for Comprehensive Security Studies and The SAARC Society.

Bangladesh Asiatic Society: The 46th Foundation Day of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh will be held. The Foundation Day Lecture on 'Facing the 21st Century: The Environmental Dimension' will be delivered by Dr A M Sharafuddin. Time: 3-30 pm. Venue: Auditorium of the Society.

Rotary Club of Dhaka Central: The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: House No 4, Road No 16 (New), Dhanmondi. R/A. Time: 3-30 pm

Weather

Dry weather likely

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met Office says night temperature is expected to fall by one to three degree Celsius across the country during the period.

Weathermen predicted that mild cold wave which is now sweeping over Khulna and Rajshahi divisions is likely to sweep over Dhaka and Sylhet divisions during the next 48 hours.

Country's highest temperature yesterday was recorded 26.0 degree Celsius at Sitakunda and Sylhet and the lowest 8 degrees at Iswardi.

The sun sets today at 5:24 pm and rises on Sunday at 6:42 am.

Maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	23.4	12.2	76	65
Chittagong	25.8	13.7	74	56
Rajshahi	22.0	08.8	77	68
Khulna	23.0	09.6	72	67
Barisal	23.5	10.0	91	93
Sylhet	26.0	12.2	84	69
Cox's Bazar	26.0	16.0	72	73

Gang of dacoits arrested in city's Motijheel area

Police arrested a gang of dacoits along with a microbus and recovered some arms and ammunition in the city's Motijheel area Thursday evening, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, CID police waited at Rahman Filling and Service Station in the area and arrested the gang when they reached there for petrol, on way to committing dacoity.

Six of the gang — Haroon, Rafiqul, Abul Hossain, Nur Jaman, Ujjal and Shamsul — were caught redhanded while three others managed to escape.

The CID team led by Assistant Commissioner M Khalequzzaman, recovered one LC, a foreign-made pistol, 6 rounds of bullet and three knives.

A case was lodged against the arrested with Motijheel police station.

33-member BCU Dhaka city unit formed

A 33-member new committee of Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU) of Dhaka City unit was formed with Rustom Ali Khokon and Adnan Riaz as its president and general secretary respectively, a press release said yesterday, reports BSS.

The 26th conference of the Chhatra Union Dhaka City unit which concluded on Wednesday last at Dhaka College auditorium, formed the new committee, it added.

Presided over by president of Chhatra Union Dhaka City unit Rustom Ali Khokon the conference was addressed, among others, by Bikas Saha, Hasan Hafizur Rahman, Manzur-e-Khoda Tarik and Hasan Tarek Chowdhury.

Speakers at the conference said the communal forces were hurting the spirit of the War of Liberation.

DU floats Attorney Alamgir Trust Fund

Dhaka University has floated Attorney Alamgir Trust Fund to award most meritorious students of the Law Faculty, Arts and Social Science Faculty, Science, Biological Science and Pharmacy Faculty and Business Studies Faculty, reports BSS.

Students who will get the highest marks in honours examination every year from each of the faculties will be awarded a gold medal and cash Taka 3,000 from the trust fund of Taka five lakh donated by Attorney Mohamed Alamgir, a Bangladeshi immigration lawyer now residing in the United States.

Dacoity at Green Road: Police yet to nab anyone

By Staff Correspondent

Police could not arrest anyone till yesterday in connection with the dacoity at a house at Green Road under Dhanmondi thana in the city Wednesday night.

Dhanmondi police however said they were interrogating the three persons arrested in connection with another incident of dacoity at a house at Satmasjid Road under the thana Wednesday morning. The three were produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court on Thursday which placed them on two days' remand.

সিকিউরিটিজ ও এক্সচেঞ্জ কমিশন
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
JIBAN BIMA TOWER (15 & 16 FLOOR), 10, DILKUSHA C/A, DHAKA-1000
সূত্র নং-পাশাসন/১১৪০৭(১)/৯৫-৪৯৮ তারিখঃ ১-১-৯৮ইং

পিএবিএক্স লাইন স্থাপন/এক্সটেনশনের দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সিকিউরিটিজ ও এক্সচেঞ্জ কমিশন (অর্থ মন্ত্রণালয়, ব্যাংকিং বিভাগ)-এর জন্য পিএবিএক্স/ইন্টারকম লাইন এক্সটেনশন করার জন্য প্রকৃত সরবরাহকারী/স্থাপনকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাবে। দরপত্র সিডিউল আগামী ৬-১-৯৮ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস কার্য দিবসের মধ্যে নগদ ৩০০/- (তিনশত) টাকা অফেরতযোগ্য মূল্যে কমিশন কার্যালয় থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আগামী ৭-১-৯৮ইং তারিখ বেলা ১-০০ টার মধ্যে কমিশন কার্যালয়ে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাস্তব করা যাবে। দরপত্রসমূহ ৬ দিনই বেলা ২-০০ টায় উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের সম্মুখে (যদি কেহ থাকেন) খোলা হবে।

কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিলের সর্বময় ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।

মোঃ আনোয়ারুল কবির ভূইয়া
নির্বাহী পরিচালক (চলতি দায়িত্ব)

জিডি-০৮

"শাহ লাগান; গাছের পরিচর্যা করুন এবং পরিবেশ বাঁচান" প্রধানমন্ত্রী

বাংলাদেশ পেট্রোলিয়াম এক্সপ্লোরেশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration Company Limited
(A Subsidiary Company of Petrobangla)

No. 123.01.129/130 Dated: 30-12-97

International Tender Notice

Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration Company Ltd (BAPEX) invites quotation from the reputed Manufacturer/Representative for Dual Completion Equipment & Drill Pipe against the following International Tender for Salda Nadi Drilling Project No. 2 under cash foreign exchange.

Sl. No.	Tender No	Description of goods	Closing date & time	Opening date & time	Price of documents (non-refundable)
1.	BAPEX/PD/INT/TEN-129/97	Dual Completions Equipment	10-2-1998 11.00 AM	10-2-1998 11.15 AM	Tk. 2000.00 US\$ 50.00
2.	BAPEX/PD/INT/TEN-130/97	Drill Pipe	11-2-1998 11.00 AM	11-2-1998 11.15 AM	Tk. 1500.00 US\$ 35.00

Tender documents containing detailed specifications with terms and conditions will be available with BAPEX Accounts & Finance Division, Ibrahim Mansion (4th floor) 11, Purana Paltan, Dhaka from 8-1-98 all working days between 9.00 AM to 12.30 PM on payment. The quotation will be received and opened as per respective date and time mentioned above in the tender box placed in Material Control Division, BAPEX, HBFC Building (9th floor) 22, Purana Paltan, Dhaka up to 11.00 AM and will be opened on the same day at 11.15 AM in presence of bidders available.

Tender documents will not be sold on the day of opening. BAPEX reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender without assigning any reasons whatsoever.

GD-07 General Manager (MCD)

Gold, silver worth Tk 9 lakh seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

Customs authorities at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) seized gold ornaments and silver worth about Tk 9.25 lakh from a passenger Wednesday afternoon.

Customs officials seized 1,919 grams of gold ornaments and two kilogram of silver from Manik Miah who arrived at the airport from Bangkok by a Thai Airways flight at 12:30 pm.

Airport sources said Manik disclosed to the customs personnel that he had only two kilogram of silver with him and agreed to pay taxes for those.

But on suspicion, the customs officials scanned his baggage and found the gold ornaments hidden in a shopping bag.

A departmental case was lodged in this connection.

Time limit extended

The Western Zone of Bangladesh Railway has extended the time limit by six months till June 30, allowing concessional charges for carrying goods in the region, reports UNB.

Railway (Western Zone) general manager issued a notice Thursday extending the time limit of concessional goods tariff that expired on December 31.

5th Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge to be constructed

A protocol for the construction of fifth Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge over the Gakhan river on the Barisal-Jhalakathi-Bhandaria-Pirojpur road was signed on Wednesday between the governments of Bangladesh and China, reports BSS.

M N Nabi, Joint Secretary, Economic Relations Division (ERD), Ministry of Finance and Chen Wen Xu, Counsellor (E and C), the embassy of the People's Republic of China signed the protocol on behalf of their respective governments, according to a press release issued in the city Thursday.

The construction of the bridge will be done under the Chinese technical and financial assistance. China helped Bangladesh construct the Buriganga, Shambhuganj, Mahananda and Karotoa bridges.

Panchhari thana OC suspended

OC of Panchhari thana under Khagrachhari district has been put on suspension for his laxity, failure, inefficiency and misbehaviour during election duty, reports BSS.

An Election Commission press release said Thursday that a departmental case was also lodged against OC Enaduddin Khandaker.

26th anniversary of Swagatul Alam's death today

By Staff Correspondent

The 26th anniversary of death of Swagatul Alam Sagor will be observed today. He was assassinated by an anti-liberation gang on this day in 1973 at Motbaria. He was a member of the then national assembly.

A veteran freedom fighter, Sagor was also a leader of the anti-Ayub movement in 1960s. He was the Vice President of Sergeant Zahurul Haq Hall of the Dhaka University in 1962-63 session. He was expelled from the university for five years for raising protest against Monam Khan during a convocation of the university on March 22, 1964. Sagor was the founder of Awami League and Chhatra League in Motbaria and was a leading organiser of Liberation War.

Beside his political career, Sagor was a sportsman. He was a member of the Pakistan National Volleyball team.

A discussion meeting will be held today at 2 pm at the central Shaheed Minar of Motbaria in observance of his death anniversary. Labour and Manpower Minister MA Mannan will attend the meeting as chief discussant. The discussion meeting will be followed by a *milad mahfil*.

He pointed out that the then Government of Ershad formed local government councils in the three hill districts, the spirit of which is in conformity with Articles 9, 11, 59 and 152 of the Constitution. The present peace accord being in the same spirit has proposed more participatory mechanism by amending some laws of the local government councils, Barrister Amir said.