

Tremor in
China
kills 47

BEIJING, Jan 10: A powerful earthquake flattened farming villages near the Great Wall today, killing 47 people and leaving tens of thousands homeless, China's state-run media reported, says AP.

The magnitude 6.2 quake toppled hundreds of houses — many of them rustic mud and brick peasant homes — across two counties in the Yan Mountains. The tremor shook buildings 250 kilometers (150 miles) to the south in Beijing.

Rescue teams found the county seat of Zhangbei devastated with nearly all houses collapsed and 20,000 families without homes, the Xinhua News Agency said. It said another 800 houses had collapsed or cracked in the neighbouring county seat of Shangyi, on Hebei province's border with Inner Mongolia.

In four towns along the two countries border, 80 per cent of the houses had collapsed, said Huang Qing, a seismologist coordinating rescue work from Zhangjiakou, a city bordering

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Strike in edn
boards to be
suspended

from tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The Inter-education Board Employees' Federation in an emergency meeting yesterday decided to suspend its indefinite strike from Monday.

The emergency meeting of the Federation was held at its central office located at the Madrasah Board.

Amjad Hossain Bakshi, president of the Federation, told The Daily Star last night that the Federation has decided to suspend its indefinite strike that began from January 4, in view of the upcoming SSC and HSC examinations.

The meeting decided to suspend the indefinite strike in view of the assurance given by the Education Minister for further.

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Inside Today

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Local bodies
elections

Motorway to
the Heart of the
Problem

Column: As I See It
by Ikram Sehgal
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Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
11	11	5-20	5-33
12	12	5-20	5-34
13	13	5-20	5-35

NOTICE

(Regarding Audit of Firms Regis-
tered under Value Added Tax)

“জাতীয় রাজস্ব সংরক্ষণ অংশ নিম”
“সুসক অভিটে সহযোগিতা করুন”

Value Added Tax (VAT) system has been introduced from 1st July, 1991. Under this system, a tax-payer himself calculates the payable tax at the time of delivering/ providing the goods or service to the consumer and deposits in the government exchequer. That is a goods manufacturer/service provider realises this tax from the consumer at the time of selling goods/providing service and deposits in the government exchequer.

The responsibility of VAT management is to verify whether this tax is properly calculated and paid in due time & due amount and maintain the national revenue paid by the consumer.

To ensure realisation of the due amount of revenue in due time, the VAT management often undertakes audit of some activities of some selected tax-payer firms. For this, the selected firm for audit is earlier informed to keep ready such documents of account as may be required for audit. Therefore, it is not possible to complete the audit smoothly & effectively within the prescribed time without sincere cooperation of the authorities of registered firm.

Under Rule 34 of VAT Act 1991 any registered tax-payer firm is bound to produce any kind of document of accounts to the audit officers on demand; otherwise it is considered as punishable offence under Rule 37.

Under the circumstance, all the tax-payer firms registered under VAT Act are requested to actively cooperate in the outing. The respective firm may ensure prior to auditing, whether the audit officers are carrying proper ID Card & audit order issued by the Commissioner concerned.

DFP-164-4/1
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National Board of Revenue

Well played, boys

Independence Cup cricket

Sports Reporter

Javagal Srinath returned with a career best five for 23 to give India a predictable-yet-perplexing start with a four-wicket win over babes Bangladesh in the inaugural match of the Coca-Cola Independence Cup at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

The tall right-arm Karnataka seamer, who made the most of an overcast condition after his captain Mohammad Azharuddin won the toss and decided to field, captured five wickets in his share of 10 overs to restrict Bangladesh to an attainable target of 190 in a truncated 48-over-a-side match. His previous best haul in limited over cricket was five for 24 against Sri Lanka at Kanpur in 1993-94.

Azharuddin then went on to celebrate his reappointment as Indian captain with a watchful 84. Coming in to bat number three, the Hyderabad-born India captain, who returned to the helm replacing Sachin Tendulkar on January 2, played a very responsible knock to help his team overhaul the victory

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The 'little master' Sachin Tendulkar is gone. Mohammad Rafique, the bowler who took the return catch, and wicketkeeper Khaled Masud have all the reasons to celebrate.

—Star photo by AKM Mohsin

Pakistan, India meet today

Sports Reporter

Arch rivals and former world champions Pakistan and India will meet today the second day of the Independence Cup Cricket tournament.

Weather permits, the match will kick-off at Dhaka Stadium at 9 in the morning.

India earned two points yesterday beating Bangladesh by four wickets in the opener.

Hosts Bangladesh will play their second and last first round match against Pakistan on January 12.

The top two teams of the first round will qualify for the three-match finals to be held on

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SEE YOU TOMORROW! Indian and Pakistani skippers Azharuddin (L) and Rashid Latif shake hands at a function at the Sonargaon Hotel yesterday. —Star photo

Prokrichi blasts BCS admin cadre activities

By Staff Correspondent

Prokrichi-BCS central coordination council yesterday

blasted the BCS (administration) cadre action committee for what it said their

terroristic and 'unholy' activities and threats to the Finance Secretary to get their demands realised.

An emergency meeting of the council held at the Bangladesh

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Benazir files corruption cases against Sharif

By Morshed Ali Khan, back from the Sundarbans

Lawlessness reigns in most parts of the Sundarbans as armed robbers in mechanised boats roam its interior freely and conduct systematic extortions, according to forest officials and local people.

Forest officials in Khulna Divisional headquarters said that the interior of the Sundarbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world, "belonged to the outlaws."

At this time of the year hundreds of tourists visit the area under our supervision with armed guards," said an official of the forest department. "But individuals going to the forest without armed escort run great risk of robbery, abduction and even torture by these gangs."

At Dhaingmari Forest Office, Deputy Ranger Habibur Rahman Khan said almost every licensed fisherman, woodcutter and honey collector is subjected to extortion by these gangs.

These people are seasoned criminals and they know the forest very well," said the Deputy Ranger. "Whenever we go out for patrol they hide inside the canals. And they benefit from the enormous resources of the Sundarbans."

Local fishermen and woodcutters said, besides Forest Department's patrol in the vast forest area, police, Coast Guards and the Navy have their own surveillance teams. But Coast Guards and Navy patrols usually pass through the big rivers.

They said the police are only seen after a crime has been committed.

Usually, every gang operates

Mercury to fall, sky may remain a little cloudy

Star Report

Cold, dry and foggy weather will persist over the country today, the Meteorological Department in a forecast said yesterday.

The sky will remain partly cloudy during the day, but visibility is likely to improve further.

Mercury is expected to fall around night, the Met office added.

Visibility was recorded at 2000 metre at 6 am yesterday which went up to 4000 metre. Visibility was 20 metre on January 3.

The Coca Cola Cricket tournament started 44 minutes behind schedule yesterday due to

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3-nation business summit Task force may be formed to face global challenges

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi

The three-nation Business

Summit in Dhaka this Thursday is expected to create a mechanism to try to "pull resources together" for the region to unitedly fight the new global trade regime and tap economic opportunities, officials and business sources said.

A task force, comprising both businessmen and civil servants from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, is likely to be launched by the conference that is scheduled to be held at the Dhaka prime minister of the three countries, their trade and economic ministers, heads of national chambers and senior civil servants.

"Unless we get together and pull our resources together, we cannot face the enormous challenges from the West," said Yusuf Abdullah Harun, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), portraying the key plank behind the January 15 event, a brainchild of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Bangladeshi businessmen

also want the exercise to continue as an annual event, which they propose to be hosted by the three capitals by rotation.

The task force has been conceived to carry forward the agenda, with plans for frequent meetings among the three countries.

"We need to emerge as a bloc to negotiate in the global market," Harun said, "because globalisation has created new challenges for countries like ours."

Government officials also agree with Harun, "How to face the rest of the world in terms of protecting our interests in areas we have advantages" would be a key question, said Foreign Secretary Mustafizur Rahman.

Both the officials and the business speak of these countries' comparative advantages which need to be identified and, according to Harun, "this is precisely what we need to do or find out at the summit."

"We will try to devise ways to cooperate and (define) what areas [are there] to cooperate."

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Gujral, Sharif to hold exclusive talks in Dhaka

Indian Prime Minister
Gujral and Pakistan Prime
Minister Nawaz Sharif will
have exclusive talks Thursday
afternoon during the business
summit in the city, reports
UNB.

Gujral is expected to arrive
on January 14 and Sharif on
January 15.

The longstanding Kashmir
issue may figure in prominently
at the meeting the agency said
quoting sources concerned.

Another report says, Nawaz
Sharif will lead a high profile
delegation.

His entourage will include
Pakistan Foreign Minister
Gohar Ayub, Finance, Economic
Affairs, Planning and Develop-
ment Minister Sartaj Aziz, Com-
merce Minister Mohammad
Ishaq Dar, Chairman of
Board of Investment Humayun
Akhtar, who enjoys the rank of
full minister, and Foreign Sec-
retary Shamshad Ahmed.

Besides, about 25 top busi-
ness leaders and a 12-member
media team will accompany the
Pakistan Prime Minister.

The business leaders include
FPCI president Senator Ilyas Ahmed
Bilour and its vice-president
and chairman of zonal committee
of FPCI Iftekhar Malik.

The Pakistan premier will
begin a two-day bilateral visit

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Businessman shot dead in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 10:
Unidentified gunmen shot dead
a businessman at Chittagong
road in the city today, police
said.

The victim was identified as
Abul Kalam Azad, a business-
man of Jahan Hawker market
under Kotwali thana.

Police informed that the
gunmen fired on him at around
2:30 pm on his way back home.

The victim with bullet
wounds ran into the godown of
a paints company from where
some workers took him to Chit-
tagong Medical College Hos-
pital.

Attending doctors at the
hospital declared him dead.

However, police could not
find out the reason behind the
killing.

Movable property of 22 alleged killers seized in Keraniganj

By Staff Correspondent

Movable property of the 22
people accused in the murder
of Nurul Islam were seized by
Keraniganj police yesterday.

Police said they attached the
property of the 22 accused after
receiving a court order Friday
night. The court also issued ar-
rest warrants against the 22,
accused in the case lodged by
Nurul Islam, wife of Nurul Is-
lam.

Meanwhile, a CID team took
up the murder case of Nurul Is-
lam on Thursday. Police earlier
arrested two persons in connec-
tion with the murder of Nurul Is-
lam. However, none of the ac-
cused in the killing of Tarikul-
lah have been arrested so far.

Newly-elected UP chairman
Tarikullah and Nurul Islam
were brutally murdered at
Aganagar area within a span of
two hours on Saturday last.

Revenue collection