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Dhaka hopes S Asian states will refrain from N-arms race

Bangladesh yesterday expressed the hope that countries in the South Asian region would keep away from further escalation of nuclear arms race, reports BSS.

"We hope all South Asian countries will refrain from further escalation of nuclear arms race," Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad said in a statement on the underground nuclear tests carried by India.

Reading out the statement to newsmen at his office, Azad said Bangladesh, being a signatory to the CTBT (Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty) and NPT (Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty), is fully committed to a nuclear-free world. Bangladesh believes in peace, he emphasised.

The Foreign Minister also mentioned that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the last SAARC summit spoke about co-operation among the member countries for development and poverty alleviation in the region.

Indian actions won't go unanswered, says Pak FM

ISLAMABAD, May 13: Pakistan condemned India's explosion of two more nuclear devices today. "It seems that the Indian leadership has gone berserk," Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub said, reports AP.

The explosions, warned Ayub, were thrusting the Asian subcontinent headlong into a nuclear arms race. An official foreign ministry statement accused India of showing "utter contempt" for world opinion.

On the floor of the Senate, Ayub promised that "Indian actions, which pose an immediate and grave threat to Pakistan's security, will not go unanswered."

As tensions on the subcontinent soared, US President Bill Clinton telephoned Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to exchange views on the dangerous situation that has arisen as a result of the nuclear tests.

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US, Japan, Germany impose stiff sanctions Defiant India conducts two more nuclear tests

NEW DELHI, May 13: A defiant India conducted two more underground nuclear tests today, two days after outraging the world with three tests, reports agencies.

The latest tests prompted punishing sanctions from the United States, Japan, Germany and other countries.

In a statement, the Indian government said its testing was now complete and it was prepared to consider a ban on such testing.

Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee told a crowd of supporters at his home that with today's tests, India completed steps it had to take to build a nuclear defense. He said India faces a nuclear threat from two neighbours with which it has fought a total of four wars in the last 50 years —

Pakistan and China.

"Ideally, we should have a nuclear-free world, but the world isn't so," he said. "We feel that the world situation should be such that all people feel protected and equal."

A crowd of about 300 people, mostly workers of Vajpayee's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, chanted: "We're not scared, we'll never be scared."

China did not immediately respond to today's tests, though it had condemned those conducted Monday. Pakistan, determined to respond with its own tests, was astounded: "It seems that the Indian leadership has gone berserk," Pakistani Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub said.

Meanwhile, India blocked a move by Australia and New

Zealand to hold a special session of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) today which was expected to condemn Indian underground nuclear testing, diplomats said.

The United Nations-sponsored forum will open its second seven-week session of 1998 as scheduled tomorrow.

Pakistan and the United States have signed up to address the 61-member talks and are expected to deplore the five nuclear weapons tests carried out on Monday and today by India, diplomats said.

Security Council members were considering an appeal to India to sign two major global treaties regulating nuclear weapons after the country exploded two more nuclear devices today.

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Vajpayee cites atmosphere of distrust in ties with China

NEW DELHI, May 13: Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee cited "an atmosphere of distrust" in relations with China in a letter to US President Bill Clinton explaining his decision to conduct nuclear test, the Press Trust of India said today, reports Reuters.

"We have an overt nuclear weapon state on our borders, a state which committed armed aggression against India in 1962," PTI quoted the letter as saying.

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Longest Jatiya Sangsad session prorogued

By Nazmul Ashraf

The eighth session of the seventh Jatiya Sangsad, prorogued yesterday, was marked by several significant events.

Starting on January 12, the session was the longest ever, lasting four months with 53 working days. The House had two sittings on a number of days.

Passage of four bills for implementation of the much talked about CHT peace accord was the most significant business in the session. Besides, eight bills including one for establishment of Employment Bank were passed.

The lengthy session also disposed of 42 call attention notices on issues of public importance and witnessed as many as 147 short discussions on various issues.

Return of the main opposition BNP to the House on March 8, ending a six-month long boycott, was another important incident during the session. It also witnessed BNP lawmakers' unpleasant behaviour with the Speaker.

Frequent walkouts by BNP legislators also marked the eighth session.

BNP MPs rushed to the Speaker's rostrum, hurled paper missiles and abuses at him and damaged TV cameras on April 15.

Apart from walking out, BNP lawmakers lodged their protests in some unique ways. They entered the House with burning candles in their hands to protest power failure in the Sangsad Bhaban on April 2. Besides, they showed their backs to the Chair for three minutes as they were barred from speaking in the House after their misbehaviour with the Speaker.

During the session, Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury ruled that two BNP MPs — Dr Alauddin and Hasibur Rahman Swapan — did not lose their membership for joining the Speaker.

See Page 12 Col 8

Cabinet okays draft bill on formation of UZ parishad

The Cabinet yesterday approved in principle the draft bill on formation of Upazila Parishad, reports UNB.

The approval was given at a meeting of the cabinet held at the Prime Minister's office with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Ministers, State Ministers, Cabinet Secretary, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and other secretaries concerned were present.

Ctg businessmen keep shutters down protesting terrorism

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, May 13: Businessmen in the port city observed a six-hour strike till noon today by keeping their shops and business houses closed, protesting terrorist activities.

Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCC&I) called the strike to protest what it said increased crimes including terrorism, toll collection, abduction and killing of a gold trader here.

During the strike period, the businessmen put on black badges, held a silent procession and submitted a memorandum to the Divisional Commissioner.

According to Chittagong Chamber, 35 people including 14 businessmen were abducted and 60 shops damaged and looted by terrorists during the last eight months.

Meanwhile, police launched a crackdown in the city to nab the identified terrorists. So far, over 50 terrorists have been arrested but most of the ring leaders have gone into hiding.



Three teenage boys arrested yesterday from Sutrapur area of the city on charge of raping a minor girl. —Star photo

Four girls raped in city

By Staff Correspondent

A nine-year-old maid and three teenage girls were gangraped in three incidents in the city on Tuesday night and the previous night, police said yesterday.

The nine-year-old maid was gangraped at Dhupkhola Math at Shurapur on Tuesday night.

The little girl is now under treatment at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Police said the girl worked at a house at Sashi Bhushon Chatterjee Lane. She was sent to a nearby grocery shop for shopping at about 8 pm.

Sumon, the owner of the shop, took the girl to nearby Dhupkhola Math and raped her along with his five accomplices, police said.

She was later found in a critical condition in the field by one of the members of the family she worked for and rushed to the DMCH.

Police arrested three alleged rapist, Sumon, Insan and Hanif Tuesday night.

They were produced before the CMM's Court yesterday. The court placed them on a three-day remand, police said.

In another incident on the same night, a 13-year-old garments worker was raped by a gang of five unidentified young.

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JS passes motion giving thanks to PM for signing CHT accord

Parliament yesterday passed a motion giving thanks to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for signing the historic peace accord on Chittagong Hill Tracts, reports UNB.

The motion was moved by Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim of Awami League, while Begum Matia Chowdhury, Suranjit Sengupta, Tofael Ahmed, Abdur Razzak from treasury bench and H M Ershad, Abu Lais Mohammad Mobin Chowdhury, GM Quader and N K Alam Chowdhury of Jatiya Party took part in the two-hour discussion.

Speaking on the general discussion on the CHT peace agreement, Ershad said "as the former army chief I know that the number of armed cadres of Shantibahini was not less than 1000."

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Long march towards CHT will be fruitless: PM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said Opposition Leader Begum Khaleda Zia's planned long-march towards the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) will go in vein.

"As of now, all her agitations proved to be failure and those to be taken up in future are also bound to be fruitless... She has failed to yield anything good for the people," Hasina said referring to the planned long-march on June 9, announced by the BNP chief on Tuesday.

In her winding up speech before prorogation of the eighth session of the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, the Prime Minister said, the Opposition Leader could plan the long-march only because peace has been restored in the region following signing of the CHT accord.

"Had the peace accord not been signed, the Opposition Leader won't have dared to plan for marching towards the CHT."

The hill region had so long been a "safe heaven" for smugglers and remained isolated from the mainland and the long-march is designed to protect the interests of illegal drugs and arms dealers there, she said. "The CHT now appears to be part of the country only after signing of the peace accord that restored peace and tranquillity in the region."

The Prime Minister called upon the Opposition Leader to return to the parliament in its next session and play a constructive role for the well-being of the nation.

Dismissing fears expressed by some Jatiya Party lawmakers including former President H M Ershad that implementation of the peace deal might be

See Page 12 Col 1

Shibir's programme disrupts road communication with Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, May 13: Road communication between Chittagong and rest of the country was partially disrupted from morning to noon today as vehicles did not ply due to a road-ramp blockade programme, called by the Islami Chhatra Shibir, police and witnesses said.

Shibir had announced the programme earlier but failed to enforce it as police forces intervened at all entry points of the city.

Witnesses said, at some entry points, Shibir activists organised processions only instead of putting barricades.

See Page 12 Col 2

BNP's return to JS depends on govt attitude: B Chy

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament yesterday said BNP's return to the next budget session will depend on the given political situation and the attitude of the government, reports UNB.

"We will take the right decision at the right time," Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury said at a press briefing at the Opposition Leader's conference room at the Sangsad Bhaban in the afternoon.

The deputy opposition leader justified their return to Parliament and said they had been able to expose the fact that the government party did not allow them to speak in the House.

He said the BNP lawmakers were forced to go out of Parliament on May 3 and join the hunger strike in the wake of the Speaker's "partisan ruling" restricting them from the discussion on the CHT bills.

See Page 12 Col 1

TOMORROW

Deprived of qualified treatment, ostracised by other people's ignorance and marginalised by the powers that be, the three and a half million people who are paralysed in Bangladesh often face a vulnerable, invisible and voiceless existence. Valerie Taylor and the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) empower the physically disabled to lead active, productive and satisfying lives. Read SWM's cover story this week on CRP.

Inside Today

Article

CHT Regional Council Bill passed

A Harbinger of Peace or Forerunner of Turmoil?

Column: Currents and Crosscurrents

by M M Rezaul Karim

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Shazneen murder case

Shahid gives confessional statement to magistrate

By Staff Correspondent

Shahid, the prime accused in the Shazneen murder, gave a judicial statement yesterday confessing that he killed the 15-year-old girl at their Gulshan residence in the city on April 23.

A CID team along with some uniformed police took Shahid to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in the afternoon. Magistrate Mortuza Ahmad took about three hours from 4 pm to record the statement under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Later, Shahid was sent to the Dhaka Central Jail.

Meanwhile, CID officials said investigation was still on to find out whether there was any abettor to Shahid. They were also looking into any possibility of a conspiracy behind the killing of Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, the youngest daughter of the Chairman of Transcom Ltd, Latifur Rahman.

"Recording of Shahid's confessional statement does not mean that the investigation to find out involvement of other person(s) has ended," said a CID official, talking to The Daily Star.

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Tri-nation series Bangladesh face India at Mohali today

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh suffered a big setback ahead of their Coca-Cola Tri-nation Series opener against hosts India when skipper Akram Khan ruled himself out for the inaugural match at Mohali today.

This was confirmed yesterday by the manager of the Bangladesh team Gazi Ashraf Hossain.

In Akram's absence, his long-standing deputy Aminul Islam will be able to relish a rare moment; that of walking alongside India skipper Mohammad Azharuddin when the

See Page 12 Col 1

D-8 summit in Dhaka Nov 28-29

The second summit of the D-8 countries will be held in Dhaka November 28-29, reports UNB.

The decision was taken at a high-level preparatory meeting of the D-8 summit held at the Foreign Ministry.

Briefing newsmen Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad said Malaysia, Pakistan, Turkey and Iran have already confirmed their participation in the summit. He hoped other members — Egypt, Nigeria and Indonesia — will also join the summit.

A ministerial level meeting will be held in Dhaka on November 26 ahead of the summit.

Heads of the States are expected to arrive on November 27.

A national committee headed by the Foreign Minister has been formed to conduct the summit.

The other members of the national committee are Finance Minister, Commerce Minister, Home Minister, State

See Page 12 Col 6

One killed, 7 hurt in N'ganj fire

By DMCH Correspondent

A one-year-old boy was killed and seven other people sustained burn injuries in a fire that broke out at Nitaiganj, of Narayaniganj town early yesterday morning.

The dead was identified as Kamal Saha. The injured are Rekha, 35, Khokon 30, Nir-mala, 50, Bimal, 3, Subhas, 32, Nital, 35, and Chand Miah 35.

The fire broke out at the residence of Hazi Shafique Uddin at about 5 am. A gas leakage from the house reportedly sparked off the fire, according to the relatives of the victims.

All the injured were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Kamal succumbed to his injuries at about 11 am.

The Daily Star

World Cup Quiz '98

DRAW OF ROUND-3 TODAY

5pm Jatiya Press Club

Guests Include

Ace footballer Golam Sarwar Tipu
Gifted striker S M Aslam
Star defender Monem Munna
TV and stage personality Ali Zaker
and Martial Art exponent Rani Padamsee

You are most cordially invited

And Remember

Round-4 begins from today

See the Sports Page NOW!

Quashment of SEC cases against 3 cos Appeal against HC verdict rejected

By SC Correspondent

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday rejected all three leave petitions filed by Shinepukur Holdings Ltd, Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd, M/s A K M Shamsuddin against the High Court's verdict turning down the reference sent by the District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka for quashment of the Share Market Scam Cases.

Chief Justice A T M Afzal along with Justice Latifur Rahman, Justice Md Abdur Rouf and Justice Bimalendu Bikash Roy Chowdhury after hearing the leave petition for several days, rejected the leave petitions in a unanimous judgement yesterday.

Earlier, the division bench of the HC comprising Justice Kazi Ebadul Huque and Justice Md Hamdul Hoque on December 9, 1997 rejected the reference holding that there is no scope of quashing the cases filed before the Court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The Securities and Exchange Commission on April 2, 1997 filed the complaint cases against Shinepukur Holdings Ltd, Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd, M/s A K M Shamsuddin and other companies on allegations of manipulating the share markets under Section 17 of the Securities and Exchange Commission Ordinance, 1969.

The court of the CMM, Dhaka after hearing the complaints took cognizance into the allegations and issued warrant of arrests against the accused including Salman F Rahman, Sohail F Rahman, A K M Shamsuddin and others.

Subsequently, all the accused persons obtained anticipatory bail from the High Court.

Later, the accused persons filed three revision petition challenging the said order of cognizance and warrant of arrest before the Court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka who allowed all three revisions and sent a reference to the HC for quashment of the cases.

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রজত জয়ন্তী বর্ষে দেশবাসীকে জানাই আন্তরিক শুভেচ্ছা

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দাবী পরিশোধ	৩৩৫.৮৭
সরকারকে ভাত্যাংশ প্রদান	১৪১.৯২
সরকারকে ট্যাক্স প্রদান	৩১৩.৮২
মুনাফা	৬৪৭.২৫
বিনিয়োগ	৩০৭.৩৯
মোট সম্পদের পরিমাণ	৫০০.০০

আমরা ১১৮টি শাখার মাধ্যমে বছরে জাতীয় সম্পদের প্রায় ৩০ হাজার কোটি টাকার বীমা-ঝুঁকি গ্রহণ করে আসছি

রাষ্ট্রীয় খাতে সাধারণ বীমার একমাত্র প্রতিষ্ঠান

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(অর্থনৈতিক নিরাপত্তার প্রতীক)

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