



The link road at Kamalapur went under water following incessant rains yesterday.

— Star photo

Ranariddh tells voters US, other states will reject Hun Sen's bid to snatch victory

PREY VENG, Cambodia, July 17: Opposition leader Prince Norodom Ranariddh told Cambodian voters Friday that the United States and other countries would reject any bid by his arch-rival, Hun Sen, to rob him of victory in elections July 26, reports AP. Ranariddh hoped to assure voters jittery of post-election violence that casting a ballot for his royalist FUNCINPEC party would not lead to a new round of armed conflict in the country's turbulent politics. The prince finished atop UN-sponsored elections in 1993 but was forced to accept a co-premiership when Hun Sen threatened civil war. The power-sharing arrangement ended in pitched street battles last year when Hun Sen seized power in a bloody takeover. 'If you want to vote for FUNCINPEC and people scare you that there will be a war if we win, don't worry,' Ranariddh said. 'The Friends of Cambodia, especially the United States, will not tolerate those who lose the elections refusing to transfer power.'

Shahrukh Khan discharged by local court

AJMEER, July 17: Cine star Shahrukh Khan has been discharged by a local court here in a case filed against him by a group of lawyers for using derogatory words against lawyers in a film, reports PTI. The Defence counsel argued that Khan, being an actor, speaks and acts according to the script written for him and he should not be held responsible for words spoken while acting. It was further said that acting in the film 'Ram Janam' was not to defame any section or community, this film has been permitted for release by Film Censor Board, therefore he should be discharged from all litigations. Six lawyers of the city had filed the suit against Khan.

New proposal to share Marcos' wealth with victims of abuse

MANILA, July 17: A senior official has proposed that part of the money from the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos' Swiss Bank accounts be given to victims of abuse under Marcos' rule before the government and his family share what is left, a lawyer said Friday, reports AP. The proposal was made by Presidential Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora in a meeting Wednesday with Luis Jalandoni, the head negotiator for Marxist rebels in peace talks with the government, said Romeo Capulong, a lawyer for the rebel negotiators. Under the proposal, which requires the approval of President Joseph Estrada, part of the 540 million dollars from the Marcos' bank accounts would be given to 9,539 Filipinos who won a class action suit for human rights abuses against the Marcos regime.

Manila to resume peace talks with Muslim rebels

MANILA, July 17: The government of new Philippine President Joseph Estrada will soon resume peace talks with Muslim and Communist rebels, a senior official said Friday, reports AP. Presidential Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora said the peace negotiations will begin in a few weeks' after Estrada approves a list of government negotiators. Talks with the rebel groups were suspended during the campaign period for national elections in May, in which Estrada won an overwhelming mandate to succeed President Fidel Ramos.



Nari Adhikar Andolon held a seminar on 'Repression on Women and its Remedy' in the city yesterday.

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India's lower house approves budget

NEW DELHI, July 17: India's powerful lower house of parliament approved the first budget of the Hindu nationalist-led government Friday, ensuring passage into law of proposals to protect domestic industry against foreign competition and spend more on infrastructure, defense and nuclear energy, reports AP. India economic future was not threatened by anti-nuclear sanctions imposed by the United States and others, Finance Minister Yashwanth Sinha in his speech urging lawmakers to adopt the finance bill. They followed with a voice vote of approval. 'No projects will be allowed to suffer on that account,' Sinha said of sanctions. 'We can stand up to any international blackmail. The country has the capacity.'

He estimated India stood to lose \$1.5 billion in international assistance as punishment for conducting nuclear tests in May. The lower house of parliament passed the budget and its approval by the upper house next week is a mere formality before it becomes law. Before the vote, Sinha offered a few amendments to the budget he first outlined to parliament June 1. Among the changes was an additional four per cent import duty, which he said the domestic industry needed as protection for some time before it could take on international competition. India began dismantling state controls seven years ago following a socialist-patterned economy for more than four decades. The 1998-99 federal budget contained a 14 per cent increase in defence expenditures and a hefty 68 per cent hike in spending on atomic energy. The defence expenditure was raised to 412 billion rupees (dhs 10 billion) from 361 billion rupees (dhs 8.6 billion) last year. India will spend 611 billion rupees (dhs 1.5 billion) — a 35 per cent increase from last year — on the key infrastructure areas of energy, transportation and communications. Sinha also promised a hassle-free procedure for foreign investors who have complained that bureaucratic red tape presents a huge obstacle to doing business in India. Sinha already has announced opening the government-owned insurance sector to competition from private Indian companies. The government was considering the question of allowing foreign companies in the insurance sector, the minister told Parliament on Friday.



Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad inaugurated a new restaurant 'Bukhara' at Iqbal Centre in Banani on Wednesday. Home Minister Rafiqul Islam, State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury and chairman of the restaurant Dr HBM Iqbal MP are also seen.

Troops ordered to crack down on looters in Indonesia

JAKARTA, July 17: Indonesia's military chief Friday ordered his troops to crack down on looters after mobs raided farms and plantations, reports AP. The villagers claim 300 hectares (740 acres) of Suharto's 700-hectare (1,730-acre) Tri-Sapoo ranch belongs to 500 people in Cibedug village, about 50 kilometers (30 miles) east of Jakarta. The ranch sits in lush, hilly country and is considered one of Indonesia's foremost cattle breeding and producing ranches. They said they had farmed the land for many years before they were pushed out with no compensation. Suharto has not commented on their claims.

building a prestigious cattle ranch there in the 1970s. The Jakarta Post reported Friday. Over recent weeks villagers have clashed with security guards at the ranch. The villagers claim 300 hectares (740 acres) of Suharto's 700-hectare (1,730-acre) Tri-Sapoo ranch belongs to 500 people in Cibedug village, about 50 kilometers (30 miles) east of Jakarta. The ranch sits in lush, hilly country and is considered one of Indonesia's foremost cattle breeding and producing ranches. They said they had farmed the land for many years before they were pushed out with no compensation. Suharto has not commented on their claims.

Korean textile mills to go on production in Nov

A 25 million US dollar composite textile mills, owned by South Korean entrepreneur, in Savar Export Processing Zone will come on stream in November, it was disclosed during a meeting in the city with the visiting deputy minister for foreign affairs and trade of Republic of Korea. Shin Sang-ho, who is thinking of relocating some of their textile and footwear industries in Bangladesh to take advantage of cheap labour. When asked to suggest ways to rectify massive trade imbalance, the minister asked Bangladeshi businessmen to travel to Korea and look for market and push products there since there are restrictions. The two-way trade between the two countries during last year was over 500 million dollars. Bangladesh's export to Korea was around 20 million dollars. About the present position of Korean Export Processing Zone near Patenga the ambassador said it is progressing slowly and is expected that by the end of the year it will become operational. Many Korean companies are sure to come either to set up new industries or relocate their existing industries.

Bangladesh. Ambassador Tase said till now 300 million US dollars have been invested in 60 big and small Korean industries in this country which employs around 25 thousand Bangladeshi nationals. Around 1,000 Koreans are involved in these enterprises. Shin said Koreans are thinking of relocating some of their textile and footwear industries in Bangladesh to take advantage of cheap labour. When asked to suggest ways to rectify massive trade imbalance, the minister asked Bangladeshi businessmen to travel to Korea and look for market and push products there since there are restrictions. The two-way trade between the two countries during last year was over 500 million dollars. Bangladesh's export to Korea was around 20 million dollars. About the present position of Korean Export Processing Zone near Patenga the ambassador said it is progressing slowly and is expected that by the end of the year it will become operational. Many Korean companies are sure to come either to set up new industries or relocate their existing industries.

US approves thalidomide for use against leprosy

WASHINGTON, July 17: Thalidomide, a drug that caused nightmarish birth defects in the 1950s, has been approved for use against leprosy in the United States, the drug's manufacturer said on Thursday, reports APF. Celgene Corp said the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the drug's sale for treatment of erythema nodosum leprosum, a severe and debilitating condition associated with leprosy. Thalidomide, which was used outside the United States in the 1950s to treat nausea in pregnant women, caused numerous deformities in children born to the women taking it. Celgene said it licensed rights to thalidomide from the Rockefeller University, in 1992 and began developing the drug for AIDS-related, dermatological and cancer-related conditions. The company said it was taking precautions to ensure the drug is not taken by pregnant women. Doctors who prescribe it and pharmacists who sell the drug will get educational materials. Before a prescription is filled, a copy of an informed consent form must be presented at the pharmacy. The prescriptions will be for 28 days with no automatic renewals.



Fishermen became active as monsoon rains make the water levels of different rivers go up. In the picture taken from Gazipur, fishermen carrying a boat to a nearby waterbody for a better catch of fish.

The Daily Star TV Guide

Table with columns for TV channels (BBC, STAR PLUS, PTV, DD 7, ZEE TV, MUSIC ASIA, SONY ET, ZEE INDIA TV, ZEE CINEMA) and their respective program schedules for Saturday, July 18th.