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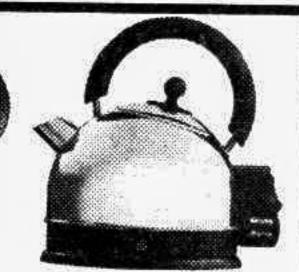
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Islamic law enforced in Pak tribal areas

PESHAWAR, Jan 16: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government imposed Islamic law in the traditional tribal areas of northwestern Pakistan today, vowing to impose the same throughout the country, reports

In these tribal regions all legal and criminal cases will be decided according to the Koran, in courts headed by Muslim clerics, a government ordinance said.

The Islamic judicial system has been enforced in these remote and religiously conservative regions through an ordinance signed by the governor of the Northwest Frontier province. The governor represents the federal government in the provinces.

The regions affected lie roughly 50 kilometers to 200 from Peshawar, the provincial capital. They also border Afghanistan where a similar form of Islamic law has been imposed by the Taliban reli-"ous army.

The Islamic laws include public punishments of lashes, amputation of hands and feet and executions of the crimi-

"The people of these areas wanted the Islamic law and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif government has fulfilled its promise," said Sardar Mehtab Khan, the chief minister of the northwest province.

In 1996, Muslim clerics in

the area led an armed revolt demanding Islamic laws in their areas.

"Pakistan was created for Islam and soon the same law will be enforced in rest of the country," Khan said.

Sharif introduced a controversial constitutional amendment in August to scrap any remaining British laws in Pakistan and replace them with laws based on the Koran.

The amendment would give the government sweeping pow-ers including that of obliging people to pray five times a day · as well as having the authority to 'prescribe what is right and to forbid what is wrong."

The National Assembly, where Sharif enjoys absolute majority, passed the amendment in September. Now the amendment waits for an approval from the Senate before it can become law. But Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League does not enjoy a two-third majority in the senate.

Opposition parties, human rights groups and non-Muslim minorities bitterly oppose Sharif's efforts to introduce Islamic laws saying that violated constitution and will wrack the institutions.

But Khan said only pro-West opposition parties are opposed to Islamic laws and trying to

"The government has a firm resolve to enforce Islamic laws all over the country," he said.

700-year-old village to be rebuilt in Rajasthan

NEW DELHI, Jan 16: A 700year-old village deep in the hinterland of the central Indian state of Rajasthan, mysteri-ously abandoned by its inhabitants centuries ago, is being rebuilt by the state government under a unique restoration project, reports IANS.

Stones from the ruins of Kuldhara village are being put together according to ancient design, without using cement and an 80-feet deep step-well buried under layers of sand is being excavated. The Statesman newspaper reported.

Kuldhara and 73 other neighbouring villages in Jaisalmer were established in 1291 AD by migrants from a neighbouring district. The villages soon rose to prominence because of the innovative agriculture techniques used by the villagers to till the dry desert lands which brought them prosperity. Kuldhara's wealth in those ancient times can be judged from the fact that each one of its 600 houses had a garage for its camel carts, evidence of which is available among the ruins today, pointed out a district official involved with the restoration project.

Besides, he noted, the villagers had evolved an interesting and effective system for constructing their homes based on wind direction and weather without using cement, because of which the walls constructed hundreds of years ago, still existed today.

There are varying versions of why the prosperous villagers abandoned Kuldhara and the other villages in 1825 AD.

Ctg: Crimes

From Page 1 feeling insecure and scared due

to increase of crimes. Toll collection and mugging in industrial areas and business hubs have become a regular phenomenon, the chamber president said in his statement. Twelve people were bullet-

hit when toll collectors fired on drivers at Kadamtoli bus stand as they refused to pay toll on January 2.

On the same day, armed muggers took away Tk four lakh from garments factory staff at Agrabad when they were returning from bank with the money.

At the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, armed muggers looted two shops at the busy Sirajuddoullah Road in the city in the evening.

On January 9, armed muggers looted about Tk six lakh distribution depot of a business house at Agrabad, po-

lice said. Many other incidents of

crime remained unrecorded with police.

Meanwhile, most of the alleged terrorists and their ring leaders, arrested during a police crackdown from mid-April last year, got release on bail. They have reportedly resumed their criminal activities in the city.

sources said. The crackdown also slowed down here with the beginning of Ramadan.

Police officials however said that additional police force were deployed in an around the city markets and some check posts set up to control crime.

Khaleda returns

home Monday BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to return home on January 18 ending her 11-day visit to Saudi Arabia, reports UNB.

She went to the Kingdom on January 7 for performing Umrah. She also offered munajat at the Rouza Mubarak of Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (SM) in Medina.

Meanwhile, Begum Zia will exchange greetings with the people of various strata on the Eid day from 10-30 am to 11-30

She will exchange pleasantries with the diplomats and representatives of international organisations at her Minto Road official residence from 10 am to 10:30 am.

Anniversary of Zia's birth Tuesday

The 63rd anniversary of birth of late president Ziaur Rahman, the founder chairman of BNP, will be observed on Tuesday, reports UNB.

BNP and its front organisations have drawn up elaborate programmes to mark the day, said a press release yesterday. The programmes including

holding of rallies, discussions, milad mahfil and placing of wreaths at the mazar of Ziaur Rahman.

BNP central committee will place wreaths and offer fateha at the mazar of the late leader at noon on the day.

A discussion will be held at the Jatiya Press Club at 3:30 pm on January 24. Party Secretary General Ab-

dul Mannan Bhuiyan has called upon the leaders and workers of the party and its front organisations to observe the day in a befitting manner.

Mutilated body of youngman recovered

By Staff Correspondent Police recovered the mutilated body of a youngman from Ahmedabad Jheel under Sabujbagh thana in the city yesterday around noon.

The body, with the head hands and legs severed, was found wrapped in a plastic sack. The identity of the victim could not be ascertained immediately. Police have sent the body to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) morgue for autopsy.

Afghan opposition frees 46 Talibans

KABUL, Jan 16: The northern-based opposition freed 46 Taliban prisoners today ahead of the Muslim festival of Eid-ul-Fitr, an opposition spokesman · said, reports AP.

Eid, which marks the end of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan when devout Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset, is on Monday.

The prisoner release came a day after the opposition freed 20 Taliban soldiers. The Taliban, who rule roughly 90 per cent of Afghanistan, including-Kabul, freed 274 opposition soldiers earlier this month.

Prisoner release was handled by the International Red Cross, said opposition spokesman who identifies himself only as Abdullah.

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THE EID IS NEAR: Home-bound people in their thousands crowding the terminals of all modes of transport in the city. This picture was taken from the Sadarghat launch terminal yesterday. - Star photo

President hosts iftar, dinner for envoys of Muslim countries

President Shahabuddin Ahmed hosted an iftar and dinner for the diplomats of Muslim countries at Bangabhaban yesterday evening, reports UNB.

Ambassador of the State of Palestine Mohammad Shahta. Zarab, High Commissioner of Pakistan Karam Elahi, Ambassador of Arab Republic of Egypt Ossama Mohamed Tawfik, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mohammad Sadegh Fayyaz, Ambassador of the State of Kuwait Mohammad Abdullah Al-Muhaiteeb, High Commission for Malaysia Dato Zulkifly Bin Abdul Rahman, Ambassador of Indonesia Soetanto Soemardjo, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey Erdinc Ulumlu, The Charge d'Affaires of Afghanistan, Libya, UAE, Iraq, Qatar, Morocco and Representative of UNICEF Ms Shahida Azfar at-

tended the iftar and the dinner. Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Chief of Protocol Mohammad Ziauddin also attended the iftar and the dinner.

President Shahabuddin welcomed the guests and exchanged greetings with them.

Iraqis mark anniversary of Gulf War

BAGHDAD, Jan 16: Thousands of Iraqis turned out for two anti-American demonstrations in Baghdad today to mark the eighth anniversary of the start of the Gulf War, reports

The demonstrators, including school-children and government workers, filed just a grandstand in one of the main

roads in the west of the capital. The demonstration was led by General Ali Hassen al-Majid, a member of the Revolutionary Command Council, Iraq's most important body, and ruling

Baath Party member. The demonstrators cursed US President Bill Clinton and swore their Loyalty to President Saddam Hussein.

"Clinton the coward, go look for girls," the protesters shouled in a reference to the sexual scandals that have rocked the

White House Anti-Saudi and Kuwaiti slogans were also yelled: "Shame on those among the Arabs who maintain the embargo" imposed on Iraq by the United Nations

BEIRUT, Jan 16: US Presi-

dent Bill Clinton said in an in-

terview with an Arab newspa-

per published today that the

best way out of the Iraq crisis

would be a change of govern-

ment in Baghdad, reports AFP.

remains in power, the Middle

East will be preoccupied by this

conflict ... and the Iraqi people

will remain under the yoke of a

criminal police state with no

hope of normalisation," the

London-based Saudi newspaper

Asharq al-Awsat quoted Clin-

of overcoming this destructive

crisis is the formation of a new

government in Baghdad which

would better represent the Iraqi

people and be ready to carry out

its commitments towards the

international community," he

on Monday, Clinton said he was

"ready to help the new Iraq by

In the interview, conducted

"In the long run, the best way

ton as saying.

"As long as Saddam Hussein

Vajpayee blasts Shiv Sena

'Hindu extremism can't stop bids to improve

NEW DELHI, Jan 16: Recent example of Hindu extremism and intolerance won't stop attempts to improve India's relations with their Islamic neighbour Pakistan, the prime minister says, reports AP.

On Friday, Prime Minister when he strongly criticized members of the fringe Shiv Sena party for vandalizing a stadium where a planned India-Pakistan cricket match is to take place and threatening Pakistani diplomats in India.

Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Maharashtra, also has threatbetween the two countries. "There are civilized ways of

have any. These misdeeds only lower the prestige of the country," Vajpayee said in a meeting with prominent athletes who urged him to ensure the Pakistan-India cricket match went ahead. The match and bus ser vice are both parts of a campaign to normalise relations between the neighboring coun-

Islamabad stops training and arming Muslim guerillas fighting a separatist war in Kashmir. Pakistan says it provides only moral support to the guerillas.

Hartal called by jute mill workers ignored in Khulna

day hartal called by Ajax Jute Mill workers and employees in

day, reports APB. Workers and employees of the mill called the hartal demanding payment of arrears

city today.

staged demonstrations in the morning. They also put up a road barricade at Phoolbaria gate disrupting traffic till noon.

Clinton on Iraq crisis

Removal of Saddam

best way out

working to ease the economic

sanctions and the cancellation

to support the Iraqi opposition,

but warned that change would

ground troops would become

involved, but said the United

States was drawing up a list of

opposition groups deserving of aid, which would be submitted

to Congress at the end of the

for the distribution of 97 mil-

lion dollars the United States

decided in December to allocate

port for a Saudi proposal to ease

sanctions to ensure the Iraqi

people have what they need for

'a decent life,' while ensuring

Saddam does not control oil

down this proposal revels

'The fact that Iraq turned

Clinton also expressed sup-

for 'the liberation of Iraq.'

revenues.

The list would be the basis

be neither quick nor easy.

He stressed his willingness

He made it clear no US

of debts" incurred by Saddam.

ties with Pakistan'

Atal Behari Vajpayee echoed the feelings of many Indians The Shiv Sena, allied with

Party in the western state or ened to stop planned bus service

registering your protest, if you

The Shiv Sena says India should have no sports and cultural ties with Pakistan until

KHULNA, Jan 16: The half-

the city was largely ignored to-

and Eid bonus. Traffic was normal and business and commercial houses remained open in the

Pakistan's ambassador to India has announced Pakistan's cricket team will indeed tour India later this month. A Pakistan field hockey tour of India will also be held as sched-

uled, newspapers said. Critics of the BJP say Hindu right-wing groups like the Shiv Sena have become emboldened since the Vajpayee government came to power in February last year. Artists, athletes, political activists, writers, academicians have called on his government to rein in Hindu groups.

About 80 per cent of India's one billion people are Hindu. The country's constitution says no religion will be raised above any other by the state and guarantees all the right to choose, practice and preach their own

Over recent months, Hindu groups have also attacked Christians, mostly in villages in the western state of Gujarat. Christian leaders say their community is more uncertain of its place in India than ever before, but also say only a fringe group of militants is creating trouble.

"By and large, the Hindu public is tolerant and not responsible for the violence," said Father Dominic Emmanuel spokesman for the archdiocese

JSD (Rab) calls 48-hr hartal in Ramgati •

NOAKHALI, Jan 16: JSD (Rab) has called for a 48-hour hartal in Ramgati thana from 6 am tomorrow demanding immediate release of its workers. reports UNB.

Police in a midnight drive on November 11, arrested 25 activists, including Chargazi UP chairman Mir Akhtar Hossin Bachhu, along with 300 arms and ammunition. They were arrested while preparing for taking possession of a char, police said Local JSD leaders said they

Police said the workers , were implicated in a 'false case' Their leader ASM Abdur Rab is a member of the cabinet holding the charge of the ministry of Fisheries and Livestock.

(Saddam's) true intentions," he

Saudi millionaire Osama Bin

Laden, who is accused by the

United States of being behind

the August bombing of US em-

bassies in East Africa, Clinton

called on the Taliban regime in

Afghanistan to expel him 'as

soon as possible to the United

States or elsewhere to face

continue to give him and his or-

ganisation shelter makes them

accomplices," Clinton added.

"The fact that the Taliban

He said the United States

was continuing with diplomatic

pressure but reserved the right

to take any measure it judges

necessary to preserve the lives

of its citizens and defend its vi-

tal interests and the fight to "re-

spond to attacks by Bin Laden

of anyone else by the means and

at the time it judges right".

Asked about the fugitive

AL leader

B Sc dead Awami League Leader and freedom fighter Syed Mohammad Fazlul Huq B.Sc died of old age ailments at his Wari residence in the city yesterday. He

Fazlul Huq

was 72, reports UNB. He left behind his wife, three sons, four daughters and a host of relatives and admirers. Born in 1928 at Mirerswarai in Chittagong Fazlul Hug was

actively associated with Chhatra League in his student life. He later joined Awami League and held various important posts. His body will be brought to the party office at noon. His Namaje janaza will be

held at Baitul Mukarram Na-

tional Mosque after Johr

prayers today. Later, he will be buried at the Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard at Mirpur. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad and LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman have

expressed their profound shock at the death of Fazlul Huq. In separate condolence messages, they prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

Traffic mess

From Page 1

ans be done away with and eastwest road be completed to ease the traffic flow.

Shafik Rehman, editor of Jai Jai Din, said on a hartal day roads remain free with a huge number of policemen. "Why isn't it that they are there on weekdays for smooth flow of traffic?" he asked. "It is difficult for citizens to walk on the streets. Dr Kamal Hossain had fallen into an open manhole. Anyone walking his dog has to wash it on return home as people spit on the streets."

He said the traffic problem is getting so noticeable that even the prime minister had to take the wrong side of the road although she had said traffic would not be halted during her

movement, Rahman said. If the prime minister and the leader of the opposition and General Ershad move without escorts, they would realise the extent of problems the citizens face and help resolve them, he said. For this political will and consensus are necessary, Rahman said.

Prof Nazrul Islam of Dhaka University suggested going underground.

Ainun Nishat said there should be flyover from airport to Sadarghat down the old railway track. He also suggested a ring road and an efficient bus service to ease the traffic mess. Gias Kamal Chouhdury, a

journalist, said political con-

sideration have been responsible for the unaccounted growth of rickshaws in the city. Sigma Huda, a human rights activist and lawyer, said much of the problem stemmed from non-compliance of traffic rules. Even the City Corporation has

added to it by putting its garbage collection boxes on the streets. Rizwana Hasan of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association said it is often difficult to prevent encroachment upon the open spaces in the city through legal action. The City Corporation grabbed a parking lot to raise a market at Bangabandhu Avenue, she said.

Mamata cancels today's talks with Vajpayee

NEW DELHI, Jan 16: Embattled Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee suffered a fresh setback today when a dis-gruntled ally said its links with his shaky minority govern-ment were weakening due to a spat over plum political posts, reports AFP.

A regional ally, the Trinamool Congress Party which is being wooed by Vajpayee to join the government but whose demand for the prestigious railway portfolio has been virtually turned down, said the snub had 'widened differences.'

Trinamool leader Mamata Banerjee stuck to her decision to accept no portfolio other than the railway, saying the steering committee of her party has taken the decision.

"We have no purpose to join the central ministry if the railway ministry is not given to the party," she said. She also claimed that Sonia

Gandhi has deputed Madhavrao Scindia and P A Sangma to contact her in a bid to make her join the Congress during the next state assembly elections. Trinamool spokesman Sudip Bandopadhyay told the Press Trust of India that Ma-

mata had cancelled a scheduled meeting with Vajpayee tomorrow to iron out differences. "I have already communicated her decision to the prime minister's office during the day. She is not going tomorrow," he

The railways ministry is currently held by Centrist grouping of defence minister George Fernandes.

 Vajpayee had announced this week that he would bring new faces into the multi-party government on Friday, two months after postponing an earlier cabinet expansion but was forced to defer his plans due

garments unit CHITTAGONG, Jan 16: Raw materials and finished products of a garments factory were gutted in a fire here early today.

Fire at Ctg

reports BSS. Fire brigade and police sources said the fire originated from a godown of the Asian Apparels Ltd located on the second floor of Jiban Bima Corporation shopping complex at Station Road

Nine fire fighting units struggled for over two houses to extinguish the blaze. Huge quantities of fabrics and finished products of the exportoriented garments factory were destroyed by the fire.

Israeli jets raid Hezbollah stronghold

SIDON, Lébanon, Jan 16: Israeli wasplanes raided southern Lebanon for the fourth straight day Saturday, security officials said, reports AP.

Two jets fired at least two air-to-surface missiles on the highlands of Iqlim al-Tuffah, a stronghold of the Hezbollah guerilla group that faces an Israeli-occupied border enclave in south Lebanon, the Lebanese officials said. They spoke on customary condition of anonymity.

Black smoke billowed from the area around the deserted village of Mlita in Iqlim al-Tuffah, but it was not immediately clear if the missiles hit the bases in the 9 am air strike. the fifth in south Lebanon this The two jets returned about

half an hour later and fired at

least one missile on a valley be-

tween the Shi'ite Muslim vil-

lages of Yater and Jibal al-

Boutoum near the southern port

city of Tyre, the officials said.

party for criticising the Trinamool demand, saying it created 'confusion' and 'widened differences. "Thakre has tried to act as

an extra-constitutional au-

thority. He has no business to

to squabbling and increasing

Khushabhau Thakre, president

of Vajpayee's Hindu nationalist

Bandopadhyay slammed

demands from his allies.

say anything regarding this," he Thakre yesterday rejected Trinamool demand for railway portfolio even as incumbent minister Nitish Kumar disapproved of open voicing of such a

Mamata has asked for railways but it is already with . Samata Party. It will not be possible for us to adjust their demand because there is no point appeasing one by annoying the other," Thakre said.

other problems over the issue. Another regional ally wants petroleum minister V K Ramamurthy sacked and control of the ministry. Several members of the

Vajpayee is also beset with

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which heads the nine-monthold coalition, were also reportedly desperate to join the cabi Vajpayee's coalition gov-

ernment has been wracked by unending infighting since it took office in March last year after elections led to a hung parliament. The prime minister inducted

three Hindu nationalists, including two aides, into his cabinet in December to strengthen his position within the government after his party was routed in key state elections.

But he has still not been able to carry out a planned cabinet expansion.

China rejects US mediation offer on Spratlys

BEIJING, Jan 16: China today rejected an offer of US mediation in a territorial dispute over a string of South

China Sea Islands, reports AFP. "External interference in this matter is unacceptable and will only complicate the current situation," Foreign Ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi was quoted as saying by the official

Xinhua News Agency. The Spratlys, a potentially oil-rich chain, are claimed in whole or in part by Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. All but Brunei have troops based on some of the islands.

"China's sovereignty over the Nansha (Spratly) islands and adjacent islands is undisputable," the spokesman added. Philippine Defence Secretary Orlando Mercado last week said Washington had proposed a meeting of all claimants.

President Joseph Estrada has given his backing, setting aside concerns by his Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon who warned drawing Washington into the dispute risked transforming it into a nuclear con-Malaysian Prime Minister

Mahathir Mohamad on Friday also rejected the offer of US me-There is no need for the United States to interfere in the matter. We can resolve it among ourselves," he was quoted as

saying by Malaysia's Bernama News Agency. China has previously expressed opposition to US involvement in the Spratlys issue and insisted on discussing the dispute on a bilateral basis

with the other claimants.

Impeachment trial

From Page 1

argued that the president, his friend Vernon Jordan, his secretary Betty Currie and at least two staff aides should testify because their testimony conflicts with that of Clinton.

"Time and again somebody is not telling the truth and time and again an analysis of ... all the testimony together with common sense says it's the president who is not telling the truth," McCollum said. "But if you have serious doubts about the truthfulness" of key witnesses, he said, they should appear in person.

The White House already has said Clinton would not testify. Clinton's lawyers, who cannot interrupt the House presentation to object, sat quietly at the prosecution table during the arguments, waiting for their turn Tuesday.

But White House special counsel Gregory Craig launched a brief salvo outside the Senate chamber, saying prosecutors wanted to "expand and extend this proceeding for one reason: They do not have a case."

Clinton is charged under two articles of impeachment with perjury and obstruction of justice in the first presidential impeachment trial since 1868. Two-thirds, or 67 of the 100 senators, most vote for convic-

dent. Twelve Democrats would have to join the 55 Republicans in order to remove Clinton from office if the Republicans stay united. The opening argument phase

of the trial is governed by a bi-

partisan agreement that post-

pones the question of witnesses

for at least another week. But, as Democratic Sen. Edward M Kennedy acknowledged, "there may be very well" a party-line vote on the witness question. During Friday's proceedings, Republican Rep. Bob Barr told the Senate that Clinton had vi-

olated perjury and obstruction of justice laws. He urged the Senate to conclude "that William Jefferson Clinton in fact and under the law, violated his oath and violated the laws of this land, and convict him on both articles of

Ghorasal plant

impeachment..."

From Page 1 history. With occasional coun-

trywide blackout, load-shedding reached the level of 600 MW to 650 MW during peak hours against a maximum demand for 2300 MW. Public criticism about the

government's poor handling of the power supply situation had tion to remove the president from office, and there are no led to the removal of the then indications that any Democrats energy minister from the minwould vote against the presi-