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Chhatak peaceful

I don't have any group in AL: Speaker

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, May 29: The situation at Chhatak thana headquarters as well as in Sunamganj and Sylhet district towns remained peaceful today, a day after the arrest of ruling party MP Muhibur Rahman Manik, sources said.

All the 11 persons arrested at Chhatak during yesterday's clashes between supporters and opponents of Manik were released this morning after taking bonds from them, said a police official.

A fruit trader, whose shop was ransacked yesterday afternoon, today filed a case with Chhatak police accusing 30 leaders and activists of the Manik-backed faction in Chhatak Awami League. The anti-Manik faction in the party brought out several processions from Govindganj Bazar at Chhatak hailing his arrest. There was no report of any untoward incident.

Meanwhile, Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury has said: "I do not have any group in Awami League. I neither control the party nor any of its front organisations. I control the 330 members in the Jatiya Sangsad. So the parliament is more important to me than the party."

He was addressing a group of leaders and activists of Awami League and its front organisations at Sylhet Circuit House this afternoon.

Regarding the arrest of Sylhet district Juba League Joint Convenor Jagadish Das who is also a Ward Commissioner of Sylhet Pourashava, the Speaker said, "The AL government stands for rule of law. The CID arrested him after getting substantial evidence regarding his complicity in the bomb making incident," he said.

However, he assured the leaders and activists of taking necessary steps for Jagadish. He also told them, "Do not come to me for any illegal *tadbir* (request)".

The Speaker reached Sylhet this morning and attended several local programmes and returned to the capital at night.

BGMEA concerned at govt's decision to cancel free quota system

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association has expressed concern over the government decision to cancel free quota system for garments export to the US and Canada next year.

In a press release last night BGMEA said that the matter was discussed at its executive committee meeting yesterday in Chittagong. BGMEA president Anisur Rahman Sinha presided.

Sinha said that BGMEA was supposed to be informed before taking such an important decision regarding garments export. He hoped that free quota system would continue.

Inside Today

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Between the inheritance and the millennium

Fear of a Single Party

Dominance in Bangladesh

M Rashiduzzaman writes from Glassboro, New Jersey
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Law and Our Rights

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Supplement

One page special supplement on the death anniversary of Ziaur Rahman on Page 8

Prayer Timings

	May 30
	Azan Jamaat
Fajr	4:15 4:20
Zohr	12:45 1:30
Asr	4:45 4:55
Maghrib	6:40 6:43
Esha	7:40 8:10

Source: Islamic Foundation

Assets handed over to Unocal

Occidental to leave country next month

US-based oil and gas exploration giant Unocal has taken over all assets and liabilities of Occidental in Bangladesh while Occidental declared its withdrawal from the country, reports UNB.

The announcement was made by two top officials of the US companies at a press briefing at Occidental's office in the city yesterday.

It came after Occidental Petroleum Corporation and Unocal Corporation signed a share purchase agreement for Bangladesh and Yemen on Thursday.

According to the agreement, Unocal will acquire Occidental's properties and liabilities in Bangladesh while Occidental will take over Unocal's holdings in Yemen.

Occidental, a pioneer investor in Bangladesh's oil and gas sector, is scheduled to leave

Bangladesh in the third quarter of next month after completion of all transactions.

With this taking over, Unocal's investment in Bangladesh will rise to 260 million US dollar.

Replying to a question on Unocal's prospective investment in Bangladesh, its president and director in Bangladesh Terry Budden said if all the planned projects, including the proposed power plants and gas pipelines, come through, their investment would eventually rise to one billion US dollars.

He said that as per the agreement, his organisation would not only takeover the assets of Occidental, but also the liabilities like compensation for Magurchara explosion.

Asked about the reason for Occidental's withdrawal, it's Bangladesh president and general manager Nigel L Hopkin-

son said it was mainly for consolidating "our strength and efficiency."

"We have to go through this situation so that we can be competitive in the world," he said. Actually Occidental was consolidating its presence in the regions it is already strong. The areas are Middle East, South America and North American, Hopkinson added.

"Decreasing trend of oil worldwide is driving us to do so,"

Terry Budden added: "It is difficult to be all in everywhere. Lower cost operation is the main objective."

He said Unocal favoured to increase its interest in Bangladesh and leave Yemen because it has more expertise in South Asia and can ensure low cost operation.

Unocal is presently working

See Page 12 Col 2

PM tells golden jubilee function

No corruption charges against AL govt

CHITTAGONG, May 29: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today ruled out the possibility of calling early election, saying the polls will be held in time in 2001 under a neutral caretaker government, reports UNB.

"We wanted to give the elections earlier, but the opposition did not accept the proposal, rather they are trying to create anarchy in the name of movement," she told a big rally on the occasion of the golden jubilee celebration of Awami League at the Polog Ground here in the afternoon.

Bangladesh Awami League

had started its Golden Jubilee celebration from the port city today, which will conclude on June 23 in the capital.

The Prime Minister said the opposition took the announcement of early election by the government as its weakness. So, election will be held in time, she added.

"If Awami League wins the mandate of the people, their confidence, it will come again to power," she said adding that Awami League will never try to cling to power by force.

Referring to the "conspiracy" See Page 12 Col 5

A view from the Gully

By Tawfiq Aziz Khan

Shahid Afridi was brilliantly 'caught' at deep square leg by team-mate Shoaib Akhtar off the bowling of Dion Nash. But the problem was the 'catch' was taken beyond the boundary, at the stands.

Fleming started confidently by winning the toss and then took two quick decisions that proved him wrong — by inviting Pakistan to bat on a firm wicket on a blustery but bright day and then opening the attack with Dion Nash instead of Geoff

See Page 12 Col 4

We give you MORE

TODAY'S MATCHES

Australia vs West Indies
Venue: Old Trafford
Live Coverage: BTV and ESPN (3:45 pm)

Kenya vs Sri Lanka
Venue: Southampton
Live Coverage: Star Sports (3:45 pm)

TOMORROW'S MATCHES

Bangladesh vs Pakistan
Venue: Northampton
Live Coverage: BTV and Star Sports (3:45 pm)

New Zealand vs Scotland
Venue: Edinburgh
Live Coverage: ESPN (3:45 pm)

Zimbabwe stun SA

CHELMSFORD, England, May 29: Zimbabwe re-ignited their World Cup hopes after producing the shock of the tournament by beating favourites South Africa by 48 runs here today, report agencies.

South Africa's Neil Johnson got his revenge against Hansie Cronje's World Cup favourites as Zimbabwe recorded their third win in their fifth and final group A match.

Man of the match Johnson cracked 76 in Zimbabwe's 233 for six and then routed South Africa's top order with three wickets as the group A leaders slid to 185 all out.

It was Zimbabwe's first victory over their African neighbours and boosted their hopes of reaching the second stage Super Six.

But Alastair Campbell's side will have to wait for the result of the rain-affected match between England and India at Edgbaston before discovering whether they had crept through.

If England win when play resumes on Sunday, Zimbabwe are through. If India win, then the final two qualifying places will be decided on run rate between India, England and Zimbabwe.

South Africa, who had already qualified with four wins, were skittled out for their lowest ever total in the World Cup, falling 10 short of the 195 they made against Sri Lanka in 1992.

South Africa's innings was torn open when five wickets went for 16 runs as they crashed to 40 for six in the 12th over. Daryll Cullinan (29) put on 66 with Shaun Pollock (52) to rekindle hope and Lance Klusener smashed an unbeaten 52.

But it went down the drain as the innings ended at 185 in 47.2 overs.

Earlier, left-handed Johnson, who represented South Africa 'A' but failed to break into the senior side, gave Zimbabwe the best possible start in a match they must win to have a chance of reaching the second stage.

He put on 65 for the first wicket with Grant Flower (19) and a further 66 with Murray Goodwin (34) for the second as Zimbabwe reached 112 for one after 25 overs.

Johnson had taken the score to 170 for two with more than 10 overs remaining when Allan Donald removed him and captain Alastair Campbell in the same over to check Zimbabwe's progress.

Johnson, once of Natal and Leicestershire, hit 10 boundaries and raced to his half-century in 57 balls but hooked Donald to deep mid-wicket.

Three balls later Donald trapped Campbell leg before to claim his 200th wicket in one-day internationals.

The Zimbabweans, who have never beaten South Africa at cricket, suffered a further blow when Andy Flower was run out to leave Campbell's side wob-

See Page 12 Col 5

CLOSE-UP

WITH LONG LASTING MOUTHWASH & FLUORIDE

SHINY WHITE TEETH - FRESHER BREATH

For Long Lasting Fresh Breath and Sparkling White Teeth



Veteran England pace bowler Angus Fraser looks towards the outfield as Indian openers Saurav Ganguly and Sadagopan Ramesh runs between the wickets at Edgbaston yesterday. — AFP photo

Game washed out, resumes today

India, England on a knife edge

EDGBASTON, England, May 29: India and hosts England were left locked in a tense, ill-tempered battle to qualify for the cricket World Cup second round as rain halted their group A match here today, reports AFP.

England, chasing India's 232 for eight, recovered from 12 for two to 73 for three before play was called off in the 21st over.

Play will resume today. England will reach the second round if they win but an Indian victory will leave both teams, as well as Zimbabwe, with six points.

Two of them will qualify on run rate behind the South Africans.

Indian seamer Debashish Mohanty wrecked England's start with the wickets of captain Alec Stewart and Graeme Hick in three balls.

Mohanty, a last-minute inclusion in the Indian World Cup squad after being omitted from a provisional short-list, forced Stewart to edge a catch to second slip in the fourth over.

The 23-year-old then bowled Hick off the inside edge.

Temperatures began to boil over soon after.

Graeme Thorpe was warned to cool down after reacting angrily when Mohanty walked

See Page 12 Col 7

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NEIL JOHNSON
(Zimbabwe)
Man of the Match
South Africa vs Zimbabwe

WP agitation programme

By Staff Correspondent

Workers Party yesterday announced an agitation programme beginning on June 15 to protest government's "misrule" and its failure to resolve water-power crises and curb terrorism.

The programmes were announced by WP general secretary Rashed Khan Menon at a rally in the city organised in observance of countryside "Black Flag Demonstration Day."

The programmes are: sit in demonstration in all thana headquarters on June 15, expressing solidarity with the movements launched by different professional groups on June 28 and padajatra from July 10-17.

Vajpayee refuses to stop air strikes

India, Pakistan ready for talks to defuse tension

NEW DELHI, May 29: India and Pakistan said today they were ready for talks to defuse tensions over Kashmir but Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee refused to halt air attacks on Muslim guerrillas, report agencies.

Pakistan said its Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz was expected to visit New Delhi next week to meet his Indian counterpart Jaswant Singh and that dates were being worked out through diplomatic channels.

Pakistan Information Minister Mashahid Hussain said in Islamabad that Vajpayee yes-

terday "accepted" Pakistani Premier Nawaz Sharif's offer of Ministerial talks to de-escalate tensions along the Line of Control that divides the Indian and Pakistan-held Kashmir.

Prime Minister Vajpayee, however, told Indian opposition leaders here that while he was ready for peace talks, he had turned down Sharif's plea to stop bombing infiltrators in Kashmir.

Vajpayee was quoted by an aide as saying that Sharif wanted an end to four days of fierce air strikes by India to pave the way for peace talks.

"We are going to talk, but there is no pre-condition," he said.

The Pakistani foreign ministry said Sharif impressed upon Vajpayee over the telephone yesterday "not to allow the situation on the Line of Control to drift towards a dangerous direction."

Sharif also denied that Pakistan was responsible for the Kashmir situation, and blamed it on India's air strikes and artillery shelling in the Kargil sector.

Sharif reportedly told Vaj-

See Page 12 Col 4

'Open market' for stolen drugs

By Naimul Haq

Drugs pilfered from government hospitals and health centres across the country are sold in certain drug stores at Mitford medicine market in the city.

At least a dozen small and big drug stores on the first floor of a three-storey building at Mitford — 212 Medicine Market — were seen buying and selling these medicines.

"This is where all the 'dealers' in pilfered drugs" come to sell those. There are some identified 'dealers' through whom we buy those medicines. None other than the 'dealers' can sell the stolen drugs," a salesman told this correspondent during his visit to the market.

Another salesman said, "The drugs come in bulks. They in-

clude syrup, vials of injections, packets of different tablets and capsules."

Fridays and Saturdays are the 'main days for our trading,' he said but could not specify the reasons.

Initially he refused to name the hospitals from where the medicines come, but on insistence he admitted that Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Mitford Hospital, National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD) were the main sources of supply.

"Stolen medicines are also brought to this market from Chittagong, Khulna, Barisal, Dinajpur, Comilla, Mymensingh and some other regions," an elderly salesman

said. "The transaction per month is more than Tk five lakh."

Asked who are the buyers of these medicines, a salesman at another store said, "Most of the drugs are purchased by drug stores in the rural areas. The number of local customers is very small."

Government hospitals and health centres get medicine supply from Essential Drugs Company Limited, better known as EDCL. The company has two factories, one at Tejgaon in the capital and the other in Bogra.

All EDCL drugs carry labels that read, 'buying and selling is punishable by law. But dishonesty is not.' See Page 12 Col 1



Ziaur Rahman's anniversary of death today

By Staff Correspondent

The 18th death anniversary of President Ziaur Rahman will be observed today.

This day in 1981, the valiant freedom fighter was assassinated at Chittagong Circuit House by a group of disgruntled army personnel.

To mark the anniversary, BNP and its different front organisations and socio-cultural organisations have taken up elaborate programmes including laying wreath, *Qurankh-wani*, *milad mahfil*, destitute feeding, discussions, photo exhibition, blood donation and mourning procession.

Meanwhile, a 12-day programme to observe the death anniversary began yesterday. Similar programmes have also been taken at all city, district and thana headquarters. BNP sources said that different units of the party abroad have also taken up elaborate programmes.

See Page 12 Col 1

Frozen food export

List of 17 more cos await PM's approval

By Rafiq Hasan

The government has prepared a new list of 17 frozen food exporters for sending it to the European Commission for approval.

The list of companies will be sent in two phases, ten in the first phase and seven in the second phase. The list is awaiting Prime Minister's approval, sources in the fishery ministry said.

Of the 17 companies, 11 are located in Khulna, five in Chittagong and only one in Dhaka.

The names of ten companies to be sent in the first phase are: Sekai Corporation Ltd, Khulna; Bangladesh Sea Foods Industries Ltd, Khulna; National Sea Food Industries Ltd, Khulna; Southern Foods Ltd, Khulna; Rupali Sea Foods Ltd, Khulna; New Foods Ltd, Khulna; M U Sea Foods Ltd, Khulna; Amam Sea Foods Ltd, Khulna; Menhar Sea Foods, Chittagong and International Sea Food Ltd, Chittagong.

The rest seven are: Bagerhat Sea Food Industries Ltd, Khulna; Modern Sea Food Industries Ltd, Khulna; Shalnewaz Sea Foods (Pvt) Ltd, Khulna; Shrimp and Fish Processing Plant Ltd, Chittagong; Frozen Foods Ltd, Chittagong; Snow King Frozen Foods (Pvt) Ltd Dhaka and Conception Sea Foods Ltd.

Meanwhile, owners of some companies in the second list are lobbying for placing those in the first list, the sources said.

A total of 27 companies are exporting frozen fish to the European Union countries now. The European Commission had imposed a ban on frozen food export from Bangladesh in October 97, complaining that the processing plants did not maintain the European hygienic standard.

The ban was withdrawn in February last year after a monitoring found improvement in the processing system and six companies were allowed to export frozen food in the first phase. Another 21 companies were given approval for exporting frozen food in two phases.

Transport strike in Chuadanga

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, May 29: The Bus-Truck Gramik Union began an indefinite transport strike in the district today protesting BDR firing on a mob at Jibannagar thana headquarters yesterday.

The transport workers backed by local people yesterday attacked Jibannagar BDR checkpoint protesting alleged harassment of some female passengers of a Kaliganj-bound bus by BDR personnel after they found smuggled sugar and motor parts in the bus.

The BDR men chased the protesters towards Jibannagar Bus-Truck Gramik Union office and clashed with them.

At one stage, they opened fire on the protesters, leaving 20 injured. Deputy Commissioner, Chuadanga, convened a meeting of BDR sector commander, commanding officer of BDR 28 Battalion, leading people of Chuadanga and Jibannagar and transport workers' leaders in his conference room this afternoon to settle the dispute. The meeting was continuing till filing of this report.

Beyond the boundary

Wheels Within Wheels

By Shakil Kasem

Much before the rains came India had shot itself in the foot, by getting only a measly 232 on the boards. Even Zimbabwe, raised eyebrows and all that, got 233 against South Africa and looked more than good enough to make a fight of it till the bitter end.

Having been put in by Eng-

land, India had a fairly decent start, although Ramesh could have been out many times over, before Mullyall put him out of misery. By then however, India did manage to put up almost 50 for the opening stand. More importantly, they saw off the new ball operators as well. David

See Page 12 Col 7

we score...

while others watch

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