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PM tells opening session of confce of Asian lawmakers

Role of people's representatives, civil societies unique for peace

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina opened the five-day conference of the Asian parliamentarians in the city, yesterday, with a call to the people's representatives and those representing civil societies of the region to make "collective and concerted efforts for peace in the continent."

"The role of public representatives in bringing about and sustaining peace is unique. So is that of the representatives of the civil society," the PM said while opening the conference, yesterday morning. "And here you are assembled today, both sides, to determine your role for

the future of the people of our dear continent ... We must not permit ourselves to forget even for a moment that the main spirit of the conference is friendship and friendship alone."

Premier Hasina said that the largest number of the world's poor live in Asia. "But the fact remains that we have a very good reserve of resources too, human resources being the most important of these. There is no reason why we should not be able to change our lot. We must be able to do so. That is why peace and co-operation between us are so important."

A total of 109 representatives from 28 Asian countries including Bangladesh participated in the conference. The other Asian countries which were represented in the peace conference include Bahrain, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, In-

donesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Korea, Kuwait, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syria, Thailand, Tonga, Uzbekistan and Yemen.

Zeng Jianhui, Head of the Chinese Delegation and Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan Elahi Bakh spoke on behalf of the parliamentary delegations, while former prime minister of India I K Gujral spoke on behalf of the civil societies of the region. Speaker of the Bangladesh

See Page 11 Col 7

Asian lawmakers' assoc likely to be formed concluding day

By Staff Correspondent

The proposed association of Asian parliamentarians is likely to be formed on the concluding day of the four-day conference of Asian lawmakers in Dhaka.

The conference attended by 109 legislators from 28 Asian countries began at Hotel Sonargaon yesterday.

Parliament secretaries of the participating countries in their pre-conference meeting on Tuesday endorsed the proposal to form an "Asian lawmakers' body" styled "Association of Asian Parliamentarians" for Peace (AAPP).

The proposal would be forwarded to a drafting committee for considering the charter and rules of the proposed association and make its recommendations today, said Quazi Manjur-i-Mowla, Parliament Secretary of Bangladesh and secretary general of the conference.

The drafting committee

See Page 11 Col 3

Showcause on Zafar Chy, five others

By Staff Correspondent

A lower court yesterday issued a notice asking Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury and five others to explain why the UCBL board headed by him would not be barred from functioning.

The Fourth Sub Judge, Dhaka, gave seven days to the defendants from the date of receipt of the notice.

They court order came after Aftabuzzaman Chowdhury Babu and four others filed a suit challenging the legality of the Zafar-led board which is running the United Commercial Bank Ltd (UCBL).

Babu, a former chairman of the bank, is claiming to be the legally elected chairman of the bank. He is claiming that Zafar Chowdhury and five others voluntarily resigned, following which he was elected chairman.

On Thursday afternoon, some 50 "miscreants" forced their way into the boardroom while a board meeting was in progress. Zafar Chowdhury in a

press conference alleged that the "gangsters" were led by Babu who compelled five board members (including Zafar) to resign at gunpoint.

A day after the incident the central bank suspended the activities of the board and appointed an administrator to run the bank. It also served notices upon Babu and Zafar addressing them both as chairman to explain why the board would not be dissolved.

Earlier 10 other directors later filed a writ petition and obtained a stay order against the central bank notice. Zafar Chowdhury-led board took control of the bank immediately after the High Court had stayed the central bank notice on last Sunday.

A day after the stay order, on Monday, Babu also filed a similar writ petition with the same High Court bench seeking a similar stay on the same case. Meanwhile, participation of

See Page 12 Col 1

Khaleda to lead another road march Sept 5

By Staff Correspondent BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia will lead another one-day "mini road march" from Dhaka to Aricha on September 5 as part of the party's current campaign against the Awami League government.

The march is also aimed at mobilising support for the opposition's planned sit-in demonstration in front of Bangladesh Secretariat on September 12.

Earlier, the former prime minister led a similar road march from Dhaka to Aricha on August 26.

The mini march will start from Amin Bazar under Savar thana at 10 am, said a press release yesterday. After addressing a public meeting at Amin Bazar bus stand Khaleda will proceed towards Aricha.

The High Court directed the Metropolitan Sessions Judge of Dhaka to take up the case from Nuruddin's court and dispose of the same as per law and procedure.

The then judge fixed several dates for delivering judgement, but felt embarrassed to pass the judgement.

All the accused, including Aktaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, were also present in the court.

Humayun Zahir murder All accused asked to appear before court on Sept 15

The Metropolitan Sessions Judge of Dhaka yesterday fixed September 15 for the appearance of all accused in the Humayun Zahir Murder Case, reported BSS.

The march is also aimed at mobilising support for the opposition's planned sit-in demonstration in front of Bangladesh Secretariat on September 12.

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Today's matches

Today's matches of the Bangabandhu Cup International Football Tournament will be held at Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium instead of Bangabandhu National Stadium, reports BSS.

The matches are: Ghana vs Uzbekistan (4 pm), Japan vs Kuwait (6 pm).

The remaining matches of the tournament will be held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium as per previous schedule, official sources said last night.

Chandpur embankment partially submerged

Cracks develop in Meghna-Dhanagoda project dam

By Staff Correspondent

Chandpur town protection embankment has partially gone under water while cracks have developed in two irrigation project dams in the district.

Meanwhile, fresh areas in Dhaka and adjacent districts including Narayanganj were flooded yesterday.

The flood situation in Sirajganj, Pabna, Natore and Naogaon remained unchanged. But due to a fall in water level in the Brahmaputra river basin, the situation may improve in Pancharagh, Dinajpur, Bogra, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Kurigram and Jamalpur, according to FFWC officials.

The FFWC, however, forecast that more areas in the districts of Chapainawabganj, Rajbari, Faridpur, Madaripur, Sharatpur, Manikganj, Munshiganj and Chandpur are likely to be inundated in the next 24 hours.

Our Chandpur Correspondent adds: Flood waters entered most of the houses in Sadar, Hajiganj, Matlab and Shahristan thanas though the situation shown slight improvement.

Cracks developed in the dams of Tk 80 crore Chandpur irrigation project and Tk 100 crore Meghna-Dhanagoda project at Matlab. The town protection embankment was partially submerged yesterday.

The discharge of water flow at Chandpur point is likely to increase following end of full moon, officials said.

In Gaibandha, some 70 feet of the Nurullah Beel Project

See Page 11 Col 8

Energy sector plan finalised

Humphrey tells press before leaving

By Staff Correspondent

US Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Energy Calvin Humphrey yesterday expressed his hopes that the US-Bangladesh energy sector cooperation would help Bangladesh lift its status to the ranks of middle income countries by the year 2020.

Speaking at a press briefing at Zia International Airport before his departure on conclusion of a four-day visit, Humphrey said an energy sector action plan was finalised during his visit and its implementation would begin soon.

A Bangladesh gas reserve study by the US Geological Survey, likely to be completed by the end of this year, would help plan best utilisation of gas reserve, he said. "Gas export is one of the proposition for Bangladesh to consider."

US Ambassador John C

Holzman and Additional Secretary of Energy Ministry Syed Tanvir Hossain, among others, were present at the press conference.

Replies to question on payment of compensation by US company Occidental for the damages caused by Magurjhara blow-out, Holzman said that the issue was discussed at a meeting between Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad and Calvin Humphrey. To remove all differences of opinion in this regard, it was decided that experts from both Petrobangla and Occidental-Uncol would jointly assess the damages.

The Ambassador further said the US government's concern in this regard is to remove the differences between Bangladesh and the oil companies without getting involved in the business aspects.

See Page 11 Col 3

AL conspiring to divide nation, says BNP

By Staff Correspondent

BNP central leaders at a discussion meeting in observance of the party's 21st founding anniversary yesterday said the government has declared a war against their party as well as the people and is conspiring to divide the nation to make it dependent on India.

Since its birth, BNP has been relentlessly working to unite the nation, but Awami League divided it immediately after independence and is still conspiring to do so.

The discussion organised by BNP was held at the Engineers Institution in the city. Chaired by party Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, it was addressed by, among others, Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, M Saifur Rahman, Oli Ahmed, Khandaker Delwar

Hossain, Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Dr RA Gani, Khandaker Mahbubuddin Ahmed, Kurshid Jahan Haq and Shamsuzzaman Dudu.

Chowdhury said though the government claims that transfer or corridor is a simple matter, actually it is not so because the country's independence, sovereignty, security and the national economy are directly linked with it. "It is a deep rooted conspiracy."

He alleged that politics of the ruling party is based on killing, repression, rape, looting and terrorism. "Though Baksal is not in existence, the government has already introduced it without any announcement," he said.

He refuted the allegation of

See Page 11 Col 5

69 killed as Argentine plane crashes on takeoff

BUENOS AIRES, Sept 1: A Boeing 737 jetliner hurtled out of control and crashed after takeoff, killing dozens of people after hoppingscotch a busy boulevard beside the downtown airport, reports AP.

Flight 3142 plane plunged to the ground just before 9 pm last night (2355 GMT), skidding to a stop near a golf course along the Rio de la Plata river and bursting into flames.

At least 69 of the 103 people aboard were killed, the news agency Noticias Argentinas reported, quoting officials at the

scene. TV reports suggest the toll could rise further.

The carrier LAPA, or Lineas Aereas Privadas Argentinas, said 98 passengers and five crew members were on the flight from Jorge Newberry airport. LAPA gave no casualty figures.

Three bodies also were found

in the wreckage of a car found near the plane, La Nacion newspaper reported.

Hotels said they took in

34 injured people, many with burns and other life-threatening injuries. A coast guard offi-

cial said

See Page 12 Col 5

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See Page 12 Col 5

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