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US move to revive military relations with UN

UNITED NATIONS, Feb 5: The US military is resuming high-level contacts with UN peacekeeping officials after years of strained relations over the debacle in Somalia and the US failure to pay its UN debt, reports AP.

US Ambassador Richard Holbrooke said in an interview Friday that both sides were rebuilding a relationship that in recent years had more or less dried up.

"We're trying to use Pentagon know-how to help the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in its planning effort. This is not an attempt to take over UN responsibilities," he said. "Since American taxpayers dollars are involved, and at times even American lives are at risk, we want to help get it right."

US Defence Secretary William Cohen came to the United Nations on Jan 20 and met Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Undersecretary-General Bernard Miyet, who heads the peacekeeping department. Cohen has invited Miyet to Washington for the first time on Tuesday and Wednesday.

US Undersecretary of Defence Walt Slocum, who is in charge of policy, has also been at the United Nations since the last month, and the White House and Pentagon sent senior officials to New York on Thursday to discuss UN peacekeeping plans in Congo and East Timor.

Holbrooke said. "We welcome the improved collaboration with the Pentagon with whom we've had good relations in the past," said UN Communications Director Shashi Tharoor.

In the early 1990s, as UN peacekeeping operations were built up following the end of the Cold War, the Pentagon and the United Nations worked hard to establish a close relationship, said David Malone, a former Canadian ambassador to the United Nations who now heads the New York-based International Peace Academy.

But the killing of 18 American soldiers in Somalia during a US-led peacekeeping operation in 1993 was partly responsible for the United States backing away from the UN. Relations worsened over the US failure to pay its UN debt.

US Defence Department spokesman PJ Crowley also welcomed the new collaboration.

"We certainly agree with UN efforts to stabilise important regions of the world through its peacekeeping efforts and we are in renewed discussions with the UN on ways to make these efforts most effective," he said.

The United Nations is currently involved in 17 peacekeeping operations around the world, the newest in East Timor and Sierra Leone.

American military observers and civilian police are participating in a number of UN



A BNP procession in the city yesterday protesting the Public Safety Act and recent bomb attack at its office. —Star photo

Azimpur murder Police yet to arrest anyone involved

By Staff Correspondent

Police could not arrest anyone involved in Wednesday's robbery and murder at the residence of a government official at Azimpur in the city.

Faisal, 18, son of Anwar Hossain, was killed and Parul, 22, the housemaid, critically injured during the incident.

A close relative of Faisal however is the prime suspect in the robbery and murder at the house, police sources said quoting the statement of the maid, Parul.

Blasts in BNP offices were pre-planned by AL

By Staff Correspondent

BNP leaders at a rally in the city yesterday alleged that the government, after miserably failing to run the country, hatched a conspiracy to destroy the image of the party and divert people's attention from the out-governed movement.

The incidents of bomb blast at BNP central office in the city and at its Chittagong office were pre-planned by the ruling Awami League as part of that conspiracy to malign the party and justify enactment of the "black" Public Safety Act (PSA), they alleged.

PM returns home

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina returned home yesterday morning after a four-day official visit to Brussels, reports UNB.

UGRD Minister Zillur Rahman, Forest and Environment Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury and Food Minister Amir Hossain Amu received the Prime Minister at the airport at about 9:10 am.

Nasim: Public Safety Act

From page 1

sion act 1995 is a bad law for BNP government. The Home Minister said there is provision of appeal in the High Court against judgement of the tribunal.

He brought to light how terrorists in south and southwestern districts, who enjoyed patronage from both administration and political leadership over the years, were flushed out from the underworld.

The terrorists arrested in southwestern region are being tried in tribunals in Khulna, Kushtia and Jessore. If an accused found innocent in the court of law, they would be freed.

Praising the role of newspapers in restoring a democratic dispensation in the country, the Home Minister requested journalists to advance the cause of democracy and people.

"Politics, press and people are inter-linked," Nasim said, adding that newsmen should guard against making any news report or step that could obstruct the process of democracy or encourage undemocratic forces.

The Home Minister said there might be lapses on the part of the government in running the country and the press can detect the flaw through constructive criticism.

He assured that being the Home Minister he would do whatever possible for ensuring free flow of information and unhindered discharge of responsibility by reporters and press photographers.

Speaking on current political dispute, Nasim referred to efforts of the Prime Minister and the business community to end the stalemate. He deplored that intransigent attitude of the leader of the Opposition.

"The door for discussion still

Sanskritik Jote programme to observe Ekushey

By Staff Correspondent

Sanskritik Jote has chalked out a ten-day programme to observe the Shaheed Dibash (Language martyrs day).

The Jote will organise a cultural programme near the National Stadium at Mirpur for the first time this year. The cultural programme will start on February 10 and continue till February 21.

Gaziul Huq, a language movement veteran, will inaugurate the programme at 4 pm on February 10.

On February 21, 1952, valiant sons of the soil made supreme sacrifices to establish Bangla as the state language of the then Pakistan. Since then, the day is being observed as Shaheed Dibash (Ekushey) with due respect to the memory of the martyrs.

The Jote has also taken an initiative to observe the Shaheed Dibash in Calcutta in West Bengal of India, its president Ramendu Mojmunder said at a press conference at the TSC of Dhaka University yesterday.

Prominent Indian writer Ananda Shanker Roy will inaugurate the programme there on February 27. A Bangladesh delegation including Jote leaders will also attend the programme.

The Jote also placed a nine-point demand at the press conference. The demands include use of Bangla in all government and semi-government offices in all types of work except foreign correspondence and establishment of a museum of documents and books on Language Movement near the Central Shaheed Minar.

General Secretary of the Jote, Golam Qudus and its Central Committee members Tariq Sujat, Dr. Muhammad Samad, Shamsul Huda Chowdhury Selim, Hasan Arif and Jahangir were present at the press conference.

They told newsmen that cultural programmes on Ekushey will also be organised in different parts of the city.

Dengue fear

From page 1

They also expressed concern over the government's lack of sincerity in taking preventive measures against growth in the dengue mosquito population.

The Zoologists said that programmes for controlling the Dengue mosquito had not yet been taken at the government level, even though it had created panic among the countryside last year.

They however said that although some sorts of mosquito-control activities are undertaken in some of the cities, these, however, do not appear effective in controlling the Aedes Dengue. Special attention needs to be given in the matter, they added.

To control the dengue mosquito, the experts say, posts for entomologists need to be created in every governmental institution. Concerned quarters point out that the government was posting physicians against vacancies for entomologists.

Referring to Dhaka City Corporation's (DCC) failure in controlling mosquitoes, they said that the drive would not prove effective until an entomologist was posted there.

Two separate technical sessions were held on the theme 'disease vector in Bangladesh and measures for controlling it' later on the day.

Tk one lakh snatched in city

By Staff Correspondent

Muggers snatched Taka one lakh from a pedestrian in front of BRTC Bus Depot at Kamalapur in the city yesterday.

Local people caught one of the muggers and beat him. He was later handed over to Motijheel police.

Lablu and Dilu, the muggers, intercepted an unidentified pedestrian at around 1 pm, said witnesses. They took away Tk 1 lakh in cash from him at dagger point.

Local people chased the muggers and managed to catch one of them named Lablu, when the victim cried out for help, the witnesses added. Dilu, however managed to escape.

A police mobile team rescued Lablu, when he came under a mob attack.

PM attends Afsana's qulkhwani

From page 1

The Qulkhwani of Afsana Mosharrar, wife of BCI President Khondoker Mosharrar Hossain, was held at his Uttara residence yesterday, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, ministers, political leaders, elite and high officials as well as friends, relatives and neighbours of the deceased attended the Qulkhwani.

Peer Shaheb of Narinda conducted the munajat seeking divine blessings for eternal peace of the departed soul.

Teachers-officers' memo to CU VC

From CU Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 5: Campus committee, a newly formed 11-member committee comprising teachers and officers of the Chittagong University (CU) submitted a memorandum to the Vice Chancellor today demanding measures to restore normalcy on the campus.

Leaders of the committee at a meeting held at the VC's office assured about cooperation to the varsity authorities if they take any step to restore normalcy on the campus.

Meanwhile, Shibir-led All Party Student Alliances (APSA) continued strike at the university for the fifth day today. The APSA began strike for an indefinite period from February 1 after a 17-day siege programme to press home its demands, including release of 54 Shibir activists and arrest of the killers of two other Shibir activists.

Two Shibir activists were killed on December 19 in a clash with Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) on the campus.

The APSA also announced fresh agitation programme to press home its one point demand for removal of the VC, Pro-VC, Proctors and Provosts of the university.

The programme was announced at a press conference at a city hotel today.

Garments trader

From page 1

the victim came to the DMCH and told police that a gang of about 10 youths appeared suddenly, shot Raju and fled away. Minto claimed that he was present at the spot during the incident.

None was arrested in connection with the incident till filing of this report last night. Police said the FIR was under process and refused to give details.

Tayebi murder: 2 main accused still at large

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 5: The two main accused in Indian citizen Jibran Tayebi Murder Case are still absconding, CID source said.

Police are yet to arrest Yasin Rahman Titu, son of a garments industrialist and mastermind of the murder and another accused Md Alamgir six other chargesheeted accused are now in the custody, CID source said.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) court earlier accepted the charge sheet against eight people, court sources said.

CID police requested Interpol to arrest Titu who left the country soon after arrest of some terrorists allegedly involved in the murder, sources said.

Meanwhile, CMM's court issued order for attachment of property of the two absconding accused. The order for attachment of their property was sent to Panchlala and Patiya thanas, but police could not locate their personal property, CID source said.

Now CID is trying to give an advertisement in the newspapers asking the two accused to appear before the court within one month, CID source said.

Jibran, only son of West Bengal IGP, who worked as country manager of a shipping company at Agrabad, was shot dead on June 9 last year while he was returning to his residence from his office by driving a car.

Train bomb kills 3, hurts 16 in Pakistan

KARACHI, Feb 5: A train bomb killed three people and injured 16 in Pakistan today, the fifth blast in as many weeks in southern Sindh province, police said, reports AFP.

The explosion occurred at a railway station in Hyderabad, 100 km east of here, just as the train was moving out for another city. Mirpurkhas, also in Sindh province, a local senior police official said.

"The bomb exploded in a car of the train, the official, who did not want to be identified, said by telephone.

The station was immediately cordoned off by para-military troops and police, the official said.

Hospital sources in Hyderabad said most of the injured were in critical condition.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the blast, which came as the country observed a day of solidarity with a decade-old Muslim separatist drive in Indian Kashmir, police said.

Sindh's deputy inspector-general of police, Saud Mirza, told reporters in Hyderabad that a foreign hand was involved in the train bombing.

"It is a Kashmiri day. You can judge yourself who could have done this," he said, in a clear reference to arch-rival India, which blames Pakistan for cross-border terrorism on its side in divided and disputed Kashmir.

Some previous explosions in Sindh and elsewhere in the country were blamed on India's secret service.

Witnesses in Hyderabad said hundreds of people gathered at the railway station and at the hospital where the injured were taken, shouting slogans against the police and the administration, accusing them of security lapses.

BCL to resist

From page 1

they would resist if any organisation try to bring out procession by covering their faces with black clothing.

JCD brought out a procession on the campus yesterday and gheraoed the office of DU Vice Chancellor in protest against Hasina's presence at Bangla Academy. JCD took out their procession from Madhu's Canteen.

Later at a rally there, they said that Hasina has lost her credibility to come to the campus as her student front Bangladesh Chhatra League occupied all the residential dormitories of DU and forced JCD activists out of the campus.

World Bank

From page 1

ment and incomes and cut rural poverty by establishing an improved, sustainable rural transport and trading infrastructure.

The bank in its report said both achievement of PDO and implementation of the project are satisfactory. The original closing date of the project is March 31, 2002.

The World Bank, however, called the performance of both achievement of PDO and progress of implementation of the Agriculture Research Management are unsatisfactory.

The objectives of the project are to increase efficiency of the national agricultural research system through improving research organisation and management, supporting priority research programmes in promising areas, strengthening client orientation and improving research resource allocation.

The original closing date of the project has been fixed at December 31, 2000.

The objectives of the Bangladesh Integrated Nutrition Project are to improve the capacity of national-level nutrition institutions in the areas of advocacy, analysis of causation and consequences of malnutrition while the main objectives of the Coastal Embankment Rehabilitation project are cyclone protection and improved agricultural production.

The bank report said although achievements of some of the objectives of these projects are behind schedule, their implementations are still satisfactory.

Let democracy work

From page 1

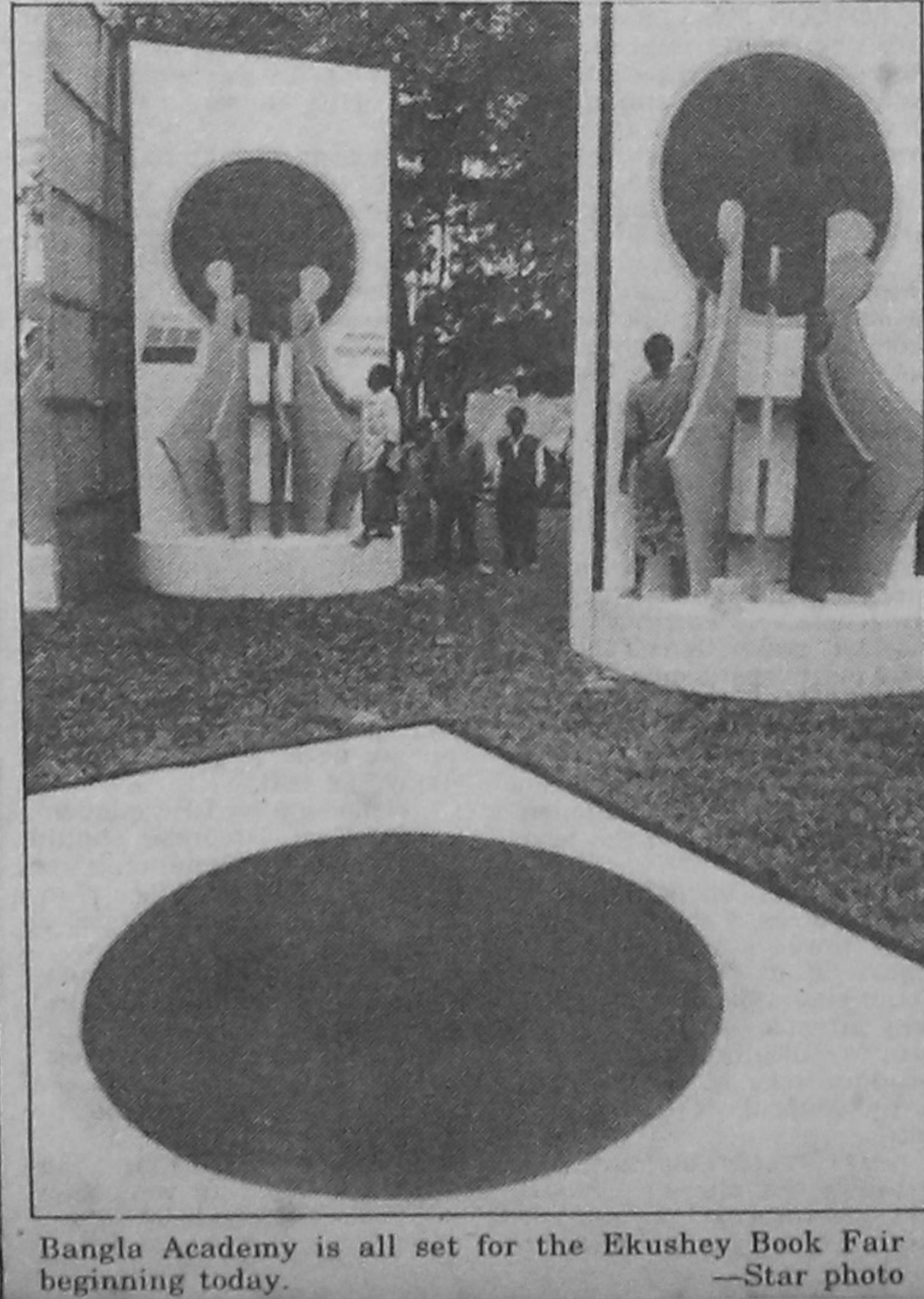
rioting, said Mahmud.

"It would not be wise to assume that the existing democratic superstructures will remain intact if the current trend towards confrontational politics continues," wrote Mahmud. "People are worried because they are not getting any sense of direction to overcome the current crisis from your partisan rhetoric."

"You would agree that it would be meaningless to sustain a democratic system that does not help improve the country's socio-economic condition and alleviate poverty. You have taken many steps during your respective tenures to implement market-oriented economic reforms. But there has not been much progress in implementing the essential institutional reforms that would ensure economic discipline and the best utilisation of resources in a market economy."

Mahmud said any steps taken against the terrorists who have overshadowed economic activities would be welcome by all.

"Where is the obstacle for the elected government to take such a popular step?" asked Mahmud. "You must have realised economic reforms would not help when there is a political demand for black money and illegal income. You must be more



Bangla Academy is all set for the Ekushey Book Fair beginning today. —Star photo