



IAF chief for more inter-services cooperation with Bangladesh

From Pallab Bhattacharya
NEW DELHI, Feb 11: India's Air Chief Marshal A Y Tipnis today said he visualised more interaction between the armed forces of India and Bangladesh, including starting joint exercises between the Air Forces of the two countries.

Another area of cooperation between the Air Forces of the two countries is the training of Bangladeshi pilots in advance weapons delivery, fighter and strike leaders' p courses. Tipnis said here after his just-concluded three-day visit to Bangladesh.

He said he observed "tremendous keenness" among the services of Bangladesh for a wider cooperation with their Indian counterparts. Bangladesh Air Force hinted at the possibilities of seeking India's assistance in maintaining MIG-29 aircraft and Russian-acquired Mi-17 helicopters. Tipnis added.

According to the Indian Air Chief, Bangladesh Air Force were wanting to train their pilots as instructors in helicopter and transport aircraft, weapon delivery instructors, qualified navigation courses and combat and fighter strike leadership courses.

Tipnis said India needed to look more towards Bangladesh, especially in areas of inter-services cooperation and linkages.

He said the two Air Forces also agreed to promote sports and cultural contacts between air force schools in the two countries.

Liton murder One more held in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, Feb 11: One more alleged criminal was arrested here yesterday suspecting his involvement in the murder of Juba League activists Shafiqul Islam Liton.

Liton was killed in police custody by some unidentified miscreants in the court area recently.

The arrested was identified as Nurul Islam alias Nur, 30. He is also one of FIR-named accused in Nazrul Mohar murder case. Nazrul Mohar was killed on the premises of the lower court in 1998.

Earlier police had arrested two persons for their alleged involvement in Liton murder.

The DC (South) of KMP Mazarul Huq said today that more clues are required to prove involvement of a business tycoon in financing the alleged miscreants who killed Liton while being taken back to district jail under police custody on February 1.

The business tycoon of the city who monitored the killing operation is being closely watched, said the DC (South).

Police recorded a suo moto case with the Kotwali thana in

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Prayer Timings

February 12	
Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-45
Zohr	12-45
Asr	4-15
Maghrib	5-58
Esha	7-15
	7-45

Noise levels double, rising fast



A silent zone in the city's Dhanmondi area. —Star photo

By Morshed Ali Khan

Dhaka is almost twice as loud as the law allows, creating an unhealthy environment for residents, say scientists from the Department of Environment.

According to scientists, noise levels should remain below 70 decibels in commercial areas, 65 decibels in industrial areas and 50 decibels in residential areas.

Noise in sensitive areas, such as hospitals, clinics and schools, should remain below 45 decibels.

However, two studies conducted in the last three years suggested average noise levels were almost double allowable levels and rising fast.

Noise pollution can cause deafness, high blood pressure, behavioural changes, heart problems and insomnia.

However, the department only co-ordinates efforts to tackle the problem. The government, police and the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority have done little to crack down on the thousands of horns, faulty engines and blaring loudspeakers that contribute to Dhaka's ambient noise.

One department official said existing laws would be enough to tackle the problem but they must be enforced properly.

Reazuddin Ahmed, another department official, said police should penalise law breakers, but he acknowledged that manpower and equipment shortages made it difficult for them to silence the polluters.

"We have discussed the problem with the police, officials from the Ministry of Housing and Public Works and the BRTA, but the noise remains," said Reazuddin.

However, Ahmed said plans are afoot to declare Dhanmondi a "silent" zone. A signboard has already been erected at Road-8 to raise awareness among motorists and residents about the permissible noise levels inside a residential area, he said.

The standing committee moved raised controversy in the banking circle and many termed the move a pressure on the central bank to violate the Bank Companies Act.

In one of the unique cases, the central bank recently detected massive financial irregularities involving Tk 1.80 crore loan to Fazlur Rahman for construction of a nine-storey shopping mall. Sonali Bank sanctioned the loan on June 25, 1994.

Under the terms and conditions, the SB was to disburse Tk 1.50 crore in eight equal instalments and each cheque would be handed over only after

Top defaulter siphoned off crores of taka

BB report reveals

By M Shamsur Rahman

getting progress report about utilisation of previous ones.

The agreement also said that the seventh and eighth instalments would be given for finishing work of the entire nine-story structure.

The SB local branch had already disbursed the entire amount of Tk 1.50 crore to Rahman although he did not complete work for fifth and sixth floors.

But a central bank investigation revealed, "There was no sign of the rest three floors."

The probe report said, "Prior to disbursement of third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh instalments involving Tk 93.75,000, no progress report was obtained from the engineer."

Meanwhile, the loan limit was increased to Tk 2.10 crore from the original 1.50 crore on June 5, 1995.

The loan limit was increased
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151-member city unit of APAC announced

By Staff Correspondent

The composition of city unit of All Party Action Council of the four-party opposition alliance was announced yesterday with Sadeq Hossain Khoka MP of BNP as its convenor.

The 151-member body comprises representatives of the four alliance components BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote and Jagapa Democratic League, Progressive Nationalist Party, Nationalist Democratic Alliance and Zaker Party.

As regards formation of APAC, the city unit has violated guidelines set by the Central Liaison Committee (CLC) of the alliance and jointly signed by the secretaries general of the four parties.

The CLC had instructed that APAC units across the country should be formed, each comprising not more than 101 members. Chittagong city unit of APAC has also violated the guidelines as regards the number of members and created the posts of joint convenors and member-secretary.

Composition of the city unit of APAC is: BNP - 74 members, JP - 37, Jamaat - 21, IOU - 13 and others - 6. The unit consists of leaders and activists who are active on the street.

Presidents and general secretaries of three parties have active on the street.

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Why the body is still at morgue?

By Staff Correspondent

Police said yesterday they didn't know why the body of the man killed in the bomb blast at the BNP's central office was kept at the Dhaka Medical College morgue for about nine days.

Unidentified bodies are usually kept at the morgue for just 72 hours. However, this body was held longer at the police's request.

Shortly after the blast, police said they believed the dead man was Ismail Hossain Babu, 25, a resident of Niamat Saha Street in the old city. However, they couldn't find someone to confirm his identity.

Hospital sources said police brought several people to morgue to identify the victim, but all attempts failed.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner claimed earlier that the victim's relatives had been informed and the police would hand the body over to Anjuman-e-Mafidul Islam for burial within 72 hours.

Despite the delay, the unclaimed body will likely be handed over to the Anjuman-e-Mafidul Islam for burial today, hinted sources at the Motijheel Police Station.

American Cup golf starts

Sports Reporter

The two-day 22nd American Millennium Cup golf tournament got underway at the picturesque Kurmitola Golf Club course yesterday.

Chief of Army Staff and president of the club Muhammad Mustafizur Rahman BB teed-off competitors at 7.30 in the morning.

At least 300 players including ambassadors, high commissioners and diplomats based in Dhaka, expatriates and the country's business magnates will put themselves to the test over the tricky 18-hole course.

The American Cup is considered a major event of the season in Bangladesh. Held annually since 1977, the Kurmitola Golf Club has had the honour of hosting it.

The prestige tournament often attracts American companies operating here as its prime sponsors.

US ambassador to Bangladesh John C. Holzman, deputy chief of mission Theodore A. Nist, chairman of the organising committee and vice-president of Unocal Bangladesh Limited, Gregory Alan Gritters and vice-chairman of the tournament committee Iqbal Mahmud were among those who attended the inauguration.

At the end of the tournament a prize-giving ceremony will take place at 7.30 p.m. at the Sonargaon Hotel.

Rejoinder

The Youngone Group has issued the following rejoinder regarding a news item headlined '10,000 Youngone staff deprived of pay raise' published in The Daily Star on February 9.

Youngone Management states emphatically that the article accusing Youngone of depriving staff of pay raise is totally baseless and false, and categorically denies these false and libelous accusations.

Youngone carefully follows the rules as promulgated by the BEZA authorities. These rules include annual 10% raises which are given to all workers once a year, maximum number of hours which may be worked on any one day, or any one

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Delhi hopes Clinton visit to break new ground

NEW DELHI, Feb 11: India said today it expected US President Bill Clinton's visit next month to lay the ground for a new partnership, reports Reuters.

The visit offered an opportunity to forge a new partnership free from the perceptions of the Cold War, a foreign ministry spokesman said.

Clinton starts a five-day India visit on March 20, the first by a US president in over two decades. India was a close supporter of the former Soviet Union during the Cold War era.

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