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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 Bangladesh pilots in advance weapons delivery, fighter and strike leadership 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 Shaiful 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 Nuru, 30. He is also one of FIR-named accused in Nazrul Mohrar murder case. Nazrul Mohrar 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 Mazharul Haq 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 See page 11 col 7

Inside Today

Article

Clinton's visit to Bangladesh

Let's Put the Better Face Forward

by A H Jaffor Ullah
writes from New Orleans, USA
Page 4

Star Literature

Reflection: The wedding of the fox and issues on fairy tales; Fiction: A sensitive issue in twilight years, and Poems
Pages 6 & 7

Business

Kibria for quality ceramic products to win int'l market
UNCTAD mulls globalisation as Bangkok meet begins today
Pages 8 & 9

Prayer Timings

February 12		
Fajr	Azan	Jamaat
5:45	6:15	
Zohr	12:45	1:20
Asr	4:15	4:30
Maghrib	5:58	6:00
Esha	7:15	7:45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Noise levels double, rising fast

By Morshed Ali Khan



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

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.

Police sergeants who work the streets said they thought they were slowly going deaf due to the persistent noise.

"We have never focused on this problem but if we were officially asked to clamp down on hydraulic or other powerful horns then we would be able to stop the nuisance," said a traffic sergeant in Shahbagh.

Other sergeants said they knew about the existing laws that ban powerful horns or loudspeakers, but the devices have become so popular it's too difficult to silence them all unless the government sincerely tackled the problem.

Top defaulter siphoned off crores of taka

BB report reveals

By M Shamsur Rahman

A top loan defaulter in the country whose case was unusually taken up by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance Ministry was found to have siphoned off crores of taka from the banking sector, according to a central bank report.

The standing committee move 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

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-storey 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 See Page 12 Col 6

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 Sadek Hossain Khoka MP of BNP as its convener.

The 151-member body comprises representatives of the four alliance components BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote and Jagga, 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, IOJ - 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 See Page 12 Col 2

Police themselves file cases when they are involved!

Victims' relatives are 'tactically' prevented

By staff Correspondent

When police are involved in the killing of a person, the police station concerned usually registers murder case on its own initiative and allegedly does not allow relatives of the victim to file a case.

There are a number of such incidents to justify this allegation, the latest being the killing of Ahmed Hossain Sumon.

Sumon, 23, was shot dead allegedly by DB police when they raided their house at Karimullah Bagh under Shyampur thana in the city on Wednesday night. Shyampur police did not allow his relatives to file a case on the plea that DB had already filed a case in this regard.

Majibur Rahman Majma, a resident of the city's Bashabo area, was allegedly tortured to death by police on March 14 last year.

Majma was nabbed from his house along with four other

persons following a complaint from a neighbour who is a local Awami League leader. In a bid to escape police torture, he jumped into a water body in the area and drowned.

Police quickly registered an unnatural death case, refused to take any case from his family members and allegedly threatened them not to proceed further in this regard.

Investigation into the case simply ended in a 'final report' as police failed to prove charges against any one due to shortage of evidence, one source pointed out.

Shamsuddin Jewel, a resident of Mugdopara, while being chased by police fell into a water body at Kamalapur on November 15 last year and drowned.

Local people protested the 'killing' by police. As usual, police filed an unnatural death case in this

connection and did not allow family members of the victim to file any case.

Besides, Shah Mohammad Tuku, a resident of Mirbagh, drowned in a canal in Mirbagh area in the city while trying to escape arrest on July 3.

When Tuku's brother went to Ramna thana to lodge a case, he was allegedly confined there for two hours and then allowed to go on condition that they would not try further to file any case in this regard. Police filed an unnatural death case.

Police said that they were still investigating the cases regarding the killing of Jewel and Tuku.

When contacted, some lawyers said that in all such incidents, police were taking advantage of Section 403 of the CrPc which says that two cases cannot be filed under the same Section in connection with the same incident.

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 Niamur 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 Anjum-e-Mafidul Islam for burial within 72 hours.

Despite the delay, the unclaimed body will likely be handed over to the Anjum-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 led-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 10000 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 libellous 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 See page 11 col 7

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.

Senior Indian diplomat Lalit Mansingh held a round of meetings with the Clinton administration and US Congress leaders in Washington this week, the official said.

"There was general agreement that the visit offered the opportunity for a qualitative new relationship between the two democracies," the spokesman said in a briefing on Singh's meetings with US leaders.

But a series of comments by Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on tensions on the Indian subcontinent and nuclear proliferation have punctured some of the enthusiasm and raised concerns about US plans to play deal-maker.

Clinton said he was profoundly concerned about the discord between India and Pakistan and hoped to do something about it. Albright was quoted as saying that the president

AL terrorists & DB men killed Sumon: Khaleda

Opposition leader Khaleda

Zia accused the government of killing Sumon and said it created the Public Safety Act to repress people rather than ensure their safety, reports UNE.

"Awami terrorists and DB policemen killed Sumon. Even a case against the killing was not accepted at the thana," she said while addressing a gathering of protesters in front of the victim's house at Karimbag yesterday afternoon.

Zia assured the mourners the killers would be tried and the culprits punished once the government was gone.

When Zia visited Sumon's residence, his family members broke into tears. Zia embraced Sumon's mother and consoled the family. She stayed 15 minutes.

See page 11 col 8

Sumon's family to file case against 24 cops

By Staff Correspondent

Ahmed Hossain Sumon's family will file a complaint case against the 24 police personnel that killed his son and critically injured one of his brothers and a niece.

The case will be filed with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court on Sunday, said Mozammel Hossain, the victim's elder brother.

Sumon, 23, his elder brother, Shamim Hossain, and his niece Tuli, 10, were shot during a detective branch raid on their Karimullah Bagh residence in Shyampur early Wednesday. Shamim and Tuli are in critical condition in Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

See Page 12 Col 1

Joint public rally tomorrow Khaleda may call 36-hr hartal from Feb 16

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP-led opposition alliance has started massive preparations for tomorrow's joint public meeting and mass procession in the city.

The programme has been organised to protest what the alliance said, enactment of "repressive, black and anti-people law" in the name of public safety.

The alliance has set guidelines for making the first ever combined programme peaceful, and an all-out success.

The just formed Dhaka City unit of the All-Party Action Council has been given the re-

sponsibility for making proper arrangements of the meeting and procession.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad, Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Golam Azam and Islami Oikya Jote chief Azizul Haq will address the public meeting from a dais at Paltan Maidan at 3 pm.

Elderly politician and Democratic League President Oli Ahad will also address the meeting on behalf of the seven-party alliance.

There would be only 14 See page 11 col 7

8000 bags of adulterated milk seized in Ctg in 5 days: 2 held

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 11: Chittagong metropolitan police continued drive to seize adulterated powdered milk sold in the city by a section of unscrupulous traders under a label of foreign made skimmed milk.

Police during the drive in past five days seized eight thousand sacks of skimmed milks allegedly found unfit for human consumption.

Police arrested two persons, identified as Md Hossain and Haradan Das from Majirghat godowns. They were placed on remand for interrogation, police said.

A senior police official here said that the drive was intensified after recovery of a consignment of adulterated milk from a godown in at Majirghat area.

All the six thanas were given instruction to locate and seize the adulterated powdered milk. Sources said a section of traders was engaged in marketing powdered milks which after

expiry of date turned into hardened blocks. They artificially milled the blocks and packed those in clandestine places in Khatunonj, Korbanigonj, Majirghat and some other places of the city.

Adulterated milk is reportedly used in restaurants, sweetmeat producing factories and shops and some icecream factories to make more profits at the cost of sufferings of the people, sources added.

Meanwhile, the kingpins behind the rackets reportedly went into hiding from the business centres of the city after some consignments of adulterated skimmed milk were seized by police.

Police said efforts are on to nab those kingpins and their syndicate members operating in the city.

However, recovery of huge adulterated milk in the city created panic among the consumers, sources said.

Book fair draws huge crowd

By DU Correspondent

The Amar Ekushey Book Fair drew a huge crowd on Friday, because of weekly holiday. The fair wore a festive look as hundreds of book lovers gathered at the Bangla Academy.

The traditional book fair, which is an annual event of the country, turned into a rendezvous of readers, writers, essayists and poets. Young and old all began to gather at the fair from 8 am on the day.

The younger visitors turned out in impressive numbers yesterday. Some tiny tots, along with their parents, were also seen moving around the stalls in the small "Children's Fair". They were busy buying books, particularly those written for them.

"I came to the fair with my mum to buy some new books," said seven-year old Sabuj, who visited the fair for the second day this year.

On an average more books were sold at the fair yesterday compared to the previous days.

A discussion meeting on "Bangladesh of 20th Century: Chronological Evolution of Morality and Ethical Science" was held at the Academy

See page 11 col 7



A tiny tot having a curious look at a book at the Bangla Academy Book Fair yesterday. —Star photo