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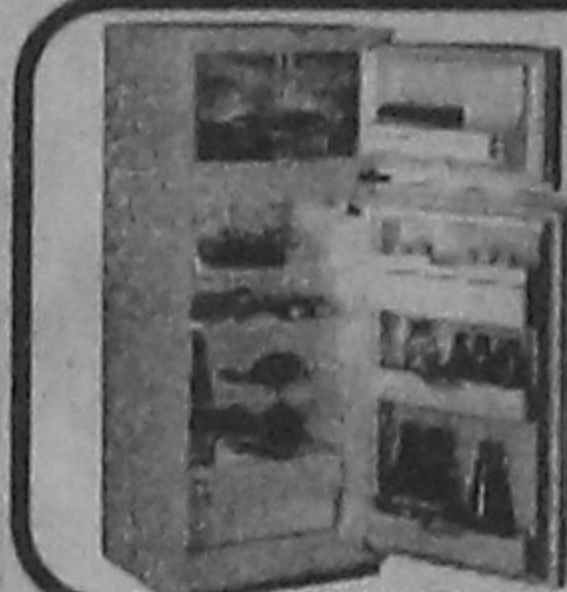
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Rickshawpuller Hira being treated at DMCH for burn injuries he suffered when pickets set fire to his rickshaw at Tongi yesterday morning. — Star photo

Strictly enforce PSA, PM tells policemen

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked the police officials to strictly enforce the Public Safety Act (PSA) for ensuring peace and security, reports UNB.

"Strictly implement the new law... people will be spared of cruelty and have peace and security," she said yesterday directing the police officials to take stern action against the terrorists irrespective of party or group.

Addressing the senior police officials at the International Conference Centre in the morning, the Prime Minister said it is the duty of the police to ensure security of the people by eliminating terrorism from the society.

She said: "Economic development will not be possible without a stable environment. It is necessary to ensure peace and stability in the society for the interest of all."

Referring to hartals, Hasina accused the opposition parties of killing innocent people, including police, in the name of hartal. "People have no support for such hartal," she said.

Hasina said the opposition has failed to force their "so-called" anti-government movement without support from the people. The opposition is issuing threats of toppling the government from the beginning and giving ultimatum one after another.

"We'll call election in time, because we believe in people's voting right and democracy," she said. "People's welfare is the only goal of this government and it is working day and night for improving the lot of the people."

The Prime Minister said her government had tried to reach an understanding with the opposition through discussion. "But they did not respond."

She said the PSA has been enacted to check crimes effectively and asked police to apply the law properly only to ensure public safety and security.

She also asked them to remain alert so that the law is not abused and mentioned the provision of punishment for abusing the law. Lapses in investigation will also be taken into account under the new law, she added.

Hasina said, action would also be taken against those filing false cases. "It will be possible to ensure peace and security in public life with proper use of this law."

An improved trend in law

Tofail explains why Clinton visiting Bangladesh

Potential and prospect of Bangladesh reaching the middle income group by 2020 as forecast by international experts may have inspired US President Bill Clinton to include Dhaka in his South Asian trip, said Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed yesterday, reports UNB.

"His visit will further open up opportunities for prosperity," Tofail told UNB when asked how Bangladesh can derive benefit from the maiden trip of a US President scheduled for March 20.

Duty-free market access, US investment and technology for gas-based industries and 30 per cent quota increase for garment are among the issues of mutual interests that are likely to figure high in bilateral talks during the visit, he said.

Bangladesh's gas resources have already attracted US investment in energy sector and more US giants are showing interest in investing in

Bangladesh.

US-Bangladesh Business Council that grouped multinationals willing to invest here also wanted Clinton to visit this country to pave way for increased partnership between the two private sectors, Tofail said.

The US President, while elaborating economic issues of his government at a recent function in Philadelphia, said poor countries also can be trade partner of US.

Bangladesh liberalised foreign investment policy to draw extensive foreign investment, which is crucial for the country's socio-economic development. Clinton's visit will bring in more US investment in the country's energy and infrastructure sectors, he hoped.

Till December 1999, Board of Investment (BOI) registered 72 US projects involving US\$3.48 billion, the highest from any single country. Most of the proposals came in the last three

years mainly in gas and energy sector. A number of US companies are involved in gas exploration and private power generation projects, BOI sources said.

Referring to Bangladesh's stand on behalf of least developed countries (LDCs) in the Seattle meet, the Industries Minister said the USA, Canada, Japan and EU have agreed on principle to extend duty-free market access of LDCs' products to the developed countries.

"The visit will help us get it," said Tofail.

Besides, Bangladesh will pursue for a 30 per cent increase in garment quota in US market that consumes bulk of the country's readymade garments.

He said, the government favours value added product from gas reserves and will welcome US technological and financial assistance for gas-based power plants and fertiliser factories to meet country's demand and export.

US sanctions to go after Clinton's visit: Vajpayee

NEW DELHI, Feb 28: US economic sanctions imposed on India after the 1998 nuclear tests will be lifted when President Bill Clinton visits India next month, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee has said, reports AP.

The American president's five-day visit beginning Mar 20 proves the scenario has changed since the United States imposed the punitive measures on India almost two years ago, Vajpayee said in a speech during the weekend, the Press Trust of India reported.

"The president of the country which imposed sanctions is coming. On his visit here, the sanctions are about to go," Vajpayee said Saturday while opening a city of Lucknow while opening a teachers' convention.

A wide range of economic sanctions — including denial of export-import loans — were triggered under the so-called

Glenn Amendment when India and Pakistan conducted tit-for-tat nuclear tests in May 1998. Subsequently, the US Congress passed legislation that enabled Clinton to waive sanctions dealing with agricultural trade in an effort to help US farmers for a period of one year. That waiver was extended indefinitely in October.

But some analysts say the United States is waiving sanctions in the hope India will sign the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and if no progress is made, sanctions could be reimposed.

In his speech Saturday, Vajpayee did not say whether Washington had given any message that the remaining sanctions would be lifted.

Pakistan tour
A PTI report says, the question of whether to include Pakistan in US President Bill Clinton's visit to South Asia

next month has been one of the dickest issue facing US foreign policy planners, the Washington Times reported today.

It said if Pakistan is included in Clinton's itinerary, it might appear to signal US' approval, or at least acquiescence, to the last October coup under General Pervez Musharraf which overthrew the elected government of Pakistan, sending a dangerous signal to other would-be plotters in countries around the world.

But, Clinton's visit to India, passing over Pakistan, would be seen as US tilt towards India, it said, which it added might strengthen the hands of the most fiercely anti-American elements in Pakistan while souring relations with a country whose support the US needs as a bulwark against fundamentalist extremists like Osama Bin Laden, based in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Lay-off at Pak Steel Mill

Massive blast during strike in Karachi

KARACHI, Feb 28: A powerful explosion destroyed a small business in the southern port city of Karachi today at the start of a strike to protest massive layoffs at one of the city's biggest employers, the Pakistan Steel Mill, reports AP.

No one was injured in the explosion in the heart of Karachi, said police. But the authorities believe it was linked to the strike called by the Mut-taheda Qami Movement and Jeay Sindh, two ethnic-based organizations that have large followings in the city.

The MQM represents Indian Muslims who migrated to Pak-

istan in 1947, most of them to southern Sindh province, of which Karachi is the capital. Jeay Sindh represents indigenous Sindhis.

The two organisations have accused the army-led government of laying off mostly ethnic Mohajirs and Sindhis.

Throughout the city the response to the strike was sporadic. In some of the more troubled neighbourhoods, where violence has occurred, many of the shops were closed. But elsewhere it was business as usual. Government offices, banks and the Karachi Stock Exchange remained open.

Albright may run to succeed Havel?

WASHINGTON, Feb 28: Madeleine Albright, America's Czech-born secretary of state, returns next week to her homeland, where there is talk she might seek the presidency of the East European nation after her tour in Washington ends, reports AP.

Some Czechs are speaking of her as a possible successor to President Vaclav Havel, who must retire in 2002. Havel, a playwright-turned-politician, helped lead the "Velvet Revolution" that in 1989 persuaded communist rulers to resign.

He has openly talked about the possibility of Albright succeeding him.

Michael Zantovsky, former Czech ambassador to Washington, said Sunday in Prague that he met last week with Havel and discussed, among other things, the possibility that Albright might run to succeed Havel.

"I never made it a secret that I think that Madeleine Albright could, one day in the future, play a big role in Czech politics," Zantovsky said.

He stressed that the idea is not new and that it would not dominate Albright's agenda in the Czech Republic.

In Prague, Havel's chief policy adviser, Pavel Fischer, told Time magazine: "It is not impossible that they will talk about this."

The secretary of state has not publicly discussed her future plans. In its new issue, Time quoted unidentified sources as saying she "has begun to consider the possibility of running."

Albright's spokesman, James Rubin, would not discuss the matter Sunday. "The secretary is completely happy serving the United States," he said. Albright's March 5-8 visit coincides with the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the birth of national hero



Tomas Masaryk, who served as the first president of the Czechoslovak Republic after the collapse of Austria-Hungary in 1918.

Albright's visit will have some political touch. She will receive a gold medal from Masaryk University in Brno and will go to Masaryk's birthplace at Hodonin. She will lay a wreath at his tomb in Lany, west of Prague, and go to the capital to unveil a Masaryk statue.

Albright's maiden name is Marie Korbelova. Her father was a Czech diplomat who took his family to London as Germany took over their homeland at the start of World War II. The family then moved to Denver in 1948 rather than serve under a communist Czechoslovakian government.

In an unscientific poll, published by Lidove Noviny, the leading daily newspaper in Prague, Albright was listed among the greatest living Czechs. Havel was first.

Non-govt primary school teachers threaten tougher movement

By Staff Correspondent

The Non-government Primary School Teachers' Association has threatened to launch a tougher movement if the government does not nationalise the school system.

Yesterday was the second day of a 13-day strike by the teachers of about 23,000 primary schools of the country. Besides, the teachers will bring out processions at every thana headquarters on March 6 and submit memorandum to thana education officer and TNO, said a press release of the organisation yesterday.

Earlier, primary school teachers observed a nine-day long sit-in programme from January 23 in the city's Osmani Uddan to press home their demand. They also observed a token hunger strike and a 36-hour hunger strike during that period.

Sheikh Hasina, when she was the opposition leader promised the primary school teachers in 1994 that if Awami League goes to power, her government will accept all their demands, it said.

But there has been no response from the government during their last movement in January, it added.

Omission

From Page 1

provision has been proposed providing that a tribunal shall not punish any one only on the basis of witness given by a person who has died or has been incapacitated or is not traceable, the source said.

The Section provided that the statement of a prosecution witness may be considered without corroboration if the person concerned dies after registering police statement or becomes untraceable or becomes incapable of appearing before a tribunal.

The sources added, "No significant changes in the Act have been made as regards grant of bail".

The PSA does not provide for grant of bail within 75 days, the period earmarked for investigation.

Mir Nasir

From Page 1

Noor Ahmed Sarak on September 10, 1999. Three people were charged in the case, including Samrak Dal president Mohammad Azimuddin, Moazzem Hossain and Khalid Hossain.

Meer Nasiruddin said the government has been filing cases against the leaders promoting the movement against it.

"We will face the false cases in the court and on the streets," said Nasiruddin.



A BNP procession on Dhanmondi road no. 32 in the city during hartal hours yesterday. — Star photo

BTTB

From Page 1

Bangladesh Association for Software Information Service (BASIS) said "Our intention is to make V-SAT services as cheap as in India, which is Tk 20 per hour."

Another leader of BASIS said, "If we fail to attain that rate, we will not be able to compete with the Indian companies which are already in the business of software export."

Welcoming the government decision, President of Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS) Abdullah H Kafi said that one of the main obstacles in software export is now removed.

President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry and former BCS president Aftab-ul-Islam said, "Now the government can expect something from the industry."

Ctg hartal

From Page 1

Most shops, markets and offices were closed. Delivery of goods to and from Chittagong port remained suspended due to lack of trucks although cargo handling was carried out inside the jetties, port sources said.

Mills and factories at the industrial belts at Nasirabad, Sitakunda, Kalurghat and Patenga suffered due to thin attendance of workers, sources said.

Rallies and processions were organised by opposition activists in an around the city.

Bangladesh Chhatra League organised an anti-hartal rally and procession at New Market crossing at about noon today.

A large number of police and paramilitary BDR personnel were deployed at all important points of the city.

Biggest heroin haul 8 including 4 Pak nationals chargesheeted

By Staff Correspondent

Eight people including four Pakistanis were chargesheeted yesterday in connection with the country's biggest ever heroin haul.

The Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) recovered 24.1 kgs of heroin worth about Tk 30 crore from a city hotel and arrested three Pakistani nationals in September last year.

The DNC in its charge sheet submitted to the CMM's court accused Ibrahim, Rais Khan, Alefzan, Irshad Ahmed, Hanif, Dulal, Mohammed Jahangir and Abul Kalam of running heroin business in Bangladesh.

Three accused Pakistanis — Ibrahim, Rais Khan and Alefzan — are now detained at the Dhaka Central Jail, while another Pakistani Irshad Ahmed and his local counterpart Hanif, Dulal, Mohammed Jahangir and Abul Kalam are absconding.

Irshad runs a drug cartel in Peshawar, the investigators said.

Six others — Ramzan, Mohammed Zakaria Mannaf, Akther Hossain, Zamshed, Aziz Ahmed Babul and Abdus Sattar, arrested by the DNC in September last year, however, were not chargesheeted. The DNC requested the court to drop charges brought against them.

The charge sheet said that four others were suspected of their involvement with that consignment of heroin. They were identified as Javed, Kumbor and Sohail of Peshawar in Pakistan and Miru of Feni in Bangladesh. They, however, could not be traced.

The DNC said that it would submit a supplementary charge sheet in this regard later.

The investigation officer recorded statement of 32 witnesses during the five-month-long investigation into the matter.

Acting on a tip-off, a team led by DNC Director General Modabbir Hossain Chowdhury recovered the heroin from a room of Hotel Razmoni Isha Khan at Kakrail in the city on September 20, 1999.

The DNC team lay in waiting at a suit of the hotel and arrested three Pakistanis.

The heroin was found to be absolutely pure and of high quality. The consignment contained in a bag was put inside 118 packets of Lux soap, each containing 200 grams of the narcotic. Besides, there was another unpacked container of 500 grams of heroin.

The consignment was to be packed with frozen food for trafficking to Britain, the investigators said. The sniper dogs at the British airports cannot trace any drug hidden in frozen food stuff, they added.

খুলনায় জনতা ব্যাংক নতুন ভবনের
শুভ উদ্বোধন

আগামী কাল পহেলা মার্চ ২০০০, খুলনা শান এ স্টর
রোড শাখা, ৫ কে ডি এ বানিজ্যিক এলাকা, দাণ নং- ২৬৯৫,
খতিয়ান নং ৭ জেএল নং- ৬৭৪, মৌজা- বানিয়াখামার খুলনা
সদর, জেলা খুলনা

হইতে

শান এ স্টর রোড শাখা, জনতা ব্যাংক নতুন ভবনে, ৮ কে ডি এ
বানিজ্যিক এলাকা, দাণ নং- ৯৭৮৯, খতিয়ান নং- ৯৭৭৪, জেএল
নং- ৩, মৌজা বানিয়াখামার খুলনা সদর, জেলা খুলনা স্থানান্তরিত
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