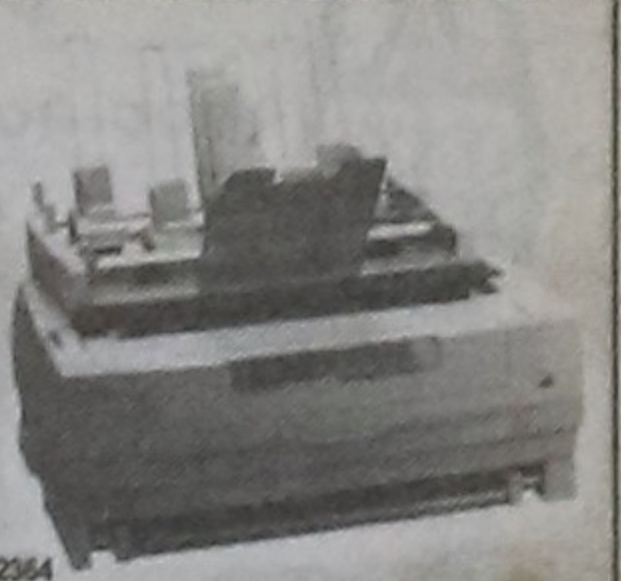


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Wishing the BEST for the 3rd Millennium

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Palestinians, Israelis exchange fire hours before the deadline

World leaders step up diplomatic efforts to stem crisis

JERUSALEM, Oct 9: Palestinians and Israelis exchanged gunfire today, hours before the deadline was up on Israel's ultimatum to the Palestinians to end the violence, or face "forceful" action. World leaders stepped up their efforts to stem the crisis, reports AP.

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright still held out the possibility of a leadership summit, and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov were due to arrive this evening to confer with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud

Barak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Arafat, returning from a meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, said he would limit his talks with Annan to the past 12 days that have left 88 people dead, most of them Palestinians.

The UN Security Council has called for an "objective inquiry," but stopped short of his demand for an international commission. Israel has rejected both calls. Israeli officials were unavail-

able for comment, observing Yom Kippur, the Day of Antonelement, until this evening. After that, Barak was set to meet with Annan and Ivanov, as well as with his Cabinet, to assess Arafat's compliance with the ultimatum he had issued Saturday night.

Annan and Ivanov were also due to visit Gaza Annan later tonight, Ivanov on Tuesday. The visits were expected to have a calming influence, with Israelis and Palestinians perhaps interested in avoiding an escalation as long as Annan and Ivanov are in the region.

US President Bill Clinton is also considering travelling to the Middle East this week for a summit with Israeli, Palestinian and Egyptian leaders, a US official said in Washington.

Barak, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Clinton would attend the summit, hosted by the Egyptians in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el Sheikh, according to CNN.

Russia, long considered an ally of Arab countries, stepped onto the tense Middle East scene See page 11 Col 7

US for 'clear cut' decision on oil, gas and container terminal issues

Star Report

US Energy official Calvin Humphrey is learnt to have suggested that Dhaka give a clear cut decision on oil and gas issues involving US companies and setting up of a container terminal near Chittagong port by US company SSA before Prime minister Sheikh Hasina's scheduled visit to Washington.

The US official who returned to Dhaka on Sunday only 72 hours after a six-day visit also discussed at the highest level the need for quick settlement of US oil company Unocal's gas bill pending with Petrobangla. Dhaka should also not hesitate to take a decision on operatorship of Block-9 involving another US company -- Chevron -- sources concerned said.

Washington wants Dhaka to outline a clear cut policy on the cost recovery of US oil companies on their investment in Bangladesh.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of US Department of Energy Humphrey had discussions with Finance Minister SAMS Kibria soon after his return and a lengthy meeting with the Prime Minister yesterday.

Government high-ups are apparently very disturbed by the US approach, abrupt return of Humphrey. The approach is considered a

direct pressure on the government to arrive at crucial decisions involving national interest," a top official said.

Officials said that despite Dhaka's pronounced stand against gas export for keeping 50 years' reserve for the country, any vital decision on the issue would be a sensitive one for the government, particularly in an election year. However, it is not clear whether Humphrey received any specific assurance from the Prime Minister on the issues discussed between the two governments.

"We are not putting any pressure. We are only helping Bangladesh government arrive at decisions. The US government will continue its efforts to change the mindset of the people who are against gas export," a senior US official was quoted as saying in Dhaka.

Humphrey is learnt to have said it is important for Dhaka to give a decision on greater participation of US companies and payment of Unocal's dues.

Dhaka's decisions will make Sheikh Hasina's forthcoming visit to US 'more productive' for expansion of trade and investment," sources noted.

See page 11 Col 2

Ctg jail clash Six prisoners shifted to Noakhali, Comilla jails

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 9: Six prisoners including Shibir cadre Nasir, BCL cadres Iqbal and Mas (fish) Kader were shifted to Comilla and Noakhali jails last night following yesterday's clash in Chittagong jail, police said.

Thirty people were injured in the clash which took place between Iqbal group and Mas Kader group over establishing domination in the jail, jail source said.

Security was tightened in and around the Chittagong jail that accommodated around 1500 inmates against the capacity of

See page 11 Col 5

Deed of agreement on participation in GLOBE okayed

The cabinet yesterday approved the deed of agreement on Bangladesh's participation in the US Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) programme, reports UNB.

Official sources said the agreement will be signed between the two countries during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's upcoming visit to the United States.

Hasina will leave for the US on October 15 for an official visit at the invitation of US President Bill Clinton for talks on various issues of bilateral interest as well as international affairs.

In its meeting with Prime Minister Hasina in the chair, the Cabinet also endorsed in principle the proposed Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Commission Act 2000.

See page 11 Col 5

BNP leader abduction Bail prayer of Marju, Monjur rejected

LUXMIPUR, Oct 9: A court here today rejected the bail prayer of Jubo League activists Marju and Monjur, who were arrested in connection with the abduction of BNP leader Nurul Islam, reports UNB.

District magistrate A Mahmud rejected the bail petition moved jointly by 17 lawyers.

Inside Today Article

Hasina, Khaleda on Collision Course
Column: Heart of the Matter
by Mansoor Mamoon
Page 4

Focus
SME development: Removing the pitfalls
Page 5

Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Oct 10	5.37 pm
Oct 11	5.45 am

Prayer Timings		
October 10		
	Azan	Jamant
Fajr	4-45	5-20
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-42	5-47
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

30 more villages inundated 80pc of Satkhira town now under water

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Oct 9: About 80 per cent area of Satkhira town is now under flood water that has inundated 30 more villages in the district in the last 24 hours.

Panic-stricken residents of the town were seen looking for high lands. Many have already taken shelter in safer places with their belongings.

Gushing flood waters have inundated Polashpore, Itagachha, Kamalnagar, Radhanagar, Madhumallar Dangi, Bakal, and many other important areas of the town.

The Collectorate building may be inundated any time now as water has begun entering the compound. Documents and other valuables were being shifted from ground floor to first and second floors. As a result activities of

Additional Magistrate's Court and other courts remained suspended.

Many government, semi-government and private offices and establishments have also been submerged, paralysing normal activities.

Satkhira bus terminal has already been inundated with fresh flood waters. Road communication between Satkhira-Jessore via Navaran and Satkhira-Kaliganj has been snapped as many points on these roads have been submerged.

Vehicular movement on Satkhira-Khulna via Chuknagar road, the only connecting road with Dhaka and other parts of the country, may be abandoned soon as many points of this road are over-flowing with gushing

waters.

Floodwater today engulfed 8 more villages in Tala upazila, 5 more villages in Debhata, 3 villages in Assassun and 12 more villages in Sadar upazila in the district.

About 40 thousand people in the affected areas including Kalaroa, Sadar, Tala, Assassun and Debhata upazillas remained marooned.

Flood shelters in the district and its adjoining areas are crammed with people while thousands more are leaving inundated homes for shelter.

Hundred of flood affected people were seen busy making makeshift houses on both sides of the Kadamtala-Baikari road, Satkhira-Jessore and Satkhira-

See page 11 Col 5

Increased participation in politics 'Womenfolk must force parties to create scope for them'

By Staff Correspondent

The country's womenfolk has to wage a movement to force political parties to create scope for their increased and effective participation in politics.

They also have to struggle against the existing political system that has so far failed to make any significant contribution to increase women's role in governance.

These were the two key points that dominated the discussions at a seminar titled 'Women in National Politics' in the city yesterday.

Parliamentarians, women's right activists and academics participated in the seminar, organised by the British Council at its auditorium.

Two women MPs from the United Kingdom also spoke. The audience include those working for empowerment of women in different fields.

Prof Rehman Sobhan of Centre for Policy Dialogue moderated the seminar. Questions from among the audience were also invited.

There were arguments between

lawmakers of ruling Awami League and opposition BNP over the pending Bill in the Jatiya Sangsad seeking retention of women's reserved seats in parliament. Other speakers blamed politicians for using the constitutional provision over the years for their politician ends.

Prof Nazmunnessa Mahtab of the Department of Public Administration, Dhaka University, presented statistics showing that there was little progress in increasing women's participation in politics and in governance.

In her key-note paper, Nazmunnessa said, although women constitute about half of the country's population, they are still deprived of their due role in running the affairs of the state and in decision-making.

"The number of women in leadership positions in ministries is very insignificant," she said.

She presented a chart showing that the highest 8.69 per cent women are in the Cabinet of Hasina. It was six per cent in the Cabinet of Ziaur Rahman, five per

cent in the Cabinet of Khaleda Zia, four per cent in the Cabinet of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and three per cent in the Cabinet of MH Ershad.

Prof Nazmunnessa suggested formation of a caucus of women in the Jatiya Sangsad to press the government to address women's issues effectively.

Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Suranjit Sengupta, who was the chief speaker on the occasion, criticised BNP for not cooperating with the government in passing the Bill on the women's reserved seats.

Suranjit requested the opposition lawmakers to join the parliament session 'at least once more' to support the crucial Bill and give their suggestions, if any.

"Let us keep women's issues above party politics and ensure their constitutional rights", Suranjit said as Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Law Ministry, he will return the Bill to the House in the See page 11 Col 1

Ratan Sen Murder Shakil gives confessional statement

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Oct 9: Shakil Khan, 30, one of the accused in Comrade Ratan Sen Murder Case was produced before the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Md Rabur Reza today.

Shakil's judicial confession was also recorded under Section 164 of CrPC in the court today. Shakil was involved in stabbing Comrade Sen to death on July 31, 1992.

All the accused including Shakil were acquitted in a verdict delivered on September 12, 1993 by the then Additional District Judge, Khulna.

Shakil was arrested again as the police commissioner revived the case and ordered reinvestigation after getting some new clues from the confessional statement of Tanik Hossain, one of the FIR named accused in JP leader Abul Kashem Murder Case.

Shakil in his judicial confession today disclosed names of some CPB leaders directly involved in the conspiracy to kill Ratan Sen, a KMP source said.

The motive behind the murder is going to be revealed very soon, IO of the case, OC Kamrul Islam of Khulna thana said.

No reason behind BNP plea for vacation of my JS seat: Akhter

By Staff Correspondent

Maj. (Retd) Akhteruzzaman, expelled from BNP, has once again defended his joining the recent parliament session and claimed that there was no reason behind the Opposition Chief Whip's request for declaring his seat vacant.

If the Speaker wishes he can refer the matter to the Election Commission for a final decision, the lawmaker said yesterday in his reply to the Speaker's letter to him earlier.

BNP expelled Akhteruzzaman from the party on September 14 for joining the parliament session, violating a party decision.

Soon after this, Opposition Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain sent a letter to Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury to declare Akhteruzzaman parliamentary seat vacant.

On October 3, the Speaker sent a letter to Akhteruzzaman along with a copy of the Chief Whip's letter and asked him to reply by October 9.

After receiving the letters, Akhteruzzaman met the Speaker

at his office and discussed the matter.

Akhteruzzaman in his letter said, "The appeal of the opposition Chief Whip seeking vacation of my parliamentary seat is totally unconstitutional. Because, the party took a decision to refrain from attending the parliament session, which is against the Constitution".

"Moreover, there is no constitutional validity behind declaring my seat vacant. If you think, you can refer the matter to the Election Commission".

Quoting from the Constitution, he said he discharged his responsibility as a lawmaker by joining in the parliament session. "Performing one's duty as per the Constitution can not be an offence".

UNB adds: The Speaker yesterday referred the issue of vacating the parliamentary seat of Maj (Retd) Akhteruzzaman to the Election Commission for a final decision.

Official sources said Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury See page 11 Col 6

People lay siege to Bagha UNO office for arrest of Sarbaharamen

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Oct 9: Several hundred people laid siege to the office of the Bagha Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) this morning demanding security of lives and property from the threat of outlawed Sarbahara party armed cadres.

The also submitted a memorandum to the Home Minister through the UNO. They said their lives and property were at risk as the Sarbaharamen were continuously threatening them after arrest of four of their members.

Local people, led by a UP chairman earlier caught four Sarbahara activists at Char Kaldaskhali with two revolvers, two shutter guns and some bullets and were handed them over to police.

Many armed cadres of the party from northern districts have taken shelter in Bagha and Charghat upazillas after police operation in that region. They have now become active in the area.

In the memorandum, people demanded that the government set up a police camp in the area and take action against the outlawed party.

They also brought out a procession and paraded the thoroughfares of the upazila head quarters.

PS to Ershad assaulted in Satkhira

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Oct 9: Golam Reza, PS to Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad, was severely injured when a group of agitated party workers assaulted him at noon on Sunday at Satkhira Water Development Board (WDB) rest house.

The incident took place in presence of Ershad and other central and local leaders.

The JP workers said Reza has been slandering local leaders and misguiding the party chairman for long. Reza being a son of Satkhira district does not have any soft corner for party leaders and workers. He is a backbiter and this is why we have taught him a good lesson on, the agitated workers said.

Profusely bleeding, Reza was admitted to a local clinic.

See page 11 Col 1

Zimbabwe shown the door

NAIROBI, Oct 9 (Internet report): Paul Wiseman earned New Zealand sweet revenge over Zimbabwe today as he span the Kiwis through to a semi-final clash with Pakistan.

The 30-year-old off-spinner ripped out Zimbabwe's middle order with figures of 4-45, the best in the tournament to date.

The Kiwis, who lost a one-day series 2-1 to Zimbabwe a fortnight ago, bowled tightly enough to make sure their 265-7, the highlight of which was man-of-the-match Roger Twose's 85 - was comfortably sufficient.

Twose's resilient knock - his fourth half-century in as many innings - came after he commit-

ted the "huge error" of running out captain Stephen Fleming.

But with the ball New Zealand made few elementary mistakes and the match was in their pocket from the moment Alistair Campbell was dismissed.

Campbell, who hit 96 and 99 no against New Zealand a fortnight ago, had seemed set to break Kiwi hearts once more as he made his way to 47 untroubled.

But the opener was cut off in his prime. Three runs short of his sixth 50 in ten innings, by the finger of Umpire Steve Bucknor, who adjudged him out lbw to Chris Harris.

The former Zimbabwe captain,

trapped a long way down, stayed for an age at his crease before trudging off in obvious displeasure.

His ill-advised departure was swiftly followed by that of Andy Flower, who neatly clipped a return catch to Wiseman off the leading edge.

Zimbabwe had to re-build, but the slide had started.

Grant Flower's inept reverse sweep and Guy Whittle's suicidal run out brought on defeat apace.

Stuart Carlisle did put his palty one-day average to shame with his second international fifty, but there was to be no reprise, even with Kiwi first choice bowlers Daniel Vettori and

Dion Nash sidelined. Chris Cairns, who aggravated a knee injury in his innings, managed just one over.

The crucial stand of New Zealand's innings was Twose's fifth-

See page 11 Col 3

Today's Match
South Africa v England

Tomorrow's match
First Semifinal
Pakistan v New Zealand

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(পেট্রোবাংলার একটি কোম্পানী)

১০৫, কাজী নজরুল ইসলাম এভিনিউ
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ফোন-৯৫৬৩৬৬-৬৮, ৮১১২১৩৫-৪২, ৮১১৯৩৭৯

গ্যাস সরবরাহ বন্ধ সংক্রান্ত জরুরি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকার আওলিয়াতে একটি নতুন পেশন নির্মাণ শেষে সংযোগ প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে আওলিয়া হাইতে আমিন বাজার এবং আওলিয়া হাইতে আরিচাগামী সরবরাহ লাইন বন্ধ করা প্রয়োজন হইবে, যাহার ফলে নিম্নে উল্লিখিত স্থানসমূহে বর্ধিত তারিখ ও সময়ে গ্যাস সরবরাহ বন্ধ থাকিবে।

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১৩-১০-২০০০ ইং রোজ শুক্রবার সকাল ১১.৩০ ঘটিকা হইতে ১৪-১০-২০০০ ইং শনিবার সকাল ১১.৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।	হাজারীবাগ, লালবাগ, রায়ের বাজার, শংকর, ধানমন্ডি (পশ্চিমাঞ্চল), মোহাম্মদপুর, ঝিগাতলা, শ্যামলী, মিরপুর, সাভার, ধামরাই, মানিকগঞ্জ ও আরিচা।

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