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## on Friday

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Two-page supplement on the 50th anniversary of the Mungla Port & one-page special on the World AIDS Day

### COMMENT

The fact that the developed countries belonging to APEC were not preoccupied with thoughts about freeing trade among the members and were more concerned with resumption of global round of talks under WTO reveals their actual intent. They want to use the APEC forum to promote their global interests through WTO. One may not go as far as calling them fifth columnists. But they very well stand indicated of setting the ship of APEC adrift through their myopic view, writes  
**Hasnat Abdul Hye in APEC Adrift**

**Mohammad Badrul Hasan's**  
The Narrow Wide Gaps

### PM leaves for 3-nation tour tonight

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to kick off a nine-day tour to Italy, Germany and Switzerland at midnight tonight as part of her avowed diplomatic pursuits to explore further avenues of bilateral cooperation in investment and employment, reports BSS.

Bangladesh is one of the major recipients of development assistance from these countries and the Prime Minister during her visit is expected to strongly encourage European entrepreneurs for investment here, taking advantage of the vast incentives and liberal government policies.

We also hope the visit will be successful in generating support of these donor countries for more active role in development cooperation. Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad told a press briefing here yesterday.

The visit of the Prime Minister is taking place on the invitations extended by the respective governments of the three European countries.

The invitation is an effective complement to the continued See page 11 col 7

## Pakistan recalls errant envoy

### Three days of explosive diplomatic drama ends

By Diplomatic Correspondent

Pakistan yesterday recalled its 'errant envoy' Irfan Raja who was serving as its Deputy High Commissioner in Dhaka.

Raja's recall ended three days of high diplomatic drama whipped up by nationwide protests threatening to affect bilateral ties between the two countries.

The diplomat had made derogatory remarks on Bangladesh's Independence War at a function in Dhaka on Monday and said the atrocities during the 1971 Independence War were initiated by 'miscreants of the Awami League and not by the Pakistan Army.' He also asked why should his country apologise after losing half of its territory.

Bangladesh government acted immediately.

summoning Pakistan's High Commissioner Iqbal Ahmed Khan and handing over a protest note to him the next morning.

A news agency report from the Pakistan capital yesterday evening said Islamabad was recalling Irfan Raja, a senior diplomat, from Dhaka following protests over his remarks about atrocities during the 1971 Independence War.

'We regret the controversy surrounding the reported remarks of the Pakistan deputy high commissioner,' a spokesman of Pakistan's foreign office said.

In the circumstances, it has become impossible. See page 11 col 7

## PM calls upon police to remain alert

### Police Staff College at Mirpur inaugurated

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the police force to remain alert so that criminals could not escape trail through loopholes in law. She also ordered for stern action against terrorists and criminals for maintain peace and security in the country.

'Criminals do not belong to any party. Take action against them, whichever party they belong to', the PM said while inaugurating the Police Staff College in Mirpur in the city.

She said economic development is not possible without improving law and order and ensuring peace and security in the country.

Hasina also ordered for action against police officials involved in immoral activities. Officials who perform duties with sincerity and honesty will be awarded. The entire police department sometimes

faces controversy due to misdeeds of some policemen, she mentioned.

The Staff College will provide better training to police officials to enhance their professional efficiency, she hoped.

The government is trying to give the police force more facilities she said and mentioned that ration for non-gazetted police officials has been increased by 40 per cent.

Fifteen hundred new vehicles have been procured for quick transportation and 1,000 digital telephone lines installed at the DMP headquarters for better communication, she mentioned.

The PM also inaugurated the course of the first batch in which 24 senior police officials are undergoing training.

See page 11 col 3



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina offers *munaqat* after inaugurating the Police Staff College at Mirpur yesterday. Home Minister Mohammad Nasim is on her left. -Star photo



Abahani striker Kanchan is sandwiched by Muktijoddha defenders Sujon (left) and Hassan al-Mamun during yesterday's title-decider of the National Bank premier division football league at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. Muktijoddha won 4-3 in tiebreaker after the regulation period ended goalless and regained the title. -Star photo

### SC rule Dec 3 on Ershad's petition

The Supreme Court will pronounce an order on December 3 on HM Ershad's petition seeking permission for payment of fine in instalments and his release on bail bond in the Janata Tower case, reports BSS.

Ershad's counsel Barrister Rafique-ul-Haque yesterday argued before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court that it (SC) has wide powers to allow Ershad's prayer Ershad, who is to pay a fine of nearly Taka 5.50 crore in the graft case.

He said in all circumstances and as per article 104 of the constitution, the Supreme Court has supreme power to allow convicted Ershad's prayer for payment of the fine by instalment imposed on him by the court.

'The court also can pass order to release him on bail bond on payment of fine by instalment', Barrister Haque argued.

Attorney General (AG) Mahmudul Islam opposed the arguments of Mr Haque saying there is specific law for imposing fine and sentence, so article 104 of the constitution does not apply to this case.

AG said the court can not pass any order contrary to criminal procedure code and penal code.

After hearing both the sides Chief Justice Latifur Rahman See page 11 col 3

### AL, BNP happy over Raja's withdrawal

Star Report

Both the ruling Awami League and main opposition BNP yesterday expressed satisfaction at Pakistan's recall of a diplomat from its High Commission in Dhaka for his derogatory remarks against the Bangladesh's War of Liberation recently.

Amidst angry protests across the country against Deputy High Commissioner Irfan Raja's remarks, Pakistan yesterday recalled him.

In an instant reaction, AL resident member Amir Hossain told The Daily Star yesterday that 'mere withdrawal of the diplomat wouldn't do. He (Raja) should withdraw his audacious statements and Pakistan should seek apology for his remarks.'

It's not only the question of calling back a diplomat. Rather, Pakistan has to change its mindset if it really means improvement of relations with See page 11 col 4

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## PAC beset with backlog

### It may take 12 years to review 450 audit reports

By Monjur Mahmud

Some 450 audit reports await scrutiny of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and it may take the committee more than 12 years to clear the backlog, sources said.

According to sources, the committee is now reviewing the audit reports of 1986. It has also jumped forward and examined some reports of 1996-97 fiscal.

Although one of the most important parliamentary committees, the PAC's effectiveness is seriously undermined, sources say.

It has no budget for hearings and runs on a skeleton staff. It does not have any research or analysis

capability. Even the members are not well aware of the committee rules and procedures.

'In fact, PAC lacks the expertise and resources to deal with the issues and the volume of audit reports,' said a World Bank official working under Strengthening the Office of Comptroller and Auditor General (STAG) project.

The World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are sponsoring a series of studies which will form the basis of a consolidated report -- the Bangladesh Country Financial Accountability Assessment (CFAA). See page 11 col 1

## Dhaka to raise question over forecast failure

### JRC meeting sometime next month

By Nazrul Islam

Bangladesh is likely to raise the question at the upcoming Joint River Commission (JRC) meeting as to why the Indian authorities did not warn it beforehand about the recent unusual flood despite an agreement between the two countries on sharing such information.

The flood that swept the southwestern region of the country causing huge damage to lives and properties in September and October originated from the upstream rivers in India.

The JRC meeting will take place sometime in January next year, the fourth year of the 30-year

Water Sharing Treaty signed between the two neighbouring countries on December 12, 1996, official sources said.

The treaty requires both sides to share updated water related data for precautionary measures. Bangladesh, India and Nepal which share several common rivers will participate in the JRC expert and high official-level meeting.

Meanwhile, following the recent unusual floods in the country's southwestern districts, a 10-member parliamentary delegation visited different projects See page 11 col 7

### Cyclone lashes Tamil Nadu

#### 12 killed, 48 missing

MADRAS, India, Nov 30: At least 12 people were killed and dozens more injured as a cyclone lashed the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu and adjoining districts, officials said Thursday, reports AFP.

Forty-eight fishermen were missing at sea, although the Coast Guard said the likelihood was they had taken shelter elsewhere.

Search operations at sea for anyone in distress would continue with aerial sorties, an official added.

The weather office in New Delhi warned that although the cyclone had spent its fury in the region late Wednesday, the states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka would be pummeled by rainfall and squalls until Saturday.

The storm, which hit Tamil Nadu and former French colony of Pondicherry on Wednesday afternoon, damaged property and brought down thousands of trees, disrupting rail and road traffic.

Gales with wind speeds between 130 and 150 kilometres per hour (80-95 mph) sliced through Tamil Nadu's coastal district of Cuddalore.

Local spokesman Chhatrahsal Singh said the state authorities had received enough forewarning to take sufficient precautionary measures.

## ECs unlikely to back out

### Identical replies to CEC's letter soon

By Staff Correspondent

The three Election Commissioners (ECs) are likely to give on Sunday their identical replies to Chief Election Commissioner MA Syed's letter that nullified the decisions taken in his absence.

'We will submit our letters explaining our position as reply to the CEC's letter served on Monday last,' an Election Commissioner (EC) told a group of newsmen at his office yesterday seeking anonymity.

Another source at the Election Commission said the three ECs will not change their position regarding the 'illegal' appointments in an EC project. Through the letters, they will urge the CEC to

change his mind regarding cancellation of the appointments, the source said.

He however hoped that the differences between the CEC and the ECs would be narrowed down through talks.

The EC said, 'He (the CEC) has to cancel his decision that he had taken to recruit an international consultant and a system analyst in an EC project. The appointments were unilaterally given by the CEC ignoring rules and norms,' the EC said.

The CEC appointed Lionel Wolner a consultant See page 11 col 4

## Life ban awaits Azhar

### BCCI may go soft on Jadeja

NEW DELHI, Nov 30: Former Indian cricket captain Mohammad Azharuddin is set to be banned for life for match-fixing, while another tainted player, Ajay Jadeja may be let off with a one-year suspension, highly placed sources said on Thursday, reports AFP.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) will next week hand down punishment to four players found guilty by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the board's own internal inquiry.

Former players Manoj Prabhakar and Ajay Sharma will be banned from having any official role in Indian cricket, while Nayan Mongia, against whom the CBI found no evidence of wrong-



Azharuddin

doing, will be exonerated, the sources told AFP.

The decision to impose a life

banned on Azharuddin, 38, who the CBI said admitted to fixing three one-day internationals, was supported by 28 of the 30 board affiliates at its special general body meeting in Calcutta on Wednesday, the sources said.

The two exceptions were the Hyderabad Cricket Association Azharuddin's home unit -- and former BCCI chief Raj Singh Dungarpur.

'These two wanted Azhar's contribution to Indian cricket to be taken into account, before deciding his fate,' said a top-ranking BCCI official who asked not to be identified.

'We would have announced the punishments on Wednesday itself if all the 30 units had agreed to it. See page 11 col 1

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