

International

Israel steps up security in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM, Dec 1: Three thousand Israeli police were deployed in east Jerusalem today to deal with potential unrest as the first Juma of Ramadan began, police said, reports AFP.

The compound is the third holiest site in the Islamic world, and thousands of men, women and children began pouring in Friday to begin prayers. Despite the flow, the situation was calm at midday, an AFP correspondent at the scene said.

Friday has been a standing "day of rage" since a Palestinian uprising against Israel broke out in late September, and Israeli authorities fear greater unrest now that Ramadan has begun.

For the first time in several weeks, Israeli authorities lifted age restrictions on worshippers permitted into a sacred site in east Jerusalem which houses two mosques, the al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

Earlier this week, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's political faction Fatah called for a surge in the intifada, or uprising, during Ramadan, and the militant Islamic group Hamas said Muslims should wage a jihad (holy war) for the sake of Jerusalem.

Both groups, which are supported by the majority of Palestinians, called on the masses to visit the compound that houses the mosques.

Access to the site was permitted only to Arab Israelis and to Palestinians living in Jerusalem. Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will not be able to worship here because Israel slapped a blockade on the territories at the start of the intifada or uprising.

At varying times, only people older than 35, 40 or 45 have been allowed in for Friday prayers as a way to keep younger, potentially more volatile worshippers away from the area.

Clashes broke out at the al-Aqsa compound on September 28, when Israel's hawkish opposition leader Ariel Sharon made a provocative visit to the compound, which is supported by the Wailing Wall.

Palestinians reacted with anger at the visit, throwing stones and rioting. The following day, Israeli troops cracked down with gunfire, killing seven Palestinians.

Some 295 people, mostly Palestinians, have been killed in the raging violence that has gutted the peace process since then.

Gunman breaks into Indian navy chief's home

NEW DELHI, Dec 1: An armed intruder broke into the residence of India's Naval Chief Admiral Sushil Kumar today, triggering a shootout in which one guard was wounded in the leg, reports AFP.

Delhi police said they were treating the case as attempted murder.

"What we know is that an intruder entered the compound," said navy spokesman Commander Rahul Gupta.

"Some alert sentry spotted him and there was an exchange of fire," Gupta told AFP, adding that the intruder managed to escape.

Kumar and his family were in the residence when the incident took place around midnight last night.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee telephoned Kumar to enquire about the incident.

Though the authorities have only confirmed a single intruder, "there could have been more," Gupta said.

The motive for the break in has yet to be determined.

"We have registered a case of attempt to murder," Suresh Roy, joint commissioner of police, told a private television network here.



Eighteen-year-old Priyanka Chopra (C) of India poses after winning the Miss World final with second placed 18-year-old Georgia Palmes (L) and third placed 20-year-old Yukel Ak of Turkey (R) in the Millennium Dome in London on Thursday. --AFP photo

Estrada pleads not guilty to corruption

Impeachment trial starts Dec 7

MANILA, Dec 1: Impeached Philippine President Joseph Estrada pleaded not guilty today to corruption and other charges before the Senate, which begins a landmark trial in seven days to determine his fitness to remain in office, reports AFP.

Estrada's lawyers entered the plea, which asked the Senate to render a "judgement of acquittal" at the end of the trial which starts on December 7.

Meanwhile, prosecutors announced the president's oldest son, Jose Ejercito, also known as Jinggoy Estrada, would be called as a hostile witness against his father.

Prosecutors want the president's son to take the stand on Thursday and Friday, Senate Secretary Lulgardo Barbo said.

Estrada's plea was a point-by-point rebuttal of the charges of corruption, bribery, betrayal of public trust and culpable violation of the constitution.

He was impeached by the House of Representatives last month. A guilty verdict on any of the charges would lead to his removal from office.

"The accused respectfully prays that a plea of not guilty be entered for him in the records of this case and, thereafter, after due proceedings, a judgement of acquittal be rendered by the Senate," the president's lawyers said.

The articles of impeachment "hardly meets the requirement (of criminal jurisprudence) that a complaint contain 'in a methodical and logical form, a plain concise statement of the ultimate facts on which the party pleading relies for his claim,'" the plea read.

It added: "Many of the specifications are in newspaper articles which can not take the place of allegations of ultimate facts."

The charges stem from allegations made by an estranged Estrada ally in early October that he collected 414 million pesos (8.3 million dollars) in bribes from operators of illegal lotteries and delivered them on a fortnightly basis to the president.

The ex-ally, provincial governor Luis Singson, also accused Estrada of diverting about four million dollars in tax revenue.

Estrada has rejected the allegations in his public speeches. "None of my ancestors are thieves," he told a Manila crowd.

His lawyers earlier tried to get the Senate to throw out the charges on the grounds that they were technically flawed.

But Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide rejected the motion last Tuesday and ordered the trial to proceed as scheduled.

The scandal has unsettled the economy, with foreign investors reassessing their business plans in the Philippines amid the political uncertainty.

Ancient cemetery discovered in Yemen

SANAA, Dec 1: A team of French archaeologists announced Thursday that they had discovered a cemetery believed to date from the third millennium BC in a desert region of northwest Yemen, reports AFP.

The team, headed by Frank Braemer, published a report saying the cemetery covered an area of more than 20 square kilometres and consisted of more than 1,500 graves that are "among the most well preserved in the Arabian peninsula."

"The grave belongs to a society of herdsmen living in desert areas of Yemen well away from oases," the report said.

Bareilly basks in Miss World glory

LUCKNOW, India, Dec 1: The non-descript town of Bareilly in northern India was basking in reflected glory today after homegirl Priyanka Chopra's lifted the Miss World crown at London's Millennium Dome, reports AFP.

"I'm feeling so proud and excited. The phone hasn't stopped ringing," said Chopra's grandmother, Madhu Jotsyana Akhouri.

"My only advice to her when she took up modelling and got into the world of fashion was stay away from any indecent stuff," Akhouri, 72, told AFP by phone from the family home in Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh state.

"Now since she's on top of the world, I think she must have listened to me," she chuckled.

Thanks to her father's job as an army doctor, the 18-year-old Chopra moved all over India as a child, during which time she was largely brought up by her grandmother.

"She was a very happy child who liked to sing Hindi film and folk songs. She was also very intelligent and never shied away from competition," Akhouri said.

"She's always been a golden girl," agreed Chopra's 35-year-old aunt Neelam Verma.

"Although she travelled a lot in India and abroad, she kept her culture intact and that's what

made her stand apart from the crowd," Verma said.

"She never put on any celebrity airs with us, even after winning the Miss India title. She was always very straightforward and hard-working."

Chopra's victory has confirmed India's recent domination of international beauty pageants.

She was crowned by the outgoing Miss World, Yukta Mookhey, from Bombay, who had herself followed in the footsteps of Diana Hayden in 1997 and Aishwarya Rai in 1994.

The current Miss Universe, Lara Dutta, is also Indian, as was the 1994 Miss Universe Sushmita Sen.

Gore wants speedy recount of ballots

TALLAHASSEE, Fla., Dec 1: Democrat Al Gore's lawyers, citing a coming deadline for picking electors, pleaded yesterday for an immediate recount of disputed ballots they believe will overturn certified results that gave Republican George W. Bush a victory in the pivotal state of Florida, reports Reuters.

In an emergency appeal to the Florida Supreme Court, the lawyers said the recount must begin immediately in order to finish by Dec. 12, the deadline for Florida to pick its electors, the 25 delegates to the Electoral College that on Dec. 18 will choose the next US president. Both Bush and Gore need Florida's electoral votes to win the White House.

Attorneys for Bush, meanwhile, filed their formal response to Gore's challenge to the Florida result in the court of Leon County Circuit Judge N. Sanders Sauls, saying the case should be dismissed and laying out their arguments against recounting selected votes.

Sauls has set a hearing on the vice president's challenge for Saturday, but has not decided whether to order a recount.

"The trial court has made it virtually impossible for the will of the voters to be known before the deadline date passes," Gore's lawyers wrote.

They asked the state Supreme Court to order that the counting begin as soon as Palm Beach County's ballots arrive in Tallahassee yesterday.

"We're getting to the point where the count has to start if all of the votes are going to be counted in a fair and accurate way," Gore lawyer David Boies said at a news conference.

In a brief hearing yesterday, Sauls said he intended to finish within a week.

"The intent is still to try to get this finished by Dec. 6 or 7. Whatever we need to do... we're going to get it done," the judge said.

He ruled that several voter groups could intervene in Gore's lawsuit, but only on a limited basis that did not necessarily ensure their concerns would be heard in court.

60 killed in oil pipeline blast in Nigeria

LAGOS, Dec 1: Around 60 people were killed when a fractured fuel pipeline exploded into flames outside Lagos port, Nigerian newspapers said today.

The fire appeared to have been extinguished but erupted again early Friday, firefighters told AFP.

The newspapers The Comet, The Examiner and National Concord said around 60 died in Thursday's explosion.

A police official speaking to AFP on Thursday had put the toll from the fire, at more than 50.

Many of the dead were fishermen who had gone to the isolated spot to illegally siphon off fuel from the vandalised pipeline.

owned by the state-run Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation.

Giving one of the first eyewitness accounts of the blast, Ayo Idowu who lives close to the site of the blast told The Comet he had seen people siphoning off fuel from Tuesday.

"We saw people siphoning petrol from that spot since Tuesday," he said.

"The hole from which it flowed was small but continued to widen by the day," he told the paper.

The fire erupted early Thursday in a fractured pipeline at a state-run loading depot at Atlas Cove, just outside Lagos's main Apapa Port.

The space shuttle Endeavour lifts off from launch pad 39-B on the 101st shuttle mission on Thursday at the Kennedy Space Center, Florida. Mission STS-97 is to deliver a solar array to the International Space Station that will convert sunlight into enough electricity to power the station. On Earth, it would be enough electricity for 30 suburban homes.

--AFP photo

50 dead in Nigeria bus crash

LAGOS, Dec 1: At least 50 people were killed when a bus smashed into a stationary vehicle and burst into flames near the southern Nigerian city of Benin Wednesday, reports said today, reports AFP.

Three passengers aboard the luxury bus, travelling from the capital Abuja to the southeastern city of Aba, survived but the rest were burnt beyond recognition, the newspaper Vanguard said.

At least 50 people are believed to have been on the bus at the time of the accident, which happened on the road between Benin City and Uromi in Edo State, southern Nigeria, the paper said.

Divisional Police Officer Sam Safana confirmed the incident to the paper.

The accident came less than one week after a bus slid off a road near Benin and plunged into a river, killing up to 60 people.

A spokesman for Edo State police declined to comment on the report when contacted by AFP.

The Vanguard said the accident happened in heavy fog.



Trucks with loads of pro-independence supporters in Indonesia's eastern most province of Irian Jaya arrive at the Papua taskforce centre in the capital of Jayapura yesterday for the separatist's Morning Star flag raising ceremony which mark the 39th anniversary of a declaration of independence in the former Dutch colony. --AFP photo

Few Asian countries seem willing to admit scale of AIDS problem

HONG KONG, Dec 1: Governments across Asia are continuing to bury their heads in the sand over AIDS, with official numbers of sufferers revealing only a fraction of the true picture, according to health workers, reports AFP.

While many of the region's governments want to be seen to be taking action to halt the spread of the disease, few seem willing to admit the scale of the problem.

With pink buses, rock bands and free condoms all used to increase awareness on World AIDS Day, onlookers could be forgiven for thinking the battle against Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome was being won.

Statistics offer a starker account. In China, where experts have long been warning of an impending catastrophe in the face of official denial, Beijing is only now beginning to begrudgingly admit there may be a problem.

The China Daily said the number of confirmed Human Immunodeficiency Virus or AIDS cases in China was 20,711 but admitted that even medical experts' estimates of 500,000 at the end of 1999 were conservative.

"China is on a fast track to having a big epidemic," said Edwin Judd, China representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

"Unless there is really substantial action in the next three or four years the real danger is that we will have 10 million cases of HIV or AIDS in the year 2010 or worse."

The majority of China's HIV carriers are in the countryside where unmonitored blood selling has contributed to a rapid spread of AIDS. In one notorious case, tests indicate around 65 per cent of the population of Wenlou, a village in the central province of Henan, have been

infected with the virus through blood donations.

In Vietnam, where a fleet of 20 pink buses took to the streets of Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi to distribute free condoms, official figures are also widely disputed.

According to the government, there have been 2,371 AIDS-related deaths in Vietnam with a further 27,000 registered as HIV positive. But UN figures suggest four times that many people have the virus.

In Thailand, which has one of the worst HIV/AIDS problems in Asia - one in 60 of the population are infected - the day was marked by low key events including a charity photo exhibition and late night television broadcast.

Likewise in Cambodia - where, on one island, one in four policemen, 41 per cent of prostitutes and 10 per cent of military personnel have HIV - the day's events were restricted to understated special education programmes and a small carnival.

In Pakistan, another clash between official and independent statistics has led to confusion over the number of AIDS sufferers.

The National AIDS Programme's latest figures show 11 new AIDS cases and 65 new HIV cases were reported this year, bringing the total recorded HIV/AIDS cases since 1986 to 1,699.

United Nations and government figures put the number of HIV/AIDS cases closer to 74,000, with widespread intravenous drug abuse, poor education about safe sex and prostitution blamed for the spread of the disease.

In other parts of the region the day was used to highlight lack of awareness over the virus.

In Malaysia, the official AIDS Council said some 35,000 HIV/AIDS sufferers were too afraid to reveal they had been infected for fear of the reaction from their communities.

বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-পিএলজি/সিটিপি/প্রশাসন/ঢাকা/খস-১ তারিখঃ ২১-১১-২০০০

বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ের জীপ নং-৮৫-মেট্রো-৮-৯১৪, ৮৫-মেট্রো-গ-৮৮৭ এবং ৮৫-মেট্রো-৫৫-৩ গাড়ীগুলি মেয়ামত করার জন্য সংস্থাপন মন্ত্রণালয়ের তালিকাভুক্ত অগ্রাহী গাড়ি মেয়ামতকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান হইতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আবেদন করা যাইতেছে। উক্ত গাড়ীগুলির ইঞ্জিন ওভারহলিংসহ অন্যান্য মেয়ামত সংক্রান্ত সিভিল ও শর্তাবলী বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ের রেল ভবনস্থ কম নং-৩১২তে প্রতিটি সিভিল নগদ ৪০০/- (চারশত) টাকা মাত্র (অফিসেব্যতীয়া) মূল্যে আগামী ১১-১২-২০০০ তারিখ পর্যন্ত পাওয়া যাইবে। দরপত্র আগামী ১২-১২-২০০০ তারিখ বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, রেল ভবন, ৩য় তলায় উপস্থিত পরিকল্পনা কর্মকর্তা/৪ এর কম নং-৩০৯তে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার ব্যাগে ফেলিতে হইবে এবং ঐ দিন বেলা ১২.৩০ মিনিট এর সময় উপস্থিত দরপত্রদাতাদের সম্মুখে দরপত্রসমূহ খোলা হইবে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন)। উক্ত তারিখ ও সময়ের পর আর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হইবে না।

কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

মোঃ আবুল কাশেম
উপস্থিত পরিকল্পনা কর্মকর্তা/৪

জিডি-১১১২

Biman
BANGLADESH AIRLINES

ZIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT KURMITOLA DHAKA. PHONES: 8614771-9, 8614730-4
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REF: DACPL/26/2000-2001 Dated: 29-11-2000

Tender Notice
No.12/2000-2001

Sealed tenders are hereby invited by Biman Bangladesh Airlines from interested manufacturers/distributors/suppliers for the supply of the item mentioned below as per details/specifications mentioned in the schedule:

01. UMBRELLA - 20,000 pes.
02. EHRAM BELT - 20,000 pes.

Tender schedule mentioning full details/specifications of the items, terms and conditions will be available from the Manager (Cash & Banking), Head Office "BALAKA", Accounts Officer (Cash Payment Unit), Admin. Building, ZIA, Dhaka of Biman Finance Directorate & office of the Divisional Commissioner (1st, 12 Storied Govt. Office Building, 1st Floor, Room No-206), Segunbagicha, Dhaka on payment of Tk. 500/- (five hundred) only per set non-refundable by applying own letter head pad during any working day up to 13-12-2000.

Sealed tender should be dropped in the tender box kept in Local Purchase Section, Stores & Purchase Directorate, Biman Admin. Building, ZIA, Dhaka. Biman Press Building, Farmgate, Tejgaon, Dhaka and office of the Deputy Director, Local Govt. Dhaka Division, Room No.-205, 1st 12 Storied Govt. Office Building, Segunbagicha, Dhaka latest by 1100 hours (BST) on 14-12-2000 & will be opened on the same day at 1230 hours at the premises of Stores & Purchase Directorate, Admin Building, ZIA, Dhaka in presence of the tenderers (if any).

Biman management reserves the right to increase or decrease the quantity of the item and can accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Choudhury Mohammad Khairul Alam
Dy. General Manager (Purchase).

GD-1111

ইনভেস্টমেন্ট কর্পোরেশন অব বাংলাদেশ
প্রধান কার্যালয়, ৮, রাজউক এডিনিউ
ঢাকা-১০০০
তারিখঃ ৩০ নভেম্বর, ২০০০ ইং
১৬ অগ্রহায়ণ, ১৪০৭ বাং

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

০১। দপ্তরের নাম : ইনভেস্টমেন্ট কর্পোরেশন অব বাংলাদেশ, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ৮, রাজউক এডিনিউ, ঢাকা-১০০০

০২। কাজের নাম : ১১, আউটার সার্কুলার রোড, রাজারবাগস্থ করপোরেশনের নিজস্ব ভবনদ্বয়ের প্রয়োজনীয় মেয়ামত ও সংস্কার কাজ।

০৩। কাজের পরিধি : (ক) সিভিল ওয়ার্ক, (খ) উড ওয়ার্ক, (গ) ইলেকট্রিক ওয়ার্ক ও (ঘ) স্যানিটারি ওয়ার্ক।

০৪। প্রাক্কলিত ব্যয়ের পরিমাণ : ৫,১২,১২৫.০০ টাকা (পাঁচ লক্ষ বার হাজার একশত পঁচিশ টাকা)।

০৫। ঠিকাদারের শ্রেণী : পিডব্লিউডি, এম, ই, এস ও রাজউক এর প্রথম শ্রেণীর ঠিকাদারগণ।

০৬। দরপত্র সিভিল ও অন্যান্য দলিলাদি প্রাপ্তিস্থান : সংস্থাপন বিভাগ, আইসিবি, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ৮, রাজউক এডিনিউ, ঢাকা-১০০০

০৭। দরপত্র সিভিল ও অন্যান্য দলিলাদির মূল্য : ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা

০৮। দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান : সংস্থাপন বিভাগ, আইসিবি, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ৮, রাজউক এডিনিউ, ঢাকা।

০৯। দরপত্র দলিলাদি ও সিভিল জরুর শেখ তারিখ : ১০-১২-২০০০ইং।

১০। দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময় : ১১-১২-২০০০ইং, সময় ১১.৩০ মিঃ।

১১। দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময় : ১১-১২-২০০০ইং, সময় ১১.৪৫ মিঃ।

১২। কার্য সম্পাদনের সময়সীমা : কার্যাদেশ প্রাপ্তির ৬০ (ষাট) দিনের মধ্যে নির্মাণ কাজ সম্পন্ন করতে হবে।

শর্তাবলী

০১। দরপত্র আগামী ১১ ডিসেম্বর, ২০০০ইং তারিখ বেলা ১১.৩০ মিনিটের মধ্যে করপোরেশনের প্রধান কার্যালয়ের সংস্থাপন বিভাগে রক্ষিত দরপত্র ব্যাগে জমা দিতে হবে এবং একই দিন বেলা ১১.৪৫ মিনিটে দরদাতাগণের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দরপত্র খোলা হবে। দরপত্র দাখিলের জন্য নির্ধারিত দিন সরকার কর্তৃক সরকারী ছুটি/বন্ধ ঘোষণা করা হলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসে একই সময়ে একই স্থানে দরপত্র জমা দিতে হবে:

০২। দরপত্রের সাথে উদ্ধৃত দরের ২.৫% (শতকরা আড়াই ভাগ) অর্থ আর্নেস্টম্যান হিসাবে ইনভেস্টমেন্ট কর্পোরেশন অব বাংলাদেশ, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা এর অনুকূলে যে কোন সিভিল ব্যাংকের ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার এর মাধ্যমে জমা দিতে হবে:

০৩। দরপত্র তফসিলে বর্ণিত স্পেসিফিকেশন অনুযায়ী নির্মাণ কাজ সম্পন্ন করতে হবে:

০৪। দরপত্রের সাথে ঠিকাদারগণের মর্যাদা সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্র বুক/সনদপত্র জমা দিতে হবে:

০৫। দরপত্র দাখিলের দিন ব্যতিরেকে সকল কার্যদিবসে করপোরেশনের সংস্থাপন বিভাগ, ঢাকা হতে ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা নগদ পরিশোধপূর্বক দরপত্র তফসিল ত্রয় করতে হবে। দরপত্র তফসিল ত্রয়ের সময় ঠিকাদার প্রতিষ্ঠানের মর্যাদা সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্র বুক/সনদপত্র প্রদর্শন করতে হবে:

০৬। দরপত্র তফসিলের সাথে সংযুক্ত নির্ধারিত তফসিলে দর উদ্ধৃত করতে হবে:

০৭। কোন কারণ প্রদর্শন ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা আইসিবি কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন।

কফিল উদ্দিন আহমদ চৌধুরী
সহকারী মহাব্যবস্থাপক
সংস্থাপন বিভাগ

জিডি-১১১০