

China asks US to stay out of Tibet issue

REUTERS, Beijing

China signalled on Thursday it would continue to refuse to deal with a US special coordinator for Tibet, despite apparent US plans to appoint the highest-ranking official ever to the post.

"This is the third time the US government has appointed a so-called coordinator for Tibet," Foreign Ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi said in response to reports that the Bush administration was set to name a senior State Department official to the position.

"Tibet is an inseparable part of Chinese territory and a purely internal affair of China's in which no country has the right to interfere," he told a news conference.

"We call on the US government to acknowledge that Tibet is a part of China, stop supporting Tibet independence activists and stop using the Tibet issue to interfere in China's internal affairs," he said.

US congressional sources told Reuters on Wednesday the administration was likely to name Undersecretary of State Paula Dobriansky its special coordinator for Tibet. It was unclear when Dobriansky's appointment might be formally announced.

Dobriansky, who handles global affairs, is viewed as one of the more conservative members of the State Department hierarchy and one very sympathetic to Tibetans.

China's suppression of Tibetan nationalism has made the fate of the Himalayan region a deeply emotive issue in the United States, where the Dalai Lama the Tibetan spiritual

leader enjoys a kind of spiritual stardom, enhanced by the vocal support of Hollywood personalities.

The previous administration of President Bill Clinton, under congressional pressure, named the first special coordinator for Tibet in 1997 to highlight US concern over China's treatment of the Himalayan region and its people.

Clinton appointees came from senior ranks, but they were not as senior as Dobriansky.

China has consistently opposed the post as interference in its internal affairs and refused to meet the coordinator.

The move was interpreted by some analysts as a further sign the Bush administration would apply to Tibet the tough line on China-related policies that it has taken on Taiwan and on security issues.

Congress, frustrated at Beijing's unwillingness to talk with the Dalai Lama, introduced legislation last week to make the Tibet coordinator a permanent position in US law and otherwise protect Tibet's rights and cultural uniqueness.

Chinese state media slammed the proposed bill as evidence of US "ignorance and arrogance" on human rights issues. They repeated China's assertion that it was modernising Tibet and lifting its people out of poverty.

The Dalai Lama has renounced claims to Tibetan independence, as China demanded, but Beijing still has not begun a serious dialogue on his call for autonomy.

New drug shows better treatment of NSCLC

The results of clinical trial shows that patients with advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) who received the anti-cancer drugs Taxotere® (docetaxel) and platinum lived significantly longer than patients treated with a standard drug combination, says a press release.

The study, presented at the 37th annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, showed that one year survival in the Taxotere/cisplatin group was 46 per cent compared to 42 per cent in the group that received vinorelbine/cisplatin, a standard treatment for NSCLC.

More importantly, the significantly superior two-year survival rate for the Taxotere/cisplatin group was 20 per cent, compared to 14 per cent in the active treatment comparator arm of vinorelbine/cisplatin.

"While platinum-based chemotherapy is often viewed as a first-line therapy for patients with advanced non-small cell lung cancer, there is no established treatment standard for this population," said Chandra P Belani, MD professor of medicine, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and co-director, Lung Cancer Program, University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute. "The improved survival associated with the docetaxel/cisplatin combination means that a superior treatment may be available for this vast group of patients who are not candidates for surgical resection."

The study included 1,220 patients with previously untreated advanced NSCLC. Patients were randomized to one of three treatment groups. The first group received, Taxotere followed by cisplatin every three weeks. The second group was

treated with Taxotere followed by carboplatin every three weeks. The third group received a combination of vinorelbine and cisplatin every four weeks. Overall exposure to chemotherapy was equivalent for all three groups.

Debate contest

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Slogan of the event.

Meanwhile, finalist Jagannath Hall beat Bangladesh-Kuwait Moltree Hall at the first semi-final yesterday on the topic "South Asia is taking towards an expanding nuclear doom". Sumon Dhar of the winning team was elected the best speaker.

On the second semi-final on the topic "Under the mask of democracy, most of the countries are pursuing state-sponsored terrorism", Rokeya Hall won against Bangabandhu Hall with Sabrina M Shaila being adjudged the best debater of this session.

Dumb girl

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under Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code, sources said.

When the girl was produced in a magistrate's court, police were asked to find out her parents and hand her over to them. But they could not collect any information about the girl and her parents.

She was then sent to Narayanganj jail on June 7 and later shifted to the central jail in the city.

Shipu murder: No headway

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Investigation officer of the case DB inspector Rezaul Karim, however, did not mention any of them as principal accused.

Some sources said Jewel is now staying in Canada. He left for Canada from an Indian airport while Zubair left Dhaka from Zia International Airport and is now staying in Italy. Alam is now working at a hotel in Kolkata.

Police sources believe that being a high official of CAAB, Zubair's father helped his son and the two others flee the country.

Police said that they could not arrest the three as they left the country after the killing. A DB team went to India to arrest the accused but they escaped.

About six months before Shipu

was murdered, Zubair and Shaiful allegedly gunned down a young man named Raju in Banani bazaar area. Despite clear evidence against the two, they were not arrested, local people said.

Documents of Shipu murder case were sent to the office of the DC of Dhaka for publishing notification about the absconders several months ago but no step has been taken as yet in this regard, family members alleged.

Shipu has a four-year-old daughter, Zaina and a two-year-old son, Zarif. Family members said although Zarif is too little to understand what happened with their father, Zaina frequently asks questions about him. "We are worried about the girl," her uncle said.

not respond.

NBR Chairman Zakir Ahmed Khan also wrote letters to the defence and home secretaries asking them to take actions for payment of duties and taxes.

The chairman reminded them that all commercially operating establishments must pay the government supplementary duty and value-added tax.

The defence secretary sent a letter to headquarters of the three services for taking proper actions against tax evasion.

But the authorities of those centres remained silent. The Daily Star correspondent also tried to talk to some army officers concerned, but they declined to make any comment on the issue.

Heat wave kills 25 Afghan children at Pak refugee camp

REUTERS, Islamabad

A heat wave has killed more than 25 Afghan children at an overcrowded makeshift refugee camp in north-western Pakistan over the past two weeks, the UN refugee agency UNHCR said yesterday.

A spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Yusuf Hassan, said the children were among a total of 29 Afghans who died since May 1 at Jallozai camp, where an estimated 70,000 Afghans who fled war and drought in their country have been camping since mid-January.

"In the past two weeks, as summer temperature soared above 45 degrees Celsius, more than 25 children have died of heatstrokes and dehydration," he said in a briefing note.

Hassan said the UNHCR and its partners had intensified efforts to improve health and sanitary conditions at the squalid camp near Peshawar, capital of the North West Frontier Province bordering Afghanistan.

But he said the UNHCR was "very concerned" about the plight of Afghans living at Jallozai, which has been at the centre of an unresolved row between the UNHCR and Pakistani authorities over how to deal with the Afghans.

PCP founding anniversary tomorrow

Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP) will celebrate its 12th founding anniversary and hold a conference tomorrow.

Language veteran Abdul Matin will inaugurate the conference at Aparajeyo Bangla on the Dhaka University at 9:30 am. After the inauguration, a colourful procession will be brought out.

To mark the occasion, PCP will also organise a discussion at TSC auditorium of Dhaka University at 4 pm. Noted writer Badruddin Umar, Khalequzzaman, Prof Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, Tasnim Arefa Siddiqui, Anil Chakma and Kobita Chakma will take part in the discussion.

DMCH

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day, some local people told this correspondent that Haris was never involved in any sort of crime.

But police filed an arms case, claiming that he was arrested along with dagger and was roaming in the area to commit snatching.

A tense situation was prevailing in the area following the death of the boy in police torture.

The local people said Haris returned home from Sunamganj on Tuesday after a 120-day chilla of Tableeg Jamaat.

Despite repeated attempts over telephone last night, neither the duty officer nor the OC of Tongi thana could be contacted for comments. The only available person, a wireless operator, told this correspondent that nobody except him was at the police station.

CMCH

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"But we need to go a massive public campaign to combat the disease" he observed.

Experts fear a dengue epidemic this year in the port city and its surrounding areas. Stagnant water in those areas will enliven the larvae left last year by Aedis mosquito. The larvae, if not destroyed, survives at least for one year, they said.

"We need a serious drive to destroy the larvae in all breeding places" said an expert.

CCC sources said plan is under-way to step up its anti-mosquito drive.

Illegal immigrants

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Kenney proposed creating the Office for New Philadelphians a privately financed agency possibly stationed in City Hall which would encourage new immigrants to move to the city, and then provide assistance, including English-language lessons, translation of city reports and referrals.

Kenney, who said it likely wouldn't require City Council legislation, said he hopes the office will be running by the end of the year.

Polluted rivers

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increase people's awareness about the rules and regulations to ensure a healthy environment. It will enhance people's spontaneous tendency to keep their own atmosphere free from all kinds of pollution.

Criticising the faulty city plans taken by different organisations of the government in the past for the development of the city which ultimately compounded the problems, the open dialogue demanded that a uniform plan be prepared by all the organisations of the government to save the city immediately. The villages of the area along the three rivers should carry on a social movement till the pollution of the three rivers is checked.



PHOTO: STAR

Workers brought out some of the stock materials in a bid to save them after a fire broke out at the New Fashion Garments at Pallabi in Mirpur yesterday.

Suicide bombing: Six killed

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thought the floor was about to fall from under me. Everyone ran and there was hysteria ... Then I saw the awful scene. Everything was broken, and I saw all the injured," she said.

Sirens wailed as ambulances and police cars raced to the scene. Rescuers treated some of the wounded on the street, while one of the dead was sprawled face-down on the pavement, surrounded by debris.

One witness, who only gave her first name, Shibolet, said that just before the explosion, she saw a young man, apparently an Arab, wearing an oversized blue sports coat. She said she became suspicious and called police, but that the bomb went off before the officers arrived.

Other witnesses said the bomber tried to get into the mall but was stopped by a security guard, who

pushed him back. The bomber then detonated his explosives and the security guard was among the injured.

Hamas identified the suicide bomber as Mahmoud Ahmed Marmash, 20, from the West Bank town of Tulkarém.

In the West Bank town of Ramallah, Hamas preacher Hassan Yousef announced the name over mosque loudspeakers yesterday, afternoon prayers. Yousef said the blast came in retaliation for the killing of five Palestinian policemen by Israeli security forces earlier this week. At the main Ramallah mosque, Hamas activists distributed sweets to worshippers after prayers to celebrate the bombing.

Hamas leader Ahmed Yassin said Israel was the aggressor. "Israel planted the violence by killing innocent people," he said. "Now Israel is harvesting the reaction."

Buddhadev sworn in

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Ministry and be satisfied with only the Transport Ministry, sources concerned said.

The Raj Bhaban function was attended by over 2,000 dignitaries. Jyoti Basu was looking a bit relaxed at the function.

There were persons like Aziz Premji, owner of Wipro, the Goenka Brothers, Harsh and Sanjeev and some other industrialists in the state.

Chairman of Trinamool Congress Ait Panja exchanged pleasantries with Bhattacharya, his wife, daughter and mother.

However, newly elected Congress MLAs were not seen. It was not known whether they had boycotted the swearing-in ceremony.

Bhattacharya is the sixth Chief Minister of the state. His predecessors are Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Ajoy Mukherjee, Prafulla Sen, Siddhartha Shankar Ray and Jyoti Basu.

Dr. Roy had started the agricultural revolution in West Bengal. It remains to be seen whether Bhattacharya can materialise his dream of an industrial revolution in the state.

AFF adds from Kolkata: Veteran Marxist leaders Harkisen Singh Surjeet, also the general secretary of the CPI-M, Prakash Karat and Somnath Chatterjee were among the dignitaries at the Raj Bhaban function.

Fiery opposition leader Mamata Banerjee, who leads the Trinamool regional party, boycotted the swearing-in ceremony, accusing the CPI-M of fudging a victory by manipulating the election machinery and creating "a reign of terror all over the state."

Trinamool called Friday a "black day" in a protest against the CPI-M's "terrorism and victory by rigging."

The CPI-M-led Left Front, a combination of nine parties, has been in power in West Bengal since 1977.

Bhattacharya former president of Democratic Youth Front and Student Federation of India, both student wings of the CPI-M was elected to the state assembly in 1977 when the Left Front came to power in West Bengal.

A former state minister, Bhattacharya was defeated in the 1982 assembly elections but was again elected in 1988, when he was made urban development minister.

Later, he held the important and sensitive portfolio of home ministry, a post he held till early 2000 when he was made deputy chief minister by Jyoti Basu.

BSS adds: Known for his "intellectual" distrust of industrialists, the new Chief Minister said that his first actions would be to "revive the industrial scenario of the state and increase employment opportunities."

Cabinet ministers:

Buddhadeb Bhattacharya, Nirupam Sen, Md. Amin, Ashim Dasgupta, Subhash Chakraborty, Md Salim, Suryakanta Mishra, Kamal Guha, Biswanath Chowdhury, Nandagopal Bhattacharya, Kiranmoy Nanda, Prabodhi Sinha, Kalimuddin Shams, Amar Chowdhury, Gautam Deb, Kanti Biswas, Naren De, Manab Mukherjee, Ashok Bhattacharya, Satya Sadhan Chakraborty, Amalendralal Roy, Abdur Rezzak Molla, Mrinal Benerjee, Bangshagopal Chaudhury, Dinesh Dakua, Nisith Adhikari, Upen Kishu, Anisur Rahman, Jogesh Burman, Nimai Mal, Sailen Sarkar, Nanda Rani Dal, Chhayga Ghosh and Hafiz Alam Sairani.

Ministers of State:

Pratim Chatterjee, Dhiren Sen, Sushanta Ghosh, Dasharath Tirkey, Maheshwar Murmu, Anju Kar, Bilashibala Sahis, Ganesh Chandra Mondal, Sreekumar Mukherjee, Kanti Ganguly, Pratyush Mukherjee, Narayan Biswas, Nayan Sarkar and Iva Dey.



PHOTO: STAR

Col (ret) Oli Ahmad addressing a seminar on "government's foreign policy of subservience and the border aggression" organised by Zia Srijonshil Sangsad at the Bhashani auditorium in the city yesterday.

Malaysia to import English teachers

REUTERS, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia will import English teachers from Britain and the United States to stop a decline in English skills among Malaysians, local media reported yesterday.

It will also send local English teachers for overseas training, start testing primary school students' skills yearly and introduce two new courses for high-school students, Education Minister Musa Mohamad was quoted as saying on Thursday.

The moves follow a public outcry last year, led by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, after 40 per cent of high-school students failed their English exams.

"We have to deal increasingly with other countries. We can't go there and speak our own language because nobody is going to learn it in order to understand us," Mahathir, who studied medicine in English in

Singapore, told the state Bernama news agency.

Most Malaysian children learn in the national language Bahasa Malaysia and take English as a compulsory subject. They do not need to pass an English exam to graduate.

Universities in the former British colony teach primarily in Bahasa Malaysia while the growing number of private colleges instruct mostly in English.

In November, Malaysia and other members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) agreed to promote English as a first or second language.

Malaysia's neighbour Singapore has embarked on its own English language programme, though with a different focus, encouraging citizens to purify their "Singlish", a mishmash of English, Malay and Chinese words and sentence structures.

Retired teachers asked to receive allocation from trust office

BSS, Dhaka

The welfare trust for retired teachers and employees of private educational institutions yesterday asked the enlisted teachers and employees of the report to the trust office today or on Sunday to receive their allocation, a press release of the organisation said in the city.

The Besarkari Shikkha Pratisthan Shikkhak O Karmachari Kalyan Trust requested the already enlisted teachers and employees to report with three passport size photos, counter signs attested by a gazetted officer, a copy of their original application and the last MPO copy to the trust office at Shikkha Bhaban at 11 am.

The release also asked the nominated successor of the expired teachers and employees (already listed) to report at the same time with succession certificates attested by local UP chairman, ward commissioners or municipal chairmen.

It, however, added that in case of inability to report within the next two days, the trust would send the cheques to the recipients shortly.

The release, signed by secretary of the trustee board, requested others who were yet to be listed to wait for the publication of the next list.

The organisation last month announced that it would soon disburse nearly Taka 5.40 crore to the enlisted retired teachers of private school, college and madrasahs as it finalised a list of 1,840 retired or expired teachers and employees of private educational institutions.

The trust was formed recently with Education Secretary as ex-officio chairman and chairman of the Intermediate and Higher Education Department as ex-officio vice chairman of the body. Principal of Sheikh Borhanuddin Post Graduate College Quazi Farood has been made the secretary of the trust.

Rumsfeld mulling changes in US armed forces

AFF, Washington

Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is considering some major changes for the US armed forces, including pulling US peacekeepers out of Bosnia, The Washington Post said yesterday.

In an interview with the daily, Rumsfeld said abandoning the principle that the US military must be prepared to fight on two major fronts at the same time was also under consideration.

Rumsfeld indicated his desire to do away with the so called "up or out" system requiring military officers to advance to new jobs every two years or retire. Calling it "mindless," he said he would consider

having "people stay in slots a little longer and maybe to serve longer."

He said he was "pushing" to get US troops out of Bosnia because he believes the military mission there is finished.

The review of the US military, begun four months ago, will not produce results until fiscal 2002, beginning October 1 of that year, Rumsfeld said.

Criticised for the closed manner in which he is conducting the review, Rumsfeld said he would include the military and Congress in his future deliberations.

"Everyone will have a chance to participate, which they should," Rumsfeld said.

9 inured in Manikganj road accident

UNB, Manikganj

At least nine people were injured in a road accident in Jhoka area in Gheor upazila on Dhaka-Aricha highway yesterday.

Police and witnesses said the accident took place at about 4 pm when an Aricha-bound microbus rammed a private car coming from Barisal.

Five of the injured, identified as GM Kabir, 40, Rabbani, 25, Maruf, 14, Maksudur Rahman, 11, and Marufa Akter, 35, were the members of a same family and travelling in the private car.

They were first admitted to Manikganj Sadar Hospital and then shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

A case was filed with the police in this regard.

Discussion on language martyrs of Assam today

BSS, Dhaka

Eminent litterateurs of the country will pay homage to the Bangla language martyrs of Shilchor in Assam today through a discussion commemorating their sacrifices for establishing the right to speak in their mother tongue.

On this day in 1961 eleven people of Shilchor, the centre of Barak valley of north-eastern Indian state of Assam, embraced martyrdom and many others were injured as police opened fire on them during a non-violent movement.

Tens of thousands of people of the region joined the movement to establish Bangla as one of the state languages of Assam.

The discussion under the banner of "19th May Observation Committee" will be held at Teachers' lounge of TSC at Dhaka University at 4 pm.

DESA crash programme

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mission lines.

Besides load shedding, low voltage causes tripping of lines and disruption in supply, damage to electronic goods and deprive high-rise buildings from using lifts.

According to sources concerned, 2000 capacitor banks are to be installed to face the low voltage problem. DESA was suppose to install 1888 capacitor banks by March 15 last under its crash program.

So far, DESA has installed 1038 capacitor banks and 100 more were to be installed by 15th of this month.

When asked DESA Member (Generation) Abdul Mannan Molla said they are going to install more 500 capacitor banks in the next phase but could not say when the work will begin.

Sources said the procurement process for the capacitor banks are yet to be completed.

Regarding the delay, a high official of DESA said their actual schedule for completing the project was September this year.

"We had squeezed the time following instruction from higher authorities. We have to depend on imported equipment. Some other complications have forced us to revise our target", he said on condition of anonymity.

But according to sources concerned the deadline for installation of the transmission lines was rescheduled several times earlier, allegedly due to sluggishness by a section of officials. The original plan was to complete three transmission and distribution projects by March 2000, the sources added.

When asked about installation of the two 132 KV transmission lines, DESA Superintendent Engineer S M Sirajuddaula said they are expecting to complete the work by next month.