

The Daily Star

COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XI No. 44

DHAKA TUESDAY OCTOBER 9, 2001

FALGUN 16, 1407 BS

ZELHAJ 3, 1421 HURI

16 PAGES PRICE: Tk 6.00

www.dailystarnews.com



Two US F-18 fighters prepare to take off from the USS Enterprise aircraft carrier (L); a B-2 Spirit flies with B-1B and B-52 bombers (2nd L); ordnancemen move a 1,000 pound bomb onto the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (3rd L); and a Tomahawk cruise missile gets launched from the USS Philippine Sea on the first night of the US-led coalition attack on Afghanistan on October 7. The picture on the extreme right shows Afghans inspecting damage in Kabul yesterday.

US may strike other countries

Three waves of attack on Afghanistan: 20 killed

REUTERS, United Nations

The United States warned the UN Security Council yesterday that it may have to launch military strikes on other countries and groups beyond Afghanistan and the al Qaeda network of Saudi-born militant Osama bin Laden.

"We may find that our self-defence requires further actions with respect to other organisations and other states," the United States said in a letter to the 15-nation Security Council.

Three US Navy warships and a minesweeper left a port in southern Japan yesterday several hours after the United States and Britain unleashed bombing and missile strikes on Afghanistan, Japan's Kyodo news agency reported.

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A night of horror for citizens of Kabul

AP, Kabul

They emerged into the crisp morning and looked around their town, knowing war had visited them again, trying to figure out how. Even for the citizens of Kabul, accustomed to misery and uncertainty and crumbled lives, this was a difficult day.

"I don't understand why the people of Afghanistan are such unlucky people," said Mirza Mohammed, leaving town yesterday morning.

Things appeared normal, as normal as possible in a capital that

has endured so many years of war. The markets opened as usual. Nothing visible was destroyed or even damaged. Little appeared overtly amiss.

But many shaken residents were trying to make sense of the attacks, which the United States said were aimed at crippling the ruling Taliban's air defenses while an international coalition hunts down top terrorist suspect Osama bin Laden.

Some braced for an extended conflict.

"Both sides are strong. America

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Dhaka monitoring developments in Afghanistan

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is 'keenly following' the developments in Afghanistan but has given no immediate reaction to the US-led air strikes there.

Security around US, British and several western embassies and their vital organisations in Dhaka has been beefed up.

US Ambassador Mary Ann Peters and British High Commissioner Dr David Carter yesterday met top officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to brief the government about the allied position on strikes in Afghanistan.

It was not known till last night if the US had made any specific request for use of Bangladesh's air space, refuelling facilities, naval and air bases in possible military measures against terrorists in the region.

The Chief Advisor's Special Assistant on Foreign Affairs Shafi Sami told newsmen last night, "We have not received any specific request till 3 pm regarding those four specific areas."

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Musharraf sidelines two pro-Taliban generals

AP, Islamabad

Pakistani President Gen Pervez Musharraf, apparently trying to bolster support within his military, has sidelined two pro-Taliban generals in a shakeup of senior ranks announced just before the United States attacked Afghanistan.

One of the more hard-line Islamists within the military, Lt Gen Mohammed Aziz Khan, was removed from the powerful position of corps commander and given the largely ceremonial job of chairman

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Strikes continue



Musharraf tries to allay fear US operation to be short, targeted

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf said yesterday that US-led attacks on Afghanistan had been specifically targeted at terrorist bases and the ruling Taliban had been given plenty of opportunity to avoid their fate.

Musharraf told a news conference less than 24 hours after the first waves of air raids on Afghanistan that he had urged US President George W Bush to avoid hurting ordinary Afghans in the operation and also keep collateral

damage to a minimum.

"The action which is going on now is targeted... It is the terrorist camps which are being targeted," he said.

"We tried our utmost but unfortunately it was not possible to prevent the conclusion that happened last night."

Musharraf said he told President George W Bush that the Northern Alliance, a group of ethnic minorities of Tajiks and Uzbeks based in northern Afghanistan, should not be allowed to exploit the attacks to

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OIC, Arab League to discuss US attacks

AP, Doha

Despite the US missile strikes on Afghanistan, meetings of Muslim and Arab foreign ministers will go ahead in Qatar over the next few days, an official said yesterday.

The raids -- launched Sunday night by US and British forces -- will top meeting agendas, the official

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MPs-elect belonging to 4-party to take oath today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of parliament belonging to the four-party alliance will take oath at the Sangsad Bhaban this morning.

Outgoing Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Abdul Hamid will administer the oath to MPs-elect at 10:00am.

The speaker is also scheduled to administer oath to the newly elected MPs of other parties tomorrow and on Thursday.

The Parliament Secretariat has completed all preparations for the swearing-in ceremony.

Awami League (AL) is still rigid in its stance on not taking oath. The AL has demanded cancellation of results of the October 1 polls and a fresh election in all parliamentary seats.

Earlier, the swearing-in ceremony of the BNP and its allies was scheduled for Sunday, and that of the cabinet for yesterday. But it was deferred due to uncertainty over whether the speaker would administer the oath.

Now the cabinet of the BNP-led alliance will take oath tomorrow at the Darbar Hall of the Bangabhaban.

President Shahabuddin Ahmad will first appoint the prime minister and administer oath to her at 7:00pm, which will be followed by the swearing-in of other members of the cabinet.

The oath-taking ceremony over, the newly elected members of parliament belonging to BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, Jatiya Party (N-F) and Islami Oikya Jote will sit together and formally elect their leader.

The Cabinet Division has completed all preparations for the swearing-in ceremony of the new government headed by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP-led four-party alliance upped its tally to 214 by securing 11 of the 15 constituencies, where re-polling at the suspended centres was held yesterday.

According to unofficial results available from the Election Commission last night, ten of the 15 seats went to the BNP, one to the Awami League, one to the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, and three to independent candidates. The AL now has 62 seats in the parliament.

Election to the Cox's Bazar-3 constituency, suspended due to the

death of a candidate two days before the October 1 polls, has been rescheduled for November 1.

During yesterday's re-polling at 83 centres in 15 constituencies, there was no incident of violence or intimidation, an EC official said.

Hemaet Ullah Awarongo, an AL dissident, won in the Shariatpur-1 constituency, polling 98,480 votes while his nearest rival Mobarak Ali Sikder of the AL got 81,930 votes.

Another independent candidate Engineer Shamsuddin Ahmed won the Mymensingh-6 constituency securing 56,570 votes with his near

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Salman's daughter killed in accident in London

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shamaila Narmeen Fazlur Rahman 23, daughter of Beximco group vice-chairman Salman F Rahman, died in a tragic accident in London on Sunday last.

Atif Karim (25), the first son of Joydul Karim, managing director of Karim Pipes Limited, also died in the same accident.

A press release of the Beximco Group said Sohail Rahman, chairman of the group left Dhaka on Sunday night after London police confirmed the death.

Shamaila was the only daughter of Salman Rahman and Rubaba Rahman. She was born in 1978 and passed her BA in law from the

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