REGD. No. DA 781

Vol. XI No. 44

DHAKA WEDNESDAY JANUARY 2, 2002

People's Right to Know

FALGUN 16, 1407 BS

ZELHAJ 3, 1421 HIJRI

16 PAGES PRICE: TK 6.00



Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair is likely to request Bangladesh to contribute some of its highly trained troops to the International Security Assistance Force for maintaining peace in war-rayaged Afghanistan, according to sources.

M ANWARUL HAQ

for Afghanistan

Blair arrives here tomorrow at 7 pm by a special flight on a two-day "working visit". He will be lodged at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.

Britain heads the International Security Assistance Force, set up under a Security Council Resolution passed late last month.

Blair may request for troops

The International Security Assistance Force created under Chapter Seven of the UN Charter is different from the traditional Peacekeeping Force formed under Chapter Six of the Charter. Chapter Seven calls for Enforcement Action involving high-risk exposure and

peacekeeping work.

If Bangladesh accedes to the British request, its soldiers will be charged with creating a "peace shield" in and around Kabul, gradually extending it to the whole of Afghanistan.

The security force will ultimately oversee that there is no human rights violation in Afghanistan. It will protect Kabul airport and subsequently other airports, and help

Barapukuria set to become another 'white elephant'

As financial viability of the Barapukuria coal mine scheme has become uncertain its costly coal-fired power generation project component is becoming a huge financial burden on the country.

Works on the US\$220 million Barapukuria coal-fired power project did not start even six months after the agreement was signed due to lack of a 30-year coal supply guarantee from the owners of the mine, Petrobangla.

At the same time, the economics of the \$192 million mine project and its implementation time are set to suffer due to repeated flooding of the mine from unpredictable water reservoir. The authorities are seriously consider-

This would delay implementation of he scheme by several years, sources

But as the Power Development Board (PDB) signed an agreement with a consortium of three Chinese companies -- CMC, SEC and SEEC -- to set up the 250 MW plant in July 12 last year, it is now bound to pay the builders an installment soon.

This has become inevitable as Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji is scheduled to visit Bangladesh on January 11

As Bangladesh has a friendly tie with China which is involved in a num-

Users welcome ban on polybags

STAR REPORT

A ban on production and use of polythene shopping bags in the city came into force on the New Year's Day yesterday with the environment-hostile bags making way for those made of bio-degradable materials like jute, cotton and paper.

The public response to the new move appeared positive though, as shopkeepers, salesmen and buvers used jute bags and thonga (cheap paper-made packets)

Members of law-enforcement agencies also went to different markets and shopping centres and asked the retailers not to sell their goods in polybags use and production of which (less than 20-micron thick) was banned by the government last month. The bar will be extended outside the capital within two months as per a cabinet decision.



Jute bags of various sizes, colours and designs, have flooded city markets as environment-friendly substitutes for polybag, banned by government from the New Year's Dav.

President's son SAARC for draft SAFTA comes under 'bomb' attack

UNB, Dhaka

President Prof. AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury's son came under an 'explosive attack' near Bangabhaban yesterday evening.

Four of the associates of Mahi Badruddoza Chowdhury fell ill inhaling noxious smell of the explosives. He was not affected, however.

"Either it's some sort of acid or liquid pungent gas thrown at my car in front DIT building crossing at 7:00 pm while I was heading to meet my father," he said.

Talking to this news agency shortly after the explosion, Mahi, who is contesting by-election from Munshiganj-1 on BNP ticket, said he usually visits his father in the evening before going to their residence at Baridhara in the city.

"Similarly, this time I was visiting Bangabhaban after conducting treaty by year end quick succession to accelerate the

The 22nd meeting of the SAARC Standing Committee ended here yesterday with the recommendation for readying by end of 2002 the framework treaty for South Asia Free Trade Area (SAFTA).

Briefing journalists on the deliberations Acting Foreign Secretary of Nepal Madhu Raman Acharya said the Standing Committee, comprising Foreign Secretaries of the region, dealt with comprehensive agenda for the 11th SAARC summit set to commence here on January

The committee, he said, decided to adopt in principle the desirability of South Asia Economic Union (SAEU) proposed by the Group of Eminent Persons (GEP) drawn from all over South Asia.

It recommended, he said, gradual implementation of the SAEU for common benefit.

He said the committee dealt with a comprehensive agenda for the summit, recommended a number of the region to address poverty, he Bhutan proposed to host meet-

ing for tackling environmental issues, he said.

India proposed meeting on science and technology and Sri Lanka on culture, he added.

On Nepal's proposal, he said, the committee recommended rationalisation of SAARC, and particularly for making annual summit meetings more business

to make an in-built agenda for SAARC meetings for smoother sailing for the forum.

Pak cricketers due today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Pakistan cricket team arrives in Bangladesh today to play two Tests and three one-day internationals.

Wagar Younis will lead a strong 16-member team in the first series against the Test babes. Wagar's side boasts some of the biggest names in the game including his predecessor Wasim Akram and champion batsman Inzama-ul Huq, who will act as deputy of the star fast bowler.

The tour will certainly give Pakistan a chance to return to SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

India, Pakistan renew nuclear pact despite tension

Both countries seem to pull back from brink of war

India and Pakistan yesterday renewed a 10-year-old agreement under which both countries are committed not to attack each other's nuclear installations and facilities, the foreign ministry said.

India and Pakistan each submit a list of nuclear facilities to be the Indian parliament which New covered under the agreement which Delhi blamed on two Pakistan-

came into force in 1991, one of only a few confidence-building measures between the nuclear-capable

But the list has assumed greater importance as both nations are engaged in the biggest military build-up along their border in nearly 15 years after last month's attack on

based groups fighting Indian rule in disputed Kashmir.

India and Pakistan appeared esterday to be inching back from the brink of conflict as a Pakistani crackdown on Islamic extremist groups fuelled hopes of bilateral talks at an upcoming South Asia leadership summit in Nepal

possible negotiation was signalled

on Monday by Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh who, for the first time, did not rule out some kind of bilateral dialogue on the sidelines of the January 4-6 South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit in Kathmandu.

"I will see how the programme The shift from confrontation to develops," Singh said, after welcom-

Killing of ex-ward commissioner

Police yet to find motive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police are vet to ascertain the motive behind the murder of BNP leader and former ward commissioner Khaled Imam.

He was shot dead near the Moghbazar rail crossing in the city at about 9:30 pm on Monday. He was 47.

After a brief conversation with some local party men on the footpath in front of Baghdad Motors, Khaled had sidestepped for cigarettes from a shop. He gave a 500 taka note and was waiting for changes. His daughter Sajeda Imam Pamela also came in a car and felt after few minutes' talks with him.

All of a sudden, a gang of about 15 appeared there in a car, a microbus and two motorcycles.

Four or five gangsters burst forth from the car and fired several shots, hitting his head and chest. Khaled collapsed on a bench in front of the shop. His elder brother Giasuddin Imam and younger brothers Alamgir Imam and Sarfuddin Imam were present there. Sarfuddin fired six shots at the

fleeing gang from his licensed gun but the miscreants escaped unhurt. Hearing gunshots, Khaled's daughter came back to the spot and found her father lying in a pool of blood in front of the shop.

Ten dists under Khulna Div

Fresh lists of terrorists, illegal arms holders

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Fresh lists of 1772 terrorists and holders of illegal firearms under 10 districts of the Khulna division have recently been prepared by order of the home ministry, according to sources in the KMP and Khulna Range Office of the DIG of police.

One of the lists prepared by the Khulna Range Office of the DIG of police contains names of 1511 persons from districts under Khulna Range. KMP (Khulna Metropolitan Police) prepared the other list of 261 persons under five police stations of the Khulna Metropolitan City.

Updated for the second time over the last one year, these lists contain names of political and non-political terrorists and holders of illegal firearms and ammunition, and copies have already been sent to all police stations and 150 police outposts for immediate action. The first list was prepared by the AL government last year followed by a

Khulna division in combing operations from July 17 to July 29 last year. The recently updated lists have already been approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs and sent to police superintendents and the police commissioner for taking necessary legal action. Police have reportedly received the goahead for launching combing operations on December 15 last, sources said.

second fresh list by order of the caretaker government of Justice Latifur Rahman. Accordingly, 97 listed terrorists were arrested from ten districts of

SAARC process and activities, considering their slowing down for various reasons. Pakistan proposed meeting of like and result oriented.

Finance and Planning Ministers of

The committee, he said, decided

It recommended acceleration of

South Asia Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA) process and agreed to hold soon the fourth SEE PAGE 11 COL 4