

EU's new plan for ME peace

AFP, Copenhagen

Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller yesterday said he plans to travel to the Middle East next week to present a new EU peace plan, notably proposing a provisional Palestinian state by 2003.

The three-stage peace plan, due to be discussed by EU foreign ministers gathering Friday and Saturday in the Danish port town of Elsinore, sets out a timetable aiming at the establishment of a full Palestinian state by 2005.

"I hope my EU colleagues will rally around this road map that the Danish presidency has proposed and which will be one of the themes of discussion at this meeting," he told reporters.

According to a copy of the plan seen by AFP, the first stage of the EU plan would involve negotiations this autumn, leading before the Palestinian elections next January to a security agreement allowing the withdrawal of Israeli forces from re-occupied Palestinian areas.

The second stage of the process "starts after Palestinian election in January 2003 and ends with the conclusion of an agreement on the creation of a Palestinian state with provisional borders by August 2003."

The third phase of the plan, after August 2003, would involve a final phase of negotiations aimed at the formal creation of a full Palestinian state "with limited arms" by 2005, according to the Danish presidency document.

At the same time peace talks would be launched between Israel, Lebanon and Syria, the plan suggests.

To facilitate the accord, the Danish plan calls for "a public statement in Arabic by the Palestinian leadership, restating Israel's right to exist and calling for the respect of the Jewish faith."

At the same time "It is clear that Israel must lift the blockade on the Palestinian territories in order to ensure Palestinian elections in January, and gradually pull out as the Palestinians take charge of security in these zones," Moeller said.

"The Israelis must allow the Palestinian legislative assembly, which is to be elected next January, to meet and vote on laws, and release the 600 million dollars due the Palestinian Authority, all the while ensuring that it will not be used to finance terrorist activities," he added.

Moeller said he "hoped and expected" that the EU would support the peace plan.

In such a case, he would meet with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal on Monday, Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher on Tuesday, and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on Wednesday.

Denmark currently holds the rotating EU presidency, and has made the Middle East a key concern for its six months at the EU steering wheel.

The document said Israeli-Palestinian negotiations leading to such an agreement would take place under the auspices of the so-called Quartet, comprising the European Union, Russia, the United Nations and the United States, alongside three moderate Arab countries: Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Under the proposals, Israel and the Palestinians would share Jerusalem, while their territories would return to those of 1967, with a few "proportionate exchanges" of territory.

The Danish proposals also call for the Europeans to organize as rapidly as possible an international conference on the Middle East.

42,000 MT

FROM PAGE 1

from Mymensingh district, Delwar Hossain Khan Dulu said he did not even attend the district procurement committee meeting.

Dulu, however, pointed out that against a primary procurement target of 1476 MT of wheat in Mymensingh, the district procurement committee sought an additional 20,000 MT of wheat purchase allotment.

Meanwhile, the secretarial probe committee also highlighted the issue of increasing wheat procurement target when there was already field reports that locally grown wheat was no longer available for purchase.

The committee, sources said, also maintained that some of the 12 food officials responsible for overall monitoring of procurement in different districts neglected their duties and did not visit their respective areas.

Within law

FROM PAGE 1

its application for a new license is resolved by the Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC).

"However, the authorities cancelled the ETV's terrestrial transmission at around 5:00pm. Certainly, we are not happy over the move," Simon Dring said.

He said the ETV's satellite transmission is still on. But he did not say anything when asked what they will do if the authorities stopped the satellite broadcast, too.

On the ETV's move to have a new license, the management in its statement said, "Today's judgement, the Court declared, would not have any bearing on the consideration of such application by the BTRC. The BTRC, the judgement said, is free to decide on these matters in accordance with the law."

When asked to comment on the legal battle, Simon Dring said, "It has been a long and confusing struggle."

"(The) ETV is far more than a television network, (it's) an expression of the people's hope. We tried to present something honest and good. Maybe we were not perfect, but we were professional in our approach," Dring said, describing their effort for the last two years.

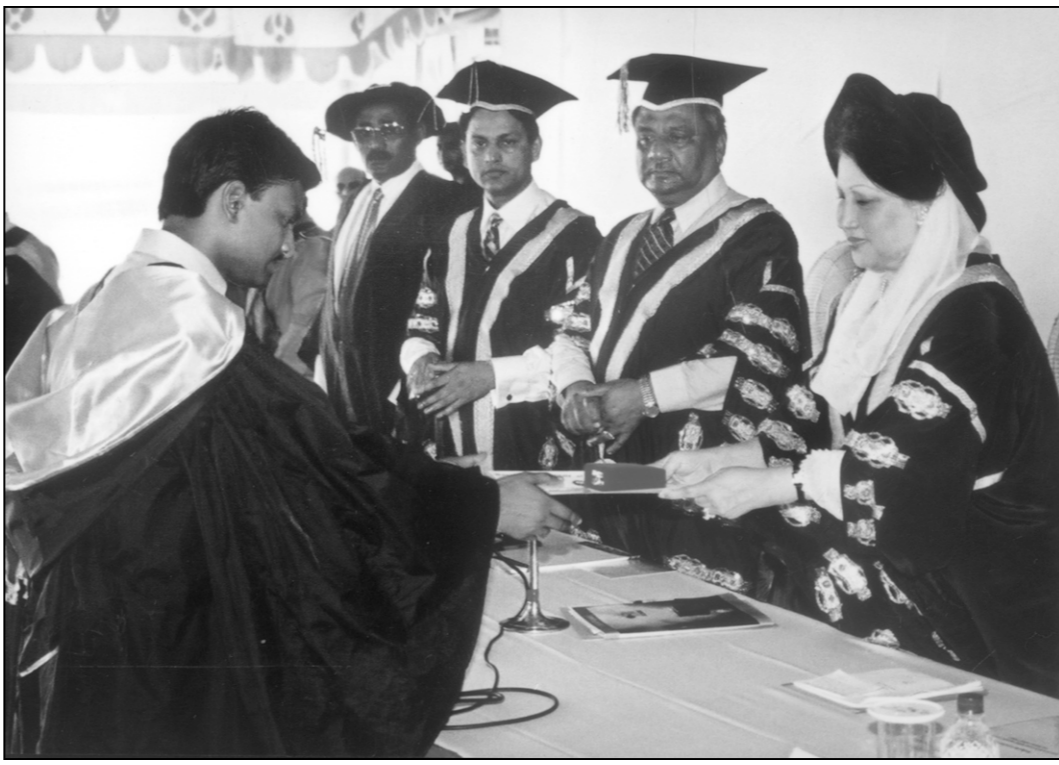


PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia distributing gold medals among the meritorious students at the convocation of Bangladesh Institute of Technology (BIT), Gazipur yesterday.

Independent electronic media

FROM PAGE 1

Azad Chowdhury said the verdict is frustrating.

"As viewers, we have been deprived of a powerful news media. Viewers will miss an independent news media from now on," he said.

Robin Ahsan, proprietor of Srabon, a publisher, said, "The ETV created an alternative to the conventional BTV."

"I don't want to know the court verdict...I want to see ETV," said Syed Mustakim Billah, a DU student.

Gobinda Bar, an NGO worker, said that although the closure came through a judicial procedure, people would take it as a politically engineered move.

"The court order may be correct in line with rules and regulations

but public interests have been undermined," Bar felt.

This is an exemplary case of how media can be politicised and politics influences the media, he added.

ADU teacher said the closure of ETV left a vacuum in electronic journalism.

"We will miss ETV much, especially its news and drama," said a housewife at Mohammapdur.

However, Information Minister Tariqul Islam said, "The government had no involvement in the case in the past and at present."

He said everybody should respect the court verdict.

Asked about transmission on the satellite band, he said that since the ETV's licence was declared illegal, there was no

scope for it.

The government was an accused in the ETV case, he said.

The Supreme Court upheld the verdict of the High Court by dismissing the leave to appeal, since the ETV's licence was issued illegally.

Former Information Minister Professor Abu Sayeed said, "It will affect the electronic media in the age of free flow of information."

Our Bandarban Correspondent adds: Anik Islam, the four-year-old son of a local journalist, sobbed to his mother, "Mom, no ETV now...I want to watch ETV."

"Why there is no ETV?" asked the little daughter of a school-teacher in Anik's neighbourhood, when she was surfing channels.

Chhabi Rani

FROM PAGE 12

molested her inside the Rampal BNP office. Rani was later admitted to the KMCH for treatment.

From the KMCH, Hasina drove to the Khulna Press Club at 2:55pm where she addressed local journalists.

She said the entire country is in the grip of lawlessness and journalists are also not safe and secure. Branding Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's government of the four-party alliance as most corrupt, Hasina said time will come when people of the country will rise up against the ministers and BNP cadres who are making fortune out of human misery.

She blamed the government for failing to tackle the dengue situation, which is claiming lives one after another. In this context, she demanded to know the whereabouts of 700 doctors who she said were given special training for treatment of dengue patients. She said those doctors were made victims of politicisation of the medical profession and transferred elsewhere in the country.

About the wheat scam, she alleged that the prime minister herself is involved in it. Also, she said she is eager to know about Khaleda Zia's reaction to the Transparency International's report that branded Bangladesh as the most corrupt nation.

She said none in the country feel secure anymore as prices of rice and other essentials are soaring, industries are being closed down, and murders, rape, extortion and kidnapping are on the rise, adding that 45,000 criminals were released in the last 10 months of alliance rule.

Dengue

FROM PAGE 12

The dengue death toll this year stood at 39 and the total number of people hospitalised so far for dengue treatment stood at 3511.

Slum-dwellers

FROM PAGE 12

He urged the media to project the problems of the slum dwellers to the civil society and the government.

On behalf of the slum dwellers, Sultan Ahmad of Rupnagar Slum said they have voting right just like the other city dwellers and they want to live in the city.

He regretted that before an election, all political parties use them, seek their votes and give them lot of promises, but just forget those later.

He urged the government to rehabilitate them on khas lands in the city and said they would pay for that in instalments.

Abdul Ali of Kalyanpur slum said when the government removes a slum, it promises to rehabilitate the affected. "But we have been floating from one place to another for years."

He alleged that Mirpur police put up a road barricade in Kalyanpur area to prevent the from attending yesterday's rally and charged baton at Shialbari slum.

Gano Forum Leader Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and slum dwellers' leaders Abdus Sobhan, Parvez, Md Selim and Abu Taher also spoke at the rally.

Agitated people block traffic on Dhaka- Ctg road for 4 hours

UNB, Narayanganj

Traffic movement on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Shimrail crossing here remained disrupted for about four hours from 10am yesterday.

People of Paindi and Mizmizi areas of Shiddhirganj upazila staged a demonstration and rally at the crossing blocking the highway at about 10am demanding arrest of and exemplary punishment to the killers of lawyer Abdus Sattar Shajal.

Hundreds of vehicles remained stranded on the highway, causing immense sufferings to the people. Vehicular movement, however, resumed at about 2pm.

Advocate Abdus Sattar was missing since August 15. His body was recovered from a field at Pashchim Sonarpar on August 19.

Police arrested three people in connection with the murder.

JCD gunfight leaves 10 hurt at Pabna

UNB, Pabna

Ten people were injured, three of them with bullets, in a gunfight between two factions of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal in the town yesterday.

Police said the clash erupted on Pabna Commercial College premises at noon over establishing supremacy on the campus.

Of the injured, Khoka, 27, Suzan, 17, and Shahin, 22, were admitted to Pabna General Hospital.

A tense situation is prevailing on the college campus

Bappi murder

FROM PAGE 12

in the river Shitalakhya.

Afu Miah, father of Bappi, filed an abduction and murder case against Shipon and 8 others under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000, the following day.

The decomposed body of Bappi was found floating on the Shitalakhya nine days after the killing.

The court also fixed September 2 for appearance of the accused.

Accused Shipon, Ripon Sanjit and Sankar, now detained at the jail custody, were produced before the court yesterday.

End of TV outlook

FROM PAGE 12

reach almost every part of the country using BTV's transmission towers.

Even the overseas radio programmes, known for their objectivity, felt pressured as their prime time programmes overlapped with ETV's.

Besides its news bulletin, the TV channel were also very popular for some other special programmes like Deshjure, Mukta Khabar, Adventure Bangladesh, Video Cring Cring, Pather Pachaili, Music Cafe and Akjer Patrika.

Mukta Khabar was a programme with a difference. This news-based programme was produced by 32 young Bangladeshi adolescent reporters - boys and girls from different social backgrounds.

Mukto Khabor covered news from a wide variety of fields on national and international news, health, sports, science and technology, music, entertainment, art and culture, industry, government and politics and successfully completed more than 50 episodes.

Among the entertaining programmes, Amader Katha, cartoons and WWF were popular to the viewers. Animal Kingdom and Tokyo Wildlife were popular.

Ekushey Television began its journey with its first broadcast on March 08, 2000 from its erstwhile offices in Banani. The channel formally launched five weeks later on April 14 to coincide with the Bengali New Year, and commenced full commercial operations thence.

Four robbers, 4 extortionists held in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CTG

Police in separate raids arrested four inter-district robbers and four extortionists from the city's Bakalia and Agrabad areas in last ten hours ending at 6:00 am yesterday.

Bakalia thana police, acting on a tip-off, raided Rajakhal area at around 6:00 am yesterday and arrested four robbers.

They are Jasimuddin, 25, Mizanur Rahman, 26, Syed Hossain alias Kalu, 28, and Md Hanif, 28. Police recovered a looted camera and Tk 1000 in cash from their possession.

In another raid, a patrol team of Doublemooring thana with the help of pedestrians rounded up four extortionists from a hotel in Agrabad commercial area at 8:00 pm on Wednesday.

They are Moshedul Haq alias Ferdous, 26, Monjurul Amin, 25, Jamaluddin, 27, and Jalaluddin, 27.

Extortion Three jailed under PSA in Magura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

District and Sessions Judge's Court here yesterday sentenced three persons to ten years rigorous imprisonment in a case under Public Safety Act (PSA).

The court also fixed the convicts Tk 2000 each, in default, to suffer RI for another two years.

The convicts are Zamal Choapder, Firoz Choapder and Shaharul of Vaina in Magura town.

According to the prosecution, the accused damaged a bus at Vaina bus stand in Magura town on October 20, 2000 as supervisor of the bus refused to give in to their demand for illegal toll.

Jalal Ahmed, supervisor of the bus, filed a case with Magura sadar thana the same day accusing the three.

District and Sessions' Judge Mohammad-Azizul Huq, after examining records and witnesses of the case, awarded the punishment to the three.

ADB: Gas export

FROM PAGE 12

a group of newsmen that whatever the decision may be, it should be taken quickly.

"We'll send the reports to political parties, chamber and trade bodies and other quarters concerned for their feedback on the expert reports. We would like to have their feedback," he said.

After submission of the reports Tuesday which suggest export only after new discoveries, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia asked for launching a dialogue for taking a decision on the basis of national consensus.

Regarding the expert committees' reports, the minister said the ADB executive informed him that by going through press reports they had by and large accepted the reports and hoped it would be acceptable to the nation.

Mosharaf Hossain said if Bangladesh failed to inform its decision regarding gas export in time, the allocation for the energy sector might be diverted to other sectors.

Other matters that came up during the minister's meeting with the donor agency official included decentralisation of Titas Gas, 80-kilometre gas pipeline around the capital and clean fuel project.

Police reforms

FROM PAGE 12

law and order and in the fight against criminals despite resource constraint. "We can call them (police) heroes of the society". Policemen are using obsolete 303 rifles in their fight against criminals equipped with sophisticated weapons.

He said 5000 more policemen will be recruited and the entire police force will be equipped with modern equipment.

They will be given more facilities. Police hospitals will be modernised and expanded at a cost of Tk 47 crore, he said.

Former minister Nuruddin Khan said, to ensure justice for all, police should act strictly as per the departmental chain of command, free from any outside influence. Often, common people do not get help from police because of influence by influential people in the society. This situation will improve greatly if the chain of command is strictly enforced, he said.

Justice Habibur Rahman said crimes have become endemic and the situation must be changed before it worsens. The police force has the main role to play in this regard, he said.

"This is our country and we have to stay here. We have to change the society".

He said Section 54 (of CrPC) is required but there should be legal provisions so that it is not abused.

Lt. Col. Faruq Khan MP said the law and order situation will improve radically if the police force is allowed to work independently without any political influence.

There should be reforms in the police administration also. "Sacking of policemen indiscriminately is

the main caused behind worsening of the law and order situation".

Dr Syed Abdullah Mohammad Taher MP said people want security of life and property. The government has to do the needful, in whatever way it can, he said. The police force must be increased and properly equipped with logistics.

Syed Ibrahim in his key note paper said reforms in the police administration and stopping political interference is a must to improve the law and order situation.

IGP Modabir Hossain said alongside reforms in the police administration, there should be reforms in certain laws framed during the British rule.

Changes have been made in the recruitment criterion and in the syllabus for training of policemen, he said. More reforms have to be made to suit the needs of the time, he said.

Sahidullah Khan said reforms in the police department must also aim at ensuring better life for policemen. "We have to realise why a section of policemen take money from people".

He said police stations should be modernised and policemen given more facilities and better logistics. There is not even typewriter in any of the police stations in the country, he said.

There is no budget for a police station. Policemen usually spend from their pocket for buying even a piece of white paper, he said.

Ismail Hossain said the police force is used by the ruling party. This must be changed.

He also suggested providing sufficient facilities and logistics to the police force.

ETV switched off

FROM PAGE 1

the ETV to continue the telecast. Counsel for the writ petitioners Barrister Abdur Razzak said the ETV broadcast should be stopped immediately after the verdict.

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Barrister Moudud Ahmed said there is no scope to keep the ETV on air. However, the ETV could continue broadcasting till the certified copy of the verdict reached it. But "it is not proper. ETV counsels should inform the ETV authorities of the verdict".

Regarding the ETV's application to the BTRC for a fresh license, Moudud observed, "If you don't have a driving license how can you drive your car?"

The ETV management, including Managing Director (News) and former BBC correspondent Simon Dring and Managing Director (Admn) Faisal Mahmud, were present at the crowded courtroom to know about the ETV's fate.

Hundreds of viewers of the popular television channel including artists, human rights activists and members of the civil society, also gathered outside the courtroom.

The ETV commenced its operation both as a private terrestrial and satellite channel on the Bengali New Year's Day (April 14) in 2000. It soon became popular among the public thanks mainly to its news programme.

However, on September 19, 2000 Prof. Chowdhury Mohammad Hossain of the Department of Pharmacy and Prof. Abdur Rob of the Department of Geography Department of Dhaka University and President of a faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) Gias Kamal Chowdhury jointly filed a writ petition challenging the legitimacy of the ETV license.

After almost a year of legal battle over the issue that attracted huge public interest, the Supreme Court finally dismissed the review petitions sealing the fate of the popular TV channel.

The duty free car, as per rules, cannot be handed over to anyone within three years of import. However, many MPs have allegedly sold their duty free cars without using it.

Before the 2002 budget, duty and tax on import of new car below 1650cc was 125 percent, which had been reduced to 59 percent.

MPs can now

FROM PAGE 1

office. The other rules and regulation in this regard would, however, remain unchanged, the SRO stated.

An MP can import the car by himself or by his authorised trader through a certificate issued by the parliament's secretariat.

The duty free car, as per rules, cannot be handed over to anyone within three years of import. However, many MPs have allegedly sold their duty free cars without using it.

The United Nations said in a report that AIDS would claim another 68 million lives by 2020 and make sustainable development a pipe dream unless the epidemic was curbed.

Releasing the document UNAIDS director Peter Piot said that at the rate it was growing, the epidemic would make it impossible to achieve the summit's aims of eradicating poverty while protecting the planet's resources for future generations.

A dozen Greenpeace activists prevented trucks carrying chemicals from entering the Chloorkop factory of 25 kilometres (15 miles) north of Johannesburg and hung a fluorescent green banner across the entrance, with the message: "Do not repeat Bhopal, clean up Africa now," in a reference to the world's biggest industrial disaster.

Greenpeace spokesman Brad Smith said the Chloorkop plant was polluting the air and water around it.

Activists from the British charity Oxfam dumped about 50 kilograms (110 pounds) of sugar on a large map of Africa in protest at European Union sugar subsidies blamed for destroying the livelihoods of poor tropical farmers.

Oxfam spokeswoman Penny Fowler said the EU had the highest-cost sugar production of any region in the world, and could only get around this competitive disadvantage by shelling out 1.6 billion dollars a year to European agribusiness.

JCD leader

FROM PAGE 1

where Asha was declared dead by doctors.

Son of Dr Abdull Huq Mollah, Asha was a student of Bangladesh Institute of Marine Technology. Asha's sister Irin said her brother was a brilliant student who secured 896 marks in SSC from BM Union High School and passed the HSC in first division. Asha was involved with the JCD since 1992.

Irin said two previous attempts to kill her brother had failed, adding that the same people involved in Wednesday's fatal attack had ransacked their house in March. A few days ago, Reza Ripon, a terror of Narayanganj, also attacked Asha in Narayanganj town.

Police recorded statement of injured Ratan, who said he had identified some attackers including Bara Shahadat, Pichchi Shahadat, Chhoikka Badal, Monir, Bocha Suman and his brother.

Police arrested Narayan, 27, in connection with the murder. Bandar thana OC Jasimuddin said police are trying their best to catch all the attackers and that additional police has been deployed to hunt for the criminals.

Meanwhile, students of different institutions of Bandar thana and Narayanganj town including Tolaram College, Bangladesh Institute of Marine Technology and BM Union High school of Bandar staged demonstrations in protest against the brutal killing.

All the schools and colleges of Bandar remained closed and students demonstrated at the Bandar Shaheed Minar at 10:00am on Thursday. At 11:00am, students of Tolaram College of Narayanganj put up barricades for an hour on BB road in the town. They also damaged several vehicles.

Judicial probe

FROM PAGE 1

of the probe report.

Speakers at the rally expressed concern over the delay in submission of the report. They said the immediate past authorities of the university can not avoid their responsibilities in the incidents at Shamsunnahar Hall.

Prior to the rally, the students gathered in front of Rokeya Hall, an area earlier declared by students a 'free zone'. They also brought out a procession which paraded the DU campus.