

It's terror not freedom struggle in Kashmir

Bush rejects Pak stance during talks with Vajpayee

PTI, New York

President George W Bush said US would continue to put pressure on Pakistan to desist from incursions into Jammu and Kashmir to ensure peaceful conduct of elections and firmly rejected Islamabad's description of terrorist violence in the state as freedom struggle.

During his 35-minute meeting with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee yesterday, Bush assured that the US would use its "leverage" with Pakistan in asking it not to resort to cross-border terrorism.

Briefing newsmen on the second meeting between Bush and Vajpayee in a year, Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal said the US President also took the initiative to express concern over the killings in Jammu and Kashmir, especially of candidates in elections.

During the meeting, coming in the backdrop of a recent upsurge in violence ahead of the elections, Bush said the US "is conscious of the need to continue to put pressure on Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf to desist from recourse to incursions across the LoC and violence especially during the elections in Jammu and Kashmir."

Sibal said "that message came through very clearly and we did not really need to make a case. The events which have taken place in the last two-three days speak for themselves."

The Foreign Secretary said Bush "very clearly and unambiguously said the US does not accept any justification for terrorism and rejected the excuse that some give for it in the garb of freedom struggle to make a distinction."

Earlier, Musharraf told UN that upcoming elections in Indian-administered Kashmir are sure to be rigged and may set back peace efforts in the disputed flashpoint, says AFP.

Addressing the UN General Assembly on Thursday, Musharraf again accused India of using the US-led war on terrorism to crack down on Kashmiri Muslims seeking self-determination.

"India has sought to delegitimise the Kashmir freedom struggle, tarnish Pakistan with the brush of terrorism and drive a wedge between Pakistan and its coalition partners," he said.

Musharraf dismissed plans for local elections next week in the Indian-ruled part of Kashmir, where a 13-year-old Islamic insurgency threatens to mushroom into a full-blown war between nuclear-armed neighbours India and Pakistan.

"India's planned election in Kashmir will once again be rigged," he said.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

DOWN TO EARTH

Dhaka's bleak urban outlook

ASM NURUNNABI

Lately, we have been witnessing a plethora of advertisements in the print and electronic media about investment opportunities in real estate in and around Dhaka City.

Private real estate companies encourage investments in projects like residential apartment buildings, shopping malls, commercial and office complexes as well as private residential housing plots in the city by offering a number of incentives such as concessionary rates for initial payments, easy instalments and assistance in arranging bank loans etc.

The current construction spree in the city has raised concerns among knowledgeable quarters about the resultant impact on the city's environment. Ironically, the more of such efficient housing means added pressure on the already short supply of gas, water and electricity, not to the mention the burgeoning traffic on the city's

limited road space. It is hard to see how infrastructural facilities can be adequately upgraded to meet the challenge of the increasing pressure on the city's transport sector. All these factors make it imperative for the city planners to ensure that the city's livability is not threatened by such unplanned activities.

Experts feel that such high-rise buildings mostly serve to accommodate only people from high-income groups, while the dearth of housing for low-income groups, which constitutes a significant portion of the population, still persists. They feel that the emphasis on high-rise buildings should be shifted from the city areas to comparatively low-cost lands available outside the city to ease pressure on the city. But the high profitability of high-rise buildings is perhaps too enticing for the builders to realise the gloomy prospect in the making.

There is, however, a silver lining

in the cloud. Real estate developers are now also trying to attract investments in housing plots in city suburbs such as Savar, Joydevpur, Ashulia, Nabinagar and even in Dhamrai. Advertisements for housing plots in those areas sponsored by various private housing societies are offering similar incentives in price and easy methods of payment. As the soaring price of land in Dhaka City has gone beyond the reach of many, people earning a modest income can look to investing in housing plots in city suburbs where land is cheaper. The development of these areas however may take time due to lack of infrastructural inadequacy.

Meanwhile, the spectre of an environmental disaster in the city looms large as the population grows by leaps and bounds.

Rajuk has drawn up a plan to build new townships and satellite towns to disperse the city population and thereby ease pressure on

civic services. The plan includes construction of absolutely new townships called Purbachal and Jheelimeel and satellite towns like Uttara Phase III and East Baridhara.

Of these projects, the Purbachal project is known to have made some progress although it has been slow for a number of reasons. Many believe the deadline for project completion wouldn't be met unless work is expedited.

Rajuk's other projects for easing city's population pressure are yet to begin. The expansion of the Dhaka City on the northern and northeastern sides are going on rapidly due to the absence of any natural obstruction, but the Buriganga river to the south of the city acts as deterrent to any appreciable expansion of the city in that direction.

Under the circumstances, the pace of real estate development in

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Now Codokuff floods city markets

STAR REPORT

Drug addicts now have a new sedative -- Codokuff-- smuggled from India.

Considered as 'a replacement' of banned Phensidyl, the new drug has already flooded the underworld drug market in the city.

Price of a 100-milliliter bottle of Codokuff, sold as a cough syrup, is 40 Indian rupees in India. It is sold at around Tk 150 by drug dealers in many areas like Mirpur, Kathalbagan, Moghbazar, Chankharpool, Jatrabari, Azimpur, Gabtoli and Mohakhali in the city.

Although banned, Phensidyl, also sold as a cough syrup, is available in plenty in the underworld drug markets in the country.

"We sell Codokuff at Tk 150 a

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8



PHOTO: STAR

The wife of slain Mahfuzur Rahman Rana grieves at their Dhanmondi residence in the city yesterday. Rana was shot dead by a gang in front of his house.

Gunfight leaves 15 injured at N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

At least 15 people were injured, five of them with bullets, in a clash in South Masdar area in the town yesterday.

The clash ensued over a dispute to drain out water from the houses of two neighbours -- Rahman and Babul -- in the area.

According to police and local people, the inmates of the two houses quarrelled over the issue in the morning.

Later, both the house owners hired two criminal groups, one led by Dara and other by Benazir, who launched attacks on each other at noon.

Both the groups traded gun shots and exploded crackers during the clash that lasted two hours.

Being informed, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Press confce told Molla not GS of TGEU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A section of employees of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd. under the banner of Titas Gas Employee's Union (TGEU) yesterday claimed at a press conference that AKM Fazlul Haq Molla is not the general secretary of the union.

They claimed that Shah Alam Sarkar is the elected general secretary of TGEU, which is affiliated with Jaiyatabadi Sramik Dal, labour front of ruling BNP.

Fazlul Haq at a press conference on September 9 claimed himself to be the general secretary of TGEU.

Reading out a written statement at yesterday's press conference, Shah Alam Sarkar alleged that Fazlul Haq and his followers were responsible for the untoward incidents

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Muggers rob couple in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers looted cash and valuables from a couple at gunpoint in front of Rajarbagh Police Lines in the city's Motijheel area last night.

The couple -- Khurshid Alam, deputy secretary of the Ministry of Finance and his wife Shegufta Begum, personnel officer of the Ministries of Communication -- was returning to their residence at

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 14		6-04 pm
Sept 15	5-45 am	

Prayer Timings		
Sept 14		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-40	5-15
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-10	6-15
Esha	8-00	8-20

Source: Islamic Foundation

BCP activist shot dead in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

An activist of Biplabi Communist Party (BCP) was shot dead by his rivals in the party at village Fulahari in Saikupa upazila on Thursday night.

The victim, Abdur Rashid, 42, was an armed cadre of BCP (Tipu group).

According to police and witnesses, a gang of eight belonging to the outlawed party (Kader group) sprayed bullets on Rashid at about 9-30 pm and fled the scene.

Rashid was rushed to Jhenidah Sadar hospital with bullet injuries where he died at about 10-30 p.m.

A case was filed with Saikupa thana in this connection.

Meanwhile, Harinakundu police arrested a BCP activist from village Harisankarpur on Thursday night.

The arrested was identified as Jamaluddin alias Tushar, 42, of village Geramara in Jhenidah sadar.

Benson & Hedges stars '2002'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The One & Only Star Search 2002, a promotional musical contest for new artists and rock bands, rounded off last night with a dazzling finale of 11 bands and four solo performers in the Sheraton Hotel in the city.

The contest was organised and sponsored by Benson & Hedges, a cigarette brand of the British-American Tobacco in Bangladesh.

The entrants to the final event had outperformed 275 others in preliminary competitions, including solo and group performances, through live audition before a panel of judges.

The panel was formed with some renowned singers of the country such as Ayub Bacchu, Kumar Bishwajit, Naquib Khan, Foad Nasser, Neo Mendes, Feisal Siddiqi

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



PHOTO: STAR

Artists of Fusion, a rock band, perform at the finale of the Benson & Hedges Star Search 2002 organised by British-American Tobacco in Bangladesh in the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday.

'Siege' makes life of DU campus people miserable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The life of people including teachers residing on the Dhaka University campus has become miserable due to the ongoing virtual siege of the camps by police.

The teachers and children are the worst sufferers, campus sources said.

Teachers feel embarrassed as police halt them at entrances to the university and ask for identity.

Teachers who have vehicles are usually allowed to move in their vehicles by showing their identity cards. But those having no vehicle have to walk as police do not allow rickshaws inside.

The virtual siege began on Tuesday when police barred agitating students to hold their programmes on the campus.

Since then police restricted easy access to the campus. Restriction has been imposed on movement of all kinds of vehicles except those of teachers.

The siege was however relaxed for several hours yesterday for the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Road accidents kill 10 in Mymensingh, Cox's Bazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least ten people were killed and 48 others injured in two road accidents in Mymensingh and Cox's Bazar districts yesterday.

Of them, six were killed in Mymensingh while the rest in Cox's Bazar.

Our Mymensingh Correspondent reports: Six people, including a woman, were killed and 32 others injured as two buses collided on Mymensingh-Sherpur road yesterday morning.

The accident occurred at about 10 am when a Sherpur bound bus from Dhaka collided head on with another bus at Taldighi in Phulpur upazila, killing four passengers on the spot and injuring 32 others.

The injured were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital where two succumbed to their injuries.

Four of the dead were identified as Saleha Begum, 55, of Nalitabari

upazila in Sherpur, Shafiqul Islam, 55, and Mahbul Alam, 25, of Haluaghat upazila in Mymensingh and Abdul Aziz, 30, of Phulpur upazila in Mymensingh.

Identity of two others could not be known.

Traffic on the road was disrupted for four hours following the accident.

Our Cox's Bazar Correspondent writes: Four people were killed and 16 others injured when a jeep skidded off the Chittagong-Cox's Bazar Highway and fell into a ditch near Khoralia yesterday noon.

The dead were identified as Urmila, 60, Kanan Bala, 45, Tonturi, 4, and Abu Saber, 48. All the dead hailed from Eidgan Union in Sadar upazila.

Police said the passengers of the jeep were going to attend a marriage ceremony at Khurosul in the same upazila. The injured persons were admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar hospital and different clinics.

Two sisters gangraped in Feni

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Feni

Two sisters were gangraped at village Bishnapur in Sonagazi upazila of the district on Wednesday night.

According to police and villagers, a gang of 12 led by Faruq, secretary of Jubo Dal Char Majlisipur unit, entered their house at about midnight and took them away at gunpoint. They were taken to a nearby house and raped.

The victims met SP of Feni Helaluddin Badri on Thursday and narrated the incident. The SP asked the officer-in-charge (OC) of Sonagazi Police Station to register a case in this connection and nab the culprits immediately.

One of the gang members, Bashir, was arrested from Char Laxmiganj on Thursday night.

The victims' medical test will take place at Feni Sadar Hospital today.

Court rejects all 3 Benazir appeals

Hundreds protest at Pak court

REUTERS, Karachi

Election tribunals yesterday rejected all three appeals by Pakistan's former prime minister Benazir Bhutto against decisions barring her from taking part in October 10 elections.

A two-judge tribunal at the Sindh province high court rejected appeals lodged against the decision by election officials in her home town of Larkana and nearby Ratto Dero, prompting protests from hundreds of Benazir supporters at the court.

A separate tribunal later rejected her third and final appeal -- over a seat reserved for women in Karachi, Benazir's lawyer Farooq Naik told Reuters.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7