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## Dhaka, Seoul pen \$58m telecom, railway deals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka and Seoul yesterday signed two loan agreements, under which the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) of South Korea will provide \$58 million for further development of telecommunications and railway services in Bangladesh.

The agreements followed official talks between Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and visiting South Korean Prime Minister Kim Suk-soo at the Prime Minister's Office in the city.

Economic Relations Division (ERD) Secretary Anisul Huq Chowdhury and Korean Vice-minister for Foreign Affairs Kim Hang-kyung penned the deal on behalf of their respective governments.

The EDCF will provide \$30 million for installation of new digital exchanges to expand telecommunications services in Chittagong, Sylhet and Khulna, and \$28 million for procurement of 11 new locomotives for Bangladesh Railway, Foreign Secretary Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury told newsmen after the talks that lasted about an hour.

The foreign secretary, who was present during the signing ceremony, said Seoul has also pledged to invest \$1 million in the country's information technology sector. It will also help establish an IT centre at Dhaka University.

Earlier at the talks, Kim assured Khaleda that his government would recruit more workers from Bangladesh and take measures to legalise those working in South Korea without valid work permits.

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Prime Minister Khaleda Zia listens to her South Korean counterpart during a meeting at the Prime Minister's Office in the city yesterday.

## ROK to recruit 3,300 more workers from Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

South Korea has agreed to recruit 3,300 more Bangladeshi workers, increasing the existing quota 5,500 to 8,800.

Visiting South Korean Prime Minister Kim Suk-soo disclosed his government's decision during a meeting with a Bangladesh delegation, led by State Minister for Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Major (ret'd) Mohammed Quamrul Islam.

Foreign Secretary Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury, secretary in charge of the expatriate welfare ministry Dailil Uddin Mondal and other high government officials were present at the half-hour meeting at Sonargaon Hotel.

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## Noor Hossain Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shaheed Noor Hossain Day will be observed across the country today.

On this day in 1987, Noor Hossain, a young pro-democracy activist, lost his life in the movement to oust the autocratic regime of HM Ershad.

Hossain was killed in police firing near Zero point in the city while participating in a pro-democracy procession. He had the slogans Swairachar Nipat Jak, Gonotantra Mukti Pak (Down with autocracy, let democracy be freed) inscribed in white paint on his chest and back when a bullet pierced through his body.

His death escalated the movement to topple the autocratic ruler and restore democracy in the country.

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## Iraq will 'quietly study' 'unfair' UN resolution

### Arms inspectors plan Iraq visit Nov 18

AFP, Baghdad

Iraq yesterday said it would "quietly study" a UN Security Council resolution giving it seven days to agree to demands that it meet its obligations to disarm or face "serious consequences".

The announcement was greeted by calls from Iraq's neighbours, as well as other countries around the world, for it to comply to spare the Middle East from a new conflict.

The demand, unanimously adopted Friday by the 15-member council, was "bad and unfair", Iraq's state INA news agency said, quoting an "authorised official".

But the Iraqi leadership was "quietly studying this

resolution and will issue appropriate signals concerning it in the coming days".

State-run newspapers branded the US- and British-sponsored resolution as "unjustified", and Iraqi satellite television station said it was "unwarranted".

Nonetheless, a leading daily said Baghdad might accept it.

The Security Council instructed UNMOVIC and the IAEA to start inspections within 45 days.

UNMOVIC head Hans Blix said: "We are planning to go to Baghdad on Monday 18th of this month."

The advance team will reopen offices unused since previous arms inspectors were withdrawn in December

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## Army training for cops

### Rapid action team (RAT) formed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has formed a rapid action team (RAT) comprising smart members of police and started giving them "commando training" to nab notorious criminals and combat crimes following withdrawal of troops now engaged in a country-wide anti-crime drive.

"The RAT would be given army commando training and equipped with modern weapons and necessary logistics," said Principal Information Officer (PIO) Khondokar Monirul Alam told a news briefing yesterday.

The first contingent, comprising 144 policemen, began a two and a

half months' training by the army yesterday. This team would operate in the capital only.

The PIO said similar teams would also be formed in all other cities and district towns in phases and work is already going on to select smart members of the police.

The RAT would comprise police officials such as the SP and others below that rank - additional SP, assistant SP, inspectors and sub-inspectors. Besides, it would include havildars and constables, he added.

He mentioned that the RAT is being formed as the government is determined to eliminate crime from the society.

Officials sources said the RAT for

the city comprises one SP, three additional SPs, 11 inspectors, 10 sub-inspectors, havildars and constables.

They pointed out that there is a public apprehension that law and order might deteriorate after withdrawal of troops. Formation of the RAT would dispel this apprehension, they added.

In this context, a senior official of the home ministry said, "The government has taken up a massive plan to modernise the police and other law enforcing agencies with necessary training, latest equipment and logistics so that they can fight crimes effectively."

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## BNP activist dies in army custody

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) activist whom army picked up Friday night died in army custody yesterday evening.

Abu Sufian, 34, son of Abdul Hamid and a resident of 41/12 Chanmari Housing area in the city's Mohammadpur area, was picked by an army team from his house at about 10:50pm on Friday.

On quizzing him, army took Sufian to Banshbari in Mohammadpur and recovered a pistol from his possession, Mohammadpur police said. Sufian died in army custody at about 4:55pm yesterday. The body was not handed over to police, neither

could it be confirmed where it was till late last night.

Army sources said Sufian was on the anti-crime crackdown and picked up on charge of criminal activities. The army men took him to Banshbari area and recover a revolver, few bottles of banned cough syrup Phensidyl and heroin.

The army sources claimed while being taken back to the custody Sufian attempted to run away and got himself injured in the process at about 2:00pm. Later, he succumbed to his injuries, the sources further claimed.

Meanwhile, 148 people were hauled up and 23 firearms recovered in the ongoing Operation Clean Heart across the country during the

## AL MPs to stage sit-in in front of Speaker's office today

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League MPs will stage a sit-in in front of the Speaker's Office today to press for the immediate release of the arrested AL lawmakers.

During the one-hour sit-in in front of the parliament chamber of Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar, the AL lawmakers will submit a memorandum to the speaker demanding immediate release of Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim MP and Talukder Abdul Khaleque MP.

"We will demand release of our MPs before the upcoming session of the parliament," opposition whip Mirza Azam MP told UNB last night. The president has summoned the next session of the 8th parliament on November 14.

Azam said they will also request the speaker to make the session

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Sehri, Iftar timings			
Ramadan	Nov	Sehri	Iftar
4	10		5-18
5	11	4-48	5-18
6	12	4-49	5-17



PHOTO: STAR

Hawkers reign again... three days into Ramadan, sidewalk in front of the Chandni Chawk Market in the city sports a familiar look, shoppers bargaining with street-side vendors for a good buy.