

Morshed, Natwar talk a new start

Discuss insurgency, river-link

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

In the first high-level contact after the Congress took office, India and Bangladesh yesterday discussed insurgency, interlinking of rivers

and other issues in a spirit of "mutual understanding" and agreed not to let bilateral ties be a prisoner of the past.

"You can't forget the past. But you must not go on reinventing the

past to make the future prisoner of the past ... we have to go ahead. We are living in the 21st century," External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh said at a joint press meet with

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Foreign Minister Morshed Khan, left, shakes hands with India's Congress President Sonia Gandhi, right, in a meeting in New Delhi yesterday. Morshed met various government figures discussing insurgency and interlinking of rivers.

Govt mulls new pay scale

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government is considering introducing a new pay scale for its employees in the next fiscal year, a finance ministry source said.

If the government only provides for dearness allowance, the upcoming budget will add more than Tk 1,000 crore to the allocation for government employees' pay and allowances.

The finance ministry has not yet calculated how much it might have to allocate if a new pay scale is

Employees see 39.4pc income erosion in 7 yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government employees experienced an income erosion of about 39.4 percent since 1997 when the last pay scale was announced as there was no cost of living adjustment by taking note of inflation.

"A person who joined the civil service as a first class gazetted officer in 1997 with a gross salary of Tk 6,525 should have been receiving a gross salary of Tk 9,100 in 2004 in order to protect the real value of his/her emolument in terms of 1997 prices," says the Centre for Policy

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DHAKA-10 BY-POLL SYMBOL DISPUTE Lawyers question handling of case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lawyers of the Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) candidate yesterday pointed out that the Supreme Court acted with rare speed in the symbol dispute case of Dhaka-10 by-election.

They also pointed out that petitioners are often allowed to appeal against stay orders without even getting certified copies of full orders of the High Court. In such cases, the petitioners file 'civil miscellaneous petition' and the court often does not check the documents.

The lawyers made the observations on the second day of the full

bench's hearing of the appeal against the High Court order that stayed the June 6 by-election to Dhaka-10 till June 12.

BDB lawyers also alleged tampering with the by-election schedule and sought a court directive for a shift of the election date fearing that voting at this stage will not be free and fair.

They also requested the Supreme Court to let the High Court stay order remain unchanged and let the High Court division bench dispose of the matter slated for hearing on June 12.

The full bench of the Supreme

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CEC still not sure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Syed is not sure yet about which document was submitted to the court in his name for appealing against a High Court order that stayed the Dhaka-10 by-polls till June 12.

"I don't know which documents were submitted before the court in my name. I would like to talk on the issue after seeing the documents," the CEC told newsmen yesterday before heading home from his office.

Syed initially declined to talk to

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JP leader Didar shot dead

Mirpur trader killed, truck driver stabbed to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified gunmen killed Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP) Vice Chairman (VC) Golam Parvez Didar in Mohammadpur yesterday, shortly before a trader was gunned down at Mirpur-1.

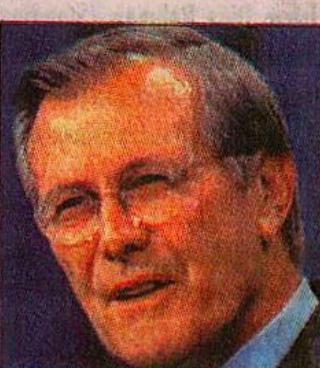
In another incident in the early hours yesterday, muggers stabbed to death a truck driver at Gabtoli.

Three hitmen killed Didar, 44, also president of ruling coalition partner BJP's youth front Jatiya Jubo Sanghati, in a hail of bullets in front

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Golam Parvez Didar



Rumsfeld flies in Dhaka Saturday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

United States Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld is set to arrive in Dhaka Saturday afternoon on a nearly 14-hour visit to urge deployment of Bangladeshi troops in Iraq

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Tigers fight back

RABEED IMAM, from St Lucia

The Tigers are fighting back in style. Bangladesh batsmen piled on the agony for the West Indies on the last day of the first Test at the largely empty Beausejour Stadium.

The tourists were 175 for seven at lunch in their second innings giving

them a 239-run lead with Khaled Mashud (40 not out) at his grittiest best and Mohammad Rafique (27 not out) carrying on from where he had left off in the first innings.

The two had put on exactly 50 runs for the eighth wicket after Rajin Saleh was the only wicket to fall in

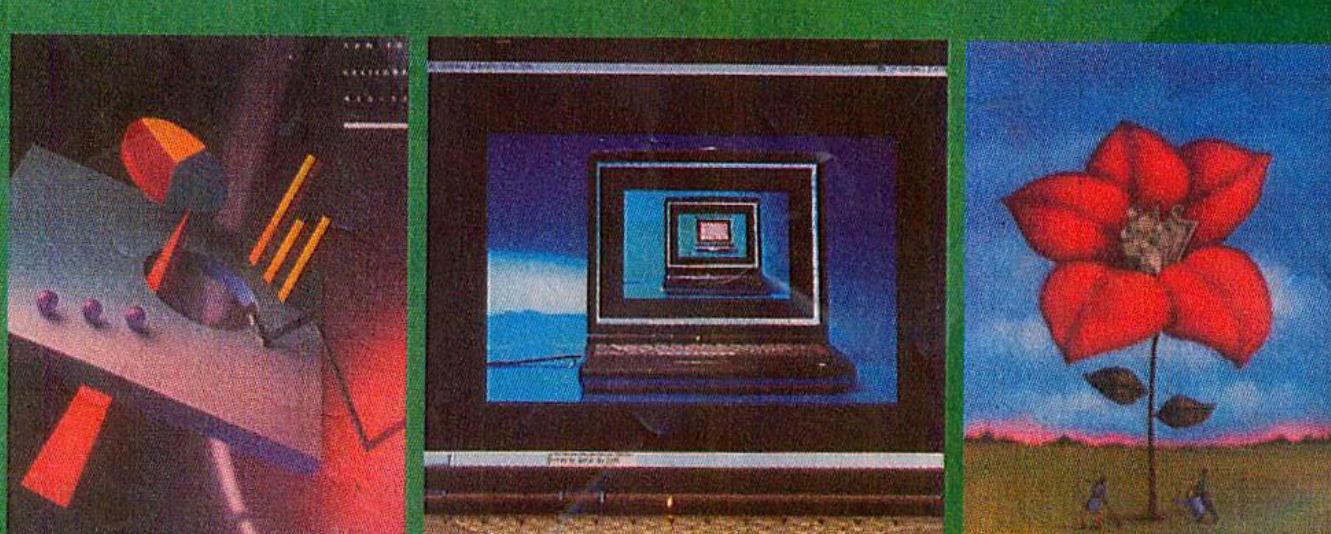
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