

Pakistan, Nepal stress regular holding of Saarc summits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pakistan and Nepal have emphasised the need of regularly holding the Saarc summits, which will provide the leaders of the South Asian forum more time to share informal views.

Both the Saarc members also agreed to share fruitful views on strengthening regional cooperation under the forum at a meeting between the foreign ministers of Pakistan and Nepal in Islamabad, reported Nepalese state-run daily The Rising Nepal yesterday.

Foreign Minister of Nepal Ramesh Nath Pandey and his Pakistan counterpart Khurshid M Kasuri also underlined the urgent need for having a regional mechanism to effectively deal with natural calamities.

Pandey called Pakistan a rising

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Pakistan, India agree to open Kashmir border

REUTERS, Islamabad

Rivals India and Pakistan agreed yesterday to open the border dividing earthquake-hit Kashmir to allow survivors and relief supplies to cross.

The accord is politically significant for old enemies who have been talking peace for almost two years.

And it will be logistically helpful in terms of getting aid to cut-off villages in the mountains near the five points where the border will be opened.

"The two sides agreed on operationalisation of the arrangement on Nov. 7, 2005, as a humanitarian gesture," said a joint statement issued in the early hours of Sunday.

News that three bombs had exploded, killing over 50 people in New Delhi overshadowed the diplomats in Islamabad, whose talks

dragged through Saturday late into the night.

The outcome will go some way to dispel perceptions that New Delhi and Islamabad were wasting time scoring points against each other during the disaster, and will lift the spirits of Kashmiri families who will be allowed across to see kin on the other side.

But it is unlikely to mean much to most of the 3 million-plus people living in dire straits since the quake on Oct. 8 killed over 56,000 people, the bulk of them in Pakistan.

With the Himalayan winter just weeks away and millions homeless, fears are growing for the lives of tens of thousands of villagers in Kashmir's mountains.

Residents in Muzaffarabad, the ruined capital of Pakistani Kashmir, were rocked by more aftershocks on

Saturday, adding to anxieties.

A massive UN-led effort to deliver vital food and shelter has been hampered by landslides blocking many mountain roads.

At Chakothi, the last town in Pakistani Kashmir on the road from Muzaffarabad to Srinagar, the summer capital of Indian Kashmir, residents were getting impatient with being cut off.

Pakistani army engineers have cleared landslides, and cut new sections of road out of rocky slopes, but the route is still blocked for the last 11 km and the only way for aid to reach the wrecked town is on foot, or by helicopter.

Supplies are short and people are getting angry.

"Open up! Don't treat us like

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Tk2cr garments, machinery gutted in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Finished products and machinery worth over Tk 2 crore were destroyed in a fire at a garment factory in the port city's Agrabad Commercial Area on Saturday night.

The fire, originated from an electric short circuit at around 10:00pm on the first floor factory of Eden Fashions Limited at Mistri Para in Agrabad, soon engulfed the entire factory, sources in the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Media Cell and fire service said.

The factory was closed at that time.

Huge amount of finished knitwear for children and exportable garments including costly jeans (denim) products were completely gutted, BGMEA sources said, adding that some 50 machines and

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PHOTO: STAR

A Rapid Action Battalion man stands guard at Sadarghat launch terminal yesterday as part of beefed up security measures ahead of the Eid-ul-Fitr.

Ambassador MM Rezaul Karim's body arrives tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ambassador MM Rezaul Karim's body is set to arrive in Dhaka from Cairo tomorrow morning.

He will be buried at the Banani Graveyard after namaj-e-janaza at Gulshan Azad Mosque.

His son Shahed Karim and daughter Sima Karim are at present

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GOVT SERVICES

Saifur unhappy over order to halt recruitment in his absence

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday expressed his resentment over issuing an order in his absence postponing recruitment in the government organisations.

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ACC tells govt to clean house

Asserts power through cautionary letter to secretaries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) recently cautioned the administration saying that unlike the former Bureau of Anti-corruption it has been given adequate power to take actions against corruption by any organisation or person.

The ACC added that the administration should take measures to clean itself and that the commission is keeping close watch on various issues on which it is receiving allegations of corruption. Some investigations have already started.

The cautionary message was conveyed in a letter sent by the ACC on October 23 to all the secretaries including principal secretary to the prime minister, the cabinet secretary, prime minister's personal secretary, and all the personal secretaries of the ministers, state ministers and the

deputy ministers.

The letter drawing personal attention of these officials noted, "The ministries and departments can take anti-corruption measures at monthly co-ordination meetings and can review the progress on monthly basis."

In addition, the ministries should direct all bodies under them, down to the grassroots level, to take similar measures to curb corruption.

"The ACC is more powerful than the former Bureau of Anti-corruption or any (similar bodies of) other countries in investigating into allegations of corruption. According to the powers vested by the law, the commission can take actions against any (corrupt) organisation or person," the letter read.

The letter cited a number of sections of the ACC Act that define

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PHOTO: STAR

Medicine and other traders hold a rally at Babubazar in Old Dhaka to protest against ongoing spell of rampant extortion and crimes.

2,500 acres govt lands recovered in 10 months

Partex Group, Rahat Real Estate, Orion Group among encroachers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 2500 acres of illegally occupied government lands worth about Tk 1500 crore were recovered over the past ten months of this year. In October alone, 146 acres were recovered.

Several hundred acres of land in Gazipur that had been occupied by Partex Group and Rahat Real Estate, and 560 acres in Mymensingh that had been occupied by Orion Group were among the recovered lands that are

legally owned by the Forest and Environment Ministry. Faruq Colony in Gulshan, a property of Dhaka City Corporation, which was earmarked for a park, was also recovered from illegal occupation.

National Committee for Recovery of Illegally Occupied Land, Investigation and Monitoring revealed the information in its eighth meeting yesterday. A source present at the meeting

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Cop exacts bribe showing false arrest warrant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Savar police official allegedly squeezed Tk 5,000 out of two garment factory workers intimidating them with a false arrest warrant on Thursday.

Officials of the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM), Dhaka yesterday confirmed that the warrant, bearing the seal and signature of the CMM, was false.

Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Jafar Iqbal of Savar Police Station met Ashrafur Rashid Khan and Rafat Alam at their workplace at Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ) in Savar on October 27 and threatened to arrest them showing the warrant he had managed somehow.

The false warrant bore the seal and signature of a magistrate of the

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Sehri-Iftar			
Ramadan	Oct	Sehri	Iftar
26	31		5-23
27	Nov 1	4-43	5-23



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Prayer Timing		
October 31		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-43	4-49
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-23	5-38
Esha	7-30	8-00
Source: Islamic Foundation		