

Benazir won't be deported, but has to stand trial

AP, AFP, Islamabad

Former premier Benazir Bhutto can return to Pakistan from exile but will have to face corruption cases against her, the government said, as her party announced her arrival date yesterday.

Benazir will return home from self-imposed exile on October 18, her party said Friday.

Benazir has been in talks with embattled military ruler President Pervez Musharraf on a possible power-sharing deal ahead of crunch general and presidential elections in the coming months.

Benazir would not be deported in the manner of another former premier, Nawaz Sharif, a government spokesman said. Sharif was expelled hours after he flew in on Monday.

That action sidelined Musharraf's chief political rival while underlining the general's willingness to take authoritarian steps to



Benazir Bhutto

extend his eight-year rule, amid a surge in attacks by Islamic militants that has rocked Pakistan.

Benazir, who served as premier from 1988-1990 and again from 1993-1996, will arrive in the southern port city of Karachi, Pakistan People's Party vice chairman Makhdoom Amin Fahim told a news conference.

"I am giving this good news to the people that she is arriving on the 18th of October and will land in Karachi," Fahim said to cheers from supporters and a barrage of firecrackers.

Earlier Pakistani newspapers cited unnamed party sources as saying Benazir would come back in late October while Britain's Sky News television said Friday that Benazir would return on October 23 or 24, citing unidentified sources.

In an interview Friday, Deputy Information Minister Tariq Azim drew a clear distinction between the rights of Sharif and Benazir to return to Pakistan.

"Nawaz Sharif's case was different. He went back to Saudi Arabia because of an undertaking he had with the Saudi government," Azim told The Associated Press. "She (Benazir) was always allowed to come back."

Asked about pending corruption cases against Benazir, he added:

"It's for the law to take its own course. Everybody has to face cases against them and the same applies to her."

Azim said the talks with Benazir were continuing, but sticking points remained, including her desire for the corruption cases to be closed, her seeking a constitutional amendment to let her seek a third term as prime minister, and over the president's re-election.

"The talks are continuing but not at the same pace we might have wished. It's in the national interest for a resolution between political leaders to be reached. But it should be in the national interest, not in the personal interest of anyone," Azim said. Benazir has led her party from London and Dubai after leaving Pakistan in 1999 over the corruption allegations. Her party said it would announce her return date at simultaneous press conferences at key Pakistan cities Friday afternoon.

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PHOTO: STAR

Trees planted on the central reservation of Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue between Dhaka Sheraton Hotel and Sonargaon Hotel are to be uprooted as the central reservation is being moved a bit to make a lane wider.

Docs at Rangpur medical College Hospital on indefinite strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Doctors at Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH) went on an indefinite strike from yesterday noon, causing sufferings to the patients.

They (doctors) called the strike following a clash between some doctors and relatives of a patient who died at the hospital allegedly due to wrong treatment.

Five people, including assistant registrar of the hospital, were injured in the clash.

The striking doctors have demanded transfer of the RMCH director and arrest of those who assaulted the doctors.

Hospital sources said acting principal of Sathibari College

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Garment unit owner held as Rab files case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested garment factory owner Ali Huq yesterday morning in a case filed following a conflict with two Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel in city's Kafrul area on Thursday.

Investigation officer of the case Sub-Inspector (SI) Shahabuddin told The Daily Star that Rab-4 Deputy Assistant Director (DAD) Alamgir Sarkar filed the case on Thursday night accusing Ali of beating two Rab officials.

The altercation between Ali Huq, 40, director of Royal Bangla Design Ltd, and Rab-4 Assistant SI Kamran ur Rahman, 30, and DAD Safayet Hossain, 30, occurred as their motorcycles had a mild collision.

All three were injured in the fight.

Police arrested Ali yesterday morning at the Orthopaedics Hospital where he was referred

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A buyer walks past a board installed by Dhaka City Corporation containing prices of essentials at Hatirpul kitchen market in the city on the first day of Ramadan yesterday.

Bush orders partial Iraq pullout

He cites 'measure of success', asks Iran, Syria to lay off Iraq

AFP, Washington

US President George W Bush announced Thursday he will pull some 21,500 combat troops from Iraq by mid-2008, but ruled out a full withdrawal and promised an "enduring" US presence there.

"Because of the measure of success we are seeing in Iraq, we can begin seeing troops come home," he said in a prime-time televised speech. "The more successful we are, the more American troops can return home."

Insisting the unpopular war can still be won, Bush said whoever succeeds him at the White House will likely inherit the conflict and warned against giving up on a fledgling ally that is "fighting for its survival."

With most public opinion polls showing the US public two-to-one opposed to his strategy, and his Democratic foes clamouring for a withdrawal, Bush defiantly said he would build "an enduring relationship" with Iraq.

Iraqi leaders "understand that

their success will require US political, economic, and security engagement that extends beyond my presidency," said Bush, whose term ends in January 2009.

"These Iraqi leaders have asked for an enduring relationship with America. And we are ready to begin building that relationship in a way that protects our interests in the region and requires many fewer American troops," he said.

The president said that he had accepted advice from the US

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AMMO SEIZURE Russell Sangma remanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Russell Sangma, arrested in connection with the seizure of around 29,100 pistol bullets from Bakakura village in Jhenaigati upazila of Sherpur district on Thursday, was placed on a five-day remand yesterday.

Police produced the indigenous youth before the First Class Magistrate Court, Sherpur, in the afternoon with a remand prayer for seven days. But the court granted five days' remand.

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) recovered the bullets from the house of Sangma in the early hours Thursday. Acting on a tip-off, a special squad of BDR, led by 45 Battalion Sector Commander Colonel Anisuzzaman, raided the

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Dravid resigns as captain

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

In a dramatic development, Rahul Dravid has resigned as captain of India, making himself unavailable for next month's home series against Australia.

Announcing Dravid's decision to step down after leading the side for two years, Board of Cricket Control for India (BCCI) chairman Sharad Pawar told reporters that

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BANGLADESH FACE HOSTS TONIGHT Australia, Sri Lanka romp to win

SPORTS REPORTER

Australia confirmed their place in the next round after crushing England by eight wickets at Newlands in Durban while at Johannesburg, Sri Lanka started their ICC Twenty20 World Championships campaign with a gigantic 172 runs win over Kenya yesterday.

Desperate for a win, the mighty Australians produced an emphatic performance, bowling out England for 135 and then racing to victory in only 14.5 overs. The victory meant

that both team qualify but Zimbabwe, the other side in Group D, were eliminated by virtue of inferior net run-rate.

Sri Lanka posted 260-6 for the highest score in this format and then dismantled Kenya for only 88.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh are bubbling with confidence as they face hosts South Africa at Newlands in Cape Town today with the glorious memory of their victory against West Indies on their mind.

The match will begin at 10pm

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Get Prayer times from Warid Menu

Iftaar 6:06 PM Sehri 4:24 AM

WARID

Sehri, Iftar timing			
Ramadan	Sep	Sehri	Iftar
2	15		6-06
3	16	4-25	6-05
4	17	4-26	6-04

Prayer Timing September 15		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-24	4-34
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-06	6-22
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Suicide attack on Pak military base: 20 killed

Govt launches probes

AP, AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan vowed to step up its fight against terrorism yesterday after a suicide attacker penetrated a high-security military base and detonated an explosive-laden vehicle, killing 20 soldiers from an elite counterterrorism task force.

Authorities did not speculate on who was behind the attack, but past incidents have been blamed on Islamic militants.

Twenty-nine soldiers also were wounded late Thursday at Ghazi Tarbela base about 100km south of the capital, Islamabad the headquarters of the quick-reaction counterterrorism commandos. The attack came the day visiting US Deputy Secretary of State John D Negroponte met with President

Gen Pervez Musharraf in Islamabad and praised his role in the fight on terror.

Musharraf ordered a thorough investigation into how the bomber breached security at the facility and rammed his vehicle into a canteen where soldiers were eating, according to a statement that ran on the state-run news agency, the Associated Press of Pakistan.

"The government will fight the menace of terrorism, extremism and militancy in all its forms and manifestations," Musharraf said.

Mostly Muslim Pakistan has seen scores of attacks since Sept 11, 2001, when Musharraf threw his support behind the US and the war on terrorism. Hundreds of suspected militants have also been

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