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Elements of Sri Lankan crisis now present

Says Rehman Sobhan about Bangladesh economy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some of the elements that led to the macroeconomic crisis in Sri Lanka are now present in Bangladesh, said CPD chairman Rehman Sobhan yesterday.

“The macroeconomic crisis which afflicted Sri Lanka, it was in parts afflicting Pakistan and now there some of the elements of it intruding into Bangladesh,” he said at the closing session of the 14th South Asia Economic Summit.

The two-day summit was organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

“The ongoing climate crisis, the fall-out from the Ukraine war, and now in the normal course of events, all these issues should have been collectively addressed.”

If there were any working institutional mechanism, such as Saarc, they could have convened meetings to address these issues.

“And perhaps the outcomes of such meeting would have inspired some of the national leaders to then initiate



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People swarming the Motijheel metro station as the Agargaon-Motijheel section of the country's first metro rail -- MRT Line-6 -- opened to the public yesterday morning. Commuters can now travel to Motijheel from Uttara in around half an hour.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

AGARGAON-MOTIJHEEL Shortened travel time elates metro commuters

RAFIUL ISLAM

Tasnuva Afroz was evidently delighted while stepping off the metro train and onto the Motijheel station's platform yesterday morning, when the Agargaon-Motijheel section of MRT Line-6 opened to the public.

It took her just 15 minutes to reach the place from Agargaon.

Before yesterday, she had to face many a challenge, including intense traffic jam, on the city streets to reach her office.

“It's unbelievable. I'm happy that I don't need to face the challenges and harassment on the city buses or the streets to reach my workplace,” Tasnuva, a child development therapist at Mugda Medical

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Cox's Bazar, 3 more dists to get new trains

BR plans to launch them by next month

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh Railway is going to launch four intercity trains from Dhaka to Noakhali, Lalmonirhat, Sylhet, and Cox's Bazar, a new destination that will soon come under rail network.

The arrival and departure schedules have already been fixed for the trains that are expected to start operating by December to enhance the country's railway services, BR sources said.

BR's launch of the new trains will take place weeks before the general election.

A proposal for the four intercity trains has been submitted to the railways ministry, and it will subsequently be forwarded to the Prime Minister's Office for approval, BR Director General Quamrul Ahsan told The Daily Star yesterday.

BR sources said the proposal includes suggestions of several names and possible launch dates for each of the trains and that the prime minister will make the final decision.

The schedule for the trains has been incorporated into a new timetable, which is expected to be implemented soon, sources added.

Currently, BR operates some 300 trains, including 106 intercity trains, to various destinations daily.

According to BR documents, the train on the Dhaka-Sylhet route will make only two stops – Dhaka airport and Sreemangal – taking 5 hours and 30 minutes to complete its journey.

Currently, BR operates four intercity trains on the route. The train on the Dhaka-Noakhali route will make stops at Dhaka airport, Narsingdi, Bhairab Bazar, Brahmanbaria, Akhaura, Kashba, Cumilla, Laksham, Nather Petua, Sonaimuri, Bajra, Chowmuhani, and Majidee Court.

It will take 5 hours and 40 minutes to complete its journey. Currently, BR operates one intercity train on the route.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, at a rally in Lalmonirhat's Patgram in 2011, promised to bring Burimari under the

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Gaza evacuations remain suspended

Death toll in Gaza nears 9,800; Palestinian president presses US to secure ceasefire

REUTERS, Gaza/Ramallah

Efforts were underway yesterday to resume evacuations of injured Gazans and foreign nationals through the Rafah crossing to Egypt, suspended since Saturday after a deadly attack on an ambulance, Egyptian, US and Qatari officials said.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas demanded an immediate Israeli ceasefire at a meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Ramallah, while Gaza's health ministry said dozens died in a strike on a refugee camp overnight.

Blinken, who has dismissed the idea of a ceasefire by Israel for fear it would benefit Hamas, was making an unannounced visit to the occupied West Bank as part of efforts to prevent the Israel-Hamas war spreading.

The Rafah crossing to Egypt's Sinai peninsula is the only exit point from Gaza not controlled by Israel. Aid trucks were still able to travel into Gaza, two Egyptian sources said.

Evacuations began on Wednesday under an internationally brokered deal.

More than 300 Americans have left Gaza, but some still remain, Jonathan Finer, deputy national security adviser, said.

“We believe it will (reopen) this afternoon,” a senior US State Department official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. “Don't hold me to it,” the official added.

At the Maghazi refugee camp refugee camp in Gaza, people searched for victims or survivors.

“All night I and the other men were trying to pick the dead from the rubble. We got children, dismembered, torn apart flesh,” said Saeed al-Nejma, 53, adding that he had been asleep with his family when the blast hit his neighbourhood.

At least 47 Palestinians, mostly women and children, were killed and scores wounded in an Israeli bombardment of Gaza's Maghazi camp.

Five hurt as locals attack Daffodil univ students Students vandalise 70 shops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Five students of Daffodil International University in Ashulia were injured in a clash between locals and students yesterday.

Ejaz Ur Rahman, director of students' affairs at the DIU, told The Daily Star that a group of outsiders attacked a campus building and broke some windows with bricks in the evening. They later attacked students who were demonstrating inside the campus demanding justice for the killing of a fellow student.

Five students were injured in the attack. Agitated students then vandalised some shops at the nearby market.

Meanwhile, Shahariar Sumon, president of Chandgaon Traders and Owners Association, claimed DIU students vandalised at least 70 shops and torched four, adding that, they did not attack the students.

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Morocco unearths Roman-era second century site in Rabat



REUTERS, Rabat

Moroccan archaeologists said they uncovered a Roman-era site in Rabat containing a port district, a bath and a cemetery dating back to the second century.

The archaeological site, now the third largest in Morocco, will offer insight into the lives of Roman settlers and romanised Moroccans or Mauro-Romans in that era, lead archaeologist Abdelaziz El Khayari said at a news conference on Friday.

The Roman-era bath spans over 2000 square metres (21,527 square feet) resembling imperial counterparts in Rome, he said.

Archaeologists also found a second century headless statue of a Roman deity, he said, noting that when ancient Moroccans adopted Christianity around the fifth century it was a common practice to behead statutes representing Roman gods.

Excavations, launched in March, are ongoing to find the port and other parts of what is believed to be one of the largest Roman towns in the country, not far from the Bouregreg river and the Atlantic coast, he said.

KNF agrees to maintain peace in CHT till Dec 2

Negotiations with govt to go on

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Armed group Kuki Chin National Front has agreed to refrain from attacks until December 2 and continue negotiations with the government for establishing peace in the Chattogram Hill Tracts.

KNF came up with the decision in a meeting with the Peace Establishment Committee, led by the Bandarban Hill District Council chairman, held at the Ruma upazila town yesterday, said committee Spokesperson Kanchan Joy Tanchanga.

“They [KNF] have agreed to continue negotiation. We will hold the next meeting on December 2. They have pledged not to conduct any activities involving arms until the next meeting,” said the spokesperson.

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Palestinians search for casualties at the site of Israeli strikes on houses at the Maghazi Refugee Camp in central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Irregularities mar by-polls to B'baria-2, Laxmipur-3

AL candidates win

STAR REPORT

Amid widespread allegations of electoral fraud, Awami League candidates won the by-polls to Brahmanbaria-2 and Laxmipur-3 constituencies yesterday.

In both districts, AL men allegedly forced agents from other camps to leave polling stations.

In Brahmanbaria, The Daily Star correspondent saw under-age boys and girls enter polling booths and ballot box stuffing.

In Laxmipur two of the four candidates boycotted the election in the afternoon, citing irregularities.

In Brahmanbaria, Shahjahan Alam Sajju bagged 66,314 votes while his closest rival Ziaul Haque Mridha, an independent, got 37,758.

In Laxmipur, Golam Faruk Pinku got 1,20,599 votes, and Jatiya Party's Rakib Hosen got 3,846 votes, the second highest number of votes.

Correspondents of this paper visited at least 13 polling stations in the two

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