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# The Daily Star

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Foreign Ministers from more than 100 countries in the Non-aligned Movement are meeting in Accra to lay the diplomatic groundwork for the non-aligned heads of state and governments summit scheduled for 1992  
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Boris Yeltsin says he wants to scrap Soviet nuclear weapons  
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An acute labour shortage is heating up debate in Japan on whether the government should begin issuing work permits to foreigners  
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There seems to be plenty of time to stand and stare in the city. Gossips buzz. Betel and nuts add to the pleasure  
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**Business**

Joint venture jute industry to be set up in Colombo  
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## More powers for CHT district councils soon

By Reazuddin Ahmed

Three district councils of Chittagong Hill Tracts — Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban — are expected to get maximum autonomy when administrative powers in 21 important areas, including recruitment of police, will be transferred to them within a couple of weeks.

The administrations of agriculture, primary education and health have already been handed over to the hill district councils.

A high-powered meeting held in Dhaka on Tuesday in-

structed all the relevant ministries to expedite the transfer of administrative powers to the hill district councils to fulfil the conditions for restoring peace in the area. A source in the President's Secretariat told The Daily Star that the meeting took stock of the situation in the hill tracts and decided to allow maximum autonomy to the districts councils as prescribed under an Act passed by parliament in 1989.

The new Act provides for bringing tribal people under the leadership of the district

councils. Accordingly, the chairmen of the three hill district councils must be elected from among the tribal people.

Shamiran Dewan, Chairman of Rangamati District Council, told this correspondent recently at his office that the new system was an improvement over the earlier arrangement and it had the full support of the people of the hill tracts. But he was dismayed by slow devolution of administrative powers to the hill district councils. He said that further delay would create

distrust about the intention of the government and the insurgents would have the scope to tell the tribals that the autonomy, promised by the government, would never come.

Shamiran Dewan, along with two other district council chairmen, is trying to convince the insurgents that autonomy could be achieved peacefully through district councils and not through armed insurgency.

During my recent visit to Rangamati I found the tribal people taking part in devel-

opment activities. Some of the leading Chakmas admitted that the Shantibahini people, who promised milk and honey for the people of the hill tracts, brought only miseries for them. People were losing faith in them, disowning them and were becoming aggressive against them.

One of them cited an example saying that the insurgents were mobbed by the tribals in an area and handed over to the law enforcing agencies only a week back. But he hastened to add that the

government was not doing its part to develop their conditions. He alleged that the people were facing acute unemployment and losing purchasing power. Many were facing starvation, he alleged.

When contacted, a source in the Ministry of Special Affairs told The Daily Star that already 4000 tons of foodgrains had been sent to the area besides allotting Taka six crore for the three district councils for development works. He said that the local government ministry

See Page 12 Col. 3

**SKOP discusses 5-point demand**

**with Govt**

The Sramik-Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) is mounting pressure on the Government to accept its modified five-point demand, which includes implementation of the agreement signed with the Ershad administration in 1984.

The SKOP leaders held a meeting with the State Minister for Labour and Manpower Rafiqul Islam Miah Wednesday on their demands so that they could decide at the SKOP convention tomorrow its next course of movement.

The meeting, held at the manpower office at Kakrail was attended among other SKOP leaders by Abdus Salam Khan, Dr Nurul Islam, Abul Bashar, Mokhlesur Rahman, Iskander Ali, Abdullah Sarkar, Shafiqur Rahman Mazumdar, Pratap

See Page 12 Col. 6

**JP men fire on BNP poll camp: Four injured**

Three leaders of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal of Dakkhinkhan Union and a BNP worker were injured Wednesday evening when a Jatiya Party procession attacked the BNP election office at Ashkona under Uttara Thana here, BNP sources said, reports BSS.

The sources said all the four received bullet injuries as the processionists opened fire on the election office at around 7-30 pm.

**India committed to leasing Tin Bigha, Rajya Sabha told**

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: The Indian government is committed to the leasing of Tin Bigha to Bangladesh in pursuance of our earlier agreements with Bangladesh, reports PTI.

This commitment was reiterated during the recent visit by the Bangladesh Foreign Minister to India from August 26-29, the Rajya Sabha was told today.

Necessary measures are underway to complete the required formalities for an early leasing of the corridor, the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr Eduardo Faleiro, told J P Mathur in a written reply.

## Massive uplift plan to be taken up: Khaleda

CHITTAGONG, Sept 4: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said here today that the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) would always safeguard interests of the people as they had reposed their full confidence in the party, reports BSS.

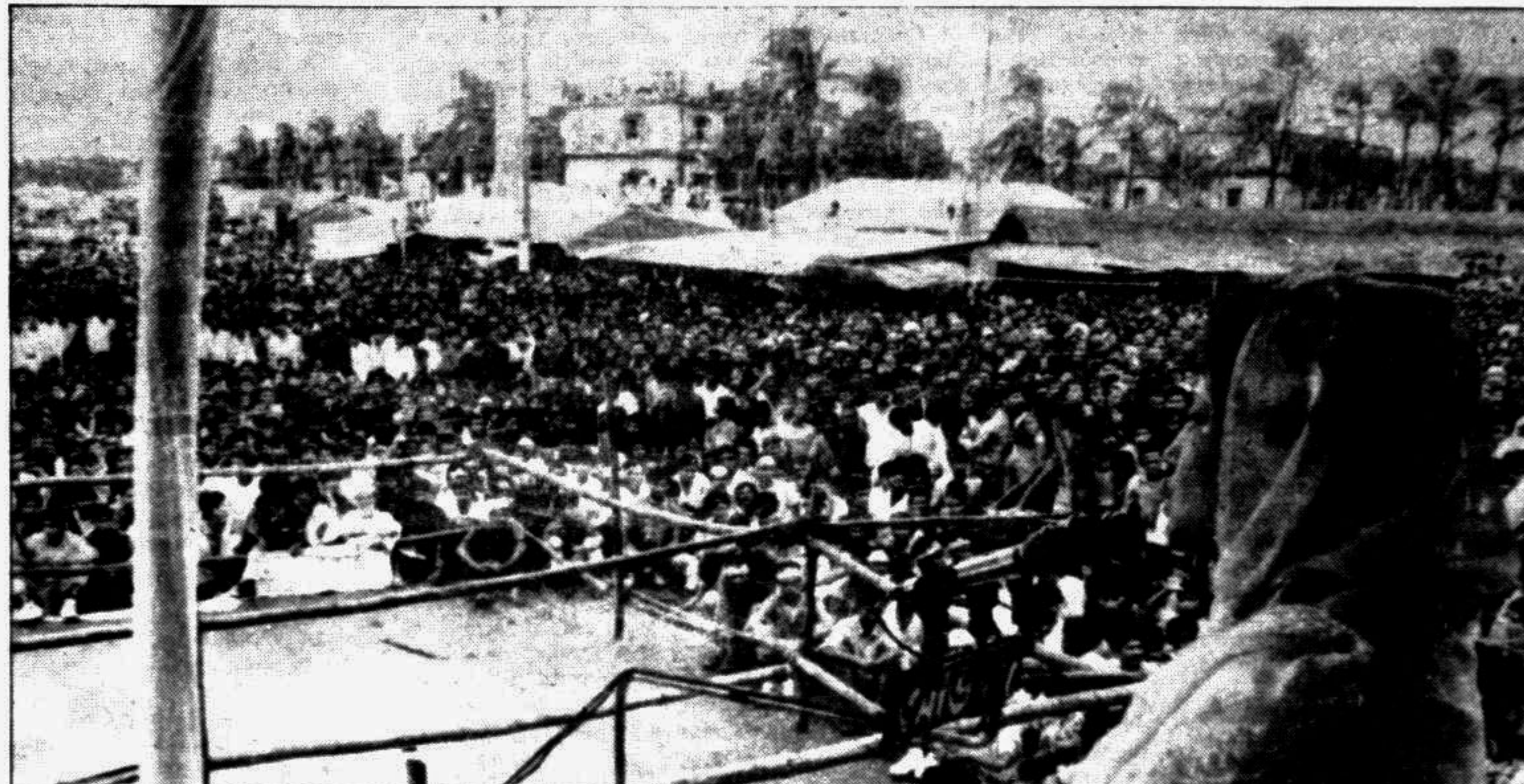
Addressing three separate big public meetings at Chittagong Steel Mill Market, Alankar Cinema Hall crossing and Dhanlalapara here Begum Zia said the people of this country believe in nationalism and that is why they have put BNP in power once again. 'It is people's Government and will solve their problems with people's cooperation. We have in-

herited a shattered economy and there are hundreds of problems which can be solved only with your cooperation', she told the cheering crowd.

Hundreds of people including women and children thronged the meeting venues defying the drizzle and chanted full throated slogans when she said the government pursued production-oriented politics to change people's lot.

Begum Zia also addressed two separate women's rallies one at Bandar Republic Club auditorium and the other at Haji Camp at Pahartali in the city.

Amid thunderous applause  
 See Page 12 Col. 1



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a big public meeting at Chittagong Steel Mills market on Wednesday. — PID photo

## Hasina accuses BNP of misappropriating relief

DAULATKHAJAN (Bhojla), Sept 4: Opposition leader in parliament Sheikh Hasina today accused ruling BNP of "misappropriating" relief goods provided for cyclone victims, reports UNB.

Addressing a big election meeting at Daulatkhan Bazar in the coastal district, she demanded of the government to publish detailed statement on the relief assistance given by foreign countries after the April 29 cyclone.

"The people want to know in detail about the foreign relief received by the government in cash and kind," said the Awami League President, now electioneering in Borhanuddin-Daulatkhan constituency for her party candidate contesting the September 11 by elections.

Hasina criticised the government leaders for what she

said bribing and intimidating voters.

The Prime Minister herself is violating the election code of conduct by threatening voters that "all developmental works will be stopped if the BNP nominees are not elected", she alleged.

"The uncompromising leader (Begum Zia) is now speaking in the language of autocrat Ershad," Hasina said.

She alleged BNP had taken votes by making false promises and now was delaying in fulfilling those pre-election commitments.

Urging the people to elect Awami League candidates, she warned consequences will not be good if the ruling party resorts to rigging.

The Awami League leader alleged the people in remote rural areas were "dying unfed"  
 See Page 12 Col. 6

## BNP using official facilities for by-election: Jamaat

By Staff Correspondent

Acting Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Abbas Ali Khan Wednesday accused the ruling BNP of using official facilities for the by-election campaign.

He alleged that the Prime Minister and other Ministers were using public vehicles, wealth and also the state-owned media, particularly the BTV to campaign for their party candidates. He called for stopping this practice.

The Jamaat leader said the government, in its six-month rule, has proved 'useless' in tackling socio-economic problems and no plan or action was also in sight for their solution. It was trying to shift the blame on others, he alleged.

Overall law and order situation had deteriorated and  
 See Page 12 Col. 6

## By-election campaign in city lacks enthusiasm

By Nazmul Ashraf

Electioneering in the city's two constituencies is yet to get momentum although only six days are left for the by-elections.

With new restrictions imposed by the Election Commission, election festivity is almost absent.

Seats in The Dhaka-5 constituency comprising Gulshan and Cantonment thanas and two mouzas of Shabujbagh thana and one union of Uttara thana and in the Dhaka-9 constituency covering the Dhanmondi and Mohammadpur thanas were earlier vacated by the BNP chief and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

Voters in the two constituencies seemed less enthusiastic than they had been

during the February elections.

Campaigning in favour of 14 candidates, seven in each constituency, has so far failed to draw the interests of the voters.

While visiting areas in the constituencies, this correspondent found electioneering mainly around the election camps.

Thinly-attended rallies, and house-to-house campaigns were organised by the ruling BNP and the Opposition Awami

League.

Besides, leaflets were also being distributed among the voters by the two parties.

Jatiya Party activists were hardly seen involved in polls activities and in efforts to bag votes for their candidates while activities by supporters of other candidates were almost absent in the field.

With a view to convincing the voters, BNP candidates and their supporters were high-

See Page 12 Col. 1

**Ershad took dowry in marriage: AG**

## Mostafiz did not deny money was Ershad's: PW

By Staff Correspondent

Prosecution witness in the Ershad's wealth amassing case Magistrate A T A M Ismail yesterday said that Ershad's representative Mostafizur Rahman did not deny the fact that the money recovered from the Sena Bhaban belonged to Ershad.

Responding to the questions of the Defence Counsel Advocate Strajul Haque in the Special Judge Court trying Ershad, Magistrate Ismail further said that many items recovered from the Bangababhan including 62 bottles of whisky were handed over to Mostafizur Rahman.

On the other hand Defence Lawyer Strajul Haque said that the Inventory Committee even listed items that former President Ershad had received as dowry during his marriage.

The court chaired by Judge Mohammad Ali Khan resumed yesterday with the cross-examination of A T A M Ismail one of the three vital prosecution witnesses in this case. He was one of the members of the Inventory Committee.

The hearing began at 10.45 am when the Chief Prosecution Lawyer Attorney General Aminul Haque produced A T A M Ismail and allowed Defence Lawyer Strajul Haque to continue his unfinished cross-examination.

Strajul Haque cross-examined him for about one hour and fifty minutes. Following are the excerpts:

Strajul Haque (Defence Lawyer): Did you ever ask Ershad from where were the items recovered from Sena Bhaban bought?  
 See Page 12 Col. 3

## Interest on defaulting loans may be waived

The Government is thinking of practical mechanisms to realise defaulting loans considering the genuine difficulties of the loanees and a sizable portion of the interest may be waived, Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman said on Wednesday, reports BSS.

The entrepreneurs, after all, are Bangladeshis. Their legitimate interests will be looked after, though delinquent and wilful defaulters will have to rectified, Rahman said while exchanging views with the members of the Council of Editors at the Press Institute. Sanaulah Noori, Chairman of the Council, DP Barua, Managing Director and Chief Editor of BSS, Mizanur Rahman Mizan, Editor, The Khabar and Anwarul Islam Bobby, Editor, The Morning Sun and Abdus Sobhan, Principal Information Officer, were present.

He said, as a developing country, we cannot afford to have sudden changes in our economic policies with the change of government. Economy has to be a continuous process and abrupt changes could affect both bilateral and multilateral relations, he added.

The general economic situation, the new budget, introduction of the VAT, pay-hike for the government employees and problems of the industries and agriculture came up during nearly two hours of discussions.

Saifur Rahman said, to sustain democracy, economic conditions of the masses have to be improved for 'poverty and democracy are not a good combination.' Poverty gives rise to tension which affects development, he added.

The Finance Minister reiterated present government's  
 See Page 12 Col. 7

## Legislators rebuff Gorbachev's proposal

MOSCOW, Sept 4: Soviet legislators rebuffed President Mikhail Gorbachev's attempt to steamroller a new constitutional order through congress today, but inched closer to allowing republics to secede, report agencies.

A draft law presented by Gorbachev and top republican leaders failed to win the necessary two-thirds support from the Congress of People's Deputies, even in principle. Amid confusing and rowdy

scenes in the Kremlin, conservative deputies and Ukrainians, concerned the law would violate their republic's independence declaration, opposed the draft or stayed away from the chamber.

The law, which is likely to be reintroduced tomorrow, possibly amended, would effectively abolish the existing Constitution and Congress and transfer sweeping powers to the rebellious republics. But a separate resolution

backed by Gorbachev acknowledging in principle the rights of republics to secede and proposing a multi-tier union system did pass. As a resolution, it required only a simple majority.

Gorbachev's close adviser Alexander Yakovlev told Reuter that the Soviet leader would issue a presidential decree recognising the independence of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

"It will be (issued), but

when, I don't know," he said. More than 30 countries have already recognised the three Baltic republics, incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1940.

The new head of the Soviet KGB, Vadim Bakatin, said Tuesday that his secret police agency would open up its files on the country's "tragic history" but that intelligence files would remain secret.

Bakatin signed an agreement on steps to end the KGB activities in Estonia

## Al Baraka Backs the Nation's Growth

Al Baraka — a Bangladeshi Scheduled Bank run on Islami Shariah. It's a joint venture bank of Al-Baraka Group Jeddah (60%), Islami Development Bank (10%), Bangladesh Govt (5%), Local Sponsor Directors (12.5%) and general public (12.5%)  
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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**Indo-Pak border calm**

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Indian and Pakistani troops held to a cease-fire Wednesday but stepped up patrols along the frontier where at least 11 people have been killed in sporadic firing, officials said.

**Infants dying, says Iraq**

NICOSIA (Cyprus), Sept 4: The official Iraqi News Agency reported Wednesday that 76 newborn infants died in southern Iraqi city last month because of food shortages resulting from economic sanctions, reports AP.

**14 killed in plane crash**

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 4: Fourteen people were killed on Tuesday when a British made Shorts Skyvan crashed in dense jungle in Sarawak state. Six people survived. The plane had developed engine trouble before coming down near the border with Brunel, reports Reuter.

**Five killed in S Africa**

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 4: Savage fighting between rival black factions killed five people, injured scores more and resulted in more than 100 shacks being set ablaze, police said Wednesday.