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NEWS BRIEFS

British minister arrives today

The British Minister for Overseas Development, Mrs Lynda Chalker arrives here today for talks with the Bangladesh government, reports BSS.

Audit reports

By Staff Correspondent
 State Minister for Finance Mujibur Rahman on Wednesday night placed before the Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) five audit reports of different years since 1983-84.

Maksud suspended

Former chairman of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (current charge) and at present Special Officer in-charge of the Ministry of Establishment Maksud Ali Khan has been suspended following submission of charge sheet against him on corruption case, according to an official handout Wednesday. The earlier order appointing him as the member of the T & T Board has been repealed, the handout added, reports BSS.

Arabs, Israel sit together for the first time in 43 years

ME talks open with call for Palestinian self-rule

MADRID, Oct 30: Israelis and Arabs opened historic talks Wednesday aimed at overcoming four decades of hostility and war in the Middle East. President Bush called for agreement on limited Palestinian self-rule on the West Bank and Gaza within a year, report AP and Reuter.

Bush pressed Arabs and Israelis to bury past hatreds and agree to territorial compromise and mutual recognition.

For the first time in 43 years, Israel and all its Arab neighbours—Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians—sat in icy silence around the same T-shaped table in the Hall of Columns of Madrid's neo-classical Royal Palace.

After welcoming remarks by Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, Bush told delegates: "We believe territorial compromise is essential for peace."

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and the European Community, represented by Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek, echoed the call and urged the feuding parties not to miss this unique chance for peace offered by the end of the Cold War.

"This conflict bears the heavy stamp of the Cold War and it was not until an end was put to that it became possible to solve this conflict," Gorbachev said.

Right up to the last minute before the conference, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir rejected the key demand of all other delegations — an exchange of occupied Arab land for peace.

Bush, whose Secretary of State James Baker crafted the talks in nine months of patient diplomacy said peace in the Middle East need not be a dream. He pledged to extend guarantees and resources to ensure peace and prosperity went hand in hand.

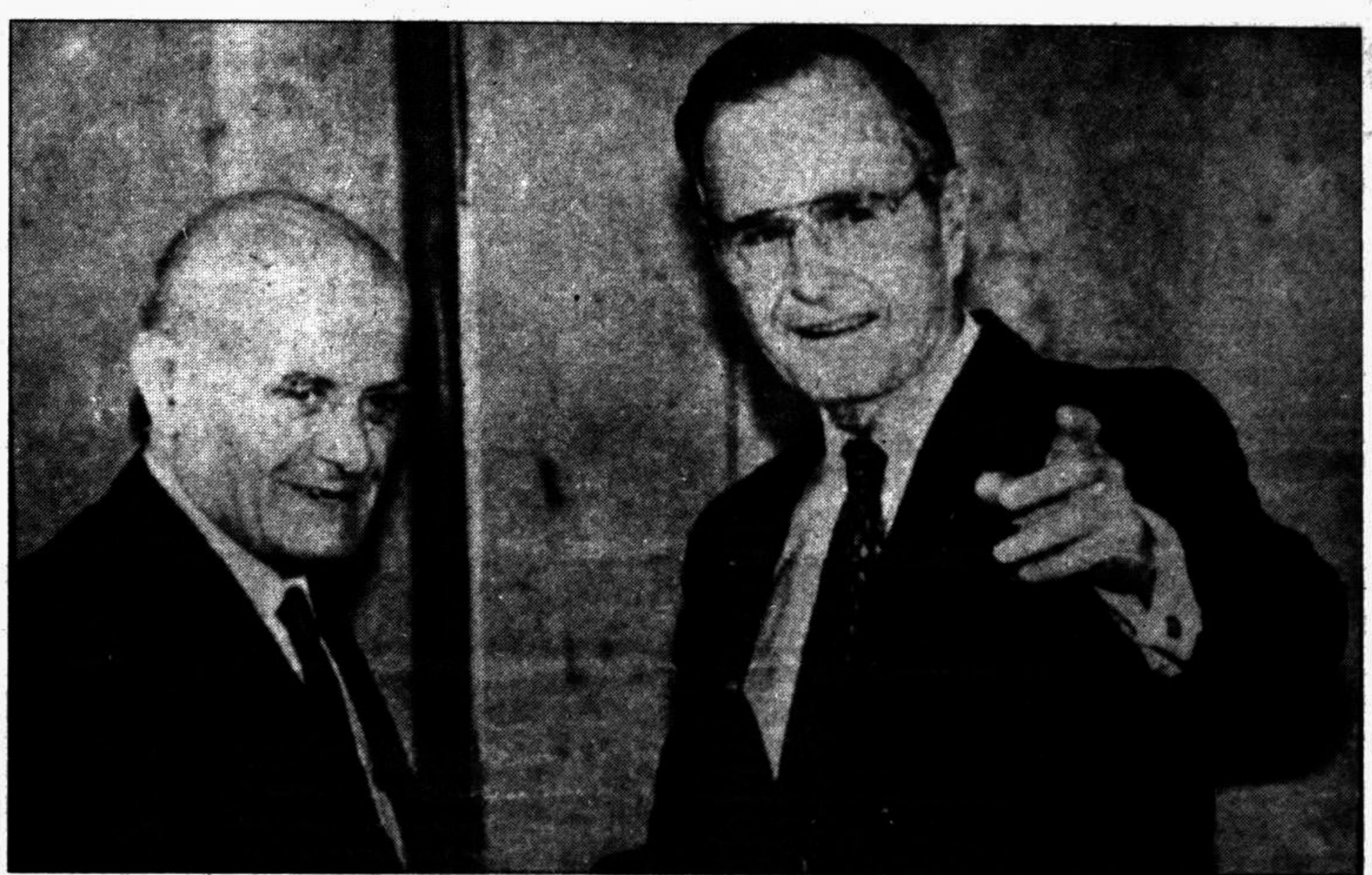
Sketching a path of negotiations in which the parties would discuss arms control, economic development and sharing water even as they bargain over borders and Palestinian rights, he offered something for each of the parties.

He said the peace process needed to give the Palestinians meaningful control over their own lives while providing for Israeli security.

"Real peace, lasting peace must be based on security for all," he said. His speech was applauded by all delegations, whose spokesmen chose to stress the positive points for their own case and play down the rest.

Bush told the Arabs, most of whom did not shake hands with the Israelis.

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US President George Bush points at photographers during his meeting with Abdel Shaif, head of the Palestinian delegation, at the US embassy early Wednesday morning prior to the start of the Middle East peace conference in Madrid. — AFP photo

Elimination of terrorism a must: Khaleda

Leaders of different political parties of Rajshahi district Wednesday appraised Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia of the code of conduct drawn by them unanimously in their sincere bid to curb terrorism from their areas, including the educational institutions, reports BSS.

The leaders were talking to the Prime Minister at her Sugandha office. They expressed their firm determination to uproot terrorism from their areas by strictly adhering to the code of conduct.

The Prime Minister congratulated the leaders for drawing the code of conduct and hoped others would follow them.

Begum Zia said terrorism would have to be uprooted from society to make democracy meaningful and ensure a bright future for the coming generations.

She hoped that all quarters would make sincere contribution like the leaders of Rajshahi district to help the present government in its efforts to curb terrorism.

The leaders in the code of conduct had decided not to provide shelter to any illegal arms holders and terrorists, to hand over identified illegal activities.

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House adjourned for lack of quorum

The government's apparent lack of seriousness in the business of Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) was pointed out by the Speaker while adjourning the house on Wednesday for want of quorum, reports UNB.

The government should take note of it, Sheikh Razzak Ali observed before adjourning the house for lack of quorum at 9-35 pm.

Most of the cabinet members, the Chief Whip were absent in the House and many of the opposition benches empty when discussion on the

See Page 12 Col. 7

Terrorist sheltered by any party must be expelled: B Chowdhury

I suspend BCL activities in DU, Hasina tells noisy parliament

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina announced in the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) Wednesday night suspension of all activities of her party's student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) in the Dhaka University.

"I suspend Chhatra League activities in the Dhaka University. Now I want to see whether terrorism is stopped," she said.

Participating in the unscheduled debate on the campus situation the Leader of the Opposition said that violence on campus could be stopped within two hours if the ruling party was sincere and rose above narrow party politics.

She strongly refuted charges of violence against BCL and blamed BNP-backed Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) for all the violence on campuses throughout the country since March this year.

The AL Chief referred to a report published in a section of press which quoted JCD activists demanding her blood and said "I am ready to give my blood if it stopped campus violence."

During her lengthy speech, Sheikh Hasina gave detailed account of campus violence since March and narrated about 50 incidents in different educational institutions. She

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Tk 550 crore flood action plan limping for lack of guidance

By Mostafa Kamal Majumder

But in the absence of guidance from the political level the consultants of the studies are operating at will, and the choices and preferences of the donors sponsoring those dominate the nature of their activities.

Said a foreign source associated with FAP, "the donors sponsoring the studies are coordinating among themselves instead of a political leadership asking them to coordinate in keeping with its policy preferences." The vices like 'commercial uses of aid' are also showing up in some instances.

Under a decision taken in December, 1990, a National Council headed by the President is to give the policy guidelines and decisions for the FAP, and implementation committee headed by the Minister for Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control is to approve recommendations.

A Technical Committee headed by the irrigation secretary is to coordinate the activities of different divisions. The technical committee is to approve the terms of references of different surveys, appoint consultants for the studies and prepare recommendations for approval by the Implementation Committee.

The 10-member National Council has not been reorganized in keeping with the change in the form of government. Under the 1990 arrangement the President was the Chairman of the committee. Its other members were the Vice-President, the Prime Minister, the Presidential Adviser on Water Development, Ministers for Planning, Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Irrigation, State Minister for Irrigation and Flood Control and the secretary for irrigation and flood control who was its member secretary.

The Implementation Committee headed by the Minister for Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control had eight members.

The National Council and the Implementation Committee are remaining inoperative since the change of government. And so the activities under FAP are limping, competent sources say.

Out of the 26 studies or components of FAP, eleven are main components, nine of which call for structural activities. Fifteen others are supplementary.

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Another victim of DU gunfight dies

By Staff Correspondent

Mizanur Rahman Mizan, another victim of Sunday's gunbattle on the Dhaka University campus, died yesterday raising the death toll to four.

A third-year geology student of the university, Mizan expired in the early hours of the day after his 60-hour-battle for life at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Mizan who was an Awami League backed Chhatra League (S-A) leader, sustained bullet wounds in his forehead during Sunday's gunbattle between the pro-BNP Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal and his organisation.

Mirza Galib and Liton of the JCD died on the spot in the gunfight and Khokon, a seven-year old street urchin, succumbed to his injuries later in a hospital.

Mizan was undergoing treatment at the intensive care unit of the DMCH where he expired at 3.30 am, our DMCH correspondent said. Doctors however confirmed his death at 8.30 am, he added. Soon after the death news spread, the BCL (S-A) leaders and workers started arriving at the DMCH.

Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina went to the DMCH to see the body of Mizan at 10-30 am. She was accompanied by AL leader Mostafa Jalal

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Sheikh Hasina having the last look at the body of Mizan, a leader of Chhatra League, who died in Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday morning. Mizan was seriously injured in Sunday's gunbattle on the Dhaka University campus. — Star photo

Massive pest attack on N region 'aman' crop

RANGPUR, Oct 30: After floods, a new menace is taking away the farmers' hope, the 'aman' crop.

Massive attack by a new kind of insects has destroyed almost 80 per cent of the near-harvest paddy in northern districts. Immature paddy is also under the attack of the insect, called 'badami ganch furing' by the farmers. Officials have named them 'brown plant

From Moinuddin Naser

Nilphamari and Rangpur, this correspondent found most of the farmer ignorant about the behaviour of the new type of insects which was previously unknown to them. They find that their paddy are left empty (without the white substance inside) after the attack by the insect.

Farmer Hamid of Pathanpara under Sayedpur district said, "I have never seen such insects. We don't know what should be used to fight out these insects. We have no money to buy insecticides." When he was talking to this correspondent he was harvesting paddy in the field attacked by the insect in a frantic attempt to save whatever paddy possible from the insect.

The brown coloured fly having a black mouth and black stripe on the back is almost the size of a wheat.

The insects move from one place to another in a large number and suck the juice (white substance in immature paddy) from the paddy before it reaches ripening stage. There remain no paddy but shell of rice after the attack by the insect. Most of the paddy has become trash, says an NGO official.

Programme organiser of BRAC in Sayedpur Samirul Haq told this correspondent if the Agricultural Extension Department did not take any measure to combat the menace of brown fly, it would create another havoc for the poor farmers who have already suffered flood thrice in a season. The BRAC official believes that if the farmers fail to reap the aman crop as they expected

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Gunfire from across border: 15 injured

From Staff Correspondent
 CHITTAGONG, Oct 30: At least 15 persons including a BDR personnel were wounded following indiscriminate gunfire from across the border into Bandarshing village at Panchart upazila of Khagrachari district at noon today.

The injured were admitted to Khagrachari Hospital for treatment.

When contacted authoritative sources confirmed the incident and said a strong protest had been lodged to the Indian government in this regard.

The ten-minute-long attack was countered by the members of Bangladesh Rifles. Sources believe the attack was made by Shantibahini men aided by the members of Indian Border Security Force (BSF).

Teresita Schaffer arrives

US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Ms Teresita Schaffer arrived here Wednesday afternoon on a three-day visit to Bangladesh, reports UNB.

She was received at the airport by Director General (America) at the Foreign Ministry Mahboob Alam and US Ambassador William B Milan.

Schaffer, in-charge of South Asian Affairs at the State Department, will discuss with Bangladesh officials various aspects of Dhaka-Washington relations.

Reconstruction and rehabilitation works in the cyclone-affected areas will prominently figure at the discussion.

They will also review the

See Page 12 Col. 4

No minimum price for jute

The government has no plan to fix the minimum price of jute, Jute Minister Brig (Retd.) ASM Hannan Shah told parliament Wednesday, reports UNB.

Both the growers and the government incur financial loss due to fixation of minimum price of jute, he said replying to a question from BNP member Abu Yusuf Mohammad Khalilur Rahman.

He pointed out that 'aria', middlemen and corrupt employees at purchasing centres accrued the benefit of fixation of the minimum jute price.

Jute is being purchased at market price in pursuance of open market policy, he said.

Replying to Mirza Golam Azam of Awami League Brig (Retd.) Shah said as many as 187 jute purchasing centres

See Page 12 Col. 7

JCD mourns the dead

Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Wednesday observed countrywide mourning day in memory of Mirza Galib and Liton gunned down by rival groups on Dhaka University campus Sunday, reports UNB.

Black flags were hoisted atop DU buildings and at different educational institutions while JCD members wore black badges.

As part of its central programme, the city unit of JCD held a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club.

RUCSU VP Rezaul Ahmed, DUCSU AGS Nazimuddin Alam, DU Senate member Fazlul Haq Milon, central leader Illias Ali, Dhaka College Students' Union

See Page 12 Col. 2

DUTA threatens to go for strike from Nov 2

By DU Correspondent
 Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) at an emergency meeting Wednesday decided to observe strike from November 2 if the government failed to take effective measures in rooting out terrorism by November 1.

The meeting, presided over by Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury, President of DUTA felt the responsibility to root out terrorism lay on the government and the government had failed to take effective measures in this regard.

The meeting strongly condemned

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