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The Daily Star

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Inside Today
International



President Mikhail Gorbachev has offered to sell large shares of the Soviet defence industry to the West
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Article

Changes in South Africa have started to come thick and fast. In the past few days the long-standing sports boycotts have been lifted, and Washington has relaxed some of its economic sanctions
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Sport

Defending champions Liaoning FC of China stayed on course for the semifinals of the 10th Asian Club Cup soccer championship
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Dhaka Day by Day



'Please get off my line' by S M Ali
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Parliament proceedings

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Supplement

Special supplement on the National Day of Egypt
Pages 8 & 9

NEWS BRIEFS

Hartal call in Rajshahi

RAJSHAHI, July 22: Rajshahi Banik Samity and Rajshahi Sarak Paribahan Samity jointly called an indefinite hartal in the district from July 24 demanding unconditional release of a transport union leader, reports UNB.

7 Bangladeshis held in Turkey

Seven Bangladesh nationals were taken in custody by the Turkish government in Ankara in the absence of valid travel documents, according to a report received here today. They were identified as Rezaul Islam Akan - Barisal, Enayet Hussain Talukdar - Barisal, Abul Kalam Mollah - Noakhali, Bashir Gazi - Chandpur, Mohammad Mustafa - Noakhali, Strajul Islam Bepari - Dhaka and Al Magnum - Noakhali, reports UNB.

Delhi detains 2,000 Lankan Tamils

NEW DELHI, July 22: Some 2,000 Sri Lankan Tamils were held by Indian police in the southern state of Tamil Nadu in the last two days as they did not resist themselves with the police, reports reaching here today said, reports Xinhua.

Strike banned in Nepal

KATHMANDU, July 22: The Nepalese government banned strikes by some 110,000 government workers today.

33 directors of 9 private banks have borrowed Tk 290 cr from nationalised banks, JS told

Private banks floated with public money

Star Economic Report
 Directors of private banks borrowed from nationalised commercial banks and Development Financing Institutions (DFIs) a total of about Taka 290 crore. The borrowings were in the individual accounts of 33 Directors of nine private banks. Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman said this in Parliament Monday during the question hour. The minister gave a detailed breakdown of individual borrowings of the Directors of the private banks. The private banks include City Bank, United Commercial Bank, IFIC Bank, Arab-Bangladesh Bank, National Bank, Islami Bank, Uttara Bank, Pubali Bank and Al-Baraka Bank. The Directors borrowed money from Sonali Bank, Agrani Bank, Janata Bank, Rupali Bank, Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha and Bangladesh Shilpa Bank. The question on the borrowings of the Directors of the private sector banks mainly drew the attention of the House on the day. In an unusual move, the Speaker allowed the question to be raised, superseding five other questions, at the request of ASM Firoz of the Awami League. The AL member was supported by other members. The question was put by Hajj



Left: One of the wounded students being carried by his fellow student to safety. Right: a rickshawpuller with bullet injuries in his leg. Twenty persons were wounded in a shootout at Suhrawardy College in the city Monday. —Star photo

Factional shootout at Suhrawardy College: 20 injured

By Staff Correspondent
 At least 20 persons including four students and a minor boy were injured, eight with bullets, when two rival groups of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) clashed in and around Shaheed Suhrawardy College on Monday. The college authorities announced class suspension "until congenial atmosphere is restored" after the hour-long fight during which the groups traded at least fifty rounds of gunshots, cocktails and also used other lethal weapons. The eight bullet injured were admitted to Salimullah Medical College Hospital (SMCH), hospital sources said. They were Rafiq and Mintu, students of the college, Sahjahan Talukder and Sahjahan Sheikh, both tailors, a six-year old boy Kuel Shamir and his mother Sahaj Begum, and day labourers Rahim and Jalal. Injured Khokon and Manik also students of the college and Koken Sharmin were given first aid at the SMCH while others at nearby clinics. Police and eyewitness said
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DUCSU polls postponed

By Staff Correspondent
 Elections to the Dhaka University Central Students Union (DUCSU) and the hall unions, scheduled for August 5, were postponed following violent activities on campus Sunday evening. The Vice-Chancellor Prof M Maniruzzaman Miah ordered the postponement and asked the police, deployed near his official residence, to spread the message over loudspeakers. A police van communicated the news to the students on campus and others over loudspeakers soon after a group of unruly students went on the rampage demanding postponement of the polls and the announcement of fresh dates for the examinations, postponed earlier due to the elections. The agitated students, most of them belonging to the Awami League-backed Chhatra League (S-A), damaged window panes of the offices of the V C and the pro-V C, locked the office of the Returning Officers at the administrative building and attacked a police van guarding the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) and tried to set it ablaze. Over a dozen shots were fired and several crackers blasted in the TSC area during the period. All these incidents occurred within half an hour from 7 in the evening. Pandey students and others in the TSC area ran in all directions to safety. The actions were promptly protested by groups of students belonging to the Awami League (S-A), JSD (Inu)-backed Chhatra League (N-S), CPB-supported Chhatra Union and the Chhatra Federation through separate processions. With this postponement, the authorities had to cancel four dates scheduled for holding the elections due to an unfavourable campus situation. Following the expiry of the present DUCSU and hall unions' tenure on June 8, the authorities first scheduled the polls for July 18. It was then shifted to July 25 and then to July 31 to find a suitable time. The DU authorities again shifted the date from July 31 to August 5 as all the major student bodies excluding the pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Jamaat-backed Islami Chhatra Shibir boycotted the elections. The boycotters were demanding postponement of the polls, holding of an open discussion between the authorities and the student leaders to resolve the controversial issue of 'special admission to the passed-out student leaders', and to take steps to ensure a congenial atmosphere for holding the elections. Only the JCD, Shibir and a few smaller organisations submitted nominations for the polls within the July 20 deadline announced by the Chief
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Tk.4,500 found with Ershad in jail

By Staff Correspondent
 The jail authorities during its regular jail trial Sunday recovered a sum of Taka 4,500 from the possession of Ershad, according to a reliable source, Monday. The jail authorities have taken punitive action against Ershad for possession of money within the jail, which is highly restricted under jail code. The jail authorities, as a punitive measure, have barred Ershad to see his visitors for two months and also ordered not to supply him with the daily newspapers for time being. The jail sources said that during the regular checking the jail authorities also intercepted a number of letters written by Ershad to different quarters.

Ershad's lawyer taken into custody

By Our Staff Correspondent
 One of Ershad's defence counsels, Advocate Jinnat Ali was taken into police custody on Sunday night on charge of carrying letter to and from Ershad, who is now suffering ten years r.1 for illegal possession of arms. The special branch personnel and police force came to the house of Jinnat Ali at around 1.50 am on Sunday night and interrogated him, his family sources said Monday
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Ashura today

The holy Ashura, the 10th Muharram, will be observed throughout the country today with due respect and religious fervour, reports BSS. The Muslim world observes the day in commemoration of the supreme sacrifices made by Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) at Karbala for upholding the
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Holiday

The offices of the Daily Star will remain closed today (July 23) on account of holy Ashura. There will, therefore, be no issue of the newspaper tomorrow (July 24).
 —Managing Editor

Khaleda seeks help to revamp financial institutions

Star Economic Report
 Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Monday called upon the concerned officials and employees to extend their support and cooperation to implement government steps taken to revitalize the financial institutions of the country, reports BSS. "The autocratic regime in the past had crippled the country's economy and destroyed all institutions including the banking sector," she told the members of the Coordination Council of Banks and Financial Institutions when they called on her at the Sugandha office. State Minister for Finance Mujibur Rahman, Ziaul Huq, MP, Coordinator of the Council Abul Kashem, council members Md. Nurul Alam, Anwar Hossain and Azizul Islam spoke on the occasion. State Minister for Labour and Manpower Rafiqul Islam Mian was also present. Begum Zia said her democratically-elected government would always stand by the people. She said the government alone could not solve all the problems and added "you have a great role to play in materialising our commitment to the people by extending us whole hearted cooperation." Referring to the huge unpaid loans, the Prime Minister said of realisation the great task has now fallen on the elected government. She also sought their cooperation in making the recovery a success. She said as the people's representative, the BNP government was pledge bound to
See Page 12 Col. 8

NBR Chairman rules out withdrawal of VAT

Joint body to oversee implementation soon

The government is actively considering to set up a committee, comprising the representatives of National Board of Revenue (NBR) and the private sector, to oversee the implementation of Value Added Tax (VAT). An official announcement is likely to be made soon about the proposed committee. The proposal was submitted to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia by the representatives of the chamber bodies in their recent meeting with her. The chamber chiefs apprised the Prime Minister of the post-VAT situation in trade and industry. The committee will help implementation of VAT without hurting the genuine interests of trade and industry, the sources said. Under the proposal of the representatives of the private sector and the chamber bodies, the proposed committee will review the VAT-induced effects on different sectors "on a case-by-case basis." Appropriate steps will be recommended by the committee to tackle the problems of trade and industry in all deserving cases following the implementation of VAT. Meanwhile, in an interview with UNB Monday, Chairman of National Board of Revenue Nurul Hossain Khan categorically ruled out withdrawal of VAT. "As the chief of the implementing agency, I can say we will stick to the system," the NBR Chairman said. Asked how to face growing political pressure, including from the largest opposition Awami League, for withdrawal of VAT, he however said, "That is the decision of the politicians." "We are not facing much problem in implementing VAT and hope we won't face in future because more than 70 per cent people will be benefited by the system," Khan said. He said it is unfortunate
See Page 12 Col. 7

Hasina, Remington talk Constitution amendment bill

Visiting Chief Counsel of the US judicial sub-committee on courts Michael J Remington called on Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina at her Sangsad Bhavan chamber Monday, reports UNB. During the meeting, Hasina apprised Remington of various aspects of the Constitution amendment bill on the form of government now under consideration of the House. Independence of judiciary, socio-economic situation and campus violence also came up during the discussion. The Opposition Leader stressed on political stability for establishment of rule of law, justice and fundamental rights of the people. In this context, Hasina mentioned that her party Awami League had been struggling for last 15 years for establishing democracy, a prerequisite of political stability.

ADB team to discuss second industrial credit

Star Economic Report
 An Asian Development Bank (ADB) team arrives in Dhaka this week to hold discussions with the government on second industrial credit programme. The programme is likely to be sized at about 150 million US dollars. After negotiations between the government and the ADB, the programme will be placed before the Manila-Based Bank's board of directors for approval.

Council of Ministers meets

The Council of Ministers met on Monday in its regular weekly meeting at Bangabhaban with Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed in the chair, reports BSS. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia attended the meeting which discussed various matters. Ministers, State Ministers in charge of various ministries and divisions, Cabinet Secretary and Principal Finance Secretary were present.

Govt employees threaten strike

By Staff Correspondent
 The Government Employees Sanghati Parishad, an association of class four employees, Monday urged the government to fulfill its 3-point demand by August 4. The demands include implementation of Pay Commission report, changing of office timing and some more facilities for non-gazetted employees. Making the call at a rally at the National Press Club, Secretary General of the Parishad Syed Mohiuddin also announced a movement programme from August 4 if the demands were not met by
See Page 12 Col. 3

Baker urges Israel to agree to peace talks with Arabs

TELAVIV, July 22: Secretary of State James Baker on Monday called on Israel to accept US proposals for peace talks with Arabs, saying the Jewish state had an historic opportunity, reports Reuter. After two sessions of talks with right-wing Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and his senior ministers, Baker said he had been assured he would receive an Israeli answer soon. "I think that this is a moment of historic opportunity. For 43 years, Israel has sought direct negotiations with its neighbours and it has been right to do so," Baker told a news conference. "An now there is a real opportunity to get to those face-to-face negotiations. Israel now has Arab partners willing to engage in direct negotiations," Baker said. "The Prime Minister indicated that he would respond shortly to our proposals. I am satisfied that he and his colleagues will consider their position and our proposals carefully and I look forward with great hope to their response," Baker said. He said he did not know exactly when the Israeli answer would arrive and had no current plans to return to the region. Shamir's spokesman Avi Pazner told a separate news conference after today's meeting: "There are still different problems which we must consider in the next few days. We had very good talks yesterday and today." After five peace missions to the Middle East, Baker told Shamir he had garnered the support of Arab states for a peace conference to be followed immediately by bilateral negotiations to end 43 years of war with the Jewish state. His news conference took place in the King David Hotel on the 45th anniversary of its bombing by Jewish guerrillas fighting British rule in Palestine led by Shamir's former partner and predecessor as leader of the rightist Likud Party, Menachem Begin. Baker said the US effort was designed to achieve three things: to produce direct negotiations; to construct a process acceptable to Israel and to foster a positive climate for negotiations. "In our view we have done all three," Baker said. The turning point in his effort came when Israel's most implacable enemy, Syria, accepted the US formula for peace talks. Israeli commentators said today Shamir now had no choice but to go along if he wanted to retain Israel's key relationship with its guardian ally, the United States, supplier of three billion dollars in annual aid. Baker said Shamir turned down an idea endorsed by Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan and backed by the international community of freezing Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, home to 1.75 million Palestinians in revolt since December 1987, in exchange for suspension of the Arab economic boycott of Israel. Despite his progress, Baker still faces formidable obstacles in getting the parties to the bargaining table. He said a formula for Palestinian representation was still not fully agreed. Shamir today told a cabinet session that Secretary of State Baker briefed him on the "revolutionary changes" in Syria and the willingness of Arab countries now to have direct negotiations with the Jewish state.