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NEWS BRIEFS

62 rescued from den of traffickers

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Aug 24: Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) busted a den of human traffickers in the town today and rescued 62 people, including 30 children and 15 women, allegedly kept for smuggling them out of the country. The victims were mostly from Comilla and Brahmanbaria districts, brought there promising jobs in India and Pakistan, reports UNB.

Village looted in Gopalganj

KOTALIPARA (Gopalganj), Aug 24: A group of armed people looted belongings of about 100 families at Piterbari village in Saidullahpur union of the upazila on Friday to avenge a murder, reports UNB.

Bulgaria polls October 13

SOFIA, Aug 24: Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev has issued a decree setting Oct. 13 as the date for parliamentary elections and appointed an independent judge to head the election commission, newspapers reported Saturday, says AP.

CU classes resume

CHITTAGONG, Aug 24: Classes of the Chittagong University resumed today after 10 days of strike enforced by the Islami Chhatra Shibir, reports UNB.

Register Abdur Rashid said classes and official work resumed peacefully.

Sources in the campus said the Vice Chancellor did not attend office and the attendance of students was thin.

Residential students who had left the halls after bloody clashes between All-Party Students Unity (AFSU) and Shibir on August 14 were yet to return.

CCCPSU to be dissolved, party property confiscated: Moscow commander fired

Gorbachev quits as party chief

MOSCOW, Aug 24: President Mikhail Gorbachev today resigned as head of Soviet Communist Party and recommended dissolution of its policy-setting central committee, a spokesman said, report agencies.

Gorbachev ordered the confiscation of all Communist Party property and banned party activity in the Armed Forces and KGB security police, Soviet television said.

"I do not consider it possible to continue to carry out the functions of general secretary," he said in a statement read on the Soviet television.

The decision comes three days after the collapse of a coup led by hardline members of the party.

The independent news agency Interfax reported that Gorbachev quit the post he had held since March 1985, when he launched his reform programme.

During the course of the day, Gorbachev had a series of meetings with advisers includ-

ing Alexander Yakovlev, Yevgeny Primakov, Georgy Shakhnazarov, Vadim Bakatin and spokesman Vitaly Ignatenko, said the source who declined to be identified.

Earlier, Ignatenko was reached by telephone and said he could neither confirm or deny the report.

A spokesman for Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin said that Gorbachev had not told Yeltsin about any plans to quit the party leadership post.

President Bush, questioned by reporters at his Maine vacation retreat, also said he couldn't confirm the report.

Asked whether Gorbachev leaving the party would make a difference on the question of economic aid, he said: "What makes a difference to me on the aid question is the reforms and how they're going to go forward."

The advisers Gorbachev met with on Saturday are known reformers, and Yakovlev was considered the architect of

some key elements of Gorbachev's programme during its first five years.

Yakovlev, hounded by party conservatives, quit the Communist Party last week.

Gorbachev has sacked the general who commanded Moscow during the coup bid against him, Nikolai Kalinin, the reformist daily Komsomolskaya Pravda said today.

Kalinin, appointed by the eight-man State-of-Emergency Committee imposed a curfew on Moscow and followed instructions from the leaders of the putsch for three days.

Russian President Yeltsin on Saturday issued decrees ordering the seizure of Communist Party and KGB archives in his republic to prevent them from being destroyed.

They were the latest in a series of orders issued by Yeltsin exerting control over central organs of Soviet power since the coup.

Yeltsin's decrees, transmit-

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Soviet President Gorbachev shakes hand with Russian President Yeltsin after arriving in the inner office of the Russian Federation building shortly before an informal meeting of the Russian Congress in Moscow Friday.

—AFP photo

Striking employees, police clash inside Secretariat

The crisis over the new pay scale and office timings aggravated further on Saturday following clashes between striking government workers and police inside the Secretariat.

Police lobbed teargas shells, fired rubber bullets and resorted to lathicharge to disperse the striking workers leaving several persons injured.

Some of the policemen

Star Report

were also injured in the clash, according to an official source. The striking workers threw ink-pots, paperweights, flower pots and other objects at the police from the Secretariat buildings.

Police arrested 35 employees from the rally but they were later released. The employees who earlier announced a three-hour strike for Saturday turned it into a day-

long strike protesting alleged police atrocities. They asked for withdrawal of police, BDR and Ansars from the Secretariat today, failing which the strike will continue for the whole day, they said.

The employees held a rally in front of the National Press Club where they announced the next programme. The programme includes blocking the

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Striking government employees back off in the face of police teargas volleys in the Secretariat Saturday.

—Star photo

Pay hike for employees

WB, IMF seek Govt clarification

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have sought that the government immediately justify the new wage hike would not destabilise the country's overall economy.

Otherwise, they indicated that future aid to the country would be affected, highly placed official sources told UNB Saturday.

The sources said both the World Bank and IMF headquarters yesterday (Friday) sent notes to the Finance Ministry

reacting sharply to the wage hike.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has also expressed dissatisfaction at the wage hike.

A visiting ADB delegation Saturday sought assurance during a meeting with a senior government official that the pay hike would not affect the development budget of the government, ADB sources said.

The multilateral lending agencies termed the wage hike as a breach of the commitment

given to the donors and explicitly indicated it would affect future lending operations to Bangladesh.

Donors have been asking the government a total wage freeze until the economy gets a sound footing.

During pre-budget discussions, the IMF and the World Bank agreed to raise the wage upto a maximum of 20 per cent this fiscal but the new pay-scale gave up to 80 per cent.

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China will adhere to socialism

BEIJING, Aug 24: Communist Party leader Jiang Zemin has stated clearly that China intends to continue adhering to socialism, shunning the communist world's trend towards democracy, reports AFP.

"The system or lifestyle practiced in a country is the business of the people of that country themselves, and no foreign national should interfere," Jiang said in comments published here today in the People's Daily.

The ideology to be adopted by a nation is also up to its people," he said. "No country should impose a certain type of ideology on others."

The comments, contained in a Xinhua news agency report carried on the official party newspaper's front page, came as democratic forces appeared to be consolidating their power in the Soviet Union.

Jiang was speaking to General saw Maung of Burma, who used the military to suppress a pro-democracy move-

ment and remain in power.

China's media has portrayed in a negative light the drastic changes taking place in the Soviet Union following the failed military backed coup against President Mikhail Gorbachev and the ascension of reformer Boris Yeltsin.

The Xinhua news agency carried a report today that quoted a Soviet Communist Party Central Committee protest over "Anti-communist hysteria" in the country.

It cited the cases of the

Govt employees eulogise Ershad, announce revised programme

By Staff Correspondent
 Government employees have announced a revised action programme to press home their three-point demand including a wage hike beyond the recommendation of the pay review committee.

In a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday afternoon the leaders of the third and fourth grade em-

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Press Note

Govt clarifies position, urges employees to join work

The Government Saturday has expressed hope that its employees would return to their normal duties and refrain from activities detrimental to law and order, so that the people would not suffer due to their unruly behaviour, reports BSS.

A Press Note issued Saturday night said the Government hoped that its employees would attend their respective duties according to the laws. Otherwise, the Press Note warned, the Government would be compelled to take lawful action against them.

The Press Note said the Government on the demands of the employees had already announced the new pay scales.

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Police action condemned

By Staff Correspondent

Different political parties and organisations have condemned Saturday's police action inside the secretariat on government employees agitating for upward revision of the just announced pay scale and change of office timings.

General Secretary of Awami League, Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, MP, called upon the government to find out an honourable solution to the situation arising out of the Pay Commission report, through dialogue.

Begum Chowdhury, in a statement expressed here

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PM stresses newer technology to raise farm production

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Saturday underlined the importance of increasing country's agricultural production to the desired level through all kinds of risk management, reports BSS.

Begum Zia said this target could be achieved by keeping the ecological balance through co-ordination of nature, environment and human activities.

The Prime Minister was addressing the inaugural session of the national workshop on "risk management in Bangladesh agriculture." The four-day workshop has been organised by Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council (BARC) at the International Conference Centre (ICC).

Agriculture Minister Majidul Haq, Agriculture Secretary KM Rabbani and Executive Vice President of BARC Dr M Sujayet Ullah Chowdhury, spoke on the occasion. Among others, ministers, representa-

tives of different foreign missions and international donor organisations and agricultural scientists attended the inaugural session.

Begum Zia said it was now imperative to know different aspects of risk management, identify the causes of risk and apply appropriate technology to tackle them. She underscored the need for introducing a proper research scheme and ensuring its implementation to achieve this target.

Describing the nature of risks in the agricultural sector Begum Zia said, in 1974, about 57 per cent of the country was inundated by floods in which three crore people were affected. The most devastating floods in 1988 inundated 84 per cent of the country and crops on 16.50 lakh hectares of land were destroyed, she said.

Begum Zia pointed out that

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Ukraine proclaims independence

MOSCOW, Aug 24: The Ukrainian parliament on Saturday adopted a resolution proclaiming Ukrainian independence, a spokesman at the parliament in Kiev said, reports AFP.

Ukraine is the country's second most populous republic after Russia.

Also today, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk announced his resignation from the Central Committee of the republic's Communist

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Silayev to head new Soviet government

MOSCOW, Aug 24: President Mikhail Gorbachev appointed Russian Prime Minister Ivan Silayev today to head a new Soviet government, a decree read out on television said, reports Reuter.

He asked the Soviet Parliament, which meets on Monday, to debate a no confidence motion in the government of former Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, who was arrested after last Monday's abortive coup.

Hasina's call to vote for 'boat' in by-election

From Our Correspondent

MADARIPUR, Aug 24: Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina today called upon the people to vote for 'boat' in the September 11 by-election to consolidate democracy by strengthening the opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament).

She was addressing a by-election rally in favour of AL candidate Shahjahan Khan at Kadambari Bazar of Rajshahi upazila.

She also called for casting 'yes' vote in the September 15 referendum.

She claimed reintroduction of parliamentary term of government was a success for her party because the ruling BNP was compelled to accept it under strong pressure from the opposition.

Referring the Indemnity (Repeal) Bill introduced by AL in the parliament, Hasina, who was also opposition leader in the parliament alleged that conspiracy was being hatched

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