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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Hasina meets editors today

**By Staff Correspondent**

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina will meet with editors of newspapers and news agencies today (Thursday) in Sonargaon Hotel. Organised by the Council of Editors the main topic of the open discussions and exchange of opinion will be: 'the responsibility and role of the opposition party in providing an institutional shape to democracy.'

### Campus terrorism report

The committee for suggesting measures to curb terrorism in the country's universities will submit its report to the government today (Thursday), officials said, reports UNB.

# Define famine, Hasina asks Govt: Look back to 1974, replies Khaleda

## JS session plunges into uproar

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) witnessed a fierce war of words between the government and the Opposition over the situation prevailing in the northern districts when its session resumed on Wednesday afternoon.

The Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina accused the government of suppressing information and asked if it continued to refuse to accept the reality, how would it define 'famine'.

In reply Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said that anybody seeking to know the definition of famine could look back to 1974, but that at the moment there was no famine and that she herself had visited the northern districts.

MPs belonging to the

Opposition Awami League, its allies the Communist Party of Bangladesh, NAP and Ganatantri Dal, National Democratic Party and Independent member Maj (retd) Hafizuddin staged a walkout to protest the Speaker's refusal to allow discussion on the question.

The exchange of words started when, following Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali's disposal of notices, Ganatantri Party member Suranjit Sengupta rising on a point of order alleged that the government's statement on the situation in the greater Rangpur region only reminded one of the autocratic attitude of the governments of the past.

He said as a Member of Parliament what else could he

do if his notice for an adjournment motion to discuss the situation was not accepted.

The Speaker interrupted reminding Sengupta that the matter was discussed at length on October 15 and that's why he had rejected adjournment notices on the same subject.

In reply Sengupta said a discussion was needed since the Opposition was calling the situation a 'famine' while the government was calling it a 'ovab' (stress) situation.

Taking the floor Tofael Ahmed said that they wanted to adjourn the House for a discussion on the question because they were eager to know about the actual situation. He claimed that famine was prevailing not only in Rangpur but also in the entire country.

Criticising the Prime Minister for her statement on the situation immediately after her return from Harare he said that flood was not created by the government and what was the harm in accepting the truth.

He said that in the past whenever the Opposition had observed hartal the government used the media to spread lies. If the same practice was followed now only the government would lose credibility.

In reply Fazlur Rahman Palat State Minister for Communications said that ministers, Members of Parliament and high government officials were deputed to the flood affected areas and that the army was deployed to carry out relief operations. It was not true

that the government tried to suppress information. The Opposition should stop making reckless statements, he said adding people were hearing statements like 'silent famine', 'famine' and 'subtle rigging of election' for quite some time, but that leaders like Sengupta were not seen in the affected areas to distribute relief materials.

Refuting the claim that people had died of starvation he said that the government had investigated the real story of a photograph published in a daily and found that it was a fake.

The government did not deny the fact that diarrhoea had caused a good number of deaths. A total of 92,000 Vulnerable Group Development

(VGD) cards were issued in the greater Rangpur region, he said.

The State Minister said that in the past the people used to listen to BBC broadcasts to get correct accounts taking place in the country. In a bulletin on Monday BBC reported that there was no starvation death. CPB leader Shamsuddoha had acknowledged the fact that adequate relief materials were distributed in Chilmari area.

The Speaker then sought to know the opinion of the Chief Whip of BNP Khandakar Delwar Hossain about having a short discussion on the question and the latter said that the House should be conducted according to the orders of the day.

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## Outlines suggested for autonomy of Radio, Television

By Staff Correspondent

A structural outline to make the national media autonomous was adopted Wednesday after a two-day discussion sponsored by the Sammilita Sanskritik Jote held at the National Press Club.

The 19-point recommendation to make the national media 'unbiased, impartial and people's media' were presented to Information Minister Nazmul Huda who also participated in the discussion.

Twenty-nine prominent speakers representing different sections of people including politicians, educationists, ministers and high government officials and journalists deliberated on 'democratisation and autonomy to Radio and TV' to prepare the guideline. Fayez Ahmed, President of the Jote, presided over the discussions.

According to the proposed structure, the autonomous organisation for the Radio and TV will be named as 'National Broadcasting Authority' (NBA) which will be headed by a Chairman.

The Chairman would be nominated by a committee of the Parliament and would be appointed by the President for three years, the appointment would be approved by the Parliament and the NBA would be responsible to it. The NBA Chairman could not be dismissed without two-third majority in the Parliament.

The Chairman would be selected from among the veteran citizens who have wide knowl-

edge in the field of education, culture and has proved his skill on his own profession.

The NBA would be divided into two committees — the advisory committee and the executive committee. The advisory committee would have 15 members while the executive committee seven. There should be regional committees where the Radio and TV have regional stations.

The NBA would get funds from state donations, licence fees for Radio and TV and earnings from commercial service. The NBA would place its budget before the Parliament as part of the national budget for approval. The accounts of the NBA would be under the government's audit and NBA would pay taxes to the government from its income.

There would be a Broadcasting Council to look after the allegations by anybody against the NBA.

The three-member Broadcasting Council would be headed by a retired judge of the High Court and the members would be selected by the Special Committee of the Parliament. All would be appointed by the President.

Those who participated in Wednesday's discussions were Information Minister Nazmul Huda, dramatist Jamaluddin Hossain, Ganatantri Party leader Suranjit Sengupta MP, Awami League leader Tofael Ahmed MP, dramatist and

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## Students attack BAU teachers' press confce

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Oct 23: A group of armed students of the Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) attacked a press conference by the BAU Teachers Council at the local Press Club yesterday evening.

The attackers allegedly belonging to the Chhatra League (S-A) ransacked the club and abused the teachers and newsmen. They damaged a number of chairs and tables and threw them indiscriminately. Nobody was injured in the incident.

The press conference was, however, held later and the BAU teachers demanded immediate reopening of the university and restoration of normalcy there.

## Alleged killer of BCL (N-S) leader arrested

By DU Correspondent

A Chhatra League (S-A) activist, Arif Newaz Farayazi Badal, was arrested late Tuesday night from the Maghbazar area for his alleged involvement in killing Mahbubur Rahman, a leader of JSD (Inu)-backed Chhatra League on July 20.

As many as three BCL (S-A) activists have been arrested in the last few days.

Mahbub, a resident student of Mohsin Hall, was killed in an armed clash between the supporters of the Awami League-backed BCL and BCL(N-S) on the Dhaka University campus July 20.

Meanwhile the BCL (S-A)

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The Dhaka University campus situation is heating up again with the charges and counter-charges, processions and counter-processions by the two rival student organisations — BNP-backed JCD and AL-backed BCL — blaming each other for continued terrorism. (Above) JCD procession and (bottom) BCL procession yesterday. —Star photo

## Defaulter kidnaps bank manager for fresh loan

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 23: Some defaulting loanees after being refused fresh loan, kidnapped a Krishi Bank manager and demanded a 50,000 taka ransom.

Haider Ali Talukdar, Manager of Tarash upazila Krishi Bank was kidnapped on October 12. On October 23, the kidnappers in a letter to his wife demanded Taka 50,000 ransom for his release.

Meanwhile, police has arrested four employees of the bank on suspicion of having connection with the kidnapping.

## Move to revive Ground Water Act

By Chapel Bashar

While a state of anarchy prevails in the uses of ground water as well as in the irrigation systems, government is now contemplating reviving the Ground Water Regulation Act.

The execution of the Act was suspended soon after its promulgation in 1967 and that suspension still remains.

The Act, formulated under the Ground Water Management Ordinance 1985, provides rules for installing deep tubewells (DTW), shallow tubewells (STW) and other irrigation equipment.

Rules and regulations related to the use of underground water were incorpo-

rated in the Act to ensure smooth management and discipline in the sector. The purpose of the Act was also to maintain a safe level of underground water by controlling its indiscriminate lifting.

The Act clearly specified minimum distance to be maintained between two tubewells, either DTW or STW.

Though no reason was then shown for suspending the Act, the concerned sources said that it was done only to fulfil a condition of the donors.

The condition for World Bank credit on National Minor Irrigation Development Project (NMIDP) stipulated that the restrictions on siting of all

DTWs and STWs should be abolished. The NMIDP was undertaken for distribution of STWs through the private sector.

In a recent meeting, the Agriculture Ministry's standing committee on irrigation projects reviewed the situation in ground water uses and the affects of unplanned sinking of tubewells.

The meeting observed that due to absence of any restrictions, the minimum distances required between two tubewells (both DTW and STW) are not being maintained anywhere in the country.

The Act stipulates that a

See Page 12 Col. 7

## Shibir activists gherao CU VC's residence

CHITTAGONG, Oct 23:

Chittagong University Syndicate meeting scheduled for today could not be held as pro-Shibir Sangrami Chhatra Oikya activists gheraoed the residence of the Vice Chancellor, reports UNB.

They gherao of VC's residence where the meeting was convened continued from 9 am to 2 pm.

The student activists held a rally in front of VC's residence where speakers renewed the demand for his removal in pursuance of recommendations by a judicial inquiry committee that probed into the affairs of the University.

The university has remained closed for more than 11 months jeopardising the academic life of about 16 thousand students.

Meanwhile a group of armed young men in the early hours of Wednesday entered

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## Prof Salam wants to set up basic studies centre in Bangladesh

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and International Centre for Theoretical Physics headed by Nobel laureate Professor Abdus Salam is willing to set up an international centre in Bangladesh which will be called 'The International Centre of Basic Studies for Densely Populated Region' (ICDPDR), reports BSS.

This was disclosed by Prof Naeem Rahman Professor of Chemistry at the University of Trieste Italy and representative of IAEA at a meeting with Education Minister Jamiruddin Striar here Wednesday.

The proposed centre will be one of the twenty centres in the region concerned with environmental problems, technical education for the youths and control of the population

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## Over 51 per cent children under 7 suffering from malnutrition

More than 51 per cent of the children belonging to the age group upto six years in the country have been suffering from malnutrition, Parliament was told Wednesday, reports UNB.

Replying to Mohammad Shahiduzzaman (BNP) Deputy Health Minister Serajul Haque said out of this, 52.2 per cent children have been suffering in urban areas whereas 48.3 in rural areas.

The minister said the government is distributing 'Vitamin A' capsules among the affected children through National Nutrition Council.

## Prostitutes plan resistance as anti-brothel campaign mounts

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ Oct 23: Tension mounted in the town as anti-brothel campaigners have planned eviction of the Tanbazar brothel after the Juma's prayer Friday while the prostitutes planned a procession against the move on the same day.

Police force has been reinforced in the brothel area.

The Unislamic Activities Resistance Committee which included some leading personalities, has, over the last few days, mobilised Public opinion for the eviction

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# Cambodia's warring factions sign peace treaty

PARIS, Oct 23: Leaders of 19 nations on Wednesday signed a peace treaty ending two decades of conflict in Cambodia but new fighting was reported in the southeast Asian country and diplomats fretted over the role of the Khmer Rouge, reports AP and AFP.

'Cambodia is about to resume its place in the world,' declared French President Francois Mitterrand, opening the session at an ornate conference center in Paris.

Hours before he spoke, re-

lief workers and the military wing of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front, one of the guerrilla factions, accused Phnom Penh government forces of shelling several positions in northwestern Cambodia.

In Paris, hundreds of Cambodian exiles cheered Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who will head an interim Cambodian government, as he arrived to sign the treaty.

Waving banners reading 'Peace in Cambodia' an 'UN Get There Fast,' the throng

greeted Sihanouk with cheers and applause as he arrived at a conference center a few hours before the signing ceremony.

US Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar called today on countries around the world to make human and financial resources available to establish a lasting peace in Cambodia.

He said the United Nations would play 'a major, and in certain respects, unprecedented role,' there.

The treaty being signed by 18 nations plus Cambodia's Supreme National Council,

representing the Phnom Penh government and the country's three resistance factions, constitutes 'an end to the nightmare experienced by the Cambodian people during two decades of war, destruction and suffering,' Perez de Cuellar said.

The Cambodians had recognised during the past few months, he added, that 'the military option had led them to an impasse.'

Perez de Cuellar called for 'genuine national reconciliation based on the higher inter-

est of Cambodia and its people,' warning that 'peace will remain ephemeral if the Cambodian people and some of its immediate neighbours continue to live in destitution and poverty.'

'We have before us a historic opportunity to win the battle in southeast Asia,' he said. 'Let us seize it so that the entire region may make peace with itself once more, and with its history.'

Perez de Cuellar said the United Nations would set up an operation in Cambodia 'that

will probably be the biggest and most complex' in its history, supervising the ceasefire and the cessation of outside military assistance and verifying the withdrawal of foreign forces as well as controlling for supervising administrative structures.

The United Nations would also be responsible for repatriation of refugees, the regrouping and encampment of all the armed forces of the Cambodian parties and would ensure 70 per cent disarmament

## UN Day today

Staff Correspondent

United Nations Day will be observed in Bangladesh and elsewhere in the world today (Thursday). The anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Charter — 24 October 1945 — has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948.

In Bangladesh the United Nations system and various non-governmental organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the Day.

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