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NEWS BRIEFS

Police rescue BDR personnel

JHENIDAH, Nov 2: Police today rescued six Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel from a village in Moheshpur upazila of Jhenidah district after they were detained by alleged smugglers for nearly 13 hours, reports UNB.

Typist held for taking bribe

A stenotypist of the Ministry of Home Affairs Mostajur Rahman has been arrested by the police for accepting a bribe of Taka 90,000 on the plea to help the posting and transfer of a police official. One Shahjahan, an inhabitant of Bogra, has also been arrested for offering the bribe, reports BSS.

Mugger killed in shootout

CHITTAGONG, Nov 2: A mugger was killed following a half-hour shootout with police on Friday evening at Bayzid Bostami Road in Panchlaish Thana of the city. A 32 revolver, two cocktails and a 26-inch 'kirich' (knife) were recovered from Motahar Hossain's possession, reports UNB.

Marcos's son held, released

MANILA, Nov 2: The son of ousted Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos was arrested briefly on charges of tax evasion today, but was later released after posting bail, his lawyer said, reports Reuters.

Deputy Commissioner of Rangpur withdrawn, made OSD

High-powered probe body on situation in N dists urged

By Moinuddin Naser

The food and work crisis that suddenly aggravated in the country's northern districts this year after three consecutive flash floods is virtually a man-made problem, a section of government officials say.

Meanwhile, different political quarters believe that there should be a high powered inquiry committee to find out the truth and the reasons behind the situation in Rangpur, Dinajpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha and Lalmonirhat.

A section of the local press and administrative officials talking to this correspondent during his visit to these areas confided that the local administration did not clarify the situation to the press and neither did it inform the government about the gravity of the situation.

The local administration was reportedly biased by the political opponents of the government dominating the politics in that part of the country.

Many of the local leaders confided that if the army had not intervened in the situation almost voluntarily it would have aggravated further although there was no shortage of food in the government stocks in that region.

The upazila chairman Ali Mohammed Zafar of Gangachara that came to the limelight as being the most vulnerable told this correspondent that the press overplayed the situation. He also dismissed the report of famine and deaths, due to starvation.

He further told this correspondent in front of an army officer who was in his room to attend a meeting on coordination of relief work on October 29 that all the reports were misleading and would pave the way for destabilising the government.

He further said that this year just before the by-election on September 11, flash floods inundated the whole area. The Teesta river eroded about three miles of its southern bank during the last three years rendering thousands of families homeless and helpless.

See Page 12 Col. 7



A young visitor engrossed in a sculpture displayed at the Asian art exhibition at Osmani Memorial Hall yesterday. The month-long exhibition was opened on Friday. — Star photo

KAFCO accord scrapped by Govt

An agreement with Japan for setting up a fertilizer factory in Chittagong known as KAFCO has been scrapped as certain provisions in it were found against the interest of the country, reports UNB.

Officials said the decision to scrap the agreement was taken at a cabinet meeting Thursday night with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair.

The government decision came on the heels of hectic parleys by a six-member cabinet sub-committee with KAFCO authorities to renegotiate the agreement.

"It's a bold and remarkable decision despite heavy pressure from the Japanese government," said a leader of the Dhaka Chamber who preferred to remain anonymous.

The cabinet meeting decided to float an international tender inviting foreign equity

for the project planned in 1981.

A six-member committee with the Principal Finance Secretary as convener was set up at the meeting to arrange a fresh implementation of the hundred per cent export-oriented fertilizer factory construction of which had already started, sources close to the meeting said.

Agreement on the 459-million-dollar joint venture project was signed at the end of Ershad regime. Officials said certain provisions of the agreement were against the interest of the nation.

These included supply of gas to the factory at a very low price — 75 cents per 1000 cft as against 2.5 to 3 dollars commercial price of gas in the international market and issuance of letter of guarantee by Bangladesh government for the entire 229 million dollar credit from foreign banks.

JS body on campus violence

Preliminary report likely this week

By Staff Correspondent

The Parliamentary Committee on Campus Violence is expected to submit preliminary report to the House before the prorogation of its current session this week.

A draft of the proposed preliminary report was prepared at the first meeting of the sub-committee of the parliamentary committee with its Chairman Khandakar Delwar Hossain in the chair.

The draft is expected to be discussed at a full meeting of the parliamentary committee tonight (Sunday). The session of the House resumes this afternoon at his a two-day recess.

The preliminary report, sources say, will be of a general nature, a type of call to be floated for ending campus violence through united efforts of all.

Specific details of recommendations to be put forward by the committee will be worked out by the committee

after the end of this session of the parliament. Preparation of a detailed report will take time because the causes of campus violence should have to be examined in minute details before framing a set of recommendations on steps to be taken by the government.

Khandakar Delwar Hossain, Chief Whip of the government, told The Daily Star that the draft was prepared on Saturday keeping in view the fact that something needed to be done before the end of the current session. He, however, declined to disclose anything about the contents of the draft.

An Awami League source said that preliminary report to be prepared on the basis of the draft is expected to be of a general nature. All political parties and organisations will be urged to unitedly help end violence in the campus, he said.

He said the committee is expected to record statements
 See Page 12 Col. 8

PM asks bankers to restore discipline

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Saturday asked bankers to restore discipline in the banking sector to invigorate the national economy, reports UNB.

"Economy largely depends on sound and efficient banking," she said addressing members of the Sonali Bank Employees Association who called on her at Sugandha in the evening.

Representatives of the Sonali Bank employees from all over the country were in the capital in connection with the 33rd founding anniversary of the Association.

She asked them to maintain a congenial working atmosphere in office. "Independence and democracy do not mean processions and slogans at place of work
 See Page 12 Col. 6

'Jail killing day' today

By Staff Correspondent

'Jail killing day' will be observed today (Sunday) by different political parties including the Awami League with due solemnity.

On this day in 1975, four national leaders — Tajuddin Ahmed, Syed Nazrul Islam, Guamruzzaman and Mansur Ali — were killed in the Dhaka Central Jail.

To mark the day, the Awami League has taken up elaborate programmes in the city and elsewhere in the country.

The Party programme in the city includes: holding of a discussion meeting in the Party central office at 23, Bangabandhu Avenue at 3 pm.

Party chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina will preside over the meeting. The AL central leaders will also address it.

The AL will hoist the party flag at half mast and black flags will also be hoisted atop party offices all over the country including the central office on the day.

Besides, a gathering will also be held and the portrait of Bangabandhu garlanded at Bangabandhu Bhaban at 8 am. The graves of the late leaders
 See Page 12 Col. 2

Israel expels Shiites from villages in south Lebanon

Syria baulks at direct talks, Palestinians to go ahead

MADRID, Nov 2: Syria is baulking at direct talks with Israel until the Jewish state agrees that all meetings will be held in Madrid, delegates to the Middle East peace conference said today, reports Reuters and AP.

But a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation will go ahead with face-to-face talks with Israel in Madrid's Parcen palace on Sunday regardless of the outcome of U S Attempts of the peace process, they said.

"We will go even if Syria doesn't," said a spokesman for the joint delegation.

The Jewish state is insisting that the first session of the direct talks, where the real negotiations will start, should be purely procedural to agree the venue for the next meeting, which it wants held in Israel.

Intensive contacts were underway in Madrid to reconcile the Arab and Israeli positions

after Friday's furious exchanges between Syria and Israel at the closing session of the three-day opening stage of the conference.

Delegates said that although Syrian objections highlighted President Hafez Al-Assad's headline position, other Arabs were equally adamant that they will not go to Israel before it shows willingness to withdraw from occupied Arab lands.

Syria also wants U S and Soviet observers to sit in on its talks with Israel to dilute the impression that they are meeting the Israelis outside an international framework, they added.

But Syria is unlikely to overcome Israeli objections to this as the rules for the talks, set by the United States, say observers can only take part if both sides agree, they said.

The delegation from the Syrian-backed Lebanese government is following the Syrian lead. It will only go into

talks when Damascus gives it go-ahead, the delegates said.

Israel on Saturday started expelling tens of thousands of residents from about 100 Shiite Muslim villages bordering the zone it controls in south Lebanon, escalating tension already heightened by the Madrid peace talks.

The order to leave within 12 hours could precipitate a confrontation with the Lebanese army, which deployed about 400 troops in the area in July.

Army headquarters in Beirut said troops would not withdraw.

Radio reports said the army and militia forces in the south were on alert, and President Elias Hrawi called a special session of the Defense Council later Saturday to discuss the situation.

Hundreds of residents of Kfar Rumman, just north of Nabatiyah, loaded clothes,
 See Page 12 Col. 7

Biswas urges CU teachers to maintain peace

An eight-member delegation comprising the members of the Jatiyatabadi Teachers Association and Zia Parishad of Chittagong University on Saturday discussed with President Abdur Rahman Biswas matters relating to the Chittagong University when they called on him at his residence in Dhaka, reports BSS.

While exchanging views with them President Biswas
 See Page 12 Col. 4

DU examinees' memo to VC for holding exams

By DU Correspondent
 Three hundred twentyfive masters and honours examinees of Dhaka University submitted a memorandum to Vice Chancellor Prof Maniruzzaman Miah Saturday demanding immediate holding of the examinations.
 All masters and honours examinations were suspended till
 See Page 12 Col. 5

IDA gives 24 m dollars, assures more aid

By Staff Correspondent

Islamic Development Bank (IDB) will give Bangladesh 19 million dollars for import of TSP fertilizer and another 5 million dollars for construction of feeder roads in Sylhet.

The visiting IDB President Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Ali also assured continued assistance in development offers of Bangladesh.

The assurance was held out when the IDB President called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Finance Minister Saifur Rahman separately on Saturday.

Dr. Ali who arrived here earlier in the day at the head of three-member delegation also led formal talks with the External Relations Department (ERD) that reviewed IDA financed projects in Bangladesh and also areas of further cooperation and assistance.

Later, he called on Agriculture, Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Minister Majid-ul-Haq at the latter's office.

IDB's 19 million dollars assistance to Bangladesh was conveyed to the Agriculture

Minister during the meeting. The IDB President also discussed with the Minister different aspects of his bank's assistance and cooperation in agriculture, water development, irrigation and flood control sectors.

Dr. Ali expressed profound interest in the IDA financed Teesta barrage project. He suggested that a comprehensive project containing dredging and other related matters be incorporated in the project for further assistance from the bank.

The IDB President stressed on the basis of the morphological data for consideration of IDB help and assistance. The 5 million-dollar IDB loan was provided under an agreement signed by Dr. Ali and ERD Secretary Enam Ahmed Chowdhury Saturday.

The IDB President will visit the cyclone rehabilitation projects in Chittagong and Cox's Bazar.

The IDB delegation was received by FRD the Secretary at the Zia.

New Russian constitution for strong presidency

MOSCOW, Nov 2: Russian President Boris Yeltsin on Saturday outlined the principles of a new republic constitution that would create a "presidential republic" and restrict the rights of national groups to secede, reports AP.

Speaking to the Russian Parliament a day after winning approval of his economic reforms, Yeltsin urged the lawmakers to draft constitution that has gone through at least one year of arduous debate and repeated revisions.

"We must not make any artificial delay in constitutional reform," Yeltsin said. "We have no right to let go of this opportunity to erect constitutional barriers to chaos and disintegration."

Yeltsin appeared confident as he spoke a day after persuading the Congress of Russian People's Deputies to approve his reform plan to create a market economy, free state-controlled prices and privatise industries. He also won broad new powers to implement the reforms and reorganise the government.

After winning the new powers, Yeltsin pushed the parliament to adopt the constitution as the next step toward creating democratic institutions out of the old Communist-dominated government structures.

The constitution will empower him to implement reforms and issue decrees without debating each new law in the Supreme Soviet legislature.

"A new democratic nation cannot live in accordance with laws written under totalitarianism," the 60-year-old President said. The draft envisions a republic with a strong presidency, with separate legislative and judicial branches

and a Western system of checks and balances.

However, the document outlined by Yeltsin appeared to omit any provision for secession by any of the dozens of autonomous ethnic regions in the huge republic, which stretches from Poland to Japan.

The autonomous regions of Yakutia in Siberia, Chechen-Ingush in the south and Tatarstan east of the Volga River are demanding greater self-rule from Russia, and their representatives of Congress oppose the draft constitution.

"I am categorically against the articles in this draft, which suggests that Russians can take our land and ... our diamonds and gold," said Dmitri Bubyakin, a lawmaker from the Yakutia.

"They are not ready to adopt it, it's too radical," she said referring to deputies from the autonomous regions and conservative lawmakers.

Yeltsin said the current constitution "is a brake for our political course and a hurdle for radical reforms, which are vital for Russia."
 He said the draft constitution

before parliament contained "firm legal guarantees against" totalitarianism, ideological control and violence as a state policy and created the legal basis for reform.

Yeltsin won powers on Friday to reorganise local regional and republic governments, but has given no timetable for implementing the changes. He said Saturday the new constitution will need such reorganisation to create a law-based state and guarantee a separation of powers that will help create checks and balances.

King of Bhutan Jigme Singye Wangchuck will for the first time be absent from the three day SAARC summit scheduled to begin on November 7 in Colombo, reports UNB.

Sources in the Bhutanese embassy in Dhaka on Saturday said the King cannot leave the country now in view pressing on Saturday need, at home. Foreign Minister Dawa Thering will represent Bhutan int he sixth summit.

AL MPs will not attend today's JS session

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League MPs will not attend today's session of the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament).

Chief Whip of Opposition Mohammed Nasim informed the Deputy Speaker Saturday that the AL MPs would not be able to attend Sunday's session since the party had chalked out elaborate programmes on the day to observe the 'jail killing day'.

BCL (S-A)'s 72-hour ultimatum for arrest of all terrorists in DU

By DU Correspondent

Chhatra League (S-A), the student wing of Awami League, Saturday gave a 72-hour ultimatum to the government for arresting all alleged terrorists from the Dhaka University campus.

If the government failed to do so, the BCL (S-A) would file cases against all of them, its leaders told a rally in front of the National Press Club.

Without naming the ruling BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the BCL
 See Page 12 Col. 6

Bhutan King will not attend SAARC summit

King of Bhutan Jigme Singye Wangchuck will for the first time be absent from the three day SAARC summit scheduled to begin on November 7 in Colombo, reports UNB.