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NEWS BRIEFS

Sausa calls on PM

Abdur Razzak Abubakar El Sausa, Secretary of General People's Congress of Libya, called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at Sugandha here last night. Sausa felicitated the prime minister and conveyed to her best wishes of Libyan leader Moammer Gaddafi. The Prime Minister also conveyed her best wishes for the Libyan leader and the people of Libya.

Performance grant

Development grants to private colleges will be tagged with their performance in examinations, official sources said Monday. The authorities have also decided to suspend grant even after receipt if the recipient colleges produce bad results in examinations held under education boards or universities, reports UNB.

49 held in city

The Dhaka Metropolitan police and the detective branch in their special drive arrested 49 persons including four hijackers, five mastans and one illegal toll collector Monday a DMP press release said Monday, reports BSS.

US compensation for Iran

THE HAGUE, Dec 2: The United States today paid 278 million dollars in compensation to Iran for US military equipment impounded by the US after the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran, a US embassy spokesman said, reports Reuter.

Karunanidhi denies aiding Tigers

MADRAS, Dec 2: A former Indian provincial leader on Sunday denied allegations that he supported the activities of a militant Sri Lankan Tamil group. M Karunanidhi, a former chief minister of Tamil Nadu state, told reporters in the state capital Madras that the allegations were baseless and appeared to be part of a political vendetta, reports Reuter.

Joining hands with fallen autocratic forces will benefit none : PM

Role of Govt and Opposition equally vital in democracy

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Monday called for unity and cooperation of political parties to help national development and consolidate democracy.

The people, after a bloody struggle against autocracy saw their representatives forge unity and establish parliamentary democracy, and now they aspire for national development through the same unity and spirit, she observed.

Any failure of democracy and in bringing about people's welfare would be failure of all, not of the party in power, she told a discussion meeting at the National Press Club where leaders of major opposition parties also spoke. The Prime Minister said the role of both party in power and the opposition in a democratic system was equally important.

"Mere criticism for the sake of criticism will not help protect democracy and solve problems. Our struggle for democracy would be frustrated if we do not cooperate with each other", the Prime Minister said.

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists organised the discussion on "journalists' role in the democratic movement".

Chaired by the BFUJ President Reazuddin Ahmed, the meeting was also addressed by the BNP Secretary General and LGRD Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and acting chief of the Awami League Abdus Samad Azad, Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General and its parliamentary party leader Maulana Matlur Rahman Nizami, Five-Party leader Rashed Khan Menon, See Page 12 Col. 1



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a discussion meeting on "Role of Journalists in the Democratic Movement" jointly organised by BFUJ and DUJ at the National Press Club on Monday. — Star photo

Ukraine's 'yes' to independence

KIEV, Dec 2: Voters in the Ukraine have backed independence from the Soviet Union by a margin of around three to one, election officials said today, reports Reuter.

Results from several electoral districts showed a probable total of 75 per cent voted for independence.

In the Ukrainian capital Kiev, nearly 93 per cent voted yes while the industrial region of donetsk showed a 70 per cent majority. In Odessa and the Crimea, where Russians outnumber Ukrainians, the figures were 75 per cent and 54 per cent in favour.

Officials said voting trends indicated parliamentary chairman Leonid Kravchuk would win election on the first ballot with more than 50 per cent of the vote.

In Donetsk 60 per cent voted for Kravchuk out of six candidates for president. Foreign observers said the poll was conducted fairly with virtually no incidents. It was conducted to the highest standards we have in Britain's said conservative member of Parliament Julian Sherway.

A big 'yes' vote for independence will be a slap in the face for Gorbachev, who has said the Ukraine, the second-largest republic, will face disaster if it leaves the Soviet Union.

AFP says, Washington will not recognise Ukrainian independence 'precipitously' but will head toward such a move if Ukrainians ratify a declaration of independence, the US ambassador to Moscow said Sunday.

Ambassador Robert Strauss said recognition within a few days just won't happen.

Speaking from Moscow in an interview with CBS television, Strauss called for additional US aid to the Soviet Union, stressing that more assistance could 'give democracy'.

60 pc buses operate: Owners

By Staff Correspondent

The nationwide indefinite strike by the transport workers was observed for the second day Monday. According to both the owners association and the transport workers union officials, about 40 per cent of the passenger buses remained off the roads around the country.

Bus services in all 10 routes of the southern districts and in some northern districts, including Rajshahi, remained

suspended for the second day. Five inter-district buses were damaged near the Shanir Akhra point on the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway and services in the Chittagong, Narsingdi and other routes were disrupted for several hours. Bus services in the Dhaka-Narayanganj route was also disrupted during the morning hours.

However, city buses, though in a slightly reduced number, were in operation in different routes and inter-district bus services in most of the routes were unaffected.

"About 60 per cent of the buses were on the road today," said Abdur Rauf, president of the Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Union, adding, "only those buses whose owners have already issued appointment letters to the workers, were plying".

See Page 12 col 7

PLO officials win entry into US, Israelis stay out

AMMAN, Dec 2: Palestinian delegates decided to travel to Washington for Arab-Israeli peace talks after six hours of negotiations with US Embassy officials on granting visas to PLO members, a delegate said Monday, reports AP.

The problem was solved and we will be travelling to Washington tonight," said Samir Abdullah, a member of the 14-man Palestinian team.

Abdullah refused to say whether the US Embassy had approved visas for seven members of the Palestine Liberation Organization who will act as advisers to the Palestinians during peace negotiations with

Israel scheduled for Wednesday in Washington.

The US government bans entry of PLO officials. The Palestinians had been scheduled to leave for Washington at 11 am (0900GMT) Monday, but delayed their departure to negotiate the visa problem.

Reuter adds: Palestinian peace negotiators said earlier today the United States had denied entry visas to some of their advisers and the delegation would not leave for talks in Washington until the issue was resolved.

It's a dirty business, said negotiator Ghasan Al-Khatib. They (US officials) promised to

give us the same treatment that we got in Madrid. They informed us at midnight last night there would not be visas except for a few of them (advisers).

"We are not going," the West Bank university professor said. Delegate said among those denied visas were Nabil Shaath, a key aide to PLO chairman Yasser Arafat, and Ahmed Abdul Rahman, the PLO spokesman in Tunis.

Both were in Madrid for the opening of the historic Arab-Israeli peace talks a month ago.

Meanwhile Lebanon's delegation left for Washington to-

Contraceptive plant

By Staff Correspondent

"Dudhlata", a common leafy plant abundant in the rural areas of the country, has all the potentials of being a contraceptive.

A group of Bangladeshi scientists found that the juice of the plant was active against fertility and could be used when scientifically developed, to combat the country's top priority population problem.

Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, Faisal A Hashim and Barun C Sen of the Pharmacy Department of Dhaka University have isolated a new steroidal alkaloid from the extracts of "dudhlata", scientifically known as marsdenia tinctoria.

Talking to The Daily Star Sunday, Prof Chowdhury said that the newly-found alkaloid, tinctoramine, showed positive in antifertility and abortion tests on the rate.

The drug when developed from the plant, could contribute substantially to the population control programme," he said.

The researcher said that the plant has already been referred to as a contraceptive in the traditional pharmacopia and prescribed as against antifertility and for abortion.

Varsity teachers meet Home Minister

Govt, Opposition discuss campus situation today

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia meets opposition political leaders today to discuss ways and means to curb campus violence that have plagued the educational institutions across the country, reports UNB.

Leaders of all major political parties have been invited to the meeting at 7 pm today (Tuesday) at the International Conference Centre, official sources said.

This will be the second meeting of the Prime Minister with political leaders in less than six months aiming at ending terrorism in the campus. The first meeting was held on August 3, 1991.

A special parliamentary committee on campus violence was formed during the last session. Awami League members on the committee however accused the government of lack of sincerity in resolving the problem.

Our DU correspondent reports: Meanwhile leaders of the Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers Association (FBUTA) at a meeting with Home Minister Monday sought quick action by police during any violent incidents on the campuses.

The FBUTA leaders felt that the delay in taking action against terrorists allowed violence to flare up in the other educational institutions.

They, however, hailed the recent police action on the Dhaka University campus during the exchange of gunfire between two rival student groups saying that it had helped check further deterioration of the situation. The leaders hoped that a similar role would be adopted by the police in during any future incidents.

The Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, according to a FBUTA source, assured the teachers of all-out efforts by the government to curb campus violence, adding that it was taking time as it was a political problem.

The Home Minister told the FBUTA delegation that the government was taking stern

action to eradicate terrorism and violence on the campuses.

He said the government had already directed the law enforcing agencies to rush to the spot of any occurrences and unarm the armed hooligans by any means.

He said that the government was thinking of sitting with the political parties to discuss the matter that some socio-economic factors also contributed in aggravating the crisis sending shock waves through the educational system and find out ways to settle it immediately.

The FBUTA would sit with the Prime Minister, Education Minister and the Leader of the Opposition in parliament to discuss the issue.

The leaders who met the Home Minister are Prof Enamul Huq Khan, President of FBUTA, Prof Mahfuzur Rahman, Secretary General, Prof Afsaruddin and Prof Alauddin Ahmed of JU, Prof Shah Mohammad Faruq of BAU and four others from Rajshahi University and Islamic University.

DU teachers take classes from Dec 7

By DU Correspondent

The teachers of Dhaka University have decided to postpone its on-going work absence and attend classes from December 7 (Saturday). The decision was taken Monday at an emergency meeting of Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA) considering dislocation in the academic pursuit of students and session jam although the government failed to take measures yet to restore academic atmosphere there, said a DUTA press release.

The meeting, held at the DU Club with Prof. Anwarullah Chowdhury, DUTA President in the chair expressed hope that the government and university authorities would take

Constables demonstrate for pay hike

Police asked to take stern action against terrorists

Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury Monday directed police to "eradicate terrorists and extortionist criminals" irrespective their political affiliations, reports UNB.

He was addressing a meeting of high officials and staff of the police force at Rajarbagh Telecom Auditorium.

The Home Minister's directives came following widespread concern against growing acts of crime and violence across the country.

He reiterated government's firm determination to take stern action against any anti-social activity deteriorating law and order situation in the country.

"Vested quarters are engaged in hatching conspiracy against the democratic government and creating artificial crisis."

The minister asked police personnel to be ever vigilant to resist such 'evil forces and See Page 12 col 7

DU in grip of acute fund shortage

By DU Correspondent

Dhaka University authorities have been facing an acute crisis in implementing their development projects since long due to unavailability of funds.

According to a source, the government does not always provide the university authorities with the allocated funds in time and as per allocation. The delay in providing

funds to implement the projects under Third-Five-Year Plan (TFYP) caused increased expenditures that amounted to Taka 48 lakhs. It was caused mainly due to the price hike of commodities, extra labour cost, and increased rates imposed by the Public Works Department (PWD). Moreover, See Page 12 Col. 4

UP chairman candidates barred from uplift projects

The government Monday decided that the persons, contesting for the offices of chairman in the coming union parishad elections, shall not remain as chairmen or members of union level project committees for local development like food for work programme (FWP) in order to make the elections free and fair, reports BSS.

The decision to this effect was taken in the cabinet meeting, held at the Bangabhaban with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair to ensure that no candidate can influence the voters.

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No Victory Day parade this year

The government has decided that the Victory Day parade will not be held this year on December 16, reports BSS.

The decision was taken at a cabinet meeting at Bangabhaban Monday with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair.

The ceremonial parade will be held later on March 26 on the occasion of the National and Independence Day.

However, other programmes of the Victory Day will remain unchanged. On the morning of the day, the President and the Prime Minister will lay wreaths at the National Mausoleum at Savar. Besides, the President will host a reception in the evening.

The cabinet meeting was attended by the ministers, state minister-in-charge of different ministries and division.

Principal Finance Secretary, Cabinet Secretary, Secretary to the Prime Minister's office and concerned secretaries were present.

Mukhter killed himself, says autopsy report

By Staff Correspondent

Hafez Mukhter Hossain committed suicide, the autopsy report Monday said.

Mukhter Hossain, chairman of now defunct Narayanganj Sadar upazila died of bullet wound Friday evening. Police recovered the body from a white Honda Civic car parked near the Holy Cross College at Tejgunipara in the city.

Mary Janet Shyamoli, a girl friend of Mukhter was arrested Sunday under Section 54 of criminal penal code and taken on five-days remand in connection with the unnatural death of the former upazila chairman. Shyamoli told police that she was with Hossain when he shot a bullet in his left temple with a revolver.

The post mortem report submitted by the Dhaka Medical College authorities See Page 12 Col. 3

BNP faction wants Jahanara out of ministry

From Our Correspondent

RAJBARI, Dec 2: The BNP district unit today submitted a memorandum addressed to the party chief Begum Khaleda Zia demanding removal of Jahanara Begum from her cabinet, seen here as an outburst of internal strife in the party's local leadership. The memorandum accused Jahanara Begum, State See Page 12 Col. 4

Cicippio freed

NORRISTOWN (Pennsylvania), Dec 2: American Hostage J Cicippio was released in Lebanon today after more than five years in captivity, his brother Thomas Cicippio announced here, reports AFP.

Cicippio said he had been informed by the State Department of his brother's release.

"The State Department said that they were just notified by the UN that Joe is on his way to Damascus," Cicippio's brother said.

Cicippio took the call amid a throng of reporters and cam- See Page 12 col 7