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# The Daily Star

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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**ALPP meets today**

A meeting of the Awami League Parliamentary Party (ALPP) will be held at 4 pm today at the Sangsad Bhaban conference room of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament. The meeting will be chaired by Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, says a party press release, reports UNB.

**Goods train derails**

JAMALPUR, Apr 10: Rail communications between Dhaka and Jamalpur were disrupted after a bogey of a goods train derailed near Narundi station today. Railway sources said a bogey of the Mymensingh-bound goods train derailed at Narundi, 14 km off the district headquarters at about 3 pm. Five inter-city trains, including Padma and Teesta, with about 2,000 passengers were stranded at Jamalpur junction, reports UNB.

**Pak delegation arrives**

An eight member Pakistani delegation, led by Population Affairs Division Secretary Mahub Ahmed, arrived in Dhaka Friday. During its stay, the delegation will study Dhaka's family planning programmes. It will also visit a number of health and family planning centres and extension projects in and outside the capital, reports UNB.

**Rallies banned in JS bhaban areas**

Dhaka Metropolitan Police has banned holding of rallies, processions and demonstrations and carrying of arms, explosives and other dangerous things in the Sangsad Bhaban and nearby areas from tonight, reports BSS.

**Session opens tomorrow**

## Golam Azam issue to dominate Jatiya Sangsad discussion

By Mahfuz Ullah

In the backdrop of the Golam Azam issue upsetting the country's political chess game, the fifth session of the fifth Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) goes into session tomorrow.

Leader of the House, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, with a view to warding off the opposition criticism on her absence in the sessions, is expected to take part in this round of the business of the House.

The session of the Sangsad, authoritative sources said, is

likely to spread over four to five working days. The government, however, has not planned to move any bill during the session, the sources said.

Political observers viewed the session will be quite interesting and may produce surprising result on the issue of Golam Azam.

Meanwhile, the policy planning body of the Sangsad, the Business Advisory Committee held its 11th meeting with Speaker Shaikh Razaque Ali

in the chair yesterday morning.

The committee normally determines the duration of a session, decides the issues to be discussed and other aspects relating to proceedings of the House. The Speaker goes by the decision of the committee. Committee sources said, the members have reached an understanding on the duration of the session and agreed to allow the members to discuss issues which are at present agitating the public mind.

Eight of the 14-member committee participated in the meeting. The Leader of the House Khaleda Zia was represented by Agriculture Minister Majedul Huq while the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina was absent. Mattiar Rahman Nizami, leader of the Jamaat parliamentary party, was represented by Ansar Ali while Badruddoza Chowdhury, deputy leader of the House was represented by Communication Minister Oli Ahmed. See Page 12 Col 6

## BNP, trial committee start talks

By Asiuzzaman

Talks between the ruling party policy makers and representatives of trial committee started Wednesday, a well-placed committee source said Friday.

Two rounds of talks were held on the day that ended

fruitfully, the source on condition of anonymity told The Daily Star.

There was no major decision but we will hold more talks, the source said without giving details.

Trial committee Chairman

Jahanara Imam headed the three-member team while BNP Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdus Salam Talukder, ruling party Chief Whip in Parliament Khandoker Delwar Hossain, Labour Minister Abdul Mannan

Bhuyan and Social Welfare and Women Affairs Minister Tariqul Islam represented the BNP at the talks.

The source said that the meeting started at around 12:30 pm Wednesday at the rest- See Page 12 Col 8



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia receiving ancient relics discovered at Joypurhat from the local MP Abu Yusuf Khalilur Rahman at her Sagandha office yesterday. —Star photo

## Ancient relics handed over to PM

Some thousand-year-old relics discovered at Jaipurhat were formally handed over to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her Sagandha office Friday, reports BSS.

The discoveries which include touch-stone statues of different deities of Hindu mythology were handed over by local member of parliament Abu Yusuf Khalilur Rahman.

The ancient statues and some earthen pots were discovered last February during the re-excavation of Asaranga Beel, the project taken under the on-going canal digging programme in the district.

According to Additional Deputy Commissioner of Jaipurhat, Strajul Islam, who was present on the handing over ceremony, the relics were discovered from ten to twelve feet beneath the bed of the beel.

There is a saying that the beel is actually a ditch excavated by some Hindu Raja Kumar Saileshwar Ray on 26 See Page 12 Col 3

## Barapukuria pit project Dhaka seeks ADB credit

Star Report

Bangladesh authorities have been negotiating with the Asian Development Bank ADB for some 150 million dollar credit needed to finance the multi-billion-taka Barapukuria Coal Mine Project, first of its kind in the country.

After several detailed studies and assessments on the project's viability by foreign consultants as well as Government agencies, the authorities are convinced that the project should get off the ground immediately.

The Council of Ministers at a special meeting held in Natore on January 21 this year felt that the project should be implemented on an emergency basis in view of its importance in the national economy.

Last month, the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) okayed the project.

The project, up in the air for the last five years, is envis-

aged as 'an alternative source of energy' considering the fact that the natural gas so far discovered can meet the country's energy requirement for the next 25 to 30 years.

According to Government estimates, the project will require an investment of Tk 916.03 crore — Tk 201.51 crore in local currency and Tk 714.52 crore in foreign currency.

Bangladesh Government is to pay the local currency part but banking on an yet-to-be negotiated loan to fund the rest.

Of the Tk 714.52 crore foreign currency amount, the Government expects Tk 595.42 crore — equivalent to about 150 million US dollars — as credit from some multilateral lending agency — ADB to be precise.

According to a well-placed Planning Commission source, the ADB has already shown in-

terest in the project. And the Economic Relations Division (ERD) has been wooing the Bank.

According to the Project Concept Paper (PCP), the objective of the project is to recover one million tons of coal annually — from an estimated deposit of 300 million tons — of which 83 per cent will be supplied to a nearby to-be-set-up 300 MW thermal power plant and the rest 17 per cent to the brick fields of the western zone.

The brick fields in the western districts consume some 25000 tons of wood as fuel, according to an estimate. Officials say that the project, if implemented, will save the country from deforestation and thereby arresting ecological imbalance.

With the extraction of one million tons of coal per annum, they say, the country will be See Page 12 Col 3

## 10 hurt as Jamaat, BCL clash in Kishoreganj

KISHOREGANJ, Apr 10: At least ten people were injured, five seriously, in a clash in the town today between the Jamaat-e-Islami activists and their opponents backed by pro-Awami League Chhatra League, reports UNB.

The seriously injured were identified as District Chhatra League General Secretary Syed Ashfaqul Islam Tito, Humayun, Natu, Liton and Aminul Islam Bakul. All of them were admitted to the local Sadar Hospital.

Police arrested Chhatra League activist Nadim and Jamaat supporter Mizanul Haque in connection with the clash which lasted for about an hour.

Witnesses said the clash ensued when a Jamaat procession, brought out from its office after Juma prayer this afternoon demanding release of Prof Golam Azam, was confronted by the local people near the Shahidi Mosque in the town.

## Tories win fourth successive term

LONDON, Apr 10: Britain's Conservatives scored a come-from-behind election victory, overcoming voter anger over a persistent recession and handing Prime Minister John Major a personal mandate that moves him out of Margaret Thatcher's shadow, reports AP.

Many observers had believed that the recession, with its 9.4 per cent unemployment and record rate of business failures and home repossessions, would help the opposition Labour party win Thursday's election.

Instead, the Conservatives became the first party this century to win four straight elections.

On Friday, with the last

votes still being counted, Major held a 10-seat majority in the House of Commons and was headed for a 21-seat majority — a sharp drop from the 102-seat Conservative majority after the 1987 election, but higher than poll predictions.

With 650 of 651 constituencies reporting, the Conservatives had won 336 seats, 10 more than the 326 majority they needed to govern alone. Labour won 271 seats, the Liberal Democrats 20.

Labour party leader Neil Kinnock, stung by the loss, hinted he might quit. He said he was "consulting colleagues to inform them of the action I propose to take in the wake of See Page 12 Col 7



## Noriega convicted

MIAMI, Apr 10: A jury found former Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega guilty on eight of 10 drug and racketeering charges today, ending a seven-month trial, reports AP.

Noriega was ousted in a 1989 US invasion and brought back to the United States to stand trial on drug and racketeering charges.

Noriega sat stone-faced Thursday as he was convicted of drug and racketeering charges.

Wearing his trademark khaki uniform, the former General showed no emotion as a 12-member jury announced that it had found Noriega guilty. See Page 12 Col 6



John Major waves enthusiastically as he strides out of No 10 Downing Street yesterday after his government was put into power for a fourth consecutive term. —AFP photo

## Tower Hamlet tangle

### 100 Bangladeshi families get new lease of life

By Staff Correspondent

The High Court of England in a verdict has instructed the Tower Hamlet authorities in London to treat 100 Bangladeshi families equal to other families until the Home Secretary declares them illegal immigrants, according to BBC monitored in Dhaka Friday night.

Quoting reports of several London dailies, BBC broadcast that the High Court verdict said that the Tower Hamlet administration had no right to deny emergency housing for the families until they were declared illegal immigrant.

The Independent said that the Tower Hamlet authorities went to the High Court against the policy of the Environment Ministry which said that the local authorities would have to arrange housing facilities for those who become homeless not for their own fault.

The daily said that the Tower Hamlet authorities denied prayers for housing of the 100 Bangladeshi families on the plea that the illegal immigrants can not receive benefits from the public fund.

The Independent commented that the decision of the Tower Hamlet authorities was contrary to the policy of the Environment Ministry.

The Guardian said that the local administration were instructed to consider the families equal to the other families until the Home Secretary announces them illegal immigrant.

London authorities may have to change their decision against the families, the newspaper added.

## Hasina returns today

Leader of the opposition in parliament and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina returns here today from Singapore where she went to see her ailing brother-in-law Dr Shafiq Siddiqui, a party press release said, reports BSS.

Dr Siddiqui is undergoing treatment at the Singapore National Hospital for the last five months after he was attacked by a complicated disease.

The family of Dr Siddiqui has expressed sincere thanks and gratitude to all those organisations and individuals who have prayed for his recovery.

## Saudi Prince due today

Saudi Prince Khaled Bin Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz arrives in Dhaka today on a five-day official visit to Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Foreign Minister A S M Mustafizur Rahman will receive the royal guest at the airport. Chief of Army Staff Lt General Noor Uddin Khan and other senior officials will also be present at the airport to welcome the former Saudi army commandant.

## Accord on 'pre-transitional' body to run Afghanistan

GENEVA, Apr 10: UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said today agreement had been reached to set up a pre-transitional council to run war-torn Afghanistan until an interim government could be appointed, reports Reuters.

"We have reached an agreement in principle to have a pre-transitional council of 15 members in Kabul which will take power now. This is the first step of reconciliation," he said.

His announcement at a news conference followed intensive negotiations over the past few months by UN special

envoy Benon Sevan with all sides in the 14-year Afghan conflict and the governments of neighbouring Pakistan and Iran.

Sevan, who sat next to Boutros-Ghali at the news conference, arrived in Geneva on Thursday to report to the UN chief after a final effort to convince all Afghan factions to stop fighting.

Boutros-Ghali said the agreement marked 'major progress' towards lasting peace in Afghanistan, racked by civil war since the overthrow of President Mohammad Daoud by officers professing Soviet-style communism in

1978. But his remarks and the text of a written statement he issued later suggested that some issues remained to be resolved and that there was still opposition to the long-

ISLAMABAD, Apr 10: Radical Afghan rebels on Friday rejected a UN-sponsored interim council to end a 14-year-old civil war that has wracked their homeland. But moderate rebel factions accepted the peace plan and said the opposition of the radicals would not derail the peace process, reports AP.

sought pact.

The UN chief gave no clear indication of when President Najibullah, head of the Kabul administration that long had the support of the former

Soviet Union, would step down.

Najibullah has said he would hand over power to an interim government — a body the council is to set up — while Boutros-Ghali said on Friday all

powers and executive authority would be transferred to the council.

The UN chief said it had not yet been agreed when and where the peace conference or

assembly that is to be part of the transitional process to an elected government in Afghanistan would take place.

The United Nations had originally planned to hold the gathering this month in Geneva but this has been resisted by some Afghan rebel factions. Vienna has also been proposed.

The statement said the agreement provided for the new council to be set up as soon as possible.

On Thursday, Pakistan's official APP news agency said the council would replace Najibullah's administration by the end of this month and

would run the country for 45 days before an interim government took over and held elections.

Boutros-Ghali said today said the pre-transition council would be composed of 'impartial personalities'.

The statement later said consultations were under way on who would join the council and on other arrangements for the transition period.

I am confident that membership of the council can be announced soon, the statement declared.

It said there was an understanding that once the council See Page 12 Col 2