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NEWS BRIEFS

Khaleda returns tonight

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia returns home to night at the end of her four-day official visit to Pakistan and Bahrain. Begum Zia returns from Lahore on conclusion of her three-day official visit to Pakistan at the invitation of her Pakistan counterpart Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. Earlier, she paid two-day official visit to Bahrain from August 8 at the invitation of Amir of Bahrain, Shaikh Isa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa, reports BSS.

Minister suspends doctor

A doctor of the Kapashia Thana Health Complex in Gazipur was suspended yesterday after ministers visiting the hospital found that he was absent from his place of work. Deputy Minister for Health Sirajul Haq issued the suspension order after a surprise visit to the health complex. The Deputy Minister along with Jute Minister Hannan Shah paid the surprise visit to Kapashia Health Complex yesterday and observed its working, reports UNB.

2 killed in Jessore bus plunge

JESSORE, Aug 10: Three people were killed and two others injured when a bus plunged into a roadside ditch after a head-on collision with a truck at Begaritola near Mantrampur thana on the Jessore-Satkhira road. Police said the accident occurred at about 3 pm killing on the spot the bus conductor Alauddin (28) and a primary school teacher Abdul Hamid (40) travelling on the bus. Three others, including the bus driver Shankar, were injured seriously, reports UNB.

Asset sharing figures in Sharif-Khaleda talks

No Pak word yet on repatriation date

From Mahfuz Anam

ISLAMABAD, Aug 10: Sincerity and pragmatism marked the outcome of talks between Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif that ended here today, the second day of her three-day official visit to Pakistan. On the thorny issue of repatriation of stranded Pakistanis, Nawaz Sharif's government agreed to start the construction of 42,000 flats in different parts of Punjab to house the

Pakistanis now stranded in Bangladesh. The work was to start immediately, and repatriation — the whole process is estimated to cost US dollars 250 million — would take place in phases, starting with the identification of the professional skills and issuance of identity card. The question of assets and liabilities figured prominently in the talks and the Pakistani side agreed to expeditiously examine the matter.

A major focus of the discussion was however to give Bangladesh-Pakistan relations a forward looking thrust by promoting trade, commerce and investment between the two countries. In this regard the Pakistani Prime Minister suggested an early ministerial level meeting between the two countries to take concrete steps in this direction.

In addition to the bilateral issue, the talks between the

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Hundreds feared killed as rockets rain down in Kabul

KABUL, Aug 10: Dissident guerrillas launched their heaviest rocket bombardment on Kabul today, possibly causing more than 1,000 casualties, a Defence Ministry spokesman said, reports Reuter.

But the spokesman could not say how many among the casualties were killed by the hundreds of rockets he said were rained on the capital by a hardline Mujahideen group, which is partner in the three-month-old Islamic government.

Diplomats said it was the heaviest pounding of Kabul since the Afghan civil war began 14 years ago. The guerrillas took Kabul in April.

The government said it had repelled the dawn offensive by the Hezb-i-Islami Party of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

"The army has advanced to most of the places from which firing brought great bloodshed to the people of Kabul,"

Defence Ministry spokesman Haji Dehli said. But late today there were still sporadic sounds of shells and bursts of gunfire from nervous troops on the streets.

More than 650 rockets rained down on Kabul in the first 90 minutes of shelling, which began at first light from positions held by the radical Hezb-i-Islami Party to the south of the city, one military expert earlier said.

Officials at a hospital run by the International Committee of the Red Cross said they had received 70 casualties by mid-day, bringing the numbers to more than 300 in the past two days.

A high proportion of the wounded were dying because shells had hit Red Cross buildings and the bombardment was preventing doctors from operating on the injured, Red Cross delegate-general for Asia Jean-Michel Monod said.

"Most of the deaths are kids with bullets in the legs or in-

juries that would be simple to operate on," he said, "children die very fast without surgery."

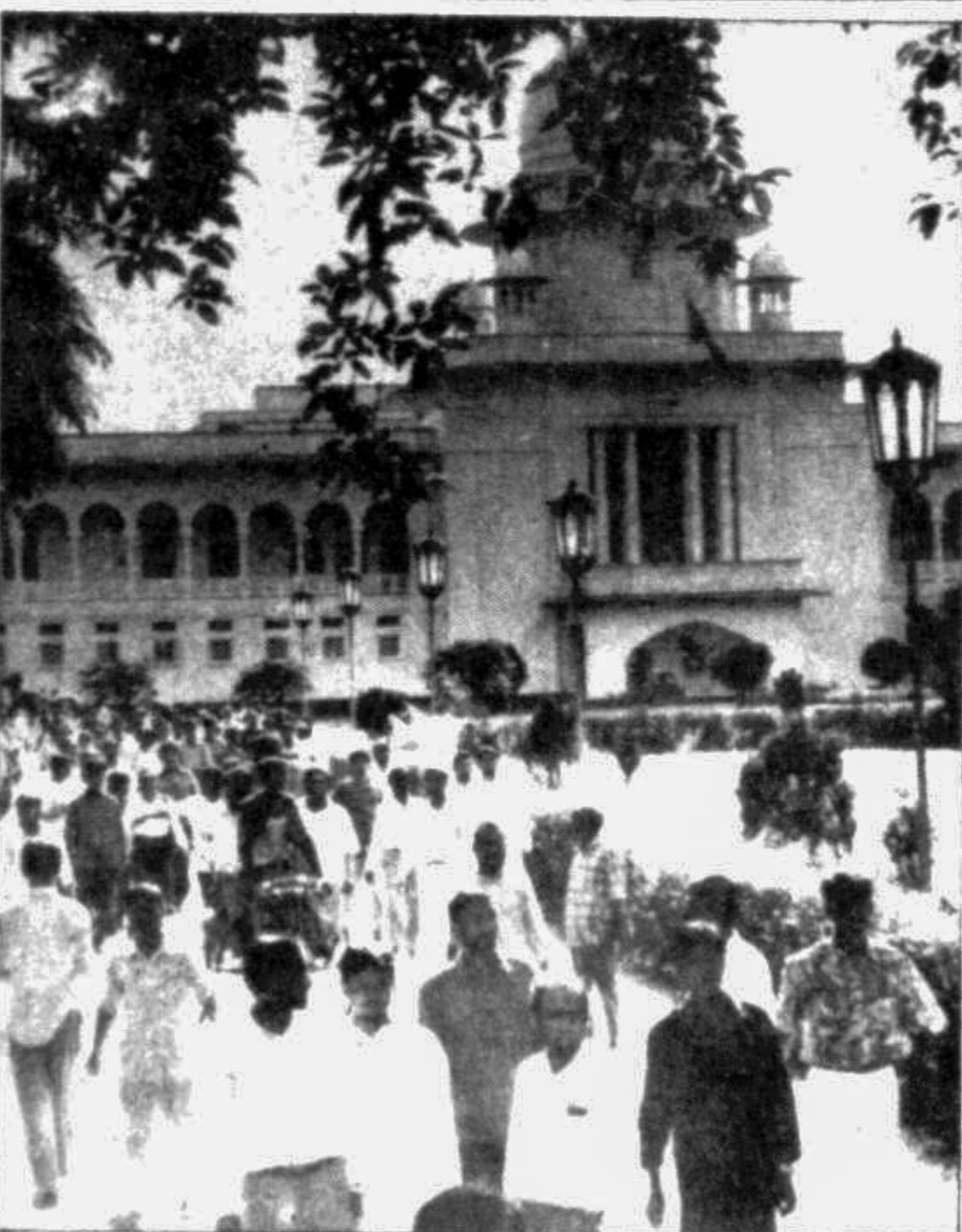
He appealed to the factions to avoid hitting hospitals in the city.

A Defence Ministry source said the Hezb-i-Islami under commander Gulbuddin Hekmatyar had tried to advance on the city and had been repelled by pro-government forces.

The three-month-old Islamic coalition government had adequate resources to deal with the threat from the dissident Mujahideen leader, he said. He declined to specify what weapons were being used.

Hezb-i-Islami commander Izzatullah blamed the government for escalating the fighting and said its forces were using air power for the first time.

"We are being bombed by government planes and are returning fire," he said.



Azam's writ: HC yet to deliver judgement

Verdict on Golam Azam's citizenship case was not delivered yesterday as a High Court division bench continued to dictate judgement, reports UNB.

The judges are giving their observations by touching all law points and related judgements referred to by both the sides during 15 days of hearing of the writ petition filed by the Jamaat leader challenging a government order that disqualified him to be citizen of Bangladesh.

Decision of the two-judge bench comprising Justice Ismailuddin Sarkar and Justice Badrul Islam Chowdhury in the much-talked-about case is expected after the court resumes at 10:30 this (Tuesday) morning.

The High Court bench started dictating the judgement on Thursday after conclusion of the hearing.

Golam Azam had been in Pakistan since November 22, 1971 and came to Bangladesh on July 11 in 1978 with a Pakistani passport on the plea to see his ailing mother. He was arrested on March 24 this year under the Foreigner's Act.

NATO to protect aid convoys in Bosnia

BRUSSELS, Aug 10: NATO cleared the way today for military contingency plans that could involve sending thousands of Western troops to protect relief convoys in former Yugoslavia, alliance sources told Reuters.

The 16 allied nations agreed last week that the military should be asked to draw up the plans. But all countries had until today at 1500 GMT to raise any last-minute objections.

"No objections were raised," one source told Reuters.

The military are now able to start the planning officially and ask national capitals what forces they would be prepared to contribute," said the source, who asked not to be identified.

Although reluctant to get involved in the fighting, NATO allies are prepared to back any UN resolution that might require the use of force to sup-

port aid deliveries. A UN resolution along those lines is expected to be passed this week, although it is far from clear who will command the forces needed or which countries will contribute.

NATO's military authorities are studying several options, including the opening of a land corridor from the Adriatic to the beleaguered city of Sarajevo for armed relief convoys — an operation the alliance thinks might need up to 100,000 troops.

Preliminary NATO military estimates say at least 12,000 troops would be needed to take Sarajevo Airport.

A political decision to use

force would have to be taken before any of the plans are put into effect.

France, Britain and the United States have agreed on the text of a UN resolution on humanitarian aid and detention camps in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the French government said today.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Maurice Gourdault-Montagne said the three countries had agreed during weekend discussions on a text to be put to other members of the Security Council.

Lawrence Eagleburger, acting Secretary of State in New York said there were no immediate plans to commit US



Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman (R) signing an agreement on cooperation in the field of science and technology with Pakistani counterpart Sidiq Kanju (L) Monday. Prime Ministers of two countries watching. — AFP photo

Row in JS over 'faulty' bill

The government landed in an embarrassing situation in parliament last night when an elderly Awami League member pointed out procedural flaw in the Open University Bill, 1992, halfway through its consideration, reports UNB.

When his term came for discussion on the bill, Zubeid Ali said the very introduction of the bill was faulty as the proposed university involved expenditure from the exchequer and hence it required prior approval of the President. But President's approval is absent in the bill.

Article 82 of the Constitution provides that no bill which involves expenditure from public exchequer shall be introduced in parliament without the recommendation of the President.

Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar who initiated the bill contended that he himself had secured the consent of the

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Jana Sanghati Samity declares ceasefire

CHITTAGONG, Aug 10: Parbatya Chittagong Jana Sanghati Samity, the main organisation of Chittagong Hill Tracts tribal insurgents, declared a unilateral ceasefire from today (Monday) to November 10, with a view to paving the way for a political solution to the long drawn hill tracts problem.

An official source told BSS tonight that the Jana Sanghati Samity had circulated a four-page leaflet to this effect on August 1 and the leaflet contained three main points with regard to the unilateral ceasefire in the hill tracts area.

The Jana Sanghati has hailed government's decision to find a political solution to the hill tracts problem and as such it has gone to the extent of declaring a unilateral ceasefire in hill tracts areas, the

leaflet mentioned.

The three main points of the ceasefire are: (1) Tribal insurgents or Shantibahini will unilaterally abstain from carrying on all sorts of insurgent activities including armed attacks on anyone from August 10 to November 10, 1992. (2) Jana Sanghati will on its own initiative stop all activities of tribal insurgents with a view to making it convenient for concerned parties to come to a political settlement of the Chittagong Hill Tracts problems as desired by Bangladesh government leaders and (3) Insurgents will review these decisions when there will be election of Hill Tract Local Parishads during the ceasefire.

The insurgents will also help stop exodus or influx of tribals or others in the Hill Tracts during the ceasefire.

Govt, opposition yet to reach accord

The ruling party and the opposition met yesterday to fix the duration of discussion in parliament on the no-confidence motion but were learnt to have failed to reach an understanding, reports UNB.

Speaker Shaikh Razaque Ali called meeting of the Business Advisory Committee of Jatiya Sangsad yesterday morning mainly to discuss and determine the length of debate on the no-confidence motion against the government, scheduled for August 12.

Sources close to the meeting said BNP proposed 12 hours of discussion and suggested it to be completed the same day, August 12.

But the representatives from the opposition parties and groups at the meeting pleaded for at least 20 hours of deliberation spreading over two days.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad told that the opposition should be given adequate time to discuss the situation prevailing in the country and prove the nine

charges brought against the government.

"We want elaborate discussion on the no-confidence motion... we're not concerned about the duration of discussion," Samad Azad said.

Ganotantri Party leader Suranjit Sengupta said the nine allegations brought against the government are substantive. "We have brought these allegations and we should be allowed to prove those."

Earlier, a press release issued by the parliament secretary said the Business Advisory Committee held a meeting with the Speaker in the chair.

The meeting discussed the duration of discussion on the no-confidence motion and took some important decisions.

The sub-rule (6) of rule 159 of the Rules of Procedure says if leave of the House to no-confidence is accepted, the Speaker will allot a day or days or part of the day for discussion.

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Hasina's demand 'Remove black laws from Constitution'

Sheikh Hasina yesterday said nine specific charges of 'failure' had been brought in parliament against the BNP government and 'being responsible' position they were committed to playing effective role in an outside the House, reports UNB.

The Leader of the Opposition was speaking at a meeting of the Awami League Parliamentary Party in Sangsad Bhavan yesterday afternoon.

Spelling out the charges contained in the no-confidence motion of the Opposition, she said the government politicised the administration and failed to ensure safety of life and property

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Rohingyas want Dhaka to help ensure security in Arakan

CHITTAGONG, Aug 10: Arakan Historical Society (AHS) today appealed to Bangladesh government to explore all possible international and bilateral sources to ensure security and safety of life and property of Rohingya Muslim refugees so that they can return home in Arakan with confidence, reports BSS.

Addressing a press conference at Chittagong Press Club, Advocate Shafiq Ahmad, a leader of the AHS, said about three lakh Rohingya Muslim refugees in Bangladesh were eager to go back to their homeland in Arakan but they wanted full security of life and property there. He said, Bangladesh government could create confidence among the Rohingya refugees by associating United Nations High Commissioner for refugees and the Myanmar government in the repatriation process of Rohingya Muslims.

Advocate Shafiq Ahmad said

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Nirmul body planning fresh programmes

By Staff Correspondent

The Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Samannaya Committee is planning fresh programmes to inspire larger numbers of people with the spirit of the Liberation War to counter the Jamaat-Shibir-Freedom Party spread 'falsehood' against pro-liberation forces.

The Committee chief Jahanara Imam announced this while concluding a discussion on "Jamaat-Shibir's planned killing '92" at Col. Taher auditorium at the JSD (Inu) office in Dhaka yesterday evening.

The three-hour discussion was organised by the Samannaya Committee to explore opinions and suggestions from noted personalities representing different communities.

Jahanara Imam emphasised the forging of a solid unity of the pro-liberation people to resist the Jamaat-Freedom Party reactionary forces while preferring to avoid direct confrontation with them.

"We must mobilise freedom-loving people against the in-

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বৃক্ষরোপণ মানে দুর্দিনের সঞ্চয়, বেশী করে গাছ লাগান এবং ভবিষ্যতে আর্থিক সংকটের দুশ্চিন্তা থেকে মুক্ত থাকুন। নিকটবর্তী নারসারী থেকে আজই চারাগাছ সংগ্রহ করে তা রোপণ ও সংরক্ষণ করুন।

বন অধিদপ্তর

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