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Artillery shells rain on Sarajevo Parliament, presidency, UN barracks on fire

SARAJEVO, Aug 21: Two persons were killed and 13 others wounded today when several artillery shells fell on a crowded market in central Sarajevo. Radio Sarajevo reported, quoting a local doctor, reports AFP. "Shells fell between 9 am and 9:30 am (07 hoo and 07h30 GMT) as the market was packed with people. Jadranka Brko, a wounded survivor whose husband was killed by the bombardment, was quoted as saying, UN soldiers, meanwhile, prepared to evacuate the body of a slain Ukrainian member of their force Friday after some of the worst fighting in the Bosnian capital overnight. Radio Sarajevo said Serbs besieging Sarajevo had been "using all arms at their disposal" to shell the city, and that fighting was continuing Friday in the Vogosca suburb. AP adds: Sarajevo residents ventured onto the streets Friday in search of bread and water after one of the heaviest bombardments in weeks. The Marshall Tito barracks, where Ukrainian peacekeepers for the United Nations are staying, was bombed for 40 minutes Thursday night. At least one shell hit the barracks and set it ablaze and eight UN vehicles burned. UN spokesman Yusuf Khalef said. "This is a very serious attack," Khalef said. He said he thought that the barracks were deliberately targeted. There was a new sniper at Sarajevo. See Page 12 Col 7



The former Bosnian parliament building burns after a Serbian mortar attack on Sarajevo Thursday. The airport was reopened for humanitarian aid flights as fighting between Serb and Muslim-Croats continued. — AFP photo

1600 Muslims forced to walk for 16 hours

LONDON, Aug 21: Some 1,600 Bosnian Muslim refugees, including invalids, old people and children, were forced to walk overnight through the mountains of central Bosnia, according to a first-hand account today by a Guardian correspondent Friday, reports AFP. Vulliamy, who joined the convoy at Lamovita, near the notorious Omarska detention camp, spoke of walking over human remains on perilous mountain roads, where refugees were ambushed by the same Serbian irregulars who forced them on to the road. The refugees, forced to leave their homes at Sanski Most, walked for nearly 16 hours, to a no-man's land northwest of Sarajevo. They were forced at gunpoint to sign papers handing their homes over to Serbian police, the reporter said. Their destination was a Muslim area around Travnik and Zenica, where they became targets for artillery fire before joining about 26,000 other homeless Muslims in a refugee centre. This was just one of scores of such groups being channelled by Serbian authorities into the battlefields of central Bosnia, Vulliamy said. By Thursday night the number of Muslims left in Sanski Most had been reduced from 2,600 on Tuesday to just 1,000, he added.

Dixit in city Shukla comes Tuesday for water talks

Indian Water Resources and Irrigation Minister VC Shukla will arrive here on August 25 for ministerial-level talks with Bangladesh on the issues concerning the waters of the common rivers, Indian Foreign Secretary JN Dixit said on his arrival last evening. Dixit, who is returning the visit of the Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman to India in May last, will have wide-ranging talks on bilateral and other issues during his two-day stay in Dhaka. "Bangladesh and India have very good relations", he told newsmen at Zia International Airport but added that by saying so he was not washing off the difficulties in the bilateral ties. "Our ties are based on realism and not abstractions", the Indian Foreign Secretary said, adding "this has made the relationship really practical and friendly." Basically, it is a bilateral visit responding to the one made by the Bangladesh Foreign Secretary and the two sides would discuss all the issues of common interest, he said. Dixit is accompanied by Joint Secretary in the External Affairs Ministry Rajiv Bhatia and Joint Secretary in the Home Ministry VS Ailawadi. Foreign Secretary Reaz See Page 12 Col 8

Rohingya refugees Today's talks to fix repatriation date

The authorities at Cox's Bazar have tightened security for today's (Saturday) official level talks with Myanmar (Burma) to discuss repatriation of 265,000 Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh, sources said on Friday. The sources reached by telephone at Cox's Bazar said the two sides would try to set a new date for the stalled repatriation. The 15-member Myanmar delegation at the meeting, the eighth since the April 28 repatriation pact, will be headed by Maung Aung, director general of Immigration. The Bangladesh side comprises 18 officials led by Omar Faruq, Chittagong divisional commissioner. The last official level repatriation talks were held at Myanmar's frontier town of Maungdwe on July 23. The Myanmar officials will cross the border river Naaf by speed boat to reach Bangladesh's frontier town of Teknaf on Saturday morning. Then they are expected to be flown by helicopters to Cox's Bazar. The talks are likely to begin at 10 am at the new circuit house at Cox's Bazar and continue until lunch. A press briefing has been scheduled for around 4 pm. The Myanmar team is scheduled to stay overnight at Cox's Bazar before leaving for home on Sunday morning. The sources said tight security measures would be taken for the Myanmar delegation as the meeting is being held in the background of fresh tension among the refugees. On last Tuesday anti-repatriation militant Rohingyas attacked Bangladesh officials at Haldia-palong camp in Ukhiya forcing police to open fire that killed three refugees. Some unofficial sources said the militants, though handful, were still active against the planned repatriation. An official source said preparations for the meeting were almost complete. The Bangladesh officials will sit among themselves on Friday night to finalise their agenda for the crucial meeting. "We are expecting a positive outcome from this meeting. But we are still discussing our side of the agenda," said the official, speaking on condition he can not be named. The Bangladesh side feels See Page 12 Col 1

Attempt on Menon Detectives off to Jessore

By Staff Correspondent A special team of the Detective Branch (DB) of police left Dhaka for Jessore early Friday for investigation into the assassination attempt on Workers' Party (WP) leader Rashed Khan Menon, according to police sources. The team was led by an assistant commissioner of police, the investigating officer of the case. Unidentified assailants shot and critically wounded Rashed Khan Menon near his party office at Topkhana Road in the city at around 8:35 pm Monday. Meanwhile, former MP of Jatiya Party, Monirul Islam Monir, and his younger brother, Zahurul Islam Rumi, the general secretary of Shantinagar Club, are being interrogated at the Detective Branch office at Minto Road. A police official, when contacted, declined to give details to facilitate the investigation. The two brothers were arrested on Wednesday in connection with the attempt on the life of the WP leader and taken on a two-day police remand. No solid food yet for Menon By Staff Correspondent The condition of Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon, MP, has improved further, according to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) and family sources yesterday. He remained under observation at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). "His condition is better than before," said the on-duty medical officer (DMO) at the ICU late last night. According to family sources, Menon's condition is improving and he talked to family members during the day. However, he is still being given intravenous fluid. No solid food has yet been given, they added. Menon, who is also the convener of the Five-Party Alliance, was shot by unidentified gunmen in front of his party office at Topkhana Road on August 17. Plea for fresh probe into Milon murder By Staff Correspondent Speakers at a discussion meeting organised by the Shaheed Doctor Milon Sangsad have called for a fresh trial after a fresh investigation into the Milon murder case. Tofael Ahmed MP, the late Milon's mother Selina Khatun, lawyer Shamsul Huq Chowdhury, Kazi Aref Ahmed, Dhaka Medical College Principal Dr Zahurul Mawla Chowdhury were, among others, who spoke at the meeting chaired by Dr M A Majed, the president of the organisation. Paying tribute to Milon, whose death on November 27 gave momentum to a nine-year-old struggle against autocracy toppling it a week later, Tofael made an appeal to all to pressurise the government into initiating a fresh probe. Mother Selina Akhter regretted the fact that Milon's murderers were yet to be identified. See Page 12 Col 7



Awami League Chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina addressing a public meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday. —Star photo

NEWS BRIEFS

Hasina leaves for Tungipara today By Staff Correspondent Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina leaves Dhaka for her village home at Tungipara in Gopalganj district today (Saturday). During her week-long stay, Hasina will hold meeting and mass contacts with the people of Gopalganj, Tungipara and Kotalipara. On arrival at Tungipara she will visit the Mazar of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and offer feteiha there. Hasina is scheduled to return to Dhaka on August 29. BNP founding day Sept 1 The founding anniversary of BNP will be observed all over the country on September 1. The Secretary General of the party yesterday issued directive each party unit to celebrate the occasion in a befitting manner. The programmes of the day include hosting the party flag atop party offices, milad mahfil, discussion and rally, reports BSS. 504 more arrested, arms recovered Police raid in different parts of the country resulted in the arrest of 504 persons during the last 24 hours ending Friday afternoon for their involvement in criminal activities, according to an official handout. Police also recovered 16 illegal firearms and 28 rounds of ammunition, reports BSS.

Malaysia FM due tomorrow Joint Commission with Kuala Lumpur soon

Star Report Under this agreement, the Joint Commission led by the Foreign Ministers of the two countries will be set up," said a source in the Bangladesh Foreign Office. The Joint Commission will cover bilateral cooperation in the fields of industry, trade, manpower, agriculture, health and education. Soon after setting up the Commission, working groups on different sectors will meet in Dhaka and start discussions on matters of common interest. The ministerial level Commission will be the first of this kind between the two countries. Previously, Dhaka and Kuala Lumpur had a Joint Economic Committee led by secretaries. Diplomatic observers in Dhaka believe that the Joint Commission will boost overall relations between the two countries. Dhaka and KL main- See Page 12 Col 8

ADB to provide SDR 2.45 cr for Open Varsity

Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide SDR 24,588,000 for the establishment of Bangladesh Open University, reports UNB. A loan agreement to this effect was signed in Manila between the government of Bangladesh and the ADB on Thursday, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday. Bangladesh Ambassador to the Philippines Mohammad Abu Hena and ADB Vice President Gunther G Schulz initialled the agreement on behalf of their respective sides. The project envisages the establishment of Bangladesh Open University for increasing access to the basic, secondary and post-secondary education and vocational training, with particular focus on rural areas. The Open University will also provide a mechanism for meeting the emerging higher education and training needs in selected areas and strengthen informal and non-formal education programmes See Page 12 Col 2

Send lists of Jamaat-Shibir Workers, asks Nirmul body

By Staff Correspondent Leaders of the Committee for Resistance to Killers and Collaborators of 1971 Friday called upon the pro-liberation forces and the Freedom Fighters to take all-out preparations for a war-time situation. Speaking at a press conference in the capital, the leaders requested people to identify the strongholds of Jamaat-e-Islami, its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir and Freedom Party. They also urged the people to send lists with names and addresses of these organisations to the committee office by September 14. Committee leaders Col. (ret'd) Kazi Nuruzzaman, Shahriar Kabir, Naim Jahangir and Sadek Ahmed Khan spoke at the press conference held at the Topkhana Road office. The leaders addressed the Jamaat and Freedom Party See Page 12 Col 6

PM's JS speech has incited Menon-assailants: Hasina

By Staff Correspondent Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina has said the government is trying to politically cash in on the two incidents — the killing of Ratan Sen in Khulna and the assassination attempt on Rashed Khan Menon. "The government is not making proper investigations to apprehend the killers and assailants and is harassing its political opponents", the leader of the Opposition in Parliament told a large public meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital yesterday afternoon. "The Prime Minister's provocative speech in the Jatiya Sangsad instigated the miscreants to take attempt on Menon," the AL leader said adding "her (the MP's) speech increased acts of terrorism by the ruling party as well as the anti-liberation Jamaat-Shibir-Freedom Party-Jubo Command clique. The opposition leader attributed the main reason for the deterioration of the law and order situation to "BNP's policy of protecting the seat of power through spreading violence." She reiterated her accusations that the ruling party was politicising the administration and maintaining control over the campuses, industrial units, bus terminals, and other vital areas by letting loose violence. The present government, she further alleged, having no confidence of the people, was following the path of the autocrats to cling to power. "The situation would have been different had Awami League been in power", the opposition leader said adding that her party believed in people's power. The metropolitan branch of AL organised the meeting in connection with the observance of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's 17th death anniversary on August 15. Addressing the meeting as chief guest, Hasina warned Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of See Page 12 Col 6

Housewife robbed of bangles, gold chain in city

By Staff Correspondent Muggers snatched away gold bangles and a chain from a housewife at dagger-point at Bailey Road in the city Monday evening. Rehana Begum, the victim, said when she and her elder sister Nehar Begum reached near Sidheshwari Girls' College at Bailey road by a rickshaw at around 7 pm, three muggers stopped them and snatched away Rehana's bangles and a chain weighing six tolas at dagger-point and immediately fled away by an auto-rickshaw. Rehana also said that she was on the way home at Bailey Road from Kawran Bazar area by a rickshaw last evening. Police rushed to the spot immediately after the incident but failed to nab the muggers. Police picked up the rickshaw puller, Siraj, from the spot to Ramna police custody for interrogation, said police.

UN call for truce in Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD, Aug 21: The United Nations today urged the Afghanistan government and Mujahedeen forces to cease fire in Kabul to permit the evacuation of diplomats and their families by road and by air, reports AFP. A detailed proposal was handed to the government in Kabul and to the representative of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami faction here, a UN statement said. The diplomatic community in Kabul and the United Nations expect that the concerned parties will honour their earlier assurances to allow a safe evacuation of foreign diplomats from Kabul, said the community. Earlier, Hekmatyar, whose forces' rockets have been rain- ing on Kabul, agreed to reopen the city's airport for one hour to airlift foreigners. The airport has been closed since fighting erupted between the government and Hekmatyar's forces earlier last week, killing more than 1,000 people. Most of the UN personnel stationed in Kabul have left the Afghan capital, where fighting had stopped Friday. There are some 200 diplomats in Kabul. Reuter adds: Hekmatyar supports a proposal for a meeting of the coalition Afghan leadership council to discuss ending two weeks of faction fighting in Kabul, his message of Freedom Radio said. Hekmatyar, leader of the Hezb-i-Islami Party pounding Kabul with rocket and artillery fire, was responding to a letter from Younis Khalis, leader of a Hezb splinter faction, according to a transcript of the broadcast received today. AFP from Kabul adds: The Afghan government's military offensive against opposition Mujahedeen forces ground to a halt today, although the rebels continued to pound them with artillery and rockets. A government spokesman said that no order from Defence Minister Ahmed Shah Masood had been given for the government troops to pursue their face-to-face engagement with Pashtun extremist Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami Mujahedeen. Frontline government Mujahedeen are puzzled about the postponement of the operation in its third day. One Jamiat-i-Islami commander cited the loss of innocent civilian lives in the contested outskirts of Kabul as the reason for the offensive's halt. But informed sources hinted that the government was calling up reinforcements from the coalition forces of northern Afghanistan, led by General Abdul Rashid Dostam, the former 53rd Division militia commander whose defection to the Mujahedeen in March 1992 precipitated the collapse of the former Najibullah regime in Kabul. Thousands of these former government militiamen are already in Kabul. [Related Story on Page 5]

Bush sees Saddam as a perfect target: Baker

WASHINGTON, Aug 21: Whatever else Saddam Hussein may be — Secretary of State James Baker says he is a "ruthless madman" — President Bush sees him as a perfect target in an election year, reports AP. The Iraqi leader is accused of persecuting Kurds in the north, Shi'ites in the south and defying UN arms inspectors. His invasion of Kuwait two years ago alarmed Arab governments. His Scud missile attacks on Israel reinforced fears there. When Bush went to war against Saddam there was little dissent. In practical terms, Americans wanted to be sure Gulf oil was protected. But with claims that Saddam was another Hitler, White House publicists tugged on Americans' emotions as well. Bush's standing soared in the polls. Bush is betting those same emotions will prevail as he carefully maneuvers to box Saddam in. If there is a conflict over Saddam's attacks on Shi'ite villages in the marshlands of southern Iraq, the onus will be on the Iraqi leader. Next week, probably on Tuesday, the United States, Britain, France and possibly Russia will notify Iraq that if it flies any more planes below the 32nd parallel, they will be shot down. [Related Story on Page 5]