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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**Hasina returns to city today**

Sheikh Hasina returns to the capital today (Saturday) after a week-long organisational tour to Gopalganj, Faridpur and Rajbari. During the tour, Hasina addressed a number of public meetings and rallies of party workers in the three districts. Including her Tungipara-Kotalipara constituency in Gopalganj, reports UNB.

**473 more arrested, arms recovered**

Police in their raids carried out across the country during the last 24 hours ending Friday afternoon arrested 473 and sent them to courts. During the raids police recovered 31 unauthorised firearms, 69 rounds of bullet, 11 cocktails, 11 kiris and one ram dao, a police press release said, reports BSS.

**51-member city puja body**

A 51-member executive committee of Mahanagar Sarbanajin Puja Committee was elected at its biennial conference held at the Dhakeshwari Temple in city (Friday). Anil Nath, Dijnendra Nath Saha and Dipen Chatterjee were elected President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively, says a press release, reports UNB.

**Ganatantri Party meeting today**

A public meeting of the Ganatantri Party will be held at Gulistan Square today (Saturday) at 3 pm. Party leaders Suranjit Sengupta MP, Saiful Islam, Afzal Hossain and Azizul Islam Khan will address the meeting, a party press release said, reports UNB.

## Myanmar's re-entry opposed Y'slavia may face expulsion move at NAM summit

JAKARTA, Aug 28: Non-Aligned nations are dedicating their 10th summit, to be held from Sept 1-6, to relaunching their movement but the war in Yugoslavia threatens to dominate proceedings, reports AFP.

The war within one of the movement's founder nations Yugoslavia, where fighting is raging between Croat Catholics, Bosnian Muslims and orthodox Serbs, is expected to permeate most discussions.

In Jakarta the spillover from the conflict will be chiefly diplomatic and procedural. Muslim countries such as Iran, Egypt and Malaysia, acting in solidarity with their Muslim brethren in Bosnia-Herzegovina, wish to expel Yugoslavia from the Non-Aligned

Movement. Arab diplomatic sources said.

The meeting of senior officials followed by a gathering of Foreign Ministers Saturday and Sunday will give the first sings of which direction the summit will take. The outcome of the London conference on Yugoslavia, with its calls for a return of Bosnia land, will also be an influencing factor.

During their ministerial meeting on the Indonesian island of Bali in May, the 106 Non-Aligned countries conceded that after the collapse of the Soviet block it had become urgent to give more credibility to their OK movement and get their message across efficiently.

They formed an agenda for

the Jakarta summit which included a quest for a new world order that was "more equitable," which would entail realigning the North-South (rich/developing countries) economic and political relationship, increasing cooperation between developing countries, and strengthening the movement's structures.

Another report says, Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao is to hold talks on the disputed region of Kashmir with his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif here next week, sources from both countries said today.

A Pakistani official said that a meeting between the two leaders had been scheduled for Thursday on Kashmir, over which the two countries have fought two wars.

The two leaders are due to arrive here over the weekend for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit from September 1-6.

But diplomats said the meeting was unlikely to stop the two sides from airing their positions at NAM plenary sessions before the bilateral talks, a move that is expected to fuel more controversy.

PTI adds: India, Iraq, Cuba and Ghana today opposed the application of Myanmar seeking re-entry into the Non-Aligned Movement as a full member after a gap of 13 years, reports PTI.

Indications are that the official-level preparatory meeting would keep the issue pending to be dealt by the

See Page 12 Col 8

## US drops leaflets warning Iraqi soldiers

WASHINGTON, Aug 28: US aircraft patrolling southern Iraq have dropped leaflets warning Iraqi soldiers not to use radar in the area or "you'll be taken out," reports AP.

US and British pilots flew 90 sorties over southern Iraq on the first day of the new policy to bar Iraqi flights south of the 32nd parallel. Defence Department spokesman Bob Hall said.

No Iraqi aircraft were detected south of the 32nd parallel, Hall said.

The sorties included military patrols and reconnaissance flights and aircraft dropped two types of leaflets printed in Arabic.

One leaflet was addressed to Iraqi pilots and warned them of the allied policy that was imposed at 1415 GMT Thursday and bars all Iraqi aircraft — both civilian and mili-

tary — from flying south of the 32 parallel, he said.

The second leaflet warned radar operators "if you turn on the radar you'll be taken out," Hall said.

Hall confirmed that the military has seen Iraqi troop movements in the southern part of Iraq, but he said he could not characterize them as a withdrawal.

Reuters from Moscow adds: Presidents George Bush and Boris Yeltsin have discussed the possibility of Russia mediating in the Iraq crisis, Itar-Tass news agency said today.

They spoke by telephone on Thursday.

"Bush informed the Russian President about events concerning Iraq. On this subject the idea of a possible peace-making role for Russia in the region was discussed," Tass said. Related Story on Page 6

## Menon may be flown to London today

By Staff Correspondent

Rashed Khan Menon, MP, is scheduled to be flown to London for better treatment tonight, Workers Party sources said last night.

Menon's going to London by tonight's scheduled Bangladesh Biman flight, however, will be stalled if his condition deteriorates, they said.

The sources said that the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) medical board had already given clearance for the journey.

Menon was shot and wounded on August 17 outside his party office at Topkhana Road and was undergoing treatment at CMH.

BSS adds: The condition of Menon marked significant improvement yesterday, the CMH sources said last night.

The liver and kidney functions of Menon showed improvement. See Page 12 Col 1

## PM giving 'lip service' to democracy, says Hasina

RAJBARI, Aug 28: Sheikh Hasina today (Friday) blasted the government alleging that the country's economy is on the verge of collapse because of its corruption, policy of politicisation and lack of planning, reports UNB.

"People have become frustrated because of the ruling party's mismanagement and ineptitude in resolving the basic problems," she said adding that the life of common man was battered by serious lawlessness and price-hike of essentials.

The Awami League president and leader of the Opposition in parliament was addressing a rally of party workers at Rajbari Railway Hall this afternoon.

Hasina accused the ruling BNP of having bluffed the people while assuming power under a "secret entente" with

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Dhaka College students blocked part of Mirpur Road yesterday.

—Star photo

## Dhaka College students block Mirpur Road

By Staff Correspondent

Students of Dhaka College kept part of Mirpur Road closed to traffic for the third day yesterday.

They are protesting the killing of a fellow student and demanding relocation of Bakushah Market elsewhere.

Some unruly students Friday evening severely beat two persons identified as Bellal Hossain and Babul near the

college.

Another group of students rushed to the Elephant Road area and forced to shut down the shops there at around 8 pm.

No other untoward incident had taken place in the area yesterday.

Farhad Hossain, a second year science student of Dhaka College was killed reportedly by a group of shop-keepers at Bakushah Market at Nilkhet Tuesday immediately after a clash between students and shop-keepers.

Dhanmondi police last night arrested Hajj Nuruzzaman, Secretary of Bakushah Market in connection with the killing of Farhad.

Earlier police also arrested another five persons from the market area in this connection and they were being interrogated in the Dhanmondi Police

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## 3-pt demands to Home Minister

The leaders of Dhaka College Students Union and other student bodies of the college unit had a meeting with Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury at his residence in Dhaka last night, reports BSS.

The student leaders urged the government to meet their

See Page 12 Col 5

## Traveller's cheque shortage at a time of foreign currency glut

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi

Existing regulations are activating a shortage in the supply of traveller's cheques (TCs) in commercial banks, whereas there is a glut in cash foreign currency in their vaults.

Banking sources attribute this situation to the "nature of transaction" in cash and TCs as well as to the customers' behavioural pattern in Bangladesh.

According to rules, commercial banks are authorised to sell foreign currency worth 1800 US dollars a year to each traveller, but they can take a maximum 1200 dollars at a time — only 200 dollars in cash and the rest in TCs.

However, for the SAARC countries, a traveller can take 400 US dollars a year — 200 dollars in cash. In other words, any person is authorised to take 200 US dollars in cash for travelling to any country.

Due to the quota as well as the specific nature of TCs, the TC consumption is much higher than that of cash.

As for the nature of consumption, the sources point out, TCs are of one-time use, but the currency notes can be used until they are defaced or

damaged.

As a result, the commercial banks have to frequently import TCs from overseas points and export cash foreign currency, a costly affair at both ends.

The export of cash foreign currency to overseas points involves Bangladesh Bank permission, insurance cover, security package and freight charges that cause a high cost to the commercial banks.

Explaining the tendency among customers, a senior banker said: "People buy it (TCs) here in Dhaka and encash it on the second day in Calcutta, Singapore or Bangkok."

"Since there is virtually no gap between the purchase and the encashment, the TC dealers are no longer that much interested in the business in this region."

"The bankers get very little scope to roll the money, virtually no scope, and hence the whole process yields insignificant profit," the banker said.

According to knowledgeable circles, the situation can be handled by reversing the cash portion within the travel

quota, or letting the commercial banks act as per their reserves, without affecting the imposed limit.

This will certainly benefit the banks as well as the clients," says a banker and adds to explain, "If there is a surplus in cash, the banks shall give the customer the cash, and if available, TC."

As for the customers, TC encashment is time-consuming and involves extra charges as commission to the encashing bank. The banks are also selective about accepting TCs.

Strict regulations on issuing cash foreign exchange, on the other hand, are encouraging secondary market operations, for the very simple reason that the clients prefer cash to TCs.

In Bangladesh, the American Express and the BCCI TCs used to dominate the market. After the collapse of the BCCI, the Amex also squeezed the supply. Citicorp and Barclays "VISA" are also in the market, but handled by a few banks in the country. The Bank of Oman traveller's cheque has also come into the market, but did not get along well in the situation.

## Shopowners form zonal bodies to resist 'terrorists'

By Staff Correspondent

Shopowners of Dhaka Friday decided to divide the markets and other shopping places of the capital into 15 zones and formed committees to resist the extortionists, hoodlums and terrorists.

Leaders of the Federation of Dhaka Metropolitan Shopowners' Associations at a meeting formed the zonal committees of the city markets and a 11-member body to coordinate the resistance programme.

The 15 zones are: Mouchak-Malibagh Zone, Kakrail-Paltan Zone, New Elephant Road Zone, New Market Zone, Farm Gate-Bangla Motor Zone, Gulshan Zone, Uttara Zone, Gulistan-Fulbaria Zone, Stadium-Baitul Mukarram Zone, Sadarghat-Islampur Zone, Chawkbazar-Maulvi Bazar Zone, Nawabpur Zone, Sayedabad-Jatrabari Zone, Mirpur Zone and Mohammadpur Zone.

A representative of the federation will head each zone and carry out the resistance against the extortionists and masons with the help of police and people.

Meanwhile, leaders of the Federation of Bangladesh Shopowners Associations in a statement Friday condemned the death of the Dhaka College

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## 82 killed in Russian plane crash

MOSCOW, Aug 28: An Aeroflot jetliner on a flight from a resort city in the Caucasus crashed while trying to land in heavy fog in the Russian city of Ivanovo, killing all 82 people aboard, aviation authorities said Friday, reports AP.

The plane crashed into a field three kilometres (two miles) short of the runway Thursday night, scattering debris, baggage and bodies over a wide area, witnesses said.

The cause of the Tu-134's crash late Thursday night was being investigated, said Yevgeny Guminsky, air traffic controller at Ivanovo airport, 200 kilometres (120 miles) northeast of Moscow.

"The weather conditions were not good. There was fog and low clouds," Guminsky told The Associated Press by telephone.

The Interfax news agency quoted unidentified government aviation officials as saying the plane, flown by a pilot with 31 years of experience, started its descent too early.

An air traffic controller ordered the plane to abort the landing and make a second attempt, but got no response from the cockpit, Interfax said. Seconds later, the aircraft

slammed into the ground, it said.

The plane was carrying 75 passengers and seven crew members, said Yevgeny Lobachov, head of aviation safety in the Russian Transportation Ministry in Moscow.

The flight originated in Mineralnye Vody, in the Caucasus Mountains in southern Russia, and made a stopover in the Ukrainian city of Donetsk.

It crashed about three kilometres (two miles) from the airport outside Ivanovo, a textile manufacturing city of about 500,000 people.

"The whole field is covered with pieces of luggage, hand bags and bodies," said ITAR-Tass photographer Gennady Popov. He said some of the bodies were so mangled authorities doubted they could be identified.

Pensioner Tamara Lanina, who lives near the airport, told ITAR-Tass she rushed to the window after hearing "a terrible roar."

"I saw a blue glow over our houses. Suddenly there was a strong smell of kerosene," she said.

Debris damaged a nearby apartment building, injuring one woman inside, Lanina said.

## Rockets set plane of fleeing Russians ablaze in Kabul

KABUL, Aug 28: Rebels on Friday ignored a temporary ceasefire and fired a salvo of rockets into Kabul's airport, setting ablaze a plane sent to evacuate Russian diplomats and their families from the besieged capital, reports AP.

Four Russian commandos aboard the plane were injured escaping from the burning craft.

Two giant Ilyushin-76 military transport planes escaped the bombardment and ferried 120 Russian Embassy staffers, their wives and children safely out of Kabul with little more than the possessions they

could carry with them.

But "before leaving the danger zone above Kabul airport, one aircraft made a daring return to the rocket-riddled tarmac to collect the injured commandos, wrapped in bloodied bandages.

The planes then circled around the mountains that ring the city, spewing dozens of flares designed to deflect heat-seeking missiles fired on the aircraft.

The fleeing diplomats came under fire only hours after the start of a truce between dissident rebels led by firebrand fundamentalist Gulbuddin

Hekmatyar and the Islami government.

Hekmatyar has sworn to destroy the capital unless the government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani expels a militia that once backed the hated communist regime but later proved crucial in toppling it in April.

Steady rocketing has rained chaos and destruction on the city, forcing one-third of its 1.5 million residents to flee, and causing severe shortages of food, fuel and medicine.

The government has so far refused to comment on the rocket attack, but a spokesman

for Hekmatyar in Pakistan denied involvement in the latest onslaught.

"We had nothing to do with the attack on the airport. Those rockets were not fired by our Mujahideen (rebels)," said Mengal Hussein, spokesman for Hekmatyar's fundamentalist Hezb-i-Islami group in Pakistan.

However, witnesses saw the rockets come from the southern edge of the Afghan capital, where Hezb-i-Islami troops are entrenched.

About 50 Russians, including ambassador Yevgeny Ostravenko and other senior

embassy personnel, were forced to stay behind when a rocket slammed into a fuel storage depot and ignited the wing of a third plane as dozens of passengers, most of them diplomats' wives, were preparing to board.

Visibly shaken, Ostravenko tried to soothe his panicky staff waiting in a dark bunker. Meanwhile, Russia sought Pakistan's help. Friday to rescue an estimated 50 diplomats stranded in Kabul, a senior government official in Islamabad said.

Russia's ambassador to Pakistan, Victor Yakunin ap-

pealed for help during an hour-long meeting with Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Mohammad Khan.

Yakunin asked Pakistan to plead with Afghanistan's new Islamic government and dissident rebel chief, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, to allow the safe evacuation of the remaining diplomats. Shaharyar said in an interview.

"The Russians have asked that Pakistan communicate with both the Afghan government and (Hekmatyar's) Hezb-i-Islami to allow their planes to land and take off," said Shaharyar.

## College closed sine die

## Police raid BMC hostels: Huge arms recovered

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 28: The Academic Council of Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College at a meeting today closed the college sine die following a police raid on three hostels and the interned doctors' hostel of the college.

According to the authorities, the college has been declared closed as a precautionary measure to prevent violence that could erupt following the police drive.

A large contingent of police led by Assistant Superintendent of Police of the district Naimuddin Ahmed in a seven hour long raid recovered one revolver, one cut-rifle, 10 pipeguns, 25 rounds of bullet of both revolver and rifle, 38 cocktails, 14 handbombs, 19 chocolate bombs, three rama-daos, one Chinese axe and a number of other weapons and ammunition from the hostels.

Tension mounted up on the college campus following the sudden raid.

The authorities directed all the students excepting the examinees to vacate their hostels by 5 pm today.

## Dhaka, Tbilis set up ties

Bangladesh and Georgia established diplomatic relations and signed a protocol to this effect in the Georgian capital Tbilis on Thursday, reports UNB.

The Georgian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Alexander Chikvaidze and Bangladesh Ambassador to Russia Mustafizur Rahman signed the protocol on behalf of their respective governments.

According to a message received here, the Chairman of the State Council of Georgia Edward Shevardnadze in his meeting with the Ambassador of Bangladesh expressed satisfaction at the establishment of diplomatic relation.