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NEWS BRIEFS

500 grams heroin seized in Jessore
A special squad of the Department of Narcotics, Khulna sub-zone today seized 500 grams of heroin from a mini-bus passenger at Mahakal, Nopara in Jessore district. Deputy Director of Narcotics Khabir Uddin Ahmed told BSS over telephone last night. He said acting on secret information the special squad remained vigilant for the last three days and finally recovered the heroin from the possession of one Harunur Rashid at Mahakal Friday evening. Six other persons along with Harunur Rashid were arrested in this connection.

Power disruption
by Staff Correspondent
Vast area in the eastern part of the city including Motijheel and Gopibagh remained without power supply for about eight hours since 4am yesterday. When contacted, Electric Supply Authorities said that the power disruption was due to burning of a breaker at the 33 KV substation at Bangshabhan.

Indian sarees seized
CHITTAGONG, Oct 2: Paharali police seized contraband Indian saree, guernsey and other cloths worth about Taka 50,000 (Fifty lakh) from a truck near Alankar Cinema hall at Paharali yesterday, police said today. Acting on a secret information police ordered a Chittagong-bound loaded truck to stop when it reached near Glaxo laboratory on Dhaka-Chittagong highway, reports BSS.

Dhaka, Delhi defer JEC meet to January

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi
The Bangladesh-India Joint Economic Commission (JEC) meeting, planned for the second week of this month in Dhaka, has been deferred to next January for "mutual convenience," Foreign Ministry officials said.
The JEC, co-chaired by Foreign Ministers, last met in New Delhi in 1990. The officials said that both Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman and Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Raghunandan Lal Bhatia would not be available for the meet until early next year. The two ministers will, however, have an opportunity for a meeting late this month when Rahman goes to Indian capital carrying formal invitation for Prime Minister Narasimha Rao for the SAARC summit. The new irritant in the bilateral relations, the so-called Operation Push Back, may outshine all other issues during the meeting. Throughout this month, the officials said, the Foreign Minister would be busy both at home and abroad. Rahman, who returned home yesterday after a three-week trip to New York where he addressed the 47th UNGA session and attended an OIC ministerial meeting, would be concerned with Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa's October 4-6 visit. Premadasa is coming in his capacity as the chairman of the SAARC. The Foreign Minister will be out of the country again accompanying the Prime Minister who goes to Italy on October 14 to speak at a FAO conference. On return, Rahman will travel to six SAARC capitals to invite formally the heads of state and government to the December 12-14 summit. Bhatia is learnt to have similar preoccupations at home and abroad. Meanwhile, the two countries are yet to set a date for the first meeting of the Joint Committee of Experts (JCE) on water sharing that was supposed to be held around the middle of September. Official sources in Dhaka cited the retirement of Indian Irrigation Secretary Dr Chitale as one of the reasons behind the delay. Irrigation Secretaries co-chair the JCE, formed late August after a two-day meeting of ministers in Dhaka. An official source said that the meeting might be held sometime this month.



POOR PEOPLE'S BURDEN: Rain or shine, hard work is the lot of the two among many in the Dhaka streets. —Star photo

Premadasa arrives tomorrow

Star Report
An agreement to start Dhaka-Colombo commercial flights by the national airlines will be a prominent bilateral point at the formal talks between Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and President Ranasinghe Premadasa. The Sri Lankan President arrives tomorrow (Sunday) in his capacity as the chairman of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), after touring four other SAARC capitals. These trips virtually mark the end of his tenure as SAARC chief. Dhaka formally takes over at the December 12-14 summit. The two leaders had discussed the issue (the air accord) at their meeting in Colombo last November. The principle is the connecting of SAARC capitals, said an official. "Accordingly, the civil aviation See Page 12 Col 8"

Dhaka calls for reactivating N-S dialogue

UNITED NATIONS (New York), Oct 2: Bangladesh has called for reactivating the North-South dialogue and strengthening the South-South cooperation to create a conducive atmosphere for global economic development, reports BSS. Addressing the annual ministerial meeting of the Group of 77 here yesterday Ambassador Humayun Kabir, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN said the recent political changes appeared to have had no impact on the economies of the countries of the South. He urged the developed countries to realise that durable peace could not be achieved leaving the majority of the world population underdeveloped and added that widespread poverty, hunger, malnutrition and illiteracy in the developing countries were powerful destabilising factors. The Bangladesh Permanent Representative called for increased resource flow to developing countries, enhanced development assistance to help nascent democracies with free market economy to pursue their development goals and to ensure that peace divided became really tangible instead of being used as mere jargon. He also called for increased market access for developing countries for their products to the industrialised countries.

Nurses begin indefinite strike today

By Staff Correspondent
Leaders of nurses' associations have called for an indefinite strike all over the country from today (Saturday) to meet their 14-point charter of demands. The demands include regularisation of 750 adhoc nurses, raise of allowances of student nurses, new pay structure and increase in member of posts. Beginning the movement on September 14 in support of their demands all staff and student nurses in the country's government hospitals went on work stoppage programmes from September 19. Later the nurses went on a 72-hour strike that ended October 1 when they resumed their work at 8 am. As all talks with the government ended in a fiasco, the staff and student nurses in the country decided to go on an indefinite strike from 8 am today (Saturday). Meanwhile, an official of the Health Ministry told The Daily Star that the government was ready to look into the demands and to meet the demands in possible cases if the nurses withdrew their programmes. "If the nurses are ready to withdraw their strike-programme, Health Ministry officials will sit for a fresh talk with the nurses anytime," he added. See Page 12 Col 2

Int'l community keen to see safe return of refugees: FM

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman returned home yesterday after attending the current 47th session of the United Nations General Assembly and said he found broad international eagerness for an early and voluntary return of the " Rohingya " refugees to Myanmar, reports BSS. "The world community is concerned over the presence of a big number of the refugees in Bangladesh and is keen to see that the refugees go back to their country at the earliest," he told newsmen on return. The Foreign Minister said he drew the attention of the international forum to the magnitude of the refugee problem in his speech at the UN General Assembly as well as during discussions with Imperialism See Page 12 Col 8

Security Printing Press Administrative changes in the offing

By Sharier Khan and Masud Hasan Khan
Bangladesh Bank authorities have suggested a complete overhauling of the administration of the Bangladesh Security Printing Press (BSPP) for smooth operation of the state-owned company. A member of the Board of Directors of BSPP told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity that a "one-line" bill would be introduced at the coming session of the Jatiya Sangsad seeking bar on the trade union activities in the Security Printing Press company. A cabinet meeting on July 12 also decided not to allow union activities in the company, sources said. A fact finding report of the Bangladesh Bank on the May incidents in which a senior executive was assaulted, recommended that the administration of the company be overhauled and be run by a cadre service executive. The enquiry report found allegations of malpractice, nepotism and politicking by the former executives in the company. The report suggested that a harmonious atmosphere be restored in the company so that its production is not hampered. The new MD would replace the incumbent Abul Quasem, who was appointed on an adhoc basis, they said. The Security Printing Press, formerly a project of Bangladesh Bank, was converted into an company in last June with a view to running it on a commercial basis. Bangladesh Bank sources said that the Sunday's meeting of the board of directors would also discuss appointment of the general manager (administration) of the company. AKM Sekander Hossain, the MD until the adhoc appointment and Abdus Sobhan (administration) who have been on leave since last June would now be moved elsewhere. Hossain earlier resigned on May 31 following a series of untoward incidents at the press in Gazipur. Bangladesh Bank sources Friday said that the Board of Directors of the BSPP would hold a meeting tomorrow (Sunday) to discuss appointment of a new Managing Director (MD) as the first step towards the proposed reorganisation in the administration of the company. The annual convocation ceremony of the university could not take place since 1970 because of political upheavals and campus violence. "I don't blame positive politics, but we couldn't hold annual convocation over the last 22 years because of polluted politics," said Vice-Chancellor Prof M Maniruzzaman Miah addressing as chief guest the graduation ceremony of the English Department of his university yesterday afternoon. Eighty-three students of the 1986-89 session refused to take their honours certificates from the administrative officials and impressed upon the Vice-Chancellor to award them certificates at a ceremony. Before giving away the certificates, the VC thanked and exhorted the students for the "revolt which made it possible to hold the mini-convocation". Miah noted with regret that he took the initiative to hold convocation in 1990 when the interim government was in power but failed because of what he said parochial political interest and rivalry from within the campus community. "A university is a community of scholars, I don't look upon any of its members as my adversary," he told the function apparently in response to his critics. "Welfare of the university... is always in my mind." See Page 12 Col 8

BDR foils bid to push in 49

JESSORE, Oct 2: Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) today foiled another attempt of Indian Border Security Force (BSF) to push 49 people into Bangladesh, official sources here said, reports UNB. They said the BSF men tried to deport the India nationals, including 25 women and three children, through the bordering areas of Saidpur, Benapole and Daulatpur. Meanwhile, the anti-smuggling task force comprising BDR, Police and customs arrested 147 Bangladeshis from Lawjan in Jhikargachha while they were trying to go to India without passport. They included 45 women, 10 boys and 12 children. All of them were sent to Jhikargachha police station.

Hasina demands govt statement on damage of Tk 3cr rice

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed concern at the reported damage of rice worth about three crore taka in different government godowns, reports UNB. In a statement she said when the country is going through a silent famine and the people are passing their days half-fed, the news of rice worth three crore taka being rotten in godowns cannot but hurt any conscious citizen. The Awami League President demanded a statement from the government on the See Page 12 Col 4

Govt to call meet on terrorism issue

By Staff Correspondent
Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz yesterday announced that the government would convene a conference of the representatives of political parties, intellectuals, professionals, and others concerned to find out ways and means to contain terrorism. The minister however, did not mention any date for holding such a meeting. The planned conference, he said, would suggest measures, in the light of the United Nations General Assembly's resolution on the growing acts of terrorism around the world, to root out terrorism from the country. Hafiz was addressing a discussion meeting on "Resist the demon of terrorism" at the Institution of Engineers in city yesterday afternoon. The Patriotic Democratic Front (PDF) organised the meeting participated by the leaders of different political parties, leading lawyers and journalists. Presided by PDF leader Saifuddin Ahmed Manik it was participated, among others, by State Minister for Law Barrister Aminul Haque, noted lawyers Barrister Ishtiaq Ahmed, Shamsul Haq Choudhury, Awami League Presidium member Amir Hossain Amu, Five-party leader Nirml Sen, Journalist Faiz Ahmed, Ganatantri Party General Secretary Mohammad Afzal, National Awami Party (NAP) leader Pankaj Bhattacharya. The Law Minister in his speech repeatedly sought cooperation of all including the opposition political leaders in curbing terrorism. "We can succeed only through a national consensus" the BNP Vice-Chairman said adding that, "It is time to take up the issue with the spirit that once led us to pass the 11th and the 12th Constitutional amendment bills in the Jatiya Sangsad." Allaying fears and criticisms regarding the recently promulgated anti terrorism ordinance, the Law Minister assured that it would never be misused or be used as a political tool. Promising stern action against the abusers of the law, he urged the public leaders to create awareness among the people for resisting any possible abuse by the law enforcing agencies. In this context, the Minister pointed out that the merit or demerit of any law depended on its use. Presently, many of the penal code laws were being misused, he added. See Page 12 Col 6

Durga Puja begins

Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Hindu community, began throughout the country yesterday with due religious fervour and gaiety, reports BSS. "Shaahiti" the first day of the five-day festival, drew large number of visitors at the puja pandals in Dhaka city as the day coincided with the weekly holiday. Hundreds of men, women and children attired in festive dresses thronged different puja mandaps in the evening to seek blessings of the Goddess Durga. Some 100 puja mandaps have been installed in various parts of the city including the Dhakeshwari Temple premises, Ramkrishna Mission, Nawabpur, Rathkhola, Shakhari bazar, Banglabazar, Siddeswari and Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University. See Page 12 Col 6

Mini-convocation at Dhaka University

A batch of English graduates of Dhaka University revolted against convocation jam and staged a mini-convocation Friday for obtaining their Honours certificates, reports UNB. The annual convocation ceremony of the university could not take place since 1970 because of political upheavals and campus violence. "I don't blame positive politics, but we couldn't hold annual convocation over the last 22 years because of polluted politics," said Vice-Chancellor Prof M Maniruzzaman Miah addressing as chief guest the graduation ceremony of the English Department of his university yesterday afternoon. Eighty-three students of the 1986-89 session refused to take their honours certificates from the administrative officials and impressed upon the Vice-Chancellor to award them certificates at a ceremony. Before giving away the certificates, the VC thanked and exhorted the students for the "revolt which made it possible to hold the mini-convocation". Miah noted with regret that he took the initiative to hold convocation in 1990 when the interim government was in power but failed because of what he said parochial political interest and rivalry from within the campus community. "A university is a community of scholars, I don't look upon any of its members as my adversary," he told the function apparently in response to his critics. "Welfare of the university... is always in my mind." See Page 12 Col 8

2 killed, 1 hurt in separate incidents

By DMCH Correspondent
Two persons were killed and one other injured in separate incidents in city yesterday. One Abdul Mannan, 25, a rickshaw van puller was killed on the spot as he was run over by a Tongi bound minibus near Mohakhall at about 11.30 am yesterday. The driver of the mini-bus escaped from the spot. The body of Mannan was later taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) morgue for autopsy. A case was lodged with the Gulshan Thana. In another incident a labourer of Chicago Aluminium Factory at 192, Tejgaon Industrial Area died when a heavy machine fell on him while he See Page 12 Col 3

US missiles hit Turkish ship by mistake : 5 killed

WASHINGTON, Oct 2: A US aircraft carrier accidentally blasted a Turkish destroyer with a missile during a NATO exercise, setting the vessel ablaze and killing at least five sailors, US and Turkish military officials said Friday, reports AP. Among those killed was the destroyer's commanding officer, Capt. Kudret Gungor, the Turkish general staff said. At least 14 other Turkish sailors were injured, but there were no reports of US Navy casualties, according to the Pentagon and the US naval command in Europe. The aircraft carrier USS Saratoga accidentally launched two Sea Sparrow missiles Thursday, and at least one of the missiles struck the Turkish destroyer Muesvenet, Adm. Mike Borda, commander of US Naval Forces in Europe, said in a statement issued in London. He said the accident occurred in the Aegean Sea about 130 kilometers (80 miles) west of Izmir, Turkey, during the NATO exercise "Display Determination '92". A Pentagon spokesman, Maj. Katherine Ingram, said on Missale hit the bridge of the Muesvenet, an area of the ship that controls navigation. A fire broke out but was extinguished in 15 minutes, she said. Ingram said the two ships were about five kilometers (three miles) apart when the missiles were fired accidentally. Early reports had put the number of dead at nine but a spokesman at the US Navy Headquarters in Europe based in London, said that figure — based on information from Turkish authorities — had been revised to five. Two seriously injured sailors were taken by helicopter to the USS Iwo Jima, an amphibious attack ship participating in the exercise, while the other injured were flown to Izmir, according to a Turkish foreign ministry official. "There is still a great deal of confusion at the scene," said Cmdr. Charles Connor. Later, he said the fire had been put out, but that the ship could not move under its own power and would be towed to port. In Istanbul, Premier Suleyman Demirel described the missile hit as an accident and said it wasn't clear what caused it. Acting US Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger immediately called the Turkish ambassador to the United States to express "our apologies and agony over this tragic incident" and to convey sympathy for victims and families. NATO's top military commander, US Gen. John M Shaikashvili, promised Friday "a quick and full investigation" and said a US naval officer was already aboard the Turkish destroyer to investigate the accident.

Mandela in Pakistan

KARACHI, Oct 2: African National Congress President Nelson Mandela arrived Friday on the first leg of a 13-day trip to Pakistan and China, reports AP. It is Mandela's first visit to both countries, which have no formal ties with the South African government. Pakistan does not recognize the government in Pretoria and has barred all diplomatic, economic and cultural contact with South Africa. However, Pakistani government officials have said that policy is under review.