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NEWS BRIEFS

Khaleda visits party office

By Staff Correspondent

The Prime Minister and BNP chief, Khaleda Zia last night visited the central office of the party for the first time after it was shifted to Naya Paltan from Dhanmondi. She exchanged views with the party leaders and workers on different issues there.

Cabinet members including Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah, Information Minister Nazmul Huda, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, members of parliament and BNP leaders were present on the occasion.

Lila Roy dead

CALCUTTA, Oct 6: Lila Roy, a well-known literary figure and wife of the noted Bengali poet, Annada Shankar Roy, died at her south Calcutta residence today following cardiac arrest, her family sources said. She was 82 and is survived by her husband, two sons and two daughters. Lila Roy had authored and translated more than 70 books in English, reports PTI.

Police team off to Cambodia

The third team of Bangladesh police contingent left here yesterday for Bangkok en route to Cambodia, according to a police headquarters press release. The members of the team will work as police monitors under the supervision of the United Nations Peace Keeping Force in Cambodia, reports BSS.

66 more held on various charges

Sixty-six people were arrested from different parts of the city in the last 24 hours on various charges, a police press release said yesterday. Of the arrested, seven were wanted criminals, six accused in arms case, six charged with stealing and one of kidnapping. All the arrested were produced before the court and legal action taken against them.

Dhaka-Colombo joint press statement

SAARC to explore more areas of cooperation

Bangladesh and Sri Lanka Tuesday lauded the positive role of the SAARC in promoting cooperation in South Asia in keeping with the aspirations of the people of the region and expressed the hope that the coming seventh SAARC summit in Dhaka should further intensify the cooperation, reports BSS.

A joint press statement issued at the end of the three-day visit to Bangladesh by Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa, the current chairman of the SAARC referred to the talks the President had with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and expressed the hope that the SAARC would cover more substantial areas of economic cooperation in the

coming days. The two leaders had wide-ranging discussions on the SAARC, bilateral and international issues of common concern and reaffirmed their vow to work in concert for strengthening the SAARC, enhancing bilateral cooperation and helping attain international peace and stability.

President Premadasa and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia agreed that as the SAARC enters a new phase with the second cycle of summits with the next one in Bangladesh capital fresh drive and impetus would be given to the on-going cooperation for the multi-faceted benefits of the people living in the region.

Following is the text of Sri

Lanka-Bangladesh joint press statement issued at the end of President Ranasinghe Premadasa's visit to Bangladesh.

Ranasinghe Premadasa, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and current chairman of SAARC paid an official visit to Bangladesh from October 4 to 6, 1992 at the invitation of Begum Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister of Bangladesh. He was accompanied by Madam Hema Premadasa, B P Tilakaratna, the Foreign Secretary Bradman Weerakoon, Adviser, International Relations and other high officials.

During his visit the President of Sri Lanka called on Abdur Rahman Biswas,

President of Bangladesh. He held detained and wide-ranging discussions on SAARC, bilateral and international issues with Begum Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister of Bangladesh. An atmosphere of friendship and cordiality characterized the talks.

The President of Sri Lanka placed wreaths at the Smriti Shaudha (national martyrs memorial). He also visited Dharamarajika Buddhist Monastery at Kamalapur.

The President of Sri Lanka conveyed to the President and the Prime Minister of Bangladesh the goodwill and friendship of the government and the people of Sri Lanka for the government and the people. See Page 12 Col 8



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia introducing her cabinet colleagues to Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa at his farewell reception at Bangabhaban yesterday. —PID photo

Hearty send-off to Premadasa

President Ranasinghe Premadasa of Sri Lanka was given a hearty send-off at the ZIA when he left for home yesterday morning on conclusion of his three-day visit, reports UNI.

Earlier Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia bade farewell to President Premadasa and Hema Premadasa at Bangabhaban. Cabinet members, heads of the diplomatic missions and high civil and military officials were present.

The Lankan President was presented a guard of honour at Bangabhaban by a smartly turned out contingent drawn from the three services.

He inspected the guard and took the salute.

Ceremonial farewell at Bangabhaban was accompanied by his wife drove in a motorcade to Zia International Airport where they were seen off by Foreign Minister A.S.M. Mostafizur Rahman.

Two tiny tots presented bouquets to Premadasa and Hema Premadasa before they embarked on special aircraft of Air Lanka.

Premadasa who flew in Dhaka Sunday, in his capacity as the current Chairman of the SAARC, briefed Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia the activities. See Page 12 Col 8

Govt-Shantibahini dialogue Oct 21

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Oct 6: The government has decided to hold a dialogue with the Shantibahini October 21 in an effort to resolve the 18-year-old hill tracts issue.

According to highly placed sources, the government fixed the date for the dialogue as the Shantibahini had agreed for the same at the preparatory meeting held September 28 between a four-member Shantibahini team and a six-member Liaison Committee at Dudukchhari border village under Panchhari upazila of Khagrachhari district.

The government set October 21 as the date for holding the dialogue between the parliamentary committee headed by the Communications Minister Col (Rtd) Oli Ahmed and the Shantibahini, after consulting the "Liaison Committee" led by Hanshadaz Chakma.

The venue of the dialogue, the first of its kind under a democratic government would be the Khagrachhari Circuit House, sources added.

The Liaison Committee leader would communicate the date of dialogue fixed by the government, to the Parbatyia Chattayagram Janasanghati Samity (PCJSS), the mother organisation of the Shantibahini, through a letter to be issued tomorrow, sources said.

Officials said that the dialogue with the Parliamentary Committee would be attended by a five-member Shantibahini team to be led for the first time by the President of the PCJSS, J B Larma alias Shanto Larma.

The dialogue, however, would be aimed at finding a political solution to the long-drawn hill tracts issue that See Page 12 Col 7/

BADC asks suppliers

Take back toxic fertilizer and refund money

By S Y Bakht

Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) has finally requested the supplier to take back the consignment of fertilizer found to contain hazardous toxic substances and refund the 'full' amount paid for it.

BADC had earlier this year imported from the United States the consignment of zinc oxy sulphate fertilizer, chemical tests on which, both locally and in the US, revealed that it contained highly toxic lead and cadmium.

According to the telex message sent to the Washington-based supplier M/s Trans Continental Imex Inc Sunday, BADC said: "The consignment of 3150 tonnes of zinc oxy sulphate fertilizer contained lead in the amount of 0.69 per cent and cadmium of 0.05 per cent as per the tests conducted by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environment

Control, as intimated by the US embassy and the results exceeded US established regulatory limits".

The BADC telex message added: "Thus, the zinc oxy sulphate fertilizer supplied by you being hazardous, you are requested to take back from Bangladesh the entire quantity of zinc oxy sulphate fertilizer available with BADC and pay back the full CNF value and other costs immediately."

Responding to the telex message, the local representative of the supplier, however, denied having deviated from the actual specifications of the consignment, as approved by the Ministry of Agriculture, 'in any way'.

"If we knew or even manipulated the papers we could be blamed, even then the pre-shipment checking would have disqualified the consignment. See Page 12 Col 1

Qatar boycotts GCC activities

DOHA, Oct 6: Qatar has pulled out of a cultural festival organised by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), deepening a rift with fellow Gulf monarchies caused by a border dispute with Saudi Arabia, reports AFP.

The Qatar delegation was ordered to leave Manama on Monday in the middle of a GCC theatre festival and to "boycott all GCC activities," a delegation source said.

It was not clear if Qatar intended to boycott the GCC's economic and political activities.

According to a senior Gulf official, Qatar has decided to withdraw its contingent of 200 soldiers from a joint GCC defence force based in Kuwait. He said Qatar could be planning to quit the GCC altogether.

The Saudi cabinet on Monday said an international body should start laying down markers on the border with Qatar, in line with a secret 1965 accord which Doha decided to abrogate last week.

AL city body likely today

Star Report

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina is likely to announce names of Executive Committee of the party's city unit today.

According to sources in the party, Mohammad Hanif and Mafazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya will be the President and General Secretary of the new committee.

The council session of the party's city unit held last month authorised the party chief Hasina to form the committee of her own choice.

Hasina, however, had several rounds of talks during last few days with the members of the subject committee formed by the city council session, sources said.

According to sources, the committee proposed by Hasina has been accepted by all the major aspirants for city leadership of the party.

Resist destructive activities, PM asks JCD workers

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon the members of Chhatra Dal to work as the social mobilisers to create mass awareness against indiscipline and irregularities, reports BSS.

She said the students had to initiate a social movement against the hindrances to development with the same spirit with which they had fought against autocracy.

The Prime Minister was speaking to the members of Jatyatabadi Chhatra Dal who won in the recent student union elections held in different colleges in Chhagalnaiya, Feni, Fulgazi, Sonagazi and Parasuram at her Shugandha office. The members of Feni district JCD leaders and other educational institutions were present on the occasion.

Begum Zia said Bangladesh Nationalist Party did not believe in terrorism or anarchy. We want unhindered development of the country through See Page 12 Col 8

Govt runs without pragmatic policy to solve health problems: Hasina

Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the present government was running without any pragmatic policy to solve the problems of food, clothing, shelter, education and medicare facing the people, reports UNI.

It is the responsibility of a government to ensure medicare for every citizen so that they could lead healthy life, said the Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament.

She was talking to Secretary General of International Union Against Tuberculosis Dr K W H Harris and Adviser Dr N C Sen Gupta when they called on the opposition leader at 29, Minto Road, Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, Vice-President, and Dr Sakawat Hossain, Secretary General of NATAB, were present.

Hasina said her party policy is to bring about changes in the health and medicare system. She called for removing poverty and malnutrition of the See Page 12 Col 2

Muggings down, murders up

By Farid Ahmed

Murders doubled in the capital in September compared to the figure reported in August in spite of a special police drive against terrorism.

Following the drive, muggings and robberies went down in the city last month. About 36 muggings and robberies were committed during the month. The August figure of muggings and robberies was nearly 60.

Incidents like murders, robberies, muggings, suicides and road accidents claimed at least 59 lives in the city during the month, September.

Of the total 14 people were murdered — eight of them by muggers, 32 killed in road accidents, eight reportedly committed suicide and five others found mysteriously dead.

In August, seven people were murdered, 29 fell victim to reckless driving, 10 found mysteriously dead and four in other incidents in the city.

Of the total murders, Ashrafur Azam Mamun and Mahmud Hossain, two students

of Dhaka University were gunned down on campus September 4 during a bloody clash between two factions of the pro-government Jatyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD). Ilias Ali, general secretary of now dissolved central committee of the JCD was charged with murdering Mamun and arrested September 13. But

none was arrested in connection with the killing of Mahmud.

Another JCD activist of the Dhaka Polytechnic Institute Abdur Rauf, severely beaten at the institute's hostel by a group of JCD workers August 29, succumbed to his injuries at a hospital on September 1.

A Sub-Inspector of Police, Abdus Sattar was killed by a group of trouble mongers at Postagala when CID police swooped on them.

Of the others, muggers killed Jonab Ali at Mirpur, Khalilur Rahman at Hatkhola,

Abdur Rahim at Babu Bazar, Mohammad Hanif at Sayedabad, Abdul Kader at Gabtoli, Hanif Mia at Mirpur and a college student at Amin Bazar during the last month.

Mohsin, a young man was murdered at Kakrail September 9 and Panna, another young man was killed at Sheikh Shaheb Bazar (Labag) September 12 following previous rivalry. A housewife — Sultana Rashid Irani was reportedly killed by her husband at Sabujbag. Police arrested the husband.

Though muggings went down in the city last month, murders by the muggers exceeded the figure reported during the last four months.

Muggers left eight people killed and another 15 wounded. Most of the muggings committed last month failed to result in any arrests.

Wives of A K A Froze Noon, Information and Publication Secretary of the BNP and Mozammel Haq, Press Secretary to the Prime See Page 12 Col 7

Monsoons as drought warnings

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 6: Scientists after a decade of painstaking research, have achieved a breakthrough they say will bring relief to developing countries dependent for their water supply on fickle monsoon rains, reports AFP.

A decade of study has unraveled the mystery of the monsoon and scientists say countries that rely on these winds for rainfall can in future expect early brought warnings.

"We are now able to identify the periods in which the monsoons are weaker or stronger and this is the biggest achievement in 10 years" a senior official of the Geneva-based World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), Robert Pearce told AFP.

The southwest monsoons blow from May to August across the Indian Subcontinent and southern China while the Northeastern monsoons from November to March affect Malaysia.

See Page 12 Col 4

Editors take up newsprint price issue with PM today

Star Report

The newspaper editors and owners today (Wednesday) will take up the issues affecting the newspaper industry, including the recent rise in newsprint price, with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at a meeting at her Secretariat.

During the meeting, the representatives of the media are expected to emphasise that the Tk 1880 increase in price of newsprint per tonne will further cripple the newspaper industry which is already facing other financial problems.

Other issues likely to be taken up by the editors with Begum Zia relate to the government's advertisement policy.

One of the complaints of the editors relates to the distribution policy of public sector advertisements while the other grievance concerns the slow and what one newspaper executive termed as "erratic" disbursement of government dues to the newspapers. On the advertisement pol-

icy, several new issues have cropped up since the Minister of Information Barrister Najmul Huda recently disclosed that in future advertisements would be linked to "objectivity of the newspaper" and not necessarily to its circulation.

The minister's statement was immediately criticized by a section of the media.

The consensus among newspaper executives is that the advertisement policy of the public sector should be more efficiently and fairly handled and that it should primarily remain linked to the circulation of a newspaper.

It is also felt in newspaper circles that there should be a revised rate structure of the public sector advertisements, upgrading it to the level of advertisement tariff accepted by the private companies. As one newspaper editor put it "there is also no justification as to why the media should publish a government advertisement at See Page 12 Col 7

Nothing exists like 'Azad Jammu, Kashmir,' Delhi tells UN body

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 6: India has strongly objected to Pakistan referring to areas of Kashmir under its control as 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' and told Islamabad that no such entity exists, reports PTI.

Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and the areas of the state referred to by Pakistan are under its illegal occupation, Indian representative TP Srinivasan told a committee of the General Assembly.

Srinivasan made the statement to put the record straight while the committee was discussing a request by Pakistan for making a recom-

mendation to the United Nations General Assembly to consider necessary measures for 'emergency assistance' for the people hit by the recent floods.

Later, the committee made the recommendation and resolution asking member states to provide assistance to victims of one of the worst floods in Pakistan, is expected to come up in the Assembly in a day or two.

Supporting the recommendation to the General Assembly, Srinivasan said while India fully sympathised with Pakistan on the loss it suffered in the recent heavy

rains, it regretted that Pakistan made an 'unwarranted' reference to the 'so called Azad Jammu and Kashmir' in the request it sent for the inclusion of the item on the Assembly's agenda.

AFP from Srinagar adds: A general strike called by Muslim militants paralysed normal activity in Kashmir for a second straight day today after a shootout the previous evening left three troopers and two militants dead.

The strike sponsored by the Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen (Muslim brotherhood) militant group closed shops and businesses in the valley and took traffic off

the streets, officials and witnesses said here in the state's summer capital.

The group, one of several fighting for the session of Muslim-majority Kashmir from India, called the strike to protest the killing here Sunday of its acting leader, Altaf Qureshi, by security forces.

On Monday evening, militants opened fire on security personnel concluding a search in the north Kashmir district of Baramulla starting a fierce gun battle, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported.

Three troopers and two militants were killed in the shootout, PTI said.

Meanwhile Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif today began his second visit to Beijing since taking office two years ago during which he will lobby China for support of his country's claim to the disputed Kashmir region.

Sharif is hoping to garner Beijing's backing on the Kashmir issue ahead of Pakistan's entry into the UN Security Council in December, sources said.

The Pakistani leader said before departing Islamabad that he would brief China's top leaders on the situation in Kashmir, over which Pakistan

and India have fought two wars since 1947.

The two countries reached a peace accord in 1972 after the second war, but Pakistan wants a plebiscite to be held in the Muslim-dominated Indian-held part in line with a 1949 UN Resolution.

The Pakistani-controlled part of Kashmir borders on China's far-west Xinjing region and Beijing has urged Pakistan and India to resolve the issue through peaceful negotiations.

Premier Li Peng welcomed Sharif at the Great Hall of the People after his arrival and the two were to hold talks later.