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Dhaka Day by Day

Due to lack of space our regular feature Dhaka Day by Day has been held over for today (Monday)

Effective for 2 years: Right to appeal in HC: Compensation if unduly affected by tribunal verdict

JS passes anti-terrorism bill

Star Report

Parliament last night passed the controversial anti-terrorism bill incorporating a number of major amendments to its provisions. With the entire Opposition out of the House, the Treasury Bench pushed the bill through 'unanimously'. The new law, titled Suppression of Terroristic Offences Bill-1992, takes effect immediately for a period of two years, if not extended by the lawmakers for a further period. The amendments, all moved by the Treasury benches including the Home Minister himself, included dropping of the provision for the appellate tribunal. The convicts in the special tribunal will have right

to challenge the verdict in the High Court. The new law that had caused a clamour in and outside the Jatiya Sangsad provides for penalty ranging from a minimum five-year imprisonment to capital punishment for terroristic offences as defined in the bill. The amendments, ostensibly prompted by the strong criticism from opponents, said that the tribunal judges would be appointed by the Chief Justice instead of the Government and the prosecution team should be led by an officer not below the rank of Inspector of police instead of the Sub-Inspector as proposed in

the bill's original version. The High Court Division of the Supreme Court, according to an amendment, must confirm a death sentence by a special tribunal. Under the law, special tribunal would be set up in each district headed by the Sessions Judge or Additional Sessions Judge. Another amendment, proposed by the Home Minister at the end of the two-hour time devoted to the passage of the bill, said that a person unduly affected by the verdict of the special tribunal would get compensation after a review by the High Court. Almost all the MPs of the

Treasury Bench including the Leader of the House Prime Minister Begum Khalida Zia were present in the House throughout yesterday's session that began at 6.45 in the evening with Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali in the chair. After doing some other legislative business including the passage of the Bangladesh Tariff Commission Bill, the House took up the much talked-about bill at 8.45 pm and passed it at 10.50 pm through voice vote. The Jamaat-e-Islami MPs led by their leader Matiuir Rahman Nizami walked out of the House as soon as Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury finished his speech

rejecting their plea to elicit public opinion before consideration. "We don't want to be a party to the passage of this black law", Nizami told the House before leaving. The Jamaat MPs were followed by the lone member of the Islami Oikya Jote, Alhaj Moulana Obaidul Huq. The other opposition groups — the Awami League, the Communist Party of Bangladesh, Ganatantri Party, the Jatiya Party, the National Awami Party and the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal — had been boycotting the proceedings of parliament since Tuesday night when they walked out protes-

ting the move to introduce the bill they termed blackest in history. Arguing in favour of their proposal for eliciting public opinion, the Jamaat MPs said the existing laws, if necessary incorporating certain changes through consensus, were enough to deal with the offences mentioned in the bill. "Proper application of the laws like the Penal Code, the Arms Act, the Anti-corruption Act is enough," said Matur Rahman Nizami, "appealing to the conscience of the Treasury Bench" to withdraw the bill. "Some amendments to the Special Powers Act, Criminal

MCCI, BCCI sign MOU for investment promotion

Staff Correspondent
 The Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) and the visiting Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) Sunday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) aimed at exchanging information on trade and investment between Bangladesh and India. The MOU was signed by M. Morshed Khan, president of the MCCI and Biji K. Kurien, president of the BCCI. Earlier, Morshed Khan while welcoming the BCCI delegation, viewed that present trade pattern between Bangladesh and India was "quite disconcerting". A long

Bill illegal, says Hasina



Sheikh Hasina addressing public meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue in city yesterday. — Star photo

By Staff Correspondent
 Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina Sunday demanded that the government withdraw the controversial anti-terrorism bill branding it "unconstitutional and against human rights." Speaking at a tripartite opposition rally yesterday afternoon at Bangabandhu Avenue hours before the House passed the bill, Hasina also called for a greater opposition unity to resist the government move to get the bill passed. A number of other central Awami League leaders, Suranjit Sengupta of Ganatantri Party and Shahjahan Straj of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) also addressed the meeting pre-

Opposition to decide next course of action today

Opposition parties boycotting parliament will sit today (Monday) to decide their next course of action after the unilateral passage of the Anti-terrorism Bill last night, reports UNB. "We'll sit to decide future course of action," said Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim. Jatiya Party leader Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury also said they would meet today to take stock of the situation and take final decision. "As per our previous decision, we'll not go back to the House until the law is revoked," he said talking to UNB. See Page 12 Col 6

PM urges youth community Build nation with whatever we have

Prime Minister Begum Khalida Zia yesterday stressed the need for utilisation of the country's vast youth force in development activities, reports BSS. Inaugurating the National Youth Day-92 at a colourful function at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium here, the Prime Minister called for taking a pledge anew with the spirit of patriotism, unity, discipline, hard labour and honesty to establish Bangladesh as a nation of self-respecting people. On her arrival at the Osmani

CPB opposes continuous JS boycott

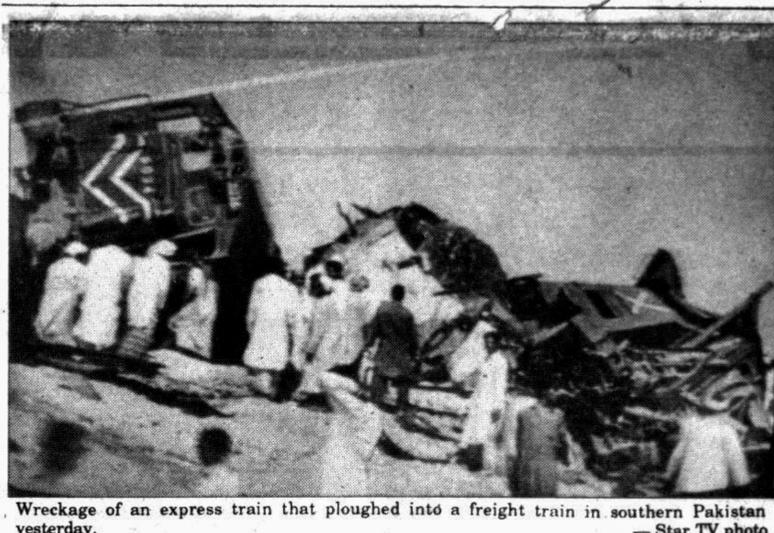
By Staff Correspondent
 The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) has opposed continuous boycott of Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) session by opposition saying "this kind of action will hinder continuation of parliamentary system." The party leaders at a press conference Sunday noon said that the MPs belonging to CPB were abstaining from attending the session considering the greater interest of opposition unity. "We will continue our

75 feared killed in Pak train accident

SUKKUR (Pakistan), Nov 1: A train packed with sleeping passengers slammed into a freight train on Sunday, leaving as many as 75 people killed or injured, railway officials said, reports AP. Details of the pre-dawn accident about 120 kilometres (72 miles) north of the interior city of Sukkur were sketchy, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity. Earlier, officials said they expected the toll of dead and injured to reach 150, but later they revised the figure to nearer 75, including about 15 killed. The government of southern Sindh province ordered an

inquiry into the crash. Pakistan's state-run news agency said authorities suspended the assistant station master at the tiny railway stop of Reiti where the accident occurred after he fled the scene. It wasn't immediately known why he fled. Initial investigations showed that an erroneous signal may have sent the passenger train barreling down the track blocked by the parked freight train, officials said. Railway officials said they did not know how many passengers were on board the 15-car express train. They said the first two cars were reduced to twisted metal. Witnesses said villagers,

many of them awakened by the sound of churning metal, ran to the site with blankets, bandages and a meagre collection of medical supplies. About 400 soldiers helped ambulance workers pull dead and wounded from the wreckage, said Abdul Chishti, an army spokesman. Pakistan's antiquated railway system has been plagued by accidents, prompting calls by lawmakers and other officials for the railways to be revamped and modernised. The rail system was developed by the British before the subcontinent was partitioned in 1947. Many Pakistanis say it has not been properly maintained.



Wreckage of an express train that ploughed into a freight train in southern Pakistan yesterday. — Star TV photo

Bangladesh utilising aid effectively: Lankester



Lankester at the press conference. — Star photo

The visiting Permanent Secretary of the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA) yesterday lauded the success achieved by Bangladesh in macro-economic management, reports BSS. Process is also being made in the field of various economic reforms undertaken by the government, Lankester told a press conference in city. He said that the British assistance was utilised by Bangladesh "quite effectively". He, however, added that there is much to do about implementing government policies and development programmes. Welcoming the democratic change in Bangladesh, Lankester said good government

AJM workers clash: 35 injured

From Our Correspondent
NARAYANGANJ, Nov 1: The pro-government workers of Adamjee Jute Mills (AJM) fought a series of armed battles against their pro-Awami League rivals here today. At least 35 persons, six with bullets, were injured. Witnesses reported that the AJM workers belonging to pro-BNP Kashem group and the AL-backed Rehan group blasted about 500 crackers and fired over 200 gunshots during the clashes. Police fired only four to five rounds of gunshots in the air and lobbed eight to ten teargas shells, they added. Seven of the critically wounded persons were rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Those ad-

Press Note Govt won't change new SSC exam system

The government yesterday made it clear that it had no plan to cancel objective-type question papers for SSC examinations, reports UNB. A press note issued yesterday said the system for objective-type questions had been introduced after extensive review and study by experts and educationists. "The objective-type questions in examination will certainly remain unchanged," the press note said underlining that the system is being introduced in greater interest of the country as well as to improve the standard of SSC examination. The government has, however, brought about some

50 hurt, 56 more held School students continue protests

By Staff Correspondent
 School students in Dhaka and elsewhere in the country Sunday continued their demonstrations against the new marking system in the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) Examinations. Over 50 students were injured and 56 others taken to custody when police went on action on the unruly students in Dhaka, Gazipur and Faridpur. Police fired gunshots, lobbed tear gas shells and resorted to baton charge while the students damaged dozens of vehicles, exploded crackers and hurled stones at the police. During the demonstrations, Tongi-Joydevpur Highway remained closed to traffic for four hours yesterday. The students demonstrated against the decision that each SSC examinee would have to obtain pass marks separately in both objective and broad questions from the next session. In Dhaka, the agitating students took to streets at Mirpur, Tophkana, Segunbagicha, Malibagh and Dhanmondi. Mirpur police arrested 28

Bush looks weary as Clinton widens lead further

WASHINGTON, Nov 1: Democrat Bill Clinton has widened his lead to seven points over President George Bush, according to the latest CNN/USA Today/gallup poll today on the US presidential race, reports Reuter. With just two days to go to election day, the poll of 1,600 likely voters put Clinton at 43 per cent, Bush at 36 per cent and independent Ross Perot at 15 per cent. The margin of error was plus or minus three points.

On Saturday, the same poll had Clinton at 42 per cent, Bush at 39 per cent and Perot at 14 per cent. An ABC news poll released on Saturday had Clinton at 41 per cent, Bush with 38 per cent and Perot with 18 per cent. But a New York Times/CBS poll published today showed Clinton with 43 per cent of the backing of those surveyed, while Bush got 34 per cent and Independent candidate Ross Perot garnered

15 per cent. And a new Washington Post survey of the state-by-state vote — the critical tally in the indirect US election system — showed Clinton with a clear edge in 16 states and the district of Columbia that can provide all but 43 of the 270 electoral votes needed for victory. It also gave him a slight edge or better in another 15 states with 112 electoral votes, but the Post pointed out that if Perot supporters move to Bush or Clinton on election day at

least 25 states appear close enough to shift sides. AP adds: President Bush on Sunday predicted victory with the election just two days away, saying polls showing Bill Clinton leading are "out of whack." Bush, looking and sounding weary at the end of an intense fall campaign, also voiced irritation with continuing questions about his knowledge of the Iran-Contra affair. "The headlines don't help, but I don't think people be-

lieve this," Bush said in a live televised interview on CNN, referring to stories questioning his truthfulness on his involvement in the arms-for-hostages deal. "I still feel very confident of victory because I believe the polls have just been totally out of whack," Bush said. Democratic nominee Clinton selected the critical swing state of New Jersey for the last major event of his Democratic presidential cam-

paign, a rally Sunday night scheduled to mix politics and entertainment. Singer Barbara Streisand planned a rare public performance there on Clinton's behalf. Maverick candidate Ross Perot was in Missouri, supplementing his infrequent personal campaigning by pouring fresh millions into his unprecedented advertising campaign. Aides said he had purchased 3 1/2 hours of network time for Sunday and Monday.

Bus dacoity in N'ganj: Tk 6 lakh looted

From Our Correspondent
NARAYANGANJ, Nov 1: Dacoits looted Taka six lakhs from 25 cloth traders aboard a Baburhat-bound bus here this morning. The dacoits numbering about a dozen shot and injured one of the traders named Mukul Pal, 40. The infuriated businessmen and the passengers of the bus later mercilessly beat up the driver Abdul Hye suspecting hand in the dacoity. According to witnesses, the dacoits stopped the bus at Pathantoli on the Narayanganj-Demra Highway at about 5.45 am. They shot Mukul Pal on the leg to frighten the passengers. They then looted Taka 6 lakhs from 25 passengers who were going to buy cloth from Baburhat Bazar at Narasingdi. The dacoits managed to get down from the bus (Dhaka B-566) near Moonlight cinema hall. The assistant of the driver fled after the incident.

Emajuddin made acting DU VC

The President and Chancellor has appointed Prof Emajuddin Ahmed the acting Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University on temporary basis to discharge the duties of the Vice-Chancellor, it was officially announced here yesterday, reports BSS. Dr Emajuddin Ahmed, who is the Chairman and Professor of the Department of Political Science and former Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the university, took over the office of Vice-Chancellor yesterday. Earlier, Prof M. Maniruzzaman Miah resigned from the office of the Vice-Chancellor of the university. He has been appointed the country's ambassador to Senegal.