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NEWS BRIEFS

PM addresses city BNP meet today

A discussion arranged by Dhaka city BNP in observance of the National Revolution and Solidarity Day will now be held at its office at Nabab Yusuf Market at 3 pm today. Earlier the discussion was scheduled to be held at the Shishu Academy Auditorium. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, will attend the discussion as the chief guest, reports BSS.

Saifur off to Tehran

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman left Dhaka last night for Tehran on a weeklong visit to Iran. He is leading a two-member delegation to the 17th annual meeting of the board of governors of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) scheduled to be held on November 10 to 11 in Tehran. Rahman is one of the members of the board of the governors of IDB, reports BSS.

BNP nomination for Bhola-4

Bangladesh Nationalist Party has nominated Abdus Shahid Maltiar as its candidate to contest the by-election in the Bhola-4 constituency of Jatiya Sangsad, a party press release Saturday said, reports BSS.

Speaker leaves for Germany

A seven-member Bangladesh parliamentary delegation led by Speaker Shaikh Razzaque Ali left Dhaka yesterday on a week-long goodwill visit to Germany. The other members of the delegation are Deputy Leader of the House Dr Badruddoza Chowdhury, Whip Mahbubul Alam, Azizur Rahman MP, Md Abdus Sobhan MP, Nurul Islam Moni MP and Md Nazrul Islam, Deputy Secretary, parliament secretariat (member-secretary), reports BSS.

India pushes in 38 breaching agreement

HATIBANDHA (Lalmontrohat), Nov 8: India pushed 38 Bangla-speaking Muslims into Bangladesh through Hatibanda border Saturday night, breaching an understanding for a halt in the move, reports UNB.

Of the push victims, 23 are now under protection of BDR at the residence of local MP Jainal Abedin. Fifteen others got dispersed in different localities of the frontier.

Among them, 16 are men, 4 women and 3 children. According to a source, the illegally pushed Indian nationals might be sent back tonight.

Officials said night guards of Hatibanda thana headquarter area at about 1 am after they were pushed in by Indian Border Security Force (BSF). One of the victims, Amjad Hossain (60), said he was a resident of a Delhi suburb, Shanta.

Delhi police and some plainclothes people picked him, his wife Nurjahan and ailing son Alauddin up in a truck last Wednesday while he was saying Esha prayers and drove them to the border, he told regularly.

Chand Mia (45) said he was pushed in although he owned a residence at the Staff Class Para, Bloc-C, in the Indian capital.

Ahmed (60) said his whole family was pushed in under the so-called Operation Push Back, which Bangladesh has condemned as an illegal, inhuman action that violates diplomatic norms and human rights. Indian side in a recent flag meeting agreed to cease from the unauthorised 'push back'.

"I have been pushed in leaving my family in India," said Khalil, almost distracted for separation from his near and dear ones.



A BRTC bus under attack during hartal hours in city yesterday. — Star photo

Stray incidents mark Nirmul body hartal

By Staff Correspondent

A half-day hartal to force the government to try the controversial Jamaat chief Golam Azam was observed almost peacefully in the capital Sunday.

The six-hour hartal was called by the National Coordination Committee for Resistance to the Killers and Collaborators of 1971 and Implementation of the Spirit of the Liberation War.

The demands of the committee also include withdrawal of cases against the 24 organisers, the last March 26 public trial of Azam at the Suhrawardy Uddyan in Dhaka. The 'public court' sentenced the Jamaat chief to death by hanging for war crimes in 1971.

Major opposition political parties including the Awami League, the 5-party Alliance and a number of student and cultural groups endorsed the hartal which began from 6 am Sunday.

A few stray incidents between the pickets and the police, marked the hartal but did not trigger off widespread violence.

Shops, marketplaces and banks remained shuttered during the hartal hours while no classes were held at the educational institutions including Dhaka University.

Office-goers were seen walking down to their work places where attendance was thin.

Barring some rickshaws and a few tempos, all modes of vehicles including buses, trucks, minibuses and private cars remained off the city streets. The inter-city bus stations at Mohakhali, Gabtali and Syedabad looked deserted during the hartal hours. Train, launch-services and Biman flights operated normally, officials said.

The government tried to operate some BRTC buses with police escorts which faced stoning by the militant activists.

Heavy contingent of riot police and paramilitary BDR were posted at different parts of the city to avert violence.

Hundreds of Hindu supporters belonging to the Nirmul Committee, city unit of the Awami League, its student front Chhatra League, Ganatantrik Chhatra Otkya and Muktiyoddha Chhatra Command brought out processions.

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Meet demands by Dec 16 or face fresh movement: Nirmul body

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Samannaya Committee has threatened to launch a fresh movement unless their demands including the trial of Jamaat-e-Islami chief Golam Azam were not met by the already announced deadline of December 16 next.

Elaborating the planned movement, the Samannaya Committee leaders yesterday declared that the movement would not only be against the Jamaat but also 'its ally the BNP government'.

The warning was made at a public meeting held at Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital after observance of a half-day hartal in city.

The hartal was called to force the authorities implement a four-point charter of demand which also include withdrawal of cases against 24 sponsors of Azam's March 26 public trial for war crimes, imposition of ban on politics by the 'Jamaat-Shibir-Freedom Party clique' and ending 'repression' on the pro-Gana Adalat (People's Court) forces by the government and the anti-liberation elements.

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Migratory birds in market

By Asiuzzaman

As the migratory birds have only begun arriving, the stalkers are hardly sparing efforts to get hold of the winter "guests" to fatten their purses.

Netted mostly in the haor areas in Sylhet and Srimangal, the birds are being shipped to the capital and other major cities where buyers can afford the high prices the sellers demand.

Vendors were even seen selling in different city points yesterday when the Prime Minister pronounced orders that the laws banning the hunt of migratory winter birds be strictly enforced.

The prime ministerial directive came when a delegation of the Wild Life Society of Bangladesh met her and sought her intervention to preserve the wild life especially the migratory birds.

The duck species like gargery, mallard and common teal from the Siberian region are available in Elephant Road, Manik Mia Avenue, Pantha Path, Baily Road and some other city points. "It is a clear violation of the country's wild life preservation laws", wild life experts told The Daily Star.

The law provides a penalty upto a two-year jail term and a Tk 2000 fine for a person charged with killing or endangering wild life.

A vendor in the Elephant Road charged Tk 550 for a pair these birds weighing about six kilograms.

The vendor, who declined to be named, said the two birds would yield over four kilograms of meat. "These are from Siberia", he said but could not identify their names.

"The wholesalers bought them from Sylhet, he said, and 'in hundreds per week'.

The Wild Life Society has been campaigning for years to protect the winter birds from the hunters, but their appeal

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Vendors selling winter birds in a Dhaka street yesterday. — Star photo

Prime Minister's directive 'Enforce law banning bird hunt strictly'

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday ordered strict application of the law prohibiting the hunting of winter birds, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister gave the directive at a meeting with the delegation of Wild Life Society of Bangladesh which called on her at her office.

Begum Zia said creation of a separate department of the Forest and Environment Ministry was under the consideration of the government for ensuring preservation of wild life in the country.

The Prime Minister called upon the society members and concerned quarters to work more actively to create mass awareness for the preservation of the wild life in the country.

The members of the society briefed the Prime Minister about the preservation of wild life and environment in the country.

They told the Prime Minister that till now 18 species of wild life had become extinct from Bangladesh and another 67 species were on the verge of extinction.

The society members said during the period of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman the Wild Life Preservation Zone Act was adopted for the first time. Under the Act reserved forest, national park, amuse-

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Solidarity Day celebrated

The nation on Saturday celebrated National Revolution and Solidarity Day with a renewed pledge to protect the country's independence and sovereignty foiling any conspiracy, reports UNB.

Special prayer was offered in all mosques, temples and churches for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the country.

Different political, social and cultural organisations chalked out elaborate programmes on the occasion. The programmes included milad mahfil, seminar and symposium highlighting the ideals and spirit of the historic 7th November in 1975.

On this day, patriotic mass and members of the armed forces foiled conspiracies against the national independence and sovereignty.

In a message on the occasion, President Abdur Rahman Biswas called upon all to safeguard the independence and sovereignty and consolidate

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Independent TV channel for education likely

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said in Dhaka Saturday the government was contemplating introduction of an independent channel in television for the spread of education, reports BSS.

In a speech delivered on the occasion of Open University programme in Bangladesh Television, she said radio and television were very important and effective media for the purpose. The government wants to utilise the media for the promotion of education, she said.

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Premadasa invited to SAARC summit

COLOMBO, Nov 8: Bangladesh Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman left here this evening after the end of his 3-day visit to Sri Lanka, reports Xinhua.

Mostafizur Rahman called on President R Premadasa on Saturday and personally handed him an official invitation from Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia to the seventh SAARC summit in Dhaka in December this year.

The President and Minister Rahman exchanged views on the issues such as regional co-operation in South Asia, due to

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Stopover at ZIA Saudi Finance Minister sees stronger ties

The existing Saudi-Bangladesh excellent relationship will be further strengthened in the days to come, Saudi Finance Minister Mohammad Ali Abul Khalil said in the city Saturday, reports BSS.

The royal Saudi Finance Minister was having an hour long stop-over at Zia International Airport on his return journey from China to home. Deputy Minister for Foreign Cooperation of the Ministry of Finance Jarrah al Seralsery was accompanying

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Dubcek dead

PRAGUE, Nov 8: Alexander Dubcek, leader of the 1968 "Prague Spring" Reform Movement that was crushed by Soviet bloc armies, died in a Prague hospital on Saturday, his place in history assured and most of his hopes for democracy fulfilled, reports Reuter.

"Despite the best available care, a failure of vital organs ... occurred," Czechoslovak Health Minister Petr Lom told reporters.

Dubcek, who died two weeks short of his 71st birthday, had been in intensive care after his car plunged off

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Stranded Pakistanis Preparations afoot to start repatriation

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi

Preparations are on to begin the repatriation of the stranded Pakistanis. Officials in Dhaka say that although an exact date is yet to be fixed, there has been "remarkable progress" in starting the process next month, as promised by Islamabad.

According to the officials, Pakistan has already indicated that preparations on its part are in final stages to receive the first batch of 3000 families.

The housing facilities in Punjab province for these returnees, numbering about 15000, are nearing completion. Each family will be given a flat.

The Dhaka authorities have been in close contact with Islamabad and its High Commission in Dhaka in this regard, the officials said.

The process of the issuance of the identity cards for 2.38 lakh refugees are fast progressing and would be complete by this month, they said.

According to a revised estimate, airlifting these people

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Green Peace activists demonstrating against loading of plutonium on a Japanese freighter in France Saturday. — Star TV photo

Plutonium shipment to Japan Asian states fear pollution of their sealanes

PARIS, Nov 8: The ecologist pressure group Greenpeace said a Japanese coastguard vessel rammed its protest ship off the French coast today as it tailed a freighter carrying radioactive plutonium to Japan, reports Reuter.

The incident, which could not immediately be independently confirmed, occurred about 10 hours after the 3,800-tonne Akatsuki Maru left the northwestern French port of Cherbourg after loading its cargo of 1.7 tonnes of recycled nuclear fuel amid massive security measures.

The Shikishima rammed the solo at 0645 GMT about 40 miles east of Ouessant Island off the French Brittany coast, Greenpeace spokeswoman Cindy Baxter said.

"The solo is undamaged and is continuing to follow the Akatsuki Maru at a safe distance in accordance with maritime regulations," she said.

In Tokyo, a spokesman at the Japanese Maritime Safety Agency (coastguard) headquarters refused to comment about the Greenpeace allegations.

He said the plutonium shipment was strictly confidential, and few coastguard personnel knew anything about it.

Meanwhile, Southeast Asian countries are anxiously bracing themselves for the arrival in their busy sealanes of a Japanese ship loaded with radio-active plutonium after it sailed from France on Saturday.

Local officials and environmentalists in Jakarta are worried that the Akatsuki Maru, carrying 1.7 tonnes of highly radioactive plutonium, will sail through the Malacca Strait, one of the world's busiest sealanes which borders Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia.

Infested with pirates, it has also been the scene of several

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\$ 100m IDA aid for trade, fiscal policy reform

WASHINGTON, Nov 8: The International Development Association (IDA), under a second industrial sector adjustment credit, will provide Bangladesh an assistance of 100 million US dollar to reform its trade and fiscal policy, reports BSS.

An agreement to this effect was signed here on Friday between Bangladesh and the IDA. KM Ejazul Haq, Economic Minister, Bangladesh Embassy here and Jochen Krause, Director, country development-1, South Asia region of World Bank, signed the agreement on behalf of the government of Bangladesh and the IDA respectively.

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