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# The Daily Star

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Hasina leaves for Ctg today

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina leaves for Chittagong today (Monday) on a two-day visit. The Awami League President will address a workers meeting of Chittagong City Awami League at 4 pm today. Hasina, also Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, will join a function on Tuesday morning in which the 11th and 12th battalions of the East Bengal Regiment will be ceremonially awarded the national flag, reports UNB.

### 22 migratory birds recovered

The Forest Department personnel yesterday recovered 22 migratory birds from the cage of a street-vendor at Tongi Bazar. Divisional Forest Officer Abdul Motaleb told BSS.

### Nationalist Law Students Forum

Bangladesh Nationalist Law Students Forum was floated at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. The General Secretary of the new forum Mohammad Borhan Meah addressing the press conference said the organisation was formed for establishing rule of law and consolidating democracy in the country, reports BSS.

### DUJ meet today

An emergency meeting of the executive committee of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) will be held today (Monday) at 11:00 AM at the union office. All office-bearers and members of the executive committee including unit chiefs have been requested to attend, reports BSS.

### Fuel-wood seller stabbed, robbed

A fuel-wood seller was severely stabbed and robbed of Taka 6000 at Uttara last night. The victim Malumuddin, 40, was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with four stab injuries and was being operated upon until filing this report midnight last night.

# SAARC summit programmes revised

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi

In a major change in the Seventh SAARC Summit programmes, the three-day event has been truncated into a two-day one, rescheduling the concluding session for December 13 evening instead of the earlier planned December 14 morning.

Officials said yesterday that the decision was taken Saturday "in view of a number of contingencies that could have an impact on the Summit."

The revised programmes have been sent to the other six governments for formal approval, said the officials, who asked they not be named.

They cited the Pakistani Prime Minister's intention to leave Dhaka on December 13 night to prepare for another foreign trip. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is scheduled to go to Japan December 15 and therefore wants to be back home earlier.

"The Pakistani leader's departure before the concluding session will certainly dampen the spirit of the Summit which is attended by all heads of state and government and where all decisions are taken on the basis of unanimity," one official said speaking on the rescheduling of the pro-

grammes.

One of the other reasons that have been cited is that December 14 is the Martyred Intellectuals Day. Several socio-political organisations had also their reservations against the plan to hold a summit programme on that day, a national mourning day.

According to the revised schedules, the one-hour concluding session will be held at 5:30 on December 13 evening. It was earlier scheduled for 10:00 on December 14 morning.

The three-hour opening session will, however, be held as planned earlier, at 10:00 on December 14 morning.

To accommodate the changes, the day-long retreat on board a vessel on the Buriganga has been shortened by two hours.

After the river cruise, the heads of state and government will prepare for the concluding session which will be followed by a banquet at the Bangabhaban and a cultural show.

The Pakistani Prime Minister is expected to depart after attending these programmes.

The idea of holding an ex-

### Proposed SAARC trade accord may not benefit Dhaka

South Asian governments have agreed on a 10 per cent duty cut in trade among themselves which trading circles in Dhaka apprehend as an inequitable deal that may widen trade imbalance between a giant and its weaker neighbours, reports UNB.

According to highly placed sources, the accord, already finalised at ministerial level, is due to be adopted at next month's SAARC summit here.

The agreement, which aims at larger intra-regional trade flow, will provide special treatment status to all products, including duty-free access, in trading among the countries grouped in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

Businessmen said the deal, if comes into effect, would help a larger SAARC trade turnover but simultaneously vented apprehension that mostly India, and Pakistan to some extent, were likely to derive benefit out of it.

India and Pakistan, having a superior infrastructure and technology, are enjoying in-



New Market during shopkeepers strike yesterday.

— Star photo

### Gunmen swoop on 2 shops

By Staff Correspondent

Within a span of 30 minutes, armed men attacked a jewellery shop and a sweetmeat shop at Arambagh in the capital Sunday evening.

Refused by the owner, a group of extortionists attacked SM Jewellers at Arambagh and left at least three persons wounded exploding crackers at around 7:30 pm yesterday.

In another incident, a group of armed men attacked Madhumita Sweetmeat near the Arambagh police box, ransacked the shop and looted Taka 12,000 in cash at 8 pm yesterday.

Motijheel police said they rushed to the Madhumita Sweetmeat after the incident but they were not informed of the incident of SM Jewellers. No arrest was made.

### Shopkeepers keep shutters down

By Staff Correspondent

All city shops were closed Sunday to protest the killing of a shopkeeper in the city Thursday.

Shopkeeper Mohammad Rafiq Mia was killed when gunmen from the Dhaka College compound opened fire on a procession of the shop owners and employees brought out against terrorism and extortion near the College Thursday.

To protest the killing and terrorism, shop owners and employees called the day long strike Sunday.

During the strike hours, shopkeepers held two separate rallies in front of the Jatiya

Press Club and the Government New Market where they demanded arrest of the 'killers' by November 30.

All the city markets and roadside shops including restaurants and dispensaries stayed closed yesterday in support of the strike.

The shopkeepers of the New Market and its surrounding markets held a protest rally in front of the market at around noon yesterday.

Later thousands of shopkeepers from different city markets held another rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club

### Steps to expand textile spinning sub-sector

The cabinet committee on finance and economic affairs yesterday decided to encourage massive expansion of textile spinning sub-sector for reducing the gap between the demand and supply position in the country at a meeting in Dhaka, reports BSS.

Finance Minister Saifur Rahman presided over the meeting while Agriculture, Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Minister Majid-ul-Haque, Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan, Commerce Minister MK Anwar, Planning Minister Zahir Uddin Khan, State Minister for Textile Abdul Mannan, Cabinet Secretary, Governor of Bang-

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### Talks on Rohingya repatriation in Arakan today

A three-day talks between Bangladesh and Myanmar on the repatriation of Rohingya refugees will begin today (Monday) at Nagapali in the Myanmar province of Arakan, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, officials here say preparations are on to send back a big number of refugees shortly. The willing returnees are being taken into the Rangikhali transit camp.

This will be the 11th round of senior officials-level talks between the two countries, the last one having been held in Chittagong.

Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Omar Farooq will lead the Bangladesh delegation at the meeting while Director General of the Immigration Department U Maung Aung will head the host side.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia offering prayer at yesterday's milaad mahfil at her Sugandha office.

### Cyclone Thanks-giving prayer to Almighty

The Nation yesterday offered thanks-giving prayer in mosques and other places of worship expressing gratitude to the Almighty Allah for saving the people of coastal areas of the country from the danger of the cyclonic storm on Saturday, reports BSS.

A milad mahfil was held in this connection at the Sugandha office of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, last evening where the congregation offered munajat seeking divine blessings to save the country from all natural calamities in future and also for its continued peace, prosperity and progress.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, ministers, leaders of different political parties,

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### Back BNP to consolidate democracy: Khaleda

NARAIL, Nov 22: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today called upon the people irrespective of religion, caste and creed to strengthen her party to consolidate democracy and take the nation to the path of progress, reports BSS.

Addressing a huge public rally at the local high school ground Begum Zia sought people's support for the successful implementation of the on-going development programmes of her government aimed at self-reliance.

Begum Zia said the fate of the people could be changed through utilisation of the country's vast manpower resources for increasing production in fields and factories.

Stressing the need for eradication of terrorism from society through collective efforts she said, "unless we can

eliminate terrorism, development efforts would be frustrated."

She said the anti-terrorism bill had been passed to stop extortion of money, toll collection and eve-teasing.

The passage of the bill has already created favourable impact on checking acts of terrorism, she said.

Begum Zia urged the people to come forward for investment in small and medium scale industries which could ultimately generate employment opportunities for the greater number of people. She said without the spread of cottage industries, it would be difficult to find jobs for the increasing number of unemployed people.

Among others, the meeting was also addressed by Minister

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### BNP letting loose terrorism, says Hasina

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday blamed the government for terrorism in educational institutions to stop opposition movement in the country, reports UNB.

In a statement, Hasina accused the BNP's student front of letting loose a reign of terror at Kazipur Mansur Ali College in Sirajganj, Abdullahpur Government College in Natore, Azimuddin College at Gazipur, Baragram Degree College at Satoria in Manikganj and injuring many workers of Chhatra League.

She alleged that the JCD terrorists also attacked residence and business establishments of some Awami League leaders across the country, and looted valuables.

### Seminar on women's rights 'Some laws contradict Constitution'

By Staff Correspondent

Some of the laws relating to women's rights contradict the country's Constitution necessitating a uniform family code to iron out the discrepancies.

The observation came Sunday the concluding day of a two-day seminar on 'Women's rights, law reforms and uniform family code,' organised by the Bangladesh Mahila Parishad at the National Museum auditorium.

Speakers at the seminar said that the Constitution ensures equal rights to all citizens but that the Muslim in-

heritance law provides a son the major part of his father's property.

In the Hindu inheritance law, a daughter has no right to her father's property. The law also deprives a widow the total rights to her husband's property. There are also gulfs of differences between Hindu family laws and Muslim family laws, they added.

These disparities have necessitated the formulation of a uniform family code for the people irrespective of sect and

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### Labour laws don't treat them right!

By Asiuzzaman

Existing labour laws, constituted in line with the ILO Convention, are frequently making women garment workers in Bangladesh to lose their jobs, according to a study disclosed Sunday.

"The number of female workers was about 80 per cent in the garments sector in 1988, which reduced to 65 per cent in 1990," Dr Protima Pal, a researcher of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) told a seminar adding that "The existing laws are instrumental for this drastic reduction."

She was one of the speakers

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### Move to set up new cement factory

Star Report

A move has been taken to set up a new cement factory in the country at an estimated cost of Taka 220 crore under a joint-venture project between a group of private investors and a public sector corporation.

The proposed cement plant, Jalalabad Cement Company Limited (JCLL), with an annual capacity to produce 2.75 lakh tons of portland cement, will be set up at Chhatak in Sunamganj district.

The factory will use imported limestones from the neighbouring Indian state of Meghalaya.

The project will be imple-

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### Garment exports to EC states Plan for double checking to stop fraud

By Inam Ahmed

The government has planned to start "double checking" of garment exports to the European countries to stop fraudulence in generalised system of preference (GSP).

The move came following the European Community's (EC) allegations of GSP fraudulence. Under the GSP Bangladesh gets tax benefit for its export to the EC.

The government has also planned to issue licenses to the exporters who avail the opportunity of GSP.

Sources said the govern-

ment had already started sending the lists of GSP issued by the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) and the country of origin certificate to the Bangladesh High Commission in Brussels since last two months. This will also help the EC authorities to check any fraudulence in GSP and origin certificate.

Under the double checking system, the customs authorities will fax all GSP documents to the concerned countries. The concerned countries on receipt of consignments, will

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### CPB observes October Revolution

By Staff Correspondent

The government should move like a horse to address the national problems but it is stepping like an elephant", CPB chief Saifuddin Ahmed Manik made the comment yesterday while addressing a discussion meeting marking the 75th anniversary of 'October Revolution' at the party central office in the capital.

Criticising the role of the opposition political parties in dealing with the nation's biting issues, the CPB leader said that "the major political parties are busy raking up old coal."

Manik scoffed at speculations that his party was going to split or he abolished because of 'several currents', and said that differences of opinion were quite natural as the CPB was practising intra-party democracy. "As communist we should accept mistakes," he remarked.

The CPB leader welcomed individual views and hoped that, 'minority views may prevail one day.'

Delivering his presidential speech at the meeting, Manik termed the disintegration of the Soviet Union a historic reality and said that those who failed to adjust with the changes would fall by the wayside. Socialism would advance with necessary changes, he hoped.

Party General Secretary Nurul Islam Nahid said that the concept of socialism

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# Recommendations on secondary education reforms

A final draft report on secondary education in Bangladesh has recommended for bringing the higher secondary level (grades 11 and 12) under the purview of the secondary education level which presently comprises grades 9 and 10, reports BSS.

The final draft report on secondary education was prepared by a study team consisting of an international consultant and five national consultants.

The report suggested that the junior secondary level (grades 6 to 8) should be treated as an integral part of basic education. Extensive ef-

forts are needed to raise the transition rate from grade 5 to grade 6 from the present level of 55 per cent with a view to reinforcing the basic literacy, numeracy and life skills gained by the pupils at the primary level, it said.

The draft report was presented at a national seminar in Dhaka yesterday morning to discuss the findings and recommendations on the secondary education reforms.

Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar inaugurated the day-long seminar which was attended by teachers and academics.

The Education Secretary,

Shafiqul Alam, presided over the inaugural session while Dr. FK Chowdhury, Prof M Eunus Mian and Dr AK Jalahuddin spoke on the occasion.

The first phase of work of the study team began on April 1, this year and the study report was discussed by the Education Ministry on October 13.

The major purposes of the study was to assess the current status of secondary education in Bangladesh and to develop a set of policy recommendations for the reform of secondary education.

The study involved six major areas namely planning,

management and financing of education, curriculum and textbook development, academic supervision and inspection, teacher education, examination system and participation of girls in secondary education.

On the examination reforms, the final draft report suggested to form a high-powered National Curriculum Council (NCC). The National Curriculum and Text Board (NCTB) should be responsible not only for producing text books but also for coordinating development and production of supplementary reading materials, reference literatures

and teachers' guides for all subjects and all grades, the report said.

The report also suggested to discontinue the policy of tracking of pupils of grades 9 and 10 into science and social science to strengthen the general education of all pupils upto an accepted level.

For strengthening teacher education, the report called for creating a permanent National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) by bringing the teacher training institutions under a unified academic umbrella.

It also suggested that three-year integrated courses leading

to the first degree in education should be introduced in the universities and selected degree colleges to improve the quality of teacher education.

The report, while suggesting on girls participation in higher education, said that hostel accommodation and institutional transport facilities for female pupils and teachers should be provided. Appointment of female teachers to the extent of at least 33 per cent in the coeducational schools and 66 per cent in the girls schools should be made, the report said. It also suggested for induction of women

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