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NEWS BRIEFS

Khaleda calls on Biswas

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia paid a courtesy call on President Abdur Rahman Biswas, who returned home after performing holy Hajj, at Bangabhaban here yesterday. The Prime Minister passed sometime with the President, reports BSS.

Prize distribution of Edn Week today

The prize distribution ceremony of the Education Week, 1993 will be held at the Osmani Memorial Hall at 10 am today. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will distribute prizes among the winners as chief guest, reports UNB.

Dacoits swoop on 3 night coaches

MAGURA, June 8: Ten passengers were wounded when a group of armed dacoits swooped on three night coaches at Moghi on the Magura-Arpara road and looted valuables worth about Tk one lakh on last Tuesday, reports UNB.

British envoy hosts reception

British High Commissioner Sir Colin Imray and Lady Imray hosted a reception Tuesday evening on the occasion of the birthday of Queen Elizabeth II. The reception held at the High Commission at Baridhara was attended by Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz, Social Welfare and Women Affairs Minister Tariqul Islam, Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni, Political leaders, MPs, members of the diplomatic corps, senior civil and military officials, journalists, professionals and elite of the city, reports UNB.

Repatriation of Chakmas again stalled

From Nurul Alam

RAMGARH (Khagrachhari), June 8: The much-expected repatriation of Chakma refugees, now encamped in Tripura state of India, could not start here today despite all preparations by the government to receive them.

Bangladesh and Indian officials said the Chakma refugees refused to return to their homelands in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) until the fulfilment of their 13-point demands placed earlier. These included, in the main, a guarantee of their full security after return, involvement of the United Nations, Amnesty International and other world bodies in the repatriation process, withdrawal of all security forces from the CHT, expulsion of Bengali settlers and proper rehabilitation of the returnees.

As a result, the repatriation process has again become uncertain. Today it suffered a fresh set-back following refusal of the refugees to return under a bilateral agreement with the Indian government, sources said.

A senior information officer of Tripura Amalendu Dutta, who arrived here along with a 10-member Indian delegation at 12:30 pm today, told the journalists at the Ramgarh Rest House that the Chakma refugees declined to return because they don't feel they'd be secure after repatriation.

"Until the fulfilment of their 13-point demands the refugees will not agree to come back here," Dutta added, as the spokesman of the Indian delegation.

The delegation, headed by the District Magistrate of South Tripura Y P Singh, came here along with a Bangladesh team which had gone to the Indian camp on the other side of the 100-yard wide Feni river that separates India and Bangladesh at Ramgarh.

The Bangladesh side, led by the Thana Nirbahi Officer of Ramgarh Mohammad Syedul Hoque, went to the Indian camp to see the preparations made by them for sending back the Chakmas. But the team re-

turned at 12:30 pm along with the Indian delegation while no refugees were sent back.

The Indian delegation had a closed-door meeting with Bangladesh officials including the Secretary on Special Affairs Nasrullah Khan, Joint Secretary of the Home Ministry M A Mannan and Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong Mohammad Omar Faruk. The outcome of the meeting could not be known immediately.

However, when the refugees did not come, a sense of frustration was noticed on the Bangladesh side among all the people including high officials, tribal leaders, journalists and members of the public who waited with enthusiasm and patience for hours together. The repatriation was scheduled to begin from nine this morning.

As per the agreement reached at the district-level meeting between India and Bangladesh on June 1, 200 families comprising 973 Chakma refugees in the first batch were expected to be repatriated

today through the Ramgarh reception centre. According to India, there are 53,405 tribal refugees.

Bangladesh officials were seen waiting with some red roses to welcome the refugees. Arrangements for food and shelter were also made. Some BDR personnel and 60 volunteers also were deployed at this reception centre to look after the refugees on their return.

The Indian side, too, had made some arrangements including erecting tents on the other side of the Feni river. Those living on the Bangladesh side of the river at Ramgarh could see the arrangements being made by the Indians and the movement of BSF and other administration personnel involved with the repatriation. But it came as quite a sad surprise when the refugees did not agree to come back.

Similar arrangements for repatriation were also made in January when her engagement to the Crown Prince was officially announced.



A WAIT IN VAIN: Officials, newsmen and relatives look eagerly across the Feni river for the repatriation of the first batch of Chakma refugees from the Indian state of Tripura at the Ramgarh reception camp Khagrachhari, yesterday. Despite their keen, patient vigil none of the refugees bothered to cross the 100-yard river into Bangladesh. —Star photo by AKM Mohsin

Opposition may join JS today

By Nurul Kabir

The deadlock in the Jatiya Sangsad following the opposition's boycott of Parliament proceedings from Sunday afternoon is likely to end today.

The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has met the opposition demand for withdrawing the BTV scriptwriter who allegedly distorted the JS proceedings Sunday night.

A five-hour long meeting of the Parliament's Business Advisory Committee ending at 1:00 am Wednesday resolved the issue.

Law and Justice Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz, Information Minister Abdul Huda, Irrigation Minister Majid-ul-Hoque, Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain, State Minister for Law Barrister Aminul Haque, Tofael Ahmed and Sajeda Chowdhury of the Awami League, Matur Rahman Nizam of the Jamaat,

and Shahjahan Siraj of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) were present.

According to meeting sources, the ruling party representatives suggested that the TV round-up would remain suspended until a new scriptwriter was selected to replace Shaikat Mahmood, the reporter of the controversial programme.

The boycotting opposition, however, meets this morning to decide as to when they would join Parliament proceedings of the budget session, an opposition leader told The Star last night.

Earlier, Speaker Shakh Razzak Ali deferred the discussion on "the adverse impact of the Farakka Barrage in India on the country's economy, environment and public life" in the House following a request from

the boycotting opposition.

Discussion on the issue was initiated by Moulana Sakawat Hossain of the Jamaat in the morning sitting of the Sangsad with Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni in the chair. The one-and-a-half-hour sitting was adjourned at noon to resume at 4 pm.

When the House resumed at 4:15 with Treasury Bench MP Abu Yusuf Mhammad Khalilur Rahman deliberating on the Farakka issue, Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali intervened to inform the House that Abdus Samad Azad, the acting leader of the opposition had sent a letter requesting the chair to defer the discussion on the topic so that they, too, could participate in the deliberations. The Speaker decided to entertain the opposition request.

See Page 12 Col 7

Another alleged killer of Zahir arrested

By Staff Correspondent

Police arrested one Mohammad Kawsar Monday in connection with the sensational murder of leading businessman Humayun Zahir killed in the city in April.

Acting on a tip a special police force arrested Kawsar, one of the alleged murderers of Humayun Zahir, from Fenchuganj under Sylhet district. Zahir, a 48-year-old businessman, was shot dead in the premises of his Dhanmondi residence on April 8 by two youngmen.

Fazlur Rahman Tanmoy, an accomplice of Kawsar, was caught red handed by the local police immediately after the incident.

Later, police arrested one Abdul Matin in connection with the murder.



Japan's Crown Prince Naruhito and his fiancée Masako Owada

Japan's Crown Prince weds today

From S Y Bakht

TOKYO, June 8: The wedding ceremony of Crown Prince Naruhito and Masako Owada, a former foreign service officer, Wednesday at the Imperial Sanctuary will be steeped in traditional rites and rituals and somewhat shrouded in mystery.

The wedding ceremony of Naruhito, 33, and Owada, 29, will take place in the Imperial Palace sanctuary, called the Kashikodokoro, housing a replica of the Sacred Mirror, one of the three imperial treasures that symbolises the Japanese imperial throne.

The sanctuary, dedicated to the Sun Goddess, is one of the three ancestral shrines located deep inside the sprawling Imperial Palace grounds in this city of nearly 12 million people.

Daughter of a diplomat and educated at Oxford and Harvard universities, Owada gave up a promising diplomatic career in January when her engagement to the Crown Prince was officially announced.

Naruhito, who graduated in history from Gakushuin University and later received a Doctor of Civil Law by Diploma degree from the Oxford University, first met Owada in October 1986 and finally won her hand in December last year.

In a briefing given to newsmen last week Ilojo Nakajima, the vice-grand master of ceremonies at the Imperial Household Agency, said that the day's functions will include a series of religious rites and traditional rituals.

The Kashikodokoro Palace sanctuary comprises the innermost sanctum, the inner sanctum and the outer sanctum and only the Emperor, Empress, Crown Prince and Crown Princess are permitted to enter the innermost sanctum.

Nearly 800 guests, including royal family members, the Owada family, government officials, members of the diplomatic corps and other foreign dignitaries have been invited to the wedding ceremony.

See Page 12 Col 1

New Hq bldg inaugurated Earn people's confidence, PM asks policemen

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said in Dhaka yesterday that the police had to expand its relationship with the people to earn their confidence, reports BSS.

Inaugurating the newly-built police headquarters building Begum Zia said old thoughts and concepts had become outdated. The police had to be the real friends of the people, she said and suggested regular meetings of the police with the representative persons of the society to establish a close relationship with them.

The Prime Minister said the police could get active cooperation of the people in curbing criminal activities and ensure their society-oriented role only by earning the confidence of the masses.

The function was also addressed by Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Home Secretary Azimuddin Ahmed and Inspector General of Police AEM Shahjahan.

The police headquarters building has been built at a cost of Tk 8.10 crore on 4.10 acres of land. In the second phase, a fifteen-storied and a three-storied building will be constructed on the land.

She said as the pattern of criminal activities had changed with the change of time the police had to acquaint itself with the modern information and technical know-how to curb crimes speedily. "You have to keep pace with the changing society," she said.

The Prime Minister also urged the police to be more people-oriented. See Page 12 Col 5

Cambodian constituent assembly sits Monday

PHNOM PENH, June 8: Cambodia's newly elected constituent assembly will convene for the first time on Monday June 14, Phnom Penh government officials said today, reports AFP.

However, Phnom Penh officials said they would not abandon their contest of UN-run general election results, which gave the opposition FUNCINPEC Royalist party a victory without an absolute majority.

Attendance does not imply consent, the officials said.

The Cambodian People's Party (CPP) has said it will only accept defeat if the result of the election is certified by an independent, non-UN inquiry board.

Meanwhile, the UN transitional authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) urged Cambodian factions to negotiate their differences and move towards political cooperation.

"UNTAC wishes to encourage all parties to intensify negotiations," spokesman Eric Falt said, calling for a strong role for Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

"We ... support his efforts for national reconciliation. We regard his leadership role as key to a peaceful transition," Falt said.

Falt's comments followed a meeting between Prince Sihanouk, Phnom Penh Prime Minister Hun Sen and government Cambodian People's Party (CPP) president Chea Sim

at the Royal Place, during which they set the date for the assembly's first gathering.

Sources said the three officials discussed a meeting of the Supreme National Council (SNC), which groups the country's warring factions, to be held Thursday.

Government spokesman Khieu Kanharith, speaking of the meeting with Prince Sihanouk, said, "he said we can attend the first meeting of the constituent assembly, and it does not mean we have to accept the result of the election, but only to go along with the prince."

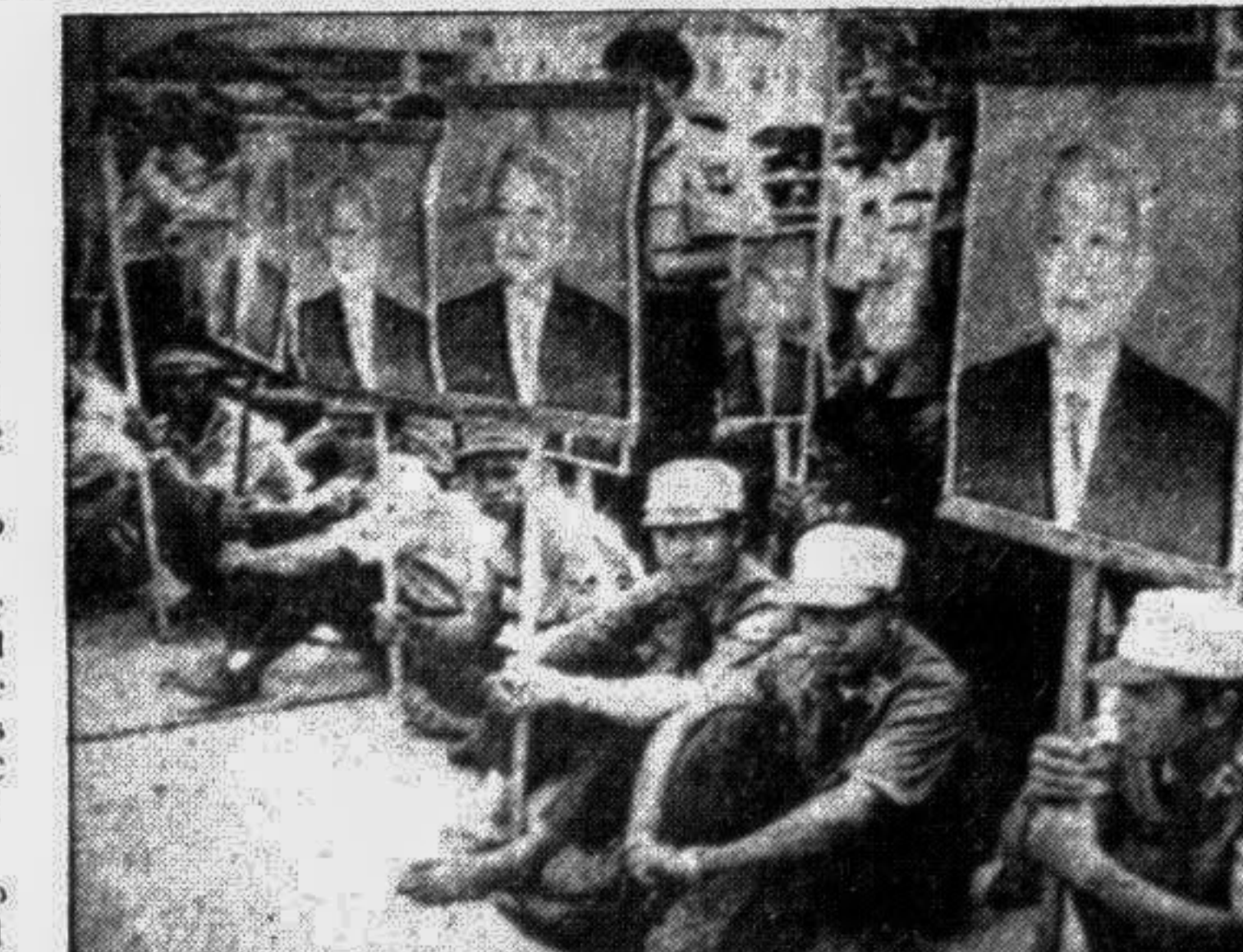
The United Nations said it would accept the date decided by Prince Sihanouk.

Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the son of Prince Sihanouk and the head of the opposition party FUNCINPEC which won the election without an absolute majority, was due to arrive Wednesday to attend the SNC meeting the following day.

Final elections results are to be announced on Wednesday.

With about 99 percent of the vote counted, FUNCINPEC had 45.2 percent compared to the CPP's 38.6. The percentages were likely to give FUNCINPEC 58 seats in the 120-member assembly to the CPP's 51.

The remainder are likely to go to the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP) of former Prime Minister Son Sann.



A demonstration in favour of Prince Sihanouk in Phnom Penh yesterday. —Star TV photo

Incentives for oil, gas exploration

The cabinet yesterday approved the proposal of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources relating to the removal of certain barriers to encourage foreign involvement in exploration and development of oil and gas in the country, reports BSS.

The approval was given at the regular weekly meeting of the cabinet held yesterday at Bangabhaban with the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair.

The incentives to be given to the foreign investors include, among others, to allow import of machinery and materials for exploration, development and production of oil and gas free of duty, withdrawal of the provision for payment of administering fee from the model production sharing agreement and fixing of price of gas at 75 per cent of the fuel oil price prevalent at the international market.

The cabinet reviewed the price and stock position of salt and decided to import salt to the extent of 4 lakh metric tons to meet the deficiency of salt production caused by recent heavy rainfall. It directed the Ministry of Commerce to arrange import of the required quantity of salt through the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) immediately.

Rocket hits Tokyo PS ahead of royal wedding

TOKYO, June 8: A rocket suspected of being launched by leftist radicals opposed to Crown Prince Naruhito's wedding hit a police station in the Japanese capital late today, police said, reports AFP.

There were no immediate reports of injuries.

The home-made rocket smashed a window of the police station in the residential area of Denzomachi in Tokyo's Setagaya Ward, they said.

Police said they suspected the attack was carried out by leftist radicals opposed to the imperial system and to the Crown Prince's wedding to Masako Owada Wednesday.

None claimed responsibility for the attack, but the Revolutionary Workers' Party, a leftist guerrilla group, said recently in handbills that it was planning to stop the royal wedding.

Govt urged to remove tariff anomalies

Star Report

The country's entrepreneurs and business circle suggest that the government should remove all anomalies in tariff values and make a realistic duty structure for industries in the 1993-94 budget, to be placed in the Jatiya Sangsad tomorrow.

They feel that the tariff values on some imports are higher than actual prices of the goods, which is affecting the manufacturing sector in the country.

They have already identified 28 items used as raw materials in industries which have been hit by higher tariff values.

These items are soda ash, calcium carbonate, roller-bearing, titanium-dioxide, zinc oxide, insulating varnishes, aluminium chloride, sodium-bicarbonate, nitric acid, melamine moulding compound and resin, metallic pigments, citric acid, acrylic polymers, polypropylene, aluminium sheets, caustic soda, graphite electrodes, lead oxide, lithopone, basic chromium sulphate, carbon steel rod, sulphur, liquid glucose, wire nails, polystyrene, rollable scraps, zinc ingot, and hydrochloric acid.

Some of these items have tariff values almost twice their real prices, business circles observe. For example, titanium-dioxide has a tariff value of Tk 2300 per metric ton.

See Page 12 Col 6

JP men damage 15 vehicles in city

By Staff Correspondent

At least 15 vehicles parked at the Bijoy Nagar area in the city were damaged when Jatiya Party activists went on a rampage Tuesday morning.

Disgruntled JP supporters brought out a procession protesting the sentencing by a special court of party chief former President Hussain Mohammad Ershad and his wife Raushan.

Police attempted to disperse the activists. However, no arrests were made.