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NEWS BRIEFS

Bangladesh Bank services essential

The government has declared the services of all categories of officials and employees of Bangladesh Bank as essential. The step has been taken as service of Bangladesh Bank is essential for arranging measures for continued normal life of the people, an official handout said here yesterday, reports BSS.

Jamuna swallows 200 handlooms

PABNA, June 28: Some 200 handlooms of five weaving factories worth about Tk 50 lakh and 15 shops at Kakalia Bazar in Bera thana have been devoured by the Jamuna in the last 48 hours. Official sources said the swelling river also eroded homesteads of 56 families rendering 250 people homeless during the period, reports UNB.

Pak soldier shot dead in Somalia

MOGADISHU, June 28: Somali gunmen shot dead one Pakistani UN soldier and wounded two others taking part in an operation to clear snipers from Mogadishu's flashpoint October 21 road, the UN said. Two gunmen were killed, spokesman Major David Stockwell said. Witnesses said at least one Somali civilian, a woman, was also killed, reports Reuter.

Christoff dead

ROME, June 28: Bulgarian-born opera singer Boris Christoff, 79, one of the great bass voices of the century, died in Rome today. Italy's national news agency Ansa said. Christoff, who lived in Italy for the last 40 years, specialised in the Russian opera Repertory and one of his greatest roles was in modest Mussorgsky's Boris Godunov, reports Reuter.

Sharif suffers fresh blow Punjab Assembly dissolved just after its restoration by HC

LAHORE, June 28: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif suffered a blow in his struggle to control Pakistan's unruly provinces when the Governor of Punjab again dissolved the Provincial Assembly shortly after a court ordered it restored, reports AFP.

The Court headed by Chief Justice Mahboob Ahmed passed a unanimous order declaring as unlawful the May 29 dissolution of the assembly by the governor on Watto's advice. The Court said neither the notice of no-confidence by pro-Sharif deputies nor the Chief Minister's advice for assembly dissolution was free from doubt.

April 18 sacking by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. Meanwhile, Nawaz Sharif, facing a deepening of the worst crisis of his political career, today rejected opposition demands for elections. Saying his government had a 'constitutional and moral right' to serve the country until 1995, the premier told a meeting of his parliamentary party that 95 per cent of deputies were opposed to mid-term polls.

Sharif, who Sunday held his first face-to-face meeting with President Ghulam Ishaq Khan since his reinstatement last month, said he told the President that only those parties and groups with no parliamentary representation were vocal in demanding elections. The election demand was conveyed to the President through a resolution adopted by more than 20 opposition parties on the eve of Sharif's 90-minute meeting with Ishaq Khan, who had sacked him and dissolved the National Assembly on charges of mismanagement on April 18. The Supreme Court later struck down the Presidential Order and Sharif's government and the assembly were restored on May 26, 38 days after the ouster which had climaxed a power tussle between the two top functionaries. See Page 12 Col 8



Iraqi women yesterday mourning the people killed in the US missile attack on Baghdad. — AFP photo

US warship heads for Red Sea Clinton vows to stamp out Iraqi 'terrorism'

WASHINGTON, June 28: President Bill Clinton claimed today the US missile strike on Iraq had crippled its intelligence operations and vowed to do 'everything we possibly can' to stamp out terrorism, report Reuter, AFP.

Clinton defended the attack on Iraq's intelligence headquarters in Baghdad, ordered in retaliation for an alleged plot to murder former President George Bush. 'I did my job' Clinton said of his decision, which has drawn criticism from the Arab world, including Egypt, which usually supports American policy. The President told reporters he received a report from National Security Adviser Anthony Lake 'confirming that we did in fact cripple the Iraqi intelligence capacity, which was the intent of the action.'

A USA Today-CNN poll released on Monday found that 66 per cent of Americans agreed with the decision to attack Baghdad but that 54 per cent believed the attack will raise the risk of terrorism in the United States. It is illegal under US law for a President to order the assassination of a foreign head of state. Meanwhile, former Gulf Editor on page 4

Iran fears US attack

DUBAI, June 28: Iran's fiercely critical reaction to the US missile strike on its traditional enemy Iraq reflects growing apprehension in Tehran that the Clinton administration may use similar tactics against it, diplomats said today, reports Reuter.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry said on Sunday the United States had violated the UN Charter and 'international law recognised by civilised nations.' The diplomats said military action against Tehran did not look likely but Iranian leaders were growing increasingly worried and fear the precedent set by the latest US strike on Baghdad. 'They fear they may be next,' one diplomat said. See Page 12 Col 4

Operative Tariff Schedule soon

The National Board of Revenue will soon bring out an Operative Tariff Schedule identifying all import tax measures, concessions or restrictions that apply to individual commodities. According to sources, commodities will be identified by the Harmonized System (HS) of Commodity Descriptions which Bangladesh adopted in 1988. At present the information about the rates of duty and restriction that apply to each of the items imported in Bangladesh are not available in

By Special Correspondent one place. The Customs Act of 1969 contained this information with a system of commodity identification that was different. Every year since then the applicable rates, concessions, restrictions for each of the thousands of items that are imported have been changed, often more than once, through issuance of Statutory Regulatory Orders (SRO). The SROs became so large in number that it became virtually impossible for importers to keep track of the applicable rates. This made the Customs

and Chief Controller of Import and Export (CCI&E) clearance process complicated unless the system was appropriately reorganised by the importers. The introduction of an Operative Tariff Schedule will follow the measures that Bangladesh has been taking to make her import system and procedures more liberal and transparent. Bangladesh has historically used import quota restriction as a means of rationing scarce foreign resources and protecting local industries from external competition. See Page 12 Col 4

Leave to appeal against HC verdict on Azam granted

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday granted leave to appeal against the April 22 High Court judgement restoring the citizenship of Jamaat leader Prof Golam Azam, reports UNB. The petition will come up for hearing on July 25. The court also ordered continuity of the stay of the High Court judgement till disposal of the appeal. Barrister A R Yusuf, the counsel for Golam Azam,

pleaded for vacation of the stay order so that the petition against detention of Azam pending in the High Court be heard. The court, however, refused to vacate the stay order. Presided over by Justice M H Rahman, the Appellate Division comprised Justice A T M Afzal, Justice Mustafa Kamal and Justice Latifur Rahman. The court debarred the press from reporting any comment, remarks or query

made by the learned judges during hearing of the case. The trial is held in open court, and the press had covered the proceedings of the High Court without any restriction. The appeal petition moved by Attorney General Aminul Haq raised the points almost similar to what he had submitted before the High Court Division. It said the Bangladesh Citi- See Page 12 Col 7

Dhaka anguished

Bangladesh yesterday expressed deep anguish over the loss of life in Sunday's pre-dawn missile attack on Baghdad and hoped the situation would not deteriorate, reports UNB. The reaction came when a Foreign Ministry spokesman was asked to comment on the US missile attack on the intelligence headquarters in the Iraqi capital that left at least six civilians dead and many injured. 'The government of Bangladesh is closely observing the situation,' the spokesman said. He stressed the imperative need for the parties concerned in the situation to abide by the principles of UN Charter and accepted norms of international law.

Opposition in JS condemns US attack, demands resolution

The opposition in parliament yesterday strongly condemned the US missile attack on Baghdad and demanded that the House adopt a resolution denouncing the 'aggression,' reports UNB. Leaders of Awami League, Jamaat-e-Islami, Workers Party and Ganatantri Party rose in protest against early Sunday's blitz on the Iraqi capital that left at least six civilians dead and many injured. They also criticised the role of United Nations.

The opposition parties called for a full-dress discussion in parliament on the incident. Speaker Sheikh Razzaque Ali told the House that he had received a notice and would consider it. 'It's a naked attack on Iraq,' said Salahuddin Yusuf, a front-ranking leader of Awami League, pointing to the pre-dawn assault on Baghdad. 'We condemn it.' See Page 12 Col 4

Two assaulted on DU campus

By DU Correspondent Two students including a Chhatra League (M-I) activist were assaulted on the Dhaka University (DU) campus in separate incidents yesterday. A group of unidentified youths assaulted Shaiful Islam, a pro-Awami League BCL (M-I) activist, on the campus in the morning. Shaiful is a final year student of the DU Institute of Social Welfare. According to sources, the group beat up Shaiful in the Registrar building premises. See Page 12 Col 6

Raushan's bail: SC rejects prayer for stay

The Supreme Court yesterday rejected a petition praying for the stay of the operation of the High Court order to release Begum Raushan Ershad from jail on bail, reports BSS. A two-member High Court Division Bench Sunday granted bail to the wife of former President H M Ershad asking her to furnish a bail bond of Tk 7 lakh. She was ordered to be enlarged on bail only in 'consideration of illness and old age.' Justice A T M Afzal, Judge See Page 12 Col 8

Finance Bill passed Saifur assures no new taxes

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday passed the Finance Bill 1993 with Finance Minister Saifur Rahman assuring the House that no fresh taxes would be levied nor prices of utility services be increased after the passage of the proposed budget. 'I don't anticipate any SRO (Statutory Regulatory Order) unless there is an emergency,' the Finance Minister said while winding up the discussion on the bill. The bill gives effect to the fiscal proposals of the government and amends some of the previous financial rules. The bill was passed by voice vote amid protest by the op-

position who had demanded a referendum on the bill. Fifty-nine opposition members moved notices for a referendum and spoke on the bill during the past two days, objecting to the seven acts proposed to be amended by the bill. In support of the bill Saifur said that the government was trying to provide the nation a new sense of direction by widening the area of participatory development process. But the opposition alleged that the bill was contradictory to the budget speech of the Finance Minister since it empowered the authorities to is- See Page 12 Col 1

Four more killed in Kathmandu police firing

KATHMANDU, June 27: At least four people were killed and five injured when police opened fire today on thousands of angry communist demonstrators in the town of Lalitpur in the Kathmandu valley, witnesses and party sources said, reports AFP. There was no immediate official confirmation of the deaths in the violent clashes in Lalitpur, a known communist stronghold near the capital, which erupted following three days of street violence in Kathmandu triggered by a communist protest strike.

Lalitpur Monday, demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala. The riot police fired tear-gas shells and charged with batons to disperse the demonstrators, the witnesses said. 'The demonstrators panicked and started throwing stones at police, and in retaliation they fired indiscriminately killing at least four and injuring five others who are now undergoing emergency operation to retrieve the bullets at a hospital,' a party source said. 'Police even fired at a young girl, Rita Shilpakar, who was watching the action from her window,' the source said, and gave the names of two of the four dead as Raj Man Shakya, 35, and Krishna Manandhar, 25. A NCP-UML parliamentarian told AFP on condition of anonymity that Home Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has failed to maintain law and order situation and control the agitation. He should now resign on moral grounds with a democratic spirit.

The new deaths brought the unofficial casualty toll in police shootings in the spreading unrest in the valley at least 25 dead and 80 injured since Friday when a general strike called by the Nepal Communist Party-United Marxist and Leninist (NCP-UML) turned violent. Officials have put the toll at seven dead and 50 injured. NCP-UML sources and witnesses said more than 8,000 people took to the streets of

WB loan for BIWTC project may not be taken

By Inam Ahmed A World Bank-financed project — the IWT-3 — is likely to be cancelled or allowed to lapse conditionally, deemed unacceptable by the government, according to sources. The final decision on the \$2 million US dollar project for the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) now lies with the Prime Minister. The conditionalities for the project, signed in 1991, include retrenchment of 2200 workers of the corporation, trimming down the fleet size, and withdrawal of some unprofitable river transport services. State Minister for Shipping, Harun-Al-Rashid, in an earlier interview to a weekly, had also See Page 12 Col 7

SKOP-labour feds fail to agree on jt programme

By Staff Correspondent The SKOP and four other workers' federations yesterday failed to agree on a common action programme — scheduled to be announced tomorrow — to pressurise the government to fulfil their demands. Representatives from both sides who talked for one and half hours at the SKOP's Topkhana office yesterday evening, agreed to meet today in a bid to finalise the agitation programme. See Page 12 Col 6

Hasina welcomes bank employees to Sramik League

By Staff Correspondent More than a thousand employees belonging to the Sonali Bank Employees' Union yesterday joined the Awami League (AL)-backed Jatiya Sramik League, a press release issued by the AL said. AL chief Sheikh Hasina spoke on the occasion as chief guest. AL presidium member Amir Hossain Amu, party joint secretary Abdul Jalil, Sramik League general secretary Abdul Matin Master and Abdullah. See Page 12 Col 6

The Philips Awards for Literature and Journalism 1399 Bangla Year. Transcom Electronics Limited announces with pleasure the annual Philips Awards for the Bangla Year 1399. The Awards were initiated in 1992 to honour two outstanding works, one in the field of literature and the other in the field of journalism. Each Award consists of a sum of Taka, 50,000, a Certificate and a Trophy, to be handed out during the official ceremony in Dhaka. The considerations to be taken into account for the Awards will be: A. For Literature: i. Originality ii. Human values and Universality iii. Reflection of contemporary life and iv. Language and style. B. For Journalism: i. Factual integrity ii. Total Comprehensiveness of the Subject iii. Objectivity iv. In-depth analysis and importance of the contemporary life. The contestants for Literature and Journalism are invited to make 5 Copies of their titles/reports, 2 Copies of recent passport size photograph reach to Mr. Hasan Ahmed, Transcom Electronics Limited 100 Kaz Nazrul Islam Avenue, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka. Two separate panels of judges will be formed to decide the Awards and their decisions shall be deemed final. The decisions will be published in the press during the 1st week of Ashwin 1400 and the Award winners will be informed by mail accordingly. Transcom Electronics Limited PHILIPS