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NEWS BRIEFS

Ashura tomorrow

Ashura, the 10th of Muharram, will be observed in the country tomorrow to commemorate the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hossain. The day is a public holiday. Different socio-cultural and religious organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day, reports UNB.

PSC departmental exam '93 July 17

The first half-yearly departmental examination '93 will begin on July 17 in the hall room of the Public Service Commission. An official hand-out last night said list of candidates, admit cards and timings of the examination had already been sent to concerned authorities, reports UNB.

Three injured in city clash

Three persons were injured when transport workers and local people clashed at Kazla under Demra police in the city Tuesday. Witnesses said, the clash followed a rift over payment of bus fare by a local person. Police intervened to end the hour-long clash.

Seminar on 'Open University'

A workshop on 'Bangladesh Open University: Planning and Implementation' will be held at the Planning and Development Academy in Dhaka on Saturday. Education Minister, Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar will inaugurate the workshop as chief guest, reports UNB.

Benazir leads walkout, calls it 'high treason' Islamabad imposes direct rule on Punjab

ISLAMABAD, June 29: Pakistan's government imposed direct rule in populous Punjab province today, ramming the resolution through a special session of parliament and emasculating the rebellious local government, reports Reuter. Opposition leader Benazir Bhutto led a walk-out after a stormy debate before the vote and members of her coalition People's Democratic Alliance blasted the move as tantamount to reimposing martial law. Members of the extraordi-

nary joint session of the National Assembly and the Senate voted 145 to seven for the resolution that a situation has arisen in which the government of Punjab cannot be carried on in accordance with the... Constitution. Angry opposition members drowned out a reading of the resolution, yelling and pounding their benches. The resolution calls for the President to proclaim direct rule and hand over powers to govern Pakistan's largest and most

powerful province to the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Opposition members said President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, locked in a bitter six-month old power struggle with Sharif, might refuse to enforce the resolution. This is high treason and amounts to subversion of the Constitution, Bhutto told reporters after the vote. She appealed to the President not to comply. This high treason has been

committed in simple lust for power, she said. The resolution came after Governor Chaudhury Altaf Hussain dissolved the 248-seat provincial assembly late on Monday, on the mandatory advice of Chief Minister Manzoor Ahmad Wattoo, a few hours after it was restored by the provincial High Court. Law Minister Abdul Ghafoor said the resolution was binding on the President and described the second dissolution of the

Bill on separation of judiciary soon

The government will soon place a bill in Parliament seeking separation of the judiciary from the executive, Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz said Tuesday, reports UNB. He said a draft of the proposed bill is now at the final stage in the parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Law and Justice and it would be placed before the House shortly for consideration of the lawmakers. "I firmly believe in the theory of separation of the judiciary and I have been upholding this concept through out my long career as a legal practitioner," he told the House while winding up a debate on cut motions on bud-

getary allocation for the judiciary for fiscal 1993-94. Amidst cheers from both treasury bench and opposition members, Mirza Hafiz said, "If I am alive, I am making a solemn pledge that I will place the draft bill in this House. If I fail, I shall resign." Narrating in detail the reasons for delay in producing the draft bill in the House, the Law Minister said there were some defects in the draft bill. After thorough scrutiny and consultation with legal experts and the Attorney General the draft bill has been almost finalised. He said the next meeting of the parliamentary standing

SKOP, labour feds to announce their plans today

By Staff Correspondent The SKOP and the workers federations of four sectors are scheduled to simultaneously announce identical action programmes from two separately arranged press conferences in the city today. The SKOP press conference will be held at its temporary office at 4:00 pm while the four federations press briefing will take place at the Workers' Party office at 5:30 pm. Representatives of both the sides tentatively reached a consensus last night on a 48-hour labour strike and blockade of roads all over the country. However, negotiators of the SKOP and the federations adjourned their respective meetings as well as a joint



PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat (left) confers with South African ANC leader Nelson Mandela during a session of the 29th Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit held in Cairo yesterday. — AFP photo

Declare Sylhet distressed area, demands Hasina

By Staff Correspondent President of the Awami League and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday, demanded that the greater Sylhet area be declared a distressed area and the flood affected people be provided with adequate relief. Addressing three public rallies and 20 small meetings during her visit to the flood affected areas in Moulvibazar, Habiganj and Sylhet Hasina said, "The Awami League is distributing free medicines and providing treatments as large number of people have been affected by diarrhoea and other diseases. But the government is yet to send any medical team to the affected areas." She told the rallies that during her recent visit to the World Conference on Human

No corrupt minister in cabinet'

By Staff Correspondent The government yesterday once again claimed itself free of any corruption and urged the opposition to refrain from levelling unsubstantiated charges against the BNP. The ruling party claim was pronounced in Jatiya Sangsad yesterday following some opposition lawmakers' repeated assertions that some ministers were corrupt. The opposition also urged the Leader of the House and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia to get rid of 'corrupt' ministers. Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan, refuting an allegation against him by an Awami League legislator, told the House that there was no corrupt minister in the cabinet. The Industries Minister also suggested that the opposition MPs should first gather adequate information about any particular issue before they raise any allegation of corruption. Barrister Aminul Haque, State Minister for Establishment, advised the opposition MPs to come up with specific evidence of corruption by the government instead of repeatedly levelling vague charges. "Why don't you publish the 'documents' relating to so-called corruption and irregularities, if there is any, in the newspapers," the State Minister asked the opposition, claiming the government had

JS body on corruption delayed

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali last night deferred for some time the announcement of the Parliamentary Committee to probe into the charges of corruption against the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control as demanded by the concerned minister, reports BSS. Earlier on Sunday the Speaker sought eight names each from the treasury and the opposition benches by Monday to announce the committee yesterday. He said the treasury bench has submitted a list of members for the proposed parliamentary committee Monday while the opposition bench submitted it yesterday morning. He said he needed to hold discussions with both sides before the announcement of the Parliamentary Committee and hence it would take some time

Tk 20 crore foreign aid found misused under 9 ministries

Foreign aid worth several crore taka was misused in a number of projects under different ministries, a report by the Auditor and Comptroller General revealed. Some 34 financial irregularities involving about Taka 20 crore have been detected under nine ministries. The audit examined the accounts of 269 projects between 1983 and 1988. The reports were placed before Parliament earlier this month. The biggest anomaly was detected in the Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Prakaipa under the Finance Ministry, in which more than nine crore taka remained overdue against delinquent borrowers since 1986. The report said, adding that there was not sufficient initiative to realise the money. The other ministries where

By Staff Correspondent monetary irregularities were identified are: the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Industries, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Ministry of Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Communication. According to the report a sum of Tk 2,47,01,308 was wasted in the Strajganj integrated rural development project by purchasing excess pipes and strainers for the project financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Under the Ministry of Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control, the report revealed that the management of the Meghna-Dhonaoda irrigation project failed to realise Tk 1,93,89,547 from a contrac-

tor who received the money as advance and misused departmental machinery. This too, was also an ADB-financed project. Irregularities in a Tk 1,84,57,320 ADB loan were found in the public health programme project (malaria control) during 1986-87. Some 500 metric tons of poor quality DDT powder was purchased as part of the project which caused the losses. Other irregularities in various ministries included expenditure without approval, excessive use of official vehicles, inadvertent payment of additional loans to the borrowers, and loss of imported equipment of some projects. The report also said that in some projects expenditure exceeded the allocation, while some projects showed expenditure without any budget.

Believe it or not!

By Staff Correspondent The people who got married for a second time in the capital apparently evaded the City Corporation tax because only 10 people were registered as having married a second time during the year 1992-93. The Dhaka City Corporation had targeted earnings of Tk 1,000 from tax on second marriages during the year but earned only Tk 250 from 10 couples. This was disclosed during announcement of the DCC budget for 1993-94 on Tuesday. Despite the poor response, the DCC officials fixed a collection target of Tk 21,600 as marriage tax (second marriages included) for the coming fiscal year. When a reporter drew the attention of Mirza Abbas to this head, the witty Mayor retorted: "If you don't inform us during your second marriage, what can we do?"

Baghdad has right to retaliate: Iraq

BAGHDAD, June 29: Iraq said today it had warned the US government of its right to retaliate for Sunday's cruise missile strike on Baghdad, reports AFP Reuter. Iraq's UN ambassador, Nizar Hamdoun, delivered a message to his US counterpart Madeleine Albright saying that Iraq had the 'complete right' to retaliate for 'this unjustified attack,' the Iraqi News Agency INA reported. Another report says, Iraq laid on a show of military might after US raids on Baghdad and one of the country's intelligence chiefs vowed to punish the United States. Ordinary Iraqis, under attack more than two years after the Gulf war ended, said they feared another American strike. Monday's main evening television news showed Iraqi troops carrying out desert war games with live ammunition — a day after US cruise missiles struck at the heart of Iraq's intelligence headquarters in Baghdad. US President Bill Clinton said the assault was a warning to the Iraqi government as well as retaliation for an alleged Iraqi plot to kill former President George Bush. In Washington, a Congressional staff report said today that Iraq has rebuilt 80 per cent of its pre-Gulf war military manufacturing capability despite UN sanctions and inspections. The report, prepared for the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Security, found Iraq had revived a clandestine procurement network, it said the network relied on known front companies in Jordan, France and Germany to buy spare-parts for its weapons industries. See Page 12 Col 8

Democratic Forum plans national programme

NETRAKONA, June 29: Democratic Forum (DF) leader Dr Kamal Hossain today said his organisation was going to announce a national programme as part of its initiative to introduce an alternative politics in the country to fulfill common people's aspirations, reports UNB. Addressing a public meeting at the local Public Hall premises, heavily guarded by law enforcing agencies, he said the Forum had taken initiatives to introduce an alternative trend of politics since the traditional politics had failed to meet the demands of the people. He stressed the need for an advanced, comprehensive programme-based politics and new economic strategy in the

DCC bares Tk 247 cr budget

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Tuesday announced a Tk 247.48 crore budget for the fiscal 1993-94, which is Tk 52 crore higher than the budget for the outgoing year. The Tk 195.49 crore revised budget of the year 1992-93 was also announced at a crowded press conference at the Mayor's residence in Gulshan. In addition, a Tk 151.69 crore development budget was also announced by Mayor Mirza Abbas under which construction of the "Nagar Bhaban"—the Corporation's headquarters—would be completed and extensive repair and maintenance works of roads would be done. Mirza Abbas said that some

By Staff Correspondent Tk 181.62 crore revenue earnings would be available from holding tax and other sources. No tax increase have been proposed in the new budget, to be effective from tomorrow. Mirza Abbas said that Tk 10 crore has been earmarked for a housing project in which plots will be distributed among the low-income groups on "no-loss, no-profit" basis. The Mayor said that a swimming pool for children will be constructed at the Shishu Park in the coming financial year at a cost of Tk 3 crore. The Mayor said that the major portion of the revenue budget is earned from the cor-



Mirza Abbas

Jatiya Party may turn to Raushan Ershad

By Asiuzzaman Former first lady and wife of deposed president Hussain Muhammad Ershad is expected to assume a key position in the Jatiya Party leadership. The move to involve Raushan Ershad is learnt to have been engineered by former prime minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed. The plan also reportedly enjoys active support of a section of party stalwarts, who feel that her involvement in a prominent position could save the party from its current "leadership crisis" and also help consolidate its position. Kazi Zafar Ahmed, who is a key player in the party's internal politics, is expected to ex-

pedite the move on his return from Thailand on July 5, a source in the Jatiya Party stated. Zafar himself is said to be aspiring for the post of party Secretary General under Raushan Ershad's leadership. The same source indicated that some of the leaders working in favour of Zafar have almost convinced jailed party chief HM Ershad about the political wisdom of the move. "The party activities will not be reactivated under the present leadership," they had reportedly conveyed to Ershad. The considerable party funds have also influenced the

Detectives raid BJP, Shiv Sena centres in 5 states

NEW DELHI, June 29: The Central Bureau of Investigation today conducted simultaneous raids at 20 places in five states on Shiv Sena and BJP centres and arrested three persons as part of the ongoing investigation into the December 6 demolition at Ayodhya, reports PTI. The Bureau launched the second round of swoops early today in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh and seized a large number of incriminating

documents and other material a CBI spokesman said here. The arrested included Shiv Sena chief of Haryana Vinod Kumar Vats, BJP activist Basit Ramesh Singh and Punjab Shiv Sena in charge Sudhir Kakkar. The spokesman said the documents recovered in raids included, letterheads, photographs, diaries, donation slips, video cassettes, and bricks of the disputed structure. Five places each in UP and

Punjab, six in Haryana, three in MP and one in Oujarat were searched today. Meanwhile, the Bajrang Dal chief Vinay Katiyar said that Mahesh Narain Singh, was picked up by the CBI from his office-cum-residence at Ayodhya in the morning. Today's raids were second by the CBI which had on April 8 arrested five persons including BJP MP, Brj Bhushan. Mahesh was taken away by detectives after four-hour

search of his home, a spokesman for the outlawed Vishwa Hindu Parishad said. Singh is a leader of an Ayodhya-based group, affiliated to the VHP, which has been campaigning for the construction of a temple to the Hindu god Rama on the ruins of the 16th century Babri Mosque. CBI detectives also raided the house of a former Hindu lawmaker in Faizabad, near Ayodhya, the VHP spokesman said. "It is a crude attempt to terrorise Hindus," the spokesman said. The CBI is investigating the razing of the Babri Mosque. The government outlawed three Hindu groups after the mosque destruction, but lifted the ban on two of them after a court ruling. The VHP ban remains. The Babri Mosque razing triggered widespread Hindu-Muslim violence across India which claimed nearly 2,000 lives.

WE CONGRATULATE THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE FINANCE MINISTER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH FOR PRESENTING A MOST PROGRESSIVE AND REALISTIC BUDGET FOR THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR, 1993-94 MEMBERS OF THE BANGLADESH CERAMIC WARES' MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION