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NEWS BRIEFS

Three HC judges appointed

Three Additional Judges of
the High Court Division of the
Bangladesh Supreme Court
have been appointed Judges of
the same division. The Judges
are: Justice Mohammed Abdul
Mannan, Justice Mohammed
Abdul Karim and Justice
Khondaker Mahmudul Hasan,
reports UNB.

276 Rohingyas repatriated

From Our Correspondent
COX'S BAZAR, July 13: Another
276 Rohingyas refugees were
repatriated to Myanmar from
the transit camps of Rangitah, Jummata and
Naya Para today. The refugees
entered Myanmar through the
Kaning Chong reception
centre of Mongdu town. The
total number of refugees
repatriated so far stands at
29,233.

Hasina greets Mitterrand

Awami League president
and Leader of the Opposition
in Parliament has felicitated
President Francois Mitterrand
of France on the occasion of his
National Day. In a message to
the French President, she ex-
pressed her firm belief that the
"existing bonds of friend-
ship, mutual respect and co-
operation between our two
countries would be further
strengthened," reports UNB.

ALCWC meets today

An emergency meeting of
the Awami League Central
Working Committee will be
held today at 11:00 am at the
party office. Acting president
of the party, Abdus Samad
Azad, will preside, reports
UNB.

100 AL workers join BNP

More than one hundred
leaders and workers of the
Awami League of Durgapur
thana in Netrakona district
formally joined the BNP yester-
day, reports UNB.

Parliamentary probe body formed at last

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Sangsad (JS) yesterday
unanimously approved a Treas-
ury Bench-proposed special
parliamentary committee to
investigate Opposition allega-
tions against the Ministry of
Agriculture, Irrigation, Water
Development and Flood Control
and the minister concerned.

This is for the first time in
the country's parliamentary
history that the JS has consti-
tuted a House probe to scruti-
nise the activities of a particular
ministry.

According to last night's de-
cision, the committee will con-
sist of 14 legislators from the
treasury and Opposition
benches while Speaker Shaikh
Razzak Ali will act as the
chairman.

Prof. A Q M Badruddoza
Chowdhury moved the proposal
in the House at 9:10 last night.

The 15-man body will decide
its own terms of reference in
the light of the allegations made
in the House by Tofael Ahmed,
on June 26, the Minister's reply
to the allegations the same day,
and the Speaker's decision de-
livered in the House the day af-
ter.

The members of the commit-
tee are: Chief Whip of the JS
Khandaker Delwar Hossain,
Works Minister Rafiqul Islam
Miah, Education Minister Jam-
iuddin Sircar, Jute Minister
Hannan Shah, State Minister
for Establishment Aminul
Haque, State Minister for Civil
Aviation and Tourism Abdul
Mannan and Abu Yusuf
Mohammad Khalil Rahman of
the BNP, Deputy Leader of the
Opposition Abdus Samad Azad,
chief whip of the Opposition
Mohammad Nasim and Sajeda

Chowdhury of the Awami
League, Moudud Ahmed of the
Jatiya Party, Maulana Abdus
Sobhan of the Jamaat-e-Islami,
Bangladesh, Rashed Khan
Menon of the Workers' Party
and Suranjit Sengupta of the
Ganatantri Party.

Prof Chowdhury, while plac-
ing his proposal, said that the
ruling BNP was pledge-bound to
ensure accountability and
transparency in government to
make the administration cor-
ruption free.

"We still firmly believe in
these ideals and are ready for a
baptism by the fire of democ-
racy," Prof Chowdhury told the
House, adding, "We would not
like to do anything by the sheer
strength of our majority in the
House."

Prof. Chowdhury, while spea-
king on the Opposition's

remarks against the Speaker's
neutrality, observed that al-
though the Opposition leaders
were yet to officially withdraw
the comments, they had in the
meantime firmly expressed their
confidence in the Chair's hon-
esty and sincerity.

Implying Speaker Shaikh
Razzak Ali to agree to head the
committee, the Deputy Leader
of the House said: "The probe
body, proposed with a view to
institutionalising democracy
and fulfilling the people's ex-
pectations from the present
Sangsad, can only be effective
with you as its head."

Leaders of different parlia-
mentary parties and groups
overwhelmingly appreciated the
ruling party for moving the
proposal in the light of
Opposition demands in the
See Page 12 Col 7

Confce on Bosnia ends

OIC states pledge to send 18,000 troops

ISLAMABAD, July 13: A
special ministerial meeting of
the Organisation of Islamic
Conference (OIC) agreed today
to dispatch thousands of
Muslim troops to help UN
forces protect Muslims in
Bosnia, reports AFP.

Bangladesh, Iran, Malaysia,
Pakistan, the Palestinian
Liberation Organisation, Turkey
and Tunisia have pledged to
dispatch nearly 18,000 soldiers
to help protect six security
zones declared by the United
Nations.

Troops pledged total more
than double the number re-
quested by UN Secretary
General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

Pakistan's Minister of State
for Foreign Affairs Siddique
Kanju said 17 OIC member
states at the two-day confer-
ence, which ended today,
adopted a "plan of action"

calling for concrete steps to
help relieve Muslim suffering
and stop hostilities in Bosnia-
Herzegovina.

It is the first such action by
the Islamic countries since re-
ports began emerging more
than a year ago of heavy
Muslim casualties in the war-
torn region of former Yugoslavia
at the hands of Serb and Croat
forces.

The conference, hosted by
Pakistan, was also attended by
foreign ministers or representa-
tives from Algeria, Bangladesh,
Brunei, Djibouti, Egypt,
Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia,
Morocco, the Palestinian
Liberation Organisation (PLO),
Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Tunisia,
Turkey and Uganda.

Bosnian Foreign Minister
Haris Siladzic also attended the
conference. He lauded the out-
See Page 12 Col 1

Dhaka iterates commitment to Bosnians

ISLAMABAD, July 13: For-
eign Minister A S M Mostafizur
Rahman has reiterated
Bangladesh's firm and un-
equivocal commitment to stand
by the side of the Bosnian peo-
ple in their struggle to main-
tain independence, sovereignty
and territorial integrity of their
country, reports BSS.

Addressing the special OIC
ministerial meeting on Bosnia-
Herzegovina, which began in
Islamabad Monday, the Foreign
Minister underlined various
steps taken by the government
of Bangladesh including the lat-
est decision to contribute one
mechanised infantry battalion
to protect the safe areas as per
United Nations Security Council
Resolution 836 (1993).

He also emphasised that all
preparatory work should be fi-
nalised so that troops, con-
tributed by various OIC member
countries, under the UN pro-
posal could be deployed in
Bosnia-Herzegovina in soonest
possible time to meet the cur-
See Page 12 Col 2

PM for active role of BNP women MPs in development

Prime Minister Begum
Khaleda Zia said here yester-
day that the active participation
of BNP women Members of
Parliament would be ensured
in programmes like family
planning, food for education
and loan giving programme for
destitute women to make them
successful, reports BSS.

The BNP women Members of
Parliament will be effectively in-
volved in other government de-
velopment programmes for at-
taining desired success in the
present process of uplift, the
Prime Minister said while talk-
ing to the BNP women Members
of Parliament who met her at
the International Conference
Centre (ICC).

The women members, who
met the Prime Minister in a
group for the first time, dis-
cussed their problems and
plans for carrying forward the
country's on-going develop-
ment efforts. They also sug-
gested for giving them more op-
See Page 12 Col 6

Sharif postpones TV address indefinitely

ISLAMABAD, July 13: Prime
Minister Nawaz Sharif has
postponed indefinitely a tele-
vised address to the nation on
Pakistan's political crisis
scheduled for today, official
sources said, reports AFP.

No reason was given for the
decision which follows Monday's
talks between the Premier and
President Ghulam Ishaq Khan,
his bitter adversary in a four-
month long struggle for politi-
cal control of the country.

Informed sources said his
address had been postponed to
smooth efforts at reconciliation
between the two feuding lead-
ers.

An official statement follow-
ing Monday's meetings between
the two said dialogue would
continue and the Premier and
the President would meet again
in the coming days.

Meanwhile, Sharif has ac-
cused the government of Punjab
province of backing an
opposition 'long march' on the
capital set for Friday.

"Unfortunately, a provincial
government has been planning
See Page 12 Col 6



IN THE DOCK: The accused (from left): American Eliadah McCord, Nigerians Robert Blankson alias Tony and Goody Ochendo, listening to the pronouncement of judgement yesterday in the court of the Additional District and Sessions Judge Dhaka. McCord and Blankson were sentenced to life imprisonment for their involvement in the smuggling of 3.27 kgs of heroin last year. Ochendo and two others, absconding, were acquitted.

Heroin smuggling case US girl, Nigerian get life terms

By Staff Correspondent

American girl Eliadah
McCord and Nigerian youth
Robert Blankson alias Tony
were each sentenced to life im-
prisonment yesterday for try-
ing to smuggle 3.27 kilograms of
heroin out of the country more
than a year ago.

Additional District and
Sessions Judge Ansaruddin
Sikder, however, acquitted three
other accused, two of whom
were still absconding.

Although under the law both
McCord and Blankson faced the
maximum punishment — the
death sentence — the learned
judge, in his verdict, cited miti-
gating circumstances for reduc-
ing the sentence to one of life
imprisonment.

Scores of curious people
thronged at the court premises
since morning to hear the sen-
tencing in the much publicised
case.

The learned judge also or-

dered the authorities to release
Nigerian — Goody Ochendo —
immediately from jail unless he
is wanted in other cases.

Bangladeshi Abdul Quayum
and another Nigerian — Okay
Goodwin — are the absconders
acquitted by the judge yester-
day.

The judgement, in a jam-
packed courtroom, came after
21 days of hearing during which
28 witnesses were examined.

"Accused Eliadah McCord
and Robert Blankson are found
guilty, under clause 1 (b) of the
table under Section 19 (1) of
Act XX of 1990 for committing
offence... and convicted there-
after and sentenced to impris-
onment for life," the judge pro-
nounced at around 12.45 pm.

The 20-year-old bespectacled
American girl, wearing a light
green shalwar-kamiz with
matching dupatta, who looked
See Page 12 Col 4

Govt-Shantibahini talks today

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 13: In
an effort to find a political solu-
tion to the long drawn
Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) is-
sue, the nine-member parlia-
mentary committee headed by
Communications Minister Col
(Retd) Oli Ahmed will hold the
fourth round of peace talks with
the Shantibahini leaders tomor-
row at the Khagrachhari Circuit
House.

The closed-door dialogue,
scheduled to begin at 10 am,
will be attended by a five mem-
ber Shantibahini team led by
Shanto Larma, president of the
Parbatitya Chattagram Jana
Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), the
parent organisation of the tribal
rebels, official sources said.

An MA degree holder, Shanto
Larma, aged over 50, took over
the leadership of the PCJSS as
its president after his elder
brother M N Larma, the
founder-president, was killed on
November 10, 1983, during in-
fighting among the Priti faction
of the Shantibahini. The Priti
faction, a splinter group of
armed rebels, was led by Priti
Kumar Chakma. Most members

of this group surrendered en
masse under a government
amnesty on June 29, 1985. But
the main group of the rebel
Shantibahini under the com-
mand of Shanto Larma stuck to
their guerrilla campaign against
the government troops.

Before taking over as presi-
dent, Shanto commanded the
Shantibahini, sources informed.

In the past three rounds of
dialogue held under the present
democratic government, the
Shantibahini team was led by
Shanto Larma while the six
rounds of failed talks held with
the security forces during the
Ershad regime were led by other
leaders of the PCJSS.

The Shantibahini delegation
for tomorrow's dialogue will
be received at Dudukchhari, a
bordering village under Pan-
chhari thana of Khagrachhari
district, by the members of the
Liaison Committee. They will then
be flown by helicopter to the
Circuit House for the talks, ex-
pected to continue till 4 pm, ac-
cording to official sources.

Besides, other preparations

are afoot for holding tomorrow's
talks with a hope of the
restoration of peace and tran-
quillity in the 5093 sq miles area
of the CHT, jolted by acts of
violence linked with the
simmering tribal insurgency
over the last 18 years.

In a bid to facilitate the ar-
rival and departure of the
Shantibahini team the authori-
ties have eased the security
regulations in Khagrachhari.

Meanwhile, a six-member
high-powered Bangladesh dele-
gation headed by Rashed Khan
Menon, MP, leader of the
Workers Party, went to Tripura
this morning for holding talks
with leaders of the Chakma
refugees camped there in a
bid to break the stalemate re-
garding their repatriation.

The other members of this
delegation are Barkat Ullah
Bulu, MP (BNP), Kalpanjan
Chakma, MP (AL), Shahjahan
Chowdhury, MP (Jamaat), M A
Mannan, Jt. Secretary of the
Home Ministry and Yar
Mohammad, Deputy Commis-
sioner of Khagrachhari.

CHT students demand political solution

By DU Correspondent

Students from the Chit-
tagong Hill Tracts yesterday
demanded a permanent political
solution to the crisis in the re-
gion by granting it 'autonomy'.

The Greater Chittagong Hill
Tracts Hill Students' Council, at
a press conference at the Jatiya
Press Club yesterday afternoon,
also stated that they would
have to launch a greater mass
movement if the demands of
the hill people were not fulfilled.

The president of the council
Proshik Viksh Khishia, in his
speech, said that the crisis in
the Hill Tracts has not only af-
fected the Chakmas but other
tribals as well.

There are ten separate tribes
speaking different languages —
like the Marma, Tripura,
Murong, Bom, Khlang, Khumi
who were also participating in
the movement, Khishia added.

The student leader expressed
his dismay over what he called
the government's decision not
to observe 1993 as the 'year for
the indigenous people,' as de-
clared by the United Nations.

Ansars, cabbies clash at ZIA: 8 injured

By Staff Correspondent

At least eight persons, in-
cluding four Ansars constables,
were injured in a clash between
Ansars and a group of cab
drivers at the Zia International
Airport yesterday morning.

The Ansars fired at least six
rounds at one stage of the vi-
olent hour-long clash which
broke out at around 8:50 in the
morning.

Airport sources said that the
violent mob, led by the taxi
drivers and their helpers, dam-
aged at least 10 parked cars
and minibuses and also broke
three large glass panes of the
airport terminal building. The
damage has been estimated at
over several lakh taka.

The trouble erupted when an
on duty Ansars constable re-
sisted some microbus drivers
from forcing an incoming pas-
senger to board one of their ve-
hicles, sources said.

Witnesses said that about 20
Ansars constables were em-
broiled in the clash after an ex-
change of hot words with the
drivers.

At one stage more than 40
cab and microbus drivers
joined in the clash. They pelted
stones at the on duty Ansars.

Other sources said that the
clash began when an Ansars
constable rebuked a driver for
parking his vehicle in the no-
parking area of the airport.

The injured were identified
as Ansars constables Abul
Kalam, Helal, Nasir and Amjad
and drivers Aslam, Shah Alam,
Cham Miah and Nasir, sources
said.

Road communication on the
nearby Dhaka-Tongi highway
was disrupted for about an
hour as the agitating cabbies
barricaded the road, sources
said.

Our Medical Correspondent
informs that two of the Ansars
constables were admitted at the
Dhaka Medical College
Hospital.

Cantonment police said that
the Ansars and the drivers filed
two separate cases, accusing
each other for the incident.

To off-set anti-FAP propaganda Govt plans a meeting in Strasbourg

By Masud Hasan Khan

The government is planning
to arrange a meeting on the
Flood Action Plan (FAP) at the
European Parliament's seat in
Strasbourg early next year, of-
ficial sources said.

They said that the
Strasbourg meet would try to
convey to the European
Parliament the urgent need for
implementation of the FAP for
the greater benefit of
Bangladesh.

Another major purpose of
the meeting would be to off-
set the anti-FAP campaign recently
launched in Europe, they said.

The sources, who preferred
anonymity, indicated that the
proposed meeting at the
European Parliament, sched-
uled to take place sometime in

March 1994, would be arranged
to coincide with another meet-
ing between the Bangladesh
government and the donors at
Paris.

The idea of organising the
meet in Strasbourg — a frontier
city in France — apparently
comes in the wake of the June
24 resolutions adopted by the
Euro Parliament on the multi-
billion-dollar FAP.

The resolutions called upon
the European Community (EC)
member-states to reconsider
their involvement in the FAP
before going for any major con-
structions in the rural areas of
Bangladesh. The concern ex-
pressed by the legislators was
fuelled by fears of environmen-
tal degradation in the country
because of the FAP.

"The Greens in the European
Parliament" organised the two-
day conference in Strasbourg
on the FAP on May 27 and May
28 with some 200 participants,
including about 20 European
MPs taking part.

Meanwhile, officials involved
in the FAP said that the
planned Paris meet would
"synthesise" the findings of all
the studies under the FAP, as
well as formulate a master plan
of action for its implementation.

The studies under the FAP
are expected to be finished by
1995, they added.

The Flood Action Plan is a
massive flood control pro-
gramme initiated by the gov-
ernment which aims at charting
an integrated national water
management policy by perma-

nently controlling floods in the
country.

A section of critics have ex-
pressed fear that construction
of the innumerable embank-
ments and other civil engineer-
ing structures under the FAP
would seriously hamper the
country's environment, fish re-
sources and also displace
many people thereby posing
hardships to the masses which
may be worse than the damage
caused by recurring floods.

The government, however,
assures that the FAP would not
only bring about a long-term so-
lution to the flood problem, it
would also help turn the eco-
nomic wheel of the country
through more scientific use of
the land, its waters and other
resources.

Japanese quake kills 71, many missing

ESASHI (Japan), July 13:
Two hundred and forty people
were feared dead today after a
major earthquake shook
northern Japan, triggering tidal
waves, landslides and fires on
the island of Okushiri north-
west of here, reports AFP.

The tremor, the strongest to
hit Japan in 10 years, devastat-
ed a wide area around the
sea of Okhotsk.

Officials said today afternoon
began arriving on Okushiri in
the afternoon, almost 18 hours
after the undersea quake, mea-
suring 7.8 on the open-ended
Richter scale, struck the west
coast of Hokkaido, Japan's
northernmost island.

Hundreds of rescue workers
began arriving on Okushiri in
the afternoon, almost 18 hours
after the undersea quake, mea-
suring 7.8 on the open-ended
Richter scale, struck the west
coast of Hokkaido, Japan's
northernmost island.

lines devoured at least half of
the 680 houses in Aomae, a fish-
ing port on the southern tip of
Okushiri, and were still raging
out of control this morning.

About 60 per cent of the
town was completely destroyed
and half of the town was on fire
when it flew over it, "a hell-
copter pilot said early today.

The island was battered by a
series of Tsunami or tidal
waves, up to five metres (16
feet) high overnight, sweeping
away houses, boats and cars.

The first quake, which had
an epicentre north of Okushiri,
occurred late Monday and was
followed by a series of shocks.

The official death toll passed
70 by late afternoon, although
another 169 were still missing
and feared dead, local officials
said.

Detention of Azam on ground of nat'l security untenable, says counsel

Barrister A R Yusuf yester-
day argued before the High
Court, hearing the writ petition
challenging Prof Golam Azam's
detention, that the detention of
his client on the ground of secu-
rity of Bangladesh was not
tenable, reports BSS.

Opposing the ground for de-
tention, Barrister Yusuf said
Prof Azam was not engaged in
any activity which threatened
the existence of the government.
He argued that during the
last 14 years there was no
complaint or case against Prof
Azam for indulging in any activi-
ty prejudicial