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The Daily Star

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NEWS BRIEFS

BNP constitution body meets today

A meeting of the BNP constitution amendment sub-committee will be held today at 2:30 pm at the central office of the party here with its convener Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda in the chair. Convener of the sub-committee has requested all members to attend the meeting. The sub-committee members are Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar, Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia, Prof Jahanara Begum, Barrister Md Aminul Haq, Farida Rahman, Ashraf Hossain, Afsar Ahmed Siddiqi (Member Secretary) and Barrister Ziaur Rahman Khan, reports BSS.

AL condemns CMC incident

Awami League general secretary Zillur Rahman yesterday condemned the violent incident at the Chittagong Medical College and demanded immediate arrest and trial of the troublemakers. He warned that the government would be held responsible for deterioration of situation if the terrorists involved in the CMC violence were not arrested and put on trial, reports UNB.

Train derailed at Arikhola

NARSINGDI, Aug 10: A train derailed near the Arikhola station in Gazipur this afternoon, disrupting rail communications between the capital and the eastern zone. Railway sources here said eight wheels of two bogies of the Akhaura-bound 205 Down train from Dhaka went off the track at about 5:00 pm. No injury was reported in the accident, reports UNB.

NATO ready to hit Serbs if UN gives go-ahead

BRUSSELS, Aug 10: NATO approved military plans for air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs, but fell short of ordering immediate tough action to end the Serb siege of the Bosnian capital Sarajevo and other areas, report Reuters, AP.

A NATO statement issued after a four-hour meeting of alliance envoys on Monday said the United Nations should have the last word in ordering air strikes.

The NATO council agrees with the position of the UN Secretary-General that the first use of air power in the theatre shall be authorised by him," the NATO statement said.

Boutros-Ghali said Monday

night that he would authorize a strike only after consulting with UN envoy Thourvald Stoltenberg about the progress of Bosnian peace talks and after consulting the Security Council.

The decision would be taken by the Security Council, not by me," he said. Britain and France, two of the countries with the strongest reservations about air strikes, are permanent members of the Security Council.

The 16-nation alliance would examine on a daily basis the situation in Sarajevo and the status of peace talks in Geneva. NATO could reconvene at short notice to decide on air strikes. Calling the situation of the

Bosnian people "dramatic and unacceptable," the alliance statement said, "it is essential that the Bosnian Serbs lift without delay the siege of Sarajevo and that the heights around the city and the means of access are placed under the control of Unprofor."

The statement said NATO's supreme commander in Europe, General John Shalikashvili, had been directed to identify bombing targets in Bosnia in coordination with the UN peacekeeping force there.

The NATO decisions marked a diplomatic success for the United States, which in an abrupt policy shift two weeks ago, apparently caused by fears

that Sarajevo would fall, stepped up pressure on its allies to take tougher action.

The US Assistant Secretary of State for Western Europe, Stephen Oxman, said the United States was happy with the envoys' decision. "NATO air power has been put at the service of diplomacy," Oxman told reporters.

Oxman, who headed his country's delegation in Brussels, told reporters the alliance could be ready to act within 24 to 48 hours of any violation by the Serbs.

US Secretary of State Warren Christopher warned on Monday that NATO is ready to take

18th death anniversary of Mujib AL's 6-day mourning begins at Tungipara

From Staff Correspondent

TUNGIPARA, Copalganj, Aug 10: The six-day long programme in observance of the 18th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman got underway here today with renewed call for materialising the dreams of the countrymen.

The programme, the first ever organised at the village home of Bangabandhu since his assassination in 1975, began with the placing of wreaths, offering of feteha and mlid mahfil.

Almost all the central leaders of the party and its front organisations attended the function.

The Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in

Jattya Sangsad Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the six-day mourning until August 15.

The 'Jattir Pita Mrityu Barshiki Palon-O-Smriti Rakha Committee' (National Mourning Committee) organised the programme which included Quran Khwari, mlid mahfil, discussion and feeding the destitute.

On arrival at Tungipara at about 4:30 pm, some 140 km off the capital, Sheikh Hasina accompanied by her party colleagues went straight to the mazar of Bangabandhu—her father.

Black badge-wearing AL leaders placed wreaths, offered

Two policemen robbed of rifles, uniforms in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Aug 10: Police picked up more than 100 people from the Agrabad Bastuhara Colony in a hunt for a group of mastans (hoodlums) who took away two rifles from two "unconscious" police constables along with their uniforms early today, reports UNB.

Local people and police said three constables of the Agrabad outpost took liquor with a group of mastans at Jamboree Maidan at Agrabad at about 2 am. When two of the policemen became unconscious after taking the liquor, the miscreants escaped with two rifles, their uniforms, wrist-watches and some cash.

The two constables—Sufian, 29, and Abdul Wadud, 40,—were found unconscious and without uniforms in a drain of the nearby Shishu Hospital

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Police watching over the charred remains of some cane furniture set afire during a clash between the street hawkers, transport workers and members of a religious procession at Nawabpur Road in the city yesterday.

50 injured in clashes near Gulistan

By Staff Correspondent

At least 50 people were injured in clashes between two groups in the Gulistan area yesterday evening. Of the injured, five persons were admitted at different city hospitals. However, police did not report any arrests.

According to witnesses, the clashes ensued when a Janmastami procession was passing through the Gulistan-Nawabpur crossing where recently-evicted street hawkers were staging a rally, protesting the eviction, at around 4 pm.

When the agitating hawkers refused to make way for the processionists to pass, an altercation took place between the two sides.

At one stage, witnesses

added, a bus parked nearby was damaged. This enraged the transport workers of the area who also got involved in the fray.

Several cracker blasts were heard in the area as the rival groups clashed and the trouble spread to the vicinity, some people were chased as far as upto the Victoria Park.

A press release of the Sharbajanti Puja Udyapan Committee claimed that at least 100 persons were injured when some unidentified miscreants attacked the Janmastami procession.

Motijheel police, meanwhile, said that a case was filed in connection with the damaging

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Janmastami celebrated

The Hindu community celebrated Janmastami, the birthday of Lord Krishna, throughout the country yesterday with devotion and traditional enthusiasm. Jubilation and religious fervour, reports BSS.

The day was a public holiday.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas, Prime Minister Begum Khaleida Zia and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina, in separate messages, greeted the Hindu community on the occasion.

According to Hindu religion, Lord Krishna was born on this day as the incarnation of God to deliver mankind from the clutches of evil and to uphold the triumph of virtue.

Members of the Hindu community observed fasts for the whole day and offered puja

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Rafiq refutes Hasina's allegation

Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia yesterday refuted the allegation made by Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina that the Special Parliamentary Committee, set up to probe the charges against Agriculture and Irrigation Minister Majid-ul Haq, is not being allowed to function, reports BSS.

The minister termed the allegation made at a gathering of Janata Bank employees at her official residence Wednesday as misleading, confusing and likely to prejudice the functioning of the committee. Barrister Rafiq, who himself is a member of the committee, said Sheikh Hasina's remarks were preemptive and might frustrate the purpose of the committee.

The minister said such remarks, made without any basis, might influence the issues before the committee comes out with its findings. Referring to the formation of the committee, he said it was aimed at unveiling the truth and not to harass or tarnish anybody's image. None of the members of the Special Parliamentary Committee, including Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad, has ever raised any question or objection in its functioning, he stated.

Refuting the claim that the committee had been formed under the opposition's pressure, the minister said Agriculture and Irrigation Minister Majid-ul Haq himself had proposed its formation on June 26 to demonstrate his honesty as well as to establish transparency and accountability of the democratically-elected government. He recalled that the resolution moved by Deputy Leader of the Jattya Sangsad on July 17 was unanimously adopted.

Barrister Rafiq said any unguarded utterance from any responsible leader about the Special Parliamentary Com-

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Disbursement of ADB loan withheld

Star Report

The second tranche of the US 125 million dollar (SDR 90.46 million) Second Industrial Programme Loan committed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is yet to be released since the conditions given by the donor agency remain unfulfilled.

The second tranche of the loan, amounting 62.7 million dollar, was scheduled to be disbursed on or after 31 December last year subject to fulfillment of the programme commitment specified for such release.

The programme period for the loan, approved on 17 December 1991, expires next December. The first tranche of US dollar 62.3 million has already been disbursed in two instalments, but the fate of the second tranche would become uncertain if it is not utilised before the expiry of the programme period.

According to sources con-

cerned, the ADB had put forward some conditions for releasing the second tranche which are still under consideration of the government.

The conditions include transformation of five sector corporations into holding corporations and conversion of industrial units under the corporations into public limited companies. There are other conditions related with the autonomy for the proposed holding corporations.

To fulfil those conditions, the authorities concerned made some proposals which were discussed at the cabinet meeting on 18 July. The cabinet deferred the decision and directed the ministries and authorities concerned to examine the conditions further and work out probable steps to meet them.

A well-placed source in the government told The Daily Star

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Cases filed against ten CMC students

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 10: Panchlaha Thana police here started two separate cases against students who were arrested during Monday morning's raid on the hostels of the Chittagong Medical College.

The raid was launched after a gunbattle between two rival student factions. Ten students were arrested.

The arrested persons were forwarded to the court today, police said. The female resident students also vacated their hostel today, as per orders of the college authorities.

The campus of the college, closed sine die following Sunday midnight's gunfight, was under police patrol.

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Dhaka Dist BNP wants Huda to remain chief

By Staff Correspondent

The executive committee (EC) of the Dhaka District Unit of the BNP yesterday refused to accept the resignation of Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda from the unit's presidency.

The EC members, in an emergency meeting held last evening at the party's central office, also unanimously adopted a resolution urging Prime Minister and BNP chief Begum Khaleida Zia to intervene for the withdrawal of the resignation.

The Information Minister re-elected by consensus as president of the Dhaka District BNP only on August 4, announced his resignation at the conference of the party's City Unit Monday.

The minister, explaining the reasons for his resignation, told The Daily Star last night that he wanted to cooperate with the party chief by helping her implement certain policies relating to accommodation of new personalities in the different tiers of party leadership.

Asked if he would honour the 'unanimously adopted' resolution of the District Unit, the Information Minister replied: "It all depends on the decision of the BNP chairperson."

Meanwhile, a party insider told The Daily Star, on the condition of anonymity, that a meeting of the BNP's executive committee quite sometime ago, felt that no central leader

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FBCCI, MCCI hail extension of banking hrs

By Staff Correspondent

Different chamber bodies Tuesday lauded the recent government decision to extend the banking transaction period by two hours in all commercial banks.

In separate statements the president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and the president of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) both termed the extension of banking hours 'a timely step.'

Earlier this week, the Bangladesh Bank announced the extension of banking hours from 9 am — 3 pm instead of 9—1 pm on all weekdays excepting Thursdays, with immediate effect. On Thursday, public transactions in all commercial banks will be conducted between 9 am and 12 noon.

Appreciating the government

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An Air China Boeing-767 plane hijacked by Shi Yuepo off China sits on the tarmac at the Chiang Kai-shek International Airport in Taiwan yesterday.

Chinese plane hijacker surrenders

TAIPEI, Aug 10: A Chinese man wielding a bottle of acid hijacked an Air China Boeing 767 to Taiwan Tuesday with at least 150 people aboard, airport police said. The hijacker was arrested and no one was hurt, reports AP.

The plane flew back to China with its passengers and 13 crew members just 2 1/2 hours after it was forced to land at Taipei International Airport, police said.

China's official Xinhua news agency said the plane later landed safely in Xiamen in southeast China with 136 pas-

sengers and 15 crew members. The reason for the conflicting crew figures was unclear.

Taiwanese police identified the hijacker as Shi Yuebo, 30, from Hebei province, near Beijing.

Shi threatened to shower passengers with the acid unless the pilot flew to Taiwan, police said.

Flight CA973 was hijacked while flying to Xiamen en route from Beijing to Jakarta, Yang Jin, a spokeswoman for the Civil Aviation Administration of China, said in Beijing. She said there were foreigners aboard the

plane, but had no details.

As he was led from the airport police station, handcuffed and wearing a shirt and slacks, the hijacker told reporters he was fleeing Chinese Communist rule.

"I oppose the Communists' one-party rule in China. People in China are living in desperate conditions," he said.

"I planned this for a long time," Shi added.

Bomb scare in White House

WASHINGTON, Aug 10: President Clinton lingered outside the White House for 15 minutes Tuesday while agents investigated a suspicious package, reports AP.

Clinton had just returned by limousine from his morning jog in the city with three visitors from his home state of Arkansas.

The package had been thrown over the North fence onto the White House lawn, the Secret Service said. Clinton remained outside the building on the South side.

Bomb specialists were on the scene for nearly an hour as White House staffers and others were kept from entering the grounds through the main gate.

Tremors kill 8 in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Aug 10: At least eight people died and dozens were injured as a result of two earthquakes which rocked Pakistan, official sources said today, reports AP.

The tremors, the largest measuring 6.6 on the Richter scale, shook Pakistan, Afghanistan and parts of northern India on Monday.

Six people were killed and five others injured in the northern town of Mingora when the roof of a house collapsed. Another two people died in similar circumstances in another mountain hamlet.

ANNOUNCEMENT The second issue of The Daily Star Computer Special will be published on Wednesday, 18 August 1993. Following the enthusiastic reception of the first issue of the Star Computer Special, we have decided to expand the membership to our Computer Forum. Please call us to find out how you can enroll as a Forum member, and become a major actor in the information technology revolution in Bangladesh. Limited space still available for advertisement — both display and classified — in the August issue. Advertise in the Star Computer Special and reach the homes and the offices of the current and future computer users in Bangladesh. Forum members are reminded to send all relevant news, articles and "company news" as soon as possible.