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### NEWS BRIEFS

#### Indian goods seized

RAJSHAHI, Aug 15: Members of the 20 rifle battalion in separate raids have seized huge quantity of Indian goods worth over Taka 15 lakh from Rajshahi and Natore districts, according to an official handout today, reports BSS.

#### Two killed in road mishap

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 15: Two people were killed and 20 others injured when a truck fell into a road side ditch in Ullapahara thana on Bogra-Nagarbari highway today. Witnesses said the Sirajganj-bound truck with about 30 passengers tumbled into the ditch at Boalia as the driver lost control over the steering killing the two people on the spot. They could not be identified immediately. Of the injured, eight were rushed to Sadar Hospital. They are Mizanur Rahman (30), Jamal (18), Sohrab (45), Haran-ur-Rashid (40), Nur Hossain (30), Hafiz (20), Abul Hasem (17) and one of them age about 20 could not be named, reports UNB.

#### Phensidyl syrup recovered

FENI, Aug 15: Bangladesh Rifles recovered a huge quantity of banned Phensidyl syrup and current nets from three night coaches on Comilla-Chittagong highway early today. Acting on a tip, 7 Rifle Battalion led by Major Jamal Mahmood halted three coaches at Mohammad Ali Bazar in Sadar thana of Feni district at about 4:30 am and recovered 1,800 bottles of India-made Phensidyl worth more than Tk 1.5 lakh and 7 kg of fishing nets, reports UNB.

## Sporadic post-hartal clashes leave 100 hurt in city



The city's Farmgate area during yesterday's hartal hours (Top) and a smokegreen caused by teargas shells near the Dhaka Stadium as police tried to quell agitated processionists in the afternoon. — Star photo

By Staff Correspondent

Sporadic clashes between police and Awami League activists turned downtown Dhaka into a battle ground yesterday afternoon as gunshots, tear gas and bomb blasts left more than 100 people injured.

A UNB report, quoting Awami League sources, said that one Sekandar was killed in a clash near the Golap Shah Mazar area in the capital.

The death could not be officially confirmed, the report added.

Five press photographers including Imran Khan of The Daily Star, were injured in police beating near the Outer Stadium gymnasium opposite RAJUK.

The violence, which continued for nearly four hours, erupted when police broke up a

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## Hartal observed

By Staff Correspondent

Normal life in the capital and most other places in the country became paralysed as a six-hour hartal called by the main opposition Awami League passed off yesterday.

About 60 people were injured in sporadic clashes between the pickets and police, and anti-hartal activists, at different places of the country during the hartal hours.

However, post-hartal clashes in Dhaka left scores of people wounded by police beating, tear gas and bullets.

Reports received in the capital said that the hartal was observed peacefully in different districts.

The Awami League and its front organisations called the country-wide hartal from 6 am to press for repealing the

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## Nationalised banks not following new hours

By Staff Correspondent

Public transactions in most city branches of the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) are practically being closed at 1 pm despite a new government directive to extend the banking hours by two hours.

The Collective Bargaining Agents (CBAs) of some of the banks are opposing the new timings and are even planning to demonstrate against the decision.

The private banks, however, are operating as per the government directive.

According to some bank officials and staff working in various branches, the new transaction hours provide very little time for reconciliation of the accounts. They said the banks of the country, specially the NCBs, are not well equipped to operate

for such long hours since they lack modern banking technology and adequate manpower. Overworked bank staff, working in a weak system, might commit serious mistakes, they observed.

They also complained that no time had been given for lunch and prayers under the new timings.

A high official of one of the NCBs, however, said that all the branches of his bank were following the government directive.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, he said the government should have taken more time to implement the new hours.

He said three branches of his bank were now fully computerised and the bank management

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## 900 plots for land acquisition victims

By Nurul Kabir

The government will distribute shortly more than nine hundred residential plots among the victims of the state-sponsored acquisition of lands at Mirpur and Mohammadpur areas of the city during late the Fifties and early Seventies.

According to Public Works Ministry sources, the documents of the "rehabilitation plots"—2.5 and 2 katha in size—will be handed over to the affected persons on the spot.

The distribution will begin any time next month, Public Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah told this correspondent Saturday.

About five thousand acres of land in the areas were separately acquired by the erstwhile

government of Pakistan during 1958-59 and by the Government of Bangladesh during 1972-73.

The then East-Pakistan government acquired the lands to set up the Mohammadpur and the Mirpur housing estates with a view to rehabilitating the Urdu-speaking people who had migrated from India following Partition in 1947.

On the other hand, the Bangladesh government acquired the lands to construct the Geneva Camp with a view to providing temporary shelters to the Biharies who had opted for Pakistan after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971.

Although both the government

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## Air strikes threat against Serbs a bluff: Owen

LONDON, Aug 15: International mediator Lord Owen said in an interview published today that the threat to launch air strikes against Bosnian Serb positions was to some extent a bluff, reports AFP.

The European Community mediator—who works alongside UN mediator Thorvald Stoltenberg—also said the United Nations often use bluffs relying on people's reluctance to shoot at UN forces.

To some extent, this is a matter of bluff, but in order to be effective you've got to be prepared to do it, he told The Independent Today, referring to the recent threat of air strikes against Bosnian Serbs.

## Flood situation worsens

Flood situation further deteriorated in some areas in the Ganges, Meghna and Brahmaputra basins as the major rivers swelled with water from upstreams again crossed danger marks according to reports reaching here yesterday.

UNB Pabna correspondent reports that the Jamuna continued swelling with rain and water from upstream and crossed danger level at Nagarbari by 2 centimetre, further aggravating overall flood situation of the district during the last 24 hours.

About 8,000 people were marooned and standing crops on 1,000 acres of land in 26 more villages of six thanas were damaged by flooding during the period. The affected thanas are Bera, Sujaganar, Sadar, Vangura, Faridpur and Chatmohor.

On the other hand, at least 100 families were rendered homeless and 100 kutcha houses damaged as the turbulent river Jamuna eroded a vast area in Nakalia village in Bera thana.

## MMC classes exams suspended until Aug 19

MYMENSINGH, Aug 15: All classes and examinations of the Mymensingh Medical College were suspended today (Sunday) till August 19 to avert any untoward incident on the college campus, reports UNB.

The College Academic Council, in an emergency meeting, also decided to cancel the college students union election, scheduled for August 18, fearing deterioration of law and order.

Campus sources said Awami League-backed Chhatra League on Saturday forced a female student, reportedly an activist of the Jatnyatabad Chhatra Dal, to submit nomination paper on behalf of the Chhatra League. Later, in a petition to the Election Commissioner, she withdrew her candidature.

The incident caused tension among the two student organisations who chased each other at their Bagmara medical hostel Saturday night. About seven hand-bombs were exploded during the melee.

## Dutch plane hijacked

DUESSELDORF, Aug 15: An Egyptian claiming to have a bomb hijacked a Dutch jetliner on Sunday and forced it to land in Germany. Police said he was demanding freedom for the Sheikh jailed in the World Trade Centre bombing, reports AP.

The hijacker also demanded to be flown to New York, where Muslim fundamentalist Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman is being held.

All 131 passengers and four of the seven crew members were released as the KLM jet, which had been on route to Amsterdam from Tunis, Tunisia, sat on the tarmac at Rhein-Ruhr Airport, said airport spokesman Hellmueth Woelkel.

## Municipal bodies dissolved in Punjab

LAHORE (Pakistan), Aug 15: Municipal bodies were dissolved in the key province of Punjab today as part of the Pakistani caretaker government's preparations for fair and impartial national elections, reports AFP.

Punjab's Local Government and Rural Development Minister Raja Saroop Khan announced the dissolution, meeting a demand from the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of former premier Benazir Bhutto and some other groups.

## Insurance cos face difficulty in floating shares by Oct

By S Y Bakht

The government has ordered 14 insurance companies to issue long-overdue public subscriptions, as required under the Insurance Act, by October 31 this year.

The Controller of Insurance issued a letter last month to the 14 companies asking them to conform with the regulations and float public shares by the end of October.

However, insurance executives point out it is almost impossible to meet the deadline because other existing government regulations and a lack of adequate guidelines are hindering the process of shares floating.

They suggested the process should be staggered over a period of time.

Moreover, a Dhaka Stock Exchange source also agreed that the process should be implemented in phases to allow both the stock market and the exchange to absorb the large volume of shares.

According to a Commerce

Ministry source, the 14 insurance companies have so far failed to comply with the provisions of the Insurance Act which requires companies to offer shares within a stipulated time-frame. The law lays down that 50 per cent of the paid-up capital of an insurance company has to be allotted for subscription of public shares and offered within three years of its inception.

The source added that the 14 companies receiving the letter have long passed the regulatory deadline to issue public shares—all of them were registered before 1988—while some were set up as early as 1985.

The letter noted that the periodic extension of time, earlier granted by the erstwhile Controller of Capital Issues (CCI) to these companies, expired in July last. The letter went on to caution the insurance companies of "appropriate" action, under the Insurance Act and insurance rules, for failure to meet the deadline for floating

public shares.

The newly-formed Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), which replaced the CCI, last week gave permission to one of the 14 insurance companies to float shares. Shares of the company are likely to be traded at the Stock Exchange later this month.

The Commerce Ministry source also noted that another four companies, which have already floated shares and are listed with the Stock Exchange, have failed to meet a separate regulation requiring them to appoint a specified number of directors in the board from amongst the public shareholders.

The regulation makes it mandatory for the insurance companies with public subscriptions to appoint a third of the board members from the shareholders. A Ministry source acknowledged that absence of adequate procedural guidelines is preventing the companies

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## Anti-liberation forces killed Mujib: Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League (AL) President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday said that the anti-liberation forces and their accomplices killed Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and governments, ever since, had been protecting the killers.

She was speaking as chief guest at a discussion meeting on "The Killing of Bangabandhu and Bangladesh Today" in front of Mujib's residence in Dhanmondi last evening.

Addressing the meeting organised by the women's wing of the AL, Hasina said, "Zia had rewarded the killers and allowed the entry of Golam Azam in this country, Ershad established Mujib's self-proclaimed killers—Col Faruk and Col Rashid. Both Zia and Ershad had to leave in unnatural manner."

She added, "by setting up killers like Faruk-Rashid-Mushtaque and their Jubo Command against the freedom fighters or establishing killers

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## Forget Kashmir, Rao tells Pakistan



Indian Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao addresses the nation from behind a bullet-proof glass cage atop the ramparts of the Red Fort in New Delhi on August 15 for India's 47th Independence Day. — AFP photo

NEW DELHI, Aug 15: Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao declared today that India would never allow Kashmir's secession, accusing Pakistan of fuelling Muslim militancy in the strife-torn state, reports AFP, AP.

"Kashmir is an integral and inalienable part of India, the 72-year-old premier said in an Independence Day speech from the ramparts of the historic Red Fort here after unfurling the national flag.

Related story on Page 5

"Let Pakistan do whatever it wants, try as hard as it can... India will always be here and Kashmir will always be a part of India," said Rao, shielded by a bullet-proof glass cage.

He charged Pakistan with training and arming Muslim militants fighting for Kashmir's secession.

Pakistan had come close to being declared a terrorist state by the United States for its role in fuelling the guerrilla campaign, Rao said, adding that Islamabad would gain nothing

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## Palestinian deportees to return in two phases

MARJ AL-ZOHOUR, (Lebanon), Aug 15: The nearly 400 Palestinians deported by Israel almost eight months ago announced Sunday they had accepted the Jewish state's offer to let them return in two stages, reports AP.

The return of the deportees to the occupied territories would remove what had become a major stumbling block in peace talks between the Arabs and Israel, although the deportations failed to derail the peace process.

"We have decided to accept the new offer and wish to stress our firm belief in the right of all of us to go back home," said the deportees' spokesman Abdul-Aziz Rantisi.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's government offered Thursday to allow the return of 192 of the 396 deportees to the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip at an unspecified date in September. The exiles had turned down several offers for a piecemeal return since Israel deported them December 17. The deportees said they would accept nothing short of a collec-

tive repatriation.

The men were deported after the slayings of six Israeli officers in the occupied territories.

The killings were blamed on the Muslim fundamentalist Hamas and Islamic Jihad movements, to which most of the deportees are linked. The fundamentalist groups oppose the Middle East peace talks.

Lebanon refused to admit the exiles to government-controlled territory, saying it would not become a dumping ground for Israel's outcasts. The deportees ended up living in a makeshift tent city in no man's land in southern Lebanon between Israel and Lebanese lines.

Rantisi said there were several reasons behind the deportees' change of mind. He cited the resumption of the Middle East peace talks despite the deportations, and the failure of the UN Security Council to implement its December 18 resolution calling for the immediate and unconditional repatriation of all the deportees.

## ROK for peaceful use of N-energy with DPRK

SEOUL, Aug 15: President Kim Young-Sam said Sunday South Korea would help rival North Korea peacefully use nuclear energy if the North resolves suspicions that it is developing nuclear weapons, reports AP.

But South Korea's foreign minister, wielding the other half of Seoul's carrot-and-stick policy, warned that the Communist North would risk international sanctions if it fails to clear up the issue by the end of September.

"I would like to make it very clear that if and when North Korea guarantees its nuclear transparency... we will positively cooperate with them for the peaceful use of nuclear energy," Kim told a ceremony marking South Korea's independence from Japan on August 15, 1945.

It should be pointed out that it will never be possible to achieve unification through nuclear arms, missiles or acts

of instigation and subversion," he said.

In two rounds of talks with the United States, North Korea has agreed to reinjoin an international nuclear controls treaty it once threatened to quit.

But the North continues to reject demands from Washington and Seoul that it allow the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect two suspect facilities at North Korea's main nuclear complex of Yongbyon.

The North maintains that the two facilities are non-nuclear and not subject to inspections.

South Korea's Foreign Minister, Han Seung-joo, said the third round of US-North Korea talks, scheduled for mid-September, may not be held unless the North opens up its secret facilities to UN inspectors.

Han said South Korea and the United States agree that they have used up all possible diplomatic initiatives