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NEWS BRIEFS

Zia Ispahani
calls on Hasina

Pakistani People's Party (PPP) leader Zia Ispahani made a courtesy call on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina at her Parliament office yesterday. They exchanged views on political and economic matters of common concern between Bangladesh and Pakistan, reports UNB.

Shahudul UNTAC
CIVPOL chief

DIG of Police Shahudul Haque now in Cambodia on a UN mission has taken over the command of Civilian Police (CIVPOL) of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), official source said here yesterday. reports BSS.

ALPP meet Sept 11
By Staff Correspondent

A meeting of the Awami League Parliamentary Party (ALPP) will be held at 4pm on September 11 at the conference room of the office of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament in the Sangsada Bhaban. AL chief Sheikh Hasina will preside over the meeting.

260 Rohingyas
go home

COX'S BAZAR, Sept 4 : Two hundred sixty Rohingyas refugees voluntarily went back to their homes in Myanmar through the Jummapara Transit Camp at Teknaf here today. Officials sources told BSS here tonight that local UNHCR and Bangladesh officials saw the refugees off while they were crossing the border.

Jordan backs accord likely to be signed Sept 13

Fatah okays Arafat's self-rule deal

TUNIS, Sept 4: Palestine

Liberation Organisation chairman Yasser Arafat, who has battled for the backing of his historic autonomy accord with Israel today won "total approval" from his top aides, report AFP, Reuter, AP.

Arafat said today his mainstream Fatah movement had approved a deal with Israel on Palestinian self-rule.

"The project was approved and transferred to the other Palestinian leaderships," he told reporters here.

Fatah's central committee has met under Arafat on three successive nights to discuss the

draft agreement.

PLO spokesman Yasser Abed Rabbo said there was "total agreement on the text" presented by Arafat to the meeting.

Bassam Abu Sharif, Arafat's political advisor, told TRL radio in Paris that the approval granted by the central committee was a victory for Arafat.

Arafat gave no date for the mutual recognition. But Israel Army radio said Saturday that the two sides have agreed on Sept 13 as a target date.

The United States has suggested Monday, September 13 as the date for the signing in Washington the agreement,

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said today.

An aide to Peres told Reuters the Israeli Minister disclosed the date at a Paris hotel where he was holding talks with Norwegian Foreign Minister Johan Joergen Holst, who is mediating between Israel and the PLO.

Arafat said other participants in the US-sponsored peace talks were close to signing agreements with Israel, but he did not name countries. Jordan, Lebanon and Syria are taking part.

Arafat also won the crucial support of King Hussein of

Jordan for the plan to grant self-rule to the Palestinians of the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

King Hussein said today that his country backed the PLO-Israeli accord for Palestinian self-rule.

The King told a press conference in Amman it was a serious step forward.

Hussein had been lukewarm to the plan, fearing it will backfire and cause new turmoil in the region, sending another wave of Palestinian refugees pouring into his resource-poor kingdom.

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Workmen yesterday dismantling the massive bamboo frame of the imposing *shamiana* put up on the Manik Miah Avenue for the opening session of the fourth national council of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) on September 1. —Star photo

PM to address UNGA Oct 1

By M Anwarul Haq

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will address the 48th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on October 1. She is expected to lead a 25-member team to the world body.

Bangladesh Prime Minister's New York route is likely to be inaugurated by the Prime Minister when she leaves with her entourage on the maiden flight of the national carrier on the night of September 29. The flight will also carry normal revenue passengers.

The Prime Minister is expected to return home October 7.

The official delegation to the United Nations General Assembly will also comprise a five-member team from the Foreign Office headed by Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman. Seven other officials of the Bangladeshi Permanent Mission in New York will join the team.

Ahead of the Prime Minister's scheduled visit, Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman leaves Dhaka on September 18 via London to attend the UNGA session which begins on September 21.

Begum Zia, in her address to the august body on October 1, is expected to touch on a number of key issues and speak on

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democracy, its success and consolidation in Bangladesh. She is also expected to make a call for taking more concrete steps for world peace and security with special emphasis to the region. The Bangladesh Prime Minister is also likely to appeal to the world body and its members to avoid double standards in international relations. Bangladesh's role in the UN peace keeping operations will also be highlighted.

The key elements of the Prime Minister's speech are now under preparation by officials concerned. Sources said, the Prime Minister has herself briefed the officials on the vital themes she would like to focus before the world body.

A decision on whether the Prime Minister should deliver her address in English or Bangla is yet to be finalised. However, the Prime Minister may choose to speak in Bangla. A source in the Prime Minister's office said, the PM would normally want to speak in Bangla to focus Bangladesh in its right linguistic perspective. She had spoken eloquently in English in several international conferences.

Earlier, Chittagong divisional commissioner gave detailed briefings to the sub-committee members at his office chamber

JS body on Foreign Ministry visits Rohingya camps

TEKNAF (Cox's Bazar), Sept 4 : The members of the sub-committee of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Foreign Ministry, led by Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman, visited Rongikhal transit camp and Rohingya refugee camps of Rongikhal and Noapara-1 on Friday, reports BSS.

The members of the sub-committee went round the camps, openly exchanged views with the inmates of the camps and inquired about their welfare.

The minister was accompanied by committee members including Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Abdus Samad Azad, Major (Retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed of the BNP, Additional Secretary (Law Adviser) of the Foreign Ministry Shamsul Morsed, Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Omar Faruque, Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner Golam Murtaza, Cox's Bazar Deputy Commissioner Enamul Kabir and related officials.

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Joint appraisal team for Jamuna Bridge arrives today

Star Report

an take decisions on a number of unresolved issues for preparing the appraisal report.

The three co-financers of the project have, in the meantime, agreed to finance the project after being convinced of its viability, but they are yet to decide the method of co-financing.

The seven-member WB mission is expected to be headed by Ismail Mobarak, Principal Board Maritime Specialist, while the missions of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) comprising seven members each will be headed by B K Gupta, Senior Project Engineer and K. Hare, Director, respectively.

The joint mission will stay in Bangladesh until September 20

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Private bill for repeal of Anti-Terrorism Act placed

A private bill seeking repeal of the Anti-Terrorism Act was submitted to Parliament Secretariat yesterday, reports UNB.

K M Jahangir MP of the Awami League said he had submitted the bill titled Anti-Terrorism Act (Repeal) Bill, 1992 under Rule 72 (1) of the Rules of Procedure.

In the statement of object of the bill, it was stated that the law should be scrapped as it is being abused in victimising opposition leaders and workers since its enactment.

In some cases, it said, innocent supporters and workers of the ruling party are being harassed following intra-party conflicts.

Corrupt policemen are also using the act as a weapon for illegal earning the statement alleged, adding that the law has created panic among the people all over the country.

The statement termed the act as contrary to fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Besides, all political parties, professional groups and social organisations have demanded repeal of the act, describing it as a bad law.

Movement against terrorism GF's maiden venture

Star Report

The newly-floated party Gan Forum (GF) headed by Dr Kamal Hossain is likely to begin its activities by launching a countrywide movement against terrorism.

The programmes of the movement as well as plans for organisational activities will be discussed at the first meeting of the Executive Council of the party which begins Tuesday afternoon. The Executive Council comprises the 12-member Council of Chairmen and the Secretariat consisting another 12.

Meanwhile, the 7-member Steering Committee, the See Page 12 Col 6

Taka convertibility

Foreign goods may be dearer from Oct

By Sohel Manzur

moved immediately after announcement of the Taka's full convertibility which may lead to an unexpected rise in the prices of the dollar, the sources said.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a high official of a nationalised commercial bank said the possibility of such a rise in the dollar price cannot be ruled out in a totally deregulated exchange market that is off. The exchange rates would be determined by the market forces and the banks would have to rationalise the prices when the market would be more competitive, he said.

Although the country has a formidable reserve of foreign exchange, the importers would have to buy those at much higher prices than ever before because of an artificial crisis that is most likely to persist at least for few months, following the convertibility of Taka, the sources said.

They said that the Bangladesh Bank has directed the dealers of foreign exchange to keep the difference between buying and selling prices of the dollar within 20 paisa, increasing it from the previous limit of 10 paisa. The provision for keeping the limit would be re-

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Export-oriented units may get tax concessions

Export-oriented industries outside the country's Export Processing Zone (EPZ) are likely to be provided with the tax concessions now being enjoyed by the industries within the EPZ, reports PROBE.

The board of governors of the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA), which meets here today with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair, is expected to consider a proposal in this regard, a highly placed source told PROBE yesterday.

Industries set up in the EPZ enjoy all sorts of tax holiday for 10 years from the date of commencement of commercial production. Capital machinery imported for setting up industries in the EPZ area — are also exempted from customs duties and VAT. Moreover, tax on dividends has also been waived.

The concessions under which foreign entrepreneurs can also remit their profit without paying any tax have been enforced to attract more foreign investment.

The proposal came from the BEPZA after it had faced problems while considering a joint

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Contaminated milk seized in Chittagong

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 4: Detectives Branch (DB) personnel of the Chittagong Metropolitan Police in three separate raids in the city this evening recovered contaminated milk powder and smuggled spices worth over Taka two crore.

Acting on a tip off the DB personnel recovered 27,000 kgs of milk powder from the godown of H Akbar Ali at Sadarghat Road and 12,500 kgs from the godown of Nasir A Brothers at Station Road. The value of the seized milk was estimated at Taka one crore.

In another operation at the godown of Apollo Store at Khatunbagh here, smuggled spices worth Taka one crore were seized. But details were not available in this regard as the officials were staying at the spots at the time of filing this report.

FBUTA strike today and Wednesday

By DU Correspondent

The country's university teachers will observe a strike today and Wednesday demanding arrest and trial of the persons involved in the violence at two universities in July last.

The Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Associations (FBUTA) has called the strike protesting the