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NEWS BRIEFS

ALPP meets today

A meeting of the Awami League Parliamentary Party (ALPP) will be held at the conference room of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament at the Sangsab Bhaban today at 5 pm. Secretary of the ALPP Begum Sajeda Chowdhury MP has requested all MPs of the party to be present at the meeting, reports BSS.

Zia Mahila College opens at Mirpur

Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda yesterday said the present government had undertaken massive programme to turn manpower into human resources by expanding opportunities for education in the country. Barrister Huda was inaugurating Shaheed Zia Mahila College yesterday afternoon at Mirpur Section 12 in the city. Local MP Syed Mohammad Mohsin was present as special guest, reports BSS.

3rd day of GF's signature drive

Gano Forum will collect signatures of members of the Dhaka District Bar Council on the third day of its month-long anti-terrorism campaign today. The programme will begin at 10 am, reports UNB.

One held with revolver

Detective Police arrested a young man with a revolver in his possession from Goran area of the city yesterday. Tapan Sarder, 30, son of Late Idris Sarder, was arrested during a raid at 314, North Goran at about 2.30 am. Police said a sophisticated revolver along with seven bullets and a stolen motor cycle 100 cc CDI Honda (Dhaka Metro A-02-3221) were recovered during the raid, reports UNB.

The Daily Star

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DAKA SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1993

RABIUL AWAL 23, 1414 HIJRI

Clinton to resume dialogue with PLO, host signing ceremony Monday

Old enemies take a new step

JERUSALEM, Sept 10: Israel recognised the PLO today in a historic step towards Middle East peace. The United States said it was resuming dialogue with the organisation the Jewish state once branded as a terrorist group, reports Reuter.

But radical Palestinians said PLO leader Yasser Arafat had betrayed them and at least one group threatened to kill him.

"It's an historic moment that hopefully will bring about an end to 100 years of bloodshed, misery between the Palestinians and Jews, between Palestinians and Israel," Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said as he signed a letter to Arafat at a ceremony in his office.

On Thursday night the Palestine Liberation Organisation chairman signed a letter recognising Israel and renouncing the campaign of violence Palestinians have pursued for decades against the Jewish state.

Mutual recognition between Israel and the group it has always dismissed as terrorists bent on its destruction changed the political landscape in the

Middle East. It cleared the way for the PLO and Israel to sign accord in Washington on Monday providing for early Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

US President Bill Clinton told a White House news conference that Washington was resuming US-PLO dialogue begun in 1988 but broken off in 1990 after a renegade

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Palestinian group attempted an attack on an Israeli beach.

But he did not mention Arafat by name and issued no formal invitations to Monday's signing ceremony.

"As a result and in light of this week's events I have decided to resume the dialogue and the contacts between the United States and the PLO," he said.

These PLO commitments justify a resumption of our dialogue," he said in referring to the PLO promises to renounce terrorism and recognise Israel's right to exist.

US officials said arrange-

ments were being made for Monday's ceremony which may be attended by 1,000 guests, including five former US Presidents.

"I would like to be there," Arafat told French state television from his headquarters in Tunis. This, he said, "will depend on the invitations we will receive from the White House."

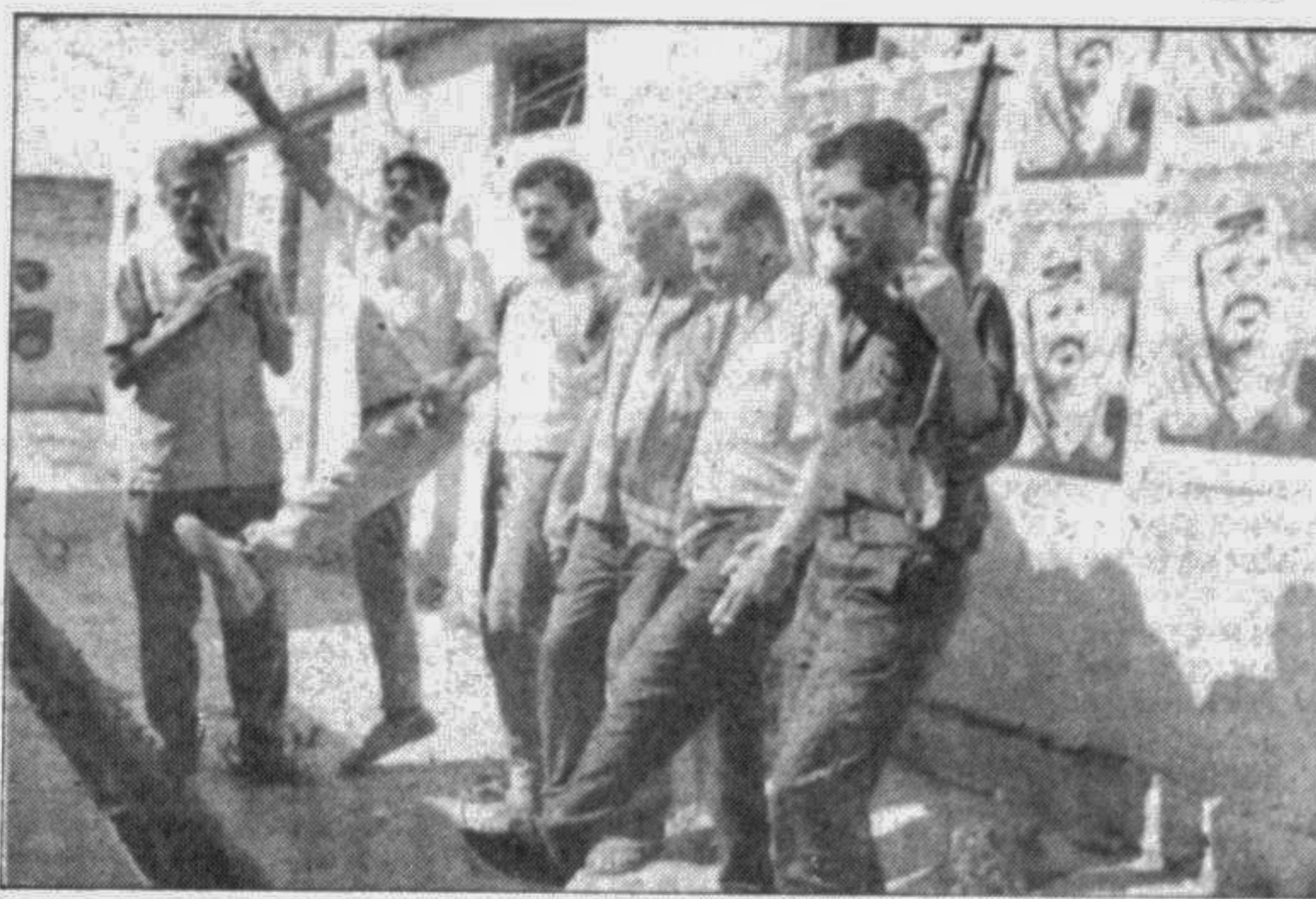
Clinton said Washington would be happy with whoever the PLO and Israel decided to send. "Whoever they decide will be here is fine with us."

PLO ambassador to Turkey Fouad Yaseen said earlier Arafat was expected there on Monday for talks with President Suleyman Demirel, Prime Minister Tansu Ciller and Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin and that as far as he knew the trip was still on.

Radical Palestinian guerrillas, swept off guard by the frenetic developments, threatened to assassinate Arafat, and other hardliners vowed to fight to wreck his pact with Israel.

"Abu Ammar (Arafat) has committed treason and because

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Palestinian fighters in the Ain el-Helwe refugee camp in south Lebanon dancing yesterday after the recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) by Israel. — APP photo

World hails PLO, Israel

UNDATED, Sept 10: From Moscow to Washington, nations on Friday saluted Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation for courage in recognising each other, reports AP.

Russia likened the pact to the fall of the Berlin Wall, the United States announced a resumption of contacts — cut in 1990 — with the PLO, and Spain planned its first royal visit to Israel.

"Today marks a shining moment of hope for people in the Middle East and indeed the entire world," President Clinton told a news conference at the White House.

But whether world leaders will match the plaudits with aid to help peace stick was uncertain.

The United States and the European Community both said they would help the autonomous Palestinian regions,

which are to be established under the agreement.

There were no immediate specific pledges of money, and US congressional leaders, citing foreign aid cutbacks, said they saw little chance of the United States making any immediate major contribution.

The declarations of mutual recognition, officially ending three decades of hostilities between Israel and the PLO, swept domestic items from the top of news bulletins in most countries and provoked jubilant headlines.

"Middle East Enters New Era," The Guardian of London headlined its main story.

Like many commentators, the newspaper's editorial acknowledged that the agreement was just the start of a difficult road ahead, adding that "in a fairly miserable world, the Middle East is entitled to a full

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Fire at Dhaka Stadium market

By Staff Correspondent

Two video shops and an electronic goods shop were gutted in the Dhaka Stadium Market Friday afternoon.

A Fire Service spokesman said the fire originated from an electric short-circuit at Swapna Video on the second floor of the market and spread to adjacent shops.

The video shop was entirely damaged while two others — Rose Valley Video and Audio Centre and Kalam Enterprise — suffered partial damage.

Owners of the shops put the loss at about Tk 70 lakh.

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2 die in launch accident at Sadarghat

By SSMCH Correspondent

Two children drowned when a launch dashed a boat, capsizing it, in the Buriganga near the Sadarghat terminal yesterday afternoon.

Witnesses said MV Sagar-4 was coming from Wiseghat to the Sadarghat BIWTA Terminal when it hit the boat carrying 15 passengers.

The victims were identified as Elachi, 8, and Sajal, 2. Two passengers of the boat were also reported missing.

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Wage increase will frustrate cut in lending rate

By a Special Correspondent

country's industry sector.

The effect of the wage increase is easy to foretell. It will make more industries unviable.

In the jute industry, for ex-

stagger the reduction in jute sector capacity over a longer period, that is, keep on spoon-feeding the sector out of the budget. In both the options everybody except those few who will retain their jobs at the higher wage will be the losers.

The second option will only pass on the burden of adjustment to the wage increase to the tax-payers. Since the tax-payers are less 'united' than the public sector workers, this would be the path of least resistance for the government and hence, the preferred one.

The government's announcement that the Wages Commission award will be

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News Analysis

ample, the problem of viability of the current capacity has become even more intense. As reported in the press, the jute sector restructuring programme is facing the threat of derailing because of the wage award. The options that are available to avert this are two: aim at a bigger reduction in jute sector capacity, that is, accept higher number of layoffs or,

JP (N) fails to name committee

By Staff Correspondent

A group of Jatiya Party dissidents said yesterday former President HM Ershad was no longer a political prisoner because he has been fighting court battles against several criminal charges.

Party insiders said the announcement was postponed because of internal discord with a number of leaders aspiring for top positions. Huda said a committee would nevertheless be announced within a couple of days.

The septuagenarian Huda was flanked by Ershad's Deputy Prime Minister Dr M A Matin — who deserted the former President just before his ouster in December 1990 — and

Nazimuddin Al-Azad another of Ershad's ministers.

The former Speaker, however, said he and his allies also demand the release of Ershad but insist it must be through proper legal process.

The new party comes after repeated accusations against the JP leadership. Acting JP chairman former Prime Minister Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury has been accused personally of being autocratic and deviating from the party's nationalist stand. The dissidents also charged Mizan and his close associates for exploiting the for-

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Deja vu?

By Staff Correspondent

Shamsul Huda Chowdhury and Dr. M. A. Matin, two seasoned players in the intriguing game of Bangladeshi politics, have done it again.

On April 2, 1983, through a 'special convention' at the Beauty cinema hall in Mirpur, they had 'expelled' the then chairman of the BNP former President Justice Abdus Sattar and Secretary General Dr. Badruddoza Chowdhury for their 'anti-party roles' and formed their own faction dubbed BNP (Huda).

At the time it was widely believed that the move by

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Muslim militants to snub a visiting Indian minister, reports Reuter.

Shops, markets, offices, banks and schools were shut in the state's summer capital Srinagar and throughout the rest of the scenic valley in a snub to India's Minister of State for Internal Security, Rajesh Pilot.

Most government offices were locked and those which did open had a skeleton staff. Public transport did not run and the streets of Srinagar were deserted after militant groups, led by the pro-Pakistan Hezb-Ul-Mujahideen, ordered people to stay at home unless absolutely necessary.

Police said six people were killed in a blast in the southern town of Anantnagar but gave no other information.

Convertibility of Taka may cause inflation

By Sohel Manzur

The country may face a serious inflation after the Taka is made fully convertible if the brokers, the authorised money-changers and the exporters are allowed to influence the money market, banking sources said.

According to the sources, a move is underway to include all of them in the money transaction process, along with the private and nationalised commercial banks, with a view to broadening the exchange market.

At present, the exporters are allowed to retain five to ten per cent of their foreign exchange earnings while an individual can keep forex to the tune of 2500 US dollars.

Besides, the foreigners, who are allowed to keep 5000 US dollars, are converting their forex with the authorised money-changers (the five-star and three-star hotels).

If all of them are allowed to trade in the deregulated exchange market, they may try to manipulate the exchange rate by creating artificial crisis.

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Ban on rallies, processions near Sangsab areas

All kinds of processions, rallies and demonstrations in the Sangsab Bhaban complex and its adjoining areas have been banned from midnight today for smooth holding of the parliament's autumn session which begins Sunday, reports UNB.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) also prohibited carrying of firearms, explosives and other harmful materials in those areas.

As per the Police Ordinance (Ordinance No. 111/76) Article 28 and 29, DMP Commissioner A N Hussain imposed the ban for maintaining law and order.

The areas are: From Old Air Port on Mymensingh Road to Sonargaon crossing, eastern part of Panthapath, from Panthapath-Green Road crossing to Farmgate, from Shyamoli

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Mahbub cries off

By Staff Correspondent

Mahbub Rahman, a former Education Minister under Ershad, who was assigned the task of drafting a new constitution of the JP, yesterday disowned his association with any faction of the trouble-ridden party.

"My inability to be associated with any move by anyone is deeply regretted," Rahman said in a written statement just before yesterday's press conference by Shamsul Huda Chowdhury yesterday.

He called for unity of all Jatiya Party members to accomplish the unfinished tasks.

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