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NEWS BRIEFS

Bus runs over one in city

An unidentified pedestrian was crushed under the wheels of a speeding bus at Tejgon industrial area in the city yesterday. Police said the victim, a 35-year-old man, was run over by the bus while crossing the road at about 2.15 pm. Police seized the bus, but the driver managed to flee, reports UNB.

Mannan returns

M A Mannan, State Minister for Science and Technology, returned in Dhaka last night from Islamabad, after attending the sixth meeting of the standing committee on science and technology of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). The meeting was held in Islamabad from September 19 to 21, reports BSS.

Abiola back home

LAGOS, Sept 24: Nigeria's would-be president ended his seven-week absence and returned home Friday to a hero's welcome from supporters and a showdown with the government he seeks to replace, reports AP. Business tycoon Moshood K O Abiola, criticised by some supporters for staying away from the troubled nation since August 3, touched down at Lagos airport aboard an Air France jetliner.

Thousands gathered outside the airport and Abiola's nearby home, and hundreds of police tried unsuccessfully to keep them from rushing to the aircraft and yanking down barriers.

Congress suspends President's power: Ruskoi acting head of state Yeltsin orders security forces to disarm opponents



Military lorries transport heavily armed troops through the centre of Moscow towards the parliament building yesterday. — AFP photo

MOSCOW, Sept 24: President Boris Yeltsin ordered security forces today to disarm opponents occupying parliament but vowed there would be no assault on conservative deputies holed up there, reports Reuters, AP.

A presidential decree instructed army and police to take measures to take away weapons from the persons' holding parliament and to take control of security at the building.

About 500 Interior Ministry troops later ringed the Moscow building to prevent a meeting of hardline military officers who back the parliament, which Yeltsin dissolved on Tuesday.

The meeting was planned by the union of officers, whose leader, Colonel Stanislav Terekhov, was arrested Friday in connection with a failed attack late Thursday on CIS military headquarters.

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Pakistan halts N-programme

ISLAMABAD, Sept 24: Pakistan has halted its nuclear programme and the United States will soon lift its embargo on aid to Islamabad, interim Prime Minister Moeen Qureshi said in an interview here today, reports AFP.

"Pakistan has already capped its nuclear programme," Qureshi, 63, told a panel of local journalists less than two weeks ahead of October 6 and 9 elections.

"We are not making any nuclear equipment. We have stopped the programme at the point where we had reached," he said.

A former World Bank Vice-President, Qureshi was inducted in mid-July to impartially supervise the elections as head of a neutral caretaker

government formed after the then President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif stepped down following their six months of bitter power tussle.

Washington had clamped a ban on more than 500 million dollar in economic and military assistance to its traditional ally Pakistan in 1990, after former President George Bush refused to certify to the Congress that Islamabad was not pursuing a weapon-oriented nuclear programme.

The certification was necessary under the so-called Pressler law which forbids US aid to the countries carrying out an unsafeguarded programme for military purposes.

Reuters adds: Washington

believes Pakistan renewed its efforts to enrich uranium to levels needed to make weapons in early 1990, when tension soared with India over the revolt in Indian Kashmir.

Pakistan and India have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir, two thirds of which is controlled by Delhi and the rest by Islamabad.

Pakistan denies Indian charges that it arms and trains guerillas fighting New Delhi's rule in the Muslim-majority Jammu and Kashmir state. But Islamabad has acknowledged it morally supports the Kashmiri campaign for independence.

Washington demands Pakistan stop its uranium enrichment programme and destroy key components.

Gear up efforts to offset opposition moves, Khaleda asks partymen

Prime Minister and BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday asked her party leaders and workers to speed up the organisational activities and project the government's ongoing socio-economic programmes to the people to offset the opposition's agitational action programmes, reports BSS.

She was addressing the thanks-giving ceremony organised at the Prime Minister's Sugandha office to congratulate the leaders and workers who had worked hard in making the September 1-2 4th national council session of BNP a success.

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Authority dispels doubt about JMBP viability

By Staff Correspondent

A top official of the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Project (JMBP) at a press conference Friday dispelled the 'misconception' created allegedly by some newspapers about the financial viability of the project.

The press conference addressed by the Executive Director of the Jamuna Bridge Authority Mohammad Ali said that the technical, economic and financial viability of the project had been established beyond all doubt through a number of studies and analysis done by national and international experts as well as by the government agencies.

All categorically named an English daily which published reports questioning the viability and necessity of the project and said that the reports were 'incorrect, misleading and

motivated.' Contradicting specific points raised by the particular newspaper, the Executive Director said that nobody was questioning the efficacy and utility of the bridge except the 'anonymous' experts quoted by the newspaper.

"The consensus of all experts, co-financiers and government agencies is that the project is fully viable and affordable," he said.

He said the project had not undergone a metamorphosis or reduced to only a bridge for trucks as claimed in the reports. It is rather a multipurpose bridge and has been so designed as to carry a metre gauge rail line, electrical interconnector, gas pipeline and telecommunications facilities.

Ali also termed the report on increase in the implementation cost of the project as 'in-

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Foreign buyers show keen interest in share market

By Inam Ahmed

The foreign buyers have begun showing keen interest in the country's share market, according to stock market sources.

However, brokers feel that the share price index still do not reflect the true picture of the market because of overcrowding of illiquid shares.

In a span of one week, the foreign buyers intervened in the stock market twice and lifted heavy chunk of shares.

On Wednesday last, 31,100 shares of Bangladesh Oxygen Ltd were purchased by the foreign investors which was 58 per cent of the day's total turnover in value. Correspondingly, the

day's total turnover surged up to over Tk 40 lakh from the usual trading of Tk five to 12 lakh.

Only about a week ago, the market again surged up to Tk one crore trading when foreign buyers purchased 34,520 shares of Beximco Infusion. "These sales were mainly from broker to broker," one trader in the market commented on condition of anonymity. This is not the ideal situation.

Brokers at the Dhaka Stock Exchange feel that if the trades had been direct, broker to client deal, the shareholders would have got better values while the

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Pragati Insurance's plea to float shares at a premium rejected

By S Y Bakht

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has turned down an appeal against the order revoking an earlier permission allowing Pragati Insurance Limited to float public shares at a premium.

According to official sources, in issuing the dismissal order on Thursday last, the Commission deemed it to be in the public interest that Pragati should not be allowed to offer public shares at a premium.

The SEC also found it to be "inequitable and a discrimination" that the company should sell its shares to the public at a premium while it had sold 5,000 of the shares to the Managing Director at par value

in July last. It termed this practice as something akin to "insider trading in securities", which is prohibited.

The appeal was heard by the SEC board and was attended by its chairman Sultanuzzaman Khan and the two ex-officio members nominated by the Finance Ministry, Additional Secretary Syed Amirul Mulk and Deputy Governor of the Bangladesh Bank Kamaluddin Ahmed. Pragati was represented at the hearing by its chairman, managing director and a director.

Earlier on August 14 the SEC approved a Pragati prospectus allowing the issuance of Tk 3,05,00,000 shares

of Tk 100 each at a premium rate of Tk 50 per share.

However, after receiving written objections from the Controller of Insurance that Pragati had violated provision of the Insurance Act, the SEC rescinded its permission on public interest grounds on September 9.

Pragati was set up in 1986 after the erstwhile Controller of Capital Issues granted permission for issue of six lakh shares at Tk 100 each at par value in the proportion of 50 per cent to the sponsors and the remainder to the general public. Under the Insurance Act the company had to float the public shares within

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Campus violence outcome of BNP decision: Nizami

Jamaat leader Mattur Rahman Nizami yesterday made a blistering attack on the ruling party, saying the current campus violence is the "outcome of a political decision of the BNP," reports UNB.

Addressing a rally at the north gate of the Baitul Mukarram Mosque, he demanded judicial enquiry into the incidents of the Rajshahi University and the Khulna city to unveil the truth.

Nizami, secretary general of the Jamaat, alleged that the BNP had entered into an entente with the Awami League and left-leaning political groups to suppress what he called Islamic resurrection in the country.

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Dr Kamal visits RU, tells press 'Remove Home, Education ministers, ban Jamaat'

Gano Forum president Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday demanded immediate resignation of Home and Education ministers and ban on politics of Jamaat-Shibir, reports UNB.

"The two ministers have failed to perform their constitutional duties.... they should resign to uphold the Constitution and faith in parliamentary form of government," he said.

"If the two ministers do not want to resign, it is the duty of the head of the government to remove them from their position."

Dr Kamal Hossain was addressing a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club in the

afternoon on his return from Rajshahi after seeing the situation in the Rajshahi University, the scene of recent violence that claimed the life of a student. He also visited some other educational institutions in Rajshahi.

The Forum president said violence gripped most of the educational institutions in the country. Jahangirnagar and Rajshahi universities, and several colleges remained closed due to widespread violence in recent days.

"It is the duty of the Home Minister to maintain law and order across the country. Ensuring congenial atmosphere

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Sihanouk becomes king again

PHNOM PENH, Sept 24: Norodom Sihanouk, the pre-eminent figure in Cambodian politics for the past half century, was named king on Friday, restoring him to the throne after more than two decades in exile and resistance, reports AP.

The elaborate ceremony at the yellow-spired Royal Palace came just hours after Sihanouk, 70, ratified the country's new constitution.

The constitution allowed him to rescend the throne as

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Parliamentary team of Nepal due tomorrow

A Nepalese parliamentary delegation led by the Speaker of House of Representative Daman Nath Dhungana arrives here tomorrow on a week-long goodwill visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The delegation invited by the Speaker of Jatiya Sangsad Shaikh Razzak Ali is the first of this kind to visit Bangladesh from Nepal after the restoration of multi-party democracy in the Himalayan kingdom.

The Speaker of the Nepalese House of Representatives will be accompanied by his wife Bhuvan Dhungana.

Other members of the delegation are: Mahendra Kumar Misra, Khalil Miya Ansari, Mrs Meena Pandey of Nepali Congress Party, Mahesh Chowdhury and Shiva Bahadur

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Push-in issue discussed with BSF

JHENIDAH, Sept 24: Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Indian Border Security Force (BSF) held a flag meeting at Mujibnagar Circuit House here today, reports UNB.

The meeting discussed India's attempt to push in its nationals into Bangladesh, land dispute between the two countries, maintenance of border pillars, smuggling, exchange of counterfeit currency and other cross-border crimes, BDR sources said.

The sources described the meeting as "fruitful" and said that both sides agreed to solve the problems through discussion.

Imelda jailed for corruption

MANILA, Sept 24: Imelda Marcos, who became an international symbol of extravagance during her husband's long reign over the Philippines, was convicted of corruption Friday and sentenced to at least 18 years in prison, reports AP.

The Philippine court also barred Mrs Marcos — a one-

time presidential candidate who still enjoys a large following here — from ever holding public office.

It was the first time any court has convicted the widow of former leader Ferdinand Marcos on a crime connected with the corruption during her husband's 20 years in office.

Mrs Marcos and former Transport Minister Jose Dans were found guilty of two charges of entering into 'unfavourable' contracts involving the government-run commuter rail line and the Philippine General Hospital Foundation Inc.

They were sentenced to nine to 12 years for each charge and must serve at least 18 years, court officials said. Both are free on bail, and Mrs Marcos' lawyer said she would appeal. They were acquitted of three other charges.

Mrs Marcos clutched a black rosary and bowed her head slightly as the clerk of the three-judge Sandiganbayan court, which tries official corruption cases, read the verdict to a courtroom packed with supporters and journalists.

About 150 supporters, wearing red shirts and carrying placards reading 'Imelda Marcos' See Page 12 Col 8



Arafat asks PLO to stop firing at Israelis

RAFAH (Occupied Gaza Strip), Sept 24: PLO fighters have received orders from Yasser Arafat to halt all operations against the Israeli occupation, a guerrilla leader told AFP today.

"We respect the decision of President Arafat to stop firing," Hisham Huda, the Gaza Strip leader of the Fatah Hawks, the PLO's main armed group, said.

"Since the autonomy agreement was signed on September 13 we have not carried out any operation against the Israelis,"

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said the 28-year-old one of the most wanted Palestinian fighters.

"We can protect ourselves, but are under orders not to open fire first," he said during an interview at a secret location in Rafah, on the border with Egypt.

Meanwhile, Israel's Military Chief of Staff General Ehud Barak said the PLO leadership had issued instructions to activists in the territories to reduce the level of violence.

"It is in the PLO's interest to cut down violence and terrorism in Israel and perhaps even in Lebanon," Barak told Friday's Maariv newspaper.

AP adds: Israel and its arch-enemy Syria are discussing a possible peace treaty, but are divided over territorial conces-

sions, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in interviews published Friday. He also criticized Syria's support for opponents of a PLO-Israeli peace deal.

Rabin rejected a proposed agreement with Syria because of doubts about the intentions of the government of President Hafez Assad, said an Egyptian official cited by the Maariv newspaper.

Their governments disagree about the scope of Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, captured from Syria in the 1967 Mideast war, the prime minister told Maariv. Syrian forces once bombarded Israeli settlements from the heights, which overlook northern Israel.

Re-export of contaminated milk ordered

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 24: The Customs Authority here has ordered re-exporting of a consignment of 100 metric tons of highly contaminated milk powder within one month to Holland.

According to Customs officials, the order was passed after a hearing at the office of the Collector of Chittagong Customs See Page 12 Col 6

25 hurt as Shibir, Maitree clash in Pabna

PABNA, Sept 24: At least 25 students were injured, 10 seriously, in a clash between the activists of the Chhatra Maitree and the Islami Chhatra Shibir at Shalgaria here today, police and witnesses said, reports UNB.

Among the seriously injured, four Chhatra Maitree activists - Asadul Islam, 28, Amjad Hossain, 26, Serajul Islam, 25, and Abul Hossain, 22, were admitted to the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Another five supporters of Chhatra Maitree — Barkat Ali, 24, Bakul, 26, Shahidul Islam, 22, Ahsan Habib, 25, and Nurul Alam, 22, and Shibir activist Mohammad Ali, 25, were admitted to Pabna Sadar hospital.

Police arrested Shibir leader Shariful Islam from the spot along with a pipegun and a knife.

Chase and counter-chase continued for about two hours in the area obstructing movement of vehicular traffic. At least seven rounds of shots were fired and crackers exploded during the clash.

District Chhatra Maitree filed a case against the Shibir supporters with the Sadar thana.

Ameer of district Jamaat Maulana Abdur Rahim, however, told UNB that armed activists of the Maitree attacked the Shibir boys staying in a building in the town.

Obituary

Mrs Shakera Rahman, tea planter, and wife of Late Khan Bahadur Mujibur Rahman of Jalpaiguri died of old age illness at 10.00 pm on Friday, September 24, 1993. She was 75.

Her Namaz-e-Janaza will be held after Zohar prayers at Gulshan Central Mosque today, Saturday, September 25, 1993. The burial will take place at Banani Graveyard.

She left behind two sons, Latifur Rahman, President of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Saifur Rahman and three daughters, Mrs Munira Wadud, w/o Dr S A Wadud, Mrs Nargis Tajuddin, w/o S A Y M Tajuddin and Mrs Sharmeen Hossain, w/o Iqbal Hossain.