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NEWS BRIEFS

FM meets editors

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman yesterday hosted a dinner and exchanged views with the editors of national news agencies and newspapers. Information Minister Nazmul Huda was present, reports BSS.

DPRK vice-premier due today

The Vice-Premier of the government of Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Chang Chole, will arrive here today on a six day official visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

AL, JP call half-day hartal Saturday Sporadic clashes mark sit-in: 150 injured

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League (AL) and the Jatiya Party (JP) yesterday separately announced plans for a half-day hartal in the capital Saturday to protest 'police excesses' against their respective programmes around the Secretariat.

The AL announcement of the half-day shut down came during a party rally yesterday afternoon while the JP announced its programme at a press conference yesterday evening.

However, yesterday's agitations — the AL's sit-in and the JP's demonstration around the Secretariat eventually turned the city centre and its adjoining commercial areas including Motijheel into mini battlefields with sporadic skirmishes between the police and the opposition activists.

More than 150 people, including some AL legislators, were injured and more than one hundred activists belonging to the AL and JP were hurt during

the four-hour clash beginning at 11 in the morning.

On the other hand, some police personnel received splinter injuries from cocktail explosions near the Gulistan Police Box and were taken to the Police Hospital immediately. Five youths were reported to have received first aid from the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Hundreds of the paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles and riot police personnel ringed the



Demonstrators being chased by police at the Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday.

AL slates police excesses against demonstrators

By Staff Correspondent

The central leaders of the Awami League (AL) yesterday, denouncing the police excesses against AL activists and leaders, said such activities only proved that the BNP government was more autocratic than the Ershad regime.

Acting president of the AL Abdul Mannan, at a rally held in front of the central office of the party on Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday afternoon, announced a half-day hartal in the city Saturday protesting the attack.

He also announced country-wide protests and demonstrations today and demon-

Dhaka rejects WB suggestion to devalue Taka

By A Special Correspondent

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman has turned down visiting World Bank Vice President D Joseph Wood's suggestion to devalue the Taka and said that the external value of the currency had now increased more than sufficiently to adjust it upward.

At an exclusive meeting yesterday in the capital, the senior WB executive suggested to the Finance Minister that the Taka be devalued but Rahman rejected sharply and said, "We

should now appreciate it rather than devalue it."

Turning down the suggestion, Rahman said that the export earnings of the country had been rising, remittances increasing and the foreign exchange reserves were now at a very comfortable level of over 2.4 billion US dollars. Belying the fears of the WB and other donors, the Taka did not lose any ground to its intervention currency — the US dollar —

Tk 650cr WB help for gas project

The World Bank (WB) has agreed to provide Tk 650 crore for the 'Gas Infrastructure Development Project' of Bangladesh, reports UNB.

An agreement in this regard is expected to be signed in Washington in January next.

The assurance of the World Bank help came during a meeting between a visiting World Bank delegation and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources in Dhaka yesterday.

Vice President Joseph Wood led the WB delegation while Energy Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain led the Bangladesh side.

The Minister apprised the

Tk 3.13 cr gold haul at airport

By Staff Correspondent

Customs officials hauled some 57 kilograms of gold at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) yesterday. A driver of Biman Bangladesh Airlines was arrested for his alleged involvement in the attempt to smuggle the gold in.

A Biman security guard, Moslem Ali, in a daring chase, spoiled the smugglers' broth and nabbed the accused driver Abdul Majid Hawlader, 35, in the apron area of the airport runway.

The gold, worth about Tk 3.13 crore, was brought on a Gulf Air flight (GF-158) coming from Muscat. It landed at ZIA at 7 am, officials said.

According to guard Moslem, just when the bus carrying the disembarked passengers reached the arrival lounge gate he saw one passenger — as yet unidentified — throw two hand-



Driver Majid with the smuggled gold.

AL MP from Ctg loses seat

CHITTAGONG, Nov 10: Sultanzul Kabir Chowdhury of the Awami League today lost his seat in Parliament, reports UNB.

The Election Tribunal-2 headed by Additional District and Sessions Judge Syed Enaytullah has declared illegal and void the election of Sultanzul Kabir from Banshkhali (Chittagong-15).

The verdict of the tribunal came upon a case filed by Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury of the Jatiya Party who had contested Kabir in the February 1991 parliamentary polls.

After examining the witnesses and relevant documents, the tribunal declared void the results of 11 centres out of 83 in the constituency. The results of the remaining 72 centres were retained.

The court also issued orders for sending a copy of the judgement to the Chief Election Commissioner for taking necessary steps in holding fresh polls in those eleven

Corruption depriving govt of huge revenue earnings: Saifur

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman said here yesterday that the government was being deprived of huge revenue earnings due to corruption by a section of officials and businessmen, reports BSS.

The Finance Minister said this while reviewing the various aspects of income tax realisation from Dhaka, Faridpur, Khulna, Kushtia, Pabna and Rajshahi regions for the year 1992-93 at meetings with senior income tax officials here Tuesday and yesterday.

Saifur Rahman expressed his dissatisfaction over the extreme inconsistencies in the realisation of income tax. Due to these inconsistencies the realisation of income tax last year from these regions was only ten per cent of the probable income, it was mentioned in the meeting.

It was also stated in the meetings that in some cases

taxable income of an assessee had been fixed at twenty thousand only despite the fact that he has several sources of income including cloth business, truck and real estate. As a result of corruptions by officials, such assesses were fixed to pay income tax between Taka 300 and Tk 500 only per annum.

The Finance Minister issued directives for reassessment of income tax of such cases to remove inconsistency. Under no circumstances realisation of less than Taka fifteen hundred from a businessman assessee was acceptable, he said.

The meeting took a number of decisions to enlarge tax base, increase the number of assesses and streamline the inspection and survey department.

Saifur Rahman said, the review of the account of income tax realisation in Dhaka city showed that only 24 specialist physicians paid Taka 50,000 as income tax annually. "Whereas, the real number of such doctors should be over 500," he said.

The meeting found that the annual taxable income of certain specialist physicians has been fixed at Taka 40,000 only. But the Finance Minister said with regret that some of these doctors even had their daily in-

come at the same level. It was informed in the meeting that some business magnets pay only Taka two or three lakh as income tax annually but in real term it should be many times higher than the present level.

The Finance Minister stressed the need for mutual coordination between the VAT and income tax departments as their system of income tax realisation were inter-related.

Referring to a community centre in Dhaka, the Finance Minister said it had paid only Taka 4,000 as VAT last year although almost everyday two marriage ceremonies took place there. "Whereas, the owner of the centre had realised Taka 1050 from each ceremony from his client to be paid to the government. With this estimation, at least 300 marriage ceremonies took place in that centre and the total VAT should have been Taka three lakh 15 thousand from the clients," he observed.

The Finance Minister expressed his concern saying the people were paying their VAT for the government while a section of officials and businessmen unscrupulously depriving the government from its revenue income.

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BNP isolated from people, says JP

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Party (JP) central leaders yesterday said the 'fascist' activities of the BNP against the opposition parties proved that it had become isolated from the people.

At a press conference, held at the residence of the acting JP chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury yesterday evening the JP also announced its next course of action.

JP secretary general Khaledur Rahman Tito, Mizan Chowdhury himself, Barrister Moudud Ahmed and Kazi Zafar Ahmed addressed the newsmen.

The ruling BNP has failed

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Noor Hossain Day observed

By Staff Correspondent

'Shaheed Noor Hossain Day' was observed yesterday by different political parties, students' organisations, professional

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groups and socio-cultural bodies all over the country. Noor Hossain, in his twenties, was killed in police firing during the 'Dhaka Siege' programme organised by the then three major political alliances

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Humayun tells UN We can't afford Rohingyas for indefinite period

Ambassador Humayun Kabir told a meeting at the United Nations that Bangladesh wants the return home, in safety and dignity, of more than a quarter million Myanmar refugees it has been hosting for the last three years, reports UNB.

"As a democratic nation, committed to the principles of human rights and profound humanitarian impulses, we did not close our doors to this massive influx," he said referring to the Rohingya refugees from Myanmar.

"But with our many and varied constraints, we cannot afford to host this enormous number for an indefinite period," Kabir told the UN meeting on refugee issues yesterday.

In his speech, the Bangladesh Permanent Representative to the UN highlighted the government's best efforts to provide assistance to the refugees with the support of the international community.

Welcoming the recent signing of an agreement between Myanmar and the UNHCR, Kabir hoped that it would help the return of the refugees in larger numbers.

He also referred to a Bangladesh-Myanmar agreement reached in April 1992,

and the memorandum of understanding Bangladesh signed with the UNHCR in May this year on repatriation of the Rohingyas.

On the global refugee problem, he stressed the need for collective responsibility to ensure help to about 19 million refugees across the world.

'AL-CPC relations to promote friendship'

BEIJING, Nov 10: Hu Jintao, a member of the standing committee of the political bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) central committee, met with a delegation from the Awami League of Bangladesh here yesterday afternoon, reports Xinhua.

The five-member delegation, headed by the Awami

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গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার কয়লা পরিদপ্তর ৪৮, মতিঝিল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, ঢাকা। নং কনি/কয়লা বিক্রয়/৭৪৮/৯৩ তারিখ: ০৮-১১-১৯৯৩ইং ২৪-০৭-১৪০০বঙ্গ। কয়লা বিক্রয়ের পুনঃ দরপত্র (তৃতীয়) বিজ্ঞপ্তি। কয়লা পরিদপ্তরের আওতাধীন ২০ (বিশ) টি ডিপোতে মজুদ ভারতের রাণীপল্ল, ইন্দোনেশিয়া, মার্কিন যুক্তরাষ্ট্র, সোয়াজিল্যান্ড ও কোরিয়া উৎসের কয়লা উৎস দরপত্রের মাধ্যমে বিক্রয়ের জন্য আগামী ফেব্রুয়ারি মাসের দ্বিতীয় হুইতে সীলমোহরকৃত বামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাবে। ডিপোর নাম ও কয়লা পরিমাণসহ বিস্তারিত তথ্যকলী দরপত্র তফসিলে উল্লিখিত আছে। দরপত্র তফসিল ১৭-১১-৯৩ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত কয়লা নিয়ন্ত্রকের অনুকূলে যে কোন সিডিউল ব্যাংক হইতে ৫০০/- (পাঁচ শত) টাকার পে-অর্ডার (অফেরতযোগ্য) প্রদানপূর্বক কয়লা পরিদপ্তর, ৪৮, মতিঝিল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা (৬ষ্ঠ তলা), ঢাকা হইতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। দরপত্র তফসিলে বর্ণিত শর্তাবলী অনুযায়ী কয়লা বিক্রয় করা হইবে। ১। কয়লা নিয়ন্ত্রকের অনুকূলে উদ্ভূত দরের শতকরা ২.৫০ ভাগ যাবে আর্নেস্টম্যান্ট টাকা যে কোন সিডিউল ব্যাংকের পে-অর্ডারের মাধ্যমে দরপত্রের সাথে দাখিল করিতে হইবে। ইতিপূর্বে দরপত্রের সাথে আর্নেস্টম্যান্ট বাবদ দাখিলকৃত পে-অর্ডার গ্রহণযোগ্য হইবে না। ২। ডিপোর ভারপ্রাপ্ত কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারীর উপস্থিতিতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে ১৭-১১-৯৩ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত যে কোন কার্য দিবসে ডিপোর কয়লা পরিদপ্তর করা যাইবে। ৩। ১৮-১১-৯৩ইং তারিখে বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত কয়লা পরিদপ্তরের প্রধান কার্যালয়ে রফিক টেডার ব্যাংক দরপত্র গৃহণ করা হইতে এক ঐ দিনই বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকার উনুত দরপত্রের মাধ্যমে কয়লা বিক্রয়ের জন্য পঠিত টেডার কমিটির সামনে দরপত্রদাতাদের উপস্থিতিতে যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন। দরপত্র খোলা হইবে। ৪। প্রতিটি ডিপোর জন্য অথবা ডিপোতে মজুদ স্ট্যাক বিশেষের জন্য পৃথক পৃথক দরপত্র দাখিল করা যাইবে। এই ব্যাপারে কোন অসুবিধা হইলে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারী অথবা কয়লা পরিদপ্তরের প্রধান কার্যালয়ের টেডার কমিটির সদস্য-সচিবের সহিত যোগাযোগ করা যাইতে পারে। ৫। অকৃতকার্য দরপত্রদাতাদের আর্নেস্টম্যান্ট দরপত্র খোলায় ৭ (সাত) দিনের মধ্যে ফেরত দেওয়া হইবে। ৬। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণে দরপত্র হুইতে বা বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। এম শহিদুল্লাহ কয়লা নিয়ন্ত্রক ও আহ্বায়ক, টেডার কমিটি ফোন নং ২৩০১১০ ডিএফপি/জি) ১৮২৫-৮/১১ জি-১৫০৬

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড ঢাকা আয়কর জরীপ জাতীয় রাজস্ব আদায় বৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যে ১৬-১০-৯৩ ইং তারিখ হইতে দেশব্যাপী বহিরাগণ জরীপ কার্যক্রম শুরু হইয়াছে। জরীপ দল বিভিন্ন ব্যবসায়ী/পেশাগত প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম ঠিকানা এবং প্রতিষ্ঠানের মালিক/মালিকবৃন্দের নাম সংগ্রহ করিবেন। নতুন করদাতা চিহ্নিত করিয়া অভ্যন্তরীণ সম্পদ বৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যে এই জরীপ পরিচালিত হইতেছে। জাতীয় রাজস্ব আদায়ের স্বার্থে জরীপ দলকে সহযোগিতা করার জন্য জনসাধারণকে অনুরোধ করা যাইতেছে। জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড ডিএফপি (জি) ১৮০৯২-৮/১১ জি-১৫০৭

Israel will cut troop presence in Gaza

CAIRO, Nov 10: Israel has agreed to cut its troop presence outside Jewish settlements in Gaza, producing progress in five weeks of negotiations for Palestinian self-rule, sources close to the PLO-Israeli talks said today, reports Reuter.

The breakthrough, which could clear the way for an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank town of Jericho and the Gaza Strip by December 13, was achieved after two days of crisis talks between the PLO and Israel at a secret location in Cairo.

"Significant progress has been made in the meetings. I expect we will achieve the desired results in December but I still feel there are many obstacles to overcome," Nabil Shaath, head of the Palestinian negotiating team told Reuters.

Shaath said the sixth round of PLO-Israeli talks would be held either on Monday or Tuesday of next week in the

Egyptian Red Sea resort of Tabá.

Sources close to the meetings said the Israeli delegation, led by General Amnon Shahak, provided the Palestinians with amended maps for the withdrawal plan from Gaza which they said this time amounted to withdrawal rather than redeployment.

Under the modified Israeli security plan, Israel would keep troops around Jewish settlements but would evacuate some roads and areas and hand them over to the Palestinians in line with the peace accord signed in Washington on September 13.

"In their previous meetings the Israelis have demanded to maintain control of half of the land to protect the settlements but this time there has been a significant change in their concept," one source said.

PLO negotiators walked out of the talks in Tabá last week saying the withdrawal plan did not go far enough.

Pak parliament bldg completely gutted

ISLAMABAD, Nov 10: The National Assembly chamber, an elegant room where democracy returned to Pakistan five years ago, was reduced to a charred, smouldering wasteland by Wednesday morning, reports AP.

"This is a national loss and a great tragedy," Yousaf Gilani, the speaker of the assembly, said of the raging fire that roared through the deserted parliament building Tuesday night.

The circular assembly chamber, opened just seven years ago, was scorched down to its concrete walls, leaving the floor an ankle-deep mix of water and rubble.

The Speaker's platform, verses from the holy Quran inscribed on wooden walls, and a huge portrait of Pakistan's founding father, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, were all incinerated. Bright orange embers fell from the ceiling Wednesday morning

as investigators searched for clues to the blaze, which may have been started by an electrical short circuit. Arson was not being ruled out as the cause.

The destruction is certain to disrupt Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's new government, which has yet to launch major programmes since winning last month's national election.

Pakistan's president is to be chosen Saturday by members of the national parliament and the four provincial legislatures. Officials said balloting would go ahead as planned, but in a different venue.

Many Pakistanis feel a strong emotional attachment to the parliament building, the home of Pakistan's democracy since the end of military rule in 1988.

"We are so sad, this place meant so much to us," said Nadeem, a security guard at parliament who would only give his first name.