



King Birendra of Nepal poses with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia during an audience in Kathmandu yesterday. — AFP photo

Khaleda: Nepal ready

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 received her at the tarmac.
 After a brief ceremony, Begum Zia, wearing a dark blue chiffon saree, came straight to where journalists were waiting to be briefed.
 Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda requested the newsmen to ask only questions related to the Nepal trip.
 The presence of the ministers at the airport was less than usual, possibly because Parliament was in session during her arrival.
 Begum Zia said besides bilateral issues, as the chairperson of SAARC she discussed regional issues with her Nepalese counterpart.
 This was her maiden visit to Nepal. Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, Begum Selina Shaheed MP, Principal Secretary K M Rabbani and Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman were in the delegation.
 Replying to a question that the Nepalese Prime Minister, in an interview, had told a Bangladeshi newspaper that the water-sharing issue was a bilateral matter between India and Bangladesh, Begum Zia said "no, the Nepalese Prime Minister will discuss the matter with India."
 In reply to another question as to how Nepal would benefit by the transit facilities provided by Bangladesh if India did not permit similar facilities, Begum Zia said that she was told that Nepal had received the green signal from India.
 The communique, issued simultaneously in Dhaka and Kathmandu, was signed by Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman and Nepalese Foreign Secretary Yadav Kant Silwal in presence of the two prime ministers.
 The salient features of the joint communique are:
 — The two leaders reiterated the need for diversifying trade, promoting cooperation in the fields of industry, agriculture

Computer show in city

By Staff Correspondent
 The Bangladesh Computer Society (BCS) will hold a two-day computer exhibition at the Sonargaon Hotel from Friday.
 The show, to be inaugurated by Commerce Minister Shamsul Islam at the same venue Friday morning, will be participated by 18 computer companies with their latest products.
 President of the society Sajjad Hossain, in a press conference in the city yesterday said the objective of the show, which would be the biggest of its kind in this country, was to promote and popularise computerisation.
 The press conference was also attended by vice president of the society Saif Shahid, Moin Khan, Abdullah M Kafi, Mustafa Jabbar and Golam Mahiuddin.
 To popularise computerisation, the BCS has demanded tax free import of computers and accessories for the next five years, introduction of computer education at the SSC level and installation of data exchange network.
 Saif Shahid suggested, the government should introduce a copyright law for the software industry.
 They urged the government to assist the computer sector in its development and suggested that the mass media should focus more on computer information.
 The show will remain open from 10 am to 8 pm on both the days.

PM flies over Everest

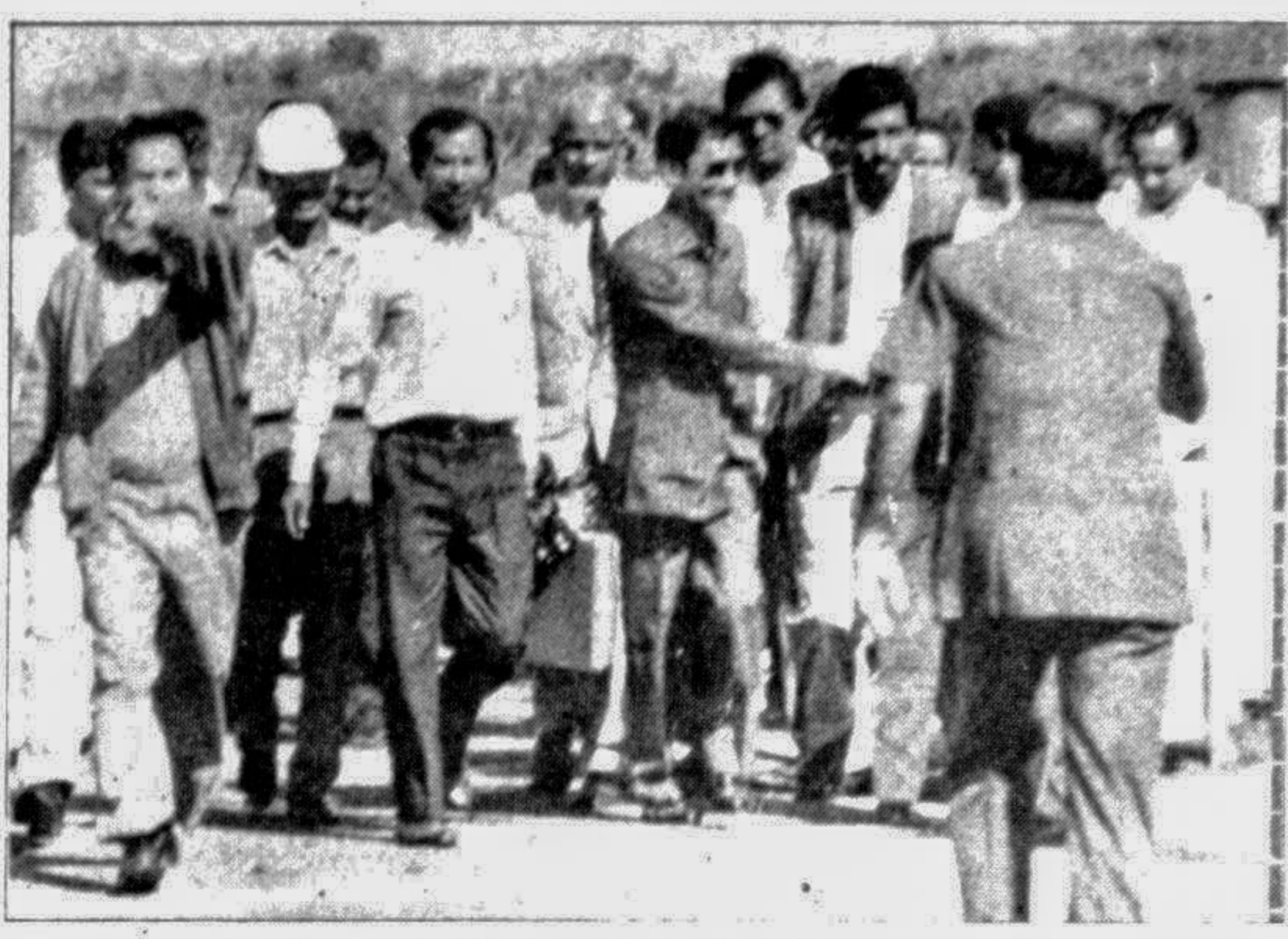
KATHMANDU, Nov 24: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia this morning went on a special aircraft of the Royal Nepalese Airlines, reports BSS.
 During the more than an hour flight around the mountains of the Himalayan Range, the Prime Minister has a close view of the world's highest mountain Everest (29,028 feet) and other peaks.

Nirmul's march to JS foiled

By Staff Correspondent
 Police yesterday foiled a march towards the Jatiya Sangsad by the workers of the Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Samanaya Committee.
 According to witnesses, riot and armed policemen stopped the marchers — who started from in front of the National Museum — at the Bangla Motors crossing.
 Leader of the marchers, Syed Hasan Imam, told the gathering there that they would organise another march during the Sangsad's next session. However, no specific date for the fresh programme was announced.
 Yesterday's programme was announced earlier to press for the implementation of a four-point set of demands which include the trial of Jamaat chief Golam Azam as a 'war criminal'.

Tribal volunteers prevent lensmen from taking pictures

From A K M Mohsin
 KHAGRACHHARI, Nov 24: Volunteers belonging to the Parbattya Chhattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) held complete sway over the security arrangements in and around the peace talks venue at the local Circuit House.
 With passes issued by the PCJSS pinned on their chests, the hundred or so volunteers even physically prevented and harassed a group of photo-journalists from Dhaka, holding authorised government passes, from taking any photographs of the PCJSS leaders.
 The tribal volunteers mingled freely with the unarmed securitymen (soldiers) at the Circuit House and were involved in checking and frisking everyone before the arrival of the leaders taking part in the talks.
 When the Bangladesh Air Force helicopter carrying the PCJSS leaders led by J B Larma alias Shanto Larma landed at the Circuit House, two of the photo-journalists, waiting nearby, moved inside the compound in an attempt to take photographs.
 But the PCJSS volunteers physically held them back, obstructing them from taking pictures of the tribal leaders attending the talks.
 The photojournalists, including this correspondent, were roughed up by the volunteers after a member of the entourage, getting down from the Air Force chopper, reacted sharply to their presence.
 The PCJSS volunteers had earlier asked the photo-journalists and other local reporters to stay away from the talks venue.



Khagrachhari district officials receiving the Shantibahini team at the local Circuit House yesterday prior to the start of the sixth round of talks with the special parliamentary body to find a solution to the CHT problems. Leader of the tribal negotiators JB Larma alias Shanto Larma is seen in a dark safari and sunglasses. — Star photo by AKM Mohsin

Time-limit for CHT polls extended

The government has extended the time-limit till January 4, 1995 for holding of district council elections in Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban by an ordinance, reports UNB.
 LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar said this in parliament yesterday in reply to a question from Azzur Rahman of the Awami League.
 He said the extension was necessary because of the violence in the region and the need to ensure a free and fair election process.

CHT talks

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 the right to continue agitation for his demands systematically," he said.
 Turning to the recent violence at Naniarchar Bazar of Rangamati hill district, Shanto alleged that some vested quarters had become active to disrupt the on-going talks by unleashing terrorism.
 "But everybody in the CHT should try to maintain peace for the sake of the success of the talks," Shanto added.
 Today's talks were held amid tight security, the meeting venue ringed by a host of both tribal and non-tribal volunteers while Section 144 was in force in Khagrachhari district to prevent any outbreak of violence until November 26.
 A group of photo journalists who arrived here from Dhaka to cover today's talks was prevented and even assaulted by the volunteers at the Circuit House premises while they were taking photographs of the Shantibahini leaders who attended the talks.

Falu Miah freed

District and Sessions Judge Md Abdus Salam yesterday discharged Falu Miah, who languished in jail for more than two decades, as there is no existence of any case against him, reports UNB.
 Advocate Elna Aziz on behalf of the Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) filed a petition praying for his release, stating that there is no specific case against him and he was never produced before any court.
 "This is really inhuman," the court observed in his order.

ALCWC, ALPP meet today

An emergency meeting of the Awami League Central Working Committee will be held at the party office today at 11 am. Awami League president Sheikh Hasina will preside over the meeting. The Awami League Parliamentary Party will also meet today in the Sangsad Bhaban at 3-30 pm. Leader of the Opposition will chair the meeting, reports UNB.

DMC polls today

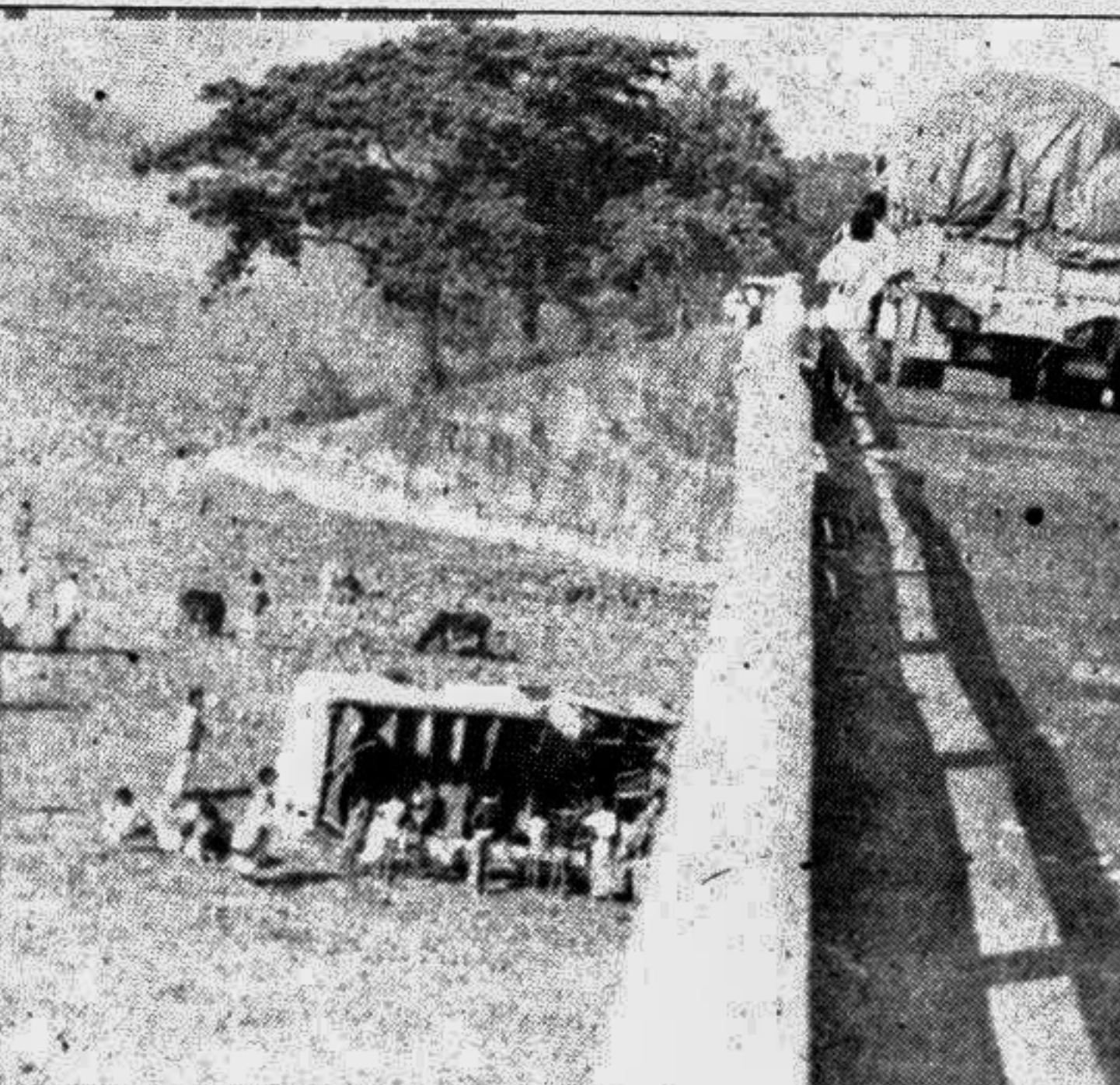
By DMCH Correspondent
 The Dhaka Medical College Students Union (DAMECSU) polls will be held today.
 A total of 1053 voters of the college are expected to cast their votes from 8 am to 12:30 pm.
 Eighty candidates from four panels will contest for 20 seats in the central students' union.

'AL, allies will stick to Hasina's decision'

By Staff Correspondent
 All the members of Parliament (MPs) belonging to the Jatiya Sangsad's main Opposition party the Awami League and its allies will stick to the decision pronounced by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday that she would resign if the government's privilege motion against her were allowed to be discussed in the House.
 This was stated by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad while briefing newsmen at his Sangsad office on the outcome of a meeting of the AL MPs with Suranjit Sengupta of the Ganatantri Party and Shahjahan Siraj, MP.
 The meeting, at the Opposition Leader's chamber, was hurriedly arranged after AL chief Sheikh Hasina threatened to resign following Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali's acceptance of a privilege motion moved by Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah against her reported remarks when reacting to the Prime Minister's November 7 comments about the Sangsad. The Speaker, accepting the motion, set November 30 for a general discussion on the matter.
 "The whole nation stands by the decision given by the Leader of the Opposition on the floor of the House. We will try to unite all democratic forces inside and outside Parliament against all undemocratic acts by the BNP government inside and outside the House," Samad Azad said, reading out the decisions of the meeting.
 Replying to questions, he explained that the 'decision' of the Opposition leader meant 'resignation'.
 Sajeda Chowdhury, Tofael Ahmed of the AL, Suranjit Sengupta of the Ganatantri Party and Shahjahan Siraj also spoke at the press briefing. AL leaders including Abul Hasan Choudhury, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim and Sudhangsu Shekhar Haldar were also present.
 Addressing the journalists, Samad Azad expressed his fear that democracy was not safe in the hands of the BNP.

Benazir invites Sharif to talks

ISLAMABAD, Nov 24: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on Tuesday invited her arch-rival and opposition leader Nawaz Sharif to talks, seeking to develop a political code of ethics and cooperation in making laws, reports Reuters.
 A letter to Sharif, quoted by local news agencies, proposed the talks to be held at a dinner hosted by Bhutto at her official residence she occupied last month after her Pakistan People's Party (PPP) won bitterly fought elections.



The minibus (left, foreground) which hit the guard rails of this bridge on the Dhaka-Aricha highway and took a plunge Tuesday evening, leaving 16 passengers killed. — Star photo

Hasina

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 Speaker accepted an opposition-sponsored privilege motion which accused the Leader of the House of undermining the image of Parliament and its members. The Speaker fixed November 29 for a two-hour discussion on the topic.
 At this stage, Deputy Leader of the House Professor Badruddoza Chowdhury took the floor to protest the Opposition chief's demand.
 Prof Chowdhury told the House that the Opposition members in the JS business advisory committee refused to accept the treasury bench proposal for allowing the Leader of the House and Prime Minister to make a statement, under relevant rules, clarifying her November 7 statement and thus putting an end to the issue.
 "But the Opposition members strongly demanded the discussion," Prof Chowdhury said. The Speaker should not discriminate against the treasury bench by reconsidering his ruling on an identical subject.
 Chowdhury also observed that the Opposition chief was now trying to take advantage of the same rule for which the treasury bench members had pleaded at the advisory body meeting.
 The Speaker then observed that the issue concerned the dignity of both the Leader and the Opposition Leader of the House and that was the reason why he had accepted both the notices under the same rule (168 of the Rules of Procedure) for discussion.
 Samad Azad, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, took the floor at this point to support Hasina's position. He said that once she had clarified her position in the Sangsad, the Speaker could not accept the privilege motion against her.
 The House later was plunged into total disorder following cheers and shouts from both sides and the Speaker, finding it difficult to proceed with the scheduled business, adjourned the proceedings for ten minutes at 6:30 pm.
 However, the House resumed again at 8:40 pm with the Opposition benches empty. The Speaker immediately adjourned the House to resume again at 4 this afternoon.

Rajshahi New Govt College closed

RAJSHAHI, Nov 24: Rajshahi New Government Degree College was closed today (Wednesday) since die after an armed clash between two rival groups of students which left at least 15 injured, reports UNB.
 The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the academic committee of the college to avert further violence.
 Doctors at the RMCH said the condition of Raju was critical.

The Midnight File

Leghari iterates support for Kashmiris

ISLAMABAD, Nov 24: Pakistani President Farooq Ahmed Leghari reiterated support for Kashmiris today as India and Pakistan agreed to resume dialogue on the disputed territory and other bilateral problems. Pakistan will continue to provide diplomatic, political and moral support to the people of Kashmir in their struggle for the inalienable right of self-determination, an official statement quoted Leghari as saying, reports AFP.

Hamis leader shot dead

GAZA CITY (Occupied Gaza Strip), Nov 24: Israeli soldiers today shot dead the head of the armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, Imad Akel, military officials said. Akel, 24, was shot dead in a clash with soldiers in Gaza City, reports AFP.

Rushdie meets Clinton

WASHINGTON, Nov 24: Novelist Salman Rushdie, who is under an Iranian death sentence for his book "Satanic Verses," met briefly today with President Clinton, the White House said. Rushdie was at the White House to meet Secretary of State Warren Christopher and National Security Adviser Anthony Lake, and Clinton dropped in to see him briefly. White House Communications Director Mark Cearan said, reports Reuters.

Hasina's threat unfortunate, say BNP ministers

Ruling party leaders yesterday termed Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina's threat of resignation from the Jatiya Sangsad as "unfortunate" and said the Speaker's ruling is final and his authority cannot be challenged, reports UNB.
 In Parliament yesterday Hasina threatened to resign unless Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali changed his decision allowing a privilege motion brought against her by Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah.
 "If a notice could be brought against the Leader of the House, then why should the Opposition oppose a similar notice against the Leader of the Opposition?"
 The question was posed by both the Works Minister and Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda while talking to reporters in the Sangsad chamber of the Deputy Leader of the House last evening.
 Quoting Sheikh Hasina's statement, allegedly made at the airport on November 19 while talking to newsmen on her return from China, Barrister Rafiqul Islam said "I as a member of this House, and as a minister, find that the Opposition leaders' remarks infringed my rights."
 The comment of the Leader of the Opposition is a general reflection on all the cabinet members, the Works Minister said, adding "Now it is my constitutional and legal right to serve a notice." Privilege should be enjoyed by all the members, he argued.
 "We do not expect a situation which may hinder the democratic process and functioning of Parliament," he said.
 He said Parliament cannot be effective without the Opposition and hoped that they would come back to make Parliament the centre of everything, as repeated by both Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina time and again.
 Barrister Nazmul Huda said, "We have yielded so much, it seems that Parliament has become the rule of the minority."
 He said the BNP parliamentary party had been making all possible adjustments inside the Sangsad to accommodate the views and feelings of all the parties represented in the House.
 The Information Minister said his party earnestly hopes that the Leader of the Opposition would reconsider her threat to resign if the Speaker allowed discussion on the notice of breach of privilege, submitted by the Works Minister to uphold the institution of the office of the Speaker and smooth growth of parliamentary democracy.
 Both the barristers avoided a reply when asked whether the Speaker's decision to allow a two-hour discussion on both the notices covered the rules of procedure.
 Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury and Major (ret'd) Akhteruzzaman, MP were present during the briefing.

Other parties' views

By Staff Correspondent
 While both the ruling party and the Awami League and its allies held press briefings at the Sangsad Bhaban after the adjournment of the House, other Opposition parties like the Jatiya Party and the Jamaat did not immediately express their views regarding Sheikh Hasina's threatened resignation.
 However, Jatiya Party leader Munirul Huq Chowdhury, MP while talking to The Daily Star last night, said that his party's parliamentary group expressed solidarity with Hasina's sentiments.
 "We are yet to decide on the issue, though, because our senior leaders are not in the city," Chowdhury added.

26 charged with Rajiv murder

NEW DELHI, Nov 24: A special court on Wednesday formally charged 26 people in the 1991 assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, clearing the way for their prosecution, reports AP.
 The accused, who include Indians and Shri Lankan Tamils, all pleaded innocent in the court in the southern city of Madras, news agencies reported. No date has been set for the trial.

22 killed in Indian train mishap

BHOPAL (India), Nov 24: Twenty-two people were killed and 60 badly injured today when a passenger express slammed into a derailed goods train on the outskirts of the central Indian city of Gwalior, railway officials said, reports Reuters.
 More than 100 people suffered minor injuries, the officials added.

\$72m ADB loan for female edn

MANILA, Nov 24: The Asian Development Bank agreed on Tuesday to lend Bangladesh 72 million dollars to improve education for women and for rural poor, reports BSS.
 Sixty per cent of the concessional funding would be devoted to improving teaching of women in Bangladesh, it said in a statement.
 Dutch grant
 UNB adds: Bangladesh will receive a grant of Tk 175 crore approximately equivalent to 80 million Dutch Florin (DFL) from the Netherlands for the year 1994.
 The amount will be utilized to implement projects in the fields of agriculture, food, education, rural development, poverty alleviation, health and family welfare and flood control.

1 hurt as JP-JCD clash in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent
 KHULNA, Nov 24: An activist of the Jatiya Party was seriously injured in a clash with supporters of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) at the City College here today.
 According to sources, the clash between the two student groups occurred at about 11:30 am following a dispute over writing of slogans (graffiti) on the college wall. Several shots were fired and dozens of hand bombs exploded during the hour-long clash.
 Injured Shahidul Islam, 20, was rushed to the local hospital in serious condition, sources said.
 Both the groups blamed each other for the incident.