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NEWS BRIEFS

Lightning kills one in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, May 26: One person was killed and another three were injured seriously by lightning in village Halidani under sadar thana this afternoon. Four day labourers took shelter in a shallow machine shade when heavy rains started there. A lightning struck them and a day labourer died on the spot. Three others received serious injuries. They were rushed to Halidani health complex.

VCs, Sircar talk campus situation

Vice Chancellors of the universities held a meeting with Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar in the chair today (Thursday). The matters relating to academic atmosphere on the campuses came up for discussion in the meeting. Education Secretary Irshadul Huq and Chairman of the University Grants Commission Prof M Shamsul Huq were present, reports AP.

32 die in S African road mishap

JOHANNESBURG, May 26: A bus carrying farm workers overturned into a dam in eastern South Africa Thursday, killing 32 people, police said. Eight passengers were injured and 28 others escaped unhurt. Police believed the driver lost control before the bus left the road and plunged into a farm dam in Lothair, about 200 kilometers (120 miles) east of Johannesburg. The bus landed on its roof and was submerged up to its wheels, reports AP.

Tremors hit Iran

NICOSIA, May 26: Two tremors jolted Iran's southern province of Fars and northern city of Roudbar today, the official Iranian news agency Irna reported. It said an earthquake measuring 4.4 degrees shook the city of Firozabad in Fars. Another one measuring 3.2 hits Roudbar. "There is no report yet available on possible damage or casualties," it said.

Two cooperation accords with Hanoi signed

Bangladesh and Vietnam yesterday signed two agreements on expanding cooperation in bilateral matters and international affairs, reports UNB.

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman and his visiting Vietnamese counterpart Nguyen Manh Cam initiated the accords following official talks between the two sides at state guest house Meghna in the morning.

The two foreign ministers led their respective sides at the talks which lasted for about one and half-an-hour.

At the talks, Cam was assisted by Vietnamese Ambassador to Dhaka Tran Viet Tan and Director (SA) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Tran Van Trung. Mostafizur was aided, among others, by Foreign Secretary MR Osman, ERD Secretary Lutfullahil Majid and Additional Foreign Secretary Mohiuddin Ahmed.

An agreement on economic, scientific and technological cooperation identified some areas of bilateral collaboration in a number of fields like commerce, fishing, irrigation, agriculture and health-care.

The other accord provides that the two countries will have regular consultations on international affairs and will work together for promoting international peace and stability.

The two foreign ministers had wide ranging talks, covering the entire gamut of bilateral relations, and regional and international issues of common concern.

Officials briefing newsmen after the talks said bilateral political, economic and trade relations figured prominently at the meeting held in a cordial atmosphere.

While exchanging views on international and regional issues, they also discussed the

progress of SAARC and focussed on the explosive situation prevailing in Bosnia Herzegovina. Besides, issues like PLO-Israeli accord, disarmament and non-proliferation came up at the talks.

Mostafizur took the opportunity to brief his Vietnamese counterpart on the political developments in Bangladesh, its relation with neighbouring countries and policies of the government.

The visiting minister was also briefed on the adverse effect of the Farakka barrage on Bangladesh's economy and the problem of Myanmar refugees.

The Vietnamese Foreign Minister invited his Bangladesh counterpart for an official visit to Vietnam and the invitation was gladly accepted.

Dates of the visit will be fixed later.

Later Foreign Minister *Mostafizur Rahman hosted a



The visiting Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Manh Cam called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office in the city yesterday. — PID photo

3 killed, 50 injured in road accidents

Three persons were killed and nearly 50 others injured in road accidents in Dhaka and Chittagong yesterday, report agencies.

Two persons critically wounded in Wednesday's road mishap on the Dhaka-Sherpur highway also succumbed to their injuries.

UNB says: Two people were killed and 40 others injured, nine seriously, when two mini buses collided on Dhaka-Aricha highway in Dhamrai thana yesterday.

The two buses collided head on as one driver lost control over steering in front of the Bata Shoe Factory at about 7:30 am, witnesses said.

They said Awal, 25, and another unidentified youngman died on way to hospital.

Critically injured driver Delwar, 25, Abdur Rouf, 26, Moinal Haque, 20, Nasiruddin, 18, Reazuddin, 40, Nazrul Islam, 50, Liakat Ali, 12, Shah-naj, 34, Afazuddin, 50 were rushed to Dhamrai Health Complex.

Ten injured were admitted to the Ganashasthya Kendra for emergency treatment.

Police seized the buses. One driver, however, managed to flee.

According to BSS one person was killed and six others were injured when a speeding truck hit with a passenger tempo at Rahatpool on Chittagong-Cox's Bazar road yesterday.

According to Chandgaon police, the accident occurred

NAM FMs' confce in Cairo May 31

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman will lead the Bangladesh delegation at the 11th Non-Aligned Movement Foreign Ministers' Conference beginning in Cairo May 31, reports UNB.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak will inaugurate the four-day conference to be chaired by Foreign Minister Amr Moussa of Egypt, officials in Dhaka said yesterday.

Foreign Ministers from 110 countries are expected to attend the conference, rated as a vital link between the 10th and 11th NAM (Non-Aligned Movement) summits.

The Cairo Conference will review the international situation after the 10th NAM summit held in Jakarta in 1992.

It will consider the issues relating to Palestine and the Middle East, South Africa,

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Search for missing Bangladeshi Hajis continues

No further news of death of Bangladeshi Hajis could be confirmed after thorough scrutiny. Foreign Office here said quoting information received from Bangladesh Mission in Saudi Arabia, reports BSS.

The Embassy of Bangladesh in Riyadh, meanwhile, continued search for the names and particulars of Bangladeshi Hajis who might have been affected by the tragic accident in Mina.

The embassy source told Bangladesh Foreign Office that after completion of Hajj rituals, many have gone to holy Madinah-al-Munawara and some are heading for Jeddah for the return journey home. This situation has made the availability of credible information complicated. Bangladesh Embassy source observed.

The Bangladesh Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is personally supervising the search operation. Foreign Office source said adding: All official and unofficial channels are being explored

PM's goodwill gesture

By Nurul Kabir

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday sent some gifts to Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina.

The gifts included a 'jainamaz' (prayermat) a 'tabah' (rosary) and a bottle of 'Zamzam' water which she brought from Saudi Arabia where she performed Hajj earlier this week.

Sources in the ruling party said Begum Zia sent her Private Secretary Dr Kamal Siddiqi to hand over the gifts directly to Sheikh Hasina.

But Hasina, who had suffered a sprained leg earlier last week could not come down the stairs of her Minto Road residence to receive the presents personally. Awami League sources said.

One of her staff received the gifts on her behalf.

Earlier in the day, ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdus Salam Talukder telephoned the Opposition Chief Whip Moham-

mad Nasif to explore ways to resolve the present stand-off.

The impasse has been created due to the Opposition's boycott of Parliament and an implied threat to stay away from the upcoming budget session as well unless the ruling party moves a bill in the House providing for elections under a care-taker government. The ruling party has so far refused to entertain the idea.

Mohammad Nasim, admitting his telephonic conversation with the LGRD Minister, told this correspondent late last night that he had suggested that Talukder should convince the premier to talk to the Opposition leader.

Nasim, however, did not go into the details of the discussion.

When asked, Talukder declined to make any comment on his conversation with Nasim, but told The Daily Star that he was optimistic about a speedy resolution of the present crisis.

Vietnamese FM lauds reform programmes

Visiting Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Manh Cam has said Bangladesh is economically developing under the leadership of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, reports UNB.

Cam also lauded the economic reform programmes of Bangladesh and said that people of this country would be benefitted if the reforms were implemented properly.

The Vietnamese FM, who is leading a six-member delegation, made the remarks when he called on the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday afternoon.

He observed that ties between the two countries were being bolstered under Begum Zia's government.

Cam said Vietnam will apply

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Rafiq on political stalemate

Two sides should sit to overcome crisis

Forces committed to protection, preservation and sustenance of democratic values in the country must devise ways and means of leading the nation out of the present political deadlock.

Making this observation Rafiqul Islam Mia, the Works Minister and a member of the Standing Committee of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), further stated that the democratic forces, whether they belong to the party-in-power or the Opposition, must map out course of action through mutual discussions to overcome the current crisis looming large on our

hard-earned democratic system.

The Minister was talking to the United News of Bangladesh (UNB) at his Secretariat chamber yesterday.

Asked if discussions between the ruling party and the Opposition on the present political stalemate had started, he admitted that piecemeal talks at various levels had already begun.

"For instance, I have talked to Mohammad Nasim of the Awami League today (Thursday), Rafiq stated.

He did not preclude the possibility of full-dress discussions.

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Prokrichi preparing for a three-day strike

By Staff Correspondent

An estimated 70 thousand professionals in the country are preparing to observe a three-day strike from June 14, sources concerned said yesterday.

Leaders of the Prokrichi-BCS Central Action Council, which had earlier called the strike, indicated that they would announce the plan for a greater movement on June 16 to press home their 17-point demand.

Doctors, engineers, agriculturists and members of the 26 non-administrative BCS cadres, belonging to the Prokrichi, have long been agitating for a complete overhauling of the existing bureaucracy.

The other demands of their 17-point charter included separation of the judi-

ciary from the administration, handing over of executive powers of bureaucrats in the ministries to the ministers and as formulation of the rules of business.

Declining to give details of the next phase of their agitation, Prokrichi leaders said that the plan would be finalised at a meeting of the Prokrichi district representatives in Dhaka on May 15.

Talking to The Daily Star, Convener of the Prokrichi-BCS Central Action Council Dr M A Majed said that the authorities had shown no interest in resuming talks with them.

Some of the Prokrichi leaders, however, indicated that negotiations might start with political activities in the coun-

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The Daily Star PUBLIC DEBATE



Today, on Page 4, Moudud Ahmed, MP and leader of the Jatiya Party's parliamentary wing, presents his arguments why the next general elections should be held under a care-taker government. Readers' views on the subject are welcome.

AL leader rebuts Huda's claims

Awami League Information Secretary Prof Abu Sayeed yesterday made a counter-attack on the ruling party rebutting Information Minister Nazmul Huda's claim that the BNP came to power with people's mandate, reports UNB.

"The BNP had assumed power with the formal support of and seat-sharing with the Jamaat-e-Islami," the AL leader said responding sharply to Huda's interview with official BSS news agency, published yesterday.

Before elections, the BNP shared seats with 'killer' Golam Azam, but it failed to gain the requisite majority. After the elections, Begum Zia met Golam Azam, got his support, and shared women's seats with the Jamaat which enabled the BNP to form government. Prof Sayeed observed.

"Today, the BNP is in power not because of popular support but Golam Azam's support," he said.

The AL leader said the tone and language Huda used in the interview were nothing but

Medical board for SM Sultan

A medical board comprising specialist physicians has been formed by the Director General of Health Directorate at the directive of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia for the treatment of noted artist of Bangladesh, SM Sultan, reports BSS.

Professor and Director of Chest and Infectious Disease Institute and Hospital AKM Moslehuddin had been appointed chairman of the board. Other members of the board are: Professor of Medicine of Dhaka Sir Salimullah Medical College, Prof Tofael Ahmed and Associate Professor of National Heart Disease Institute and Hospital Dr Md Nazrul Islam.

The physicians will leave for Narail immediately for better treatment of the artist and will take necessary steps.



A British Airways jumbo jet carrying 331 people arrives safely at the Tokyo's Narita Airport yesterday after its captain died of heart attack during the flight. — AFP photo

BA captain dies on flight

TOKYO, May 26: The captain of a British Airways (BA) jumbo died on a flight from London but his two co-pilots steered it to a flawless landing at Tokyo's Narita Airport Thursday — and without the passengers even knowing about the misfortune, reports AFP.

The captain, David Robertson, a 52-year-old Briton, died of a heart attack while napping during a regular break when the Boeing 747-400 was flying over Russia, some seven hours after take off, a BA spokeswoman in Tokyo said.

The death was not made public in flight but the crew did make an appeal for a doctor among the 331 people on board passengers said.

The passengers were also told to wait before disembarking while a medical team brought out Robertsons body.

There was an announcement in English that someone was taken ill but it did not specify who it was, a young Japanese male passenger told a Tokyo television network.

The BA spokeswoman, Misao Suzuki, said that a British doctor among the 312 passengers checked Robertson and attributed his death to myocardial trouble a post-mortem was being conducted by Japanese police, she said.

There is an operational manual under civil aviation law

Huge black hole discovered

WASHINGTON, May 26: A huge black hole was discovered in a galaxy 50 million light years from earth, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) announced Wednesday, reports AFP.

The hard evidence of the black hole in the giant elliptical galaxy M87 supports the existence of the collapsed stars which were predicted 80 years ago by Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity, a NASA statement said.

"If it's not a black hole, it must be something even harder to understand without present theories of astrophysics," said researcher Richard Harms.

The discovery came when the Hubble telescope sent back images of a disk of hot gas swirling around a central object that is extremely massive but extraordinarily compact—characteristics of a black hole.

Until now black holes, objects so dense that nothing, not even light, can escape their gravitational pull, have been considered mathematical curiosities rather than real astronomical objects.

"Now it all knits together," said astronomer Holland Ford. We see a disk-like structure that appears to have spiral structure, and it is rotating."

QUIZ-5

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