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NEWS BRIEFS

ALWC meets today

An emergency meeting of the central working committee of the Awami League will be held today at 5 pm at 29 Minto Road with party chief Sheikh Hasina in the chair, reports UNB.

2 JCD activists expelled

Two Dhaka University activists of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) have been expelled while two others suspended for a month. Campus sources said Monir Hossain Raki and Rezaul Karim Rinku were expelled while Dani and Maman suspended on Saturday for their anti-organisational activities, reports UNB.

SAARC ministers' confce opens in city

Evolve effective programmes to fight poverty: PM

By Staff Correspondent

The first ever SAARC Finance and Planning Ministers' Conference began in the city yesterday with a call to work collectively for the alleviation of poverty in South Asia.

"In our region, mass poverty still remains the main source of concern. Unfortunately, so far we have had limited success individually and collectively in tackling this problem.

Saifur outlines Dhaka's strategy

By Staff Correspondent

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman Sunday has said a broad-based sustainable high growth rate is a cornerstone of Bangladesh's strategy for poverty alleviation.

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The depressing statistics that South Asia harbours the world's largest concentration of poverty continues to haunt us," said Prime Minister and Chairperson of SAARC Begum Khaleda Zia.

Portraying the poverty situation prevailing in South Asia in her inaugural address at the two-day conference being held at the International Confer-

Singh stresses more co-operation

By Staff Correspondent

The challenge of SAARC to manage the interdependence among the member nations through cooperative and mutually beneficial strategies to improve the socio-economic

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ence Centre yesterday morning. Begum Zia gave a clarion call to the SAARC countries to offer "striking examples of innovative, imaginative and successful poverty reduction programmes."

"We need to develop a common South Asian perspective on the role of NGOs in the field of poverty alleviation, both nationally and regionally.

Jaffrey favours a 2-pronged approach

By Staff Correspondent

Pakistan has suggested a two-pronged approach to combat poverty at the national and regional level in South Asia, seeking intra-regional cooperation in population control

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We need to exchange information and initiate studies on the adverse impact of social violence, unrest and insurgencies on poverty eradication programmes," the SAARC Chairperson said.

"We also need to systematically study the effects of natural disasters in creating new and sudden poverty," she

SL calls for more investment

By Staff Correspondent

Sri Lankan representative yesterday cautioned the SAARC finance and planning ministers that the structural reforms programme may founder unless accompanied by adequate investment in poverty allevia-

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SAARC Chairperson and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia delivering her inaugural address at the first meeting of the SAARC Finance and Planning ministers' at the International Conference Centre (ICC) in the city yesterday. — PID photo

IGG meet may be shifted

By Sohel Manzur

The fifth meeting of the Inter-Governmental Group (IGG) of the SAARC member-states, which was scheduled to be held in Pakistan this month, may be shifted as the ground work for it is yet to be completed, according to sources concerned.

The ground work mainly concerns preparation of final 'request lists' and exchange of those among the member-states to secure concessions under the South Asian Preferential Trade Arrangement (SAPTA).

No other SAARC member except Bangladesh has finalised the 'request lists' mentioning the items of export interest to particular member-states with the request for tariff concessions to certain extent. Bangladesh has already sent its 'request lists' to the six other SAARC members and is awaiting receipt of those from them. A final agreement on the issue is likely to be reached at the forthcoming

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Interview with The Daily Star SAARC can contribute in social sectors : Jaffrey

by M Anwarul Haq

"SAARC can make a significant contribution in the area of poverty alleviation, which is a major challenge facing all the member countries of the region."

This was stated by V A Jaffrey, Adviser to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on Financial and Economic Affairs, in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star yesterday.

Tomorrow, Indian Finance Minister Manmohan Singh speaks to The Daily Star.

Jaffrey who holds the rank of a cabinet minister and is heading his country's delegation at the on-going meeting of SAARC finance and planning ministers, said there are a number of fields in which the association's member states can expand their cooperation. These areas, he felt, were par-

ticularly in the social sectors like agriculture, health, poverty elimination schemes and information technology.

The visiting minister felt that in the long term SAARC holds tremendous potential, but in the short term, unresolved disputes between member-states act as impediments.

Jaffrey said the process of integration and cooperation was always a slow process. However, if one evaluated the progress of SAARC since its inception, the record has not on the whole been disappointing.

The Pakistan minister, who is a retired civil servant and had served his country in key positions including that of Finance Secretary, viewed that more progress is possible in social areas than in the sphere of trade between the SAARC

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CHT truce extended till Sept 30

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 10: The Shantibahini leaders today agreed to extend the ceasefire in Chittagong Hill Tracts until September 30. The ceasefire now in force there is due to expire on July 15.

The agreement came at the second round of talks held today at Dudukchhari border village under Khagrachhari-hill district between the parliamentary sub-committee and a team of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), the parent organisation of tribal rebels. The talks that began at 10:30 am lasted five hours.

The government side was led by Rashed Khan Menon MP while the four-member PCJSS team was headed by its president Jotindra Bodipriya Larma alias Shanto Larma.

The two sides also agreed to hold more meetings to find out a peaceful settlement of the CHT issue.



Bulgaria's Jordan Letchkov (L) kicks the ball away from Germany's Martin Wagner during the first half of their World Cup quarter-final in Giant Stadium yesterday. Bulgaria won the match 2-1. — AFP photo

Outsiders Bulgaria send the champions packing

EAST RUTHERFORD, N. J., July 10: Two goals in three minutes by Hristo Stoichkov and Yordan Letchkov ended Germany's reign as World Cup holders Sunday and put 20-1 outsiders Bulgaria into the semifinals for the first time on a 2-1 scoreline, reports AP.

German captain Lothar Matthaeus, making a record-breaking 21st World Cup appearance, had fired the Germans ahead from the penalty spot in the 49th minute.

But Stoichkov curled in a 25-meter free kick in the 76th minute and Letchkov, who was at fault for the penalty, scored the winner three minutes later with a spectacular diving header.

Bulgaria, who had not won a World Cup game in five previous visits to the finals, now will meet three-time titlist Italy in the semifinal, also at Giants

Stadium, on Wednesday. It was a sad ending for a German team that had won the trophy in 1954, '74 and '90 and had been runner-up three times. But the Bulgarians celebrated one the



biggest upsets in the Cup's history with the winning goal coming from a German-based player, Hamburg's Letchkov.

In a high-quality game at Giants Stadium, Germany's Juergen Klinsmann had chances to adding to his World Cup tally of five goals in four games.

Matthaeus, playing impressively at the back of his defence, tied the World Cup appearance record of 21 games with countryman Uwe Seeler, Wladislaw Zmuda of Poland and Argentine superstar Diego Maradona.

Bulgarian goalkeeper Borislav Mihaliov fumbled a long range shot from Martin Wagner in the fifth minute but his forwards almost made the breakthrough at the other end in the 12th.

Nasko Sirakov got round the back of the German defence and produced an angled shot that goalkeeper Bodo Illgner parried one-handed.

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Polls sans Opposition absurd: Nasim

By Staff Correspondent

mand. He said that the opposition parties would re-evaluate their agitation to force the government accept the de-

The opposition parties in Parliament yesterday said that if the ruling party tried to hold general elections without the major opposition parties, it would act as a boomerang.

Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim told a press briefing yesterday that all efforts by the ruling party to bring the opposition back to Parliament would be futile unless they tabled a bill for a caretaker government.

He declined to answer a question whether the ruling party tried to woo the smaller parties to join Parliament.

Mohammad Nasim said the Bogra by-election proved that the people were less enthusiastic about any election boycotted by opposition parties.

"It was a voterless election according to press reports and the Election Commission," Nasim claimed.

The Opposition Chief Whip said they had information that the budget session of parliament would be prorogued any day but the ruling ... was yet to introduce a caretaker bill in line with the opposition de-

Mark Tully resigns from BBC

LONDON, July 10: Mark Tully, the BBC's South Asia correspondent who openly criticised the BBC under Director General John Birtin announced his resignation on Saturday after working for the corporation for 30 years, reports AP.

In a statement from India, Tully said it was no longer possible for him to work for the British Broadcasting Corporation because he could not defend his views in public.

"I am very proud to have worked with the BBC for 30 years. I had hoped to continue the work for the Corporation, but that is no longer possible."

"Since I expressed my views on the changes being made within the BBC in July last year, I have sought to negotiate a position which would allow me to defend my stance in public, especially when it is questioned.

"The BBC has required that I do not speak on matters on See Page 12 Col 8



Koirala resigns

KATHMANDU, July 10: Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala resigned Sunday after losing a crucial vote in Parliament marking a serious setback to the Himalayan nation's three-year-old experiment with democracy, the state-owned radio reported, reports AP.

Koirala submitted his resignation. See Page 12 Col 3

G-7, Russia for greater efforts to end tensions

NAPLES (Italy), July 10: G-7 leaders and Russian President Boris Yeltsin urged today greater efforts to end tensions in the world's hotspots, notably North Korea, Bosnia, Israel and Haiti, on the final day of the Group of Seven summit here, reports AP.

In a chairman's statement issued at the end of the political summit, transformed today into a 'G8' gathering by the first-time attendance of Russia, the heads of the leading industrialised countries called on North Korea to freeze its nuclear programme.

The G-7 statement, issued in place of a formal communique, urged Pyongyang to continue talks with the United States on inspections of its suspect nuclear facilities despite the death of North Korean President Kim Il-Sung Friday, and to go ahead with a scheduled unprecedented summit later this month with South Korea.

Following the death of Kim

Il-Sung we must continue to seek a solution to the problem created by North Korea's decision to withdraw from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)," said the statement, presented by Italian Prime Minister and summit host Silvio Berlusconi.

The leaders also urged Pyongyang to ensure total openness concerning its nuclear programme, and said they supported dialogue to resolve the impasse.

"We stress the importance of North Korea ... maintaining the freeze on its nuclear programme, including not reprocessing spent fuel or reloading its nuclear reactors," the statement said.

North Korea is suspected of diverting nuclear fuel to a secret weapons programme.

The eight also agreed to "cooperate to prevent nuclear smuggling" following reports that organised crime

Advertisement for Blue Cross milk featuring a score board for a quarter-final match between Bulgaria and Germany. The score board shows Bulgaria leading 2-1. It also lists match statistics like goals, shots, fouls, and cards.

A large advertisement for the National Election Commission (NEC) of Bangladesh. It lists various candidates for the national assembly and provides contact information for the NEC.