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NEWS BRIEFS

Army aquatic meet
begins today

SAVAR, July 15: The annual aquatic meet of the Bangladesh army begins at the Savar Cantonment tomorrow. A total of 11 teams drawn from the Bangladesh army are taking part in the five-day meet. Savar area commander of the army Major General Muhammad Abdul Matin, Bir Protik, will declare the meet open, reports BSS.

Queen Elizabeth
to visit Russia

LONDON, July 15: Queen Elizabeth II will visit Russia from October 17 to 20 as the invitation of Russian President Boris Yeltsin. Buckingham Palace announced today. It will be the first time a British monarch will visit that country, reports AFP.

Rebels kill 24
troops in Bogota

BOGOTA, July 15: Leftist guerrillas attacked a military base near the Venezuelan border on Friday, killing at least 24 soldiers, a radio station reported. Police confirmed the clash and said there were numerous casualties on both sides. At least 16 other soldiers were missing and five were wounded. Radio Caracol said, reports AP.

Mitterrand's wife
undergoes surgery

PARIS, July 15: Danielle Mitterrand underwent cardiovascular surgery Friday, and aides to the French first lady said the operation went smoothly. No details were released about the reason for the surgery at Broussais Hospital in Paris or about Mrs Mitterrand's prognosis, reports AP.

The Daily Star

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Battle of 'big dogs' tomorrow

PASADENA, Calif. July 15: The United States' first World Cup will climax with a truly grand finale, a match of storied soccer superpowers, reports AP.

By the time afternoon shadows begin to drift over the Rose Bowl on Sunday, either Brazilians or Italians can brag that theirs is the only nation to win the World Cup four times. Italian star Roberto Baggio, who seems determined to play despite a slight hamstring pull said, "to play in the final is a dream. To play Brazil for the World Cup is the appropriate ending."

"This is the best of all possible finals," said Pele, who led Brazil to all three of its world titles, the last in 1970. "These

are two great soccer powers seeking to be the first four-time World Cup champion."

The upstarts of the 1994 tournament — the Romanians, Saudi Arabians, Americans — are gone.

A Sweden-Bulgaria final, which would have been applauded by Swedes and Bulgarians and met by yawns by most others, was averted when Brazil beat Sweden 1-0 and Italy downed Bulgaria 2-1 in Wednesday's semifinals.

Sweden and Bulgaria will meet, but in the third-place game on Saturday at the Rose Bowl.

That leaves Sunday to Brazil, which flaunts its flamboyant, relentlessly attacking style, and Italy, which favours

the more defined, disciplined technique common to Europe.

"This is a battle of big dogs. Brazilian midfielder Mazinho said of the match of teams that account for six of the previous 14 World Cup titles.

The game could be relatively high-scoring, since both teams are expected to press the attack, rather than lay back on defence as so many of their outmanned opponents have done during this World Cup.

On Sunday, the Italians should give them the kind of challenge the Swedes didn't.

"We want to play the game to win, and have the other team play to win," said midfielder Jorginho, whose crossing pass found the head of Romario for the goal in Brazil's



1-0 victory over the reluctant Swedes. "Against Sweden, I was not frustrated, but I was becoming impatient. When you attack and attack and don't score, you press more. Then See Page 12 Col 7

Comet hits Jupiter
today

SYDNEY, July 15: Astronomers are preparing for the first glimpse of an almost weeklong, nuclear-sized collision of the Shoemaker-Levy9 comet with Jupiter, the biggest planet in the solar system, reports AP.

Dozens of comet fragments will hit the planet at a speed of 60 kilometers a second, releasing thousands of megatons of energy, said Dave Crisp, of America's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Crisp will be among a worldwide team of astronomers and scientists watching the event from the Anglo-Australian observatory at Siding Springs, in outback Australia, northwest of Sydney.

From their vantage point in the Southern Hemisphere, Crisp and the other scientists will have a privileged seat for the event. Jupiter is high in the sky in the Southern Hemisphere. In the Northern Hemisphere, it lurks low on the southern horizon, where as-

tronomers have to look through a thicker angle of the Earth's atmosphere.

Some of the best viewing, though, won't come from Earth at all, but from the Galileo space probe, now heading towards Jupiter. Although it is damaged, it will be sending back thousands of pictures.

Crisp and other scientists, watching from Australia are particularly interested in fragment K. The fragments are listed alphabetically in order of appearance.

Crisp said astronomers in South Africa would be able to detect the first in the series of collisions on Saturday. On Tuesday, Australians will be able to see it hit on the dark side of Jupiter.

There will be no direct sighting, even from Australia. But one of Jupiter's Galilean moons, Europa, will be in eclipse at the time.

"It may be that we will be able to see its impact, re-



A large section of the railway track near Khilgaon in the city is badly in need of proper maintenance. The condition of the sleepers is such that a disaster may happen any day. — Star photo

Rabin-Hussein meet in
Washington July 25

WASHINGTON, July 15: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Jordan's King Hussein will meet in Washington on July 25 in hopes of concluding a historic peace agreement between the two countries, reports AP.

President Clinton announced the summit, and said both leaders also will address a joint session of the US Congress and attend a combined state dinner at the White House.

Clinton called the summit agreement "another step forward toward the achievement of a lasting peace, in the Middle East." Clinton said both Hussein and Rabin had demonstrated "courageous and bold leadership" in making progress in thorny peace talks.

Clinton said he was dispatching Secretary of State Warren Christopher to the region to help the two countries clear up any remaining differences.

Israel and Jordan have already concluded the framework of an agreement, but the King delayed a wrap up while Syria negotiated with Israel. With those talks moving slowly, Hussein said earlier this month he would not be deterred by the slow pace.

Hussein told the Jordanian Parliament last Saturday that he would not hesitate to meet

with Rabin if "it is a service for my country which is facing threats from all directions."

His statement was broadcast live, suggesting he was preparing the Jordanian people for the historic breakthrough.

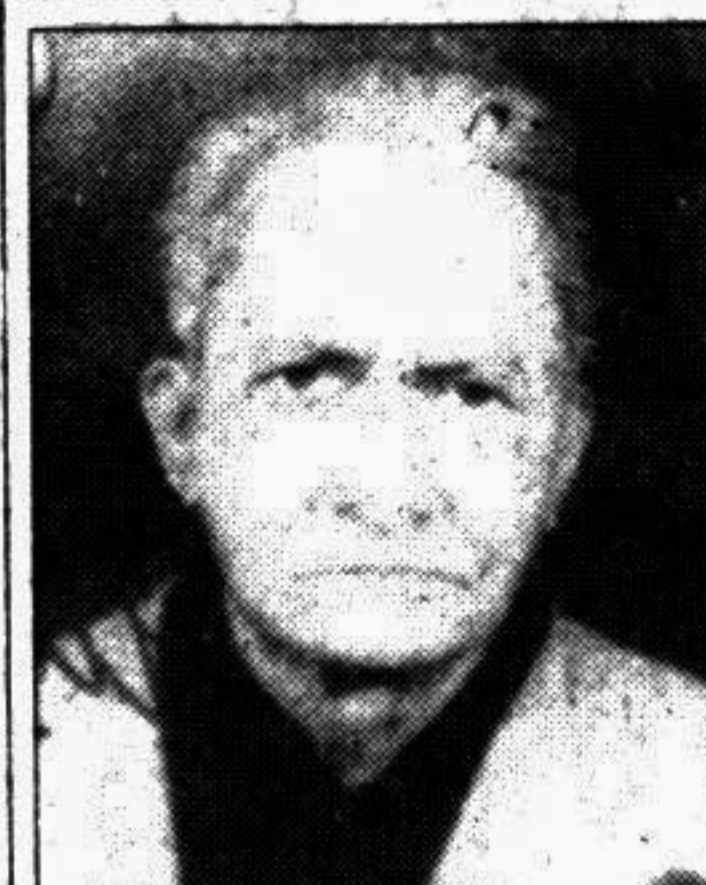
The Washington meeting will put Clinton front and centre in Mideast peace making and could improve his image in foreign policy. Israel's agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organization to provide Palestinian self-rule was worked out secretly between the two sides, with the help of Norwegian diplomats.

However, Clinton stepped in, and presided last September at a White House ceremony with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Rabin. It produced a handshake between the two old adversaries and launched Palestinians on the path to self-rule.

In Jerusalem, Rabin's office released a message sent by Clinton to the Jordanian and the Israeli leaders.

"This historic meeting is another big step forward toward reaching a comprehensive peace in the Middle East," said Clinton's letter, released in a Hebrew translation.

Christopher said the Washington summit is "an event that transforms the landscape."

Journalist Abdul
Wahab dead

Noted journalist Abdul Wahab died of cardiac failure at a city hospital yesterday morning. He was 78, reports UNB.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque after the Jumma prayers yesterday and the second janaza at the Press Club after Asr prayers. He was buried at the Banani graveyard, family sources said.

Wahab, the eldest son of late Sayedur Rahman of the Bengal Judicial Service, was born in Calcutta in 1916 and graduated from the St. Xavier's College, Calcutta, in 1935.

During his long and distinguished career he served as the Dhaka correspondent of the Statesman (Calcutta), the Dawn (Karachi), the Times (London), the New York Times See Page 12 Col 3

UN calls for immediate ceasefire

Rwandan govt flees stronghold

GOMA, Zaire, July 15: The leaders of Rwanda's Hutu-dominated government abandoned their stronghold and fled into a French-protected zone as Hutu refugees swept into Zaire in one of the greatest human floods in history, reports AP.

Carrying babies on their backs and possessions on their heads, the Hutus fled Tutsi rebels advancing across western Rwanda in pursuit of Hutu government forces. The exodus included busloads of fleeing Rwandan government soldiers.

Powerless to slow the exodus, authorities in Zaire threw open the border gates.

A UN representative in Goma reported that by late Friday, at least 250,000 refugees had surged across the frontier since the exodus began Wednesday. Refugees were continuing to arrive at a rate of 10,000 an hour.

Christiane Berthiaume, a spokeswoman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva, said those numbers were "very conservative." In the next few days, the number of refugees around Goma, previously a town of 20,000 people, could reach 800,000, Berthiaume said.

Jean-du-dieu Habimeza, the Rwandan Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, told reporters that Rwanda's interim

president, its prime minister and other officials flew out of Gisenyi on Thursday. The government had withdrawn to Gisenyi, across the border from Goma, after rebels captured the Rwandan capital of Kigali.

Habimeza said they fled south across Lake Kivu to Cyangugu, a town on Rwanda's southwest border with Zaire and inside the French-protected humanitarian zone.

Faustin Twagiramungu, a moderate Hutu picked by the rebels to be prime minister of the new government, said

France now had the responsibility of arresting government leaders accused of instigating massacres that killed between 200,000 and 500,000 mostly Tutsi civilians this spring.

"If those people from Gisenyi (the interim government) have run into a French protected zone, it is the responsibility of the French to apprehend them as international war criminals," Twagiramungu said Friday.

"If the French say that government is working under their protection it will be a big problem," he added.

France said earlier it would not protect Rwanda's Hutu-led government nor let it move its headquarters to the French-established security zone. But on Friday, a Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said arresting Rwandan officials "is not our duty."

In New York, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali appealed for an immediate cease-fire, saying: "Unless this exodus... ceases, the stability of the whole region will be endangered."

The Security Council also demanded a truce and asked UN members for troops, equipment and financing for an expanded UN peacekeeping force to replace the French mission. The 15-member council was meeting again later Friday.

US to snap ties
with Rwanda

WASHINGTON, July 15: The United States is cutting diplomatic ties with Rwanda's Hutu government, which fled before a Tutsi-led rebel offensive, Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Friday, reports AP.

"We are taking the appropriate diplomatic steps to end their representation here in Washington," Christopher said at a White House news conference.

"That will give us an opportunity to work with the new government, hopefully to help assist in the creation of a coalition government there," See Page 12 Col 2

Leftists call series of
strikes against Koirala

KATHMANDU, July 15: Nepal's leftist parties today agreed to unite against caretaker Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, and called two general strikes to force the premier's resignation, a political source said, reports AFP.

The six leftist parties formed the movement after a two-hour meeting, during which it was decided to call a nation-wide one-day general strike on July 20, to be followed by a three-day strike beginning July 25, the source said.

The parties included the Nepal Communist Party-United Marxist and Leninist (NCP-UM), the United People's Front (UPF), the Nepal Peasants and Workers Party (NCP), the Nepal Communist League and the NCP-Mahar Party.

The country has been pulled deep into political uncertainty following King

Birendra's decision Monday to dissolve Parliament and call new elections on November 13, with opposition parties staging demonstrations across the country.

The King's decision, taken after consultation with Koirala, has angered all major political parties in the 205-seat Parliament. Koirala resigned Sunday after losing a crucial parliamentary debate on his government's annual socio-economic and political programme.

The King also asked Koirala to stay in office until the November elections, which he asked the Prime Minister to oversee.

Koirala's Nepal Congress (NC) had 112 seats in the dissolved lower house while the main opposition NCP-UM had 68 members.

The six leftist parties said their protests would continue See Page 12 Col 1.

Wonder of a new soil-friendly fertiliser

By Asiuzzaman



A portion of the paddy field in the Meghna-Dhanagoda project area. — Star photo

MATLAB, Chandpur, July 15: Several thousand farmers in the Meghna-Dhanagoda irrigation project area are thrilled by the wonder of a new soil-friendly fertiliser evolved by a Bangladeshi scientist.

"I could not believe it before I fused 'sarna' in my paddy field on an experimental basis," an elderly Mokhelesur Rahman told a group of visiting newsmen while showing them his plot of paddy.

"I am astonished at the growth. It is a miracle," he said, adding that the growth of the paddy seedlings on his plot was far better than any other crop field using chemical fertiliser.

He said that normally he had to spend Tk 700 for chemical fertiliser to cultivate one bigha (one-third acre) of land but a 800 gm packet of sarna which costs Tk 90 only is enough for a bigha of land. I will use sarna on all my

15 bighas in the coming season," he confirmed.

Bazlu Miah, Moqbul Hossain Prodhon, Gazdur Rahman, Abul Kalam and a number of other farmers expressed similar feelings.

"We are now sure sarna is a very good fertiliser and will be a blessing for us," Gazi Tofael Hossain, chairman of the Farazikandi Union of Matlab thana told visiting reporters.

Sarna is a photo-hormone inducer with required micro-nutrient which has little side-effect on the soil. Bangladeshi scientist Dr Abdul Khaleque evolved the fertiliser after eight years of research under a fellowship of the London University from where he did his PhD in 1974 and which he later joined as a teacher.

Agro-Trading Syndicate, a commercial firm, started marketing the new fertiliser since early April this year. See Page 12 Col 1

TONIGHT'S WORLD CUP
MATCH ON TVTHIRD PLACE PLAY-OFF:
Sweden vs Bulgaria 01:30 (BST)SAARC summit
postponed
till Apr '95

NEW DELHI, July 15: A proposed summit of South Asian leaders scheduled for later this year in New Delhi has been postponed till April next year because the dates clash with Indian state elections, the United News of India said today, reports Rويتر.

The news agency quoted top Foreign Office diplomat K. Srinivasan as saying that all members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) endorsed an Indian proposal to put off the meeting.

The annual summit of SAARC, comprising India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives was due to be held in October or November, mainly to discuss easing of trade barriers in the region.

Democracy not
safe in hands
of BNP : Hasina

GOPALGANJ, July 15: Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina today called for unity of pro-liberation democratic forces to realise demand for general elections under a neutral caretaker government, reports UNB.

"Democracy and people's voting rights are not safe in the hands of the BNP government," she said while inaugurating the Bangabandhu Research Centre and Library at Tungipara.

Hasina said the post-75 autocratic regimes had distorted the history of the country's liberation struggle in a planned way. She urged the members of the Research Centre to project the correct history for the new generation.

The function was also addressed by Gopalganj Awami League leaders Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Abul Khair Bashir and Chhatra League leader Saiful Islam. Syed Nurul Huq presided.

Earlier, Hasina offered fatiha at the mazar of Bangabandhu and attended a milad mahfil.

Brief shower
submerges
city roads

By Staff Correspondent

Only a 12 mm rainfall yesterday inundated the Kakrail, Shantinagar and Inner Circular Road areas in the capital causing dislocation to the traffic movement in the areas.

The Met office recorded the 12 mm rainfall in the city during 6:30 pm to 7 pm.

Due to the rain, the road from Kakrail to Malibagh went under knee-deep water. Several other areas in the old city were also submerged.

However, the brief shower after several days of hot spell brought relief to the city-dwellers. The maximum temperature recorded in the city was 33.5 degree Celsius and the minimum 27.5 degree Celsius.

Besides Dhaka, rainfall also occurred in Comilla (7 mm), Rangpur (3 mm), Barisal (2 mm), Rangamati (3 mm) and Chittagong (1 mm).

Luxembourg PM
Santer to be made
new EU chief

BRUSSELS, Belgium, July 15: European Union leaders, hoping to close the book on three weeks of in-fighting, agreed Friday to appoint Luxembourg Prime Minister Jacques Santer as their new chief executive, EU officials said, reports AP.

The Belgium premier, the previous favourite for the top job, officially pulled out of the race for the European Union's new chief executive, paving the way for the selection of Santer.

EU officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Santer had been approved as the nominee within an hour after the 12 EU leaders began their summit.

Luxembourg Ambassador Jean-Jacques Kasel also confirmed Santer's approval by the leaders.

Belgian Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene bowed out of the race with a blast at the veto system — all EU major decisions must be unanimous — that knocked his candidacy down.