

# LDF convention tomorrow

By Nazmul Ashraf

Representatives of 64 political parties, professional groups, trade unions and socio-cultural organisations are likely to join the Left parties' national convention in the city tomorrow to gear up agitation against the fundamentalists.

The convention, sponsored by the eight-party Left Democratic Front (LDF), will also try to unite the progressive forces against the communal and anti-liberation elements, organisers said.

The convention is likely to include in its declaration, demand for a ban on religion-based politics, they said.

Until yesterday, LDF leaders completed their meetings with representatives of most of the 64 organisations. They are scheduled to meet the journalists and university and college teachers today.

According to the organisers, all the 64 groups have confirmed their participation in the convention. However, the Awami League did not confirm its participation until last night. The LDF has so far not invited the ruling BNP, the

Jatiya Party, the Jamaat and the anti-liberation political parties to the convention.

The LDF leaders have, in the meantime, drafted the declaration of the convention in consonance with their talks with the like-minded groups. It will undergo further modification after the convention, due to be held in the auditorium of the Engineers' Institution.

The organisations expected to join the convention include the National Awami Party, Ganatantri Party, Ganatantri Biplobi Jote, Gana Azadi League, People's League, SKOP, Anti-Communist Students Unity, Ganatantri Chhatra Oikya, the Supreme Court Bar Association, the Lawyers' Coordination Council, the Human Rights Coordination Council, Oikyabaddya Nari Samaj, Lekhak Shibir, Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Samannaya Committee, Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Parishad BFUJ, DUJ, Sammito Sangskritik Jote, Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Khelaghar, Projanmo '71, the Diploma Engineers' Association, the Prokichi-BCS Central Action Council, the Television Artists' Association, the Short Film Forum, Teachers Associations of the Universities of Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Jahangirnagar, BUET, Mymensingh Agriculture University, the Nurses' Association and the trade union bodies in jute, textiles, steel mills.

Besides, noted personalities in the fields of literature, art and culture, film and sports are also likely to participate in the convention.

The LDF comprise the CPB, Workers' Party, JSD, two factions of BSD, Samik Krishak Samajbadi Dal, Samyabadi Dal and Oikya Prokriya.

Today programming committee, comprising senior officials from the region will meet, to be followed by meetings of the drafting committee and informal consultations among the foreign secretaries of South Asia.

Reports are expected to be adopted by the programming committee today.

The participants at the informal consultations among senior officials of the region included Director General, Bangladesh Foreign Office, Ashfaqur Rahman, Director, SAARC Desk, Bhutanese Foreign Affairs Ministry Mrs. Kunzang C. Namgyel, Joint Secretary, Indian Foreign Affairs Ministry, Bhaskar Mitra, Director, Maldives Ministry of Foreign Relations, Abdul Ghafoor Mohamad, Nepal's Under Secretary, SAARC Division at the Foreign Affairs Ministry, Badri Prasad Khanal, Pakistan's Director, SAARC Desk at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iftikhar Hossain Kazmi and Sri Lanka's Director General, SAARC Division at the Foreign Affairs Ministry, A K David.

Confessing the currency smuggling Haque had told the police that he was the ring leader of the racket. Hayetullah had fled the country but returned recently.

Police sought for 10 days' remand but court allowed 7 days. No bail petition was filed on behalf of Hayetullah who hails from Narsingdi.

The peaceful sit-in at an Amman mosque was organised by eight Muslim fundamentalists and leftist groups that oppose the US-backed Middle East peace process. They regard Monday's meeting in Washington as a sellout of Arab rights to lands lost to Israel in the Mideast wars.

The Washington meeting is a black day in our history," one banner read.

At the White House on Monday, the two leaders met publicly for the first time and were to later sign a declaration ending the official state of war between their countries.

Many Jordanians favour a settlement, believing it will boost the stagnant economy by encouraging joint ventures with Israel. Protests against unpopular government policies are frequent in Jordan, so the low turnout at Monday's well-publicised demonstration seemed to reflect a widespread desire for peace.

Opposition by the groups that protested at the al-Husseini mosque downtown has been mostly vocal and peaceful. Hussein warned earlier this month that his patience was wearing thin with their anti-peace slogans.

Garments workers

From Page 1 Col 6 for the workers of garments industry in 1985 and then the second one in 1992 following workers' movement.

None of the Wage Board Awards has been implemented, he said.

Referring to the deplorable condition of the garments workers, Amin said they would announce a programme for greater movement on September 2 at a national convention of garments workers in Dhaka.

During the month-long programme, the federation will submit memorandum to Garments Owners Association, Inspector of Industries and Labour Ministry, and organise rallies and a campaign week besides holding convention on September 2.

The press conference was attended by leaders of the federation Baharainul Sultan Bahar, Md Nasir and Parul Begum.



Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina speaking at the Central Working Committee meeting at the party office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday. — Star photo

## AL calls halt

From Page 1 Col 7 self from the Jamaat-e-Islami as soon as possible, meeting sources said.

The leaders noted that confusion about the AL's commitment to the spirit of liberation war had been created among the people because of the party's tactical relation with the Jamaat, the sources added.

Some of the leaders, however, felt that an all-out agitation against the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and its 'old partner' would automatically remove any confusion about the AL's commitment to the spirit of liberation war.

The meeting, chaired by Sheikh Hasina, was adjourned till 2:00 this afternoon.

The meeting is likely to discuss the party strategy to intensify the agitation to press home its demand for holding general elections under a caretaker government.

The decisions relating to the party's next course of action would be made public by Sheikh Hasina at a rally scheduled to be held in the city tomorrow.

## Israeli troops shell Hezbollah bases

RACHAYA (Lebanon), July 25: Israeli forces early today unleashed an eight-hour artillery barrage against strongholds of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerrilla movement in southern Lebanon, police said here, reports AFP.

Sixty heavy-calibre shells were fired at the Syrian controlled southern Bekaa valley from Israel's self-declared security zone in south Lebanon, the police said. There was no immediate report of casualties.

The shelling lasted for eight hours after midnight Sunday.

## Protest in Amman against summit

AMMAN, July 25: Only 50 people showed up for a sit-in Monday against King Hussein's meeting with Yitzhak Rabin, bolstering the king's assertion that most of his subjects want peace with Israel, reports AP.

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## Jordan-Israel accord

From Page 1 Col 5

vision.

"And so it is that on this day... we have been able to take an historic step, which we hope and pray will be the benefit of our peoples," Hussein said.

Only months ago, Rabin met with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat at the White House to sign an agreement granting self-government to Palestinians who have lived under Israeli rule in Gaza and on the west bank of the Jordan River.

It was 15 years ago that Egypt and Israel came to Washington to sign a peace treaty.

Before putting the finishing touches on the declaration at a White House meeting, Rabin and Hussein publicly greeted each other with a handshake and warm smiles.

Rabin said their handshake symbolises much more than two people who no longer take up arms against one another. He said he looked forward to the day when such greetings would become routine.

"Your Majesty, the entire state of Israel is shaking your hand," he told Hussein.

Welcoming them to the White House, Clinton said, "On this morning of promise these visionary statesmen from ancient lands have chosen to heal the rift that for too long has divided their lands."

The obvious warmth between Rabin and Hussein, who have met secretly in the past, was in sharp contrast to the restraint when Rabin met Arafat last September.

On that occasion Arafat held out his hand and Rabin hesitated before grasping it.

With US help, Israeli and Jordanian officials Sunday night negotiated the language of a declaration.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher predicted on television that the two countries

would have a formal peace treaty in a matter of months.

Hussein and Rabin were the guests of honour at a White House dinner tonight and will address a joint session of Congress on Tuesday.

For Clinton, another firm step toward peace in the Middle East was likely to be the high point in a week that will see the opening Tuesday of potentially embarrassing hearings in Congress on questions arising from the White-water land dealings in Arkansas.

In September Israel and the PLO signed an accord that promised self-government for the Palestinians, a promise that is being realized only now after months of difficult negotiations.

The path to peace between Israel and Jordan looks far less tortuous.

The state government employees, most of whom are Muslims, demanded that the paramilitary Border Security Force (BSF) remove bunkers set up last year near Srinagar's Hazratbal shrine, the most sacred mosque in Kashmir.

The BSF set up pickets around the shrine in October during a month-long army siege aimed at flushing out several dozen Kashmiri Muslim separatists who had sought refuge inside the mosque.

Muslim devotees have boycotted the mosque since then to protest the presence of the paramilitary troops around their place of worship.

Organisers of today's strike said it was also called to protest the deaths in custody of suspected Muslim militants.

The Indian security forces have been frequently accused of detaining and then killing suspected Muslim militants.

Nearly 10,000 people have died in Kashmir, India's only Muslim majority state, since a Muslim separatist movement began in 1989.

## 7 die as dome of shrine collapses in Karachi

KARACHI, July 25: At least seven Muslims died and more than 20 were injured today when the main dome of an old shrine in southern Pakistan fell on them, an ambulance volunteer said, reports Reuters.

The large dome of the shrine of the Muslim saint Lal Shahbaz Qalandar at Sehwan, 200 km (125 miles) northeast of Karachi, fell when dozens of people were busy in religious ceremonies, the volunteer said by telephone.

Seven bodies and more than 20 injured people were found under tonnes of debris, he said.

## Russia to sell 7 rocket engines to India

NEW DELHI, July 25: Russia has agreed to sell seven cryogenic rocket engines to India but it will not transfer their technology, an Indian government minister said today, reports Reuters.

Minister of State for External Affairs Raghunandan Lal Bhatia told the Indian Parliament Russia had agreed to sell four engines to Delhi initially with provision for another three later.

"This will be without transfer of technology," Bhatia said. Bhatia's comments were at variance with Indian space scientists who claimed in September last year that their colleagues had acquired the drawings of the engines from Russian experts, despite US objections.

"We have even received drawings of the engine," a senior scientist at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in Bangalore city in the south had told Reuters.

Russian officials say Moscow suspended plans to sell the cryogenic rocket technology to India after the United States opposed the 250 million US dollars deal on the grounds that it would violate the missile technology control regime (MTCR).

The MTCR seeks to halt the spread of rocket technology, particularly to the developing world.

India, a key non-communist ally of the former Soviet Union, is widely believed to be a nuclear threshold power, currently engaged in the production of an indigenous nuclear delivery system.

Cryogenic rockets use low-temperature fuels, such as liquid hydrogen and methane.

## BSP meet decides

## Other newspapers to increase prices later

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Parishad (BSP) at a meeting yesterday discussed different issues facing the newspaper industry.

The meeting also reviewed the refixation of newspaper prices and decided that those newspapers which had not increased prices will do so at a convenient time.

The meeting presided over by Kazi Shahed Ahmed was attended by Anwar Hossain, Atiqullah Khan Masud, Mohammad Zakaria Khan, Mahfuz Anam, Abdul Awal, Matlur Rahman, Kazi Nabil Ahmed, Rahat Khan and M Mofazzal Hossain.

## Govt employees' strike paralyses Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India, July 25: More than 30,000 employees of the Kashmir state government staged a strike today to protest against the presence of Indian troops around the state's holiest Islamic shrine, reports AFP.

Banks, courts and government industries were also paralysed by the one-day walk-out, witnesses said.

The state government employees, most of whom are Muslims, demanded that the paramilitary Border Security Force (BSF) remove bunkers set up last year near Srinagar's Hazratbal shrine, the most sacred mosque in Kashmir.

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## The Midnight File

## Indian parliament mourns Kim's death

NEW DELHI, July 25: Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao led the Indian parliament today in mourning the death of North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung, describing him as a valiant fighter for the Third World. "He was one of the great leaders of our times," Rao said in the Lok Sabha, the Lower House of parliament, before Speaker Shivraj Patil asked the members to observe a minute's silence on the opening day of the parliament's monsoon session, reports Reuters.

## Pakistan lifts trade embargo on S Africa

ISLAMABAD, July 25: Pakistan today formally lifted its embargo on trade with South Africa, which was in force for decades because of Pretoria's now dismantled policy of apartheid. The decision was taken in view of the all-race elections in South Africa. Commerce Minister Ahmad Mukhtar said in a televised speech announcing the new trade policy for fiscal 1994-95, reports Reuters.

## Cholera death toll rises to 11,000

## French troops clash with Hutu militia in Rwanda

GOMA, Zaire, July 25: French Foreign Legionnaires have clashed with Hutu militia, killers in southwest Rwanda while the death toll in Rwandan refugee camps in Zaire climbed to 11,000, reports Reuters.

French forces struggling to contain looting and a mass movement of refugees into Zaire said they skirmished with Hutu militia for three nights near Bugarama.

Foreign Legion Lieutenant-Colonel Jacques Hogard said his men, probably the toughest in the French army, inflicted casualties. The legionnaires suffered none, he added.

"We are hunting them," Hogard said on Sunday in Cyangugu in the French-declared "safe zone".

The "interahamwe" (those who fight together) are a French-trained Hutu militia who played a leading role in massacring members of the Tutsi-minority after the Hutu government launched its genocidal purge of Rwanda's former feudal rulers in April.

Now with the army defeated by the Tutsi-dominated Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), the militia are coercing the Hutu population into joining them in exile, pillaging what is left of Rwanda and carrying out hit-and-run attacks on Tutsis.

With a cholera epidemic killing more Rwandans in refugee camps in eastern Zaire, the United Nations said today that existing mass graves had all been filled.

The death toll continues to rise. Our rough estimate is that 11,000 have died," UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) spokesman Ray Wilkinson told reporters in the Zairean border town of Goma.

But Wilkinson also struck a more optimistic note in saying that more food was being delivered to the remote Zaire camps and that thousands of refugees had begun to go home to Rwanda.

## Japan, China agree to help reduce Korean N-tensions

BANGKOK, July 25: China and Japan agreed Monday to cooperate in reducing tensions over North Korea's nuclear programme but specified few concrete steps, officials said, important than military spending, and said Japan is worried about China's continued nuclear testing, Nomoto said.

Qian replied that he understood Japan's concerns, and that China's policy is to seek a worldwide ban on nuclear weapons, Nomoto said.

The foreign ministers also discussed a regional organisation propose by Malaysia called the East Asian Economic Caucus which would exclude the United States and other outside nations.

Kono said the group must not become a divisive factor in the region and emphasised that it was important to gain Washington's understanding.

## Bank

From Page 1 Col 7 ing its requirement of working capital.

In case of the mills already closed down, the year of highest production out of the three years before their closure would be selected for estimating the requirement of working capital.

According to sources, the government has given a total of Tk 550-crore to the jute mills to share their losses under the Jute Sector Adjustment Programme during the last two and a half years.

The amount of loss financing during the current year is likely to stand at Tk 150 crore, the sources added.

## Stock market

From Page 1 Col 3

By raising the investment to 18 per cent of the GDP. At present the investment-GDP ratio is 14.5 per cent leaving a gap of 3.5 per cent.

At the 1993-94 estimate of Tk 10380.36 crore GDP, the 18 per cent investment amount comes to Tk 18685.14 crore. The excess investment required to fill the gap is Tk 3633.22 crore.

## Senior SAARC officials meet informally

Senior officials from the SAARC countries last night held informal consultations mainly to discuss today's programme leading to the regional foreign ministers' meeting which begins here Saturday.

After the meeting, lasting for a little more than an hour, Director General, SAARC Desk, Bangladesh Foreign Affairs Ministry Ashfaqur Rahman, said the senior officials discussed procedural elements, structure of the meeting as well as programmes.

Today programming committee, comprising senior officials from the region will meet, to be followed by meetings of the drafting committee and informal consultations among the foreign secretaries of South Asia.

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## Chakma rehabilitation

From Page 1 Col 4 1,177 families was now going on, officials said.

Under the package repatriation deal, Bangladesh authorities ensured complete rehabilitation of the returnees.

The authorities have undertaken a programme to provide the unemployed educated tribal youths with jobs. So far 55 tribals have submitted applications for jobs under special consideration. The refugees who previously held different official positions are being reinstated. Already 23 of the 32 tribals, who returned in the first phase, have been reinstated in their previous jobs. Cases of the rest are being processed.

The authorities would relax the age-limit for the returnees to enable them to get government jobs.

The children of the refugee families would be allowed to get themselves admitted to the same classes they were studying in the camp school in Tripura. The Comilla Education Board would hold special tests for those who have passed the secondary and higher secondary certificate examinations in Tripura and would give them certificates.

The tribal headmen would be reinstated in their previous positions in their own villages and, special permit would be issued for collecting wood from the forest to build houses.

The authorities have decided to withdraw security camps from all tribal religious places, extend general amnesty and absolve convicted Shanubahini members of previous

## Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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