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NEWS BRIEFS

LDF convention
today

By Staff Correspondent

The Left Democratic Front (LDF), a conglomeration of eight left-leaning parties, holds its national convention to gear up agitation against fundamentalists today. Sixty-four socio-political and cultural organisations are expected to attend the convention scheduled to be held at the auditorium of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB). The convention will begin at 9 am.

One killed at Uttara

By Staff Correspondent

A young man was killed by a group of unidentified miscreants in Mollartek area of Uttara in the capital yesterday. Police said Jahangir, 35, was attacked in front of his house at about 6 pm. Fatally wounded Jahangir was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

16 hurt in Barisal
road mishap

BARISAL, July 26: Sixteen people were injured, eight of them seriously, when a passenger bus fell into a ditch near Amtaon on the Amtaon-Patuakhali road this morning.

Shashi Kanti Talukder, a self-styled lieutenant of Shantibahini, says insurgency is a never-ending process and a losing game for both the sides concerned.

"Insurgency is no solution to the CHT problem," Talukder, 50, who surrendered on December 2, 1983 after serving for nine years as a zonal commander of Shantibahini, told The Daily Star.

Talukder said that Priti was now residing at Agartala, capital of Tripura state of India. Shanti Larma now leads the team holding talks with the parliamentary committee on CHT issue headed by Communications Minister Oli Ahmed.

The founder leader of

began on July 21.

He said that some 577 Shantibahini rebels, loyal to the Priti Group, surrendered from time to time responding to the government offer of amnesty.

The tribal rebels are split into two groups — the bigger one led by Shanti Larma and the other by Priti Kumar Larma.

Talukder said that Priti was now residing at Agartala, capital of Tripura state of India.

Shanti Larma now leads the team holding talks with the parliamentary committee on

CHT issue headed by Communications Minister Oli Ahmed.

The founder leader of

Shantibahini Manabendra Larma was killed in a factional fight on June 9, 1985.

Talukder guessed that some 3,000 to 4,000 tribal adults and youths were still active in Shantibahini.

He recalled that he had been trained at a training academy located in a 'special area' in Mizoram state.

One Zulu Babu, a 'major' was the chief of the academy, he said. He declined to say whether or not any Indian officials were at the academy.

Talukder, who is now a contractor of the Roads and Highways, said that the Shantibahini men sent a letter

asking him to show cause why he had joined the 'combined longmarch' with Bengalees on March 26, 1992.

"I replied that I am working for peace," he said. He did not receive any other threat from the rebels, he added.

Talukder is also a leader of the Parbatya Chattagram Jatiya Samanayana and Shanti Parishad (national coordination and peace council of CHT), a conglomerate of the tribals and Bengali-speaking settlers.

He expressed optimism about the dialogue between the government and Shantibahini and hoped peace would be restored in the region through the dialogue.

The reaction in the Security Council ... was one of considerable alarm," he said.

WELLINGTON, July 26: The UN Security Council was shocked by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's recommendation that the world body withdraw its 35,000 troops from the Balkans, New Zealand's envoy said today. Washington, he said, had made clear it would not place its troops under UN command.

He also called for a virtual withdrawal if the peace plan failed and major powers carried out threats to use force against the combatants.

Keating said everybody was aware there were certain circumstances that could render the UN's presence in the Bosnian conflict risky.

Boutros-Ghali on Monday recommended pulling out UN troops if a peace pact was reached between Serbs, Muslims and Croats, saying only major powers like the United States could enforce it. Washington, he said, had made clear it would not place its troops under UN command.

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SAARC Foreign
Secys begin
3-day talks
today

Foreign Secretaries of the seven-nation SAARC begin a three-day talks here today to prepare grounds for the Foreign Ministers' meeting aiming at closer cooperation, reports UNB.

The Foreign Ministers or the Council of Ministers of SAARC (South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation), will hold a two-day meeting here Saturday-Sunday (July 30-31).

The Council of Ministers will review progress of cooperation in the 12 areas, including implementation of SAFTA (South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement), set by the SAARC summit last year, and finalise the date for the next summit.

During three days of deliberations, the foreign secretaries will formulate the agenda of the Council of Ministers' 14th meeting which will be inaugurated by SAARC chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia on Saturday.

Deputy Foreign Minister of the Maldives Salah Shihab, Pakistan Foreign Secretary Nazimuddin A Sheikh and Environment and Urban Affairs Secretary Muhammad Zafullah Khan, Bhutanese acting Foreign Secretary Lathu Wangchuk, Sri Lankan Foreign

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Kamal favours
agreed formula
for fair polls

Gano Forum leader Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday suggested formation of a committee comprising both government and Opposition MPs, constitutional experts and eminent personalities to hammer out a formula for ensuring free and fair elections, reports UNB.

Putting forward a five-point suggestion at a press conference at his Segunbagicha party office yesterday afternoon, he said an agreed formula could be found out by discussing various proposals from the ruling party and the Opposition in Parliament.

He referred to the opposition-framed modality for neutral caretaker government, government bill for strengthening the Election Commission and other proposals for freeing voting from the influence of illegal arms, black money and ensuring neutrality of radio-television.

Kamal said the proposed committee would submit its report, within 15 days. The

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KLM starts Dhaka
flight Nov 1

By Staff Correspondent
The KLM Royal Dutch Airlines will start two weekly flights from Amsterdam to Dhaka via Dhaka from November 1.

Vice President of the 75 year old airlines K B F Steller at a press conference in the city yesterday said that Dhaka would be its final destination and the two flights would carry around 800 passengers and 70 tons of export goods from Bangladesh weekly.

The press conference was also addressed by Ambassador of the Netherlands H Gajentaan, KLM General Manager G W Boven, Director of Marketing and Sales F Van de Laar, Bangladesh Managing Director A Rahman and Director S Khan.

K B F Steller informed the newsmen that the inaugural flight from Amsterdam would carry businessmen from the

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Currency
smuggling:
One more held

By Staff Correspondent

A special team of the Detective Branch of Police Tuesday arrested another person in connection with the sensational foreign currency smuggling case.

They arrested M Abdul Kasheem Bhuiyan from Adabor area of Shahamoli in the capital for his alleged involvement in foreign currency smuggling.

The police also seized his car.

A statement from the police said the arrested person was the right hand man of Hayatullah, who was earlier arrested by police. Bhuiyan is now being interrogated.

Both sides call half-day hartal tomorrow 4 killed as Jamaat, APSU clash in Chittagong

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 26: At least four persons were killed and over 200 injured in armed clashes between Jamaat activists and supporters of All Party Students Unity (APSU) here this afternoon, according to sources.

Hospital sources and police, however, confirmed the deaths of three persons — Md Ehsan (20), Abul Khair (22) and Ashraf Uddin (18). Hospital sources also said death toll may rise.

During the clashes, gunshots and bomb-blasts rocked the areas around the meeting

venue. APSU also had scheduled a meeting at the same venue at the same time.

At first bomb attack was made from inside some buildings close to Kotwali Thana premises near Laldighi maidan. This was countered by Jamaat activists engaged in protesting the meeting venue, witnesses said.

The attack was intensified while Jamaat chief Golam Azam started addressing the

venue.

Meanwhile, both Jamaat

and APSU

meeting but the attackers

could not proceed to the

maidan in the face of stiff re-

sistance by Jamaat supporters

aided by riot police.

At one stage, bomb-blasts

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