

Inside Today

Article

South Asia's
Nuclear Stand-offby Brig (retd) M Abdul
Hafiz
Page 4

International

Nepali Congress may
vote today to expel G P
KoiralaProspect for Korean
summit dim
Page 5

Business

Tk 4.6 cr additional EU
grant for cyclone
protectionIndian journalist
subpoenaed in
BCCI case
Pages 6, 7

Feature

Science &
TechnologyThe magic of
mushrooms; Fallout of
the world's worst
nuclear accident; Gene
therapy lowers
cholesterol levels; and
Modernisation of UK
lifeboat fleet completed
Page 8

Supplement

Today's issue contains
a special supplement on
the 7th founding
anniversary of
Bangladesh Council
for Democracy
Page 9

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

When Spending is a
Problem
Page 3

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 youngman 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 Amtali on the Amtali-Patukhali road this morning.

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.

Around 100 persons with bomb and bullet wounds were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital. Of them, the three succumbed to their injuries, doctors said.

The clashes began at 5 pm while a public meeting organised by Jamaat was in progress at Laldighi maidan here amid tight security by police and BDR.

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

meeting but the attackers could not proceed to the maidan in the face of stiff resistance by Jamaat supporters aided by riot police.

At one stage, bomb-blasts and gunshots were heard from the north side of Laldighi maidan. But even in such a tense situation, Jamaat was able to complete its meeting and Golam Azam safely left the venue under heavy escort.

Meanwhile, both Jamaat and APSU called for a

Azam demands
interim govt

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 26: Jamaat chief Golam Azam has said they will wage a united movement, along with all opposition parties to unseat the BNP government if it did not accept the demand for a caretaker government.

Addressing a public meeting at Laldighi maidan today he urged the government to accept the demand immediately.

He also spoke of the need for a

Students rally
batoncharged
in city

By DU Correspondent

Several students were injured when the police baton-charged a rally of the Sampradayaketa Birodhi Chhatra Samaj in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday evening.

The Chhatra Samaj activists were holding the rally to protest yesterday's Jamaat-Shibir action in Chittagong.

See Page 12 Col 6



A group of agitated students vandalised vehicles near the Jatiya Press Club in a backlash to the killings in Chittagong yesterday.

— Star photo

22000 audit cases of Railway
lying unsettled for decades

By Special Correspondent

Thousands of audit objection cases involving hundreds of crores of taka of Bangladesh Railway have been lying unsettled for decades.

According to well-placed sources in the government, the number of such cases recorded so far is about 22,000 involving around Taka 850 crore.

Authorities concerned under the Ministry of Communication, quoting published report of the Auditor General, however, said that the number of accumulated audit objections was over 17,500 until fiscal 1987-88. These cases involved over Taka 318 crore.

The authorities could not provide the number of cases during the years after 1987-88 since, according to them, the reports for the period were yet to be published. But they agreed that a large number of cases had been added to the pending list during the last six years.

Sources concerned said

that the process of settling the audit objections in the Railway is 'unusually slow', resulting in huge accumulation of outstanding cases.

The list of unsettled audit objections also contains 1163 cases recorded during 16 years before liberation — from fiscal 1945-55 to 1970-71. These cases had financial involvement of Taka two crore 64 lakh.

During 17 years after liberation until fiscal 1987-88, another 16,344 audit objections of over Taka 315 crore 52 lakh were listed.

Audit reports show that the number of outstanding cases and the amount of money concerned in the Eastern Zone of the Railway is higher than that of Western Zone.

In the Eastern Zone, during the period fiscal 1954-55 to 1987-88, the number of unsettled cases stood at 8900 involving over Taka 226 crore. During the same period, in the Western Zone, 8607 cases of a

total of over Taka 92 crore were listed.

The outstanding cases incorporate objections raised by the Railway Audit on various irregularities in the affairs of the Railway. The irregularities were related to tenders, non-realisation of bills and fees, unauthorised recruitment of manpower, theft of goods and equipment, unauthorised expenditures, over expenditures, allocation of fuel more than the fixed quota and so on.

Railway authorities said some committees for the settlement of outstanding audit objections have been set up at various levels. The committees at zonal and divisional levels sit once a month while two high-level committees at ministry-level meet once in two or three months. The committees discuss in presence of the representative of audit department and settle the cases. The committee also recommends actions if necessary.

See Page 12 Col 8

Hasina condemns
Ctg killings

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina has strongly condemned the 'killing of students by police and Jamaat-Shibir forces' in Chittagong yesterday, reports UNB.

In a statement, Hasina held the government responsible for 'this heinous incident' and said as the Jamaat-Shibir was given the opportunity by General Zia to do politics, these defeated forces of the Liberation war were now pushing the country towards anarchy.

The Opposition leader demanded immediate judicial probe into the killing and punishment to the killers, and also urged the people to resist the heinous activities of the anti-liberation — Jamaat-Shibir — forces.

She conveyed her deep sympathy to the bereaved family members of those killed in Chittagong yesterday and prayed for the departed souls.

Demand for
blasphemy
law criticised

By DU Correspondent

The speakers at a seminar in the city yesterday criticised the demand for enacting blasphemy law as 'politically motivated' and unnecessary.

Organised by the Sammlita Sangskritik Jote, the seminar on 'Blasphemy Law: A New Weapon for Exploitation' held at the TSC of Dhaka University was attended by legal experts, academicians, cultural activists and intellectuals.

The speakers also called upon the people to launch a united movement against the fundamentalist and communal forces 'for misguiding the people by propagating distorted decrees on religion'.

Barrister Ishtiaq Ahmed, Justice K M Sobhan, Professor Anisuzzaman, Ali Zaker, Kamal Lohani, Mamunur Rashid, and Ayea Khanam spoke at the seminar. Faiz Ahmed was in the chair.

Barrister Sara Hossain presided.

See Page 12 Col 6



The ten wives of Singapore national Abu Talib Haron, 34, shield their faces from photographers as they leave court in Johor Bahru in Malaysia yesterday. Abu Talib pleaded not guilty to a total of 18 charges, including that of having 10 wives and of being involved in deviationist Islamic teachings.

— AFP photo

Former Shantibahini commander tells Daily Star

Insurgency no solution to CHT issue

By Asiuzzaman

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.

Shashi Kanti, who now heads the Repatriated Shantibahini Welfare Trust, came to Tabalchhari border, 50 km from Khagrachhari, to greet the Chakma returnees as the second phase of repatriation

began on July 21.

He said that some 577 Shantibahini rebels, loyal to the Prity 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 Shantu Larma and the other by Prity Kumar Larma.

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

Shantu 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 long march' 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 Parbatyia Chittagong Jatiya Samanvaya 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.



Activists of the Bangladesh Nari Mukti Parishad demonstrating in the city yesterday demanding reinstatement of retrenched hospital ayas. The aggrivated ayas have been staging a sit-in near the Jatiya Press Club since late last year.

— Star photo

AL public meet in city today
'Agitate against Jamaat,
BNP simultaneously'

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League (AL) has called upon the people to launch simultaneous agitations against the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami.

The central working committee of the AL, in a resolution at its two-day meeting that concluded yesterday, said that the BNP was patronising the Jamaat to weaken the pro-liberation forces in the country.

The BNP is doing so to divert the people's attention from the demand for holding general elections under a non-partisan caretaker government, the resolution said.

A press release issued by the AL party chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina would deliver 'an important speech' at a public meeting in the city today.

In another resolution, the AL central working body condemned the 'joint attack by

the police and the Jamaat-Shibir activists on the processions of the pro-liberation forces in Chittagong Monday and said that the government was pushing the nation towards anarchy.

The resolution, also condemned the National University Vice Chancellor's recent 'refusal' to play National Anthem at the beginning of the university's Senate meeting and demanded punitive measures against the persons concerned.

The ALCWC resolution also expressed concern at the price hike of the essentials and demanded government control over the prices.

The AL working body also asked the union and ward level units of the party to complete their annual council sessions by December 30 and November 30 respectively. It fixed January 30 next year as the deadline for council sessions.

See Page 12 Col 5

Attackers of NGOs to
be dealt with : Saifur

By Staff Correspondent

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday suggested stern measures against the people instigating attacks on NGO activities and assured the administration's full support to non-government voluntary organisations.

'The law enforcing agencies should take prompt action against the attackers and exemplary punishment should be meted out to them,' he told a group of representatives of some leading NGOs.

He was speaking at a discussion meeting, initiated by the finance ministry, on the recent attacks on NGO activities in a number of places across the country.

'The government is fully committed to a participatory

development process and we have no reservations about using the resources of the NGOs. We want you to work,' the minister said.

Senior government officials, and representatives from the Grameen Bank, different NGOs and the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB), participated in the two-hour discussion meeting held at the conference room of the finance ministry.

Identifying the attackers as 'conservative elements' whose exploitative influence is being marginalised by the empowerment of the poor and women in rural society, the NGO representatives urged

See Page 12 Col 4

Ghali's suggestion
surprises UNSC

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, reports Reuters.

'It was completely out of the blue and I think it's taken all the members of the Security Council by surprise,' Ambassador Colin Keating said in an interview with Radio New Zealand.

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

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.

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.

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 SAPTA (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 Zafrullah Khan, Bhutanese acting Foreign Secretary Lathu Wangchuk, Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary

See Page 12 Col 3

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

See Page 12 Col 4

KLM starts Dhaka
flight Nov 1

By Staff Correspondent

The KLM Royal Dutch Airlines will start two weekly flights from Amsterdam to Dhaka via Dubai 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 Gajenttan, 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

See Page 12 Col 7

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. Abul Kashem Bhuiyan from Adabor area of Shyamoli 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.