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NEWS BRIEFS

2nd phase of tribal
repatriation ends

CHITTAGONG, Aug 5: The second phase repatriation of the tribal refugees from Indian state of Tripura to Bangladesh ended when 314 refugees returned to their homes in Khagrachhari hill district through Ramgarh border point today. Official sources told BSS, over telephone here tonight that with this last batch in the second phase, the total number of the repatriated persons to Bangladesh now stood at 3346 of 648 families.

Model polls in
Tongi today

Chief Election Commissioner Justice Abdur Rauf will inaugurate the model election programme in Tongi Paurashava today at 11 am, said an official announcement yesterday. On the first day identity cards will be given to the voters, registered under the new system to prevent false voting, reports UNB.

Two killed in
boiler blast

JESSORE, Aug 5: Two workers, both of them brothers, were killed and eight others including two children and two women injured when a paddy boiler exploded here yesterday, reports BSS.

Benazir leaves
for Saudi Arabia

ISLAMABAD, Aug 5: Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto left for Saudi Arabia today for an Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, the state television said. She is also likely to meet King Fahd during her two-day visit, the private PPI news agency said, reports Reuter.

NATO jets bomb Serb targets

SARAJEVO, Aug 5: NATO warplanes launched an air strike on Serb targets near Sarajevo at 6.35 pm (1635GMT) today, a UN military spokesman told Reuters.

French Lieutenant-Colonel Bernard Labarsouque said: "A strike was carried out at 1835 (1635 GMT) just outside of the southern edge of the weapons exclusion zone, east of Mount Igman. Targets were hit and destroyed."

He believed two aircraft took part in the attack but he could not say what was hit.

UN troops went on high alert after the attack, and took cover at the main UN head-

quarters in Sarajevo.

Earlier, the United Nations summoned NATO warplanes to enforce the order banning heavy weapons from around Sarajevo after Bosnian Serbs shot at a UN helicopter, a US official said today.

A State Department official in Washington confirmed the attack and said two US A-10 aircraft and two French Mirage took part in the raid.

"We understand the strikes did occur," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman John Shalikashvili confirmed the NATO air strikes

were ordered after the Serbs removed heavy weaponry from storage areas in the region. But he could not immediately confirm the attack.

The United Nations can call in NATO warplanes to enforce a ban on heavy weapons around Sarajevo and protect its peacekeepers, but until now had been reluctant to do so without an immediate threat to Sarajevo.

Bosnian Serb soldiers took a T-55 tank, two armored personnel carriers and a mobile anti-aircraft gun before dawn today from a UN collection point in Serb-held Ilidza, just

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quarters in Sarajevo.

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The aircraft safely landed at the Zia International Airport early Thursday after four hours of flying. A Biman source said that the engine of the aircraft might have to be overhauled because it suffered "heavy strain."

Biman's DC-10 averts mishap

By Staff Correspondent

A Biman aircraft carrying 260 passengers from Muscat, Oman, narrowly escaped a mishap Thursday after it was caught in a whirlwind, Biman sources said last night.

"It was a miracle that we survived," Captain Akhteruzzaman, commanding pilot of the DC10-30 aircraft, told The Daily Star. "We had to use full power of the engine and it took a minute and 30 seconds to come out of the windshear."

The aircraft safely landed at the Zia International Airport early Thursday after four hours of flying. A Biman source said that the engine of the aircraft might have to be overhauled because it suffered "heavy strain."

The pilot of the aircraft said

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Accord on WB credit for gas project soon

By S Y Bakht & Inam Ahmed

The government has completed negotiations with the World Bank for securing a 141-million US dollar credit to finance the gas-sector infrastructure development project (GIDP), both Bank and Energy Ministry sources have confirmed.

The two-year project is being seen as "extremely critical" in improving the overall gas transmission system in the country to meet the projected growth in demand in the coming years.

Petrobangla conducted the negotiations with the World Bank (WB) and the agreement is now expected to be finalised in Washington later this month. The loan accord would then be placed before the bank's board in September.

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Tagore's death
anniversary
today

By Staff Correspondent

Today is the 53rd anniversary of the death of poet Rabindranath Tagore.

To mark the day, different socio-cultural organisations across the country have planned elaborate programmes including discussion meetings, recitations and musical soirees.

Bangladesh Television and the Radio Bangladesh will put on special programmes while the national dailies will publish special articles and features on the only Nobel laureate.

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BJP's 'no' to Manmohan Singh's apology

contain several government
concessions.

"I would like to assure the house that it was never our intention to show any disrespect to the Joint Parliamentary Committee."

"If these words convey such an impression, I have no hesitation in requesting you to treat them as withdrawn."

The government, Dr Singh said, agreed with the view of the JPC that the irregularities in securities trading revealed both failures in various aspects of the financial system including both internal control mechanism of banks as well as the supervisory system, and also a deliberate and criminal misuse of public funds with the aim of illegally siphoning off funds of banks by select brokers for speculative returns.

Singh appealed to the op-

position to return to parliament and debate the government action report.

"The government seeks the views of the honourable members in this regard," Singh said.

Jaswant Singh, a senior leader of the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party, rejected the apology and the appeal.

"Nothing short of a withdrawal will do," he told Reuters.

The opposition, from right to left in rare unison, has insisted that the government withdraw its "action taken report" detailing what it had done about a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) probe into scandal.

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DUTA token strike from tomorrow

By DU Correspondent

The Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA) will observe token strike tomorrow and Monday to protest the attack on teachers Thursday.

DUTA at an emergency meeting yesterday, demanded withdrawal of Dr M Ershadul Bari, Dean of the Faculty of Law, from the DU Senate, Syndicate, hall administration and various committees within seven days. Otherwise, the association would take fresh programmes, according to a DUTA press release.

The meeting resented the statement of the Prime Minister regarding Thursday's violence on the DU campus.

DUTA alleged that the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) led the terrorist activities on the DU campus Thursday.

The DUTA also demanded of the government to withdraw Prof Azhar Uddin, Pro Vice Chancellor of Rajshahi University, from the Dhaka University Senate as he reportedly spoke against the playing of National Anthem in the first session of the Senate meeting of the National University.

DUTA demanded of the authorities assistance for the treatment of Dr Ratan Lal Chakrabarty, who received bullet injury in his leg Thursday.

Some 300 children won awards in the national competition which included 'qrst', recitation of poem, patriotic

song, Nazrul geeti, Rabindra sangeet, rhymes, dramatic performance, classical song, dance, story-telling and instrumental music.

Initially, some 30,000 children took part in the countrywide competitions held at 35 centres.

The function coincided with the introduction of "BETA-SP," a new system of recording, news gathering and broadcasting of the Bangladesh Television.

The system has been installed at the Rampura television station with the help of Japanese experts in a bid to modernise the country's state-owned television in the face of growing challenge from satellite networks.

Begum Kamrul Tania Tinki (left) who became the individual champion in 'Ka' Group (6-9 years) of the Jatiya Television Shishu Shilpi Natun Kuri competition 1399 BS, receiving the gold cup from chief guest Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia during the presentation ceremony at the Rampura TV Bhaban yesterday.

— PID photo

Tinki, Shaon top TV child artistes

Groom young talents collectively : PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday underscored the need for collective responsibility to groom the country's young talents, reported U.N.B.

"We have won independence but our struggle for economic freedom has been continuing. Our effort now is to achieve self-reliance... success can be ensured only if we raise our children properly," she said.

The Prime Minister was addressing a function arranged to distribute prizes to the winners of the 'Natun Kuri Jatiya Television Shishu Shilpi Purashkar' — the TV awards for child artistes for the Beigali year 1399.

Fauzia Kamrul Tania Tinki was adjudged the best child artiste or all-round champion in the 'Ka' group (6-9 years) while Meher Afroz Shaon became the best child artiste of the 'Kha' group (9-12 years). The Prime Minister handed over glittering gold cups to the two proud winners.

Some 300 children won awards in the national competition which included 'qrst', recitation of poem, patriotic

to leave the areas if they were rehabilitated elsewhere.

The hospital authorities had constructed only 50 units to house its employees which over the years turned into a 7,000-person slum on nearly eight acres of land.

Principal of the College Prof Zahirul Mawla Chowdhury, told The Daily Star that they are close to a solution to the impasse.

The hospital authorities have also been trying to clear the land to start a Tk 40-crore expansion project. A 400-bed hospital with 12 modern operation theatres would be constructed under the project financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

He already signed an agreement under which the employees will evict the outsiders by August 30," he said adding "If the government allot a piece of land, the crisis will immediately be resolved."

He declined to elaborate what sort of problems the slum was creating but said that it was a trouble spot.

"Leaving other matters aside I will say that the authorities failed to start the expansion.

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Slum holds up DMC classes

By Asiuzzaman and Ripon Beg

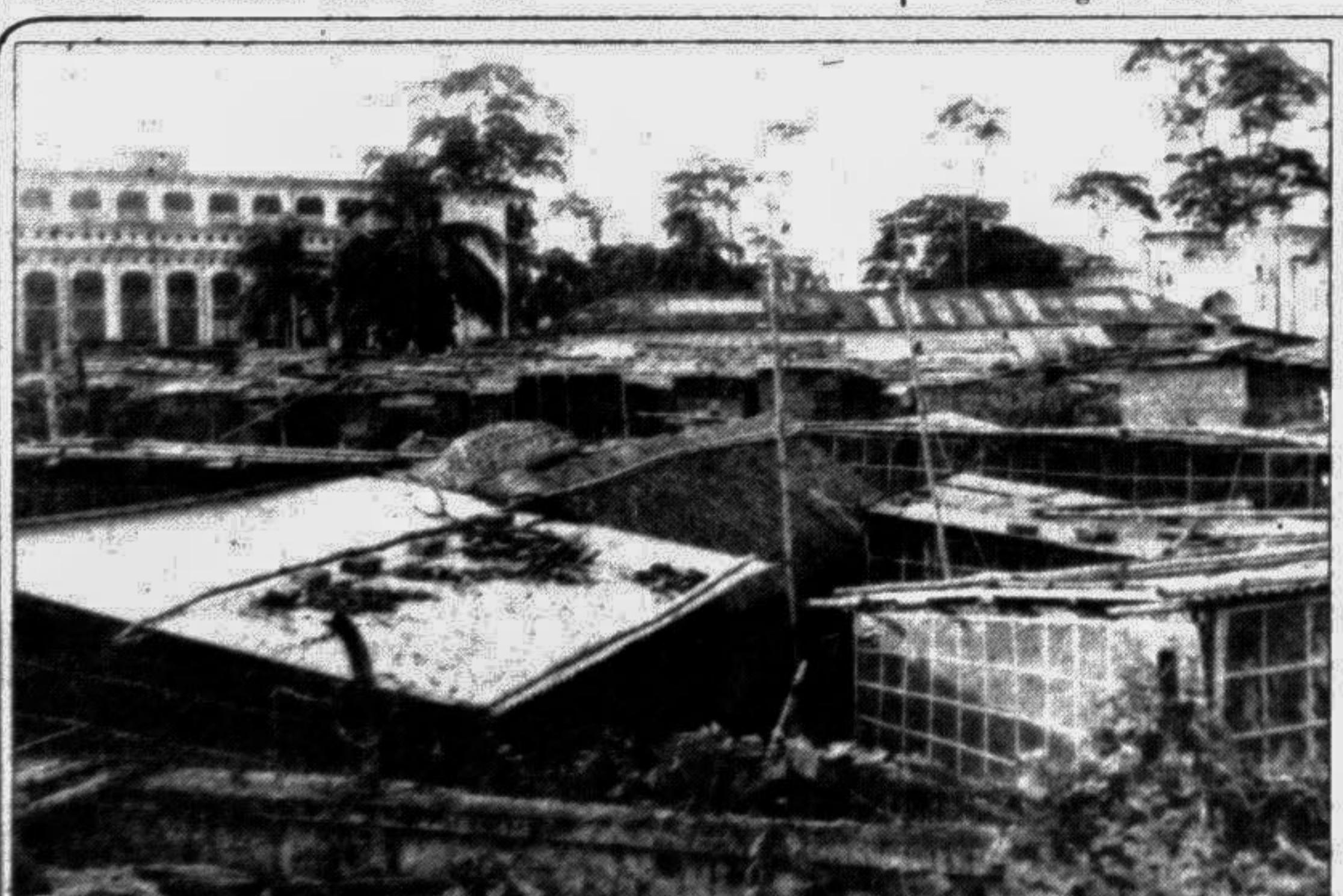
Classes of the Dhaka Medical College have remained suspended for nearly one and a half month despite strenuous efforts by the authorities to resolve the crisis over the eviction of occupants of an unauthorised slum within the college area.

Some 1,000 students have been boycotting their classes and have kept the departments under lock and key since June 26 demanding removal of the slum which they claim is a sanctuary for miscreants.

The students' agitation gained momentum following clashes with a group of truck drivers and workers of the areas. The truckers were allegedly backed by some residents of the slums, students claimed.

The clash was sparked by the death of a DMC student under the wheels of a truck in

the atmosphere of both the college as well as the country's biggest hospital. Star photo



A partial view of the unauthorized slum near the Dhaka Medical College which has been suspended for nearly one and a half month despite strenuous efforts by the authorities to resolve the crisis over the eviction of occupants of an unauthorised slum within the college area.

From Our Correspondent

DHAMRAI, Aug 5: At least 3