Delhi offers talks with Kashmiri militants

NEW DELHI. Aug 8: The government offered today to open talks with separatist groups in Kashmir in its attempt to hold elections there next year, reports AP.

The administration of Jammu-Kashmir state is controlled by the federal government in New L'elhi since the elected government of India's only Muslim majority state was booted out in 1989, two years after it came to power.

Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao today met with cabinet ministers and state administration officials. He asked them to meet with leaders of the pro-independence Jammu-Kashmir Libera tion Front and the All-Party Hurrivat Conference, an umbrella organisation of 32 separatist groups. Press Trust of India news agency reported.

Rao's directive came two days after security forces dismantled bunkers around the Kashmir's holiest Hazratbal Mosque, a demand voiced, by the separatists since October.

Meanwhile, AFP reports: At least 21 Muslim rebels, in-Afghan, were presiding. among 26 people killed overnight in the troubled state of Kashmir as troops launched a crackdown ahead of a Hindu Srinagar today

Move for DU normalcy

From Page 1 Col 5 an agreement between the tending groups to help restore a congenial atmosphere on the campus. The VC may continue his dialogue with the student leaders today. He is likely to sit with the DU Teachers Association (DUTA) leaders and officials concerned separately following his talks with

the student leaders. Meanwhile, no classes were held at the Dhaka University in the first three days of this week because the teachers and students separately observed strikes to protest the terrorist activities on the campus Thursday last.

The DUTA yesterday urged the government and the university authorities to take appropriate action against the 'terrorists' and ensure security of the campus residents.

The association, at an emergency meeting of its executive committee said that a large number of armed terrorists from outside regrouped on the campus in last few days and they were moving before police brandishing firearms.

The meeting said that neither the government nor the university authorities took any action to defuse tension on the campus although press reports termed the campus situation volatile and apprehended further clashes.

ment and the university au-

thorities would have to shouluntoward incident on the cam-

DUTA President Prof Mohammad Shahadat Ali presided

It urged the authorities to take necessary steps to ensure safety of DUTA General Secretary and Chairman of the Journalism department Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique in view

of the campus told this correspondent that several rounds of gunshot were heard on the campus late Sunday night.

different areas of the campus yesterday. Besides, detectives were watching the campus situation, sources said. In a separate incident, po-

lice chased a procession of the Chhatra Oikya Parishad near the Bangla Academy at about 11.45 yesterday and picked up two of its activists. They were, however, released later.

The parishad brought out the procession from the TSC demanding release of Myanmar opposition leader Su Kyi.

Working Committee (ALCWC) will meet today at 29 Minto Road at 5 pm. Party chief Sheikh Hasina will preside over the meeting,

Israel-Jordan road link

From Page 1 Col 4

Actually, Jordan and Israel have been in de-facto peace since the 1967 war, when Israel drove Jordanian troops out of east Jerusalem and took control of the West Bank.

the crossing connects the sunkissed resorts of Aqaba and Eilat, said this has been a place of longing, where Israelis and Jordanians could stand on the beaches and see each other, but not know each other.

King Hussein of Jordan said he hoped it would produce peace between Syria and Israel, as well.

"You know President Assad feels the need to move ahead It is our hope we will see progress on all fronts," Hussein said referring to Syrian President Hafez Assad.

Christopher said today that *Israel and Syria still 'have a great distance to go' to make

He said his meetings this week with Rabin and Assad 'have begun to lay the ground-

work for progress towards peace. In a sobering note, though, Hassan, speaking in Arab and

English, said the border crossing is still being negotiated. Jordan, like the other Arabs, is demanding territory from Israel and is likely to get

There was a huge sense of euphoria on the Israeli side, with virtually the entire government present and flags from both countries raised in the hot desert air.

Jordanians were more subdued. King Hussein did not attend, although he was to host a lunch for Rabin and four other Israeli leaders afterward. The country also did not raise Israeli flags. Jordanian opposition gro-

ups, including Islamic funda-

hideouts after Musl'im rebels reiterated their vow to block an annual Hindu pilgrimage to a holy cave in the Himalayan

Thousands of Hindus travel to the Amarnath Cave, located 4.645 metres above sea level to offer prayers at what they believe is the abode of Shiva. the God of Destruction.

The high death toll followed

stepped up raids on separatist

Dissolution of Pabna chamber demanded

PABNA. Aug 8: Several hundred people took to the street here today demanding dissolution of the existing committee of Pabna Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), reports UNB.

The Babasayee Oikya Parishad, an organisation of the local traders opposing the PCCI, organised the procession. It held a brief rally at Indirapatti in the town with its general secretary Kafi Sarkar

Speakers at the rally alleged irregularities in the formation of the PCCI committee and criticised it for disallowing pilgrimage, police said in membership to many traders of the town.

> der the responsibility of any pus as the university classes would resume today.

over the meeting, said a press release.

Meanwhile, some residents

Police were seen patrolling

It warned that the govern-

strate in the search for peace."

process, arguing Jordan was But Christopher, noting that

in a bus, waving to the dispersing crowd.

> fore it signs a final treaty. Military and construction workers worked day and night over the past days, blowing up mine fields, tearing down barbed-wire fences and building roads to create the crossing just about 3 kilometers

Another barrier between Israel and Jordan came down Sunday when President Ezer Weizman inaugurated direct phone links by calling Hussein

Palestinians have been disturbed by the Jordan-Israel rapprochement, especially that Jordan's control over the holy sites in Jerusalem was reaffirmed during the Washington

buffed in attempts to start talks on Jerusalem immediately. They are due to start within two years, along with other final status talks like settlements.

Rabin and Arafat are to meet Wednesday at the Erez crossing between the self-rule area of Gaza and Israel to discuss the ongoing implementa-

Editor: Mahfuz Anam Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on



speaking in support of the demands and sympathising with the non-government primary school teachers who have been agitating in front of the Jatiya Press Club. -Star photo

Pry teachers

From Page 1 Col 6 government to meet their de-

mands immediately. Addressing the gathering of the teachers Hasina said the government had lost its right to stay in power as it had failed to fulfil the demands of the teachers and other profession-

Terming the primary school teachers as basic elements to eradicate illiteracy, she said if they were deprived of their rights, building of the educational infrastructure would not be possible.

Hasina accused the government of betraying the people, saying it had breached commitments made to the professionals and let loose terror throughout the country.

The government claims it has allocated the highest budget for the educational sector. but the reality does not reflect this, she told the demonstrators. "Otherwise, the primary teachers would not have taken to the streets with their several demands," she said.

"How the teachers can teach the students if their minimum needs are not met," said Hasina and urged the government to talk to the primary teachers for an immediate decision to solve their problems.

President of the teachers' association Major (Retd) Asaduzzaman said, several thousand teachers passed the third day yesterday of their sitin and were determined to continue it until the demands were met. He urged the government to meet their demands immediately to mitigate the sufferings of the teachers who have come from different parts of the country to realise their 'just' demands.

West Bengal govt to renovate Thakurbari

CALCUTTA, Aug 8: To revive the past glory of the house of the Tagores at Jorasanko, the focal point of the Bengal Renaissance, the West Bengal government has embarked on an ambitious Rs seven-crore project in coordination with the human resources development ministry, reports PTI.

Disclosing this at a press conference here today, the state's Higher Education Minister Prof Satyasadhan Chakraborty said that efforts would be made to turn the ancestral house of the Tagores. repléte with memorabilia of Rabindranath and his ancestors, into a centre of cultural excellence and renovate it to make it more attractive to both domestic and foreign tourists.

The project, for which the state government has earmarked Rs 70.97 lakh and the human resources development ministry Rs 58.22 lakh, will be completed in two phases, he

The renovation of the 210year-old Tagore house, popularly called "Thakurbari', will be entrusted with the archaeo logical survey of India and the Indian National Trust for Culture and Heritage (INTACH)

The state's Information and Cultural Affairs Minister Buddhadev Bhattacharjee said that the UNESCO, which suggested thorough renovation of the dilapidated building on the pattern of the Stratford-on-Avon to preserve the house of William Shakespeare, might be approached for future funding for the project.

BNP moves

From Page 1 Col 7

stand-off. Both the sides accused each other of lack of 'sincerity' to resolve the problem.

Meanwhile, as part of its mass campaign, the BNP will hold a public meeting at the Gulistan Square in the capital today. Organised by the city unit of the party, the meeting will be addressed by senior BNP leaders.

Similar meetings would be held in the districts and thanas, BNP leaders said.

Nirmul body to launch organisational drive

The Daily Star

By Staff Correspondent

The Ghatak Dalai Nirmul Jativa Samannaya Committee will launch a drive next month to restructure its existing committees across the country and extend its network.

It will organise railies, processions and demonstrations throughout the country in October to rally support against the killers, collaborators and 'war criminals' of 1971 and the communal-fatwabaz forces as well as to demand a ban on politics by the Jamaat-Shibir-Freedom Party axis.

The decisions were taken at a representatives' meeting of the Samannaya Committee at the Engineers' Institution auditorium in the city yesterday.

Chaired by Begum Sufia Kamal, the meeting was at tended by representatives from different parts of the country as well as from the

The meeting also adopted several resolutions condemning the attack on the Nirmul member-secretary Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury at the Dhaka University and the Chittagong killings of July 26 and demanded judicial inquiries into both incidents. It also condoled the death of Jahanara Imam and at the same time congratulated the new chief of the committee Sufia Kamal. Another resolution criticised the DU authorities for not allowing yester day's meeting at the TSC auditorium of the university.

The representatives, central leaders of the Samannaya Committee and some leaders , of political parties having representation in the committee including the Awami League general secretary Zillur Rahman, Abdur Razzak MP of the same party, Kazi Aref Ahmed of the JSD, Mohammad Afzal of the Ganatantri Party, Syed Hasan Imam, Ahad Choudhury and Prof Abdul Mannan Choudhury spoke at the meeting.

Zillur Rahman called for motivating the people against the fundamentalists. fatwabaz and religion peddlers who were exploiting the religious sentiments of the masses for political ends.

vived after secularism was

dropped from the Constitution by the post-75 government.

Justifying the AL's relations with the Jamaat in the Jatiya Sangsad, Zillur Rahman said there were some rules and regulations and compulsions in the practice of parliamentary democracy. "First declare that you won't enter Parliament if there is any member of the Jamaat before you criticise the AL," he said in an oblique reference to the Left parties.

Abdur Razzak, in his speech, alleged that there was no difference between Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and the Jamaat chief Golam Azam and added that they had a common political goal. He called upon the pro-Liberation people to launch agitation against both of

Razzak said the anti-Libe ration forces were now united and were attacking the freedom fighters taking advantage of their distinity.

However, he said, unity of the students against the 'razakars' and communal forces was a ray of hope for the pro-Liberation people and urged the students to consolidate their unity and involve the common people in their current agitation.

Kazi Aref Ahmed said the Nirmul Movement had helped to identify the 'killers and collaborators' and expose the atrocities committed by them in 1971 and now they should be involved in the struggle against the 'war criminals' and their cronies He urged the student bod-

ies, agitating against the communal forces, to make the women community aware of the activities of the so-called fatwabaz. Syed Hasan Imam called for

countering the propaganda of the Jamaat-Shibir axis and to expose their fascist character. Sufia Kamal said only unity

of the pro-Liberation forces could make the anti-fundamentalism campaign successful. She urged all concerned to carry forward the agitation with courage and determina-

"We want to be true Mus-He said these evil forces lims and wish to serve the were defeated in 1971 but re- country," she said and sought the mercy of Almighty Allah.

Bosnian Serbs admit

Scores of Muslims put in forced labour camp

SARAJEVO, Aug 8: Bosman Serbs have confirmed they rounded up scores of Muslim men and put them in a forced labour camp, an International Red Cross official said today, report AP, Reuter.

Lisa Jones, a Red Cross spokeswoman, said a list of 111 Muslims given to her agency last week was the first Serb confirmation that a large group of Muslim men were taken to a camp in northeast Bosnia over the past few

The move to the camp at Lopare was part of a recent ethnic cleansing campaign in which about 300 Muslim women, children and elderly men have been forced from the northeast city of Bijeljina, Jones said.

Ethnic Serbs in Bosnia have

been accused of conducting the most widespread "ethnic cleansing campaign of the war Hundreds of thousands of people, mostly. Slavic Muslims, have been forced from their homes in the 70 per cent of Bosnia now controlled by Serbs.

The Serbs, despite facing total isolation after Serbia cut all ties, showed no sign they were ready to retreat from their rejection of the latest peace plan for the republic. A Bosnian Serb leader demanded that any territorial

division of Bosnia leave Serbs

in control of 64 per cent of the

republic. An international

peace plan would leave them

with 49 per cent of Bosnia The rest would go to a Muslim-Croat federation.

The new territorial demand was likely to be immediately rejected by the international community, which had insisted the plan be accepted as is. Serbian leaders in Belgrade also are pressuring the Bosnian Serbs to accept the plan.

Meanwhile the commander of peacekeepers in Bosnia. Lt Gen Sir Michael Rose, was seeking to meet with Bosnian Serb commander Gen Ratko Mladic to discuss a UN proposal to demilitarize the Sarajevo area.

Under the still-vague plan both sides would withdraw their troops from around the

Another report said, the OIC has expressed its concern that the five-nation contact group that authored the peace plan for Bosnia had not given out a clear cut plan of 'rigorous action' it had agreed to take against the Serbs if they rejected the plan. "The five-nation contact

group, while indicating its readiness to undertake action through the resolutions in the Security Council, had not indicated a clear plan of action to deal with the Serbian side in the light of possible disincentives announced earlier" said the declaration issued at the end of ministerial meeting of OIC contact group of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Geneva.

US wants India to pledge never to build N-bomb

NEW DELHI. Aug 8: The United States wants India to pledge never to build a nuclear bomb but realises in needs a strong defence to keep peace in the "troubled" Asian region, Washington's new envoy to New Delhi said today, reports

In his first public address since taking office last week. US Ambassador Frank Wisner also said Washington would continue pushing India and Pakistan to resume negotiations to settle a longstanding dispute over the Kashmir re-

"The United States proceeds from an understanding that India requires a strong national defence." Wisner told the Confederation of Indian Industry, an industry trade association.

"You live in a region that

will not cease to be troubled for many years to come. There's no Question that a strong national defence effort must be maintained." Wisner, who filled a post that to India's frustration had remained vacant since March

1993, said Washington wanted

the international nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to be extended to India when it is renegotiated next year. "We will continue our efforts to find ways with you to slow the forward momentum in the creation and deploy

ment of weapons of mass de-

struction," he said.

Islamic group opposes blasphemy law

The Bangladesh Islamic Revolutionary Movement (BIRM), a pro-Awami League organisation, yesterday strongly opposed the demand for enacting a blasphemy law by what it called anti-liberation elements, reports UNB.

Addressing a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club, BIRM Secretary General Maulana Ziaul Hasan said the anti-liberation forces, led by Jamaat leader Golam Azam and Khatib of Baitul Mukarram Mosque Obaidul Haq, were demanding blasphemy law to take revenge of their defeat in the Liberation War of 1971. *He also demanded the re-

moval of Obaidul Haq from the

post of Khatib, "The post

should not be used by the anti-

liberation forces for political purpose as members of all political parties offer prayers behind him," he said. The BIRM leader said no religious minded people could tolerate the speeches of the Khatib and the Peer of Charmonai delivered at the Manik Mia Avenue rally as

and independence of the country. The organisation demanded scrapping of the Indemnity Ordinance that blocked the trial of the killers of Sheikh Mujib and announcement of August 15 as the "National

those were contrary to Islam

Black Day. Moulana Ziaul Hasan said some anti-liberation elements had killed Sheikh Mujib and his family members on August 15, 1975, and promulgated Indemnity Ordinance on September 27 to protect the

Drought

From Page 1 Col 4 anonymity. "The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that the irrigation pumps had to be activated for transplantation of the seedlings."

Agriculture experts now feel that this would raise the cost of production causing either an increase in next year's rice price or a loss to the farmers if prices remains dull. "How much has been planted is not as important as how much could be sustained in the next few weeks," said another official.

Officials have identified 21 northern districts as currently experiencing a drought-like situation.

According to sources, a proposal for the rehabilitation of the drought stricken farmers is now under consideration of the Agriculture Ministry Under this programme, farmers hit by the dry spell may be provided assistance. Official confirmation of the pro-

gramme could not be had. Meanwhile, the Agriculture Extension Department has taken some steps to help the farmers. It is advising the farmers to collect whatever rainwater is available by raising the boundaries of the crop lands. Other techniques for retaining the moisture of the land are also being applied.

Agriculturists are specially worried about the current dry spell because this may hit the major rice producing season the antan season. The country's projected aman production for 1993-94 is 94.90 lakh tonnes against the total production of 197 20 lakh tonnes. "If the last-minute monsoon rain comes, we might yet be able to overcome the situation," said Dr Sharafat Hossain Khan. Member (Crops) of the BARC.

The Midnight File

Ban on carrying arms in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD, Aug 8: Pakistan today banned private citizens from carrying arms in Islamabad - including politicians and religious leaders who are often accompanted by gun-toting bodyguards. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto ordered the ban in the capital in a crackdown on violence. And Information and Broadcasting Minister Khalid Ahmad Kharal told a news conference after a cabinet meeting it could be imposed in other towns, reports Reuter.

Delhi extends president's rule in Kashmir

NEW DELHI, Aug 8: The union cabinet today approved the introduction of a resolution in parliament for extension of president's rule in Jammu and Kashmir by six more months from September 3. official sources said, reports PTI.

Contaminated water

From Page 1 Col 2 Hye, said that local people had brought out a procession and lodged a complaint with the nearby supply office of the WASA nearly three weeks ago.

An elderly Motaleb Ali Khan

said that children clashed over collecting drinking water from the roadside taps on Wednesday. A number of men, women and children gathered on dif-

ferent lanes of Baddanagar, Nilambar Shah Lane and Enavetgani areas to narrate their tales of suffering. iceberg; residents of a vast

This is only the tip of the area in the older part of the city have been facing the simiproblem," banker

Proglegs

From Rage 1 Col 7 export the stock was fixed on

10 November the same year. After the expiry of this final deadline, six companies reported that 5,63,740 pounds of their frogleg stocks still remained unsold. Of this stock, 35,270 pounds were in the process of being exported to the USA by one company and the rest were under the care of the Customs Depart-A proposal from the Co-

nimerce Ministry, supported by relevant agencies of the government, to allow export of the remaining stock of the froglegs was placed before a Cabinet meeting held recently. But the cabinet rejected the proposal and decided that the Customs Department should take immediate steps to destroy the whole stock of froglegs.

Explaining the reasons for not allowing such export, a well-placed source in the government said, that the quality of froglegs, stocked for years, might have suffered consider-

"If any question about the quality is raised by the importers, it will affect our export trade adversely." he added.

Observers concerned expressed doubt whether the present stock is actually a part of the original stock of 24 lakh pounds estimated in January 1990.

"It could be that this stock has been built up again by killing frogs illegally after the expiry of the last deadline,

they said. Experts believe that poth the killing of frogs and export of froglegs should remain banned totally for the sake of maintaining the ecological balance.

Saifur

From Page 1 Col 8 He also appreciated the different development projects with particular reference to the rural electrification pro-

grammes. The finance minister sought more US assistance for expediting the rural electrification programme in the country. He pleaded for US help to procure hardwares like electric cables and transformers for use in the power sector.

During the hour long discussion, the finance minister also outlined various aspects of the ongoing reform process and said with best of price stabilisation, all micro-level indicators were favourable in the country. What is needed now is a congenial atmosphere for a faster pace of reforms, he

Referring to the critics of the reform programmes, the finance minister said while under taking reforms in the economic and commercial sec tors, the government was try ing its best to protect community interest against that of the vested quarters.

The US ambassador in Bangladesh, David N Merrill, was present during the meet-

3 Pakistanis From Page | Col 8

The arrested passengers are Kamruddin, Delwar Hossain and Abdur Rahman The Customs authorities have lodged separate cases.

Last Friday another consignment of contraband medicine valued at Tk 28 lakh was seized at ZIA from another incoming flight from Dubai

Shujauddin said. WASA officials were not immediately available for comment on the allegation of the Baddanagar residents Water supply lines were installed in the area more than two decades ago. No rentovation and repair work was, done

during the period, he alleged. According to official estimates, the city of seven million people need daily an estimated 140 crore litres of water, half of which is now supplied by the WASA from its 179 deep tubewells and a 120-year-old surface water treatment plant located at Chandni Ghat in the Lalbagh area. The plant, which is now under a BMRE programme, supplies 40 lakh litres of water, mainly for the residents of the older part of

the city. The WASA has some 1,294 kilometres of supply lines to serve its consumers, most of which are very old. Water lines and sewerage lines in many places go side by side and often there are leakages in the badly corroded galvanised iron pipes. Sometimes these lines are damaged when other agencies responsible for gas supply or telephone links carry out their expansion plans.

The WASA has 1.38 lakh connections for its bonafide clients. No one knows the number of illegal connections or those who have more than one supply line, sources said. According to a recent report, nearly 45 per cent of the

is wasted in different ways, which the authorities admit is a huge system loss. In addition to the losses due to leaking pipes and stolen lines or connections, WASA's continuously mounting losses are compounded by the cor-

total supply of water in the city

ruption among many of its employees who, in collusion with the consumers, often manipulate the bills. 304 more Rohingyas

go home COX'S BAZAR, Aug 8: Another batch of 304 Rohingya refugees of 64 families volun-Parily went back to their homes in Myanmar bringing the total number of repatriated

persons to 60.295. HC refers case

From Page 1 Col 5 The BBC was sued for telecasting a news programme on Taslima on June 30; while the Home Ministry made hardly any attempt to arrest the author and the Ministry of information allowed the BBC's programme to be aired

Amena Khatun alleged. Amena said she had filed the case because the plaintiffs failed to give any satisfactory

through Bangladesh Television,

answer to her legal notice. BBC sources in Dhaka said they had duly replied to the legal notice.

The complainant had earlier sent a legal notice to the BBC for televising the interview with Taslima Nasreen, which the Swadesh Party leader felt had hurt the religious sentiments of the Muslims, including herself. The petition was moved by

Advocate A B M Shamsud Doulah

One arrested From Page 1 Col 5

Acting on a tip off, a deteclive branch team, led by Assistant Commissioner Fazlul Karim, raided a house in Badda and arrested the acletised.

Police say that after hijacking a car from Motifheel, Zakir along with some other miscreants went to Gulshan killed the constable and seized his rifle.

hijacking and murder following the confession of the main accused Alam who was arrested immediately after the killing. Police also recovered the seized rifle after Alam's confession in 1989. Zakir fled to India immedi ately after a warrant of arrest

Police came to know about

Zakir's involvement in the car

was issued against him. He returned to Dhaka recently. According to police, Zakir also wanted for several

other cases.

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of threat by the terrorists.

ALCWC meets today The Awami League Central

mentalists, handed the gov-

ernment a petition Sunday

saying it opposed the peace

giving up land. Jordan used to rule east Jerusalem and the east bank. After the speeches, the wounded from the wars or their relatives from both sides shook hands and exchanged gifts. And at the end of the ceremony, Rabin Hassan and Christopher rode off together

Outstanding issues between the two sides include a disputed border line and water rights. Jordan also may wait for negotiations with Syria, stuck over / control of the Golan Heights, to be completed be-

north of the Red Sea ports."

and inviting him to Jerusalem.

Leader Yasser Arafat was re-

tion of their treaty.