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NEWS BRIEFS

Gas in Kishoreganj

Kishoreganj will be getting gas supply from tomorrow under the project of Brahmaputra Basin Gas Transmission and Distribution. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will inaugurate the supply, reports UNB.

Cabinet meeting

The weekly cabinet meeting was held yesterday at Bangabhaban with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair. Ministers, State Ministers-in-charge of different ministries attended the meeting. Cabinet Secretary, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and Secretaries of the ministries concerned and divisions were present, reports UNB.

RMC hostels open

RAJSHAHI Aug 22: The residential hostels of the Rajshahi Medical College (RMC) will be opened for the examinations of professional MBBS examinations tomorrow morning. The decision was taken in the academic council meeting held today, reports BSS.

279 Rohingyas go

COX'S BAZAR Aug 22: Another batch of 279 Rohingyas refugees went back to their homes in Myanmar bringing the total number of repatriated persons to 62,631. Official sources told BSS here tonight that local UNHCR and Bangladesh officials engaged in repatriation process saw the refugees off.

Three missing

From Our Correspondent COX'S BAZAR Aug 22: Three people were reported missing after a passenger loaded boat had capsized in the Maheshkhali channel here today. The capsized occurred at about 12:30 pm today when the Satlapur-bound boat from Maheshkhali was caught in a storm. Other passengers swam ashore, according to the local district officials.

The Daily Star

Govt-Opposition talks likely soon

By Nurul Kabir and Asiuzzaman

The ruling party and the mainstream Opposition in Parliament are likely to discuss ways of resolving the present political deadlock across the table shortly.

The Opposition's demand for a caretaker administration to hold the next general elections and the ruling party's refusal to entertain such an idea has led to an impasse in the country's political arena with the opposition parties boycotting Parliament since March last.

With only a week left for the start of the 16th session of the country's fifth Parliament, scheduled for the 30th of this month, the ruling party is

learnt to be planning to propose a concrete agenda for a dialogue between the treasury and Opposition bench leaders. That agenda would include the ruling BNP's willingness to discuss both the caretaker government issue as well as the subject of strengthening the Election Commission, a source close to the Deputy Leader of Parliament Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury told The Daily Star.

Prof Chowdhury is a member of the three-man body authorised by the BNP Standing Committee to start negotiations with the boycotting Opposition.

Parliament boycott

Hearing of writ stayed till Aug 25

The hearing of the writ petition against the Opposition's boycott of Parliament was stayed till August 25 by Justice A T M Afzal of the Appellate Division in his chamber yesterday, reports BSS.

The provisional application for leave to appeal against the judgement of the High Court division and the stay petition filed by Moudud Ahmed will come up for hearing before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court on August 25.

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Flood situation improving

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Aug 22: The overall flood situation in Chapainawabganj and Rajshahi districts slightly improved with the fall of the water levels of the Mahananda and Padma rivers, officials here said today, reports UNB.

But the Padma at Shabganj and Mahananda in the town were still flowing 192 cm and 28 cm above their respective danger marks. The two rivers registered fall in their water levels by 11 cm and 5 cm respectively today.

Two children of Chapainawabganj poura area drowned in flood water in last two days

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Jordan, PLO agree to set up 3 joint bodies

AMMAN, Aug 21: Jordan and the PLO agreed here today to set up three committees to tackle joint problems and issues arising from the Middle East peace process, officials from both sides said, reports AFP.

A 'ministerial' delegation from the Palestinian self-rule authority headed by information minister Yasser Abed Rabbo met with a Jordanian team led by Prime Minister Abdel Salam Majali.

The Palestinian team arrived today for a visit lasting several days. They were to dis-

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Milosevic rejects UN appeals

BELGRADE, Aug 22: President Slobodan Milosevic today rejected UN appeals to place observers on the Serbian-Bosnian border as a way to check up on Belgrade's pledge to punish the Bosnian Serbs for rejecting a peace plan, reports AFP.

Yasushi Akashi, the top UN envoy to the former Yugoslavia, said after meeting with Milosevic that the Serbian leader reiterated his stance that placing observers on the border would be hard for Serbians to swallow and smack of violating their national sovereignty.

Akashi refused to say what the United Nations next move would be.

Serbia announced on August 4 that it was closing its border with the Drina River, which separates Serbia and Bosnia, after Bosnian Serbs rejected for a third time the latest international peace plan for Bosnia.

Serbia had been a key source of support for the Bosnian Serbs.

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JP never worked as stooge of any quarters : Mizan

The Jatiya Party is governed by the ideal of Bangladeshi nationalism. It has never worked as a stooge or a lackey of any quarters, reports UNB.

The acting Chairman of the Jatiya Party, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury made this observation yesterday in a sharp rebuttal of the rejoinder issued by the Jatiya Party (Nationalist) alleging that the JP (Mizan) was involved in activities tantamount to talismans to the Awami League.

He further stated that having failed to secure sympathy and kindness of the JP (Mizan), the so-called Jatiya Party (Nationalist) has started imputing baseless allegation against the former.

With a note of sarcasm in

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Kazi Zafar's denial

By Staff Correspondent Jatiya Party president member Kazi Zafar Ahmed, MP, has denied that the party was divided over possible strategies to free Ershad.

In a press release yesterday he said his attention had been drawn to a report saying the JP is divided on the question of party chief H M Ershad's release from jail on parole and that some negotiations are going on with the BNP government on this question.

He termed the report unfounded and said that there

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Members of the public and law enforcing agencies seen yesterday retrieving bodies of the victims of Saturday's launch disaster in Chandpur.

— Star photo

Miladunnabi observed

Holy Eid-e-Miladunnabi was observed all over the country Sunday seeking divine blessings for the peace, progress and prosperity of Bangladesh as well as of the Muslim Ummah, reports UNB.

The observance of the birth and death anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (SM) was marked by *milad mahfil*, Quran Khawan, discussions and processions organised by various religious, social and cultural organisations.

A *milad mahfil* was held at the Bangabhaban after Asr prayers Sunday.

Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali, Deputy Leader of the House Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, ministers, political leaders, judges of the Supreme Court, chiefs of the three services, senior officials, journalists and elite of the city attended it.

DC DB to probe death of young man in custody

By Staff Correspondent Deputy Commissioner (DC) of the city Detective Branch (DB) has been assigned to probe the mysterious death of one Abdul Khaleque who died in police custody Saturday.

Thirty-year old Khaleque was declared dead by doctors at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) Saturday while under the custody of Tejgaon police.

Tejgaon police had said Saturday that Khaleque, wanted in connection with a number of cases, died of excessive consumption of alcohol.

But the victim's relatives accused the police of beating Khaleque to death. They alleged that torture by the police had caused Khaleque's death.

Abdus Sabih, father of the

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JU Syndicate for probe into death of Quamrul

By Staff Correspondent

The Jahangirnagar University Syndicate at an emergency meeting yesterday urged the government for a probe into the death of Quamrul Islam and demanded trial of the persons responsible for the incident.

Chaired by Vice-Chancellor Professor Amirul Islam Chowdhury, the syndicate also expressed its deep concern over the deteriorating campus situation and called for cooperation from all concerned to restore a congenial atmosphere on the campus.

Meanwhile, the Savar police had turned its General Diary (GD), lodged following the death of Quamrul Islam, into a murder-case, a police source told The Daily Star last night.

Twelve bodies of launch capsized victims found

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Aug 22: Twelve bodies were recovered in the last two days from the river Meghna, downstream of the site where a launch — MV Dinar-2 — capsized with an estimated 300 passengers.

Hundreds of relatives of the victims were still frantically searching for the bodies, believed to have been trapped inside the vessel.

Some 200 passengers were drowned when the

PM orders probe into cause of launch capsized

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Sunday instructed the Shipping Ministry to make an inquiry into the cause of Saturday's launch capsizing in the 200-feet-deep river bed.

The search was put off at about 2:15 pm today because of severe current and whirlpool.

IWTA rescue vessel Amir Hamza arrived here at 9:00 am today from Narayanganj to start the salvage, only when the vessel in traced.

BNS Shah Jalal of the Navy, which is capable of carrying

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BRITISH AIRWAYS

is pleased to announce the appointment of

Surma Air Services Private Limited
Chouhatta, Tel: 5333/5353

as the General Sales Agent for Sylhet area

and

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Hotel Agrabad Arcade, Tel 500111

as the General Sales Agent for Chittagong area

with effect from 22nd August 1994.

Ershad sent specifications of boats to ministry, court told

the Relief Ministry in the previous month.

Shahjahan Amin identified two small notes from Ershad addressed to the Relief Secretary (written in June and July 1989) asking him to accept the boats as per specification. During deposition Amin said that the price of a 51-foot long boat, as quoted by the company Kinsho Mataichi, was almost half the price quoted by Marubeni Corporation. Incl-

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