

Inside Today

Article

Political Stale-mate Rocking the Democratic Boat!

by Abdul Bayes
Page 4

International

Pakistan to raise
Kashmir issue at
UNGA session in Sept

Malaysian govt
declares Al Arqam a
danger to public order
Page 5

Business

Country needs \$100b to
meet electricity
demands by 2010,
Energy Minister tells
IDB president
Page 6

Weekend Magazine

Rereading Nazrul's
Vidroh: The Politics of
Its Language; National
Consciousness in
Nazrul's Poetry and
Song; My Patches of
Disquiet; Francois
Fights Back, But
Franglais Lives on; The
Day Paris Fell and
Hemingway Stole a
Wife; Meaningful
Lyricism in Mezzotint;
Boatman of the River
Padma: Almost as
Memorable as the
Novel itself
Pages 9, 10 & 11

Rising Stars

Culture and Heritage;
Lend Me an Ear;
Windows; Social
Problems
Page 8

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Dhaka Could be Green,
Once Again
Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

Hasina goes to Chandpur tomorrow

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina will go to Chandpur tomorrow to visit the spot of the launch disaster and meet the members of the victims' families, reports UNB.

Razzak, Delwar visit ailing Rouf MP

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali accompanied by Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain last night visited ailing Abdul Rouf, the BNP MP from Kushtia, now under treatment at the Suhrawardy Hospital. They stayed for sometime with him and enquired about his health, reports BSS.

ROK team arrives

A four-member Korean youth volunteers team arrived Dhaka yesterday evening from Seoul, a Korean embassy press release said, reports BSS.

Meet on Padma bridge

MEHERPUR, Aug 26: Speakers at a discussion meeting here today demanded the construction of a bridge over the Padma river to link greater Khulna and Barisal with Dhaka. The meeting decided to form action committees in Khulna and Barisal divisions to realise the demand, reports UNB.

2nd Buriganga Bridge construction begins

KERANIGANJ, Aug 26: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today inaugurated the construction work of the second Buriganga Bridge on the southern side of the river at Zinzira, reports UNB.

Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman had laid the foundation of the bridge on February 6 in 1981 at Babu Bazar side in the capital.

On her way to Zinzira in the afternoon, the Prime Minister offered 'munajat' in front of the foundation stone seeking divine blessings for continued peace, progress and prosperity of the country.

The 304 metre long and 70.6 metre wide bridge with four lanes over the river Buriganga will connect the southern end of the capital city with three thanas — Keraniganj, Nawabganj and Dohar.

The bridge would not only save time but also reduce the risk of river crossing by boat of nearly four lakh people of a vast area on the other side of the river, who earn their livelihood working in the capital.

The entire funding of the Tk 133.5 crore project will be met from domestic resources utilising local expertise. The bridge is expected to be complete by February, 1998.

Addressing the inaugural function, the Prime Minister said it's a very happy day for the people of the area as their long-cherished dream of a bridge is soon to be fulfilled.

About financing of the bridge, Begum Zia said she was very glad that it has been arranged from local resources. "This is a success of the BNP," But, she added, the

Opposition sees such success of the BNP as failure because when in power they could not fulfil the aspirations of the people. "And while in the Opposition, they also have not been able to give anything to the people. They do not have any specific programme for the development of the country."

"The BNP believes in the politics of production, development and welfare of the people," Begum Zia said and listed the development programmes of her government which has gradually strengthened the national economy. "People have now realised the effectiveness of a nationalistic party."

The independence of the country, achieved at the cost of lot of blood, depends on

Khaleda urges Opposition to return to JS

KERANIGANJ (Dhaka), Aug 26: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today made an appeal to the Opposition to return to Parliament for carrying forward the on-going democratic process, reports UNB.

"Come, join the next session of Parliament and seek solution of the problems of the people and the country through discussion to advance the democratic process," she said in her appeal to the Opposition.

Prime Minister was addressing a huge gathering in the afternoon at Zinzira on the bank of the Buriganga across the city where she inaugurated the construction work of a second bridge over the river.

A number of ministers, state ministers, MPs and local leaders were present on the occasion.

Begum Zia, however, accused the Opposition of in-

Ctg oil & Semutang gas

Negotiations with two cos begin today

By Sharier Khan

Negotiations with two foreign companies begin today for exploration of oil in Chittagong region and development of the Semutang gas field, sources said.

The Cairn PLC of Scotland and the Holland Sea Search of the Netherlands — already permitted to explore oil and gas in the Bay of Bengal near Cox's Bazar-Sandwip region — had earlier jointly placed before the government a production-sharing contract (PSC) for exploration in Chittagong region.

Sources said that the companies might propose to the government to develop the Semutang gas field and supply the natural resources through the Chittagong-Bakhrabad gas line. This would help meet the growing gas demand in the

immediate future.

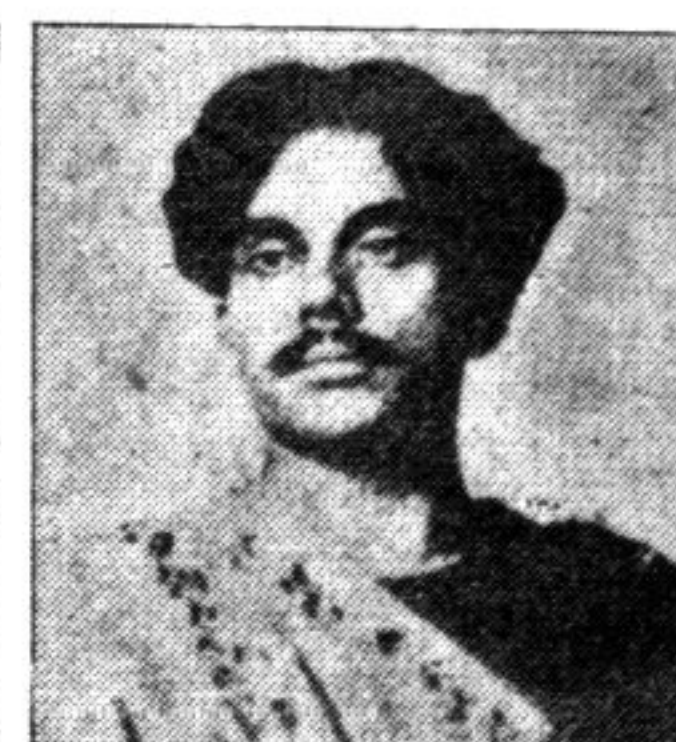
The Semutang gas field, located in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, has four wells, drilled a decade ago, but it had not been developed for commercial utilisation, the sources said.

It is estimated that the Semutang field has a reserve of nearly one trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

The negotiating teams would comprise officials of the Cairn and Holland Sea Search and those from the Petrobangla and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources.

The Cairn and Holland Sea Search would begin seismic survey in the Bay from November, the sources added.

Meanwhile, a US company — Occidental — with which the government initialled a con-



Nazrul's death anniversary today

By Staff Correspondent

The 18th anniversary of the death of national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam will be observed today throughout the country.

Various socio-cultural organisations have taken up elaborate programmes to pay tribute to the poet who is popularly known as the rebel poet.

The programmes include laying wreaths at the mazar of the poet inside the Dhaka University campus, milad mahfil, Quran khwani, discussion on the life and works of the poet, recitation of his poems, session of Nazrul songs and staging of plays written by the poet.

The Nazrul Institute will place wreaths at the mazar of the poet in the morning. In the evening a discussion meeting and cultural programme

See Page 12 Col 7

Seven more bodies found: Launch yet to be traced

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Aug 26: Seven more bodies were found in the river Meghna raising the number of the August 20 launch disaster victims recovered so far to 29.

The swollen bodies of two women and five men were found near the Puralan Bazar grain area, several hundred yards away from the spot.

Local authorities failed to identify the bloated bodies.

A six-day hunt of a combined salvage team failed to trace the sunken launch — MV Dinar — which capsized in swirling water with nearly 250 passengers on board.

Three navy teams, six BIWTA teams, fire service, river police and hundreds of volunteers have been taking part in the rescue operation.

Meanwhile, a four-member inquiry committee yesterday started an investigation into the launch disaster.

ALCWC discusses 'Dhaka siege' programme

The Awami League central working committee (ALCWC) yesterday began discussion on its planned 'Dhaka siege' on September 10 to press for election under a neutral caretaker government, reports UNB.

The meeting chaired by Sheikh Hasina was adjourned at 9 pm till 10.30 am today.

A party press release said the meeting discussed the ongoing agitation to realise the demand for the resignation of the BNP government and for a caretaker government to supervise next parliamentary polls.

The meeting condoled the death of Roushan Ali MP and other party leaders and workers who died recently.

It also expressed condolences for those who were killed in the Chandpur launch disaster.

Suranjit again poised to join Awami League

By Staff Correspondent

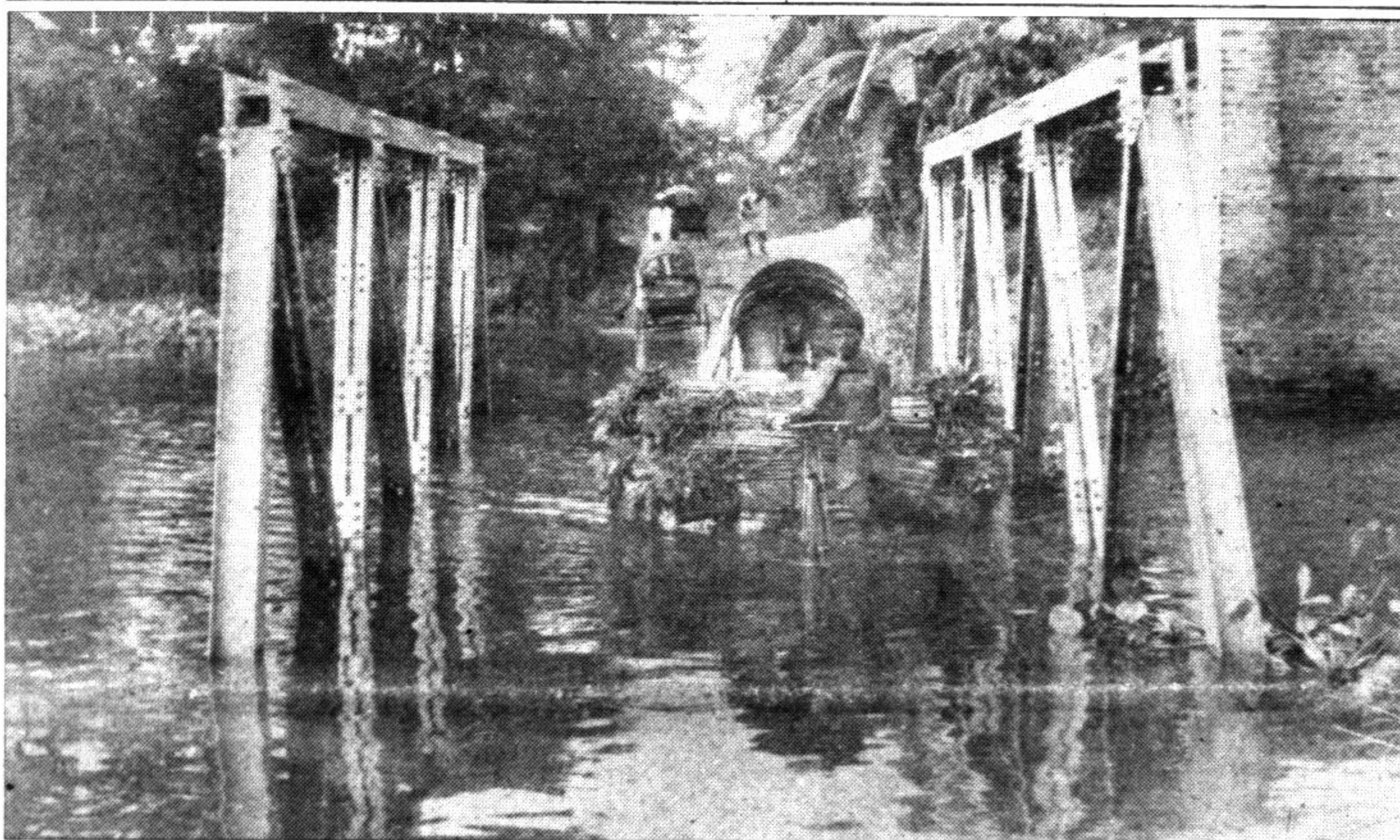
Suranjit Sengupta, the lone MP of the Ganatantri Party, is once again said to be all set to join the Awami League.

This became increasingly apparent following yesterday's meeting of the central committee of Sengupta's party where he reportedly told his colleagues that he was contemplating pitching his political future with the AL, which he considers a 'natural choice'.

When contacted over telephone last night Sengupta admitted having intimated his Ganatantri Party comrades yesterday of his intention to switch parties.

He however, added, 'I will have to hold more discussions,' declining to elaborate.

See Page 12 Col 8



Flood waters have submerged an iron bridge in Malipara village under Sonargaon thana in Narayanganj district.

— Star photo by Anisur Rahman

A caretaker govt by nature can't ensure fair polls: Saifur

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday decried the Opposition demand for a caretaker government saying that it was not an appropriate way to institutionalise democracy in the country, reports BSS.

Speaking at a seminar on Towards Good Governance in Bangladesh, organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM) at the BCS Administration Academy in the capital, the finance minister said a caretaker government by nature was a weak government and as such it could not ensure free and fair elections.

The answer to the issue as how to transfer power and form the future governments, lies in strengthening of the Election Commission, the finance minister said.

He said because of its weak nature, a caretaker government could not check money power in the electoral process nor it could prevent post election horse trading.

The finance minister said that constitution of parliament form of government was one of the good things the people had achieved. But he expressed his anguish over the political situation about how to transfer power and hold future elections.

He said political uncertainty neutralises the good works of the present government for more investment and expansion of trade and commerce.

The finance minister suggested that the politicians should engaged themselves in dialogue and discussions among themselves to overcome the current impasse.

The Minister of State for Planning Dr Abdul Mayeen Khan also spoke on the occasion.

Presided over by the Director General of the BCS (Administration) Academy Fazle Hasan Yusuf, the seminar was addressed by the chairman of Board of Investment (BOI) Mokammel Huq and convenor

of BIAM Shahidul Alam.

He said since politics was aimed at delivering services to the people, the politicians must rise above their self-seeking interests to engage themselves in the service of the people and building the country on a sound footing.

About the theme of the seminar, the finance minister said without good policies and good administration, the concept of good governance would remain a far cry.

He said mission-driven administration with accountability and transparency, rule of law and harmonious judiciary process were the important factors to ensure good governance in any society.

He said non-transparency meant corruption and decried it as a lethal weapon endangering our society and disrupting the democratic process as well as the free market economy.

About the long and cumbersome bureaucratic and judicial process, he said

See Page 12 Col 7

Army major suspected of killing wife

By Staff Correspondent

Abdul Halim, a serving major in the Bangladesh Army, has been accused of murdering his wife.

Halim's wife Rasheda Begum, 35, died at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) Monday last of severe head injuries. Initially, it was reported that she was attacked by some intruders who broke into their Shaheed Mainul Road residence inside the Cantonment early Monday morning. She was rushed to the CMH in critical condition and later expired.

Halim, who had lodged a case with the Cantonment police saying that the robbers had attacked Rasheda with an iron rod after she raised an alarm, is now suspected of having killed his wife.

Officer-in-charge of Cantonment Thana Shahidullah Khan, who took up the investigation, soon discovered certain clues which pointed the finger

See Page 12 Col 7

BJP tries to enforce strike in Bombay



Activists of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) flee baton-wielding police yesterday in the Andheri suburb of Bombay after the youths stoned buses during a one-day general strike called by the BJP to protest the assassination of its Bombay leader Ramdas Nayak Thursday.

— AFP photo

BOMBAY, Aug 26: Hindus stoned buses and trains today to enforce a general strike in Bombay protesting the killing of a Hindu nationalist politician and 52 injuries were reported, reports AP.

The Bharatiya Janata Party, the largest opposition group in India's Parliament, joined Shiv Sena, the Bombay-based Hindu radical group, to announce and enforce the strike.

Traffic in Bombay, India's busy financial centre, was much lighter than normal during the morning and evening rush hours.

Fifty-one buses were damaged by Hindus throwing stones, the United News of India news agency reported.

Other mobs hit many trains with stones and stopped service on some lines by lying on the tracks and pulling down electric railroad signs. Press Trust of India news agency said.

Police said 32 people were arrested for attacking government buses.

See Page 12 Col 4

Sex, violence in Indian movies to be curbed

NEW DELHI, Aug 26: India's censors, cracking down on increasing sex and violence in movies, have banned pelvic gyrations, double entendres, fights with chains and stabbings in films, the government announced, reports Reuters.

Information and Broadcasting Minister K P Singh Deo spelt out the new censorship rules in parliament on Thursday after government-appointed censors reported frequent breaches of censorship guidelines in the world's biggest movie industry.

Indian films must be approved by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) before being publicly screened. Singh Deo told parliament in a statement on Thursday the CBFC objected to scenes of violence, particularly those involving places of worship, hospitals or orphanages.

Violent scenes involving belts, chains or animals were also considered unpalatable, he said.

Singh Deo added that the board also considers vulgar: "Selectively exposing women's anatomy such as breasts, cleavage, thighs, navel in song and dance numbers, through suggestive and flimsy dresses, movements, and zooming particularly in close shots."

The government has been facing protests over increased levels of sex and violence in films. It recently asked the board to redefine its definition of vulgarity. Last month film stars protested against the move.

India's censors have yet to clear a critically-acclaimed movie, *Bandit Queen*, by Shekhar Kapur. The film, which has already been screened abroad, depicts violence and rape scenes.

Unlike most Indian movies, however, *Bandit Queen* is not punctuated by songs and dances, where sexuality and suggestiveness are common.

A recent film song title

See Page 12 Col 5

Pak nuclear threat

India vows proper response

NEW DELHI, Aug 26: India will consider deployment of 'conventional or non-conventional weapons' on its border with Pakistan to meet the threat posed by Islamabad's nuclear weapons programme, a government minister said today, reports AP.

Both nations have fought three wars, two of them over disputed Kashmir, and western nations believe India and Pakistan can launch a nuclear war.

Pakistan's nuclear threat and the claim by its former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif that Pakistan has a nuclear bomb will be raised by India at all international meetings, said Junior Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid in Parliament.

The Times of India news-

paper quoted Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao as telling his governing party lawmakers that India's defences were strong enough to take care of any bomb threat from Pakistan.

Although the Pakistani government has denied Sharif's claim, the issue irked lawmakers in India's Parliament.

"If the safety and security of India require deployment of conventional and non-conventional weapons, we will do it," Khurshid said.

In a television interview on Wednesday, Khurshid said India has kept 'its (nuclear) option open in terms of security and that is the reason why we did not sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. But we've never claimed we have the bomb.'