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NEWS BRIEFS

BCL (M-I) council tomorrow

By DU Correspondent

The pro-Awami League Chhatra League (M-I) will hold its national council '94 tomorrow Wednesday. AL chief Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the council at 10 am at the Ramna Batamul in the city. BCL (M-I) President Moinuddin Hasan Chowdhury will preside. The programmes include rally, discussion meeting and a cultural function.

30 shops gutted in Sitakunda

CHITTAGONG, Sept 5: Thirty shops were gutted in a fire that broke out at Sitakunda here today. Fire service sources said the fire originated from a blacksmith's shop. The shops included furniture shop, laundry, grocery and office of local union parishad.

3 armed men held in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET, Sept 5: Three armed people were caught red-handed by the villagers of Lalabazar in Sadar thana yesterday afternoon. One revolver, seven rounds of ammunition, two pigeons, one Chinese axe, and a knife were recovered from their possession. On receiving information police reached the area and arrested them. The arrested people are: Selim, Ahmed, 19; Jashim Uddin, 20, of village Baraikandi and Afzar Ahmed, 18, a student of Madan Mohan College.

Wijetunga hospitalised

COLOMBO, Sept 5: Sri Lankan President Dingiri Banda Wijetunga complained of chest pain Monday and was hospitalised, his spokesman said. Wijetunga is having high blood pressure but his condition is stable, doctors said. Wijetunga, 72, did not attend a meeting of senior members of his United National Party in the morning, said presidential spokesman Anthony Fernando, reports AP.

Cairo Confce begins: 'Abortion not to be encouraged'

Delegations agree to discuss EU formula



UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali opened the UN International Conference on Population and Development before 3500 delegates from 182 countries in the Egyptian capital Cairo yesterday. Delegations are to discuss a 20-year action plan to slow population growth and development in developing countries — AFP photo

CAIRO, Sept 5: Delegates to a UN population conference agreed here today to consider a European formula to end a controversy over abortion that endangers their "historic" effort to curb booming birthrates, report AFP, Reuters.

The conference decided at its opening session to hold informal talks Tuesday to consider new wording in the 113-page UN population plan that the European Union (EU) has proposed in a bid to defuse the abortion row, delegates said.

Under the EU compromise, the document would underline that abortion must not in any way be encouraged as a method of family planning.

Earlier, Muslim East and secular West, liberals and religious conservatives, staked out positions on abortion and — See Page 12 Col 1

Dhaka team attends confce

Masud Hasan Khan from Cairo

The Third International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) '94 drew about 20 thousand delegates from 174 countries to reach an agreement on a strategy to stabilise population growth and chart a Programme of Action. Representatives of nearly 4000 NGOs joined the nine-day conference.

ICPD Secretary General and UNFPA Executive Director Dr Nafis Sadik opened the proceedings of the conference this morning at the Cairo International Conference Centre (CICC).

A 28-member Bangladesh — See Page 12 Col 6

Cabinet okays draft of Coast Guard Act '94

The Cabinet today (Monday) approved in principle the draft of Bangladesh Coast Guard Act, 1994, reports UNB.

The approval was given at the regular weekly meeting of the Cabinet at Bangabhaban with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair.

The proposed legislation aims at formation of a coast-guard for protecting the country's economic interests in the territorial waters as well as in the maritime economic zone.

The proposed force will be equipped with highspeed patrol boats and other modern equipment.

A government handout said the formation of the coast-guard should help prevent smuggling and other illegal activities in the country's coastal territorial waters.

The Cabinet also approved a five-point proposal of the Roads and Roads Transport Division to prevent road accidents in the country.

The proposal includes for — See Page 12 Col 3

BNP govt will not retrench workers, PM tells newcomers

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday asked the jute mills workers to boost production to make the losing concern profitable and announced that the BNP government will not retrench workers, reports BSS.

"The BNP is an organisation of the masses. It works for the welfare and protection of people's interest. The BNP is an organisation which protects the interest of the country, peasants, workers and the people," she said.

The Prime Minister, who is also the chairperson of the BNP, was addressing a big gathering of jute workers and — See Page 12 Col 2



BNP negotiators Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury and Abdus Salam Talukdar seen with JP leaders Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and Kazi Zafar Ahmed at the JP parliamentary party office inside the Sangsad Bhaban yesterday. — Star photo.

JP opposes bilateral talks on interim govt

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of the ruling party held a meeting with Jatiya Party leaders yesterday as part of their efforts for a dialogue with the Opposition.

Deputy Leader of Parliament Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, BNP Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukdar and Minister for Environment Akbar Hossain represented the ruling party at the meeting.

Acting chief of the JP Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Moudud Ahmed, Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Munirul Haq Chowdhury and JP Secretary General Khaledur Rahman Tito represented their party.

The one and half-hour meeting at the office of the JP parliamentary group at the Sangsad Bhaban was held in a cordial atmosphere but failed to reach agreement on holding the proposed dialogue, meeting sources said.

This was the second such meeting organised by the ruling party to end the present political impasse by holding discussions with the Opposition parties. Such meetings are designed to lead to a formal dialogue with the combined Opposition.

After the meetings with — See Page 12 Col 1

Make 'Dhaka' siege a success: Hasina

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the people of all strata to make the September 10 Dhaka Siege programme an all-out success by foiling all conspiracies, reports UNB.

"Join the Dhaka Siege peacefully to force the BNP government to step down and realise the demand for elections under a caretaker government to ensure economic development by curbing corruption, nepotism and terrorism," she said.

Hasina was addressing a joint meeting of leaders of Awami League and its front or — See Page 12 Col 3

Parliament passes Companies Act '94

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad (JS) yesterday adopted the Companies Bill, 1994 to adjust the present-day features of the country's economic activities based on principles of a market economy.

The legislation will now replace the one enacted during the British colonial rule in 1913.

Earlier, Niamat Ullah Sabu of the treasury bench urged the Speaker not to allow passage of the bill with the Opposition MPs absent from the House. "As the law would have multi-dimensional implications in the country's economic activities, the bill should be discussed in a full House," he argued.

At this stage Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali sought the opinion of the law minister who said, he did not find any reason to defer the passage of the bill.

Besides, Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz informed the House that the departments concerned consulted representative of almost all the country's commercial and industrial bodies and accommodated their views into the draft law.

Commerce Minister

Shamsul Islam, supporting the law minister, said, delay in adopting the bill would eventually affect the country's economic interests.

"The bill, if passed in the House, would create a more congenial investment climate for the foreign investors," the minister asserted.

Referring to Niamat Ullah Sabu's call for a full-dress discussion, Shahjahan Omar of the treasury bench said, "The presence of 60 MPs, belonging either to the ruling party or the Opposition, makes it a full House. So, Sabu's arguments do not stand technically, because the proposed law is going to be adopted by a full House," Omar observed.

The bill was adopted at 8:30 last night.

The chair also disposed of eight call attention notices, two of which were discussed in the House.

M A Matin, a BNP MP from Chandpur, in his notice called the attention of the environment minister to the increased pollution of the capital city's environment and suggested the government take steps for urban agriculture to create job opportunities for — See Page 12 Col 4

HC Rule against Tangail FAP project

The High Court Division yesterday issued rule nisi on the government to show cause why activities under the FAP-20 project in Tangail should not be declared unlawful, reports UNB.

A High Court bench comprising Justice Md. Ismailuddin Sarkar and Justice Md. Hamidul Haque issued the rule upon a writ petition by a resident of Tangail district.

The court also asked the government to explain why the entire scheme should not be said to have been framed in a mala fide manner and also for collateral purpose not compatible with public interest.

The rule has been issued upon the Secretary of Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Ministry, the Chief Engineer of Flood Plan Coordination Organisation (FPCO), the Chairman of Bangladesh Water Development Board, the Project Director of FAP-20, the secretary of Land Ministry and the Deputy Commissioner of Tangail.

Secretary General of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers' Association (BELA) Dr Mohiuddin Farooque moved the writ on behalf of the petitioner, according to a BELA press release.

Abahani hold Mohammedans

Sports Reporter

Reigning champions Mohammedan Sporting Club failed to cling to a solitary-goal lead as arch-rivals Abahani Krira Chakra forced a 1-1 draw in the last match of the Star Premier Division league first phase at the Dhaka Stadium last night.

It was only a matter of surviving four more minutes for the defending champions, who looked set to register their first league win over the Dhanmondi outfit in seven years. But a powerful drive from the edge of the box from little-known Mansur ruined Mohammedans' plans, and, decimated to a great extent, the black-and-white's chances of retaining the league title.

It was honours even at the jam-packed Dhaka Stadium last night, bathed in a sea of floodlights. For once the passion play involving the Titans of local soccer spilled no blood, left no shattered shop windows or car windshields outside.

At the end of the first round fixture of the league, Abahani lead the table with 14 points from nine matches. New force Mukhtijoddha KC trail them by a solitary point with a haul of 13 points. Brothers Union have 12 points while Mohammedans complete the four-way championship race with eleven points from their quota of nine — See Page 12 Col 4



Mohammedans' Russian medio Inataev is hemmed in by Abahani captain Monem Munna and Partha Pratim Kundu (sliding) during yesterday's Star Premier Division football league at the Dhaka Stadium. The derby ended in a one-all draw. — Star photo

2 Kashmiri leaders invited to OIC FM's confce

ISLAMABAD, Sept 5: The Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has invited two prominent leaders from Indian-controlled Kashmir to its special meeting this week in Islamabad, a senior Pakistani official said today, reports AFP.

The two are Umar Farooq, Kashmir's chief Muslim priest,

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and Abdul Ghani Bhat, Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh told reporters.

They have been invited along with leaders from the Pakistani-administered part of Kashmir to meet with OIC Secretary General Hamid Al-Gabid and delegates from Islamic states during the OIC conference here.

The extraordinary meeting of foreign ministers of OIC states starting Wednesday will take up major issues of concern to Muslim nations including Bosnia, Kashmir and Afghanistan.

Inefficient bureaucracy slows development

By Staff Correspondent

Participants in a workshop on "Foreign Aid Management in Bangladesh" yesterday stressed the need for improving the quality of the bureaucracy to expedite the implementation of projects.

The participants, mostly officials of various ministries and government bodies, agreed that lack of coordination and inefficiency of the administration are the major reasons for the failure to achieve the targets of government efforts.

Participants in the workshop said efficiency of the civil servants has declined over the years due to politicisation of administrative machinery, protracted martial law rule, and lack of adequate training facilities.

"Unfortunately, the process of politicising the administrative machinery was strengthened in recent years, affecting the integrity of the administration," a top bureaucrat said.

There has been a sharp decline in the loan negotiation capability of government officials dealing with foreign aid, he noted.

"The major problem facing the country is not lack of resources, but of intellect, culture and good management," he said. The situation has to be improved by undertaking appropriate measures for improving the quality of the bureaucracy, he added.

The inaugural session of the one-day workshop, organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM), was attended by State Minister for Establishment Annuul Haq as chief guest. Establishment Secretary Habibur Rahman and Education Secretary Irshadul Haq were special guests while Additional Secretary of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) Shahidul Alam was in — See Page 12 Col 1

Dhaleswari bridge construction begins today

Construction work of the much-awaited Tk 10 crore Dhaleswari Bridge-1 on the Dhaka-Mawa road will begin today, reports UNB.

Communications Minister Oli Ahmed will formally inaugurate the construction work of the bridge while Deputy Leader of the House Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury will attend the function as chief guest.

The 840-foot long bridge is expected to be completed within 36 months. The entire fund of the project will be from internal sources, it was learnt.

With one end at Keraniganj thana, the bridge will connect Sirajdikhan thana of Munshiganj district and make the traffic between south and south-western districts and the capital faster.

1 killed in Ctg jeep explosion

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 5: Blasts of explosives inside a running jeep on Sunday night left one person killed and another seriously injured in Fatikchhari, 25 miles from here.

Police said, when a group of suspected miscreants were heading for committing a robbery, the explosives kept inside their jeep suddenly exploded near Bheppur village under Fatikchhari thana, killing one Jasimuddin, 22, dead on the spot and seriously injuring another Nazimuddin, 23.

The other inmates of the jeep escaped.

74 killed in Afghan fighting

ISLAMABAD, Sept 5: At least 74 people were killed in faction fighting today around the Afghan capital Kabul and the nearby province of Logar, state-run Kabul radio said, reports Reuters.

Forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani killed 70 opposition militiamen in Logar and captured three positions, said the Rabbani-controlled radio, monitored in Islamabad.

Four people were killed and 39 wounded when anti-Rabbani militias controlled by Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum fired more than 180 rockets on Kabul's residential areas, it said.