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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**Hasina to visit Munshiganj**

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina will visit Munshiganj tomorrow to see the areas affected by erosion of the Padma. Awami League central leaders will accompany her.

**Salam meets JSSS leaders today**

BNP Secretary General and Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Abdus Salam Talukder will meet the leaders of Dhaka city unit of the Jatiyatibadi Samajik Sangkritik Sangstha (JSSS) at its office today at 7 pm. All office bearers and members of thana units and the city unit have been asked to remain present in the JSSS city office before 6 pm.

**Six Workers' Party men hurt in attack**

JHENIDAH, Sept 15: At least six people were injured when outlawed Sharbahara Party members attacked a Workers' Party rally at Kalliganj thana today. Witnesses and police said about 50 Sharbahara men swooped on the rally at about 4:30 pm with hand-made bombs and sticks. Workers' Party central leader Comrade Abdus Salam along with five other local leaders were injured in the attack.

**Prisoners on hunger strike**

PIROJPUUR, Sept 15: Some 1,500 under-trial prisoners in Pirojpur sub jail today went on hunger strike for an indefinite period in protest against alleged police harassment and inordinate delay in investigation into their cases. The detainees have earlier submitted a written complaint to the Deputy Commissioner demanding immediate solution to their problems, reports UNB.

**No alternative to invasion: Clinton Haitian leaders defiant**



Haitian President Emile Jonassaint addresses a late evening press conference Wednesday in Port Au Prince, where he vowed Haiti will stand firm in the face of a threatened invasion by the US. — AFP photo

FORT-AU-PRINCE, Sept 15: Despite an increasing threat of US invasion, Haiti's military rulers were standing their ground and refusing to give up power, reports AP.  
"The government will continue to fulfill its mission and will not fail to fully pursue defence of the republic," the army-installed president, Emile Jonassaint, said at a

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news conference Wednesday night.

Haiti's leaders were unmoved by President Clinton's warning that the United States will soon invade to restore the democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. A crippling trade blockade and intensifying psychological warfare has failed to dislodge the military. On Wednesday, US planes dropped propaganda leaflets over Port-au-Prince.  
With 15 US warships looming offshore, two aircraft carrier

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**India to assist in 2nd phase of UN mission in Haiti**

NEW DELHI, Sept 15: India today said it had made no commitments on the number of troops it planned to deploy in Haiti as part of a UN mission to restore the democratic process in the Central American state, reports PTI.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said this while reacting to press reports suggesting that India is to send 5,000 troops to Haiti.

The spokesman said that India had agreed to cooperate with the UN in the second phase of the UN mission in Haiti, which seeks to assist in rehabilitation and establishment of an environment conducive to the organisation of the democratic process. This was conveyed to the UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, during his official visit here last weekend.

"No commitments have been made on the number of personnel to be deployed", the spokesman said.

**Two killed as cops, mob clash in Khagrachhari**

KHAGRACHHARI, Sept 15: Two persons were killed in a clash between villagers and police at Matiranga today, reports UNB.

Mujibur Rahman (25) and Abdur Rahim (40), settlers at Matiranga, who sustained bullet wounds died at Chittagong Medical College Hospital at 10-30 pm today.

Earlier our Chittagong Correspondent said: Around 50 persons including eight police personnel were injured in a clash between a mob and police at Matiranga bazar this morning.  
Of the injured, eight were admitted to Chittagong Medical hospital with bullet wounds while the injured police personnel were admitted to Khagrachhari hospital.

Police opened fire when about 2000 non-tribals violated Section 144 imposed there and attacked police. Administration sources and other local sources said the trouble began when police intercepted the agitating non-tribals proceeding in trucks to Khagrachhari

from Guilmara area defying Section 144.  
Earlier, Section 144 was imposed in eight thanas of Khagrachhari Wednesday since as two rival organisations called rallies at the same venue — Khagrachhari Government high school ground — today.

The Bangalee Krishak Kalyan Parishad had called a peace conference at the venue at 11 am today and had taken prior permission for this.

The Jatiyatibadi Bhumheen Sangstha also called a rally at the same venue.  
The clash broke out today when people belonging to the Bangalee Krishak Kalyan Parishad, a cluster village-based organisation, in protest against the police interception, started to pelt stones at them, local sources said.

Police initially resorted to baton-charge to disperse the mob, administration sources said.

But when the situation deteriorated, police opened fire at them, the sources said.  
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**PM visits drought-hit areas, assures all measures**

THAKURGAON, Sept 15: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today made a whirlwind tour of the untimely drought-hit areas in three northern districts and announced special programmes to assuage the woes of the affected people and recoup crop losses, reports UNB.

During her sojourn, she talked to the farmers and landless people and enquired about the latest situation for a first-hand assessment of the ravages caused by the calamity.

The country is facing natural calamities due to the Farakka Barrage. The situation will further aggravate if we do not plant a large number of trees," Begum Zia said, asking the people to plant trees to maintain the ecological balance.

The Prime Minister visited Burirhat in Lalmonirhat dis-

trict, Palashbari in Nilphamari and Balladangi in Thakurgaon district. She first arrived at Burirhat and visited the worst-affected areas. She enquired about the prices of essentials in the remote areas.

Hearing the news of the Prime Minister's presence, thousands of men, women and children gathered to listen to her.

Abdul Mannan, 50, and Azizur Rahman, 58, of Burirhat informed the Prime Minister that they had planted rice seeds which were damaged due to the lack of timely rainfall.

Villagers said a majority of the people of the district had become unemployed due to the drought. The landless are the worst hit, they added.

Begum Zia assured them of necessary measures to face the adversity and make up the

losses. She said her government had under-taken all-out programmes to save the farmers and landless people from the natural calamity.

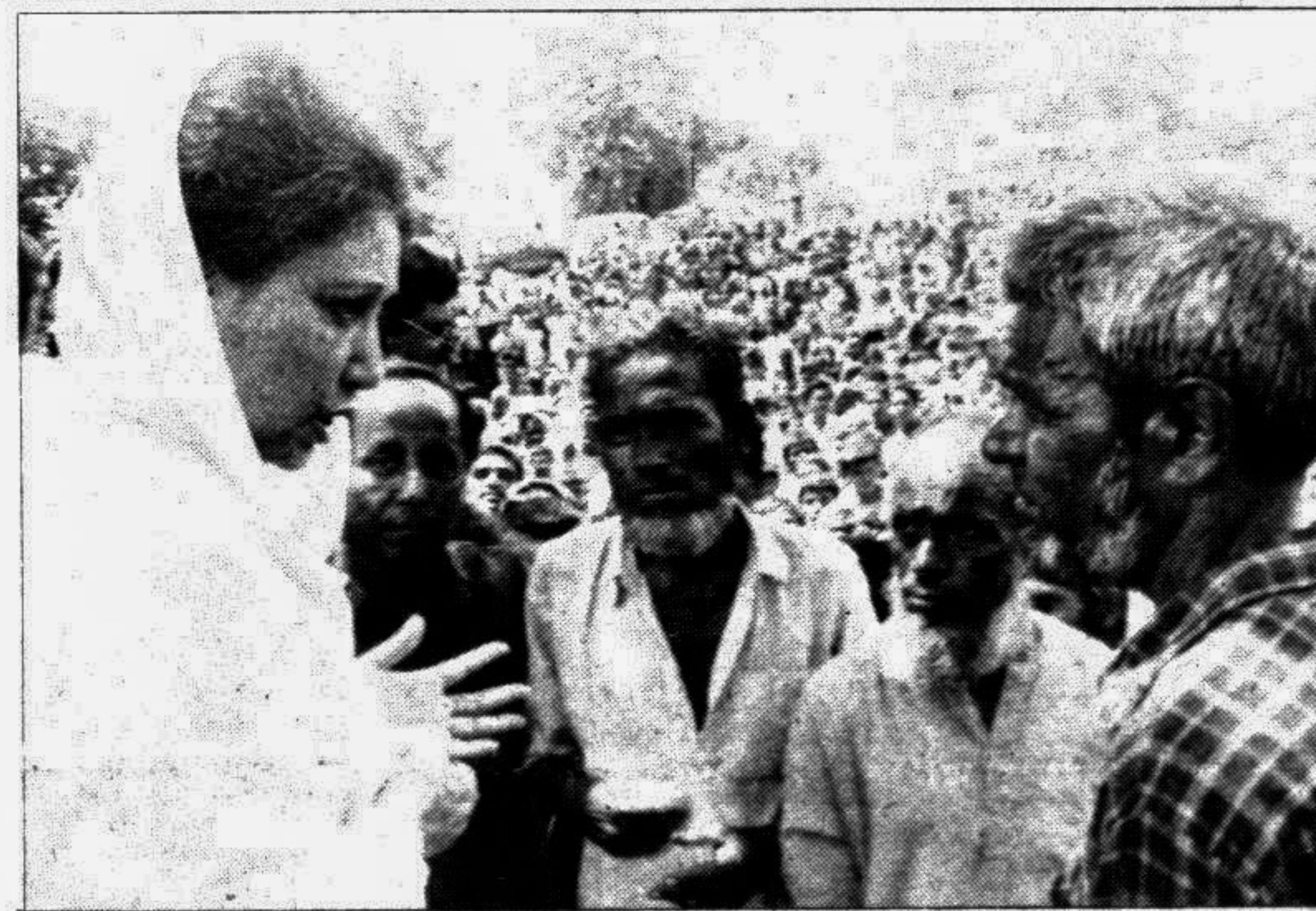
She said the day-labourers and landless people would be given special relief and the farmers provided seeds, fertiliser and other necessary agro-inputs.

After talking with cross-section of people at Burirhat, Begum Zia held a joint meeting with the local people and district officials at the Lalmonirhat Circuit House.

She instructed the administration to distribute relief goods among the poor and to take necessary measures to remove people's suffering.

Officials of the Lalmonirhat district administration informed the Prime Minister that farm production in the

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia talking to the local people of Burirhat in Lalmonirhat district during her visit to the drought affected northern areas of the country yesterday. — PID photo

**Consultations with IMF begin tomorrow**

Star Report  
Terms of future arrangements between the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Bangladesh are likely to be firm up during the annual consultations due to begin in the capital tomorrow.

An 8-member IMF delegation, led by the Fund's regional division chief John Hicklin, arrived in the city yesterday to take part in the talks with government officials. The home side at the 10-day meeting would include finance secretary Nasimuddin Ahmed, Bangladesh Bank governor Khurshid Alam and other senior officials.

Among other issues, an arrangement for IMF surveillance of the country's macro-economic performance is likely to be discussed and finalised during the talks, official sources said.

The country's macro-economic performance would also come up for review and indications are there that the IMF team is likely to press for expediting the ongoing reform

**Coup bid in Liberia**

ABIDJAN (Ivory Coast), Sept 15: Soldiers tried to seize the presidential mansion in the Liberian capital of Monrovia on Thursday, but African peacekeepers said they foiled the attempted coup, reports AP.

Heavy gunfire erupted in the capital for the first time in nearly two years at around 4 am at Barclay Training Centre, the army barracks around the corner from the mansion, a fortress that houses the government executive offices.

Both are located near the Atlantic Ocean in southern Monrovia.

Soldiers from an eight-nation African intervention force in Monrovia intervened.

"A few elements of the at-

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Bangladeshi observers safe  
All Bangladeshi military observers in the war-torn Liberia are safe, according to a report received in the capital Thursday night, reports UNB.

**Prokrichi protests promotion of 1048 BCS admn officials**

By Staff Correspondent  
The Prokrichi and BCS Central Action Council yesterday protested what it said a recent government order promoting 1048 BCS administration cadre officials in violation of government rules.

Addressing a press conference in the city yesterday council leaders said under the order, even officials of the selection grade were promoted. But, as per government rules, selection grade officials could not be promoted this way, they claimed.

Council leader Md Abu Hena said, "For all other cadres, the promotion procedures take

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**Hasina explains stand to diplomats**

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her Opposition demanded a neutral, caretaker government since free and fair elections are not possible with the BNP in power, reports UNB.

"Our struggle is a fundamental one. We want to restore the people's right to choose their government by the free exercise of franchise," she said at a luncheon hosted by the Diplomatic Association of Dhaka at a local hotel.

Hasina alleged massive rigging in the Bholia, Mirpur and Magura parliamentary byelections as well as in other local bodies' elections had caused the people to believe that like

her two 'military predecessors' in office, Prime Minister Begum Zia would hang on to power by any means.  
"The BNP government is indulging in misuse of power, state-owned radio-television and resources of the state to subvert the electoral process to frustrate the will of the people," the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament said, adding: "We don't want to let them succeed in their evil design."

She said if and when the Awami League comes to power, it would also hand over power to a neutral, caretaker government before general elections.  
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**Rain the spoiler in Colombo**

Sports Reporter

The Singer World Series one-day cricket tournament league match between subcontinental superpowers India and Pakistan, which was rained off yesterday, will be held at the same venue in Colombo today, weather permitting.

The day-night match, likely to be shown on BTV, is scheduled to start at 2:25 pm BST.  
If meteorologists' forecasts of more thundershowers in Colombo today come true and the game is again washed out, India will go through to Saturday's final against hosts Sri Lanka, who have won all their three matches.

Competition rules say in case of a tie on points the team with a better run rate will qualify. Both India and Australia have one win each but India's run rate is 4.9 over compared to Australia's 4.1.

Pakistan have lost to both Australia and the hosts.  
If the final, too, is ruled out by the weather, the two finalists will be declared joint champions.

**Asian confce on diarrhoeal diseases from tomorrow**

By Staff Correspondent

The seventh Asian Conference on Diarrhoeal Diseases (ASCOD) will begin in the city Saturday which is expected to be participated by about 1000 experts from ten countries.

Hosted by the Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), the conference will be inaugurated by Deputy Leader of the House Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury at the Engineers' Institution auditorium at 9 am.

"Bangladesh is one of the most diarrhoea-prone countries in the world. Every year, some 1.60 lakh people die of diarrhoea in the country," said organiser of the ASCOD and BMA secretary general Dr Gazi Abdul Haq at a press conference explaining the context of the conference.  
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**City BNP to bring out procession Sept 30**

The Dhaka city unit of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) at its adjourned meeting which resumed yesterday decided to bring out a procession on September 30 in protest against what it said, 'violent and anarchic activities of the opposition parties,' a party press release said, reports BSS.

The meeting presided over by president of the city BNP and Food Minister Lt Gen (Retd) Mir Shawkat Ali also decided to hold separate workers' meeting and organise processions as part of its mass contact programme.

Mir Shawkat Ali asked the party workers to stand by the

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**Delhi prepared to discuss Kashmir autonomy**

NEW DELHI, Sept 15: India is prepared to grant greater autonomy to Kashmir to help end a four-year separatist rebellion in the Himalayan region that has claimed 17,000 lives, a minister said on Thursday.

Junior Home Minister Rajesh Pilot told Reuters the question of autonomy would come up in talks next week between the Indian government and Farooq Abdullah, former Chief Minister of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Abdullah, lost his post in 1991 when the central government imposed emergency rule after the revolt erupted in Hindu-dominated India's only Muslim-majority state.

New Delhi believes Abdullah has a key role to play in any talks to end the rebellion and a 47-year dispute with Pakistan over who controls Kashmir, split between the two coun-

tries.  
"He certainly wants greater autonomy and we are ready to discuss that," Pilot said.

"We are ready to accommodate views on the question of autonomy, but it depends on discussions with all the political parties," he said.

"The idea is to make life for the people peaceful and prosperous there, and anything we can do in that line, we have no objections to," he said.

Pilot, who is spearheading the government's handling of the dispute, said the Himalayan state already enjoyed a substantial degree of autonomy and had its own constitution.

"For there to be added autonomy the government has no hesitation," he said without specifying what powers might be devolved to the state to meet the demands for greater independence.  
India and Pakistan have

competing claims on Kashmir, two thirds of which is ruled by New Delhi.

AP from Madrid adds: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan said Thursday that her country plans to ask the United Nations for a resolution on Kashmir similar to the self-determination vote for the Western Sahara.

Benazir Bhutto and her Spanish counterpart Felipe Gonzalez met with reporters at the end of Bhutto's two-day official visit to Spain. Bhutto arrived Tuesday from Morocco and plans to leave Spain Friday.

Pakistan apparently plans to raise the Kashmir issue in the UN General Assembly on Sept. 23.

"If the dispute over land is settled in accordance with the UN resolutions, there will be peace in the subcontinent," Bhutto said.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

WILL JUTE GO THE WAY OF INDIGO?  
OUR PAST WAS BUILT ON THE BACK OF JUTE. CAN OUR FUTURE BE BUILT ON ITS BACK, TOO? OR SHOULD WE FORGET ABOUT OUR GOLDEN FIBRE AS A THING OF THE PAST? READ THE OPINIONS OF EXPERTS, BUSINESS LEADERS AND POLICY-MAKERS ON THIS VITAL SUBJECT.

THE FULL TEXT OF *The Daily Star* ROUND TABLE ON THE FUTURE OF JUTE: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS WILL BE PUBLISHED ON MONDAY, 19 SEPT. 1994.

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