



The Centre for Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, a British-aided NGO in Savar, brought out a wheelchair rally in the city yesterday with disabled persons carrying colourful banners and placards inscribed with slogans against road accidents. — Star photo

## Govt ready for talks

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for doctors, and increased autonomy for the medical colleges.

Besides, the BMA is demanding removal of the Health Secretary, cancellation of the vigilance system and withdrawal of the suspension orders against some doctors at Tongi and Gazipur hospitals who were found absent from duty.

Regarding the demands of the doctors, Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf said, some demands have already been implemented while 18 other demands were being considered.

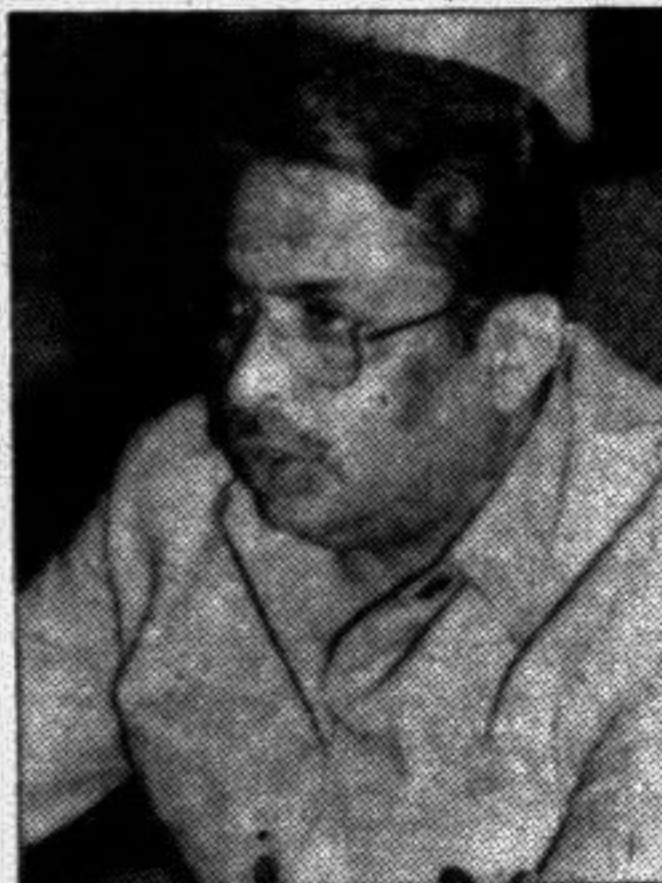
He admitted that a number of demands can not be met due to, what he said, practical limitations.

When asked why the government had not taken any action against the strikers, the minister said "Until now, it is very difficult to take any action against them."

Responding to a question on the legality of the strike, Kamal Yusuf avoided a clear answer, saying only "This strike is very unkind."

During the press conference, the Health Minister was assisted by Deputy Minister for Health Serajul Hoque and Health Secretary Syed Shamim Ahsan.

Referring to the suspension of the doctors, Kamal Yusuf



Kamal Ibne Yusuf

About the demand for removal of the Health Secretary, Kamal Yusuf said, the accusations against the senior civil servant were "baseless and unfounded."

## 21 BCL activists sent to jail

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 22: Twenty-one BCL (S-P) activists were sent to jail after the Special Tribunal Court rejected their bail petitions today and Wednesday, reports UNB.

Police said 28 BCL activists of Mansur Ali College have been sued for their alleged involvement in a clash that left a JCD activist injured on December 21, 1992.

## 117 RU teachers urge opposition to join JS

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Sept 22: One hundred seventeen teachers of the Rajshahi University have expressed their grave concern over the chaotic political situation in the country created by three major opposition political parties on the caretaker government issue.

In a joint statement today, the teachers said "due to their unjustified and unusual activities" not only the normal life of the people was being disturbed but also economic progress was being hampered and people's confidence in politics eroded.

They said the issue of the caretaker government and other issues could be solved only in Parliament and as such the teachers appealed to the opposition members to respect the democratic norms by joining the Parliament session for solving the national issues in greater national interest.

## IMF praises ADP implementation rate

International Monetary Fund appreciated the implementation rate of last fiscal year's Annual Development Programme (ADP), reports UNB.

The compliments came from a delegation of the IMF, led by its division chief John Hicklin, when they called on Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman at his office yesterday.

According to the official figures, the ADP implementation rate was 94 per cent during 1993-94.

During the meeting, the leader of the IMF delegation briefed the finance minister on the outcome of his delegation's visit to Bangladesh.

The team arrived in Dhaka September 15 to discuss the post-ESAF (enhanced structural adjustment facility) programme as the IMF-prescribed ESAF programme has already completed.

Hicklin praised the expenditure control measures of the government and discussed the scope of foreign investment in Bangladesh.

4 killed in Lahore bomb blast

LAHORE, Sept 22: At least four people were killed and five injured when a bomb exploded in a steel-melting factory in a nearby town of Gujranwala today, police said, reports AFP.

The blast occurred when factory workers off loaded scrap into the furnace.

## Decision to gear up agri rehabilitation in drought-hit areas

A review meeting on the emergency measures taken by the government for facing drought situation yesterday took decision to accelerate agricultural rehabilitation work, reports UNB.

The meeting, presided over by Agriculture and Water Resources Minister M Majid-ul Haq, specially discussed the agricultural rehabilitation programme for recouping crop loss due to the untimely drought in the country's northern region.

It decided that as emergency measure, BADC would hand over its godowns and other infrastructures to the Ministry of Industries without any rent for the preservation and distribution of fertilizer properly at fair price in the drought-affected areas.

A joint meeting will be held within two days between the fertilizer producing and marketing agencies of the Ministry of Industries and the Agriculture Ministry to accelerate the process of rehabilitation.

The meeting also discussed the process of fertilizer marketing and distribution fairly under the supervision of deputy commissioners and agriculture officials of drought-hit districts.

Discussion was also held on the emergency storage of fertilizer in the districts of southern region and increase of fertilizer supply in the country's hill districts at fair price.

Agriculture secretary M Akhtar Ali and concerned high officials were present in the meeting, held at the Secretariat.

## Rly to transport drought relief on priority basis

Railway Secretary and Director General, Bangladesh Railway Dr. Masihur Rahman has directed railway officers and workers to transport food-grains and other essential commodities to the drought hit northern districts on priority basis, reports BSS.

The Railway Secretary was visiting Bahadurabad and Teestamukhghat of Bangladesh Railway to see the position of railway wagon ferry crossing between these two points yesterday.

Dr. Rahman later visited Teestamukhghat and Bonapara railway junction and saw the wagon movement arrangements there.

## Israel trying to escape from accord: Arafat

CAIRO, Sept 22: PLO leader Yasser Arafat said in an interview published today that Israel was trying to escape from an agreement to redeploy troops on the West Bank, reports Reuters.

He said this was possibly because it had second thoughts about letting Palestinians in Jerusalem vote in elections.

The Palestinian authority in Gaza and Jericho impatient with the Israelis, has unilaterally approved plans to begin preparations for general elections within three months.

But Israel, which should redeploy its troops before elections take place, says the PLO must first agree on details of the elections before it takes any steps.

"If there is not agreement on all of the early stages prior to the holding of the elections, the elections will not be able to be held," Israel Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin told the Israeli daily Al-Hamishmar this week.

Arafat told the international Arabic newspaper Ashraaq Al-Awsat that Israel's position violated a series of agreements, including the original declaration of principles on Palestinian self-rule, signed in Washington in September.

"One of Israel's main motives for delaying the Palestinian elections is to evade the agreement on withdrawing the Israeli army from towns and villages and population centres on the West Bank and redeploying them," he said.

Doctors' strike

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On the other hand, some seven patients died and 120 patients were admitted. The total number of patients admitted to the 800-bed hospital, the country's largest, was 1377.

Our SSMC correspondent adds: Doctors in the city's Mitford Hospital abstained from their duties. Hospital work was done by some 50 intern doctors of the Sir Salmullah Medical College.

Because of the strike, 18 patients were discharged from the children's ward and 11 from the gynaecology ward. Some 32 patients were discharged from other wards.

At least five patients left the hospital voluntarily while the total number of patients admitted to the hospital till yesterday evening was 528.



Pakistani Premier Benazir Bhutto (R) and United States Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary smile during a meeting in Islamabad yesterday. O'Leary, who arrived here Wednesday on a four-day official visit, said that her mission was clear — to support specific business opportunities, identify potential barriers and streamline joint ventures and sustainable technologies. — AFP photo

## NATO planes bomb Serb positions

SARAJEVO, Sept 22: NATO warplanes struck at Serb positions just outside this besieged capital on Thursday in retaliation for a Bosnian Serb attack on UN peacekeepers, a UN official said, reports AP.

The official, who refused to be identified, said the attack followed a Bosnian Serb assault on a light tank manned by French soldiers on UN peacekeeping duty just northeast of the Bosnian capital.

Maj Herve Gourmelon, a UN spokesman in Sarajevo, confirmed the earlier UN report from Zagreb that an air strike had occurred, but refused to provide details.

The Serbs hit the French tank with four rocket-propelled grenades shortly after it moved to observe fighting between government troops and the Serbs around Sedrenik, just northeast of Sarajevo. A French soldier was wounded in the attack.

The UN source could not immediately say what Serb target was attacked and whether the air strike was successful.

There was no immediate word on what countries participated in the attack.

The United Nations is authorised to call on NATO jets for protection any time peacekeepers are attacked by any of the warring sides.

Besides its mandate to protect UN peacekeepers, NATO is also authorised to attack any heavy weapon not under UN control within a 20-kilometre (12-mile) zone around the Bosnian capital.

There was no immediate confirmation from NATO.

AFP adds: The Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on Wednesday criticised the UN Bosnia commander, Lt Gen Sir Michael Rose, for threatening to use force against Bosnian Muslims. OIC Secretary General Hamid Algabid said he was "surprised" by Sir Michael's warning on Sunday of force to halt fighting inside the 20-kilometre (12.5 mile) heavy weapons exclusion zone around the Bosnian capital.



Malaysia's new King Tuanku Jaafar holds a kris, a traditional Malay sword, before kissing it yesterday to mark his installation as Malaysia's 10th King at the National Palace in Kuala Lumpur. The 71-year-old former diplomat will rule for five years. — AFP photo

## Newsprint import

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been allocated for the development sector this year and it may be increased to Tk 11,500 crore in the revised budget. Overall imports have been reduced because of increased production.

He said, the import of food has been reduced from 4.3 per cent to 3.8 per cent and that of consumer goods from 7.2 per cent to 5.1 per cent while the import of raw materials has increased from 88.5 per cent to 91.1 per cent. All these reflect the achievements of the government, the Finance Minister said. There has also been huge investments in both urban and rural sectors, the Finance Minister claimed.

In the last fiscal year, Tk 2212 crore was sanctioned by the banks for industrial investment, of which Tk 1388 crore was disbursed. The government also plans to disburse Tk 3110 crore during the current fiscal year.

The minister said about Tk 5000 crore was invested in the industrial sector of the country during the last three and a half years.

Saifur Rahman said the government has also achieved significant success in the social sector by improving the living condition of the rural people.

About 35 per cent of the people were brought under the sanitation network as against 10 per cent in 1991 while 96 per cent of the rural people were brought under the water supply system, the minister said.

The Finance Minister, however, expressed dissatisfaction at the poor progress in privatisation and said the government is not being able to speed up the privatisation process due to resistance of the employees and opposition of the political parties and certain newspapers.

The government was even compelled to change a decision of privatising a sugar mills although almost all the formalities of handing over the mills to a private buyer were completed, he said.

He also refuted the press reports about the banks' excess liquidity problem, saying liquidity in the banks is absolutely normal.

The government injected Tk 1100 crore into the nationalised commercial banks in the last fiscal year and provided Tk 650 crore as bonds against their bad debt. This was done to keep their capital structure consistent with the international standard, the Finance Minister added.

## Hasina

From Page 1 Col 3

MP was involved in vote rigging there. "It has been proved time and again that voters' rights and lives are not safe under the BNP," she maintained.

Criticising what she termed, abuse of the state-owned media by the ruling party, Hasina said the government was using the media for serving its political interests instead of taking steps to make them autonomous.

"Don't listen to television news. They are propagating false news in their party interest," she urged the people.

Hasina ridiculed the Prime Minister's claim of achievements in different sectors of the economy during the last three and a half years of BNP rule. She said nine crore people were still living below the poverty line.

The Opposition leader brought charges of corruption against the government leaders and demanded assessment of wealth of the ministers and ruling party MPs.

About the construction of the Rupsha Bridge, as committed by the Prime Minister in December, Hasina accused the government of its failure to keep the commitment. She asked the people to mount pressure on the government for realising their demand.

Presided over by Khulna city president of Awami League Manzurul Imam, the meeting was addressed by party leaders Zillur Rahman, Abdul Mannan, Tofael Ahmed MP, Mohammad Nasim MP, Salahuddin Yusuf MP, Abdul Jalil, Khaleq Talukder MP, Mannujan Sufian and Shudangshu Shekhar Halder MP.

Earlier, Hasina flew into Jessore in the morning. She visited the graveyard of Rowshan Ali, an Awami League MP who died recently, and offered fateha. On her way to Khulna she addressed wayside gatherings at Rupdia Bazar, Nasamdia, Noapara and Rajhat.

The Opposition leader will leave here for Parbatipur by train.

## Rocket attack on Kabul: 13 die

ISLAMABAD, Sept 22: At least 13 people were killed and 23 others wounded when a number of rockets crashed into central Kabul today, state-run radio Kabul said, reports AFP.

The broadcast said a series of rockets exploded in the city's congested areas, resulting in heavy casualties among civilians.

## AL-LDF talks

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chief left Dhaka for Gopalganj and returned to the city in the third week of the month.

The LDF leaders once again sought a date for the dialogue but Hasina told them that she would go to Saudi Arabia and the talks could be held only after her return home.

Then on September 4, in response to a fresh LDF request, the AL chief agreed to have a dialogue on September 11.

The date for a dialogue was again shifted to September 18 by the AL chief.

But the dialogue did not take place.

Asked to comment on the situation, a top LDF leader told The Daily Star, on condition of anonymity, "may be the AL wants to evade the dialogue." Explaining this the LDF leader said that with the change of political and economic policies, the AL may have decided to go for alliance with the rightwing political forces instead of the old left allies.

AL Organising Secretary Mohammad Nasim, however, told The Daily Star that his party did not have any intention to evade a dialogue with the LDF leaders. Explaining the reasons behind repeated change of the schedule for talks with the LDF, Nasim said, "Sheikh Hasina had really been pre-occupied with some serious and unavoidable business."

## The Midnight File

### Plague kills 24 in India

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: Plague has hit a second state in western India after a three-decade absence, killing at least 24 people in a city crowded with slums and open sewers where rats carrying fleas scurry about, a health official said Thursday. Unofficial reports put the death toll due to plague at 60 in Surat, a city in Gujarat state noted for silk and diamond-cutting industries. United News of India news agency reported. Panic spread through Surat as officials sealed off a large part of the city and ordered people to stay indoors. Yet, an estimated 100,000 people fled the city and many of them were heading to Bombay, reports AP.

### Ukrainian parliament gives ultimatum to rebels

KIEV (Ukraine), Sept 22: Ukraine's parliament issued an ultimatum to leaders in the restive Crimean peninsula on Thursday, giving them until November 1 to reverse separatist legislation or face tough unspecified measures. The decision was reached less than 24 hours after parliament amended Ukraine's constitution to allow the suspension of Crimea's regional parliament if it continues to defy central government, reports AP.

## Clinton warns Haitian cops against excesses

WASHINGTON, Sept 22: President Clinton Wednesday condemned Haitian police brutality against Haitians and vowed that it would not be tolerated, reports Reuters.

"Such violence cannot and will not be tolerated," he said.

Clinton, in remarks on Haiti during an arts event in the White House East Room, said 1,000 US military police had landed in Haiti to monitor Haitian police activities "and by their own presence help to deter violence."

He said that "we strongly condemn yesterday's police violence there" and said that Lieutenant General Hugh Shelton, Commander of US forces in Haiti, had met Haitian military chief Raoul Cedras and "made clear our policy to them."

Meanwhile AFP adds: Exiled Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide broke three days of silence Wednesday and voiced support for sending US troops to Haiti, even though they did not remove the military rulers who ousted him.

Aristide thanked President Bill Clinton and his high-level delegation for the weekend agreement that averted a US invasion and opened the door for his return "in less than 24 days".

He also announced a transitional government headed by Jean Belloute, Minister of Defence under Prime Minister

## DU students wreck vehicles

A group of unruly students of Dhaka University yesterday damaged some 15 vehicles following an accident at Nilkhet area which left a student injured, reports UNB.

Ziaur Rahman Zia, a 2nd year student of Dhaka University Art Institute, was critically injured when a car knocked him down at about 7:30 pm. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, witnesses said.

The students from the adjacent halls rushed to the spot and damaged some 15 vehicles protesting the accident. They also brought the ill-fated car to the campus and badly damaged it.

Police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

## Prokrichi-BCS

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memorandum to the PM's office.

During the strike, several government offices including the Water Development Board, DESA and the Telephone and Telegraph Department looked deserted.

Doctors in government hospitals and health complexes are already on strike for an indefinite period since Wednesday.

Addressing the rally in the Krishbid Institution premises, the Prokrichi Chairman Dr M A Majed accused the members of the administrative cadre of misusing power and conspiring against the implementation of their demands.

He urged the government to evolve an administrative system truly accountable to the people.

Prokrichi leaders M A Hena, A N H Akhter Hossain, Dr Ziauddin Ahmed, Ibrahim Mia, Dr Gazi Abdul Huq, M Ruhul Matin, Nurul Huda and Monirul Islam also spoke at the rally.

A member of the Action Council, Dr Mushtaq Hossain, read out a 30-point resolution at the rally.

## Calcutta firing

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opposition Congress (I) members vociferously demanding resignation of Joyti Basu as Home Minister for yesterday's police firing at Sealdah station.

Basu informed the house that Professor Shankar Chakraborty had been arrested in connection with yesterday's incidents and search was on for others involved. Police were trying to identify the guilty, he added.

There were loud protests from Congress (I) benches when Basu described Professor Chakraborty as a "Congress (I) man."

## PM returns

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In the morning, a cultural function was organised at the Ugyen Pelri Palace ground in honour of Begum Zia.

Begum Zia also visited a handicraft shop at the Bhutanese capital Thimpu and attended a luncheon at the residence of the Bangladesh Ambassador there.

Earlier, the Bangladesh Prime Minister was interviewed by Bhutan Radio Services Wednesday night at Ugyen Pelri Palace, where she stayed during her visit.

## It communiqué

From Page 1 Col 5

disabled, and Women and Family Health.

The meeting felt that further momentum should be imparted for forging cooperation between SAARC and other regional bodies, such as ASEAN and the European Union. The need for projecting a SAARC position on issues of common concern at various international meetings were also underscored.

The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to working together for promoting cooperation for the mutual benefit and national interests of the two countries.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister thanked the Bhutanese king and the government and people of Bhutan for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality extended to her and the members of her delegation during the visit.

Begum Zia extended an invitation to the Bhutanese monarch to visit Bangladesh at a mutually convenient time. The King accepted the invitation.

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