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## NEWS BRIEFS

### 2 killed in Lahore mosque blast

ISLAMABAD, Sept 23: A grenade exploded in a mosque in the eastern city of Lahore, killing two worshippers and seriously injuring four others, the state-run news agency reported Friday. Two masked men on a motorcycle tossed the grenade into the mosque as 40 Muslim faithful began evening prayers on Thursday, reports AP.

### New MD of BBC World Service

Sam Younger has been appointed Managing Director of BBC World Service. Currently BBC World Service's Director of Broadcasts, Sam Younger, becomes a member of the BBC's Board of Management in his new role, starting on November 1, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday, reports UNB.

### Dutchman hanged in Singapore

SINGAPORE, Sept 23: A 59-year-old Dutchman was hanged at Singapore's Changi prison yesterday morning, a Dutch embassy spokeswoman said. Johannes Van Damme was the first Westerner executed by the city-state for violating its tough anti-drug laws. Van Damme, convicted of heroin trafficking, went to the gallows after last Dutch legal and diplomatic appeals to win a stay were rejected by Singapore authorities, reports Reuters.

### Tributes paid to Pritilata

CHITTAGONG, Sept 23: Different organisations today recalled the supreme sacrifice of Pritilata Waddader, a revolutionary against the British rule and paid tributes to her memory. Pritilata Waddader, one of the main associates of Masterda Surya Sen, who took part in the Chittagong Juba Bidroha (rebellion), attacked European Club at Pahartali successfully on this day and immolated herself by taking poison, reports BSS.



The Rowing Federation organised a traditional boat race in the Buriganga river on the city's waterfront yesterday.

## Plague kills 100 in Surat, sparks mass exodus

SURAT (India), Sept 23: Tens of thousands of people were fleeing this western Indian city Friday in an exodus sparked by a killer plague that left at least 100 people dead, reports AFP.

Residents locked up their homes and packed railway and bus stations, ignoring government appeals not to panic and stay put, witnesses said.

Families with their own transport were driving out of Surat in a hurry, and officials estimated that about 100,000 people would leave the city today in addition to the 150,000 who fled the plague zone Thursday.

Teams of government workers fanned out across the city of two million people, broadcasting appeals for calm, and residents who stayed behind in

the city emerged outdoors with clothes covering their faces.

Doctors, voluntary organisations and other sources said up to 8,000 people may have been afflicted by the pneumonic plague detected Thursday as the cause of a fever outbreak in the city.

The 700-bed new civil hospital and other infirmaries, where doctors and nurses have been working round the clock, were crowded by anxious relatives of suspected plague victims.

Doctors at the civil hospital said they had set up three isolation wards with 120 beds to treat cases of the disease transmitted by rat fleas and passed on from person to person through cough droplets in the air, causing pneumonia.

Schools, colleges, shops, hotels and cinemas were ordered closed for a week. Work in diamond-cutting factories, textile mills and chemical units came to a halt and attendance in government offices was thin.

The first relief efforts were launched Friday with volunteers and government workers handing out preventive medicines and antibiotics.

At least 100 people have died of the deadly disease, deputy municipal commissioner for health, Saroj Kumar Mohanty, told mid-day newspaper published from Bombay, 270 kilometres from this city.

Earlier press reports said 57 people had died. The Gujarat state government which administers Surat put the

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## PM addresses public meet at Sylhet today

SYLHET, Sept 23: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will address a public meeting tomorrow (Saturday) at the Alia Madrassah ground here at 3 pm, reports UNB.

Begum Zia will arrive here by a Biman flight at 2 pm. She will be accompanied by some ministers, MPs and senior leaders of BNP.

From the Osmany Airport, the Prime Minister will drive straight to the mazar of Hazrat Shahjalal (R) and offer *fateha* there. She will later join the public meeting.

The meeting will also be addressed by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Energy Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Post and Telecommunications Minister Tariqul Islam, State Minister for Social Welfare Fazlur Rahman, central organising secretary Abul Haris Chowdhury, Amanullah Aman MP, Khandaker Abdul Malik MP and other central and local leaders.

Organised by Sylhet district BNP, the meeting will be presided over by its president MA Huq.

## Pakistan keen to buy 40 Mirage bombers from France

PARIS, Sept 23: Pakistan is interested in buying 40 Mirage 2000-5 fighter-bombers from France, Defence Minister Francois Leotard said after a meeting in Islamabad with Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, reports AFP.

Benazir spoke of Pakistan's "urgent need" for the planes and was anxious to visit Paris in the next few weeks to discuss details of the deal, believed to be worth about two billion dollars. Leotard aides said after the meeting Thursday, which lasted more than one hour.

Leotard himself quoted Benazir as saying the acquisition of military aircraft was a "priority" for Pakistan.

On Wednesday, Leotard and Pakistani Defence Minister Aftab Shahab Mirani signed a billion dollar contract for three diesel-powered Agosta 90-B submarines and an unspecified number of sea-to-sea SM-34 missiles, successors to the Exocet.

Leotard aides said the exact amount of a mirage deal had not yet been costed by the plane's makers Dassault, but that it would be around two billion dollars.

Pakistan had already concluded a deal with the United States for F-16 fighters and had made a down payment of 650 million dollars, but the contract was blocked by a US arms embargo against Pakistan.

Romania has its own plant producing heavy water, at Haling some 200 kms (125 miles) west of Bucharest, but sources there said three of its four production units had been closed down for safety checks following reports that several workers had died in accidents there.

"The terms of the deal with India's State Department of Atomic Energy are advantageous for us," Viorol

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## Train carrying Hasina fired at AL-BNP clashes leave 100 hurt at Ishurdi, Natore

NATORE, Sept 23: Gunmen fired shots at the train in which Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina was travelling on a campaign for a neutral, caretaker government through a "train march" in the northern districts today, reports UNB.

Witnesses claimed several gunshots were fired at the inter-city train Rupsha when it reached the Ishurdi and Natore stations this evening. However, Hasina was unhurt.

At least 100 people, some with bullet wounds, were injured during the clashes in Ishurdi and Natore.

The journey of democracy

cannot be stopped by resorting to such armed violence and terrorism ... the people will give an appropriate reply by ousting the autocratic regime of Khaleda," Hasina told her agitated workers and supporters at the violence-ridden Ishurdi and Natore stations.

She said, "We'll be compelled to start one-point 'Oust Khaleda' movement, if ruling BNP ignores the popular demand for caretaker government."

Several bombs were exploded when Hasina was addressing a crowd of about 5,000 people at Ishurdi station from a compartment of the

train. Armed police was deployed at the station.

Witnesses said at least 60 people were injured, some with bullets, when armed activists, allegedly of the BNP, attacked Awami League supporters who were proceeding towards the rail station a few hours before Hasina reached there at about 6:20 pm from the south-western Khulna district.

Police reportedly opened fire to control the situation. The injured included a magistrate and a policeman. Magistrate Tofazzal Hossain and constable Fazlul Haq were

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## Rich patients shift to clinics, poor at mercy

By Staff Correspondent

Doctors at the government hospitals and health complexes continued their strike for the third consecutive day yesterday with more patients leaving the hospitals.

While outdoor patients at the city hospitals failed to draw the attention of doctors yesterday, more indoor patients left those due to deteriorating services.

The indoor departments are exempted from the strike.

The Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) called the indefinite strike to press home a 21-point demand including higher allocation for the health sector, removal of the health secretary, cancellation of vigilance system, withdrawal of suspension order against 12 doctors, more job opportunities and promotions for doctors and increased autonomy

for the medical colleges.

Attendance of doctors at the indoor departments was poor yesterday also. Ward boys, nurses and relatives were found providing emergency services to patients in many cases.

In such a situation, admission of patients to private clinics and hospitals was on the rise. But poor patients remained at the mercy of doctors at the government hospitals as they could not afford the expensive treatment at private clinics.

An estimated 50 thousand patients used to have the services of government hospitals and health complexes across the country a day.

The BMA executive committee will meet today at 2 pm to discuss the situation and

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## DU student dies from bullet injury

By Staff Correspondent

A Dhaka University student, Sarwar Hossain Mithu, died from bullet injury he received near the Fazlul Haq Hall on the campus yesterday.

Mithu, an MSc first-part student of Demography Department, was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) around midnight Thursday with a bullet in his chest. He expired in the early hours today.

Witnesses said, Mithu was wounded in an exchange of gunfire between two groups of students near a pond beside the dormitory building. They said there was an altercation among some students including Mithu earlier during dinner time in the hotel dining room.

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## Soldier shot as Shantibahini attacks patrol

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 23: One soldier was injured when armed Shantibahini men launched a sniper attack on a security patrol this morning at Naniarchar under Rangamati district.

According to official source, Sukkur Ali, 25, received bullet wound when the tribal rebels in violation of a ceasefire, fired on the security patrol from inside a jungle while it was proceeding from Moksud Tila towards Kutubchhari area under Naniarchar thana.

Following the attack the securitymen and the rebels had a brief exchange of fire and later the insurgents fled into deep forest.

## US wants Cedras' exile



Local residents watch as a US Bradley fighting vehicle pulls a Haitian Army 40mm cannon Thursday out of the headquarters of the country's best equipped force.

WASHINGTON, Sept 23: Secretary of State Warren Christopher said today the United States still wants Haiti's military ruler Raoul Cedras to leave Haiti despite his insistence that he will stay in the country after he steps down from office, report Reuters, AFP.

Christopher said on NBC's "Today" television programme that the principal US goal was that Cedras and other military rulers leave office.

"We also think that they will probably want to leave the country after Aristide comes back though leaving Haiti was not part of the agreement worked out between a delegation led by former President Jimmy Carter and Haiti's military rulers," he said.

Meanwhile, US forces took over an Air Force base in Haiti, further extending their control of military facilities there.

Exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's camp in Washington pressed for the departure from the country of General Cedras, who said earlier this week he would step down by October 15 but stay in Haiti.

Aristide, Haiti's first elected leader, was ousted in a 1991 coup led by army commander Gen Raoul Cedras. His restoration and Cedras' ouster are primary aims of the US intervention.

Aristide remains committed to the principles of Governors Island and Resolution 940, which requires the multinational force to use whatever is necessary to have Cedras leave

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## Serbs warned of further NATO air strikes

WASHINGTON, Sept 23: Secretary of State Warren Christopher Thursday warned of more NATO air strikes if Serbs violate exclusion zones in Bosnia or attack United Nations peacekeepers there, reports Reuters.

"We'll see more of it if there is enforcement called for, if there are violations of the exclusion zones or if there are attacks on the UNPROFOR troops," he told reporters adding that "NATO is ready to respond and will respond."

Christopher, speaking as he posed for photographers with Japanese Foreign Minister Yohsei Kono, was reacting to US

and British jets that strafed and bombed a Bosnian tank west of Sarajevo, Thursday in a NATO strike prompted by Serb attacks on UN 'peacekeeping troops.

I think it's a very positive thing that NATO has responded ... the request came from UNPROFOR and the response was quick and determined, he said.

Christopher said all the planes returned from the Radi but he otherwise did not have any after action report.

The bombing was a part of the authorisation that NATO has had to act in response to

requests to enforce the exclusion zones or to protect the UNPROFOR troops, he noted.

AP adds: Bosnia's prime minister on Thursday praised the US government for setting a deadline after which the administration will seek the lifting of an international arms embargo against the embattled country.

"We have a right to defend ourselves and that is why we are very proud of the decision that the Congress and the President have taken, and that is to let the Bosnians defend themselves," said Premier Haris Silajdzic.

## Romania to import heavy water from India

CERNAVODA (Romania), Sept 23: Romania will import 350 tonnes of heavy water from India for its first nuclear power plant expected to come on stream next year, the plant's general manager said today, reports Reuters.

Romania has its own plant producing heavy water, at Haling some 200 kms (125 miles) west of Bucharest, but sources there said three of its four production units had been closed down for safety checks following reports that several workers had died in accidents there.

"The terms of the deal with India's State Department of Atomic Energy are advantageous for us," Viorol

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