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NOTICE

The Daily Star introduces today a new fortnightly feature **Law Page**, dealing with legal matters, on **Page 8**

NEWS BRIEFS

Two killed in road mishaps

Two people, one of them a college student, were killed in separate road accidents in the city yesterday. Tarulata Majumder, 30, wife of Suchitra Majumder was knocked down by a jeep on Biswa Road near Deputy Colony in Mugdipara at 2:30 pm. Tarulata was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where she expired at about 3:30 pm, police and hospital sources said. Sabujbag police arrested the driver of the jeep. In another accident, Ziauddin Bablu, 18, a student of New Model Degree College, was hit by a truck on the tunnel road of Sangsad Bhaban about 12:30 Monday night, reports UNB.

Strike observed at Chhatrak

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Nov 15: A half-day strike was observed at the Chhatrak thana headquarters of Sunamganj district today to press the demand for immediate arrest of the driver of the killer vehicle which caused the deaths of two young men, including a law college student and an expatriate on October 30 last. The All-Party Students Unity called the strike.

4 terrorists held in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Nov 15: Panchajanya police in a drive arrested Sagar, kingpin of the "Aagar Bahini" and his three associates from Burma Colony here last night. According to a police press release today, one pistol was recovered from their possession. They were wanted on several criminal charges including hijacking and toll extraction, reports BSS.

Belgian envoy hosts reception

On the occasion of King's Day, the ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium held a reception in Dhaka yesterday evening at his residence.

APEC to lift trade barriers by 2020

BOGOR (Indonesia), Nov 15: Asia-Pacific leaders agreed here today to achieve free trade among their economies by 2020, with a target of 2010 set for developed countries. But they pledged to remain open to commerce with the rest of the world, reports AFP.

The accord said the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum — a thriving group that already accounts for more than half of the world's output — would launch the liberalisation drive next year.

Developed countries will be asked to scrap tariff barriers by 2010, whereas poorer countries have been given until 2020, said a statement released by the 18-member APEC group after a summit here.

The agreement, announced by Indonesian President Suharto, followed an informal summit in the lush tropical setting of the Bogor Palace south of Jakarta.

It amounted to an apparent victory for champions of trade liberalisation, led by the United States and Australia.

Malaysia had previously held out against a deadline, saying trade liberalisation should be conducted according to national interests.

"We further agree to announce our commitment to complete the achievement of our goal of free and open trade and investment in (the) Asia-Pacific no later than the year 2020," an eight-page, 11-point summit communiqué said.

"The pace of implementation will take into account the differing levels of economic development among APEC economies, with the industrialised economies achieving the goal of free and open trade and investment no later than the year 2010, and developing economies no later than the year 2020."

Suharto, addressing possible concerns elsewhere in the world, said APEC "is not closed... we want to be open, not only to Asia-Pacific countries, but to the world."

APEC countries include the United States and Japan, the world's two most economies.

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Tourism Month opens

By Staff Reporter

A month-long tourism promotion campaign began yesterday with a call for local and foreign investors to take advantage of the incentives being provided for the growth of the industry.

The programme was inaugurated by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the Osmany Memorial Hall in the city.

Addressing the function, Begum Zia urged the local and foreign entrepreneurs to invest in the tourism sector and said the government has been offering lucrative incentives for investments in the sector.

The Prime Minister said the foreign and local investors can make huge profits by investing in this potential sector and utilising the facilities of

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Many feared killed in shelling Serb forces close in on Bihac

SARAJEVO, Nov 15: Bosnian Serb forces, supported by Croatia's rebel Serb artillery, closed in on the embattled Muslim enclave of Bihac today and co-opted local rebel Muslims to help them in the campaign, reports AFP.

The Serb onslaught threatened thousands of civilians and some 1,300 UN peacekeeping troops trapped in the town and pocket, which has been cut off by a Serb blockade on UN food and supply convoys.

Ten surface-to-air missiles slammed into the Muslim-held town of Cazin and surrounding area, a UN protection force (UNPROFOR) spokesman said.

The SA-2 missiles, used as ground artillery, were fired Monday evening from an area to the east of town, controlled by Bosnian Serbs. Major Mohamed Bashir-uddin reported from the UN Bangladeshi headquarters in the enclave.

Sarajevo radio said there had been many casualties, but this could not be immediately confirmed.

The missiles badly damaged at least one building and shattered numerous windows.

BSS adds: When asked to comment about the welfare of Bangladeshi troops in the besieged town of Bihac a spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Dhaka said tonight that they have already contacted the Bangladeshi mission in New York and the mission has confirmed that "UN is

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Opposition scrutinises new BNP formula

By Staff Correspondent

The leaders of the parliamentary opposition yesterday scrutinised the ruling party's latest proposal for an interim multi-party cabinet for holding general elections.

Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim, after a closed-door meeting of the opposition leaders at the Sangsad Bhaban, told newsmen: "We are discussing the latest government formula handed over to Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina by the Commonwealth envoy Sir Ninian Stephen Sunday evening." He, however, declined to give details.

Sources close to the leaders attending yesterday's meeting told The Daily Star late last night that implementation of the government's latest formula would require amendment.

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism M A Mannan (extreme L) and a host of other dignitaries watch a colourful rally of traditional transports of the country featuring horse drawn carriages, bullock carts, palanquins and rickshaws brought out in the city yesterday on the occasion of the Tourism Month '94. — Star photo

British trade team highly impressed

By Staff Correspondent

The business leader of the visiting British trade and investment mission yesterday said that the team members would leave with a 'radically changed' perception of Bangladesh.

"I am confident that our mission would leave with their perception (of Bangladesh) radically changed," said Iain L Dale OBE, while referring to the problem of perception of the team members acquired through the negative coverage of Bangladesh in the international media.

The mission has led to a radical change of the 'minds and attitudes' of the team members, he pointed out.

"Now they realise that the perceptions are unreliable and that reality is much more positive," he added. "That's the real achievement of this mission and it has also created greater interest in this market."

Addressing a press conference at a local hotel he said that companies represented in the mission signed at least three contracts in Bangladesh during the visit.

He found very little evidence of the general perception of aid dependency. Dale said, instead he found a very pro-active attitude among government officials and representatives of the private sector.

"It is evident that Bangladesh is a country where the

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British export credit cover for Bangladesh

By Staff Correspondent

The British Export Credit Guarantee Department (ECGD) has extended normal medium and long-term export credit cover for Bangladesh, according to an announcement by the British High Commission in Dhaka yesterday.

Prior to this, ECGD was only prepared to consider support exceptionally.

"The more relaxed policy follows a growing interest in the market by UK capital goods exporters and a review which highlighted the authorities' achievements in recent years in reducing inflation, debt service and fiscal deficit," the statement said.

ECGD is Britain's official export credit insurer. It is a

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Gunfight, looting of ballot boxes mar Nepalese polls

KATHMANDU, Nov 15: Police firing, clashes and looting of ballot boxes marred Nepal's legislative elections today and a government source said polling would have to be repeated at some voting centres, reports AFP, AP.

Some 100,000 troops and police, together with 74,000 Election Commission staff, were on duty to guard polling stations. But despite sporadic incidents, the elections were held in an atmosphere of general calm.

One person was killed and three injured in intra-party gunfight while at least 74 people were arrested during the one-day mid-term polls, police sources said. Of those arrested, 34 were charged with voting on someone else's behalf.

Officials said police arrested 20 people in the Kabre district and Ropla for looting ballot boxes at two polling stations.

Voting had to be suspended at three locations southwest of the capital because of factional violence, and a Home Ministry source said repolling may be held at 40 polling centres.

One policeman was injured when rioters threw a crude bomb — a tin pot packed with explosives and glass pieces — outside a polling station in Dhanusha constituency, 140 kilometres southeast of Kathmandu.

Political analysts said today's voting is unlikely to yield a clear majority. Final results will not be known until at least Friday.

Today's voting was the second in Nepal since a popular uprising in 1990 forced the country's monarch, King Birendra, to transfer powers to an elected parliament.

The main contenders for power are the centrist Nepali Congress Party and the leftist parties, who form a loose alliance in Parliament.

Analysts say, Nepali Congress is expected to emerge as single largest majority.

The only party that looks

PM to visit Maldives Nov 23-24

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will pay a two-day official visit to the Maldives November 23-24 to talk SAARC and bilateral issues with President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, reports UNB.

This will be the second in a series of tours to the SAARC countries which Begum Zia is undertaking in her capacity as chairperson of the seven-nation South Asian forum.

According to an official announcement made yesterday, Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman and senior government officials will accompany the Prime Minister to the island-country.

During the visit, Begum Zia will hold official talks with President Gayoom, covering matters concerning SAARC and bilateral, regional and international issues, the announcement said.

Expansion of bilateral trade, economic cooperation, manpower export and other issues of common interest are likely to be included in the agenda.

Hasina threatens non-stop hartal

GAIBANDHA, Nov 15: Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina today demanded elections for at least three terms under a neutral caretaker government to ensure people's voting right and political stability in the country ending the current unrest, reports UNB.

"We'll be compelled to announce non-stop hartal for 54 hours to 72 hours and, if needed, we will go for 7 days continuous agitation programme to paralyse the whole administration and realise the people's demand," she said.

The Awami League president was addressing public meetings and wayside rallies in Bogra and Gaibandha districts on the second day of her visit to North Bengal.

"The government gave the proposal for fifty-fifty share of power, but we rejected it... Our politics is not aimed at sharing power," she said, adding this corrupt and inefficient government is busy protecting its power and interest ignoring people's right.

Hasina said there was no security of people's life and vote under BNP, which she alleged resorted to massive rigging in different by-elections and even rigged the vote of a dead person, Rowshan Ali, MP, of Jessore.

Talking to local journalists at Bogra Circuit House Hasina said the prospect of the Commonwealth-brokered dialogue depended on the attitude of the ruling party. "Dialogue would be successful if the government shuns its obstinacy and comes to terms."

Asked about resignation of opposition parliamentarians, Hasina said Sir Ninian had requested her not to give any ultimatum at the moment. "So, we are waiting."

She, however, hastened to add "at one stage, we may have to submit the resignation letters. In this context, she blamed the government for making the parliament ineffective."

Anti-Terrorism (Spl Provision) Bill placed in JS

The Anti-Terrorism (Special Provision) Bill 1994 was introduced in Parliament yesterday, reports UNB.

Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury introduced the bill aimed at disposing of cases filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act on or before the expiry of the Act, the tough short term law which was enacted two years back to deal with growing acts of violence.

The law enacted in 1992 for at least two years expired on November 5, 1994.

Earlier, the government party decided not to extend the time of the act.

JCD places 5-pt demand to end CU crisis

CHITTAGONG, Nov 15: Chittagong University chapter of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) today placed five-point demand to end the present crisis on the campus, reports BSS.

Addressing a press conference at the press club here this afternoon Mahbubur Rahman Shamim, assistant general secretary of CUCCSU and chapter president blamed the Islamic Chhatra Shibir for creating present stalemate on the university campus.

He urged the authorities of Chittagong University to expel the accused activists of Shibir in connection with the killing of Nurul Huda Musa immediately.

He pointed out that the hall-based terrorist activities by Shibir workers was repeatedly hindering the congenial academic atmosphere on the campus. He called upon the authorities to close down all male hostels to pave the way for opening the university.

PCJSS agrees to sit with govt Dec 12

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 15: The Parbatyia Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) has agreed to hold the next round of peace talks with the government on December 12 at Dudukchhari, border village under Panchhari thana of Khagrachhari district, a highly-placed source said.

The PCJSS, in a letter, has also demanded release before November 30 of its 8 activists who were arrested on different occasions.

Teesta is now their sorrow

By Nazmul Ashraf, back from Lalmonirhat

The Teesta river has eroded 48 bighas of farm lands and the homestead of Nazrul Islam of Balapara village under Mahishkhocha union.

He could, however, save the tin-roofed structures and the household goods with which he has now settled at Gobardhan village of the same union.

Once a well off farmer, Nazrul is now a small trader. "Like us, at least 300 rich farmers of this union are more or less affected by the unabated erosion by the Teesta," he said.

Five poor families, who also lost everything because of erosion by the Teesta, have made thatched houses on portion of Nazrul's newly-purchased one bigha of land.

"We are again planning to shift our houses from the present location as the river is now only a few hundred yards away," Nazrul said.

Abdur Rahman, Maqbul Hossain, Hassan Ali and many others of Gobardhan village are now landless due to continued erosion by the Teesta.

Mahishkhocha and Palassy unions of Aditmari thana and Rajpur and Khuniagach of sadar thana of Lalmonirhat district are the hardest-hit by both the erosion and the drought.

According to unofficial sources, the Teesta has been eroding homesteads and farm lands in a 20-km long area along its eastern bank affecting hundreds of villagers in the four unions every year. These people were moving to other areas of the district and also migrating to other parts of the northern region. In Mahishkhocha union alone, the Teesta swallowed one, high school, four primary schools, seven madrasahs, 19 mosques and hundreds of homesteads since the erosion began in the late eighties. The river started changing its course towards the east since a dam in the western side was built to protect the Haragach industrial belt of Rangpur in 1986, said Chairman of Khuniagachh

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This photograph, taken a few days ago, shows a group of children gazing in bewilderment at the spot where until some hours earlier a village had stood in Mahish Gocha of Lalmonirhat district. The Teesta has devoured vast areas along its banks in the region. — Star photo by A K M Mohsin

Quake kills 45 in Philippines

CALAPAN, Philippines, Nov 15: Hundreds of people who survived a typhoon in their seaside villages last month gave up and fled the area today after a strong earthquake and a tidal wave destroyed everything they had left on their central Philippine island, reports AP.

Carrying bags of food and clothing on their heads and shoulders, at least 450 people walked down tar roads with huge cracks left in them by the quake that struck before dawn.

At least 45 people were killed on the northern coast of Mindoro Island, 135 injured and eight left missing, and as many as 200 homes were destroyed, said Rodolfo Valencia, one of its two governors. Most of the deaths came in the 5-foot tall tidal wave.

Yuji Murata, 41, a scientist studying orchids for the Japanese government, was trapped by landslides along with three Filipino guides on a 5,000-foot mountain, local people said.

The quake struck the island's Oriental Mindoro province the day it planned to celebrate the 44th anniversary of its founding, and people planning a parade spent the day helping survivors.

When the quake struck at 3:15 a.m., it was felt throughout the central and southern Philippines and rocked skyscrapers and tall hotels in Manila, 75 miles north of the epicentre. But no damage or injuries were reported very far outside the quake zone.

Throughout the day, several of the 888 aftershocks jarred Mindoro Island again, startling many residents.

"We are afraid of the sea," said Francisca Pascua, 48, as she walked towards two shelters that were quickly set up in a high school gym and on a hilly field near a hospital in the town of Calapan. She was with her four daughters and two grandchildren.

Many other shellshocked people also fled Malayay, the hardest hit village, where at least 25 people died.