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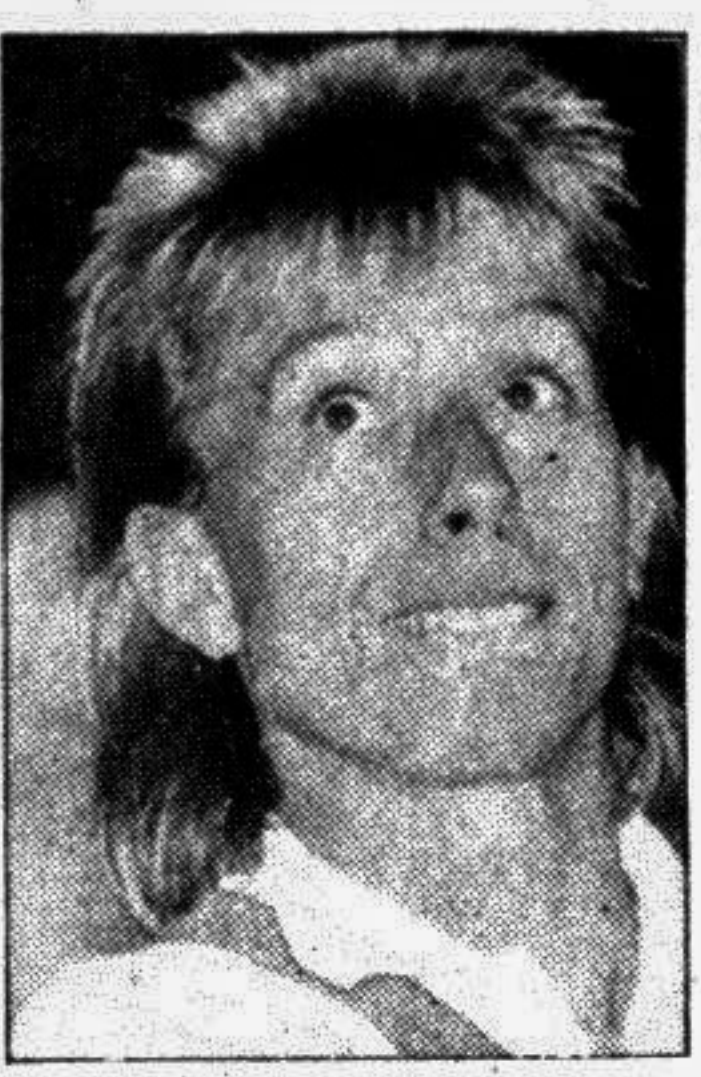
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## End of an era: Navratilova takes final bow

NEW YORK, Nov 16: The career of the greatest woman tennis player ever to pick up a racket ended on Tuesday night when Gabriela Sabatini spoiled Martina Navratilova's Madison Square Garden retirement party with an overpowering first-round victory at the Virginia Slims Championships, reports Reuters.

The air of electricity at the Garden was more fitting of a heavyweight title fight than a tennis match. But if the 38-year-old Navratilova took any inspiration from George Foreman's unlikely victory at 45, it did not translate into her strokes on Tuesday.

On the blue carpet court See Page 12 Col 5

**25 hurt as soccer fans, players clash at N'ganj**

From Our Correspondent  
 NARAYANGANJ, Nov 16: At least 25 persons were injured in clashes between the players and supporters of two teams during a match of the Hanjin shipping first division football league at the Osmani stadium here this evening.

Officials, players and fans of the two teams -- Suktara Junior Kriachakra and Khanpur Mohsin Club -- were locked in See Page 12 Col 4

## HC declares promotion of BCS officials illegal

By Staff Correspondent

A special bench of the High Court yesterday declared the government notifications issued in 1992 relating to the promotion of a group of Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) cadre officials as illegal and made without lawful authority.

Acting on two separate writ petitions, filed individually by two government officials, the 3-member bench made the rule absolute by a 2-1 majority.

The petitions challenged two government notifications dated February 8, 1992 concerning the promotion of 192 BCS officials from the post of deputy secretary to the rank of joint secretary and 450 from senior assistant secretary to the rank of deputy secretary.

However, upon a government prayer, the court stayed the operation of its judgement for eight weeks while the High Court Division certified it as a case fit for appeal to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

After a hearing lasting 22 working days the judgement was delivered in another six working days.

The senior member of the bench, Justice Mohammad Ismail Uddin Sarker, ruled the government's promotion order as legal while Justice Naimuddin Ahmed and Justice Mohammad Hamidul Huq ruled that the notifications for promotion were illegal and issued without lawful authority.

The petitioners, Shafuluddin Ahmed, a Deputy Secretary at the Ministry of Industries, and Sheikh Mozhar Uddin, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) at Mymensingh, challenged the notifications alleging that it was done without any basis and guideline and superseding some senior officers and as such the promotion orders were made arbitrarily.

The petitions were initially heard by a Division Bench comprising Justice Anwarul Huq Chowdhury and Justice K M Hasan, which issued a rule upon the government. Another Division Bench, after hearing the case for three days, sent it to the Chief Justice for setting up a special bench while observing that the case involved the Constitution and as such was of public importance.

The petitions were filed on behalf of the petitioners by Barrister Amrul Islam.

The identical petitions also See Page 12 Col 6



Khishna Gopal Shrestha, the Nepal Communist Party — United Marxist and Leninist party candidate from Kathmandu constituency flashes a victory sign yesterday after early results showed he won a parliament seat in Tuesday's elections. — AFP photo

## Opposition gives only lip service: Khaleda

DEBIDWAR (Comilla), Nov 16: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today alleged that the Opposition was giving only lip service to democracy, reports UNB.

"They talk about democracy and the rights of the people but they do not believe in them," she said at a public meeting at the Debidwar High School ground this afternoon.

Indicating at the Awami League, the Prime Minister said some opposition parties again joined hands with the autocratic forces that plundered public wealth and ruined the country.

Pointing to different development projects being implemented by the present government, she said the BNP's programmes aimed at the people's welfare. "We believe in politics of production and development. The people and the soil of the country are the source of powers of the BNP," she added.

The Opposition, unnerved by the government's development activities and popularity, are trying to create indiscipline in national life, she added.

Begum Zia blamed the Opposition for creating unnecessary crisis and reaffirmed that her government would not bow down to any illogical demand. She reiterated the government's sincerity in resolving the crisis through dialogue.

The Prime Minister stressed the need for strengthening the election process and said steps had been taken to issue identity cards for voters to ensure proper voting.

Referring to some local demands, Begum Zia said they would be solved in phases.

She assured that the Kalikapur bridge over the Gumti river will be built soon, the local 31-bed General Hospital will be upgraded to 50-bed and a BSCIC industrial estate will be set up in Debidwar.

## CP takes early lead in Nepalese polls

KATHMANDU, Nov 16: The opposition Nepal-Communist Party-United Marxist and Leninist (NCP-UML) took an early lead over the ruling Nepali Congress (NC) today, as the first results of parliamentary elections trickled in, reports AFP.

The NCP-UML bagged 10 of the 16 seats declared so far out of 205 in parliament, and was reportedly leading in 35 other constituencies.

In the capital the opposition party had taken six of the seven seats up for grabs and looked set for a clean sweep.

Of the other declared seats two went to another communist faction, three to the rightist Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) and one to the NC, the Election Commission said.

The NC was leading in 11 constituencies and the RPP in 10. As predicted by analysts, the NCP-UML was comfortably ahead in the Kathmandu valley area -- which includes Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur -- where 136 candidates contested 12 seats.

In Kathmandu, NCP-UML chairman Man Mohan Adhikari, who contested from two constituencies, has already won a seat. He is tipped to become Prime Minister if his party wins a majority.

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, who also contested two seats, was leading the NCP-UML candidate in southeastern Morang district, but was trailing in nearby Sunsari.

In the absence of formal opinion polls, most analysts felt that no party would be able to secure a sufficient majority to form a government, some analysts say the NC would have to enter into a coalition with the royalist RPP if it is to retain power.

But in the capital, where communists enjoy strong support, demonstrators were already taking a communist victory for granted and organised victory parades.

## Opposition parties meet today to prepare reply to BNP formula

By Staff Correspondent

The opposition parties in Parliament will meet today and hold consultations with Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina about the latest government proposal to prepare their reply to it.

Competent sources indicated the Opposition was 'almost prepared' with their own proposal for ending the present political crisis to be communicated to Sir Ninian Stephen.

Awami League sources said political advisor to Sheikh Hasina S A M S Kibria met the Commonwealth emissary twice yesterday for exploratory or preparatory talks in the continuing dialogue process.

Kibria met Sir Ninian at around noon and later Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad and he met him again at around 6.30 pm yesterday.

## NEWS BRIEFS

- PM's meeting at Sirajdikhan today**  
 MUNSHIGANJ, Nov 16: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will address a public meeting tomorrow afternoon at the Rajdia Pilot High School ground in Sirajdikhan thana. After the meeting, Begum Zia will distribute cattle and poultry birds among the distressed people, reports UNB.
- 2000 flats for govt staff under process**  
 Construction of 2000 flats for government employees in Dhaka is now under process. Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Mia said in Parliament yesterday. Replying to Neyamatullah (BNP), he said tender for 1000 flats had been invited while for the remaining 1000 would be floated soon, reports UNB.
- 3 houses gutted in Manikganj**  
 MANIKGANJ, Nov 16: Three dwelling houses were gutted in a devastating fire at Jhariyabak village in Shibbalaya thana today. Witnesses said two people were injured and property worth about Tk 1.30 lakh damaged in the fire originated from a kitchen in the afternoon, reports UNB.
- Three killed in road accidents**  
 SAVAR, Nov 16: Three people were killed and 30 injured in road accidents on the Dhaka-Aricha highway today. Police said two people, including a microbus driver, were killed when a truck rammed the microbus at Hemayetpur on the road at about 10 am. In another mishap, Sakina, 14, was killed and 30 other passengers were injured when a Dhamrai-bound minibus fell into a roadside ditch in front of Kafil filling station at about 3 pm, reports UNB.
- Farmer slaughtered**  
 SAVAR, Nov 16: A middle-aged farmer was kidnapped and killed by miscreants at village Baitola in Satoria thana of Manikganj district Tuesday night. Police said some unidentified people called Mohammad Hanif, 45, out of his house and slaughtered him in a lemon garden near the village, reports UNB.



Bosnian female government soldiers practice on the outskirts of Sarajevo Tuesday last to prepare themselves to reinforce their troops along the frontlines in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is the first time that Bosnian women practise the full range of training in preparation to join the army. — AFP photo

## High-level meet reviews Bihac situation

A high-level meeting at the Foreign Ministry yesterday reviewed the latest situation in the embattled Bihac enclave of Bosnia where a Bangladeshi army contingent is currently deployed under UN command, reports UNB.

The meeting held with Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman in the chair, was attended by high civil and military officials.

An official announcement said the meeting was informed that the Foreign Office and the army headquarters were in constant touch with the UN-PROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) headquarters in New York and the Bangladeshi contingent in Bihac.

All members of the Bangladeshi contingent currently in Bihac are safe and sound and their morale is high," said the announcement.

It said the United Nations had assured that Bangladeshi troops and other UN personnel See Page 12 Col 3

## Country has 30 lakh retarded children

By Staff Correspondent

Some 30 lakh children in Bangladesh are physically and mentally impaired, half of them disabled, according to some eminent paediatricians.

The 1905 Lunacy Act, which was enacted by the British colonial masters, is still in force in the country, they pointed out, adding that there was an urgent need to rehabilitate and integrate the retarded children in the mainstream of society.

Organisers of a regional seminar on childhood disability revealed this information at a press conference in the capital yesterday.

Quoting from a recent survey on 10,000 children aged between two and nine years, they said a large number of those diagnosed retarded were gradually becoming disabled for lack of proper care.

Due to malnutrition, iodine deficiency and lack of attention during birth, our children are becoming disabled... We cannot provide them with care and services they need," said a renowned paediatrician, Dr Sultana S Zaman, Chairman of the Special Education Department, Dhaka University.

"It is still a vast no-man's land where nobody has ever given due attention," added Dr Naila Z Khan, a consultant with the Child Development Centre of the Shishu Hospital.

The press conference was organised ahead of the 3-day regional seminar which will begin on December 3.

The Department of Special Education, Dhaka University, the Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation and the Child Development Centre, Shishu Hospital are jointly organising the seminar which is likely to be attended by more than 300 participants from home and abroad.

Sixty-five experts in the See Page 12 Col 3

## Bhasani's death anniversary today

By Staff Correspondent

The 18th death anniversary of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani will be observed today.

Bhasani, a popular leader of his time, always fought for the cause of the toiling masses throughout his career that began against colonial British rule in India.

He was imprisoned many times for his uncompromising stand against unjust and autocratic rule.

See Page 12 Col 5

## Lashing of teenaged girl Speaker asks Home Minister for report

By Staff Correspondent

The Speaker yesterday asked the Home Minister to inform Parliament whether the police had sued the 'fatwabaaz' who lashed 80 times teenaged Hazera of Kurigram in September.

The issue came up in the House when Farida Rahman of the treasury bench called the attention of the home minister to the reported lashing of Hazera for her failure to produce any witnesses to testify that she had been raped.

In her notice, Farida Rahman said that usually rape is not committed in the presence of others. "How can a victim of rape produce witnesses to such an inhuman incident?" she asked. The government should, take effective measures to stop issuance of fatwas (religious decrees) against women, she said.

Making a statement on the See Page 12 Col 1

## Over hundred shops, houses gutted in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Nov 16: A devastating fire broke out at Balaichari Bazar under Rangamati district gutted over hundred shops and dwelling houses in the early hours of today, reports BSS.

According to district administration and eyewitnesses, at least 15 persons were injured in the fire.

The fire originating from one of the shops around 3.15 am instantly engulfed the entire bazar. The panick-stricken people who were sleeping inside the shops cried for help and ran helter skelter, the sources said.

The extent of damage was estimated at about Tk two crore, unofficial sources said.

The firemen could not reach the spot because of its remoteness, the sources further said.

## Hasina rejects new BNP plan for interim govt

PEERGANJ (Rangpur), Nov 16: Sheikh Hasina today outright rejected the ruling party offer of a multiparty interim government as an alternative to the Opposition demand for a neutral caretaker one to conduct elections, reports UNB.

"An all-party government can in no way be alternative to a caretaker government... We do not want share in power, we want to establish the rights of the people," the Awami League chief and the Leader of the Opposition told a big rally here.

Pledging her party's decisive struggle for elections under a neutral non-party caretaker government, the Opposition leader repeated her argument that at least three parliamentary elections should be held under caretaker government.

"Only then corruption and terrorism would go and peace and stability settle in, and thus comes development," said Hasina, who today concluded her three-day trip to the North Bengal.

Earlier, addressing a series of rallies, including one each at Palashbari and Tulshighat, Hasina renewed her call for intensifying the current agitation to force the government to move out making room for a caretaker government.

The Awami League President charged the ruling party with corruption and election See Page 12 Col 2

## 2 JU students injured in gang attack

By JU Correspondent

Two students of the Jahangirnagar University (JU) were injured, one of them seriously, Tuesday night when some unruly youths attacked them near the Public Administration Training Centre (PATC) at Savar.

The victims, Shawkat Kabir Dipu and Golam Sarwar Babu, were attacked by 9-10 youths with sharp weapons and sticks while they were waiting for a bus for going to Dhaka at about 9 pm. Savar thana police deployed near the PATC rushed to the spot and rescued the victims.

Police managed to arrest three students of Savar College — Manik, Mukhtar and Polish — from the spot for their alleged involvement in the incident. Both the victims were rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Dipu, now under treatment at the intensive care unit, is in a critical condition. Babu was released after primary treatment.

According to sources, the incident was a sequel to the long-running rivalry between two factions of the JU Unit of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD). The two factions, known as 'locals' meaning students from Savar and the adjoining areas and 'non-locals' or students from other parts of See Page 12 Col 1



Dhaka University students seen on the campus during student strike yesterday. — Star photo