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NEWS BRIEFS

Khaleda visits ailing MP

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited ailing BNP leader Keramat Ali MP at the PG Hospital yesterday evening. Begum Zia inquired about the condition of the MP and passed sometimes there. She instructed the attending physicians to ensure his proper treatment, reports UNB.

Relief for fire victims demanded

Awami League president Sheikh Hasina has resented the government for not sending any relief materials to the people affected recently by a devastating fire at Ghaor Bazar in Kotalipara thana of Gopalganj district. In a statement yesterday, Hasina renewed her demand for sending immediate relief and help to the fire victims. She also urged the government to provide soft-term loans for the small traders who were severely affected by the fire on June 19, reports UNB.

ERF's dialogue with Saifur tomorrow

The Economic Reporters' Forum (ERF), an organisation of financial reporters, has arranged a dialogue with Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman at 3 pm tomorrow at the Jatiya Press Club, reports UNB.

Iran Broadcasting chief due today

Dr Ali Larijani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, arrives in the city today leading a four-member delegation on a three-day official visit to Bangladesh. During his stay, Dr Larijani, who is holding a ministerial rank, will have official talks with M Shamsul Islam, reports BSS.

Egypt masses troops on Sudanese border

CAIRO, June 30: Egypt has reinforced its troops on the Sudanese border and the Sudanese cabinet held an emergency meeting to discuss the deteriorating relations between the two neighbours, reports Reuter.

The row that set off the fierce war of words of the past few days began after Cairo accusing Khartoum of being implicated in an attempt to kill President Hosni Mubarak earlier this week.

Egyptian and Sudanese forces clashed in the disputed Halaib triangle near the Red Sea on Tuesday and on Thursday Mubarak ordered 70 Sudanese policemen to leave posts they had been holding inside what Egypt says is Egyptian territory.

In Khartoum Major General Mohammed Abdalla Oweida, head of the Sudanese parliament's security and Defence Committee, told par-

liament on Thursday, Egyptian troops had made unusual movement in the area, a bone of contention of decades.

Egypt stepped up its military presence there to include a mechanised infantry unit, and airborne unit and a border guard detachment, he said.

His account corroborated reports by Egyptian security sources that Egyptian military convoys were heading south towards the border on Wednesday.

Sudanese radio later reported that an emergency cabinet meeting chaired by President Omar Hassan al-Bashir took unspecified decision to deal with the crisis.

The cabinet condemned the activities of Sudanese dissidents in exile who have taken advantage of the crisis to muster international support for a change of government in Khartoum.

It accused Cairo of using Sudan as a scapegoat to divert attention from domestic opposition by Muslim militant groups seeking to overthrow the government.

Ever since the assassination attempt in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa on Monday, the Egyptian authorities have been emphasising a possible Sudanese link.

Mubarak has allowed his supporters to whip up a frenzy of nationalise centred on his personality.

In three speeches on Thursday to groups of people congratulating him on his escape he criticised Sudanese Islamic leader Hassan al-Turabi and spoke of possible action against the Sudanese government.

He described Sudanese ruler as the gang on our border and said the man behind the assassination plan, whom

Yeltsin sacks 3 security ministers

MOSCOW, June 30: President Boris Yeltsin fired three top security ministers today on the eve of a crucial no-confidence vote in parliament, shaking up his Cabinet to defuse Russia's worst political crisis in two years, reports AP.

Dismissed were three men who had offered under pressure to quit the previous day - Interior Minister Viktor Yerin, Federal Security Service chief Sergei Stepashin and Deputy Prime Minister Nikolai Yegorov.

Pavel Grachev, Yeltsin's embattled defence minister, apparently survived the high-level purge.

The moves all but guaranteed the failure of Saturday's no-confidence vote in the State Duma or lower house of parliament - a vote that already had been expected to fizzle.

Yeltsin's press secretary Sergei Medvedev had said

Dissolve parliament immediately: AL

The Awami League Central Working Committee (ALCWC) yesterday said the only way to overcome the present political crisis is to immediately dissolve the 'one-party parliament' and hold elections under a non-partisan neutral caretaker government, reports UNB.

The meeting chaired by Sheikh Hasina at the party central office at Bangabandhu Avenue adopted a resolution demanding resignation of the government 90 days before the general election.

The resolution said after the resignation of some 147 Opposition MPs on December 28 last year the Speaker gave a ruling against the resignation violating the Constitution.

This government is hatching conspiracy to kill democracy, the meeting alleged saying it was pushing the country towards destruction by ignoring the popular demand for a caretaker govern-

ment and by running Parliament with one party.

The meeting observed that the right to vote of the people could not be ensured without the caretaker government. The ruling party rigged elections, killed voters and failed to ensure the security to voters' life, said the resolution.

A free and fair election is not possible under the BNP government, it said.

"This government has lost its credibility to the people. It has further deepened the political crisis by violating the Constitution repeatedly."

The ruling party has snatched people's right to vote and food and pushed the country towards a severe crisis, said the resolution.

The meeting expressed concern over the price hike of essentials including rice, edible oil, salt, baby food and paper and condemned the failure of the government in controlling price spiral.

Legal experts attend BNP meeting

By Staff Correspondent

A special meeting of senior BNP ministers and leaders were held at the Prime Minister's office last night to discuss the issue of absentee Opposition members' seats in Parliament, it was learnt reliably.

Presided over by the Prime Minister at her Tejgaon office, the meeting was learnt to have been attended by some legal and constitutional experts.

The outcome of the meeting that continued for over three hours could not be known immediately.

UNB adds: Sources said the meeting discussed various options including sending the issue to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court under the Article 106 to seek its opinion.

The BNP leaders were learnt to have conveyed the experts opinion to the Prime Minister.

As per Article 67 (1) (b) of



The seized rickshaws at the DCC garage at Aga Sadek Road in the city. — Star photo

DCC may destroy 7000 seized rickshaws

By Asiuzzaman

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) is waiting for an order from 'higher authorities' to destroy some 7,000 unlicensed rickshaws seized from the capital under its special drive during the past four months.

The seized rickshaws, now dumped at the DCC's workshop at the Aga Sadek road "will be crushed as soon as we get the order from higher authorities," a senior DCC official told The Daily Star yesterday.

Such seized rickshaws were auctioned off in the past "but this time we have decided to crush those by bulldozer," he said.

The drive is on and will be intensified from today. "We seized 7000 rickshaws but the operation had impact on 70,000 rickshaws. Now we are planning to raid rickshaw garages across the city."

The decision to seize unlicensed rickshaws was decided jointly by the DCC and the

Fertiliser to be exported to Nepal under spl order

By Reaz Ahmad

The government has made a special authorisation for sale of 20,000 metric tons (MT) of urea to Nepal despite an existing ban on the export of fertilizer, imposed earlier this year following a crisis in the country.

Negotiations between the Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) and the Agricultural Input Corporation (AIC) of Nepal is on and an agreement could be drawn within a few days.

Nepalese government had made request for fertilizer to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia during her visit to that country last month, Akhter Kamal, Director (Commercial) of the BCIC told The Daily Star.

There is a reserve of 1,62,000 MT of urea in the country now and export of the aforesaid amount will in no way affect the domestic requirement, he said.

Country's six fertilizer factories produced 18,51,577 MT of urea from July last year

Jute-textile workers plan 5-day strike from today

By Staff Correspondent

The workers and employees of private sector jute and textile mills plan to begin a 5-day strike this morning to press their 8-point demand including implementation of the wages commission award.

The action council of workers-employees of jute mills, the coordination committee of the CBAs of private sector jute and textile mills, the Bangladesh textile workers-employees federation and the Bangladesh textile

Int'l Cooperatives Day today

The International Day of Cooperatives will be observed in the country as elsewhere in the world today, reports UNB.

In December 1992, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the first Saturday of July 1995 to be the UN International Day of Cooperatives, marking the

Ershad scheduled to be produced in court today

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, June 30: The hearing of the Gen Manzur murder case is scheduled to resume in the Court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate here tomorrow.

Earlier, CID investigators submitted charge-sheets on June 28 implicating former president H M Ershad and four retired army officers.

According to sources here all preparations have been made to produce Ershad before the CMM's court.

Informed sources in Dhaka, however, said that due to lack of adequate security measures, it was unlikely that the former president would be brought to Chittagong tomorrow.

The IC Prisons, when contacted, said he was unaware of any arrangements for producing the former president at the CMM's court in Chittagong.

The CMM had earlier issued production and custody warrants against Ershad and Lt Col (rtd) Kamal Uddin Ahmed, asking the Dhaka Central Jail authorities to escort them to Chittagong for appearance in court Saturday.

Among the five charge-sheeted accused, Maj General Abdul Latif, Col Shamsur Rahman and Major Emdadul Huq - all retired - had already appeared before the

Floods damage crops on 3.5 lakh acres

Star Report

The recent floods caused severe damage to standing crops on at least three lakh 50 thousand acres of land in 17 districts.

According to reports available in Dhaka, the damaged crops included mostly aus and aman paddy besides jute and vegetables.

Official sources said the government has so far recorded damage of crops on three lakh 33 thousand acres of land. The figure may go up when detailed reports of damages are available from the districts, the sources added.

The quantity of standing crops damaged during the floods is yet to be estimated.

The districts where the loss of crops is heavy are: Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Sylhet, Sirajganj, Pabna, Madaripur and Tangail.

In Sunamganj, crops on 43 thousand acres were totally damaged and on 10 thousand acres partially damaged.

Crops on over 50 thousand acres were damaged in Moulvibazar. Of this, paddy and some other crops on 20 thousand acres were fully damaged.

Reports available from Sirajganj said that aus and aman paddy and jute on over 40 thousand acres were severely damaged while crops on 37 thousand acres in Pabna were also damaged.

Forty-five thousand acres of agricultural land in Madaripur were inundated by the recent floods, causing extensive damage to crops.

Latest official estimates showed that about 24 lakh people were affected by the floods that washed away 42 thousand dwellings and damaged about one lakh 40 thousand houses.

Besides, 140-km of embankments, about 3400-km of roads and 65 bridges and culverts were damaged by the floods.

Walkout marks concluding day of DU Senate meet

By DU Correspondent

The three-day annual session of the Dhaka University Senate ended yesterday.

The DU budget for fiscal '95-96, presented at the Senate meeting Thursday, was passed yesterday.

The election of four syndicate members was also held at the concluding session.

Prof Mustafizur Rahman, Prof Shafiqur Rahman, Mainul Hossain were elected as distinguished educationist, registered graduate's representative and prominent citizen respectively.

Prof A H M Mahbubur Rahman was elected member of finance committee.

Forty-three Senate members were present at the time of election.

Earlier, 40 members walked out of the session on the concluding day.

Boom in DSE trading: Share prices up by 66pts in June

By Sharier Khan

The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) witnessed a boom in trading last week while its market capitalisation shot up by Tk 2.66 billion.

A record volume worth a record amount of Taka of trading marked the five-day DSE week.

From the first day of the month of June, the all share price index went up by nearly 66 points. It shot up by 17.66 points or 2.27 per cent to 776.87 points at the closing of the week from previous week's 759.20. The DSE had been witnessing a prolonged bearish trend from February till the first week of June.

A total of 23,17,946.75 shares and debentures worth Tk 26,73,30,391.90 were traded last week against 13,37,256 shares and debentures worth Tk 16,43,79,643.50 in the previous week.

The daily average number of shares traded last week increased to 4.63 lakh from the previous week's 2.22 lakh.

The daily average value of trading increased by nearly

Rathajatra celebrated

DHAMRAI, June 30: Thousands of devotees gathered here today to celebrate 'Rathajatra', a traditional festival of the Hindu community, reports UNB.

The devotees of Sri Sri Jashomadhav, coming from different parts of the country, took part in various religious rites wearing saffron clothes.

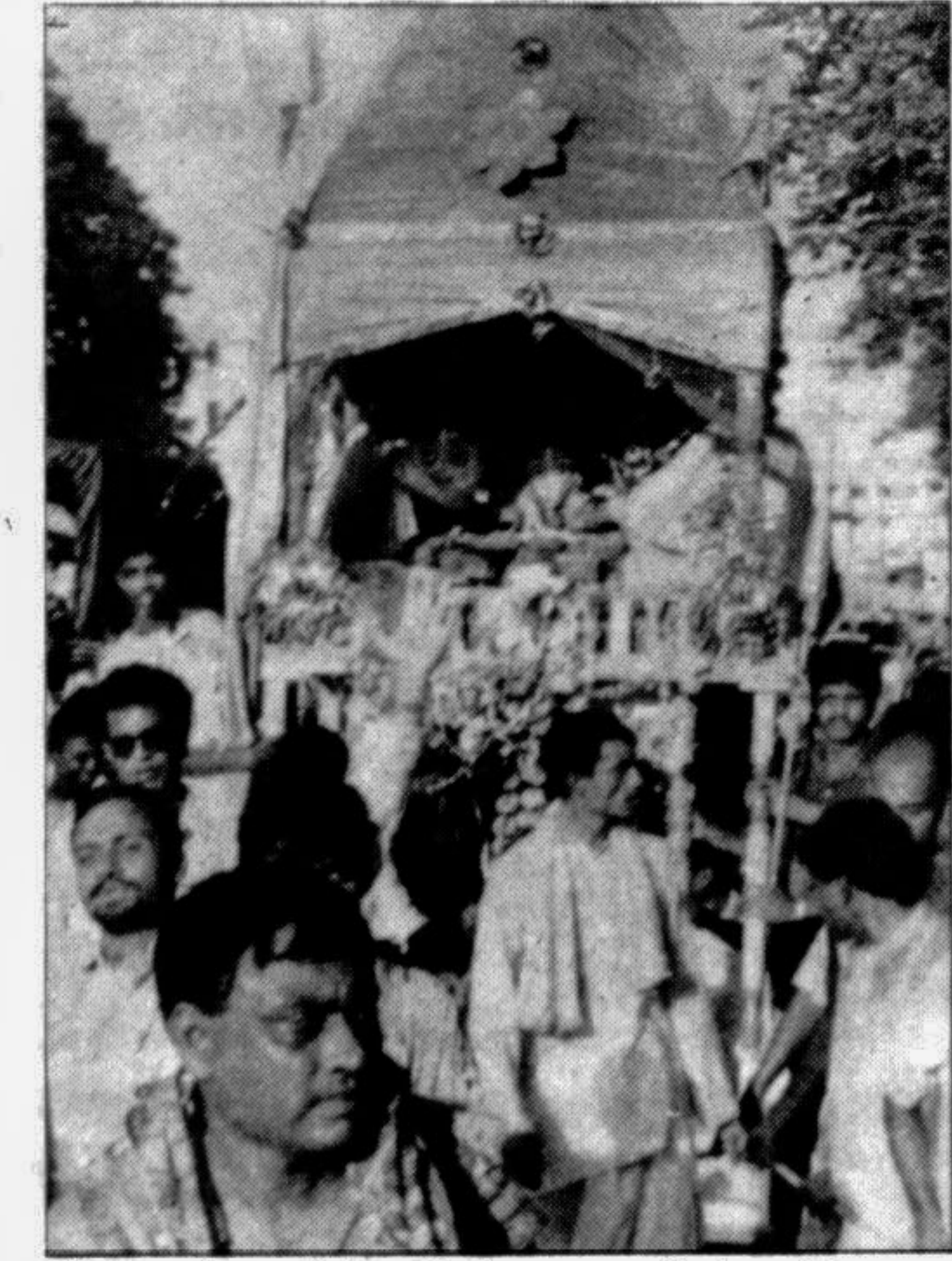
Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury inaugurated the main programme of the festival here in the afternoon.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister urged all to maintain the harmony now prevailing among different religious communities of the country at any cost.

He said peace and stability can be maintained in the society by pursuing the religious edicts.

The Home Minister assured that the government would take necessary steps to rebuild the age-old 'Rath' of Dharmrai, which was destroyed by the Pakistani army in 1971.

Presided over by Justice Debesh Bhattacharjee, the inaugural function was also addressed by local MPs Ziaur



The members of the Hindu community brought out a Rathajatra procession in the city yesterday. — Star photo

BCL factions trade shots at DU hall: 1 hurt

By DU Correspondent

A student of Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University was injured in a gunbattle between rival factions of Chhatra League at the hall late night Thursday.

Sudhangsu Biswas, a fresher, was caught in the cross-fire as the rival activists traded at least 40 shots, according to witnesses. Biswas was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

A tense situation is prevailing and police have been deployed to avert further violence.

Wimbledon Result HIGHLIGHTS
 Courtesy
 KLM
 Royal Dutch Airlines

Men's singles (3rd round): Goran Ivanisevic (Croatia) def Arnaud Boetsch (France)
 Todd Martin (USA) def Derrick Rostagno (USA)
 Women's singles (3rd round): Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario (Spain) def Zina Garrison Jackson (USA)
 Anke Huber (Germany) def Chanda Rubin (USA).