Major rivers but Meghna mark further fall

Monsoon was less active over the country and rivers in the four basins recorded fall except in the Meghna basin. said a Flood Information Centre bulletin yesterday, reports UNB.

According to the bulletin. the Brahmaputra and the riod. Ganges continued to fall at all points while the south-eastern hill basin registered fall in the last 24 hours till 9 am as all the rivers are likely to

flowing above their respective danger levels recorded improve and only the Meghna

Speaker

From Page 1 cially after the Supreme Court opinion on the Presi dent's reference," the leader said on condition of anonymity

He admitted that the situation had created a "major problem" since the ruling party was "not in favour of early election." "The latest development in the political arena has compelled the party to think of early elections," he said.

The Supreme Court on Thursday declared that the "walkout" from and "boycott" of Parliament by the Opposition members must be construed as absence resulting in vacation of their seats.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali on Friday indicated that the seats of the Opposition MPs whose absence from the House crossed the 90-day constitutional limit would be considered vacated from June 20 last

As per the Constitution, the Election Commission has to hold elections in the vacated seats within 90 days.

The Speaker attended his office yesterday and instructed the officials concerned to do the needful for publication of a gazette notification on the vacation of the 140 JS seats. Parliament sources said.

at Bhairab Bazar remained

above its danger mark. The bulletin said, very light to moderate rainfall has been recorded at most places over the four basins with moderately heavy fall at one or two places during the pe-

The centre forecast that overall flood situation of the country may improve further flow below their respective The rivers which were danger levels within next 48

The rivers which rose during the last 24 hours are as follows: The Surma in the Meghna basin 20 cm at Kanaighat and 8 cm at Sylhet but the river receded by 7 cm at Sunamganj.

The Kushiyara registered a sharp rise by 65 cm at Amalshid and 49 cm at Sheola while the Manu at Moulvibazar recorded rise by 27 cm. The Someswari at Durgapur recorded rise by 3 cm during the period.

Another report adds from Chandpur: As many as 17 people died and 75,000 fami lies were affected in 57 unions of six thanas of Chandpur district during the recent flood.

According to District Control Room, onrush of flood water started inundating the area since July 12

ALCWC

From Page 1

ernment to ensure that the next polls become free and fair. Even, they added, the party might reconsider its previously-announced modality for a caretaker government but under no circumstances would compromise on the idea for the sake of

"We'll decide everything after the government action on the issue and on return of party chief Sheikh Hasina from the United States". senior AL leader told The Daily Star last night, requesting anonymity.

SAARC meet on women ber regional forum had

From Page

to merit and regional quotas. The Prime Minister also apprised the conference of the introduction of compulsory primary education and free education for girls up to class ten.

She observed that there is no discrimination against women in Bangladesh where seats have been reserved for them in Parliament.

Focusing on socio-cultural scenario in South Asia and other parts of the world where women are subject to physical, psychological and other abuses, the former SAARC chairperson said: "Peace is a far cry for

women." Begum Zia referred to last three world conferences on women in Mexico. Nairobi and Vienna and said "We are now on way to Beijing to participate the 4th world conference on women."

Earlier, State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Begum Sarwari Rahman delivered the address of wel-

Speaking on the occasion, SAARC Secretary General YK Silwal said the seven-memidentified 16 specific issues and remedial action to enhance the social dignity of Indian State Minister for

Women and Child Development Basava Rajeshwari, who is leading her country's delegation to the conference. gave a vote of thanks.

The SAARC Ministerial Meeting on Women: Towards the 4th World Women's Conference in Beijing, first of its kind, is being participated by all seven member-countries of the association.

Bhutanese Minister for Planning Lynopo C Dorji, Nepalese Minister for Education, Culture and Social Welfare Modnath Prashrit and Sri Lankan Minister for Transport, Environment and Women Affairs Srimani Athulathmudali are leading the delegation of their respective countries to the meeting.

Director-General of Ministry of Youth and Women Affairs of the Maldives Ahmed Selim and Pakistan Secretary for Women Affairs Salma Waheed are leading their teams.

Qotations for ID cards

From Page 1

secretary said a single bidder may submit bids for as many constituencies as he wants. The work may be done jointly, but a bidder must opt for at least a single constituency of his choice.

He said some 85,000 camps have to be set up throughout the country where the voters would come to get photographed. One camp would cover on an average 647 voters. The camps have to remain open for at least six days including a public holiday. .

The voters would produce the registration form no 3 before the bidders to authenticate their identity. This form would be distributed among the voters by that

Ershadul Haq said the bidders would be given blank ID cards as soon as the final voters list is published on October 7.

The bidders would paste photographs on those cards, collect voters' signatures, laminate the cards after having signatures of designated EC officials and distribute those among the voters.

The EC secretary said that in accordance with the law. cards would have to be prepared after publication of final voters list. He asked the bidders to take preparations

by this time and do the work within two and a half months from the publication of voters

When asked by an intending bidder what would be the fate of the ID card project in case of an early election, Ershadul Haq said the work would continue if work order was given.

He said the bidders would submit their bids estimating the cost per card, adding that equipment, establishment and manpower would be of their own. The bids could either include or exclude the cost of film, photo paper and lamination poly-

He said the work would not be left only with the bidders. The EC officials would constantly monitor the work and adequate legal protection would be given to the bidders. The EC would also launch a campaign to encourage the voters to have their ID cards and involve the workers of political parties in

Ershadul Haq said besides business interest, the bidders would have to keep in mind the legal compulsion of preparing the ID cards and its importance at national level. Any intentional misdeed in this regard is a punishable offence, the cau-

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia handing over the crest of the Bangladesh Economic Association to eminent economist Prof. Muhammad Yunus at the eleventh biennial - PID photo conference of the Association in the city yesterday.

Pedroso breaks Powell's mark



SESTRIERE, Italy, July 29: Cuba's Ivan Pedroso leaped into the record books this high altitude ski resort. reports Reuter.

The 22-year-old jumped 8.96 metres, just beating American Powell's previous best mark of 8.95 metres set at the Tokyo World Championships in August 1991.

with thick mist blowing across the exposed Sestriere Stadium, Pedroso took advantage of a rare drop in the wind to establish the new world mark, sinking to the ground indelight when the official distance was an nounced.

Pedroso was given a 130,000 US dollars red Ferrari sports car by the event organisers to mark his

on Saturday, beating Mike Powell's four-year-old world long jump record at an international athletics meeting in

On a cold, blustery day

Details on page 11

15-yr plan for higher growth

PM asks economists to help integrate human resources

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said the government plans to develop a sound competitive environment for free market economy by flourishing an expanded entrepreneurship. reports UNB. The main objective of all

our economic activities is to attain self-reliance through rapid growth," she said inaugurating the 11th biennial conference of the Bangladesh Economics Association (BEA) at the Engineers' Institution auditorium in the city.

Country's renowned economists are attending the three-day conference where experts will make a thorough review of all sectors of the national economy since the independence.

A comprehensive long term plan is needed for structural transformation and self-reliant uplift, she said. adding that the government is undertaking a 15-year perspective plan from next year replacing the traditional fivevear ones.

"The 15-year plan will face the challenges of the upcoming century and bridge the two centuries," she said, adding that development of infrastructure poverty alleviation and ensuring higher growth are the prime objectives of the plan.

The prime minister

pointed out that the philosophy of the plan in to ensure people's participation in the development process and asked the economists to advise the government in evolving ways of integrating the country's human resources in the plan.

Outlining the government's effort to develop the capital market for increased investment in industry and trade, Begum Zia said foreign investment is marking gradual rise as the capital market expanded tremendously.

Saying that the tax structure has been made dynamic and expanded, Begum Zia observed after initial stumbling. the introduction of VAT proved to be a modern tax mode with an enormous contribution in mobilising

Chaired by BEA President Prof Anisur Rahman, the inaugural session was also addressed by Planning Commission member Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and association General Secretary Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya.

The Prime Minister later presented crests and letters of citation to Prof Muhammad Yunus of Grameen Bank and Prof Muzaffar Ahmed of Dhaka University for their outstanding contribution in the fields of economy.

Police picked up some unruly school students from the city streets yesterday during their demonstration for the reintroduction of the 'question bank' system in the SSC — Star photo examinations

Businessman held for allegedly molesting boy

By Staff Correspondent

A 45-year old businessman was arrested Friday for allegedly molesting a teenaged boy at his Dhanmondi residence.

The 14 year old boy from Muktagachha, Mymensingh, is the shop assistant of a department store located on the ground floor of the two storied building at Road No 5. The businessman, owner of the building, resides on the first floor with his family.

The businessman molested the boy after calling him from the store at about 10:30pm, according to the GD registered at the Dhanmondi thana. No one was in the house at the time, the shopowner said in the GD.

The businessman, father of two, was picked up by the Dhanmondi police at about 11.30 pm Friday and was produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court yesterday, police said.

The teenaged boy somehow managed to escape from the house and spoke about his ordeal to the shop owner and some of his friends who were present there, local people said.

The boy was later admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

A case has been lodged with the Dhanmondi thana.

Question bank: Students block Dhaka-Aricha road By JU Correspondent

Students of Savar put up barricades on the Dhaka-Aricha highway for one and a half hours yesterday demanding reintroduction of the "question bank" system in the SSC examinations.

The boys and girls from the Savar School brought out a procession on the highway at around 11 am. They also damaged an Aricha bound BRTC bus.

Hundreds of vehicles remained stranded during the one and a half hour barricade. The students went away at around 12.45.

UNB adds: Road communication on the Dhaka Aricha highway at Dhamrai remained suspended for four hours following a clash between the students and transport workers yesterday morning.

Witnesses said about one thousand students of different schools put up barricades on the highway demanding restoration of the "question bank" system in the SSC examinations.

The clash started when the transport workers tried to break the blockade for plying of their vehicles. At least 30 students and workers were injured in the clash. The angry students also

damaged ten buses. Another report from Faridpur says, police picked up 10 schoolboys when they were damaging vehicles during a demonstration at Faridpur vesterday. They were demanding restoration of the question bank system in the SSC Examinations.

About a thousand schoo students gathered near the Faridpur Zila School at 10:30 am, brought out a procession and damaged vehicles when they reached the bus stand in Goalchamot area at 11.30 am.

Another report from Barisal adds: A half-day hartal called by a group of school students was observed at Amtoli thana Sadar in Barguna district today.

The demonstrators demanded re-introduction of with a domestic help, Din question bank in future SSC Islam, went out at about examinations. Another half-day hartal has

been called by the students sources said. in Barguna town tomorrow to press for the same demand. A torch procession was brought out in the town this evening. persons turned up there and one of them whispered with

Suu Kyi's denial YANGOON, July 29

Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi denied today that she had accepted a Earlier story on Page-8.

being, reports AFP.

post of UNESCO special advisor on democracy and human rights, saying her obligations here did not allow her to work overseas for the time

answer: Moudud

Jativa Party leader Mou dud Ahmed. Bar at law. vesterday said, the only answer to the present crisis is a credible general election under a neutral caretaker government

No more tactics in playing with politics will hold water after the Supreme Court's opinion," he told UNB.

Moudud said the Court's opinion directly or indirectly rejected the contention of the government and the Speaker with regard to vacation of seats on the grounds on an masse resignation and obsence from Parliament.

We're not very much concerned about the issue of 90 days but this opinion has also established the fact that the seats fell vacant on 28th December, the day the opposition members resigned from Parliament," he observed

Moudud also termed unrealistic the proposal for formation of a caretaker government with 10 personalilies who will be nominated on consensus and elected in by-election.

200 Brotherhood men held in Egypt

CAIRO, July 29: In its biggest crackdown, the government has arrested 200 members of the Muslim Brotherhood, many of them reportedly top leaders, the Interior Ministry announced today, reports AP.

Tripura Governor says Chakma repatriation may resume after monsoon

AGARTALA. July 29: Tripura governor Siddheswar Prasad has said that repatriation of Chakma refugees to Bangladesh may again start after the monsoon.

For a discussion on the issue, some central ministers would visit Bangladesh, the governor told PTI here yesterday evening.

Prasad said that he had discussed the refugee problem with the External Affairs Minister. Pranab Mukherjee and handed over him a 16point charter of demands of the refugees.

A delegation of refugees led by Upendra Lal Chakma who met him recently, said that they were not opposed to their repatriation and demanded implementation of the clauses agreed between the two countries.

College teacher arrested for demanding dowry

SIRAJGANJ, June 29: Police today arrested a college teacher on charge of torturing his wife for failing to satisfy his insatiate lust for dowry, reports UNB.

The bride's family sources said Abul Kalam Azad, Lecturer of local Jamuna Degree College, married Irine Sultana Mukti, 20, ten months ago with Tk 50,000 in cash dowry as well as other valuables.

But Azad, of Kalibari area in the town, used to beat his wife for bringing more money from father-in-law's house and eventually drove her out 15 days back, it was stated in the case.

Later, Mukti filed a case against her estranged husband.

Young man

From Page 1

seen yesterday almost speechless with the unbearable shock.

An elder brother of the

deceased said that about four months ago, Sajjad had paid a big amount to one Golam Mohammad Khasru of a travel agency at Malibagh for going to the US. The agency also is involved in manpower export, he said Later Sajjad changed his

mind and gave up the plan for going to the US, family sources said, adding that Khasru then repaid a small amount. Yesterday, Sajjad along

10.45 am. He met Khasru and asked for the money, the Khasru took Sajjad and Din Islam to a nearby shop. At a stage, a group of about five

Khasru, said the domestic The group then pounced on Sajjad and started beating

him mercilessly. Fatally injured Sajjad was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Sabujbagh police, when contacted last night, said they were investigating the incident. None was arrested till last night.

Major power outage cripples 10 Indian states

CALCUTTA. July 29: A major power outage crippled nearly 10 northeastern states in India today and officials were unable to immediately find out what caused the breakdown. The outage began at 8.40 pm (1510 GMT), plunging in darkness most areas in the states of Bihar, West Bengal. Orissa and the seven states in the northeastern corner, reports AP.

Serb forces torch Zepa

From Page 1 been burnt down and basically looted." Ivanko told a

news conference. He described how Serb forces acting under Tolimir's direct guidance sized 36 men from the last buses evacuating Muslim civilians from Zepa. despite UN protests.

The commanding officer of UN sector Sarajevo. General Herve Gobilliard, expressed his outrage to General Tolimir. Ivanko said adding that the UN and the Red Cross were promised access to the detainees today.

The violent events coincided with the departure of the last of the civilians who came down from the hills above Zepa where they fled when the enclave was cap-

Benazir urges UK to arrest MQM chief

LONDON, July 29 Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, facing bitter ethnic violence in southern Pakistan, Friday urged Britain to arrest the opposition Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) leader Altaf Hussain. who is in exile in London, reports AFP.

When Altaf sits in London and he gives a call for a strike and his militants... enforce that strike (and) kill 30 innocent people a day I think the British government has a moral responsibility to restrain him" Benazir said on BBC television news.

Speaking on the same programme Friday, Altai blamed the Pakistani government for the ethnic violence currently raging in the port city of Karachi,

Polls or by-polls

From Page 1

summoned by the President. The next normal session is not due until first half of September. But the Speaker is certainly not going to defer his decision any more.

This time, the Speaker has made it clear the decision will be effective since June 20 and its effectiveness has nothing to do with summoning of Parliament.

The Speaker's decision should prompt a sense of urgency in the camp of the government and the ruling BNP. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, who decides everything in the government and her party, will now have to take a decision whether to go for the by-elections or order a full-scale general

election. Has the Speaker's move annoyed the Prime Minister? Will the Prime Minister be forced to re-arrange her plans? These are some of the questions Shaikh Razzak Ali raised by his decision.

That the government wants to avoid the by-elections - which will be nearly as big an event as the general elections - is no more a secret. The entire affair of taking the issue to the Supreme Court was designed to avoid the by-elections and go for the general elections on expiry of this government's five-year term in April next

The court's decision has already been seen as a setback to the anti-by-elections plan. The by-elections can be avoided now only through the holding of the general elections. The nation seems to be heading for the general elec-

Tanbazar From Page 1

under police custody Thursday night. On Friday, Narayangani Magistrate's Court granted them bail as one Rabi, identifying himself an son of late Rahimuddin of 4, DIT Market, prayed for their bail. But this reporter did not find anybody named Rabi in this address today. The two girls had returned to the brothel with Rabi, sources there said.

On Thursday, while being rescued, the two girls were carrying one baby each in their laps but it was later revealed that they were not mothers of the babies. They were forced to take the babies and pretend to be mothers for convenience in getting bail, the sources also said

The police, in the case, had also mentioned that the two babies belonged to Hashi and Nazu. But Salma Ali had claimed that they were not aged enough to be mothers.

tured on Tuesday.

Some 4.500 voluntéered to be expelled aboard Bosnian Serb buses. About 3,000 others are holding out against the encircling Serb forces. the UN said, with at least 1,5000 of them armed. Zepa fell to Serb forces two weeks after the nearby 'safe area' of

Sebrenica was captured. The separatist Bosnian Serbs emptied the enclave of its 42,000 Muslims and detained an unknown number of men. Refugees said women were raped and men taken away and executed. The UN says several thousand people are unaccounted for.

Meanwhile, the Croat forces have shifted their offensive towards central Bosnia after dealing separatist Serbs a major blow by capturing two western towns on Friday, Serb army sources said today

Croatian government troops and allied Bosnian Croats turned their assault towards the town of Jajce and Donji Vakuf which lie on a road leading north to the major Serb-held town of Baja Luka, the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) sources said. By seizing the two towns

of Grahovo and Glamoc on Friday the Croats have cut the main supply road to the rebel Croatian Serb stronghold of Knin from Bosnian Serb territory. Another reports says, President Bill Clinton and

Russian President Boris

Yeltsin agreed during a telephone call on Friday that it was essential that Bosnian Serbs stop their threats to UN declared safe areas, the White House said. They agreed that a lasting resolution of the crisis can only by achieved through a political process, and for this

threats to UN established safe areas cease. White House spokesman Mike McCurry told reporters. In Paris French President Jacques Chirac and British Prime Minister John Major

to happen it is essential that

the Bosnian Serbs and their

renewed their calls today for efforts to find a political solution in war-torn Bosnia. If we are to ask young men, young British and French soldiers to do their duty in Bosnia, then we believe it is necessary also to

seek to make progress down a political track,' Major said. On Friday, Chirac announced his intention to try

to reinvigorate the diplo-

matic process in former

Yugoslavia. JEC meet

From Page 1

Bhutan, in trade with Bangladesh. Saifur Rahman particularly insisted on close cooperation between Dhaka and Kathmandu in water resource

management and in early

Recognizing Nepal's po-

flood warning.

tential for hydro-electricity. Rahman said: "Billions kilowatt of electricity could be produced in Nepal, huge scope (for cooperation) is going waste, it's a tragedy." Responding. Bharat Mohan Adhikari assured

Nepalese cooperation in the

area of early flood warning.

"We are deeply concerned with the flood problem in Bangladesh. Therefore, we would like to begin cooperation in flood mitigation and forecasting." Official sources said Bangladesh side, during the current meeting, would fur-

ther insist on establishment

of a cement klinker factory and a pharmaceutical unit in joint venture. Also, special request may be made to Nepal for accepting the recommendations of the Nepal-Bangladesh Joint Study team on Water Resources. Bangladesh has already

endorsed the recommendations Nepal will also be offered wider transit facilities through Chittagong and Mongla ports. Additional scholarships for Nepalese students will,

too, be offered. Nepalese side, on the other hand, is expected to renew its demand for special tariff facility on import of Nepalese goods. They might also pursue a long-term agreement on fertiliser sup-

The meeting is scheduled to end tomorrow with the signing of an agreed minutes. The Bangladesh-Nepal

Joint Economic Commission was set in January 1978. It is supposed to meet once a