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Accord on basic principles for peace

Bosnia to be equally divided between Serbs, Muslim-Croats

GENEVA, Sept 8: The main players in the Yugoslav conflict agreed today on basic principles for peace in Bosnia, guaranteeing Bosnia's future territorial integrity but dividing it up almost equally between Serbs and a Muslim-Croat alliance, diplomats said, reports Reuter.

They said the agreement was reached during talks between the foreign ministers of Croatia, rump Yugoslavia and Bosnia with US negotiators Richard Holbrooke and members of the contact group of major powers.

Holbrooke, who had said earlier in the day he hoped to make a major announcement after the talks, had brought forward a planned news conference from 1600 GMT to 1430 GMT.

But diplomats said there was still disagreement over a second document on the status of eastern Slavonia, part of Croatia conquered by Serbia in 1991 and still held by Belgrade.

A document on basic principles agreed by the parties, obtained by Reuters, said: "Bosnia... will continue its legal existence with its present borders and continuing international recognition."

"Bosnia... will consist of two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as established by the Washington agreements and the Republica Srpska."

Bosnian Foreign Minister Muhamed Sacribey said today that an accord outlining Bosnia's future constitution ruled out the possibility of Bosnian Serbs joining a greater Serbia.

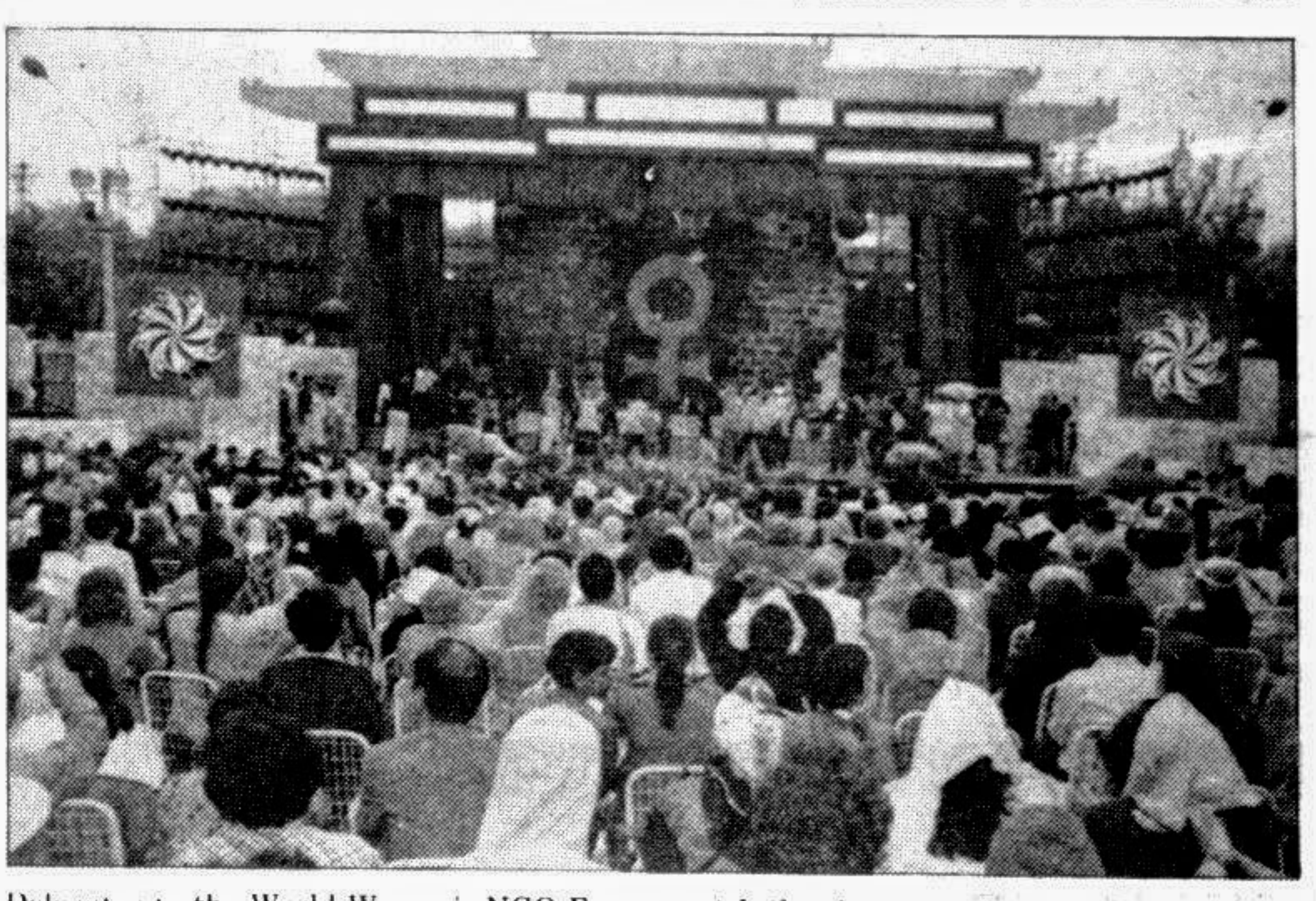
"We have cleared up once and for all the possibility of a greater Serbia being created on our doorstep," Sacribey told reporters after meeting the foreign ministers of Croatia and former Yugoslavia.

Sacribey said the Serb entity in Bosnia would be able to have cultural, trading and other such links with Serbia proper, but would not be able to enter into a political confederation that affected Bosnia's sovereignty.

"We have been told explicitly that there would be no confederation," he said.

AFP adds: NATO warplanes have extended their air campaign against the Bosnian Serbs to include roads and bridges in the hope of interfering with their military movements.

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Delegates to the World Women's NGO Forum watch the closing ceremony on the outdoor stage at the venue site in Huairou, China, yesterday. — AFP/UNB photo

Beijing NGO Forum meet ends with call to 'keep on fighting'

Shaheen Anam from Beijing

The 10-day NGO Forum meet ended at Huairou yesterday.

Thousands of women stood in persistent drizzle to watch Chinese dancers, drummers and lion dancers close the gathering of thousands of private activists from around the world.

The forum leaves the stage to a main UN meeting at Beijing, where organisers claimed small breakthroughs in battles between the religious conservatives and feminists for the future equality of sexes.

The chairman of the main committee of the FWCW and of the UN Commission on Status of Women (CSW), Dr Palencia Lecuanan has one message: "Keep on fighting."

NGOs, she said, who have played an active role in the preparatory process will have to continue putting pressure on governments to monitor compliance with the agreements reached in the Beijing Platform for Action.

The pace of discussion at the UN conference is slow, but observers are optimistic

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about accord on the three contentious issues — rights, resources and reproductive health.

Dr Nafis Sadik, head of UNFPA, strongly defended the Cairo Action Plan in her speech at the UN conference Wednesday. She said that the first mark of respect for women is to have equal rights.

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2 young men murdered in city

By Staff Correspondent

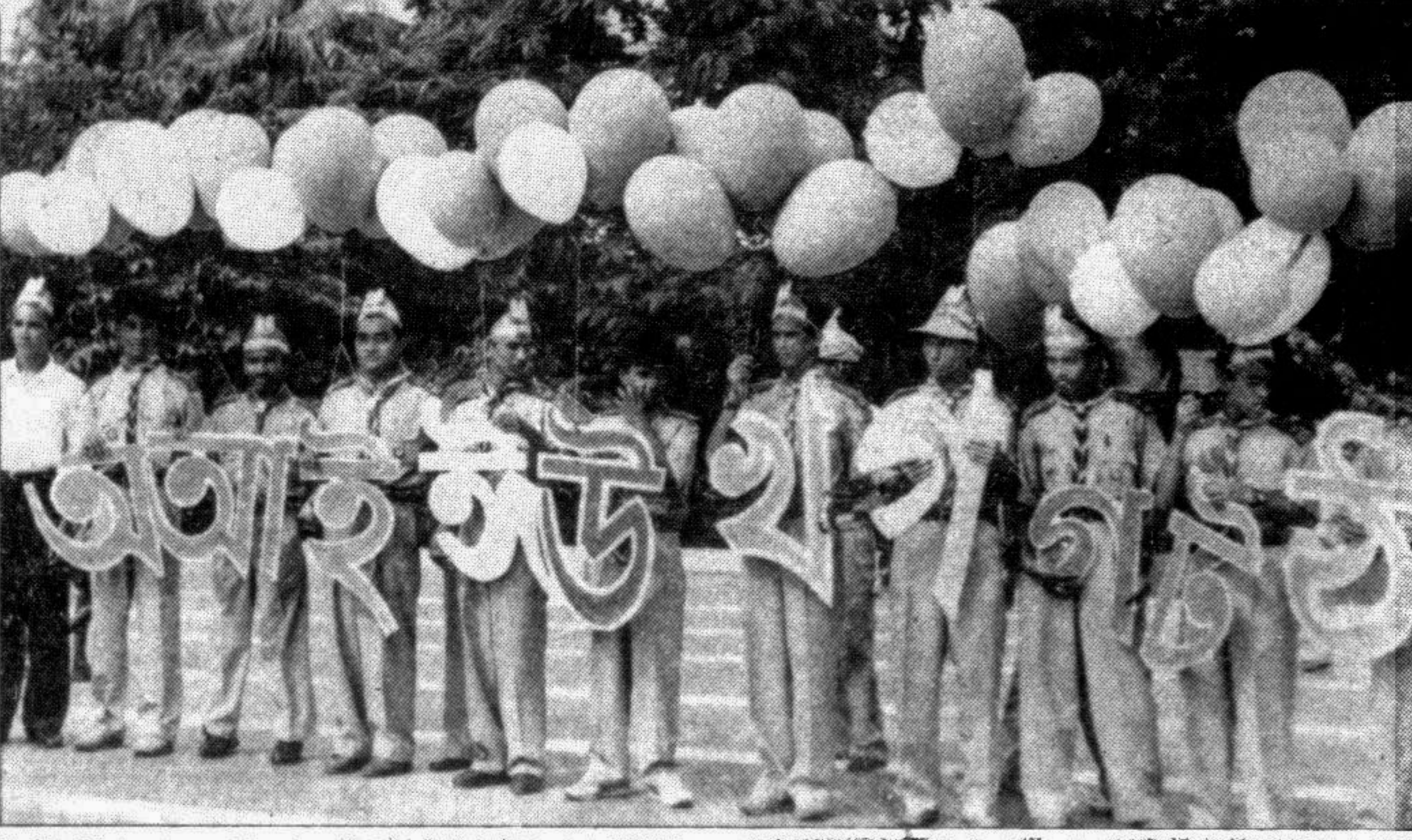
Two young men were murdered in two separate incidents and the body of a young woman was found in the city yesterday.

Afasuddin, 28, was allegedly strangled at a hotel room in North South road in the old part of the city, police said. Afasuddin's body was lying on the floor, the neck tied by a piece of cloth, police added.

Afasuddin, son of Rahman Miah of Kotalpara, along with one Ismail, came to the hotel at around 5 pm Thursday. About half an hour later, Ismail left the hotel depositing the key of the room at the counter. Ismail could not be traced till last night, police said.

The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy. Dacous shot dead one Ismail.

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A colourful rally was held in the city in observance of the International Literacy Day yesterday. — Star photo

Literacy Day observed

The international Literacy Day was observed throughout the country yesterday as elsewhere of the world, reports BSS.

Various government and non-government organisations observed the day through holding seminars, symposiums and discussion on the significance of the day.

This year's slogan of the day was education for all.

Colourful processions were brought out in Dhaka and other cities and towns to mark the day.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia gave separate messages on the occasion.

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina also issued a message on the day.

Newspapers brought out special supplements while radio and television put up special programmes highlighting the significance of the occasion.

The United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) held a discussion at its office here to mark the day.

Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), a non-government organisation consisted of 37 different socio-cultural organisations, brought out a colourful rally which paraded from National Museum to National Press.

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Govt firm to eradicate illiteracy by 2000: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday urged all citizens irrespective of party affiliations to actively join the literacy programme to make it a success within the shortest possible time, reports BSS.

"Let us declare in one voice that we will free our country from the curse of illiteracy by the year 2000", she appealed to the people at a function in the city in observance of the International Literacy Day.

The Prime Minister said her government had taken all steps to remove illiteracy for accelerating the pace of development, and making the people conscious of their rights, dignity and responsibilities.

"We are firmly committed to eradicate illiteracy from the country by the year 2000", she affirmed.

Begum Zia also gave utmost importance on education to help maintain the hard earned democracy and democratic spirit.

Organised by the Primary and Mass Education Division at Osmani Memorial Hall auditorium, the function was also addressed by Deputy Leader of the Jatiya Sangsad Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury as special guest.

former education advisor Azizul Haq, noted educationist Dr Abdullah Al-Muti Sharifuddin and secretary of the Primary and Mass Education Division Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmed.

The Prime Minister distributed awards among the best teachers for their notable contributions in the programmes of non-formal education, basic education and adult education.

The Prime Minister said her government has been making the highest budgetary allocations in education sector every year.

Referring to the introduction of compulsory primary education and food for education programme, Begum Zia said these measures had helped raise the rate of literacy to 37 per cent in the last four years.

She said the government had also introduced non-formal education and adult education programmes.

The Prime Minister said that the inhabitants of Lalmonirhat district had now been freed from the curse of illiteracy through the cooperation of the people of all shades of opinion.

The programmes of overall education movement, she said, had been taken in the district of Bhola.

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Hasina exchanges views with intellectuals

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday exchanged views with some intellectuals, educationists and cultural activists on country's political situation and her party's on-going agitation for elections under a caretaker government.

"The agitation is for establishing people's right to vote. It is not for power," she said during the exchange of views at the Dharmond party office. She also called upon the people of all professions to join the movement.

"We do not want terrorism or anarchy. We want general elections under caretaker government," she said and urged the government to accept the proposal to form a caretaker government, headed by the Chief Justice.

Hasina also urged all prohibition forces to intensify the agitation. The country has been ruled by the defeated forces since the killing of Bangabandhu in 1975, she said.

The meeting was attended by among others Justice Kamal Uddin Hossain, Justice K M Sobhan, Dr Anisuzzaman, Dr Abdullah Al Muti Sharifuddin, Hasan Imam, Ramendu Majumder, Asad Chowdhury, Belal Chowdhury.

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Power Cell may start functioning soon

By Sharier Khan

The newly set up Power Cell in the Energy Ministry is likely to start functioning next month.

An Energy Ministry source yesterday said that the Power Cell, which would deal with private sector power development and tariff structure, would be housed in the BTMC Bhaban at Kawran Bazar in the city.

The source, however, said the cell is yet to take 'operative shape' as only two officials out of the 28 required have joined it so far.

"We have approached PDB experts to join the Power Cell, but they are not very enthusiastic about joining the cell as it is only a two-year project," one source told this correspondent.

Meanwhile, the government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Thursday with a British company, Midland Power International, for setting up a 108 MW power plant.

Project Development Manager of the company John G Hides, in an interview with The Daily Star in the city yesterday, said that the location of the 110 million US dollars plant was yet to be fixed.

With this, the Energy Ministry has signed 10 MOUs with foreign private power developers — from the USA, UK, Canada, Singapore and some other countries — for generation of over 2000 MW of power with total investment of around 2.50 billion US dollars.

The Midland Power International will set up a natural gas-fired combined cycle power plant on Build-Own-Operate (BOO) basis, utilising gas supplied by the PDB, within 15 months of signing of the final accord.

"Semutang is one proposal which we are considering, but we are discussing with the Bangladesh Power Development Board other locations like Ashuganj," Hides said.

"Now we will decide the site of the project, prepare the financial proposal and proceed for the implementation of the project after a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with the relevant authorities. We are discussing with the PDB the draft PPA," he added.

According to the MOUs, the foreign companies and government agencies concerned like the PDB will have to reach a consensus through negotiations over power tariff, plant factor etc within a year.

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Garments workers' ultimatum for weekly holiday

By Staff Correspondent

Garments workers will enjoy self-declared weekly holiday from first Friday of October if no official announcement is made in this regard by September 30, their leaders declared at a rally in the city yesterday.

"It is slavery... inhuman... we have no weekly holiday" said leaders of the National Garments Workers Federation at the rally organised as part of its 'demonstration day' to realise the demand for weekly holiday.

The rally in front of the National Press Club was also attended by several workers.

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Footballers demand Azam's trial

Sports Reporter

Footballers of Abahani Krira Chakra and Moham: medan Sporting Club in a joint statement yesterday demanded trial of Prof Golam Azam for his alleged war crimes.

They demanded Golam Azam's trial before the next general election.

The players expressed deep resentment over the "destructive activities" of Jamaat-Shibir and appealed to all to defeat this anti-liberation force in the next general elections.

The leading footballers of the country also demanded banning of Jamaat-Shibir politics. They also expressed solidarity with the programme of the Nirmu Committee.

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TCB to import 5500 tons of lentil from Nepal

The price of lentil is expected to come down within a few days as consignments of cheaper pulses from Nepal were scheduled to reach the Radhikapur border yesterday, reports UNB.

Some 5,500 tons of lentil are being imported from the Himalayan Kingdom by state-owned Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) after its price shot up abnormally in the country during the post-flood period.

TCB Chairman Shoab Ahmed said price of lentil has already shown a downward trend.

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Accommodation problem in DU halls acute

By M M Aminul Islam

Students coming from different parts of the country to study in the Dhaka University are facing acute accommodation problem in the residential halls.

According to the available statistics, about 60 per cent of the nearly 29,000 students of the DU come from different districts.

The university has fifteen residential halls — eleven for male students, three for female students and one for foreign students.

The total number of seats in the residential halls, excluding that for foreign students, is about 8,000 but about 12,000 students are staying there.

Only six halls were built after independence.

The number of seats in Jagannath Hall is 1,105, Shahidullah Hall—813, Zabu

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Four students sharing a two-seated room at a DU hall. — Star photo

No-confidence against Adhikari today

KATHMANDU, Sept 8: Nepali opposition parliamentarians assembled in a Kathmandu hotel today to discuss tactics ahead of a no-confidence motion against the Communist government, reports Reuter.

Lawmakers from the Nepali Congress and Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), which between them control enough votes to topple the nine-month-old government, gathered before the vote tentatively set for late tomorrow afternoon.

RPP general secretary Pashupati Shumsher Rana told the People's Review weekly that opposition parliamentarians were lodged together because of two concerns.

One is that it would help us to speedily arrive at decisions, the other is to prevent the possibility of their being kidnapped or even murdered, he was quoted as saying.

Nepali Congress spokesman Taranath Ranabhatt told Reuter the lawmakers were in the hotel receiving intensive training ahead of the no-confidence motion, but denied they faced any security threat.

Yesterday the ruling United Marxist Leninist (UML) Party caused an uproar in parliament in a failed attempt to prevent the opposition from tabling the vote of no-confidence.

The UML wanted the vote delayed until Prime Minister Man Mohan Adhikari leaves hospital, where he is being treated for a broken collar bone and spine injury from a helicopter crash.