

Inside Today

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by Muhammad Anisuzzaman
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DSE MARKET	
DSE price index	1103.76 (+0.84%)
Market capital Tk	7494.49 cr
Transactions in volume	704678
Transactions in value Tk	13.51 cr

Metropolitan

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NEWS BRIEFS

Hasina thanks Saudi govt

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a message yesterday thanked the government of Saudi Arabia and its people for extending her warm hospitality during recent visit to the kingdom. Bangladesh Ambassador to the kingdom Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin handed over the message to the Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz at Al Salam palace in Jeddah yesterday. Receiving the message Crown Prince Abdullah, who is second in royal hierarchy, recalled the deep-rooted relation between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia and wished Bangladesh peace and prosperity, reports UNB.

BNPPP adjourned meet today

The adjourned meeting of Bangladesh Nationalist Party Parliamentary Party (BNPPP) will be held today at 3 pm at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan. Deputy Leader of the Opposition in parliament Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury has requested all BNP MPs to attend the meeting on time, reports UNB.

200 phones out of order in city

Nearly 200 telephones have been out of order under Gulshan exchange for the past few days. A press release of the T&T board yesterday said the disruption was due to fault in the underground cables in Am-tali, TBV gate and Titumir College areas. The workers and officials of the board have been working to mend the wires and the operation of the telephones is expected to resume by July 23, reports UNB.

Ferry fare for passengers waived

The government has decided to waive ferry fare for passengers from the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

Communications Minister Anwar Hossain yesterday informed Parliament of the decision during question hour. Fare for vehicles ferried in different river routes will, however, have to be paid as usual.

By-elections to vacant JS seats Sept 5

By Staff Correspondent



Abu Hena at the press confce yesterday

By-elections to the 16 vacant seats of the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) will be held on September 5.

The last date for filing nomination papers is August 5. The nomination papers will be scrutinised on August 6 and the last date for withdrawal is August 12, according to the election schedule announced by Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena at a press conference at the Election Commission (EC) Secretariat in the city yesterday.

Abu Hena said firmly that the by-elections will be fair like the June 12 general elections and sought cooperation from the political parties and all others concerned in holding the by-polls.

The EC is considering deployment of army during the by-elections, the CEC said. The 16 JS seats were va-

cated by nine members of the parliament (MPs) who were elected from more than one seats in the June 12 elections.

The constituencies where by-elections would be held are: Rangpur-2, 5 and 6, Kurigram-3, Bogra-6 and 7, Sirajganj-1, Bagerhat-1, Khulna-1, Bhola-1, Pirojpur-2, Shariatpur-1, Sylhet-4, Laxmipur-2 and Chittagong-1 and 13.

Abu Hena also replied to a volley of questions by newsmen about alleged irregularities, election expenses of candidates, and disposal of complaints by some candidates regarding the June 12 election. Election Commissioners Mushatq Ahmed Chowdhury and Abdur Rahman were also present at the press conference.

He said that the EC had put forward to the government See Page 12 Col 1

BOI drafting legal framework for private sector EPZs

The Board of Investment (BOI) is drafting a legal framework for the private sector willing to develop export processing zones in the country in order to give the economy a fillip, reports UNB.

This was disclosed by BOI Executive Chairman Toufique-Elahi Chowdhury at a meeting in the city yesterday with the Japanese entrepreneurs doing business in Bangladesh.

"We hope that the legal framework would be introduced in Parliament soon," he told them.

Chowdhury also informed that a seminar on private sector infrastructure projects would be held in September in Dhaka to attract private capital in sectors like power, telecom, road and ports.

The fund is intended to liberate additional capital from the private sector," Chowdhury said and hoped that the private entrepreneurs, specially from Japan, would participate in Bangladesh's infrastructure

projects. "We are particularly interested in Japanese investment because Japanese capital was the real engine of growth in the countries of Southeast Asia... we also know that Japanese investments are long-term investments," he said.

The representatives of the entrepreneurs attended the meeting include: Mitsubishi Corporation, Mitsui and Co Ltd, Nichimen Corporation, Sumitomo Corporation, Ito Tsusho, Itochu Corporation, Japan Engineering Consultant Co Ltd, Kanematsu Corporation, Kinsho Mataichi Corporation, Marubeni Corporation, Nishio Iwai Corporation, Obayashi Corporation, Pacific Consultants International, Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd and Japan-Bangladesh Company Limited.

Officials of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO), the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) and the Japanese Embassy were present.

The meeting at a local hotel was arranged mainly to discuss the possible ways of attracting more Japanese firms who have been doing business in Bangladesh.

Proposals for further improvement in the areas needed for attracting foreign investment and specific advantageous areas for joint-venture cooperation from Japanese firms were also discussed in the meeting.

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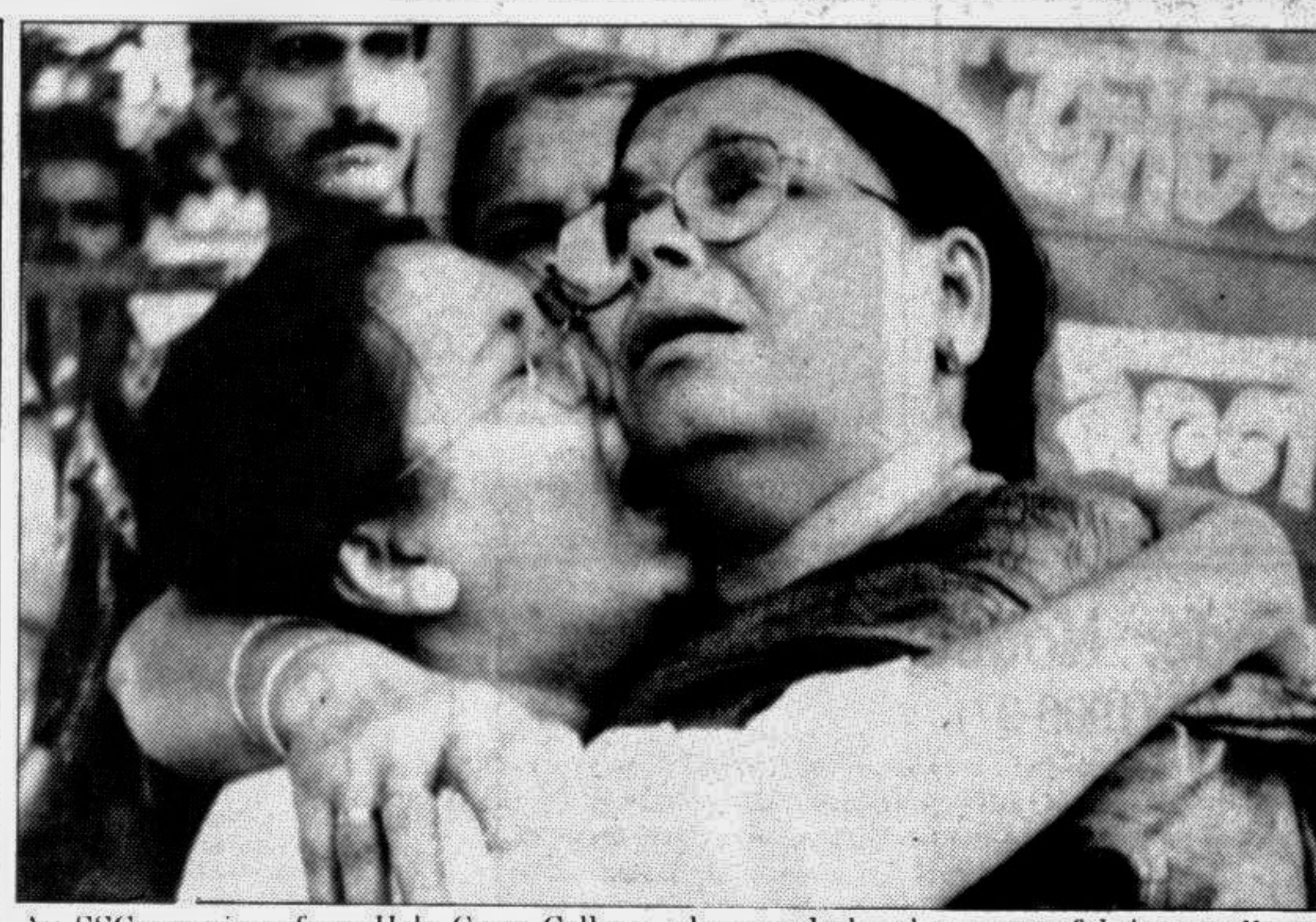
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Nurses, employees go on strike at BIRDEM

By Staff Correspondent

Sufferings of patients in the country's only diabetic hospital, BIRDEM, mounted yesterday as nurses and other employees of the hospital started an indefinite strike.

Sources in the hospital said, doctors could not perform operation and attend patients because the striking employees also obstructed services in the hospital kitchen, air conditioning system and lift etc. See Page 12 col 8



An SSC examinee from Holy Cross College, who was declared unsuccessful due to alleged computer error in tabulating results burst into tears at a protest-rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Speaker urges BNP to return to House

By Staff Correspondent

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury yesterday called upon the legislators of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) to return to the House to "meet the hopes and aspirations of the people" about the present Jatiya Sangsad.

He also assured the members of parliament that the business of the House would be conducted in accordance with the "dictates" of the Constitution and the JS Rules of Procedure.

The BNP lawmakers staged a walkout on Thursday protesting what they said was a violation of a particular rule of the Rules of Procedure by the Speaker and his bias towards the ruling party. The BNP members did not return to the House till yesterday.

"I have told the House earlier that my activities as a Speaker would be guided by the Constitution and the JS Rules of Procedure. I once again assure the House that I will be discharging my responsibilities in accordance with the dictates of the Constitution and the JS Rules of Procedure," the Speaker said.

He urged "the legislators who have walked out of the House" to come back.

"The people expects a lot from this parliament. Return to the House to make this parliament function effectively in order to meet the hopes and aspirations of the people," Chowdhury said in a brief statement.

Deputy Leader of the Sangsad and LGRD Minister

BNP keeps its decision in abeyance

By Nazmul Ashraf

Keeping in abeyance a decision on return to the Jatiya Sangsad, the BNP legislators refrained from attending the parliament session for the second day yesterday.

The deferral of BNP decision followed the ruling Awami League's formal request to the opposition BNP to return to the House. The ruling party's move has provided an oppor-

See Page 12 col 7

Zillur Rahman also made an appeal to the Opposition to come back to the House to "meet its obligations" to the electorate.

He, however, defended the Speaker saying that the BNP legislators' allegations against the Chair was "unjust." "The Opposition walked out on the first day to implement a pre-planned move, while on the second day, it put forward a lame excuse to stage the walk-out," he added.

The way BNP legislators behaved in parliament on Thursday was "even inconsistent with mannerism," the Deputy Leader of the House remarked.

Calling upon the BNP legislators to return to the House, Zillur said, "The House is yours. Come back and discuss your problems, if there is any, on the floor of the Jatiya Sangsad."

Meanwhile, five bills were introduced in the House yesterday by Agriculture, Food, Relief and Disaster Management Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury.

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Nomination filing for Presidential polls today

By Staff Correspondent

The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) will receive nomination papers for the Presidential election between 8 am and 2:30 pm today.

Nomination papers will be scrutinised at 10 am tomorrow and the last date for the withdrawal of candidature is July 24.

The Presidential election will be held on August 1, according to a notification issued by the Election Commission on July 15.

The tenure of the President Abdur Rahman Biswas ends on October 8.

BARC, 4 other agri sector bills tabled

A bill for introducing an effective and efficient national agriculture research system and implementing the World Bank-funded project was placed in Parliament yesterday, reports UNB.

Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury introduced the Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council Bill 1996, which will replace the Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council Order 1973, aiming to modernise the farm sector.

The minister also tabled four other bills seeking certain amendment in the original laws on the institutes of agriculture, i.e. nuclear agriculture and livestock research.

According to the objective of the BARC bill, it aims at smooth implementation of the Agriculture Research Management Project, which bears national importance, to be implemented.

See Page 12 Col 7

4 JS committees to be proposed today

By Staff Correspondent

Four Parliamentary standing committees will be proposed today for the approval of the House. Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Abul Hasnat Abdullah said in the House yesterday.

The standing committees on various ministries will be proposed after necessary amendments to the Rules of Procedure of Jatiya Sangsad, the Chief Whip said.

See Page 12 Col 6

Swimming again main focus



Atlanta 1996

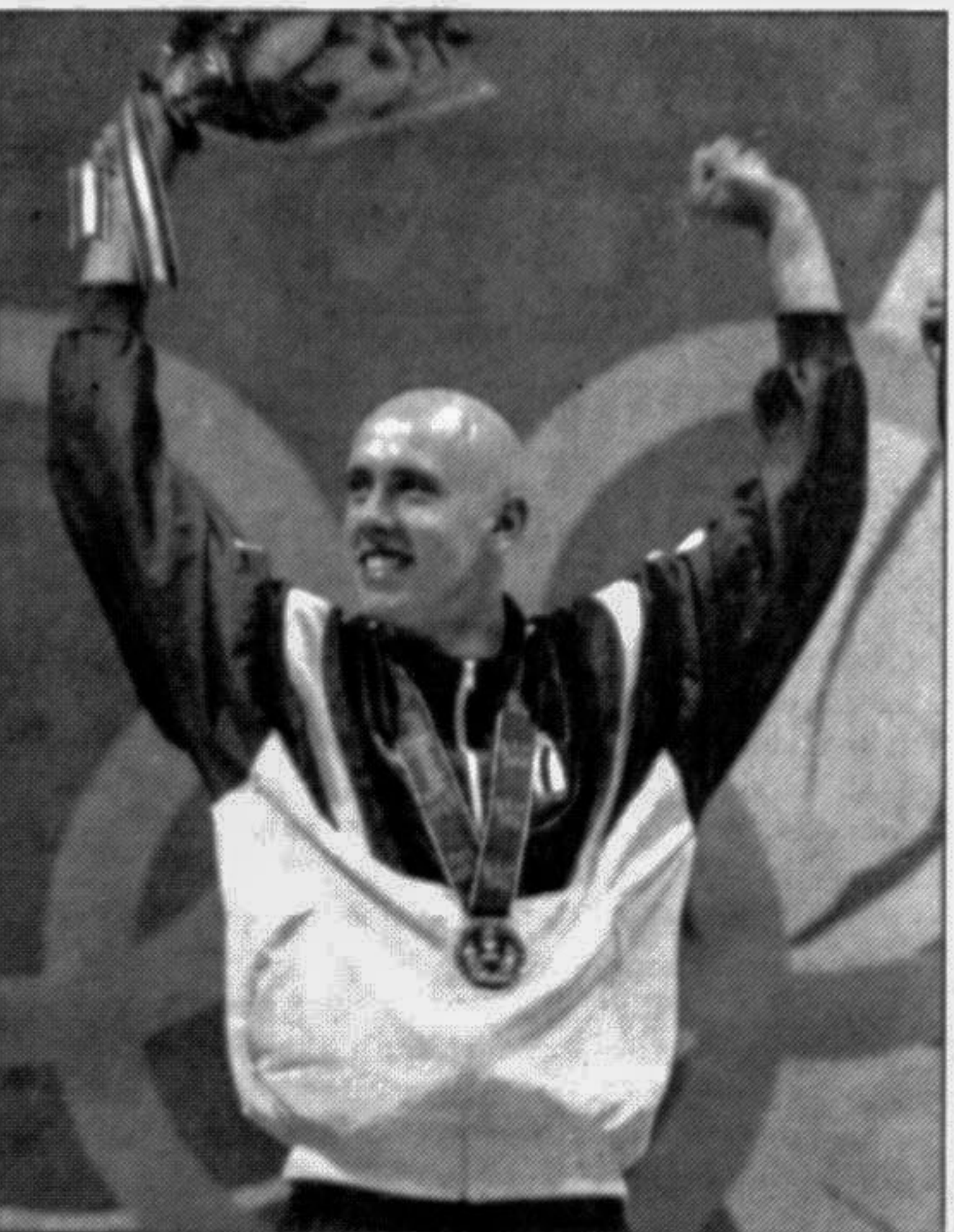
ATLANTA, July 21: Swimming, which kick-started Olympic Games competition into life with a world record shortly after the start, will again be the main focus of attention, reports Reuters.

Belgian swimmer Frederik Deburghgraeve and Turkish weightlifter Halil Mutlu both set world marks and more are anticipated as 17 more gold medals are decided.

Much of the action will again be in the pool where the four finals are women's 200 metres freestyle and 100 metres breaststroke and the men's 400 metres medley and 4x200 metres freestyle.

Germany's Franziska van Almsick, denied a medal in the opening day's 100 metres freestyle, aims for gold in the 200 freestyle, her top event.

Van Almsick, world champion in the 200 freestyle, won See Page 12 Col 4



A shaven-headed Fred de Burghgraeve, the first-ever Belgian to capture an Olympic swimming gold. He captured men's 100m breaststroke. — AFP/UNB photo

Flood in 14 districts Relief inadequate

Flood situation in seven districts worsened further due to the swelling of the Ganges river, but it remained static in seven other districts worst-hit by the deluge, reports UNB.

Officials said that the current spell of flood left a vast number of people destitute and they needed emergency food and medicine to survive the onslaughts of the calamity. The relief supply is too inadequate to meet their demand.

The flood situation deteriorated in the downstream districts of Manikganj, Dhaka, Munshiganj, Rajbari, Faridpur, Madaripur and Shariatpur while it remained unchanged

The overall flood situation See Page 12 Col 3

Jailbreak Second escapee on remand

Abdul Mannan, the second arrested fugitive, was brought under police remand for seven days yesterday, reports UNB.

Both Mannan and the earlier arrested Shawkat were being interrogated by the CID personnel at its Malibagh office in the city, police sources said.

The two inquiry committees, constituted to probe the July 15 jailbreak by 13 prisoners, also questioned Mannan and Shawkat at the CID office See Page 12 Col 3

Dacoits attack minister's car

MYMENSINGH, July 21: State Minister for Land Alhaj Rashed Mosharraf came under a dacoity bid on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway early today, police said, reports UNB.

The incident took place at Chelergat of Trishal thana in Mymensingh when the minister was passing through the area at about 1:30 am on way to the capital from Jamalpur, his home district.

Police said the dacoits, who put up a barricade by felling trees on the road, started to See Page 12 col 6

Agri sector to get support, Kibria tells donors

Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria yesterday told donors that the government was determined to provide support to agriculture as such an action suits the ruling party's social and economic goals, reports UNB.

During his formal exchange with local representatives of the donors' group, the minister, however, said the government would judiciously decide on supports to agriculture.

He ruled out any indiscriminate subsidy and said only the productive sub-sectors of agriculture would be provided support. Meeting sources said Kibria even avoided uttering the word "subsidy" and used

"support." Sharing with donors the government's plan to "support" agriculture, Kibria said measures would be taken to minimise crop losses to the farmers due to flood. Availability of inputs would be eased and agro-based industries supported to create demands for farm output, he added.

During nearly a two-hour meeting, the finance minister apprised the donors of government's policy goals. He said the ruling party was making its best effort to build a consensus on vital national issues.

Donors' side was represented by chiefs of multilateral lending agencies, UN agencies and heads of foreign missions.

According to the meeting sources, donors sounded appreciative of the new government's policies and goals. But they insisted on expediting pending reforms, infrastructure development, reducing bureaucratic tangles, restoration of an investment-friendly climate, and on radical improvement in aid utilisation.

Some of the donors asked for government's urgent attention on poverty programmes in rural areas to contain the growing trend of rural-urban migration. Some also drew Kibria's attention to quality factor in various government programmes, including primary education.

Kibria, in response, said increased resources would be allocated to programmes aimed at changing the "poverty picture".

Kibria told the donors that the ruling party would continue and expedite reforms in crucial sectors, including financial sector and public administration. "We won't give only lip service as by the previous government. We'll prove we mean what we say," a source quoted the minister as saying.

Kibria also assured the donors of the government's determination for expediting aid utilisation. "We want greater and better utilisation of foreign aid."

World Bank Resident Mis-

sion Chief Pierre Landel-Mills, Asian Development Bank mission head Bhanspal Horayangura, US Ambassador David N Merrill and UNDP Representative Elmi Watanabe were, among others, who took part in the discussion.

Landel-Mills was learnt to have called for urgent actions on administrative reforms and on financial sector reforms. As he laid stress on loan recovery, Landel-Mills suggested that the central bank better exert its power in this regard.

The US Ambassador suggested urgent actions on development of infrastructural facilities and improvement in law and order situation in the country for investment to come.

Atlanta 1996
OFFICIAL SOFT DRINK
1996 OLYMPIC GAMES

LATEST FROM ATLANTA

They forget gifts for opponents

ATLANTA, July 20: The all-millionaire US Dream Team arrived for Saturday's Olympic basketball clash with Argentina without the traditional pre-Game gifts for their opponents. "We exchanged handshakes for their pins," forward Grant Hill said. "We were supposed to give them T-shirts, but we didn't have them." But he promised: "We'll make sure Argentina get them from us." Later, the squad's Atlanta Hawks coach Lenny Wilkens, who heads the all-time list in NBA coaching wins and was a Hall of Fame player before that, flipped over his name placard on the news conference dais. His name was misspelled Wilkins. "I've been in Atlanta for three years," he said.

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