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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**BNPPP meets tomorrow**

A meeting of the Parliamentary Party of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will be held tomorrow at 3 pm at the Number 1 committee room of the Jatiya Sangsad, a press release said yesterday. BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia will preside, reports BSS.

**One killed in Chittagong**

From Staff Correspondent  
CHITTAGONG, Aug 9: A young man was killed when his uncle allegedly hit him with one blow of his fist during a brawl today at Middle Saripara under Pahartoli thana, according to police sources. The victim was identified as Abul Kashem, 30. Later, police arrested his uncle Mahbul Alam and a case has been filed in this connection.

**Phensidyl seized**

Police seized 920 bottles of Phensidyl syrup, 68 litres of wine, 80 pieces of Indian sares and some ganja and charas from different parts of the city yesterday. Twenty six people were arrested in this connection, said a DMP press release, reports UNB.

**Forged 500-taka notes seized**

MYMENSING, Aug 9: Police today seized 75 forged 500-taka notes and arrested a man from a local residential hotel. Acting on a tip-off a squad of CID police raided Malek Guest House and arrested one Sultan, 30, with the forged notes and some Indian currency, reports UNB.

**Flag meet with India today**

COMILLA, Aug 9: A two-day Bangladesh-India flag meeting aimed at repairing and reinstating border pillars, preventing smuggling and maintaining law and order across the border begins here tomorrow in the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner's office, reports BSS.

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**Water accord before next lean season, hopes Dhaka**

## Delhi to consider tariff concessions on 20 items

NEW DELHI, Aug 9: India has agreed to consider offering trade concessions to Bangladesh to help plug a gaping trade imbalance, officials from both countries said today, report agencies.

The two countries also agreed to hold further consultations for a broad-based permanent accord on sharing of the Ganges waters.

New Delhi has agreed to consider tariff concessions to Bangladesh on 20 items including tea, pharmaceutical products, leather and leather products, tobacco, carpets, soap and detergents, according to PTI.

Briefing reporters at the end of his three-day official visit, the Bangladesh Foreign Secretary, Farooq Sobhan said India's response to resolving the protracted water dispute was "extremely encouraging."

The United Front government had shown a keen interest in addressing this problem, he said.

The Indian External Affairs Minister, I K Gujral, will carry forward the negotiations on sharing of waters when he visits Dhaka early next month.

Sobhan told BSS, "We hope the water sharing agreement will be signed between the two countries before the onset of the next dry season."

Replying to a question on transit facility through Bangladesh he said, "transit also figures within the framework of SAPTA facilitating the movement of goods within the region."

In this context, Indian Foreign Secretary Salman Haider said, "transit is not only to the benefit of India but also the countries involved."

Farooq Sobhan also told reporters that his country was not interested in renewing a 25-year-old Friendship Treaty with India, set to expire next year.

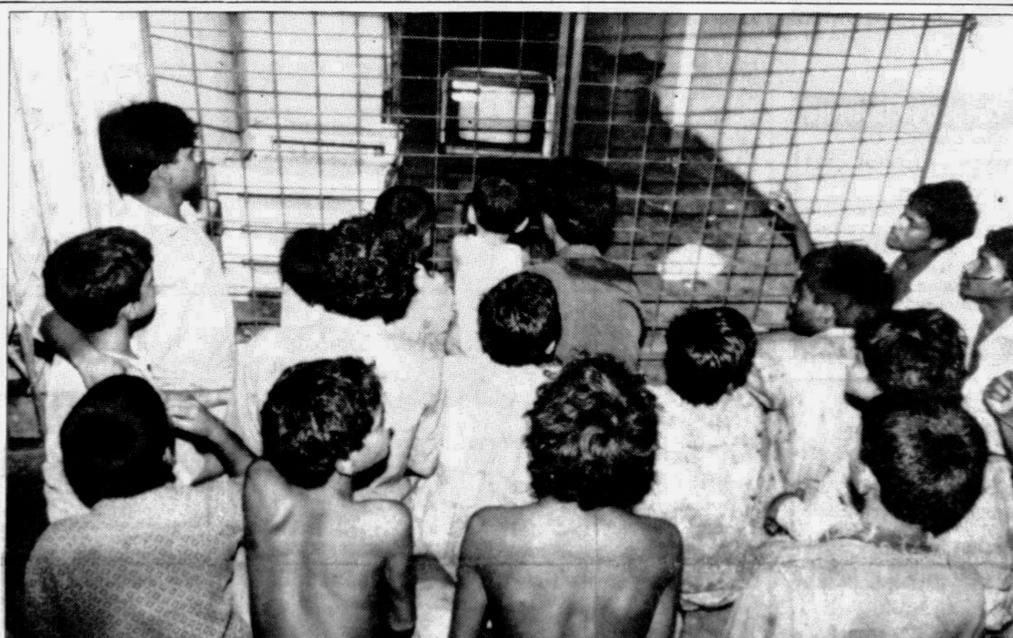
He said political parties in

Bangladesh were willing to allow the treaty to lapse as the two countries were now engaged in regional efforts to strengthen ties among nations in South Asia.

"The feeling in Bangladesh, shared by all political parties, is this treaty has fulfilled the purpose it has served," Sobhan said.

Sobhan said Dhaka had not yet made up its mind whether to support India's campaign to win a permanent seat on an expanded United Nations Security Council.

Bangladesh handed India a list of 31 exports for which



FREE ENTERTAINMENT: A number of tokais (street urchins) watching a Bengali movie on television in front of an electronics shop at the Stadium market in the city yesterday.

**BB directives to all banks**

## Realise overdue loans, take action against defaulters

By R M Titumir and Inam Ahmed

The Bangladesh Bank has asked all the scheduled banks to tighten their portfolio management, gear up recovery of overdue loans and to be "careful" in sanctioning new loans.

The central bank has also asked the banks to take stringent measures to realise overdue loans and take legal actions against defaulters, a highly placed source in the finance ministry said.

The directives, issued Monday last, are aimed at restoring discipline in the "beleaguered" financial sector, the sources said.

The new government had earlier expressed concern over the sudden spurt in credit supply to the tune of 20 per cent in the terminal year of the previous BNP government, from 3.84 per cent in the previous year.

Three major observations by the Bangladesh Bank (BB) in the banking sector by prompted the latest move. These are, an increase in the flow of credit compared with deposit growth, lower rate of loan recovery and increase in classified loans, a high official of the BB told The Daily Star last night.

In its new circular, the central bank asked the board of directors of the scheduled banks to meet quarterly to review and streamline the loan recovery. It also suggested the banks to strengthen their legal divisions to ensure higher rate of recovery by taking appropriate legal actions. If necessary, help of prominent legal experts can be taken to pursue the loan defaulters and settle the cases in the shortest possible time, the circular said.

The sources said the banks have been further advised to be "active" to regularly realise those loans which have not yet been overdue so that the amount of overdue loans does not escalate further.

It reiterated that all existing projects should be evaluated in case of demand for extra loans on projects.

About providing new loans, See Page 12 Col 7

**Telecom in Bangladesh**

## Basic services still rudimentary: WB

The World Bank has suggested to the Bangladesh government to promote greater competition and strengthen regulation quickly and transparently in telecommunication sector before investors became disillusioned, reports BSS.

The WB pointed out that demand for services and emerging new technologies is now pushing deregulation beyond the capabilities of existing legal and regulatory framework in Bangladesh.

The WB in its recently released Agenda for Action for Bangladesh said the telecommunication services in Bangladesh are in a mixed bag. In Bangladesh, basic services are still rudimentary and not up to the quality that emerging market competitors like Sri Lanka or major South Asian commercial centres like Mumbai are beginning to offer, it said.

At main lines per 1000 residents, Bangladesh's telephone penetration rate compares very unfavourably with Pakistan's 16, India's 11 and Sri Lanka's 10. The WB also pointed out that the installation charge for a digital line — around 20,000 Taka or 500 US dollars — is one of the world's highest. Bangladesh has about 4,000 cellular customers while Sri Lanka has 60,000.

Two out of ten local calls are successfully completed on average in Bangladesh compared with seven in the European Union, six in China and four in Indonesia, the World Bank said pointing out that the rate of complaint soared from just below 10 per cent in 1991 to over 50 per cent in 1995.

The government would have only one chance to promote competition and strengthen regulations quickly and transparently to get the sector right, the World Bank said, adding once the legal arrangements are made they would "determine the shape of the sector for a long time to come — for good or ill."

The World Bank also listed some suggestions for the government to attain its goals in the telecommunication sector. See Page 12 col 8



**S M Sultan's 72nd birthday today**

By Staff Correspondent

The 72nd birth anniversary of celebrated painter S M Sultan will be observed in the country today.

Different socio-cultural organisations have drawn up various programmes, including a fair at Narail, the birth place of the artist, in observance of the day.

Besides, a book commemorating the illustrious painter will also be published on the day in the city.

National award-winning painter S M Sultan, born in Narail in 1924, died on October 10, two years ago.

The publication ceremony of 'S M Sultan Commemorative Book' will be held at the Shilpakala Academy auditorium in the city at 5 pm today.

Poet Shamsur Rahman will attend the function as chief guest while Prof Anisuzzaman, Prof Borhanuddin Khan Jahanangir, journalist Sontosh Gupta and artist Motulab Ali will take part in the discussion.

Shilpakala Academy, which published the book marking the 72nd birth anniversary of the artist, will sell the book at 20 per cent commission for two days from today.

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## Number of metropolitan magistrates inadequate

By Masud Arif and Mizan Ali

Inadequate number of magistrates and lack of various facilities have gripped the Dhaka Metropolitan Magistracy, affecting its smooth functioning, sources concerned said.

A magistrate has to take up 40 cases a day on an average, the sources said, adding that there were only 17 metropolitan magistrates for around 80 lakh people of the metropolis.

The number of under trial cases in the court was 13,782 till Thursday, they pointed out.

The court authorities concerned were now planning to recommend at least 13 new posts of magistrate. The proposal would be put forward within a month, one source said.

Some senior officials told The Daily Star that on an average at least 30 thousand people visit this court every day but it lacks adequate facilities for the witnesses even.

Officials said that there were 6,000 registered lawyers and two assistants for each registered lawyer, a large number of whom come to the court regularly.

Besides, more than 500 cases were heard a day on an average in the court, which involved at least another 10,000 people including witnesses, relatives, friends and visitors. In addition, a large number of others crowd the congested court buildings, the officials mentioned.

There is no witness shed anywhere in the court, not to speak of toilets and other civic amenities," an official said. Besides, the court has a capacity to keep in its custody about 60 people but it sometimes has to accommodate more than 500 people there," he added.

According to police sources, at least 300 people were brought to the court every morning from 15 thanas of the city to be produced before the court during the whole day. Besides, a large number of under trial prisoners are brought from the central jail. They have to stay in court custody for at least eight hours for hearing of cases or for the completion of various formalities in the court.

## Azharuddin 'sacked', Tendulkar takes over

CALCUTTA, Aug 9: Batting genius Sachin Tendulkar has replaced Mohammad Azharuddin as India's cricket captain, it was announced today, reports AFP.

The 23-year old was named captain for the four-nation Singer World Series starting in Colombo on August 24 and a five-match Rubber against arch-rivals Pakistan in Canada in September.

Chairman of selectors Gundappa Vishwanath said the decision to sack Azharuddin, India's most successful Test captain with 11 wins, was taken because his leadership was "not up to the mark."

"We needed a change because Azharuddin's performance as captain was not up to the mark since the World Cup," Vishwanath said.

Azharuddin, 33, has been under fire since India's defeat in the World Cup semi-final to eventual champions Sri Lanka in March.

India also failed to win two limited overs tournaments in Singapore and Sharjah following the World Cup, and lost both the test and one-day series in England earlier this summer.

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Sachin Tendulkar



Mohd Azharuddin

## Former college teacher murdered in city

By Staff Correspondent

A former college teacher was allegedly murdered at her Bailey Road residence in the city yesterday.

Nargis Jahan Farida Begum, 51, a former lecturer of Physics in Kabi Nazrul Islam College was found dead with injuries in her head, face, ear and hand in her flat at Nouratan Colony, Ramna police recovered the body yesterday afternoon, police sources said.

Mother of two sons, Nargis came back to Dhaka from the USA about two months ago. She was abroad with her husband Fazlur Rahman, an engineer, for long, the sources said.

The motive behind the killing could not be known immediately. Police suspected that she was hit by some heavy objects and succumbed to injuries within a very short time, in the early hours of yesterday.

A carpenter who had been working at the victim's flat for the last few days, went to the flat at about 11 am yesterday and later informed the brother of Nargis that the entry gate at her sister's house was locked from inside and none responded to repeated knocking, police said.

Nargis's brother Hedayetullah, who resides in the city's Kafrul area, rushed to the spot and broke open the door in presence of some local people. He found the body lying inside the flat and informed the Ramna police at about 3 pm, police sources added.

Detective police picked up the carpenter and a maid of the house, aged about 45 for questioning.

The body is being preserved at the BIRDEM after autopsy at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

A case was lodged with Ramna thana in this connection.

## Gunmen kidnap jeweller in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 9: Three masked gunmen abducted a jeweller at 2:15 pm today from his village home at Enayetpur under Hathazari thana, police said.

Jeweller Milon Kanti Dhar is owner of a shop at Hazari Lane in the city and president of local temple committee (Kalmondir). He was abducted on his way back home after attending a meeting of the committee.

But it was still unclear whether Milon was abducted for ransom or previous enmity.

A large contingent of police later launched a search operation in the locality for his rescue but only managed to arrest

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## DSE market indicators fall

By Rafiq Hasan

All market indicators of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) went down last week showing a massive correction in the share market.

Although the prices of shares fluctuated heavily during the week, the volume of trading and the value did not fall remarkably compared to the previous week's record.

Market operation and share brokers said that the market indicators went down because a selling pressure dominated the DSE floor over the week. Despite the liberal policy measures proposed in the 1996-97 budget, foreign investors are still selling out their shares, they said.

DSE chairman Imtiaz Hossain said the trend was a seasonal phenomenon. The market would be stable within a few weeks, he added.

A declining trend prevailed at the DSE floor almost every day during the week after several weeks' bullish trend.

The market, however, slightly improved on Thursday at the end of the week with more than 17 points rise in the All Share Price Index. On an average, prices of 65 issues incurred losses daily while 49 gained and 5 remained unchanged.

The All Share Price Index declined to 1126.89 points on Thursday the closing day of the week from previous week's closing-day record of 1145.54 points.

The market capitalisation of the DSE fell by Tk 127.93 crore to 7731.14 crore from previous weeks Tk 7859.07 crore.

On an average 5 lakh 50 thousand shares and debentures valued at more than Tk 11 crore exchanged hands daily during the last week against the previous week's 5 lakh 87 thousand, worth more than Tk 12 crore.

The All Share Price Index of the DSE had gone down to 1109.85 points on Wednesday, showing a total of 36 points fall in consecutive 5 days' bearish business.

Imtiaz also said that more than Tk 80 to 90 crore was invested in the Initial Public Offering for the 8th mutual funds of JCB and Bengal Fine Ceramic industries which also affected the secondary market.

The All Share Price Index at the Chittagong Stock Exchange marked a slight 2.50 point rise over the week.

The market capitalisation of the CSE also rose by Tk 21 crore to Tk 4297.73 crore from previous week's closing-day record of Tk 4275.89 crore.

## JCD again calls strike at DMC

By DMC Correspondent

The Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) said yesterday that they would go for another strike today at the Dhaka Medical College (DMC) to press its six-point demand including removal of the Principal of the college.

A tougher programme would be taken up if the demands were not met, a JCD press release said.

Earlier, a meeting between the rival groups on Thursday mediated by the Academic Council of the DMC, failed to make any headway as regards restoration of normalcy on the campus and resumption of classes.

The JCD had earlier observed strike for three days on the campus since the authorities reopened the college on August 5. It made a six-point demand that included immediate

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## Death in Ctg jail due to AIDS

All 60 Myanmar fishermen to undergo check-up

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Aug 9: Over 60 Myanmar fishermen who recently completed prison terms at Chittagong jail, are now waiting to be repatriated, sources in the jail said.

They were caught one year ago while illegally fishing in the exclusive economic zone of Bangladesh.

The sources said that due to cumbersome procedure, the return of those fishermen to Myanmar was being delayed.

Meanwhile, the body of the detained Myanmar fisherman, Thom, who died of AIDS at the Chittagong Medical Hospital on August 6, was burnt at the Baluadighi crematorium today at the introduction of higher authorities as the Myanmar embassy did not agree to send

the body home, a jail official said.

The jail authorities have now planned for medical check-up of the other Myanmar nationals before their repatriation, sources said.

The jail authorities planned this after a suggestion from Chittagong Medical College authorities and requests from different circles, the sources added.

On the other hand, police here began a hunt for an AIDS patient identified as Md Selim, 26, who fled from Chittagong Medical College Hospital on Wednesday before the test reports reached the doctors.

Selim, who returned from Abu Dhabi recently was

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## 2 BBCP men shot dead in Jhenidah

JHENIDAH, Aug 9: Two members of the outlawed Bangladesh Biplobi Communist Party (BBCP) were shot dead in the Kaliganj thana of the district yesterday, police said, reports UNB.

Villagers said a group of about 10 armed miscreants stormed the house of Abu Bakkar, 35 of Krishnapur village at about 11 pm and shot him dead.

In another incident, Momin alias Azad, 40, was shot dead by unknown miscreants at a market in Subarnasara village at about 8 am.

Police said the dead were members of the outlawed party, but could not say who were the assailants and what was the motive behind the killings.

Miscreants killed 15 people in the district in last two months, police sources said.

## 74 illegal arms deposited as deadline ends

The 72-hour ultimatum to deposit illegal arms ends at 6 am today with a warning of action against those who have failed to avail of the government-declared amnesty, reports UNB.

Fifty-seven firearms were surrendered yesterday, the third day of amnesty, further raising response to the amnesty for illegal arms holders, officials said.

With yesterday deposit, the number of total surrendered arms rose to 74. On the first two days, a total of 17 arms with some ammunition were laid down.

The districtwise break-up of yesterday's arms surrender: Natore 15, Keraniganj in Dhaka 10, Narasingdi 7, 14 others recovered by police in

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