



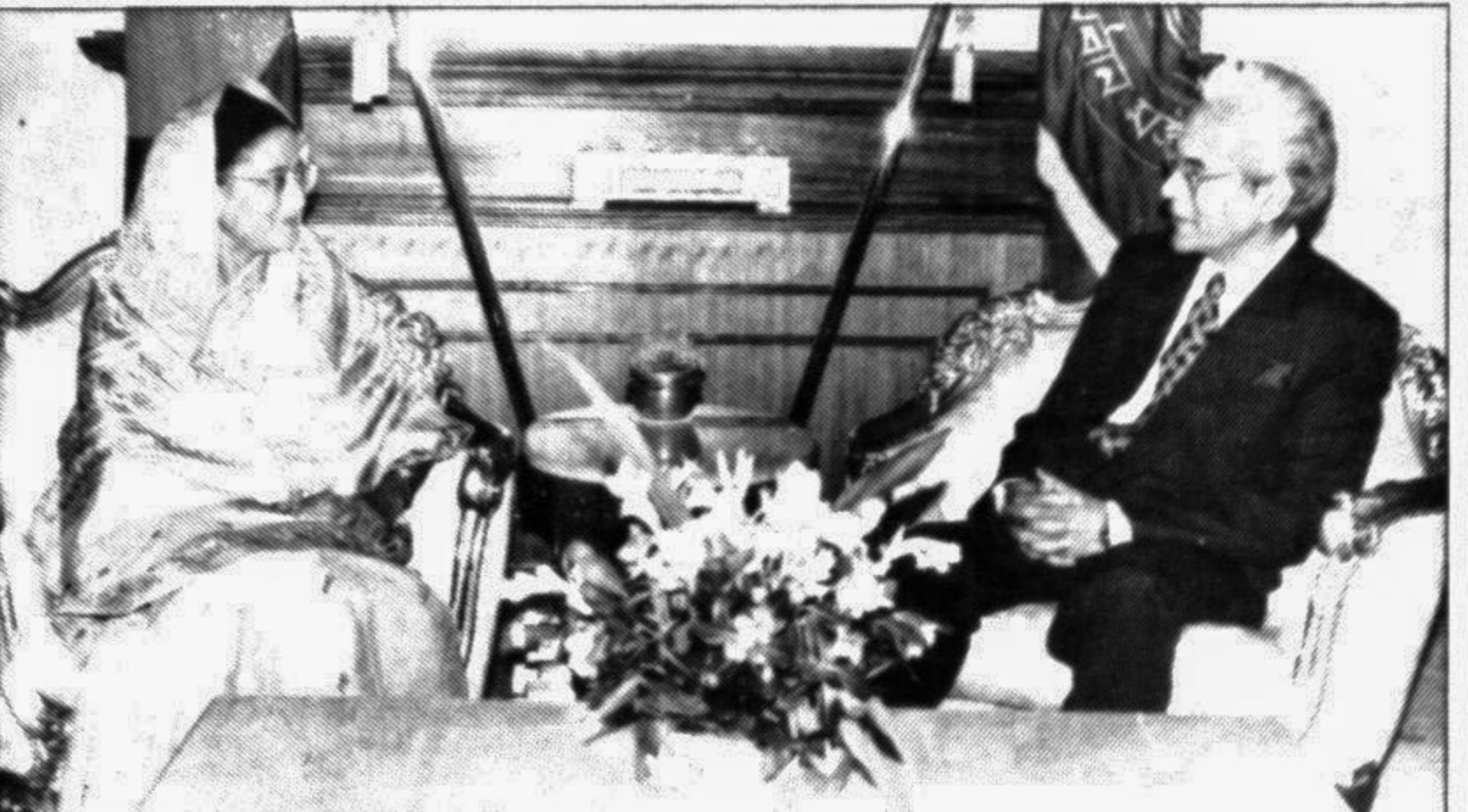
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SAARC Secretary General Naeem U Hasan called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday.

— PID photo

SAARC can play effective role in economic cooperation: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh wants to see the seven-nation SAARC playing an effective role in fostering regional cooperation in the economic front, reports UNB.

"We have already identified various fields of economy where the SAARC can play an effective role to reach the benefit of regional cooperation to commonman," she said.

The prime minister was talking to the visiting Secretary General of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Naeem U Hasan, at her office in the city.

Stressing the need for a strong regional cooperation under the framework of SAARC, she said this regional forum should be made effective like other regional groupings, including the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

"We want that the success of SAARC trickles down to the common people of the region for the overall welfare and development of the member countries," she said.

Hasina said people-to-people contact is essential among the over one billion people of the subcontinent and for this,

the idea of regional cooperation was mooted back in 1973 by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

She told the SAARC secretary general that her government attached priority to ensuring peace and order in the society, economic stability and poverty alleviation within the shortest possible time.

"And for this, we are taking necessary steps," she said, adding that the government was trying to ensure a peaceful atmosphere and education for all which are very important for economic development and job creation.

It was informed in the meeting that Bangladesh government has taken measures to enable elected representatives of the country visit the SAARC countries without visa.

The meeting emphasised that facilities should be extended to the business community also to boost trade and commerce among the member states.

Naeem U Hasan expressed his happiness to note that the government has given importance to SAARC and identified the fields of cooperation among the regional countries.

He also praised Bangladesh's idea of exerting efforts

for confidence-building among the SAARC countries.

Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan was present during the meeting.

BSS adds: The visiting SAARC Secretary-General also had a meeting with Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan yesterday.

During the two and a half hours meeting, held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the two sides discussed implementation of the decisions taken in the meeting of SAARC Council of Ministers in New Delhi in December last year, a foreign office source said.

The issues to be taken up at the SAARC Council of Ministers' meeting on Children of South Asia were also reviewed during the talks, the source said.

He said the two sides discussed matters relating to draw a collective position of the South Asian nations to be placed before the World Food Summit which will be held in Rome in November.

Major elements relating to the cooperation between SAARC and European Union also figured in talks, he added.

Lankan maid stabs Saudi employer

DAMMAM, Saudi Arabia, Aug 13: A Sri Lankan maid was killed by her Saudi employer with a knife before being stopped by the maid's family, the Saudi Gazette reported today.

Mohammed Al-Sabea, 75, was watching television in his living room when the 20-year-old maid came in with two knives, stabbed him once in the chest, and tried to stab him a second time before he restrained her and screamed for help, the English language daily said.

It did not name the woman or say when the incident took place.

Al-Sabea's son was quoted as saying the stabbing took place after his mother asked the maid, who had been working for the family for less than month, to move from her room to another room, the newspaper said.

The maid, a mother of two, was taken to a mental hospital and then deported after her employer's family dropped the charges, the Gazette said.

Hasina

From page 1 cannot be removed from the mind of people, she added.

The Prime Minister could not check her emotion while narrating the great role of her affectionate father, and recalling the memory of her mother and brothers.

"My father has sacrificed himself for the cause of people and the country. I will put in all my efforts to make the people happy by fulfilling their needs," said Hasina.

In her presidential speech, poet Sufia Kamal demanded the killers of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib.

Bus accident

From page 1 driver of the reserved bus with some 45 table-givers on board lost control over the vehicle.

Two passengers, identified as Abdur Rahman, 5, and Ali Akbar, 60, died on the spot while two other unidentified passengers succumbed to their injuries on way to Dhaka.

The rest of the injured were admitted to different hospitals in Savar and Dhaka.

A case was filed with Savar thana.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed deep shock at the deaths of 11 people in the road accident at Bhaluka.

In a condolence message, she said the deaths of 11 people, including five freedom fighters who had played a heroic role during the 1971 Liberation War, was a big loss to us.

Sheikh Hasina conveyed her sympathy to the bereaved family members and prayed for salvation of the departed souls.

Arms recovery

From page 1 Metropolitan area till yesterday, said police.

These include one SLR, one SMG, seven rifles, 11 guns, 18 revolvers, four pistols, four pipe-guns, five LG, and 173 rounds of bullets, police said.

The DIG of Barisal Range talking to The Daily Star over phone last night said eight firearms, including seven pipe guns and one Indian pistol, were surrendered till yesterday.

In Sylhet Division, seven weapons, including two foreign pistols and 5 pipe guns, were surrendered, said the DIG over the range.

The DIG of Khulna Range said last night that 217 weapons of various kinds including 148 rounds of ammunition were recovered from the division till the end of the expiry hour of voluntary surrender last evening.

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The Daily Star

Ceasefire in Chechnya

MOSCOW, Aug 13: Russian and rebel Chechen forces today agreed a ceasefire to take effect at noon (0800 GMT) on Wednesday, the Interfax news agency reported, quoting the rebel command, says AFP.

The accord provides for a separation of the belligerents and an exchange to wounded and dead, the Chechens said.

The agreement was reached at talks today in the village of Novy Atagi between Chechen Chief of Staff Aslam Maskhadov and the commander of Russian forces in Chechnya, General Konstantin Pulikovsky.

An earlier AP report said: Russian troops battled separatist fighters in the Chechen capital today as commanders of the two sides began talks on ending the bloody, eight-day battle for the city.

Gen. Pulikovsky, and separatist military leader Aslam met this evening in a village south of Grozny, the Interfax news agency said, quoting officials in rebel headquarters.

On Monday, Alexander Lebed, Boris Yeltsin's security chief, and Maskhadov agreed to talk to halt fighting and withdraw rebel fighters from Grozny, which is gripped by some of the fiercest battles

since the war began in December 1994.

The rebels continued to control the city center, driving around in cars and four-wheel-drive vehicles. The Russians pelted them with tank, mortar and sniper fire, but there was no sign they were launching a ground assault to retake the centre.

A correspondent for Russian Public Television was reported dead, fatally shot in the head, Ramzan Khadzhiev was the 19th journalist to die in the 20-month-old conflict.

Lebed, Yeltsin's special envoy to the region, returned to Moscow yesterday after a secret meeting with rebel commanders, and blasted the Russian military for mishandling the war. He said he plans to take personal charge of military operations in Chechnya, where the rebel offensive has left hundreds of Russian soldiers dead and wounded.

The separatists continued to attack government buildings yesterday and there was heavy sniper fire. Russian helicopters fired rockets, and Russian tanks and mortars near the ruins of presidential palace shelled residential areas throughout the night.

No AIDS patient in Ctg city: Physicians

CHITTAGONG, Aug 13: Some leading physicians of the city have said that there is no AIDS patient in the city, reports BSS.

The physicians said this while exchanging views with Chittagong city Mayor Alhaj Mohiuddin Chowdhury in the corporation auditorium here last night, a city corporation press release said today.

The physicians said that only a Thai national carrying HIV positive, died of the disease a week ago. "We are not yet confirmed that Mohammad Selim, a suspected AIDS patient, is attacked by the same disease, they informed the meeting.

The press release further asserted that there was nothing to be afraid of the news of detection of AIDS as published in a section of newspapers.

The physicians present on the occasion included Director of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) Col. Shamsul Islam, acting chairman of the Skin and Venereal Disease of CMCH Dr AQM Serajul Islam.

Prof ASM Mujibul Haq, Dr Mohammad Abdul Faiz, Dr Sultanul Alam, Dr ASM Tarek and chief health officer of the city corporation Dr MNA Mamoon.

The press release further said that the persons having any information about suspected AIDS patient should contact chief health officer of the city corporation over phone number 228868.

36 DU senators urge MPs to repeal Indemnity Ordin

Thirty-six senate members of Dhaka University yesterday demanded a delegation to try the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib.

In a joint statement, the senators urged all the parliament members to repeal the Indemnity Ordinance.

The signatories to the statement include Dr Abdul Kalam Azad, Dr ATM Zahurul Huq, Dr M Shahadat Ali, Dr Mohammad Muniruzzaman, Dr Sultan Shafi, Dr M Anwar Hossain, Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Ramendu Majumder, Dr Syed Moshadass Ali, Dr ATM Nurur Rahman Khan and Dr M Inamul Huq.

The demand was made at a general meeting of the BUETTA held in the city on Monday at the seminar room of BUET with its president Dr M Abdur Razzak Akond in the chair.

The meeting observed that the "autocratic and arrogant" attitude of the Vice-Chancellor were tarnishing the image of the university.

The meeting urged the government to take necessary measures for the removal.

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