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NEWS BRIEFS

BSF frees two Bangladeshis

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Oct 4: Two Bangladesh nationals who were kidnapped by the BSF from the Bisnakandi border of Gowainghat thana were release today. Daraj Mian and Shahin Mian were collecting firewood from near the zero line of Bisnakandi border on Monday afternoon when the members of Indian BSF forcibly took them away. However, a group of 'Khasia' (Indian tribe) today handed over the two kidnapped persons to the Bangladesh authority, said an official.

One chopped to death in Jessore

JESSORE, Oct 4: An influential member of a smugglers' syndicate in Jessore, Abul Khair, was killed by his rivals at Mahidia village, four-km off the town. The unidentified assailants caught Khair and chopped him to death in the evening, police said. Abul Khair, hailed from neighbouring Tetulia village, was the leader of 'Kota-Khair bahini,' reports UNB.

Timber worth Tk 75 lakh seized

COX'S BAZAR, Oct 4: Timber worth about Tk 75 lakh was seized from Idgah area in sadar thana on Thursday. Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of the forest department, district administration and police raided the area on Thursday morning and seized about 15,000 cubic feet of stolen timber from five depots. Officials said an organised gang of timber lifters had long been involved in stealing trees, including Segun, Teak and Gamari, from the reserve forests of Cox's Bazar, reports UNB.

9 burnt to death in West Bengal

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: Nine people including one woman and two children were burnt to death and 65 others suffered serious burns when a mob of about 1,000 people burnt down a village in India's West Bengal on Thursday, the Hindustan Times said today.

Stricter laws, if necessary

Child trafficking has to be stopped : PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said more stringent laws will be enacted, if necessary, to stop child repression and trafficking, reports UNB.

"There are laws against child repression and trafficking in the country. If necessary, stricter laws will be enacted," she said responding to a demand of a child speaker at a function in the city in the afternoon.

Inaugurating the function of Kendrio Kanchi Kanchar Mela, marking the 40th founding anniversary of the juvenile organisation, the Prime Minister said children are the future of the nation and everything possible will be done for their upbringing and good life.

The inaugural function at the Shilpakala Academy was presided over by Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, Director of Kanchi Kanchar Mela Rokunuzzaman Khan (Dada Bhai), Prof Anisuzzaman and child speaker Tanjib Rubaiyat also spoke on the occasion.

Referring to child repression, Hasina recalled that a group of Bangladeshi children, smuggled out by traffickers, were apprehended in Bombay a few years ago.

The traffickers, she said, were planning to sell these hapless children to middle eastern countries to use them in camel race, but they were later brought back to the country when the opposition raised hue and cry in Parliament.

Child trafficking has to be stopped, she said.

Referring to a personal tragedy, Hasina said in an emotion-choked voice: "I still don't know why my little brother Russel was killed, nor what was

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CU classes resume tomorrow

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 4: Classes at Chittagong University will resume Sunday Vice-Chancellor Dr RI Chowdhury said after a meeting of the Syndicate today.

The situation on the campus has returned to normalcy and halls are already open for resident students, he told The Daily Star.

Today's Syndicate meeting did not take any decision to extend suspension of class, the VC said.

Classes at CU were suspended till October 5 as per decision of the Syndicate meeting held on September 27 against the backdrop of the stalemate following the September 17 clashes between Chhatra League and Chhatra Shibir on the campus.

Today's Syndicate meeting however reorganised the two probe bodies formed on September 27, by increasing the number of members to 5 each from 3 earlier.

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Hydrocarbon exploration in Bangladesh

Round-tables postponed as organiser backs out

By Sharier Khan

The scheduled round-tables in London and Houston of USA on hydrocarbon exploration in Bangladesh has been postponed for an indefinite period due to reasons beyond the control of Bangladesh government, according to sources in the Petrobangla.

The round-tables which were sponsored by the World Bank on behalf of Bangladesh government, were scheduled to be held on October 5-7 in London and 12-14 in Houston, the sources said adding that most of the reputed oil companies of the world were invited to the conferences.

The World Bank had appointed a Swiss agency, Petro Consultants, to organise and conduct the round-tables but it backed out from the task at the last moment, the sources said.

The sources revealed that proprietorship of Petro Consultant was purchased recently by a German company which is now disinterested in conducting the round-tables.

Bangladesh first held a WB-sponsored round-table in Houston in 1992 which received good response and had resulted in signing of 20 Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with different oil companies.

The round-tables in London and Houston had generated "tremendous response" from leading hydrocarbon exploration companies as a British company — Cairn Plc — set and exemplary achievement by exploring a big gas reservoir in the Bay of Bengal in January this year, the sources said. "There was hardly any chance for rescheduling the round-tables within January for various reasons".

Meghnaghat power plant

Meanwhile, the government has primarily selected five foreign companies out of 20 which participated in the pre-qualification for the 300 MW Meghnaghat Power Plant which will be set up at a cost of US 300 million dollars.

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Shahid Afridi

Fastest ton in one-day matches

NAIROBI, Oct 4: Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi scored a century from 37 balls today to break the world one-day international record during the four-nation tournament at Nairobi Gymkhana, reports Reuter.

Promoted to number three against Sri Lanka in an attempt to boost the run-rate the 18-year-old Afridi pulverised the bowling with 11 sixes and six fours before finally falling for 102.

Afridi, playing in only his second international, missed the fastest one-day international 50 by one ball, but dipped under the previous century record by 11 deliveries.

Both previous records were held by Sri Lanka's dynamic opener Sanath Jayasuriya who made 50 from 17 balls and 100 from 48 against Pakistan in a tournament in Singapore last April.

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AL sets programmes for council session

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League has chalked out programmes for holding its national council session billed for the first week of December.

The programmes were drawn up at a lengthy meeting of the party's Central Working Committee (ALCWC) held yesterday with party president Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Almost all the 65 members of the ALCWC attended the nine-hour long meeting split into two sessions. The meeting began at 10 am at the party central office at Bangabandhu Avenue and continued till the lunch break at 1 pm. It resumed at five pm at the Bhaban and ended at 11 pm, meeting sources said.

A member of the ALCWC told The Daily Star last night six teams were formed at the meeting and these would coordinate holding of council sessions of all district units of the party in six divisions. The composition of the teams would be made public today, he added.

Council sessions of district units are scheduled to be completed by November 15.

The national council session of the party was earlier scheduled to be held in September but was deferred due to floods in different parts of the country and parliamentary by-polls in the 15 constituencies of the Jatiya Sangsad.

The meeting also discussed about the extended meeting of the ALCWC, due to be held on October 11. Members of the ALCWC, National Executive Committee, presidium advisory committee and presidents and general secretaries of the district units are likely to attend the meeting.

A party press release on yesterday's meeting, issued late last night, did not give details about the issues discussed.

Talking over telephone last night, some leaders who attended the meeting gave the impression that a wide-range of organisational and political is-

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CID interrogating Taher Thakur

By Staff Correspondent

CID personnel yesterday began interrogating former state minister Taheruddin Thakur on his alleged involvement in the jail killing of November 3, 1975.

CID is also probing his alleged links with the killing of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15 that year.

Taheruddin was arrested Wednesday night in connection with the killing of Bangabandhu and was now under CID custody on an eight-day remand, that began on Thursday.

He was also shown arrested in the killing of four national leaders — Tajuddin Ahmed, Syed Nazrul Islam, Kamruzzaman and Mansur Ali — inside the Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975, and was remanded for interrogation in this regard, according to CID sources.

CID got some 'important information' from Taher Uddin regarding the jail killing, police officials said yesterday.

Unchain Madhu

Madhu, the Rhesus Monkey in chain, tied with a Mahogony sapling near the Science Faculty of the Dhaka University, caresses a cat, perhaps reminiscing his childhood when his mother loved him, somewhere in a forest in Bangladesh. Poachers had plucked him out of his abode. They found a pet lover, Moslem, who shares his life with Madhu and the cat, feeding them with his little earning from his job as a Rickshaw mechanic and renting out two Rickshaws. "I bought Madhu two months ago from a pet-seller for Taka 200. But they cost me more than what I need for myself. But I love them," he said. But he is not aware that it is illegal for him to keep Madhu as a pet. Trading on Rhesus Monkey, a vanishing species, is prohibited by law in Bangladesh. Unscrupulous hunters regularly trap them for a flourishing market on illegal trading. —Shehab Ahmed with photo by Enamul Haq.

Body to examine repeal of Indemnity Odn may submit report next week

Star Report

The committee formed to examine repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance is likely to submit its report to the Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs by the second week of this month, according to official sources.

The six-member committee was formed on September 30 with secretary of the Law and Justice Ministry Aminullah at its head. The committee had been asked to submit its report by October 20.

Other members of the committee are Mostafizur Rahman and A Bashar joint secretaries of the Ministry of Law and Justice, Kazi Habibul Awwal, secretary of the Law Reforms Committee, Iktidar Ahmed, director of the Judicial Training Institute, and Anwarul Huq deputy secretary of the Ministry of Law and Justice who is the member secretary of the committee.

The terms of reference of the committee are : To examine the legality of the Indemnity Ordinance of 1975 and draft a Bill if

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Frequent load-shedding intentional : Khaleda

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said the prevailing power disruption is being created 'intentionally' to prepare ground for importing electricity from India, reports UNB.

"Power plants are also being kept inoperative," she said while addressing a meeting with the Hazaribagh Jatiyatabadi Tannery Sramik Dal at her Minto Road official residence in the evening.

Begum Zia said: We have no need to import power from any country. Bangladesh has adequate power generation capacity. If all the power plants can be made operational, the country's demand will be fulfilled.

She charged the ruling party with hatching conspiracy to make Bangladesh not only a market for foreign products but also a province of another country. She said: "They (ruling party) have already started working according to the conspiracy."

The BNP chairperson also accused the government of planning to give transit to India. "The nationalist forces will have to be united to save the country from these conspiracies and protect its independence and sovereignty," she said.

There seems to be no difference between the former autocrat and the present government, the Leader of the Opposition said. "They talk about democracy, but do not practise. They talk about voting rights, but do not actually believe in it."

She said the ruling party has started running the country in "Baksali" style by unleashing repression and torture on the people, particularly, on BNP workers. "We want to see the end of these repressions," she added.

The former prime minister said her government had left a strong economy for the present government. "But instead of ad-

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No progress in BNP plan for 'shadow cabinet'

By Reaz Ahmed

The BNP has not made any headway as yet regarding formation of its planned 'shadow cabinet'.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), which emerged the largest opposition party in the country through the June 12 general elections, had planned to form a 'shadow cabinet' in line with British parliamentary culture.

BNP vice-chairman and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury had told newsmen on June 24 last that the party would form a 'shadow cabinet' soon.

A party frontliner said, "The idea of a shadow cabinet has virtually been lost in the crowd of top-priority agenda like revamping of the organisation and countering government's repression on BNP leaders and workers". "It is at the bottom of

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Mismanagement at BATEXPO '96 alleged

By Staff Correspondent

Visitors, participants and foreign buyers were embarrassed yesterday due to alleged mismanagement at the Bangladesh Apparel and Textile Exposition, BATEXPO '96, at Hotel Sonargaon.

Some participants at the 3-day exposition, organised by Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association, alleged that although, the exhibition was scheduled to open at 9 am, they were not allowed to enter into the premises even after 9:15 am which caused dislocation and delay in decorating their stalls.

Participants, visitors and foreign buyers who started gathering there at 8 am had to wait for more than 1 and half an hour to enter the exhibition pandel, set up at the ground floor of the hotel.

Many visitors felt embarrassed as they were charged Tk 50 as entrance fee which was

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Save Dhaka, Clean Dhaka : Scouts show the way

Star Report

They were not pied pipers of Hamilon. But the boys in smart *khaki* and regalias of scouts were trooping down the garbage-strewn Bangladesh Bank Colony at Motijheel, urging bewildered housewives and curious children in tow, to keep it clean.

Soon, the small platoon of scouts led by Nahid, 15, had a legion of irregulars who joined their unique campaign to keep the neighbourhood tidy. Their message reverberated across the colony.

There are bins nearby. But the domestic hands, mostly the maids, rarely go out of their stairwalls. They prefer to leave their rubbish piled near the entrance.

"Madam, please ensure that your garbage does not litter the colony and thus the metropolis", Nahid told the startled, demurred housewives while explaining their sudden arrival on the scene.

Nahid and his boys were part of hundreds of other little volunteers who gave up their weekend yesterday to give a hand to The Daily Star-pioneered Save Dhaka, Clean Dhaka campaign with active help from the Boys and Girls Scouts, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and cooperation from citizens in different parts of the capital.

The city with an estimated nine million people, is groaning under litters, pressing hard on the resources to keep it neat. The City Corporation, which has its own legion of sweepers and equipment to cope with the growing piles of rubbish at night, seldom ventures out onto the nook and corners, complained some residents of Nakhalpara. "We have to grease their palms on a regular basis even then they neglect their

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Ramendranath Goldar, a teacher of the Nakhalpara Hossain Ali High School leads his boy and girl scouts, trumpeting their arrival in the area to begin the Save Dhaka Clean Dhaka campaign. — Star photo

Warrant for Rao's arrest stayed until Oct 7

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: An Indian court today suspended a warrant for the arrest of former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao until a hearing next week, a lawyer representing Rao said.

Counsel R K Anand told Reuters that the Delhi High Court issued the stay order after a lower court judge had issued arrest warrants against Rao and three others in a seven-year old forgery case.

The Delhi High Court scheduled a hearing for October 7 on Rao's request that the arrest warrant be quashed.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Prem Kumar earlier issued warrants for the arrest of Rao, US citizen Larry Kolb, former Deputy Foreign Minister K K Tiwari and a former top bureaucrat, K L Verma, AFP quoting official said.

The magistrate disallowed the four from obtaining bail in advance in line with a legal provision in India which grants immunity against possible arrest.

Kumar's orders came on charges filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) accusing Rao and the others of masterminding the forging of documents in 1989 to embarrass a crusading opposition politician, Vishwanath Pratap Singh.

Shah Rukh Khan long-lost son of a labourer?

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: Indian film actor Shah Rukh Khan has been summoned to appear in court after a construction worker claimed he was her long-lost son who vanished years ago, the Press Trust of India said today, reports AFP.

The news agency said Khan, one of India's top matinee idols, had been asked to appear in court in the western city of Ahmedpur on October 30.

The woman, Malanbai claims Khan is her son who got 'lost' mysteriously several years ago when she was working as a labourer in Bombay, India's film capital and financial heart.

She says the actor was born on June 12, 1965 and was christened Alasab.

Khan shifted to Bombay from New Delhi about five years ago after becoming a top television star. He has repeatedly said in interview that he was born in New Delhi and studied there.

BCL, Shibir fail to hold meetings on IU campus

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Oct 4: The Bangladesh Chhatra League and the Islami Chhatra Shibir could not hold their scheduled meetings on the Islami University Campus today as the authorities had earlier imposed Section 144 in and around the venue.

Section 144 was imposed in the area at late last night by the district administrations of Kushtia and Jhenidah to avoid further clashes between the two rival student groups.

Both the groups convened meetings at the same venue de-

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Fayezullah on 2 days' police remand

By Staff Correspondent

AFM Fayezullah, arrested on charges of possessing illegal firearms, was placed on two-day police remand yesterday, police sources said.

Fayezullah, who identified himself as journalist, was arrested by the Detective Branch (DB) police along with an illegal foreign-made revolver from the Public Relations Department of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Thursday afternoon, according to reports.

The BD produced Fayezullah before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, (CMM) court yesterday afternoon and prayed for five day's remand. The court granted only two days, police sources said.