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NEWS BRIEFS

BNP executive body
meets today

By Staff Correspondent

The meeting of the national executive committee of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will be held at Hotel Sundarban in the city, instead of the party's central office at 10 am today, said a party press release last night.

Phensidyl, wine
recovered in city

Detective police recovered a huge quantity of banned phenidyl syrup, foreign wine and beer from Sayedabad and Gulshan areas in the city yesterday. Acting on a tip-off, police raided Balurmath area at Sayedabad in the morning and recovered 750 bottles of Indian phenidyl. They also arrested Mohammad Sattar, 23, and Golam Sarwar alias Hiru for their involvement in the phenidyl trading. Another detective team recovered 13 cartons of foreign-made beer and one carton of wine from Gulshan area and arrested Abdul Hakim and Kabir, reports UNB.

Call for hartal at
Golapganj tomorrow

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET Nov 15: The All Party Action Committee has called for a half-day hartal on November 17 at the thana headquarters of Golapganj to press its six-point demands. The demands include, setting up of a fractionation plant and Gas turbine power plant at Golapganj, cancellation of acquisition of lands in the name of Jalalabad Gas and jobs for the local people. A rally was held at the Hetingganj Bazar Choumuhani this afternoon with a call to make the hartal a success.

Pak National Bank
president held

KARACHI, Nov 15: Pakistani police today arrested M B Abbasi, President of the country's largest state-run bank, National Bank of Pakistan (NBP), police sources said. It was not immediately known if the arrest was linked with the sacking of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto by President Farooq Leghari on November 5 on disputed charges of corruption and misrule, reports Reuter.

Shahjalal Varsity
admission test

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET, Nov 15: Admission tests for the first year honours classes in the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology will be held on January 3 and 4. Tests for 'KA' Unit (Science) will be held on January 3 and for 'KHA' unit (Arts and Commerce) on January 4, an official of the university said. Application forms for admission tests will be distributed and received from December 1 to 15, the source added.

Tokyo suggests steps for 'effective use' of grants, aid

By Inam Ahmed and Sharier Khan

Tokyo has asked Dhaka to take 'at least a dozen' specific steps for effective and efficient utilisation of its grants and technical assistance to Bangladesh, Finance Ministry sources said yesterday.

These steps were suggested by a Japanese delegation at the two-day annual consultation on Japanese grant and technical assistance to Bangladesh held in Dhaka late last month.

The delegation noted that if Bangladesh did not take those steps, Japan would reconsider future grants and technical aid.

The delegation pointed out to the government that the External Resources Division (ERD) and the National Board of Revenue (NBR) usually took three to six months to clear the acceptance letter and the pass book of any expert of JICA and

JOVC of Japan. Such delay in the procedures forces many of the experts to stay in Bangladesh illegally against their will and incur unnecessary expenses.

Bangladesh should make all efforts to streamline the procedures to ensure prompt issue of an acceptance letter and a pass book, the sources, quoting the Japanese suggestions, told The Daily Star.

The delegation, which did not conceal its unhappiness in this regard at the annual consultation, noted that 'ECNEC's Project Concept Paper (PCP) approval process did not have appropriate documents for timely implementation of project-type technical cooperation.'

The Japanese side requested the Bangladesh authorities to promptly send new project pro-

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No fresh contacts between AL, BNP

Star Report

No fresh contacts were made between the ruling Awami League and the main opposition BNP yesterday for a dialogue to resolve the impasse due to the latter's abstention from attending Jatiya Sangsad session since Sunday last.

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said "No fresh contacts were made from either side yesterday."

Replying to a question, he told this correspondent, "We have already made it clear to them (AL) that a congenial atmosphere must be created first for holding any sort of discussions."

BNP lawmakers started the abstention after it submitted a 10-point charter of demands to Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury saying that it would not be possible for them to return to the House till the demands are met.

Later Chief Whip of the JS Abul Hasnat Abdullah and Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Suranjan Sengupta, MP, contacted BNP leaders over tele-

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10000 face cases, 1200 held, alleges BNP

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) yesterday claimed that 900 cases were lodged against 10,000 leaders and activists of its youth front, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), and 1200 of them were arrested since the Awami League came to power in June last.

Ahmed Nazir said: "Verdicts of student unions' elections in various educational institutions are being snatched in favour of the ruling party in a similar style as Awami League did in June 12 general elections." He said this was being done to destroy the congenial academic atmosphere and prevent the students from launching movement against their (ruling party) anti-people and undemocratic activities.

He claimed that a conspiracy was being hatched to handover the country to a foreign country and urged the students to remain everready for launching movement to foil such a ploy.

Release JCD boys immediately, withdraw false cases, demanded Ahmed Nazir.

He alleged that in the name

of capturing student halls in colleges and universities, the party in power has created a chaotic situation in the educational institutions throughout the country.

That is the official name of Taiwan, which Beijing does not recognise as an independent country.

Communist China's official name is the People's Republic of China.

"We regret that this omission was made," a summit official said delegates in a special announcement.

A new journal is now being created and will be distributed to you as soon as possible," the official said.

These abandoned lands' total 5,907.90 acres in BR's eastern and western zones while another 1,459.97 acres are under illegal occupation. Different government organisations are illegally occupying 1,040.74 acres, the sources said.

If these organisations now approach us for purchasing the lands which they are illegally occupying for years, we will consider it, the source said requesting anonymity.

A rather small portion totalling 419.23 acres are occupied by individuals.

At the centre of all the speechmaking was the pledge to reduce by half the number of people who suffer from chronic hunger and malnutrition by 2015.

However, things may be going a bit too smoothly for the media who are restive and full of complaints against the severe restrictions imposed on the press, confining them to areas of FAO so remote from the actual events and presence of the delegates, that many are reacting with negative views of what they are now seeing as an artificial, highly orchestrated

Soeharto assures PM of assistance for development

ROME, Nov 15: President Soeharto of Indonesia has assured support and assistance for development and economic stability of Bangladesh, reports UNB.

"We will not hesitate to take any supportive measures for Bangladesh to continue its development efforts," he said during a 45-minute talk with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a hotel here on Thursday night.

Referring to his country's development experience, Soeharto said a nation has to suffer, has to work hard to pave the way for its development and stability.

Both the leaders, who reached Rome earlier in the day to attend the World Food Summit, discussed issues of bilateral interest and emphasised developing economic relations between the two countries.

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Li identified as Taiwan's PM!

ROME, Nov 15: The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) apologised to Chinese Premier Li Peng today after identifying him as leader of arch-rival Taiwan in an official document at the World Food Summit, reports Reuter.

The written journal containing the programme of speakers for today's sessions of the World Food Summit at FAO's Rome headquarters referred to Li as 'premier of the state council of the republic of China'.

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Food Summit: Restrictions on media alleged

Neeman Sobhan writes from Rome

The general debate at the Food Summit that commenced with 48 speakers from governments and inter-governmental organisations Wednesday continued smoothly as scheduled.

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Farooq kept in condemned cell

Star Report

Some special security measures have been taken for the three detained former army officers accused in the August 15 75 killing case, according to official sources.

Col (retd) Syed Farooq Rahman has now been kept in a condemned cell, while Col (retd) Shahriar Rashid Khan and Major (retd) Kharuzzaman have been kept in two other cells in the Dhaka Central Jail, the sources said, adding "for security reasons, they were shifted from one cell to another."

The three were also charged in the November 3, 75 jail killing case when CID took up the case in September last after a lapse of almost 21 years.

All-Party ultimatum to arrest killers of Biplob

KISHOREGANJ, Nov 15: An All-Party rally today gave an ultimatum to arrest the police personnel involved in the killing of college student Biplob within a week, reports UNB.

Biplob Sarker alias Debasish, a B Com Final year student of Wali Newaz Khan College, was allegedly beaten to death by some police in the town's Rathkhola area on Monday.

The leaders of the Awami League, BNP, JP and JSD at a condolence meeting at Rathkhola this afternoon warned that they would go for an action programme if their demand was not met. Jatiya Party leader Matiur Rahman Khan presided over the meeting.

The rally was addressed among others, by BNP MP Md. Sharif.

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PM invites Italian investors to avail 'best opportunity'



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing Italian businessmen in Rome yesterday.

— PID photo

ROME, Nov 15: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has invited the Italian investors to invest in the country and said Bangladesh offers the best investment opportunity available anywhere in the world, reports UNB.

"Our package of fiscal and other incentives to foreign investors are more liberal and our labour is cheap even compared with the other South Asian countries," she said addressing a dinner party at a local hotel on Thursday night.

The dinner was hosted in her honour by the Honorary Consul Generals and Consul of Bangladesh.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Food and Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) president Fouzi Al-Sulttan, World Food Programme (WFP) executive director Catherine Bertini, vice ministers and senators of Italian Parliament attended the dinner.

The prime minister said that the investors would find in Bangladesh an able, willing

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BR plans to sell its lands now 'illegally occupied'

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Railway (BR) authorities will seek approval from the government to sell its lands across the country, which are either illegally occupied by people or unused, according to official sources.

A proposal in this regard will be placed before the government soon along with a detailed chart of its salable 'abandoned lands', prepared through a survey, the sources added.

"It is not possible to evict the illegal occupiers. So we are either leasing or selling the lands. This will enable the BR to build a fund of its own which can be spent for different development purposes," another source said.

The BR has a total of 61,839.31 acres of land in its eastern and western zones out of which 36,673 acres are under use for tracks, stations, staff quarters, rest houses, offices and all other facilities.

The BR proposal says that 27,46 acres could be used for commercial purposes.

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Abducted student rescued from DU hall : 4 arrested

Police yesterday rescued a Dhaka University student-cum-businessman from the Surya Sen Hall, reports UNB.

Police said a group of armed youths kidnapped Rabiu Islam Rabi from Bakushali Market at Nilkhel at about 6 pm on Thursday and demanded Tk 1.5 lakh as ransom.

The law enforcement personnel launched a massive hunt soon after the kidnapping.