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BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan addressing a rally organised by the Jassas in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday protesting alleged harassment of its activists.

— Star photo

Queen Sophia visits Grameen projects

Queen Sophia of Spain yesterday visited the Grameen Bank projects at the remote village of Tatar Karigarpura, 15 kilometres from the Rajshahi city, reports BSS.

Accompanied by her sister Princess Irene and Managing Director of Grameen Bank Prof Mohammad Yunus, the Spanish Queen arrived at Baneswar in the morning by an Air Force helicopter.

She walked into the houses of poor rural women to see their self-reliance efforts with the assistance of the Grameen Bank.

During her day-long stay in the Tatar Karigarpura, the Queen visited a basic education programme under the sponsorship of the Grameen Bank, attended a discussion with Grameen Bank members and a workshop at a mango garden there.

She also witnessed a cultural function participated by the little children.

On her way back to Dhaka, the Spanish queen visited the Barendra Museum at Rajshahi and the Paharpur Archaeological Monument at Badalgachhi thana under Naogaon district.

At Tatar Karigarpura, the Spanish queen exchanged views with the women about their problems and prospects for attaining self-reliance with the support of the Grameen Bank. She was visibly impressed to see the warmth and resilience of the rural women of Bangladesh.

The village women too did not hesitate to ask her personal questions. The queen replied to their queries in simple terms.

Replies to a question, the queen said that there were also poor people in Spain. Asked if she would like to open Grameen Bank in her country to help the poor, the queen said she would.

Fire at cotton factory

A fire broke out at a cotton ginning factory at Shyampur industrial zone at Postogola in the city yesterday afternoon. An electrical short circuit sparked off the fire at the Ahmed Machinery and Company factory, said the fire fighters who brought the fire under control. The loss caused by the fire was estimated at about Tk 35,000, reports BSS.

BNP rally

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non-cooperation by the then opposition party — the AL.

About the government move to ensure independence of the judiciary, Mannan Bhuiyan commented, "It seems that the judiciary is independent only in the case of Ershad.... the Public Prosecutors don't oppose any bail prayer for Ershad while pressure from the higher authorities are cited when such moves are made for the BNP workers."

Reiterating the allegation that his party was not allowed to speak on the floor of the Parliament and not properly represented in the parliamentary committees, the BNP leader said, "That's why we boycotted the parliament."

Alleging political, economic and cultural aggression against the country, Mannan Bhuiyan called for strong resistance against the move under the leadership of BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia.

The BNP leader also blamed the government for smuggling out fertiliser, depriving the farmers of just price of their produce, not paying salaries to the industrial workers regularly, closing down several mills and unleashing terrorism at the educational campuses and the industrial zones.

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

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PM advises youths to be ideal citizens

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the youth community to groom themselves as ideal citizens capable of building the country on the basis of Mujib ideals, reported BSS.

During the house-to-house visit, the queen took keen interest in weaving of cloths like gamchha, chador and other items, traditional way of paddy husking, preparation of pitha (winter cakes) and molasses and milking of cow.

The village women presented the queen and her sister with gamchha, chador and other handicraft items. They even offered the queen pitha, molasses and fresh milk. The royal guest, without any hesitation, accepted the offer.

Killing of tigers

16 Zoo staff interrogated by police

By Staff Correspondent

The Detective Branch (DB) of police yesterday interrogated 16 officers and employees of the Dhaka Zoo as part of their investigation into the recent killings of four Royal Bengal tigers at the Zoo.

Eight of the 16 Zoo staff were under the custody of the DB last night, police said.

The DB started the enquiry last week following the mysterious deaths of a four Royal Bengal tigers and a jungle cat.

The DB is likely to submit its investigation report within a week.

Hajack light explodes in Barguna: 2 killed

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 25: Two persons were killed and six injured when a hajack light exploded at a marriage ceremony at Gyanpara village under Patharghattha thana of Barguna district last night.

Witnesses said, Dulal, 10, and Yusuf, 20 died on the spot.

The seriously injured Abul Bashar, 25, was sent to the Al-Bari Sher-e-Bangla Medical College-Hospital in a critical condition.

Warrants of arrest against Abbas, Gayeswar condemned

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BNP General Secretary Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday condemned the warrants of arrest against its youth front president and general secretary Mirza Abbas and Gayeswar Chandra Ray, reports BSS.

According to their proposals, the Prime Minister said they could take up programmes to train the youths and make scope for them to grow up as Mujib Sena to serve the nation.

About the other proposals of the organisation, Hasina directed them to keep contact with the Youth Ministry and Information Ministry.

Among other leaders of the Sena, Afzalur Rahman and Moniruzzaman Monir also spoke on the occasion.

BB: BAC probe

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irregularities in granting permission to eight financial institutions, five of them without the approval of the Governor.

The report had said there was an 'influential' group in the central bank which made gains by bending rules.

It suggested further probe by the BAC or the Detective Branch.

Share certificates

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Most of these forged certificates are being exchanged outside the trading floors of the stock exchanges, in the kerb market. No official procedures are required for transfer of certificates as the kerb market operation is illegal.

Detective Branch police yesterday unearthed a factory at Fakirpura area under Motijheel thana in the city, which was forging share certificates of different companies and certificates of education boards and universities.

Police recovered large numbers of fake certificates of Halima Knit Fashions Ltd, and Ashraf Textile Mills Ltd from there. Police also recovered various machines used for forging share certificates and educational certificates.

Police arrested one person, Abhijoy Kumar Das, from the spot.

Earlier, forged allotment letters of Anwar Galvanizing and Imam Button Industries Ltd were seized by the officials concerned.

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Call for fighting scourge of AIDS

A four-day meeting of national AIDS programme managers of WHO in the South-East Asia region began in the city yesterday with a call for fighting against the killer disease that has already sieged humankind around the world including Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Salahuddin Yusuf inaugurated the 12th annual meeting at a local hotel, assuring all government cooperation and support in the battle against the deadly disease.

"We must save our people from this killer disease," said the minister, who also informed that a national HIV/AIDS/STD policy, framed by a task force, is now under study by the government and would be adopted shortly.

Besides, Yusuf said, a technical committee would be formed soon to find ways to contain the scourge as already 74 Bangladeshis, most are migrant workers, have been detected AIDS-positive.

Four of them are already dead while, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the number of estimated HIV (Human Immuno-deficiency Virus)-infected people in Bangladesh stood at 20,000 at the end of 1995.

The meeting, organised by the South-East Asia Region Office of WHO, is being participated by health and development experts from Bhutan, India, Indonesia, the Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Bangladesh.

Besides, officials from the

United Nations AIDS (UNAIDS) are also attending the meeting to make a series of recommendations for further strengthening of national programmes for controlling AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

According to the WHO, up to 28 million adults and children around the globe have so far been infected with the HIV which leads to the fatal condition known as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

AIDS has so far killed nearly 6 million people around the world since the early 1980s and threatens to affect millions in this Southeast Asian region.

WHO Representative in Dhaka Dr W. Hardjotanjo read out a message of Regional Director of WHO's South-East Asia Region Dr Uton Muchtar Rafel in the inaugural function. UNFPA representative Alain P. Mouchiroud read out message from UNDP Representative David Lockwood.

Representative of WHO South-East Asia Regional Office Dr S. Pattanayak also addressed the meeting.

Country papers detailing existing situation and initiatives undertaken to contain the AIDS epidemic are to be presented at the meeting by national programme managers of the participating states.

The HIV/AIDS scenario is likely to worsen, says WHO, because no cure or preventive vaccine is likely in the next five to ten years. By the end of the century, 40 million people are likely to contact HIV.

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Besides, officials from the

Condition of Teresa unchanged

CALCUTTA, Nov 25: Mother Teresa suffered chest pains and breathing problems again overnight, and doctors said today she must remain in hospital for at least several more days, reports AP.

She was given medication, oxygen and a mild sedative, and then she slept through the rest of the night and had a light breakfast, said SK Sen, the medical director of the Woodlands Nursing Home.

A medical bulletin described her condition as "unchanged". Sen added: "She is not out of danger."

Her medical team was considering giving Mother Teresa an angiogram to see whether her arteries needed dilating. Sen said. But the doctors will wait for a few more days in deference to her routine aversion to any intrusive tests, he said.

Khulna BNP demands removal of Kotwali OC

From Staff Correspondent

The Sena leaders said they were trying to make documentary films and episodes on the Liberation War and values of independence. They proposed "Bangabandhu Stipend" for meritorious students. They placed their intention for re-publishing the book "Dhaka Bangabandhu" of Sheikh Mujib Sena.

The organisation leaders also proposed keeping a box at the National Press Club for the common people to drop complaints and appeals addressing the Prime Minister.

According to the press release, Shahjahan Ahmed, 30, was severely injured in an attack by police at the Natun Bazar during the half-day hartal on Sunday.

The police on suspicion challenged the man identified as Chowdhury Ahmed Parvez Sohel, 32. Later, during interrogation, Chowdhury confessed his guilt, police said.

He was handed over to the Tejgaon thana where a case has been filed against him.

40 injured in Barisal road accident

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 25: At least 40 people were injured, 10 of them seriously, when two buses collided head-on at Rupatali near the Barisal town today.

Police and witnesses said a bus was bound for Barisal from Nalchiti and the other was on way to Patuakhali from Barisal.

Hamed Ali, 60, Md Shahajahan, 50, Sabita Rani, 25, Kamal, 35, Lokman Hossain, 22, Azam Khan, 35, Soma, 11, Suman, 8, Abdur Rab, 35 and Avi, a one year old child were admitted to the Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

To mark the day, BNP leaders will place wreaths at the Shaheed Milon Memorial Plaque at TSC at 8:30 am and offer *fateha* at his graveyard adjacent to Dhaka Medical College at 9:00 am.

The BNP will also hold a discussion at its central office at 5:30 pm.

BNP programmes to observe Dr Milon Day

From Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and its front organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to observe Shaheed Dr Milon Day tomorrow.

On this day, in 1990, Dr Shamsul Alam Milon was shot dead by terrorists near TSC crossing during anti-autocratic movement.

To mark the day, BNP leaders will place wreaths at the Shaheed Milon Memorial Plaque at TSC at 8:30 am and offer *fateha* at his graveyard adjacent to Dhaka Medical College at 9:00 am.

The protest "caravans" organised by three leftist groups opposed to APEC's free trade goals, eventually ended peacefully after Philippine President Fidel Ramos sent a top aide to meet representatives of the demonstrators.

Jyoti Basu

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hold official talks. Foreign Ministry officials and water experts of the two sides are likely to assist them during the meeting.

A dinner in honour of Basu will be hosted by the foreign minister at Sheraton Hotel tomorrow evening.

In the morning of November 28, Basu will visit the Jatiya Smriti Saudha at Savar, by helicopter. He will spend the rest of the day visiting his ancestral home at Baradi in Sonargaon. He will go there and return the same day by helicopter.

Jyoti Basu will call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on November 30. Sources concerned said that besides the courtesy call on the Prime Minister, when he will be accompanied by the members of his entourage, the two leaders are likely to have exclusive talks.

He will also pay a courtesy call on President Shahabuddin Ahmed the same day.

Basu will be accorded a reception by the Workers Party of Bangladesh on November 30 at 4 pm at the Shilpakala Academy. The Chief Minister would visit Sylhet on December 1. The trip by helicopter is likely to include sight-seeing and visit of tea estates in Sri Mongal.

Jyoti Basu might visit some Grameen Bank projects prior to his departure for Calcutta on December 2.

BCL leader