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NEWS BRIEFS

Bangladeshi killed by BSF

JHENIDAH, Jan 10: A Bangladeshi national was killed by India Border Security Force (BSF) on Wednesday. M Abdul Jabbar of Shamku village in Mahespur thana of the district was shot dead at Sonatpur village in Hasakhal thana on Nadia district. BDR sources here said today. After the incident, BDR sent a letter to BSF for a flag meeting, but was yet to receive any reply, reports UNB.

BSF yet to return fisherman

From Staff Correspondent SYLHET, Jan 10: A Bangladeshi fisherman who was kidnapped by a group of BSF members from the Kushtiyara river on Tuesday night is yet to be released. Shamsul Miah of village Maiyakhal of Beani-bazar thana was fishing at about 11 pm when a group of BSF men kidnapped him. BDR has already protested the incident and asked the BSF to hand over the Bangladeshi national immediately, official sources said tonight.

Woman banker robbed

A woman officer of the Gulshan circle one branch of the Janata Bank was robbed of her cash and prize bonds near Gulshan police station on Thursday evening, police said yesterday. Shams-E-Ara was attacked by the muggers when she was returning home from the bank by a rickshaw. They snatched away her cash, a cheque book and prize bonds worth Tk 30,000, reports UNB.

India to buy two Russian subs

NEW DELHI, Jan 10: India will import two conventional submarines from Russia and build two killer-class submarines under German licence, a defence ministry spokesman said here today. "We are importing one this year and the second in 1998 from Russia," he said, confirming the deal was clinched last month when India's defence Secretary Tapas Banerjee visited Russia to purchase Sukhoi-30 warplanes. The official said Germany has also agreed to India's plans to build under licence two specialised killer submarines, designed for underwater combat, reports AFP.

Traffic disrupted on Dhaka-Ctg road

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 10: A truck caused disruption of traffic on Dhaka-Chittagong highway for several hours as it created a barricade on the road after its axle was broken yesterday afternoon.

The truck remained on the road at Dorikandi union under Sonargaon thana till yesterday evening after it went out of order at about 1:30 pm, police said.

Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
1	11	—	5.34
2	12	5.20	5.35
3	13	5.20	5.35

The Daily Star

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receiving her British counterpart John Major on his arrival at the Zia International Airport yesterday. — Star photo

Hasina, Major hold official talks today

By Staff Correspondent

British Prime Minister John Major was accorded a warm welcome when he arrived in the city last night on a three-day official visit to Bangladesh.

He was accompanied by his wife Norma Major.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina received the distinguished guests at the airport on their arrival at 10:45 pm by a special flight of the British Airways.

Cabinet ministers, Mayor of Dhaka city Mohammad Hanif, heads of diplomatic missions, senior officials, and chiefs of the Army, Navy and Air Force were present at the airport.

This is the first visit by a British Prime Minister since then prime minister James Callaghan came to Bangladesh in 1978.

Major arrived from Bangalore, India, on the second leg of a three-day tour that will later take him to Pakistan.

Two tiny tots presented bouquet to the British Prime Minister as he alighted from the aircraft.

After the airport formalities, John Major drove in a ceremonial motorcade to the residence of the British High Commissioner at Baridhara, where he will stay during his visit.

Major streets in the capital were decorated with the National Flag of Bangladesh and the Union Jack, marking the visit of the British premier.

This is the first visit by a British Prime Minister since then prime minister James Callaghan came to Bangladesh in 1978.

Official talks between the

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Apart from senior officials, a large delegation of top business men from leading British companies are accompanying Major.

The visit is being considered important as it would seek to strengthen further the existing bilateral trade and commercial links between the two countries.

Major was speaking at a special plenary session of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) partnership summit 1997 at Netaji Indoor Stadium here.

Major also termed the water sharing agreement as a tremendous achievement for the both sides.

Chief Minister of West Bengal Jyoti Basu also spoke.

Major, on the first day of his visit to South Asia, also told Indian businessmen that he regretted the tiger had become one of the most endangered animals in the world.

The tiger is a proud and glorious animal. We must ensure its survival so that our great grandchildren can enjoy his grace and power as much as we do, he said.

The meeting was organised on the occasion of joining the BNP of some leaders and workers of a social organisation, Jatiya Tarun Sangha, led by its Chairman Fazlul Huq.

Begum Zia said the government was trying to suppress the BNP as there is no political party other than the BNP, which would raise their voice against the government's misdeeds and repression.

About other political parties, she said, the Jamaat has been lagging behind due to its own faults.

I don't want to make any

Major praises water-sharing accord

CALCUTTA, Jan 10: British Prime Minister John Major has appreciated the recent water sharing agreement between India and Bangladesh, reports BSS.

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Prime Minister warns

By-elections if BNP MPs fail to return to JS in 90 days

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said yesterday that by-elections would be held if Jatiya Sangsad seats fall vacant due to absence of BNP lawmakers from the House for 90 working days in a row.

I personally communicated with both the Opposition Chief Whip and the BNP Secretary General, invited them to return to House and resolve grievances through discussions. If they don't return, by-elections will become inevitable and that's the provision, Sheikh Hasina, also chief of ruling Awami League said meeting in observance of the 26th anniversary of Bangabandhu's homecoming day. A number of ministers

and senior party leaders also took part in the discussion, organised by the party at the lush green lawn of the institution of Engineers in the city.

In her half hour address, the prime minister spoke about various issues including BNP's abstention from the Jatiya Sangsad (JS), effective running of the House, and the proposed sub-regional grouping among Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Bhutan.

BNP has been abstaining from JS session since November 10 last year, placing a 10-point demand including neutrality of the Speaker, neutral coverage of the proceedings. See Page 12 Col 4

Ramadan begins

The holy month of Ramadan begins today as the moon of the Arabic month was sighted in Bangladesh yesterday evening, BSS quoting an Islamic Foundation press release said.

A meeting of the National Moon-sighting Committee, chaired by State Minister for Religious Affairs Maulana Mohammad Nurul Islam yesterday decided that the holy Lailatul Qadr (Shab-e-Qadr) would fall on the night of February 5 as the Ramadan starts today.

Religious Affairs Secretary A B M Abdus Shahid and Director General of Islamic Foundation Mohammad Morshed Hossain were present in the meeting.

President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate messages congratulated the countrymen on the occasion of the holy Ramadan and urged all to maintain the sanctity of the holy month.

The President said Almighty See Page 12 Col 4

BNP protests Ershad's remarks

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) yesterday protested the false and indecent remarks deposited President H M Ershad had made about the BNP in an interview with BBC Thursday night, reports UNB.

In a statement, BNP office secretary Nazrul Islam Khan urged Ershad to refrain from such propaganda against BNP, which will not bring any benefit for him or his party.

Khan said, Ershad's comment was part of a conspiracy against the nationalist forces because it is Ershad who captured state power by toppling an elected BNP government in 1982.

He said the ousted President, during his nine-year rule, institutionalised corruption, looting and lasciviousness and eliminated See Page 12 Col 2

Ershad likely to address public meeting Jan 17

By Staff Correspondent

Former president and Jatiya Party chairman H M Ershad is likely to address a public meeting in Rangpur on January 17, according to party sources.

He will fly to Rangpur, his home district a day ahead of the public meeting, the sources said.

Ershad contesting from jail has elected from five constituencies in Rangpur in the 1991 and 1996 general elections.

Prior to his visit to Rangpur, he may address a joint meeting of the Presidium and the Central Working Committee of the Jatiya Party in the city.

On the second day of his release yesterday, Ershad went to the residence of JP Vice-Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury in the city and had an hour-long meeting. Some other leaders including JP joint secretary Nazrul Islam Manju were also present.

Meanwhile, Youssif Hussain Humayun, lawyer of Ershad, said they will pray before the court so that Ershad is not required to appear physically before the court during hearing of the cases.

Mother stabbed to death by step-son

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 10: A teenage boy reportedly stabbed his step-mother to death at Mukundi village under Araiha thana last night.

Shamsunnahar, 35, second wife of one Joynal Miah, sustained fatal injuries as her step-son Monir Hossain, 18, stabbed her following an altercation reportedly over a family feud at about 9 pm Thursday night, police said. She died on the spot. Monir fled the house soon after the incident.

However, Monir surrendered to police at Araiha thana this morning. He was arrested on charge of killing his mother. The body of Shamsunnahar was sent to the Narayanganj Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

30 shanties at a city slum ransacked

By Staff Correspondent

A group of people attacked a slum and ransacked more than 30 thatched houses at Dholaiapar under Demra thana in the city early yesterday.

Police said that the group of about 25 people including some local residents attacked the slum in Dholaiapar Bagicha area at about 3 am and damaged most of the houses during about a four-hour-long rampage. They also evicted the slum dwellers during the attack.

However, no casualty was reported in the incident till filing of this report last night.

The gang, reportedly the musclemen of a local influential person, attacked the slum

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Malaysia Red skipper Khairul Anuar receiving the Bangabandhu Cup from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

Malaysia Red lift Bangabandhu Cup

Sports Reporter

Professionals ruled over the semi-professionals as Malaysia Red finally exposed their real facade to lift the Bangabandhu Cup Silver Jubilee of Independence football tournament title with a convincing 2-1 victory over favourites PSM (Ujung Pandang) Football Club of Indonesia in the final at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday afternoon.

The war of nerves between the two South East Asian neighbours remained locked 0-0 at the lemon break but striker Cik Jambil struck twice for second string Malaysia, a selection of Malaysian League Clubs, midway through the second half.

On the other hand, Cameroonian forward Musa Kallon pulled one back for the powerful

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of Foreign Affairs, M Asrafuddowlah, said that it is for the first time that Bangladesh has been given the honour to chair the conference in recognition of the achievement in implementing micro-credit operations. Bangladesh presently is also globally recognised as having some of the largest NGOs in operation working for poverty alleviation, he noted.

The aim of the micro-credit summit is to launch a decade-long campaign, ending in 2005, for providing micro-credit schemes to the poor, with particular emphasis to women.

The summit would also seek to raise a fund of 20 billion US dollars by the year 2005 through the efforts of the respective countries.

The Director General of the America Desk in the Ministry

See Page 12 Col 3

Global campaign to reach micro-credit facilities to 100m families

By M Anwarul Haq

PM opens confce in US Feb 2

through providing micro-credit

council of NGOs, council of parliamentarians, council of donor agencies, council of international financial agencies, council of religious groups and several others. Some 3,000 participants from across the world are expected to take part in the deliberations of the council sessions which would be an integral part of the micro-credit summit.

The decision to hold the world micro-credit summit was

drawn up following a series of global summits on the environment, health and women. The last was the global summit on Food held in Rome.

The aim of the micro