

Flag meeting

BSF agrees to stop road construction

LALMONIRHAT, June 9: Bangladesh and India have withdrawn their troops after two days of tension in the Kuchlibari border in Patgram thana, following a flag meeting on Sunday night between the border guards of the two countries, reports UNB.

Local BDR jawans Saturday barred the Indian authorities from constructing a road in the 'no man's land' in Kuchlibari border of the district.

As the tension mounted, frontier forces of both the countries erected bunkers in their respective areas and took a face-to-face position with heavy weapons.

Later, a flag meeting was proposed by BDR and the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) agreed to sit for a meeting.

During the discussion, the Indian side agreed in principle to stop constructing the road.

It was also agreed in the flag meeting that a decision on the matter would be taken after a meeting between the Foreign Ministry officials of the two countries, sources said.

IAF chopper landed at Chunarughat due to bad weather: Delhi

The government of India yesterday formally informed the Bangladesh government that "An Indian helicopter strayed from its planned route due to bad weather on 20 May and was compelled to force-land in Bangladesh territory," an official handout said last night, reports BSS.

The Bangladesh government had lodged a protest to the Indian government asking reasons for violation of Bangladesh air space by an Indian Air Force helicopter that landed at Chunarughat in Habigonj district on May 20.

Mine blast near Myanmar border kills Bangladeshi

COX'S BAZAR, June 9: A Bangladeshi national was killed when a mine planted by Myanmar border security force went off in the deep forest of Waladongh frontier in Nalkongchhari thana of Bandarban district yesterday, reports UNB.

Family sources said Syed Ahmed, 35, of Chakboitha village in Ukha thana of Cox's Bazar was killed in the mine blast when he was collecting wood in the forest.

Ahmed went to the forest yesterday morning along with some other villagers and met the tragic end of his life at about 5 pm.

Being informed by the villagers, relatives of Ahmed recovered the body this morning.

Barisal jail break incident: Charge framed against 40

From Our Correspondent
BARISAL, June 9: Kotwali police said, charge sheets have been framed against 40 persons for their involvement in the Barisal jail break incident last year.

They will be produced before court tomorrow.

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JS budget session begins today

By Staff Correspondent

The budget session of the Jatiya Sangsad begins at 4 pm today.

It is the fifth session of the seventh parliament.

Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria will place the national budget for fiscal 1997-98 in the House on June 12 at 3:05 pm, said a government handout yesterday.

Bangladesh Betar will broadcast live the proceedings of the budget session it added.

The finance minister will also address a post-budget press conference at the NEC building at 10 am on June 13.

This will be the second national budget in the nearly one-year Awami League rule.

The AL government placed the first budget, prepared by the caretaker administration, in the first session of the present

parliament in July last year.

The finance minister is also due to place the revised budget for 1996-97 along with the new budget.

The JS Business Advisory Committee comprising representatives from both the Treasury and the Opposition benches is scheduled to meet at 10 this morning to decide the duration and business of the session. Parliamentary parties of the ruling AL, the opposition BNP and the Jatiya Party will also meet separately today to decide their respective strategies on various issues to come up during the session.

The JS Secretariat received more than 2500 questions, some 3,000 resolutions and a good number of call attention notices until yesterday, sources concerned said, adding that the

secretariat was equipped with printed questions and their answers for the next 10 days.

The budget session is likely to be a lengthy one with members of the Treasury and the Opposition benches discussing the allocations and proposals. The House will pass the new budget by June 30.

The JS session is also likely to deal with a number of issues of political importance, including the parliamentary committee report on formation of JS standing committees on various ministries and four bills on local government bodies and two on checking repression on women.

Besides, the much-talked-about bill for separation of the judiciary may also come in this session.

Bangabandhu murder case: Hearing resumes today

By Staff Correspondent

The hearing of the Bangabandhu murder case, which was stayed on May 6 by the court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka, is scheduled to resume today.

District and Sessions Judge Kazi Golam Rasul announced the stay order till June 10, following a defence petition that the High Court had stayed the proceedings of the case for a period of four weeks in its order on May 4.

A Division Bench of the High Court comprising Justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury and Justice Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman had passed the order upon a criminal revision petition filed by Zobaidda Rashid, challenging the charge.

Student bodies defy ban on CU campus

CHITTAGONG, June 9: The Islamic Chhatra Shibir, Jatiyatadab Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya today brought out processions and held rallies on the Chittagong University campus, defying the ban imposed by the authorities, reports UNB.

The university authorities yesterday clamped down on holding rallies, processions and gathering by student organisations on the campus and its adjoining areas till June 30.

The ban followed Saturday's bloody clash between two rival factions of Chhatra League that left two students injured.

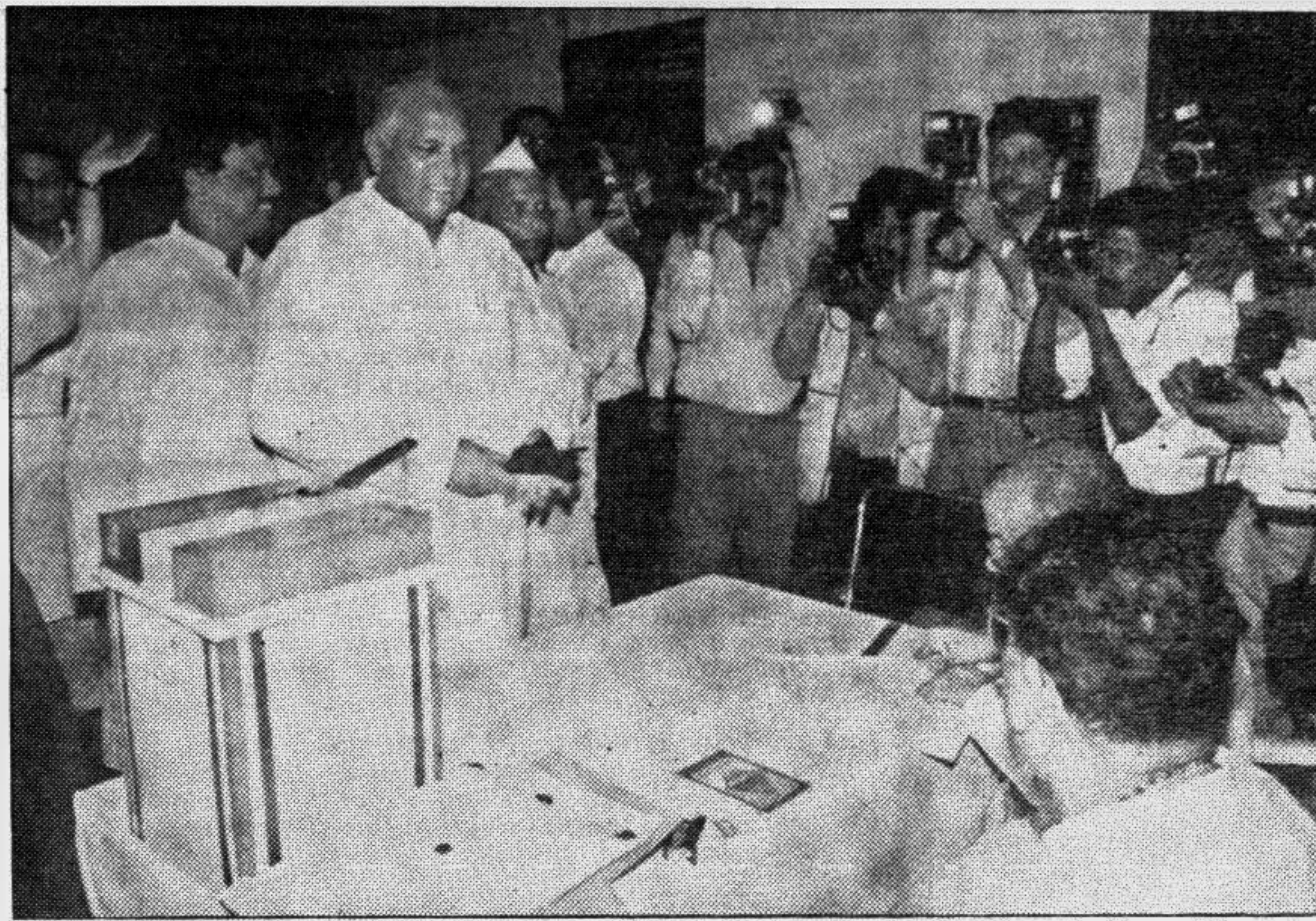
Leaders of the student fronts who brought out processions and held rallies on the campus today said the authorities cannot impose such a ban on the

Two Bangladeshis killed in Kuwait mine blast

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: Two Bangladeshis shepherds were killed when landmines exploded in the desert in southern Kuwait, the Interior Ministry said yesterday, reports AFP.

A ministry statement, carried by the official Kuwait news agency Kuna, did not say when the shepherds were killed by mines while working between the area of Minagish and Ahmed Al-Jaber airbase in the south of the country.

Kuwait was heavily mined by Iraqi troops after the invasion in August, 1990. A massive mine-clearing operation began after liberation in February 1991, but stray mines often explode with fatal consequences.



Former chief minister of Maharashtra Sharad Pawar waits for the election officer to complete paper formalities, before casting his vote yesterday at Tilak Bhavan in Bombay for the Congress presidential election.

Task force to be formed for denationalised industries

The Cabinet yesterday decided to constitute a task force to identify irregularities in maintaining the terms and conditions by denationalised industries, reports UNB.

It will also formulate recommendations for preventing such lapses on the part of the industrial units which were privatised on certain terms and conditions.

The Cabinet took the decision at a meeting held at the Secretariat with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The meeting also approved the draft bill of the President's Award Fund (Amendment) Act, 1997.

Ministers, State Minister, Cabinet Secretary, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and other secretaries concerned were present in the meeting.

RU Shibir GS arrested

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, June 9: Motihar thana police arrested the General Secretary of the Islamic Chhatra Shibir Rajshahi University Unit Md Mainul Islam from Mirzapur village near the campus last night.

Police also nabbed two other Shibir activists from Bamanshikhor village. The two were identified as Ali Azam and Hafizur Rahman Mintu.

With these arrests the total number of Shibir leaders and activists so far taken in custody has risen to 40.

The leaders of Jamaat city and district units have condemned the arrests.

Pawar, Pilot allege rigging Kesri likely to retain Cong leadership

NEW DELHI, June 9: Congress presidential candidates Sharad Pawar and Rajesh Pilot today complained of rigging in the polls to pick a party leader through voting in more than four decades, report agencies.

Sitaram Kesri, who assumed the party presidency last September when former prime minister P V Narasimha Rao resigned in disgrace over a corruption scandal, was expected to cruise to victory in the three-man race to lead India's oldest party.

Returning Officer Oscar Fernandes clarified that the allegations by the two candidates would be looked into by the relevant authorities provided the charges were substantiated.

More than 95 per cent of about 8000 delegates today cast their vote to choose the party president.

The ballot boxes will be brought to Delhi from state capitals and counting will be held on June 12.

"I'm confident Congressmen will vote for the revival of the party," Pawar said after casting his vote in Bombay.

A Kesri aide said this afternoon that the party president had no plans to vote. Kesri had told reporters Sunday that he saw no need to vote for himself, and was confident of winning.

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Enhanced benefits for voluntary retirement

The workers and employees of 11 state-owned textile mills, who want to go on voluntary retirement, will be given additional financial facilities, a high-powered meeting decided yesterday, reports UNB.

The meeting of the Committee on non-profitable textile and jute mills with Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria in the chair took the decision after reviewing the Mustafiz Committee report.

As per the new decision, the workers and employees of the 11 mills, identified earlier, will be given enhanced facilities according to their duration of service.

See Page 12 Col 7

Budget should be balanced & pro-investment: DCCI chief

By Rafiq Hasan and Govinda Shil

President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) A S M Quasem has said Bangladesh needs a 'balanced and pro-investment' budget for its development.

In an interview with The Daily Star yesterday, Quasem, a leading garments manufacturer and chairman of Newage Group, emphasised the need for reforming the financial sector, improving infrastructure, strengthening the capital market and ensuring law and order.

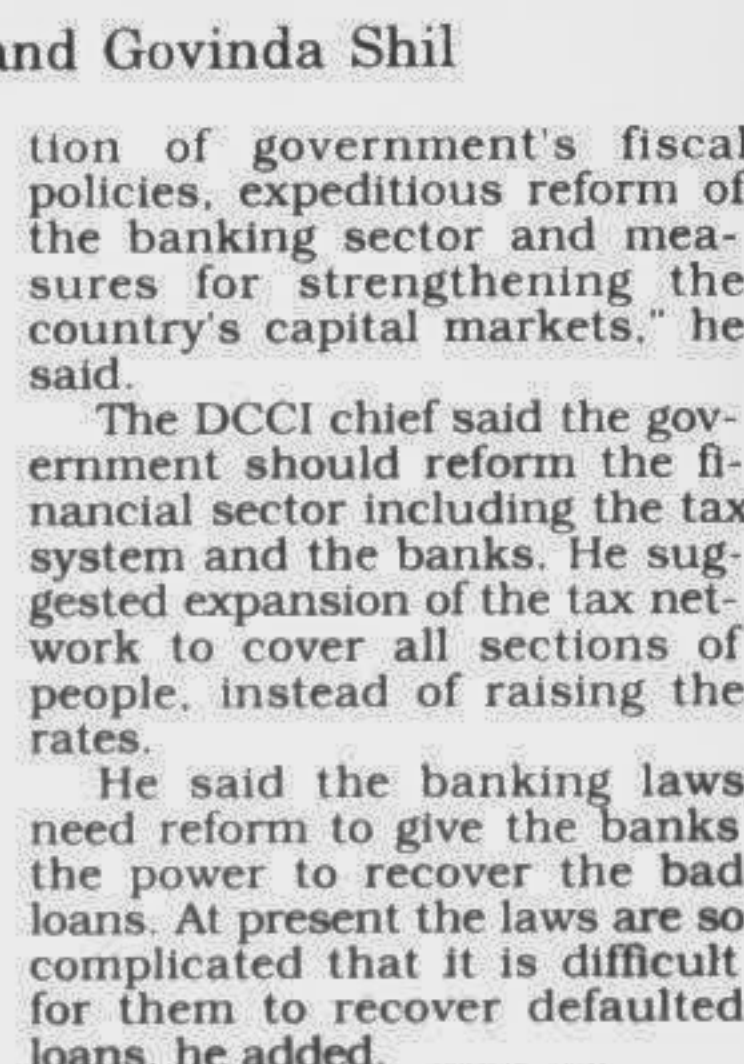
He said the new budget should seek to eradicate poverty and increase literacy rate while attempting to meet the 'high expectations' of the business community.

"We want to see the continuation of government's fiscal policies, expeditious reform of the banking sector and measures for strengthening the country's capital markets," he said.

The DCCI chief said the government should reform the financial sector including the tax system and the banks. He suggested expansion of the tax network to cover all sections of people, instead of raising the rates.

He said the banking laws need reform to give the banks the power to recover the bad loans. At present the laws are so complicated that it is difficult for them to recover defaulted loans, he added.

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ASM Quasem

Country has now become market of India: Ershad

KHULNA, June 9: Jatiya Party Chairman H M Ershad has accused the present government of failure to run the administration with sound financial management, reports UNB.

"Government has failed to achieve revenue target in the current year... Development activities remain stopped. And it is paying salaries to government employees borrowing money from commercial banks," he told a public meeting here today.

The JP leader urged the government not to privatise public sector mills and factories without creating new employment opportunity for the workers.

The country has now become a market of India, he alleged, saying 'border is today opened for free smuggling, resulting in the destruction of rupee'.
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Accord with Indian team today 2 joint venture cement plants to be set up

Bangladeshi and Indian entrepreneurs will sign agreements today for setting up two joint venture cement plants, beginning a process for increased economic ties between Bangladesh and seven north-eastern states of India, reports UNB.

Of the two cement plants, one will be set up in Bangladesh while the other in India.

This was stated by President of the Federation of Industries of North-Eastern Region (FINER), India, H S Kumbhat while addressing a press conference at a local hotel yesterday afternoon.

With Indian raw materials, Indus Cement Plant of India will set up its venture with Future Trade BD Ltd either in Rajshahi or in Sylhet while Norpo

Cements Ltd will set up a plant in Meghalaya with Bangladesh partner Bengal Tiger Cements Ltd of the capacity of producing one lakh tons per annum.

The 42-member Indian trade delegation exploring Business possibilities in Bangladesh termed their present visit as successful.

Kumbhat said the backward Indian north-eastern region needs investment from Bangladesh and the central government has given highest priority for the economic development of the region.

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BISTEC accord

Sub-regional airline to be established

NEW DELHI, June 9: The just concluded meeting of sub-regional economic cooperation among Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand held in Bangkok has agreed to establish a sub-regional airline to be called BIST (Bangladesh-India-Sri Lanka-Thailand) Indian Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Salim I Shervani said here today, reports BSS.

Shervani, who is expected to take over as the Minister of State for External Affairs at any moment, led the Indian delegation to the meeting of Bangladesh-India-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Cooperation (BIST-EC).

He said it was agreed that technical experts from the four countries would study the establishment of the sub-regional airline and make recommendations. Thereafter, a meeting would be held to work out See Page 12 Col 3

2 accomplices of Sweden Aslam arrested in city

Police in separate drives yesterday arrested four alleged terrorists, including two associates of Sweden Aslam, and recovered a stolen revolver and some ammunition, reports UNB.

A special team of detective branch raided West Tejpurbar area in Tejgaon thana at about 2 pm and arrested Abu Salam Saidur Rahim alias Tuhin, 33, a close associate of Aslam.

They also arrested Delwar Hossain, 20, from the area and, following their confessional statement, recovered 34 bullets from a cigarette carton at a grocery shop.

Aslam, arrested on May 19, is now on police remand under DB custody for the third consecutive time.

In another drive at Lalmatia in Mohammadpur thana, the DB team arrested one 'terrorist' Liton alias Ripon, 23, and picked up his friend Solaiman alias Sole, 21, from Dholakhal area.

Acting on Solaiman's statement, police recovered a stolen 38 bore US-made revolver along with three empty cartridges from his Nasiruddin Sarder Lane house.

The revolver was stolen from Mohammadpur area on March 3.

Charge framed against 7 in Abul Kashem murder case

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, June 9: The District and Sessions Judge has framed charges against seven accused in the Abul Kashem murder case, reports UNB.

The name of another accused, Kazi Aminul Huq, a former KCC mayor, has been dropped from the charge.

The accused are former Jatiya Party MP Abdul Gaffar Biswas, ward commissioner If-tiaruddin Bablu, Monir Hossain, Tariqul Huda, Moshfek, Mofiz and Omiker.

Judge Khondaker Musa Khaleel read out the names of the seven accused in the court yesterday.

Abul Kashem, an ex-president of Khulna Chamber of Commerce and Industry and JP city unit general secretary, and his car driver M Hossain, were gunned down in broad day light on April 25, 1995.

Meherpur BCL activist stabbed to death

MEHERPUR, June 9: An activist of Chhatra League, the student wing of ruling Awami League, was stabbed to death by his rival group at Natunpara in the town today, reports UNB.

Police said Amjad, 20, an activist of BCL city unit, was stabbed by a group of youths in front of a shop nearby his residence at about 6 pm. He appeared in the SSC examination this year.

Meanwhile, local Awami League and its front organisations brought out a procession in the town, carrying the body of Amjad and held a rally in front of the local press club.

The rally demanded immediate arrest of the killers of Amjad.

Work resumes in Benapole

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, June 9: Business activities in Benapole land port resumed today following the call-off of the strike by the Indian Truck Drivers' Association.

The strike was withdrawn after an Indian driver, arrested by Sharsha thana police on May 27, was released by a court here yesterday. Police had arrested the Indian in connection with a road accident in which a minor boy was killed.