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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina signing the Istanbul Declaration launching the D-8 yesterday. — PID photo

Dhaka's call to promote

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Turning to her own country, Sheikh Hasina said Bangladesh had created a favourable climate for investment and the economic and industrial reforms developed a firm base for sustainable growth.

Bangladesh is now enjoying macroeconomic stability as a result of comprehensive adjustment measures for short and medium-run stabilisations of the economy, she told the summit meeting of the heads of state or government of the eight Muslim countries.

She welcomed the fellow members of D-8 to visit Bangladesh and assess themselves the vast potential that exists for trade and investment there.

The Prime Minister said investments are increasing, reserves are being fully utilised and progress has been achieved in the area of human resources development.

She said the foreign investors and companies could invest in Bangladesh independently on the basis of 100 per cent ownership or through joint ventures, with public or private sectors.

Hasina noted with satisfaction that the group identified 10 areas of cooperation. There are deep-rooted historic, religious and cultural affinities and abundance of human and natural resources within the grouping.

AL MPs

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Amanullah Khan, Deputy Minister for Primary and Mass Education Zinnatunnesa Talukdar and Whip Mizanur Rahman Manu were present in the workshop.

The consensus opinion of the MPs will be conveyed to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on her return from Istanbul today, the sources said.

They said the opinion might be discussed at the Awami League parliamentary party meeting shortly before its approval by the cabinet.

Commenting on the consensus opinion, a senior ruling party leader said this is for the first time in the country's parliamentary history that members of the treasury bench took such a major move considering the interest of the people.

2 killed in Feni road accident

FENI, June 15: Two people were killed and three others injured as a speeding truck rained a rickshaw at Lalpul on the Feni bypass today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the unidentified rickshaw-puller and its passenger Saira Khan, 35, died on the spot when the truck hit the rickshaw from behind at about noon.

Three children of the ill-fated woman, who were in the rickshaw, also sustained serious injuries.

In another accident on Feni-Parshuram road, 15 people were injured, three critically, when a passenger bus fell into a roadside ditch in the morning.

Police said the accident occurred at Munshirhat as the Feni-bound bus from Parshuram skidded off the road and plunged into the ditch at about 9 am.

Three of the injured were rushed to Feni Hospital in critical condition.

100 injured as rival armed groups clash at Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, June 15: A fierce clash between two rival groups of people in the town today left about 100 people injured, 25 seriously, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the clash between the armed supporters of Abul Hossain, chairman of Machhimpur Krira Chakra, and Abdul Mannan, a member of the organisation, started as the former refused to pay money from the sale proceeds of a cultural function.

The cultural function, organised by the organisation with artists from Dhaka in the local New Market area, was foiled as the supporters of Mannan allegedly attacked it on Saturday night.

The two groups then locked into an overnight battle exploding bombs and using lethal weapons.

The injured were admitted to different clinics in the town. Separate cases were filed with the local police.

Dhaka to host

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Turkey for hosting the first summit of the bloc.

The next D-8 Arts and Cultural festival will be held in Bangladesh in June next year.

State Minister for Youth and Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader made the announcement in Dhaka on his return from Istanbul Sunday.

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KSA to recruit more Bangladeshi workers

Saudi Arabia will recruit skilled and unskilled manpower from Bangladesh both in the government and private sectors, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday, reports BSS.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal reiterated his government's decision on recruitment of Bangladeshi manpower to the visiting Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad during their formal talks at Jeddah Saturday.

The two foreign minister reviewed the whole gamut of bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. Prince Faisal emphasised the need for frequent high level bilateral visits to strengthen further the existing brotherly relations between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia.

He recalled the visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to Saudi Arabia in July last and her fruitful discussions with the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz.

The Saudi Foreign Minister reiterated Saudi government's strong support to the social and economic development of Bangladesh and assured all possible economic assistance for various projects of the country.

The Saudi foreign minister hoped that Saudi businessmen would take full advantage of various facilities being offered by the government of Bangladesh.

He agreed to the revival of the existing joint economic commission between the two countries and hoped that the meeting would take place as early as possible.

The Saudi foreign minister, during the talks, gave a resume of the latest position of the Middle-East peace process and hoped that the stalled peace process would be revived soon to bring peace and stability in the region.

The Bangladesh foreign minister assured him of Bangladesh's total support to the Palestinian cause and hoped that the problem would be solved in soonest possible time.

Azad hoped that all members of OIC would work unitedly for the solidarity of the Islamic ummah.

JCD leader of Dental College unit beaten up

By Staff Correspondent

A student of Dhaka Dental College was assaulted by a group of young men on the campus yesterday.

Abdul Hannan, a second year student and a Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leader of the Dental College, came under attack when he came out of his class at about 10:30 am, campus sources said.

The attackers, reportedly outsiders took Hannan to the students' union office of the college and started beating him with hockey sticks. Some people rescued Hannan and took him to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The cause of the attack could not be known immediately.

A resident of Kazipara area in the city, Hannan, who hails from Bagerhat, filed a case with Ramna thana. None was arrested in this connection till last night, police said.

Repatriation of Rohingyas stalled

Repatriation of the remaining Rohingyas has been stalled due to reluctant attitude of Myanmar, a competent source said yesterday, reports UNB.

It recognised the need for ensuring universal access to economic opportunities for eradication of poverty, people living in poverty and vulnerable groups must be empowered through organisation and social life, in particular in the planning and implementation of policies that affect them.

It also decided to hold the next meeting of D-8 in Dhaka in November or December, 1998.

Nearly 2.35 lakh Muslim refugees out of 2.5 lakh, who fled to Bangladesh from neighbouring Myanmar in 1991 in the face of persecution by military junta, had returned to their homeland voluntarily in last seven years.

The remaining 15,000, encamped in Teknaf now, are awaiting repatriation which began in September 1991 under an agreement between the two countries signed in Dhaka.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been monitoring the repatriation with the consent of the two countries.

Villagers gouge out eyes of 3 alleged dacoits

BAGERHAT, June 15: Angry villagers gouged out eyes of three alleged dacoits at a remote village adjacent to the Sundarban area in Morrelganj thana early today, reports UNB.

Police said some villages caught the three while they were fleeing after committing dacoity at the house of a UP member, Sattar Akhand, at PC Barokhali village at around 4 am.

The villagers beat up the dacoits — Nasir, 35, Wahidul Sheikh, 25, and Nazrul Islam, 26, and gouged out their eyes.

Later, the dacoits were handed over to police. Of them, Nasir had been wanted by police in several cases, including murder and dacoity.

PDB employee electrocuted

BHERAMARA, June 15: One Abdul Aziz, an employee of Poradha electric supply centre under Mirpur thana was electrocuted at Poradha on Thursday, reports BSS.

Gafur alias Babu, said to be an activist of pro-Awami League Bangladesh Chhatra League, had been absconding for a long time.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the Bhaban and picked up Gafur, son of Mofizuddin of Dakbanglopura in Sadar thana around 2 pm.

Flash floods in Romania

BUCHAREST, June 15: Twelve people drowned in western Romania today when flash floods swept through several villages, police said.

"The floods are now retreating, but the situation is still potentially dangerous," Captain George Simionas told Reuters by telephone from Oradea, near the Hungarian border.

Weather forecasts show more rain expected across Romania over the next few days.

Errata

A report published in The Daily Star yesterday under the headline 'D-8 to be launched in Istanbul today,' inadvertently mentioned Istanbul as the capital of Turkey instead of Ankara. The error is regretted.

Huge blaze engulfs gas field

it. But the fire there is no fierce that nobody can go near it, the source said.

High officials of Petrobangla and Occidental rushed to the disaster area in a chartered plane yesterday morning. Energy Minister Noor Uddin Khan and high officials and experts of the ministry will visit the area today. The energy minister has postponed a foreign visit in view of the disaster, the sources said.

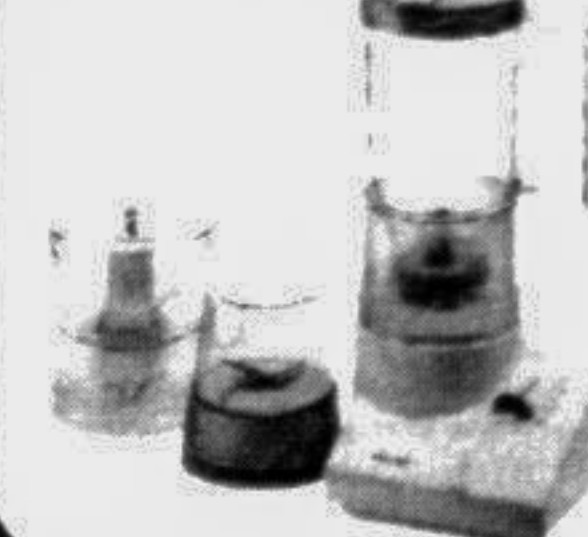
Property damaged in the explosion is yet to be determined. According to a preliminary report, the expensive German drilling rig deployed by Occidental had been completely damaged.

Occidental started drilling the well on June 2. This is the first drilling by the US company which is operating in the Surma valley under a Production Sharing Contract (PSC) signed on January 11, 1995.

This is the third such disaster in Bangladesh. The first one took place in Haripur gas field in Semutang in the late 60s, an official source said.

Currently, similar drilling

Blender with mill and chopper



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Jatiyatabadi Krishak Dal brought out a procession in the city yesterday protesting price hike of fertiliser and other agri-inputs. — Star Photo

'US troops to remain in S Arabia indefinitely'

PRINCE SULTAN AIRBASE, Saudi Arabia, June 15: US Defense Secretary William Cohen told US troops today they have to stay indefinitely at this hot and isolated desert base because US economic interest demands it, reports AFP.

With temperatures soaring to 47 degrees Celsius (117 degrees Fahrenheit), Cohen toured the base flight lines and tent towns and commiserated with fighter pilots and ground crews enforcing a nearly six-year-old "no-fly zone" over southern Iraq.

"Many of you I'm sure from time to time wonder why your are here. And if it is necessary that you be here," Cohen told about 200 soldiers assembled in an air conditioned shelter.

The answer is yes, because the Middle East is a vital interest to our economy, it is a vital interest to the rest of the world economy," he said.

Cohen's only concession to the searing heat was to unfasten the top button of his starched white shirt as he moved about dressed in a blue suit and tie.

More than 4,000 US troops work and live behind concentric rings of fences and sensors in the snake and scorpion infested desert — out of view from Saudi society and as far as possible from the threat of terrorist bombings.

The truck bombing nearly a year ago of a US military housing complex near the eastern Saudi city of Dhahran that killed 19 Americans prompted the US military to retreat to the safety of the desert.

Despite apprehensions fueled by the upcoming anniversary of the Khobar tower bombing June 5, US military officials said the base was not on any higher alert.

"Vigilance every night — we don't treat tonight any different than any other night. You can't because you're always going to be hit at the most unlikely time," said General Binford Peay, commander of US forces in the Gulf.

Nepali Congress men clash with police: 100 held

KATMANDU, June 15: One hundred supporters of opposition Nepali Congress were arrested and more than 30 were injured in clashes with police in southern Nepal on Sunday, police said, reports AP.

Police fired gunshots in the air and tear gas to quell the Nepali Congress activists who accused Communists, the main partner in the governing coalition, of using violence and fraud to steal local elections last month.

They clashed with police in Gaur, 100 kilometers (63 miles) south of Katmandu, the Nepalese capital. Protest marches elsewhere in the country were peaceful.

Medical staff

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and C Virus.

"For the poor man it's a big temptation to recycle syringes. For the sake of very little money they are risking the whole community," he pointed out.

Bhutani said used needles very readily transmitted disease like HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B and C. He said the medical profession had a duty to protect the people who placed their trust in it.

Bhutani also said medical workers should try to raise public awareness of the dangers of recycling syringes through the electronic media.

He suggested glass syringes could be reintroduced if they were properly sterilised by autoclaving, the standard process for sterilising surgical instruments.

"You need conscientious people to ensure the process is carried out — the responsibility lies with the medical people to make sure syringes are sterilised," he said.

Bhutani also said plastic syringes had to be burnt, which made glass syringes a more eco-friendly option.

He said disposable needles could be used with the glass syringes but it was still the responsibility of people in the medical profession to prevent recycling by ensuring their destruction after use.

Privatisation

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ensure transparency and accountability in every decision making by the managing committees of each sugar mill.

Reiterating government decision to give priority to the workers and employees of a mill if they want to buy it. To-fael said in one hand the workers will not take over the running of the mills and on the other the mills will continue to make loss years after years, such a situation could not be continued.

Holiday

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the handout added.

The universities will decide the weekly holiday through their own syndicates and other policy-making bodies.

Meanwhile, a press release of the labour ministry yesterday said the new weekly holiday and office time would not be applicable to the organisations under Factory Act of 1965 and the Shop and Establishments Act of 1965.

All these organisations and establishments will follow the Factory Act and the Shops and Establishments Act, the press release added.

Charles

From Page 1

blessing to such a union.

The monarch automatically becomes supreme governor of the Church of England, and there is no technical bar to Charles retaining the title. But there is disapproval within the Church hierarchy — reflected in Streeter's comments.

Although Charles has confessed his adultery, Streeter said he had not repented, causing "considerable problems of how to avoid a constitutional crisis."

The clergyman noted that the prince is not above either civil or moral law.

"What he has to face up to is the fact that the monarchy is greater than prince Charles and this country is greater than the monarchy," Streeter said.

"A lot of sacrifices have to be made in public office. I feel he has got to sacrifice. Camilla Parker Bowles if he is going to convince the public of his ability to lead this country. He has simply got to say to Camilla Parker Bowles, very tearfully, good-bye," Streeter said.

BNP: Movement

From Page 1

tion in the Manikganj-3 by-election Bhuiyan said. "We have taken it as part of our movement against the government subservient to India."

He alleged that the Awami League government wanted to hand over "the electricity switch to India like that of the Farakka in name of importing power."

The BNP leader said the government talked of development of agriculture, but the farmers are not being provided with agri loans. "It is shedding crocodile's tears for them by raising the price of fertiliser," he added.

He called upon the officials and employees including those of the police administration not to do any "illegal acts" to kowtow to the government.

Bhuiyan mentioned that the Awami League had formed its "government of consensus" with autocratic forces. "Now it made party candidate a man who was one of the top men in the autocratic Ershad regime."

One-day status

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in 1947, the cricket-crazy country wandered in the wilderness for more than two decades. Bangladesh seized the attention of the cricket fraternity for the first time when a selection of the famous Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) visited the country in December, 1976.