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Talks not held: AL, BNP blame each other

By Nazmul Ashraf
The Awami League and the BNP blamed each other as the planned dialogue talks did not take place yesterday.

Sources in the ruling party attributed the failure to 'unfavourable' circumstances, while BNP leaders blasted the government for 'further deteriorating' the atmosphere for a dialogue.

Telecommunications and Works Minister Mohammad Nasim told The Daily Star late last night that he had made several attempts to contact the BNP leaders but failed to reach them. "Nevertheless, I'll continue my efforts because we want to resolve the stalemate sitting across the table," he said.

C'wealth confce PM leaves for Edinburgh

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina left last night for Edinburgh to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting beginning in the British city Friday, reports UNB.

A Biman flight carrying the Prime Minister took off from the airport at 11:40 pm.

Ministers, diplomats, chiefs of three services and high officials were present at the airport to see off the Prime Minister.

The four-day conference of the heads of government of 54 Commonwealth countries will focus on winds of democracy sweeping the world.

UP polls will be held on non-party basis: CEC

KHULNA, Oct 22: Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena today asked all officials concerned to conduct the ensuing Union Parishad elections sincerely and effectively, reports UNB.

All elections under the local government are important as it expands democracy in the grassroots level and should not be underrated, he said.

The CEC was addressing a meeting of the high officials of Khulna division at the DC's conference room here with Divisional Commissioner SM Samiul Alam in the chair.

The meeting was attended by Khulna Range DIG of Police, BDR Sector Commander, deputy

Sajeda made acting AL president

Awami League presidium member Begum Sajeda Chowdhury will act as the acting president of AL during the stay of the party chief Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the United Kingdom, reports UNB.

Awami League President Hasina left last night for Edinburgh, UK to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.



BNP activists running for safety as police lobbed tear gas shells in front of the party central office at Naya Paltan in the city yesterday to prevent them from bringing out a procession. — Star photo

Procession obstructed: 50 hurt, 11 held Police, BNP activists clash in city

By Staff Correspondent
The area around BNP central office at Naya Paltan in the city yesterday turned into a battlefield as police and BNP workers clashed for hours, leaving at least 50 people including a policeman injured.

Police picked up 26 people including a BNP central leader, Tagdir Hossain Mohammad Jasin, during the clashes that began when police obstructed BNP workers from bringing out a planned procession from in front of the party office in the afternoon. Tagdir Hossain was arrested along with some party

tymen from inside the BNP office. Fifteen of the arrested were released later. Motiheel police said.

The planned procession was part of BNP's 17-day demonstration programme across the country that concluded yesterday. The programme was observed to press its various demands.

Witnesses said police lobbed tear gas shells indiscriminately during the clashes that lasted nearly four hours.

Angry BNP activists damaged some 40 vehicles in the

Economic regress destiny for many LDCs: Kibria

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria said the developing economies must remove structural weaknesses and strengthen institutions of governance if they are to survive and prosper in the globalised market, report agencies.

He said many developing nations had chosen to liberalise and open up their economies to the pressure of international competition and are trying to take advantage of the enormous potential benefits of free trade.

But the globalisation, which contributed to an enormous expansion of the international trade and stimulated private

capital inflow, has so far unleashed contradictory forces in the world economy, he said.

"While in recent year some countries have benefited from steady economic growth, economic regress has been destiny for many LDCs (least developed countries)," Kibria pointed out.

The finance minister was addressing the Commonwealth Business Forum in London yesterday ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Edinburgh, according to a message received in the city.

The findings of the two-day Forum will be submitted to CHOGM for heads of govern-



Building materials occupy a portion of the road near Bahadur Shah Park in the old part of the city, disrupting normal movement of vehicles. — Star photo

PW-27 tells court Troops were told Rakkhi Bahini will attack army

The 27th prosecution witness of Bangabandhu murder case yesterday said army officers responsible for the August 15 tragedy of 1975 had bluffed the soldiers into believing that Rakkhi Bahini would attack them, reports UNB.

Taking us from night parade at New Airport to Balurghat, Major Muhiuddin said Rakkhi Bahini will attack army," said PW Havildar (ret'd) Harun Rashid while making deposition to the trial court yesterday.

He said after hearing the

news of killing of Bangabandhu and others "we realised that officers have bluffed the soldiers."

Harun mentioned nine names as killers of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman saying he came to know about them from his unit members. Of them, he identified Col Farooq and Col Muhiuddin on dock.

The witness was introduced to Dhaka District and Sessions Judge Court by Special PP advocate Ramjan Ali Khan after cross examination of PW-26 Naik Gunner (ret'd) Jamrul Islam.

Harun, who was at Kalabagan on patrol duty during the bloody operation at Bangabandhu's house, was later cross-examined by defence lawyers at the court of Judge Kazi Golam Rasul.

He will be further cross-examined when the court resumes at 9:30 am today. The next witness will be retired army personnel Abdul Hye or Sahabuddin or Sajedul Haq.

The PW said he was a sepoy of 2 Field Artillery at Dhaka Cantonment. Major Khandakar

BNP announces fortnight-long programme from today

Main Opposition BNP yesterday threw a fortnight-long action programme, beginning today, to press its various demands, reports UNB.

Dhaka city convenor of BNP Sadek Hossain Khoka announced the programme last night, also to register its protest what he said against the undemocratic, subservient, fascist and autocratic activities of the government.

The street protests of the party will continue till November 7.

BNP will also observe a demonstration day in the capital city on Friday, protesting police action on BNP yesterday.

Rallies and protest processions will also be taken out at thana and district headquarters of the country from today

Khaleda tells Banggao Sub-regional bloc not conducive to country's sovereignty

Chinese Vice Premier Wu Bangguo called on BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia at her Minto Road official residence yesterday, reports UNB.

Talking to her, the Chinese leader said late President Ziaur Rahman had initiated the relations between China and Bangladesh and it was further consolidated during the tenure of Begum Zia, said a party source.

Banggao hoped that the two countries would continue their

One killed, 10 hurt as mob, alleged miscreants clash in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Oct 22: At least one person was killed and 10 others injured during a clash between a mob and a gang of alleged miscreants in Madarbari area under Doublemoring thana this morning, police said.

The clash erupted at around 11 am when about 2,000 local people chased a group of armed miscreants who stormed into the house of one Dr Abdul Matin in a bid to assassinate him due to previous enmity, police said.

As the family members of the doctor raised hue and cry, on duty publicmen rushed to the spot and foiled the assassination bid.

The mob caught two of the fleeing miscreants and beat one of them to death, police said.

NCCHT now meets today

By Special Correspondent
The National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts (NCCHT) could not meet yesterday. It would meet today, according to NCCHT sources.

The meeting was not held as its convenor and Chief Whip of Parliament Abul Hasanat Abdullah returned to Dhaka from Barisal late yesterday.

The sources said the meeting will review related documents to finalise the proposed accord with the Parbatitya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), likely to be signed in the NCCHT meeting between the NCCHT and the PCJSS beginning in Dhaka on November 16.

Besides, modalities of post accord rehabilitation of

China to help install 1.4 lakh phones, relocate industries

Visiting Chinese Vice Prime Minister Wu Bangguo yesterday expressed keen interest in providing assistance in installing 1,40,000 digital telephones in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

"China is keen to assist Bangladesh in the development of telecommunications sector through skilled and internationally reputed Chinese experts and companies," Wu said while Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim called on him at Hotel Sheraton this afternoon.

Appreciating the government's development policies including measures for refurbishment of the telecommunications system, the Chinese leader said his country wants to participate in the development process of Bangladesh.

"I am very glad to observe that Bangladesh, though a developing country, is involved in the poverty eradication programmes and it is sincerely trying

Steps taken to reform cooperatives law: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government has taken steps to reform the cooperatives law with a view to accelerating the cooperative movement for strengthening the rural economy, reports UNB.

"We want to speed up the cooperative movement by ensuring rights of cooperators and reducing administrative control over the cooperatives," she said inaugurating the 17th annual general meeting of the National Rural Development Cooperatives Federation at the Engineers Institution yesterday morning.

The PM said the rural-based cooperative organisations can play a vital role in strengthening the rural economy.

She called upon all concerned to work together with fellow feeling and cooperation

Dominance of English may be on the wane: BC

LONDON, Oct 22: English may have to make way for other languages as globe youth culture is influenced by a baby boom in Asia and Latin America, a new report said on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Efforts of companies like Benetton and Coca Cola to use different languages to tap into a global youth "agenda" focused on the environment and human rights may also encourage linguistic diversity.

"The focus of a global youth culture might shift in the next decade or so from Europe and the US..." said the British Council, which promotes British culture and the English language worldwide, in its report.

Evasion of duties by car importers Ctg customs likely to remove appraiser

From Nurul Alam
personnel, the sources said.

A senior official of Chittagong customs house said that the principal appraiser concerned would be posted elsewhere soon for the sake of investigation.

Meanwhile, the NBR has directed the customs officials to verify the production serial and year of manufacture of all reconditioned vehicles on their chassis to stop alleged evasion of duties by a section of importers of used vehicles, the sources said.

The order came in the wake of alleged widespread malpractices by some unscrupulous importers of reconditioned vehicles in collusion with some customs officials, C&F agents and port

JSD Rab, Inu factions to reunite

By Nurul Kabir
Hasina, will be the President of the united party while Hasanul Huq Inu will become the general secretary.

While discussing various aspects of the proposed unity, the top level leaders of both the factions "carefully" avoided discussing the next course of action of the united party, insiders said, adding that the issue would be decided after the merger.

It has been gathered that following discussions with the activists of both factions, the supporters of each faction believe that they would be able to win their counterparts to take

Showcase on govt for restraining Eskander from going abroad

By SC Correspondent
The High Court yesterday directed the government to show cause within 10 days as to why its actions in off-loading Maj (ret'd) Sayeed Eskander from Bangladesh Biman and impounding his passport should not be declared to have been taken without lawful authority.

A Division Bench of the HC comprising Justice AM Mahmudur Rahman and Justice Abu Sayeed Ahmed also ordered the respondents to show cause as to why appropriate directive should not be issued upon them for returning the passport to the petitioner at once and booking the petitioner's travel to London in Bangladesh Biman flight according to his convenience.

The court further ordered the rule to be made returnable within 10 days and the matter to have been placed at the top of the daily cause list of the court subject to part-heard.

However, the court refused the prayer for returning his

Shahjahan Khan MP granted anticipatory bail

By SC Correspondent
Shahjahan Khan, a ruling party MP, has been granted interim anticipatory bail by the High Court in a criminal case.

A division bench of the HC yesterday also directed the government to show cause as to why the petitioner shall not be enlarged on anticipatory bail in Madaripur Police Station Case No-10 (9) 97 under Section 147/148/149/448/323/324/326/307/427/144 of the Penal Code with Section 3/4 of the Explosive Substances Act.

The division bench comprising Justice Md Mozammel Haque and Justice Md Ali Khandkar Mahbub Hossain assisted by Advocate Afzal Hossain and Zafar Imam moved the petition.

It was alleged in the FIR lodged by Kajal Krishna Dey,

TV officials' killing Ex-armyman taken on 5-day police remand

The retired armyman arrested on charge of killing four BTV officials in 1975 was taken on a five-day police remand yesterday, reports UNB.

A security officer of Phillips, Hon Lt (ret'd) CID Hossain was arrested by CID Tuesday after 22 years of the incident and produced before court yesterday when police sought 10 days of remand.

Reviving a case of Gulshan thana filed by the wife of victim Akmal Khan, police investigated the case and arrested Akmal from Phillips Mohakhali factory Tuesday evening.

Police charged the retired army personnel with killing

Ilias, Ratan sent to jail

BNP leaders Ilias Ali and Kamruzzaman Ratan and Chhatra Dal worker Rafiqul Islam were sent to jail yesterday after three days' police remand, reports UNB.

At the end of the remand, they were produced before court yesterday afternoon. The court rejected their bail prayer.

The three were arrested on October 5 allegedly with illegal arms during the BNP-enforced countryside road-rail barricade.

4 sentenced to death for killing minor girl

From Our Correspondent
HABIGANG, Oct 22: The Additional District and Sessions Judge, Habiganj today gave death sentence to four persons and life term to two females for killing a minor girl in August 1993.

The persons given death sentence are: Monu Miah son of late Nabi Hussain, Selim son of Monu Miah, Abdul Ahad son of late Suban Ullah and Abdullah son of Abdul Haque, all of village Jalsuka under Ajmiriganj thana in Habiganj district.

The two females awarded life term are: Anwara Begum wife of Monu Miah and Kulsam wife of Abdul Haque.

Four others accused in the case were acquitted.

The convicted persons had killed the minor girl Salema Khatun daughter of one Hussain Ahmed of the same village and concealed her body.

The body was recovered by police. After investigation, police chargesheeted nine persons.

The Judge Mofizul Islam, after examining 34 witnesses and evidences found the six accused persons guilty and awarded them the sentences.

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