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With the election of more

than 4,000 union parishads

nearing, Chief Election Com-

missioner (CEC) Mohammad

Abu Hena yesterday exchanged

views with leaders of the ruling

Awami League and the opposi-

tion Bangladesh Nationalist

Party (BNP) on the ways of en-

and BNP separately met the

CEC at his office and assured

him of cooperation in holding a

iree and fair election, meeting

gation led by party Vice Chair-

man M K Anwar MP met Abu

The world's biggest oil and

gas company, Shell Oil, has

warned the government that it

would withdraw from the sec-

ond round of block bidding if

the government sticks to the

"one block, one company" for-

mula in the negotiation process.

petitive formula," according to

tiations on Wednesday last for

exploration of oil and gas in 12

exploration blocks in the coun-

try. Twenty foreign companies

The government began nego-

instead of a "standard com-

sources.

yesterday.

Truck carrying

paddy hijacked

in Faridpur

From Our Correspondent

miscreants hijacked a paddy-

laden truck from Sonda area

three kilometres off Mad-

maunds of paddy from Na-yarhat in Dhaka to Ishurdi in

Pabna district. On the way, the

gang stopped the truck by block-

ing the Jessore-Faridpur high-

Helper of the truck said

armed miscreants numbering

about 15 got into the truck at

about 2:30 am and took control

of the steering forcing out the

driver. They sped away by the

Bangladesh is trying to ob-

tain duty-free access to markets

in India and Pakistan in a bid

to boost its exports and bridge

the trade gaps with the two

neighbours, a government offi-

"What we are now aiming at

is duty-free entry into Indian

and Pakistani markets on non-

Farrouk Chowdhury, Com-

reciprocal basis." Syed Alamgir

merce Secretary, told a group of

businessmen in the city yester-

meeting of the Foreign In-

vestors' Chamber of Commerce

and Industry (FICCI), he cited

the removal of market restric-

tions by the Bangladesh author-

non-reciprocal facility.

ities as the basis for seeking the

Speaking at a luncheon

cial said, reports UNB.

way with a bus and a truck.

hukhali thana, today.

FARIDPUR, Oct 26: Armed

The truck was carrying 312

The four-member BNP dele-

Two delegations of the AL

suring free and fair polls.

The Baily Star

DHAKA MONDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1997

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MARBLE MARBLE MARBLE

16 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 6.00

# VOL. VII NO. 273 REGD. NO. DA 781 Rickshawpullers,

# tempo drivers clash at Barisal: 100 injured

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, Oct 26: A trifling matter triggered sporadic clashes involving rickshawpullers, tempo and outorickshaw drivers and police in different areas of the town today, leaving over 100 people including 17 policemen injured.

Of the injured policemen, six

are officials. Police lobbed at least 60 rounds of tear gas shells to disperse rampaging fickshaw-pullers and tempo drives who also exploded numerous hand bombs during the clashes that lasted about five hours from 8

See Page 12 Col 3

#### Settlers barricade roads in Khagrachhari

From Our Correspondent KHAGRACHHARI, Oct 26: Movement of vehicles to and from here was disrupted due to a road barricade programme to press for equal rights for tribals and settlers in the proposed

CHT peace agreement. The programme was observed by the settler-dominated Sarbadaliya Oikkya Parishad, which has also called a dawnto-dusk hartal in the three CHT districts on October 29.

An all-party rally, to be addressed by BNP MP Salahuddin Quader Choudhury, Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Matiur Rahman Nizami and JP (Z-M) leaders will be held at Rangamati tomorrow, to build up public opinion against any peace accord sidelining the set-

## Court orders release of Naroda Devi

By Court Correspondent Naroda Devi Kapoor, an Indian national who claimed herself to be a daughter of former President Abdur Rahman Biswas, was discharged by the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court yesterday.

She was arrested on September 16 under Section 54 of CrPC by Sabujbagh thana. It forwarded her to court on suspicion of being a member of an international criminal gang.

Police vesterda submitted its report clearing ner of the suspicions. Her personal baggage, kept at Sabujbagh thana, were also ordered to be re-

#### SB recovers Tk 2022.35 cr loans in 9 months

Sonali Bank has recovered a total of Tk 2022.35 crore loans including stuck-up and overdue money from January to September, reports UNB.

Of the recovered loans, Tk 1399.85 crore has been realised in cash and Tk 122.50 crore through rescheduling.

The Baily Star on the Internet http://www.dailystarnews.com

## -Inside Today-Article

## Janata Dal Experiment of Indian Coalition

Government

Column: Perspectives by Brig (Rtd) M Abdul Hafiz Page 4

## International

India, Pakistan to set up panel to discuss Kashmir dispute Page 16

#### Business

World Bank, economists suggest Bangladesh diversify export products and markets

Pages 6

# Supplement

Today's 16-page issue of The Daily Star contains a 3-page supplement on 'Real Estate' Pages 13-15

# Union parishad polls

KARTIK 12 1404 BS.

# AL, BNP assure CEC of cooperation

By Staff Correspondent

Hena in the morning while the three-member AL team led by Joint General Secretary of the party Mozaffar Hossain Paltu met him in the afternoon. The Election Commission (EC) is scheduled to conduct

tal of 4,468 in December. The CEC briefed the leaders about the preparations and steps taken for holding free and fair polls, an EC press release said adding that he also noted

election of 4,330 UPs out of a to-

ward by the leaders. Although BNP had reservation about the appointment of Abu Hena as the CEC, party

'One company, one block' formula

Shell threatens to withdraw

from bidding process

By Sharier Khan

and one local company -

BAPEX — had submitted 36 pro-

the government told bidders

that it would go by "one com-

pany, one block" formula to se-

with invitations for negotia-

tions, took participating inter-

national oil companies (IOCs)

by surprise who were earlier

told that it would be a "competi-

Some five IOCs registered

Last week, all of a sudden.

The announcement, coming

posals on June 15 last.

lect companies.

tive bidding.

down some suggestions put for-

leader M K Anwar last night told this correspondent that he had 'no doubt about the CEC's intention to offer the nation a free and fair election' and assured him of cooperation in this regard.

"But we still do not know, as to how the EC will ensure free and fair polls when the government seems to consider it nothing more than a ministry

under the ruling party", he said. Requested to substantiate his observation, the BNP leader said, "the government of Sheikh Hasina rejected, a few weeks back, the findings of an See Page 12 Col 7

written protests with the gov-

ernment for "such an unfair"

change in the terms and condi

The sources said that repre-

sentatives of Shell Oil - which

submitted proposals for six blocks — had met high officials

of the Energy Ministry and the

Petrobangla late last week and

offered Block 10 under "one

block, one company" formula.

But Shell's representative re-

See Page 12 Col 1

During the talks, Shell was

"expressed their surprise".

tions of the bidding.

#### AL calls for talks only to cheat people: BNP

By Staff Correspondent BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP has termed the ruling party's call for dialogue a "ploy to deceive"

the people. "They're deliberately creating a gap with the Opposition and calling for so-called negotiations only to cheat the peo-ple," he told the newly-elected office bearers of Zia Parishad's BADC branch at the BNP central office in the city yesterday.

Mannan Bhuiyan bitterly criticised the government for 'using the ruling party terrorists and the police to foil street rallies and processions of the BNP' while inviting the party for a dialogue. "It's nothing but an act of cheating ... They've nothing to do other than cheating, resorting to repres-

sion and telling lies" He also blamed the Awami League government for 'lacking even the minimum faith in and

See Page 12 Col 6

# Rly ferry between Teestamukh, Bahadurabad may collapse anytime From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Oct 25: Railway ferry services between Teestamuk and Bahadurabad ghats from Fulchhari point may collapse at any time fol-lowing heavy siltation of ferry channel at Kalasona turning point, according to a source in the Railway.

Earlier, ferry services had been plying between Fulchhari to Bahadurabad through Projapati channel. On October 15 the said channel was declared abandoned. Later BIWTA opened another northern channel through Kalasona which is more narrow due to heavy siltation.

See Page 12 Col 3



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with her Pakistan counterpart Nawaz Sharil prior to their meeting in Edinburgh on Saturday.

# Draft CHOGM economic declaration Dhaka's proposals on trade, micro-credit incorporated

EDINBURGH, Oct 26: The draft of Edinburgh Commonwealth economic declaration, to be adopted tomorrow at the concluding session of the CHOGM, incorporated two suggestions put forward by Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The suggestions on trade and micro-credit were put forward by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina when she took part in the deliberation of the first exclusive session on the opening day on Friday.

The heads of government of Commonwealth strongly sup-

ported Bangladesh's stand on expansion of duty-free market and microcredit facilities.

They also supported the expansion of duty-free market access with flexible rule of origin for the exports of the least developed countries, strengthening the multilateral trading system, within the framework of the World Trade Organisation in order to provide for the greater flow of international trade on the basis of agreed rules which are fair and equitable and support the full implementation of the Uruguay

round agreements.

The declaration opposed the introduction of new fariff barriers and the use of unilateral actions and bilateral pressures

which run counter to the spirit

of the WTO.

The declaration said it would also continue to support regional arrangements, consistent with multilateral liberalisation under WTO, which promote the economic growth of their members.

The draft declaration touched upon various issues See Page 12 Col 4

# Magurchhara gas field explosion

# All 16 radioactive isotopes escaped leakage: BAEC

By Morshed Ali Khan

All the 16 missing radioactive isotopes 'miraculously' es caped leakage and were found intact under piles of earth near the gas well in Magurchhara which exploded on June 14 this year, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) officials confirmed.

"We are happy to have recovered the radioactive isotopes there was no leakage whatsoever of radioactivity and it does not pose any threat to public safety," said BAEC Chairman MA Quaiyum, explaining that thorough examinations showed that the sources were found so intact that they can be used

Occidential, the American company, brought the radioactive sources under license from the BAEC to use them in welllogging to determine soil and rock layer compositions - a usual practice in the operation.

Immediately after the ex plosion in Magurchhara, BAEC scientists were deployed at the site to detect any leakage of radioactivity but found none. The matter was never officially

made public and all concerned remained tight lipped.

BAEC also asked for help from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which sent a two-member team on October 11. A team consisting of experts from BAEC, IAEA, Petrobangla and Occidental visited Magurchhara on October 13 and 14 and unearthed the sources opening a steel bunker. The radioactive sources were found in an intact condition inside their respective lead containers.

Explaining what had happened, MA Quaiyum told The Daily Star that the powerful explosion sent piles of earth into the atmosphere and produced a large crater on the spot. The violent shakeup instantly buried the steel bunker in which the radioactive sources were locked up. The piles of earth and mud protected the lethal radioactive sources from the raging temperature that ensued as the huge well-fire kept burning for several months, he said

It was learnt that one of the See Page 12 Col 8

## Hasina, Sharif talk forthcoming 3-nation summit

EDINBURGH, Oct 26: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had a meeting with Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif here yesterday evening, reports BSS. The two leaders discussed is-

sues of common interest as well as the forthcoming three-nation economic summit in Dhaka.

Briefing newsmen. Press Secretary to the PM Jawadul Karim today said the meeting was held in a very cordial atmosphere.

Sharif told Sheikh Hasina that he was looking forward with great interest and eagerness to visiting Dhaka to attend the business summit scheduled See Page 12 Col 8

#### BCL-Shibir clash in Pabna: 30 hurt

PABNA, Oct 26: Ten student activists were injured in a clash between Chhatra League and Islami Chhatra Shibir at Shaheed Bulbul College today, reports UNB.

The clash occurred at about 9:30 am following an altercation between the leaders of the two rival student bodies over establishing supremacy on college campus.

Of the injured, Masum, 22. and Shah Alam, 19, of Chhatra Shibir were admitted to a local hospital.

Leaders of Chhatra League and Chhatra Shibir blamed each other for the attack.

#### Edward College teacher assaulted

From Our Correspondent PABNA, Oct 26: A teacher of Pabna Edward College was assaulted by a group of students today as he prevented a student from adopting unfairmeans in the Honours final examina-

College source said Mohidul Hossain, a lecturer of Chemistry department, was beaten up by the students as he caught Enamul Haque Polash while copying during the examination. Polash is a JCD leader. sources added.

The academic council of the college in an emergency meet-See Page 12 Col 5

2 shot in clash

## at city slum By Staff Correspondent

Two persons sustained bullet injuries in a clash between two rival groups of youths at a slum in city's Malibagh area yesterday morning.

Railway police said the men. identified as Zahad, 25, and Mawla alias Malu, 45, were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Zahad received wounds on

his back while Mawla in his eyes during an armed clash between the two groups at about 7:30 am. The feuding youngsters exchanged bullets to gain control over the slum.

# Ex-FM Prof Shamsul Huq says

Holding a motorcycle helmet, the OC of Ramna thana trying to keep agitated employees at bay inside the Secretariat

# Sub-regional grouping won't harm SAARC

National Professor M Shamsul Huq yesterday said the proposed sub-regional grouping — comprising Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and the eastern states of India would do no harm to the seven-

nation SAARC, reports BSS. "I don't think the formation of sub-regional group would vitiate the functioning of SAARC," he said.

A former foreign minister during the tenure of President Ziaur Rahman, Prof Huq was replying to queries after he had delivered a lecture on

Bangladesh seeks duty-free

access to Indo-Pak markets

He informed that following

the two rounds of successful

trade negotiations under the

South Asian Preferential Trad-

ing Arrangement (SAPTA), the

third round is going on and

gested on 226 items in the first

round and 815 in the second, he

said and added Bangladesh was

granted concessions by India on

513 items, which cover 'Consid-

erable amount of tradable

formed that as a step to boost

export further. Bangladesh has

proposed the SAPTA members

to reduce the value-addition re-

quirement for qualifying for

the tariff concession to 25-30

per cent from the existing 40 per

The commerce secretary in-

goods.

Tariff concessions were sug-

likely to be concluded shortly.

"Bangladesh foreign policy: Reflection of its evolution" at Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) in the city. The elderly academician

said the sub-regional grouping "should not be seen as compatible with regional or international organisations like SAARC and others." Such grouping could have positive impact not only on political matters, but also on the spheres of economic activities, he

See Page 12 Col 7

In another step, he said, the

government is thinking about

reducing the value-addition re-

quirement for the high-fash-

ion-wear to 25 per cent, which

will increase the exports of

Jamil pointed out that the dis-

closure clause of the Companies

Act was seriously disturbing the

foreign businesses, Chowdhury

said they were ready to address

See Page 12 Col 4

As per the 1994 Act, Jamil

the issues that impede business.

When FICCI chief Mahbub

readymade garments.

interests.

#### Govt employees hold rally inside Sectt

Star photo

By Staff Correspondent A despatch rider of the Law Ministry was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday after he was injured when a police official allegedly hit him during a rally of employees at the Secretariat.

It created commotion among the employees who were demanding revision of the new pay scale and change in office timing. But the situation was brought under control by police officials and employees' lead

The employees told reporters that Rafiqul Islam, Officer-in-Charge of Ramna Police Sta-See Page 12 Col 7

gunbattle between the student with bullets, reports UNB.

tween Chhatra League and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal took place over the students union election at Kazipur Tenglahata RIM Degree College.

gas shells to bring the situation under control. Three of the injured were identified as Helal, 24, Shahadat, 22, and Kashem, 30 of

activists of Awami League and BNP at Kazipur today left at least 40 people injured, eight Witnesses said the class be-

Police charged baton and

# 40 hurt as JCD BCL clash in Sirajganj SIRAJGANJ, Oct 26: A flerce

fired at least 25 rounds of tear

said, an entity is required to divulge certain vital company secrets detrimental to its business Chhatra League and Sayed, 25 "Although in certain cases of JCD. The injured were admitted to different hospitals and temporary exemptions from clinics



the second day of an open-air drama toward Star photo