

**BNP won't join Speaker's luncheon**

By Staff Correspondent

BNP has decided not to join today's luncheon to be hosted by Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury.

The Speaker on Thursday invited some leaders of the ruling Awami League and opposition BNP for a launch today to forge a negotiation between the parties.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said that they would not join the launch as most of the party lawmakers at its parliamentary party meeting on Thursday expressed the view that the Speaker-hosted launch would produce nothing in meeting the party's 14-point charter of demands.

BNP has been abstaining from participating in the proceedings of the parliament since August 30, the inaugural day of the last session of the Jatiya Sangsad.

Its 14-point demand include

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**JSD factions reunite**

By Staff Correspondent

Two factions of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) led by Shipping Minister Md. Abdur Rob and Hasanul Huq Inu got reunited yesterday after 13 years.

The announcement of the merger was made at a press conference held at the Ramma Restaurant in the city yesterday evening. Several thousand JSD activists were present on the occasion.

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**Chairman murder: 2 held in Natore**

From Our Correspondent  
NATORE, Oct 31: Police today arrested two persons in connection with the murder of Zahid Hossain Mukul, chairman of No 5 Biplab Belgaria Union Parishad.

The arrested persons are Md Aminul Islam Biddut, joint secretary of the Sadar thana unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Md Rafiqul Islam, an Awami League activist, police said.

Meanwhile Md Ruhul Amin Biplob, president of the Sadar thana BCL and its general secretary Sohanur Rahman Sohel in a joint statement claimed that the arrested persons were not involved in the murder. They demanded unconditional release of the two persons.

**UP chairman murder news not correct**

By Staff Correspondent

The news item headlined 'UP chairman murdered in Rajshahi' on the front page of The Daily Star yesterday was not based on facts. Our Natore correspondent filed the report without getting it confirmed by Rajshahi police.

But our Rajshahi correspondent quoting the SP of Rajshahi and the chairman of Bariswar Union Parishad in Puthia thana (not Charhat thana as reported), Sultan Ahmed, said the report was unfounded.

The wrong information is regretted and action is being taken against the correspondent concerned.

**The Daily Star  
on the internet  
<http://www.dailystarnews.com>**

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## Disclosure of draft CHT treaty may create complications: PM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said disclosure of the contents of the expected peace treaty on Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) might create "complications."

"Usually, in this type of treaty, if we really mean business, everything can't be disclosed. It may create complications. Wait and see," Hasina told newsmen at a press conference held at her official residence, Gonabhaban, last night.

The press conference followed the Prime Minister's return home yesterday after attending the 54-nation Commonwealth Heads of Government's Meeting (CHOGM) in Edinburgh, UK. The Prime Minister replied

to a volley of questions, giving an elaborate resume of her eight-day visit.

She also renewed her call to the major opposition party, BNP, to attend the Jatiya Sangsad session that begins tomorrow and expressed the hope that parliamentary standing committees would be formed in the coming session.

On the much talked about peace treaty between the National Committee on CHT (NCCHT) and the Parbattya Chhagram Janasanghati Samity (PCJSS), the Prime Minister said, "After signing of the treaty, we will place it on the floor of the parliament for discussion but, not before the signing."

Reaffirming that members of the armed forces would not be withdrawn from the CHT, the Prime Minister said, "A peace treaty may create problems for those who used to trade on arms but, I don't know what loss she would incur."

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## JS goes into session tomorrow

The seventh session of the Seventh Jatiya Sangsad begins tomorrow at 4 pm, reports BSS.

All preparations for smooth conducting of the session have been completed, sources said, indicating that it would be a brief one.

So far, 1400 questions, 65 call attention notices, 254 adjournment motions, 41 privilege motions, 12 notices for short discussions have been submitted to the Secretariat by the legislators belonging to both the ruling and the Opposition parties.

A total of five bills are expected to be placed before the House. The bills are: Securities and Exchange Commission (second amendment) Bill, 1997, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker (remuneration and privileges) (amendment) Bill, 1997, the Bangladesh (whips) (amendment) Bill, 1997, the Administrative Tribunals (amendment) Bill, 1997, and the Code of Civil Procedure (amendment) Bill, 1997.

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## Normalcy yet to return in Sylhet border areas

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Oct 31: Normalcy is yet to return in Sripur and Tamabil border areas though both the BDR and the BSF have withdrawn their additional troops today.

Import through the Tamabil land customs station remained suspended for the second day today as the drivers of Indian trucks which carry coal to Bangladesh are still panicky, said an official. However, the official hoped that the border trade would resume tomorrow.

Plying of minibuses and other vehicles Sylhet-Tamabil road were normal today. Collection of stones from the Sripur quarry also began today, but at a slow pace, the official said.

Meanwhile, the namaj-e-janaza of the BDR Havildar, Hatem Ali Patwari, who was shot dead by BSF firing yesterday morning at Sripur stone quarry, was held at the BDR Sector Headquarter in Sylhet.

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## Times-Bangla Trust newsmen, employees stage sit-in

By Staff Correspondent

Journalists, employees and other employees of The Dainik Bangla, The Bangladesh Times, Bichitra and Ananda Bichitra publications of The Time-Bangla Trust, are staging a sit-in on the premises of the newspapers after majority of them refused to resign voluntarily by Thursday as directed by the government.

Out of 281 journalists and employees of The Dainik Bangla, only 27 journalists resigned. They included 20 who were recruited in March this year. Dainik Bangla journalists said, "Only the editors of the Dainik Bangla, Times and Bichitra resigned on Thursday."

The journalists and others of the two newspapers continued

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## IU students, outsiders clash: 8 hurt

KUSHTIA, Oct 31: At least eight people were wounded in a clash between some students of Islamic University and outsiders on the campus Thursday night, reports BSS.

The clash began when a group of 15-20 outsiders halted a campus-bound bus at the university gate at 8 pm, beat some of the students and reportedly snatched away about Taka 1000 from them at gun point.

Campus sources said the outsiders made the attack as they had failed to get any coupon for the annual dinner at a hall of the university. Pro-Awami League Chhatra League and Chhatra Shibir blamed each other for the clash.

Tense situation is prevailing on the campus as rival student organisations have taken positions at different points of the university. A huge number of armed police was deployed on the campus.

The deadlock ended following a fruitful discussion between the port authority, local administration, coordination committee of the port users and workers associations here last night. Deputy Minister for Shipping Dhirendra Debnath Shambu presided.

The port activities including loading and unloading remained stopped since October 26.

A committee has also been constituted comprising the representatives of the port authority, local administration, port users and workers associations to remove various problems.

Witnesses said, the angry students put up barricades on the road to protest canceling of the Degree Examination Centre at Sadat College by the National University on Thursday last. They also attacked the principal's residence at Noon.

## Govt to seek \$2.1b in fresh aid commitment

By Inam Ahmed

ments of food aid and commodity aid and implementation of the conditionalities of policy-based lending for release of tranches.

To ensure this higher commitment, it would now require a better coordination between the government and development partners, the official document says.

The disbursement of aid for FY98 is estimated at 1.467 billion dollars which includes 63 million dollars as food aid, 144 million dollars as commodity aid and 126 million dollars as project aid.

The total disbursement for FY98 is at about the same level as the previous fiscal.

Making its case of a better management of the economy, the government has stated that the recovery experienced in overall balances in FY97 is

likely to continue in FY98 and is expected to result in a turnaround in the overall balance from a deficit of 127 million dollars in FY 97 to a surplus of 216 million dollars in FY 98.

The estimated trade deficit of 3015 million dollars is expected to be partly offset by a projected increase of private transfers — mainly workers' remittances — by 4.9 per cent from 1770 million dollars in FY97 to 2033 million dollars in FY98.

The document has banked heavily on the energy sector to highlight the foreseeable increase in private foreign investment. But it has remained silent on the prospect of FDI in other sectors.

Claiming 'a substantial improvement' in last year's macroeconomic performance, See Page 12 Col 6

## Contractor shot dead in city

A young contractor was shot dead at Sher Shah Shuri Road under Mohammadpur thana in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

Police said some business partners of Kamal alias Foreign Kamal shot at him at one stage of alteration in front of Hotel Fahd at 10 am.

Kamal, father of a one-year-old daughter sustained bullet injury in chest and thigh. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

The body was sent to the DMC morgue for autopsy. A case has been filed with Mohammadpur police.

**Some changes in ambassadorial positions in offing**

By Staff Correspondent

A number of changes in ambassadorial positions is learnt to be on the anvil, according to official sources.

Aminul Islam, Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is tipped to become the country's high commissioner to Canada. The post is vacant since the recall of M R Osmany.

Additional Foreign Secretary and Chief of Protocol AKM Farooq is tipped to become ambassador to China. He would be succeeding Mustafizur Rahman who has taken over as the Foreign Secretary.

Meanwhile Dr Toufic Ali, envoy to the Netherlands has been called back to headquarters.

Shafi Sami, high commissioner to India, is due for promotion to Secretary level shortly, according to the sources. He is due to be brought back to headquarters to fill up Secretary level vacancies which would arise due to the overseas posting of Aminul Islam and the recent retirement of Walidur Rahman, the sources added.

**Nat'l Youth Festival '97 begins today**

The National Youth Festival '97 begins in the city today, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the week-long festival at 11 am at Paltan Maidan and later distribute the National Youth Awards to 11 persons.

Nearly 15,000 delegates from home and abroad will attend the festival organised by the Department of Youth Development under the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Fifteen delegates from Sri Lanka, India, the Philippines and Korea are already in the capital to participate in the festival.

The festival will be featured by a cultural function, a youth rally, a juba mela and a seminar at different city venues.

The youth rally, to be led by See Page 12 Col 8

**3000 join Terry Fox Run in city**

Boys and girls from different city schools and adults joined the Terry Fox Run in the capital yesterday to take part in the globally popular cancer fundraising event, reports UNB.

About 3,000 boys and girls from five and above, wearing special T-shirts for the Run, gathered in front of the Canadian Club at Gulshan Avenue at 7:30 am.

Later, they ran through different roads of the city holding banners and festoons showing support to the prevention of cancer.

Some adults and the members of Canadian community in Dhaka also took part in the run, being organised worldwide to commemorate the idea of See Page 12 Col 1

## BNP to seek \$2.1b in fresh aid commitment

## Govt to seek \$2.1b in fresh aid commitment

By Inam Ahmed

The government sits with the donor community on Tuesday at the aid group meet in the capital for an estimated fresh aid commitment of 2.173 billion US dollars.

The estimate was made assuming substantial increase in overall commitment, particularly in project aid commitment, the official document on the aid group meet says.

This year the government goes to the meet, to be held in Dhaka for the first time, with a much smaller opening aid pipeline — only 4.71 billion dollars as commodity aid and 126 million dollars as project aid.

The estimate of higher commitment is based on certain normative assumptions: 20 per cent of opening pipeline and at least five per cent of new commitments of project aid, the entire amount of new commit-

ments of food aid and commodity aid and implementation of the conditionalities of policy-based lending for release of tranches.

To ensure this higher commitment, it would now require a better coordination between the government and development partners, the official document says.

The disbursement of aid for FY98 is estimated at 1.467 billion dollars which includes 63 million dollars as food aid, 144 million dollars as commodity aid and 126 million dollars as project aid.</