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The Daily Star

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Repatriation of refugees resumes today

By Special Correspondent
All is set to resume repatriation of tribal refugees today from camps in southern Tripura.

This will be the fourth phase of repatriation since 1994 and 1996. The first batch will return at the Tabalchhari point at 10 am today.

The first batch of 574 refugees will start arriving across the Feni river in the morning walking down a makeshift bridge from the Shilachhari camp in Tripura.

It will continue at the Tabalchhari point until November 27. Another batch will cross See Page 12 Col 4

Discussion on draft CHT accord continues

By Staff Correspondent
A 'core group' of two members from the 11-member National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts (NCCHT) had been conducting the 'main discussion' with two others from the Parbatyia Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) on a draft agreement being readied for signature by the two sides.

This was said by NCCHT member and Jatiya Party leader Fazole Rabbi, MP, at a meeting of the party presidium. JP sources told The Daily Star yesterday.

The NCCHT was reconstituted by the government in October last year with Abul Hasnat Abdullah, Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad, as its Convener. The two BNP members of See Page 12 Col 6

Armed Forces Day today

The Armed Forces Day will be observed today, reports UNB.

The day's programme will begin with the offering of *munajat* after *Fazr* prayers in all mosques at army garrisons, naval ships and establishments as well as airforce bases throughout the country. President Shahabuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia gave separate messages on the occasion.

In Dhaka, President Shahabuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Chief of Army Staff Lt General See Page 12 Col 3

12 promoted to rank of SP

By Staff Correspondent
A total of 12 additional superintendents of police, holding current charge as SAs in various districts, were promoted to the rank of SP yesterday, according to the officials at the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The police officials promoted to the rank of SP yesterday will remain posted at the same station, said an official at the ministry, adding that the promotions were given on the basis of seniority. Further detail, however, was not available immediately.

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

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Supplement

Today's 16-page issue of The Daily Star contains a 4-page supplement on 'Armed Forces Day'
Pages 13-16

Business Summit postponed

By Staff Correspondent

The Three-Nation Business Summit scheduled to be held in the city on Sunday has been put off.

An official announcement yesterday said that the Summit was 'postponed' as Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif conveyed his inability to attend it due to domestic 'political compulsions'.

Both the Pakistani and Indian prime ministers, however, intimated their desire to hold the summit at a mutually convenient 'early date'.

The Daily Star learnt that the Foreign Ministry received a message from Islamabad at 10 am yesterday informing that

Newaz Sharif had cancelled his Bangladesh trip for the summit, followed by a two-day bilateral visit.

Foreign Ministry officials immediately got in touch with Islamabad and Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka and Bangladesh mission in Islamabad 'to insist' if the Pakistan premier could be in Dhaka for at least one day — November 23 — to attend the summit.

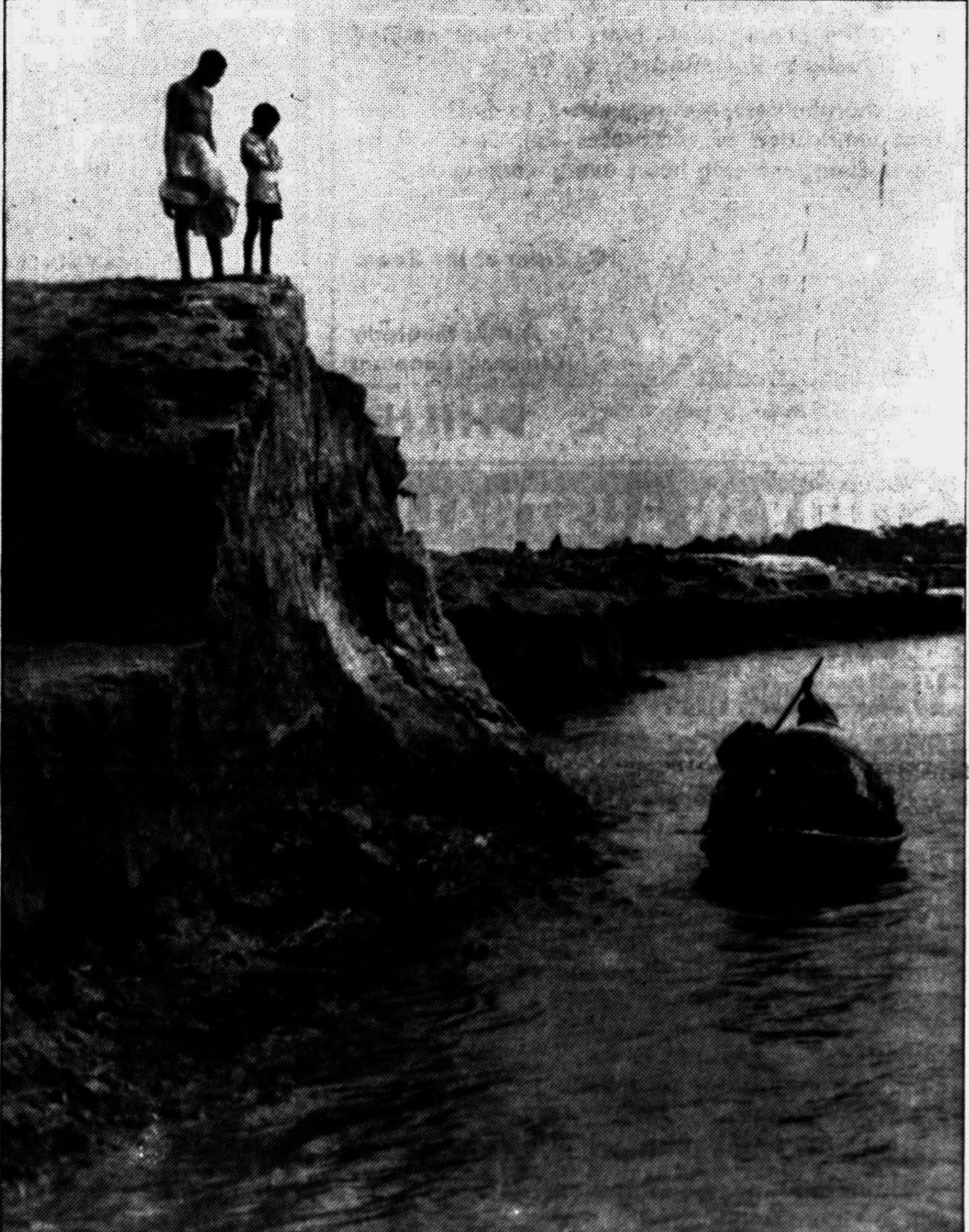
Later in the evening the Foreign Ministry received confirmation from Islamabad that 'in the present circumstances, it would not be possible for the Pakistan premier to make a trip outside the country.'

sources said.

However, Nawaz Sharif sent his personal assurance 'that he was very eager to attend the summit at a fresh and early date.' Dhaka was assured that an early date will be given 'to suit the convenience of the three prime ministers.'

Officials of Bangladesh, the host country, immediately relayed the inability of the Pakistani premier to attend the summit to New Delhi and also its mission in Dhaka.

Later in the afternoon, the Indian External Affairs Ministry communicated Prime Minister I K Gujral's 'consent to See Page 12 Col 3



Two villagers watch in silence, wondering how far the Padma would erode its eastern bank at village Kalma in Lauhajang thana of Munshiganj. The river has so far claimed almost all of the Dhaida union leaving hundreds homeless. — Star photo: A K M Mohsin

Arsenic contamination Which is safe — ground or surface water?

By Naimul Haq

Experts are divided over the use of surface water or groundwater as an immediate solution to the problem of arsenic contamination of groundwater in the country.

Some experts feel that surface water is safe for those exposed to arsenic contamination while others maintain that use of surface water could be harmful and suggested continued use of groundwater for drinking and cooking 'till something concrete is recommended.'

Dr Dipankar Chakrabarti, an expert from India, said, 'immediate advice should be given to revert to the habit of using surface water for drinking and cooking purposes.' Dr Chakrabarti has been studying environmental effect of widespread contamination of groundwater by arsenic in Bangladesh and West Bengal since 1984.

Talking to this correspondent in the city recently, he said, 'For a short term solution, there are basically two options — use of deep tubewell (DTW) water or conservation of rain and river water. Installation of each DTW costs between Tk 40,000 and 50,000 which is costly for ordinary villagers. Conservation of rain and river water till now seems to be the most suitable choice that should be acceptable in terms of expenditure.'

Dr Mahmudur Rahman, a leading dermatologist of the country also working in this field, said, 'The nature is taking revenge on us. Twenty years ago, the concept of using groundwater was accepted without thinking of its impact today. It is now high time we See Page 12 Col 1

AL conspiring to rig UP polls: Mannan Bhuiyan

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan MP has urged the people to resist all sorts of 'designs by the ruling party to rig' the coming Union Parishad elections.

Addressing a public meeting at Nabinagar College ground in Brahmanbaria yesterday, Mannan Bhuiyan accused the government of conspiring to get the ruling party-backed candidates elected through any means.

'We'll launch an out-govern-ment agitation if the UP polls are rigged and their results are manipulated', a BNP press release quoted the party secretary general as saying.

Alleging intrigues over the country's gas reserve, Mannan Bhuiyan demanded that the reserve be assessed by local and foreign experts before the signing of any agreement on exploration. 'Otherwise, the success- See Page 12 Col 7

Faulty plans expose visitors to dangers at Dhaka Zoo

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka Zoo is riddled with hazards for the visitors and accidents similar to Tuesday's may occur any time.

Several moats and cages either had faulty plans or were damaged, exposing visitors to dangers from the animals.

A 10-year-old boy from Nababar Bagh area of Mirpur was killed on Tuesday when a Royal Bengal Tiger snatched him inside its cage, severing his head from the neck.

While visiting the Zoo, this correspondent found that the moat of the Samber deer was encircled by simple fences without any safety ditch between those and the visitors. Men, women and children were standing close to the fence, offering leaves and peanuts to the huge brown coloured deer.

With its sharp horns, the Samber might any time cause fatal injuries to a visitor.

The 30 or more venomous snakes were kept in ordinary glass cages which visibly bore evidence of faulty planning. The glass window frames rickety with slight push, opening up to an inch.

Although the windows were locked, visitors constantly tapped on the glass to wake the cobra or the rat snake. At least six windows were found cracked and broken, with dangerous snakes inside.

The three activists arrested with arms were Hamidullah, Aktar Hossain and Bhokari Nazim. They were placed on See Page 12 Col 4

Dock workers at Mongla Port start go-slow

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Nov 20: The dock workers at Mongla Port have begun a go-slow programme today in protest against non-payment of tips by the stevedores.

Loading and unloading of cargo in the ships has slowed down considerably. At present, 18 foreign vessels are anchored at the jetties and the outer anchorage of the port.

The president of Mongla Port Stevedores' Association Syed Mestahid Ali said the association would remain firm on its decision not to pay tips to the dock workers.

'Rather, we demand abolition of Dock Workers Management Board for the greater interest of Mongla Port,' he said.

In cargo handling, two systems — tonnage and shiftwise — are used at the port. The dock workers' go-slow programme is being applied in the shiftwise system, said a port official. Of the 18 vessels, work on shiftwise system are being done in 13 ships for loading jute and jute goods.

Stalemate at Ctg Port continues

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 20: Minister for Ports and Shipping Abdur Rab continued to hold talks with leaders of the dock workers union till late today, to break the stalemate caused by suspension of cargo handling at Chittagong port since Wednesday.

The minister, accompanied by the Deputy Minister for Shipping Dharendra Devnath Shambhu, arrived here this afternoon.

The talks were continuing at the port rest house till the writing of this report at 11:45 pm.

Earlier in the evening, the minister held a meeting with the leaders of Bangladesh Master Stevedores Association (BMSA). The stevedores stopped gang-booking of dock workers See Page 12 Col 3

Zia murder case put up in court

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 20: The Zia murder case was put up in the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate here today.

The investigation report on this case, which was scheduled to be placed in the court today by police, was not submitted, court and police sources said.

Police prayed to the court for further three months' time to complete the investigation.

But the CMM's Court asked three police officials including the Commissioner of Chittagong metropolitan police and officer in charge of Kotwali thana to show cause for failure to submit the report on Zia murder case today.

The court also asked the OC to be present in the court on the next date, December 10, court source said.

\$150m ADB loan for 2 projects

By Staff Correspondent

The Asian Development Bank yesterday approved two concessional loans amounting to 150 million US dollars for Bangladesh.

The loans bring ADB's total lending to Bangladesh in 1997 to 420 million dollars, the record level in a year, says a press release of the Bank.

The new loans are for the 80-million dollar Capital Market Development Project (CMDP) and the 70-million dollar Third Rural Infrastructure Development Project (TRIDIP).

The CMDP aims at developing a fair, transparent and efficient capital market in Bangladesh to foster investors' confidence and facilitate savings and investments.

It contains two components. The first is to implement a policy and institutional reform programme to create necessary See Page 12 Col 6

3 Shibir activists arrested in Ctg remanded

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 20: Detective police started to interrogate the three alleged Shibir cadres arrested on Tuesday from Chandanpura area after two-hour long gunfight with a large contingent of police.

Police sources said a hunt is continuing to arrest other Shibir cadres who fled from their hide-out by opening indiscriminate brushfire sensing the police raid.

The three activists arrested with arms were Hamidullah, Aktar Hossain and Bhokari Nazim. They were placed on See Page 12 Col 4

Cabinet for impeachment of President SC suspends new law, asks Leghari not to sign bill

ISLAMABAD, Nov 20: Pakistan's Supreme Court today suspended a new law enabling Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to defend himself against charges of contempt arising out of a trial of strength between government and judiciary, report agencies.

Meanwhile, Sharif's Cabinet decided today to impeach the President after he delayed signing the amendment, something he is required by law to do, but within 30 days. Sharif had asked him to attach his signature within 24 hours of receiving the amendment.

It's not clear what grounds Sharif's government can use to justify its move to impeach the

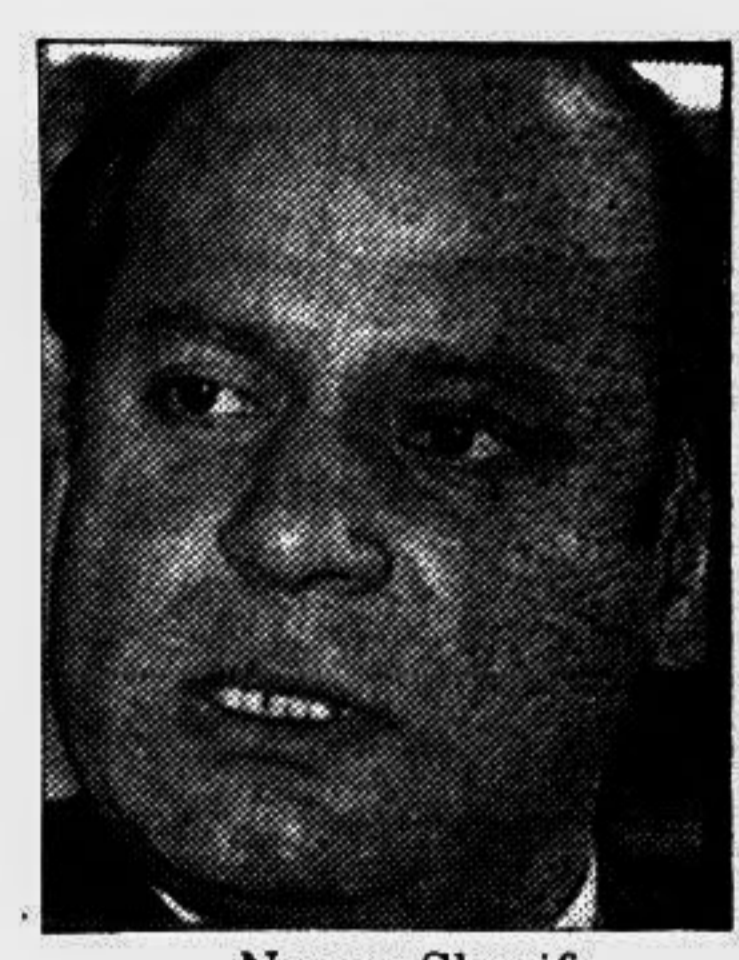
President.

The resolution was expected to be introduced in parliament, late today.

In its brief ruling, the three-member Supreme Court bench said the amendment was introduced to benefit only one person, the prime minister.

The Supreme Court also instructed President Farooq Leghari not to approve the bill, which the embattled Prime Minister rushed through to defend himself against contempt charges currently before court.

The court action put Leghari at the centre of a crisis which opposition legislators say could paralyse government and See Page 12 Col 7



Nawaz Sharif

Letter served on Gujral Congress threatens to withdraw support for UF govt

NEW DELHI, Nov 20: India's Congress Party today formally served notice on Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral that it would withdraw support for his government if a regional ally was not ejected from the ruling coalition, report agencies.

Congress lawmakers meeting after a stormy morning session of parliament approved a resolution demanding the government take 'appropriate action' against all those indicted by an investigation into former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's 1991 assassination by a suicide bomber.

The report written by judge Milap Chand Jain, has been quoted in newspaper leaks as naming the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) party for sympathising with Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels who are blamed by Indian authorities

for Gandhi's 1991 assassination.

The Jain Commission report was placed before both houses of parliament earlier today as lawmakers gathered for their winter session.

'The CPP (Congress Parliamentary Party) executive would like to make it clear that the party cannot extend support to a government of which the DMK party indicted in the report is a constituent,' the Congress resolution said.

The CPP executive therefore demands the immediate ouster of (the) DMK from the central government and further follow-up action on the basis of the findings of the Jain Commission, it added.

Earlier, in his findings presented to Parliament today, Jain called Gandhi 'the most See Page 12 Col 8

13 receive Nat'l Sports Award '96

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday assured all possible help and patronage for the development of sports, and said the government has taken the initiative in formulating a sports policy, report agencies.

'The government is determined to raise the standard of sports in the country to international level and has taken up various programmes for its development,' she said.

The Prime Minister was addressing the National Sports Award '96 distribution ceremony at the Osmani Memorial Hall.

'For the first time, an allocation of Tk 2 crore has been made in the budget for sports and another Tk 20 crore earmarked as special allocation for the development of sports,' she told the function.

The Prime Minister handed over the prestigious awards to See Page 12 Col 6

Exploration for oil, gas begins in Bandarban

BANDARBAN, Nov 20: The exploration for natural oil and gas began in Bandarban hill district today, reports BSS.

According to official sources, the United Meridian Corporation (UMC) of USA and Petrobangla jointly have started seismic survey in Ruma, Chimbuk, Bathchhara and Kalkang areas. The survey work would continue for about seven months.

Meanwhile, the survey teams have already identified three prospective oil and gas spots in the hill areas of Matiranga, Dighinala and Baghachhari thanas in Rangamati district where the survey work has started on November 1.

The survey teams of the UMC prepared to collect samples of gas and oil from next year in these areas.

Shell's negotiations on block bidding fail

Talks between oil giant Shell and the negotiation committee on the second round block bidding for exploration in the country, failed for the third time Wednesday.

Shell is so far the only his oil company invited by the committee since the negotiations began on October 22 on a 'one block, one company/group of companies' formula.

With only 24 days left for completion of the negotiation and signing of production sharing contracts (PSC) with different companies in 12 blocks, negotiations with only a handful of companies have progressed

Star Report

Twenty foreign companies and Petrobangla's subsidiary BAPEX are participating in the bidding.

Sources said the negotiation committee Wednesday offered Shell Block-5 in the meeting. But Shell, which had been insisting on negotiation on the basis of an evaluation of its proposals for six blocks, said that Block-5 was not its primary interest.

Shell said it would consider exploration in Block-5 only if it had qualified to explore the adjacent blocks, the sources said.

The negotiation committee See Page 12 Col 2

ঢাকায় সোনালী ব্যাংকের কনজুমার্স ঋণ প্রকল্প

রেফ্রিজারেটর, টেলিভিশন, এয়ারকুলার, কম্পিউটার এবং মোবাইল টেলিফোন এক সময় ছিল বিলাস সামগ্রী। কিন্তু এখন প্রত্যেক পরিবারের জন্যে হয়ে দাঁড়িয়েছে জীবন যাত্রার জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় উপকরণ। কারণ কর্মবাহিত নাগরিক জীবনে সময়, অর্থ এবং শ্রম বাঁচাতে সবাই সচেষ্ট। কিন্তু এক সাথে সমৃদ্ধ টাকা পরিশোধ করা যেমন কষ্টসাধ্য তিক তেমনি ধীরে ধীরে টাকা জমানোও সময় সাপেক্ষ ব্যাপার।

নাগরিক জীবনের এই প্রয়োজনীয় উপকরণ আহরণে সোনালী ব্যাংক সুযোগ করে দিয়েছে ঢাকা শহরের ১০ (দশ) টি শাখার মাধ্যমে ক্রিতিতে রেফ্রিজারেটর, এয়ারকুলার, টেলিভিশন, কম্পিউটার এবং মোবাইল টেলিফোন কেনার।

যে সমস্ত শাখা থেকে এই ঋণ পাওয়া যাবে সেগুলো হলোঃ-

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| (গ) মিলকুনা করপোরেট শাখা | (ঘ) সদরঘাট করপোরেট শাখা |
| (ঙ) গয়ের আর্বার করপোরেট শাখা | (চ) পেরাটন হোটেল শাখা |
| (ছ) মীরপুর সেকশন-১ শাখা | (জ) কার্ণিট শাখা |
| (ঝ) ভলশান শাখা | (ঞ) উত্তরা মডেল টাউন শাখা |

আমাদের সম্মানিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দের মাঝে বারা কনজুমার্স ঋণ প্রকল্পের আওতায় ক্রিতিতে এসময় সামগ্রী কিনতে অগ্রাহী তাদের উল্লেখিত শাখা সমূহে যোগাযোগ করতে অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে।

সোনালী ব্যাংক
সোনার বাংলার সোনালী ঋণ বাস্তবায়নে নিয়োজিত