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Where were the hijackers?

MOSCOW, Aug 9: A hijack crisis involving 97 passengers and crew ended peacefully at a Moscow airport today with all on board reported safe and sound, says AFP. But the big question was: Where were the hijackers? The drama began when a flight attendant found a note on the cabin floor during a flight from Irkutsk in Siberia. It demanded the equivalent of 100,000 dollars in rubles and threatened to blow up the jetliner. But by late today, after the 97 had stepped to safety, security agents were still looking for the hijackers who, they began to suspect, might not even have been aboard the Tupolev Tu-154 at all. The luggage and the plane See Page 12 Col 3

PM asks police officials Stop incidents like Rubel murder

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday categorically asked the police officials to take all necessary steps so that incidents like killing of Rubel did not take place in future, reports BSS. She was talking to the members of Bangladesh Police Associations when they called on her at the prime minister's office. Sheikh Hasina said her government never tried to hide any incidents relating to crimes. She said the government had constituted a one-man judicial commission to probe the Rubel killing incident. Regretting the incident, the prime minister said a certain political party has been trying to make it a political issue and observed that in this connection, she referred to the killing of Yasmin and said "We did not try to make it a political issue although the situation was tense". The prime minister told the police officers that her party came to power through a political process. "We do not need police support or to utilise you to materialise our political pledges and commitments," she emphatically said. "You should do your job and stand by the side of the people." She urged them to ensure safety, security of life and property of people and maintain law and order and earn people's confidence. She said peace and stability were essential for institutionalising democracy in the country. The association members congratulated the prime minister for taking steps in nabbing the police personnel involved in the incident of killing of university student Rubel. They also thanked her for constituting a judicial commission in this respect. They See Page 12 Col 1

Rubel murder 7-party plans to stage mass hunger strike

By Staff Correspondent The BNP-led Seven-party Alliance yesterday decided to stage a mass hunger strike in the capital to protest, among other issues, the killing of Rubel in police custody. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Alliance held at the Minto Road official residence of BNP chief and Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday evening. The meeting was unanimous on the venue of the programme Paltan Maidan — but proposed different dates for it. Meeting sources said that BNP suggested August 14 while its partners preferred August 16 See Page 12 Col 7

Row with minister Secretaries discuss situation

By Special Correspondent A number of secretaries to the government yesterday took stock of the situation vis-a-vis their relations with the ministers in the wake of a recent incident involving the health minister and the health secretary, official sources said. The Secretaries who were summoned by the Cabinet Secretary for a special meeting on computerisation of the budget took up the issue after the formal meeting was over. Health Secretary Mohammad Ali, who stirred the horns nest by reportedly calling Health Minister Salahuddin Yusuf a 'liar' during a meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee last week, did not attend the meeting. He is on leave till today. He went on leave after the incident and is likely to join on Tuesday. After the row between the health minister and the health secretary, some ministers, who had been facing problems with officials, complained to the Prime Minister seeking her intervention to "straighten things out," the sources said. The Prime Minister reportedly advised all sides to maintain calm and avoid repetition of such things in future. See Page 12 Col 8

Intern doctors' ultimatum

By DMC Correspondent The intern doctors of eight government medical college hospitals yesterday gave a two-week ultimatum to the government for realising their six-point demand including doubling of their remuneration. The interns under the banner of 'Young Doctors' Movement Council' at a press conference in the city announced an indefinite work stoppage if the demands were not fulfilled. The protesting doctors will initially observe a three-hour token strike from 9 am for a week after the expiry of the ultimatum. Then in the following week the interns will go on a 48-hour work stoppage for two days. And if the demands remain unrealised after those programmes, then they will go for the indefinite strike. Dr. Hayat Mahmood, general See Page 12 Col 3

Abductors of Rima yet to be nabbed

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANJ, Aug 9: Police could not arrest anyone in connection with the Rima abduction case even after six days of the incident. SP of Narayanganj ordered the OC of Sadar thana yesterday to nab the abductors within 24 hours. Talking to this correspondent, the OC claimed that police were trying to arrest the abductors and hoped they would be able to arrest the culprits soon. A group of terrorists, reportedly affiliated with a political party, abducted Tahmina Rahman Rima, a degree student of Narayanganj Government Women's College, from a busy part of the town on August 3. See Page 12 Col 6



NO ROOM FOR YOU: Boatmen ferrying people in the flood affected Ahmedbagh in the city forcing a pet dog out of the boat as passengers refused to board it yesterday. — Star photo : Sheikh Enamul Huq

AC Akram placed on remand

By Staff Correspondent AC Akram Hossain, the principal accused in Rubel murder, was placed on a three-day remand yesterday. Senior officials of CID were interrogating him at the CID headquarters last night, official sources said. Akram was taken there from the CMM's court at about 6 pm. However, Akram, Assistant Commissioner of Detective Branch, denied his involvement in the killing of Shamim Reza Rubel in DB custody on July 23, the sources said. In another development, Deputy Commissioner of DB Bazul Karim, and ADC of DB Nuruzzaman yesterday gave their statements before the one-member Judicial Commission comprising Justice Habibur Rahman Khan. The sources said the two top officials mostly concentrated on the structure of the DB and its mode of operation. However, details of statements of the DB officials regarding Rubel murder could not be known immediately. They took about an hour each to record their statements before the Commission separately in the afternoon. Meanwhile, the Commission yesterday officially sought 15 days' extension of time for submission of its report. CID produced Akram before the court of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Habibur Rahman at about 3 pm yesterday. Akram, senior most official of the Detective Branch, accused in the murder, was not handcuffed when he was taken to the court premises, court sources said. On Thursday, CID moved a petition for placing Akram on See Page 12 Col 7

Death of teenage prisoner: Probe body yet to submit report

By Staff Correspondent The departmental committee set up to probe the death of Alamgir, the teenage under-trial prisoner at the Dhaka Central Jail who succumbed to his injuries on Thursday, was yet to submit its report till yesterday. Meanwhile, jail sources said last night that a number of prisoners in the ward where Alamgir was detained had run over Alamgir when he fell down See Page 12 Col 8

JCD activist murder BNP calls hartal in Khulna city today

From Staff Correspondent KHULNA, Aug 9: BNP has called a half-day hartal in the city tomorrow protesting the killing of JCD activist Babul Gazi at Nijkhama under Batiaghata thana on Saturday. Babul was shot dead when a group of youngmen opened fire on a bus carrying about 30 JCD activists to Satkhira where Begum Zia addressed a public meeting the same day. The Nabaj-e-Janaza for Babul was held near BNP office here this morning and later he was laid to rest at Basupara Graveyard. Berek Gazi, father of the deceased, has filed a case with Batiaghata thana accusing 25 Jubo League activists of the murder.

PCJSS chief coming to city Formation of interim RC may be delayed

By Special Correspondent Formation of an interim Regional Council, the apex body to run local governments and supervise development and law and order in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), is likely to be delayed further. It reflects a frosty relation between the government and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), sources concerned said. Despite a meeting of the CHT Peace Accord Implementation Committee on Friday, the two sides could not agree on the list of members for the 22-member RC. The interim RC would be nominated by the government. Both the sides had prepared their own lists but disagreements continued to plague the final list, concerning the members from the settlers' quota, the sources said. However, officials in Dhaka said, formation of the RC would not be delayed any further. "We have been able to iron out the differences on the nominations," Abul Hasnat Abdullah, Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad and Chairman of the CHT Peace Accord Implementation Committee told newsmen after its meeting on Friday at Chittagong. Kalparanjan Chakma, Minister for CHT Affairs, on Saturday told a meeting at Rangamati that the formation of RC would take about a month. Because of delay in finding nominees for Raja or circle See Page 12 Col 3

বিদেশে মহিলা কর্মী শ্রেণণ বন্ধে সরকারের সাম্প্রতিক সিদ্ধান্ত প্রত্যাহারের জন্য গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর প্রতি বায়রার আবেদন

মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী, অত্যন্ত উৎসেহ ও হতাশার সাথে বিভিন্ন দৈনিক পত্রিকা মারফত আমরা জানতে পেরেছি যে মন্ত্রী পরিষদ কমিটির সাম্প্রতিক এক সিদ্ধান্ত অনুসারে সরকার বিদেশে চাকুরীর উদ্দেশ্যে সকল প্রকার মহিলা শ্রমিক পাঠানো নিষিদ্ধ ঘোষণা করেছেন। বায়রা মনে করে যে এই সিদ্ধান্ত সুভিক্ষার স্বপ্নকে এবং জনগণের বর্তমান জনশ্রিয় সরকার এবং দেশের জন্য আশঙ্কাজনক হবে। এ ব্যাপারে নিম্নে বর্ণিত জনগুরুত্বপূর্ণ বিষয় তুলে ধরার প্রতি আমরা আপনার সদয় দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করছি।

Automated trading from today DSE brokers say they aren't ready for it

By M Shamsur Rahman All is set for the 54-year-old Dhaka Stock Exchange to start automated trading, but some senior brokers say they are not yet ready for it. The Dhaka bourse yesterday formally abolished its trading floor, bidding bye to the traditional cryout system of share trading. Senior members of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) traded shares for about half an hour in the cryout system for the last time during yesterday's trading. The DSE will begin its online screen-based trading from today. Some of them said they were being forced to go for it before they were prepared for the new system. They said launching of computerised system by the Chittagong bourse has made it difficult for the Dhaka brokers. "Doing it at least a month later would be ideal for us, but the DSE would become a cattle grazing ground by then," a top broker said. Already, the CSE trade volume has surpassed that of DSE by a large margin although the number of companies listed with the Chittagong bourse is almost half that of the Dhaka exchange. See Page 12 Col 7

Court allows sending Chetia's photo, fingerprint to Indian govt

By Court Correspondent Three prosecution witnesses in two separate cases against ULFA leader Anup Chetia were examined by Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday. Chetia was arrested along with two of his associates Babul Sharma and Laksmi Prasad, late last year from an apartment in the city. They were implicated in two separate cases for illegally possessing foreign currencies and passports of various countries. The prosecution witnesses who appeared before the court yesterday were Abul Bashar Mia and Md Alam, both owners of the city's Adabar residence from where Chetia arrested on December 21 last year and Zulfikar Alam, son of Md Alam. In almost identical statements the three witnesses said that plainclothes policemen arrested Chetia with passports of different countries and foreign currencies from the 5/D, North Adabar residence. They said, Chetia rented an apartment in the building on October 15, 1996. The three witnesses are now scheduled to be cross-examined by defence lawyers on August 13. Meanwhile, Chetia in a brief statement at the court yesterday recalled the all out assistance that he and his fellow Assamese had lent during Bangladesh's War of Independence in 1971 and hoped that people of Bangladesh would reciprocate. He said that the union of India would split into pieces by the year 2005 and Assam would continue to keep good relationship with Bangladesh. UNB adds: The court turned down the request of Anup See Page 12 Col 1

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মোহাম্মদ নূর আলী সভাপতি বাংলাদেশ এসোসিয়েশন অব ইন্টারন্যাশনাল রিক্রুটিং এজেন্সিজ (বায়রা)