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PM cancels visit to South Africa

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has cancelled her visit to South Africa in view of severe flooding in the country, reports UNB.

She was scheduled to attend the 12th conference on Non-Aligned Movement in Durban from September 2-3.

"She has cancelled her visit because of the severe flood," Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad told a weekly press briefing at the Foreign Office yesterday morning.

However, the Prime Minister will go to Saudi Arabia on August 30 to perform Omrah and is expected to return home the next day.

The Foreign Minister will see Page 12 Col 3

Low over Bay slows recession of water

By Mizan Ali

A low over the Bay is now causing high tide in the sea, obstructing recession of flood waters, weather experts told The Daily Star yesterday.

"A low tide in the sea was supposed to begin today and continue till September 3. But it is being delayed by the depression. The intensity of the depression is less but it will also shorten the period of the expected low tide," an expert said.

The low is likely to continue for another two or three days, the expert said.

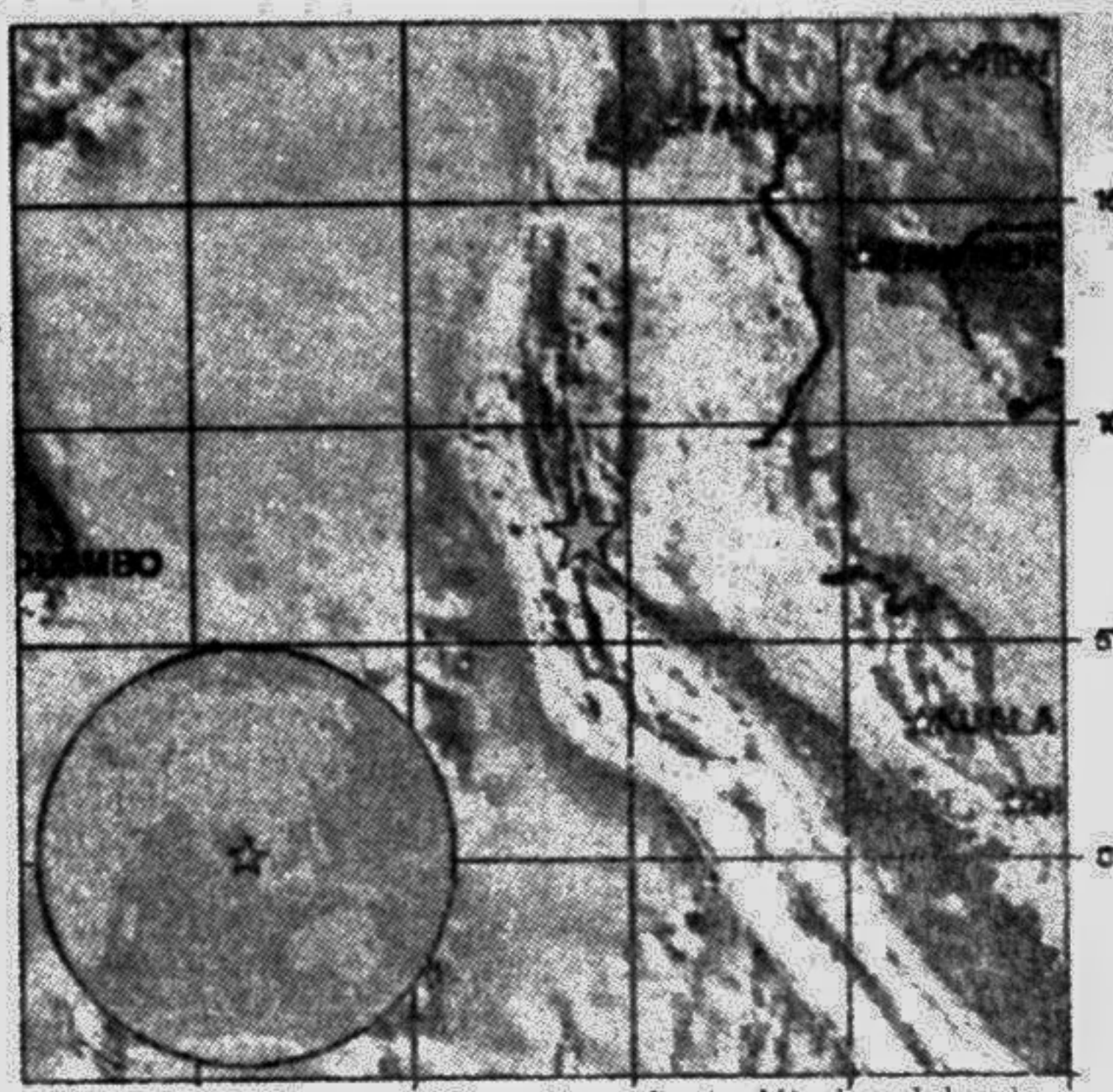
The low is whipping up winds upto 40 miles an hour, causing swelling of water along the coast and slowing the flow of flood waters into the sea," he added.

Flow of flood waters into the

Bay was also obstructed earlier as the water level in the coast rose by several feet due to an earthquake in the sea bed, sources said. The quake took place at a time when there was supposed to be a low tide in the sea.

"An earthquake measuring 6 on the Richter scale occurred in the Nicobar Islands at 9:52 am on August 10," said a source quoting reports from the National Earthquake Information Center of US.

"Spherically symmetric wave propagated from the earthquake center generated surges known as Tsunami and was noticeable in Bangladesh coast where water level rose by several feet," the report said.



Floor crossing by 2 BNP MPs Speaker directed to refer dispute to EC

By SC Correspondent

The High Court yesterday directed the Speaker to forward to the Election Commission the dispute over the floor crossing by two BNP MPs by joining the Awami League government.

The Speaker was directed to forward the dispute to the EC within 30 days from receipt of the copy of judgement.

The MPs are: Dr Mohammad Alauddin and Hasibur Rahman Swapan.

However, the court upon a government prayer ordered stay of operation of the judgement for seven days and gave certificate to the government for submitting an appeal petition before the Appellate Division of

the Supreme Court.

A division bench of the HC comprising Justice KM Hassan and Justice Md Latifur Rahman after hearing the parties in a writ petition for four days made the rule absolute and passed the direction upon the Speaker.

On Wednesday, after concluding his argument Attorney General Mahmudul Islam sought the court's permission to submit his written argument and the senior Judge of the bench Justice KM Hassan appreciated it saying that due to noise he could not hear and follow the argument of the Attorney General.

Then the Attorney General

told the court that he would submit the written argument on Monday.

The Attorney General reminded the court about its Wednesday's directive when the court started to deliver the verdict yesterday.

The hearing of the writ petition continued for the last four days with Barrister Moudud Ahmed appearing for the writ petitioners.

The petitioners — Chief Whip of the Opposition Khandker Delwar Hossain and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament B Chowdhury — submitted that the dispute re-

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Thailand to extradite Maj Huda in 3 months

BANGKOK, Aug 27: Thailand is to extradite a Bangladeshi fugitive allegedly involved in a 1975 military coup in his country, the Justice Ministry said today, reports AFP.

A spokesman said the Appeals Court today upheld a criminal court ruling that the case of Major Bazul Huda was not political.

Bazul Huda, allegedly one of the key leaders of 1975 coup, is now in a Bangkok jail and the Dhaka government has been urging Bangkok to send him back.

Appeals Court judge U-Krit Khaisung upheld the earlier extradition ruling, saying the law required Bazul Huda to be extradited within three months from now, the Appeal Court decision is final.

5-day drive ends 75 BNP MPs deposited resignation letters

BNP has decided to continue its special drive to collect the letters of resignation of the party lawmakers as the five-day drive failed to complete the process.

The special drive, earlier planned till yesterday, expedited the process of collecting the resignation letters to a large extent, party sources said.

Until yesterday, the resignation letters of at least 75 of the 111 BNP MPs were collected by the Opposition Chief Whip and

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Death of Sramik League leader: Case against 26 in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent
KHALUNA, Aug 27: A case has been filed accusing 26 people, including local Awami League leaders and BCL and Sramik League activists of the murder of a local BCL leader.

Anwar Hossain Kamal, joint secretary of Khalishpur unit of BCL, died Monday from bullet wounds sustained during a gunfight between rival factions of Sramik League.

KM Siraj, newly elected general secretary of People's Jute Mills Workers' Union filed the case with Khalishpur thana.

The accused include four AL leaders, nine BCL activists and 13 Sramik League supporters belonging to the Ibne Zaman faction of the ruling party.

Police could arrest any of the FIR-named accused.

6 lakh tonnes of foodgrains to be imported to offset shortfall

By Shehab Ahmed

The government has decided to import six lakh tonnes of foodgrains to offset the shortfall due to massive damage of crops by the floods, sweeping the country for more than six weeks, according to official sources.

Half of the imports will be rice and the rest wheat which will beef up the stocks, now over seven lakh tonnes, the sources said.

Another 13.8 lakh tonnes are expected from donors, which, together with the imports, are likely to replenish a possible shortfall of about 20 lakh tonnes of foodgrains in the current year.

According to preliminary estimates, more than Tk 1400 crore worth of farm produce including rice have been damaged by the floods.

Damages can go up when the full assessment will be available after the flood waters recede, agriculture officials said yesterday.

Officials of the Agriculture Extension Department said, their estimates till mid-August showed that at least seven lakh tonnes of rice and about 250,000 tonnes of vegetables and other farm produce in

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Foodgrains are being loaded in a boat from a truck at the Mill Barrack CSD ghat for sending those to flood-affected areas. The ghat has already been submerged. —Star photo

Flood hits 61 out of 90 wards of Dhaka city

The flood situation in the central part of the country took a serious turn yesterday amid rise of water levels in the upstream of Padma and Meghna basins coupled with high tides in the Bay of Bengal, reports BSS.

Disaster Management and Relief Ministry officials said the flood situation further deteriorated in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Narsingdi, Gazipur, Madaripur, Shariatpur, Gopalganj, Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Comilla and Chandpur districts.

Dhaka City Corporation sources said at least 61 out of 90 wards of the capital are affected by the flood and more than 20 lakh people were marooned.

The situation remained static in Faridpur, Rajbari,

Mymensingh, Kishoreganj, Bogra, Pabna, Luxmipur, Habiganj and Brahmanbaria districts while it marked slight improvements in Jamalpur, Sherpur, Netrakona, Manikganj, Sirajganj, Kurigram, Gaibandha and Barisal districts, relief ministry officials said.

The officials said the situation became normal in 16 other districts.

They said with ten overnight casualties — five in Dhaka and five in Chandpur district — the flood related death toll stood at 370.

According to the Roads and Highways Department, the road communication between Dhaka-Daudkandi section of Dhaka-Chittagong highway was suspended following inundation by upto three feet of water at 18 points.

Officials sources said though parts of Dhaka-Sylhet highway was submerged at Brahmanbaria, vehicles are still plying with caution.

They said traditional routes via Gabtali bus terminal on Dhaka-Aricha highway was diverted through Uttara-Ashulia route following submergence of the highway near Ameen Bazar adjacent to the Mirpur Bridge.

According to Railway officials, train communication between Jamalpur and Jagan-nathganj Ghat continued to remain suspended with waters still flowing over the railway tracks in the 40 kilometers section.

They said although the water

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They said though the water

One toilet, one tap for 600 flood affected people

By Staff Correspondent
"We have only one toilet for over 600 people and we are drinking water from only one water tap. This is the way we are leading our lives since Tuesday," said Md Khalilul Islam, a flood affected resident of Kamrangirchar now staying at a shelter in the city.

"Most of us did not have any meal yesterday as we do not have any arrangement to cook food here," said Jahura Khatun.

More than 200 flood affected families from Kamrangirchar and Jhauchar, about seven kilometers from the city, have taken shelter at the Bangladesh College of Leather Technology premises at Hazaribagh since Tuesday.

Kamrangirchar and the adjacent Jhauchar areas have

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Betar directed to present 'objective news'

By Nurul Kabir

The parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Information yesterday stressed on the importance of 'free flow of information' and directed the Bangladesh Betar authorities to present objective news.

The parliamentary body, at a meeting held with its chairman Abul Kalam Azad MP of the Awami League, discussed various aspects relating to the running of the state-owned Betar. The issues that came up for discussion included objectivity of news broadcast by Betar, its

manpower, budget, development projects, problems of the staff artists, allegations of corruption in staff recruitment and recovery of lands grabbed by local people.

According to meeting sources, the BNP members of the parliamentary body accused Betar authorities of taking a 'partisan approach' in broadcasting news.

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FM off to SA to join summit

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad left for Saudi Arabia yesterday evening en route to South Africa to attend the NAM summit in Durban, reports UNB.

Crimes up but identified gang leaders move freely in Ctg

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Aug 27: Incidents of crimes including murder, abduction, looting of shops, mugging and illegal toll collection, went up in the port city and its surrounding areas with further deterioration of law and order.

Panic has spread among residents and businessmen as the identified syndicates of terrorists and criminals have again become active, sources said.

Although police have launched a crackdown since mid-April to nab the identified terrorists, the main gang leaders have escaped arrest as they enjoy 'political protection'.

Some of the gang leaders reportedly possess sophisticated arms, maintain a high profile with expensive cars and mobile phones and keep covert links with a section of police personnel, the sources said.

Police said these identified gang leaders could not be arrested as they went under-

ground after the crackdown was launched.

But sources said that some of these gang leaders were seen moving freely in recent months although they had restricted their movements during the initial period of the crackdown.

The crackdown was launched following a directive by the Home Minister during his visit here last April.

A number of terrorists were arrested at that time. But some of the identified terrorists and their ring leaders reappeared seemingly with new strategy by attacking mostly the jewellery shops as their main targets.

In recent days many jewellery shops were looted in the city. The incident of looting at the Mimi-Super Market jewellery shops rocked the business community.

Police swung into action immediately and arrested five known terrorists belonging to the student and youth fronts of

a political party.

But the ring leader of the gang could not be arrested even after police raided his house.

The ring leader reportedly organised protest procession in his area. One of his gang member was arrested by police in a raid on the night of Saturday, the sources said.

Some other ring leaders of identified gangs were seen addressing different functions in the city which were covered in the local press.

In the past few weeks, jewellery shops were looted in Chawkbazar, Barik Building crossing, Hamsarbagh and Kalamir Bazar.

Three businessmen and a minor boy were abducted recently by the armed terrorists to realise ransom. The abductors are yet to be arrested.

On person was shot dead and several others received bullet injuries when an armed gang

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Rubel murder case CID collects specimen of ADC Nuruzzaman's handwriting

The CID, investigating the murder of Rubel yesterday collected a specimen of handwriting of ADC (DB) Mahfuzul Haq Nuruzzaman to probe the writing on a chit, recovered from an almirah of SI Hayatul Islam Takur, reports UNB.

The CID investigators also interrogated ADC Nuruzzaman for the second time yesterday.

The investigators recorded the statement of Nuruzzaman, who was in-charge of Detective Branch on July 23 in absence of DC Syed Bazul Karim.

In his statement, the ADC (DB) explained his role about the Rubel incident.

Earlier, the investigators of Rubel murder case took the specimen of handwriting of SI Thakur and his wife. Thakur led the DB team which arrested Rubel.

The mysterious chit contained the address of a coaching centre on one side and that of Rubel's residence on the other side, hand-written by different people.

The address of Cambridge Coaching Centre was written, according to his own admission, by AC Akram Hossain, the main accused in the Rubel murder. But police are yet to find out who wrote the Rubel's home address.

"We will examine these specimens of handwriting by the experts concerned," said a CID investigator.

Also yesterday the CID interrogated two people, including Nurul Amin, who used to sell lungi near the Siddheswari residence of Rubel. Amin was later forced to leave the area and is now working as steno of the Special Branch police, sources said.

The other person interrogated by CID is a son of the owner of Cambridge Coaching Centre and a friend of Rubel's brother Jewel.

CID sources said AC Akram Hossain is likely to be produced before the court on Sunday, when a specimen of his handwriting

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Shazneen murder

Hasan's bail prayer rejected again

By Staff Correspondent
A bail prayer for contractor Hasan, one of the seven persons allegedly involved in Shazneen's murder at Gulshan in the city on April 23, 1996 rejected by a court on Wednesday.

The Court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka, in its order rejecting the bail prayer said that the accused was named in the confessional statements in connection with the murder case.

Hearing the arguments of the lawyers and reviewing the documents, the court rejected the bail petition for the sake of proper investigation.

Bail petitions of Hasan were refused several times earlier.

In the last week of July, a Division Bench of the High Court comprising Justice M Moazzem Hoque and Justice ABM Khairul Huque refused to

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ANNOUNCEMENT
The Daily Star
Young Entrepreneurs and Professionals Forum
Conference on
Opportunities in the IT Sector
CAREER PROSPECTS FOR THE YOUNG
In cooperation with: The British Council
The Daily Star Young Entrepreneurs and Professionals Forum cordially invites you to attend the above IT conference scheduled on Monday, August 31, 1998 at the British Council Auditorium from 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM. Country's leading IT personalities in the hardware, software and training areas will speak on the problems and prospects of the IT sector. Interested individuals are requested to complete registration (which is free but mandatory) by sending us your (1) Name, (2) Designation, (3) Organisation & contact phone number, and (4) Area of Interest within IT field at the following fax numbers: 863035, 886061 and 9350017. You may also register yourself over phone by calling at the following numbers: Coordinator (885214), Rafi Hossain (017-540076) and Quazi Mahmud Ahmed (9665294). The last date of registration is August 30, 1998.

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