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Floods: Minister

allays fear of

food crisis

yesterday allayed fears of a food

crisis in the wake of the longest

ever floods sweeping across the

steps to maintain a stable food

situation although rice produc-

tion has suffered extensively

due to widespread flooding," she

The minister asserted that

"the food stock is satisfactory

and steps are underway to pro-

cure necessary foodgrains."

Donors are also extending their

helping hand to the flood vic-

UNB, Matia Chowdhury ex-

plained the government's agri-

cultural rehabilitation plan

and steps to tackle the food sit-

uation in the aftermath of the

Two brothers

drown in flood

waters in city

By Staff Correspondent

in the flood affected North

Mugda area in the city yester-

plob, 26, a student of Jagannath

University College, and his

younger brother Nazeem, 20,

residents of North Mugda, po-

fence sources said their divers

could not recover Nazeem's

body even after searching for

more than two hours from 4

pm. Local people and relatives

continued to search till the fil-

waters in Mugda Jheel area at

Nazeem was bathing in flood

ing of this report last night.

Fire Service and Civil De-

Two young brothers drowned

They were identified as Bi-

See page 11

natural calamity.

In an interview with the

"We have taken all possible

country, reports UNB.

Food and Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury

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BHADRA 20, 1405 BS DHAKA FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 4, 1998 JAMADIUL AWAL 12, 1419 HIJRI

#### Hasina visits flood-hit

Tungipara TUNGIPARA, Sept 3: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today visited the flooded areas in her own electoral constituency.

tims, reports UNB. The speed boat carrying the prime minister was surrounded by hundreds of boats of the flood victims when she reached remote Gopalpur union to see the extent of damage wrought by the prolonged flood.

Tungipara, and distributed re-

lief materials among the vic-

The flood victims gathered near a school building to have a glimpse of the Prime Minister, See Page 12 Col 7

#### Khaleda asks govt Disburse loan to flood-hit

tarmers soon DAULODIA. (Manikgani). Sept 3: BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia today asked the government to disburse immediately interest-free loans and

ports UNB. She also demanded supply of house building materials to the victims who had lost their houses in this prolonged flood-

agri-inputs to the farmers, re-

The BNP leader, who conducted relief operation at different places in Daulodia, criticised the government for not constituting an all-party relief

Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thaiheld during the current month The two-day meeting was to start on September 7.

The first meeting of the new regional grouping was held in Bangkok last December.

Sources said all the countries have already been intimated about the postponement of the meeting. The new dates will be fixed following consultations with member countries.

#### President donates one month's salary to PM's Relief Fund

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday donated his one month's salary towards the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. reports BSS.

Officers of the president's office donated one day's salary while some others donated two days' salary towards the fund.

A spokesman of the president's office said the president will donate half of his yearly entertainment allowance equivalent to taka five lakh towards the PM's Relief Fund on Sunday.

### - Inside Today -

# Article

"Flood, Farmers and the Scientific Apartheid"

Column: Do I Dare! by AZM Obaidullah Khan Page 4

#### **Focus**

Role of Grameen Bank in poverty reduction: Chosing the credit-worthy ones

Page 5

#### Business

Russian govt 'powerless' to arrest rouble plunge

Most Asian stock markets fall amid Malaysian turmoil

Both DSE and CSE indices rise Pages 6, 7, 8

#### Deluge set to make a bigger dent in Dhaka

## Water won't recede before month-end

By Shehab Ahmed

A renewed rush of water from the upper catchment of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, thanks to heavy rains, has deteriorated the flood situation in the country.

Both the rivers were already above the danger levels, and their swelling will only further prolong the country's deluge, dubbed the worst in decades. In all probability, the floods will continue till the end of this

month, belying earlier forecast

by experts of a recession by the

middle of this month. The Dhaka city will bear the immediate brunt, according to officials at Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC).

The Brahmaputra, rising by 10 cm at its entry point in Bangladesh at Chilmari in Kurigram, is expected to deluge the areas upto Aricha by this

"Its effect would be felt by the millions from Dhaka's working class and the middle-income neighbourhoods in the south, east and western parts when they wake up tomorrow morning," an FFWC official said last night.

The rich and expatriates living in the posh areas in the city's north-eastern neighbourhoods are also going to see a further rise in water level. Contributing to the city's

tribute more Vulnerable Group

Feeding (VGF) cards among the

BNP legislator, they also ac-

cused the government of 'care-

lessness in addressing the

See Page 12 Col 3

around noon in front of the rest

house when the workers belong-

ing to the Container Terminal

Implementation Council, on

their way to meet the deputy

minister were confronted by the

coalition workers, police and

each other in the half-an-hour-

long clash, marked by a series

of cracker blasts and brick bat-

struction of the private termi-

nal brought out procession car-

rying 'black flags' while their

opponents carried 'white flags'

during their procession, wel-

coming the government's deci-

A large number of police, al-

ready posted there, swung into

action, lobbing tear gas shells

and charging batons to disperse

brought under control later

with reinforcement of addi-

tional police personnel as ten-

See Page 12 Col 1

President Shahabuddin Ahmed addressing a discussion marking the birth centenary of

renowned journalist, litterateur, politician and lawyer Abul Mansur Ahmad at the

National Museum auditorium yesterday. Other participants from L-R are: Prof Serajul

Islam Chowdhury, Prof Abu Rushd, Prof Mustafa Nurul Islam and Prof Zillur Rahman

অসম্ভ প্রথম সাহিত্যিক, রাজনীতিবিদ ও সাং

The situation was, however,

the warring groups.

The group opposing the con-

The rival workers chased

port sources said.

ting, police said.

flood, the Buriganga and the Shitalakhya rivers rose yesterday by one centimetres each.

In its forecast for until 6 a.m. Saturday, FFWC said the Brahmaputra, the Ganges, the Old Brahmaputra at Jamalpur, the Buriganga at Dhaka, the Mahananda at Chapai Nawabganj and the Meghna at Bhairab Bazar are all likely to rise.

Flood gauges at 21 river points out of 46 monitoring stations were above their danger levels yesterday. According to FFWC. 14 points fell. 27 rose while four remained static. The situation has rung

alarm bells among flood ex-See Page 12 Col 4



WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN! Flood victims in the city's Rajarbagh area scrambling for relief in chest-deep water yesterday. — Star photo

Swissair plane crashes

killing all 229 aboard

#### Flood hits 2.15 cr people

## Tk 4.34cr, 66018 MT rice distributed

By Nurul Kabir

Pvt container terminal issue

Rival workers at Ctg

port clash: 50 hurt

From Staff Correspondent

The Ministry of Relief and Disaster Management has so far distributed Tk 4.34 crore in country.

The state minister also informed the members of the parliamentary committee that the government has decided to dis-

CHITTAGONG, Sept 3: At

least 50 people, including some

policemen, were injured in a

clash between two rival groups

of workers at Chittagong Port

today over the installation of a

private container terminal by a

foreign consortium, police and

Chittagong Medical College

Hospital and the port hospital

all activities at the port, includ-

ing cargo handling, were

stopped as the workers belong-

ing to a coalition of 22 trade

union bodies opposing the in-

stallation of private container

terminal, went on a wildcat

strike protesting the clash and

demanding resignation of the

Deputy Minister for Shipping

and Ports Saber Hossain

The deputy minister was in

The clash sparked off at

the rest house of the port at the

time of the clash, police and

port sources said.

Siddiqui.

Chowdhury, port sources said.

The injured were admitted to

Immediately after the clash

port sources said.

for treatment.

#### Water purifying tablets selling at higher price

By Morshed Ali Khan Unscrupulous traders have

hoarded water purifying tablets and are selling them in small quantities and at a higher price. During a visit the country's biggest medicine market at Mitford, pharmacy attendants there told this correspondent that the tablets had 'vanished from the market and could not be 'easily' available. They said the tablet had been one of the slow items' on the shelves but with the floods 'demands has risen sharply

A shopkeeper in Mitford of fered to sell 100 tablets for Tk 0.80 each. The normal retail price of a tablet had been around Tk 0.50. He said only one company produced the item in the country, "therefore, sudden rise in demand has caused the crisis.'

When contacted. Chief Health Officer of Dhaka City Corporation, Dr Ashraf Uddan said that his department was also facing problems in procuring water purifying tablets for the flood affected people.

"We are currently supplying water purification tablets to the flood victims in the 176 city shelters. We tried to buy some recently as our stock was running out, but the price has gone up from Tk 0.42 to Tk 0.57 for each tablet in the wholesale market and we cannot find them in large quantities," said Dr Ashraf.

#### Disruption of Ctg Port activities won't be

FBCCI yesterday said businessmen will never allow disruption of Chittagong port activities by a handful of people.

allowed: FBCCI

reports UNB. "Our position is very clear on the matter as it is virtually our only port and heart of business," said Yussuf Abdullah Harun, President of Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Addressing a press conference here, he said foreign investors will be discouraged and local entrepreneurs will be frustrated if anyone tries to paralyse the port activities.

For boosting foreign investment, he said, politics should be centred in parliament. "Hartal is a democratic right, but it should not be practised for the sake of the economy," he added.

The FBCCI President urged the political parties to reach consensus on certain points for economic progress.

- ७व (जन्म ठवाविक)

About the damage by flood in See Page 12 Col 8

- Star photo

HALIFAX (Nova Scotia), Sept 3: A flotilla of coast guard and at Peggy's Cove. "When you saw how small fishing boats searching the sea

early today found only bodies and debris floating in an oil slick at the site where a Swissair jetliner went down off Nova Scotia, killing all 229 people aboard, reports AP. Swissair said today that the plane's 215 passengers - two of them babies — and 14 crew

members were killed in Wednesday night's crash Geneva-bound Flight 111 had left New York's Kennedy International Airport at 8:17 pm (0017 GMT). Witnesses reported a wide

area of ocean littered by debris from the downed aircraft, including an oil slick and life preservers - all illuminated by searchlights from coast guard cutters, tielleopters and overflying aircraft. Canadian rescue official

Dan Bedell said 18 bodies had been recovered as dawn approached. Sixteen of the dead were

brought aboard a navy supply vessel, HCMS Preserver, which was co-ordinating the operation. Fishermen in small boats

Female students at

DU demolish two

hall gates, ransack

provost's office

By DU Correspondent

Shamsunnahar Hall of Dhaka

University demolished two

gates inside the hall and ran-

sacked the provost's office late

Wednesday night, witnesses

gry as a new gate was built on

Wednesday on the way to can-

teen from the hall annex

campaign against this in the

evening and demolished the

The students also broke an-

After midnight, they also

other gate built for checking

their identity cards when they

ransacked the provost's office

inside the hall and chanted slo-

gans against the hall authori-

Nur-Un-Nabi rushed to the spot

at around 12:30 am. He assured

that he would soon arrange a

meeting of the residents with

the Vice Chancellor to discuss

A number of residents of the

See Page 12 Col 8

various problems of the hall.

Proctor of the university Dr

gate at around 10:30 pm.

They started a signature

building.

enter the hall.

Residents of the hall got an-

A section of residents of

brought the two others to shore

the pieces of fragments were you could tell it must have been a pretty horrific crash," said Jim Buckley, skipper of a whaling boat. "You could tell by some of the things that floated by that it didn't look real good."

Civilian rescuers were at the scene within minutes of the crash, Canadian navy spokeswoman Tracy Simoneau At a news conference in

Zurich, Swissair spokeswoman Beatrice Tschanz said the passengers were thought to be mostly Swiss, many from the French-speaking west of the country. One of the crew members was an American from Swissair partner Delta Tschanz said.

The Geneva-New York route is regularly used by officials of the United Nations and other international agencies based in Geneva - the world body's European headquarters.

"The flight deck crew reported smoke in the cockpit and attempted an emergency landing at Halifax Airport. About 48 kilometers south of the airport.

ULFA leader Anup Chetia

and two of his associates de-

tained in Dhaka Central Jail

have sought political asylum in

was sent to the Secretary, Min-

istry of Home Affairs, yesterday

by their lawyers Sigma Huda

Star that they also sought hear-

ing of the petition in presence of

the petitioners and their

the home secretary neither

confirmed nor denied receipt of

tion of granting asylum to any

under trial prisoner does not

tion was obtained by The Daily

strongly believe that Assam is a

separate nation and that they

are the victims of an Indian

governmental discriminatory

policy: and that their resources

are being plundered" by the In-

The petition seeking asylum

Alina Khan told The Daily

When contacted last night

He, however, said, "The ques-

A copy of the asylum peti-

It said "People of Assam

Bangladesh.

lawvers.

arise.

the petition.

and Alina Khan.

the aircraft disappeared from radar screens," Tschanz said. White House spokesman PJ Crowley said "we have no indication that terrorism was in-

volved. The three-engine McDonnell Douglas MD-11 dumped fuel over nearby St Margaret's Bay before crashing, an airport worker said.

Witnesses reported hearing sputtering sounds before a thunderous crash.

"The motors were still going. but it was the worst-sounding deep groan that I've ever heard. said Claudia Zinck-Gilroy. It was Swissair's first crash

since October 7, 1979, when a Swissair DC-8 overshot the runway in Athens while attempting to land and burst into flames. Fourteen people were

Speaking to reporters at the Geneva airport, Georges Schorderet, the chief financial officer of parent company SAirGroup, said the plane was put into service in August 1991 and overhauled in August and September last year. It had been checked, as all are, before takeoff, he added.

Chetia, his associates

seek political asylum

By Staff Correspondent

dian government.

were being arrested.

inately.

"The petitioner no 1 is the

secretary of ULFA and the other

two petitioners are the mem-

bers of the said organisation.

They have willingly surren-

dered to the police when they

to them by the Indian govern-

ment left no other choice but to

establish the ULFA, which is

till date, waging a continuous

war struggle against the Indian

government, its army and their

collaborators who are unabat-

edly plundering the wealth not

only of the state of Assam but

also that of its citizens, picking

up innocent people and tortur-

ing and killing them indiscrim-

that if the government of

Bangladesh hands them over to

the relevant authorities of In-

dia, they will not be spared as

they being freedom fighters

may have for the sake of their

war of liberation committed

such actions which may attract

capital punishment and which

See Page 12 Col 3

They are very apprehensive

"The ignominies meted ou

#### about 2:30 pm. At one stage, he See Page 11 7 electrocuted in Shariatpur

SHARIATPUR, Sept 3: Seven people were electrocuted and eight others injured in two thanas of the district last night. reports UNB. Villagers said five youths

died and eight men injured at village Upashi in Naria thana of the district at 9 pm as they came in touch with a live electric wire while they were travelling by a boat in Beel Laxmipur.

Identity of the deceased could not be known immediately. The injured were admitted to the sadar hospital in critical conditions.

In a similar incident, two men were electrocuted in a village in Bhedarganj thana of the district at 11 pm.

#### Police investigating deportation of 2 MPs from UK Police are investigating the

deportation of two MPs from Healthrow airport in London on Tuesday, reports UNB.

AKM Hafizur Rahman and Shamsuzzoha Khan, the two MPs of BNP, allegedly accompanied 10 people who were destined to freland with forged traveling documents. They were also packed out with the MPs.

The deportation of the MPs traveling with diplomatic passport aroused lot of criticism in political circles, for it tarnished the image of the country. Five of the associates used

the names of the sons of MPs and described the MPs as their fathers. Police are looking for the broker, Yahiya, who is said to

have taken the passports of the MPs to manage Ireland's visa from Kuala Lumpur and New The MPs told police that

they gave their passports to Yahiya but did not know his whereabouts.

Police expect the scandal will be unearthed when Yahiya is rounded up.

#### BNP calls hartal in Sylhet Div Sept 8

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Sept 3: BNP has called an 8-hour hartal in Sylhet division on September 8 as gramme.

part of its 5-day agitation pro-It was announced at a press conference held at the Sylhet

Press Club this afternoon The programme was an-

nounced in protest against the lodging of 'fake and motivated cases against the BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, Saifur Rahman and other senior leaders by the government and its failure in carrying out relief activities throughout the country adequately during the ongo-

ing floods. The other programmes include, mass contact with the professional groups and like minded political leaders and workers on September 4 to September 6 and brining out

jul Islam Choudhury, writer, critic and professor, Mustafa Noor-ul-Islam, professor, critic and researcher, and KG

President tells birth centenary function

#### Abul Mansur's contribution in literature, politics, journalism outstanding By Staff Correspondent

President Shahabuddin Ahmed has said the late Abul Mansur Ahmad fought for establishing a society free from religious fanaticism and based on mutual tolerance among all irrespective of their religion, caste and creed.

His devotion to the cause, the President told the commemoration ceremony on the 100th birthday of the late politician, litterateur, lawyer and journalist yesterday, had vivid reflections in his political life and writings and his immortal literary works.

The President was the chief guest at the function held at the National Museum auditorium in the city.

Leading contemporary re-

ner in many aspects of Bengali literature, in politics based on non-communalism, and in attempts to uplift the state of Bengali Muslims purely from a

They said the celebrated man from Mymensingh, during

ward Bengali Muslims in a manner unmatched by his contemporaries. The Abul Mansur Ahmad

rising aspirations of the back-

Smriti Sangsad organised the discussion meeting, chaired by elderly litterateur Professor Abu Rushd. Professor, researcher and

critic Rafiqul Islam presented the key-note paper on the life and works of Abul Mansur Ah-

Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, professor, poet and critic, Sera-

searchers, literary critics and journalists were also speakers who highlighted his life and works, which they said were replete with materials of learning for today's society. They called him a forerun-

non-religious point of view.

his long, illustrious career as a leading journalist of his time, a practising lawyer, a prolific writer of great repute and a successful politician, upheld the

See Page 11

See Page 12 Col 8

#### flood affected people especially in the worst-hit areas of the cash in the flood hit areas of the committee. "To misappropriate relief According to the state minisgoods, told the party in power More than 2.15 crore people ignored our demand," she told ter. 300 people of every flood have been affected by the devasaffected union is now holding flood victims during her relief tating floods in the country VGF cards, while each of them since July 12 last. See Page 12 Col 3 receive, free of cost, about 15 Besides, the ministry has BIMST-EC meet in kgs of rice per month. He told distributed some 66,018 tonnes of rice among the flood victims. the meeting that the number of Dhaka postponed cards "would be increased up to This was disclosed by the 1,000, especially in the worstsecretary of the ministry at a Leaders of Bangladesh, Inmeeting of the Parliamentary hit unions. dia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Standing Committee on the The state minister told this Thailand, who were to meet in Ministry of Relief and Disaster correspondent that the gov-Dhaka next week to chalk out ernment had so far distributed Management held at the plans and programmes under a total of 7.77.470 VGF cards Sangsad Bhaban yesterday. the framework of BIMST-EC. among the poor, while it would Talking to The Daily Star postponed the meeting because start distributing more cards last night, State Minister for of the devastating flood, foreign Relief and Disaster Manageoffice sources said, reports BSS However, the Opposition ment Talukder Abdul Khaleg The second meeting of members on the parliamentary said; in addition to these, BIMST-EC (Bangladesh, India. body observed at the meeting Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has distributed some Tk 57 that the relief materials supland Economic Cooperation) lakh among the flood victims. plied by the government was which was to take place at the extremely inadequate." She has also distributed level of state minister for for-According to Abu Yusuf Mo-1,55,954 pieces of sarees and eign affairs is unlikely to be 45,000 pieces lungis. hammad Khalilur Rahman, a