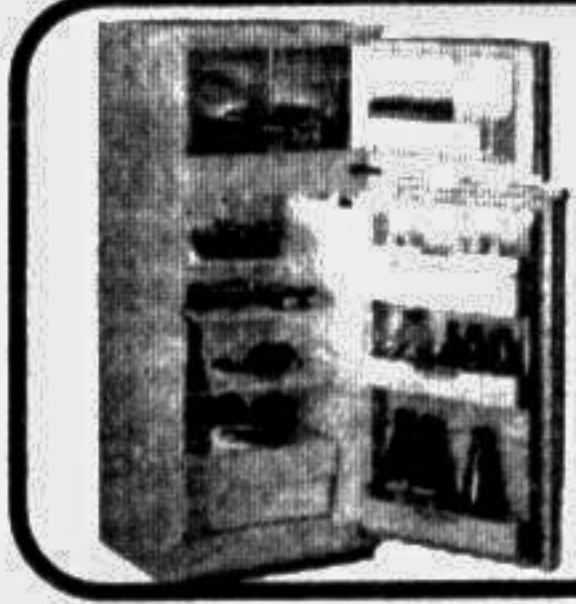




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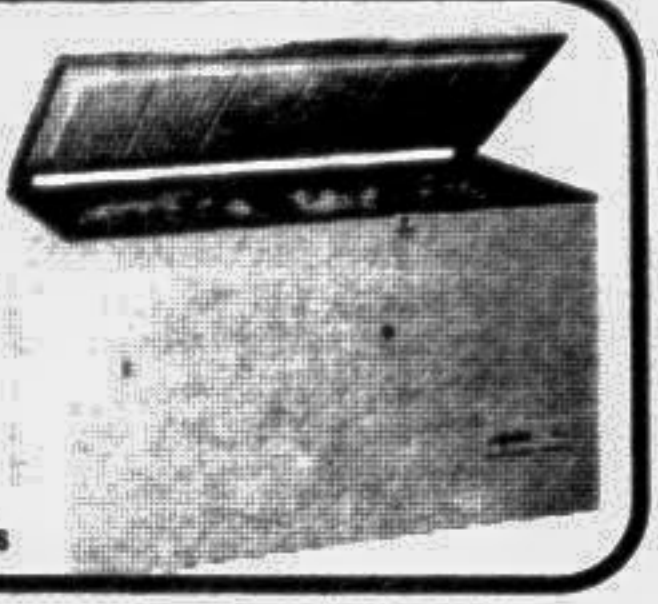
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Rehabilitation of flood-hit people is my only concern now: PM

The 52nd birthday of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina passed off yesterday without any ceremony or festivity, reports UNB. The Prime Minister came to her office in the morning as usual and maintained her busy schedule. She presided over the cabinet meeting, visited the ICDDR,B and received flood donations.

"I want to dedicate the rest of my life to the welfare of the people," she said when some Awami League leaders and workers went to Ganabhaban to greet Hasina on her birthday. She said: "My only concern now is proper rehabilitation of the flood affected people."

Neither the Awami League nor her family had any plan for celebrating the Prime Minister's birthday as the country is passing through problems of aftermath of the devastating flood, and the government declared nationwide austerity.

In an emotion charged voice Hasina said: "I have lost my father, mother, and brothers. I want to find consolation in doing good to the people."

"I find them amidst the distressed and grieved people of the country, and I am serving them as much as I can."

Hasina sought Divine blessings so that she could continue her work for the welfare of the people. She also sought strength from Almighty Allah to overcome the crisis caused by the lengthy flood.

In the afternoon, a milad mahfil was held at Awami League central office where special prayers were offered for long life and good health of the Prime Minister.

Awami League central leaders, city leaders and workers joined the prayer.

4 killed

From Page 1 In another incident, one Berek, 32, of village Khoksa Dighirpur, was beaten to death by a mob in village Sadaki Dighirpur under Kumarkhali thana last night.

Witnesses said that the victim, along with seven others went to the house of one Montaz Shaikh of village Sadaki Dighirpur and demanded toll money. When the house owner shouted for help, villagers rushed immediately there and caught Berek and gave him a good beating. Police later rescued Berek and rushed him to Kumarkhali Health Complex where he succumbed to the injuries.

VGF cards

From Page 1 Union Parishad chairmen and having representatives of NGOs, would select vulnerable families and distribute the cards, he said.

Resident Representative of World Food Programme (WFP) in Bangladesh Werner Kiene also had an hour-long discussion with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the weekend and said that the VGF cards should be distributed urgently.



The ferry terminal at Mukartapur, Munshiganj, is still not operational though floodwaters have receded significantly. — Star photo

Defence Counsel tells court ISI, CIA, Kissinger involved in Bangabandhu murder

Defence counsel for Col (dismissed) Syed Farooque Rahman in the Bangabandhu Murder Case yesterday contended in the court that the President and his family members were killed by a 'third party' with the connivance of some foreign powers, reports UNB.

Khan Saifur Rahman linking the third party in the killing said Bangabandhu was not killed by the accused persons. He was killed by another group in which ISI, CIA and the then US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger were involved.

Kohl defeated in his home district

BONN, Sept 28: German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has suffered a humiliating setback when he lost his home district of Ludwigshafen to Social Democratic candidate Doris Barnett, the local election commissioner has said, reports Reuters.

Barnett won 47.9 per cent of the vote in the district compared to 40.8 per cent for Kohl, who had won his home district in 1990 and 1994.

Schroeder opens talks with Greens Friday

BONN, Sept 28: Gerhard Schroeder, Germany's future chancellor, said today the centre-left Social Democrats will begin talks Friday on forming a government coalition with the environmentalist Greens, reports AP.

Schroeder said the coalition was 'the natural result' of the Social Democrats' sweeping 41 per cent victory in elections Sunday that ousted Chancellor Helmut Kohl after 16 years of conservative rule.

BNP protests submission of chargesheets

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has protested the submission of chargesheets in three cases involving 48 of his party leaders including four lawmakers — Oli Ahmed, Morshed Khan, Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury and Giasuddin Quader Chowdhury.

In a statement issued a day after the CID police submitted the chargesheets in the CMM's Court of Chittagong accusing the BNP leaders, Mannan Bhuiyan also demanded withdrawal of all three cases claiming those were based on falsehood.

BNP rampage

Stadium that left six people killed. The Chowdhury brothers have again been accused along with Manzur Morshed MP, Oli Ahmed MP, Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin and Dastagir Chowdhury in the November 27 clash that left two people dead on Chittagong Medical College campus during a visit of Khaleda Zia.

A total of 23 people have been arrested in connection with the incident. Police also accused nine people, including SQ Chowdhury, attacking of Chantgao thana on the same day last year.

Cessna crash

The pilot of the aircraft, Farrea Lara, had sent 'May Day', the highest emergency signal before the control tower lost contact with the aircraft.

She was on a routine flight as part of her Assistant Flight Instructor's course, along with Syed Raifque Islam, also doing the same course.

Both had earlier obtained commercial pilot's licence, doing most of their flying course at the Parbat Flying Academy, which is run by a company which operates the Air Parbat, a private airline.

The aircraft, made in USA, was bought second hand. But it was fully operational, the official said.

He said the Cessna-150 is a highly valued training aircraft. It has records of landing on paddy fields and even on one occasion, without wheels. But the crash is baffling us. May Day signal is normally given at an extreme emergency which suggests the pilot had faced a grave situation.

He denied that the aircraft had been unworthy of flying due to poor maintenance, alleged by some quarters.

DESA-DESCO feud

From Page 1 DESA itself, DESA employees had been trying to resist the formation of this company from the beginning.

Considering high pilferage in Mirpur Zone, the government decided to launch DESCO by handing over the distribution of power in this area.

As per an agreement between DESCO and DESA, a 60-day process to transfer the responsibilities began from yesterday. These include transferring the power distribution control room to DESCO.

"Till last night, DESA officials verbally agreed to cooperate with us," said the DESCO official. "But when we went to the DESA office premises in the morning we found nobody there. The office premises remained shut and they (DESA employees) took a new stand: They all want permanent jobs in DESCO with full pay and more."

DESCO was formed with an objective to operate with minimum number of employees. It intended to conduct the maintenance services through contractors. The company accordingly has contractors on standby to look after the torn cable or transformer problems.

ME peace talks Israeli PM claims 'breakthrough'

WASHINGTON, Sept 28: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said today that he and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat had achieved a 'breakthrough' on a long elusive deal to turn over more West Bank territory, reports AP.

The two Middle East leaders WASHINGTON, Sept 28: President Clinton said he, Netanyahu and Arafat had made progress today on breaking the 18-month deadlock in the Middle East peace process but there was more work to be done. He was talking to reporters after the summit. Clinton said he had invited both men back to the White House in October to continue discussions, reports Reuters.

flew to Washington today to continue talks with President Bill Clinton that lasted late into Sunday night with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

"I think we're getting close to finalising an agreement and it's time for the leaders to meet," Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said on NBC television's Today show.

Israeli diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there was agreement that Israel would withdraw from an additional 13 per cent of the West Bank — adding to the 27 per cent already promised to the Palestinians.

Three per cent would be turned into a nature preserve and kept under Israeli military control, with Israel and Palestinian construction prohibited.

"That's basically the concept we're trying to nail down here, and that's where we've made a breakthrough," Netanyahu said.

Netanyahu said that he and Yasser Arafat would meet later in the day with President Clinton.

Shazneen murder

From Page 1 Parvin, Badal, Shani Ram and Minu. In his judicial statement, Shahid said, "A few days before Eid, Hasan met me on the lawn of Latifur Rahman residence and summoned me. Hasan said that Shazneen would have to be murdered. I agreed to the proposal as Hasan offered to pay me handsomely."

Thereafter, he went to the village home of one of the accused, Badal, a supervisor of contractor Hasan, on April 6 for Eid, he said. He spent several days in Badal's village. Later, he went to his own village, Maksudpur, for a brief period. He returned to Dhaka on April 19 and went to Badal's house in the city. He spent the next couple of days with some friends in Mirpur and again returned to Badal's house on the morning of April 21 and spent the day there, before rejoining duty at Latifur Rahman's residence on the same evening.

Shahid in his judicial statement further said, "On April 23, I met Hasan at his residence. Hasan informed me that a party will be hosted at Latifur Rahman's residence that night.

"Everybody will be busy when the party starts, Hasan said asking me to complete my assigned job during that time. He assured me that there was nothing for me to get scared and that Parvin and Humayun will assist me during that time. He also said that he will bear all my responsibilities.

"Shazneen was alone in her ground floor bedroom when the dinner was in progress at about 10.00 pm that night. Parveen carried food to Shazneen's bedroom. When Parvin went to Shazneen's room, I took the opportunity and entered inside.

"Shazneen asked why I entered the room without knocking the door. I said I wanted to go to the toilet and then immediately switched off the light. When I went to her room I was carrying a knife in my pocket collected earlier from the house. Switching off the light, I brought out the knife from the pocket. Shazneen started screaming. I made an attempt to

Appointment of Observer Editor: HC order stayed

By Staff Correspondent The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court has stayed operation of the order of the High Court Division on appointment of Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury as Editor of The Bangladesh Observer, according to a press release issued yesterday by the Establishment Officer of the daily.

The management of the Al-Helal Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd. appointed Chowdhury as Editor of the daily on August 6 this year, it added.

Manzoor A Chowdhury, a share holder of the company, later challenged the appointment by filing an application before the Company Judge of the High Court Division on August 9 for maintaining a status quo ante as regards appointment of Editor and other matters. By an order the following day, the Company Judge directed maintaining status quo ante, which was later challenged by Khaled Hamidul Huq, a director of the Observer Group of Publications. He filed a civil miscellaneous petition and prayed for stay of the order, the press release said.

On Sunday, upon hearing both the parties, the Vacation Judge of the Appellate Division stayed the operation of the order till November 19 this year.

Senior advocates Barrister Shafiq Ahmed and Barrister Mohammad Akbar, instructed by the Observer Group of Publications, appeared for the petitioner while Md Nowab Ali, Advocate-on-Record, appeared for the respondent.

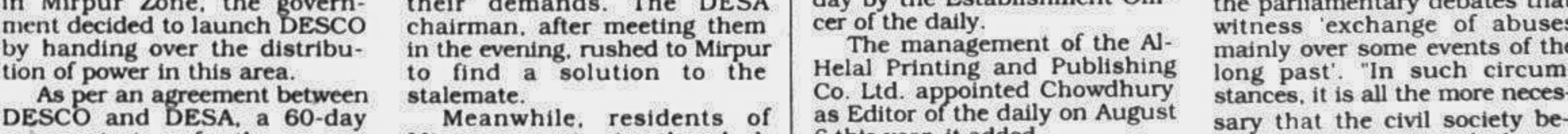
PM: Ministries

From Page 1 the meeting that the format carried information like the number of foreign tours of the ministers, secretaries and so on. But it did not give more important information like how much electricity the energy ministry had produced, or how many cases had been pending with the courts and so on, the secretary noted.

The cabinet members found the arguments logical, while the PM instantly asked the secretaries concerned to take necessary steps to change the format.

In another development, the cabinet deferred consideration of a Land Ministry proposal seeking certain amendments to the Vested Property Act.

According to cabinet sources, the land ministry has been advised to get the proposed amendments vetted by the law ministry.



Chancellor-elect Gerhard Schroeder addressing supporters while his wife Doris Koepf-Schroeder flashes a V-sign in Bonn on Sunday, after his party won the national elections. — AP/UNB photo