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2 DU staff held with stolen certificates

Four persons including two employees of Dhaka University were arrested yesterday for their alleged involvement in stealing 26 certificates of masters degree from the university, reports BSS.

Official sources said a team of Ramna police, acting on a tip off, arrested Kazi Khairul Bashar and Billal Hossain from Katabon Market and seized 26 certificates of masters degree from their possession at 1 pm.

Police later, arrested Shaheed, a medical attendant of Sureya Sen Hall and a tea-stall owner Salek from the administrative building area according to confessional statements of Bashar and Billal, the sources added.

Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof A K Azad Chowdhury urged the law enforcing agencies to take action against the offenders.

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Akbar buried, BNP brings out procession

By Staff Correspondent

Akbar Hossain, 13, a student of Graduate High School in the city, who died of brain haemorrhage allegedly due to police assault during Thursday's hartal called by the BNP-led Seven-Party Alliance, was buried at Tikatul graveyard yesterday evening.

A group of people announced on behalf of residents of Dhokhalah area that businesses would remain closed and transports off the roads in the area from dawn to dusk today to protest 'killing of Akbar by police'.

Earlier, City BNP convenor Sadek Hussain Khoka led a procession carrying the body of Akbar.

Talking to The Daily Star over telephone last night, Khoka said police refused to register any FIR in connection

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Try killers of Akbar Hossain: Mannan Bhuiyan

By Staff Correspondent

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday demanded trial of the killers of BNP activist Akbar Hossain who was 'beaten up by police' during hartal Thursday and succumbed to his injuries in the early hours of yesterday.

In a statement, Mannan Bhuiyan called for launching movement against the 'fascist government'. He said, 'The anti-civilisation activities of the government will not be tolerated any more'.

In another statement, the BNP secretary general condemned the bid to kill Khulna BNP leader Kamruzzaman and alleged that the terrorists have been roaming freely under the shelter of the ruling party and the government.

He also demanded arrested and exemplary punishment of the persons responsible for attacking Kamruzzaman.

Winter likely to start in mid-Nov

Winter is likely to start in mid-November this year with low intensity, reports UNB.

Deputy Director of Met Office Akram Hossain said weather will remain wet this year as soil absorbed much moisture due to prolonged flood.

The winter will come in due time and stay till the end of January, he added.

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Dancers form a pyramid to celebrate the game of cricket. This will be part of the brief opening ceremony of the Wills International Cup at the Bangabandhu Stadium today. —Star photo

Cricket carnival begins today

By Nizamuddin Ahmed

The eight-match, nine-team knock-out Wills International Cup cricket tournament gets under way today at the refurbished Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The day-night match of the knockout tournament will commence at 2 in the afternoon.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will release eleven balloons as part of the fanfare and as many pigeons of peace at a ten-minute opening ceremony of the mega event before being introduced to the players of New Zealand and Zimbabwe.

The number symbolises the nine participating teams, hosts Bangladesh and the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

All the nine Test-playing nations are taking part in the one-chance challenge, dubbed by many as the 'mini World Cup'. Test babes Zimbabwe led by Alistair Campbell and New Zealand skippered by Stephen Fleming will meet in the lone

pre-quarter-final of the tourney on the day. The winners will face world champions Sri Lanka in the quarters.

The other three quarter-finals will be played between England and South Africa, Aus-

are now on a tour to Pakistan.

This is the first tournament of its kind and the Bangabandhu Stadium will go down in history as being the first venue to host all the Test-playing teams in a single competi-



tralia and India, and Pakistan and West Indies.

England, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Zimbabwe are already in the city. India, West Indies and four one-day specialists of the Australian team will arrive tomorrow. Pakistan and the remaining ten Aussies will reach the capital straight from Karachi on October 27. The Australians

tion.

All the eight 50 overs-a-side matches will be held under lights and start at 2 pm. A full match is expected to finish by 9.45 pm. The final of the fundraising meet is scheduled for November 1.

Teams will vie for the gold and silver glittering Cup, designed by an Indian jeweller. See Page 12 Col 4

AVR being installed at stadium

Authorities have decided to install an automatic voltage regulator (AVR) at the power sub-station of the Bangabandhu Stadium to increase voltage for the day-night Wills International Cup cricket tournament, reports UNB.

Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (DESA) will install the AVR with the help of Rural Electrification Board (REB) before the game starts today, said an official handout yesterday.

It said the sub-station is now ready to ensure uninterrupted power supply. Besides, small mobile generators along with a standby generator will be in the stadium and its adjoining areas.

The handout said although there is a government directive to ensure uninterrupted power supply across the country during the tournament there may

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A VIEW FROM THE GULLY

Tawfiq Aziz Khan

Two of the weaker teams in contemporary cricket will vie for a quarter-final slot in the Wills International Cup today.

The nine-nation 'sudden death' cricket tourney begins at the refurbished Bangabandhu National Stadium today amidst pomp and splendour and under a shadow of uncertainty surrounding the unpredictable weather — but not at all an unusual phenomenon at this time of the year.

The Bengali month of Kartik has always been notorious for its treacherous behaviour known as *Kaitan*.

New Zealand will be playing against Zimbabwe in the opening match. This could be a one-

See Page 12 Col 1

4 cos. to import hybrid paddy seeds Agronomists skeptic about suitability

By Reaz Ahmad, back from Gazipur

The government has allowed import of hybrid paddy seeds to meet the scarcity of seeds following the floods but agronomists are skeptic about the suitability of those in the country.

Four private companies were allowed recently to import 2,200 tonnes of hybrid paddy seeds of four different varieties to meet the requirements in the Boro season, official sources said.

Talking to a group of newsmen at Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) at Gazipur yesterday, agronomists said that those varieties were tested earlier at various demonstration fields, but except one variety, the others did

not show any 'encouraging yields'. They insisted that without taking the country's 'soil condition and agro-ecological dimension' into consideration, import of hybrid seeds would not be wise.

Scientists at BRRI, which has developed a total of 36 high-yielding varieties (HYV) since its inception in 1970, claimed that hybrid seeds which would be imported this year had already proved 'incapable of giving 20 percent extra dividend' in comparison to local varieties. 'If hybrid variety fails to produce at least 20 percent more, then the variety is no more considered worthy', said one agronomist.

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\$130m ADB loan for 5 sectors likely

The Asian Development Bank is to approve credit worth around 130 million US dollars for five sectors of Bangladesh at its board meeting on December 17 to help the country overcome damage caused by the recent devastating flood, ADB official sources told BSS yesterday.

They said an agreement in this regard is expected to be signed by January next year. Prior to that a 14-member ADB mission, headed by senior programmes officer Shyam Bajpai, will submit its final report containing details about sectoral allocation on November 26 for the board's consideration, the sources said.

Bajpai came here on a 12-day visit to assess the extent of damage caused by the floods with the government officials.

According to the draft report, the ADB is preferring to provide credit to five sectors which were badly damaged in the recent deluge.

The allocation in the five sectors includes 63.3 million dollars for road and rural infrastructure, 15 million dollars for railways, 18.3 million dollars for water, 7 million dollars for education and 24.6 million dollars for water supply, sanitation and urban development.

Corruption case against ex-BNP Whip Tara

FENI, Oct 23: The district anti-corruption bureau filed a case against three persons, including former whip of BNP and president of Krisak Dal, Mahbubul Alam Tara yesterday, reports APB.

The bureau alleged that Mahbubul Alam drew 100 tonnes of fertilizer submitting fake documents and sold it in the black market on October 24, 1994.

In the name of one Hasan, Tara recommended for the said amount of fertilizer to the chairman of BCIC on his Jatiya Sangsad letterhead.

But after investigation it has been found that there was no office-bearer named Hasan with Feni Thana Central Cooperative Society at that time.

The two other accused are accountant of the cooperative society Mohammad Faruq and owner of Meghna Transport in Bhairab, Zahir Mia.

Direct bus link with Calcutta next month

By M Anwarul Haq

Travellers commuting between Bangladesh and India are expected to enjoy increased road travel facilities and greater mobility following the opening of direct bus links between Dhaka and Calcutta sometime next month.

Nearly half a million people from Bangladesh side alone are likely to use the direct bus service during the first year of its operation. The nine-hour bus journey, covering the 300-km route, is likely to become a boon to travellers as it will be quicker, cheaper and comfortable.

The government measures in this regard would also 'mean a direct road travel arrangement to and from a neighbouring country for the first time. The move is also aimed at simplifying and developing surface

communications,' an official said.

Communications Ministry officials said yesterday that what was envisaged by the government nearly two years ago and remained on the drawing board for so long will now become a reality.

The last remaining bottleneck in this regard may be removed early next month with the signing of a protocol between Dhaka and Delhi. To be known as 'The Regulation of Motor Vehicle Passenger Traffic between India and Bangladesh,' the agreement is likely to be signed in Delhi for a period of two years, with provisions for renewal on the basis of mutual understanding.

The Bangladesh team will be led by Karar Mahmudul Hasan, See Page 12 Col 8

Palestinians, Israelis reach land-for-peace accord

QUEENSTOWN (Maryland), Oct 23: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat agreed today on a breakthrough land-for-peace deal on the violence-scarred West Bank, the culmination of marathon negotiations mediated by President Bill Clinton, reports AP.

Under the deal, the Palestinians will eliminate anti-Israel provisions in their founding charter and the Israelis will free scores of alleged political prisoners, US and Palestinian officials said.

Clinton planned to announce the agreement upon his

arrival at the White House, where the Israeli and Palestinian will join him, spokesman Joe Lockhart said.

Israelis and Palestinians who participated in the talks, which ended as the sun rose over the secluded Chesapeake Bay retreat, praised the agreement as good for people on both sides of the lingering dispute.

Dore Gold, Israeli ambassador to the United Nations, said the agreement would bolster Israel's security. 'Hopefully, this can be a new beginning,' he said.

Asked if the accord moves the Palestinians closer to be-

coming a state, Arafat spokesman Marwan Kanafani smiled and softly replied, 'Yes.' The question of statehood will be negotiated as part of 'final status' talks that can now begin.

Clinton will attend a Palestinian conference in their territory to witness the changing of the 1964 charter, Kanafani said.

In the Middle East, Israeli and Palestinian hard-liners condemned the deal.

Sheik Ahmed Yassin, founder of the Islamic militant group Hamas, called it a sellout See Page 12 Col 4

'State control, censorship, lack of professionalism, corruption cripple BTV'

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a seminar in the city yesterday said that the standard of television media in the country deteriorated severely due to state control, TV censorship law, lack of professionalism and commitment and corruption.

They also said that Bangladesh Television (BTV) was lacking properly trained manpower. They expressed their fear that the upcoming private television companies would not have adequate professionals to build up their in-

stitutions.

They were speaking at a seminar on 'New Horizons in the Tele-Media: Impacts, Trends and Direction', organised by the Young Entrepreneurs and Professional Forum and The Daily Star in association with The British Council.

The seminar was participated by media personalities including Anisur Rahman, Afzal Hossain, Mohammad Jahangir, Syedul Anam Tutul, Golam Mostafa and renowned magician Jewel Aich. Editor of

The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam moderated the programme.

The speakers observed that introduction of 'package programmes' produced by private companies at the BTV failed to improve the quality of programmes due to the programme producers' 'unhealthy' attitude of prioritising their margin of profit over the programme.

Besides, the BTV technical staff are more interested to work with private producers to earn money. 'They lost their drive to work in BTV. That is

why their production has deteriorated so much,' said former BTV official Golam Mostafa.

The speakers, who had been working with the BTV for long, maintained that lack of accountability was another reason why BTV was in such shambles. No employee could be fired or punished for their misdeeds. Because of weak leadership in BTV, the bad employees enjoy more authority in running the BTV than the good employees, they said.

'Politicisation is another

factor. Almost half the people in BTV became inactive employees during the BNP rule. After the Awami League came to power, those inactive people came to the forefront and others went idle,' said Mohammad Jahangir.

He noted that since the birth of BTV, no research on TV viewers was done. The BTV authorities also have no system to train manpower.

He said that the government had announced its plan to give autonomy to the BTV but it was

not implemented. Giving BTV autonomy would not be good enough for its survival. It needs professional leadership which is lacking now. BTV should also focus on running development oriented programmes, he said.

Anisur Rahman said that both the BTV and satellite television programmes were not considering the aspect of social welfare while airing any programme.

Afzal Hossain said that TV advertisements could be made See Page 12 Col 7

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TODAY'S MATCH

Pre-quarterfinal
New Zealand vs Zimbabwe.
Time: 2 pm. Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

TOMORROW
First quarterfinal
England vs South Africa.
Time: 2 pm. Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

Arrest of Jubo Dal leader sparks violence in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, Oct 23: At least 12 persons were injured in clashes between police and Jubo Dal activists in the city today.

The clashes erupted at several places of the city following arrest of Asaduzzaman Litu, 34, a leader of Jubo Dal city unit and Commissioner of Ward Number 24.

Litu was arrested from West Baniakhamar at noon in connection with an armed attack on Qamrul Islam, a BNP activist.

Qamrul was chopped and shot by some unidentified persons near his residence at Basupara under Sonadanga thana at about 9:50 am today.

He was rushed to a Khulna Sadar Hospital in a critical condition and later operated upon.

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BNP may propose amendment to UZ Parishad Bill

BNP lawmakers are likely to propose amendment to the Uplazila Parishad Bill placed in the last session of Parliament.

Sources told UNB that an emergency meeting of BNP standing committee yesterday discussed various legal aspects, merits and demerits of the Uplazila Bill and BNP's position on it.

The meeting chaired by BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia at 29 Minto Road also discussed post-hartal political situation as well as post-flood relief and rehabilitation works.

A press release said the standing committee congratulated courtmen for observing the Thursday's half-day hartal. It condemned the joint attack by police and ruling party activists on the opposition leaders and workers during hartal hours across the country.

The meeting observed that the government being scared of See Page 12 Col 4

India forms body to negotiate power purchase from Pakistan

NEW DELHI, Oct 23: The power ministry today set up a committee to negotiate purchase of power from Pakistan, following a directive from the Prime Minister's Office, reports PTI.

'We have set up the committee following a direction from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). The committee is headed by Joint Secretary in power Pradeep Baizal,' Power Minister R Kumaramangalam told reporters here.

The committee would negotiate on the terms and conditions for buying surplus power from Pakistan, estimated to be about 2,000 mw, the minister said.

He said in case the deal materialised the electricity could be used for supplying power to the deficit regions of the northern India.

Pakistan had mooted the idea of supplying surplus power to India at the world energy conference organised recently at Houston, Kumaramangalam said.

The minister said Pakistan had also submitted a detailed document regarding the trading of power with India to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

He, however, declined to go into the details of the document stating 'these things are still to be worked out and looked into.'

Schoolboy stabbed to death in Jessore

JESSORE, Oct 23: A schoolboy was killed allegedly by activists of an outlawed party in Chougachha thana here on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said Sabuj, 14, of Salua village was stabbed to death by armed miscreants at a beel near their house as his father Kashem Ali refused to pay a toll of Tk 50,000 at about 10 am.

His body was later recovered by police and sent to General Hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was filed with the local police station.