

## PM tells opening session of confce of Asian lawmakers Role of people's representatives, civil societies unique for peace

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina opened the five-day conference of the Asian parliamentarians in the city, yesterday, with a call to the peoples' representatives and those representing civil societies of the region to make "collective and concerted efforts for peace in the continent."

"The role of public representatives in bringing about and sustaining peace is unique. So is that of the representatives of the civil society," the PM said while opening the conference, yesterday morning. "And here you are assembled today, both sides, to determine your role for

the future of the people of our dear continent. ... We must not permit ourselves to forget even for a moment that the main spirit of the conference is friendship and friendship alone."

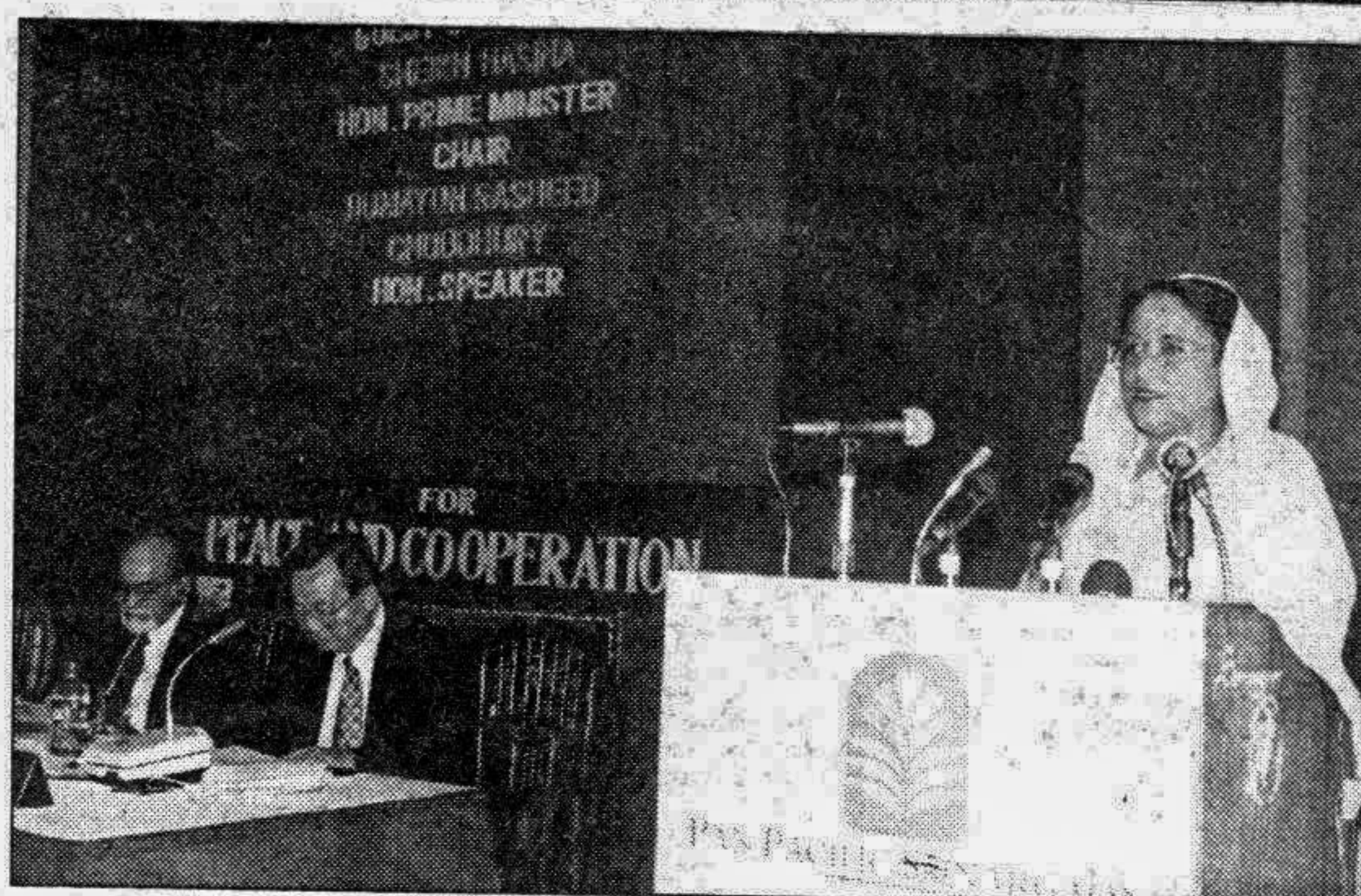
Premier Hasina said that the largest number of the world's poor live in Asia. "But the fact remains that we have a very good reserve of resources too, human resources being the most important of these. ... There is no reason why we should not be able to change our lot. We must be able to do so. That is why peace and co-operation between us are so impor-

tant," Hasina said, adding: "What we can achieve collectively and with the help of one another, we cannot achieve in isolation."

The opposition parties in the Bangladesh parliament, however, boycotted the conference, protesting alleged government repression on its political opponents.

A total of 109 representatives from 28 Asian countries including Bangladesh participated in the conference. The other Asian countries which were represented in the peace conference include Bahrain, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Korea, Kuwait, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syria, Thailand, Tonga, Uzbekistan and Yemen.

Zeng Jianhui, Head of the Chinese Delegation and Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan Elahi Bakht spoke on behalf of the parliamentary delegations, while former prime minister of India I K Gujral spoke on behalf of the civil societies of the region. Speaker of the Bangladesh See Page 11 Col 7



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurating the Asian Parliamentarians' Conference for Peace and Cooperation at Hotel Sonargaon in the city yesterday. — PID photo

## Reinvestigation into death of Salman Shah ordered

By Staff Correspondent

The First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's court, yesterday, ordered reinvestigation into the death of film star Salman Shah, our court correspondent reports.

Chowdhury Mohammad Shahar alias Imon, 30, better known by his assumed screen name Salman Shah was found hanging from the ceiling fan in the dressing room of his 10th floor flat in the city's Eskaton area at about 11:45 am on September 6, 1996.

The detective branch of police investigated the incident and in its final report concluded it was a suicide case.

But the controversy, that apparently ended after submission of the DB report, was resuscitated when a young man See page 11 Col 4

## Asian lawmakers' assoc likely to be formed concluding day

By Staff Correspondent

The proposed association of Asian parliamentarians is likely to be formed on the concluding day of the four-day conference of Asian lawmakers in Dhaka.

The conference attended by 109 legislators from 28 Asian countries began at Hotel Sonargaon yesterday.

Parliament secretaries of the participating countries in their pre-conference meeting on Tuesday endorsed the proposal to form an Asian lawmakers' body styled "Association of Asian Parliamentarians for Peace (AAP)".

The proposal would be forwarded to a drafting committee for considering the charter and rules of the proposed association and make its recommendations today, said Quazi Manjur-i-Mowla, Parliament Secretary of Bangladesh and secretary general of the conference.

The drafting committee See page 11 Col 3

## "Their absence hurts nation, not ruling party"

UNDP country representative David E Lockwood criticised the opposition lawmakers for staying away from the Asian Parliamentarians' Conference, saying "Their absence hurts the nation, not the ruling party," reports UNB.

"I must express my disappointment today that opposition members of parliament feel unable to attend the conference regardless of the current relationship between the two major political parties," he said.

Lockwood, whose organisation is cosponsoring the four-day conference with partial financial assistance said their absence here, as in parliament itself, hurts the nation, not the ruling party.

Referring to UNDP's assistance to parliament and other related institutions he said the principal purpose of assistance to parliament is to help develop national respect for the institution. See page 12 Col 1

## Showcouse on Zafar Chy, five others

By Staff Correspondent

A lower court yesterday issued a notice asking Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury and five others to explain why the UCBL board headed by him would not be barred from functioning.

The Fourth Sub Judge, Dhaka, gave seven days to the defendants from the date of receipt of the notice.

The court order came after Akhteruzzaman Chowdhury Babu and four others filed a suit challenging the legality of the Zafar-led board which is running the United Commercial Bank Ltd (UCBL).

Babu, a former chairman of the bank, is claiming to be the legally elected chairman of the bank. He is claiming that Zafar Chowdhury and five others voluntarily resigned, following which he was elected chairman.

On Thursday afternoon, some 50 "miscreants" forced their way into the boardroom while a board meeting was in progress. Zafar Chowdhury in a

press conference alleged that the "gangsters" were led by Babu who compelled five board members (including Zafar) to resign at gunpoint.

A day after the incident the central bank suspended the activities of the board and appointed an administrator to run the bank. It also served notices upon Babu and Zafar advising them both as chairman to explain why the board would not be dissolved.

Zafar and 10 other directors later filed a writ petition and obtained a stay order against the central bank notice. Zafar Chowdhury-led board took control of the bank immediately after the High Court had stayed the central bank notice on last Sunday.

A day after the stay order, on Monday, Babu also filed a similar writ petition with the same High Court bench seeking a similar stay on the same case. See page 12 Col 1

## Khaleda to lead another road march Sept 5

By Staff Correspondent

BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia will lead another one-day "mini road march" from Dhaka to Aricha on September 5 as part of the party's current campaign against the Awami League government.

The march is also aimed at mobilising support for the opposition's planned sit-in demonstration in front of Bangladesh Secretariat on September 12.

Earlier, the former prime minister led a similar road march from Dhaka to Bhairab on August 26.

The mini march will start from Amin Bazar under Savar thana at 10 am, said a press release yesterday. After addressing a public meeting at Amin Bazar bus stand Khaleda will proceed towards Aricha.

On way to Aricha, the BNP chief, who is also the leader of the opposition in parliament, will also address a number of public meetings.

Meanwhile, participation of See page 11 Col 4

## Humayun Zahir murder All accused asked to appear before court on Sept 15

By Staff Correspondent

The Metropolitan Sessions Judge of Dhaka yesterday fixed September 15 for the appearance of all accused in the Humayun Zahir Murder Case, reports BSS.

The Judge Sheikh Rejane Ali fixed the date to comply with the order of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court. Further step in this case will be decided on that day, the judge announced.

Earlier, at the stage of delivering the judgment of the case, the then Additional District and Sessions Judge Sahed Nuruddin sent the case to the High Court seeking its opinion. The entire proceedings in this case were performed in his court.

The High Court directed the Metropolitan Sessions Judge of Dhaka to take up the case from Nuruddin's court and dispose of the same as per law and procedure.

The then judge fixed several dates for delivering judgement, but felt embarrassed to pass the judgement.

All the accused, including Aktaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, were also present in the court.

## Today's matches

Today's matches of the Bangladesh Cup International Football Tournament will be held at Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium instead of Bangladesh National Stadium, reports UNB.

The matches are: Ghana vs Uzbekistan (4 pm), Japan vs Kuwait (6 pm).

The remaining matches of the tournament will be held at the Bangladesh National Stadium as per previous schedule, official sources said last night.

## Chandpur embankment partially submerged Cracks develop in Meghna-Dhanagoda project dam

By Staff Correspondent

Chandpur town protection embankment has partially gone under water while cracks have developed in two irrigation project dams in the district.

Meanwhile, fresh areas in Dhaka and adjacent districts including Narayanganj were flooded yesterday.

The flood situation in Sirajganj, Pabna, Natore and Naogaon remained unchanged. But due to a fall in water level in the Brahmaputra river basin, the situation may improve in Panchagarh, Dinajpur, Kurigram, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Bogra and Jamalpur, according to FFWC officials.

The FFWC, however, forecast that more areas in the districts of Chapainawabganj, Rajbari, Faridpur, Madaripur, Shariat-

pur, Manikganj, Munshiganj and Chandpur are likely to be inundated in the next 24 hours.

Our Chandpur Correspondent adds: Flood waters entered most of the houses in Sadar, Hajiganj, Matlab and Shahrasti thanas though the situation shown slight improvement.

Cracks developed in the dams of Tk 80 crore Chandpur irrigation project and Tk 100 crore Meghna-Dhanagoda project at Matlab. The town protection embankment was partially submerged yesterday.

The discharge of water flow at Chandpur point is likely to increase following end of full moon, officials said.

In Gaibandha, some 70 feet of the Nurullah Beel Project See page 11 Col 8

## BSP condemns attack on Janakantha

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Parishad (BSP) has condemned attack on the Daily Janakantha office on August 30.

In an emergency meeting yesterday, BSP expressed its resentment at the attack on the office of the vernacular daily at the flag end of a mass procession programme organised by the opposition alliance.

BSP termed the incident as a naked attack on democracy and freedom of expression, said a press release.

With BSP president Kazi Shahed Ahmed at the chair, the meeting viewed that responsibilities lie with the political parties to resist such attacks on newspaper offices, journalists and properties of general people during the observance of political programmes.

It demanded that all political parties play active role in preventing such undemocratic activities in future. It also condemned all recent incidents of violence against press and See page 12 Col 4

## Energy sector plan finalised

Humphrey tells press before leaving

By Staff Correspondent

US Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Energy Calvin Humphrey yesterday expressed his hopes that the US-Bangladesh energy sector cooperation would help Bangladesh lift its status to the ranks of middle income countries by the year 2020.

Speaking at a press briefing at Zia International Airport before his departure on conclusion of a four-day visit, Humphrey said an energy sector action plan was finalised during his visit and its implementation would begin soon.

A Bangladesh gas reserve study by the US Geological Survey, likely to be completed by the end of this year, would help it plan best utilisation of gas reserve, he said. "Gas export is one of the proposition for Bangladesh to consider."

US Ambassador John C

Holzman and Additional Secretary of Energy Ministry Syed Tanvir Hossain, among others, were present at the press conference.

Replying to a question on payment of compensation by US company Occidental for the damages caused by Magurhara blow-out, Holzman said that the issue was discussed at a meeting between Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad and Humphrey. To remove all differences of opinion in this regard, it was decided that experts from both Petrobangla and Occidental-Unocal would jointly assess the damages.

The Ambassador further said the US government's concern in this regard is to remove the differences between Bangladesh and the oil companies without getting involved in the business aspects.

Humphrey said he had discussions with both Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia over the gas reserve study by US Geological Survey and the gas utilisation study.

The discussions, he said, were focused on the importance of completing the studies as these would help Bangladesh

See page 11 Col 3

## Two alleged muggers beaten to death

By Staff Correspondent

Two alleged muggers were beaten to death by mob in the city's North Jatrahari area yesterday morning.

Police and hospital sources identified the dead as Fazlul Huq Minto, 28, and Dulal, 25.

Emdad, 26, an alleged accomplice, who was also beaten up, was arrested by Demra police after first aid at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

According to police, the three armed muggers tried to

snatch money from a pedestrian a Kala Patti at about 6:30 am yesterday.

When the pedestrian cried out for help, local people and passers by rushed to the spot. They chased the alleged muggers and caught all of them.

Fazlu and Dulal were fatally injured as the mob beat them up mercilessly until police came to their rescue. Fazlu succumbed to his injuries at about 2:30 pm while Dulal at about 5:30 pm at See page 12 Col 7

## Janmastami today

The Hindu community will celebrate Janmastami, the birthday of Lord Sree Krishna, today throughout the country, reports BSS.

Janmastami is one of the greatest religious festivals of the Hindu community.

Day-long fasting, puja, special prayers, Geetajagya, processions, discussions, and staging of Krishna Lila are the highlights of the day's programmes.

In the capital, the Mohanagar Sarbojanin Puja Committee will perform a Geetajagya at Dhakeshwari Mandir Malangan, seeking divine blessings for the peace and prosperity of See page 11 Col 4

## Inside Today

### Article

## After the Century's Earthquake

Arshad-uz-Zaman writes from Istanbul Page 4

### Business

First-ever hotel equipment show begins in city today

IMF gold sales may cost poor nations \$500m

DSE, CSE price quotations Pages 8, 9 & 10

### Supplement

A two-page supplement on 'First International Hotel and Restaurant Equipment Supplies Show' Pages 6 & 7

### Prayer Timings

September 2		
Fajr	4:20	4:25
Zohr	12:45	1:30
Asr	4:35	4:40
Maghrib	6:20	6:24
Esha	7:25	7:40

Source: Islamic Foundation

## AL conspiring to divide nation, says BNP

By Staff Correspondent

BNP central leaders at a discussion meeting in observance of the party's 21st founding anniversary yesterday said the government has declared a war against their party as well as the people and is conspiring to divide the nation to make it dependent on India.

Since its birth, BNP has been relentlessly working to unite the nation, but Awami League divided it immediately after independence and is still conspiring to do so.

The discussion organised by BNP was held at the Engineers' Institution in the city. Chaired by party Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, it was addressed by, among others, Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, M Saffur Rahman, Oli Ahmed, Khandaker Delwar

Hossain, Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Dr RA Gani, Khandaker Mahbubuddin Ahmed, Kurshid Jahan Haq and Shamsuzzaman Duda.

B Chowdhury said though the government claims that transit or corridor is a simple matter, actually it is not so because the country's independence, sovereignty, security and the national economy are directly linked with it. It is a deep rooted conspiracy.

He alleged that politics of the ruling party is based on killing, repression, rape, looting and terrorism. "Though Baksa is not in existence, the government has already introduced it without any announcement," he said.

He refuted the allegation of See page 11 Col 5

## 69 killed as Argentine plane crashes on takeoff

BUENOS AIRES, Sept 1: A Boeing 737 jetliner hurtled out of control and crashed after takeoff, killing dozens of people after hopping a busy boulevard beside the downtown airport, reports AP.

Flight 3142 plane plunged to the ground just before 9 pm last night (2355 GMT), skidding to a stop near a golf course along the Rio de la Plata river and bursting into flames.

At least 69 of the 103 people aboard were killed, the news agency Noticias Argentinas reported, quoting officials at the

scene. TV reports suggest the toll could rise further.

The carrier LAPA, or Lineas Aereas Privadas Argentinas, said 98 passengers and five crew members were on the flight from Jorge Newberry airport. LAPA gave no casualty figures.

Three bodies also were found in the wreckage of a car found near the plane, La Nacion newspaper reported.

Hospitals said they took in 34 injured people, many with burns and other life-threatening injuries. A coast guard off- See page 12 Col 5

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