



JS to discuss
transhipment
today

By Staff Correspondent
The Jatiya Sangsad will discuss the controversial transhipment issue amid opposition boycott today.

The current session of parliament resumes at 9.30 this morning after a six-day recess for the Asian Parliamentarians' Conference for Peace and Cooperation which concluded in the city Saturday.

Opposition BNP and its allies are boycotting the session that began on August 29, protesting the government's decision to examine the proposal to allow land transhipment facility to India.

The opposition parties found it 'meaningless' to join the parliamentary discussion on the issue 'already decided' by the government.

But the ruling party said it had only decided to examine the transhipment idea at the experts level.

The AL leaders also alleged that the BNP first agreed to provide India with transit facility and was now opposing trans-

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Army redeployed
at Ctg port

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Sept 5: About 200 army personnel have been redeployed at Chittagong port today to strengthen security in the port's protected area, port sources said.

The army have been redeployed here after 17 days of their withdrawal, port sources said. The redeployment took place following appeal from Chittagong Port Authority and Port Users Forum.

The port users appealed to the Prime Minister for redeployment of army in the wake of frequent incidents of pilferage, looting of imported goods and illegal toll collection in port area.

Earlier, army was deployed at Chittagong port on September 17, last year under food cell after the flood, to supervise the discharge of food cargo from the ships.

**Kader Siddiqui
leads road
march**

TANGAIL, Sept 5: Bangabandhu Kader Siddiqui, who resigned from parliament as a ruling party MP recently, today led a road march from Mirzapur to Shakhipur in Tangail with 37 vehicles, campaigning against Prime Minister and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, reports UNB.

Accompanied by freedom fighters, the renegade Awami League leader addressed 24 roadside meetings, criticising the prime minister for what he called her 'childish remark about him.'

"Hasina is annoyed with me as she understood that I will never surrender to her ... Being surrounded by the killers of Bangabandhu she is now undermining many people," he told his supporters.

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Prayer Timings

September 6

Azan Jamaat

Fajr 4:20 4:25

John 12:45 1:15

Asr 4:45 5:00

Maghrib 6:25 6:30

Esha 8:00 8:30

**Farooq Sobhan pledges
C'wealth will be made
more effective**

By Staff Correspondent

Farooq Sobhan, Bangladesh candidate for the post of Commonwealth Secretary General, intends to add 'new dimensions' and give a more visible profile' to the 54-nation organisation if he is elected.

Talking to a group of men at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, the veteran diplomat who had several stints as the country's envoy and also served as foreign secretary, said: "We need to give a participatory sense to the developing nations of the Commonwealth who constitute the bulk of the members."

The developing countries form the bulwark of the new Commonwealth. Fifty of the 54 Commonwealth members are developing countries and it is the development agenda that

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needs to get priority and higher focus to take the Commonwealth into the new millennium."

The spirit and work of the Commonwealth are not and should not be centred around the government only but should also centre around the civil society in the member countries.

"I also share the vision of most developing countries to activate the unofficial Commonwealth comprising innumerable non-government organisations and increase the working partnership with the government. The Commonwealth Secretariat is already involved in a lot of activities and I intend to increase them further."

Farooq Sobhan is having a

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Militiamen on rampage: UN compound under 'siege'

Tens of thousands flee homes in Dili, massacre feared

DILI, Sept 5: Tens of thousands of people fled their homes in East Timor's capital today, terrified for their lives as pro-Indonesian militias took control of the streets in a rampage of burning and shooting after the landslide vote for independence, reports AP.

Pro-Jakarta forces kept the UN elections team compound under virtual siege, shooting rounds of automatic and semi-automatic gunfire, mostly aimed into the air. Food and water shortages loomed when 1,000 civilians taking refuge in a school next door fled into the compound after guns were shot near them.

Casualty reports were impossible to verify, though witness accounts said scores were

killed Sunday in the former Portuguese colony.

"There is every indication that a massacre is taking place, staged by (Indonesian) military forces," Ana Gomes, who is Lisbon's diplomatic envoy to Jakarta, told Portugal's TSF radio. "Over 100 dead would be a conservative estimate."

People escaped however they could in an exodus from the province. More than 5,000 terrified civilians left from Dili's seaport on ferries for nearby islands, which are being prepared to receive as many as 100,000 people.

In Dili, the provincial capital, rampaging militiamen with guns and machetes spread terror. There was no apparent attempt by thousands of soldiers

and police to stop them, underscoring allegations that elements in the security forces are tacitly supporting the renegades.

The militias outside the UN compound on the outskirts of the city kept the hundreds of UN workers penned in all day.

The militias also kept up

bishop was safe inside the house, but his diocese office across town was set ablaze.

"This is the time that we badly need some peacekeeping troops in this region to protect ordinary people who have no weapons, such as children, women and the elderly," Belo told reporters.

Exasperated police said 15,000 people had crowded into the police compound to stay out of harm's way.

At the airport, civilians clutching their dearest possessions dashed across the runway, scrambling aboard an air force cargo plane to fly to safety through skies filled with smoke from burning buildings.

More than 100 journalists,

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Interim 'probe report submitted

BB withdraws notice on UCBL board

Star Report

The Bangladesh Bank yesterday withdrew the show-cause notice it served on the UCBL board on August 27, the day after vandals stormed its boardroom.

The same central bank order also suspended activities of the board and appointed an administrator to perform the functions of the board.

In a letter to UCBL chairman Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury, the central bank said that it was withdrawing the notice in the public interest "as normally is returning in the bank".

The latest central bank letter also means Zafar Chowdhury is formally recognised as the chairman of the bank. On August 27, the Bangladesh Bank gave notices to Zafar Chowdhury and Babu, both addressed as chairman.

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Babu, Zafar, six others granted anticipatory bail

By Staff Correspondent

A High Court bench yesterday temporarily granted an anticipatory bail to Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, his son Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Zaved, Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury and five others in connection with the August 26 UCBL incident.

The bench comprising Justice Mafuzur Rahman and Justice Mohammad Ali Asgar Khan granted the bail "till disposal of the rule or submission of police report, whichever is earlier".

The court also issued a rule upon the government to explain why the accused petitioners should not be granted permanent bail.

Earlier, the court also granted anticipatory bail, temporarily, to Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury, Jahangir Alam, Shaukat Aziz Russel, Riyad Zafar Chowdhury and Monowara Begum.

Meanwhile, the CMM yesterday ordered the Motijheel police to accept an FIR of UCBL. The CMM order came after the bank filed a case complaining that the police were not "treating" their FIR.

Zafar fears fresh attack, demands Babu's prosecution

By Staff Correspondent

UCBL chairman Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday demanded prosecution of Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu for his alleged involvement in vandalism in the bank's boardroom on August 26.

"We want legal action against Babu immediately. We are worried about another attack as the government is yet to take any action against him," he said at a hurriedly-called press conference at a city hotel yesterday afternoon.

He warned that he would postpone a scheduled board meeting today if police did not ensure security.

Zafar Chowdhury welcomed the Bangladesh Bank order withdrawing the show cause issued to the board of directors on August 27. "We are happy about it though it is late."

The UCBL chairman said Babu had spoken to the bank's managing director Saturday over phone, claiming himself as the chairman of the bank.

He said that the board was also determined to hold its pre-scheduled annual general meeting (AGM) on September 15.

Zafar said that he and fellow directors met the prime minister last Friday. "She assured us that legal action would follow after necessary investigation."

UCBL directors who attended the press conference included Reaz Zafar Chowdhury, Shawkat Ali Russell, Yunus Ahmed, M A Sabur and Z A Khan.

Babu says he is still the chairman

By Staff Correspondent

Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, ex-chairman of United Commercial Bank Ltd (UCBL), is continuing to claim that he is the legally elected chairman of the bank.

"Nowhere in its order has the High Court said that Zafar Chowdhury is the chairman of the bank. The HC only stayed the central bank order," Babu told a press conference yesterday.

He said the matter is under trial at a lower court which has already issued a show-cause notice on Zafar Chowdhury and others.

Replying to questions, Babu said that he would talk to the central bank governor before deciding whether or not to join a board meeting scheduled for today.

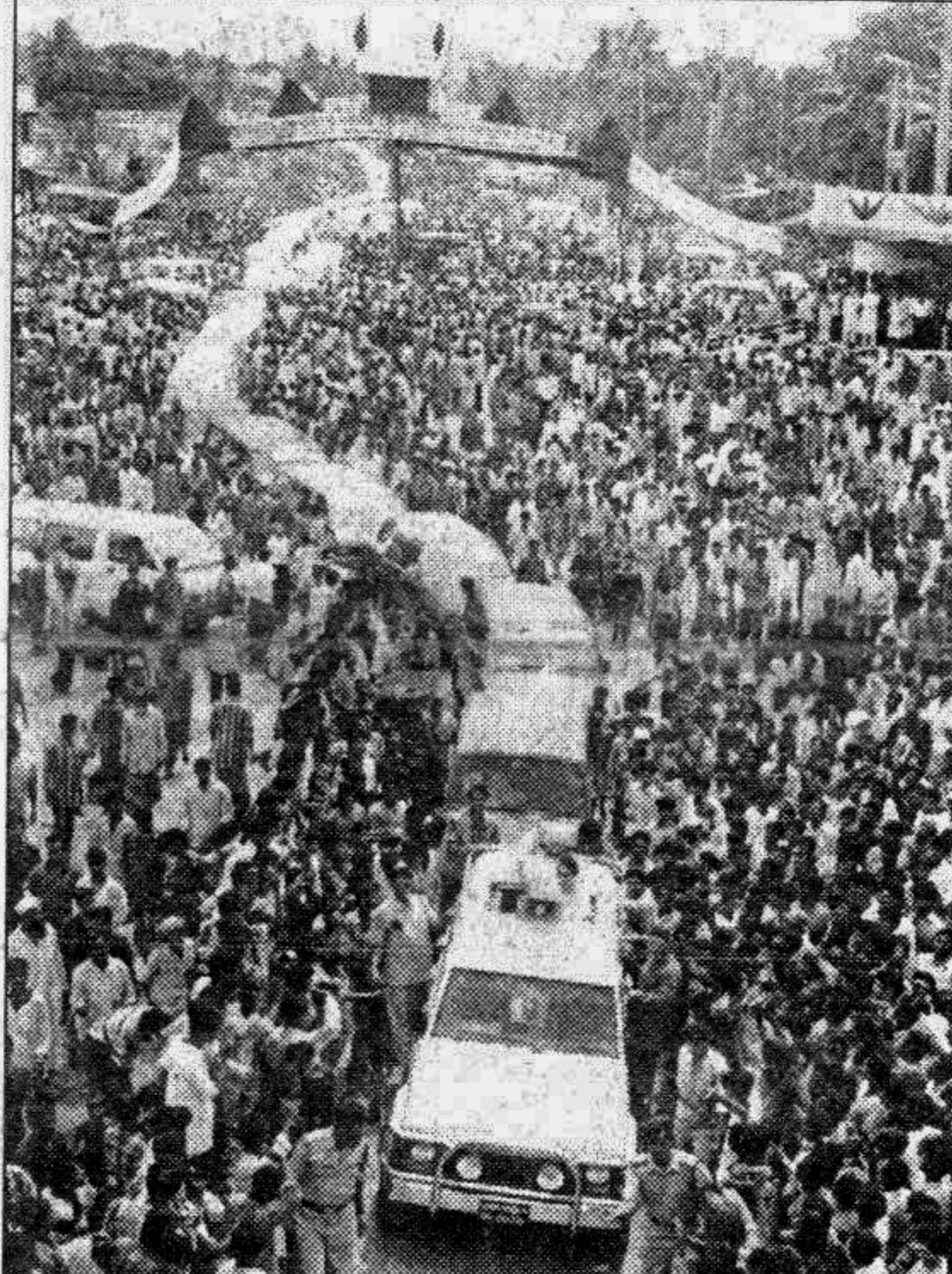
About yesterday's central bank's letter to Zafar Chowdhury addressing him as the chairman of the bank, Babu said that the governor did not tell him any such thing and that the central bank withdrawal of the notice was a result of an out-of-court settlement between the Bangladesh Bank and the petitioners.

Babu also said that he was feeling insecure and that there were threats on his life.

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After corridor, AL govt will give port, gas to India

Khaleda tells rally during road march



BNP's road march towards Aricha passing through Savar yesterday.

By Staff Correspondent

BNP chief Khaleda Zia yesterday said the country is gradually moving towards a 'mass upsurge' and fall of this 'subversive government' is inevitable.

"This government will fall or they will escape to India if a slight push is given," she said while addressing a series of roadside public meetings during the Dhaka-Aricha road march organised by her party.

The road march was the fourth of its kind led by Begum Zia to mobilise public opinion against the 'government decision to provide corridor to India in the name of transhipment' and to protest its 'misrule'.

Seeing massive public support to BNP's movement against giving 'corridor' to India, the government has mounted repression on the opposition, she alleged.

"But BNP is not alone as people are united under it and have joined the current movement to protect the independence and sovereignty of the country," she said.

"Our movement is not to go in power ... This movement is purely to protect the country."

She started the road march from Aricha Bazar at 11:40am with a convoy of some 300 cars after addressing a huge gathering there. Thousands of people attended the meeting and chanted various anti-government slogans opposing the move to provide transit to India.

Meanwhile, Israel's cabinet today was convening to ratify the accord.

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Arafat, Barak sign accord

SHARM EL-SHEIKH (Egypt), Sept 5: Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak signed a deal in Egypt on Saturday that puts stalled Middle East peace-making back on track after weeks of tortuous negotiations, reports UNB.

US President Bill Clinton said he hoped the new accord, dubbed Wye Two, could be a stepping stone to a broader Middle East peace and pledged US support.

Barak and Arafat smiled broadly and shook hands as US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordan's King Abdullah watched the ceremony at a luxury hotel in Egypt's Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.

The agreement revises the Wye River accord signed last October by Arafat and Israel's former rightwing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who froze its implementation in December.

The new agreement sets the terms for three Israeli withdrawals from the West Bank between September and January. It offers the Palestinians more prisoner releases, clearance to open Gaza seaport and a safe passage from Gaza to the West Bank.

Israel and the Palestinians will also aim to complete by February 15 a "framework agreement" on some of the most difficult disputes in the Arab-Israeli conflict — Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees, the future of Jewish settlement, and the borders and status of the Palestinian territories.

Saifur in a statement said, it was expected that David Lockwood would regret to the people for his controversial comments about the opposition.

At the inaugural session of the conference on September 1, Lockwood said that the opposition's absence hurts the nation.

**Hasina urges Khaleda
Join JS, raise objection
to transhipment, if any**

PUTHIA (Rajshahi), Sept 5: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged the Opposition leader Khaleda Zia to join parliament to discuss the transhipment issue discarding street protests, reports UNB.