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Supersonic: US speed merchants Maurice Greene (right) and Marion Jones react to thunderous applause from a capacity crowd at Stadium Australia after winning the finals of men's and women's 100m sprints respectively in the Sydney Olympic Games yesterday. Greene powered across the finish line in 9.87 seconds while Jones clocked a time of 10.75 seconds to take gold medals. — AFP photo

ITCL staff missing with Tk 10 crore

LALMONIRHAT, Sept 23: The employees of the local branch of Islamic Trading Company Limited (ITCL) have been missing with over Tk 10 crore since Thursday last, reports UNB.

Sources said the employees of ITCL, including the manager, put the office under lock and key and left the place in the morning bluffing the depositors.

Earlier, the depositors had created pressure on the employees to return money after they learnt irregularities in the organisation.

Sources said the local branch collected Tk 10 lakh from 36 people and Tk 10 crore from 2,013 people through credit cards.

Election in 13 municipalities from tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The authorities have completed preparations for holding election in 13 municipalities tomorrow and the day after.

Election in Chadpur municipality will be held tomorrow and in the rest 12 on Tuesday.

The 12 are Bagla in Rajshahi district, Najipur in Naogaon, Bhangura in Pabna, Badarganj in Rangpur, Saria-kandi in Bogra, Gopalpur in Natore, Dohar in Dhaka, Kuliachar in Kishoreganj, Tongi in Gazipur, Moksudpur in Gopalganj, Jagannathpur in Sunamganj district and Comilla.

The Election Commission has planned to deploy army in five municipalities, Dohar, Tongi, Comilla, Chadpur and

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PM to visit US, Kuwait

By Diplomatic Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina would be embarking on two official visits shortly, both of which are seen as crucial in furthering diplomatic relations.

She would be visiting the United States at the invitation of President Bill Clinton in the middle of October and Kuwait at the end of next month at the

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Saddled with Divisive Politics
By A R Shamsul Islam
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Supplement

A two-page supplement on 'South Asia Peace Keeping Operation Gaming Seminar' on Pages 9 & 10

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 24		5-53 pm
Sept 25	5-48 am	

Prayer Timings		
September 24		
Fair	Azan	Jamaat
Zohr	4-30	5-05
Asr	12-45	1-15
Maghrib	4-45	5-00
Esha	6-12	6-17
	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Greene, Jones fastest on track

SYDNEY, Sept 23: Maurice Greene and Marion Jones demolished the opposition to win the Blue Riband Olympic sprint titles today, while the US dominated the final swimming session with two sparkling world relay records, reports AFP.

Dutch swimmer Inge de Bruijn ended her Games with a perfect three starts, three golds and three world records, and British rower Steve Redgrave took his place in history with a fifth consecutive gold.

But the super Saturday was dominated by the four gold medal burst by the United States on the track and in the pool.

On a chilly Sydney evening, Greene and Jones turned up the heat as they were crowned the king and queen of sprinting.

The usually brash Greene dropped his emotional guard after delivering on the promise to be the fastest man at the Games.

He didn't lower his 100m world record as promised - the temperature was against him - but he did produce a majestic sprint, beating Ato Boldon of Trinidad and Tobago into second and Obadele Thompson of Barbados into third.

"Four years ago in Atlanta I sat in the stands and cried. Those were tears of misery. Those you see now are tears of joy," said Greene who failed to make the US Olympic team in 1996.

In celebration, Greene tore off one of his shoes decorated with the stars and stripes, and threw it into the 100,000 strong crowd packed into Stadium Australia where it was caught by an Australian jeweller.

Jones, on a record busting quest for five gold medals went one-for-one taking the women's sprint ahead of Greece's silver medalist Ekaterini Thanou and bronze winner Tanya Lawrence of Jamaica.

"It's a dream come true. It's finally here," said Jones who carried the American flag and the flag of Belize - her mother's homeland - on her victory lap.

The 24-year-old world champion, unbeaten over 100m since 1997 never looked like losing that record here as she blasted from the blocks to clock 10.75 sec.

The US did not feature in the third track and field final where world javelin record holder Jan Zelezny of the Czech Republic defended the title he won in both the 1992 and 1996 Olympic Games, beating Britain's Steve Backley into the silver medal position.

The United States swimmers

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Govt finally going to allow TU activities in EPZs?

By Rafiq Hasan

Bowing to US pressure, the government is likely to allow trade union activities in the export processing zones, according to sources.

A government delegation which included the son of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had talks with officials at the US Trade Representative Office (USTRO) in Washington recently and assured them of doing everything according to US advice regarding trade union issues in the country's EPZs, the sources said.

The Prime Minister's son Sajib Wazed Joy along with the delegation met Chairman of the GSP (Generalised System of Preference) sub-committee John Rosenbaum at USTRO on September 13. He reportedly played a very active role in the negotiation, in spite of having no official position.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury was kept out of the delegation for the meeting though he was present in Washington at that time.

The other members of the team included MAB Siddique Talukder, Chairman of Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) and Gholam Hossain, Commercial Counsellor at Bangladesh Embassy in Washington.

The US Ambassador designate to Bangladesh was also present during the discussion, the sources mentioned.

The government had earlier appointed a lobbyist firm to take up the issue with the US administration. The firm - Aternan, Wortley and Obala - is represented by George C Wortley, a former member of the Congress. It is alleged that the PM's son who lives in US played a decisive role in the selection and appointment of this lobbyist firm.

A senior official at the Prime Minister's Office, who deals with EPZ issues, however denied having any knowledge about the development in this regard. "We do not know anything about it because the members of the delegation are yet to return."

He confirmed that a delegation went to Washington but could not say whether the PM's

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Bangladesh captain Naimur Rahman (middle) shares a light moment with rookies Bikash Ranjan Saha (right) and Ehsanul Haq at the Bangladesh Cricket Board office prior to the official photo session. The Bangladesh team leaves the city today to take part in the ICC Knockout Tournament in Kenya followed by a tour of South Africa. — Star photo

Hand over '71 Generals to Dhaka for trial

Former Pak defence minister & PPP leader demands

The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has suggested that the generals who led the country to defeat and surrender in 1971, should be handed over to Bangladesh to face trial for the allegations against them, reports BSS.

"These coward generals have no right to the protection given to them by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto if they believe that they are innocent of the serious charges which led to the demand of war crime tribunal against them," Aftab Shabazz Mirani, a former defence minister and PPP leader said, according to leading Pakistani English daily The Frontier Post.

He condemned the remarks by Chief Executive General Pervez Musharraf at a New York press conference defending "the generals of 1971 who committed corruption, rape, loot, plunder and led the country to defeat."

The former defence minister said Bhutto had "saved them from prison and perhaps death. However, if they think that they are innocent, then they should have the courage to submit themselves for war crime trials before Bangladesh."

It is a disgrace that the coward generals are unrepentant, Mirani said. He asked the "coward" generals who surrendered at Dhaka Race Course to apologise and repent publicly for their crimes against humanity

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Opposition to gear up mass contact, avoid hartal now

By Rezaul Karim

The BNP-led Opposition alliance has set its eyes on gearing up mass contact programmes instead of calling further hartals now to mobilise people's support.

The alliance which called hartals on more than 50 days in the last one year has apparently reached a consensus for the first time not to lose its strength by going for hartals on petty issues.

Sources in the four-party combine said Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote this time opposed a move to call hartal from tomorrow's joint public meeting at Mymensingh. They suggested that the alliance should continue mass contact programmes up to the Eid-ul-Azha as the parliamentary election is nearing.

However, a small section of Jatiya Party leaders and BNP hardliners are still trying to pursue the leadership of their respective parties to call hartal every month to intensify the anti-government movement. They want announcement of a tougher action programme including hartal from tomorrow's meeting at Mymensingh centring the kidnapping of a district BNP leader at Laxmipur recently.

Earlier also, these JP leaders along with BNP hardliners pressed for calling hartal from the joint public meeting in Khulna on September 8 but the move failed and the alliance announced the programme for joint meeting at Mymensingh.

The central liaison committee (CLC) of the alliance will sit today to finalise the next course of action to be announced by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia from the meeting tomorrow.

CLC said that BNP representatives in the committee would meet Khaleda Zia, who returned from Saudi Arabia yesterday morning before finalising any programme. The hardliners tried to talk with Khaleda at the airport about fresh programmes but she refused to discuss the matter saying that she was tired.

There is a possibility of calling hartal from the joint

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Deregulate telecom sector to boost IT: Prof Yunus

By Staff Correspondent

Grameen Bank Chairman Professor Muhammad Yunus urged the government yesterday to deregulate the telecommunications sector for development of the IT sector.

He said government control over the telecommunications sector is a major obstacle to the prospect of IT in the country and urged the government not to make further delay in taking the vital decision.

Yunus was speaking at the inaugural ceremony of Grameen Star Education Franchise at the auditorium of Grameen Bhaban in the city.

"Presently the door is shut. We want it open. Open it to our young masses and see what they can give in return," Yunus said. "Many countries are changing their economy by getting their hands on substantial part of trillion dollar IT businesses."

Presently, he said, there is an IT wave going on all over the world. "Its future is tremendous with new opportunities coming up every day," Yunus said. India has realised the need and decided to deregulate its telecom sector leaving it all to the private sector. Pakistan is also going the same way.

Recently, the Pakistan government declared that an IT company irrespective of its location would be treated as export processing zone.

"Whereas in Bangladesh a private EPZ willing to lay fibre optic at its own cost does not get response from the authorities even after waiting for months," Yunus said quoting a newspaper report.

He said that the government has recently formed a committee

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30 villages flooded in Meherpur

MEHERPUR, Sept 23: At least 30 villages of the frontier district were flooded displacing some 50,000 people from their homes, reports agencies.

Local people said sluiceways of the rivers Jalangi, Bhagirathi, Mahananda and Kharia in Indian territory were opened and a bordering flood protection road was cut to make way for flow of water downstream.

Vast areas of six unions of Meherpur-Mujibnagar went under water as Kharia river in bordering Indian district of Nadia overflowed and water rolled down from Friday afternoon.

District administration said onrush of water continued, flooding Bagoan, Darikapur, Sonakhali, Amdah, Pirojpur and Buripota unions and affecting standing crops on about 10,000 hectares of land.

Rural infrastructures, including kutcha roads connecting the district town with Mujibnagar, Chuadanga and Kushiya were badly damaged by the surging waters that also marooned the historic Mujibnagar mausoleum and Amrakanon.

In the absence of any rescue drive from the administration so far, affected people themselves moved to safer places with their belongings and pets.

Reports from Chapainawabganj and Rajshahi said flood situation deteriorated further with partial collapse of two embankments.

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MAS acting in violation of the said written agreements issued letters dated 23rd and 25th August'00 purporting to terminate the aforesaid written agreements with Vantage.

Vantage instituted on 03rd September'00 Title Suit No. 259 of 2000 in the 1st Court of Subordinate Judge, Dhaka to protect its own right, title and interest acquired under the written Agreements with MAS. The Learned Court passed an order on the 03rd September '00 directing MAS to maintain Status Quo in the matter until further order while asking MAS to show cause as to why MAS shall not be restrained from giving effect to its letters dated 23rd and 25th August '00 terminating the written agreements with Vantage and appointing any other person in place as its GSA/PSA/CSA/Agent and issuing any Tickets and Airway bills without VALIDATION of Vantage and encashing its Bank Guarantee.

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