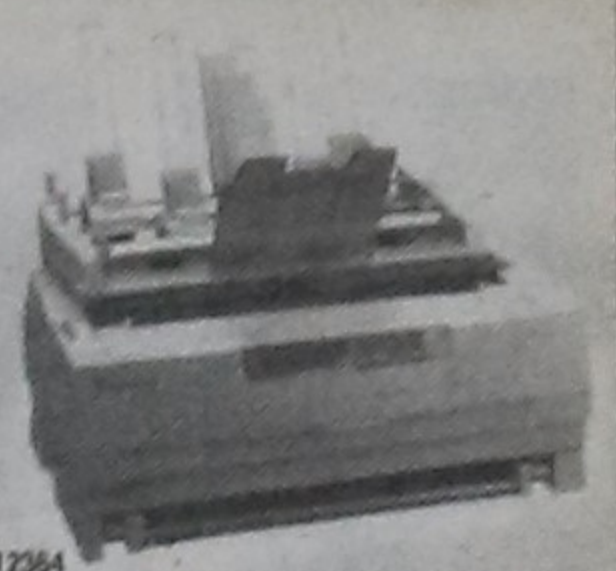


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JS goes into 20th session tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent
The parliament goes into its 20th session from tomorrow (Thursday). The coming session of the seventh parliament will run till November 23, official sources said.
The Business Advisory Committee of the parliament is expected to sit for a meeting tomorrow morning to finalise businesses and the length of the session at the commencement of the session. Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury will preside over the meeting.
Like the previous session, the main opposition BNP, Jatiya Party (Ershad) and Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh will not join coming session. Members of the three opposition parties have been abstaining from the sessions of the House for more than a year, excepting the day when they did join the House in order to fulfil the constitutional obligation for protecting their membership.
Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury tried three times in the past to bring the long abstaining Opposition back to the House, but all his efforts were in vain. This time, however, he took no initiative in this regard. The Opposition has charged the Speaker to be biased against the opposition members.
See page 11 col 6

SC orders Ershad to surrender by Nov 21

The Supreme Court yesterday ordered former president H M Ershad to surrender before the trial court by November 21, reports UNB.
The order of the Appellate Division with Chief Justice Latifur Rahman in the chair, came following an application of Ershad praying for exempting him to surrender before the trial court.



Former President and Chairman of a Jatiya Party faction HM Ershad comes out after the Supreme Court asked him yesterday to surrender before a trial court by November 21. — Star photo

The Appellate Division, which heard Ershad's prayer, also comprised of Justice Mahamudul Amin Chowdhury and Justice Kazi Ebadul Huq.
A High Court Division Bench on August 24 directed the Jatiya Party chairman to surrender "immediately," upholding the verdict of the trial court. The Bench reduced Ershad's sentence to five years' from seven years.
The trial court found Ershad guilty in a corruption case, known as "Janata Tower Case."
Later, during the autumn vacation of the Supreme Court, a vacation bench also asked Ershad, following his prayer, to surrender within a week after the vacation.
Following another prayer after the vacation, a chamber judge extended the time by two weeks for Ershad to surrender before the lower court.
The Appellate Division yesterday further fixed November 21 for the hearing of the leave petition filed by Ershad against affirmation of his conviction by the High Court.
Another leave petition filed by the State against commuting
See page 11 col 7

Gas Commission likely next year

By Staff Correspondent
A Gas Commission is likely to start functioning next year following passage of the proposed Gas Act 2000 by parliament, sources concerned said.
The objectives of the regulatory body would include fostering substantial private investment in gas sector, long term development of the sector in a competitive environment, preventing misuse of monopoly or market
See page 11 col 3

New telecom act in the offing

End to govt's supervisory authority, BTTB monopoly envisaged
By Mustak Hossain
The Ministry of Post and Telecommunication (MPT) is likely to place the National Telecommunications Act, 2000 before the cabinet soon, sources said.
The act aims to help develop a sound national telecommunications infrastructure that would be able to provide telecommunication facilities on demand, assure satisfactory quality of service and ensure value to the customers.
It would replace the century old Telegraph Act, 1885 and Wireless Act, 1933, which have become redundant in the light of present day telecommunication needs and introduction of newer technologies.
As a result, subscribers of various telecommunication services have been facing problems over the years.
The new law would see the BTTB work only as a public sector operator side by side with private operators like cellular phone companies, the source said.
See page 11 col 7

Unocal to submit Bibiyana plan next year

Star Report
US oil company Unocal will submit to the government a detailed plan for development of Bibiyana gas field in the first quarter of next year, sources said quoting Unocal officials.
The plan will be developed on the basis of government's decision on how it wants to utilise the Bibiyana gas. Unocal officials told Energy Ministry officials yesterday during a presentation on commercial use of the gas.
Unocal officials said that the Bibiyana gas field had a probable reserve of 2.48 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of gas. There is a possibility of finding six tcf of gas in the field, they told the ministry officials.
The US company proposed some options for utilisation of the gas, which include pipeline export of gas, power generation and conversion of the gas to Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) to diversify its use.
Unocal strongly argued for pipeline export of gas, saying that it would be possible to extract 500 to 550 million cubic feet of gas per day (mcf) from Bibiyana and export it. At this rate, the total export will be 3.5 tcf in 20 years.
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A view of the mass of humanity at the colourful rally the BNP-led opposition alliance staged at Muktangan in the city yesterday on the occasion of "National Revolution and Solidarity Day." — Star photo

Over a dozen hurt in police action near BNP office

By Staff Correspondent
Thousands of activists joined the opposition alliance's 'mass procession' which marched through the city streets yesterday, demanding resignation of the government and early parliamentary polls.
The 'mass procession', preceded by a big rally at the Muktangan in observance of the "National Revolution and Solidarity Day" was organised also to protest the government's refusal to allow the opposition to hold its scheduled 'grand public rally' at Paltan Maidan on the day.
City BNP President Sadek Hossain Khoka MP presided over the rally.
Senior leaders of BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Oikya Jote, Jagpa, NDA and DL addressed the rally and led the procession.
Several petrol bombs were exploded at the end of the procession when it reached the Kakrail crossing at about 5:20 pm. Police also fired several tear shells and rubber bullets at that time.
A group of unruly people then torched an auto-rickshaw and damaged about a dozen of rickshaws in front of Wills Little Flower School. Panic-stricken people ran for safety as the fire from petrol bombs spread in the area.
More than a dozen people including BNP Assistant Office Secretary Zahiruddin Swapan were injured in the police action.
BNP later alleged that "Awami terrorists" and police jointly attacked the peaceful procession. It was a pre-planned attack, aimed at flogging the procession, BNP alleged.
Earlier, addressing the rally, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan announced that the opposition's "grand public rally" would now be held at Paltan Maidan on November 23. He said the alliance postponed yesterday's scheduled rally at Paltan Maidan to avoid confrontation with the government. This would have only increase sufferings of the people. "A final warning will be given to the government on November 23", he said.

Chief Whip to have talks with Larma

By Special Correspondent
Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad and Convenor of the committee for implementing the Chittagong Hill Tracts peace accord Abul Hasnat Abdullah will have talks with Chairman of the CHT Regional Council Jyotirindriya Bodhipriya Larma sometime next week in a bid to sort out a number of issues.
Sources said the meeting is likely to take place when Abdullah goes to Rangamat in November 15.
The Chief Whip, who negotiated the peace accord signed on December 2, 1997, will visit development projects in the CHT. He will be accompanied by two members of Australian parliament.
Larma has threatened to go back to the hills, accusing the government of not implementing the accord fully, a charge the government denies.
In a recent speech at Bandarban, he criticised what he said the government plan to acquire land for an Army training centre in the CHT.
Besides, addressing a convention of his Parbatiya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity at Khagrachhari, Larma said that there had been not much progress in implementation of the peace accord and that there was
See page 11 col 5

Biman ready for restructuring, privatisation

By Special Correspondent
Bangladesh Biman has finalised its preparations for restructuring and privatisation of the national carrier under a World Bank aided project.
The government will retain 51 per cent of Biman's share. Forty per cent will be offered to a strategic partner (SP) and nine per cent will be kept for some 5500 Biman employees.
Consultants from the Citibank Group have prepared an Information Memorandum (IM) contain
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Inside Today

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Column: Between the Lines
By Kuldip Nayyar
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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Nov 8		5.16 pm
Nov 9	6.09 am	

Prayer Timings

November 8		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-00	5-35
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-25	5-30
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Biman suspends 6 for Jarina's woes

By Shaikh Nazrul Islam
Four cargo handlers of Bangladesh Biman are involved in pilferage of Jarina Khatun's money from her briefcase following her arrival at Zia International Airport in an Oman Airlines flight Saturday morning. Cantonment police said yesterday.
Biman authorities already suspended six employees — a security officer, a supervisor and the four handlers — on Monday for their alleged involvement in the incident.
The pilferage took place somewhere between the aircraft and the luggage area at the airport. Usually officials from different
See page 11 col 4

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Ganguly's men in town

By Sports Reporter
The Indian cricket team led by Saurav Ganguly arrived in Dhaka yesterday to play their part in the momentous occasion of Bangladesh's baptism in Test cricket. The city however is already in a festive mood ahead of the historic match, which will commence at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on November 10.
The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), which has drawn up a five-day programme leading up to the Test, arranged a painting competition and cricket related photo exhibition at the National Sports Council Gymnasium yesterday. There is a grand fireworks display scheduled for today. The explosive gala will be held at Ganasagar Dighi near Rajarbagh Police Lines at 7 pm.
See page 11 col 1



Superstar Sachin Tendulkar leads the pack of Indian cricketers at the arrival lounge of Zia International Airport yesterday. The Indian squad skippered by Saurav Ganguly will play against Bangladesh in the latter's maiden Test match. — Star photo

US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Is draw a possibility? First vote goes to Bush
By Raffat Binte Rashid
Closeness of this year's American presidential race has made such idle speculation as a draw between George W Bush and Al Gore a likely possibility.
On Saturday, Governor Bush held a slim lead over Vice President Al Gore in every major national survey of voters. But state-by-state examinations of how Electoral College votes are likely to fall showed no advantage for Bush.
What could happen this year is a winner can lose; a candidate can come second in the popular vote, yet win a majority of electoral votes.
With its potential for a close finish, the race has spotlighted the difference between the popular vote and the electoral vote. If Bush wins small-population states in the South and West by anticipated huge margins and loses the biggest states by small margins, Bush could win the popular vote but suffer a resounding loss to Gore in the Electoral College. In fact it is mathematically possible for Bush to carry more
See page 11 col 7

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