

## BCL plans comeback on DU campus soon

By Masud Arif

Awami League backed Chhatra League (S-A) is contemplating resumption of activities on the Dhaka University campus shortly.

The decision in the regard is likely to be announced at a press conference after AL chief Sheikh Hasina's return from Singapore by the end of this month.

Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Hasina announced suspension of all organisational activities of her party's student wing BCL (S-A) on October 30, following a fierce gunfight between the BCL and ruling BNP backed JCD on October 27. The gunfight left three students and a street urchin dead.

After 55 days, since the suspension of BCL (S-A) activities, BCL leaders were seen at the Madhu's Canteen on December 22 (Sunday).

BCL (S-A) stopped its activities including holding rallies and processions on the DU campus, following Sheikh Hasina's decision. The leaders of the party even refrained

from going to Madhu's Canteen, the centre of all political activities of Dhaka University.

Observers say there are forebodings of serious clashes soon after the resumption of activities of BCL.

Some JCD activists who BCL leaders say are identified terrorists were seen moving around the Madhu's Canteen on Sunday when BCL leaders went there.

Witnesses say a large number of outsiders was seen in the residential halls of the university.

No major incident occurred since the October 27 gunbattle, except for some sporadic incidents. Classes and examinations are being held peacefully.

Several prominent BCL leaders were arrested in recent weeks in connection with their alleged involvement in terrorism. BCL leaders claim the government's role has not been impartial in dealing with terrorism. They allege the cases against the BCL leaders are all false, fabricated and motivated.

## Ruskoy meets Najibullah

KABUL, Dec 23: Russian Vice President Alexander Rutskoy met Afghan President Najibullah here to discuss means of securing the release of Soviet prisoners of war from rebel camps, officials and diplomats said here today, reports AFP.

At the late Sunday meeting, the two men also discussed Rutskoy's visit to Islamabad, which resulted in accords to develop wide-ranging bilateral cooperation between Russia and Pakistan, the officials said.

The talks were cordial and the two leaders discussed issues of mutual interest as well as concerns such as the Afghan conflict, the Soviet POWs and future cooperations between Russia and Afghanistan, a Soviet diplomatic source said.

Meanwhile, Afghan government forces fired medium range artillery and machine-guns today from garrisons based near the Kabul International Airport amid reports that troops were firing at targets nearby.

The almost continuous sound of firing, starting at 11.30 am local time (0600 GMT), came during a visit by Rutskoy to discuss a political settlement to the Afghan conflict which has left more than one million dead since 1979.

Military sources said the troops were firing rockets and other weaponry, but diplomats returning from the airport reported seeing nothing in the vicinity of the complex.

## 10 Bangladeshis stranded in Albania

DURRES, Dec 23: The holiday of a lifetime has gone sour for 95 East Asian tourists, whose grand tour of Europe has turned into weeks of frustration in impoverished Albania, reports AP.

The group of 85 Sri Lankans and 10 Bangladeshis has been cooling its heels for three weeks in Durres, walking disconsolately around the hotel grounds with the occasional volleyball game serving as the main distraction.

The port's only recent claim to fame is that it served as a jump-off point earlier this year for tens of thousands of desperate Albanians who clambered aboard ships and sailed to Italy in the hope of a more prosperous life.

The East Asians arrived in Europe five weeks ago.

"We... paid up to dhrs 3,000 for a holiday of a lifetime," said group's spokesman, Tiasaj Rajca. The 35-year-old salesman said the idea was to visit as many European countries as possible.

The group booked tickets to Albania and was supposed to pick up tickets and visas for other European countries in Zagreb. But the Yugoslav war got in the way.

"We got to Albania via Athens and spent four very nice days here," Rajca said. Trouble began in Yugoslavia.

"When we left by bus to get to Zagreb, we were stopped in Sarajevo by the Yugoslav army who told us to go back to Albania," he said. "Nobody told us that the war was so serious in Yugoslavia."

Back in Albania, the bewildered tourists, with passports confiscated by Albanian authorities looking for guarantees that the hotel will be paid and with no return air tickets, spend much of the day in the lounge of the first-class Adriaku hotel.

Two weeks ago, a fax arrived from the New York office of the Sri Lankan travel agency where they booked, promising to pay the hotel and to charter a plane to get them out of Albania. But nothing has yet happened.

## Teachers demand Mishu's release

By DU Correspondent

Seven teachers of Dhaka University and Jahangirnagar University in a joint statement Monday strongly resented the arrest of Chhatra Oikya Forum leader Moshrefa Mishu and demanded her immediate release.

The statement termed the case filed against Mishu as false and harassing and said such repression conducted on the organisers of the mass movement of 1990 was not at all acceptable.

The teachers who signed the statement include Humayun Azad of the Department of Bengali, Sirajul Islam Chowdhury of English, Helaluddin Khan of Sociology, Shamsul Islam Khan of International Relations, Naren Biswas of Bengali, Rangal Sen of Sociology and K M Saduddin of the same department. Of Dhaka University and Azfar Hossain of English Department of Jahangirnagar University.

## Huda laid to rest

The body of former Vice-President and renowned economist, Dr M N Huda, was laid to rest at the Banani graveyard in Dhaka Monday afternoon, reports ISS.

Dr Huda died at the Diabetic Hospital (BIRDEM) Dhaka Sunday morning following a massive heart attack.

His namaz-e-janaza was held on Monday at three places. The first janaza was held at the Dhanmondi Eidgah Mosque at 10 am, the second was held at the Dhaka University Mosque at 11 am which was attended by the teachers and students of the university.

The third and last janaza was held at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque after zohr prayers which was attended, among others, by different political leaders, including Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad, Abdus Samad Azad, former Vice-Presidents Justice Nurul Islam and Moudud Ahmed.

## Delhi to recognise breakaway republics

NEW DELHI, Dec 23: India Monday welcomed the commonwealth treaty binding 11 former Soviet republics and said it has decided to recognise the new states, reports AP.

Foreign Minister Madhavsinh Solanki said formal diplomatic recognition will be extended soon after the republics meet again this month to further define the responsibilities of Commonwealth of Independent States.

India's response to the creation of a new commonwealth is positive," Solanki said. The government has been in touch with the presidents of eight states about cooperation agreements, he said.

He said he expected the republics to keep the terms of a 20-year friendship treaty that India renewed and signed with the Soviet Union last summer.

The 6-month-old Indian government appeared anxious to voice support to the emerging powers in the former Soviet Union in order to recover from earlier diplomatic setbacks.

India, a traditional ally of the Soviet Union, was quick to welcome the hardliners' coup that temporarily ousted President Mikhail Gorbachev last August and was left red faced when the coup collapsed.



Quest for latent talents: Children at an art competition at the Shishu Academy in city yesterday. — Star photo

## Commonwealth won't survive

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Soviet Union was dead, saying only the now-defunct Supreme Soviet could make such a decision.

"It is not reasonable to think that someone arrives, and declares that the Supreme Soviet has been liquidated, the Kremlin and all its possessions are nationalised," he said.

"It is not indicative that the new personalities do not answer to anyone? Is this not shameful for our democratic process?"

"I think that a final session of the Supreme Soviet should necessarily be held... and it will be the (Supreme) Soviet that will declare the end to the existence of the Soviet Union."

Of Yeltsin and his followers, Gorbachev said; for me, they have poisoned the air. They have humiliated me. I can be humiliated.

Gorbachev said the events leading to formation of the commonwealth were not a coup, as some people had suggested. But he said they were unconstitutional.

"I don't think this is a coup. I'm just saying that the process of transition has to follow the constitutional course. I

told Yeltsin: "If you are democrats, if you are authentic reformers you must always act according to the laws and rules, otherwise people will ask if you are nothing but street delinquents," Gorbachev said.

He was pessimistic about the immediate future, saying the people were bitter and confused.

"I don't think the situation will stabilise by the end of the year. What we need exactly is clarity."

"I will explain to you my position. I am going away but my task remains with me... I told Yeltsin yesterday that for me the greatest problem is that the country does not understand what is happening. The people are not aware," he said.

"We were once united and now we are divided. As far as I'm concerned this process is not destined to stop. I don't feel comfortable with the partisans of the new community."

"I ask myself why this is happening. Soviet man was carrying one with his life when suddenly the rules changed... he has lost his orientation. He was a free man... now he finds himself in a blind alley and I can't autho-

rise all of this," he said.

Gorbachev, widely expected to resign soon following the collapse of the Soviet Union, will make a televised speech this evening.

A spokesman for Soviet television said the speech would be broadcast later in the evening, but gave no further details.

Gorbachev's televised announcements have often been broadcast after the main evening news, which ends at 10.40 GMT.

Another report says, Russian leader Boris Yeltsin met President Mikhail Gorbachev today to discuss handing over control of the Soviet nuclear arsenal, a top Yeltsin aide said.

Russian first Deputy Prime Minister Gennady Burbulis, speaking at a new conference, also predicted that Gorbachev would formally resign within days, if not hours.

But a Gorbachev spokesman said the Soviet leader did not plan to announce his resignation today.

Burbulis was giving details of Saturday's meeting in Kazakhstan.

"I think Mikhail Sergeyevich expressed himself correctly," Burbulis said when asked about Gorbachev's interview. He added that Yeltsin was meeting Gorbachev to discuss technical aspects of a definitive resolution of this situation.

The four "nuclear republics" — Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Byelorussia — agreed in the Kazakh capital Alma-Ata to give Yeltsin the authority to launch any nuclear strike, but only in consultation with the other three republics' leaders.

The Kazakh parliament on Monday became the first of the eight new members of the commonwealth to ratify Saturday's accords, which effectively dissolve the 69-year-old Soviet Union, Interfax news agency said.

The potential dangers of the collapse of central Soviet authority were underlined by fierce fighting in the Transcaucasian republic of Georgia. (Related Story on Page 5)

## Baby food

From Page 1 Col 8

should be consumed according to the advice of the doctors while 52.27 percent did not categorise the age levels of the babies for milk feeding.

More than 20.45 per cent had no LABEL in Bengali and 40 per cent used encouraging comments in favour of their brands.

The survey observed that at least 12 conditions of the ordinance for selling tinned powder milk were violated.

The 44 brands included 20 fullcream milk, 17 infant formula and seven cereal brands.

Moreover, the trading companies have been presenting free samples to the doctors to popularise their brands, the CAB added.

The CAB said that the survey also revealed that many of the brands did not bear expiry and manufacture dates on the tins.

## Launch salvaged in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent KHULNA, Dec 23: The launch ML Al-Mamun, which reportedly capsized with 50 passengers on board in the river Kocha Saturday afternoon was salvaged by the divers today.

There was no body in the launch, according to divers.

The launch was dragged to a nearby char quite away from the actual spot.

Local people suspect that the bodies were intentionally allowed to drift away.

## Biman earns Tk 11 cr profit

Bangladesh Biman earned a profit of about Tk 11 crore in the first five months of the current fiscal year (1991-92) with a 6 per cent growth in passenger and cargo carrying, reports UNB.

Officials claimed a total of 4,43,852 passengers travelled by the airlines from July to November in its domestic, regional and international routes.

The figures of profit and growth in passenger and cargo handling are in comparison with those of the corresponding period of last fiscal.

The airlines carried 2,09,094 passengers in its international routes, 74,376 in regional and 1,60,382 in domestic routes during the period.

Biman's regional routes are Dhaka-Calcutta, Chittagong-Calcutta, Dhaka-Kathmandu and Dhaka-Rangoon.

The national flag carrier transported 4,18,150 passengers, including 2,02,620 in its international flights, in the first five months of fiscal 1990-91.

It carried 9,716 tons of cargo in the first five months of the current fiscal as against 9,147 tons during the same period of last year.

Biman sustained a loss of about Tk 40 crore due to the Gulf war, increase in premium rate, introduction of war risk insurance, suspension of flights to Gulf and Middle Eastern region in the first 8 months of the last fiscal.

The airline's highly subsidized domestic routes also contributed to that staggering loss which was one third of the total, sources said.

Officials attributed this year's profit to schedule regularity, improved services, on-time performance and extensive marketing promotional drive.

## 2 killed, 1 hurt in separate incidents

By SSMCH Correspondent

Two persons were killed and one injured in three separate incidents in the city Monday.

Bablu, 22, was crushed under the wheels of a speedy truck (Khulna-Ta-52) at Bhangapara area of Demra Monday afternoon. Bablu died on the spot.

Demra police seized the truck but its driver managed to escape, police said. The body of the victim was sent to Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital (SSMCH) morgue.

Tejgaon police recovered body of an unidentified old man from Monipuri Para yesterday at about 1:30 pm. He was about 60 and said to be a pedestrian, according to police. The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Shahabuddin Azad, vice president of Bangladesh Homeopath Medical College Students Union, was admitted to SSMCH Monday following stab injuries. He was mercilessly beaten by some rival students, according to police.

His condition was reported to be critical.

## Pension committee for poets, newsmen reconstituted

The government has reconstituted the committee for granting monthly pension to the distressed poets, litterateurs, artists and journalists, reports ISS.

According to a gazette notification, the Additional Secretary in charge of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs was made chairman while the Joint-Secretary of the same ministry was made vice-chairman of the 11-member committee.

## SKOP

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turned with 'disappointment' as the minister, despite a commitment he made earlier, was not present at his office.

The MOU was supposed to be signed much earlier on December 21 night when both the sides reached understanding. But it could not be done due to absence of the Labour Minister at the final stage. In the minister's absence the government was represented by the Labour Secretary Mashur Rahman that day.

According to the previous understanding, the negotiations between the government and the SKOP was scheduled to resume this morning.

Although the SKOP leaders failed to have a glimpse of the Labour Minister yesterday Iskender Ali, the president of ruling party's labour front, told his colleagues in the SKOP that the scheduled meeting between the government and the SKOP would be held this (Tuesday) afternoon, a TUC leader told The Daily Star.

According to sources the SKOP leaders will meet at 10 am today to discuss the situation arising out of the postponement of the work stoppage which was scheduled to be observed on December 22 and 23.

## The Midnight File

### UK welcomes Alma Ata outcome

LONDON, Dec 23: Britain today welcomed the outcome of the weekend meeting of the former Soviet republics at Alma Ata, creating new commonwealth of independent states, a foreign office spokesman said today. London was "urgently considering" with its partners and allies the question of relations with the republics. Britain had taken full note of assurances offered on issues of concern to the international community. These included control of nuclear weapon, debt and human rights, the spokesman added, reports AFP.

### IRA announces ceasefire

DUBLIN, Dec 23: The Irish Republican Army today announced a three-day ceasefire over Christmas. In a statement to the media in Dublin, the guerrilla group said that all "active service units" would cease operations for 72 hours, reports Reuter.

### Gorbachev announces 'decision' in 2 days

MOSCOW, Dec 23: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, widely expected to resign in the near future, said today he would "announce his decision" within two days, the independent news agency Interfax said. It quoted him as making the comment in a telephone conversation with British Prime Minister John Major, reports Reuter.

### PM: Heritage

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culture is life of a nation. She said the nation loses its direction without the flourishing of proper culture.

"Referring to the rich cultural heritage of Bangladesh, Begum Zia said, 'we have a big canvas of Liberation War, mass upsurge language movement and a history of long struggle.' The elements have provided a unique distinction to our culture," she added.

The Prime Minister said the very basis of our culture is our own people and their surroundings from where we have to collect the elements of culture.

She regretted that video had now become a carrier of distorted culture without becoming a medium of healthy entertainment and expansion of education.

Begum Zia said, "we are now fed up with video culture", which is eroding the moral values of the youths. This has also given rise to many social problems, she said adding "we can no longer remain indifferent in this regard."

She called upon the guardians and cultural activists to help check infiltration of distorted culture. "It cannot be solved only through enacting laws," she pointed out.

Begum Zia said her government would encourage proper flourishing of the national culture and at the same time to check distorted culture. "Our objective is to recover the glorious heritage of Bangladesh, its protection and nourishment."

### Ctg Port

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immediate measures to make the port operative.

He said that both importers and exporters were incurring huge losses for the delay of shipment and unloading of goods. The statement said the traders must pay demurrage to the foreign chartered ships.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) in press release at Dhaka said that the garments sector has been sustaining a loss of about taka 20 crore everyday because of the truck drivers' strike and inoperation of the Chittagong Port.

"If the export orders are not executed on schedule they may be cancelled by the respective buyers which will reduce our foreign exchange earnings," Redwan Ahmed MP, Second Vice-President of BGMEA said.

He also said that the strike will not only affect the garments sector but also harm the economy of the country and create other problems.

The BGMEA demanded immediate steps for resolving the problems.

## Notice

In addition to the existing Telephone Numbers of "The Daily Star", 3 (three) more PABX lines have been installed.

The 3 (three) new PABX

Telephone Numbers are : 24 50 61

24 50 62

24 50 63

—Management

Editor : S. M. AM

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