

Tk 427 cr to renovate non-govt pry schools

The government has undertaken a project to reconstruct, renovate and repair nine thousand non-government primary schools at a cost of Taka 427 crore, reports BSS.

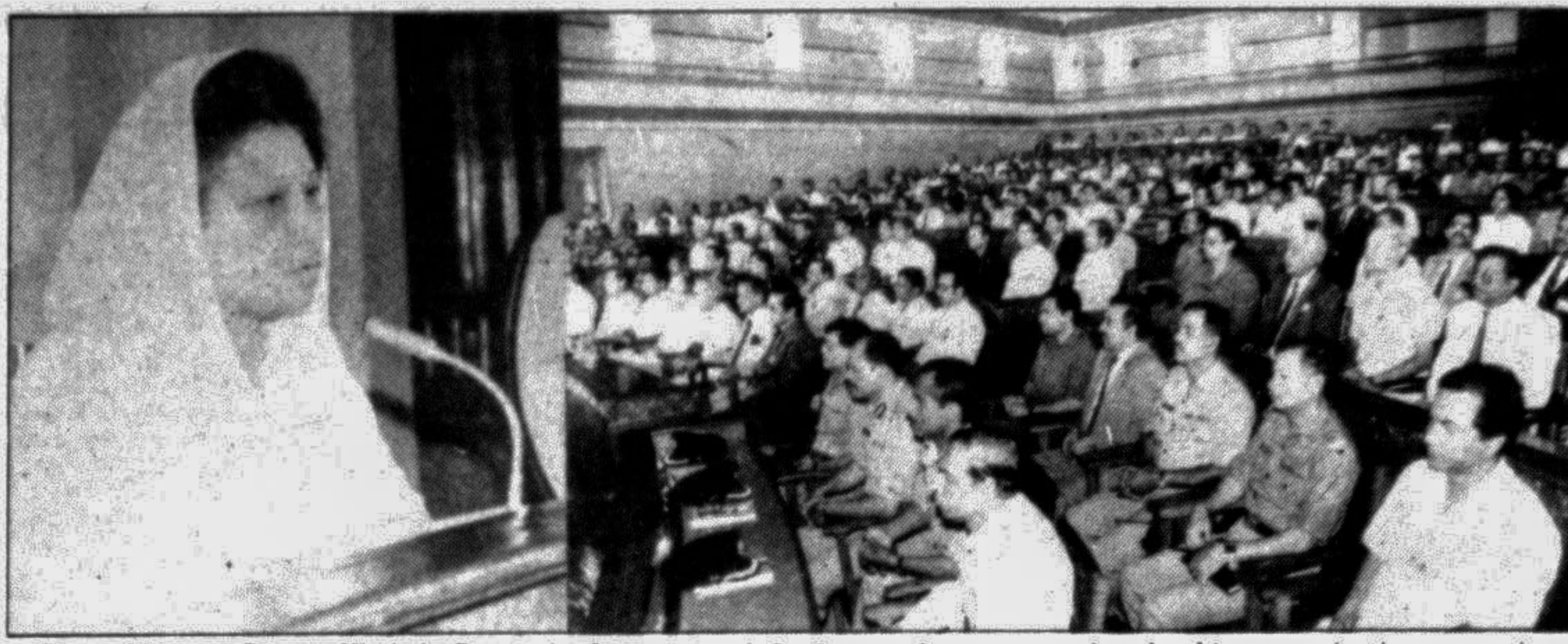
The expenditure was approved here yesterday at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) chaired by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia laid emphasis on primary education and a separate division styled as 'the primary and mass education division' has been created and placed under the direct supervision of the Prime Minister's office.

ECNEC meeting was attended by Agriculture Minister Major General (Retd) Majedul Haque, LGD Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder, Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar, Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah al Noman, Cabinet Secretary, members of the Planning Commission, secretaries and other concerned officials.

The meeting okayed a total of ten projects which included a crop diversification programme, purchase of three cranes (for relief) for Bangladesh Railways and setting up of a 30,000 line digital telephone exchange in Chittagong.

Three projects involve an expenditure of Taka 465 crore including a foreign exchange component of Taka 260 crore. ECNEC meeting also approved a project to construct science buildings in 63 private degree colleges with a total expenditure of Taka 16 crore.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the International Conference Centre yesterday thanking organisations, agencies and persons who extended their cooperation to the smooth holding of the Seventh SAARC Summit. — PID photo

Srebrenica town demilitarised

ZAGREB, Apr 21: The disarmament of Muslim defenders is besetted. Srebrenica has been completed and the East Bosnian town has been demilitarised, UN General Lars-Eric Wahlgren said today, reports Reuters.

"From reports I have received from my officers in Srebrenica, I can confirm that from noon today, the town has been demilitarised," the Commander of UN peacekeepers said in a statement issued here.

The statement said all weapons and ammunition collected by the peacekeepers had been destroyed by late this afternoon and a final inventory was being prepared by a team of officers representing the United Nations, the Muslim-Bosnian government and the Bosnian Serbs.

The team was carrying out a joint inspection to verify that the demilitarisation of Srebrenica under a ceasefire agreement had been completed.

Three killed in city road mishaps

By DMCH Correspondent.

Three persons were killed in separate road accidents in the city yesterday.

An unknown man about 35 years old was killed on the spot as a truck ran over him at 3 am on the Airport Road near Kawla Bridge.

Another unknown man about 30 years old was also killed on the spot as a truck hit him at 7.30 am near the Tejgaon Truck Stand.

In another incident, a student of class five, Nasiruddin, 10, was hit by a truck at Dholakhil at 5 pm. He was taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he succumbed to his injuries.

Mazari-Benazir tussle

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Punjab, punctuated with rallies, has no such scruples.

He has denounced the president's 'egotism and bad faith', the futility of the dissolution which, he said, had sent the stock exchange plunging, paralysed business, and destroyed in 48 hours all that his government had achieved in two and a half years.

Meanwhile thousands of dancing supporters throwing rose petals massed at the station in Rawalpindi to cheer Nawaz Sharif as he began a cross-country train journey to drum up sympathy.

"We will go with Nawaz Sharif, we will go with Nawaz Sharif," a crowd of more than 10,000 chanted as the disgraced Prime Minister drove in a procession to the station.

"The real Prime Minister is Nawaz Sharif," they shouted.

Sharif waved to the crowds from his open-top jeep and flashed victory signs to his jubilant supporters.

He led a nearly 1.2 mile procession of cars, many of them the yellow cabs bought under one of the reformist Sharif's incentive schemes for jobless young men.

The huge crowds poured on to the station platform in Rawalpindi, the twin city of the capital Islamabad, forcing Sharif to board the train from the tracks.

Earlier, the Lahore High Court today admitted a petition

filed on behalf of Sharif challenging the dissolution of the National Assembly.

The five-judge bench ordered the government to appear for a hearing on May 3.

The Speaker of the National Assembly, Gohar Ayub Khan, filed the petition early on Monday, hours after President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dissolved the Assembly and sacked the Prime Minister, accusing his government of nepotism, subversion and terrorising its opponents.

The petition sought that the president's order be suspended.

Meanwhile, Pakistan today said its three-day old interim administration would not bring any material change to the country's foreign policy and slammed India for "tendentious" comments.

"We don't expect any material change in foreign policy" by the caretaker government headed by Mazari, a Foreign Office spokesman said at a news briefing.

The spokesman said comments earlier this week by Indian Foreign Minister Dinsh Singh amounted to a "tendentious verdict on the developments in Pakistan."

Singh said Monday that India would keep a close watch on the evolving situation in Pakistan where, he added, elected governments had been repeatedly impeded.

Zahir murder Court rejects Matin's bail prayer

By Court Correspondent

Abdul Matin arrested in connection with the murder of Humayun Zahir was sent to the Dhaka Central Jail after the end of five-day police remand Wednesday.

When Matin was produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday he made a confessional statement under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPc).

Matin was arrested on April 14 and taken on five-day police remand by the Detective Branch the following day.

A magistrate in the Dhaka Metropolitan Magistracy, Mohammad Abdul Hannan, recorded the confessional statement of Matin yesterday.

During the yesterday's court proceedings, a bail petition on behalf of Matin was submitted before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate who rejected the petition and ordered to send Matin to the jail.

Humayun Zahir, a businessman, was shot dead by two young men in the premises of his Dhanmondi residence on April 8.

Tk 7591 cr earned from export

A parliamentary committee was told yesterday that the country's export earnings during last fiscal year was Taka 7590.86 crore which is 25 per cent higher than the earnings of the previous year, reports BSS.

The 19th meeting of the standing committee (parliamentary) on the Ministry of Commerce was further told that the export earnings increased considerably as export items were diversified following a timely and coordinated action programme undertaken by EPB (Export Promotion Bureau).

The meeting held at the

Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban was chaired by Commerce Minister M K Anwar.

BNP MPs Muhammad Ansar Ali Siddiky, Amcer Khasru, Advocate Abul Kalam, and Begum Farida Rahman, and Md Khademul Islam and Md Anwar Hossain, members belonging to Awami League and JP, attended the meeting.

The export earning target for the current year has been fixed at Taka 9750 crore which is 28 per cent higher than that of last year.

The meeting discussed in detail, the administrative structure, aims, objectives and overall activities of the EPB which is under the Commerce Ministry.

The meeting was informed that Bangladesh's export in 1992 began with 70 items to 35 countries. The country now exports 115 items to 110 countries. These achievements were possible for the timely initiative of the EPB, the meeting opined.

In EPB which is headquartered in Dhaka, has three regional offices in Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi and four branch offices at Comilla, Sylhet, Barisal and Bogra with a total manpower strength of 236.

The members of the standing committee gave stress on providing more autonomy to the EPB making the organization more dynamic.

Commerce Secretary Nazim Ahmed Chowdhury, EPB Vice Chairman and senior officials of the Commerce Ministry and its subordinate departments attended the meeting.

Vietnamese ship with contraband seized in Ctg

By Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Apr 21: Custom officials and Navy personnel today impounded a Vietnam flag carrier at the outer anchorage of the port here for carrying smuggled goods.

According to official sources, the ship 'Flying Dragon' was cordoned off and the contraband including electronic goods and liquor were seized.

The vessel that arrived here with a cargo of 14000 tons of cement via Singapore port came under anti-smuggling crackdown at the outer anchorage of Chittagong Port, sources added.



Awami League city unit brought out a procession yesterday in support of April 25 programme of the Nirmul Samannay Committee. — Star photo

Aurango pleads not guilty

By Court Correspondent

Awami League leader, Hemayetullah Aurango MP, in the Dhaka Judge Court yesterday claimed himself not guilty of the murder of the DGF official.

Aurango was put on a trial in Court of Dhaka District and Sessions Judge for the murder of DGF official Naik Ali Azam.

Azam was murdered at Shahbagh in the city by unidentified men in 1980.

Aurango was taken to the court from the Dhaka Central Jail amid tight security and a written plea on behalf of Aurango was submitted to the Judge Nasiruddin Ahmed in which Aurango claimed that he was not guilty.

Mob blocks Pabna highway as truck runs over boy

PABNA, Apr 21: Angry people blocked the busy Pabna-Nagarbari highway at Pushpapara in the sadar thana after a speeding truck ran over a minor boy today, reports UNB.

At least 3,000 passengers in nearly 100 buses and trucks were stranded as the road barricade at Pushpapara continued till late this (Wednesday) evening since the accident occurred at noon.

Sabuj (6), son of Naziruddin of Pushpapara, died instantly when the truck ran over him.

BCL factions clash

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number of BCL (M-I) activists entered Salmullah Hall at about 11:30 in the morning yesterday.

The Montu group activists at the time left the hall and went to Zahurul Huq Hall, also a strong hold of the BCL (M-L).

Later, Montu supporters in a procession from Zahurul Huq Hall came back to Salmullah Hall, witnesses said, but returned as they could not enter it.

Later, at about 1 pm, a group of Montu supporters again rushed to Salmullah Hall, sources said. At the time a large number of police were at the spot, witnesses added.

Some BCL (M-I) leaders were present in front of the main gate of Salmullah Hall.

The BCL (M-I) and BCL (M-L) leaders and their activists exchanged some hot words in the presence of some senior police officials, witnesses added.

The BCL (M-I) supporters who had entered the hall at 11.30 am gradually left it some hall sources said.

Later, at about 1.45 pm, the BCL (M-I) activists in a big procession entered the Arts Faculty premises and held a protest rally.

The BCL (M-I) leaders at the rally alleged that Montu supporters with the support of the police wanted to keep their hold on the DU halls including Salmullah Hall.

Addressing the rally the

BCL (M-I) DU unit President K H M Lizu and General Secretary Pankaj Nath said that Montu group activists were openly moving with firearms in the campus but that police were not arresting them.

Meanwhile, to protest the incident the BCL (M-I) also held a press conference at the TSC yesterday afternoon with its central General Secretary Iqbalur Rahim in the chair.

The BCL (M-I) at the conference demanded withdrawal of police from the university campus.

The BCL leaders alleged that the police and even the university authorities were silent over arresting the terrorists and freeing the campus from these armed elements.

The BCL (M-I) said that the BCL (M-L) had brandished weapons in front of police at Salmullah Hall yesterday.

The BCL (M-I) GS Iqbalur Rahim condemned the violent incident at Salmullah Hall and said that they would go for a greater movement if the university authorities did not rehabilitate the students who had been forcibly ousted from the halls at different times.

The BCL (M-I) press conference was attended among others by its leaders Ishaq Ali Khan Panna, Akhter Hossain, Pankaj Nath and K H M Lizu.

PM: Dal bhat

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Begum Zia expressed satisfaction over the preparation including security arrangements during the conference which, she said, had been praised by all.

Pointing out some minor mistakes and problems, Begum Zia called upon all to be careful in making such programmes more successful in future.

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, Chairman of 7th SAARC Preparation Committee Farooq A Choudhury and DG South Asia G A M A Rahim also spoke on the occasion.

Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister K M Rabbani were present.

Remove VC, RUTA iterates demand

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Apr 21: Rajshahi University Teachers' Association (RUTA) today reiterated its demand for the removal of Vice-Chancellor and pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University and appointment of the Vice-Chancellor through Senate in accordance with the University Act 1973.

RUTA had demanded the removal of VC and pro VC following the incident on the campus on February 6. The University was closed sine die after the incident.

Meanwhile, various organizations including RUTA and APSU (All Party Student Unity) declared that there would be no congenial atmosphere of education till the present VC and Pro-VC were holding the posts.

Believe it or not!

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Postal Department took forty days to deliver a letter from Banani to Dhanmondi.

Ashfaq Chowdhury, a reader of The Daily Star residing in Banani posted a letter addressed to the newspaper office in Dhanmondi — only some 10 km away, on March 10 last. The Daily Star office received the mail on April 19. His letter, Ashfaq Chowdhury neatly expressed his opinions regarding a column written by Kuldip Nayyar on the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and India titled, 'Is Dhaka Going Distant from India?'

But the letter having reached the Star office at a speed of 0.25 km per day, lost its relevance for publication.

Injunction on Sonargaon Hotel decoration work

Star Report

The Second Court of Assistant Judge, Dhaka recently imposed a temporary injunction on the Sonargaon hotel authorities asking them not to issue any work order for the hotel's interior decoration to any firm save the Charuta (Pvt) Limited.

The injunction came April 4, following an appeal of the Charuta Limited in the Court earlier.

In the appeal, Charuta Limited said that the Sonargaon Hotel authorities had called a tender in December last year inviting firms willing to work in the first phase of the hotel's interior decoration.

In response to the tender notice bids were submitted by three firms including Charuta Limited.

The firm previously considered a technically qualified one by the hotel authorities, became the lowest bidder.

But the hotel authorities issued the work order to another firm without giving Charuta any satisfactory explanation.

The Judge after hearing both the parties concerned, delivered judgement in the first week of April that asked the Hotel authorities not to issue the work order to any firm except Charuta Limited until the fate of the case was finally decided.

The Midnight File

40 bodies found in Cult compound ruins

WASHINGTON, Apr 21: About 40 bodies have been found in the ruins of the Cult compound where 86 people are believed to have died after a 51-day standoff with authorities that ended in a huge fire, officials said today. The bodies seen in and around the compound include the remains of 10 women and children and three of the Cult members appear to have been shot, said Justice Department spokesman Carl Stern, reports AFP.

Partial US sanction on EC

WASHINGTON, Apr 21: The Clinton administration announced Wednesday partial trade sanctions against the 12-nation European Community because of a failure to completely resolve a trade dispute involving government contracts, reports AP.

Court ruling increases Yeltsin's chances of winning referendum

MOSCOW, Apr 21: Russia's Constitutional Court on Wednesday improved President Boris Yeltsin's chance of winning a referendum on his leadership by ruling he needs only a majority of ballots cast. In a decision split 8-5, the court overturned a stipulation by Russia's Congress that Yeltsin win a majority of all eligible voters — not just those who turn out for Sunday's referendum — to win questions about confidence in his leadership and support of his economic policy, reports AP.

Allow screening of 'Ekatturer Jishu', demands Jahanara

By Staff Correspondent

Convener of Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Jatiya Samannay Committee Jahanara Imam in a statement Wednesday strongly condemned the decision of not permitting the screening of 'Ekatturer Jishu' (Jesus of 71), a Liberation War based film, by the Film Censor Board.

She demanded Censor certificate for the film immediately and said the allegations of undermining the Liberation War against the film were motivated, confusing and false.

The decision was, in fact, the continuation of the recent government efforts to please the killers of '71 and to destroy the Spirit of Liberation War, Jahanara said and added the decision of the Censor Board had also made it clear that the anti-liberation elements have been placed at various tiers of administration.

3 BCI directors sent to jail

By Staff Correspondent

Three directors of now suspended Bangladesh Commerce and Investment (BCI) arrested Tuesday were sent to the Dhaka Central Jail Wednesday.

All the directors were placed under 120 days detention following an order of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka, yesterday.

The directors are Kazi Ashrafuddin, Abdul Matin and Abdul Wadud. They were arrested against a charge of fund embezzlement of the BCI.

The Detective Branch arrested the directors early Tuesday from their residence.

The government last year suspended all activities of the BCI for alleged fund embezzlement by some of its directors and officials.

Butcher shot, robbed in city

By DMCH Correspondent

A number of musclemen yesterday shot a butcher at his arm and looted Tk 8,000 from his shop at Sabujbag of the city.

The musclemen came to the butcher, Faizur, 32, at 7 pm and demanded money. But being refused, the musclemen opened fire and blasted crackers injuring Faizur before looting the money.

Faizur was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

BSS adds: Two hijackers snatched away the gold chain and the ring of the wife of Golam Hossain, director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the Uttara Model town here yesterday.

Sirajganj JCD activist gets life term for murder

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 21: The District and Session Judge's Court today (Wednesday) awarded one Jewel to transportation for life and fined Taka 5,000, in default six months rigorous imprisonment, in the sensational Milon murder case, reports UNB.

District and Session Judge A T M Fazle Kabir gave the verdict on Jewel, a Jatityabadi Chhatra Dal worker, who was absconding.

Ten other JCD activists and a pro-Awami League Chhatra League worker accused in the murder case were acquitted.

Repatriation

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Muslims who fled Arakan in Myanmar and took refuge in Bangladesh.

Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Omar Faruque will lead the Bangladesh side at the talks and the Myanmar team will be headed by Director General of Immigration Aung Maung.

The question of UNHCR involvement in the resettlement of the refugees is expected to be raised at the upcoming talks between Bangladesh and Myanmar, diplomatic sources said.

ICFM

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South Africa, Palestine and Middle East will also be discussed at the ICFM.

The conference is expected to take note of the prevailing situation in Afghanistan and urge the parties concerned to stick to Islamabad Accord to the letter and spirit.

The question concerning economic cooperation between member states of OIC will draw special attention of the conference. It has become imperative for the OIC states to forge closer cooperation between them in the light of the current move for South-South cooperation.

Dhaka is likely to revive her old proposal to form Islamic Common Market to bolster the move for economic cooperation between the OIC states. Late President Ziaur Rahman had mooted the idea of setting up Islamic common market at the Islamic Summit in Saudi Arabia.

Bangladesh will also renew her proposal to set up the Centre for Medical Research in Dhaka. It is also an old proposal made by Bangladesh during Zia's time.

Besides, the sources said, Bangladesh will ask for stepped up contributions to the development and promotion of ICTVTR.

Rooms ransacked

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rooms.

The agitated group pelted stones at the classrooms and broke windowpanes.

The police later brought the mob under control, witnesses said.

Meanwhile, UNB adds: The Dhaka University authorities yesterday constituted an inquiry committee to identify the unruly students who ransacked a number of rooms and the VC office to press for shifting examinations.

The committee was formed at a meeting of concerned Deans, Departmental Chairmen and officials. Vice-Chancellor Prof Emazuddin Ahmed was in the chair.

The meeting advised the committee to recommend stern action against the rowdy students and submit the inquiry report immediately.

The DU authorities, however, expressed their firm determination to begin the 1st part examinations under Arts and Social Science as the time-table was announced after completion of course.

The authorities rejected the examinees' demand as illogical and reasserted their decision to hold the exams on schedule.

Visa rules

From Page 1 Col 7

the success of its Visit Malaysia Year event in 1994," he said.

Syed said only 281 Pakistanis had been detained by Malaysia for seeking employment illegally.

"As there are only a small number of Pakistanis being detained by Malaysia, there is no need or the government to fear tourists from Pakistan."

Tourism Ministry officials said Biman Airlines and Air Lanka had also reported about a 50 per cent drop in their passenger loads.

The officials said Culture and Tourism Minister Sabbiruddin Chik had assured the airlines that their complaints would be considered.