

# 11 injured during BCL elections in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, June 15: Clashes during elections of the Narayanganj district unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) reportedly left 11 persons injured in the town today.

The clashes began at 11 am when two candidates — Mostaque and Palash — along with their supporters were approaching the election venue at the Narayanganj Central Shaheed Minar in Chasara. They were allegedly confronted by another group led by one Kamrul and Selim.

Both groups hurled a number of cocktails at each other and fired shots.

The whole Chasara area was soon terrorised and sporadic bomb blasts continued till 9 pm.

A press statement issued by the district BCL Joint Secretary said that 11 persons belonging to the Mostaque-Palash panel were seriously injured in bomb blasts.

But none was admitted to the hospitals in the town.

The BCL Jt Secretary also alleged that the election commissioner had been held hostage by the Kamrul-Selim group for the past three days.

He also demanded an investigation and justice regarding the elections from the authorities.

The Moshtaque — Palash group brought out a procession in the town and also held a protest rally.

Meanwhile, the central President of the BCL, Moinuddin Hasan Moin, last night declared the Kamrul Islam and Selim Reza panel elected.

In a press release he also said that the elections were held according to the constitution of the organisation.



With the onset of the rainy season such sights of boats—a fishing boat in this case—getting the right of way over other vehicles on some city roads is not an uncommon one these days. —Star photo by Enamul Haq

## PM urges Myanmar to speed up repatriation

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Tuesday urged the Myanmar authorities to speed up the repatriation of Rohingya refugees encamped in the country's southeastern region, reports UNB.

Bangladesh cannot afford to bear the burden of the refugees for a long time, she told the outgoing Myanmar Ambassador U Soe Myint who called on her at the Prime Minister's office in the afternoon.

The Prime Minister hoped that the Myanmar authorities would facilitate the return home of the Rohingya Muslim refugees and complete the repatriation process at the earliest.

She said the resolution of the refugee problem will contribute to bolstering the existing friendly relations between the two neighbouring countries.

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister K M Rabbani was present.

## Husband kills wife

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, June 15: A housewife was reportedly beaten to death by her husband at Balipona village in Jhalakathi district Tuesday noon.

Elpi Begum, 18, was severely assaulted by her husband Badshah Mia and expired, witnesses and police sources said.

Badshah Mia is absconding.

Sources said, Badshah married Elpi four months ago but has been complaining about his wife's 'ugliness' ever since. A murder case has been lodged with police.

## Fire at Jiban Bima tower in city

By Staff Correspondent

A fire broke out on the fifth floor of the Jiban Bima Tower at Dilkusha in the city Tuesday afternoon.

The extent of damage, however, could not be ascertained immediately.

Fire Service sources said, the fire reportedly originated from an electric short circuit in a stair-case room adjoining the American Cultural Centre Library at around 5.45 pm. The fire gutted some papers in the store room, but did not affect the main library.

Fire fighters rushed to the spot but could not get through the smoke-belching multi-storied building immediately.

However, using gas masks and other accessories the firemen eventually extinguished the fire within an hour.

Four firemen were injured during the operation, Fire Service sources reportedly said.

Critically injured fireman Shahidul Islam was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, medical sources said.

## Akbar

From Page 1 Col 6

of 3 lakh lives, a better future.

Some opposition MPs, particularly, from the Awami League, appeared to raise their eyebrows at Akbar's new figure. However, none of them made any attempt to seek the Speaker's permission to rebut the former minister.

Akbar, turning to the AL MPs moving uneasily in their seats, repeated: 'Yes, I repeat, the figure is only three lakh. And it is time the record was put straight!'

## Radio staff artistes strike

By Staff Correspondent

Over 400 staff artistes of Radio Bangladesh yesterday, observed a strike from 6 am to 5 pm demanding regularisation and making their jobs pensionable.

As a result of the strike, Radio Bangladesh could not broadcast live programmes from any of its regional centres. However, the radio carried out pre-recorded programmes and its regular news broadcasts.

The strike, called by the Radio Staff Artists' Action Committee, was followed by a demonstration by the artistes in the city in the evening. The demonstration was led by convenor of the committee musician Subal Dutta.

The action committee, during the demonstration, said that the artistes have been agitating for a long time now to press home their demands and were forced to call the strike because of a lack of response from the authorities to their cause.

The action committee further said that the staff artistes of Bangladesh Television and Shilpakala Academy were enjoying many facilities including pension, and that there was no reason why radio artistes should not get similar facilities.

## One murdered at Gulshan

By Staff Correspondent

One Majiduddin, 18, was reportedly murdered by a group of unidentified people at Mastul, Gulshan, Monday night.

Police sources said the young man was strangled to death near a grocery shop of one Salam.

Sources said, Majiduddin was killed as a consequence of previous enmity.

## Chakrapong

From Page 1 Col 4

Party (BLDP) members, and threatened them with death.

Police and military officials who had massed in the provincial capital after forcing UN civilian police out of their district posts on Friday were instructed to return to their positions, the report said.

Hok Landy also asked the People's Committee of Sway Rieng to make an official declaration that the province was again part of Cambodia, the UNTAC report said.

The governors of Sway Rieng and neighboring Prey Veng have disappeared, and their whereabouts were unknown, the UN officials said.

## CPB factions

From Page 1 Col 2

even after the demise of the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe. Accusing the "reformists" for adopting an "opportunistic line," they expressed the hope that the party would now march ahead under correct leadership to achieve socialism.

The 45-year-old party remained virtually divided and involved in bitter quarrel over its policy and a proposed change of name after the fall of the Soviet regime and the collapse of socialism in the eastern Europe.

The party's split was endorsed by the leaders of both factions at the two-day central committee meeting on June 9. Out of 75 members of the central committee, 50 members present at the meeting endorsed the decision to split it amicably.

Supporters of both the factions later brought out processions, carrying traditional red hammer and sickle flags. Led by the leaders of the respective factions, the slogan-chanting processionists dispersed at the party central office at Purana Paltan which was recently bifurcated by a wall.

Both the factions have amicably shared the assets of the undivided party, including the bank deposits.

## CIS abandons plan to set up jt armed forces

MOSCOW, June 15: The Commonwealth of Independent States today formally abandoned plans to set up joint armed forces, Interfax news agency said, reports Reuter.

The agency said a meeting of defence ministers of the six commonwealth signatories of a collective security treaty decided their joint military command should be transformed into a looser coordination body by the end of the year.

Last month Russia rejected a proposal by the other five members of the treaty — Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan — which provided for the creation of joint CIS armed forces.

Russia's top brass say Moscow, which would have been the backbone of the planned joint armed forces, cannot afford it.

The joint military command was set up soon after the Soviet Union collapsed in late 1991 in a bid to save the Soviet armed forces from disintegration and keep Moscow's nuclear forces under joint control.

But the plan has remained on paper as ex-Soviet republics started building their own armed forces and the nuclear states — Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan — agreed that the latter three would get rid of all nuclear arms.

## Heroin haul in Jhalakathi

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, June 15: Police recovered 500 gram of heroin worth Tk 5 lakh and arrested seven people from a remote village of Jhalakathi Tuesday noon.

Acting on a tip, Jhalakathi District police raided a house of one Yunus Ali at Sankardhabal village under Kirtipasha Union and seized a sealed leather packet containing the substance.

Witnesses said, a Pakistani flag was drawn on the packet and the inscriptions read, "O K Double Lion 3x39 (100x100) Net Weight 500 gms PK 180."

The arrested people are: Modasser, Ishaf, Shamsul Haq, Firoz Alam, Mannan, Chand Mia, and Abdus Salam.

## Jamal Haider refused bail

Mustafa Jamal Haider, former works minister in Ershad's cabinet held in a corruption case, was refused bail yesterday by the District and Sessions Judge, reports UNB.

Haider was accused of giving allotment of a government house in Dhanmondi to Jatiya Party General Secretary on a monthly rent of Tk 16,200 in place of Tk 42,000 and thus sustained financial loss of Tk 9,13,803 to the national exchequer. The prosecution said Haider as works minister made the allotment by abusing official power and obtained pecuniary advantage for his party.

Earlier, on June 8 the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate had rejected the bail petition of Haider and sent him to the Dhaka Central Jail.

## General debate on budget

From Page 1 Col 7

farmers to ensure production at an increased rate.

Mashhur Rahman of the Treasury Bench praised the Finance Minister for granting the highest allocation to the education sector. But Abul Hasan Chowdhury of the Awami League (AL) felt that allocation wise, the education sector virtually occupied the seventh or eighth position.

To back his claim, the AL MP said that the combined allocation for defence, para-military and police forces was much higher than that of the education sector.

Saiful Azam of the BNP, however, felt that the allocation for the defence sector was less than it really needed.

Abdur Rahim of the AL criticised the Finance Minister for his proposal to limit duty on all imports including luxury goods at one hundred per cent. The AL MP observed that it had been done with a view to enabling the richer section of the people to enjoy more luxury. It contradicted the government's slogans for austerity, he added.

Ibne Aziz Lama of the Jatiya Party (JP) accused the government of turning Bangladesh into a market for foreign goods.

A large number of the opposition MPs observed that the law and order situation in the country was also not in favour of foreign investment.

The Treasury Bench MPs, in this connection, called on the opposition parties to refrain from observing 'unnecessary strikes and hartals' to ensure a congenial investment climate in the country.

Col (Retd) Akbar Hossain of the BNP congratulated the Finance Minister for a balance budget and suggested evolving maximum utilisation of natural resources including water and land.

Akbar demanded a ban on the production of synthetic bags because the abandoned bags destroyed fertility of the soil.

Besides, the ban would promote jute bags and at least 40 jute mills would have the scope for supplying 40 crore jute bags a year, the MP observed.

Akbar also underscored the need for introduction of an integrated education system across the country. He felt that the present system of education was dividing the society into different 'compartments' which would virtually affect the uniformity of thinking of the nation.

Jamaat MP Kazi Shamsur Rahman criticised the proposed budget saying that it lacked a vision for the future. He suggested that the budget should be designed within the framework of a long plan.

Out of 27 MPs taking part in yesterday's discussions, 12 were from the ruling BNP, 9 from the AL while three each from the JP and Jamaat.

It was a seven-and-a-half-hour long debate, spreading over two sittings.

Speaker, Shaikh Razaque Ali, was in the chair after the break for Maghreb prayers till the House was adjourned for the night at 9:05 PM.

The House will resume the sitting at ten this morning.

## Pm's tributes

From Page 1 Col 8

tained world pressure had made inroads against the bastion of apartheid and today world attention is focused on epoch-making developments which were unfolding in South Africa.

After years of frustrating struggle and bitter sacrifices by the oppressed majority, new possibilities have opened, she said adding that there was, however, no room for complacency.

The international community should remain vigilant till the last vestige of apartheid is dismantled, she added.

On this important occasion, we pledge, in union with all members of the international community, our total support to the people of South Africa in their quest for building a multi-racial and democratic society in which all shall enjoy equal rights and freedoms irrespective of race, creed or colour.

# The Midnight File

## Combined offensive against Kashmir militants

NEW DELHI, June 15: Indian security forces have launched their largest combined offensive against Muslim rebels in the strife-torn state of Kashmir to revive the electoral process after a five-year hiatus, the Press Trust of India said today. A high-ranking state official told the news agency in Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital, that the "Biggest-ever joint operation" would restore normalcy and pave the way for polls by the end of the year, the first since 1987, reports AFP.

## Aided's supporters protest UN air strikes

MOGADISHU, June 15: More than 1,000 supporters of warlord Mohamed Farah Aided demonstrated here today against the United Nations attacks on their leader's arsenals and the killings of Somali protestors. But, on the other side of the city, interim Somali President Ali Mahdi Mohamed said that the United Nations had 'the right to take action' against Aided and those factions that violated the March disarmament agreement, reports AFP.

## 'Mobilise people for over-all development'

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a seminar yesterday stressed on spreading mass education across the country because it was the key to mobilising the people for over-all development.

At a seminar on "Involvement of Youths in the Village Level in Mass Literacy Programme for Poverty Alleviation", organised by an NGO — 'Bangladesh 2000' — the speakers said 70 per cent of the country's population belonged to the 5 to 35 year age group and the total development process should utilise this larger portion by educating them.

The programme, presided over by chairman of Bangladesh 2000, Engr M Shahjahan Khadem, was addressed among others, by State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain as chief guest, Canadian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Emile Gauvreau and Syed Mohammad Mohsin, MP as special guests while Addl Project Director of the BARD, Comilla, Dr Tofail Ahmed, presented the keynote paper.

The speakers said that in order to mobilise the vast number of youths in the country, the policy-makers should at first bridge the generation gap for better understanding of the population.

"Poverty and lack of education are the two dimensions of a single problem", the speakers said. "The light of education of the problems around him and their solutions," they observed.

The speakers urged the government to include education in all programmes and projects since, according to them, "educated persons are likely to cooperate in all projects."

## Tariff barriers

From Page 1 Col 8

from textile raw materials like cotton, synthetic fibre, synthetic yarn, silk yarn, dyes, zari, glue, gum and resin.

He also demanded that grey cloth and finished fabric be excluded from VAT or other tax net.

The BTIF also demanded balancing, modernisation, rehabilitation and extension (BMRE) of the total textile sector.

The federation said there is 85.75 per cent tax on import of cotton yarn and 94 per cent tax on synthetic yarn. It said this high tax on yarn has led to over profiteering by the local yarn manufacturers and has also given incentive to smuggling of yarn. The BTIF also said that there is a 41.75 per cent tax on dyes and chemicals used in the textile industries.

They mentioned that a smuggled Indian cotton sarree sells at Tk 180 but it costs local producers Tk 220. They claimed that if duties were reduced, the local manufacturers could offer the same sarree at Tk 160 a piece.

The BTIF leaders said that if the demands of the federation are met, the country can produce 345 crore metres of fabrics both for local consumption and export, which would also generate jobs for 67 lakh workers.

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