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11 hurt in clashes during Kushtia volleyball semis

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Apr 4: At least 11 people were injured, five of them needing hospitalisation, in a free-for-all during the national volleyball championship semifinal between Bangladesh Rifles and Bangladesh Navy at the local stadium this afternoon.

Those hospitalised are P K Mullick, three students of the Islamic University here — Reza Shamim and Nurul Islam — and one spectator Bazlur Rahman.

Besides, referee Abul Hossain, line judge Mintu Dutta, Shamsul Huq Tenku, a photographer of the daily Bhorer Kagoj from Dhaka, and Khwaz and Shamsul Huq were released after first aid. Tenku hurt his collar bone.

Witnesses said the brawl started during the men's competition in the afternoon when the two Services teams were tied two sets-all after the first four sets.

In the nail-biting fifth and deciding set, the BDR spikers, after being locked 16-16 with the sailors, claimed victory when they took the next point to lead 17-16.

When the referee pointed out that they needed one more point to win,

because the margin had to be of a clear two points, the BDR team protested the rule and went on a rampage by first tearing up the net, witnesses said.

They said in the Pandemonium that followed, the BDR players and supporters started beating up opposing players, officials and spectators. The shambles, or the canopy, at the stadium and furniture were damaged.

The BDR players also beat up the Ansars and VDP personnel, police and the Islamic University students present at the venue.

Enraged, the local people began brickbating and a pitched battle began with the riflemen.

Pension rules simplified

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tions within a month of its receipt of the relevant papers.

The cabinet meeting also approved two new welfare-oriented steps in case of family pension. Sick and retarded children of the dead pensioner who are incapable of earning will get life-long pensions and the widow of the pensioner, if she does not remarry, will get a life-long family pension.

The cabinet decided that the last authority under which the dead employee worked will determine his or her successors in case of the family pension and gratuity and the certificates of the widow of the dead employee stating that she did not remarry would be acceptable.

The certificates of the local union parishad chairman or para commissioner or ward commissioners will also be acceptable in this regard. From now on restrictions on issuance of success on certificate from the court will be paid.

In case of family pension, the age limit for the sons of the dead pensioner has been raised to 25 years from the existing 21 years due to the raising of the age limit for entry into the government service.

The family of a pensioner will get pension at the same rate both in cases of his or her death after retirement or before retirement.

No employees will require to submit their ACR (Annual Confidential Report) before the sanctioning of pension.

The cabinet meeting decided that the concerned employees will also be able to surrender cent per cent of their pension if they so desire.

Presently, only 50 per cent gratuity can be taken by surrendering 50 per cent of the gross pension.

The audit office will send post-dated cheques equivalent to the basic salary of the allotted leave (highest 12 months).

Marriage fee lowered

The Council of Ministers at its regular weekly meeting yesterday approved various proposals for removing obstacles in the way of application of the Child Marriage Prohibition Act for preventing persecution of women and children, amending the Muslim Marriage Registration Act-1994 and providing legal assistance to distressed and oppressed women, reports BSS.

The proposals included introduction of a punishment of three years' rigorous imprisonment or a fine of Taka five thousand or both for not registering marriages.

The proposals also provide for appointment of one Kazi at each union to make marriage registration easier and lowering of the minimum fee for marriage registration to Taka five from the present Taka thirty.

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

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JCD rescinds expulsion of 5

By JU Correspondent

The people also set ablaze two vans of the police and the Navy, a bus of the Islamic University and a private car.

Barricades were set up by the angry students on the Kushtia-Jhenidah highway adjacent to the stadium.

To protest the incident, the local All-Party Students' Action Council has called a half-day hartal in the town today (Tuesday) from 6 am until noon.

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The Deputy Commissioner of Kushtia, Police Superintendent and the BDR Sector Commander were in a meeting at the Kushtia District Sports Association with other KDSA officials till late night and the fate of the match could not be known at the time of filing this report.

The BDR players and team officials were confined to the stadium for their own safety and could mention their own candidacy for the post.

The 'locals' — hailing from Savar and adjacent areas — and the 'non-local' factions earlier clashed on several occasions, leading to the closure of the institution.

The JCD men of the local group who have been absolved of anti-party charges are: Saiful Islam, Shafiqul Islam, Arshed Ali, Walid and Rafiq. Two of them — Arshed and Shafiqul — are now in police custody for their alleged involvement in February's violence that left the varsity closed for 50 days.

30 hurt at N'ganj

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rival faction of Narayanganj District Awami League with firearms, sticks and other lethal weapons stormed the auditorium and attacked the audience.

They fired several rounds of shots and exploded fire-crackers.

Chases between the two factions continued for about half an hour, police said.

AL sources alleged that the regional secretary Shamim Osman was involved in the attack.

A case was filed against him.

Thai visa policy

From Page 1 Col 6

thing in writing.

"We are trying to find out the facts and have already asked our mission in Thailand to look into the matter," a top official of the Foreign Ministry said on condition of anonymity.

The official, however, added: "Visa regulations are normally the domain of the host country, unless there is a reciprocal agreement."

Foreign Ministry officials, however, indicated Dhaka would try to impress upon the Thai officials that the new visa regulations should not become effective.

A senior official of the Home Ministry said, "We are waiting for the documents from the Foreign Ministry or our mission. We will act when we get the documents."

Local Thai embassy officials when contacted, refused to comment on the new directive but said they were processing visa applications with "as much speed as possible."

Nearly 8000 passengers travel each way on the Dhaka-Bangkok route every month. Many of them are transit passengers who have to make an over-night halt to get connecting flights to other east Asian, Pacific or American destinations.

Thai Airways operates six flights a week while Biman operates four weekly flights and has plans to start another flight shortly.

Senior officials of both Thai Airways and Bangladesh Biman said the new regulations are an embarrassment for their airlines.

Civil Aviation authorities said three flights to Bangkok, one of Thai and two of Biman, in the last two days saw a significant drop in the number of passengers bound for Bangkok.

A Biman official said, "We are trying to minimise the sufferings of the passengers by informing them while they come for re-confirmation of tickets."

The proposals also provide for appointment of one Kazi at each union to make marriage registration easier and lowering of the minimum fee for marriage registration to Taka five from the present Taka thirty.

PM consults key BNP men

From Page 1 Col 5

During the second round of parley, the BNP leaders discussed the implications of the Awami League (AL)'s proposed April 7 siege of the Secretariat, the prospects and efficacy of a dialogue with the Opposition in Parliament and the strategy to counter the Opposition's tactics.

During the first round of talks, the Prime Minister called 12 leaders to her chamber one by one and separately sought their opinion on the best possible candidate for the post of party Secretary General.

The negotiations, according to campus sources, helped defuse the tension prevailing on the campus.

The 'locals' — hailing from Savar and adjacent areas — and the 'non-local' factions earlier clashed on several occasions, leading to the closure of the institution.

The JCD men of the local group who have been absolved of anti-party charges are: Saiful Islam, Shafiqul Islam, Arshed Ali, Walid and Rafiq. Two of them — Arshed and Shafiqul — are now in police custody for their alleged involvement in February's violence that left the varsity closed for 50 days.

After this the Prime Minister started a second round of talks with her top aides and reviewed the current political situation.

According to sources, Secretary General Salam Talukder had sharply reacted to some ministers' bids to clarify to the press the party positions on different issues. Talukder felt that the Secretary General should be the official spokesman of the party.

The BNP chief, accepting Talukder's contention, asked the others not to discuss the party's policy matters with newsmen.

About the AL's proposed siege of the secretariat on April 7, the meeting resolved that there would be no provocations from the government side during the AL's agitation.

Frank Wells, who had been president and chief operating officer for Disney since 1984, was pronounced dead at the scene.

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