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Members of the Abrity Aangan reciting poems at an Ekushey function organised by the Sammilita Sangskritik Jote at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday. — Star photo

Ekushey Book Fair

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joint meeting of the student bodies and cultural organisations with the authorities of Bangla Academy. The proctor of Dhaka University was also present.

Under the code of conduct, the sale of nude posters, books against the spirit of the Liberation War and foreign books published illegally will not be allowed in the fair.

All student organisations have given the assurance of all possible help to implement the code of conduct.

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, the student wing of BNP, however, walked out of the meeting protesting the decision of Bangla Academy to invite Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for inaugurating the book fair. JCD leaders proposed that President Shahabuddin Ahmed be invited to inaugurate the fair.

The JCD also decided to stage a demonstration today protesting the PM's coming on the campus. JCD activists will bring out a procession on the campus and wear black badges.

Talking to The Daily Star, Habib Un Nabi Shohel, the general secretary of JCD said, they were "not preventing Sheikh

Ekushey '97

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the Central Shaheed Minar, patriotic songs were rendered by Shishu Kantha, Kranti, and Bangladesh Ganashilpi.

Plays were staged by Theatre Centre, Smriti '71 and Aranyak.

Natya Dal while poems were recited by Abrity Aangan, Biswakala Kendra and Swaran.

The Bangladeshi Nationalist Party (BNP) has drawn up an elaborate programme to observe the Shaheed Day, according to a party press release.

A discussion meeting will be organised at the Ramma Bato-mul at 3 pm on Feb 20 by the cultural wing of the BNP, JASAS. It will be followed by a cultural function.

The Bangladeshi Uddihi Shilpi Gosthi will accord a reception to those who took part in the historic Language Movement at the Central Shaheed Minar on Feb 21.

Hasina from coming on the campus. We would just register our protest."

Meanwhile, some people have complained of mismanagement in arranging this year's fair. Most of the stalls were not completed till last night. When asked, some stall owners told The Daily Star that they were not allowed sufficient time to complete the stalls within due time.

Sources at the Bangla Academy said, this happened due to the fact that the post of the Director General of Bangla Academy remains vacant since February 5.

When asked about the reported capturing of stalls by the BCL activists, the authorities said that no such stalls belonging to the Bangla Academy were dispossessed.

IPU confce

From Page 1

her daughter is president.

Indira Gandhi picked up where her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, independent India's first prime minister, left off. Her son Rajiv became the prime minister after she was assassinated in 1984. After Rajiv Gandhi was killed in 1991, the Congress Party elected his widow, Sonia, to be the president and candidate for the prime minister's post. Sonia Gandhi declined.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is the daughter of her nation's first prime minister.

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury took the chair from Islam after half an hour.

BNP member presides over JS session for half an hour

The two sides of the aisle struck a note of harmony after a fracas, as a panel member chaired the session of the Jatiya Sangsad for about half an hour yesterday, reports UNB.

In absence of both the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker, opposition BNP's senior member and former Commerce and Information Minister M Shamsul Islam presided over the Parliament session from 7:35 pm to 8:07 pm.

Deputy Speaker Abdul Hamid left the chair to the opposition lawmaker as he was sick.

Hamid announced that the first on the five-member panel of chairmen, Shamsul Islam, would chair the House as the Speaker was also absent at that moment.

Members from both the Treasury and Opposition benches welcomed the first panel chairman thumping desks.

Under Islam's chairmanship, the MPs spoke on their rejected call notices two minutes each.

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury took the chair from Islam after half an hour.

Two accused

From Page 1

Ansar and Hashim denied any participation in the killings, although the latter acknowledged having participated in the coup at the time.

Ansar was a vice-consul at the Bangladesh embassy in Ottawa from 1976 to 1981 while Hashim held diplomatic posts in the Middle East before seeking political asylum in Canada in 1981.

The two men, who are both veterans of Bangladesh army, were charged in January along with 18 other army officers and politicians for the murder of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the television reported.

Only one hundred guests will be invited for her marriage to a businessman here, an official spokesman said.

14217 murdered in five yrs, minister tells JS

Some 14,217 people have been murdered in five years since 1991 under BNP rule. Home Minister Rafiqul Islam told Parliament yesterday, reports UNB.

The Home Minister gave the staggering figure of murders in response to Shamsur Rahman Sharif (Pabna-4).

He said some 784 incidents of murder had occurred in Dhaka metropolis area during that period.

More than 5,000 dacoits were also committed across the country at that time, Islam told the House.

Smuggled goods

Smuggled goods worth Tk 70.04 crore have been seized in seven months under the present government since July 1 last year, the Home Minister said.

Replying to Abdus Sattar of the ruling party, Major (Rtd) Rafiqul Islam said police arrested 1,054 smugglers in connection with the cross-border

trade during the period.

The contraband smuggled into the country included sarees, blouse pieces, readymade garments, cattle, sugar, salt, phenisidyl, beer, liquor, medicine, motor parts, bicycle parts, spares of shallow machine, radio and radio parts, imitation jewellery, fish, cigarettes, cosmetic, fruit, blade, gold, powdered milk and rice.

The items smuggled out of the country included fertilizer, family-planning devices, family oil, diesel, polyester, China, yarn, fish, tea and old garments.

Hasina

From Page 1

nation dates would not be shifted to avoid session jam.

The Prime Minister was critical of the BNP government and said that they flouted the order of the Supreme Court by not holding the Local Government elections. She said the Supreme Court at that time issued order for holding local government elections on time.

She said that a bill would be placed in the House today on the subject. She further added that the cabinet discussed the Union Council elections twice.

The Prime Minister sought cooperation of the opposition parties in strengthening the local government institutions in the country.

As the Leader of the House resumed her seat, Opposition Chief Whip Khondkar Delwar Hossain contested the contention of the Prime Minister and said that the Upazila Parishad was repealed by the BNP government on the basis of a consensus reached between the Awami League and the BNP.

Referring to allegation of violation of the Supreme Court directives in respect of holding election at the Upazila Parishads, the Opposition Chief Whip said that the BNP government had brought a bill before the House which, he added, could not be considered due to prolonged boycott of the then Opposition members.

200 shanties

From Page 1 also some tin-shed semi-pucca houses in the slum, said Fire Service sources.

Fire service personnel took around an hour to extinguish the blaze.

More than two thousand people are affected by the fire.

Extra police were deployed while the local people were removing the debris till last night.

BNP query

From Page 1 and the tour cost the government Tk 1,43,47,131.

UNB adds: The hue and cry started when Nizamuddin Khan of BNP, in his supplementary, asked how much money was spent by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina from the government exchequer to see her daughter in Miami during her US visit in October last year.

The BNP lawmaker also wanted to know the identity of Anil Das Gupta and Baby Moudud, who had accompanied Hasina as her entourage members. Their names were included in the list of PM's entourage as 'eminent citizens'.

Another BNP member, Abu Yusuf Mohammad Khalilur Rahman wanted to know under which criteria Baby Moudud and Anil Das Gupta were listed as 'eminent personalities'. Anil Das Gupta joined the Prime Minister in New York from Germany.

Responding, the Foreign Minister said Anil Das Gupta is widely known among the expatriate Bangladeshi people because of his contribution in the 1971 War of Liberation. About Baby Moudud, he said, She is a leader of Mahila Parishad and an eminent journalist and writer.

BSB adds: Taking the floor for personal explanation, the Foreign Minister said he is sorry for taking a long time in answering the supplementary.

"I agree with Mr. Delwar Husain and Mr. Rabbu but at the same time it is also true that the members too take a long time in formulating supplements."

"I, however, apologise to you," he added.

Sugar production

From Page 1 producing molasses with power crusher violating the law while leaders and workers of all parties including the Awami League, BNP and Jatiya Party supported the farmers as the law enforcing agencies proceeded to take legal actions against them.

He said out of the 17 sugar mills, six has already stopped production although they were due to operate until April.

State Minister

From Page 1 proper rehabilitation of the slum dwellers. They also expressed their regrets on behalf of the Prime Minister for the action.

The Prime Minister will visit the Bhashantek slum today at 9 am to see for herself the plight of the slum dwellers.

Shima

From Page 1

Shima Chowdhury in safe custody in Chittagong Jail.

The high-powered official enquiry commission and medical team members are expected to visit Chittagong tomorrow, jail sources said.

Sharif-Hasina

From Page 1 was looking forward to meeting her in Islamabad during next month's summit of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

Congratulating Nawaz Sharif, Sheikh Hasina hoped that during his tenure, democracy will be consolidated in Pakistan and peace and progress of the country hastened.

During the conversation, Hasina emphasised the united efforts and work for the economic emancipation of the poor people in the SAARC countries.

Nawaz Sharif expressed his determination to work together for improving the lot of people in the countries of the sub-continent.

Bid to scuttle peace

From Page 1 about the government's thinking on peace in the hills. They were offered wide-ranging autonomy for local government as well as assurance to roll back security forces' camps scattered in the hills to their garrisons.

Hopes mounted about a breakthrough in dialogue with the PCSS when it resumes on March 12. A delegation of the National Committee on the Hill Tracts is also visiting Tripura to persuade thousands of tribes people, living in squallid camps, to return home.

They fled to Tripura after violence broke out in the hill tracts following collapse of negotiations to restore peace in the area in 1986.

Authorities are hopeful about bringing the refugees back with the prospect of peace brightening this time. But they are worried about the latest developments.

The rebels want expulsion of settlers from the plains, who make up about half of the hill regions population of about 800,000, split in 13 ethnic groups.

But the Shantibhumi insurgents mainly represent one tribe, the Chakmas. Bandarban district, bordering the north-eastern Indian state of Tripura.

and Burma and inhabited mostly by non-Chakmas, had been relatively free of the insurgents.

They are appearing to be stepping up their operation in the area to establish their domination before an anticipated deal between the government and the rebels.

Authorities, meanwhile,

stepped up security in the three hill districts and security forces are coming the forested areas of Ruma where the soldiers were ambushed and Roangchhari where Saturday's incident took place. Transports to Ruma and Roangchhari remained suspended.

Our Correspondent from the hill tracts reported that a general strike called by BNP disrupted life in the Bandarban district Sunday. The strike which, officials said, passed peacefully although BNP staged a rally protesting the death of police.

Awami League staged demonstrations yesterday. Jatiya-e-Islam called a half-day hartal on Wednesday.

Different organisations including Parbatty Gana Parishad have urged the authorities to launch a coming operation to flush out the Shantibhumi.



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Nasaka

From Page 1 a border town and 18 Myanmar crew, along with their cargo boat would be released by the BDR shortly.

At the meeting, the Bangladesh delegation informed that incidents of robbery in the Naff river and intrusion of Rohingyas into Bangladesh territory had increased.

The 14-member Myanmar delegation was led by U Win-Min, Director, Border Immigration, HQ.

The ten-member Bangladesh delegation was led by BDR Sector Commander in Chittagong Col Md Waliullah.

HC rule

From Page 1 cils take over the offices and the government, if necessary, shall enjoy the authority to reconstitute the interim councils.

It was argued by the petitioner that the Acts are *ultra vires* of Articles 11, 59 and 60 of the Constitution having only provisions for elected local administrative units in every administrative unit.

Barister Moudud Ahmed moved for the petitioner.

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