

## 79 die in Thai hotel fire

BANGKOK, July 11: The death toll from a fire that engulfed a hotel in the Thai Holiday resort of Pattaya today rose to 79, police said, reports AFP.

Most of the dead were Thais, but one Hungarian man perished in the blaze, as well as a middle east man, they said.

The deaths were attributed mainly to smoke inhalation.

The Thais were either hotel staff or employees of the electricity generating authority of Thailand (EGAT) who were attending a seminar when the fire broke out, media reported.

The blaze started on the ground floor of the 30-storey royal Jomtien resort on the east coast and within one hour had swept up the stairwells to the top of the building, police said.

See Page 12 Col 6

**PM leaves for Germany tonight**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will deliver the key-note address at an international conference on adult education that begins in Hamburg today, renewing the country's commitment to fight illiteracy, reports UNB.

She leaves tonight for the German city to attend the five-day conference. It will be inaugurated by German President Roman Herzog.

The UNESCO sponsored conference will adopt Humburg Declaration, providing a sense of direction on expansion of scope of adult education and mass literacy in the global context.

See Page 12 Col 5

**Bangladesh self-sufficient in rice output says Holzman**

WASHINGTON, July 11: US Ambassador designate to Bangladesh John C Holzman has said, Bangladesh has achieved 'important progress in certain areas' and the country is virtually self-sufficient in the production of rice, reports BSS.

Speaking to the senate committee on foreign relations yesterday before its confirmation by the senate as the president's nominee to be US ambassador to Bangladesh, Holzman said the country has significantly reduced population growth in cooperation with US.

See Page 12 Col 1

**Nepali chopper makes emergency landing in Sitakunda**

CHITTAGONG, July 11: A helicopter of Mana Kamana Airways Private Ltd of Nepal made an emergency landing in Sitakunda thana today failing to land at Chittagong Airport due to inclement weather, reports UNB.

Police said the helicopter landed at Sultana Jute Mills ground safely at about 6:30 pm. Two captains and one engineer were aboard the helicopter.

BSS adds: Pilot Durjoy Bahadur Pan was quoted by police as saying that they started their journey from Calcutta at around 3 pm today for Yangon via Chittagong. But they had to make emergency landing due to rough weather. Police are guarding the helicopter.

**Inside Today**

**Article**

**US Economy: Strengths and Strains**

Column: Beneath the Surface by Abdul Bayes Page 4

**Star Literature**

A maverick talker: Surrender at Dhaka: Birth of a nation; and The contemporary art scene in Sri Lanka Pages 6 & 7

**International**

UNSC renews sanctions against Libya Page 5

**Business**

BEPZA makes little progress to set up EPZ at Mongla Page 8

# Landslides kill 30 in Ctg, CHT & Cox's Bazar

By Staff Correspondent

At least 30 people including twelve children were killed and 10 injured in landslides in Chittagong, Rangamati, Cox's Bazar, Bandarban and Kaptai in the early hours of yesterday due to torrential rains, according to reports from Our Staff Correspondent in Chittagong and BSS.

Fire Service and police sources said 13 people, mostly children and women, of three families, were killed when chunks of earth from a nearby hill fell on their houses at Reserve Bazar on the bank of Rangamati Lake.

The victims were asleep when the landslide occurred.

Fire service and police recovered 13 bodies trapped under

earth after a five-hour search. The dead were identified as Farida Begum, 26, Shamima Akhter, 2, Nur-Nahar, 35, Nur Akhter, 2, Farida, 3, Mamun, 5, Sanwara, 30, Kamala Begum, 50, Manwara Akhter, 13, Jahangir Alam, 20, Yunus Mia, 35, Maktob Hossain, 65, and Zeni, 6. The bodies were sent to hospital for post mortem.

Three of the injured persons Anwar Hossain, Rehana Begum and Jainul Abedin were admitted to Rangamati Sadar Hospital.

In Chittagong, seven persons including two minor girls were killed and six injured in three landslides at Station Road and Amin Jute Mills under Kotwali and Panchalaish thanas.

Fire service and police sources said, Aleya Begum, 14, and Kuleshum, 12, were killed when a big chunk of land from the adjacent hill fell on their house at Station Road.

The victims were daughters of one Nurul Islam.

The second landslide occurred at Dulal Colony near Station Road in which three persons were killed. The victims were identified as Runa Khatun, 16, Amina Khatun, 60, and Mohammad Momin, 11.

In another landslide (two labourers of Amin Jute and Textile Mills were killed when the wall of their house collapsed under the weight of a big chunk of earth last night.

See Page 12 Col 7

## Abu Sayeed appointed new SEC chairman

By Rafiq Hasan

The government is likely to issue an order tomorrow appointing Chairman of Rupali Bank Abu Sayeed as Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), regulatory body for the country's capital market, highly placed sources said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina approved appointment of Abu Sayeed, a former secretary, on Wednesday.

Banking Division Secretary Syed Amirul Mulk last night told this correspondent that an order in this regard might be issued on Sunday.

The decision to appoint a new chairman was taken as incumbent Dr Harunur Rashid gave a notice in the later part of last month expressing his desire to resign from the post.

Meanwhile, the authorities have suspended licences of two brokerage firms and fined two enlisted companies Tk one lakh each for alleged involvement in market manipulation and not providing necessary information to the SEC.

The two brokerage firms are Capital Investment Service Company and Asia Securities Limited while the two enlisted companies are Excelsior Shoes and Altex Industries Ltd.

The action was taken as per the report of a two-member enquiry committee. The committee comprising SEC Deputy Di-

rector Mansur Alam and corporate accountant Khairul Anam found that the two brokerage firms in collaboration with Excelsior Shoes raised the share price at the very beginning of its entering the capital market.

A large number of Tk 100 shares of Excelsior Shoes were sold at Tk 550 each on February 2 when trading of its shares started on the DSE floor. The share price of the company then drastically fell and came down to Tk 112.61 on Thursday.

DSE Chairman Abdul Howlader told this correspondent on Thursday night that the DSE had received an order from the SEC about suspension of licences of two brokerage firms. As the SEC issues licences for brokerage firms, it can also suspend or cancel it, he said.

Altex Industries Ltd was fined allegedly for not providing detailed information regarding use of the money raised from the primary market. It defied repeated SEC orders in this regard.

The orders for fine were issued on Thursday following a decision taken at a meeting of the SEC management board, sources said.

The SEC also ordered the companies to pay the money within seven days. Otherwise they will have to pay compensation of Tk 10 thousand per day.

## BNP supports July 15 hartal

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) yesterday extended its support to the dawn to dusk countrywide hartal on July 15 called by Islami Oikya Jote and Jamaat-e-Islami to protest the Zionist act of Blasphemy against the Holy Quran and Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (SM).

The decision was taken at a meeting of the BNP Standing Committee last night. BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia chaired the meeting held at her Minto Road official residence.

A party press release said, the meeting in a resolution protested and condemned the act of blasphemy. The resolution said, people

See Page 12 Col 8

**Tremors shake Ctg, Cox's Bazar**

CHITTAGONG, July 11: Tremors were felt in Chittagong and Cox's Bazar today, but no casualties or damage was reported, says UNB.

The tremor in Chittagong was felt from 8:51 pm for about 25 seconds. However, Met Office could not confirm the quake immediately.

Earlier at about 9 in the morning, a moderate earthquake shook the Cox's Bazar town which lasted for about 30 seconds.



Father of Mahbub wailing while receiving his son's body at the Zia International Airport yesterday.

## Rajuk plan to widen lanes, by-lanes

By Naimul Haq

The Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk) has prepared a master plan to widen the lanes and by-lanes of the city to remove traffic jam, according to sources in the Rajuk.

A feasibility study has been completed at a cost of Tk 80 lakh and the plan is ready to be placed before the Planning Commission for sanction of funds, the sources said.

Under the plan, the lanes and by-lanes having width of more than 10 feet but less than 20 feet will be widened to at least 20 feet. Over 1000 lanes and by-lanes have been identified for widening and reconstruction. Many lanes, in Basabho, Gopibagh, Rajar Bazar, Madhubagh, Nayartola, Shantibagh, Malibagh, Sabujbagh, Nakhalpara and in the old town area will be made one-way.

The project will cost 500 crore taka, the sources said.

"The intricate connecting alleys will greatly benefit from this plan," said a Rajuk official. Most of those will be straightened and will have fine edges with concrete sides to allow movement of pedestrians wherever needed.

"Rajuk will first take up a number of lanes and by-lanes as a 'model'. The rest of the work will be done according to the 'model'," the official said.

The project will take about 40 years to be completed.

"The main problem that the project may face is acquisition of land. There are few places where spaces are available by the side of the lanes that belong to the government," said the Rajuk official. "In most cases, private property have to be purchased through negotiations."

## Mahbub's body handed over to his father

By Staff Correspondent

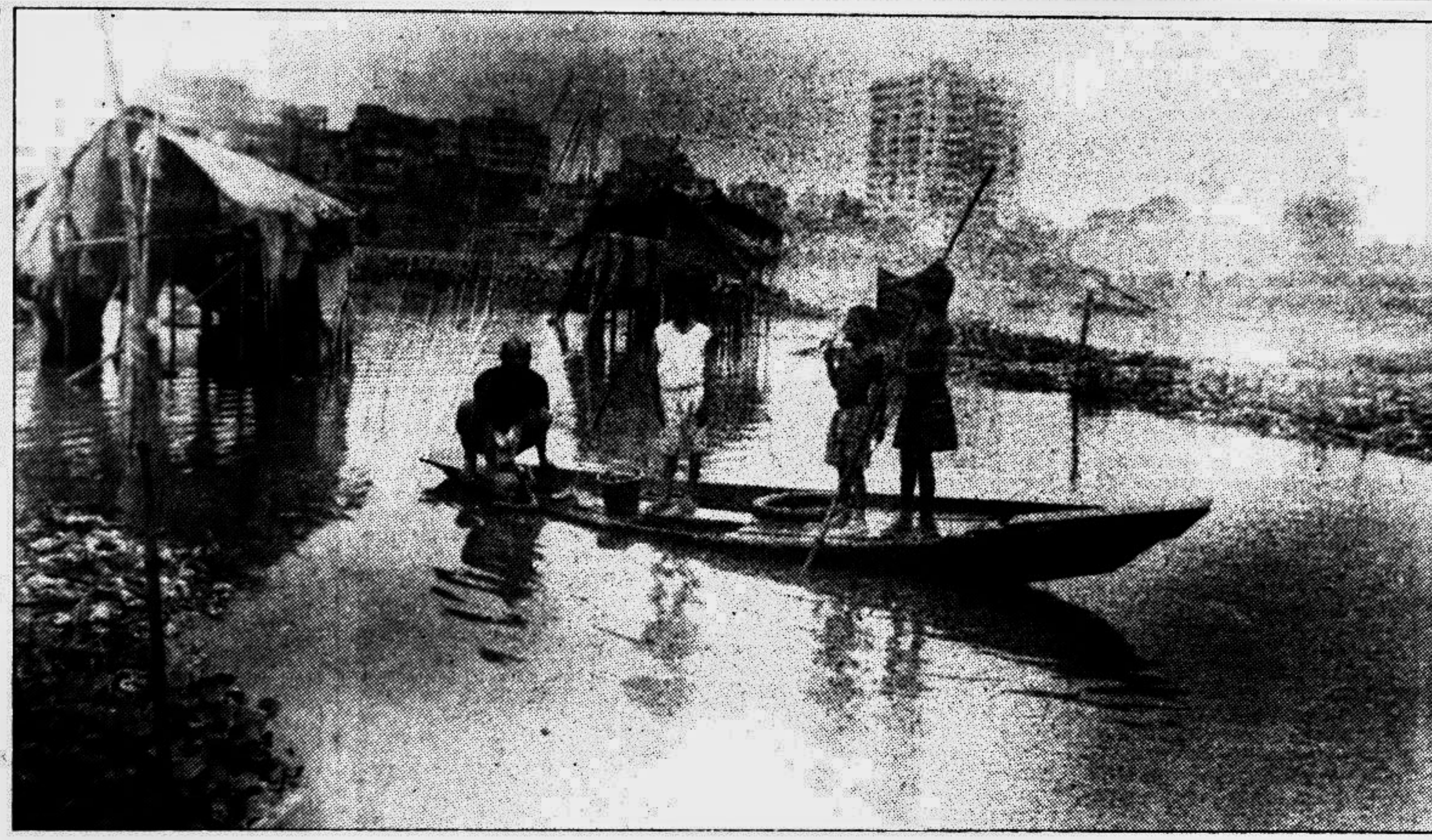
The body of Mahbub, who was found dead in the wheel carriage of a Biman Airbus at Riyadh airport in May, was handed over to his father at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) yesterday.

Saudi authorities sent Mahbub's body, death certificate and other reports to Dhaka by a Biman flight which landed at the ZIA earlier in the day, according to a Biman official.

Quoting the death certificate, the official said Mahbub was fatally injured due to pressure in his chest and head. However, most of the other reports sent from Saudi Arabia were in Arabic and the details would not be known immediately.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism, Dr Mohtuddin Khan Alamgir, gave a cheque for Tk one lakh to Mahbub's father Moazzem Hossain during the handing over of the coffin at the VIP lounge of

See Page 12 Col 3



Rain waters have submerged low lying areas of the city.

—Star photo

## Flood grips six more districts Road communication with 16 N-districts snapped

By Staff Correspondent

Flood gripped at least six more districts yesterday while direct road communication between the capital and 16 northern districts remained snapped as over 100 feet stretch of Nagarbari-Natakhalia highway at Raghunathpur in Bera thana of Pabna was washed away Thursday night.

However, ferry services between Aricha and Nagarbari resumed yesterday morning after nearly 12 hours of suspension, official sources said.

Flood situation ten districts worsened while low-lying areas in Pabna, Sirajganj, Sherpur, Khulna, Rajshahi and Lalmonirhat went under water due to incessant rain.

Five people were drowned in flood waters in Cox's Bazar and 30 others killed in landslides in Chittagong and three hill districts.

Dhaka city and most parts of the country experienced significant rain for the fourth day yesterday.

Most parts of the Khulna city were submerged due to down-pour overnight, according to a report received here.

In the low-lying areas, kutchas houses and ground floor

of concrete buildings also went under water.

Rain water entered the city's 31 wards, including Khan Jahan Ali Road, Basupara, Banorgati, Jinna Nagar, Iqbal Nagar, Bania Khamar, Nazirhat and

Editorial on page 4

Jahanabad areas. In Pabna, incessant down-pour swelled two major rivers of the district inundating 45 villages in seven thanas, including low-lying areas of the town.

A Flood Information Centre bulletin yesterday said nine rivers in the Meghna and South-Eastern Hill basins were flowing above danger levels in the morning, inundating low-lying areas of the regions.

See Page 12 Col 7

**Major rivers cross danger marks**

Nine major rivers have crossed their respective danger marks while the others continued to rise due to heavy rain, reports UNB.

A Flood Information Centre bulletin yesterday said nine rivers in the Meghna and South-Eastern Hill basins were flowing above danger levels in the morning, inundating low-lying areas of the regions.

See Page 12 Col 7

## Murder at DU: BCL expels 2 activists

By DU Correspondent

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) has expelled two of its activists for their alleged involvement in the killing of Imam Hossain Tonal, a city unit leader of BCL, a press release said yesterday.

The two are Farid Ahmed Sentu alias Sada Sentu, a central committee member and Shahin Khan, Vice-President of the Dhaka city unit of BCL.

The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the executive committee of the BCL, the press release said.

The press release was signed by AKM Enamul Haq Shamim and Ishaque Ali Khan Panna, president and the general secretary respectively of the BCL.

Imam Hossain Tonal, assistant library secretary of the BCL city unit (north) was stabbed to death early morning Wednesday on the Dhaka University campus. His body was found on the road near the east gate of Curzon Hall.

None was arrested in this connection till yesterday, police

See Page 12 Col 1

**Garments workers to observe strike July 30**

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Garments Workers and Employees Federation has called for a 24-hour strike in all units of the country on July 30 to press home 8-point demand of Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) and 5-point demand of garments workers.

The Federation also urged the garments workers and employees to gherao BGMEA office in Dhaka on July 24.

The strike call was given at a rally of the Federation held at Gulshan Circle 2 kutchas bazar yesterday afternoon, said a press release.

With the Federation president Abul Hussain in the chair, the rally was addressed by Renu Begum, Aiyub Khan, Fazlul Karim, Mahar Ali, Nahid Rahman, Delwar Hussain, Anwar Hussain, Nahar Akhter, Kaiyum Hussain, Hasina Begum and Arshad Ali.

## Magurchhara gas well fire Probe body to submit report tomorrow

By Sharier Khan

The five-member committee set up to investigate the Magurchhara gas well explosion incident has finalised its report and will submit it to the Energy Minister tomorrow, according to sources.

Committee members and government officials remained tight-lipped about the findings, saying that early disclosure of these would create confusion.

Energy Minister Lt Gen (ret'd) Nooruddin Khan, when asked about this, told The Daily Star, "Whichever organisation is found responsible for the explosion will have to pay for the damages caused by the explosion. If Occidental (the US company doing the exploration) is found responsible, it will have to compensate for the damages. If not, we'll have to compensate for the damages jointly (the government and the Occidental)."

The committee, headed by

the Additional Secretary of the Energy Ministry, was formed on June 15 after the report of the explosion reached the authorities in Dhaka.

It has separately interviewed all field staff involved in the drilling of Magurchhara well on that night. The number of interviewed persons would be 13 or 14, one source said.

Following the explosion, allegations were made by various quarters against US company Occidental that the disaster occurred because of its negligence or inefficiency.

Experts had earlier said that the explosion took place due to uncontrollable high pressure inside the well. Occidental was drilling at a depth of 839 metres when the accident took place.

Occidental's officials had so far refrained from making any comment about the cause of the explosion but indicated that it

See Page 12 Col 8

## Kukis kill 14, torch over 100 villages in Manipur

IMPHAL, July 11: At least 14 persons including five women were killed, five seriously injured and over hundred houses torched when armed Kuki militants attacked a series of villages on Mata Paite and Hengmoul villages of Churachandpur district of Manipur during the past 24 hours, reports PTI.

Official sources said that about 50 armed Kuki militants raided the Mata Paite village, about nine kms south of Churachandpur police station at 0315 hours this morning.

As the villagers were asleep, the sources said, the militants started setting ablaze houses and opened fire indiscriminately killing ten persons including five women on the spot. Five others were seriously injured and at least 58 houses were set on fire.

The injured were taken to the nearby hospital where their condition was stated to be in serious condition.

Another report adds: Security personnel have been put on red alert following fresh ethnic clashes in Churachandpur district where Kuki militants killed four persons and torched over 42 houses in Chamol and Hengmoul villages, under Singhat subdivision, yesterday.

Official sources today said the victims belonged to Zou community, a close tribal group of the Paite community. The chieftain of Hengmoul area, Bumzhang Zou, was among those killed in the attack.

Sources said the Kuki-Paite clashes have claimed over 50 lives since June 25 last. Over 200 houses have been set ablaze or destroyed and several hundred villagers rendered homeless.

Official sources said the reason behind the violence was that Kuki militants suspected that a section of Paite community was helping armed Nagas in the Kuki-Naga clashes.

## 16 AL teams for organisational tour formed

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League Central Working Committee (ALCWC), at an emergency meeting yesterday, formed 16 teams to start an extensive organisational tour of the country later this month.

The meeting, the second one of the present ALCWC formed earlier this year, was held at the Ganabhaban with Prime Minister and AL chief Sheikh Hasina in the chair. Starting at 8 pm, the two-hour meeting ended with a dinner hosted by the party president.

According to sources, Sheikh Hasina asked the ALCWC members to undertake organisational tour of all the 64 districts, arrange rallies and contact the masses to highlight the AL-government's achievements so far.

The Prime Minister, who is leaving Dhaka tonight on a three-week visit to Germany and the US, said that during her absence Foreign Minister and AL presidium member Abdus Samad Azad, as the senior most leader, would oversee day to day developments in the country.

The meeting discussed in details the latest socio-political developments.

It also discussed in brief a report placed by party general secretary Zillur Rahman about latest party activities.

Earlier, the ALCWC consoled the deaths of eminent persons who passed away since its last meeting.

## IU teachers begin strike today demanding removal of VC

From Our Correspondent

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY (Kushtia), July 14: Islamic University Teachers Association (IUTA) today announced an indefinite work stoppage from tomorrow demanding removal of Vice-Chancellor Professor Inamul-Haq on charge of 'corruption'. The leaders of the association will submit a memorandum to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in this regard tomorrow.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of the ruling party, continued strike for the 12th day today on the campus demanding removal of the Vice-Chancellor for his reported move to introduce the faculty of Islam and comparative religion. The BCL also blamed the VC for, what it said, his pro-BNP role.

Islamic Chhatra Shibir also demanded removal and trial of the Vice-Chancellor for his alleged involvement in corruption and nepotism. But the Shibir demanded introduction of the faculty of Islam and comparative religion in the varsity.

## 6 shot dead in Karachi

KARACHI, July 11: Six people, including three policemen, were shot dead today in Karachi's eastern district, police said, reports AFP.

Sub-inspector Kashifur Rehman, his younger brother, a bodyguard and a police driver, were ambushed soon after they came out of a mosque after saying their Friday noon prayers in Malir district, police said.

Rehman was the son of a senior official of the Karachi police. Azizur Rehman, Police described the incident as a targeted killing.

Police said the gunmen believed to be three in number, later seized a car parked near the mosque and fled.

Police recovered the body of an unidentified man from the car abandoned by the attackers

See Page 12 Col 5