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**Meetings around**  
**Baitul Mukarram**  
**banned**

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner has banned holding of meetings, processions, miking and carrying arms and ammunition around the Baitul Mukarram Mosque, especially at its northern and southern gate from today, a DMP press release said, reports BSS.

The ban will be enforced from 6 am on the day for ensuring public security and maintaining peace, the press release said.

**PM assures US investors of more incentives**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina assured foreign investors of providing all the existing incentives and facilities and expressed readiness to offer more if needed, reports UNB.

"I assure I'll take personal initiative to ensure the facilities," she said.

The Prime Minister was addressing a number of noted US Congressmen and businessmen of Florida, USA, at a banquet on Sunday night, according to a message received in the city yesterday.

Sheikh Hasina outlined the incentive package and facilities being provided to attract foreign direct investment in Bangladesh.

She said political instability, which was the biggest impediment to national development in the past, had been removed.

"Political stability has been ensured in Bangladesh through the system of holding election under non-party, neutral caretaker government," Hasina told the American lawmakers and businessmen.

**EC may defer ban on Bangladeshi frozen foods**

The European Community (EC) may defer its embargo on the import of Bangladeshi frozen foods into the EC countries by one month from August 15 to September 15, reports UNB.

An indication to this effect was received by the Foreign Office in the city yesterday from Bangladesh mission in Brussels, which is keeping close contact with the EC headquarters on the subject.

**Ekushey Bhaban to be built**

The government will construct a 21-storied building — Ekushey Bhaban at the Bangla Academy premises in memory of the great Language Movement, reports BSS.

The construction work is expected to begin February 1, and it will cost Tk 52 crore.

**State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs**

Obaidul Quader disclosed this during his surprise visit to the Bangla Academy yesterday. Director General of the Bangla Academy Prof Syed Anwar Hossain was present.

**Inside Today**  
**Article**  
**What about Good Loans?**

Column: Window on Asia by Shahed Latif Page 4

**Focus**  
**Arsenic alert: Resolving the problem: Private sector approach**

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**Business**  
**Bureaucrats slept as ban on Bangladeshi shrimps was in offing**

DSE index continues to fall Pages 6,7

**International**  
**Gun battles erupt as police try to disarm militants in Karachi**

Indian EC asks state govts to be prepared for early polls Page 8

## 48 out of 51 edible oil refineries operate without valid licences

By Naimul Haq

Forty-eight soyabean and palm oil refineries out of a total of 51 have been marketing products without having their licences renewed, according to sources in the Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institute (BSTI).

Owners of the refineries failed to renew their licences despite after several official reminders. "All the refineries have been manufacturing goods violating rules and procedures," said a BSTI official.

Only three refineries have applied for renewal of licences to continue production, which are in process. The others continue to import crude and market the finished products — soyabean and palm oil — without facing any action from the authorities concerned. All such violators can be indicted under law but no step has been taken as yet, the official pointed out.

Vice Chairman of Bangladesh Soybean Oil Refinery Association Nazmul Haq Chowdhury, when contacted, admitted that there were a number of refineries which had not renewed their licences. But, he said, "Obtaining licence is not a problem for us. It is the government policy which is creating all the hindrances in the way of obtaining permission."

He further said, "the government wants that we pay BSTI certification marks (CM) fee at the rate of Tk 0.10 for every product manufactured, which is not reasonable. After paying high rate of taxes, making such other payments will hurt the refineries, already in

shambles. We pay more than 60 per cent tax and levy, which include 30 pc import duty, 15 pc VAT, 5 pc development charges and Jamuna Bridge surcharge and others."

He also said, "the sector has already suffered serious setbacks. A number of refineries have closed down while others remain closed due to high production cost. Two years ago, the refineries which were able to produce more than 50 pc of their capacity paid fees at the rate of Tk 1.50 for every metric ton of crude used for manufacturing. But the authorities neglected our suggestion to reintroduce the fees."

The BSTI Council had decided to impose the CM fee of Tk 0.10, earlier fixed at Tk 0.15. The 39-member council, headed

## Federation Cup final today

Sports Reporter

Aspirants Abahani Krira Chakra take on giant-killer Arambagh Krira Sangha in the final of the 14th Federation Cup football tournament at the Mirpur Stadium today.

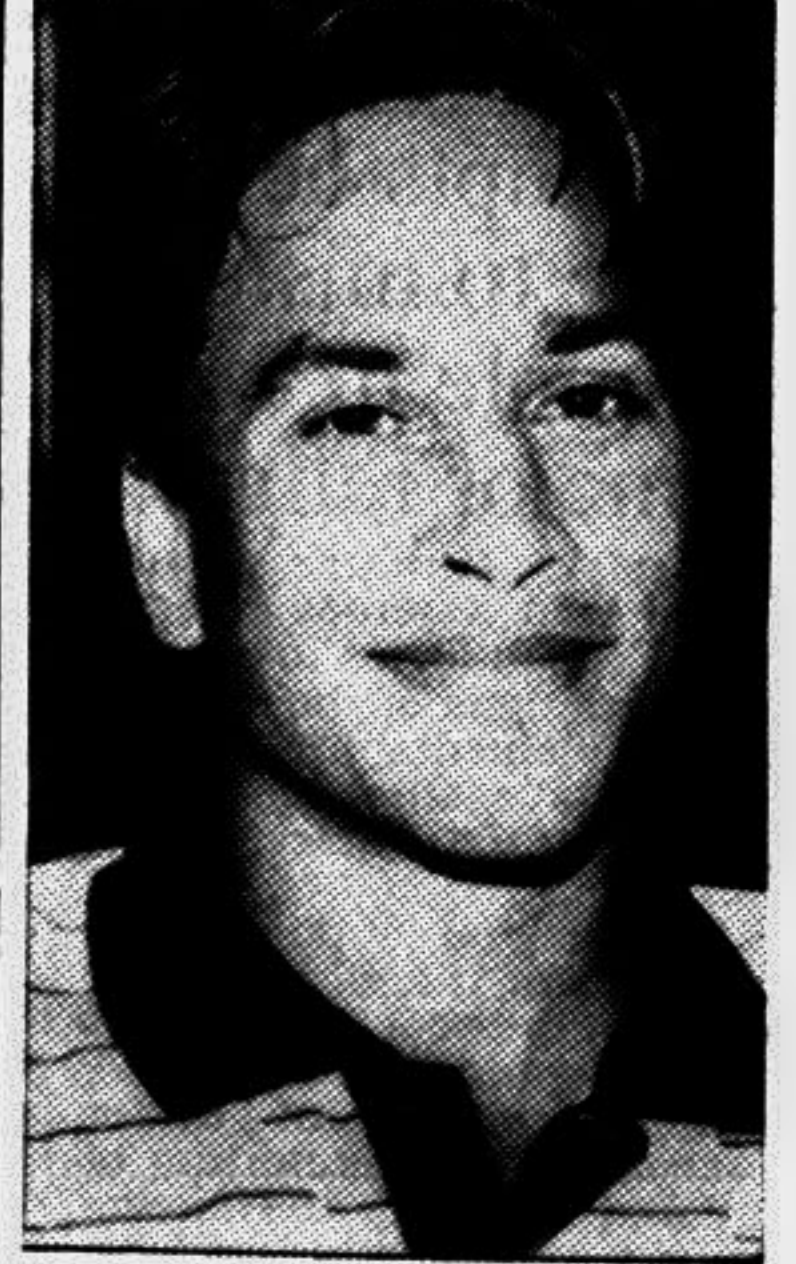
The match will kick off at 5 pm. Bangladesh Television will cover the final live while Bangladesh Betar will provide running commentary from the big bowl.

Meanwhile, the third place-deciding match between the losing semifinalists — Mohammed Sporting Club and Muktiyoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra, scheduled for a 3 pm start at the same venue, was called off by the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) after both teams expressed their reluctance to appear in what they called an insignificant affair.

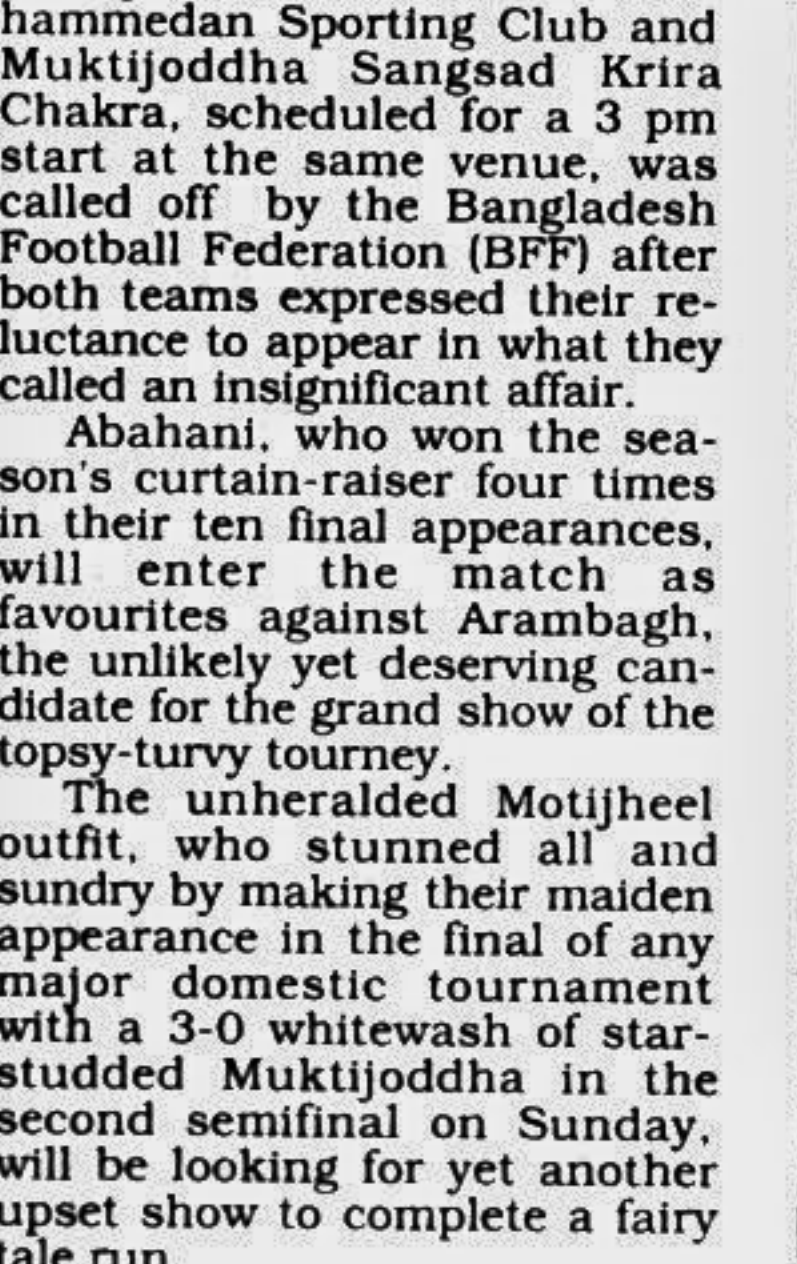
Abahani, who won the season's curtain-raiser four times in their ten final appearances, will enter the match as favourites against Arambagh, the unlikely yet deserving candidate for the grand show of the topsy-turvy tourney.

The unheralded Motijheel outfit, who stunned all and sundry by making their maiden appearance in the final of any major domestic tournament with a 3-0 whitewash of star-studded Muktiyoddha in the second semifinal on Sunday, will be looking for yet another upset show to complete a fairly tale run.

"We ought to prove that our



Zakir Hossain



Mahbubur Rahman Roxy

## Depression: Heavy rain likely

The monsoon depression over north Bay slightly moved northwards and was centered about 300 kilometre southwest of Chittagong port and 230 km south of Khulna city at 9 pm yesterday, reports UNB.

A Met Office special bulletin said it is likely to move in a north or northwesterly direction.

Maximum sustained wind within 40 km of the depression centre is about 40 kph rising to 50 kph in gust or squalls. Sea will remain rough.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to keep hoisted local cautionary signal number 3.

Under its influence, heavy to very heavy rain accompanied

## Two murdered in city

By DMC Correspondent

Two persons, including an accused in a murder case in Jessore, were murdered in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

The accused, identified as Mosharof Hossain, 30, was found dead on a pavement in Paribagh area under Ramna thana. Besides, police recovered the body of a barber shop employee, Dulal, 23, from the shop at Swamibagh in the old part of the city in the morning.

Mosharof, accused in a 1993 murder case in Sarsa thana, was bullet hit in his head and had deep cut marks in the neck and other parts of his body, police said.

He was on bail and came to

## Death of Salman Shah 3-member body to re-examine autopsy report

Home Ministry has formed a three-member expert committee to re-examine the post-mortem and viscera reports of late filmstar Salman Shah, reports UNB.

Prof M Shamsul Haq, head of the Forensic Department of Dhaka Medical College, was made chief of the committee while Head of the Chittagong Medical College Forensic Department is one of its members.

Meanwhile, a magistrate, Golam Rabbani, has been asked to be present during interrogation of arrested Reza in the CID office.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court has already allowed the Criminal Investigation Department to take Reza in a two-day police remand.

## Strike at CU today

CHITTAGONG, Aug 4: General Student Parishad has called a day-long strike at Chittagong University tomorrow to realise its four-point demand, reports UNB.

The parishad, a non-political student body, announced the programme from a rally today.

Their demands included immediate introduction of academic calendar, formation of Parishad Parishad and immediate reopening of Prillata Hall for resident students of the university.

## Bangabandhu Murder Case

### I was not aware of any breach in army chain of command: PW-4

By Staff Correspondent

The fourth prosecution witness in the Bangabandhu murder case told the Court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka, yesterday that he was not aware of any breach in the Army chain of command while he was on duty at the residence of Bangabandhu on August 15, 1975.

Mohammad Quddus Sikder, 58, a retired Army Havildar who was the Guard Commander at the residence of the then President Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, also told the court that he continued his duty there till the morning of August 17, 1975 and was not aware of any breach in the Army chain of command during that time.

During the day's proceedings, lawyers of the five accused in custody completed their cross-examination of Sikder.

Sikder was earlier cross-examined by the 14 lawyers of the state defence, appointed by the government for the 14 absconding accused in the case.

After a break of three days, hearing of the case resumed at about 11:00 am yesterday and continued till about 4:40 pm.

The next prosecution witness will make his deposition tomorrow when the hearing resumes at 10:30 am.

Sikder also told the court that many people wanted to visit the residence of Bangabandhu after the killings but

they were stopped by guards.

The Army and police guards deployed at the residence of Bangabandhu did not exchange gunshots with the attackers, he said.

He was asked whether the list of items found in that house including arms and ammunition which were also recorded in the inventory, were prepared in his presence. Sikder answered in the negative.

He also told the court that he did not see any arms and ammunition in that house.

He also said that an Army officer visited the residence after the incident but he was not aware whether that officer was

## Rival BNP faction holds rally in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 4: The supporters of the BNP faction led by Abdullah Al Noman, opposing the formation of new city committee of the party, held a rally and brought out a procession again today to voice their resentment, party sources said.

They chanted slogans demanding cancellation of the committee formed with Mir Md Nasiruddin and Dostagir Chowdhury as president and general secretary respectively and urged for constituting another committee of their choice.

Meanwhile, the BNP leaders summoned by the party chairperson went to Dhaka to attend the meeting aimed at resolving the internal rivalry in Chittagong, party sources said.

## No trace yet of missing maid

By Staff Correspondent

Police were yet to trace the maid suspected of foul play in the incident that left one person dead and nine others seriously sick following dinner in a house at Sobhanbagh in the city Friday night.

According to police sources, the 25-year-old maid, Nasima, joined the affected family as domestic help on the day of the incident. Earlier, two months ago she worked in the house as maid for about a week.

Questioning the family members, police suspected that the maid could have been involved in mixing poison in the food items served in Friday's dinner. However, police said they could confirm it only after getting the chemical analysis report of the food items.

A businessman, Kabir Hossain Chowdhury, 40, died after having the food Friday. His wife, two daughters, members of

## BNP calls hartal in Sylhet today

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 4: The Sylhet District BNP has called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the district tomorrow to protest the government's failure in restoring the rail communications, frequent loadshedding and price-hike of essentials.

To drum up support for the hartal, a big rally was held in the town this afternoon with district BNP president M A Haque in the chair.

The speakers also called upon the government to arrange Barge service up to Sherpur to ensure speedy supply of essentials. Later a torch procession paraded the streets of the town.

UNB adds: BNP Standing Committee member M Saifur Raihan MF urged the people of Sylhet to make the hartal programme a success.

In a statement issued in Dhaka today, he alleged that an

## Plan to involve foreign banks in term-lending

By Staff Correspondent

In a bid to boost project financing, the govt is formulating a strategy to involve the foreign banks in term-lending, bringing them out of their traditional role of trade financing.

A high level meeting of the chiefs of all foreign banks in Bangladesh, Governor of the Bangladesh Bank, and resident representative of the World Bank with the Finance Minister SAMS Kibria yesterday formed a committee to suggest how the foreign banks could involve themselves in project financing.

The committee consisting of representatives from CIBBank, ANZ Grindlays Bank, Standard Chartered Bank and Banque Indosuez will submit its proposals to the finance ministry within three weeks.

Initially the government is thinking about giving some financial incentives to the foreign banks to woo them into term lending.

"Foreign banks are welcome to open up shops here because they help upgrade the banking operations by introducing internal practices. But having said this they are confined to trade financing which is important, but not a very direct contribution to industrialisation," said Finance Minister Kibria while talking to The Daily Star yesterday. "I want them to enter the field of term loans with their better appraisal and monitoring capabilities."

The government is also toying with the idea of cutting syndication deals between foreign and local banks and leasing companies to diversify the funds of the foreign banks.

The foreign banks' role in project financing is now seen as

## Team leaves for Tripura Thursday

### Chakmas will be persuaded once again to return home

By Special Correspondent

A seven-member delegation of the National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts (NCCHT) will try to persuade the refugees once again to return home when it visits refugee camps during its three-day visit to Tripura in India, beginning Thursday.

It is expected to hold talks with the refugee leaders, who had put stiff conditions like involvement of the UNHCR and ICRC in repatriation and rehabilitation of the refugees.

Some 40 thousand refugees are living in squalid and cramped camps in southern Tripura.

## 'No one in society will accept us now'

From Our Correspondent

"No one in the society will accept us now as it has already been circulated that we were raped," said one of the four sisters violated on Friday night at Siddhirganj allegedly by five youths.

Marriage of one of the sisters was settled with a businessman in Comilla. But it has become uncertain now, they told this correspondent.

Three of the sisters had moved to their eldest sister's place at Sanarpur in Siddhirganj over about a month ago from Barura in Comilla district, hoping to be employed in a local garments factory.

On the previous day of the tragic incident, Alek Hossain, the brother-in-law of the three

sisters, was beaten up. "They entered the house and beat my son-in-law. They took Alek with them and confined him at an unknown place," said Shaha Begum, Alek's mother-in-law.

"On Friday, eight people entered our house. It was then dark all around," the eldest sister, expecting her first child, narrated. "They first tied up my mother and put off the lights. They then raped my young sisters. Even I was not spared."

At one stage, the elder sister managed to escape and reached the Siddhirganj police station. A police force immediately rushed to the spot and encircled the area. They entered the house

prevailed over the remaining refugees not to return home unless their return and resettlement is supervised by the international bodies.

The government also countered it saying the Indian authorities did not allow the international agencies like UNHCR and ICRC to look after the refugees in Tripura.

As the stalemate in the repatriation process hanged over an expected accord on the decades-old CHT problems last month, the government decided to send a delegation to Tripura

See Page 12 Col 7



Singer Doly Sayantoni performing at the Philips Light Dealers Night 1997 at Sonargaon Hotel yesterday. —Star photo

## Arakan separatist groups face tough time

From Nurul Alam

On the other hand, Bangladesh border guards have been put on high alert along the border with Myanmar amid increased patrolling to check the infiltration both by insurgents and fresh Rohingya refugees, BDR sources said.

The Myanmar border security force, Nasaka, increased the border patrolling recently after Bangladesh border guard officials sent a protest note to them against the backdrop of fresh influx of Rohingya refugees from Arakan state.

They said the activists of those Arakan separatist groups were moving from one place to

## Operation suspended at Sylhet hospital

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 4: Operations have been suspended at the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital since yesterday due to shortage of oxygen cylinders.

Bangladesh Oxygen Ltd could not supply cylinders as road links between Dhaka and Sylhet remained snapped for the last few weeks, said an official of the hospital.

The stock in the hospital also came to the lowest, which can only be used for emergency operations, he added.

**Solemnly Remembering**  
**REAR ADMIRAL MAHBUB ALI KHAN**  
On his 13th Death Anniversary, Tomorrow August 6th 1997

"Salute thee, the Noble Son of the soil and Vanguard of the Sea, Who breathed his last while serving his distressed countrymen."

Milad Mahfil Tomorrow, August 6th, 1997  
After Asar Prayer at 5:30 P.M.  
at MAHBUB BHAVAN  
House No-40, Road No-5, Dhanmandi R/A.  
All are cordially Invited to attend.  
**BEGUM MAHBUB ALI KHAN**