

## Shima rape case HC accepts govt appeal for hearing

By SC Correspondent  
The High Court yesterday accepted for hearing the government appeal filed against the judgement of acquittal of all accused in the Shima rape case.  
The court, however, refused to issue warrant of arrest against the accused.  
The appeal will be heard, call for the records and send usual notices," the division bench of the HC comprising Justice AM Mahmudur Rahman and Justice Md Nurul Islam directed in the order.  
Attorney General KS Nabi in his submission argued for issuing warrant of arrest against the accused apprehending that the accused may leave the country to avoid due process of law.  
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## Loans to sister concerns of defaulting cos Bankers oppose amendment to Bank Company Act

By Inam Ahmed  
Top bankers of all the private and nationalised commercial banks yesterday unanimously observed that any amendment to the Bank Company Act regarding loan facilities to subsidiary enterprises of loan defaulting companies would jeopardise the financial position of the banks.  
This view was expressed in a meeting of chief executives of banks with the Governor of the Bangladesh Bank (BB) yesterday at the BB conference room.  
Earlier, the Governor had sought opinions of the bankers about a proposed amendment to the law that bars credits to subsidiary enterprises of loan defaulting companies, according to bankers present in the meeting.  
The bankers, in response said any relaxation of the law will jeopardise the current loan recovery drive of the banks which the banks will not be able to sustain.  
However, after hearing the bankers' views, the Governor, Lutfar Rahman Sarkar, asked them to take a lenient view towards the companies which are not willful defaulters and have good projects needing finance.  
He also requested them to reschedule defaulted loans of a subsidiary company if a group wants loan against a good project.  
The bankers also said that it was not the duty of the commercial banks to provide industrial loans and added that during the Pakistan period and even in the 70s, commercial banks were not involved in term-lending.  
They were of the view that it would be risky for banks to provide term-loans from depositors' money. They said, experience of the past, especially



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina being received by Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad at the Zia International Airport on her return home yesterday. —PID photo

## EU extends time for exporting frozen food till Sept

CHITTAGONG, Aug 6: An official of Britain's Trade and Industry department, David J Burton, said here today the time for exporting Bangladesh's frozen foods to Europe had been extended till September this year, reports UNB.  
Burton, who is also a promoter of British goods, regretted the ban imposed recently on the import of Bangladeshi frozen foods, including shrimp, into EU countries.  
The British executive said during a meeting with the President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Zafrul Islam Chowdhury MP, at the Chamber Bhaban, according to a press release.  
Burton said 90 per cent of the EU countries.

## BNP demands BTV announcement on acceptance of its conditions

By Staff Correspondent  
In its response to BTV's first letter on the same issue, BNP had demanded that the state-owned medium give up its 'partisan role and the practice of belittling' the party.  
In the reply sent yesterday, Mannan Bhuiyan said that in BTV's second letter there was no mention of the BNP demands which had suggested BTV's return to the position it maintained before this government came to power. "There was nothing unjust, impossible and excess in our demands," he said, adding his party made those to help the authorities create a situation conducive to the

## PM returns home

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina returned home this morning from Miami via London, reports UNB.  
A regular flight of Bangladesh Biman carrying the Prime Minister touched the tarmac of the Zia International Airport at 7:15 am.  
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina left the country on July 13 for Hamburg of Germany to attend the UNESCO-sponsored international conference on adult education.  
She went to Miami on July 15 to stay with her daughter Saima Sharmeen Putul who gave birth to her first child on July 19.  
Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria, Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak, Dhaka City Mayor Mohammad Hanif, State Minister for Planning and Civil Aviation and Tourism Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Chiefs of three services and other high government and military officials were present at the airport to receive the Prime Minister.

## EC appeal for opinions on polls reform No response from major parties

By Morshed Ali Khan  
None of the major political parties has responded to the Election Commission's appeal soliciting their opinions on electoral reforms, EC sources said.  
Last April, the EC had sent a questionnaire to all political parties, organisations concerned and individuals inviting their opinions on what reforms in the present electoral process could help conduct a free and fair election.  
An EC source said only Bangladesh Communist Party came up with its suggestions.  
"Political parties, editors of different national newspapers have aired their views about reforms in the past. It is sad that none have come forward when we need their suggestions most," he said.  
The questionnaire focused on independence of the EC, delimitation of the constituencies, bank loan default, conduct of presidential, parliamentary and local elections, transparency in electoral process, electoral inquiry committee, voter registration, registration

## CPA team to go to S'pore for talks with CFTC

From Nurul Alam  
CHITTAGONG, Aug 6: The Chittagong Port Authority is sending a 5-member delegation to Singapore on August 12 to hold a meeting with members of the Chittagong Feeder Trade Committee (CFTC), an association of feeder vessel operators, for withdrawing its decision on imposition of congestion surcharge at the port.  
The delegation is expected to leave for Singapore on August 11, port sources added.  
The Chittagong Port Authority yesterday received the confirmation of the August 12 meeting in Singapore through telephonic communication with the convenor of CFTC, An-  
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## Noman urges Ctg BNP men to work unitedly

By Staff Correspondent  
Joint secretary general of BNP Abdullah Al Noman, who backed the party rebels in Chittagong, has appealed to all leaders and workers of the party in the port city to sink their differences and work unitedly under the new committee formed by the party chief.  
In a press statement last night, Noman, however, viewed that the discontent among the rival factions could have been avoided if the 'committee of consensus' prepared maintaining the status quo, was approved.  
"Besides, changes were made in the committee formed by me and others, who were authorised to do the job, before it was submitted to the standing committee," the former president of the Chittagong city BNP pointed out.  
The statement further said that Noman, also the president of Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal, would meet the leaders of the Chittagong BNP and its front organisations at the local party office today at 3 pm.

## KU teachers lock VC's office

From Staff Correspondent  
KHULNA, Aug 6: The agitating teachers of the Khulna University today locked the office of the Vice-Chancellor and public relations department.  
The teachers have been agitating since long demanding the implementation of their 15-point demand.  
They locked the office demanding the resignation of VC for his 'failure' to meet their demands.  
The teachers also urged the officials not to do any work assigned by the Vice-Chancellor.  
According to KU sources, the VC has already met eight out of 15 demands of the teachers.



Lili Islam rendering songs at a function at the Shipakala Academy yesterday in observance of death anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore. —Star photo

## Bangabandhu Murder Case I could not seek help as Lancer forces encircled me: PW-5

By Staff Correspondent  
The fifth prosecution witness in Bangabandhu murder case, Abdul Gani, said yesterday that as he was encircled by Lancer forces in the guard room, he could not seek help from police guards when the then President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members were killed at his residence on August 15, 1975.  
Gani, 55, was being cross-examined in the Court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka, by one of the five lawyers of the accused in custody. Another lawyer started cross-examining him but it remained incomplete.  
Earlier, five lawyers of state defence for the absconding accused cross-examined Gani, a retired Army Havildar, who was

## Another committee formed to crack down on illegal construction in city

By Staff Correspondent  
Government has once again formed a high-powered committee to crack down on unauthorised construction and to monitor the implementation of the National Building Construction Act and Rules within the 590 square miles Rajuk area, sources concerned said.  
The decision was taken at a meeting held at the Rajuk Bhaban on July 10. It was chaired by Minister for Public Works Mohammad Nasim. The four-member committee is headed by the Secretary of the Works Ministry, Chairman, Member, Land and Administration and the Secretary of Rajuk will act as its members.  
This is the second such committee formed within the span of one year. Following the collapse of a building in Kalabagan area last year, Rajuk formed a committee to crack down on unauthorised constructions and to monitor implementation of the National Building Construction Act and Rules. It was headed by the Member, Land and Administration of Rajuk.  
Rajuk sources said the 1996 committee even failed to submit its preliminary report about the anomalies in the construction sector in the city. "All activities of the committee mysteriously came to a halt after a while", said one source.  
The present committee is empowered to take any steps to crack down on the building anomalies within its jurisdiction," said an official requesting anonymity.

## Lanka breaks 59-yr-old Test total record

COLOMBO, Aug 6: Sri Lanka scored the highest total in Test cricket, and Sanath Jayasuriya took the honours for making the top individual score against India on the final day of the first cricket Test which ended in a draw in Colombo on Wednesday, reports AP.  
Sri Lanka ended the last day's play at 952 for 6, a new Test innings record that surpassed a previous best of 903 for 7 made by England against Australia at the Oval in 1938. The new mark was created in 271 overs in three days.  
Continuing from an overnight 326 with Sri Lanka on 587 for one, Jayasuriya made 340 to become the highest run-getter against India when he went past a previous best 333 made by England's Graham Gooch at Lords.  
But the 28-year-old left-hander fell just 35 runs short of Brian Lara's world record of 375.  
Jayasuriya's marathon innings ended in the first ball of the morning's fourth over when silly point Saurav Ganguly held on to a simple catch off spinner Rajesh Chauhan.  
Pandemonium prevailed outside the venue just before and after the start of play as police battled restless spectators. Organisers, hoping that Jayasuriya would achieve greater heights, decided to abolish tickets for the final day.  
But when Jayasuriya departed, so did many of the spectators whose presence in large numbers, seen for the first time in the match, may have distracted the batsman.  
Jayasuriya's concentration was not the same as on the previous two days when he raced from an overnight 326 to 340 with the help of three fours in just 10 balls. But Jayasuriya bowed out after booking a place in a select band of 13 other  
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## 25 hurt in clashes during hartal in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent  
SYLHET, Aug 6: At least 25 people were injured in clashes between police and BNP activists during hartal in the town today.  
Today's hartal programme was announced by the BNP yesterday protesting police attack on a post-hartal rally of the party in the town earlier in the day. BNP had originally called a dawn-to-dusk hartal today but later the programme was shortened to end at 2 pm.  
During today's hartal, clashes and chase and counter chase took place between BNP activists and police in Zindabazar, Chouhatta, Ambarkhana and South Surma areas. Party sources alleged that police swooped on peaceful processions at Zindabazar and Chouhatta and picked up at least 20 BNP and JCD activists. Mesbahuddin Molla, a JCD activist was admitted to M A G Osmani Hospital with serious injuries.  
Two minibuses, one auto-rickshaw and some rickshaws were damaged by pickets during the hartal.  
The district JCD held a post-hartal rally in Court Point area with its president Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury in the chair. District BNP president M A Haque and secretary Ariful Haque Chowdhury and other leaders addressed the rally.  
The speakers said the government was totally ignoring the miseries of lakhs of people in the four districts of Sylhet  
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## Interim councils in Bandarban, Rangamati start work

The interim local government councils in Bandarban and Rangamati hill districts have started functioning, reports agencies.  
UNB adds: Thowai Cha Prue Master today took over the charge of the newly formed five-member Interim Local Government Council of the district.  
Thow Cha Prue Master, 53, will oversee the administration till the election of a full-fledged committee by next two months.  
Other members of the council are Abdur Rahim Chowdhury, Jewel Bown, Kyesheila and Prosanna Kanti Tongchanga.  
Earlier on Tuesday, the High Court directed the government to constitute interim local government councils in Rangamati.  
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## 7-member team leaves for Tripura today

A seven-member Bangladesh delegation will begin a three-day visit to Agartala today, reports UNB.  
The delegation will hold talks with Indian authorities on resumption of repatriation of Chakma refugees.  
Led by Kalparanjan Chakma, MP, the team will also hold talks with tribal leaders as well as officials of the Indian state of Tripura for the second phase of repatriation of the Chakmas.  
Kalparanjan Chakma, as the chairman of the government task force on repatriation affairs, enjoys the rank and status of a State Minister.  
Other members of the delegation are: Samiran Dewan, Bir Bahadur, MP, Divisional  
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## Salman Shah's death Rezvi placed under one month detention

Probe into the 'mystery' about death of filmmaker Salman Shah hit snags as the arrested Rezvi Ahmed was placed under a one month's detention, reports UNB.  
Rezvi was given 30-day detention when there was possibility of bringing out important disclosures from the young man after taking him on remand, approved by court, investigators said.  
"We came to know about the detention when a team went to Dhaka Central Jail yesterday to bring him on remand," said Subodh Chandra Chanda of CID.  
The Criminal Investigation Department official said following the detention order it was not possible to bring him on remand under CID custody for interrogation.  
When contacted, an official at Dhaka Central Jail said the  
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## Law against fatwabaj demanded

Participants at a discussion meeting yesterday demanded of the government to enact laws against 'fatwabaj', saying that they were creating social unrest by misinterpreting religion, reports BSS.  
Presided over by Barrister Shafiq Ahmed, the meeting was attended by Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqy, Dr Kamal Hussain, Col (ret) Abu Osman Chowdhury, Advocate Nurul Alam, Ajay Roy, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Ayesha Khanam, Maulana Abdul Awal, Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah, Khushi Kabir, Prof Muntassir Mamoon, Shahriar Kabir, Abul Kalam Azad and Gulam Kuddus.  
Prof Zillur Rahman said this section of 'fatwabaj' had been creating social unrest. Therefore, it was necessary to  
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## Call to monitor application of Factories Act in garments unit

By Staff Correspondent  
Sammita Nari Samaj has demanded setting up of an independent 'monitoring cell' to oversee application of the provisions of Factories Act in the garments factories in the country.  
The demand was made at a press conference held at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Samaj leaders Shirin Akter, Farida Akter, Nila Khan, Sultana Akter, Shumsunnahar Josna, Shima Das, Natasha Ahmed and Ila Chandra addressed it.  
The Samaj leaders alleged that the provisions of Factories Act and labour laws were not being properly followed in the garments factories. They said this was a major cause of fire in the factories.  
They urged the government  
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