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## Shima rape case HC accepts

# govt appeal for hearing

By SC Correspondent The High Court yesterday accepted for hearing the govern-ment appeal filed against the judgement of acquittal of all ac-cused 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 See Page 12 Col 8

## 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 this 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 See Page 12 Col 8

#### 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 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-See Page 12 Col 2

## Workers gherao Port Bhaban in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Aug 6: Chittagong Coaster and Hatch Workers Union today gheraoed the Port Bhaban to press home their demand for handling cargo at outer-anchorage ships. reports UNB. The port activities, however,

was normal despite the gherao which began at 10 am and continued till 3 pm. according to port sources. At a rally, leaders of the

union threatened that they See Page 12 Col 1

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to Live Together Column: Between the

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## Business

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# International

Over 200 feared dead as Korean jet crashes in Guam Page 8

## 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 meet-

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 wilful 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 pro-

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 de positors' money. They said, experience of the past, especially See Page 12 Col 1

#### Invitation to Khaleda

## BNP demands BTV announcement on acceptance of its conditions

By Staff Correspondent

BNP has demanded that the BTV make an announcement in clear terms on accepting its conditions given earlier for making the 'Deshbashir Mukhomukhi' programme a proper, neutral and well-intended one.

The demand was contained in BNP's reply to BTV's second letter inviting Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad and BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia to participate in the live programme. BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP, sent the reply to BTV Director General Syed Salahuddin Zaki yesterday.

Noman urges Ctg

BNP men to

work unitedly

By Staff Correspondent

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 commit-

night, Noman, however, viewed

that the discontent among the

rival factions could have been

avoided if the 'committee of

consensus', prepared maintain-

ing the status quo, was ap-

in the committee formed by me

and others, who were autho-

submitted to the standing

committee," the former presi-

dent of the Chittagong city BNP

that Noman, also the president

of Jativatabadi Sramik Dal.

Chittagong BNP and its front

VC's office

KHULNA, Aug 6: The agitat-

ing teachers of the Khulna Uni-

implementation of their 15-

manding the resignation of VC

for his 'failure' to meet their

officials not to do any work as-

signed by the Vice-Chancellor.

VC has already met eight out of

15 demands of the teachers.

They locked the office de-

The teachers also urged the

According to KU sources, the

lic relations department.

point demand.

demands.

office today at 3 pm.

"Besides, changes were made

proved.

pointed out.

in a press statement last

tee formed by the party chief.

Joint secretary general of

In its response to BTV's first letter on the same issue, BNP had demanded that the stateowned 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 Opposition leader's participation in the BTV programme. "But its mysterious why and with what motive our demands

Stressing that his party was sincere and is still so as regards participation in the programme, Mannan Bhuiyan said nominating two of the party leaders — M K Anwar and Dr Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain to discuss the matter with the BTV authorities clearly demonstrated this.

were ignored," the BNP leader

On the justification of the Opposition leader's proposed See Page 12 col 6





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

## Bangabandhu Murder Case

# 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 live lawyers of the accused in custody. Another lawyer started cross-examining him but it remained incom-

Earlier, five lawyers of state defence for the absconding accused cross-examined Gani, a retired Army Havilder, who was a Guard Commander at the residence of Bangabandhu when the killings took place. The nine other lawyers of the state defence cross-examined him the previous day.

The proceedings resumed at 11:00 am. The court was adjourned at about 4:35 pm till Monday. "I could not seek help from

police guards at the residence of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman during the time of incident on August 15, 1975 as I was encircled by the Lancer forces," he said adding that he did not see any police guard when he came out

Gani also said that he had earlier reported the incident of August 15, 1975 to his commanding officers Capt Bashar

and Naib Subedar Abdul Mo-

Gani said that while he was on duty at Bangabandhu's residence on August 14, 1975, Naib Subedar Abdul Motalib came to check the guard at around midnight and told him that the next shift of guards would arrive an hour ahead of schedule as Bangabandhu had a programme at the university.

He also said that his duty had begun at 6:00 am on August 14 for the next 24 hours. He also said that he could not complete the handover of charge to next Guard Commander Havilder Abdul Quddus Sikder at around 5:00 am, as he did not have the ammunition which were taken away by Wahab Joarder, the ac-See Page 12 Cof 4

## PM returns home

Prime Minister Sheikh Ha sina 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.

#### 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 moni tor 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 meeting held at the Rajuk Bha ban on July 10. It was chaired by Minister for Public Works Mohammad Nasim. The fourmember 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 Administra-

tion 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.

#### Tense situation continues to prevail at DU By DU Correspondent

A tense situation continued to prevail on the Dhaka University campus as the feuding student organisations could not reach a settlement of their disputes till yesterday.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of Awami League, and the pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) is accusing each other of disturbing their party activists in the Surya Sen Hall

The hall was recently evacuated and only the bona fide residents of the hall were allowed to enter after producing their identity cards as per an agreement between the student organisations and the university authorities. Twenty activists of JCD who

are the residents of BCL-dominated halls and cannot stay there, were allowed to stay in the hall on condition that they would be rehabilitated in their respective halls after August 10. But the BCL demanded their expulsion from the hall imme-

See Page 12 Col 4

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

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina being received by Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad at

the Zia International Airport on her return home yesterday.

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.

-PID photo

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 See Page 12 Col 7

# 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 became 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 lefthander fell just 35 runs short of Brian Lara's world record of

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 de-

parted, 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 See Page 12 Col 7

# 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 Moula, a JCD activist was admitted to M A G Osmani Hospital with serious injuries.

Two minibuses, one autorickshaw and some rickshaws were damaged by pickets during the hartal.

The district JCD held a posthartal 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 See Page 12 Col 8

#### Govt move to revamp leather industry Bangladesh Bank, the amount The government has decided

to take some sweeping measures to revamp the low-performing leather industry whose export earning last fiscal dropped by over 30 per cent from a year back, reports UNB. The decision was taken at a

meeting between Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria and a delegation of Bangladesh Finished Leather and Leathergoods Exporters Association held at the finance ministry yesterday. Commerce and Industries

Minister Tofael Ahmed was present at the meeting that reviewed the overall situation in the leather sector for resolving the problems it is facing. It was decided that if wet-

blue tannery firms spend their working capital to construct building and import machinery for converting their projects into crust and finished units the amount with interest would be considered as term loan. On permission from the

blocked account after scrutiny by the banks. The same amount could be sanctioned as working capital to the concerned units. Import of hides, including

could be transferred to a

wet-blue, will continue and enjoy the exemption of the existing 2.5 per cent customs duty and 2.5 per cent import licence fee for three years.

The meeting also decided that the application of those tannery units who produced crust and finished leather, having necessary machinery, and showed satisfactory performance in the past would be considered case-to-case.

It decided to waive the interest of the overdue loan of the wet-blue leather producers and fix a time-limit for repaying the

A decision to follow an identical method and interest policy by all banks regarding giving See Page 12 Col 1

#### Interim councils in Bandarban, Rangamati start work

The interim local govern-ment councils in Bandarban and Rangamati hill districts have started functioning, report agencies.

UNB adds: Thowai Cha Prue Master today took over the charge of the newly formed fivemember interim Local Gov-

ernment Council of the district. Thow Cha Prus aster, 53, will oversee the administration till the election of a fullfledged committee by next two months.

Other members of the council are Abdur Rahim Chowdhury, Jewel Bowm, Kyeshila and Prosanna Kanti Tongc-

Earlier on Tuesday, the High Court directed the government to constitute interim local government councils in Ranga-See Page 12 Col 5

### 7-member team leaves for Tripura today

A seven-member Bangladesh delegation will begin a threeday 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 repatriation of the Chakmas. Kalparanjan Chakma, as the chairman of the government task force on repatriation affairs, enjoys the rank and sta-

tus of a State Minister. Other members of the delegation are: Samiran Dewan, Bir Bahadur, MP, Divisional See Page 12 Col 3

#### Salman Shah's death Rezvi placed under one month

detention Probe into the 'mystery' about death of filmstar Salman Shah hit snags as the arrested Rezvi Ahmed was placed under a one month's detention, re-

ports 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, investiga-

tors 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

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 See Page 12 Col 4

#### 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 Siddigy, Dr Kamal Hussain, Col (retd) Abu Osman Chowdhury, Advocate Nurul Alam, Ajoy Roy, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Ayesha Khanam, Maulana Abdul Awal, Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah, Khushi Kabir, Prof Muntasir 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 See Page 12 Col 2 Call to monitor application of

## Factories Act in garments unit

By Staff Correspondent Sammilita 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 coun-

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 Dás, Natasha Ahmed and Ila Chandra ad-

dressed 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 See Page 12 Col 7