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VOL. VII NO. 197 REGD. NO. DA 781

SRABAN 27 1404 BS.

DHAKA MONDAY, AUGUST 11, 1997

RABIUS SAANI 6 1418 HIJRI

16 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 6.00

## JRC team inspects course of Teesta

LALMONIRHAT, Aug 10: Water experts of India and Bangladesh today inspected the changed course of the Teesta at Kaliganj border no-man's land adjoining Nilphamari district, reports UNB.

Their visit to the site this afternoon was to find out the technical feasibility of an embankment on the right bank of the common river.

Earlier, a five-member Indian delegation, led by JRC member Suresh Chandra, arrived here today as part of a four-day cross-border meeting of the standing committee of Indo-Bangla Joint Rivers Commission to discuss the dam.

Other members of the Indian delegation are: SK Sarker, Irrigation and Water Resources

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## AL-BNP clashes continue in Feni

FENI, Aug 10: Activists of the ruling Awami League and the Opposition BNP fought a series of battles in the town since Friday night, leaving at least 10 injured, reports UNB.

Police sources said some 1,000 bombs were exploded and gunshots heard during the three days' clashes.

Swed-off rifle, LG, revolver and gun were being used by the belligerent rivals for establishing their respective political supremacy in the town.

The AL and BNP men clash-

See Page 8 Col 4

## 669 provisionally selected in 17th BCS exams

A total of 669 candidates of the 17th BCS examinations have been provisionally selected for appointment to different cadres of Bangladesh

Detail list on Page 2

Civil Service, reports UNB. The appointment of the selected candidates are subject to health certificates from medical board and police verification reports, said an official here last night.

Said letters will be sent to the candidates for medical check-up after the formation of medical boards.

## Ministers, AL leaders to visit Tungipara

By Staff Correspondent

Members of the Cabinet and the Awami League Central Working Committee (ALWC) will visit Tungipara tomorrow to offer *fateha* at the mazar of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Daily Star goes Global Greetings to our global readers.

We are now on the Internet to serve all Bangladeshis and other readers abroad.

Since two years, we published a weekly edition of The Daily Star. Now we are going daily in a new format. Log onto HTTP : 11 www.dailystarnews.com.

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Today's issue of The Daily Star contains a 6-page supplement on 'Cellular Telephone in Bangladesh'

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# LGC recommendations gathering dust

By Nurul Kabir

Legislations to introduce an integrated local government system in the country has become uncertain as the recommendations of the Local Government Commission (LGC) in this regard have been gathering dust for more than three months.

The major election pledges of the ruling Awami League in 1996 included strengthening of the local government in the light of constitutional provisions that administrations at all levels would be run by elected representatives of the people.

The LGC recommended in May a four-tier local government system for village, union, thana and district levels. But a

five-member 'secretary committee' formed by the Prime Minister in the same month to scrutinise the LGC report has so far made no substantial progress.

Talking to The Daily Star, some members of the LGC expressed disappointment over the fact the government is yet to take effective steps to pave the way for making legislations to constitute the local bodies. Some of them expressed apprehension that the bureaucrats, who have been assigned by the Prime Minister to scrutinise the LGC report, have no reason to take much interest in the subject because introducing a full-fledged local government system will empower the people and curtail some powers of the

bureaucrats.

The seven-member LGC, headed by Advocate Rahamat Ali MP of the Awami League, constituted on September 1 last year, was scheduled to submit its recommendations by December 31, 1996. The LGC, which examined the powers, structure and jurisdictions of various local government bodies in Bangladesh and some other countries including India eventually submitted its recommendations to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in May this year.

The LGC included Prime Ministers' Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Sunrajit Sen-gupta, Advocate Fazle Rabbi MP

See Page 8 Col 4

## BJMC asked to buy jute from growers

The government yesterday directed the BJMC to purchase jute from production belts to ensure fair price to the growers and stimulate the market force, reports UNB.

At a high-level meeting, presided over by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation was asked to buy jute direct from the farmers. For this purpose, adequate funds would be given to the corporation.

Meeting sources said the Prime Minister asked the authorities concerned to take effective measures in this regard.

"You have to remain alert and active so that the jute growers get fair price of their produce," she said.

This year, a bumper harvest of the cash crop has caused its price to go down. Jute production this season has been estimated at 65-70 lakh bales.

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria informed the meeting that there is no problem in financing jute purchase and said

cash credit limit would remain in force for the procurement of jute.

Private exporters have also enough money to buy jute, he said.

The sources said the Russian Federation would buy jute and jute goods worth 15 to 20 million US dollars this year.

To monitor jute purchase at district level, a committee has been formed with Deputy Commissioner, and representatives from jute growers and elite.

The Prime Minister, in the meeting, also directed the authorities to accelerate the process of jute sector reforms and infrastructural development of jute management at grassroots level.

The meeting also decided to conduct media publicity about the jute price and situation to keep the growers informed.

Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, State Minister for Land Rashed Mosharrar,

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## Agitation in due time, says Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said the current anti-government agitations will have to be organised as a cohesive movement in due course to save the people from the anarchic situation, reports UNB.

"People have become frustrated as anarchy, terrorism and indiscipline are everywhere. The country is now passing through a critical time," she told the leaders of Zia Parishad at a meeting at her Minto Road residence.

The Leader of the Opposition said various sections of people, including businessmen and transport workers, have already raised their voice against the government. "These scattered protests need to be organised."

She said although BNP refrains from calling frequent country-wide hartals, but hartal is being observed almost everyday in different districts on local problems. "Insha-Allah, a

See Page 8 Col 3

# Indian army chief sees scope for military cooperation

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi and Nazmul Ashraf

## Interview

Indian Army Chief General Shankar Roy Chowdhury said yesterday that there were opportunities for Indo-Bangladesh military cooperation and his country would "certainly" welcome such move.

"Military cooperation to a certain extent is already there," he said in a brief interview with The Daily Star. "But we'd like to develop this certainly." If it is desired by both countries, the General, who fought in the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971, said.

The existing level of cooperation only covers training of officers of one country in another's military academy.

General Chowdhury said Bangladesh's buying military

hardware from India was also a possibility.

"There are opportunities because India has got a very large (arms) industry. So depending on a case to case... and whatever is required by Bangladesh... it can certainly be considered on a government to government basis... at the highest level," he said.

"But that has not been discussed, frankly. No one raised it and I also didn't raise the issue," Chowdhury said.

Asked if Bangladesh needed strong armed forces given the geo-politics of the region which puts India on three sides of the

border, the Indian general said it depended on how Bangladesh felt the need. "Each country would like to have the strength of armed forces which it considers appropriate for itself."

Chowdhury called his week-long visit a "goodwill" one, designed to "further develop good relations between the armies of India and Bangladesh and also between the two states."

The visit took him to his ancestral home in Jessore, an event of "tremendous nostalgia," as India's one of very few Bengali Army chiefs put it.

"My village is just on the other side of Ichhamati river," Roy Chowdhury, the General's ancestors, lived just across the

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Some passers-by trying to lift a car which skidded into an open manhole near the north gate of Baitul Mukarram mosque in the city yesterday. — Star photo

# PB chairman cites three major obstacles to privatisation

By Staff Correspondent

Opposition by labour unions, local political influences and vested interests of the bureaucrats are the main problems in the way of privatisation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs).

The organised labourers have wrong notions about privatisation and fear loss of jobs. Much of their demands are impossible to meet. These are intended to agitate labourers in the specific enterprises," said Kazi Zafarullah, Chairman of the Privatisation Board (PB).

He was exchanging views with the members of Economic Reporters' forum (ERF) yesterday at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium.

"Local political interest is also stand in the way of privatisation. Local political leaders feel that they would lose influence in the locality if mills are privatised," he added.

off units and therefore, over-valuation of enterprises is deliberately done to discourage privatisation," Zafarullah said.

"SKOP had opposed our privatisation programme during the last government's period, but the government was not intimidated by their threat. SKOP has a wrong notion that privatisation would mean loss of jobs, which is not correct. The World Bank had done a study on the units which were privatised by the previous government and found that this has rather gen-



Portraits of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman at the entrance of Surya Sen Hall of Dhaka University were erased yesterday. — Star photo

# Abul Hossain resigns

By Staff Correspondent

State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Syed Abul Hossain resigned yesterday.

Hossain submitted his resignation letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina but did not mention any reason in it. Cabinet Secretary Ataul Haq said, "About acceptance of the resignation by the Prime Minister, the secretary said, 'It's a matter of procedure'."

Hossain's resignation follows his controversial visit to Singapore on August 3 without government's permission, using an ordinary passport instead of his diplomatic passport. This gave rise to criticisms in the government and political circles.

The cabinet secretary refuted a report in an English daily that the Cabinet Division was asked to probe the matter.

Possessing more than one passport by any person is illegal as per the law of the land.

Hossain, however, said ear-

lier that his visit was for treatment.

Sheikh Hasina was out of the country during Hossain's brief visit to Singapore. Upon her return on August 6, Hossain met the Prime Minister twice — on August 7 and 9 — to explain his position but she reportedly expressed her dissatisfaction

over the matter. Mentionably, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman returned home yesterday morning after an official visit to the US.

Sayed Abul Hossain is the second man to resign from the 14-month old government of Sheikh Hasina. Earlier, on February 18 this year, State Minister for Works Afzaruddin Ahmed Khan resigned following forced eviction of a slum from a 40 acre government land in the city's Bhashantek area.

Syed Abul Hossain, elected MP twice from Madaripur-3 constituency, owns a number of business establishments including Shaco International.

Hossain, 48, hails from village Tebari under Kalkini thana in Madaripur district.

His latest business was a luxury hotel at Banani.

The Daily Star correspondent tried to contact Abul Hossain but he was not available.

Abul Hossain

See Page 8 Col 3

## Biman flight from Calcutta averts mishap

By Staff Correspondent

A Biman flight from Calcutta averted a mishap and landed safely at the airport in the city yesterday despite the loss of one of its wheels, reports UNB.

The Dhaka-bound BG 092 flight with 85 passengers aboard landed at the Zia International Airport at 1:50 pm, Biman officials said.

The F-28 aircraft lost one of its wheels for a "basic parts" failure, said an official, adding that the right-hand main landing gear torque link broke during the initial touchdown impact against the runway surface.

All the passengers of the aircraft disembarked from the

See Page 8 Col 7

# BNP still undecided on alliance with others

By Nazmul Ashraf

BNP is still 'undecided' about going for an alliance with other opposition parties for a vigorous agitation against the government.

As of now, the major opposition party prefers to maintain close links with those parties for carrying out simultaneous agitations from separate platforms on issues of common interest, well placed sources in the party said.

Meanwhile, the breakaway faction of Jatiya Party led by Kazi Zafar Ahmed recently tried for an alliance of the opposition parties and discussed the matter with top leaders of BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami.

Some other BNP leaders had talks with leaders of Jamaat and other Islamic groups on the planned agitation. In the talks, the opposition leaders agreed

on launching an anti-government agitation but the issue of forming an alliance of the parties was not finalised.

The JP faction is desperate for a coalition but Jamaat prefers a simultaneous movement. Jagga and other smaller parties are least bothered about the move.

BNP sources said that revamping the party and its front organisations by holding council sessions of all the units across the country before going for the national council strengthening relations with other opposition parties and launching local-level agitations were the priority tasks for the party at the moment.

Asked on the possibility of alliance with other opposition parties, BNP Secretary General

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## Acid thrown on 6 of a family

JAMALPUR, Aug 10: Six members of a family sustained burn injuries when some persons threw acid on them at village Kaitamari in Madarganj thana of the district early today.

Of the injured, Majid, his wife Karful Begum and five-year-old son Humayun were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Hospital sources said the right eye of Majid was damaged. Police said the incident was sequel to a feud between Majid and his neighbour Keru alias Ebadul as Majid married Anguri, Ebadul's divorced wife, recently.

Quoting the victims' relatives, police said Ebadul and his associates stormed into the residence of Majid breaking open the door and threw acid on the inmates while they were sleeping.

Majid, his first wife Karful Begum and their two daughters

See Page 8 Col 3

# 3-yr Degree, 4-yr Hons courses suggested

By Aminul Islam

The National Committee on Education Policy has suggested introduction of three-year Degree course and four-year Honours course saying the degrees will be enough for any job excepting teaching and research work.

Facilities for higher education should be open to those who want to join teaching, research work and be a policy-maker.

Colleges having the capacity to introduce Honours course will be allowed to do so and will be called university colleges. A uniform syllabus and curricula will be followed in the universities and university colleges in case of Honours and Masters courses.

Students completing Honours courses will have one-year Masters course. Those complet-

ing Degree courses will have two-year Masters courses.

According to the suggestions of the committee, students will be enrolled in the Degree and Honours courses after they pass the secondary level. The Committee has also suggested an eight-year primary education and inclusion of Class XII in the Secondary level.

It has also proposed abolition of quota system and enrollment on the basis of merit in higher education institutions to maintain the standard of education.

An English language course carrying 100 marks will be compulsory for Honours and Degree students, according to the committee's suggestion. Students who will fail in the English Language course in the

See Page 8 Col 8

## Portraits erased from wall at Surya Sen Hall gate

By DU Correspondent

The portraits of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman were erased yesterday from the wall near the entrance of Surya Sen Hall of the Dhaka University as per a decision of the DU Parishad.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of ruling Awami League, painted the portrait of Bangabandhu after capturing the hall late last month.

The DU authorities after rehabilitating the 'genuine' students of the hall, painted portrait of Ziaur Rahman on the wall, as per an earlier decision.

The DU Parishad decided at a meeting on Saturday to remove all kinds of pictures from the walls of the university. As part of the implementation of the decision, the DU authorities yesterday erased almost all the pictures from the walls of different halls, campus sources said.

Meanwhile, the university dormitories will be evacuated tomorrow for rehabilitating the 'genuine' students in their respective halls.

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## CCC employee shot dead

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 10: An employee of the Chittagong City Corporation, identified as Pradip Kumar Dey, 25, was shot dead this evening by an armed group at Sholoshahar under Panchalish thana, police said.

He was also identified as president of Jubo League, Sholoshahar unit, party sources said.

Armed activists allegedly belonging to 'Dhaka-Akbar group' attacked the victim while he was standing in front of a tea shop at Sholoshahar at around 6 pm, police said.

The attackers fled from the scene after firing on Pradip who instantly succumbed to bullet wounds.

The attack was made following previous enmity, police added.

## Barricade: IU VC could not enter campus

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Aug 10: Vice Chancellor of Islamic University (IU) Prof Inam-ul-Haque could not enter the campus today due to a barricade put up by the activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS).

The VC was confined to his Koshia residence since June 26 last for his alleged involvement in corruption and malpractices, which he denied as false and untrue.

When he tried to come out of his residence the student activists put up a barricade.

The teachers and employees of IU also called a non-cooperation movement against the VC since July 12 last.

## Sylhet JCD calls strike in edn instts today

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 10: The Sylhet district unit of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal has called for a day-long strike in the educational institutions in the district tomorrow.

The strike was called to protest against the police action during the hartals called BNP last week and the arrests of a large number of BNP and JCD activists on false charges, said a JCD announcement today.

The JCD unit will also hold a rally at the Court Point in Sylhet and bring out processions today.