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VOL. VII NO. 199 REGD. NO. DA 781 SRABAN 29 1404 BS. DHAKA WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13, 1997 RABIUS SAANI 8 1418 HIJRI 12 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 6.00

Ministers, MPs & AL leaders visit Bangabandhu's mazar

TUNGIPARA, Aug 12: Hundreds of people in a sombre atmosphere assembled at the mazar of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today to pay their respects to the great leader in observance of his 22nd anniversary of death, reports BSS.

Members of the cabinet, parliament members, and leaders and workers of Bangladesh Awami League and its front organisations also thronged to the mazar.

The leaders placed wreaths on the mazar and offered *fateha*.

The leaders included Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman, Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed, Forest and Environ-

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Abul Hossain's letter yet to be forwarded to President

By Staff Correspondent

Resignation letter of State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Syed Abul Hossain was not forwarded to President Shahabuddin Ahmed for his acceptance till yesterday.

Syed Abul Hossain tendered his resignation letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina earlier on Sunday last. His resignation followed a visit to Singapore without government's permission, carrying an ordinary passport instead of the diplomatic passport.

Cabinet Secretary Ataul Haq told The Daily Star last night that the resignation letter was yet to be forwarded to the President.

Asked why the acceptance is taking such a long time, he said "once the process is completed the news would be made available to the press."

Talking to this correspondent last night, a senior minister said, the resignation would be accepted soon. He, however, could not explain why the process was being delayed.

3 SEC members seek reinstatement

By Special Correspondent

The two members of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Dr Shahbub Alam and Alamgir Kabir, went to the SEC office yesterday for reinstatement in their jobs.

They met SEC Chairman MA Syed and stayed there for some time.

Their contractual appointments were cancelled by the government before the expiry of their terms.

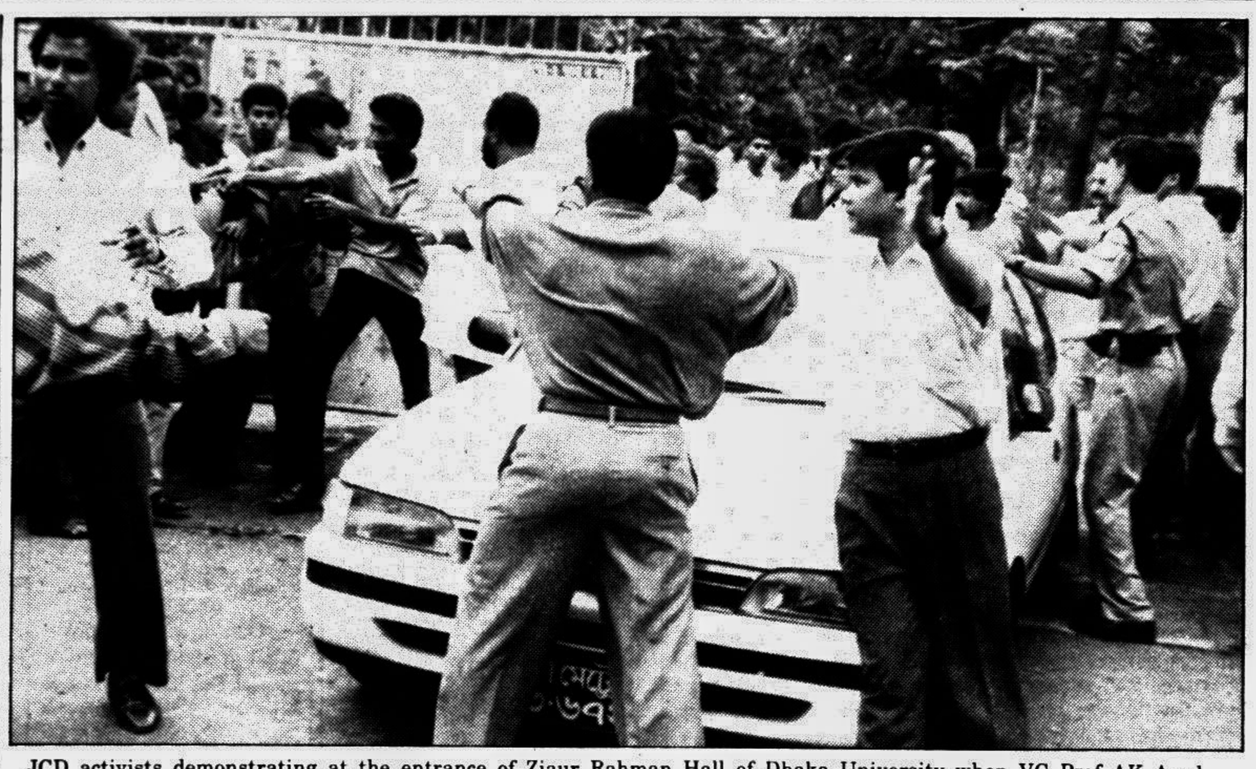
They file a writ challenging the cancellation order. The High Court declared their removal illegal. But the government filed a petition seeking a stay of the High Court order, which was rejected by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court on Monday.

Prof Nazrul new KU VC

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Aug 12: Prof Dr SM Nazrul Islam of BUET is expected to join as vice chancellor of Khulna University on August 17, says a KU press release.

Hailing from Kotalipara thana of Gopalganj district, Prof Islam will be the third VC since the establishment of the university.



JCD activists demonstrating at the entrance of Ziaur Rahman Hall of Dhaka University when VC Prof AK Azad Chowdhury reached there by his car yesterday. —Star photo

VC humiliated at DU halls

By DU Correspondent

Some activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) threw eggs and shoes aiming at the Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University and damaged his car on the campus yesterday.

The VC, Pro AK Azad Chowdhury, faced the humiliating situation when he went to Jasimuddin Hall and Ziaur Rahman Hall to supervise 'rehabilitation' of the 'displaced' activists of JCD and BCL (Bangladesh Chhatra League) in their respective halls, witnesses said. The VC went to the Jasimuddin Hall first, at about 12:30 pm.

Later, JCD activists brought out a procession on the campus at about 2 pm and ransacked the office of the Proctor of the university at the Arts Faculty building.

Yesterday's 'rehabilitation' process began as per an August 9 decision of the DU Paribesh Parishad which comprises representatives of the university authorities and student organisations. The Parishad had decided that all the residential halls except Surya Sen Hall, Jagannath Hall and female dormitories would be evacuated by turn for two hours on August 12 (yesterday) and 'displaced' students would be rehabilitated in their respective halls after checking identity cards.

But on Monday (August 11) JCD decided not to participate in the process alleging that the university authorities had violated some provisions of the decision. The JCD leaders backed out claiming that the authorities had decided to start the process with the "JCD dominated halls", without consultation them. They had demanded that the process start with the halls "dominated" by BCL.

Yesterday, the university authorities started the process with Sir AF Rahman Hall, dominated by BCL. After that, Mohsin Hall was evacuated. The 'displaced' students were

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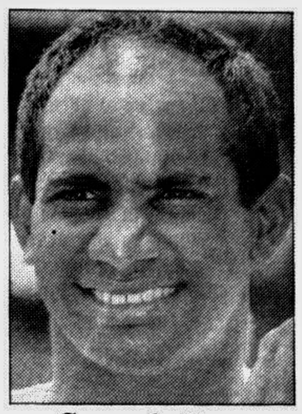

Sanath first past 1000 runs in '97

COLOMBO, Aug 12: Sanath Jayasuriya became the first batsman to notch up a thousand runs in Test cricket for the year 1997 as Sri Lanka moved on to set India a 373 target on the fourth day of the second and final Test at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground in Colombo on Tuesday, reports AP.

Jayasuriya plundered 199 as the home team declared at 415 for seven.

The knock by Jayasuriya

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Situation may demand snap polls : Khaleda

Opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said a mid-term election would be a necessity as the government proved failure on all fronts because of inefficiency and mismanagement, reports UNB.

"The fourteen-month rule of this government yielded a ruined economy, lawlessness, political persecution and unabated price-hike ... this grim situation will obviously call for a mid-term poll," she said.

Addressing the members of the Overseas Correspondents Association of Bangladesh (OCAB) at Hotel Sheraton in the afternoon, Begum Zia did not specifically say when she prefers the election.

She said it would depend on the overall situation, attitude of the government and mobilisation of people's sentiment against the 'misrule'.

The Leader of the Opposition said her party had extended all cooperation to the government to maintain democratic atmosphere and ensure development, but the government reciprocated the BNP gesture with 'torture and repression.'

"We want peace and democratic atmosphere, but it is the government which is creating trouble and disrupting peace by perpetrating torture on us," she told the journalists.

In reply to a question, she said: "Despite showing our political tolerance, different social forces are staging strike, hartal and blockade to register their protest. . . The way the country is being ruled made people feel it won't be possible for this government to remain in power for five years."

Begum Zia, who lost power

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Begum Khaleda Zia

Haripur plant

Power tariff offer by AES Transpower found lowest

By Staff Correspondent

Four international companies yesterday submitted their power tariff proposals for setting up a 300 megawatt power plant at Haripur, official sources said.

The proposals were opened at the Power Cell office.

According to the offers, the power tariff offered by AES Transpower Private Ltd (US) was found to be the lowest. AES quoted a price of Tk 1.14 (2.73 US cents) per kilowatt hour (kwh), Occidental Energy Venture Corp (US) quoted Tk 1.46 (3.46 cents), Marathon Power Ltd (US) quoted Tk 1.48 (3.53 cents) per kwh and Midlands Power International (UK) quoted Tk 1.64 (3.9 cents) per kwh.

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Pvt sector power plant schemes delayed

By Sharier Khan

Implementation of different private power plant schemes has been delayed by at least four to ten months, despite the Energy Minister's firm commitment to maintain their respective schedules.

The delays would ultimately result in a bigger power shortfall next summer when demand for power would soar up to about 2500 MW against a current power generation capacity of around 2100 MW, official sources said.

Implementation of four schemes for barge-mounted power plant was originally scheduled to begin in late 1996. But till now, not 'final agreement' has been signed.

The process of awarding contracts to a private company to build the 300-450MW Meghnaghat Power Plant was initially scheduled to begin in early January last. But it began five months later.

Moreover, the intermediate process of signing the final contract for the Meghnaghat project is also being delayed by months.

The five proposed power plants, when completed, will generate at least 700 MW power. Of this amount, the Energy Minister Noor Uddin Khan had said that at least 400 MW power would be added to the national grid by October this year.

Sources said, the Power Development Board (PDB) is likely to sign agreements within a month with four foreign companies for building four 100 MW barge-mount power plants on build-own-operate (BOO) basis.

Once the agreements are signed, the foreign companies would be contractually obliged

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Police, Nasir Bahini men exchange fire

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 12: A special team of the Detective Branch of Chittagong Metropolitan Police launched a predawn raid today on a hideout of Shibir-backed "terrorists of Nasir Bahini" at Chandanpura under Kotwali thana.

But the members of Nasir Bahini managed to escape after an exchange of fire with detective police team. However, no casualty was reported. Detective Branch sources said the terrorists fled from the residential building through a 'false window'.

Earlier, in another raid yesterday at Chawkbazar detective police arrested 'Major Selim', an aide of Nasir.

Police said 'Major Selim' is wanted in a number of criminal cases.

BNP chief may meet other Opposition leaders soon

By Nazmul Ashraf

BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia is likely to meet top leaders of different opposition political parties this month to "solicit their support" to her party's planned agitation against the Awami League government, party sources said.

In a run-up to the desired meeting, the Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad is now having backstage parleys with leaders of like-minded parties separately, face-to-face or over telephone. Besides, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and other senior leaders are also having discussions with opposition parties to prepare grounds for Begum Zia's planned meeting.

Preparations are on to arrange the meeting before Begum Zia leaves for the US on August 23 for a 10-day trip. However, the exact date for the meeting has not yet been fixed.

The BNP chief has already held talks with top leaders of the Jatiya Party (Z-M), Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Oikya Jote and some other parties to "read their pulse" whether they would go along with her party's planned movement against the government on various issues.

She may also talk to leaders of the Left Democratic Front, a grouping of eight left-leaning parties, if "positive signals" are received from the Front.

"The current round of parleys are aimed at reaching a broad-based understanding on the fight against the government and eventually isolating the ruling party in the local government elections, due in December", said a top BNP leader.

Gen Manzur murder

HC rejects bail prayer of Major Emdadul Huq

A High Court division bench yesterday rejected the bail prayer of Major (Retd) Kazi Emdadul Huq in the Maj Gen Manzur murder case, reports BSS.

The bench comprised Justice Badrul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Mohammad Abdul Matin.

Major (Retd) Kazi Emdadul Huq was arrested on March 1, 1995. Earlier, his bail prayer was also rejected by the additional sessions judge, First Court, Dhaka.

Abul Mansur, brother of Maj Gen Manzur, lodged an FIR on February 28, 1995 with Panchlaish police, Chittagong, alleging that after the death of former President Ziaur Rahman, his brother was arrested

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BOC to invest Tk 60cr in new air separation plant at Rupganj

BOC Bangladesh Ltd will invest nearly Tk 60 crore in a new Air, Separation Plant at Rupganj, near the capital, reports UNB.

The work has already started on the plant having a target capacity of producing 80 tons of liquid oxygen, liquid nitrogen and liquid argon per day.

The new plant is expected to go into operation in 1999, said a company press release yesterday.

Approval to the investment proposal for the new plant at Rupganj was given at a Board of Directors meeting of the Company on July 31.

The plant, largest in the country, will more than treble the company's current capacity of 30 tons per day, enabling BOC

See Page 12 Col 4

Corrupt govt depts : Police tops list, Customs next

By Staff Correspondent

In a countrywide opinion poll conducted by the Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP), it has been found that 95 per cent of the people consider the Police department as the "most corrupt" organisation.

The Customs department follows next as 91 per cent people consider it to be "very corrupt." The Income Tax Department ranked third (90 per cent), Bangladesh Secretariat fourth (82 per cent) and the Judiciary ranked fifth (77 per cent) in the list of the "corrupt" government departments in Bangladesh.

BUP conducted the opinion poll in April last among 2197 people in 60 districts. Of the respondents, 28 per cent were urban and 72 per cent rural.

Presenting the preliminary report on the survey on Bureaucracy and Corruption at a roundtable discussion in the city yesterday, BUP Chairman Kholiquzzaman Ahmad said that most people interviewed felt that corruption was one of the country's major problems.

"Eighty-three per cent of the respondents believe that corruption was a major obstacle to development," he told the discussion organised by BUP. It was participated by among others Dr Md Farasuddin, Waliur Rahman, Motiur Rahman, Prof Kobir Uddin Ahmed, and AMA Muhit.

Sixty-two per cent believe that government officials are mainly responsible for "all corruption and bribery" in the country, Kholiquzzaman said quoting the poll results.

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Freeze on Ershad's bank accounts withdrawn

Star Report

The freeze on the bank account of deposed president HM Ershad and his wife Begum Raushan Ershad has been withdrawn.

Bangladesh Bank in a letter on July 9 has informed the relevant banks about the withdrawal of the freeze order by the District and Sessions Court.

The District and Sessions Court on May 14 had withdrawn its instructions for seizure and freezing of the accounts of Ershad and his wife Raushan. The same court had ordered on July 6, 1991 the seizure and freeze of their accounts.

Ershad was enlarged on bail on January 9, 1997. The court order came three months after his release from jail.

Ershad, who was forced to resign after a mass upsurge on December 6, 1990, was convicted in three cases and sentenced to 13 years in jail. But later, he was acquitted in one case, of keeping arms without authorisation, on appeal by the High Court.

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Bangabandhu Murder Case

No inmates resisted attack or sought guards' help: PW-6

By Staff Correspondent

The sixth prosecution witness in the Bangabandhu murder case told the Court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka yesterday that Bangabandhu's family members neither resisted the attackers nor did they seek any help from the army and police guards.

Sohrab Ali, 46, was among the army guards present at the residence of Bangabandhu, when the then President Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members were killed on August 15, 1975.

In the day's proceedings yesterday which began at 11:00 am and continued till about 5:00 pm, Sohrab was cross-examined by the 14 lawyers of the state defence and the defence lawyers of the five accused in custody.

When the court resumes at 10:30 am today, the seventh prosecution witness, the then Capt. Abul Bashar will make his deposition before the court.

During the day's hearing, Sohrab said that he could not lodge the case as he did not have the capacity to bear the expenses for it.

To the suggestions from the lawyers that Sohrab himself was involved in the killing and that he had agreed to record his statement as a witness in the case to save himself from the charges, the PW-6 said, "it is not true."

When asked, "Kamal and Jamal opened fire to counter the attack on the day of the incident" the PW-6 said, "it is not

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Trade unions issue number plates of rickshaws in city!

By Staff Correspondent

Increasing number of rickshaws are plying on the already congested city roads with fake number plates issued by some trade unions, Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) sources confirmed.

They said the authorities have remained silent over the issue although the matter was notified to them on several occasions.

Thousands of rickshaws are now taking to the city roads everyday with these illegal authorisations violating the 'Rickshaw By-laws 1973'.

Last year the DCC filed cases against two such trade unions with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court and served notice on Sultanganj Union Parishad for violating the law.

A DCC official said that the CMM's court referred the cases for further investigation to the respective police stations. DCC is the only authority to issue licences to non-mechanised vehicles in the city.

The trade unions are charging between Tk 250 and Tk 300 for each illegal authorisation.

Some traffic policemen in the city admitted that they were accepting the trade unions' authorisation as valid documents. "If we have instructions not to accept them we will catch them," said a traffic policeman on duty on Mirpur road.

DCC officials estimated that there were more than 50,000

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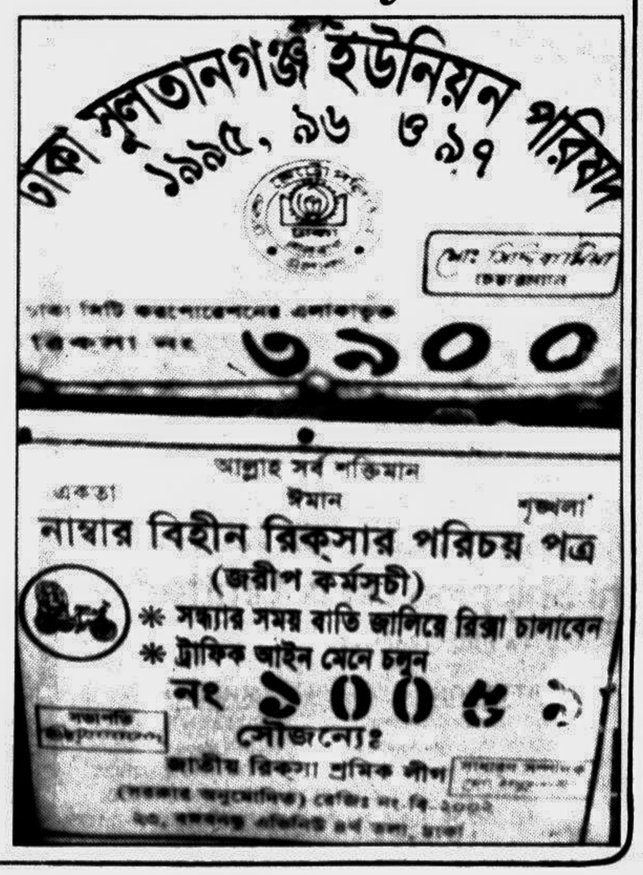

Salman's death: Medical board submits report

By Staff Correspondent

The CID investigators are yet to confirm whether popular film star Salman Shah was murdered or not.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner of Detective Branch Syed Bazlul Karim told The Daily Star yesterday that the DB would lodge defamation suits against some people as soon as the CID submits its report to the authorities concerned.

"The DB has already investigated Salman's death and submitted its report saying that the film star committed suicide," the Deputy Commissioner of DB said. "A vested quarter was now trying to harass some people by framing a plot that Salman was killed."

He said police has also found the reasons behind the suicide of the young film star but declined to disclose those saying, "when necessary, we will disclose it."

Meanwhile, the medical

See Page 12 Col 7

Prayer of IO in Sheikh Moni murder case

By Staff Correspondent

The CID investigating officer in the Sheikh Fazlul Hu[illegible] Moni murder case in a praye[illegible] the court of Chief Metro[illegible]itan Magistrate, Dhaka said that the confessio[illegible]l statements made by the fou[illegible] of the accused in the Bangabandhu murder case have revealed the subject matter of the case he is investigating.

Abdur Rahman, an ASP of CID who is investigating the case, also prayed before the court on Tuesday last for allow-

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CID to probe death in Ctg police custody

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 12: The CID police today took over the case to investigate the cause of death of an accused in Fatikchhari thana custody during remand.

On Saturday night, Nurul Afsar, the night guard of Nazirhat Health Complex was found dead inside thana custody.

Earlier, he was arrested in a dacoity case and taken on remand for interrogation.

Yesterday, five police personnel including two sub-inspectors were arrested for allegedly torturing him to death.

Govt to erect mausoleum at Tungipara

The government will erect a mausoleum on the grave of father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara, reports UNB.

State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader said this yesterday while he was exchanging views with the officials of the Department of Archaeology at Mohammadpur.

The government also declared Bangabandhu's ancestral home at Tungipara protected antiquity, said a PID handout.