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## Biman employees protest move to directly recruit officers

By Masud Arif

The employees and workers unions of Bangladesh Biman have started demonstrating against the management of the airline in protest against its move to directly recruit officers.

The protesters belonging to the two unions, including the CBA, have demanded of the management to stop the written examinations for recruitment to be held on August 23, Biman sources said.

Leaders of the two unions — Bangladesh Biman Employees Union (BBEU), which is the CBA, and Bangladesh Biman Sramik Union (BBSU) — had met the Biman management and put forward their demand.

The BBSU also submitted a memorandum to the Managing Director of Biman on Monday and brought out a procession at the Balaka Bhaban, head office of the airlines in the city.

A senior Biman official told The Daily Star the airline has a policy of recruiting 30 per cent of first class officers directly through competitive examinations. But, over the last 10 years, it could not be done due to protest from the CBA.

"Biman is often facing problems as there is a shortage of young efficient officers. There

**Death of Salman**  
Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday interrogated three women about the death of popular film star Salman Shah, reports UNB.

Official sources said they will interrogate industrialist Aziz Mohammad Bhat today for which a letter was issued to him.

Of the three women, Sweets and Yasmin Kamal resided on the same floor of the multi-storey Eskaton Plaza where Salman had a flat while Ruby lives in a nearby building.

They were separately interrogated at the CID office.

**Coaster hatch workers gherao Ctg Port office**  
From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 19: Several thousand coaster hatch workers gheraoed the Chittagong Port office this morning despite the decision of the port ministry about distribution of work, port sources said.

The gherao continued for few hours and later it was withdrawn after the agitating workers held a meeting with port officials.

**Bangabandhu murder**  
From page 1

guard Ganabhaban and Bangabandhu's residence. The troops, brought from Comilla, had taken over duty on August 1, 1975, he said.

Cross-examination of Bashir by lawyers of the five accused in custody was completed yesterday. The proceedings of the court will resume again at 10.30 am today.

The command and control of the Armed Forces broke down on the day of his battery guarding the residence of Bangabandhu were influenced by those detailed officers on that day, Bashir told the court.

Khan Saifur Rahman, lawyer of accused in custody Farooqur Rahman asked Bashir if he was an eye witness to the incident. He said that he had visited the spot following the incident and had seen the alamas at the place of occurrence.

Sharfuddin Mukul, lawyer of accused in custody Taheruddin Thakur asked Bashir if he could show any documentary

evidence that he was on duty in Dhaka from August 14 to 17 in 1975. He said that he did not have those with him at that moment.

Rezzak Khan, the lawyer of accused in custody Wahab Joarder asked him if his witness was based on memories. Bashir said that he told everything from his memories.

Rezzak Khan who also appeared on behalf of accused in custody Shahriar Rashid Khan asked him if he knew whether Khandker Mushtaq Ahmed handed over power to ASM Sayem. At this, Bashir said, he did not remember.

TM Akbar, lawyer of accused Muhiuddin asked Bashir whether there was any written document that he had taken over the duty at Ganabhaban and Bangabandhu's residence from officer who was on duty before him. He answered in the negative.

He was asked by a defence lawyer whether he knew about any condolence message, sent from India, following the August 15 incident. Bashir answered in the negative.

## Tk 446 cr project to remove city water-logging

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) at a meeting yesterday approved 14 projects involving Tk 1841.96 crore, including a foreign exchange component of Taka 584.20 crore, reports BSS.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presided over the meeting at the NEC Bhaban in the city.

The projects included a Tk 144.73 crore crop diversification and intensification project under which efforts would be made for income generation of 85,000 landless people and marginal farmers. The other objective is to enhance nutrition quality through crop diversification.

The meeting approved a Tk 445.93 crore Dhaka Integrated Flood Protection Project to remove water-logging problem of the city through construction of storm sewerage system. Under the project, massive digging and reexcavation of canals and sewerage system would be done.

**Intending Hajj pilgrims asked to deposit house rent**  
The devotees who are willing to perform Hajj in 1998 under government arrangement will have to deposit Tk 16,000 to schedule banks from August 20 to October 30 as house rent, reports BSS.

The non-refundable deposit will be subjected to adjustment with Saudi rial. Religious Affairs Ministry sources said yesterday.

The decision was taken at an inter-ministerial meeting on Hajj management 1998 with State Minister for Religious Affairs Maulana Nurul Islam in the chair.

Religious Affairs Secretary, Director General of Islamic Foundation and high officials of Biman Bangladesh Airlines were present in the meeting.

The money can be deposited in all branches of Sonali Bank, Agrani Bank, Janata Bank, Rupali Bank, Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Pubali Bank, Islami Bank Bangladesh Ltd., Ultra Bank, Al Baraka Bank, and City Bank.

The expenditure of each devotee who went to perform Hajj under government management in 1997 was Tk 78,815, but the amount may increase next year due to devaluation of taka.

**Transport strike in Tangail-Mymensingh road from today**  
TANGAIL, Aug 19: Transport owners and workers called an indefinite strike on Tangail-Mymensingh highway from tomorrow demanding immediate reconstruction of the highway, reports UNB.

**7 killed**  
From page 1

Manu Mia, 30, and Sattar, 40. Of the injured, 20 were rushed to the Ganosasthya Kendra Hospital, 10 admitted to Savar Thana Health Complex and 10 sent to different hospitals in Dhaka.

The bodies were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue.

## Trade bodies worried

From page 1

the trade and industry to sort the problems but most of those remained unresolved due to lack of inter-ministerial coordination.

"Tight monetary policy, liquidity problems in the banks arising from large scale borrowings by the government and the state-owned enterprises, reluctance on the part of the bank officials to take initiatives in the fear of corruption charges have brought about a near-stalemate in financing new investments. On the other hand, the widespread power cuts, law and order situation, extortion of money by local *mastans* have crippled the morale of the existing indus-

tries. There is till no indication that the earlier assurance of the Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources that there would be no power shortage after September, 1997, will come true.

"In the same way, even industries around the major metropolitan cities continue to fall victims of unchecked collections by notorious elements often having political affiliations.

The statement said, trade and industry will now be subjected to a high rate of freight surcharge on the imports and exports for congestion at Chittagong Port. This is most unfortunate, as we repeatedly stressed that Chittagong Port must function efficiently, free from political interferences and unruly trade union elements. Regrettably, time passed without any visible action for which the surcharge could not be avoided. In such uncertain conditions, the business community can not but feel demoralised."

The statement however said that it was still possible to tackle several of the issues, which have been threatening the economic fundamentals and destabilising the investment climate.

There is no dearth of interests for investments both amongst the local and foreign investors. The government's policies are also recognised to be investment supportive and fiscal and other incentives are acknowledged to be one of the best in the region. The tragedy is that for reasons not known, the country's economic problems are not getting the priorities they deserve. On economic issues, things are tackled more in a reactive manner than through proactive initiatives. On the other hand, there is hardly any coordination between the government's fiscal and monetary policies," it said.

**Fuel price**  
From page 1

market rates. The price of petrol still remains lower than that of the neighbouring country," the official clarification said justifying the price hike.

It said kerosene is an essential item used by low-income group while diesel is used in bus, truck, water vessel and agriculture sector.

So, the government has reduced the prices of kerosene and diesel at a much lower rate than its buying price, keeping in mind the people of low-income group, the handout said.

**Depression**  
From page 1

50 kph in gusts or squalls. The sea will remain rough. Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to hoist local cautionary Signal Number Three.

Under the influence of the monsoon depression, the low-lying areas of the coastal districts of Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat, Pirojpur, Borguna, Patuakhali, Jhalokathi, Barisal and their offshore islands and *chars* may be inundated by surge of 3-5 feet height above normal tide.

The low-lying areas of the districts of Bhola, Laxmipur, Chandpur, Feni, Noakhali, Chittagong and Cox's Bazar and their offshore islands and *chars* may experience wind-driven surge of 2-3 feet height above normal tide.

All fishing boats and trawlers over the north Bay have been advised to remain in shelter till further notice.

## JU employees go on allout strike from today

By JU Correspondent

Vice Chancellor (VC) of Jahangirnagar University Prof Amirul Islam Chowdhury has called an emergency session of the Syndicate at 11 am today as the officers and employees of the university begin an all out strike.

Transport services will come under the strike from today following the failure of the discussion between the university authorities and the agitating officers and employees yesterday.

The officers and employees observed a three-hour token strike from August 7 to 12 and the on going 9-day strike began from Sunday to meet their four-point charter of demands including change in office timing.

The officers and employees proposed two schedules for office timing but the authorities did not accept any of the proposals following discussions with the JU Teachers' Association, officials said.

Talking to The Daily Star, JU VC Prof Amirul Islam Chowdhury hoped that the problems could be solved by today and urged the employees not to go for the transport strike.

**BNP calls hartal**  
From page 1

the decision 'bypassing the parliament' which is scheduled to go into session on August 30.

Begum Zia said this government has not implemented any of its election pledges but is doing everything for the interests of its foreign masters.

She also criticised the government for 'not implementing' the pay commission report for the public servants despite its announcement and for 'not yet forming a wage commission' for industrial workers.

"The country is bound to be a bottomless basket again unless the policies being pursued by the present government are given up," she said adding, "It is now trying to cling to power with the help of terrorists."

The BNP chief warned: "Terrorists won't succeed in protecting them... We'll overthrow them from power through a massive movement."

Calling those in power 'betrayers' she said, "Once they had fled the country but this time they won't be spared. They will be tried for betraying the people."

Chaired by Sechhyasebak Dal chief Rizvi Ahmed, the meeting was also addressed by Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan MP, Sadek Hossain Khoka, MP, Amanullah Aman MP and Fazlul Haq Milon.

Mannan Bhuiyan demanded immediate resignation of the government and holding of fresh elections.

Earlier, Bhuiyan told a public rally in front of the party central office that protest rallies would be held at the thanas on August 21 and at the districts on August 24 against the price hike of fuel.

**US Asst Secy**  
From page 1

Meanwhile, the newly appointed US Ambassador to Bangladesh, John Holzman, is due to arrive in Dhaka on August 28 to take up his new assignment.

Holzman was previously the Deputy Chief of mission at the US embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan.

**Nepal eager to use Mongla Port**  
From page 1

sides, port charges have to be reasonable.

The ambassador said he is visiting Mongla Port on August 24 and 25, accompanied by his country's Consul General in Calcutta, to see the port facilities and discuss with the Port authorities the costs and warehouse arrangements.

"Initially, the transit of goods and transportation to and from Nepal would involve multi-modal transportation in the absence of road and rail line over the Rupsha river and due to lack of good and uninterrupted surface links from Mongla to Bangladesh."

The envoy said his country, therefore, will look into the possibility of transferring goods from Mongla Port by waterways upto Baghabari point in Pabna. From there, the goods will be transported by Nepalese trucks through the transit points at Banglabandh on Bangladesh side and Fulbari point on the Indian side.

The ambassador also said that the road from Tetulia to Banglabandh at present cannot take the load of trucks carrying above five tons. "This is understandable since it was not developed as it was not required in the past. If these are developed in future it will help Nepalese trucks of 10 tons and other heavy load-carrying vehicles to ply with transit cargo."

The envoy said discussions were on with Bangladesh offi-

are a number of vacant posts at entry level of first class officers of the airline," he said.

The management had decided to hold the examinations on August 23 for recruiting about 30 officers. "We are discussing the issue with both the unions and trying to solve the problem," said a top official.

Early this year, the authorities concerned had decided to recruit bright and efficient young men for the airline so that the national flag carrier could increase its efficiency in the highly competitive international aviation market.

Following the decision, Biman management had invited applications for the posts of trainee officer. The candidates must have at least three first divisions/classes and no third division/class, the advertisement mentioned.

**Khaleda leaves for US Aug 24**  
By Staff Correspondent

BNP chief and Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia leaves Dhaka on August 24 for the United States.

The Opposition leader is scheduled to attend the 11th North American Bangladeshi conference to be held August 29-31 in Los Angeles as the chief guest, party sources said.

During her week-long stay, Begum Zia is expected to meet the US Senators and her party members. She is due to return home September 2.

**Yasmin murder**  
From page 1

UNB adds: They told the court of Judge Abdul Matin that SP Motahid ordered firing of a UD case.

The SP also formed a three-member police enquiry committee and urged the DC Dinajpur to form a judicial probe body to investigate the sensational case.

On the basis of the departmental report, the SP suspended the accused police staff and arrested them under Section 54, the defence counsels argued adding that the SP ordered the police to recover the body and perform its autopsy.

The accusation that Yasmin was shown as a prostitute by the SP is totally unfounded, the lawyers said.

Nine people, eight of them police and the rest a physician, are facing the trial. The court will resume tomorrow.

**Demonstration**  
From page 1

shaw drivers went on rampage protesting increase in fuel prices, witnesses and police said.

Agitating transport workers also put up barricades at various places to oppose the movement of vehicles, police said.

The barricades were raised at Dewanhat, Tigerpass, Lal-khan bazar, Fouzderhat, Oxygen Crossing and other areas, police said.

The agitators pelted brick bats at police who were trying to remove the barricades at different places, police said.

Police resorted to lathicharge to disperse the agitators.

However, all the barricades were removed before 1 pm. Few transports were seen plying on roads. Most of the autorickshaws and tempos stayed off the roads in the port city witnesses said.

Petrol pumps were closed in the city till 12 noon. Those started selling fuel after receiving the new price list from the oil companies, sources said.

Non-availability of fuel in the morning also angered the vehicle operators, sources said.

However, the long-distance commuters were the worst affected due to non-plying of vehicle.

Activists of Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Sena brought out a procession in the city in protest against the price increase of fuel.

**Rajuk approved**  
From page 1

The diplomatic enclave is situated in the vicinity but their opinion was not sought. Neither was there any consultation with the valuation authorities who are nearby," said a Rajuk official requesting anonymity.

Indus Valley reminded the Rajuk Chairman in a formal letter written on August 9 that the original deed was signed between Rajuk and Indus "so Rajuk should sort out all problems related to the project — not the Works Ministry," said the official quoting the letter.

Under Clause 45.2 of the Rajuk-Indus Valley agreement, any conciliation or arbitration between the parties would be placed before the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) or the Singapore International Arbitration Centre. Sources said the expenses involved in these international arbitrations were huge. "Who will bear these expenses Rajuk or the government?" asked an official.

The Nepalese envoy said the new transit route would not only facilitate the growth and passage of Nepalese goods to third countries but also help trade with Bangladesh.

In this regard, he said that the earlier Birol (on Bangladesh side) and Radhikapur (on Indian side) were used for transportation of fertiliser and newsprint from Bangladesh and pulses from Nepal. But there were always problems of shortage of railway wagons and consequent delays.

The envoy said he is "expecting a date of transit passage opening on September or close to that date. The Bangladesh government is going ahead with the modalities and the arrangement for the use of transit."

There is no legal impediment as India had extended transit rights to Nepal while Bangladesh has an agreement on transit with Nepal, signed as early as in 1976.

The envoy said, "A formal inaugural ceremony, with officials of Bangladesh and Nepal attending it, would be held once the date of the transit opening with Nepal through India is finally confirmed."

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## Hasina meets AL presidium members

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had an informal meeting yesterday with the presidium members of Awami League on some important issues that triggered controversy in the country, reports UNB.

Meeting sources said price hike of petroleum, loadshedding and agitation in Sylhet division came up during the meeting held at Ganobhaban in the afternoon.

The Prime Minister was learnt to have asked her party stalwarts to explain to the people the reasons behind the enhancement of fuel prices.

Prime Minister Hasina is likely to sit again with the presidium today.

**Flood in 5 dists of greater Barisal**  
From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 19: The low-lying areas in Barisal, Bhola, Jhalakathi, Patuakhali and Barguna have been inundated due to incessant rain today.

Several thousand acres of land in low-lying areas of the five districts went under water and many houses were also submerged.

**27 Sirajganj BNP men chargesheeted**  
SIRAJGANJ, Aug 19: Twenty-seven leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations have been chargesheeted in connection with the ransacking of an Awami League office here in November, 1996, reports UNB.

The accused included former district BNP president Advocate Mokaddes Ali, general secretary Humayun Islam Khan and Krisk Dal president Saiful Islam Shishir.

**Call for strike at CU Sept 9**  
From CU correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 19: The general students solidarity council of Chittagong University today announced 20-day agitation programmes, including a day-long strike at the university on September 9.

The leaders of the organisation at a press conference on the campus announced the programme demanding introduction of an academic calendar.

**Magurchhara**  
From page 1

the site by falling trees there. The new site for drilling the relief well is about 1000 metres off the eastern side of the main well, informed an official today.

If the situation does not deteriorate further and the new location is found suitable, work on the relief well would begin soon, said the official. It would take about one and a half months to seal the gas well.

Meanwhile, work on the 14 kilometre bypass road from Bharugachh via Padmchhara-Nurjahan Tea garden to Srikanal began three days back with an estimated expenditure of Taka one crore 32 lakh, by the Roads and Highways Department. Construction of another road has been planned from Munshibazar to Srikanal via Deorachhara at a cost of Taka one crore 40 lakh.

**Samples of sweets**  
From page 1

possible on our part to monitor standards of so many products with such a poor strength of manpower." He admitted that BSTI is also responsible for market monitoring of food and other products but said, "We alone are not responsible for its implementation. There are other government bodies which should also help us check adulteration. If others do their duties properly, I believe adulteration can be reduced to a great extent."

He went on, "Whenever a company manufacturing 'sub-standard' products is detected, it is first asked to improve the quality. If it fails to do so within a specific period, it is taken to court."

"There are 130 items of various categories which must obtain BSTI 'certificate marking'. The violators often cannot easily be traced as they sometimes use false addresses. So it is possible that some manufacturers are using BSTI markings and selling 'sub-standard' food items," another official said.

Md Abul Faruk, IPH analyst, said, "We are to ensure better control of the manufacture and sale of 107 types of food for hu-

man consumption as stated in the Pure Food Ordinance, 1959."

"I give certificate against only those samples which arrive here. Though our sanitary inspectors, on suspicion, can collect samples for testing, we cannot take someone to court or seize products for producing adulterated food items," Faruk added.

The BSTI sets standards, they should also ensure that it is being followed properly. Otherwise, the certificate marking is useless, he pointed out.

There are large scale allegations from consumers that many products do not contain labels mentioning contents of the food items, manufacturer's address and batch code number. Besides, the products do not contain specified materials. Some consumers told this correspondent that a few products were found having fungus in those, but had BSTI certificate.

"We trust BSTI means they exist for maintaining quality of food items. I always buy food items seeing BSTI markings on the labels but they have really disappointed me as I found fungus in one of the food items," said a consumer at Gulshan market.

**বাংলাদেশ পোশাক প্রস্তুতকারক ও রপ্তানীকারক সমিতি**  
৭-৯ কাওরান বাজার, বিটিএমসি ভবন, ঢাকা

**জিএসপি সংক্রান্ত সাধারণ সভা**

জিএসপি সংক্রান্ত সর্বশেষ পরিস্থিতি নিয়ে মত বিনিময় ও সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণের উদ্দেশ্যে এক সাধারণ সভা অদ্য ২০ আগস্ট, ১৯৯৭ সকাল ৯ ঘটিকায় সোনারগাঁও হোটেল, বলরুম-এ অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

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সচিব

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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