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Ministerial body visits some garments units

Members of the ministerial committee for averting accidents in garments factories yesterday paid a surprise visit to some woven, knit and sweater factories in the city...

Led by committee Chairman Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed, the team comprised Home Minister Rafiqul Islam, Post and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim and State Minister for Labour and Manpower MA Mannan.

During the visit, the ministers expressed dissatisfaction over the inadequate emergency security measures and accident prevention activities in some factories, said an official hand-out.

2 sisters commit suicide in city

By Staff Correspondent

Two sisters allegedly committed suicide together in a house at Indira Road in the city in the early hours of yesterday.

The dead were identified as Fatema Nizami Chowdhury alias Sunny 22, and Sharifa Nizami Chowdhury alias Jeni, 20, daughters of Sarfuddin Ahmed.

Police recovered the bodies from inside a bathroom of the ground-floor flat at about noon yesterday.

The reason behind the alleged suicide could not be known immediately.

Quoting the FIR, filed by Jagul Haider Biswas, a brother-in-law of the dead girls, police said Sunny and Jeni killed themselves by taking poison after the family members went to bed at about 2 am.

The family members got suspicious when the two were not getting out of their room till 10 am. They then broke the door of the room which was locked from inside. They found the two sisters dead inside an attached bathroom.

The bodies were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy. An unnatural death case was filed with Tejgaon thana in this connection.

Three killed in road accident

COMILLA, Sept 10: A road accident on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Nayakandi in Burichang thana today left three people killed and one injured, reports UNB.

Police said the accident occurred when a private car and a bus collided at about 3:45 pm.

The dead were identified as Jaker Party's Chittagong unit general secretary Selimullah Chowdhury, owner of Chittagong Shipping Corporation Manirul Alam and one Selim Chowdhury of Nasirabad, Chittagong.

The injured was identified as Towhidul Islam. Police seized the vehicles, but the bus driver fled the scene.

IMF suggests reduction

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should be accelerated. He strongly recommended maintenance of the macro-economic stability and suggested that the country's trade regime be opened further. "Frankly, there is no progress in trade liberalisation," he told the news-men.

While briefing on the IMF annual report, Bove replied to queries that the negotiations for an ESAF (enhanced structural adjustment facility) loan for the country were yet to conclude.

He said officials of the government and the Fund were discussing a package proposal submitted by a mission from the IMF that visited the country recently to assess its financial requirements.

According to the finance minister, the government sought some 600 million US dollars under the ESAF scheme. But as per quota, Bangladesh can get maximum 435 million US dollars from the Fund.

The IMF report, released ahead of the Fund's annual board meeting this month, encouraged the authorities, in conjunction with tightening the financial policies, to adopt a more market-based exchange rate regime.

This would help prevent a further decline in reserves and help conduct monetary policy while avoiding recourse to administrative controls on imports, it said.

While noting the strengthen-

ment policy, the owners committed that they would take all security steps within one month.

The steps include: Making emergency exit and alternative stairs, setting up of automatic fire alarm with smoke detector, bringing all workers and employees under group insurance scheme, implementing Factory Act properly, setting up of safe electrical wiring with adequate capacity to maintain load, arranging regular firefighting demonstration, keeping fire extinguishing equipment and first aid arrangements.

The minister also instructed the factory owners to take some long and mid-term steps for preventing accidents and reducing the extent of damage and casualties.

During the visit, the ministers also talked to the workers and enquired about their salaries and other benefits.

IFIC Board

From Page 1

the notices for various alleged irregularities and alleged acts of fraud in rescheduling two export cash credits (ECC) of Bagkhali Fisheries, a company in which Beximco has an interest, into term loans.

The chairman of the board apprised the members about the letters and it was also decided that the MD would prepare a reply to the notice and place it before the board in another meeting before expiry of the deadline for replying to the notices.

40 hurt

From Page 1

in the fifth floor factory at the time.

About 30 injured workers were immediately taken to Tongi Hospital and seven of them were later shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. All of them were released after treatment, police and hospital sources said.

The reason behind the burst of the boiler pipe could not be known immediately.

Uttara police visited the spot. Police team was deployed there.

Women's college

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tween pro-Awami League Chhatra League (S-P) and BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal erupted in the morning over admission.

At least 10 girl students were injured in the violence that later spread to the town.

Of the injured, six girls - three from each side - were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

They are college students union AGS Lipi, magazine secretary Poly and member Afisana of BCL. Injured JCD activists are Jhuma, Nita and Sheuli.

After a series of clashes in the town, the JCD activists set ablaze a microbus and a jeep. They also damaged several rickshaws and shops.

All shops at Ganginarpar, the heart of the town, were closed following the clashes. Police were deployed in the main streets.

British Secy of State for Int'l Dev due Sept 15

British Secretary of State for International Development Clare Short, MP, will arrive in Dhaka on September 15 on a five-day official visit, reports UNB.

This will be the first high-level visit by a British Minister since the new Labour government assumed office on May 1.

Short will meet senior ministers, senior officials and representatives of NGOs during her visit. She is a British Cabinet Minister responsible for the Department for International Development (DFID), formerly known as the Overseas Development Administration.

DFID's cooperation programme in Bangladesh is the UK's second largest programme, said a British High Commission press release today.

One beaten to death in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANJ, Sept 10:

One person was allegedly beaten to death at Godnal under Siddhirganj thana early today, police said.

Police quoting local people said that the victim Iqbal Hossain lifted demanded toll from a truck carrying garments near Godnal bridge on the Narayanganj-Demra highway at around 1:30 am.

The helpers of the truck took him away and beat him severely, police said. Iqbal, son of one Firoz Mia was then thrown on the road near No 2 Dhakeswari, police quoting local people said. He was found dead.

A murder case was filed with Siddhirganj thana.

Sramik League factions clash in Khulna: 4 hurt

Staff Correspondent KHULNA, Sept 10:

Four persons, including a policeman were injured in a hour-long fierce gunbattle between the two rival groups of Sramik League over the leadership of CSD godown handling workers' union at noon today.

Both the groups used firearms and handbombs during the clash.

Police fired blank shot and lobbed tear gas shells to disperse feuding groups.

One Lalchand, 30, was arrested with a country-made gun.

Link road

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The Land Reforms Board leased out the link road behind the Sonali Bank headquarters in Motijheel for one year for Tk 85,000, claiming that 18 kathas of land belonged to Nawab Sir Salimullah, of which, the Board was the custodian.

Immediately after the deal, the lease holders totally blocked the road and raised several shops on it. Signboards of Awami Juba League, Sramik League and that of the Land Reforms Board were seen on the makeshift structures.

The minister said he did not know anything about the Board's move and was surprised to see the report published in The Daily Star on September 7.

About mushrooming party offices, clubs and other structures on government lands in the city, the state minister expressed his determination to take action and said, "I will discuss the matter with the Prime Minister soon and chalk out a course of action." He, however, said most such land in the city belonged to the Dhaka City Corporation.

When asked what his office was doing to confront widespread illegal encroachment on the river Buriganga, Mosharaf replied that his office would also take action in this regard.

Board committee

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The source also said that examinations of 250 examinees who appeared in the examination before expiry of their terms of expulsion and 206 students who changed their names and addresses in the registration cards are likely to be cancelled.

The board earlier decided to cancel the examinations of 6,886 examinees for three kinds of irregularities. But the court of Senior Assistant Judge ordered the Board yesterday to publish the results within 30 days of those retained examinees who changed their colleges to appear in the examination.

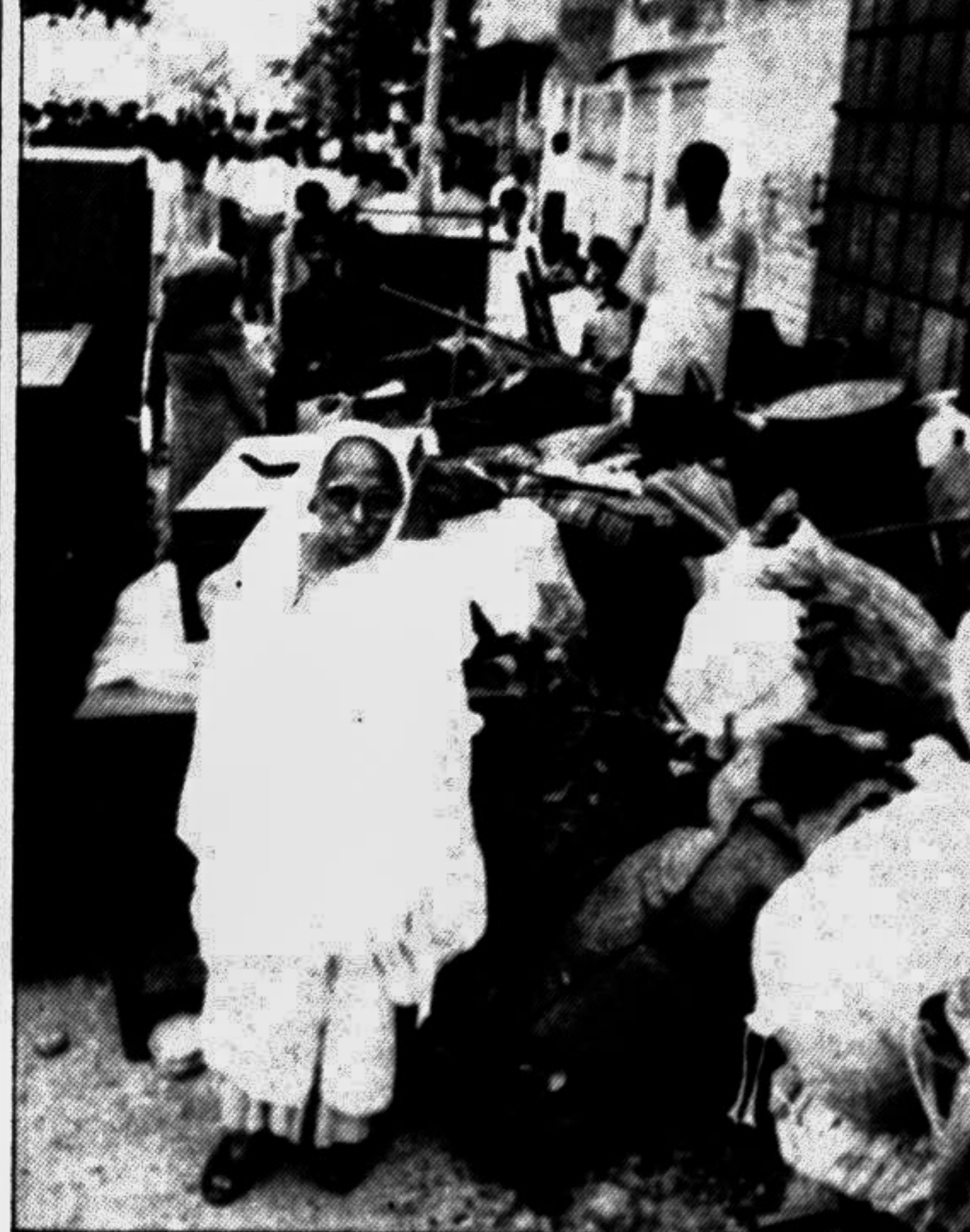
PG Hospital

From Page 1

government decision to turn the BMU, into an autonomous institution.

Yesterday, the striking nurses also demanded that the BMU authorities cancel the transfer order of five leaders of the nurses.

There was no untoward incident at the BMU yesterday. Police was deployed at the premises of the BMU.



Rafiya Khatoun, mother of martyred freedom fighter Zulfiqar Ali Ahmed, and other members of her family standing in front of their house at Rajia Sultana Road of Mohammadpur in the city as an unidentified man 'evicted' them and threw away their belongings yesterday.

— Star photo

Samad Azad in London: Talks with Cook today

Foreign Minister Abus Samad Azad arrived in London yesterday on a four-day official visit to the UK, reports BSS.

The foreign minister was accompanied by Begum Azad.

John Margetson, special representative of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, received the minister at the Heathrow Airport. A H Mahmood, Bangladesh High Commissioner to the UK, was also present.

The foreign minister is scheduled to hold talks with Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Robin Cook today. He will also meet Secretary of State for International Development Claire Short and Secretary of State for Home Affairs Jack Straw.

BCL CU unit to go on fast-unto-death from today

CHITTAGONG, Sept 10:

Chittagong University unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League will go on fast unto-death tomorrow demanding arrest of the killers of Aminul Islam Bakul, reports UNB.

Bakul, a BCL leader, was gunned down on the Chittagong University campus on August 3 during a fierce gunbattle between the activists of BCL and Islami Chhatra Shibir.

The hunger strike will begin in the morning in front of the local press club.

Mustafiz

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Earlier, he was an Additional Foreign Secretary from August 1987 to November 1990.

Born in 1941, Mustafiz is married and has one daughter and two sons.

Showcause notice on IFIC Board

From Page 1

in a rather complicated rescheduling process, a whole chain of borrowing from one account to another took place with the last check bouncing. The mandatory 15 per cent, as required for such an adjustment, was then paid through means, unapproved and unacceptable in banking norms.

The entire process, along with other transactions, only created new loans to the tune of Tk 8.80 crore with the IFIC branch at the end of July this year, the sources quoted the central bank inquiry as concluding.

The inquiry, it has been learnt, detected that a Tk 9.93 crore classified loan in two export cash credit accounts, long overdue, to Bagkhali Fisheries, a Beximco company, had been rescheduled recently by IFIC after the defaulting firm agreed to pay the required 15 per cent of the outstanding money in cash.

And IFIC gave them extremely favourable terms. The Bagkhali Fisheries would repay the rest in eight years, from October 1 1997 to October 1 2004, in equal, annual installments. The interest was fixed at nine per cent.

According to the sources, the central bank said the rate of interest should have been 15 per cent, the usual for such a term loan. The Bank pointed out that it violated instructions issued in 1991 which were still valid.

In addition, according to the inquiry findings, the IFIC violated a major clause of the Banking Company Act. The bank did not ask for Bangladesh Bank approval, which is mandatory when the loan amount exceeds 15 per cent of a bank's capital and reserves.

In this case, the loan account

One killed, 35 hurt as Tablig Jamaat, Sunni group clash in Kishoreganj

KISHOREGANJ, Sept 10: A fierce clash between the supporters of Tablig-e-Jamaat and a Sunni group at Astagram in the town today left a man dead and 35 others injured, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Amir Hossain, 50, of Humayunpur village in Bajitpur thana. Tablig-e-Jamaat claimed Amir as its activist.

The clash occurred when the Sunni group reportedly attacked the supporters of Tablig-e-Jamaat while erecting panel at Astagram helipad ground this morning to hold its three-day assembly, beginning on September 18.

But the supporters of Sunni group at a meeting at Astagram high school on Tuesday protested the assembly of Tablig-e-Jamaat and announced their own programmes at the same time at same venue.

Meanwhile, the district administration has imposed Section 144 in the trouble-torn thana till September 20.

Deputy Commissioner and senior police officials visited the spot. Additional police were deployed in the thana to avert further trouble.

Ershad

From Page 1

without the approval of Jatiya Party. Asked if he had consented to his joining the cabinet, Ershad said he was in jail at that time.

Asked if he had requested during his meeting with the Prime Minister to review the cases against him, the former president replied in the negative. "Why should I ask for that?"

Responding to another question, the JP Chairman rejected the idea of mid-term election, saying that the government should be allowed to complete its full five-year term.

"I'm not in favour of mid-term election... Let the government have the opportunity to rule the country full term and make more mistakes for the people to judge," he said.

Ershad said the present government was making many mistakes and taking wrong decisions against the interests of the people. He pointed out the recent rise in fuel and fertiliser prices as well as low prices of jute and paddy.

He also criticised the government for the passage of the Gram Parishad (village council) Bill in Parliament despite protests from the JP lawmakers.

In an oblique reference to BNP's threat of demanding mid-term election, he said Begum Zia had run the country without the opposition in parliament for three years. They claimed themselves as democratic and forcibly ruled the country for five years.

Asked about possibility of his party withdrawing support from the government, the JP chief, however, said, "We have never supported this government. Our stand is clear: Support the good works and oppose the wrongdoings of the government."

Jatiya Party, he said, has always been in the opposition and wants to play a constructive role as responsible opposition.

Ershad scoffed at the idea of launching anti-government movement with Begum Zia. "Jatiya Party has its own politics and own philosophy for doing good for the country and the people... We will go our own way."

The inquiry also found that there were more such instances of purchasing cheques and transferring money from the IFIC Dhanmondi branch to help the Beximco Group.

Allegations have it that the inquiry has also indicted officials at different levels including the managing director were involved in the whole process.

The Daily Star also tried, in vain, Tuesday to contact Salman F Rahman. His secretary said he would get back to Star by Wednesday if the Beximco Group deputy chairman would be willing to talk. Till the writing of this report, he did not respond.

Khaleda given 2 months time to respond to show cause notice

By Special Correspondent

Assistant District and Sessions Judge of Dhaka, Abdul Mannan yesterday granted two months time to BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia to explain why she should not be restrained from celebrating her birthday on August 15.

A group of lawyers led by Advocate Sanaullah, on behalf of Begum Zia, appeared before the court and sought time to reply to the show cause notice issued on August 21 following a petition filed by Advocate Suhrawardy.

He filed the petition on August 20 seeking a mandatory injunction to restrain the leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad from celebrating her Birthday on August 15, saying it had hurt his feelings and impeded his right to observe the National Mourning Day on the same day.

He also claimed according to documents available from the Dhaka Education Board, Begum Zia's birthday is September 5.

The petitioner's lawyers were, however, not present in the court yesterday.

The lawyers for the defendant raised slogans in the court premises denouncing the filing of the case.

Traffic constable arrested for snatching money

By Staff Correspondent

A traffic constable was arrested on charge of snatching money from a man at Katchukhet under Cantonment thana in the city yesterday.

Police said Harun Ur Rashid, a constable of Kotwali traffic zone, and two others attacked Abu Taher when he was passing through the area at about 11 am. They reportedly snatched Tk 4,900 from Taher, a trader residing in Bhashantek.

When Taher raised a hue and cry, local people rushed to the scene and caught Harun, who was not in uniform. The mob also assaulted the constable while his two accomplices fled the scene by an auto-rickshaw.

Patrol police immediately rushed to the spot and arrested Harun. However, the money could not be recovered till last night.

Transport leader shot in city

By Staff Correspondent

A leader of the transport workers was shot by a group of unidentified gunmen at his Demra residence in the city yesterday.

Identified as Selim, a leader of the Dhaka-Demra Minibus Workers' Association, the victim was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with bullet wounds in his chest.

Hospital sources said a gang of about five armed men stormed into Selim's house at Konapara at about 12:30 pm, and opened fire on him.

The reason behind the attack could not be known immediately.

PM: BNP's revenge

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rather, they did it. We feel the original name should be restored."

Asked to comment on President Shahabuddin Ahmed's recent remarks about the ruling party and the major opposition party, the AL chief said she would meet the President to know for herself what exactly he said. "It won't be wise to make any comment before I discuss the issue with the President," she noted.

When her attention was drawn to reports that a section of people in the administration is allegedly sabotaging her government, the Prime Minister admitted this and advised the journalists to "expose" those persons. "We're also trying to overcome the crisis, caused by the vested groups existing in the administration for long."

Earlier, the Prime Minister described her six-day visit to Indonesia and the Philippines as "very fruitful".

She also briefed the newsmen about her discussions with President Soeharto of Indonesia and President Fidel Ramos of the Philippines, with the businessmen in both the ASEAN countries and the accords signed during the visit.

Besides, bilateral economic cooperation, Hasina said, regional cooperation was also stressed.

Bangabandhu murder

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was disabined in 1976' the PW-12 said 'I do not remember'.

To the suggestion of the lawyer that his dismissal from the army and disbanding of the First Bengal Lancer were linked with the incident of August 15, he said, "It is not true."

All the soldiers of the First Bengal Lancer excepting the 'appointment holders' of the Unit participated in the 'operation' on that day, he said.

Appointment holders were those who held important positions and were posted on duty in the cantonment, the PW-12 explained.

When the lawyer suggested that during the night parade of August 14, 1975, no briefing was given other than that relating to the scheduled night parade, the PW-12 said, "It is not true."

When asked whether he informed the superior officers about the briefing which was not related to the night parade, he said, "such provision does not exist in the army". The juniors cannot do anything on their own," he added.

"I am not aware whether any punitive action was taken against those who participated and those who did not participate in the operation," he said.

"I did not see any jeep parked near trucks when I returned to the parade ground carrying ammunition from the kote on the night of August 14," he said.

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Let's make things better PHILIPS

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Committee (BAC) meetings.

In the BAC meet before the just-concluded sixth session, we agreed to discuss in the House all the issues they raised, even those which are delicate for us. But the Deputy Leader of the Opposition violating an agreement, rose on a point of order and walked out of the House in a pre-planned way. Did they come to the BAC meet to stage the drama later?" Hasina said and added the Opposition leader has no right to speak outside parliament after refraining from attending the BAC meet.

Replying to a question on Jatiya Party chief Ershad's reported decision to withdraw his support to the government, the PM said in a lighter vein, "He (Ershad) may have been inspired and excited by the statements of his *habibi* and being so he sometimes utters these. It will be looking nice if the *debar* and the *habibi* take to the streets together. We need to witness such a combination."

Asked if her government would accept BNP's 15-point demand, Hasina replied, "Those are already accepted. I don't find any substance in those."

About a demand for withdrawal of the government circular renaming Zia International Airport, she said, "We didn't change its (airport's) name

15 hurt as BCL factions clash in Pirojpur

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, Sept 10: At least 15 activists of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) were injured, two of them seriously, in a factional clash on the Pirojpur college campus at about 11 in the morning.

Witnesses said, the clash erupted between the activists of the two BCL factions at the Bilash square of the college led by two local Awami League leaders. The clash left 15 BCL activists and an Awami League leader injured.

Seriously injured BCL district leaders Quayum, 28, and Amar, 22, were sent to Barisal Medical College Hospital while Awami League leader Mostafa Sikder, 38, was admitted to Pirojpur Hospital.