

5 mills to be handed over to workers this month: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said five mills and factories of Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Mymensingh regions would be handed over to their workers by this month as part of the privatisation process, reports UNB.

"These five mills will be used for industrial purpose only, not for housing under any circumstances," she said while exchanging views with leaders of Bangladesh Workers Party at her office in the morning.

Hasina said the government's privatisation process aims at making the losing mills and factories profitable. She also laid emphasis on running the old mills and factories after necessary repairs.

The government is taking realistic and stern action against the loan defaulters, she said, adding that Tk 3,800 crore had been recovered since her government took over.

Isa Murder Case

Four awarded life-term, 4 10 yrs' RI

A court yesterday sentenced four youths to life imprisonment and four others to suffer 10 years rigorous imprisonment after finding them guilty of murdering a 16-year-old boy at his home at Hotel Elysium in the city on October 19, 1994.

Ishiaque Ahmed Isa was alone at his parents home at the hotel used for the residences of the government officials when the killers slit open his throat with a machete and fled with a VCP and other valuables while his parents, both government officials, were off to work.

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Strike at BUET: Hilton's condition critical

By BUET Correspondent
No classes were held at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) yesterday as various student bodies jointly called a strike in protest against the assault on BUET correspondent of the Sangbad.

The BNP-backed Jatiyabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), however, did not join the strike.

The student bodies that called the strike held rallies demanding stern action against those involved in assaulting the correspondent, Hilton Das, late Wednesday night.

A resident of Titumir Hall, Hilton was severely beaten by five outsiders carrying hockey sticks and weapons in his room.

Two top leaders of the EUCSU were allegedly behind the strike.

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Indo-Pak talks conclude

NEW DELHI, Sept 18: India and Pakistan today ended three days of peace talks and negotiations said they had agreed to meet again to try to normalise relations between the long-time rivals, reports Reuters.

"We are clear in our mind that the serious dialogue should continue," Indian foreign secretary K. Raghunath told reporters after the talks.

Raghunath and his Pakistani counterpart Shamshad Ahmad both said the talks had been cordial and there was agreement on the need to meet again, although no date was set.

"During these talks we were able to understand each other's position in a better manner," Ahmad said.

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Removal of bridge over Crescent Lake protested Police, BNP workers clash: Many hurt



BNP office area in Naya Paltan in the city clouded with thick smoke yesterday as police lobbed tear gas shells. BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia (inset) wiping her eyes when she entered the office shortly afterwards. — Star photo

Crescent Lake pontoon bridge shifted to Shayestaganj

The government has shifted the pontoon bridge on the Crescent Lake near Sangsad Bhaban to Shayestaganj, reports UNB.

The pontoon bridge has been temporarily shifted to Shayestaganj considering the inconvenience of the people of Sylhet to cross the river Khowai, said an official handout yesterday. The pontoon bridge belongs to the Roads and Highway Department.

It said the government has arranged to place the floating bridge on the river Khowai beside the under-construction Khowai bridge. The Khowai bridge collapsed due to a flash flood on July 13.



The floating bridge on the Crescent Lake at this point was removed on Wednesday night. — Star photo

By Staff Correspondent

Scores of people were injured in a series of clashes between police and BNP supporters in and around the party central office at Naya Paltan in the city yesterday.

According to witnesses, the clashes took place when police tried to prevent the major opposition party from staging a rally to protest removal of a floating bridge on the Crescent Lake, leading to founder of the party late President Ziaur Rahman's mazar.

Police lobbed teargas shells blanketing the area with a massive cloud of smoke which made a number of people inside the BNP office sick.

Those who fell sick due to teargas included Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad Prof. Badruddoza Choudhury and city BNP Convener Sadek Hossain Khoka.

Besides, three policemen were wounded in brickbats by BNP workers, police sources said.

The trouble began when police took position on the stairs at different floors of the four-story building.

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BNP announces countrywide demonstration today & tomorrow

BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday warned that her party would go for a tough street protest to oust the government if it does not stop its "undemocratic" activities, reports UNB.

"The government is doing everything excess. We will further intensify our street protest which might expedite the fall of the government," she said.

The Leader of the Opposition in Parliament issued the warning at a press briefing shortly after police had gone on action against BNP activists in front of the party central office in the afternoon.

She also announced countrywide demonstration today and tomorrow and demonstration at district headquarters on Sunday to protest the police attack and removal of the pontoon bridge from Crescent Lake.

Describing the police action as barbaric, Begum Zia said the BNP would not back down.

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Larma tells CHT people PCJSS, govt made concessions for greater interest

By Special Correspondent

Chairman of Parbaty Chittagong Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) Jyotirindriyo Bodhipriyo Larma alias Shantu Larma has said that both his organisation and the government agreed to give concessions to each other in the greater interest of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and the country to bring a lasting peace in the region.

"Because of sincerity of the government we have been able to work out a draft agreement, which will be placed before you," he told cheering supporters upon arrival at his temporary headquarters at Dudukchhara in Khagrachari district yesterday morning by a special flight of an Air Force Mi-17 helicopter.

He said if the tribespeople give their approval the agreement will be signed in the next meeting with the National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts (NCCHT), according to information received from local correspondents covering his arrival at Dudukchhara, a tiny frontier hamlet near the border with the Indian state of Tripura.

Several thousand tribespeople greeted him and his delegation when they alighted from the military helicopter from Dhaka at 11:15 am after four days of talks with the NCCHT. The talks ended on Wednesday evening.

Larma sounded optimistic when he said that he expects people in the CHT and all over the country as well as the Shantibahini would accept the agreement when it is signed.

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Short sees progress in poverty alleviation

British Secretary of State for International Development Clare Short MP said Bangladesh achieved remarkable progress in poverty alleviation, education and agriculture, reports UNB.

"We see major progress in poverty eradication. It's an enormous task," said the visiting British minister at a joint press conference with Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria at the NEC Bhaban yesterday.

Short, who came here Monday on a four-day official visit to Bangladesh, yesterday signed an Exchange of Letters approving a British grant of over Tk 24.6 crore for the second phase of the Fisheries Training and Extension Project.

The British minister termed her visit enormously enjoyable, she said. We are looking for long-term partnership between the two governments.

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HC issues showcause on striking nurses

The High Court yesterday asked the nurses association leaders to show cause as to why they shall not be directed to call off the strike at IPGMR and resume duties immediately, reports UNB.

It issued a rule calling upon the two nurses associations to show cause as to why the indefinite strike enforced by them at IPGMR since September 7 should not be declared to have been done against public interest and without lawful authority.

The vacation writ bench of the HC Division also issued show cause notice upon the Health Secretary, the Director of Nursing Service and the Director of IPGMR for their failure to restore the medical services at the PG Hospital.

The bench comprising Justice Mainur Reza Chowdhury and Justice Mohammad Hamidul Huq issued the rule after hearing a writ petition filed by Anwar Sadat Kolloi, a relation of a patient now undergoing treatment at the hospital.

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Nurses observe 24-hr strike

By Staff Correspondent

A 24-hour strike in government hospitals and health complexes in the country began at 8 am yesterday at the call of Bangladesh Diploma Nurses Association (BDNA) in support of the striking nurses of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BMU). BDNA leaders claimed.

The 24-hour strike called through a press conference on September 11 was successfully observed across the country. No untoward incidents took place, said one of the BMU nurses' leaders.

To put an end to the crisis, Director of Nursing Services Nimati Sharma met the leaders of BDNA at the BMU premises yesterday evening. During the one and half hours talks, BDNA leaders turned down her request to call off the strike and set for a meeting with the authorities.

The talks failed. The Director had come on behalf of the minister to convince us to call off the strike. We shall sit for talks only if the government withdraws its decision to turn the IPGMR (now BMU) into an

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Grameen Court won't clash with judicial system: Khashru

By Staff Correspondent

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Abdul Matin Khashru said yesterday that the proposed Grameen Court system was aimed at ensuring justice to the poorest of the poor.

"The village courts in the past had been non-functional because those who ran those courts were partisan by the very nature of their appointments," he said at a Consultative Workshop on Grameen Court in the city yesterday.

"We do not want to make the same mistakes of the past. By establishing a maximum participatory court, we would like to ensure justice to all," he told the workshop which was participated by lawyers and representatives from different human rights organisations.

The Grameen Court Project of the Law Ministry has prepared an outline of the final draft of the new system, which, according to the Law Minister, would not clash with the existing judicial system but would

act as a complimentary system. The outline was discussed at the workshop and lawyers added their recommendations with it.

The workshop was participated by Attorney General K S Nabi, Barrister Amrul Islam, Justice K M Sobhan, Advocate Sigma Huda, Law Secretary M Aminullah, Project Director and Joint Secretary of Law Ministry Sahur Hossain, Project Consultant Mizanur Rahman and others.

Amirul Islam said that while a better system would be formulated to ensure justice at the grassroots level, it was hard to appoint the right people who were committed enough to ensure justice.

"Commitment in judiciary is lacking. Justice is perpetuated in cases like Seema murder or Nurjahan murder. The society, in general, lacks sensitivity for justice. People are becoming more legalistic, egoistic and technical about themselves. Therefore, the person who will ensure justice is the problem

which needs to be addressed first," he said pointing fingers at politicisation of the judiciary at village level.

He noted that to sustain the participatory nature of Grameen Court, institutional support would be needed. The institution's purpose would be training the judges, mediators and conciliators of Grameen Court with an emphasis on maintaining neutrality.

Justice K M Sobhan noted that although the judicial system in villages had been introduced in 1919, all past courts remained partisan by the nature of their appointment.

Describing the composition of the Grameen Court, Mizanur Rahman said that the court would be composed of three judges or adjudicators. They would be nominated from among a panel of 15 to 20 'justices of peace' (honorary magistrates). The senior-most adjudicator will be designated as Chairman of the court.

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Jiang's rival dropped from party central committee

BEIJING, Sept 18: China's Communist Party has elected a new central committee with 193 full members and 151 alternative members, AFP quoting Xinhua reported.

The 2,048 top-rank leaders of the party also elected a new commission for discipline inspection with 115 members. Qiao, Shi, the head of China's parliament and a rival to Communist leader Jiang Zemin, was dropped from the party's policy making Central Committee, delegates to the party congress said.

Liu Huaqing, the Chinese army's top representative, also was left off the powerful committee, said Zhang Guoyan and Wang Zhiwei, delegates from northern Shaanxi.

The removals of Qiao and Liu from the committee, one of the party's highest organs of power, may open the way for Jiang to manoeuvre more supporters into top positions, according to AP.

"They're retiring, they're too old," Wang said. Liu is 81, Qiao is 72.

The central authorities have made other arrangements for them," Zhang said.

Qiao's removal also increases the likelihood of him stepping down at a later date as head of the National People's Congress, perhaps in favour of Li Peng, whose term as premier ends in March.

The weeklong congress marked a watershed for 71-year-old Jiang in that it was his

first without the powerful backing of his mentor Deng Xiaoping, China's paramount leader who died in February.

Today's closing session was expected to approve Jiang's reforms, proposed in a keynote speech to the opening of the congress last Friday, as well as a plan to amend the Communist Party constitution.



Chinese President Jiang Zemin (left) and Prime Minister Li Peng have a discussion during the closing session of the 15th Communist Party Congress inside the Great Hall of the People in Beijing yesterday. — AP/UNB photo

Manzoor Murder Case Fresh hearing on charge framing Sept 28

By Staff Correspondent

A fresh hearing on charge framing in the Manzoor murder case, in which Jatiya Party chief and the former President H M Ershad is the principal accused, is scheduled for September 28 at the First Court of Additional Session Judge, Dhaka, said Yousuf Hossain Humayun, lawyer for Ershad.

The court will also examine the accused and hear the argument in the Jatiya Party office

case on the same day. Ershad is also an accused in the case. Humayun added.

Ershad is also scheduled to appear before the court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka in the T&T and Holiday Inn cases on September 29.

A date for fresh hearing on charge framing in the Manzoor murder case was fixed under order of the High Court as the

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Ganesh Man Singh dead

KATHMANDU, Sept 18: Ganesh Man Singh, supreme leader of the Nepali Congress Party who made his name fighting a century of one-family rule in Nepal, died today aged 82, officials said, reports AFP.

One of the most popular figures in Nepal, thousands of people started flocking to his residence in Kathmandu after news of his death was announced on state radio.

Singh died after suffering a heart attack but had ill for some time.

Noor Jehan in critical condition

ISLAMABAD, Sept 18: The diva of Pakistani music, whose singing and film career predates the creation of her country 50 years ago, has been hospitalised with critical heart problems, AP quoting newspapers reported today.

Noor Jehan, who will turn 71 on Sunday, was admitted to the intensive care unit of the Agha Khan Hospital in the

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The Daily Star
on the Internet
<http://www.dailystarnews.com>

Nat'l Film Award '94 distributed

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the filmmakers to imbibe positivity with the spirit of the War of Liberation through films depicting the events of history, besides producing entertaining movies, reports UNB.

"We also have to take effective steps to control the production of cheap entertaining films," she said at the distribution ceremony of the National Film Award '94 at Osmani Memorial auditorium in the evening.

Unveiling government plans for developing film industry, the Prime Minister said: We are keen to see the films of Bangladesh develop into a strong public medium to provide the viewers with healthy recreation. We are eager to step forward in line with the progress of the world film industry.

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Young man stabbed to death in city

By Staff Correspondent

A young man was murdered and his brother was critically injured when an unidentified gang stabbed them in South Pirerbagh under Mirpur thana in the city last night.

Police identified the dead as Siraj, 28, and his injured brother as Jasim, 30. The injured man was under treatment at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

The motive behind the attack on the sons of Jainal Abedin of South Pirerbagh could not be known immediately.

Police said the two brothers were stabbed indiscriminately by unidentified assailants at a grocery near their house at about 8 pm. Both of the wounded brothers were taken to DMCH immediately.

Siraj succumbed to his injuries at about 10:30 pm while Jasim's condition was deteriorating.

Mirpur police said the investigating officer rushed to the spot. However, no case was lodged and none was arrested in connection with the incident till filing of this report late last night.

Ershad apprehends

CHT won't remain part of Bangladesh if army withdrawn

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday expressed his apprehension that Chittagong Hill Tracts will not remain a part of Bangladesh if army is withdrawn from there, reports UNB.

"I have doubts whether the hill tracts will remain a part of Bangladesh if the army is withdrawn from there. Army, by no means, should be withdrawn from the region," he said in a statement.

Ershad said the government should discuss the CHT issue in Parliament before signing any agreement.

"Transparency is essential in any agreement. People should be informed of it clearly," he added.

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