

Mills closed
Prime Group
owners,
employees
file cases

From Ehsanul Haque

NARAYANGANJ, Oct 3: Two cases were lodged with Fatullah thana today in connection with the attack on three industrial units of Prime Group by armed goons on Thursday.

Of the two cases, one was lodged by the workers and the other by the owners, said Fatullah police.

Twenty people were injured in the attack on Prime Textile Spinning Mills, Prime Composite Mills and Prime Re-rolling Mills of the group in Nanadalalpur area under Fatullah thana. The units employ about 4,000 workers.

Following the incident, the mills were closed and police were deployed there. None was, however, arrested police said.

During a visit to the mill area, it was seen that a five-story rest house of Prime Group was damaged and their offices were also ransacked. Vehicles, freeze, television, air-conditioner and furniture were also damaged.

The FIR lodged on behalf of

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Indian goods flooded markets during BNP rule, says Zillur

General Secretary of Bangladesh Awami League and Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman yesterday rejected the statement made by Begum Khaleda Zia and said it was her BNP government which had turned Bangladesh into the market of Indian goods during its rule, reported BSS.

In a statement, Zillur Rahman said that during the BNP rule *ruhi* fish, potatoes, onions, garlics and even *rashgollas* from India flooded the market of this country. The incident of the biggest arms smuggling in Chittagong took place during their rule while smuggling of gold was a regular feature, he pointed out.

He said the countrymen are well aware of the fact that

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Appointments, transfers

Former Defence Secretary Kazi Mohammad Monzoor-e-Moula has been appointed Secretary of the Parliament Secretariat on contract basis for three years by cancelling his LPR, said an official handout last night, reports UNB.

It said Joint Secretary of the Jute Ministry A K M Rezaur Rahman has been made Private Secretary to the Prime Minister.

Director General of Bangladesh National Museum A Z M Rafique Bhuiyan has been made Director of the Directorate of Archaeology while Director of Bangla Academy A K M Shamsuzzaman the DG of the National Museum on contract

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Announcement

Our weekly Entertainment page for Friday appears today, dropping National page. Inconvenience caused to readers is regretted.

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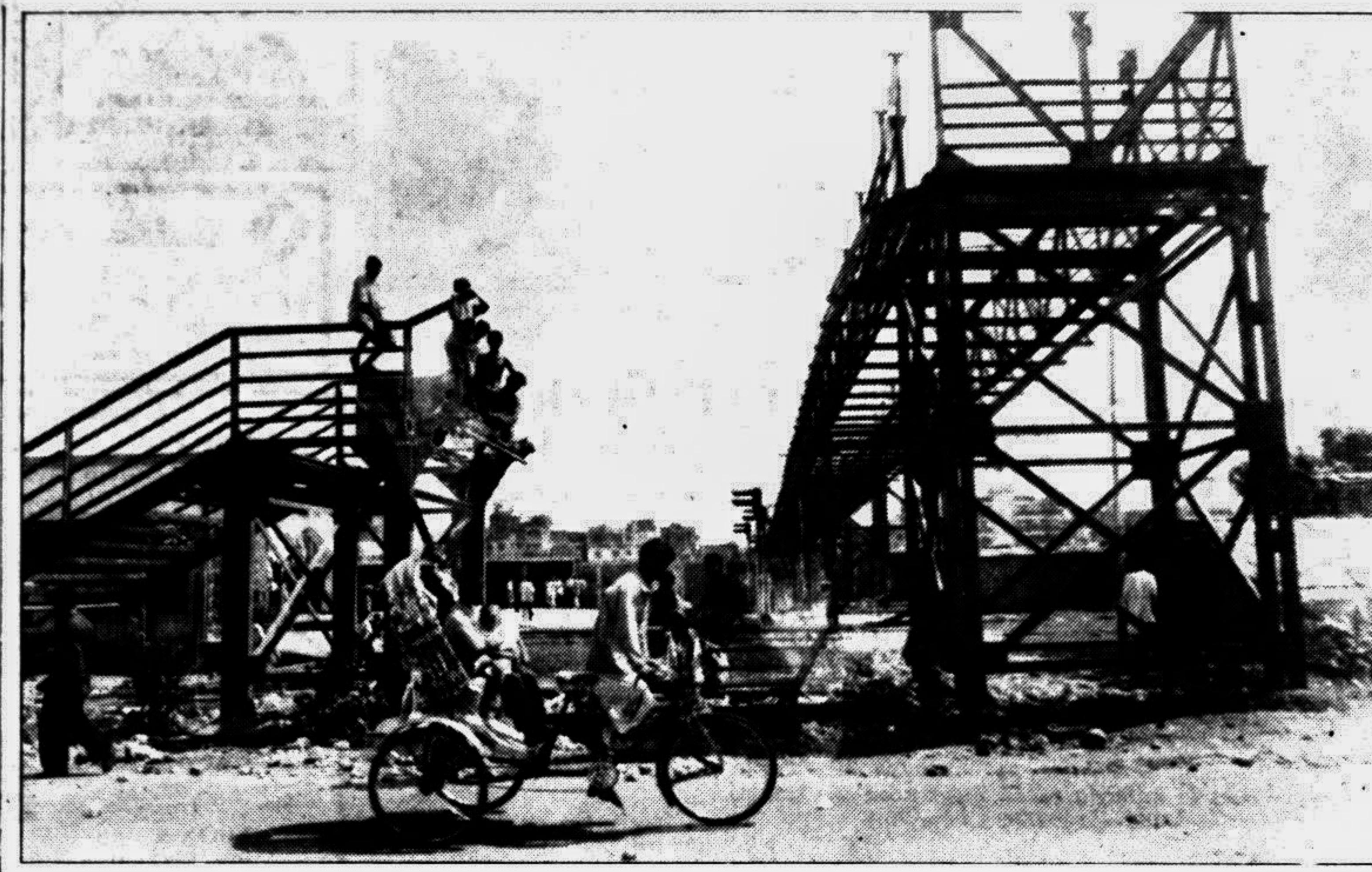
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The Daily Star
on the internet
<http://www.dailystarnews.com>



The overbridge at Kamalapur railway station in the city being dismantled yesterday. —Star photo by Sk Enamul Haque

Eight-hour road-rail barricade tomorrow

Govt using media against movement, says Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

tomorrow's barricade programme a success, according to UNB.

The Opposition Leader in a statement yesterday said that BNP is struggling for safeguarding country's independence and sovereignty, continuation of the democratic process, saving economy, protecting public life and property and ensuring people's democratic rights.

The barricade programme across the country has been called as part of that struggle, she added.

The Leader of the Opposition in Parliament said the government has become isolated from the people due to its total failure to run the country and sub-servient activities.

They also hinted that barricade will be put up at Rampura, Makhali, Jatrabari, Sadarghat, Tongi bridge, Kanchupur bridge and Mirpur areas around Dhaka during the programme.

Meanwhile, BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia has urged the countrymen to make

protect the country and people's rights.

But, she expressed her confidence that like in the past the present government would not be able to mislead the patriotic and democracy-loving people through false propaganda.

"We want to categorically say that our movement is to protect the country and its people. Our movement is for the demand to run parliament neutrally and making it the central point of all activities," she said.

Begum Zia also said that the current movement is also for ensuring fair price of all agri-products, including jute, rice and sugarcane, and reduction of fuel price, fertiliser, agri-inputs and essential commodities.

The movement is also to press for cancellation of 'undemocratic' Gram Parishad Bill, resolving the existing crisis of water, gas and electricity, full implementation of pay-scale and announcement of

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Eight ADB-aided projects moving at snail's pace

Eight projects funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) are moving at a snail's pace while the government is seeking ways for speedy implementation of the limping projects.

Official sources said the Economic Relations Division (ERD) has identified the eight slow-moving projects against which disbursements of loan money are trailing far behind the project's elapsed loan period.

The poor disbursements, compared to the elapsed loan period of the projects, show that they have become almost sick and need special measures for their satisfactory implementation, an official said.

A review of these eight projects was recently sent to the Prime Minister's Office for necessary action, pinpointing the problems and suggesting their possible redress, he told UNB yesterday.

The suggestions include designating project directors as early as possible in the project cycle, even though he may not

be formally appointed until the loan is made effective.

Frequent transfer of project directors should be stopped, the ERD suggested, adding that preferably one project director should continue for the entire implementation of the project.

The projects are Coastal Greenbelt project, Third Natural Gas Development project, Rural Electrification project, Dhaka Integrated Flood Protection project, Second Water Supply and Sanitation project, Higher Secondary Education project, Bangladesh Open University project and Second Health and Family Planning Services project.

Only 8 per cent of loan amount was disbursed against 30 per cent of elapsed loan period for the Coastal Greenbelt project, where the ADB is providing 21.98 million US dollars.

For the Third Natural Gas Development project, only 14 per cent of the 107.43 million ADB loan was disbursed against the 57 per cent of the elapsed

loan period.

The ERD commented on the project that the executing agencies need to comply with loan covenants like enactment of gas regulations, establishment of regulatory authority and appointment of private sector directors in their boards.

The executing agencies must expedite procurement action, it added.

Only 11 per cent loan amount was disbursed against 50 per cent of elapsed loan period for the Rural Electrification project in which the Bank is giving 44.44 million US dollars.

For the Dhaka Integrated Flood Protection project, 49 per cent loan amount was disbursed against 99 per cent of the elapsed loan period. The ADB's contribution in the project is 95.45 million dollars.

The ERD said the PPs of the project have to be changed to accommodate revised scope and increased cost. The executing agencies should gear up imple-

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WFDY secy-gen tells The Daily Star

Youth bodies should have a say in policy making

By Nurul Kabir

Youth organisations in Bangladesh should have a more active role in dealing with problems like illiteracy, poverty and unemployment, according to Harchand Singh Bath, secretary general of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY).

"Illiteracy, poverty and unemployment are the major problems Bangladesh's young people have been confronting and the country's youth organisations should play a greater role to remove the problems."

Bath, a former general secretary of the All India Student Federation said the democratic youth organisations should also be involved in the policy making process in the

country, from grassroots to the national level.

An Indian national, now based in Budapest, Hungary, Bath was in Dhaka on a three-day visit last week to attend a conference of Bangladesh Judo Union, which is also WFDY's local unit. As many as 155 youth organisations in 105 countries are under the fold of WFDY, which acts as coordinator of their activities at the global level.

In an interview with The Daily Star, Bath also gave ideas about how the youth community could make its way into the national policy making mechanism.

A case has been filed with Doublemooring thana accusing five persons. None was arrested till filing of this report.

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Govt still uncertain about donors' aid pledge

By Inam Ahmed

The government requires an increased foreign aid inflow to bridge the savings gap for a higher level of investment to achieve the targeted seven per cent growth rate, according to highly placed official sources.

The changed aid environment marked by trimming of donors' aid budget, however, may not allow for higher external assistance pledge in the November consortium meet to be held for the first time in Dhaka, departing from the earlier practice of meeting in Paris.

"We would make our case. But we are still uncertain about the donors' pledge this year since some major donors have cut back on their aid budget," said an authoritative source.

Japan, the largest bilateral donor, is 'favourable' to Bangladesh. But it also has trimmed its overall external assistance quantum this year.

"We still expect a better pledge from them," he said.

But how much the donors

would agree to give Bangladesh would require an assessment of the lending they had been making, said a top Finance Ministry official.

"Donors are moving away from open pledge. This time they are likely to make it an impact-based one," he said.

This year's budget shows a higher foreign aid component from last year's. It is 1525 million dollars this year against last year's revised amount of 1450 million dollars," he pointed out. "This means we will need more aid commitment to keep our programmes on foot."

On top of this, a higher growth rate — seven per cent — would require more investment to achieve the target. With the government's revenue collection efforts straining at the moment, a natural recourse would be to net more aid to make the necessary investment for reaching the growth rate, officials noted.

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Cyclone: 17 more bodies recovered in Patuakhali and Bhola

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Oct 3: Seventeen more bodies of victims of last Friday's cyclone were recovered in Patuakhali and Bhola in the last three days, according to sources today.

Many bodies, some decomposed, are still floating in different areas of the coast, according to Mostafa Chowdhury, president of Patharghata Trawler Owners Association in Patuakhali.

He said that five decomposed bodies of missing fishermen were recovered from Karabunia Char, some 6 kilometres away from Kuakata sea beach under Kalapara thana of Patuakhali district today. One of these bodies could be identified as that of Mir Harun, 30, of South Patharghata of Barguna district.

He also informed that out of 134 missing fishermen since last Friday, 57 returned so far.

According to reports from Bhola, bodies of twelve more cyclone victims were recovered from different places under five thanas of the district in the last three days.

Eight of the bodies were

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Ousted BCL faction retakes DU halls

By DU Correspondent

Activists of the Shariatpur-Madirpur faction of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) who were ousted from the Shahidullah Hall and Fazlul Haq Hall of Dhaka University by the rival Gopalganj faction Thursday evening, recaptured the halls at around 12 the same night, according to sources on the campus.

After being ousted, the activists first demonstrated in front of the residence of the Vice Chancellor and urged him to take action against capture of the halls by 'outsiders'.

The activists, some of them armed, then forced the resident students of the two halls to participate in a procession and marched towards the dormitories from the Gopalganj group.

When the procession reached the Doel Chattar near Curzon Hall, the Gopalganj faction fired shots from the Shahidullah and Fazlul Haq Halls. At this stage, police lobbed some 10 rounds of teargas shells to bring the situation under control.

Sensing danger, activists of

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Delay in registration 10335 pharmacists sit idle for over a yr

By Naimul Haq

More than 10,000 qualified pharmacists are sitting idle as the Council Committee of the Pharmacy Council of Bangladesh (PCB) is sitting on their applications for registration with the PCB.

PCB registration is a precondition for pharmacists to start professional work but the PCB Council Committee, the body responsible for giving registration, is not functioning for over one and a half years.

Sources in the Council said, 10,335 candidates who completed the 'Certificate Course in Pharmacy' and appeared at Pharmacy Certificate Registration Examinations held from November 1993 till March 1997 are waiting for their certificates of the BPS are now fighting a legal battle for legitimacy.

The sources also said that about 150 graduates from the pharmacology departments of Dhaka and Jahangirnagar universities are also waiting for their registration in category 'A'.

The 15-member Council Committee comprises representatives from the Bangladesh Pharmaceutical Society, Chemists and Druggists Association, Drug Administration and the Bangladesh Medical Association. Its tenure expired