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Rickshawpullers, tempo drivers clash at Barisal: 100 injured

From Staff Correspondent
BARISAL, Oct 26: A trifling matter triggered sporadic clashes involving rickshawpullers, tempo and outorickshaw drivers and police in different areas of the town today, leaving over 100 people including 17 policemen injured.

Of the injured policemen, six are officials.

Police lobbed at least 60 rounds of tear gas shells to disperse rampaging rickshawpullers and tempo drivers who also exploded numerous hand bombs during the clashes that lasted about five hours from 8 am.

Settlers barricade roads in Khagrachhari

From Our Correspondent
KHAGRACHHARI, Oct 26: Movement of vehicles to and from here was disrupted due to a road barricade programme to press for equal rights for tribals and settlers in the proposed CHT peace agreement.

The programme was observed by the settler-dominated Sarbadaliya Oikya Parishad, which has also called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the three CHT districts on October 29.

An all-party rally, to be addressed by BNP MP Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Matur Rahman Nizami and JP (Z-M) leaders will be held at Rangamati tomorrow, to build up public opinion against any peace accord sidelining the settlers.

Court orders release of Naroda Devi

By Court Correspondent
Naroda Devi Kapoor, an Indian national who claimed herself to be a daughter of former President Abdur Rahman Biswas, was discharged by the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court yesterday.

She was arrested on September 16 under Section 54 of CrPC by Sabujbagh thana. It forwarded her to court on suspicion of being a member of an international criminal gang.

Police yesterday submitted its report clearing her of the suspicions. Her personal baggage, kept at Sabujbagh thana, were also ordered to be returned.

SB recovers Tk 2022.35 cr loans in 9 months

Sonali Bank has recovered a total of Tk 2022.35 crore loans including stuck-up and overdue money from January to September, reports UNB.

Of the recovered loans, Tk 1399.85 crore has been realised in cash and Tk 122.50 crore through rescheduling.

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Supplement

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Union parishad polls AL, BNP assure CEC of cooperation

By Staff Correspondent
Hena in the morning while the three-member AL team led by Joint General Secretary of the party Mozaffar Hossain Paltu met him in the afternoon.

The Election Commission (EC) is scheduled to conduct election of 4,330 UPs out of a total of 4,468 in December.

The CEC briefed the leaders about the preparations and steps taken for holding free and fair polls, an EC press release said adding that he also noted down some suggestions put forward by the leaders.

Although BNP had reservation about the appointment of Abu Hena as the CEC, party

'One company, one block' formula Shell threatens to withdraw from bidding process

By Sharier Khan
The world's biggest oil and gas company, Shell Oil, has warned the government that it would withdraw from the second round of block bidding if the government sticks to the "one block, one company" formula in the negotiation process.

The announcement, coming with invitations for negotiations, took participating international oil companies (IOCs) by surprise who were earlier told that it would be a "competitive bidding".

Some five IOCs registered and one local company — BAPEX — had submitted 36 proposals on June 15 last.

Last week, all of a sudden, the government told bidders that it would go by "one company, one block" formula to select companies.

The announcement, coming with invitations for negotiations, took participating international oil companies (IOCs) by surprise who were earlier told that it would be a "competitive bidding".

Some five IOCs registered



Holding a motorcycle helmet, the OC of Ramna thana trying to keep agitated employees at bay inside the Secretariat yesterday. — Star photo

Truck carrying paddy hijacked in Faridpur

From Our Correspondent
FARIDPUR, Oct 26: Armed miscreants hijacked a paddy-laden truck from Sonda area, three kilometres off Madhukhal thana, today.

The truck was carrying 312 maunds of paddy from Nayrat in Dhaka to Ishurdi in Pabna district. On the way, the gang stopped the truck by blocking the Jessore-Faridpur highway with a bus and a truck.

Helper of the truck said armed miscreants numbering about 15 got into the truck at about 2:30 am and took control of the steering forcing out the driver. They sped away by the truck.

Ex-FM Prof Shamsul Huq says Sub-regional grouping won't harm SAARC

National Professor M Shamsul Huq yesterday said the proposed sub-regional grouping — comprising Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and the eastern states of India — would do no harm to the seven-nation SAARC, reports BSS.

"I don't think the formation of sub-regional group would violate the functioning of SAARC," he said.

A former foreign minister during the tenure of President Ziaur Rahman, Prof Huq was replying to queries after he had delivered a lecture on "Bangladesh foreign policy: Reflection of its evolution" at Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) in the city.

The elderly academician said the sub-regional grouping "should not be seen as compatible with regional or international organisations like SAARC and others." Such grouping could have positive impact not only on political matters, but also on the spheres of economic activities, he added.

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AL calls for talks only to cheat people: BNP

By Staff Correspondent
BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP has termed the ruling party's call for dialogue a "ploy to deceive" the people.

"They're deliberately creating a gap with the Opposition and calling for so-called negotiations only to cheat the people," he told the newly-elected office bearers of Zia Parishad's BADC branch at the BNP central office in the city yesterday.

Mannan Bhuiyan bitterly criticised the government for "using the ruling party terrorists and the police to foil street rallies and processions of the BNP" while inviting the party for a dialogue. "It's nothing but an act of cheating... They've nothing to do other than cheating, resorting to repression and telling lies".

He also blamed the Awami League government for "lacking even the minimum faith in and

Rly ferry between Teestamukh, Bahadurabad may collapse anytime

From Our Correspondent
GAIBANDHA, Oct 25: Railway ferry services between Teestamukh and Bahadurabad ghats from Fulchhari point may collapse at any time following heavy siltation of ferry channel at Kalasona turning point, according to a source in the Railway.

Earlier, ferry services had been plying between Fulchhari to Bahadurabad through Propajati channel. On October 15 the said channel was declared abandoned. Later BIWTA opened another northern channel through Kalasona which is more narrow due to heavy siltation.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with her Pakistan counterpart Nawaz Sharif prior to their meeting in Edinburgh on Saturday.

Draft CHOGM economic declaration Dhaka's proposals on trade, micro-credit incorporated

EDINBURGH, Oct 26: The draft of Edinburgh Commonwealth economic declaration, to be adopted tomorrow at the concluding session of the CHOGM, incorporated two suggestions put forward by Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The suggestions on trade and micro-credit were put forward by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina when she took part in the deliberation of the first exclusive session on the opening day on Friday.

The heads of government of Commonwealth strongly supported Bangladesh's stand on expansion of duty-free market and microcredit facilities.

They also supported the expansion of duty-free market access with flexible rule of origin for the exports of the least developed countries, strengthening the multilateral trading system, within the framework of the World Trade Organisation in order to provide for the greater flow of international trade on the basis of agreed rules which are fair and equitable and support the full implementation of the Uruguay

Magurchhara gas field explosion All 16 radioactive isotopes escaped leakage: BAEC

By Morshed Ali Khan
All the 16 missing radioactive isotopes miraculously escaped leakage and were found intact under piles of earth near the gas well in Magurchhara which exploded on June 14 this year, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) officials confirmed.

"We are happy to have recovered the radioactive isotopes, there was no leakage whatsoever of radioactivity and it does not pose any threat to public safety," said BAEC Chairman MA Quaiyum, explaining that thorough examinations showed that the sources were found so intact that they can be used again.

Occidental, the American company, brought the radioactive sources under license from the BAEC to use them in well-logging to determine soil and rock layer compositions — a usual practice in the operation.

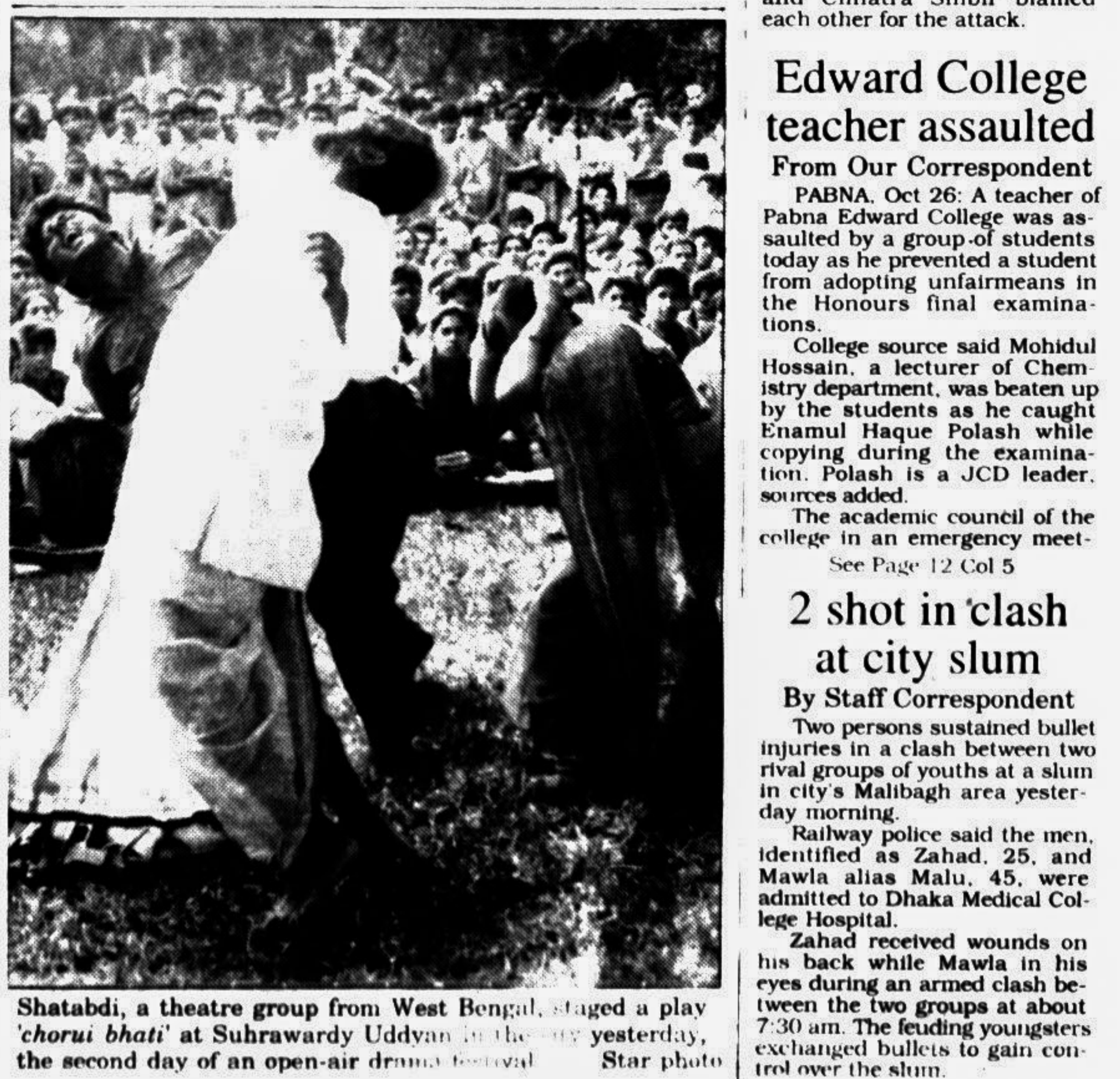
Immediately after the explosion in Magurchhara, BAEC scientists were deployed at the site to detect any leakage of radioactivity but found none. The matter was never officially made public and all concerned remained tight lipped.

BAEC also asked for help from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which sent a two-member team on October 11. A team consisting of experts from BAEC, IAEA, Petrobranga and Occidental visited Magurchhara on October 13 and 14 and unearthed the sources opening a steel bunker. The radioactive sources were found in an intact condition inside their respective lead containers.

Explaining what had happened, MA Quaiyum told The Daily Star that the powerful explosion sent piles of earth into the atmosphere and produced a large crater on the spot. The violent shakeup instantly buried the steel bunker in which the radioactive sources were locked up. The piles of earth and mud protected the lethal radioactive sources from the raging temperature that ensued as the huge well-fire kept burning for several months, he said.

It was learnt that one of the

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Shatabdi, a theatre group from West Bengal, staged a play 'chorui bhai' at Suhrawardy Uddyan in the city yesterday, the second day of an open-air drama festival. — Star photo

Govt employees hold rally inside Sectt

By Staff Correspondent
A despatch rider of the Law Ministry was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday after he was injured when a police official allegedly hit him during a rally of employees at the Secretariat.

It created commotion among the employees who were demanding revision of the new pay scale and change in office timing. But the situation was brought under control by police officials and employees' leaders.

The employees told reporters that Rafiqul Islam, Officer-in-Charge of Ramna Police Station, was the one who hit him.

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40 hurt as JCD BCL clash in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 26: A fierce gunbattle between the student activists of Awami League and BNP at Kazipur today left at least 40 people injured, eight with bullets, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the clash between Chhatra League and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal took place over the students union election at Kazipur Tenglahata RIM Degree College.

Police charged baton and fired at least 25 rounds of tear gas shells to bring the situation under control.

Three of the injured were identified as Helal, 24, Shahadat, 22, and Kashem, 30 of Chhatra League and Sayed, 25 of JCD. The injured were admitted to different hospitals and clinics.

Hasina, Sharif talk forthcoming 3-nation summit

EDINBURGH, Oct 26: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had a meeting with Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif here yesterday evening, reports BSS.

The two leaders discussed issues of common interest as well as the forthcoming three-nation economic summit in Dhaka.

Briefing newsmen, Press Secretary to the PM Jawad Karim today said the meeting was held in a very cordial atmosphere.

Sharif told Sheikh Hasina that he was looking forward with great interest and eagerness to visiting Dhaka to attend the business summit scheduled

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BCL-Shibir clash in Pabna: 30 hurt

PABNA, Oct 26: Ten student activists were injured in a clash between Chhatra League and Islami Chhatra Shibir at Shaheed Bulbul College today, reports UNB.

The clash occurred at about 9:30 am following an altercation between the leaders of the two rival student bodies over establishing supremacy on college campus.

Of the injured, Masum, 22, and Shah Alam, 19, of Chhatra Shibir were admitted to a local hospital.

Leaders of Chhatra League and Chhatra Shibir blamed each other for the attack.

Edward College teacher assaulted

From Our Correspondent
PABNA, Oct 26: A teacher of Pabna Edward College was assaulted by a group of students today as he prevented a student from adopting unfair means in the Honours final examinations.

College source said Mohidul Hossain, a lecturer of Chemistry department, was beaten up by the students as he caught Enamul Haque Polash while copying during the examination. Polash is a JCD leader, sources added.

The academic council of the college in an emergency meeting

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2 shot in clash at city slum

By Staff Correspondent
Two persons sustained bullet injuries in a clash between two rival groups of youths at a slum in city's Malibagh area yesterday morning.

Railway police said the men, identified as Zahad, 25, and Mawla alias Malu, 45, were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Zahad received wounds on his back while Mawla in his eyes during an armed clash between the two groups at about 7:30 am. The feuding youngsters exchanged bullets to gain control over the slum.