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'Hartal the moment' gov't signs CHT treaty

By Staff Correspondent
A joint meeting of the BNP and six other opposition parties yesterday strongly felt the need for keeping "close watch" on the government move to sign a "secret treaty" on the Chittagong Hill Tracts and related developments.

"The moment the government signs the so-called treaty, the already announced programme (a dawn-to-dusk hartal across the country) will be implemented and fresh programmes will also be announced," said a resolution adopted at the meeting.

Held at the Minto Road official residence of BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia, the meeting also alleged that the government was desperate to jeopardise the country's independence and sovereignty by signing the treaty.

The meeting condemned the killings during the public meeting of the "combined Opposition" yesterday and met NC-CHT Convenor Abul Hasnat

CHT talks postponed, no fresh date set

By Special Correspondent
Abdullah, Chief Whip of Jatiya Sangsad seeking confirmation of the new date. The emissary also met officials and persons concerned.

He was told that it would not be possible for the NCCHT to sit on November 25 as the government would remain busy with the visit of Pakistan Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif, the sources said.

Sharif would be staying back for a two-day bilateral visit after the November 23 three-nation summit.

Shantu Larma and some of his key lieutenants yesterday postponed their scheduled trip to their temporary headquarters at Dudukchhara. A military helicopter was to fly them to Dhaka today for the meeting.

Earlier, on Tuesday, the authorities demilitarised 25 sq km area in and around Dudukchhara, a tiny frontier hamlet in Khagrachhari district to facilitate arrival of the PCJSS "high command" from their headquarters in Tripura yesterday morning.

But Hansadhaja Chakma received an "urgent message" from Shantu Larma Friday night that he was "indisposed" and would not be available for the meeting till November 25.

The dramatic developments took the authorities in Dhaka by surprise. They were all ready for the meeting scheduled at a state guest house in Dhaka which was expected to clinch an agreement to end the decades-old insurgency in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

According to information received from the hills, Shantu declined to come to Dudukchhara until he received any communication from the authorities in Dhaka accepting his proposal for the meeting on November 25.

Some of his top lieutenants had already arrived there, waiting for him. They included 'field commander' of the Shantibahini, Ushatan Talukder, Raktoutpal Chakma and Rupan Dewan.

The sources said the authorities were preparing for an accord with the PCJSS, hoping to



Mothers sitting on the pavement opposite Udayan Biddalaya for their children. Almost all the schools of the city like this one have no waiting room for the parents. They are not even allowed to wait inside the premises. —Star photo by SK Enamul Huq

AL conveys its stand on BNP conditions

By Reaz Ahmad
Ruling party negotiator Mohammad Nasim yesterday communicated to the BNP the government's latest position on three conditions set by the opposition party for holding a dialogue.

Post and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim told The Daily Star last night that he had conveyed the ruling party's position regarding the BNP conditions through a messenger yesterday.

The three conditions, earlier communicated by BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan to Nasim on Friday, include withdrawal of cases against BNP lawmakers and all cases against party leaders and workers lodged since August 31 when the ban on street rallies in the city was imposed, and withholding the decision on the ban.

I made it clear today that it was not possible to withdraw all cases, as they demanded. — See Page 12 Col 7

BNP still continuing terrorism: Hasina

FENI, Nov 15: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today called upon the people to remain alert so that none can conspire against the ensuing union parishad elections, reports UNB.

"A vested quarter is conspiring to create an issue at the cost of human life... trying to fish in the troubled water," she said while addressing a huge public meeting at the local Government Pilot High School ground in the afternoon.

A certain party that "killed police people indiscriminately in Chittagong to create chaos might again try to disrupt the ensuring UP elections," Hasina said and warned that the people will not allow anyone to play

Gold, computer parts worth Tk 1.89 cr seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent
A customs surveillance team recovered gold bars, ornaments and electronic parts worth about Tk 1.89 crore from inside two luggage near the customs hall at the Zia International Airport Friday night.

The seized goods included 85 gold bars weighing ten tola each and 10,742 grams of gold chains, worth about Tk 1.3 crore. The recovered items also included different computer parts and 228 pieces of video CDs worth about Tk 59.63 lakh, customs sources said.

— See Page 12 Col 8

Bankruptcy Act 'ineffective' against big loan defaulters

By Inam Ahmed
Certain loopholes in the newly enacted Bankruptcy Act is preventing the commercial banks from applying it against corporate loan defaulters with whom majority of the defaulting loans are lying, according to banking circle.

Legal experts said the Bankruptcy Act has been formed keeping in mind the 'natural individual' and not organisations.

"This has left the Act virtually ineffective against the big defaulters which are basically companies and other government and non-government organisations," said a senior banker of a nationalised commercial bank.

The Janata Bank had recently taken a move to file cases under this new law against some big defaulters who are essentially business organisations. The list had been prepared, but later, upon advice from its legal adviser, these names had been dropped and only five individuals had been served with notices to sue them.

The legal wing of the Janata Bank has given the opinion that it seems from 11 (ka) and (Kha) clauses of the Bankruptcy



'UNICEF committed to continue work in Bangladesh'
The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) wants to carry out its programmes in Bangladesh, attaching more importance on cooperation with non-government organisations, reports UNB.

"We are committed to continue our activities in Bangladesh. Our programmes with the NGOs are expanding," UNICEF executive director Carol Bellamy told a press conference in the city yesterday.

She said although donations from governments across the globe to the UNICEF decreased substantially, the UN organisation would continue its activities.

— See Page 12 Col 6

Italian PM to visit Bangladesh in January

From Neeman A Sobhan
ROME, Nov 15: Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi will visit Bangladesh in January, it was learnt from reliable sources here.

The two-day visit will be part of a programme that includes an initial visit to India. The high-powered delegation will visit Dhaka from January 8-9.

This will be the first time that any government official above the rank of a cabinet minister from Italy will visit Bangladesh. Sources indicate that the Italian Prime Minister is most likely to be accompanied by an entourage including

— See Page 12 Col 5



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing a public meeting at Feni Government Pilot High School ground yesterday. — PID photo

Khaleda threatens non-stop agitation after CHT treaty

JOYPURHAT, Nov 15: Leader of the Opposition in parliament Begum Khaleda Zia today accused the Awami League government of conspiring to cede the Chittagong Hill Tracts to insurgents without any discussion in the Jatiya Sangsad, reports UNB.

"The CHT is being leased out to terrorist Shantibahini without taking consent of all the 12 tribes and lakhs of Bengalees," she told a huge public meeting at Housing Estate ground here in the afternoon.

The BNP Chairperson warned of non-stop agitation, including hartal, across the country from the next day of signing of any agreement on the CHT, if it goes against the Constitution.

The government is working on a conspiracy to hand over

Armed gang stabs house owner, loots valuables worth Tk 7.5 lakh

By Staff Correspondent
Dacoits stabbed the owner of a house and took away gold ornaments, savings certificates credit cards, and cash totalling about Tk 7.52 lakh from a house at Shantibagh under Motijheel thana in the city early yesterday.

Police said a gang of about eight armed men entered the ground floor flat of Nazimuddin Bakul by cutting the iron grill of a window at about 3.30 am.

Nazimuddin was stabbed in the hand. The dacoits tied the inmates of the house and took away savings certificates worth about Tk five lakh credit cards of Standard Chartered bank worth about Tk two lakh, gold ornaments worth about Tk 42 thousand and Tk 10 thousand by breaking lockers.

None was arrested in connection with the incident till filing of this report.

Azizul Haq to replace Humayun Khadem as Rajuk chairman

By Staff Correspondent
Chairman of the Rajdhanī Humayun Khadem (Rajuk) Humayun Khadem has been removed from his post and made Officer on Special Duty (OSD), sources concerned said.

The Additional Chief Engineer of the Public Works Directorate (PWD), Azizul Haq Bhuiyan, has been promoted to the rank of Chief Engineer and made the new Chairman of Rajuk. He is expected to take over his new post within this week.

Sources in the ministry said the decision to make Humayun Khadem OSD comes following

— See Page 12 Col 3

Mauritius meet from Nov 24 Dhaka may become IORARC member

By M Anwarul Haq
Bangladesh is likely to be included as a member of the 14-nation Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IORARC) in its forthcoming meeting to be held in Mauritius, according to diplomatic sources.

The Working Group on Membership of the IORARC will meet in Mauritius on November 24 and 25 where Bangladesh is expected to get its admittance into the new Asia-Pacific economic grouping, the sources said.

The new grouping was initiated

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

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Gazipur EPZ project put off due to difficulties in acquiring land

By Rafiq Hasan
The government has decided to postpone setting up of an Export Processing Zone (EPZ) in Gazipur because of difficulties in acquisition of land for the project.

The Board of Governors of Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) at a meeting last Sunday decided to set up an EPZ in Comilla instead of Gazipur due to lack of sufficient land for the proposed Gazipur EPZ, BEPZA sources said.

The meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina discussed where an EPZ could be established in the shortest possible time to meet the foreign and local entrepreneurs' demand for industrial plots. As the BEPZA officials pointed out various difficulties they faced in acquiring land for the proposed Gazipur EPZ, the meeting ordered BEPZA to keep the project postponed for some time and set up an EPZ in Comilla airport area immediately, the sources said.

The decision for establishing an EPZ in Gazipur was taken at a meeting of the BEPZA Board of Governors in July 1996. Later, BEPZA experts conducted a preliminary feasibility study and selected a site at Mauna, about 60 km from the city, for establishing the EPZ.

BEPZA Chairman Moazzem Hossain Khan, however, said Gazipur EPZ project was not cancelled but they would prefer

— See Page 12 Col 7

Leakage of degree question paper: Photocopies being sold in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent KUSHTIA, Nov 15: Photocopies of Economics second paper question of Degree (pass) examinations under National University, which was leaked out on November 10 in Daulatpur are being sold secretly at Tk 300 per copy, according to examinees here.

Some question of Economics second paper were leaked out when those were distributed among examinees of Mathura People's College at Daulatpur along with the question papers of Islamic History.

When the mistake was detected, investigator took back most of the question papers but some could not be recovered. The teachers said that the Economics question papers were enclosed with Islamic History questions in the packet.

This college authorities later filed a GD with Daulatpur police station (GD No. 345).

There was no Magistrate when the question papers were

— See Page 12 Col 8

Dacoits kill two, loot grocery shop in Narsingdi

From Our Correspondent NARSINGDI, Nov 15: Dacoits killed two employees of a grocery store and looted cash and valuables totalling about Tk 2.75 lakh from the shop at Sri Rampur Bazaar in Raipura thana early today.

The dead were identified as Abdul Mannan, 34, the manager of the shop, and Abul Kashem, 22, an assistant. Police said the two were stabbed and strangled to death.

Raipur police recovered the bodies this morning with their hands and legs tied and their

— See Page 12 Col 7

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