

Nat'l instt for the retarded likely to be set up: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government is pledge-bound to ensure proper upbringing of the disabled through care, education and training, reports UNB.

"We are conscious of our pledge for establishing equality of persons having mental retardation with other citizens as given in the ESCAP proclamation for the decade 1993-2002," she said.

Hasina said the government is considering with due importance the setting up of a National Institute for the Mentally Retarded. Ten per cent job quota in government service has been reserved for the disabled that includes the mentally retarded.

State Minister for Social Welfare, Women and Children Affairs Dr Mozammel Hossain, AFM, founder member Father Brendan O'Connell, SCEMRB acting president Ashraf-Ud-Dowla and Conference Committee chairman Prof M Shamsul Huq also addressed the function. AFMR president Shahar Banu Salam presided.

DU BCL factions reach 'settlement' for co-existence

By DU Correspondent

Rival factions of the ruling party-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) have reached a 'settlement' for co-existence at the residential halls of Dhaka University, according to sources in the BCL.

The 'settlement' was reached at a meeting of leaders of the factions on Saturday night, held at the residence of Hemaetullah Aouranga, a former Awami League MP.

The sources said that activists of both the groups who were ousted from the halls earlier by their rivals returned to their respective halls yesterday. But sources on the campus claimed some outsiders belonging to BCL also returned to the halls along with the student activists.

The rival groups clashed twice last week for gaining 'control' of the BCL-dominated DU dormitories.

5 students hurt in attack at CU rly station

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 16: At least five students were injured in an incident of violence at Chittagong University railway station this afternoon, police and campus sources said.

The injured were admitted to Chittagong University health centre. Police said the violence erupted when a group of students equipped with lethal weapons attacked some other students waiting for train at 5 pm.

The attack was sequel to an alleged assault of a student at Sholoshahar station in city in the morning, police said. Meanwhile, the All Party Students Unity in a press release blamed Shibir activists for the attack and condemned it. The incident created tension on the campus and police force were deployed to prevent any fresh outbreak of violence.

Gold seized

From Page 1

able lights kept inside the baggage, sources in the customs said yesterday. Customs officials challenged the passenger when he was passing through the green channel.

A departmental case has been lodged with the customs in this regard.

"The government will do its utmost for the welfare of the mentally retarded persons of the country," she said while inaugurating the week-long 13th Asian Conference on Mental Retardation at Hotel Sheraton in the morning.

The Prime Minister called upon all including the United Nations and the regional organisations and NGOs working in the country to assist in resolving the acute problem.

Asian Federation for the Mental Retarded and Society for the Care and Education of the Mentally Retarded, Bangladesh (SCEMRB), jointly organised the week-long conference.

"Rights of Persons with Mental Retardation: Role of Government and UN Agencies in Asia," is the theme of the conference, being held for the first time in the country with the representation of 400 mentally disabled persons, including 150 from different Asian countries.

According to the organisers, Bangladesh has 1.2 million mentally retarded persons, of which only 3,500 are getting institutional support.

The Prime Minister said "the mentally retarded persons are not a burden of the society. They can also contribute a lot in the development activities if they are provided with necessary treatment, nursing, education and training."

Sharif From Page 1

gency session of both houses of parliament tomorrow evening to deal with any eventuality arising out of the Supreme Court hearing in the morning.

The decision to summon parliamentary session attains political significance as media reports suggest that the cabinet meeting discussed amending the constitution to clip the wings of the Chief Justice on constituting Supreme Court benches.

This comes close in the heels of the Chief Justice reconstituting the bench, which is going to hear Sharif tomorrow, and inducting into three judges whose elevation to the Supreme Court was strongly opposed by the government recently.

Troublemakers in UP polls to face stern action: CEC

Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena yesterday warned that stern action will be taken against the terrorists and law-breakers to ensure free and fair union parishad election, report agencies.

"The troublemakers, whatever their political affiliations are, will have to face dire consequence for their misdeeds," the CEC said while exchanging views with newsmen at his office.

He mentioned with deep anguish that incidents of violence, murder and looting have occurred in some places of the country over the UP polls.

The CEC urged all, including the political parties, to extend their cooperation for holding the UP election in a free, fair and peaceful manner so that democracy can flourish at grassroot level.

He said as major political parties, Awami League and BNP should play a leading role in this regard in the greater interest of the country's development.

JS session prorogued

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Meher Afroze, Prof Ethin Rakhain and Sabita Begum.

2. Standing Committee on Religious Affairs Ministry: President — Shah Hadizuza-man, Members — Maulana Nurul Islam, Hafez Rubul Amin Madani, Kalparanjan Chakma, Panchanan Biswas and Lutfar Rahman Chowdhury.

3. Standing Committee on Agriculture Ministry: President — Dr TIM Fazle Rabbi, Members — Mizanur Rahman Manu, Dewan Farid Gazi, Ahmed Tafizuddin, Emdadul Haque and Abdul Hakim.

4. Standing Committee on Jute Ministry: President — Shamsul Haq, Members — AK Fozul Haque, Advocate Moazzar Hossain, Sharif Khasruzzaman, Emdadul Haq Bhuiyan, Jalal Uddin Talukder and Mojibur Rahman.

5. Standing Committee on LGRD and Cooperatives Ministry: President — Abdul Mannan, Members — Zillur Rahman, Advocate Rahmat Ali, Rafiqul Islam, Talukder Abdul Khaleque, Mojibul Haq and Dr Rustam Ali Farazi.

6. Standing Committee on Communications Ministry: President — Sheikh Fazlul Karim, Members — Anwarul Islam, Mostafizur Rashid, Suja, Mustafizur Rahman, Khan Tipu Sultan, Alhaj Mokbul Hossain and Makkbul Hossain.

7. Standing Committee on Youth Ministry: President — Jaynal Abedin Hajari, Members — Obaidul Quader, Bir Bahadur, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Shamim Osman, Harunur Rashid and Abdur Rashid Sarkar.

8. Standing Committee on Water Resources Ministry: Pres-

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PW-40 Syed Ahmed tells court

Quarter master issued slip to hand over key of armoury

Dismissed Hon Lt Syed Ahmed, prosecution witness (PW) no. 40 in Bangabandhu Murder Case, yesterday told the court that martial law was not promulgated following the August 15, 1975 killings, report agencies.

During the cross-examination by the defence counsels, the witness said although the night parade was scheduled to take place till midnight on August 14, 1975, it continued up to 4 am on August 15 on the orders of the commanding officer (CO) in charge of First Bengal Lancer Regiment, the then Major Syed Farooqur Rahman.

The JCOs, NCOs and sypeds who were out of the Dhaka Cantonment since August 15, 1975, were informed to draw their salaries from the unit. Syed

gave the order to lock the gates of his unit after hearing the radio announcement that Bangabandhu was killed.

"I didn't get any order from Major Farook to lock the gates," he said replying to a defence counsel.

Syed Ahmed said he had supplied breakfasts to four/five places as asked by the on-duty officer on August 15 morning.

The PW said that a year after the killing of Bangabandhu, 1st Bengal Lancer, which was said to be involved with the August 15 incident, was disbanded in 1976.

Brig Shahjahan will make his deposition as the 41st prosecution witness in the Bangabandhu Murder Case when the trial resumes today (Monday) at 9:30 am.

BNP rejects JS bodies

From Page 1

Criticising the Treasury Bench for unilaterally forming the parliamentary bodies, Chowdhury said, "We're well aware of our responsibilities as the Opposition and we want to return to a meaningful parliament."

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said, "The parliamentary committees have no legitimacy. The parliamentary convention has not been followed in the formation of those having no representation from the Opposition. We demand annulment of the committees and reformation of those by resolving the stalemate in parliament."

He also demanded that the government accept his party's minimum demands to pave the way for creating an atmosphere for a dialogue between the ruling party and the Opposition.

It's the responsibility of the government to create a conducive atmosphere to overcome the crisis in the parliament," he said.

Chief Whip of the Opposition Khondakar Delwar Hossain demanded cancellation of the parliamentary bodies. The ruling Awami League unilaterally formed the committees with an unfair motive to linger the parliamentary standoff," he said.

Earlier, B Chowdhury gave a brief resume of the government-Opposition negotiation on the BNP demands for withdrawal of 'political cases' against the party lawmakers and other leaders and workers, cancellation of the decision banning street rallies and permission to hold rallies on at least two streets — the Topkhana Road in front of the Jatiya Press Club and the Manik Mia Avenue.

"As a political party, we're always ready to negotiate. They agreed to withdraw cases against all but one BNP MP and 14 of the 74 cases against others... the atmosphere could have been created if they would have agreed to withdraw all the

cases," he said.

B Chowdhury also protested the Chief Whip Abul Hasanat Abdullah's remark that the formation of the JS committees were delayed due to non-cooperation of the Opposition.

League supporters had resorted to killing, looting and destruction of property after the death of Yasmin in Dinajpur. "Now many Yasmins are being raped and killed everyday, but the culprits, who belong to the ruling party, are not being arrested," she alleged.

The Leader of the Opposition said the government in its 17-month rule could not bring any foreign investment. "They are more engaged in carrying out a propaganda against the former BNP government."

She said the Dinajpur Medical College, tourism centre, court building and circuit house were built by the BNP government and the ministers of the present government are inaugurating those only by cutting ribbons.

Presided over by Khurshid Jahan Huq MP, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Col (Retd) Akbar Hossain, Mizanur Rahman Minu, Shahjahan Siraj, Alamgir Kabir MP, Fazlur Rahman Patal MP and Habibur Rahman Habib.

President assents to two bills

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday assented to two bills passed in the current session of the Jatiya Sangsad, reports UNB.

The bills are: The Speaker and Deputy Speaker (Remuneration and Privileges) (Amendment) Bill, 1997 and The Bangladesh (Whips) (Amendment) Bill, 1997, said a press release.

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A week-long film festival to mark the 50th anniversary of Cannes Film Festival was inaugurated at the National Museum in the city yesterday. State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed (3rd from right) and State Minister for Cultural Affairs Obaidul Kader (3rd from left) seen with French Ambassador Rene Veyret and film artistes at the inaugural ceremony. — Star photo

PCJSS liaison man leaves city with letter from Abdullah

By Special Correspondent

An emissary of Hansadhaja Chakma, who maintains liaison between the National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts (NCHHT) and the Parbatya Chittagong Jana Sanghat Samity (PCJSS) left Dhaka yesterday for Khagrachhari with a letter from NCHHT convenor Abul Hasanat Abdullah.

Contents of the letter could not be known immediately but it suggested a date for the next round of talks, expected later this month or early next month, sources said.

On Friday night, the PCJSS had conveyed a message to Abdullah through Hansadhaja Chakma that their leader Jyotirindriyo Bodhipriyo Larma was unable to attend the meeting with NCHHT earlier scheduled for November 16, and also suggested November 25 as the next date for the meeting.

The NCHHT message said that it would not be possible for the government to hold the meeting on November 25 due to its preoccupation with the forthcoming three-nation summit and visit of Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif.

It also said that 13 border outposts and camps of security forces, which were neutralised

Bhasani

From Page 1

gave separate messages. The President, in his message, recalled Maulana Bhasani's contribution in the socio-economic development of the down-trodden, particularly farmers and workers.

In her message, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said that Maulana Bhasani would be ever remembered by the nation for his contribution toward establishing the rights of peasants, workers and other oppressed masses of the country.

To observe the day, main opposition BNP has chalked out a three-day programme. Party leaders will place wreaths at the mazar of Maulana Bhasani at Santosh in Tangail today.

On Tuesday, a discussion meeting will be held at Ramna Green at 3 pm and a seminar on Wednesday at the same time at the VIP Lounge of Jatiya Press Club.

Shaheed Asad Parishad will hold a seminar, "Secularism in Running the State", at the TSC Island of Dhaka University today.

Our Tangail Correspondent adds: Santosh Islamic University and its affiliated institutes have chalked out a 10-day programme which began on November 8. The programmes include tafsil mahfil, workshop, juvenile art competition, discussion and cultural function.

Shun conspiracy: PM

From Page 1

they wished to discuss on whatever issue, we welcomed and had the discussions in the House."

"Despite non-cooperation from the Opposition," Sheikh Hasina said, "we kept the House operative. I don't understand that why the Opposition is boycotting parliament. This is unfortunate."

Referring to the 14 parliamentary standing committees formed yesterday, the Prime Minister said "this is unfortunate that we could not incorporate their names in these committees as both BNP and Jamaat did not give us the lists of their nominees."

Referring to lists of cases against BNP, leaders and workers sent by the party to the government, the Prime Minister said, 150 cases were lodged during BNP rule while 64 more were filed during the time of the

Erratum

The date on the mast-head of yesterday's issue of The Daily Star was inadvertently printed as November 15 instead of November 16. We regret the error.

Film festival opens

"Le Festival de Cannes", the first ever week-long film festival commemorating the 50th anniversary of the prestigious Cannes festival, began in the city yesterday evening, reports BSS.

Selected European and Bangladesh films, screened in the Cannes, will be shown in the festival which was jointly organised by the Alliance Francaise, British Council, Goethe Institut, Royal Danish Embassy, French Embassy, Embassies of Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, British high commission and the delegation of the European Commission.

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed and State Minister for Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader attended the inaugural function as chief guests while the over hour-long ceremony, held in the National Music Auditorium, was attended by prominent film and cultural personalities of the country.

French ambassador Rene Veyret also spoke on the occasion. Ambassadors, high commissioners and senior diplomats of the concerned European nations also participated in the inaugural session in which three leading film stars of the country — Babita, Kabori Sarwar and Subarna Mustafa — were also invited to present themselves as "darlings of the festival."

The award winning European and Bangladesh films to be screened in the festival are, among others, in Weiter Feme So Nah, Rosa Luxemburg, Fitzcarraldo and Malou of Germany, Le Huitieme Jour, Un Dimanche A La Campagne, Ma Saison Preferee, La Haine, Un Homme Et Une Femme, Serie Noire, I and Argent of France, Carrington, Secrets and Lies, A World Apart and Wish You were Here of United Kingdom, House of Angels of Sweden, Felle the Conqueror of the Denmark, Spotted in a Cow-Modern Crimes of the Netherlands and Meher Anek Rong, Kancher Deyal, Nadir Nam Modhumati, Ekatorer Jishu and Dhire Bahe Meghna.

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