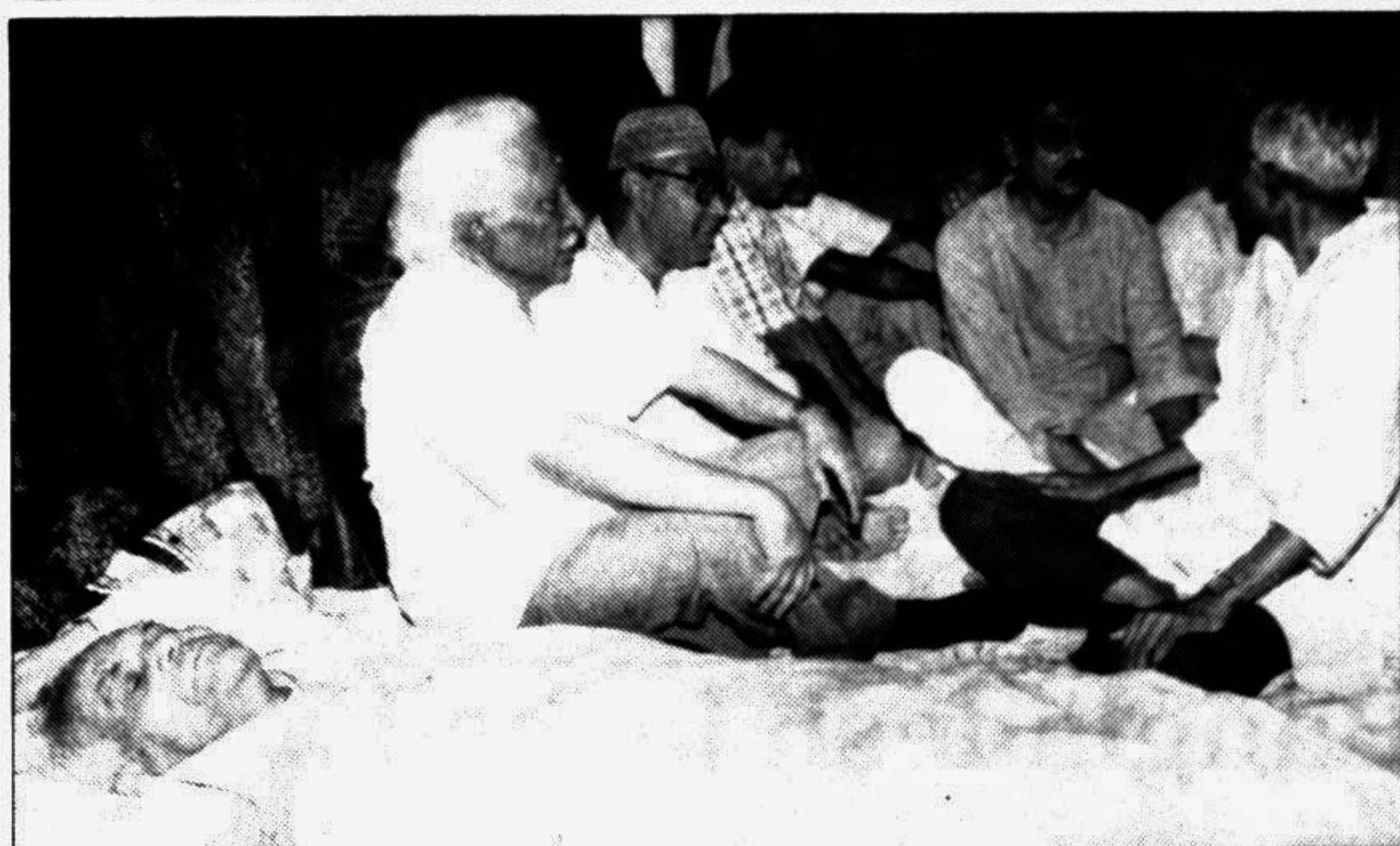


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Some senior journalists sitting beside Nirmal Sen, who is on a 'fast unto death', at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. — Star photo

TB patients to receive medicines free of cost

By Staff Correspondent

The government is committed to combat tuberculosis on a priority basis and give medicines free of cost as it kills more people than other diseases in Bangladesh. Health and Family Welfare Minister Salauddin Yusuf said here yesterday.

He made the statement at a press conference marking the release of an evaluation report on the success of the Directly Observed Treatment, Short-course (DOTS) method of treating tuberculosis.

The report was prepared by a team comprising WHO representatives and national and international TB experts. The team visited nearly 100 TB control centres spread over six administrative divisions.

According to the report, Bangladesh is achieving the "highest documented cure rates", compared to any other country in the world. "By using DOTS strategy, Bangladesh has been achieving a cure rate which is twice as high as those reported in many countries with far greater resources," it said.

Unesco DG
From Page 1
lence into a culture of reason, peace and tolerance. Describing universities as "watch towers" he said, higher education must be based on merit and free from political influence.

Putting emphasis on "globality rather than globalisation," the Unesco DG said, what is important today is to try to know others, their beliefs and their identity.

"We have to make it visible to the people that 18 per cent of the people are enjoying 80 per cent of the resources of the world," he said.

"Only if we can make it visible, war imposition and violence will disappear."

Earlier, Vice Chancellor of the University Prof A K Azad Chowdhury conferred the degree on Federico Mayor on behalf of the Chancellor of the University at a function at the TSC auditorium.

Prof Mayor entered the TSC auditorium in a convocation procession led by the Vice Chancellor.

Prof Azad Chowdhury in his address said that only material progress would not be sufficient to bring peace, prosperity and happiness. Human values must prevail and there should be intellectual development alongside technological innovations, he said.

বাংলাদেশ পোশাক প্রস্তুতকারক ও রপ্তানীকারক সমিতি
৭-৯ কাওরান বাজার, বিটিএমসি ভবন, ঢাকা

আর্থিক ও ব্যাংকিং সমস্যাবলী আলোচনা ও সমাধানের পন্থা নির্ধারণের জন্য সাধারণ সভা

১৯৯৫ সালে ৩৫ দিন বন্দর বন্ধ ও অবরোধ, অসহযোগ আন্দোলনসহ ১৭০ দিন হরতাল, ১৯৯৭ সালে ২৫ দিন বন্দর বন্ধ থাকা এবং ৮ দিন হরতালের কারণে স্টক ইকলটসহ, জাতীয় ও আন্তর্জাতিক ষড়যন্ত্রের শিকার অর্থনীতির চালিকাশক্তি রপ্তানিমুখী পোশাক শিল্পকে নিশ্চিত ক্ষণের হাত থেকে রক্ষাকল্পে বিরাজমান আর্থিক ও ব্যাংকিং সমস্যাবলী আলোচনা ও সমাধানের পন্থা নির্ধারণের জন্য সমিতির সম্মানিত সদস্যদের এক সাধারণ সভা আগামী ২৯শে নভেম্বর, ১৯৯৭ সাল ৯ ঘটিকায় সোনারগাঁও হোটেল, বলরুম-এ অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

বিজিএমইএ'র সকল সম্মানিত সদস্যদের উক্ত সভায় উপস্থিত থেকে ধন্যসোনা' পোশাক শিল্পকে রক্ষাকল্পে সমাধানের পন্থা নির্ধারণে সহায়তা করার জন্য বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

সচিব

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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The Daily Star

Bidding for gas, oil blocks

Little progress in first round of negotiations

Star Report

The negotiation committee on the second round block bidding for oil and gas exploration yesterday concluded its first round of discussions with different foreign companies, making little progress, sources said.

It will now place a report to the high-powered investment committee of the government comprising four secretaries. The investment committee would give the next directives to begin the second round of negotiations.

The present pace of negotiations would not allow the government to complete the bidding process within the pre-set deadline of December 15, negotiation experts said.

"There is no chance of signing of a single production sharing contract (PSC) with any foreign oil and gas company within December 15," said a government expert. "The negotiation committee has hardly made any progress in the negotiations yet."

The second round block bidding for exploration in 12 blocks of the country started in June 15 amid much enthusiasm. But it has slowed down due to lack of transparency in the negotiation process. Twenty foreign companies and BAPEX — the exploration unit of the Petrobangla — are participating in the bidding.

Now the enthusiasm has almost died down as the big companies like Mobil, Chevron, Texaco and Petronas have been totally left out of the negotiation process. Even BAPEX was not called at the negotiations.

Oil giant Shell and its partner Cairn were called three times for negotiations but the talks ended without any outcome. Shell-Cairn joint venture was offered blocks 5 and 10 as against their proposal for six blocks. Shell has not so far accepted the offer saying that it did not come to Bangladesh to negotiate blocks but proposals.

The negotiation committee has so far offered Block-9 to an Irish company, Tullow, on the first day of negotiations. It was later offered Block-11. At the same time, the government took an initiative to find a bigger oil company as Tullow's partner in those two blocks.

The committee has also offered a small company, South Asia (US), blocks 3 and 4. But South Asia apparently withdrew from the bidding process.

US company Enron was offered blocks 6 and 3. The sources said that negotiations with Enron were progressing positively.

Similarly negotiations with the Triton-Uncol joint venture were also progressing positively. They were offered block-7.

US company Hondo, which did not even file the bid documents properly, was offered block-21 and was asked to submit their accounts report. After filing the report, the negotiation committee found that it had negative growth for the last three years.

Another small company, Pangaea, was offered block-8 and was asked to find a big partner and bank guarantee to back-up its proposal.

Dutch company Maerks was offered block-19 against its two proposals for blocks 19 and 20. Maerks said it would not accept one block and negotiation with it is still pending.

"So far, the negotiation committee has discussed the bid proposals, but nothing has been discussed over production sharing or other aspects of the PSCs. Experience shows that a negotiation over a PSC actually takes at least five to six months. Therefore, it's impossible for anyone to comply with the December 15 deadline," said an expert.

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Save life of Nirmal Sen: Khaleda

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia has expressed deep concern at the deteriorating health condition of veteran journalist Nirmal Sen, reports UNB.

"No conscious person can remain silent at the fasting of an elderly personality like Nirmal Sen," Begum Zia said in a statement from Jessore yesterday.

She demanded of the government to save the life of Nirmal Sen by ensuring the demands of the journalists and employees of the Times-Bangla Trust.

SAARC Society

From Page 1
16th annual general meeting of Bangladesh Cardiac Society.

"Existing facilities for treatment and research are inadequate. We should give importance to prevent the diseases. People should be informed about overweight, dietary habits, physical inactivity and hypertension," Abdul Malek said.

The Society will be a professional body devoted to raising the standard of investigation, treatment facilities and research. It will be of great help in sharing experience, he said.

"Unless we share knowledge, data and expertise, we cannot give better service," Dr Ashok Seth, a specialist from India said while talking to this correspondent at the conference.

AL, BNP campaign

From Page 1
"Protect your area," is the common instruction to MPs and local leaders from the hierarchy in the AL and BNP. Winning the UP polls will greatly help the MPs and aspirants, policy planners in both the parties think.

Accordingly, the MPs, along with local leaders, are passing hectic days in their respective areas, campaigning for their 'nominees'.

The contending parties are also preparing to face each other on the election days, fearing outbreak of violence during balloting. Meanwhile, pre-election violence has also been reported from different parts of the country.

A meeting of the BNP Standing Committee last night discussed various aspects of the forthcoming polls and stressed the need for giving all back-up support to "preferred" candidates. Chaired by party chief Begum Zia, the meeting also decided to give instruction to local leaders and workers to resist any move by the ruling party to rig the polls.

Top AL leaders in the cabinet are keeping away from the electioneering due to legal barriers but party MPs and other leaders have become involved in the process.

But BNP leaders including party MPs have been engaged in the UP election. Begum Zia, now visiting districts is discussing the UP polls with local leaders while also making public statement warning the government against any kind of malpractice in the polls.

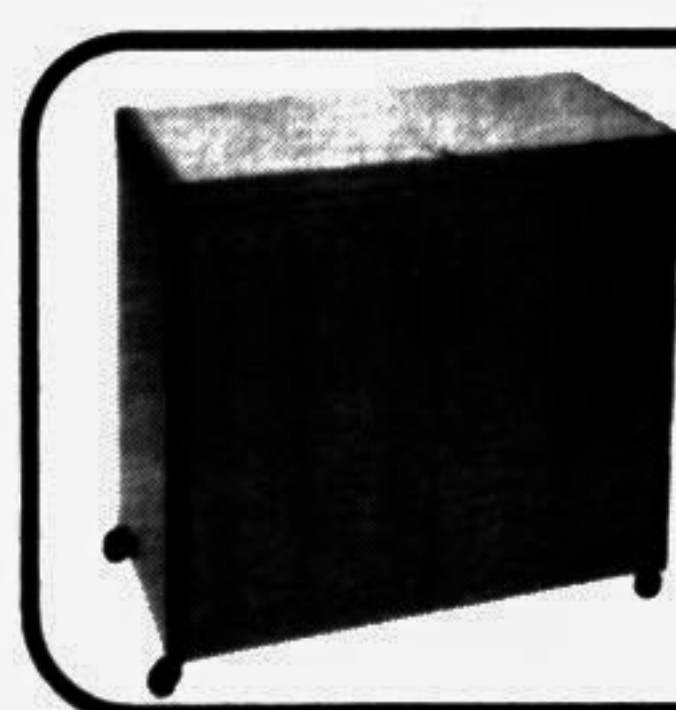
The Standing Committee of BNP meets again today to decide the party strategy for the upcoming elections.

After the conference, he said, Mushatque, Thakur, Major Rashid, Major Farook, Major Shahriar and other army officers left for Mushatque's village home. He said he went back to Comilla from there.

Prof Alam said receiving a call from his father he returned to Comilla on August 14 from Dhaka, where he came to take oath as the newly appointed District Governor of Comilla. The oath-taking was scheduled for August 14/15, he said.

On August 15 morning, going back to Comilla, Prof Alam said, he heard the announcement of Major Dalim over radio that "Sheikh Mujib was killed and army took over power under the leadership of Khondaker Mushatque Ahmed."

He said in various ways he came to know that Major Rashid, Major Farook, Major Shahriar, Major Dalim, Major



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UP election CEC exchanges views with AL, BNP leaders

Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena yesterday stressed the neutrality of the election officers and total support of the political parties for holding the coming Union Parishad elections in free and fair manner, reports BSS.

Hena was exchanging views with the leaders of Bangladesh Awami League when they called on him in the morning and later with the leaders of BNP in the afternoon.

Election Commissioners Abidur Rahman and Mushtaq Ahmed Chowdhury were present at the meetings.

The BNP leaders who met the chief election commissioner included M K Anwar, MP, Barisat Aminul Huq, MP, Mannan, MP, Hafizuddin Ahmed, BNP, while the Awami League leaders were Joint Secretary Mozaffar Hossain Paltu and office secretary Advocate Abdul Mannan Khan.

Indian team of JRC due in Rangpur today

RANGPUR, Nov 25: A four-member Indian team of Joint River Commission (JRC) headed by R N Mondal, chairman, North Bengal Flood Control Commission, Jalpaiguri arrives here tomorrow, reports BSS.

The team will enter the Bangladesh territory by road through Burmari border and will go straight to Dahagram and Angorpotia enclaves to see for themselves the Teesta River flood protection work by Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB).

The team will conduct a survey across two-kilometre portion of the river Teesta at Kalliganj point under Dalia thana.

A four-member Bangladesh team headed by Aftab Alam Ansary, Chief Engineer of Teesta Barrage Project, will hold talks with the Indian delegation.

PM: Sadia

From Page 1
Minutes after the Prime Minister straight drove to Hamzarbagh, army and fire brigade men recovered a body of a woman from under the debris of the house, raising the death toll to 18. More bodies might have been there, officials and rescuers apprehended.

Sheikh Hasina also visited Chittagong Medical College Hospital to see those injured in the tremor and a colony of Amin Jute Mills where a fire broke out Sunday night affecting some 1,100 families.

Later, talking to newsmen at Chittagong Airport, the Prime Minister called upon all to take precautionary measures while building houses to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

"Please never build a three-story building after getting the approval of a two-story building so that we do not have to lose an innocent girl like Sadia," she said.

Sheikh Hasina also laid emphasis on mass awareness in this regard, mentioning that many people from kutcha houses had taken shelter at that building during Friday's tremor.

The Prime Minister said immediate steps will be taken to make the lone Richter Scale functional and set up a casualty department and an intensive care unit in the CMCH.

Sadia: Case

From Page 1
probe the death of Sadia and to find out the lapses and negligence of doctors concerned at Chittagong Medical College Hospital and the civil surgeon in providing treatment to Sadia.

District administration sources said the two committees had started the investigation in this regard.

PM opens PHE Bhaban 'Steps taken to expand local govt instts up to grassroots level'

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government has taken initiatives to expand the local government institutions up to the grassroots level to ensure people's participation in the development activities, reports UNB.

The reorganised local government framework will make contributions to successful implementation of the mass welfare programmes," she said while inaugurating the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Bhaban at Kakrail in the morning.

The five-storey PHE Bhaban was built at a cost of Tk 12.49 crore with financial assistance from Unicef, Danida, ADB and IDB.

Hasina said the government is determined to build a poverty-free nation by fulfilling the basic needs of the common people.

"For this reason, we have taken massive programmes in almost all sectors of development and given proper importance to the protection of public health and development," she said.

Sheikh Hasina said a congenial working environment would be created in developing

Fresh threat to Star JU Correspondent

By Staff Correspondent
A group of armed students of Jahangirnagar University (JU) gave threat to the life of the JU Correspondent of The Daily Star following the publication of the report headlined "Star Correspondent assaulted at JU" in the newspaper yesterday.

The group, equipped with lethal weapons, came to the room of the Star Correspondent, Gobinda Bar, yesterday and asked him to leave the hall with his luggage 'at once'. They also warned him of dire consequences and threatened to kill him if the incident is reported in the newspapers.

Later in the day, authorities of Al-Beruni Hall formed a probe committee, headed by house tutor of the hall to investigate the incidents.

Earlier, Gobinda received injury in his head and face when the terrorists mercilessly beat him at the common room of Al-Beruni Hall on the JU campus Monday. JU authorities, including provost of the respective hall, Proctor and the Vice Chancellor were informed of the matter.

Leaders of JU Journalists' Association and President and Secretary of Savar Press Club, Tuhin Khan and Javed Mostafa respectively condemned the incident and demanded exemplary punishment to the persons responsible.

Khaleda

From Page 1
"Repression and harassment on opposition activists are increasing everyday," she added.

Mentioning the planned Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) agreement with the tribal insurgents, Begum Zia said the 5,000 square miles of CHT, which is one-tenth of country's territory, are full of natural resources and geographically the Chittagong port is very vital.

Pak army

From Page 1
serve the best interest of the nation," it said, adding this image of the army "must not be tarnished by irresponsible statements."

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Bangabandhu Murder Case

From Page 1
Thakur and Shah Moazzem criticised many policies of Bangabandhu at a tea-party at Mushatque's village home.

Shah Moazzem was very enthusiastic and vocal in the criticism episode and Mushatque criticised different policies of Bangabandhu maliciously, he said.

The witness said in June/July, 1975, a conference on Family Planning and Health was organised at Daudkandi Madrassah premises, which was also attended by Mushatque, Thakur, Ali Ashraf MP and Chashi. He himself attended it as the president of Comilla district unit of Awami League.

During the conference, he said, Prof Rashid, Major Farook, Major Shahriar and few other army officers came there by an army jeep.

After the conference, he said, Mushatque, Thakur, Major Rashid, Major Farook, Major Shahriar and other army officers left for Mushatque's village home. He said he went back to Comilla from there.

Prof Alam said receiving a call from his father he returned to Comilla on August 14 from Dhaka, where he came to take oath as the newly appointed District Governor of Comilla. The oath-taking was scheduled for August 14/15, he said.

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