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Cabinet for body  
to review report  
on edn policy

The Cabinet has decided to form a committee for distributing and reviewing the report prepared by the Committee on Formulation of National Education Policy 1997, reports UNB.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting held at Bangabhaban yesterday with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The meeting was informed that seminars and meetings will be arranged to discuss the report and as per the outcome of the discussions, a draft policy will be prepared and placed before the Cabinet and the parliament for consideration.

Cabinet meeting also approved the draft of the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Bill 1997 and also a proposal to amend the Private Universities Act.

**Report on Sadia's death submitted**

The three-member committee headed by Major General (rtd) Anis Waiz to probe into the causes of death of 11-year-old girl Sadia during the recent earthquake in Chittagong submitted its report to the Health and Family Welfare Minister Salauddin Yusuf at his office yesterday, reports BSS.

The committee was constituted in response to a directive of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

**Tailor held with Indian nat'l flags in city**

By Staff Correspondent

Detective police recovered 16 Indian national flags and arrested one person from a tailoring shop at New Super Market in city's Dhanmondi area yesterday.

A special team of detective police, acting on a tip-off, raided the small shop in the afternoon and also seized dice, painting brush, fabric and sewing machine used for making the flags.

Police identified the arrested man as Md Alauddin, aged about 30. Son of Abdul Khaleq Mizi of Jafrabad village in Chandpur, Alauddin resided in the New Market area.

A senior Detective Branch official said they suspected that some people, with an ulterior motive, was conspiring to hoist Indian flags at the Chittagong port and in the three hill districts on the day of signing of a peace agreement on Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The planned attempt was to undermine the government's ongoing move to restore peace in the CHT, the official added.

Alauddin told police that a

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**Legal aid body to be formed in each dist**

The government has decided to constitute the National Legal Aid Committee with branches in each district to give financial assistance to the poor people seeking justice, reports UNB.

The first meeting of the Legal Aid Committee will be held at the Law Ministry today. Law Minister Abdul Matin Khusru will preside over the meeting.

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

**Inside Today**

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Disruption at Ctg Port: BGMEA warns of far-reaching crisis

DSE index drops to 3-month low Pages 6, 7

**Large turnout of woman voters**

## Two killed on first day of UP polls

By Staff Correspondent

At least two persons were killed on the first day of the month-long Union Parishad elections in the country yesterday.

A large turnout of women voters marked the polling yesterday. Voters' presence at the centres was also higher than that in the previous UP polls.

Reports of violence from different district headquarters were coming in till late last night. Out correspondents and news agencies said over 200 people were injured in sporadic clashes.

Chief Election Commissioner, Mohammad Abu Hena visited six polling centres in

Gazipur. State-run news agency, BSS quoted him as saying that he was satisfied with the progress of the polls.

Polling continues today in 56 unions of eight thanas under Lalmonirhat, Gaibandha, Joypurhat, Naogaon, Meherpur, Bagerhat, Barisal and Sherpur districts.

Following suspension of polling at a centre under Bhola sadar, Major (retd) Hafiz Ahmed MP and Nazim Uddin Alam MP accused the ruling party of taking over all polling centres in Dhonia and Babda.

Hafizur Rahman and Moksum Ali are candidates for the chairmanship of Majeehati union parishad. Polls will be held there on December 8.

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Woman voters standing in a queue at a polling centre in Ashulia union of Savar thana on the first day of Union Parishad elections yesterday.

Pre-polls violence  
in Gopalganj  
kills one

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, Dec 1: One person was shot dead and 15 people were injured in a gunfight between supporters of two rival candidates for the post of union parishad chairman at village Gopalganj in the sadar thana of the district.

One Noor Mohammed was shot dead as the supporters of Hafizur Rahman and Moksum Ali Khan fired shots, exploded bombs and used lethal weapons during the clash that broke out during campaign, witnesses said.

Of the injured, five were admitted to hospital in critical condition. They are Rana, 20, Ektair, 35, Jumin, 30, Omar Ali, 30, and Mohan Ali, 32.

Zainul Ahmed, ASP of Gopalganj, visited the spot. Seven persons were arrested.

Hafizur Rahman and Moksum Ali are candidates for the chairmanship of Majeehati union parishad. Polls will be held there on December 8.

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## 2 banks write off 50pc bad loans of a top defaulter

By Inam Ahmed

Through unprecedented manipulation of the banking system, a top loan defaulter, Abul Khair Litu, has managed to persuade two banks to write off more than half of his bad loans, including principal amount from Al-Baraka Bank.

Besides, Bangladesh Shilpa Bank (BSB), in a rare move, has waived more than 80 per cent of its total outstanding loan from it. A Bangladesh Bank (BB) inquiry has termed the BSB decision 'most unusual' and the bank is preparing to appeal to the higher court to vacate it.

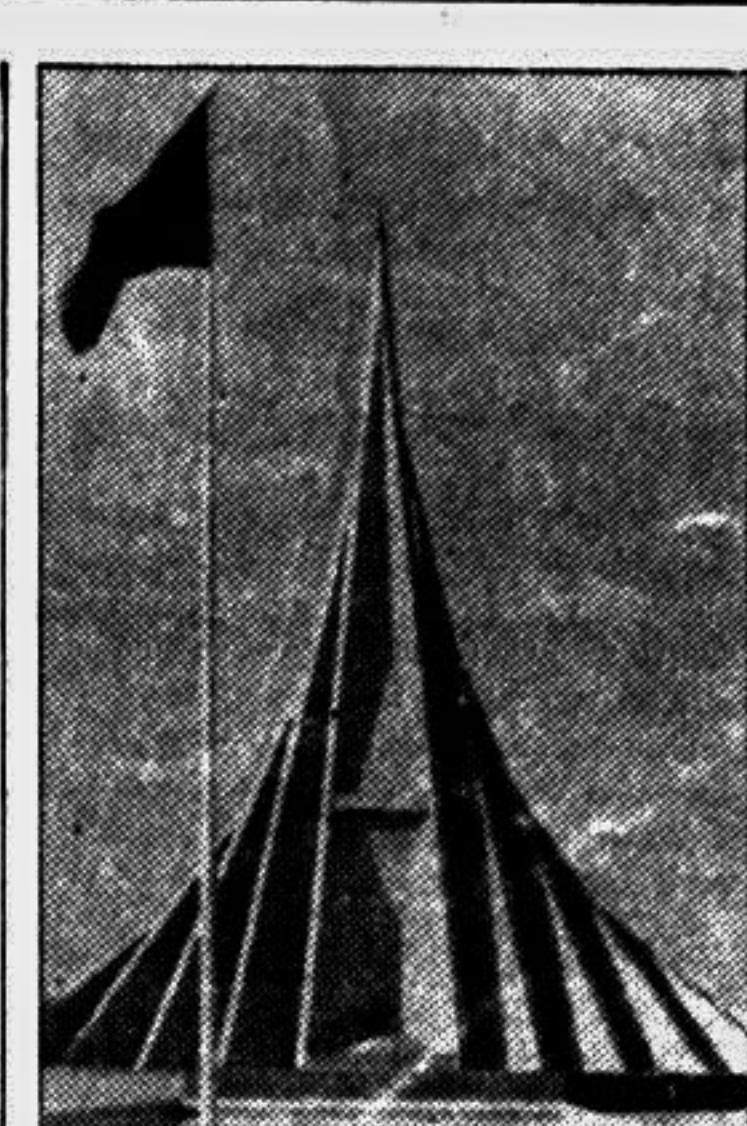
The inquiry has also revealed that Litu of Bengal Group had taken up a housing project on lands already pledged to Sonali Bank as collateral for a

loan. The BB has asked Sonali Bank to stop the sale of these lands.

The BB had ordered Al-Baraka Bank to take legal action against Litu. But when the bank took initiative to file a criminal case against him, it found that Litu had already obtained a court order that bars the banks from filing any criminal suit against him. Legal experts consider such blanket protection as 'most unusual' and the bank is preparing to appeal to the higher court to vacate it.

The BB investigation found that Litu had taken Tk 91.53 crore loans against 29 accounts

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**Victory Day  
celebrations begin**

By Staff Correspondent

The month of victory began yesterday with a renewed vow to uphold the spirit of the Liberation War.

On the first day of December yesterday, the capital as well as other parts of the country witnessed jubilant people hopping from one place of festivity to another.

On December 16 in 1971, Bangladesh emerged as an independent country through a nine-month bloody war against

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CHT peace talks continue

## Nothing will be done in secret: Abdullah

By Special Correspondent

The draft of an agreement to end the decades-old insurgency in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) is being finalised, with negotiators from the government and the tribal leaders working on its details till late last night, meeting sources reported.

If the main stumbling block, the authority of the RC, and other issues can be sorted out, there is a likelihood that the PCJSS delegation, led by its Chairman Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Shantu Larma, will go back to Dudukcharchi in Khagrachari for a final nod of approval from their colleagues.

After more than ten hours of talks on Sunday, spilling into the early hours of yesterday, negotiators from the National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts (NCCHT) and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) were working out the details of the accord till 10:45 pm last night. The talks resumed at 10:30 am.

State Minister for Civil Aviation Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, who played a key role in drafting the outlines of the accord, lent his hand twice on the day, helping narrow down the differences.

They scrutinised and haggled on the nitty-gritty of the proposed accord despite grum-

blings on the authority of a Regional Council, proposed for the three hill districts.

If the main stumbling block, the authority of the RC, and other issues can be sorted out, there is a likelihood that the PCJSS delegation, led by its Chairman Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Shantu Larma, will go back to Dudukcharchi in Khagrachari for a final nod of approval from their colleagues.

After the 'agreed minutes' are approved and signed, there is a possibility of convening of a special session of parliament and placing of an ordinance in the form of a bill for ratification.

Almost all the members of the NCCHT, barring the lone Jatiya Party member Advocate Fazle Rabbi, MP, Kalparanjan Chakma, MP and two BNP MPs, were at hand yesterday for the differences.

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