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JS committee

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peatedly requested him to call a meeting to sort out problems arising out of his decisions but he allegedly ignored those.

The committee members yesterday made some queries to top officials of two ministries — the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources and the Ministry of Food, Secretaries of the two ministries, Tawfik Elahi Chowdhury and Abdul Hamid Chowdhury respectively, were present at the meetings held separately.

The committee members wanted to know from energy ministry officials the reasons behind shortfall of power and steps to make it up.

The members wanted to know from food ministry officials steps taken for food management and procurement of foodgrains. The food secretary replied to queries.

Dr Mizanul Haq chaired the meetings while Akhteruzzaman and Sultan Mohammad Mansur, both AL MPs, were present.

Procurement drive begins today

Paddy price Tk 7 per kg, rice Tk 10.70

The government has announced the guidelines for domestic procurement of foodgrains, setting a purchase target of total 3.90 lakh metric tons of rice and paddy for the 1997-98 fiscal year, reports UNB.

The procurement drive starts today and will continue till February 7 next, the Food Department said in an official circular yesterday.

It said the decision to locally procure 'aman' paddy and rice was taken to keep the prices of foodgrains stable, encourage the farmers and build up a contingency stock.

Government's procurement price of paddy has been fixed at Tk 7 per kg and Tk 700 per quintal while rice Tk 10.70 per kg and Tk 1070 per quintal.

Some 1.20 lakh metric tons of paddy and 2.70 lakh tons of

rice will be procured during the three-month long drive.

The Food Department fixed the types of paddy and rice to be procured and asked the officials concerned to be very cautious so that the procurement guidelines are not violated in any way.

The people involved in the procurement, monitoring officials and the concerned District Controllers of Food would be held responsible in case of violating the guidelines, it warned.

The department directed the procurement staff to purchase paddy from the 'genuine farmers.' No paddy can be purchased from any trader or middleman. The concerned District Food Controllers will sign contract with interested rice millers for supply of rice.

14 DAGs & AAGs appointed

President Shahabuddin Ahmed has appointed 14 advocates as deputy attorneys general and assistant attorneys general, an official handout said last night, reports BSS.

The four newly appointed deputy attorneys general are Abdul Quayyum, Barrister A K M Saifuddin, Md Altaf Hossain Khan and Obaidur Rahman Mostafa.

The assistant attorneys general are Md Sajjadul Haq, Khandkar Mehbub Alam, Md Musfiqur Rahman Khan, Alhas Md Mahmud Hossain, Md Abul Hossain Azadi, Soab Ahmed Chowdhury, F K M Ahsan Mahbub, Prabir Neogi, A K M Zahurul Haq and Mohammad Mostafa.

The authorities, in the meantime, has accepted the resignation of Assistant Attorney General Masuk Ahmed Chowdhury. The appointments of deputy attorneys general Kaisar Uddin Ahmed and Laskar Fakhruddin Ahmed and Assistant attorneys general Serajul Haq and Suriya Begum have been terminated, the handout added.

Fresh hartal

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Addressing the news conference, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan MP also announced some other agitation programmes.

The programmes are: Demonstrations and torch processions on December 10 and 11 across the country, excepting the CHT and Chittagong, exchange of views with the professionals in Dhaka and all other districts on December 12 and 13, countrywide mass contact from December 17 to 21 and the opposition MPs' procession wearing black badge in the city on December 21.

Kazi Zafar Ahmed of Jatiya Party (Z-M), Kamruzzaman of Jamaat-e-Islami, Oli Ahad of Democratic League and Shafiqul Alam Prodhan of Jagpa also spoke at the press conference.

Mannan Bhuiyan said that the people had rejected the "black and illegal" accord on the CHT by "spontaneously observing" hartal yesterday.

"We hope the government will now cancel the agreement and move for a fresh one on the basis of consensus", said the BNP secretary general.

He also alleged government repression on opposition leaders and activists during yesterday's hartal and said four of the party lawmakers — Lutfar Rahman Khan Azad, Joynal Abedin Faruk, A N M Ehsanul Haq Milon and Nazimuddin Alam — were injured in attacks by police and ruling party goons.

Alam was admitted to hospital, he said, adding they also received reports of similar incidents in Chittagong and Rajshahi.

City BNP chief Sadek Hossain Khoka MP alleged that police stormed the party's city office at Naya Bazar, ousted the partymen from there and kept it under their control during the hartal hours yesterday. He further alleged attacks by police and Awami League activists on BNP men in different parts of the city.

Sonargaon thana

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normal at about 5 pm.

Tuhin was buried later in the evening.

A three-member committee has been formed to probe into all the acts of violence at the thana complex.

Five cases were filed in connection with the attacks. However, none was arrested till last night.

OIC summit

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added. "The need to refrain from any interference in Iraq was adopted without any reservation," said Zarif.

Among the issues featured in the resolutions are the conflicts in Afghanistan and Kashmir, and the Middle East peace process.

PM: Tehran

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During her four-day stay in Tehran, the Prime Minister is also expected to visit the Islamic World Trade Exhibition and the Islamic Handloom Exhibition in the Iranian capital.

She will attend a luncheon to be hosted by Iranian President Mohammad Khatami tomorrow and a dinner likely to be hosted by the D-8 members on Wednesday.

NID programme to continue today

By Staff Correspondent

The first phase of the fourth National Immunisation Day (NID) was observed yesterday across the country.

The NID programme will also be observed today to facilitate the parents who could not reach the vaccination centres with their children under the age of five yesterday due to hartal.

Hartal: 150 injured in clashes

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districts. However, the day-long hartal was observed by and large peacefully in the rest of the country.

In the city, vehicles except rickshaws stayed off the roads while private business houses, educational institutions and shopping malls remained closed.

The Expanded Programme on Immunisation, was conducted across the country despite the hartal, its communication officer Mahfuzur Rahman told The Daily Star.

In Dhaka and its adjacent areas in the old part of the city, clashes between AL and BNP activists began at about 9:30 am and continued intermittently for almost the whole

day. They chased each other firing shots and hurling crackers and brickbats. Police lobbed tear gas shells to disperse the clashing groups. Smokes billowing from tyres burnt by pickets and tear gas shells blanketed the area.

A news agency report said about 100 crackers were exploded and 10 gunshots fired in and around the Dhaka University campus.

One Alamgir Hossain was hit by machete during a chase and counter chase between supporters and opponents of hartal at Roysaheb Bazar.

The Dhaka city unit office of BNP at Naya Bazar was kept under tight police security since morning. Police also did not allow people to assemble near the office premises.

Awami League also brought out an anti-hartal procession at Farm Gate area at about 11:45 am. Witnesses said that some crackers were hurled at the procession when it approached the foot bridge there. The processionists then ransacked one shop and assaulted an elderly person there, witnesses added.

At the fog end of the hartal hours, when a BNP procession was passing through Rd No 2 of Dhanmondi area, home made bombs were hurled at police, police said. Police then arrested 16 persons from the area.

The Noakhali bound inter-city train Upakul which left the Kamalapur Station in the morning was called back to the city from Laksham Station at about 11:00 am because of a barricade at Daulatpur station, sources said.

Goalanda bound Jamuna inter-city train from Rajshahi came under attack at Kushtia Court Station.

The Parbatipur bound Chilahati Express from Chilahati came under attack near Syedpur.

Our Staff Correspondent reported from Chittagang that ten persons were injured in stray incidents of violence in the port city during the hartal.

Of the injured, two were hit by rubber bullets fired by police at Chawkbazar to disperse pickets throwing brick-bats at around 11 in the morning. Police arrested 49 persons from different parts of the city during the hartal.

In Chittagong Port, cargo handling was carried out inside the jetties though delivery of goods to and from the port remained suspended.

Our Correspondent reported from Khulna that production in mills and factories hampered during the hartal hours yesterday. Cargo handling at Mongla Port remained suspended.

PM: CHT agreement

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Sheikh Hasina, also Leader of the Jatiya Sangsad said, if the opposition wants, the parliament can be summoned any time to discuss the accord. "If the President wishes, the accord can be discussed on the floor of the House."

In this regard Hasina said, as per Constitution, an accord with foreign countries is required to be tabled for discussion in the House. "But this accord is with the people in the country. Still we want it to be discussed in the parliament."

She came down heavily on BNP and its political allies for what she termed, calling hartals on issues one after another. They are switching over from one issue to other and calling hartals. They could not stick to one issue anymore."

She brushed aside the criticism that Bengalees in the CHT had been turned into 'second class citizens' by the accord and asserted that interests of the non-tribal community there was not compromised in any way. She termed "false" a statement that posts of deputy commissioner would be abolished in the hill districts.

Quoting from the Constitution, the Prime Minister said that formation of a regional council was very much in line with the spirit of the Constitu-

tion and mentioned that the Constitution allowed special privileges to disadvantaged communities for removing disparity. She further hoped that implementation of the CHT accord would bring about "unity in diversity".

About the *lucas standi* of the tribal leaders with whom the accord was signed, Sheikh Hasina said, "The previous committee led by Col. Oli as well as former prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia had also talks with the same set of people. Why raise this question now?"

On the provision for appointment of a tribal affairs minister, the Prime Minister said there is nothing wrong in it. Former presidents Ziaur Rahman and H M Ershad had appointed tribal affairs advisors with ministerial status.

The Prime Minister also brushed aside "propaganda" regarding land acquisition and certain other provisions of the accord. A reporter asked what will be the fate of the accord when Awami League will not be in power. Sheikh Hasina, also president of Awami League, said, "It is a general expectation that successive governments would adhere to the spirit of the accord. But in case of non-implementation of the accord by any future government, people will consider then what to do."

Khaleda

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peace accord. She said many leaders and workers of her party, including Lutfar Rahman Khan Azad MP, Nazimuddin Alam MP, Ehsanul Haq Milon MP and Jainul Abedin Faruq MP, were injured during the hartal.

The BNP chairperson demanded release of the leaders and workers arrested during the hartal.

She also urged the people to make all future programmes of BNP all-out success in the interest of independence and sovereignty of the country.

Polls violence

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olence in Kalia Haripur union under Sadar thana of the district on Saturday.

The clash erupted between the supporters of winning and defeating candidates of Kalia Haripur union in the morning. The seriously injured Ainul 40, Ishak Ali, 42, Abdul Mannan, 36, Abdul Jalil, 40, Mannan, 32, and Rabul Awal, 42 were admitted to the Sirajganj General Hospital.

GOLDEN TONES

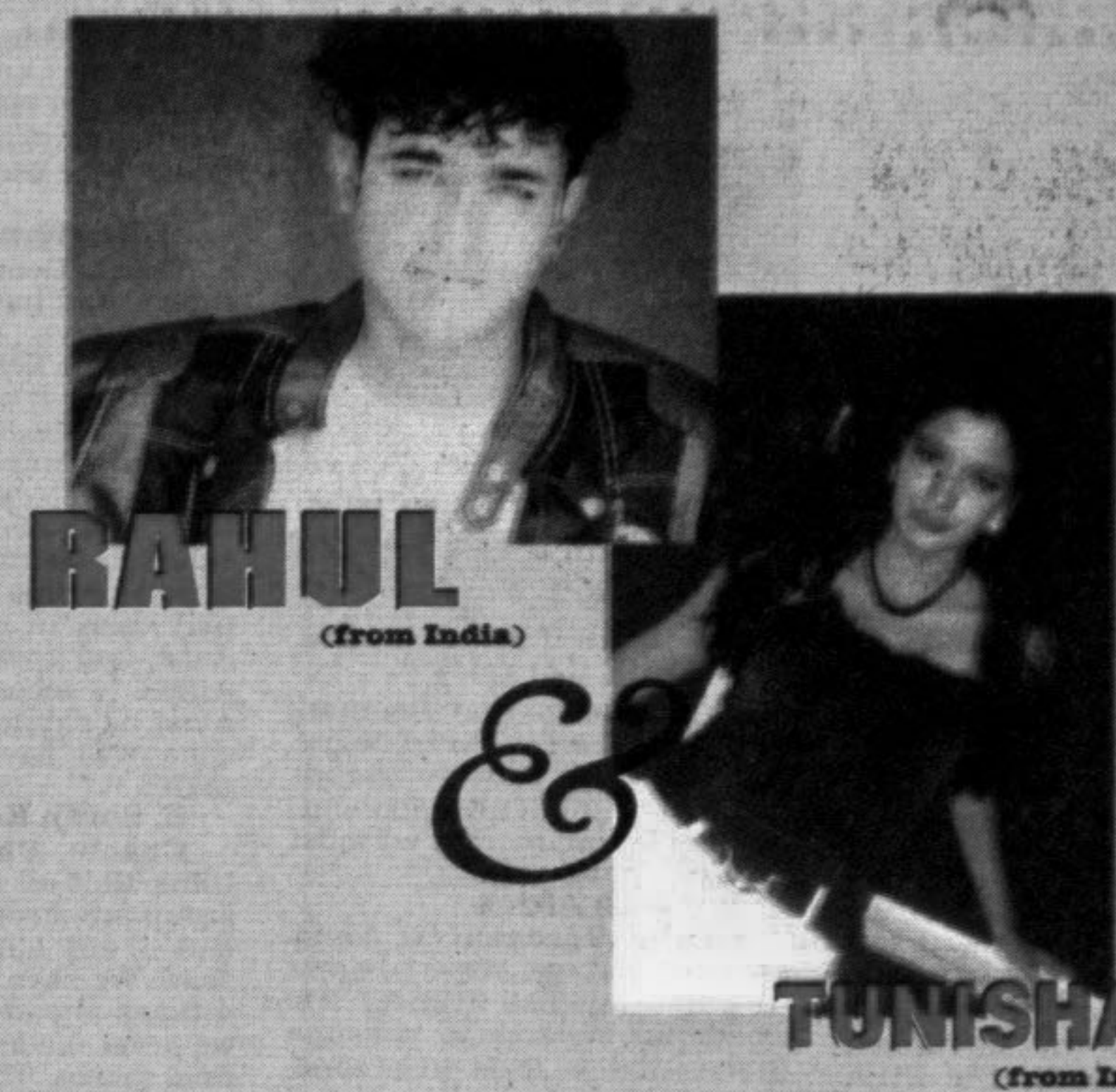
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Feelings



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Time : 6:00 pm

Tickets : 400 Taka each available from December 2nd at : Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, Swiss Plus (Baily Road), Bridgehouse Hallmark Shop (Banani), La bamba (Dhanmondi), Yum Yum (Dhanmondi), Patisserie (Elephant Road), Hot Hut (Dhanmondi), Candy Floss (Gulshan), Film Fair (Dhanmondi), Dolce vita, Dhaka Billiard Centre.

Organized by Sandhani National Eye Donation Society. All proceeds from ticket sales will benefit the Society. No one under 18 years will be admitted.

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