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BAU convocation

'Keep campus
arms-free'

MYMENSINGH, Dec 20: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has called for developing an agriculture system suitable for Bangladesh and building the foundation for research in light of the challenges and requirements of the 21st century, reports UNB.

Addressing the fourth convocation ceremony of the Bangladesh Agricultural University at Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin auditorium here today, she said proper application of modern agricultural knowledge in the country's agri system has become more important nowadays.

Urging the university to take a lead in the field of agriculture research, technology innovation and application, she assured all cooperation and support from her government.

About the student politics, the Prime Minister said the student should do constructive politics being imbued with patriotism. "The atmosphere in the campus should be very congenial, free from the influence of arms."

Former chief of the caretaker government Justice Habibur Rahman addressed the ceremony as the convocation speaker. Education Minister A S H Q Sadique and BAU Vice-Chancellor Prof Muhammad Hossain also spoke on the occasion.

In the fourth convocation of the university, 2,091 students were conferred with degrees, including 33 PhDs. Students of different faculties for the year 1990, 1991 and 1992 received the degrees at the function today.

Colour of BJP

From page 1
election, the party shunned the hard-line stance on sensitive issues that in the past drove minorities and political groups away.

For the first time in a key election document, the Hindu nationalists dropped all reference to building of a temple in a disputed area that led to communal riots in 1992.

Instead the political resolution stressed reviving the 'spirit of optimism, opportunity and oneness in this 50th year of our independence'.

A minority BJP government was voted out after 12 days in power last year because no political party offered support. Since then, the BJP have won several regional parties and splinter groups of all hues in the search for power.

Every election has issues, this (temple building) is not an issue now. The issue is stability," party spokeswoman Sushma Swaraj said.

But she indicated that the long-term ideals of the party would stay intact. "The basic philosophy of hindutva (nationalism) cannot be diluted.

Hasina tells public meeting

BNP out to hamper development efforts

MYMENSINGH, Dec 20: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said the government is taking every possible step for the economic development of the nation, but that is being hampered by the opposition reported UNB.

They (opposition BNP) don't want development of the nation, they don't want economic emancipation of the people," she said addressing a huge public meeting at the local circuit house maidan in the afternoon.

The BNP is opposing the CHT peace agreement to create unrest in the country, she said.

Mentioning the signing of CHT peace accord, Hasina said, "We've taken the step to restore peace in the troubled region which was wrecked by unrest for the last 20 years. We've taken steps for improving the life of the tribal people."

She said the government has created a congenial atmosphere for investment, but the BNP is trying to create unrest at a time when the foreign entrepreneurs are coming to invest in the country.

The government is working Dacoity at night coach in Pabna

PABNA, Dec 20: Twenty passengers of a night coach bound for Chapainawabganj from Dhaka sustained injuries in the early hours of today following the attack by a group of dacoits.

The dacoits, who were travelling in the bus in guise of passengers, indiscriminately stabbed some of the passengers after taking over the control of the bus at gunpoint when the coach reached Gachpara near the town.

BGMEA:

From page 1
off could be avoided.

He voiced concern over a news item published in a section of newspaper on Friday about the "threat to create cargo-jam" and to introduce surcharge again" at the port.

Quddus said cargo operation has come down to 30 per cent as the port workers resorted to 'go slow' policy.

It created serious congestion keeping 55 cargo vessels waiting at the outer anchorage.

BGMEA president said the situation is so bad that the foreign shipping lines are showing their reluctance in booking cargo and has threatened to introduce surcharge on goods sent through this port.

He said repeated disruption of normal activities at the port created uncertainty particularly for the export-based garment sector.

Polls violence

From page 1
the supporters of two chairman candidates at Shahapur centre of Majidpur union. The dead could not be identified.

The trouble also spread in the villages of Shahapur and Lalpur.

Yesterday, elections were held in 200 unions under 31 thanas of 31 districts. The number of polling centres was 1847.

Clashes between supporters of rival candidates led to the cancellation of polling in the six centres. Of them, three centres are located in Jagatpur North and South unions under Daudkandi thana of Comilla district, one centre each in Pathor and Peerpara unions under Kachua thana of Chandpur district, and the other centre in Chouhal thana of Sirajganj district.

JU buses

From page 1
sociation Atiqur Rahman and Chairman of Aminbazar Union Parishad Mohammad Kafiluddin, among others, were present at the discussion.

JU Pro-VC Prof Alauddin Ahmed also told this correspondent that the university authorities had discussions with transport workers' leaders.

Meanwhile, in a joint statement yesterday, 10 student organisations protested and condemned police action on JU teachers and students and attack by workers of Awami League-backed Chhatra League on the leaders and activists of various student bodies including Chhatra Union, Chhatra Front and Chhatra Federation in the university.

He said repeated disruption of normal activities at the port created uncertainty particularly for the export-based garment sector.

"But during the last puja festival, as usual, thousands were crossing without papers and at



Visitors at a science and technology exhibition that began on the BCSIR premises in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Funds to be sought from donors for dev of CHT

Star Report

Finance Minister S A M S Kibria has said he will meet representatives of donors this month and seek funds for development of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

The Economic Relations Division (ERD) is preparing long and short-term plans for development of the CHT, the minister told the BBC, monitored here last night.

The BBC quoted an unnamed senior official of the ERD as said that Tk 2500 crore would be needed for the overall programme.

Another Tk 200 crore would be required urgently for rehabilitation of the refugees and displaced people, farm loans, creation of jobs and grants to members of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJS), it said quoting

FM's talks

From page 1
route due to absence of facilities. However a cargo of fertiliser is expected to move to Nepal through Bangladesh using the old rail route. The route is time consuming and involves transhipment.

The progress of the first phase of South Asian Growth Quadrangle is expected to be reviewed during the Bangladesh foreign minister's visit. Nepal is the co-ordinator of the 4-nation growth concept that involves Bangladesh, India and Bhutan.

We are nonetheless holding regular meetings with the villagers along the border to create public opinion against child and woman trafficking," said the SP.

At the BDR Company headquarters in Benapole, Lt Col Zahirul Islam said that since September this year, a special BDR team to crack down on the trade," said Maksud Ahmed, a local businessman, adding, "Only a few days back you would find it difficult to walk on the roads due to the rush."

There are two types of dhurs," said a senior police official in Jessore. "One is a poor person who cannot afford to obtain a passport and the other is a victim of the woman and child trafficking syndicate."

He said that traditionally poor peasants and groups of devotees have been travelling to and from India without papers and the matter used to be ignored. "After visiting their relatives and shrines as far as in Ajmer, these people would return home in Bangladesh," he said.

According to BDR records from September to November 1,534 men, women and children were detained. Among them, 488 were women and 68 were children. "All were handed over to Sharsha police station," said the official.

Jessore police headquarters sources said, from September till this month, only five women and children were rescued from Benapole area. One female trafficker was arrested this month and a child was rescued from her grip. "Only four cases were lodged under the Women and Child Repression Act," said police official Aminul Islam.

An attempt for setting up some new court rooms was made during the BNP government but was later abandoned due to opposition from lawyers. The lawyers had then argued that it would be difficult for them to shuttle between the two buildings. The government is now planning to construct a 'gang way' to link it with the Supreme Court building, the sources added.

another official of the Special Affairs Division.

Talking to BBC's Dhaka correspondent, the Finance Minister hoped that at the meeting, the donor countries would also finalise the amount of this year's aid disbursement.

He said, following the CHT peace accord, he held meetings with representatives of the donors including the US regarding development of the CHT. They promised help. They also wanted to know the quantum of financial assistance and specific areas for which it was needed, Kibria said.

Another Tk 200 crore would be required urgently for rehabilitation of the refugees and displaced people, farm loans, creation of jobs and grants to members of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJS), it said quoting

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Exhibition on architecture opens in city

By Staff Correspondent

An exhibition titled "Punjab to Sherebanglanagar: Architecture in Bangladesh" opened in the city yesterday.

Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Abul Kalam Azad Chowdhury inaugurated the exhibition at the National Museum auditorium.

Photographs and drawings of major architectural works in Bangladesh from 320 BC till the present day are on display.

The 11-day exhibition organised by Chetana Shapatay Unnayan Society also includes images and documents of some rare buildings.

Presided over by architect Mazharul Islam, president of the organisation, the inaugural function was also addressed by veteran litterateur Swakat Osman, Saiful Haque and Khaled Ashraf.

The exhibition is the product of four years of research and documentation by Chetana Shapatay Society. The research project was sponsored by the Ford Foundation.

BNP: President

From page 1
President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed and submit a memorandum.

The memorandum may contain the BNP's demand for scrapping the CHT agreement, which it is calling unconstitutional.

During the meeting, the party is also learnt to have planned to seek a presidential intervention for stopping implementation of the CHT peace accord.

In the statement, Opposition Chief Whip Khandakar Delwar Hossain, requested all party MPs to be present at Khaleda's Minto Road residence by 9.30 and participate in the programme.

UNB says, BNP Secretary General has rejected the call for return to the winter session of parliament.

"We want to go back to the House, but the situation further aggravated with the surfacing of new issues like the CHT accord blocking the way of our return to parliament," he told the agency over phone yesterday.

BNP lawmakers

From page 1
been saying in recent days."

"These are all spoken matters. It is the feeling of the MPs and a joint effort, and I've just reiterated it once again," said Mahabubur Rahman.

When his attention was drawn to the fact that many of the signatories knew nothing about the statement, Rahman said, "the persons assigned for the task could not contact them on time."

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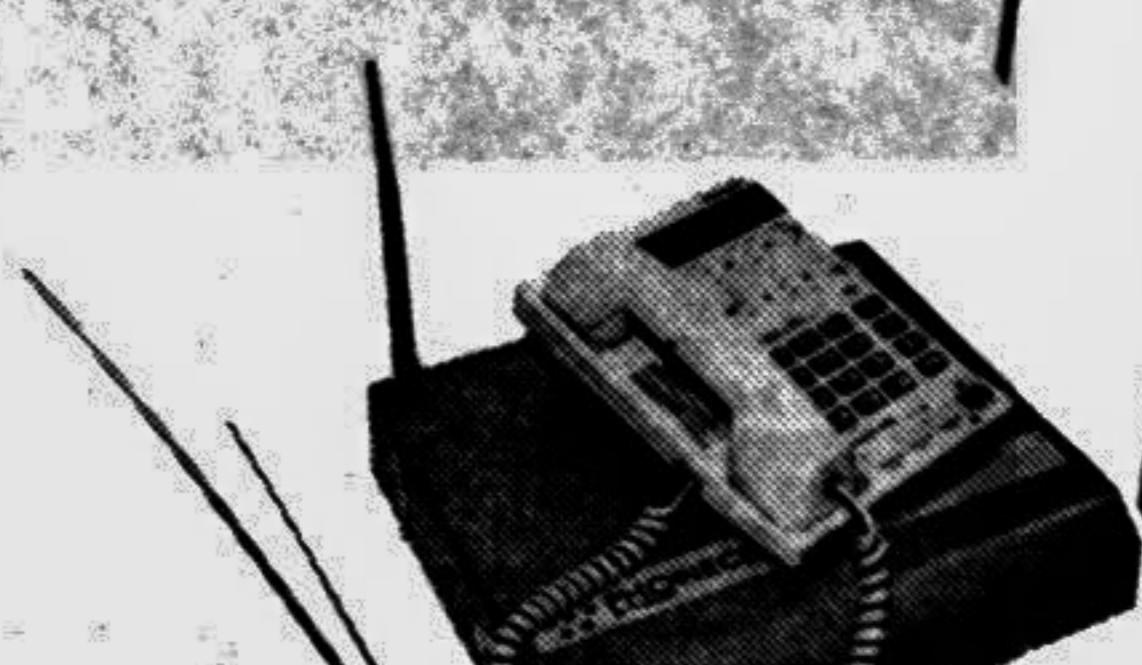
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