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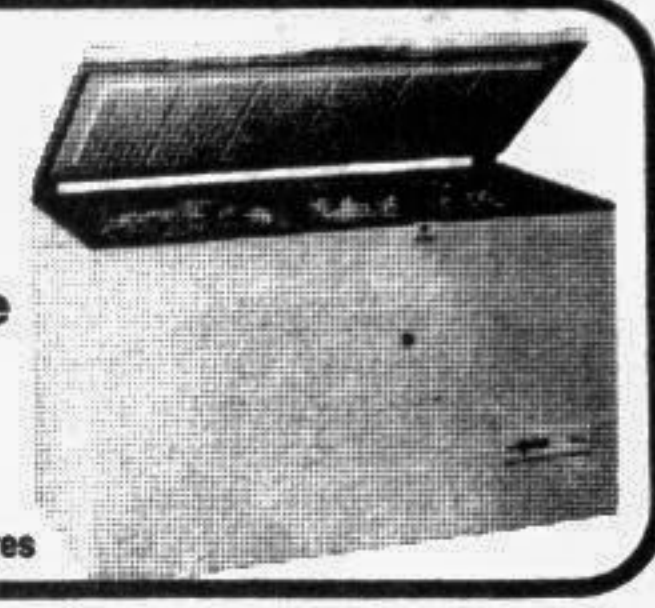
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BNP's allegation of vote rigging false: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday criticised opposition BNP for bringing false allegation of vote rigging in Barisal by-election, where the opposition candidate won the polls, reports UNB.

"If the election was rigged, who did it? Is it the opposition which won the polls there?" she asked referring to the allegation made by the Opposition Leader while addressing a meeting at Feni on the day of polling.

The Prime Minister was addressing a meeting, where several thousand leaders and workers of BNP, Jatiya Party and JSD joined the Awami League showing their allegiance to the ideals of father of the nation ADB offers \$ 80m to modernise Ctg port

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) yesterday offered 80 million US dollars for modernising the Chittagong port, reports UNB.

A delegation of the ADB met the Shipping Minister A S M Abdur Rab here and made the offer. The delegation was led by the Bank's acting resident representative Francis B Narayan, said an official handout.

According to the ADB proposal, the fund will be utilised to modernise and improve the efficiency of the Chittagong port by commissioning modern equipment and organising training programmes for the operators.

Date for hearing corruption case against BNP chief shifted to Aug 30

The date for hearing the charge against BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia in a corruption case was yesterday shifted to August 30 from July 26, reports UNB.

A petition for dispensing her from personal attendance in the case and allowing a lawyer to represent her was also moved in the court. District and Sessions Judge Kazi Golam Rasul fixed August 2 for hearing the petition.

It was stated in the petition that the petitioner is the Chairperson of BNP. She was prime minister and Leader of the House from 1991 to 1996. At present, Begum Zia is an MP and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, as such she enjoys the status and privileges of a minister.

Moreover, Begum Zia is seriously preoccupied with party activities for which she is unable to remain present in the court on the date fixed, the petition said.

It was further stated that her appearance creates huge rush in the court premises. So her personal appearance will be dispensed with and she should be allowed to be represented by a lawyer in the court under Section 205/A of the Criminal Procedure Code.

JCD factions

From Page 1

As she boarded the waiting car, the students started shouting at each other and also took to fist fight.

Most of the BNP leaders had left the premises earlier. The others remained inside during the incident. Panic gripped the entire area.

The students also smashed flower tubs, slammed doors and windows, and ran helter skelter. They later chased each other brandishing knives. Some were injured.

Flood situation

From Page 1

teriorated in Rajshahi, Naoagan and Chapainawabganj districts.

Fresh areas have been inundated and two persons died yesterday in Manda thana of Naoagan district.

The number of flood affected unions has risen to 28 in Naoagan district.

In Chapainawabganj, 13 unions of Shibganj and the Sadar thanas have been submerged.

Our Sherpur correspondent reports: The flood situation in five thanas of the district deteriorated yesterday with the onrush of hilly waters from across the border.

UNB reports from Pabna: The flood situation in the district worsened further with two more thanas, Atgharia and Satia, being affected today.

In Jamalpur, the overall flood situation in the district has further deteriorated with onrush of waters from across the border.

In Kushtia, though water level of the river Ganges and Gorai remained steady, the flood situation in remote villages of Daulatpur thana was stated to be grim.

In Gaibandha, the overall flood situation in the district aggravated with fresh areas inundated due to widening the breaches in Karotoa river embankment.

In Kishoreganj, two children drowned in flood water in Mitamin and Bazidpur thanas of the district yesterday.

tion Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Some Union Parishad chairmen, led by Manikganj Paurasava chairman Ramjan Ali of Jatiya Party, also joined the ruling Awami League at the meeting at International Conference Centre in the afternoon.

Sheikh Hasina said the government has taken all measures to ensure free and fair elections. "We've confidence in people and the people have faith in us."

Percentage of vote in favour of Awami League has increased in the Barisal by-election compared to the last election, she said. "This is a reflection of the people's increasing confidence in the ruling party."

About the allegation of the Opposition Leader Begum Khaleda Zia, she said it has become a habit of the opposition party to bring charges of rigging, since they won the February 12, 1996 election through rigging.

Referring to the recent flood, Hasina said the government has taken all measures to help the flood victims.

Victory in by-polls to intensify oust-govt movement: BNP

The BNP Standing Committee last night said people expressed no-confidence in the present 'inefficient and subservient' government through their verdict in the Barisal-5 by-election, reports UNB.

The party's highest policymaking forum, at a meeting at 29 Minto Road, said BNP's victory in the election would intensify the oust-govt movement.

The meeting, chaired by BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, censured what it called the government's blueprint as well as intimidation and terrorism during the Monday's voting to manipulate the election result.

It said: This undemocratic government, losing the confidence of the people, has become desperate to destroy democracy.

Standing Committee members Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, M Saifur Rahman, Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Oli Ahmed, Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Dr R A Gani, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Dr Khandaker Md Shafiqul Hossain, Chowdhury Tavir Ahmed Siddiqi, Barrister Moudud Ahmed, K M Obaidur Rahman and Khandaker Mahbub Uddin Ahmed were present in the meeting.

A press release issued half-way of the meeting said the Standing Committee discussed the flood situation and the overall situation of the country, including the Barisal-5 by-election.

Textile mills

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by a sub-committee headed by Industries Secretary Ijazul Haq, with some amendments.

"The new committee headed by the State Minister for Textiles will start working immediately and try to hand over the mills to the workers as soon as possible," said a ruling party MP who attended the meeting.

The nine mills incurred a total loss of around Tk 210 crore over the years.

According to a decision taken at the meeting, the workers who will take over the mills will form a company and bear the long-term loans of the mills. Payments against the long-term loans will be made in phases after three years of takeover.

Five out of nine mills are located in Tongi industrial areas, two in Chittagong and two in Narayanganj.

FBCCI

From Page 1

their jobs if new private ports are set up.

The FBCCI which favours establishment of more than one private port in the country termed the opposition to it as "intentional". The federation said the labour unions and some other vested quarters "are involved in the game" and the government should deal with them sternly.

About the present port facilities, it said shipment in due time has become impossible due to lack of necessary equipment. With the existing level of facilities, the Chittagong Port is unable to continue its normal operation, said the FBCCI.

On the other hand, because of container congestion, the feeder vessels have to wait for a longer period at the ports. As a result, the foreign ships increase the fair of the containers causing further increase in export expenditure.

Meanwhile, a delegation of the Bangladesh Employers' Association, led by its President Rokia A Rahman, met with Deputy Minister for Shipping Saber Hossain Chowdhury today and discussed with him different aspects relating to the Chittagong Port.



A section of students of Dhaka University staged a demonstration in front of the Vice-Chancellor's residence yesterday protesting increase in tuition fees and other charges. — Star photo

Today's exams at DU postponed

By DU Correspondent

All examinations of the Dhaka University schedule for today have been postponed due to a strike called by Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO).

Speaking at a press conference at the administrative building of the university yesterday evening, Vice-Chancellor Prof A K Azad Chowdhury said that the authorities have no intention to go for any sort of confrontation.

As the GCO have kept the examinations within the purview of the strike, the authorities will not take any step to conduct the examinations, the VC added.

The GCO strike is in demand for the withdrawal of the authorities' recent decision to increase tuition and other fees of the students.

Varsity officers postpone 15-day work abstention programme

By DU Correspondent

The Inter-University Officers Federation (IUOF) postponed its 15-day work abstention programme and the university officers will resume work from today.

The IUOF postponed the work stoppage which began from July 21 in a meeting of its executive committee on Tuesday. It was presided over by A T M Abdul Hannan, the president of the committee, said a press release.

The IUOF, representing about 4,000 officers of 10 government universities, launched the campaign to press home its four-point demand.

9 BNP activists held in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, July 22: Police arrested nine BNP and JCD activists from different village areas under sadar thana of Barisal district last night.

Ashan Habib Kamal, president of Barisal city BNP, condemned the arrests, saying it was politically motivated. In a statement, he demanded their immediate release.

Speaker, FM rivalry

From Page 1

visor Suranjit Sengupta, Dewan Farid Gazi, Sultan Mohammad Mansur, Shah Azizur Rahman and Syeda Zebunnessa Haque — were also present at the function.

The Speaker in his speech also accused officials of the Railway and the Communications Ministry of helping the 'black hands'. He demanded an enquiry into the matter. The Speaker further alleged, "The senior minister" can not run his own ministry properly. "He sleeps in the Jatiya Sangsad when the session goes on."

Humayun Rashid Chowdhury also called upon the local party leaders and workers to be united to "destroy the black hands" which work against development of the Sylhet region.

At the function, the Speaker got the audience including the party MPs to pledge by raising their fists to extend "aloud support against any conspiracy."

The Speaker said that, being the elected MP from Sylhet Sadar, he had "manoeuvred a lot" in getting the Tk 6.5 crore project approved, but the Foreign Minister, by "influencing" the Railway officials, postponed the official function, just out of grudge.

Speaking on the occasion, Sengupta said, "From today, we would start a new era to destroy the black hands which work against the cause of Sylhet."

However, Syed Abu Nosor PP and A N M Shafiqul Haque, president and general secretary respectively of Sylhet district Awami League, also spoke on

VC defends tuition fee rise DU students demonstrate, call strike today

By DU Correspondent

A chaotic situation prevailed at the Dhaka University yesterday as a section of 'general students' and different student organisations brought out processions demanding withdrawal of the authorities' decision to raise tuition fees and other charges.

The general students, under the banner of a committee for resisting the increase, attacked the offices of the Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and the Treasurer of the university and residence of the VC.

The resistance committee also called a two-day strike at the DU on July 26 and 27 to press home the demands.

Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya, an alliance of several left-leaning student organisations, had earlier called a strike at the university today on the same issue.

Witnesses said that the general students from different residential halls came out in processions and gathered at the Aparajeya Bangla at around noon.

The students paraded the campus in a single procession. At one stage, they tried to enter the administrative building but were obstructed by police.

The students then turned violent and threw bricks at the offices of the VC, pro-VC and Treasurer in the administrative building, damaging windowpanes.

The agitating students later went to the residence of the VC and tried to enter it. Obstructed by police, they threw bricks at them. One of the demonstrators was injured there.

They also threw bricks at the VC's residence. Then they returned to the Aparajeya Bangla, held a rally and announced the strike programme for the rally.

The GCO brought out a procession on the campus to drum up support for their strike.

Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of the BNP also extended support for the strike from a rally on the campus.

Bangladesh Chhatra Federation (BCF) gheraoed the office of the VC in the morning de-

the occasion maintaining a low profile. Party insiders said that the general secretary was considered as a man of the Foreign Minister while Nosor was apparently trying to maintain a neutral stance.

The president and the secretary of Jagannathpur thana unit of AL also addressed the function, supporting the Speaker. Jagannathpur is the home thana of the Foreign Minister.

Immediately after publication of the Speaker's speech in local dailies, things went serious. Leaders of local AL and its front organisations — Sramik League, BCL, and Juba League — took sides and started giving statements for and against the Foreign Minister.

The Foreign Minister in an interview with the Editor of tabloid daily Manabjain on Monday accused the Speaker of making "aggressive remarks" against him. Abdus Samad Azad also alleged that Humayun Rashid Chowdhury had never uttered a word demanding trial of the killers of Bangabandhu before he joined the AL. He also raised questions about transparency in activities of the Speaker.

Samad Azad strongly criticised the role of Sengupta and alleged that he had been involved in activities against party's interest.

Sengupta, in his interview with the same daily today, also strongly criticised the role of the Foreign Minister and said, "He has been harming the cause of Sylhet and the post of the

Body to implement CHT accord now to meet on July 31

By Special Correspondent

A vital meeting of the committee for implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) peace agreement to resolve a number of issues, including the formation of the Regional Council (RC), scheduled to be held at Chittagong circuit house today has been postponed.

The committee would now meet on July 31 at the same venue, authoritative sources said yesterday, to try to smoothen differences on nomination of members for the RC. Dispute over formation of the RC has so far delayed full implementation of the CHT agreement.

Chairman of the implementation committee Abul Hasnat Abdullah, Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad, had led the government side in clinching the peace accord with the Parbatia Chhattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), led by its Chairman Jyotirindriya Bodhipriya Larma alias Shantu Larma on December 2.

Both the government and the PCJSS have put forward their respective nominees for the first RC. But sharp differences, cropped up on nomination of members from the settlers in CHT.

manding withdrawal of the decision to raise tuition fees.

Later in the evening, Vice-Chancellor Prof A K Azad Chowdhury at a press conference at the administrative building condemned the attack on his office by students.

The VC justified the decision to raise tuition fees and other charges.

Under the new arrangement, a student will have to pay only Tk 40 more per month, he noted.

Students have every right to protest any decision of the authorities, the VC said. "But this is probably not the right way to register their protests. Any disagreement can be solved through discussion."

Pro-VC Shahiduddin Ahmed, Treasurer Shamsul Haq and deans of different faculties also spoke at the press conference.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka University Teachers' Association condemned the 'attack' on the offices of the VC, Pro-VC and Treasurer.

In a statement, the DUTA president and general secretary urged all concerned to abstain from strike and other destructive activities for the sake of smooth academic activities.

Young men attack barrack of jail guards in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, July 22: Tension is prevailing in Khulna district jail following a clash between a group of young men and some jail guards on Tuesday afternoon.

Eight young men allegedly attacked barrack of jail guards and exploded two hand bombs.

The clash began when jail guards did not allow the young men to talk with the prisoners from the roof top of the barrack.

Jail guard Rafiqul Islam was severely injured in the clash.

A case has been lodged with Khulna thana in this connection.

Rival groups clash at city market : 15 hurt

By Staff Correspondent

At least 15 people were injured when two armed gangs clashed over possession of a vegetable market near the Shia mosque in the city's Mohammadpur area yesterday.

Police identified five seriously injured as Abu Saded, Abul Mian, Tamizuddin, Hashem and Abul Kashem. They were admitted to Suhrawardy Hospital.

Four people were arrested from the spot in connection with the clash.

Local people said that both groups were equipped with sharp weapons, hockey sticks and explosives.

The clash, which lasted nearly an hour, erupted between Taher group and Salam group at about 11 am when Taher's men beat up Hashem, reportedly a treasurer of the market committee of which Salam is the president, they said.

A case was filed with Mohammadpur thana in this connection.

World Bank

From Page 1

fect 'economic neutrality and horizontal equity of the system'.

It went on "the scope for improving transparency, simplicity and enforceability of the tax system is considerable and should be exploited fully."

The Bank also suggested that the government should consider doing away with a number of tax exemptions.

8 lawyers, 5 court staff accused of forging bail bonds in Ctg

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CHITTAGONG, July 22: Five court employees and eight lawyers were charged with releasing eight prisoners from Chittagong Jail custody through forged bail bonds, reports UNB.

Chittagong District and Sessions Judge Jahurul Islam today served show-cause notices against the five court employees and advised the Bangladesh Bar Council to suspend the licence of the lawyers concerned.

The judge's order came after an inquiry into the bailing out of the eight prisoners in between January to March by resorting to malpractice.

Of the eight, four were later arrested by police, while remaining four including two women, are still at large. They were involved in cases of looting police camp at Noapra village in Rajgan thana, dacoity and murder.

After the incident, the District and Sessions Judge constituted a one-member inquiry committee with Additional District and Sessions Judge Golam

Loan defaulters

violators will be fined or declared disqualified.

An election appeal board, headed by Nurul Islam, a former president of Cold Storage Association, will have a full-day session on the day of polling to hear complaints.

The 32-member executive committee includes a president, a vice president and 15 members each from chambers and associations. But the spotlight has always fallen on the post of president.

The rule prohibiting defaulters from seeking an FBCCI office was already there. By law, no insolvent person can become an office-bearer of FBCCI, a public limited company by registration.

"But bringing it into the fore as a slogan is just a reflection of the resentment among the members of the business community," an FBCCI executive committee member said.

Some FBCCI insiders however pointed out that there were some willful defaulters who might not be convicted but would have the chance to compete and get elected.

Others argued that there were some who became defaulters for "commercial reasons" and should not be disqualified.

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