

BSCIC industrial estates in each district by 2000

BSCIC (Bangladesh Small Cottage Industries Corporation) industrial estates would be set up in every district headquarters by the year 2000 to develop the country's craft industry. Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

Replying to a question from Treasury Bench member Dharendra Nath Saha, the minister said BSCIC estates have already been set up in 61 out of 68 districts, reports BSS.

The minister said various measures have been taken to expand and popularise the craft industry, including easy-term loans for unemployed educated youths, training for artisans, distribution of developed designs and organising exhibitions and fairs at home and abroad.

Tofail said BSCIC has introduced annual awards for artisans to encourage them. To a supplementary by Jatiya Party member Sabita Begum, Tofail said there is a plan to develop 'nakshi kantha' (embroidered quilt) industry through BSCIC programmes "to restore Bengali culture and heritage."

Birth registration programme begins in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Nov 16: Birth registration programme of the children began here today, reports BSS.

Chittagong City Mayor Alhaj ABM Mahiuddin Chowdhury formally inaugurated the programme at a function held at the south Agrabad ward office here.

The inaugural function was addressed, among others, by UNICEF country chief Shahida Afzar and chief health officer of the city corporation Dr AMN Mamun while ward commissioner Jalaluddin Ahmed presided over it, a City Corporation press release said.

The mayor in his inaugural remarks said the registration of birth of the children is a must for their identification of the entity and ensuring their rights.

Though the registration of birth and death of the children are compulsory, but birth records of the children, under the age of one is below 12 per cent.

UNICEF chief Shahida Afzar wishing success of the programme said she would extend all out cooperation in this regard.

The programme will continue in different parts of the city till Nov 26.

Earlier, the UNICEF country chief paid a courtesy call on the Chittagong City mayor at the latter's office.

They discussed matters of mutual interest, especially of birth registration and primary health service programmes, the press release added.

Shiri Shishu Sahitya Kendra musical programme in NY

The New York branch of 'Shiri Shishu Sahitya Kendra', a juvenile literary & cultural organisation, has recently organised a musical soiree in Astoria of New York City, USA, says a press release.

Dan Sheehan, an American educationist and also an adviser of the New York branch, presided over the colourful function. Hasanur Rahman, the founder-Director of SSSK, also spoke on the occasion.

'Warfare', a newly-formed band group of Bangladeshi youngsters in New York, performed a concert on the occasion.

The function was conducted by Abdul Mannan and Parveen Rahman, the acting director of the New York branch.

PM's 'no hartal' call welcomed

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's declaration that 'Awami League will no more call hartal' has been widely welcomed, reports BSS.

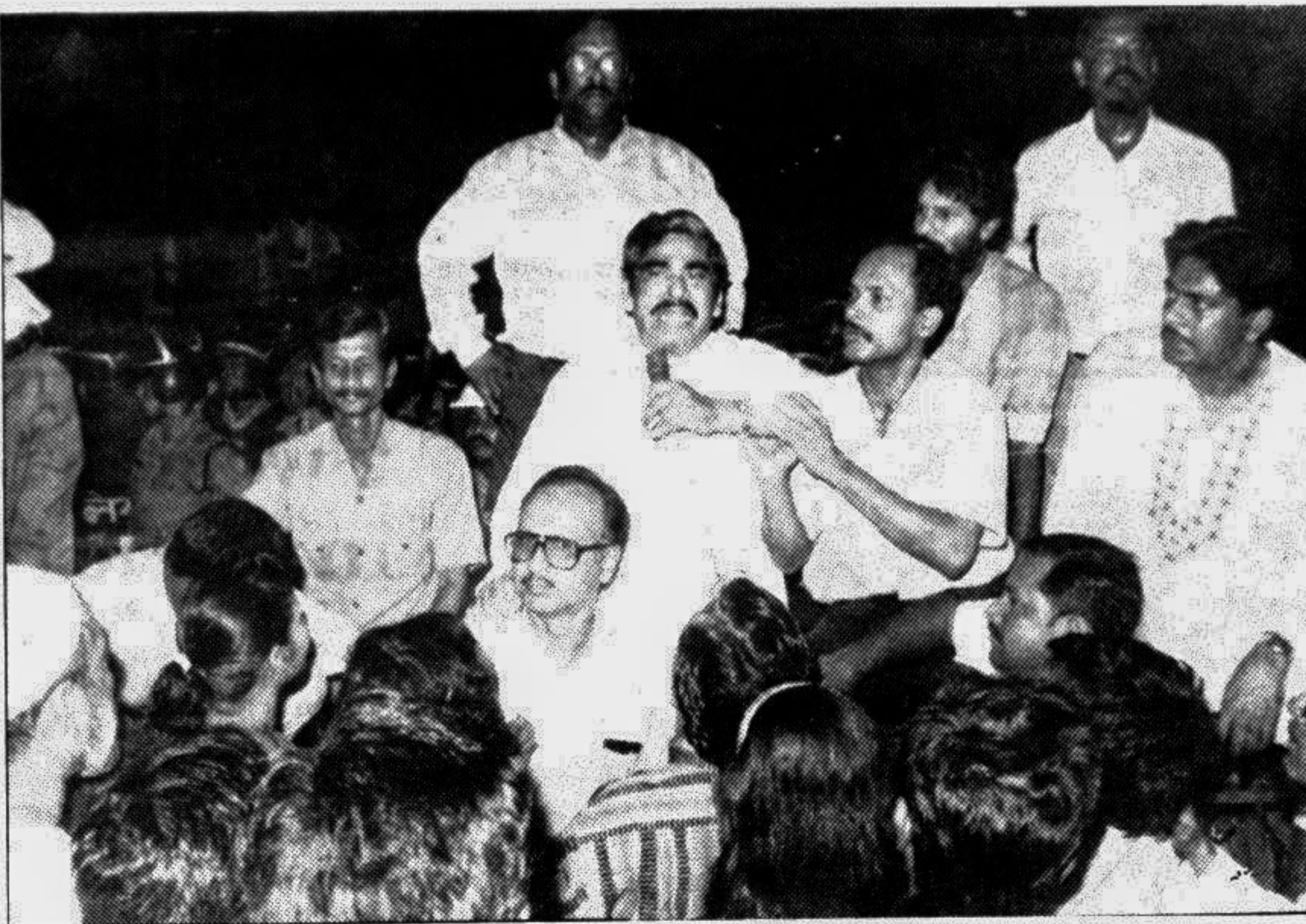
Dhaka City Awami League president and City Corporation Mayor Mohammad Hanif and general secretary and State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, in a joint statement congratulated the Prime Minister for her historic announcement in the greater interest of the nation.

International Pen-Pals Club president and secretary general of UNESCO Club Mahabuddin Chowdhury said the prime minister's decision will help increase foreign investment in the country.

Chairman of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad Central Command Council Abdul Ahad Chowdhury said hartal not only increases sufferings of the people but also hampers overall development of the country.

General secretary of Jatiya Sramik League Ahsanullah Master said industrial production will increase after implementation of the Prime Minister's move to stop hartal.

Bangladesh Jatiya Ghat Sramik League congratulated the prime minister for her call. President of Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI) Sharif M Afzal Hossain hoped that other political parties will share the same opinion as the Awami League chief regarding hartal.



JP(Z-M) procession was intercepted by police at Bangla Motor when it was proceeding towards the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday. — Star photo



Jamaat-e-Islami marching towards the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday. — Star photo

Police bar dismissed Sindh govt from holding assembly session

KARACHI, Nov 16: Hundreds of armed policemen used water trucks to seal off the assembly building of Sindh province on Monday in an attempt to stop opposition lawmakers from holding a session which the government says is illegal, reports AP.

On the orders of Sindh Governor Moiniddin Haider, police blocked roads to the assembly and did not allow some 54 lawmakers from entering.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government dismissed Sindh government on Oct 30 and said Sindh's governor would rule instead. Sharif said the move was an attempt to stop violence in the port city of Karachi — the capital of Sindh.

The governor in an order issued Sunday bars the provincial assembly speaker from allowed to convene a session of the ousted lawmakers. It was the attempt to convene a session

that led to the police action. Members of the ethnic Mutahida Qami Movement (MQM) and supporters of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) protested in front of the barricades for around three hours. Benazir and MQM are normally rivals, but have united over this issue.

The step is unconstitutional. The government can not stop the assembly from holding a session," said Feroz Sattar, an MQM lawmaker.

The assembly has neither been dissolved or suspended... The constitution does not give power to the (federal) government to stop the assembly from holding its sessions," he said.

The MQM was an ally and a coalition partner of Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League. But it parted ways with Sharif after he accused the party of violence in Karachi and the of assassinating a former Sindh province

governor Hakim Said, who was shot dead on Oct 17.

More than 1,000 people have been killed in violence in Karachi this year.

Sharif's party does not have a majority in the Sindh Assembly and is unable to form a government alone.

The governor's rule effectively places the province under the federal government control, with orders coming from Islamabad.

The MQM is comprised of Urdu speakers who migrated from India at independence from Britain in 1947 and their descendants.

The party is locked in a conflict with its splinter faction known as the MQM (Haqiqi) which broke from the party several years ago.

Sharif's government has vowed to restore peace in the troubled southern city. Pakistan's financial center.

Tk 22 lakh given for rehabilitation of flood victims

SHERPUR, Nov 16: A grant of Tk 22 lakh has been allocated to help repair the flood damaged dwellings of 4,400 affected families here under the post-flood rehabilitation programme, reports UNB.

Official sources said Tk 8.78 lakh has been sanctioned for 1,756 families in Sadar, Tk 4.86 lakh for 972 families in Nalitabari, Tk 3.86 lakh for 772 families in Nakla, Tk 2.45 lakh for 490 families in Jhenagati and Tk 2.05 lakh for 410 families in Sribardi thanas. Under the programme, each family will receive Tk 500 as grant.

The Thana Committees led by TNOs will scrutinise the list of the flood-affected families prepared by the union level Relief and Disaster Management Committee for the final approval of the Zila Committee led by the Deputy Commissioner.

Chinese govt to fund bridge over River Gabkhan

China government has pledged to provide fund for construction of the 5th Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge over the river Gabkhan in Jhalokathi district, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to lay the foundation stone of the bridge in January next, said an official handout.

A five-member team of engineers recently visited China and got approval of the primary design of the bridge.

The estimated cost of the 918-metre-long and 10-metre-wide friendship bridge has been fixed at Tk 78.61 crore. Of that amount, China will provide Tk 49.54 crore as grant.

Meanwhile, the construction work of Shikarpur and Doarika bridges on Barisal-Faridpur highway will begin soon.

3 kidnapped girls rescued

RANGAMATI, Nov 16: Rangamati Kotwali police rescued three teenage girls yesterday from a village in Mirsarai thana of the district, reports BSS.

The girls were reportedly abducted from Garjantali of the town on November 12. Police also arrested two person — Mizan and Shamsul Alam.

Police raided Adani village and rescued the girls after a case was lodged by their father.

US envoy calls on Nasim

US ambassador to Bangladesh, John C Holzman met Post and Tele-communications Minister Mohammad Nasim at his secretariat office yesterday, reports BSS.

During the meeting they discussed matters of mutual interest and exchanged views on different international issues.

RU convocation Nov 29

RAJSHAHI, Nov 16: Rajshahi University is going to hold its 7th convocation, the first after the country's independence, on November 29, reports UNB.

The 6th convocation was held in 1970. The then East Pakistan Governor and Chancellor of the University Admiral SM Ahsan attended it as chief guest.

The upcoming convocation has created much enthusiasm in the highest educational institution in the country's northern region.

President and Chancellor of Rajshahi University Shahabuddin Ahmed will attend the convocation as chief guest.

Only the Masters degree holders from 1969 to 1990 period and PHD holders up to September 1998 will be awarded certificates in the convocation.

University sources said some 52,000 students got Masters and PHD degrees from the university during the period. Of them, 985 persons have registered their names for the convocation.

The university authorities formed 12 sub-committees to hold the convocation smoothly.

Seminar told

Living standard of rural population has not improved

The living standard of the rural population of the country has not improved despite the increased flow of loans to the countryside, an economist said yesterday, reports APB.

Dr Azizur Rahman of the Department of Finance and Banking of Dhaka University said this in his keynote paper at a seminar on issues relating to rural credit at Bangladesh Bank auditorium.

The DU professor called upon the banks and NGOs operating in rural areas to work for the overall uplift of the teeming millions in villages and shun the tendency of highlighting success rates in loan recovery.

Prof Rahman suggested formation of regional institutions to finance farming activities in the countryside.

The seminar was organised by the Training Academy of the Bank under its Executive Development Programme.

Senior officials of the Bangladesh Bank and commercial banks took part in the discussion.

Political parties urged not to call hartals during int'l fair

CHITTAGONG, Nov 16: President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry Kamaluddin Ahmed today urged all political parties not to call for any hartals in Chittagong till December 5 next, reports BSS.

He made the call only days before the international fair begins on November 20.

In separate messages sent to the chiefs of all political parties in Chittagong today, chamber president said the fortnight long International Trade Fair (technology exposition), to be held at railway pologround here, will draw as many as 330 stalls and 20 pavilions of different local and foreign companies.

India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Malaysia will take part in the fair. Moreover, a good number of foreign investors and entrepreneurs will visit the fair, being held annually in the port city for the last seven years, Kamaluddin Ahmed said.

Chamber president said the significance of this fair bears great importance because the fair contributes immensely to the overall economic development.

Ex-director of EPB dies in road accident

Syed Dalil Uddin Ahmed, former Director of the Export Promotion Bureau and Income Tax Collector, died after a tragic road accident yesterday morning. He was 68, reports UNB.

He was hit by a private car at 6:30 am when he was on his regular morning walk near the Crescent Lake at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

He was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at 9 am.

Dalil Uddin Ahmed left behind two sons, a daughter, wife and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

His namaj-e-janaza will be held at 9 am today at Green Corner Jam Mosque.

He will be laid to rest at his family graveyard at Quepara in Raozan, Chittagong.

Obituary

Zamatunnessa Khanam, wife of late Golam Ali Khan died of old age complications yesterday afternoon. She was 85, reports BSS.

She had suffered a stroke recently, family sources said. General secretary of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, is one of her two surviving daughters. Zamatunnessa will be buried today at her village home in Netrakona.

Qulkhwani

The qulkhwani of Haji Zane Alam, an eminent businessman of Moulvibazar, will be held after Asr prayers today at his 40 Nabipur lane residence in Hazaribagh, reports UNB.

He died on Saturday at Combined Medical Hospital (CMS).

10,000 extrajudicial executions, kidnappings in Algeria since '94

ALGIERS, Nov 16: Nearly 10,000 cases of 'extrajudicial executions and kidnappings' were recorded in western Algeria since 1994 and their files submitted to Amnesty International human rights monitor Abdennour Ali Yahia said today, reports AFP.

In an interview with the daily Le Jeune Independent, the Lawyer and head of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (Laddh) charged that some of those responsible for massacres in Relizane, western Algeria, "have been identified but remain unpunished."

He was referring to two regional mayors who were arrested last summer for organising "death squads."

"Victims who escaped have identified them by name but no

one, particularly judicial authorities, have lifted a finger. Families and survivors have testified after recognising the attackers, and the League is in possession of their declarations," Ali Yahia added.

Speaking about the "disappeared," a term which designates those from whom their families have not heard since being arrested by security forces, he estimated at 18,000 the number of cases recorded by the League.

The Algerian interior minister affirmed in early October that 1,735 cases of people disappearing had been declared by their families a month after the setting up of official organisations to deal with the question.

Among the missing, 212 are sought by authorities for "breaking the law," and 140

cases had been investigated "without success."

Their files were transmitted to the justice department. "Reception offices" have been established in all wilayate (Prefectures) to receive complaints by families and to identify those who have disappeared.

The issue has damaged relations between the Algerian government and non-governmental organisations that deal with human rights, as well as with political parties such as the Socialist Forces Front (SFF) or the Workers' Party (PT), who favour dialogue with the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

These parties and the NGOs have also changed the security forces with "Kidnapping" thousands of people.

Rajendra University College election: BCL bags 14 seats, JCD 7

FARIDPUR, Nov 16: Ruling party-backed Chhatra League won the Government Rajendra University College Students Union election today, bagging 14 seats, reports UNB.

In the voting, held amid tight security, opposition BNP's student wing, Jatiyatibadi Chhatra Dal, clinched the two important posts of VP and GS among the remaining 7 seats they got.

Jasimuddin Mridha Jasim and Chowdhury Sabir Hossain Sohag were elected VP and GS respectively.

66 mills under Industries Ministry

The total number of mills and factories under the Industries Ministry in the public sector is 66 at present, parliament was told yesterday, reports UNB.

Of these, 21 are under Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC), 22 under Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC) and 23 under the Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation (BSFIC).

Replying to a question of Sarwar Jamal Nizam, Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed said the total manpower of the mills and factories are 20,826. Among them, 5,570 are officers and 15,256 employees.

2 held with arms in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Nov 16: Two people were arrested and arms and ammunition recovered from Kulshtinaya area in Panchhat thana of the port city early this morning, reports APB.

The seized arms include a DBBL gun, two Sikander brand guns, one locally-made LG, one kirich and 70 rounds of bullets. Acting on a tip-off, a team led by Assistant Commissioner of DB police Mia Lufar Rahman raided a house in the Kulshtinaya area and caught Pasha Mia and Mohammad Hiron with the arms.

Police said, the two were professional criminals wanted in connection with various cases.

A case was filed with Panchlaish thana.

3 commit suicide, another killed in Pabna

PABNA, Nov 16: Three people allegedly committed suicide and another was killed at various places in the district on Sunday night and this morning, reports UNB.

Mukhter Hossain, 25, was found dead at a nearby sugarcane field at his village, Nalda in Alghoria thana this morning.

Mukhter, an army constable, came to the village to testify in a rape case.

Police arrested four people — Montaz, Joyal, Sofia and Nurul Islam — in this connection.

Mousumi Kabir Swapna, 22, a student of degree class and resident of Gopalpur area in the district town, allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from ceiling fan Sunday night.

A young housewife Shantana, wife of Ananda Sarker at Lamimura village in Sadar thana, allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself over family feud.

An old man Manik Pramannik, 90, of Jhaodanga in Sadar thana also allegedly committed suicide.

BCL sweeps elections in 2 colleges

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 16: Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student front of ruling Awami League, swept the elections to the students' unions of two colleges in the district Sunday, reports APB.

Abir Hossain and Shamul Haque Baki have been elected vice-president and general secretary, respectively, of Shahjadpur Government College Students Union.

The BCL panel bagged 18 out of 20 posts of the executive committee.

The posts of social welfare secretary and assistant social welfare secretary were won by JSD-supported Chhatra League and BNP-backed Jatiyatibadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) respectively.

In the election of the Students Union of Akbar Ali Government College of Jilapara, the BCL captured all the executive positions. The newly-elected VP and GS of the student body of the college are Ariful Islam Uzzal and Shah Alam.

The JCD alleged that both the elections were rigged.

Time wasted at JS

From Page 1 may, with the previous permission of the Speaker, call the attention of a Minister to any matter of urgent public importance and the Minister may make a brief statement or ask for time to make a statement at a later hour or date.

Besides, the rule obliges the minister concerned to give a reply to the MP giving the notice and allows the MP to ask a question on the minister's reply.

However, Deputy Speaker Abdul Hanid who was in the Chair sounded a little naive in this regard.

"I have not really seen the notice earlier. One hundred and thirty eight lines seem to be very big. We should save time," said the Chair and asked Akhtaruzzaman to read out 'three/four lines' of the notice.

"Rest of the notice would be read out in the House, while the entire notice would go to the proceedings," Akhtaruzzaman rather reminded the Chair that it was the Deputy Speaker himself who had earlier announced in the House that he had accepted, following scrutiny, a couple of notices including the present one. "So, now you cannot just claim that you haven't seen it earlier."

Then came Treasury bench whip Abdus Shahid. "The opposition MPs' notice appears to be a thesis. If he read it out in the House, it would appear that he was teaching us. This cannot be allowed."

Salfur Rahman of BNP who seldom takes part in such controversial debates seemed really agitated. "This is unprecedented that a notice given, and accepted as well, under Rule 71 has been rejected later. You cannot say that the parliament secretary has not applied its mind in scrutinising the notices, especially when you have accepted the notice."

He demanded that the MP be allowed to read out the notice. "The proceedings of the House must progress in accordance with the rules."

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad took the floor to observe that the problems prevalent in the police administration could not come under the call attention notices. "The MP should not read out the no-

tice, it may be deemed to have been read out," the minister said.

Former Speaker and BNP MP Shaikh Razzak Ali appeared at this stage. "Things are being made complicated unnecessarily. Since the notice has been included in the Order of the Day, one has only to presume that you have checked it and you have consciously accepted it," he told the Chair. The former Speaker demanded that the Chair allow Akhtaruzzaman to read out the notice.

Then Commerce and Industries Minister took floor to say that the controversy was unnecessary. "You have already given a ruling that the BNP legislator would read out a few lines of his notice and rest of it would be considered to be deemed to have been read out."

This time Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, a former BNP minister, was on his feet. "It is funny that a debate is being continued in the name of saving time. Had there been no debate on it, by now the member could have read out the notice at least twice."

He also observed that it could not be an argument that an MP would not be allowed to read out a notice in accordance with the rules only because the notice is a long one. "Can we say that the budget speech be should not be read out, arguing it would save time?"

Finally, after half an hour, the Chair asked the BNP legislator to read out a part of his notice. "Rest of the notice will be deemed to have been read out," Deputy Speaker gave the ruling.

Akhtaruzzaman did accordingly. But before he started reading, the BNP legislator said: "The rural people who cannot read newspapers, but listen to the radio are being deprived of the content of the notice by the ruling."

Commenting on the notice, Home Minister Rafiqul Islam assured the BNP lawmaker that he would form a high-powered committee to finalise the ministry's master plan to reform the police administration, while the Opposition MPs suggestions would be sent to the committee for due consideration.

JP candidate for Pabna-2 by-polls

Jatiya Party has nominated Sajjad Hossain Bachchu to contest the December 12 by-election to Pabna-2 constituency, reports UNB.

The selection was made at a meeting of JP Parliamentary Board with party chief HM Ershad in the chair yesterday, said a press release.

Five nomination seekers were interviewed at the meeting.

Raihati Bridge closes for repairs

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 16: Raihati Bridge on the 69th kilometre point on the Nagarbari-Bogra highway will remain closed to traffic from 10 pm to 8 am tomorrow for repairs, reports UNB.

Heavy vehicles, including trucks and buses may use the Singra-Natore-Pabna-Sirajganj route, and light vehicles, including cars, minibuses and jeeps, the Sherpur-Dhunat-Kazipur-Sirajganj route.

One robbed of Tk 2 lakh

KHULNA, Nov 16: Muggers snatched Tk 2 lakh from the cashier of Panchika Manobik Unnyan Kendra from in front of its Khulna branch office at Khanjahan Ali road today, reports UNB.

Police said that the robbers swooped on cashier Brajendra Kishore Roy at about 3 pm while he was going to deposit the money at Agrani Bank of Khanjahan Ali road.

The muggers left the scene in a rickshaw after exploding crackers.

A case was filed with the local police.

3 JCD leaders held in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 16: Police arrested three Jatiyatibadi Chhatra Dal leaders from Diradhanga and Dattabari areas of the town early today, reports APB.

The arrested are members of JCD district, thana and town committees — Shaiful Islam Zinnah, Selim Mahmud and Mehdi Hassan Munna.

They have been sent to jail hajat, police said.

District committee president of JCD Najmul Hasan Rana and general secretary Rashedul Hasan Ranjan, in a statement, demanded unconditional release of the arrested.

KNM incurs Tk 40 cr loss

Nearly 48,000 metric tons annual capacity Khulna Newsprint Mills, with the ability to meet the demand of the country's newspaper industry, incurred a loss of Tk 40.63 crore during the 1997-98 fiscal year, reports UNB.

The mills can be profitable if all its units are able to operate, Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed said replying to Kazi Sirajul Islam (AL-Faridpur) during question hour in Parliament yesterday.

At present, only one of the three units of the state-owned KNM is on operation. The present manpower strength of the mills is 1,994.

Tofail Ahmed told parliament that the government has a