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DSE polls stayed

By M Shamsur Rahman

A court yesterday stayed the December 17 election of the Dhaka Stock Exchange following filing of a suit by a DSE Council Member against the decision of its Election Council and the Election Appeal Board.

The Fifth Sessions Judge's court also directed the Election Council to stop all election preparations.

Council member Kazi Feroz Rashid on Thursday sued the DSE, its Chairman, Chairman of the Election Council along with two members and Chairman of the Appeal Board along with two members.

The court yesterday stayed all election preparations until hearing of injunctions and directed the defendants to "maintain status quo."

The Election Council of the bourse had earlier decided to allow Rakibur Rahman to continue as a member of the DSE Council for another term although he was "out" following an open lottery.

The lottery became inevitable as none of the councilors volunteered to withdraw.

According to new election rules adopted late last year, four of the 12 elected councillors are to retire every year. The vacant posts are to be filled through direct election. There are provisions for lottery in case none volunteers to retire.

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BNP, allies to observe mass hunger strike today

BNP and its allies will observe a mass hunger strike for eight hours from 9 am today to protest price hike of essentials, lawlessness and persecution of opposition activists, reports UNB.

The mass hunger strike at Paltan Maidan will be led by BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia.

The hunger strike is also to protest increase of gas price, imposition of fresh tax of Tk 300 crore, rape incidents by 'BCL members' at Jahangirnagar Market, maldistribution of VGF cards, irregularities, corruption, attack on opposition rallies, arrest and harassment of opposition leaders and workers by implicating them in "false" cases.

BNP sources said Khaleda Zia is likely to announce a mass contact programme through railway and road across the country to drum up support for mid-term election.

It was learnt that Jamaat-e-Islami will not take part in the mass hunger strike but it will express solidarity with the programme.

Pabna by-polls Police prepare list of 684 'terrorists' in nine thanas

PABNA, Dec 1: Local police has prepared a list of 684 'terrorists' in nine thanas of the district for arrest to ensure fair polling in Pabna-2 constituency, reports UNB.

Official sources said copies of the list had already been sent to the Home Ministry, Election Commission and authorities concerned.

Meanwhile, police in separate drives arrested 150 people from different thanas of the district.

Of the listed people, 174 were in Sadar thana, 373 in Ishurdi, 24 in Sathiya, nine each in Sujanagar and Chatmohar, 10 each in Aitghoria and Bhangura, 11 in Faridpur and 64 in Bera thanas.

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The main entrance to the Ahsan Manzil, the pink palace of the Nawabs of Dhaka on the eastern bank of the Buriganga, remains shut, leaving its approaches to the vendors. The 19th century marvel of Indo-Mughal and European architecture face encroachment from all and sundry — the vendors, merchants and touts. The government spent Tk 14 crore in two phases from 1986 to 1994. But the palace with a museum is losing its shine. Faulty repair is threatening its structure, and a planned market at its precinct by certain elements is likely to deal a final blow to the archaeological site.

— Star photo by A K M Mohsin

First anniversary of CHT accord today Discontent brews but rallies to be peaceful

By Special Correspondent

The first anniversary of signing of the historic Chittagong Hill Tracts peace accord will be observed today by different organisations, with the PCJSS having a note of discontent and the Awami League marking it as a success of the government.

BNP-backed Sarbadaliya Okkya Parishad, a forum of Bangladeshi settlers, will observe "protest day" today against the accord.

Although the three groups have announced separate programmes to observe the day, they will remain careful not to interrupt each others' rallies and demonstrations, sources said. Even the Awami League is avoiding a rally at Rangamati where the PCJSS (Parbatty Chittagong Jana Sanghati Samity) is holding a rally at local stadium at 1 p.m. Awami League is holding its rally at the Town Hall at 10 a.m.

The CHT peace accord is the result of 25 formal meetings between the PCJSS and the government — six during Awami League rule, 13 during the rule of its predecessor BNP and six during the regime of General Ershad who opened formal talks in October 21, 1988.

The grounds for formal meetings between the military and the PCJSS were laid in 1979-80 through informal contacts and secret parleys.

The accord was signed on December 2, 1997 between the PCJSS led by Jyotirindriyo Bodhipriyo Larma alias Shantu Larma and the National Committee on CHT, headed by its

convener and Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Abul Hasnat Abdullah.

The signing took place at the International Conference Centre in presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, members of her Cabinet and other dignitaries.

But the agreement is yet to be fully implemented because of a discord between the government and the PCJSS over nomination of three members from the Bangladeshi community in the Interim Regional Council (IRC), assigned to oversee local government, development work and law and order in the three hill districts.

Shantu Larma declined to take charge of the RC as its first chairman, nominated by the government. He also publicly accused the government of floating its "verbal" understanding with the PCJSS.

The government however denied the claim of Shantu Larma that there was any "secret deal" between the two sides.

See Page 12 Col 7

The AIDS Awareness Forum (AAF) brought out a colourful procession in the city yesterday marking the World AIDS Day.

— Star photo

AL leaders will have to stand public trial for signing accord: BNP

Opposition BNP said ruling party leaders would have to stand public trial for signing the "anti-state" accord with the Shantibahini, reports UNB.

Party Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan on the eve of the first anniversary of CHT peace accord in a statement yesterday said, December 2 is a black day as the government, on this day in 1997, signed such an accord which is contrary to the Constitution.

Bhuiyan alleged the accord created discriminations among the tribal and non-tribal inhabitants of the hill region. "The nation has rejected the black accord by launching Long March, hartal and demonstrations," he said.

The BNP leader said one party to the "black" accord is now pressing for implementation of the secret deal apart from the written one.

"But the government remained mysteriously silent on this unwritten agreement," he said. It is clear that the "one tenth of the country's territory will be ceded from the mainland if the accord is implemented", he added.

The BNP secretary general said fall of the government would have to be expedited through mass movement to protect the country's integrity and sovereignty.

Don't spoil them, urges PM Power mongers supply youths with arms

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government has made special efforts to turn the youth forces into a valuable human resource, giving utmost importance on youth development in national uplift planning, reports UNB.

"We don't want to spoil the youths by supplying firearms or by offering the scope to earn illegal money ... we want to groom the youths as worthy citizens in a healthy manner," she said while inaugurating a National Youth Festival at Osmany Memorial Hall in the morning.

The Youth and Sports Ministry organised the week-long festival with this year's theme Skilled Youth Force: Self-Reliant Economy.

The promising youths were supplied with arms and thrown to the world of terrorism, she said, adding that this was done deliberately by the power mongers.

The Prime Minister said the usurpers knew that it would be difficult to cling to power if moral values in the youths could not be destroyed. Not only that, the anti-liberation forces also tried to distort the na-

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AL politics in Chittagong Arch rivals under the same tent!

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Dec 1: Intra-party rivalry in Chittagong unit of Awami League has taken a dramatic turn with a reconciliation between Mayor Mohiuddin Chowdhury and his once arch rival here Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury who is also a central leader of the party, insiders said.

Mohiuddin Chowdhury, who is general secretary of Chittagong city AL, and his rivals were engaged in a bitter race for long to establish domination in city politics.

Mohiuddin Chowdhury, who is general secretary of Chittagong city AL, and his rivals were engaged in a bitter race for long to establish domination in city politics.

During his absence from the country, Akhtaruzzaman also lost control of the student front led by former BCL central leader from Chittagong AJM Nasir due to difference of opinion, sources said.

Nasir later tried to emerge as another minister, Mosharraf Hossain, is reportedly backing Nasir.

Akhtaruzzaman is also reportedly trying to obtain release of a BCL faction leader arrested recently, who is on the list of home ministry as a terrorist, sources said.

Even he is also trying to obtain release of Shirib-backed Nasir Bahini leader Nasir for drawing him in his favour, the sources added.

Meanwhile, AJM Nasir is also lobbying to secure Awami League nomination to contest the next mayor election here.

Countrywide transport strike from today

The Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation (BRTWF) has called a countrywide strike for an indefinite period to press home their 11-point demand from today, reports UNB.

"We have been compelled to call the strike as the government did not pay heed to our demands," BRTWF president M General Islam told a press conference yesterday.

Bus, minibus, truck, tank lorry, taxi, micro-bus, autorickshaw and tempo will come under the purview of the strike, he said.

The demands include stopping the move for banning tempo and auto-rickshaw, security of transport workers in the hill tracts, easy issuance of driving licence, stern action against illegal toll collection, stopping requisition of vehicles by the government without due payment, suspension of leasing out ports including Chittagong, Mongla and Benapole in the name of modernisation and expansion.

Islam also demanded fulfilment of the demands of the regional committees of the Federation.

Slum allegedly set afire at Kamalapur

By Staff Correspondent

At least 10 people were injured and about 2500 rendered shelterless as a gang of hoodlums allegedly set fire to a slum near the Inland Container Depot (ICD) at Kamalapur in the city in the early hours of Tuesday, police said.

The fire, lasting over an hour from 1:00 am, razed to the ground about 500 shanties at Tikkapara slum.

The injured including a woman were treated at local clinics.

The slum dwellers alleged that the ICD authorities which own the slum site were desperately trying to evict them for the last few days.

The ICD authorities could not be contacted for their comment.

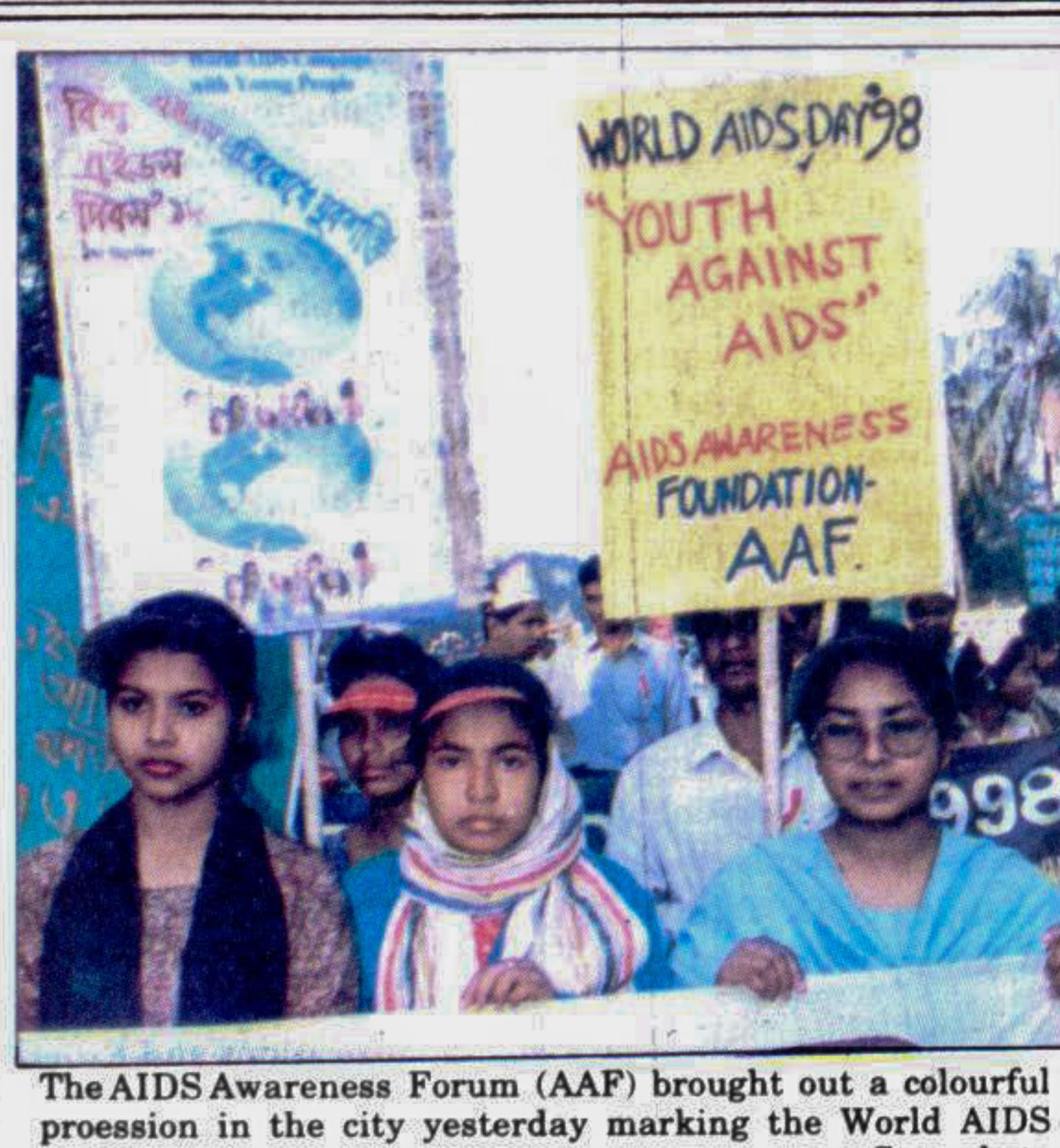
Police quoting the FIR filed in this regard said some hoodlums first sprayed petrol and then set fire to the shanties. "All the 473 shanties were gutted in the blaze."

Fire brigade sources, however, said about 400 shanties were gutted.

Noor Islam, owner of a grocery in the locality, lodged the FIR with Sabujbagh thana accusing a gang — Khokon, Raza, Tapan and their accomplices.

ASI Farid Ahmed, who was on patrol in the area, told The Daily Star yesterday that he had seen the flame at the middle of the slum and immediately informed fire service control room at about 1:00 am. He, however, did not see anyone near by.

Being informed by the control room fire fighters arrived at the spot at 1:19 am and doused the blaze at 2:15 am, he added.



Interns of eight medical colleges on strike

By DMC Correspondent

The interns of the eight government medical college hospitals in the country yesterday began a 72-hour work stoppage, according to a press release of the Young Doctors' Movement Council.

The YDMC had earlier announced the agitation programme to press home its six-point demand including doubling of their remuneration.

Interns at Dhaka Medical College Hospital brought out a procession in the morning and later submitted a memorandum to the principal of the college.

The young doctors at private clinics wore black badges.

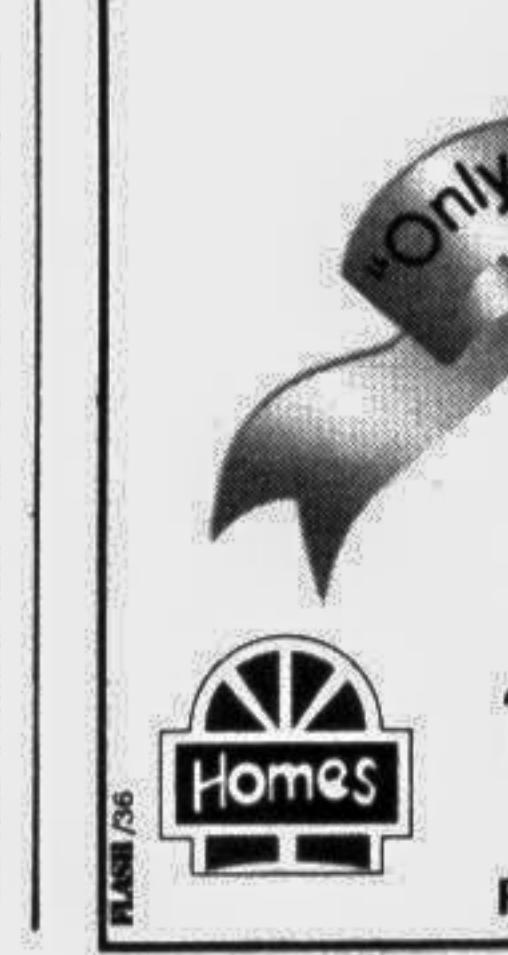
Normal activities at the hospitals were badly affected due to the work stoppage. Emergency squads were, however, working at the hospitals, YDMC said.

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Freezer only for VVIPs, not commoners

By Staff Correspondent

the freezer would be shifted to the emergency wing within half an hour.

The minister was generous enough to