

FedEx

Federal Express

The World On Time

SIGNED, SEALED & DELIVERED

From documents to packages, FedEx delivers peace of mind reliably to over 212 countries worldwide. Our integrated network of 590 planes, 38,500 vehicles and 1,37,000 people, promises smooth delivery every step of the way. We can even advise you on the status of your shipments; thanks to our unique computerised global tracking system. So the next time you have got to send a package, relax - call your FedEx agent BANEX to deliver your package hassle-free - on time - to your satisfaction.

For more information call Dhaka, Tel: 9565114, 9883927, 9130647, 894213, 808803, 9345261 DEPT 9338931 Chittagong, Tel: (031) 712127, CEPZ (031) 740108, Khulna, Tel: (041) 725008, N.Sany, Tel: 9714336

Ideal gift for any occasion.

Installation facility available only for purchases above Tk. 5,000

Transcom Electronics Limited

Official licensee of Philips Electronics N.V. for lighting products, radio and TV sets

Dhaka: 815307-10, 819625-9 Ctg: 716353, 723578

Khulna: 723034, Bogra: 6215



Let's make things better

PHILIPS

City Corpn polls

S M Rab AL candidate for KCC mayor

KHULNA, Dec 9: S M Rab, who joined Awami League barely two months back deserting Jatiya Party, has been nominated as the ruling party candidate for mayor of Khulna in the upcoming City Corporation elections, reports UNB.

Party sources said, Khulna city Awami League today nominated him at its extended meeting held at the Circuit House with party leader Adv. Montuul Islam in the chair. State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Talukder Abdul Khaleque and ruling party MP Sheikh Helaluddin were also present in the meeting.

Vandals

From Page 1

sleepy villages in Bera and Sujannagar thanas. The ministers promised a heavy train if their candidate wins, and the Leader of the Opposition warned of "serious consequences" if her nominee lost "due to manipulations".

What would have otherwise been one of the lacklustre by-elections following the death of AL legislator Tazfuddin Ahmed who won the June 12, 1996 general elections by a margin of 1500 ballots, the voting for the vacant seat brought eyes across the nation riveted on its outcome.

Over 100 MPs from the two parties backed by their big guns took on their respective campaign trails, rumbling fire and spewing venom against each other that left everyone wondering on the outcome and watching the next move by the opponents.

Khaleda Zia, who joined the campaign on Monday, renewed her warnings, saying, "It would be the last of the government's elections if they try to tailor the results. We shall launch such an agitation that it (government) would not be able to find its way for the retreat."

Awami League heavyweights — Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed, Public Works and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim, State Minister for Information Abu Sayeed, State Minister for Sports Obaidul Quader — promised that the two thanas would receive all the attention they deserve if their candidate wins.

"It's a reality that the Awami League is in power. So our candidate A K Khandaker would have access to the Prime Minister to get the development programmes approved," a minister told rallies soliciting support for the diminutive Liberation War hero and former Air Chief.

"Before he (Tazfuddin) expired, a cheque for Tk 2.50 lakh was ready for sports development. But our leader (Prime Minister) forbade me to give it before the polls. It would be given the day after the polls," Youth and Sports Minister Quader said a campaign meeting at Sujannagar thana sadar Tuesday evening.

"Why could A K Khandaker be the best bet? Because he can access the Telecommunications Minister for telephones, the Industries Minister for setting up industries, LGED Minister for bridges and culverts etc," Mohammad Nasim said.

Tofail Ahmed dismissed BNP's allegations of terror by his party and dubbed the opposition party as one of terrorists and plunderers and sought vote for taking the development process ahead.

Hours earlier, Khaleda Zia followed by dozens of vehicles of supporters drove past the meeting site after finishing her speech at Dulal school ground, not far from the AL rally earlier in the afternoon where she explained why people should not vote for the ruling party.

As her motorcade rumbled down the dusty road, winding through the flood plains, dotted with summer rice seedlings and vegetables, the partisan mood frayed.

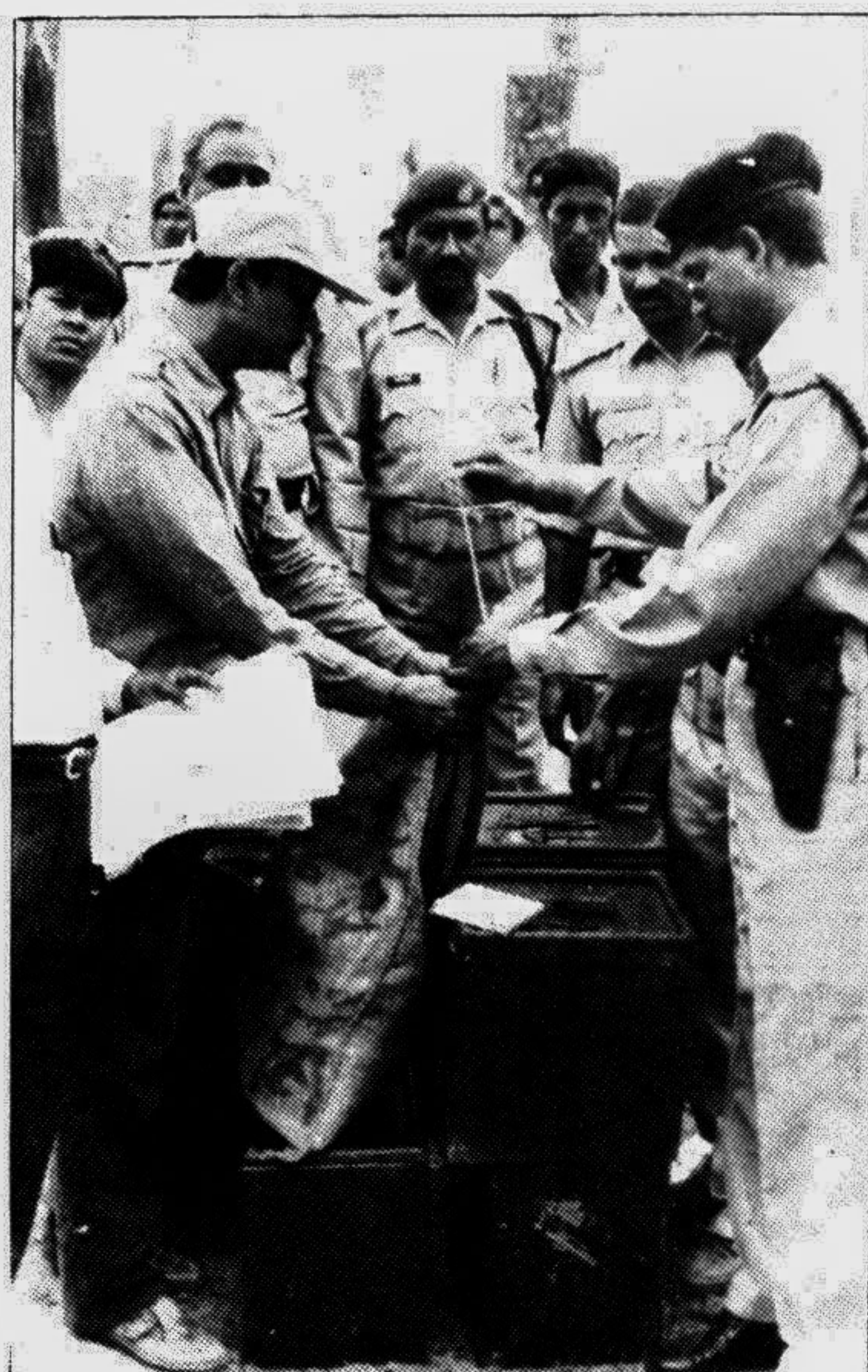
But supporters of the two rival parties — one cheering BNP leader and the other joining the AL rally — crossed each other, chanting slogans. But they didn't lock their horns. They simply kept going, perhaps the numbers on the two sides were equal, keeping a mutual respect for each other.

But on earlier occasions, it was not the same story. Clashes soured the mood last week and on Saturday. When Khaleda's motorcade reached Kachori, the BNP supporters were boiling in anger as she visited the residence of Samad Khan, whose home with some others were ransacked allegedly by rivals after a brawl on Saturday.

BNP has blamed the AL for the attack that the party denied, accusing instead the BNP supporters of attacking its men.

Chief Election Commissioner Abu Hena is set to visit the area on the polling day, with troops and para military BDR and police constabulary fanning around the constituency, whose all 81 centres have been readied.

But Fazlur Rahman Patil, MP, campaign co-ordinator for A K M Selim Reza, said after removal of DC from the job of returning officer the police remains to be sorted out.



Ballot boxes are being readied for the Pabna-2 by-election. —Star photo

Battle of ballots

From Page 1

male — will also be there. Besides, a large number of BDR personnel, members of the armed police and police constables would be on mobile duties.

Even two companies — each 157-strong — have already been deployed in the two thana headquarters under two lieutenant colonels. Some magistrates will be with them.

For the vote, 81 presiding officers, 402 assistant presiding officers and 804 polling officers and 81 magistrates will be on duty. "They would finish duties only when the counting ends," said the returning officer.

However, the field level officials, especially TNOs of the two thanas, do not apprehend any big trouble during the polls. They also believe that there has not been much tension among

the voters, despite such claims by the political parties.

"I do not think there is any tension among the voters now. I am confident that the polls will eventually be held in a peaceful atmosphere," Mokhelesur Rahman, TNO of Sujannagar thana and an assistant returning officer for the by-elections, told The Daily Star.

Mridul Kanti Ghosh, TNO of Bera and another assistant returning officer, echoed him. "There had been no trouble in my thana since announcement of the election schedule, and I am optimistic that the polling would eventually end with a happy note."

However, the BNP and AL are still suspicious of each other that the other side would try to manipulate the election results.

Uproar in Lok Sabha over Rabri's remark

NEW DELHI, Dec 9: Lok Sabha today witnessed uproarious scenes as angry members from BJP and Samata Party clashed with those from RJD and Samajwadi Party over the reported derogatory remarks made yesterday by Bihar chief minister Rabri Devi against the governor at a rally in Patna, reports PTI.

Objecting to raising of an issue related to a state by the BJP, members from Rashtriya Janata Dal and its ally Samajwadi Party trooped into the well.

As they were protesting and arguing with Speaker G M C Balayogi, a few BJP and Samata Party members also rushed to the well and were seen trading charges and counter charges.

Responding to the concern expressed over the 'abusive' language used by Rabri Devi against governor Sunder Singh Bhandari, parliamentary affairs minister Madan Lal Khurana said he would request the home minister to verify the veracity of the speech and inform the members.

Raising the issue during zero hour, Rita Verma (BJP) said that Rabri Devi had crossed all limits of constitutional dignity

by openly abusing the governor at yesterday's rally and it was highly unbecoming of a chief minister to have used derogatory language.

Verma said Rabri Devi had also made derogatory remarks against prime minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and home minister L K Advani at the rally.

President and governors should not be made targets of attack in a democratic set-up, she said.

While BJP member C P Thakur demanded dismissal of Rabri Devi government, Samajwadi Party member Mohan Singh sought recall of the governor, who he alleged, was openly issuing public statements against the RJD government.

RJD member Raghuvansh Prasad Singh said there was no justification for raising the issue in the House.

Samata Party member Prabhunath Singh said the chief minister had openly abused the governor and the government must make a statement on the issue.

RJD and SP members were supported by Republican Party member Ram Das Athwale.

Suharto questioned for four hours

JAKARTA, Dec 9: Protected by a massive security clampdown, former President Suharto was questioned by state prosecutors for four hours today over corruption allegations during his 32-year authoritarian rule, reports AP.

The 77-year-old retired army general, who quit office after student protests and deadly riots six months ago, smiled but looked tired when he emerged from the Jakarta High Attorney's office.

He said he would continue to cooperate with the prosecutors, but he refused to answer reporters' questions about his case.

"No one is above the law, but everybody in Indonesia has the right to legal protection. My case is still being investigated. I have no authorization to answer any questions (from reporters)," he said.

He was accompanied by eight lawyers.

Indonesia's national resources to amass fortunes for himself, his family and a clique of cronies.

He has denied any wrongdoing and has repeatedly scoffed at accusations that he has stashed billions of dollars in overseas bank accounts.

Suharto was questioned today after the government bowed to demands for a new inquiry. Students staged continuous protests for weeks demanding that he be put on trial for corruption and human rights abuses.

Riot police clashed with about 200 students near President BJ Habibie's house today.

Police said 31 students were arrested outside the headquarters of a charitable foundation formerly controlled by Suharto.

Some of the students, who want Suharto put on trial, threw rocks at officers, witnesses said.

The building is about 500 meters away from Habibie's home, which was heavily guarded.

SC rejects Sayedi's petition seeking stay against HC verdict

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday rejected the provisional application of Delwar Hossain Sayedi seeking stay against the High Court verdict which upheld the judgement of the election tribunal, Pirojpur, reports APB.

The tribunal declared void the election of Pirojpur-1 constituency from which Sayedi was elected in June 1996 parliamentary elections.

The petition was moved in the chamber of justice Mohammad Abdur Rouf of the Appellate Division.

On December 7, a High Court Division Bench upon hearing the appeal filed by Sayedi upheld the judgement of the tribunal with additional directive to hold fresh election in Barai Bhunia polling centre in the constituency.

Earlier, on May 19, 1997, the tribunal upon hearing the case filed by Awami League candidate Shudhangshu Shekhar Halder, ordered that the poll was to be held in Garghatia Government Primary School centre after which the results of all the centres would be recounted.

Senior Advocate Khandker Mahbubuddin Ahmed and Barrister Abdur Razzaque moved the application for Sayedi.

Barrister Amir-ul Islam appeared for Shudhangshu Shekhar Halder.

BNP Protests arrest of JCD leaders

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has strongly protested yesterday's arrest of two more JCD leaders in Pabna-2 constituency where by-election is scheduled to be held today.

The government has created a tense situation in the constituency by arresting Sheikh Tuhin and Modasser Hossain Sanju on the eve of the polls, he said in a statement here yesterday.

Bhuiyan alleged that the government continued arrests, harassment, filing of false cases and repression on leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations after the polls schedule was announced.

A tense situation has been created in the entire Bera-Suganagar constituency due to "frequent police raid" on the houses of BNP supporters, he alleged.

The BNP secretary general alleged that the government was using the administration with a motive to influence the polls results because it has become unbalanced sensing defeat. As a result, the Election Commission was compelled to remove the Returning Officer, he said. "The latest arrest of two JCD leaders has unmasked their blue print".

Bhuiyan demanded immediate release of all arrested leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations, including Tuhin and Sanju, and urged the government to refrain from harassing opposition activists.

100 injured as villagers clash over jatra in Pabna

PABNA, Dec 9: About 100 people were injured, four of them critically, when rival villagers clashed over staging of a Jatra in Santhia thana today, reports APB.

Police said the residents of Chesanai and Gagrakhal villages clashed at around noon as a sequel to a previous incident in which a youth of Gagrakhal came under attack while he was going to enjoy a jatra in the neighbouring village.

During the three-hour long trouble the feuding groups fought each other with lethal weapons leaving about 100 injured.

Four critically injured were sent to the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital while some others were admitted to Pabna General Hospital, Santhia and Bera thana health complexes.

Two separate jattras were filed with Santhia police in this connection.

Egyptian plane hijacked

CAIRO, Dec 9: A chartered Egyptian airliner was hijacked yesterday after taking off from Yemen and was ordered to fly to Libya, but police said it landed on the Tunisian island of Jerba, reports AP.

The MD-90 was hijacked after it left San'a, the capital of the Gulf nation of Yemen, en route to the Tunisian capital, Tunis. Apparently none of the passengers or the crew was injured.

The hijackers were refusing to speak to authorities, the police official said. It was unclear whether they were still on the plane.

Six new thanas in city open

Earn people's confidence, PM asks policemen

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the policemen to earn people's confidence by discharging their duties sincerely.

"You have to earn people's confidence through your deeds as you are paid with their money," she said while speaking at a ceremony at the Dhaka Metropolitan Police headquarters here, marking the opening of six new police stations in the city.

She, however, warned that her government would not tolerate "any indifference" towards the people.

Home Minister Rafiqul Islam, Inspector General of Police AYBI, Siddiqi and DMP Commissioner A K M Shamsuddin also spoke on the occasion.

Renewing her government's pledge to curb terrorism, the prime minister said police will in no way be used as a political weapon.

"Police will have to act neutrally, honestly and fearlessly to fight terrorism. Terrorism will have to be uprooted for economic growth in the country."

She alleged that post-'75 governments had used the po-

lice force for political gains.

"Our party will never do so. Ours is a people's party and it does not need to be backed by police," Sheikh Hasina, also president of ruling Awami League, said.

With the opening of six new police stations the total number of thanas under DMP stands at 21.

The new thanas are Shyam-pur, Khilgaon, Badda, Kafrul, Kamrangirchar and Hazaribagh.

Shyam-pur thana covers Gandaria of Sutrapur, Jurain, Alibahar, Shyam-pur, Kadamtali, parts of Dania and Matuail. Officer-in-Charge of the thana is Abdur Razzaq and its telephone number is 239020 DMP-546.

Khilgaon thana comprises Khilgaon, parts of Khilgaon, Ulan, Meradia, Goran, Nandipara, Meradia of Gulshan, Gazaria of Demra, Gournagar, Nasirabad, North and West of Durgapur. Officer-in-Charge of the thana is Ghiasuddin Chowdhury and the telephone number is 409090 DMP-504.

The area of Badda thana is Burura, Dumni, Delana, Mas-

tuli, Patura, Boro and Choto Beraid, Boro Kathalia and Bataara of Gulshan, Badda, Shuttibhola, Starkul, West and East Haradia, Nigur Appald and Joyer Shahara of Cantonment.

Kafrul thana covers Senpara Parbata of Mirpur, Ibrahimpur of Cantonment, Kafrul, Fatemanager, Chhoto Maghbazar, Lalsharai and Damal Court. The thana's Officer-in-Charge is Abdur Rashid Sikder and the telephone number is 9871771 DMP-246.

Kamrangirchar comprises Nawabchah of Lalbagh, Dukuria, Jangalbari, Baghechand Khan, Hasal and Kamrangirchar. The Officer-in-Charge is Sirajul Islam and the telephone number is 509342 DMP-559.

Hazaribagh consists of Kutachur of Mohammadpur, Sutanganj, part of Sarai Jafarabad, Srikhand of Dhamondai, Baraikhali, North and South of Sanatanghar, Chhoto Sikarita, Gazmohol, Barband Kawra, part of Sibpur, Rameshshawri, Hazaribagh of Lalbagh, Enayetganj and Kalunaga. The Officer-in-Charge is Yunus Ali and the telephone number is 509303 DMP-242. DMP Exchange No. 842501.

Dreifuss first female Swiss president

BERN, Dec 9: Swiss politicians today elected Interior Minister Ruth Dreifuss as the country's president for 1999, making her the first woman and first Jew ever to lead the Swiss government, reports AP.

Dreifuss, 58, of the left-of-center Social Democrats, replaces Foreign Minister Flavio Cotti in the largely ceremonial post, which rotates on an annual basis between the seven members of the coalition cabinet.

Hartal

From Page 1

To make the political atmosphere conducive, they called for following steps:

— While the announcement of the Prime Minister and the chief of the Awami League on hartal has been "timely and commendable it is expected that as the ruling party it will visibly demonstrate political tolerance and work to strengthen democratic principles and practices.

— The government will refrain from all types of repressive activities against opposition political parties. However, those who have committed crimes must face the consequences of law, irrespective of their political affiliations.

— The government must allow the administration and police to work freely and without any political interference.

— Radio and Television must highlight the views of the opposition political parties in the same way they broadcast the government's viewpoints on different issues.

— All opposition political parties must make formal announcements that they will avoid hartals for all times to come.

While these were common points, the statement by the 10 added that the Betar and BTB should be made autonomous institutions "at the earliest".

The FBCCI statement added that the political parties must sever links with terrorists and extortionists. "Not only that, they have to take realistic steps in this regard."

The statements expressed concern that the economy was not getting any respite from confrontational politics although challenges of globalisation and market economy were putting increasing pressure on business.

They said confrontational politics had become a threat to the development potential of the country and inexplicable damage had already been caused to the economy by hartal, imposed indiscriminately to press political demands.

The 10 signatories to the other statement (not of FBCCI) were: DCCI President R Maksud Khan, MCCCI President Lalla Rahman Kabir, FICCI President AKM Shamsuddin, BGMEA president Mostafa Golam Qudus, Bangladesh Employers Association president Rokeya Rahman Kabir, BTMA president M Shahjahan, Bangladesh Chha Sangsad chairman AQI Chowdhury, Jute Spinners Association chairman Nazmul Haq, BKMEA president Manjurul Haq, BJMA president Mirza Ali Behrouz Ispahani and Frozen Foods Exporters Association president Golam Mostafa.

Business sources said delays in holding the FBCCI executive committee meeting, which approved the statement, resulted in two statements, instead of the planned one. The 10 released their statement ahead of the FBCCI's as the national chamber office-bearers sat for the meeting in the evening.

But both groups worked on the same draft, which remained almost same.



A Sammilita Nari Samaj cultural team rendered songs on different city streets as part of its programme in observance of Begum Rokeya Day yesterday. —Star photo

Non-tariff barriers

From Page 1

dollars a year while her import stands at about 1,000 million US dollars. The import figure increases depending on rice import.

This year's import will be much higher than last year as rice import increased manifold due to the flood devastation.

Meanwhile, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed urged India to allow duty-free access of Bangladesh goods and services to India on non-reciprocal basis.

Bangladesh imports wide varieties of goods from India and wants to expand export to India as it has trade capacities on many items, he said while talking to Prabhu.

Tofail said with the increase of bilateral trade "we could also speed up the implementation of SAFTA agreement."

The New Delhi official said India will never impose any restriction on export of rice to Bangladesh even there is restriction on export to other countries.

India has resolved the problems on Bangladesh-Nepal transit allowing two routes to make the agreement functioning, the Indian secretary said.

Indian export growth is now minus three per cent, vis-a-vis Bangladesh have achieved a tremendous progress in maintaining export growth, said Prabhu.

After Philippines, Bangladesh is the second country ahead of China in the South and South-East Asia which is maintaining a very good economic condition, including export, he said.

The Commerce and Industries Minister appreciated the Indian gestures and said, "We are grateful to India for its continuous help, especially during the liberation war."

As neighbours, we might have contentious issues, which could be resolved through discussion. He said establishment of mutual trust is imperative for the development of the SAARC countries.

"In this case, we could follow the policies of ASEAN, where they first compensated each other and then decided for joint ventures for mutual development," he said.

Rokeya Padak '98 awarded to Jahanara Imam

The Begum Rokeya Padak '98 was awarded to shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam (posthumous) yesterday for her leadership and contribution towards progress of the womenfolk, reports UNB.

Her younger sister Umme Salma Chisty received the Padak on behalf of Jahanara Imam from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a function in the city.

Jahanara Imam died on June 26, 1994. She became famous for her book 'Ekkattur Dingu', based on the Liberation War. She was mother of valiant freedom fighter Shaif Imam Rumi, who embraced martyrdom during the Liberation War in 1971. Muktiuddher Chetana Bastabayan O Ekkattur Ghatok Dalal Nirml Committee was formed under her leadership in 1992.

Young man 'tortured' to death

By Staff Correspondent

A young man, allegedly tortured in the city's Mirpur area late Tuesday night, died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Golam Hossain, 35, son of one late, Rustam Ali, hospital sources said quoting his relatives. He was a goldsmith.

The sources said that Hossain had gone to his shop at Mirpur on Friday but didn't return home. Local people later found him in a critically injured condition in front of Shah Ali Mazar and sent him to his residence at North Pirerbagh in a rickshaw.

He was sent to the DMCH where he died yesterday morning. The body was sent to the hospital Morgue for autopsy.

The killing was sequel to Hossain's previous enmity with his brother-in-law Humayun Kabir the sources quoted his relatives as claiming. No case was filed.

Computer show

From Page 1

ticipating directly in the event. Apart from the four giants, some 40 foreign companies are taking part in the fair through their local representatives.

Besides, as many as 151 organisations will display their products and services on the huge 100,000 square feet floors of the IDB Bhaban.

Of them, 77 are hardware and 37 software companies, 18 training institutes, seven internet services providers and 12 computer-related publication houses.

Entry fee to the annual show, which the BCS had been organising since 1993, has been fixed at Tk 10 per person.

BNP alleges

From Page 1

sion for the Paltan Maidan venue, BNP has instead decided to organise its week-long programmes in different places of the capital city, he said. The inaugural function will be held at Diploma Engineers' Institute at 3 pm which the party Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to open.

Prof Chowdhury said that the BNP has also sought permission for the venue of the Ramna Batmul for December 15, but the authorities are yet to respond on that.

BNP's week-long Victory Day celebration programme will include discussion meetings, musical soirees and photo exhibitions.

Khaleida

From Page 1

Monno and Amanullah Aman. Advocate Khandaker Masud represented the respondents to the committee.

Senior Vice-President of BNP and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Prof AQM Badruddoza