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BNP to stage demonstrations in city today

By Staff Correspondent

BNP and its front organisations will stage demonstrations in ten areas of the city to protest filing of "false" cases against some 150 leaders and activists of the party for their alleged involvement in Wednesday's bomb explosion that left a constable killed and eight others wounded.

Police filed two cases against BNP men, including BNP MPs MK Anwar, Sadek Hossain Khoka, Amanullah Aman and Nazimuddin Alam with Ramna police station.

According to a BNP press release, the city unit of the party will organise public rallies at Nayabazar, Siddeswar Balurmath, New Market, Mirpur No 10 Square, Jatra Bari, Shampur, Motijheel, Sabujbagh, Badda, Hossain Ali Market and Azampur Amin Complex at Uttara in the afternoon.

BNP Standing Committee members, vice chairmen, national executive committee leaders, and chiefs of front organisations will address the rallies.

Meanwhile, the main opposition party will also hold a public meeting at Paltan Maidan on Tuesday demanding withdrawal of "false" cases against its leaders and activists.

Death of constable: DCC commissioner arrested

By Staff Correspondent

A ward commissioner of Dhaka City Corporation was arrested in the early hours of yesterday for his alleged involvement in the incident of bomb attack on policemen on July 7.

Farhad, a constable of riot police, was killed and eight other policemen were wounded when unidentified miscreants hurled bombs at a police team near Zero Point in the city Wednesday night.

The arrested was identified as Jahiruddin Babul, the commissioner of Ward No. 24 and also a member of national executive committee of BNP. He was arrested from his Khilgaon residence.

With the arrest of Babul, police have so far arrested two persons in connection with the killing of Farhad. Earlier, on Thursday one Samsuzzaman Farhad was arrested from city's Purana Paltan area in connection with the incident.

A subedar of riot police filed a murder case accusing 32 BNP leaders, including Sadek Hossain, on July 10.

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Prayer Timings

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:10	4:15
Johr	12:50	1:25
Asr	4:55	5:05
Maghrib	7:00	7:05
Esha	7:55	8:15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Nobody bothers to Rajuk's appeal 90pc commercial high-rises don't have parking lots

By Morshed Ali Khan

Not a single developer or owner of high-rise commercial buildings in the city has bothered to respond to Rajuk's appeal to comply with relevant laws and have parking facilities on their premises, Rajuk sources said.

In a series of notifications in newspapers recently, Rajuk asked the developers and owners of commercial structures to make provisions for parking. The deadline was June 25.

Rajuk sources said about 90 per cent of all commercial buildings in the city are violating the Building Construction Rules, 1996, by not having parking facilities. Law requires that for every 200 square metre of such construction, 23 square metres of parking space must be kept.

"When the building plan is approved by us, we make sure they have adequate parking facilities, but once the developer constructs, he overlooks the law and builds offices or shops on the space meant for parking," said a top Rajuk official.

Rajuk has identified several hundred such commercial structures and served notices on their owners. An official in the Authorised Section of Rajuk said, before going for action, they serve three notices on an offender.

In case of BEL Tower at Road-1 and 25 others recently built commercial structures at Mirpur Road in Dhanmondi area, Rajuk has served notices and some of those have 'matured' for demolition or other actions, the official said.

Rajuk sources said out of its 50 field level inspectors, only five are qualified to carry out inspection of these buildings and ensure implementation of the relevant laws.

"It is always possible to make small changes in a building and arrange parking facility. In many high-rise commercial buildings, the ground and first floors have to be converted into car park," one source pointed out.



A high-rise building without parking facilities in the city's Shantinagar area. — Star photo

Militants reject Sharif's call to pull out of Kashmir

RAWALPINDI (Pakistan), July 10: A leading militant group that is fighting Indian troops in Kashmir refused to withdraw fighters from the icy mountain peaks today — a day after Pakistan asked the Muslim guerrillas "help resolve" the conflict, reports AP.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met guerrilla leaders Friday, but they rejected his appeal to pull out of Kashmir, according to Ahmed Hamza, a leader of the Al-Badr group told from Rawalpindi, about 20 kilometres from the capital, Islamabad.

"All the mujahideen groups have unanimous position that they won't abandon their posts," he said.

Reuters says, the umbrella organisation for militants today denied reports they had agreed to a Pakistani government appeal to withdraw from the Kargil sector.

The United Jihad Council reaffirms its stand ... that a withdrawal from Kargil would be detrimental to the freedom struggle for Kashmir and that the mujahideen will fight to their last breath to free their

motherland from Indian forces of aggression," a statement said.

Another report adds: Militants may meet on Monday to reply to Pakistan's appeal, the head of one mujahideen group said.

Fazalur Rehman Khalil, leader of the Harkatul Mujahideen, told Reuters today that several of some 15 mujahideen organisations held talks with Nawaz Sharif late on Friday.

He said the mujahideen's umbrella organisation, the United Jihad Council, would probably make its position known after Sharif addresses the national assembly and makes a state broadcast on Monday night.

The Defence Committee of the Cabinet said that Sharif, in talks with US President Bill Clinton, had successfully "internationalised" the 52-year Kashmir dispute and won a pledge of personal interest from the American leader.

"We had the impression that the government had given up everything in Washington, but from the discussion with the prime minister it seems that

what we heard was not all true, the Harkatul leader said.

Other mujahideen leaders declined comment and were said to be consulting each other in various parts of Pakistan and the one third of Kashmir which Islamabad administers.

On Friday, the Pakistani government asked Muslim rebels to help resolve the crisis in Kashmir, but stopped short of urging them to withdraw from the Indian-controlled side of the territory.

Sharif had pledged to US President Bill Clinton on July 4 to withdraw the fighters from Indian Kashmir.

But Al-Badr said Sharif is not in a position to fulfil this promise.

"We don't take dictation ... either from Sharif or Clinton," he said.

"We reject the agreement between Sharif and Clinton which in fact is an effort to bail out India from the Kashmir crisis," he said.

Meanwhile, the chief minister of the Indian state of Kashmir today urged New Delhi to

Resist 'evil design' of BNP & its allies: AL

Ruling Awami League yesterday alleged that BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia and her allies have launched a conspiracy to overthrow the elected government by any means, reports UNB.

"They are trying to take back the country to the process of killing, coup, violence and anarchy when Sheikh Hasina's government has removed longstanding problems and the country is heading towards development," said a resolution of the AL presidium meeting.

The meeting at Awami Foundation office here said Begum Zia's terrorist forces have engaged themselves in killings by calling illegal hartals one after another.

The meeting condemned the killings of police constable Farhad Hossain Khan and the Imam of Islambagh Jame Masjid, Karim Abul Hasem Fakir, in the name of hartal.

The AL presidium called upon the countrymen to come forward and resist the 'evil design' of BNP and its allies for continuing the country's ongoing march towards development.

The meeting with party's acting president and foreign minister Abdus Samad Azad in the chair also urged the people not to be misled by propaganda of reactionary forces about Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to UK.

TU leaders file cases against 9 officials of Ajax, Sonali jute mills

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, July 10: Nine officials including two directors of Sonali and Ajax Jute mills have been accused in two separate cases for allegedly misappropriating of Tk 15 crore from the provident fund of workers and employees.

The cases were filed with Khan-Jahan Ali Thana on Friday. Two leaders of CBA of the two mills are the complainants. They are Mozahar Ali, General Secretary of Ajax Jute Mills CBA and Shahabuddin Ahmed, President of Sonali Jute Mills CBA.

According to police, five officials including Badal Ghose, director of Ajax Jute mills have been named as accused in the FIR for misappropriating of Tk seven crore. Other accused in this case are Douglas Ghose, Habibur Rahman, Capt (Retd) Ziauddin and MN Shaha.

2 accomplices of Shibir cadre Nasir held

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 10: Three alleged criminals were arrested in two separate pre-dawn raids in the city today.

Detective branch of police raided building at Chawkbazar under Kotwali thana and arrested two accomplices of Shibir cadre Nasir.

The arrested were identified as Mohammad Yussuf, 27, and Ziauddin alias Ismail, 28. Both are from Fatikchhari.

Police said, the two were wanted in many cases, including terrorism, extortion and abduction.

In a separate raid, Pahartali thana police arrested a listed terrorist from Abdur Rab Para.

The arrested, identified as Ameer Ahmed, is an accused in several cases filed with the same thana.

Hasina seeks another term to 'institutionalise democracy'

From Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan

LONDON, July 10: "I don't want to remain in power for 20 years. I want to give opportunity to all".

"But we need another term in office to institutionalise democracy, ensure transparency in the government and establish (people's) right to food", Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said while replying to questions at an open discussion for expatriate Bangladeshis at the Toyanbee Hall here yesterday.

Earlier, she presented a keynote paper at Bangabandhu Memorial Lecture '99 at the same venue. The lecture was organised by the All European Bangabandhu Parishad (AEBP), AEBP Chairman Lord Peter Shore, a former British MP presided over the function.

Asked about expatriate Bangladeshis' demand for becoming voters, she said, "You can enlist yourself in the voter

list when you go to the country". Replying to another question from an expatriate Bangladeshi woman she said, "We are aware of the incident of threat by *fatwabazes* to kill sculptor Shamlin Shikder."

The Prime Minister said her government has formulated a policy for development of women. An amount of Tk 25 crore has been allocated in this year's budget for widows and repressed women. "We are also considering enactment of strict laws to stop repression on women", she said.

Speaking at the Bangabandhu Memorial Lecture session, Sheikh Hasina said, "Bangabandhu was an institution, a movement, an upsurge and a tornado."

"He made the Bangladesh realise the richness, glory and diversity of their history, culture and civilisation."

He gave them freedom, a na-

tion state, their identity, and in the process sacrificed his life," she added.

The Prime Minister said the government has taken initiative to set up the office of Ombudsman to ensure transparency in the government.

UNB adds: The Prime Minister in her 90-minute speech recalled the events of Bangabandhu's life and history of independence struggle and march towards democracy.

"Life of Bangabandhu is inseparably linked with the history of Bangladesh," she said adding, Bangabandhu made the people of Bangladesh aware of their rights and achieve independence.

Recalling events from the Language Movement to the Liberation War, Hasina narrated the political struggle of Bangabandhu and his work to build the war ravaged country during

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Use of 'faulty' rig at South Sangu

Petrobangla mysteriously mum

By Sharier Khan

Petrobangla authorities are mysteriously keeping mum about deployment of an untested 25-year old rig in the offshore South Sangu exploratory well by Cairn and Shell.

Earlier, Petrobangla said that it would be very risky to use this rig, specially in South Sangu oil and gas structure. South Sangu well is going to be the country's first 'deep well' exceeding a depth of 4500 metres and having 'over pressure' zones.

"Using a faulty rig may lead to a massive disaster in that area," one source said.

However, other sources said that Shell, the new operator of blocks 15 and 16 which include Sangu and South Sangu areas, was well reputed for its safety measures in drilling operations.

"That is why, Shell has not

started drilling the South Sangu well with this rig," said a former high official of Cairn.

Cairn handed over the operation of blocks 15 and 16 to Shell on July 1. Shell now owns the assets, liabilities and oil and gas exploration work programmes of Cairn.

Before Cairn wound up from Bangladesh, sources alleged, it resorted to various irregularities in an attempt to hand over hurriedly its concerns in Bangladesh to Shell.

It now turned out that the approved budget for South Sangu included unnecessary costs. The budget pursued by Cairn from December last year originally outlined a cost of \$47 million US dollars but it was rejected for "irrational costing". Cairn then pursued a budget of 9.5 million dollars in January. Petrobangla refused

again. But in February, Petrobangla surprisingly approved a budget of 11.67 million dollars.

Sources said that in this budget, the cost of mobilisation and demobilisation of drilling equipment was fixed at 3.1 million dollars. Experts argue that the cost should not exceed one million dollars.

"This budget was passed on a day when attendance at the meeting of Joint Management Committee of Block 16 at Petrobangla was very poor due to a hartal," said an insider. The Director of Mines and Minerals, Petrobangla, played a vital role in the approval of this budget. Ironically, the Director himself had earlier been rejecting Cairn's budget on the ground that it was too high," the insider added.

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Listed terrorists didn't surrender on July 2

From Quazi Amanullah

KHULNA, July 10: None of the armed terrorists listed by police and intelligence agencies surrendered to police in presence of Home Minister Mohammad Nasim on July 2, according to sources here.

Illegal firearms generally used by the terrorists and the arms looted in Khulna city and different areas of the district were also not deposited at the surrender function, held at the Circuit House Maidan, they said.

The sources said that about 95 per cent of those who surrendered are not on the list of intelligence agencies.

There are modern and sophisticated arms in possession of the listed terrorists. But only a few of those were found on display at the function.

The sources said, "terrorist" Abdul Kader, a former activist of Juba League, surrendered to police from the metropolitan area. Kader surrendered along with four arms including one Spanish revolver.

Shailan Biswas of Dumuria surrendered with arms. Biplobi Communist Party has already disowned him as its cadre. He

slaughtered three of his opponents at Daulatpur and five armed cadres of 'Khokha Bahani' at Shalua under Dumuria PS and snatched their arms last year.

He went to India early this year to purchase arms. But he failed as his godfather threatened him not to purchase arms. His godfather is a leader of the ruling party's Daulatpur thana unit who is also absconding.

When asked, Shailan told this correspondent that his life would be insecure if he is released from prison.

Another 'terrorist', Shahid alias 'Hath Kata' Shahid, worked as a toll collector for Digholia thana police. He is known as a notorious terrorist but managed to evade arrest.

The role of Khulna Metropolitan Police in recovering illegal firearms and making the terrorists surrender is being widely criticised, the sources claimed.

Even the most wanted criminal, Ershad Shikder, could not be made to surrender while rumour goes that a section of po-

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Accord with Ctg Port dock workers signed

CHITTAGONG, July 10: An agreement was signed here between the port authorities and dock-workers trade unions today ending a tussle between the two sides for the last two years, reports UNB.

The agreement was reached between Chittagong Port Dock Sramik Trade Unions and Dock Management Board to resolve 51-point demand.

State Minister for Shipping Mozaffar Hossain Chowdhury Maya mediated the agreement, which was signed at the Port Rest House at 6 pm.

Vice-president of Dock Management Board, representatives of Master Stevedores' Association, Stevedore Agent Association and four trade unions of dock workers signed the agreement.

Acting Secretary of Shipping Ministry Abdul Haq, Chittagong Port Authority Chairman Commodore Gofar Rabbani and Joint Labour Director Tobarakullah also signed the agreement.

Following the agreement, the wages of dock workers will be increased by 60 per cent which would increase the total yearly expenditure of the port by Tk 50 crore, said the port sources.

From July 1, the dock workers would get 20 per cent increased wages and 20 per cent house rent.

Student falls from Eden College bldg, hurt

By Staff Correspondent

A student of Eden University College was critically injured when she fell from a college building yesterday afternoon.

The student was identified as Tahera Akter Munira, 24, an MA final year student of Psychology department, police and hospital sources said. She is now under treatment at the Suhrawardi Hospital.

Police, however, could not confirm whether it was an attempt to commit suicide or just an accident. But they said there was a piece of paper in her hand and her address was written on it.

Police and hospital sources said Munira, who resided with her sister at Paikpara in Mirpur, came to the college to attend classes in the morning. Before the incident, she was chatting with her friends for some time.

Teachers and students of the college rushed to the spot and took her to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Munira suffered fractures in her left leg, neck and waist, according to hospital sources. Later, she was shifted to Suhrawardi Hospital.

Buffer stock of seed developed to meet emergencies

By Reaz Ahmad

A seed buffer stock has been built in the country for the first time this year to meet emergency situations like natural calamities.

Official sources said last year's bitter experience of seed shortage because of the floods during the aman season prompted the government to stock seeds at Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC), which is also the implementing agency.

The buffer stock with 200 metric tons (MT) seeds has been developed with paddy seeds of locally improved varieties (LIVs), which can be sowed late in the aman season as a last resort to recoup crop losses due to adverse weather condition early in the season.

Last year, farmers could not recoup crop loss immediately after the worst deluge of the century, as they could not go for late sowing due to scarcity of seeds.

During the aman season, the country needs 90,000 MT paddy seeds. Beginning in early May,

the BADC has so far marketed 6,500 MT seeds of high yielding varieties (HYVs) through its 78 sales centres and 1,235 designated seed dealers. However, rice farmers manage seeds mostly through self-preservation and farmer-to-farmer exchange programmes.

BADC officials did not agree that there is a fear of seed scarcity during the aman season this year. They said there are growing demands for quality seeds but in general sufficient quantity of seeds preserved by the farmers are there.

"The quantum of seeds that we market is meager in terms of percentage, but it has a tremendous impact on overall quality improvement of seeds used in farmers' plots," said an official. He explained that after three or four years seeds preserved by farmers substantially lose quality. "So certified seeds from BADC contribute to keeping their quality intact."

Compared to 4,800 MT seeds marketed in the last aman season.

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The Syedabad bus terminal road in the city is in a deplorable condition with garbage piled up on it. — Star photo