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## Allotment of all 301 Rajuk plots cancelled: Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday announced cancellation of Rajuk's recent allotment of 301 residential plots in Gulshan, Baridhara and Uttara.

She made the announcement at a crowded press conference at

the Ganabhaban on her return from UK after a nine-day visit. When asked if she was aware of the controversy centring the allotment of plots, the prime minister replied, "I am fully aware. The list of all plots stands cancelled."

She said "I do not think there has been any irregularities in the allotment process. But since there have been press criticism and disputes on the issue, I have decided to cancel the list."

Hasina also said journalists

should investigate how Rajuk plots were allotted under the past regimes of Zia, Ershad and Begum Zia.

"Inquiry should also be made as to how many journalists got Rajuk plots and how much money was received by them from Ershad government for construction of buildings."

Asked if any inquiry would be made into the allotment of residential plots which were mostly given to her partymen, she replied, "Since the allotment has been cancelled, there is no need for investigation."

The prime minister said that in the past, plots had been allotted by different governments indiscriminately and illegally since 1957. All the regimes had committed irregularities in allotting plots to their partymen and relatives.

She mentioned that late Kafiluddin Chowdhury as a minister in those days had managed allotment of many plots to his near relatives and said an investigation into this would unveil the nepotism.

Responding to a question if her government would investigate irregularities in plot allotment under the past government, she said,



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina talking to newsmen on her return home from the United Kingdom. — PID photo

## PM's 'no' to UZ city corporation polls under caretaker govt

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has dismissed the Opposition demand for holding the upcoming city corporation and Upazila elections under a caretaker administration, saying the demand is illogical and unrealistic.

"Election of local government bodies can not be held under a caretaker administration and it never happened so. They (the BNP) are now demanding it

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## Rajuk employees to lock chairman's office Sunday

RAJUK Karnachari Sangsad and Officers Welfare Association will put the offices of the chairman and members under lock and key on Sunday, reports UNB.

The decision was announced at a joint rally of the officers and employees of the Rajdhani Karmachari Sangsad yesterday morning in Kartipakha

They also demonstrated inside the RAJUK Bhaban from morning to noon protesting the alleged corruption and irregularities in allotting plots and demanded the immediate removal of those involved.

The Association's leaders said they (the chairman and members) have tarnished the image of the organisation as well as the government through illegal allotment of plots.

RAJUK employees demanded formation of a judicial committee to look into the alleged corruption and irregularities of the chairman and members in allotting plots in Gulshan, Baridhara, Nikunja and Uttara Model Town.

Their demands also include formulation of a permanent policy for allotment of plots, and withdrawal of the show-cause notices served against 10 employees.

## Heroin worth Tk 70 lakh seized, 4 held

By Staff Correspondent

Four people were arrested for possessing 700 grams of heroin worth about Tk 70 lakh from a house in the city's North Kaful area yesterday morning.

Police identified the arrested as Kajuddin, 45, Golam Rabbani, 31, Jahangir, 25, and Mojibur Sakil, 33.

Kaful police said that the said amount of heroin was seized from Kajuddin who went to the house to sell the drug. Police, acting on a tip-off, raided the house and arrested them.

According to police, the three others, arrested in this connection, were also involved in the sale and trafficking of heroin.

The seized drug was examined by the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) and its price was estimated at around Tk 70 lakh.

## Chittagong port workers agitate for pay hike

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 15: Several hundred labourers who work under marine contractors at the jetties, gheraoed the office of Chittagong port for three hours from 12 noon today demanding increase in their wages, port sources said.

The agitating labourers, some wearing 'burial cloth', staged a demonstration in front of the office and exploded cocktails creating panic in the port office area, witnesses said.

They also put up a barricade on the road in front of the port office disrupting traffic, witnesses and police said. Later, police removed the barricade.

The gherao was withdrawn at around 3 pm following an assurance given by the marine contractors to increase the wages, port sources said.

## Bold and decisive move, but it must go further

By Mahfuz Anam

We congratulate Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her prompt and judicious action in scrapping the Rajuk land allotment, which would have greatly damaged the credibility and image of her party. It is to her great credit that she understood the tremendous damage that this action has done to her government, her party and to her personal image and took precipitous action to prevent further damage. Congratulations and thanks.

However, Sheikh Hasina must go further and dig deep as to how this could happen. How could the Rajuk, the works ministry and her own cabinet col-

leagues do such a thing and embarrass her in such a way? Could it be just a coincidence or was it deliberate that the decision was made during her absence. The Prime Minister cannot ignore the fact that the Rajuk's award was published in only ONE newspaper in clear violation of the norm to publish in at least three Bangla and one English newspaper indicates deliberate action to avoid public knowledge. In fact if Prothom Alo did not make a report on the Rajuk advertisement in Banglar Bani the story might just have been missed and the scam might have escaped the

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## Press reports shock PM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said she was shocked and surprised to see press reports that Joy, her only son, who is now studying business administration in Dallas, US, has got married.

She also resented similar reports that claimed that she secretly went to Dallas from London.

"All these are baseless. It seems that these newspapers know about my son what I bring his mother don't know. You please suggest how those newspapers can be punished for carrying such fictitious news," an angry Hasina told newsmen at a press conference at Gana Bhaban on her return from Britain yesterday. "I will go to court over it."

In a lighter vein, the prime minister said, "Now I want my air ticket to Dallas from those

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## EPB official fired for corruption

By Rafiq Hasan

The Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) has dismissed a senior official for allotting textile quota in favour of an exporter violating government rules, sources said.

Begum Gulnazar, research officer at EPB's Chittagong office, was fired on Monday.

She was charged with allotting 7,463 dozens of US textile quota under 341 and 634 category in favour of The Fashion Care of Bangladesh in 1997 when she was serving at the textile cell at Dhaka office as a research officer.

After receiving allegation, the EPB launched a departmental probe, headed by deputy director of EPB Fazle Elahi, in June last year.

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## More areas flooded as Gumti dam remains unrepaired

Ganges rising, other major rivers mark fall

By Special Correspondent

Floods in Naogaon worsened further yesterday as the Atrai and Chhoti Jamuna continued to flow above their danger levels, inundating fresh areas while the situation remained unchanged in four other districts.

The Gumti in Comilla marked fall but water gushing out of its breached embankment and elsewhere in the district engulfed some more areas in Burichang, Devidwar and Chandina thanas threatening the Dhaka-Chittagong highway, reports from correspondents and agencies said.

While a return to fine weather after the heavy rains

earlier this week showed signs of improvement thousands of people remained trapped by vast sheets of water in Naogaon, Comilla, Sylhet, Feni and Fatikchhari in Chittagong.

Thousands of others took shelter in embankments and lost their homes in severe erosion, elsewhere in the country, reports said.

Despite registering 59 cm fall the breach in Gumti embankment could not be plugged. Swirling water of the river flowing 67 cm above danger level made it difficult to start the repair, a district official told the Star last night.

The Army helping rescue

and relief operations stood-by to fix the Gumti's breaches, which officials said could be taken up when the river returns to its normal level, something that may take a few more days if the current decline continues.

The floods are on the wane, the major river systems barring the Ganges-Padma have started receding yesterday. Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) officials said yesterday.

The Brahmaputra marked fall at upstream points, leaving its system shrinking also. The Ganges continued to rise at all points. Almost all the rivers in the Meghna basin including the

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Fish being dried at Cox's Bazar.

— Star photo by AKM Mohsin

## Dry fish export needs care

By Special Correspondent

Dry fish from Bangladesh is cutting a corner for the gourmet in the world market, notably in the US, Japan, China and Middle East, helping a growth of the industry which is still in its infancy.

Mostly based in the coastal town of Cox's Bazar and its nearby off-shore islands, drying fish has become a profitable business for the fishermen and their families.

But big traders and firms are reaping a benefit from the surge in demand abroad for the Indian Salmon, Pomfret, Jew fish and Betki.

Shark fins and bladders of fish are also gaining ground in the list of exportables, traders said.

But the industry is still in its rudimentary stage. The fishermen depends on the mother nature for drying fish.

But modern technology to

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## BNP MP resigns alleging 'anti-party activities'

By Staff Correspondent

BNP MP Manjurul Ahsan Munshi has resigned from the party protesting "anti-organisational activities of party central leaders".

He also announced that he would resign from the Jatiya Sangsad.

"Now I have no moral right to remain an MP because I was elected thrice from Comilla-4 (Devidwar) constituency with BNP ticket. I have also decided to resign from the Jatiya Sangsad as I resigned from BNP," he said in his resignation letter sent to BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday.

A copy of the letter was faxed to The Daily Star office.

Munshi said that Devidwar thana unit of BNP expelled three local leaders including its former president on June 12.

This was conveyed to the Comilla Sadar (North) unit

Convenor. The party Secretary General was also requested to take steps to this effect.

But the Convenor, Redwan

committee of Devidwar thana unit without informing him. The district unit selected Advocate Taher, who was expelled from Devidwar thana unit, as general secretary of the district committee.

After this, Munshi said, he held a series of meetings with the BNP Secretary General and demanded punitive measures against the expelled persons. Though the Secretary General assured him to look into the matter, no step was taken in the last one month, he said.

"This is why I resign from all party positions as a protest against anti-organisational activities of the central leaders," Munshi's resignation letter said.

When contacted, a close aide of the BNP Chairperson said no such letter was received by Begum Zia yesterday.

She has been suffering from fever since Wednesday night. She cancelled her yesterday's scheduled visit to the flood affected areas in Comilla, the aide said.

## Death of constable DCC commissioner Babul sent to jail

By Court Correspondent

Jahiruddin Babul, a ward commissioner of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), arrested in the constable Farhad murder case, was sent to Dhaka Central Jail by the CMM's court yesterday.

Farhad was killed and eight other policemen were injured when a bomb was hurled at near the city's Zero Point on July 7.

Police so far arrested three people including Jahiruddin, the commissioner of ward no. 24 for their alleged involvement in the killing.

Jahiruddin was produced before the CMM's court at about 5 pm on expiry of a four-day DB remand.

Metropolitan Magistrate Anisuddin Manjur rejected a bail prayer moved on behalf of Jahiruddin.

## Six alleged terrorists held in Ctg

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 15: Police arrested six alleged terrorists from different parts of the city today.

Chandgaon thana police arrested Abu Taher and Shah Alam from Bahadderhat area in the morning.

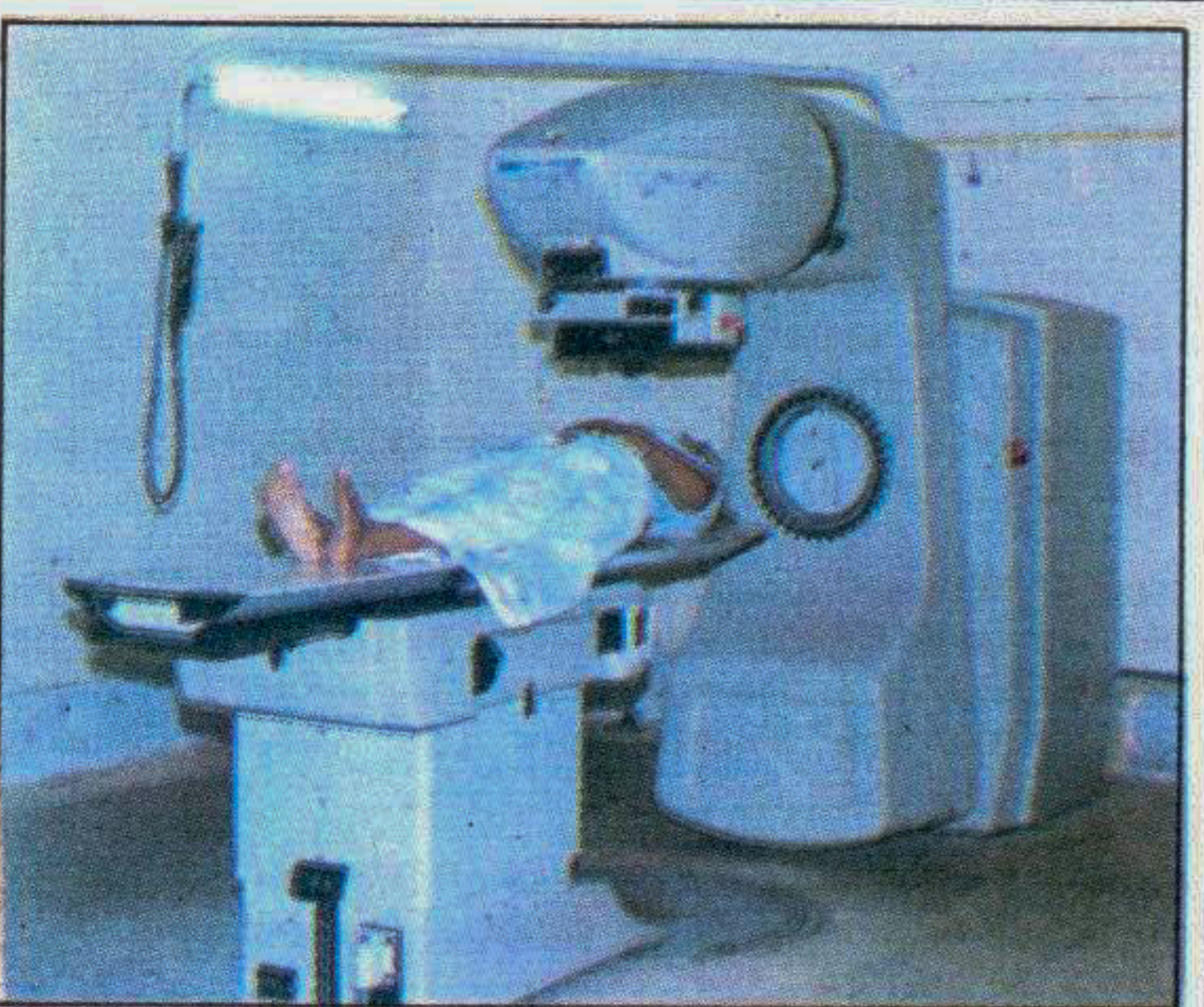
Police said the two were arrested on charges of illegal toll collection and dacoity in the area.

Pahartali thana police in a pre-dawn raid at Shaheed Lane arrested three terrorists.

They were identified as Bacha Mia, Helal Uddin and Hassan.

Police said the three were wanted in criminal cases, including extortion and dacoity. Kotwali thana police arrested one listed terrorist from Raj Community Centre at Kazir Dewry in the city.

The arrested, identified as S M Suman Newaj Masum, was wanted in several criminal cases filed with the thana.



Cobalt-60 teletherapy machine.

— Star photo

## High dose radiation therapy starts

### Malignant cells can now be pinpointed and destroyed fast

By Naimul Haq

The Cancer Institute at Mahakhali in the city has started treating patients having internal cancer with high dose radiation for the first time in the country.

Two high-dose brachytherapy machines at the Institute's 50-bed hospital started functioning more than two weeks ago. The devices are used to destroy malignant or cancerous cells inside the body using high dose beams from closely focused radiator.

Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Banghabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital and a private clinic also provide treatment for cancer but use low dose

radiation for a much longer time.

Both the devices at the Cancer Institute use Iridium-198 as source of radiation. One device is for multiple use and the other is exclusively for treatment of cervix cancer. The procedure uses radiation to kill abnormally growing tissue cells inside the patient's body.

"The greatest advantages of the latest devices are that they have the capacity to destroy abnormal cells at a very close distance using a short period of time," said Dr Qamruzzaman Chowdhury, Assistant Professor of Radiation Oncology at the Institute.

The devices are mainly de-

signed to expose cancer patients at very close range of radiation and they harm no normal cell during exposure. The fully computerised devices are programmed to detect abnormal growth in addition to precise location of abnormal cells before every exposure.

The devices facilitate treatment of cancer in lung, respiratory tract, cervix, vagina, breast, larynx, rectum and other internal malignant tissues.

"Introduction of the Dutch machines, worth over Tk four crore, have resolved many outstanding problems here at the hospital. Hundreds of referred patients suffering from internal

cancer could not be treated earlier due to lack of machines," said a senior doctor.

According to the latest survey by Bangladesh Cancer Society, there are about eight lakh cancer patients in the country.

Using the new devices, the institute hospital has already treated some patients with gynaecological malignancy and some others suffering from oesophageal malignancy at its out patient department (OPD).

Besides, the hospital provides treatment to about 120 patients a day using the cobalt 60 external beam therapy machine since long.

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