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**Agrani Bank**  
Board discusses mass transfer, other issues

By Staff Correspondent

The Agrani Bank board of directors at a meeting, yesterday, discussed the latest situation in the bank over the mass transfer of officials and subsequent submission of resignation by its managing director, according to sources.

Some members of the board criticised the mass transfer order and observed that this may create disorder in the bank.

The issue was also raised at the press conference of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on her arrival from London. Responding to a query the prime minister told the journalists that the MD had done because he has decided to join a private bank.

The managing director of the bank Nazmul Haq issued a transfer order of 76 officials in the first week of this month. He later stayed the order allegedly following pressure from governments high-ups.

The MD also tendered his resignation, reportedly protesting the government's interference. He, however, denied the report and said that the resignation was on personal grounds.

The sources said, although the issue was not in the agenda of the meeting the members of the board raised the matter while discussing the overall situation of the bank.

The managing director of the bank Nazmul Haq gave a statement at the meeting regarding the transfer of 76 high officials of the bank, according to a meeting source.

The MD in his statement said that the transfer order was necessary in the greater interest of the bank.

Responding to the MD's statement a board member said that the MD had identified the real problem in the bank and he could solve those. But as he tendered his resignation it is now the responsibility of the ministry of finance to take decide about it, a director said.

Now the board can not do anything about the matter, he observed. The bank's chairman Matiur Rahman presided over the meeting and five of the seven directors were present.

**Amartya Sen calls for early Indo-Pak talks**

SANTINIKETAN, West Bengal, July 15: Nobel laureate Prof Amartya Sen today called for early talks between India and Pakistan to defuse tension along the Kashmir border, reports PTI.

Terming as "unfortunate and sad" the loss of lives in Kargil, Sen told newsmen here that how the intruders' got access into Indian territory should be looked into.

Referring to future Indo-Pak relations, the eminent economist said it would all depend on further developments in Kashmir. Even Western countries had the same perception, he noted.

**Hasina: Plots**

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means, Hasina said, "It should be done." But she apprehended that most of the documents concerned might have been destroyed by this time.

When asked if the allotment of plots under past governments in violation of rules could be cancelled, she said "That is not possible now. But their names can be revealed."

**MIG Purchase**

The Prime Minister, responding to questions about the purchase of MIGs, firmly defended the purchase and said it was a state-to-state deal and there was no room for commission business.

"No body could purchase such items at such a less price. There is example of purchase of two war planes with the price of three in the past," she said.

Hasina termed the armed forces a symbol of national independence and sovereignty and said all defence hardware needed for them have to be procured.

She said that Bangladesh first approached the United States for procuring F-16 but they did not want to give those. Besides, it would cost us more to purchase those (F-16). We have purchased from Russia and we will buy from China also as it costs less."

In reply to a question on US State Department reaction on the purchase of MIG-29s, she said: "They (The US) cannot suggest what we should buy. We are a sovereign country."

She said that the Awami League government after independence had purchased MIG-21s and after a long time we have purchased MIG-29s".

**Editor : Mahfuz Anam**

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By Shehab Ahmed

## Encroachers damaging Mirpur flood protection dam

The city flood protection embankment at Mirpur along the river Turag is facing threats due to encroachments and movement of trucks as the river swells with the monsoon rains and rise of the Shitalakhy which is linked with the Meghna and the Brahmaputra. Encroachers have raised slums, bazaars and trading spots for building materials including gravels, chips, bricks and sand on some parts of the embankment. During last year's flood, the embankment kept the Turag waters from submerging Mirpur area but it may give in if there is a similar flood this year.

Starting from Mirpur

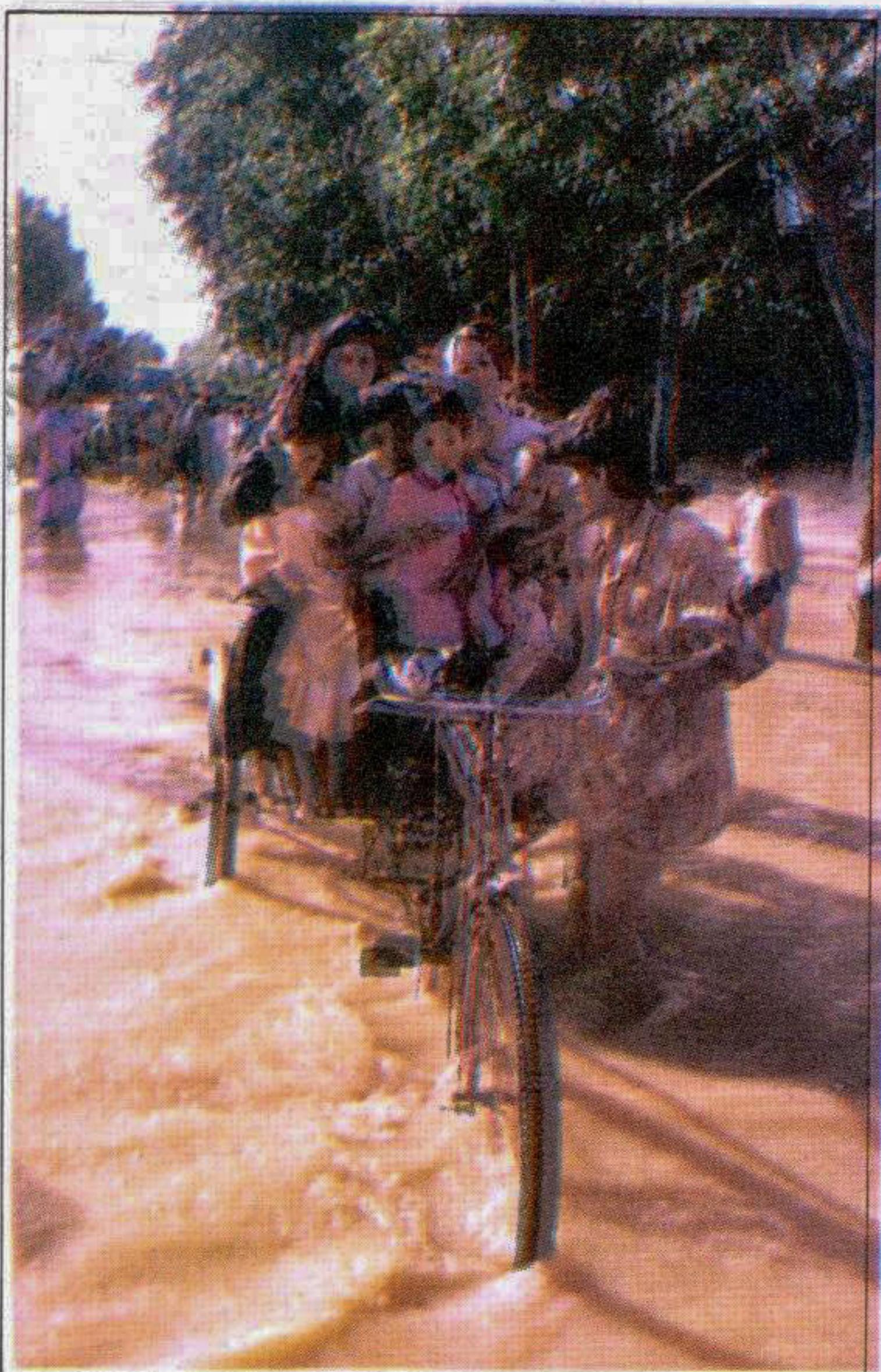
bridge, the embankment is occupied by sellers of brick, earth, chips and illegally brought logs and saplings from the Sundarbans.

Trucks move to and from the embankment gnawing at the top oil, which make it vulnerable to rainfall.

A little further, the embankment suddenly ends at a bazaar that grew up as an extension of Mirpur Puran Bazar.

Slum dwellers have virtually taken over both sides of the embankment at Zahanabad further down.

Travelling by a boat in the Turag along the embankment, this correspondent saw slums on it.



**Wet and painful**  
People fleeing their homes for dry places. The breach in the Gumti embankment has submerged the adjoining area.

— Star photo

## BNP plans to overcome 'internal weakness' first

By Rezaul Karim

BNP is giving top priority to strengthening the organisation ahead of the upcoming city corporation and upazila polls and preparing for launching its planned one-point movement to topple the Awami League government.

Those organisational districts by September. The districts include Rajshahi, Narayanganj, Sherpur, Madaripur, Lalmonirhat and Munshiganj.

He said Begum Zia's on-going meetings only with the full-fledged district units have yielded a positive result as leaders of more than 30 organisational districts have sought date from the central office for holding councils.

Leaders in 25 organisational districts have now taken preparations for holding district councils he said and hoped that councils in at least 40 organisational districts would be completed by September this year.

"We are determined to complete formation of full-fledged executive committees in the remaining districts by September this year because we are planning to start a non-stop anti-government movement from October and a one-point oust-government movement from the first week of November," said another top party leader involved with the process.

During the meetings, most of the district leaders expressed their opinion in favour of BNP's participation in all local body elections. People are very much enthusiastic about election and they want to see BNP's participation in the upcoming upazila polls, they told the party chief, the sources said.

But the local leaders told her that most of the party workers at district and thana levels are being harassed after Awami League came to power. Police frequently raid their houses to get bail from courts. Many of them stay in the capital to escape arrest, they added.

They told her that the ruling Awami League was proceeding with three strategies: filing of "false" cases against BNP members, preparing "fake" voter list and ID cards and politicisation of the administration. They observed that it would be very difficult to "check" the AL (in election) if it continues with these strategies.

Many local leaders alleged that central leaders and MDPs do not look into local matters properly and many try to avoid

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## 685 sex workers fill up forms

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, July 15: A total of 685 sex workers have so far filled up questionnaire distributed by the Department of Social Services under the proposed rehabilitation programme of the sex workers.

The survey in the town's Tanbar and Nimgoli brothels started on July 14.

Some 34 surveyors including 30 women in cooperation with Concern Bangladesh, an Irish NGO, have been conducting the survey programme.

## Procession inside APBN barrack?

By Staff Correspondent

Members of the Armed Police Battalion (APBN) reportedly brought out a procession inside their barrack Wednesday night after a meeting with the home minister at the Darbar Parade, a yearly programme, earlier on the day at Uttara in the city, police sources said.

However, DMP Commissioner AKM Shamsuddin told The Daily Star last night, "I have not heard anything about such incident."

The sources said Home Minister Mohammad Nasir and the inspector general of police attended the programme which was held at APBN on the day.

"They said members of APBN were disappointed after their representatives from different ranks had a talk with the minister about their problems and demands during the Darbar.

Following this, a group of APBN members brought out a procession in the evening in support of their demands. However, senior officials rushed to the spot and took the situation under control, sources added.

The officer-in-charge of Uttara thana also denied that such an incidence had taken place last night.

## Press reports

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newspapers that had sent me there... I want to go and meet my son."

Asked about Joy's marriage, Hasina said it should not be surprising if her 28-year-old son gets married. "But he has not yet married. Press reports about his wedding taking place in London is a blatant lie..."

"My son could not come to see me in London because he would have to skip his classes."

A smiling Hasina then told newsmen that the marriage of her son would take place here in Bangladesh. "I invite you all in advance to attend my son's marriage ceremony when it takes place."

"We are determined to complete formation of full-fledged executive committees in the remaining districts by September this year because we are planning to start a non-stop anti-government movement from October and a one-point oust-government movement from the first week of November," said another top party leader involved with the process.

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Man against nature  
As the river rises the vulnerability of the Turag embankment at Diarbari, Mirpur, is all the more evident.

— Star photo

100 feared drowned in Bihar boat capsizes

PATNA, July 15: Rescuers said more than 100 people were feared drowned today after a passenger boat capsized in the Ganges River in the northern state of Bihar, reports AP.

Two bodies were recovered from the rain-swollen river at Athmagola near this city, 800 kilometers (480 miles) southeast of New Delhi.

Most of the passengers were women and children, rescuers said. At least 125 people were on board the vessel when it rolled over and sank in the river.

Some of the passengers swam ashore.

Rivers in eastern India and neighbouring Bangladesh have been overflowing their banks, inundating villages.

## PM: Polls

From Page 1

but did not make any such arrangement while the concept of caretaker government was incorporated in the Constitution," she told a press conference at the Gana Bhaban on her return yesterday after a nine day visit to the United Kingdom.

"What is the formula of their caretaker government? National elections and elections to local government bodies can not be held together (under the caretaker administration)", the Prime Minister said.

She however thanked BNP chief Khaleda Zia for speaking for the concept of caretaker government now, which she ridiculed while in power.

Hoping that the Opposition would contest the city corporation and Upazila polls, Hasina advised them to devote to preparations for the two elections which were shifted repeatedly to ensure participation of the Opposition.

"I think they will definitely not repeat the mistake they did by boycotting the municipal polls," she said and advised the agitating Opposition to earn people's confidence by contesting the upcoming polls.

Farhad Chowdhury of private TV channel ETV said, "we say many things but do not mean it."

He said we have many young talents and we do not utilise them.

Farah Kabir criticised the BTV for not having a clear-cut policy to implement even after so many years in a democratic environment.

"BTV needs a people-oriented policy to introduce more people-oriented programmes", she said.

Speakers said it is only possible for the government to run a programme by giving subsidy and more satellite or private media is not a solution to the present media scenario of the country.

The Prime Minister claimed that all local body polls and parliamentary by-polls held under her government were free and fair. She alleged that there were rigging and killings in such elections under the governments of Ershad and Khaleda Zia.

She hoped people will again vote her party to power for implementation of all short-term and long-term programmes taken up by her government for socio-economic development of the country.

The Prime Minister also replied to a wide variety of questions on contemporary issues and her visit.

Replies to a question about the death of a police constable in the city during a pre-haral procession of BNP on July 7, she blamed the opposition party for the "killing and inciting revolt" in some (riot) police barracks. "They are now desperate to find an issue for agitation," she said, charging the party for similar attacks on police earlier also.

She said there is "little chance" for shifting the venue of the NAM summit from the Osmany Udayan. "We're yet to find any alternative location," she said.

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