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Gunfight leaves one dead in Khagrachhari

KHAGRACHHARI, July 30: One person was killed during a gunfight between security forces and a group of terrorists in a deep forest at Kalapahar in Mohalchhari thana on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said Maichchhari UP chairman Sajal Marma recovered the victim's body from Manikchhari School premises this evening and handed it over to police. Identity of the victim could not be known immediately.

The security forces came under sudden attack by the terrorists. The two sides traded at least 100 shots during the fighting.

However, the terrorists managed to escape, police said. The security forces and police went there to rescue Haripada, one of two villagers, abducted on Wednesday. Another, Shankar, managed to escape from the grips of the terrorists.

Degree (Pass) Exam results today

By DU Correspondent

The results of Degree (Pass) and Certificate Course Examinations of 1998 under the National University will be published at 4 pm today, said a press release yesterday.

The results will be published simultaneously from all the examination centres of the country.

Necessary arrangements have been made to publish the results.

The students have been asked to collect results from their respective colleges or examination centres. Results will not be available at the National University office, the press release added.

Teenage maid succumbs to burn injuries

By Staff Correspondent

A teenage maid, who allegedly torched herself at a flat in Mirpur area in the city, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday noon.

The dead was identified as Bina, 14, daughter of Abu Bakar of Sujannagar in Pabna, according to police. Bina had been a maid at the flat of Moazzem Hossain, an engineer, at Mirpur section-1 for the last two years.

The engineer was quoted to have told the police that Bina had a love affair with son of a gatekeeper of the apartment. When members of the family rebuked her for the relationship, she torched herself pouring down kerosene all over her body.

According to police, the family members found Bina engulfed in fire in the bathroom adjacent to the servants' room of the flat at about 2 am yesterday.

With critical burn injuries, the maid was admitted to DMCH where she succumbed to her injuries at about 12 noon.

The officer-in-charge of Mirpur thana said the Daily Star last night that they suspected the death was a suicide. "We, however, are waiting for the post mortem report," he added.

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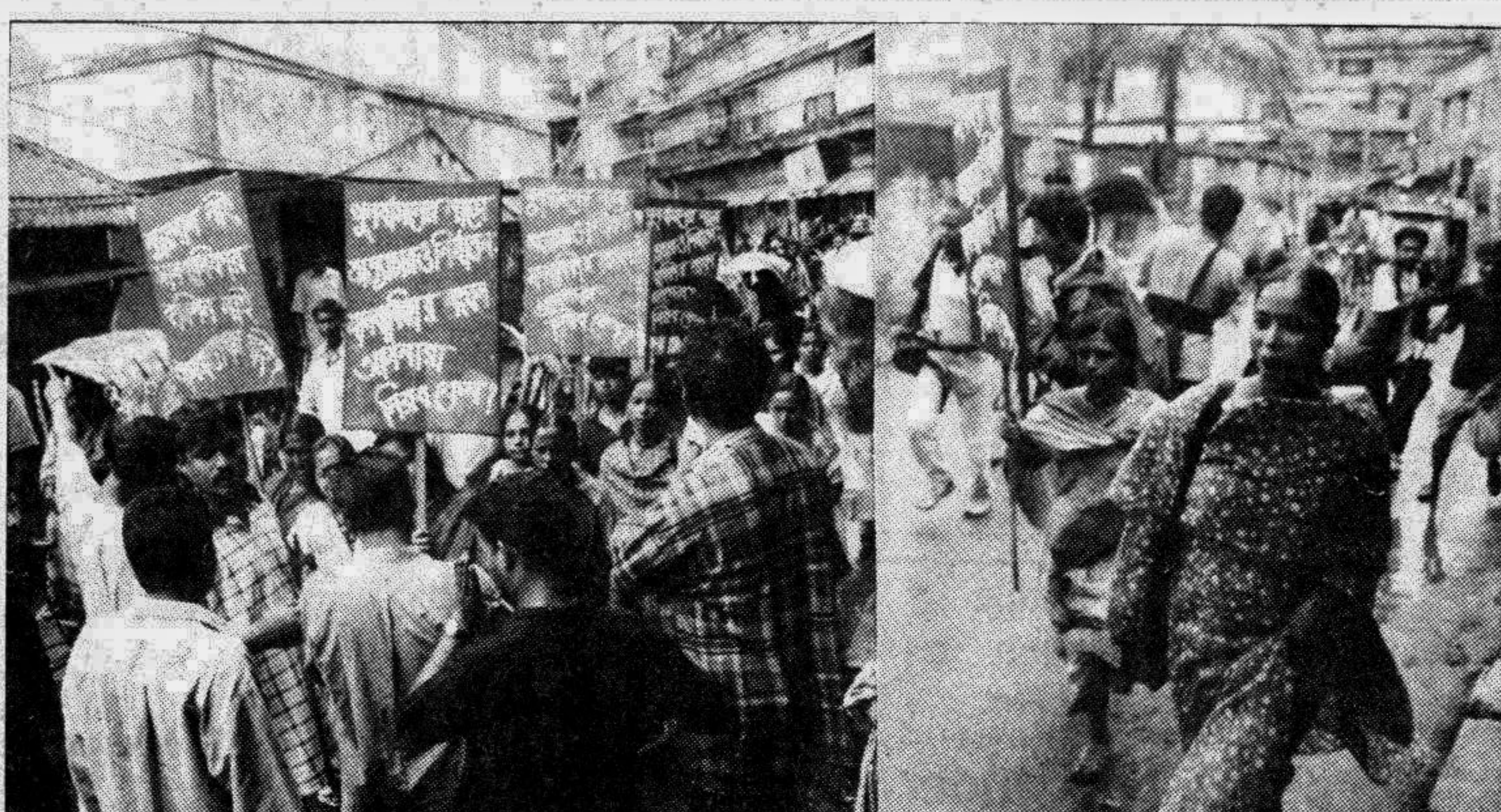
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Prayer Timings

July 31		
Azan	Jamaat	
Fajr 4:10	4:15	
Johr 12:50	1:25	
Asr 5:00	5:10	
Maghrib 6:55	7:00	
Esha 7:55	8:15	

Source: Islamic Foundation



Musclemen obstructed the woman and human rights activists at Tanbazar and (right) some activists run for dear life following the attack.

Gunshots, cracker blasts near Tanbazar

Musclemen attack women, human rights activists

From Ehsanul Haque

NARAYANGANJ, July 30: Armed goons attacked a procession of activists from 69 women and human rights organisations as they tried to proceed to Tanbazar brothel here this morning for staging a demonstration protesting the recent eviction of sex workers.

The activists started running helter-skelter as the attackers fired about 50 shots in the air and exploded crackers when the procession reached near the brothel.

The attackers who are known as local *mastaans* chased the processionists and put up a barricade on the road to obstruct the procession and foil the scheduled demonstration.

Police virtually joined hands with the attackers as they charged batons on the activists, local people alleged.

Witnesses said that soon after the procession reached near the brothel at around 10:30 am,

the attackers intercepted it and started abusing the participants, numbering more than 100. They asked the demonstrators to leave the place at once and threatened them with dire consequences.

The demonstrators later alleged that police did not come to their despite being informed of

9 sex workers handed over to their guardians

Nine of the sex workers, who were brought to Kashimpur vagrant centre from Tanbazar and Nimtoli brothels, were handed over to their guardians yesterday, said a PID handout, reports UNB.

A total of 267 sex workers were evicted from the two

the programme earlier and asked for security.

The demonstrators took shelter in nearby houses. Shopkeepers in the area downed their shutters as the situation turned tense.

Later, the activists assembled near the Sadar thana in a fresh bid to move to the brothel. But the goons chased them again, firing shots in the air and exploding bombs.

The demonstrators then took shelter on the thana premises while police simply looked on.

The agitated women and human rights activists then left for Dhaka. The hoodlums also followed them up to the bus stand and fired several more shots in the air at around 11:30.

None was, however, injured in the hour-long incident. The demonstrators earlier

'Little attention, poor diagnosis' Patients grumble about city doctors

By Naimul Haq

Majority of patients seeking medical advice at doctors' chambers are disappointed over the time given to an individual for consultation and the quality of diagnosis.

During a recent investigation by The Daily Star, patients waiting outside some doctors' chambers complained about the quality of diagnosis. They also said the medical practitioners "see maximum number of patients within a limited time, ignoring proper diagnosis."

"I have come to see the doctor for the third time in last eight days for tracheoscopy (examination of throat). The doctor did not explain to me what is the problem. On an average, he gave me not more than five minutes' time. I have already spent Tk 500 as consultation fee," a discontented patient told this correspondent at a chamber at the Green Super Market in the city.

Another patient, who was recently operated upon for chest injury said, "We avoid consultation at crowded government hospitals and instead come at private chambers of doctors to get proper attention. But there is no sign of proper diagnosis despite payment of high amount of fee."

"The more they see patients, the more they earn. I guess this is the motto of doctors. They don't want to see any of their waiting patients go back. So, obviously they hurry and try to see as many patients as possible," said another patient.

A local doctor allegedly treated a kidney patient with wrong diagnosis. The urologist told him that he had a malfunctioning bladder. But during investigation in India, it was later found out that he had a malfunctioning kidney, another patient told this correspondent at another doctor's chamber at Dhanmondi Road No. 7.

"Frankly speaking, doctors here do not consider patients' needs. They seem to be busy seeing as many patients as possible. Had the doctor examined me carefully, he could have detected what was wrong with me. I am sure he has the capacity."

Another patient at a chamber at Dhanmondi Road No. 8 said, "We pay doctors whatever they demand but in return we demand proper care. But doctors do not listen to our problems. Besides, they hardly give any advice except prescribing lots of medicines and diagnostic tests."

Another patient from Brahmanbaria said, "We are helpless. I wish I had enough money to see a doctor abroad. I heard doctors in India take more care and are friendly. I also heard that doctors there explain to the patients the nature of disease and treatment procedure."

This correspondent later talked to some senior doctors at their chambers at Dhanmondi and Green Road about the allegations. All the doctors are working in government hospitals in the city including the Combined Military Hospital (CMH).

The average time for private practice by these doctors is between 5 and 9 in the evening. In some other areas, a number of government hospital doctors were found seeing patients during morning hours at chambers at their residences.

At Green Super Market, there are at least 60 chambers of private practitioners.

On Sunday (July 18), this correspondent approached 20 doctors on the first and second floors at the market. But only four agreed to talk to The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

Tale of misappropriation by 251 madrassahs

Star Report

Two hundred fifty-one madrassahs whose government affiliation and Monthly Pay Order (MPO) were cancelled due to various irregularities had been misappropriating Tk 28.8 lakh public money every month, official sources said.

The cancellation followed detection of the irregularities through investigations by the Ministry of Education in 1994, 1995, 1997 and 1998. The 251 madrassahs include 126 Dakhlil, 69 Alim, 53 Fazil and three Kamil Madrassahs.

Due to the action, teachers and employees of those madrassahs will not get government contribution for their salaries and allowances.

The government grants Tk 34 thousand for a Dakhlil Madrassah, Tk 39 thousand for an Alim madrassah, Tk 78 thousand for a Fazil madrassah and Tk 1.6 lakh for a Kamil madrassah per month.

The irregularities detected by the education ministry include failure to meet primary requirements for MPO, employing more teachers than the requirement on the basis of number of students, inadequate bank deposit, payment of salaries and benefits to teachers and employees showing inflated number of students and opening of upper classes in junior madrassahs without meeting the requirements.

In July 1998, the government formed a three-member committee in each of the 460 thanas in the country to detect 'fake' madrassahs and those violating rules. Each committee was headed by the Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) and included Thana Engineer (Facilities) and Thana Education Officer (TEO).

The committees gave their reports mentioning gross irregularities in madrassahs al-

most in every thana. Besides, different special committees were formed in 1994, 1995 and 1997 to look into alleged corruption in madrassahs. Action against the madrassahs followed the probe reports.

When contacted, an education ministry official said that it was a temporary action and the madrassahs will again get all benefits including those for the period for which MPO was not given. The madrassahs can apply to the ministry for restoration of MPO on condition of regularisation of things, he said.

Another official said Primary and Mass Education Department recently cancelled registration of some 100 non-litigious and Thana Education Officer (TEO).

Meanwhile, the education

IT: No thrust for thrust sector

By Staff Correspondent

Only a handful of measures have been taken so far to facilitate the growth of the country's software industry although the government has declared Information Technology (IT) industry a thrust sector.

Software sector is one of the essential components of the IT industry with a global market of US dollar 276 billion in 1996. This market is largely dependent on the human resources and that is why several developing countries are taking advantage of this opportunity. Bangladesh, which has announced its intention to reap rich dividends from the IT sector, is yet to chart out a specific strategy in this regard.

Progress has been very slow here and certain immediate action plans need to be initiated both by government and the private sector so that Bangladesh could still catch up with IT industry. It is in a position to engage its professionals and a large number of educated youths to create a multi-mil-

See page 11 Col 7

Tayebi murder Police hunt for mastermind continues

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 30: Another person arrested by CID police in connection with the sensational murder of an Indian citizen, Jibrin Tayebi, gave his confessional statement before the court yesterday, CID and court sources said.

The accused was identified as Omar Ali.

Earlier, three other arrested gave their confessional statements before the court. They were Jahid Hossain Kiron, Jilur Rahman and Ali Akbar.

A CID source claimed the arrested four in their statements said that a son of an industrialist of the port city masterminded the killing of Jibrin, the only son of West Bengal IGP.

CID police already raided a house of that industrialist located at Badsha Miah Chowdhury road near War Cemetery to arrest the mastermind who allegedly hired one dozen terrorists for killing Jibrin, CID source said.

But the son of that industrialist went into hiding immediately after the arrest of four persons, the source added.

However, drive is on to nab the mastermind, the CID source said.

Opposition plans 5 more road marches Aug-Sept

By Rezaul Karim

The BNP-led opposition alliance will organise five more road marches in the next two months to muster support against what they called the government's 'misrule'.

The alliance also plans to announce 'Dhaka siege programme' after completion of the proposed road marches in August and September. According to the plan, the opposition will lay siege to the capital on November 7 to dislodge the Awami League government.

The siege programme has already been christened 'Cholo, Cholo, Dhaka Cholo/s-haracha, gherao koro programme (Let's go to Dhaka and besiege the autocrat)'. Begum Zia and chiefs of other parties during the July 25-27 marches called upon people to prepare to go to Dhaka.

A policy maker of the BNP said that the party will carry out three-day road marches

from Dhaka to Sylhet division, Dhaka to Khulna division and Dhaka to Barisal division.

Besides, there will be two one-day marches from Dhaka to Manikganj and Dhaka to Bhairab. Like in the past two marches, chiefs of the partner parties of the alliance will lead the 3 road marches.

"The road march programmes have already been planned and these will be implemented one after another. The liaison committee will soon sit to finalise the third march," he said and added that the BNP has decided to lead its next road march from Dhaka to Sylhet division.

After finalisation of destination of road marches of BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islamic Oikya Jote (IOJ) by the liaison committee, the leader said BNP will instruct concerned central and local leaders to chalk out the detailed

route of the Dhaka-Sylhet road march.

Sources said the BNP, JP, Jamaat and IOJ have decided to further intensify their agitation programme in the days ahead. "We are determined to dislodge this autocratic government through enforcing severe action one after another. We will not hesitate to go to any extent in the upcoming days," an influential vice chairman of BNP told the Daily Star yesterday.

He said the political atmosphere of the country will become hot gradually and will gain full force in October.

"Currently we are preparing the ground of the movement through the road march campaign. We do not want to confine the anti-government movement to the capital alone. We want to launch a movement from every corner of

See Page 12 Col 4

Beximco at it again!

By Inam Ahmed

A so-called blue chip company has hoodwinked a bank by depositing post-dated cheques that bounced thrice and then took out money without meeting the bank board's conditions for loan extension.

The whole thing appears to have been done in connivance with the bank management and no bank official did anything to stop the malpractice. The bank did not even file any criminal case against the company for cheque bouncing.

The scam came to light when a board member made a random inquiry into industrial credit situation.

The blue chip firm in question is Beximco Group's flagship company Beximco Pharmaceuticals and the bank that suffered is Janata Bank (JB). This is a classic example of how some senior bankers of JB sabotaged the decision of its own board to restore financial discipline.

According to sources, JB Managing Director Aminul Islam had given the approval to the local office located in the head office for disbursing the loans violating the board decision.

After the bank board inquiry questioned the management about the incident, Aminul Islam sent a soft-worded letter to Beximco asking it to repay the money or face actions under the Non-transferable Instrument Act for issuing cheques that bounced.

According to sources Beximco Pharma applied for extension of its loans from the JB from Tk 40 crore to Tk 57 crore in April this year.

After going through its proposals, JB attached a major condition that the company has to pay its Tk 9.05 crore debenture loans to the bank in addition it also has to adjust its other overdue loans on different accounts.

These together raised the amount to be repaid by Beximco Pharma to around Tk 18 crore. As part of its obligation to pay the debenture loans, Beximco issued three post-dated cheques drawn on June 30 this year.

JB sent Beximco's proposal to the Bangladesh Bank for approval, which the regulators turned down in May this year. But later, under pressure from a certain quarter, BB gave its

See Page 12 Col 1

It's neither corridor nor transit, says Indian Deputy HC

The Indian mission in Dhaka yesterday dispelled apprehensions about Bangladesh's security problem due to transshipment of their goods, saying it would be purely an arrangement based on mutual economic benefits.

Talking to UNB Deputy High Commissioner of India Pinak R Chakravarty said the proposal approved by the Bangladesh cabinet was neither for 'corridor' nor even for 'transit'.

It's just transshipment of Indian goods to Northeastern States of India by Bangladeshi companies, he said. Elaborating the point he said Indian goods would go through all formalities including customs checking at the entry points of both the countries. This is just a 'service' which Bangladeshi companies would provide to Indian companies to transport goods from one point to another of the Indian border.

See Page 12 Col 3

Deadline expires 220 terrorists surrender in Khulna, Magura

By Staff Correspondent

Some 220 terrorists surrendered and laid down arms yesterday, 110 in Khulna and 110 at Magura, to return to normal life taking advantage of the governments' amnesty.

The amnesty deadline expired midnight last night.

Our Staff Correspondent reported from Khulna: A total of 110 terrorists surrendered to State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Talukdar Abdul Khaleque at a function at Kalpataru at Daulatpur.

They surrendered 113 illegal firearms.

The terrorists include Gazi Kamrul of Daulatpur and Kamal Hossain of Rupsha, both belonging to the youth front of the ruling party, police said.

Kamrul surrendered along with 39 armed cadres and deposited 40 firearms including one SMG and seven DBBL guns. Kamrul surrendered 15 firearms which were under his possession, police said.

Kamal Hossain surrendered with three of his armed cadres, OC of Rupsha thana Elias Fakir said.

The highest number of 45 firearms were surrendered from

Bangladesh Freedom Foundation set up

A group of prominent citizens has set up a philanthropic organisation - Bangladesh Freedom Foundation (BFF) to promote fundamental freedom of the citizens of the country, reports BBS.

The BFF an independent and non-partisan national philanthropic organisation, will provide financial support to initiatives aimed at promoting fundamental freedom of the citizens with the ideals of the freedom struggle and provisions of the Constitution, said a press release in the city yesterday.

Professor Rehman Sobhan, Dr Muhammad Yunus, Kazi Fazlur Rahman, Syed Manzur Elahi, Prof Wahiduddin Mahmood, Sultana Kamal, Dr Meghana Guhatkaurta, Dr De-

See Page 12 Col 4

IT SEMINAR

The Daily Star and APTECH Computer Education are jointly organizing a seminar titled "Moving Forward with Information Technology."

OBJECTIVES

- Govt has declared IT as thrust sector - what has been done so far.
- Identify steps to be taken both by the govt and the private sector.
- To give a road map & vision to people who aspire a career in IT

► Date: July 31, 1999 ► Time: 04.00 p.m.
► Venue: Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, Ramna, Dhaka

Participants: Those who aspire a career/business in IT

Speakers: Opinion-leaders and policy-makers from government and private sector.

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Uttara: House #11/A Road #04 Sector-4, Uttara, Modile Town Tel: 897264
Chittagong: Engineers, Inst. Bld. S.S. Khaled Sarak, Tel: (031) 622182

PARTICIPATE IN THIS UNIQUE SEMINAR AND HELP PREPARE BANGLADESH FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



argument that her presence in the politically key state which elects highest number (85) of members to Lok Sabha, will give a big boost to the party's prospects.

There has been talk also that she may choose to contest from Rae Bareilly constituency (also

See Page 12 Col 5

Sonia to contest Lok Sabha elections

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, July 30: India's main opposition party Congress has decided that its chief Sonia Gandhi will contest the elections for the lower house of parliament (Lok Sabha) in September-October.

This was disclosed by Congress spokesman Ajit Jogi in response to a question from newsmen here yesterday evening.

A formal announcement in this regard would be made after the central election committee of Congress finalises its list of candidates for the coming polls on August 4, Jogi said.

The Congress spokesman's confirmation that Sonia will be in the electoral fray for the first time also set political circles speculating on the constituency she would be contesting from.

The Uttar Pradesh state unit of Congress has already urged Sonia Gandhi to contest from Amethi, the seat held by her husband and former Indian premier Rajiv Gandhi, on the