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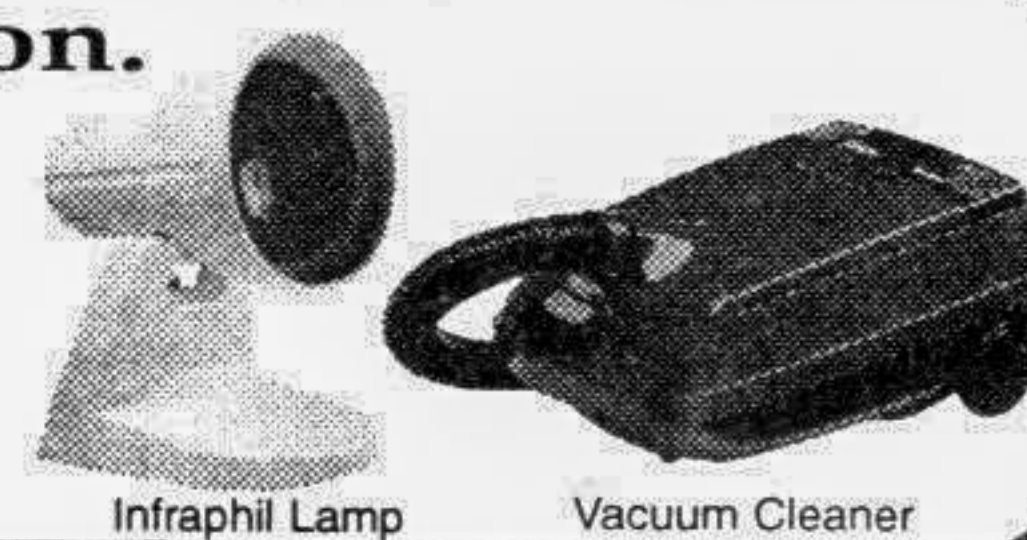
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Anwar Zahid detained for 30 days

BNP leader Anwar Zahid was given a 30-day detention yesterday in connection with Monday's attack on the daily Janakantha office, reports BSS.

The BNP leader was produced before the court of the metropolitan magistrate, Maksudur Rahman Patwari, under tight security.

Barrister Khandkar Mahub Uddin Khokon, Abdur Rejak Khan and Advocate Sanaullah Miah moved his bail petition, but the court rejected the prayer and sent him to Dhaka Central Jail.

The court also rejected a remand prayer, submitted by police, hearing both sides. Anwar Zahid was arrested from his new DOHS residence Monday night in connection with three cases filed by the Janakantha authorities with Ramna police.

Our Staff Correspondent adds: Two grocers filed two separate cases with Ramna thana on Monday night accusing Anwar Zahid and the BNP processionists of ransacking some shops during the attack on Janakantha.

Meanwhile, one Abdul Latif on behalf of BNP submitted a written allegation at the Ramna thana the same night accusing Liakat, a former Jubo League leader, and his accomplices of attacking BNP procession Monday evening.

Ramna thana sources said that police were yet to record the written allegation as a case. But police were investigating the incident, they said.

Floor-crossing

From page 1

seats in parliament be declared vacant.

But the two MPs have still been arguing that their conduct does not amount to violation of the Constitution. Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury holds the same view.

However, the controversy went to the Election Commission on August 8 after the Supreme Court had ordered the Speaker to refer the matter to the Commission for a decision.

On August 10, the EC asked the contending parties to defend their positions in writing in a week from the date of receipt of the letters. Replying to the EC on August 17, the BNP re-iterated its original position. The party argued that the MPs should lose their seats in parliament from the day they had joined the AL government.

On August 16, Mohammad Alauddin and Hasibur Rahman sought one-month time from the EC for preparing legal arguments. The Commission extended the deadline for them to August 24. Accordingly, the MPs submitted their replies on Tuesday last. They also maintained their previous position that joining the government did not amount to the violation of the Constitution.

The Commission is legally obliged to give a decision on the matter in 120 days from August 8, the day the Speaker had referred the matter to it.

Confce of MPs

From page 1

to be discussed in the conference for the sake of maintaining an atmosphere of peace.

"We believe in a culture of peace" he added.

The meeting adopted a draft agenda for the conference that will consider formation of an organisation, Association of Asian Parliamentarians for Peace, as proposed by Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury. The proposed organisation will have an executive council comprising a president, a vice president and 12 members.

Replying to a question, the parliament secretary said Opposition members of parliament had participated in the preparatory process of the conference and hoped that they would also join the Asian parliamentarians conference.

Mowla said the conference is intended to create awareness of peace among the peoples of Asia and to mobilise and unite them for the promotion of peace. It will consider ways and means to give a permanent shape to efforts by Asian parliamentarians in this regard, he said.

He said the topics of the conference are: the main reason of war and the culture of peace, institution on human rights and international law, solution to armed conflicts, disarmament and security of people and democracy in Asia.

Participating countries include Indonesia, Malaysia, Kuwait, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Philippines, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Jordan, South Korea, Singapore, Bhutan, Vietnam, Yemen, China, Laos, Mongolia, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Cambodia, Tonga, the Maldives and Uzbekistan.



Low-lying areas in the city have been inundated by flood waters. The photo was taken from a place near Gulshan yesterday. — Star photo by Anisur Rahman

Deadline may be extended

63pc ID cards ready, says EC official

By Nurul Kabir

Vendors have so far completed Identity Cards for 63 per cent of the country's six crore voters and only 50 per cent of the voters have been provided with cards.

The deadline for distribution of ID cards to all the voters will expire on September 30. The original deadline was June 30 this year, which was extended.

The Election Commission (EC) is considering a proposal from the vendors to extend the deadline till November 30, sources in the EC said here yesterday.

"Till August 22 last, we distributed some three crore ID cards among the voters. Besides, some 78 lakh cards are now ready for distribution," a high official of EC's voters ID card project told the Daily Star.

All the 64 vendors responsible for preparing the cards told the EC authorities concerned on August 29 that they would not be able to complete the job by the September 30 deadline as photographs of 30 per cent of the voters are yet to be taken.

They however assured the EC that if the deadline is extended till November 30, the job would "definitely be finished in time" as top officials in district administrations have now become active on the issue.

Further extension of the deadline will not involve any additional expenditure, the vendors told the EC. "The Commission is actively considering the proposal," the official said.

Meanwhile, the EC has decided to introduce a 'permanent mechanism' to provide 'new voters' with ID cards so that the voters list can be updated through a continuous process.

Some vendors will be registered permanently with district level EC offices who will prepare ID cards for 'new voters', he said.

For this, the EC has a proposed budget of Tk 7.5 crore to cover the expenses from October 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000.

The EC officials concerned are optimistic that the government would disburse the money from the revenue budget.

Prime Minister says

Armed Forces to be kept above politics

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the National Armed Forces would be kept above all political controversies, reports BSS.

The army leadership would be vested in those who are active, conscious, intelligent and have chosen this sacred profession only to serve the country keeping themselves above all partisanship, she said.

The Prime Minister called for selecting capable leadership, who have no political high ambition but would make significant contribution to build up a strong and efficient armed forces to help the government in its development efforts.

Presiding over the meeting of the Selection Board of the Bangladesh Army, the Prime Minister said a strong, disciplined and well-educated armed forces is the symbol of independence of a country. Armed forces are the vanguards of independence and sovereignty and from this realisation the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman took steps to build up a strong armed forces.

The Prime Minister said in the past some vested quarters utilised the armed forces for achieving their self-aggrandizement and thus created a difference between the people and the armed forces. But after formation of the government, she said, she re-established the lost glory and image of the armed forces and build up amity between the people and army through involving them in nation building activities.

Turning back to the promotion of the members of the armed forces, Sheikh Hasina said professional efficiency, leadership quality and deep sense of discipline should be the cardinal factors in this regard. Besides, she said honesty, allegiance, faithfulness, physical fitness, faith and allegiance to the War of Independence and freedom of Bangladesh would also be the other main factors for promotion. In addition, seniority, education and social

obligation are also important factors to be evaluated while giving promotion.

The Prime Minister noted with satisfaction that during her government 15 officers were promoted to major general, 60 to brigadier and 101 to the rank of colonel. While giving these promotions the decision of the selection board was given the highest consideration.

She said there are certain rules and regulations in the army which would be strictly followed and every one must have to obey chain of command.

The Prime Minister also highlighted a number of steps her government have taken to develop, expand and modernise the country's armed forces.

Among other things, she said: **REB owes**

From page 1
PDB's power generation is around Tk 1.5 per unit. It takes Tk one more per unit for transmission of power to consumers. Since most of the power transmission lines are owned by PDB, the total cost of per unit of power comes to around Tk 2.5.

An Energy Ministry source said, "Power tariff within PDB-DESA-REB should be streamlined as per their actual investment cost."

PDB, the core entity in the country's power sector, is severely affected by financial mismanagement. Clients, including DESA, had a total outstanding bill of Tk 2269 crore with PDB till April this year. The amount is equivalent to PDB's 11.4 months' bill. Of the total, government offices owe PDB Tk 111 crore, autonomous bodies Tk 152 crore, private sector Tk 459 crore and DESA Tk 1547 crore.

Recently, in a move to streamline financial affairs in power sector, the government asked all its offices to clear the dues to PDB and DESA. DESA is not paying PDB its monthly bills since May but has made a 'chunk payment' of Tk 70 crore.

DESA has a system loss of around 26 per cent, PDB 21 per cent and REB 17 per cent. Eight per cent of PDB's system loss is generation, seven per cent is 'transmission loss' and the remaining six per cent is simply stolen. REB's transmission loss is seven per cent and 10 per cent is stolen while DESA's transmission loss is seven per cent and 19 per cent is stolen.

Flood

From page 1

els in the Ganges-Padma system are likely to rise further till 9 am today.

Water levels of some of the rivers in the Meghna and South-eastern hill basins rose and those of some others marked fall.

Out of the 46 water-level measuring stations monitored by the Centre, the major rivers were flowing above danger marks at 12 points, recorded rise at 22 points and fell at 15 points.

In the Brahmaputra basin, the Jamuna was flowing 18 cm above the danger level by 18 cm at Bahadurabad, 28 cm at Sirajganj, and 66 cm at Aricha. The Sitakohiya was flowing 34 cm above the danger level at Narayanganj and Kaliganga was flowing 64 cm above the level at Taraghat.

In the same basin, Dharla was flowing 11 cm above the danger level at Kurigram, the Turag 7 cm above the level at Tongi and the Kaliganga 31 cm above the danger level at Taraghat.

Hasina

From page 1

ports through our land." The prime minister ridiculed BNP chief Khaleda Zia's agitation against transshipment move. "The opposition leader is fighting against the action of her own party. Who is it she is fighting against?" she asked.

Hasina blamed Khaleda for resorting to "politics of falsehood" and trying to fool the people through such politics. "Confidence of the people can not be earned by telling lies," she said.

Hasina was also critical of the BNP chief for what she said frequently speaking against India only when she is in the opposition. "We never heard her uttering a single word against India while in power."

In her 50-minute speech, Hasina recalled the brutal killings of her father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, mother Fazilatunnesa Mujib and other members of her family on August 15, 1975. She described many stories relating to her mother's glorious role in different historic events leading to the country's struggle for independence.

Chaired by Chhatra League president Bahadur Bepari, the meeting was also addressed by Ajoy Kar, general secretary of the organisation.

Babu relieved

From page 1

Akhতারুজামান yesterday, informing him about the measure. Party General Secretary Zillur Rahman signed the letter.

Asked whether there was any plan to expel Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury from the party, Mannan said, "The authority to expel anyone from the organisation lies with the party's Central Executive Committee."

Mannan could not say whether the party's Working Committee would meet in the near future to discuss the issue.

Babu was not available for comment till writing of this report at 9:30 pm.

Soccer

From page 1

But the pattering of one-way traffic inevitably followed in the second half as the stubborn Bangladesh defence hardly allowed the Malaysian an inch to make a single positive move.

The only sad episode of an otherwise excellent day for the home team was the loss of dependable goalkeeper Aminul, who was stretched off the ground early in the second half after sustaining an injury.

With Aminul's departure Bangladesh spent anxious moments but substitute custodian Apel was a confident man under the bar in his debut for the national team. The day also marked the debut of Anwar, who came as a substitute for Monwar in the second half.

Masud Rana was declared the man-of-the-match and received a cash award of Taka 10,000.

Survey reports on slum dwellers within 2 weeks

The second meeting of the high level committee on the planned eviction of slum dwellers and their rehabilitation yesterday decided that all government and non-government organisations would complete the survey on slum dwellers to rehabilitate them on the basis of the specified format, reports BSS.

The meeting decided that the said organisations would submit their survey reports within two weeks.

The survey would identify the eligible slum dwellers who could be rehabilitated following and earlier decision of the first meeting of the committee that was chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The second meeting was presided over by Home, Post and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim.

Khaleda

From page 1

become imbalanced at the unprecedented success of the recent road marches, mass processions in Chittagong and other programmes, and has hatched a conspiracy to foil BNP's peaceful movement.

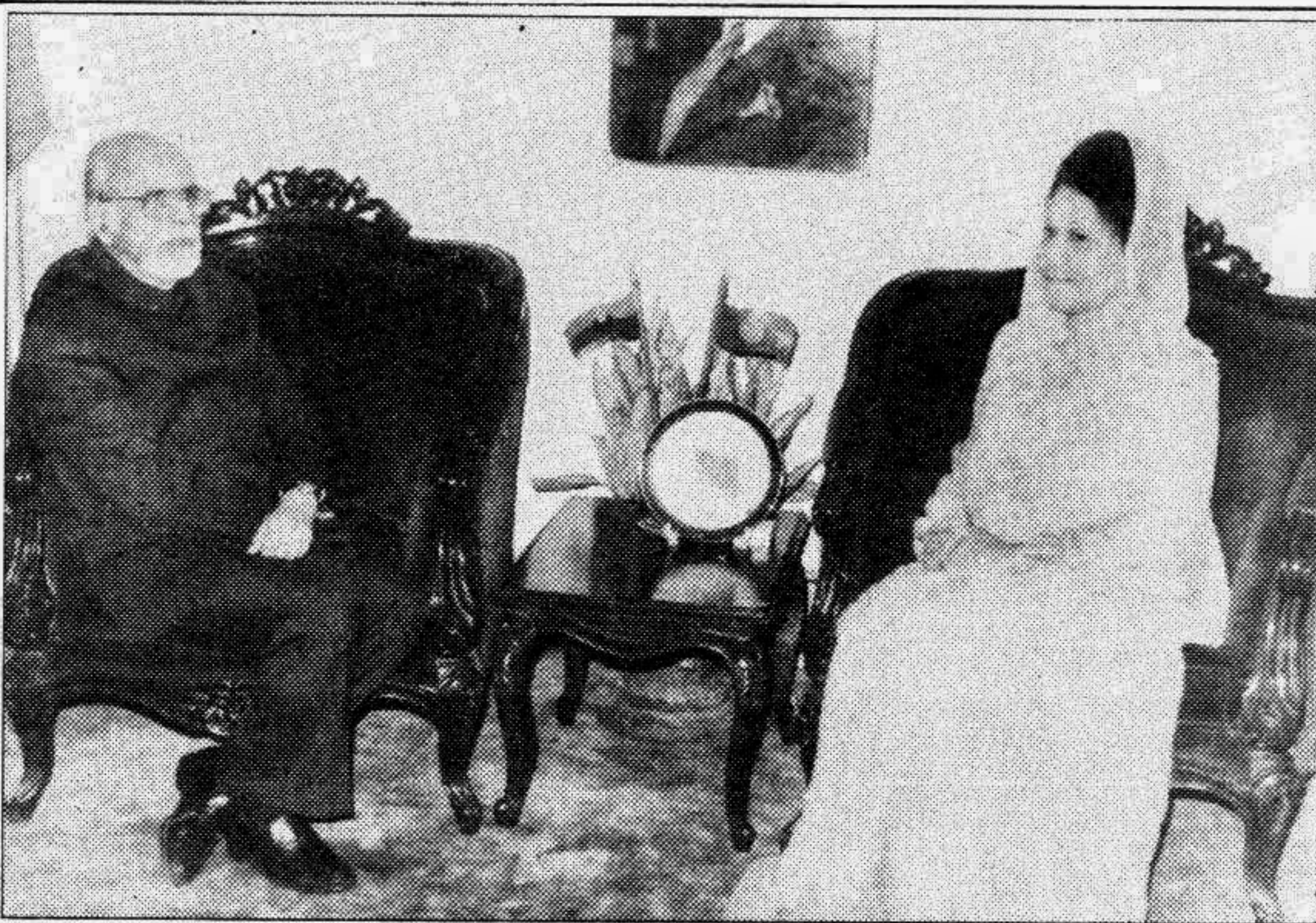
She said the government sensing a mass upsurge resorted to attack on the mass procession by its party terrorists. "We consider the attack on Janakantha office as a pre-planned conspiracy to destroy the image of BNP publicly. The terrorists, who attacked the BNP procession, also attacked the Janakantha office," she added.

Begum Zia demanded judicial inquiry into the attack on the procession and Janakantha office and said BNP believes in freedom of the press and democracy.

She strongly protested the arrest of Anwar Zahid without any investigation and demanded his unconditional release.

Meanwhile, the opposition Liaison Committee in a press statement yesterday strongly condemned and protested the arrest of BNP Chairperson's Press Advisor Anwar Zahid.

It also condemned the "Awami terrorists' attack on a peaceful mass procession. And demanded immediate release of Anwar Zahid."



Former Indian Prime Minister I K Gujral called on Opposition Leader and BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia at her official residence yesterday. — Star photo

Gujral, Humphrey call on Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

Former Indian Prime Minister I K Gujral and US energy team leader Calvin Humphrey separately called on BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia in the city yesterday evening.

The meetings were held at the official residence of the opposition leader.

There was no formal briefing after the talks from any side.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Affairs of the US Department of Energy Calvin Humphrey had a 45-minute talks from 6:15 pm. US Ambassador John C Holzman was present.

Emerging from the meeting Calvin declined to make any comment and said they would brief the press at airport today.

Talking to newsmen, I K Gujral said he meets with government and opposition leaders whenever he comes to Bangladesh. This time I came here to attend the conference of Asian parliamentarians, he said.

He said: As neighbouring countries, the Indo-Bangladesh relationship should be kept above the politics.

When asked whether he had discussed with Begum Zia the gas issue, Gujral sarcastically said, "Incidentally, both of us are former prime ministers, and so are powerless to discuss power."

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Dr Moeen Khan and Dr Khondker Mosharraf Hossain were present during the discussions.

Eleven parties demand Bring back slum dwellers to previous places

By Staff Correspondent

While eleven political parties made a joint statement at a discussion meeting yesterday urging the authorities to arrange rehabilitation of the slum dwellers before eviction, most discussants agreed that there must be a strategy to discourage illegal occupation of land and setting up of new slums in the city.

The discussion meeting, held at the Jatiya Press Club, was jointly organised by the Communist Party, Gano Forum, two factions of BSD, Sramik Krishak Samajbadi Dal, Shamyabadi Dal, Ganotantrik Majdur Party, Gonotantri Party, Gonoazadi League and the Communist Kendra.

In the statement the eleven parties also put forward a six-point demand that include bringing back the evicted slum dwellers to their previous places.

They also demanded construction of high rise buildings for low cost accommodation, hostels and dormitories for women; recognition of slum dwellers by giving them identification papers; land reform and publication of details on total amount of funds collected in the name of rehabilitation, welfare and housing by the government, NGOs and other organisations.

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain said the city is not a place for the rich only. Contribution of the slum dwellers must be recognised and they must be a part of the development of the city. There has never been any government initiative to create any provision for the poor in the city, Dr Kamal said.

Rahat Khan, Acting Editor of Ittefaq, said there must be a rehabilitation programme before evicting the slum dwellers. "By keeping the slums in the city permanently, we are nurturing poverty. Ways must be found to relocate these poor people and ensure their right to living," he said.

ABM Musa, a free-lance columnist, said by keeping the slums in the city we are encouraging illegal occupation of public land. "We are talking about rehabilitation, but where do slums would be set up?" he said.

Attackers on city Oil Mill still at large

By Staff Correspondent

In a letter to the Home Minister Mohammad Nasim, the Bangladesh Vegetable Oil Refiners' and Vanaspati Manufacturers' Association has called for immediate steps to arrest the terrorists responsible for last Wednesday's attack on one of the largest edible oil refineries in the country.

The letter, signed by the association president M A Rouf Choudhury, said a local group of about 25 illegal toll collectors damaged property of City Vegetable Oil Mills Ltd and other factories in Rugganj on August 25. A case was also filed with the Rugganj thana, Narayanganj the same day.

During the armed attack, five workers of the mill sustained serious injuries while costly equipment of the mills were damaged. A member of the parliament and former and existing presidents of FBCCI visited mills spot.

The letter said that none of the accused has so far been arrested. The terrorists have demanded Taka two lakh from the mills authorities and continued to threaten the workers of the mills.

In such a situation, the association sought the home minister's intervention to arrest the terrorists.

Jute, textile workers postpone today's strike

The workers and employees of state-owned jute, textile and yarn mills has postponed their strike scheduled for today, reports UNB.

BNP's founding anniversary today

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has taken up elaborate programmes to observe the party's 21st founding anniversary across the country today, reports UNB.

The programmes include holding of discussion meetings, rallies, *mitad mahfil* and cultural functions.

A day-long programme has also been drawn up in Dhaka on the occasion.

The programmes include hoisting of national and party flags at central office and placing of wreaths at the mazar of president Ziaur Rahman.

BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia will place wreaths at the mazar.

Later, a discussion will be held at the auditorium of the Engineers' Institution at 4 pm. Khaleda Zia will address the meeting.

Shell, Unocal

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However, the areas to be excluded are yet to be demarcated. Shell Oil was negotiating with the government on Block 5 and Unocal is negotiating on Block 7.

Sources said the environment ministry undertook a study last month to identify the area in the Sundarbans that is to be excluded from exploration activities.

In a press release yesterday, managing director of Shell Bangladesh Exploration and Development Andrew Vaughan said, "We understand the concern about the Sundarbans."

We share that concern and are very much aware of the sensitivities in that area. That is why in our bid document submitted jointly by Shell and Cairn in July 1997 we have stated that no exploration activities are envisaged in the ecologically sensitive and protected area of the Sundarbans National Park.

"Our approach is based on partnership. It must be remembered that all our activities require the appropriate government consent."

Sources told The Daily Star that the signing of the PSCs for Block 5 and Block 7 would take more time. The government is also negotiating with Shell for Block 10.

Ctg: 4 killed

From page 1

Administrative Officer Nazir Ahmed Majumder, 30, and microbus driver Abdus Sabur, 26.

The Shimizu Corporation is engaged in development work of the Chittagong International Airport.

The injured are Nepalese engineer Lila 55, and Assistant Security Officer Karmal.

They were admitted to Holy Crescent Hospital in a critical condition. The driver of the bus managed to escape. A case was filed in this connection.

DESA engr

From page 1

of various equipment. The DESA Chairman made this allegation at a meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Power in early August and informed that he had stopped procurement of equipment worth Tk 100 crore as he smelt "fishy deals."

"Equipment and cables often procured by these engineers never reach the DESA godown. These are sold in the black market by these corrupt employees," said a source.

"Sometimes, a section of these corrupt officials and employees report that they have repaired a certain line and extended it. But in reality, they do nothing of that sort. The materials and equipment are actually sold in the black market," he pointed out.

Besides, they often repair distribution lines with old and poor quality cables instead of using the materials procured for that purpose."

A system loss of 27 per cent has made DESA a losing concern although it is supposed to earn a profit of at least Tk 20 crore a month. The system loss is mainly caused by theft of power.

Babu orders

From page 1

out of the city but is expected to start work from today on his return.

The incident was followed by filing of six cases with the Motiheel police. Both sides filed three cases each accusing the rival group of vandalism.

CID probe

Meanwhile, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police has taken up the matter following directives from Home Minister Mohammad Nasim. A CID team yesterday visited the head office of the bank.

The team led by an ASP asked the Additional Managing Director (AMD) and secretary of UCBL to submit a report on the incident. Both UCBL officers were present in the boardroom during the incident.

Talking to The Daily Star, UCBL Chairman Zafar Chowdhury admitted that some of the employees of the bank had not gone to work since the incident.

Despite repeated attempts, the UCBL MD could not be reached for comment.

Odhikar survey

661 raped, acid thrown on 99 in last 8 months

By Staff Correspondent

As many as 661 women were raped, 99 persons became acid victims, 46 persons died