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PM's directive

Consult ministries before going for Apparel Board

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday advised the Industries Minister to consult the ministries of textile and finance before formally proposing the formation of an autonomous body to supervise and monitor the country's export oriented garments sector.

The PM gave the directive at the weekly cabinet meeting held yesterday afternoon.

According to cabinet sources, the Commerce Minister had proposed that an Apparel Board be set up to supervise and monitor the country's garments sector. The board, which would be headed by the Commerce Minister, will also take care of various problems of the export oriented garments. According to the Commerce Ministry's proposal, the board

See Page 11 Col 6

Khaleda cold-shoulders

Hasina's offer for talks

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia last night cold-shouldered Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's offer for talks on specific demand towards resolving the political impasse.

Avoiding direct reply to a question on her response to the Prime Minister's offer for dialogue, Khaleda Zia said, 'ours is now a single demand'.

When her notice was drawn to Sheikh Hasina's statement inviting her for talks on specific demands, she said, 'I've not heard nor do I know what she (Hasina) said'.

Asked if she reject the offer for talks, the BNP chairperson avoided direct reply.

Talking exclusively to UNB as she was leaving the official residence at Minto Road at 9:50 pm, Khaleda stood firm to the one-point demand — resignation of the government and early election.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing a public meeting in Bagmati on Sunday, invited the opposition leader without naming her for talks on specific demands instead of enforcing frequent hartal that caused sufferings to the commonman.

Launching a virulent campaign against the 39-month old Awami League government she threw one-point demand from the Paltan Maidan on September 22.

Dhaka protests

killing of Bangladeshi by BSF

Dhaka formally protested to Indian government the killing of yet another Bangladeshi national, Enamul Haque, by the BSF at a frontier village in Kurigram district on Friday, reports UNB.

The government over the past weeks had already expressed grave concern over series of border incidents in which a number of Bangladeshis, including three BDR personnel, were killed inside Bangladesh territory.

"Once again another Bangladeshi national Enamul Haque, 18, was killed by the BSF at a border village in Kurigram," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a protest note yesterday.

In connection with the latest incident of shooting by the Indian Border Security Force, the government of Bangladesh formally protested the 'unlawful killing' of a Bangladeshi national by the BSF 'within Bangladesh territory without any provocation'.

Inside Today

Article

The BJP's Dual Agenda: The 'Non-hidden' One is Bad Too
by Pratul Bidwai
Page 4

Focus

The Prothom Alo pioneers a new movement
Page 5

Prayer Timings

October 5

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:30	5:00
Zohr	12:45	1:25
Asr	4:15	4:30
Maghrib	5:55	6:00
Esha	7:45	8:15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Gold glitters for booters, finally

From Hasan Masood

KATHMANDU, Oct 4: After 15 years of shattered dreams, Bangladesh football team finally got their first-ever gold in the SAF Games when they beat hosts Nepal by a solitary goal in the final at the Dasharath Rangashala (stadium) here this evening.

In the topsy-turvy final of the 8 SAF Games, ace striker Alfaz Ahmed scored the all-important winner in injury time of the first half, stunning the 18,000 capacity home crowd.

Alfaz, the nimble centre forward who was out of form in the three previous matches, rose to the occasion, this time to shoot the ball home from a goal-mouth melee.

Matiur Rahman lobbed a flag kick from the left side from which Jewel Rana's header put it a position for Alfaz to take his first attempt that Nepal cus-



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odian Binod Kharel did well to parry. Alfaz was fortunately at hand to take his second attempt from the ensuing scramble, much to the delight of the few hundred Bangladeshis who came all along from Bangladesh by road to cheer their national team.

This was Bangladesh's first win in the SAF Games final after failing on four previous occasions out of the seven meets.

This was also sweet revenge for Bangladesh, who lost the first SAF gold to hosts Nepal 2-4 way back in 1984.

Buoyed by the morale-boost-

ing win over pre-tournament favourites India in the first semi-final last Saturday, Bangladesh came up with their best performance in the competition by adopting the same defensive strategy.

They adopted the 5-3-2 formation with a tight defence, which left no room for the otherwise fast Nepalese forwards.

Bangladesh began the match with a positive attitude and concentrated on the lead right from the beginning. They launched their first attack in the first minute through the left

See Page 11 Col 6



STRIKING GOLD: Alfaz Ahmed shoots the all-important goal against hosts Nepal.

— BPJA photo by Amran Hossain

Plot to assassinate PM unveiled: Nasim

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim has urged the opposition to 'stop conspiring', saying his intelligence unit has uncovered a plot to kill Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, reports UNB.

"The latest conspiracy was to kill the prime minister on her return (from Paris) after receiving the UNESCO Peace Award," the home minister told newsmen at his chamber at the Secretariat in the city yesterday.

Elaborating 'conspiracies' hatched by BNP and some other opposition parties since Awami League assumed power, he confidently said no conspiracy will be successful as the government enjoys people's support.

The home minister, however, would not elaborate the plot to assassinate Hasina for the sake of further investigation to bring the culprits to book.

He also did not divulge names of individuals or parties involved in the 'conspiracy' to kill the prime minister like her father, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Referring to the prime minister's repeated call to the opposition for resolving all problems through discussion in parliament, Nasim said people hoped it would respond to the

dialogue offer. There might be differences... But all the discrepancies could be removed, all problems solved across the table," he said. But if they do not come, the government will have nothing to do but going its own way, he warned.

BNP holds janaza: Demonstration on Thursday

By Staff Correspondent

BNP yesterday organised a *Gayehana Janaza* for Sherpur district Jatiyatabadi Secchashabak Dal leader Bidyut Talukder who was killed during the countrywide hartal on Sunday.

Maulana Shah Mohammad Nesarul Haq conducted the *janaza* at the south gate of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque after the *asr* prayers.

BNP leaders including secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Tariqul Islam, Shahjahan Siraj, Prof MA Mannan, Mirza Abbas, Sadek Hossain Khoka MP, Amanullah Aman MP, Jatiya Party leader

See Page 11 Col 6

AL activists clash with police as court rejects bail petition

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Oct 4: At least 20 people including four policemen were injured when more than a thousand Awami League activists clashed with police at the Narayanganj court premises at Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday evening.

The clash ensued after the court rejected bail to four Awami League leaders and activists and ordered sending them to jail.

Police and witnesses said Sramik League leader Kawser Ahmed Palash, Fatullah Jubo League president Masudur Rahman and two Sramik League activists Ishaq and Khaled appeared at the Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court yesterday in connection with a murder case lodged with Fatullah thana in 1994.

The court rejected their bail prayers and sent them to jail. When party activists came to know about the court order, they, armed with sticks, marched towards the court

See page 11 Col 5

BNP MPs tell NDI officials Ruling AL has turned JS into party office

By Staff Correspondent

The visiting officials of the Washington based National Democratic Institute (NDI) yesterday had a lengthy discussion with BNP MPs on various aspects of Bangladesh's parliamentary system.

The NDI as part of its series of discussions with the parties represented in the Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) held its first round of discussion with the mainstream opposition at Hotel Sheraton. The NDI officials will hold similar exchange of views with Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami MPs today and ruling Awami League MPs tomorrow.

On the first day of the workshop, the BNP MPs and NDI officials exchanged views on the role of the Speaker, the parliamentary standing committee system, the role of civil society in the legislative process and scheduling and organisation of parties in parliamentary de-

bates. At the discussion, the NDI officials sought suggestions for making the parliament more effective.

The BNP lawmakers told the NDI officials that the ruling party had already turned the Jatiya Sangsad into its 'party office' and that the opposition bench members were hardly allowed to talk on important issues like law and order situation.

The BNP MPs also said past three and a half years' experience clearly indicated that neither the Speaker nor the Treasury Bench wished to make the parliament effective.

They said the BNP as a responsible opposition from the inception of the 7 Jatiya Sangsad tried its best to make parliament effective and turn it into a central point of all political activities, but it could not be done because of autocratic at-

See Page 11 Col 7

TOSHIBA TV RANGS GROUP Bangladesh 229 in first innings

By Sports Reporter

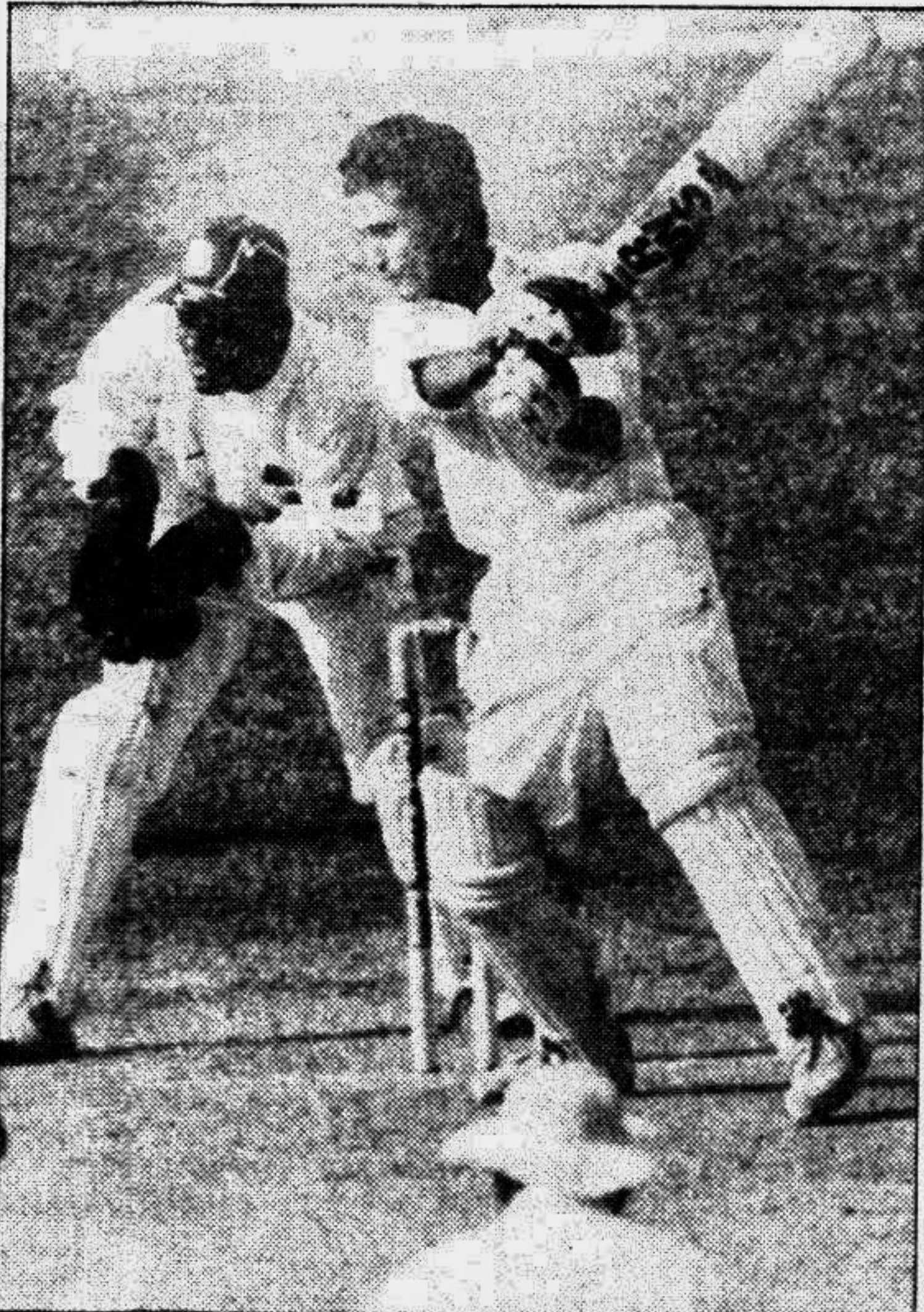
Bangladesh enjoyed a promising first day of their three-day match against the West Indies at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

In their first-ever first-class game against a Test-playing country, Bangladesh garnered 229 before being all out in 80.3 overs. Javed Omar (53) and Khaled Masood (59no) hit two gutsy half-centuries to make sure that the home side bat out almost the entire day.

Winning the toss, Bangladesh captain Aminul Islam opted to bat. But his decision almost backfired as Bangladesh plunged into deep trouble losing opener Mehrez Hossain without any score on the board. And they were then left tottering at 27 for three in only 15.5.

Despite the early setback, which also saw the dismissal of Aminul, a doughty one-downer Omar held the fort till the 43rd over, featuring in four small but useful partnerships with opener Shahriar Hossain (11), Aminul Islam (5), Naimur Rahman (8) and vice-captain Khaled Masood, who scored 40 off 60 deliveries.

The three-day match will continue today



Bangladesh wicketkeeper-batsman Khaled Masood square cuts during his unbeaten 59 yesterday.

— Star photo by AKM Mohsin

'Land policy should have provisions to protect the poor, environment'

By Reaz Ahmad

The proposed National Land Use Policy should have provisions to check further marginalisation of the poor and protect the environment, according to experts, farmers groups and NGOs.

They gave their views to the Daily Star yesterday on the eve of a high-level meeting at the land ministry to finalise the draft policy, prepared on orders from the Prime Minister to ensure planned use of scarce land in the over-populated country.

The proposed policy should not be finalised and approved in a haste. All aspects of land use for different purposes should be carefully examined,

keeping provisions for environmental protection and checking gradual marginalisation of the poor, particularly in rural areas, they said.

State Minister for Land Rashed Mosharraf will chair today's meeting, the second one on the proposed policy, to be attended by high officials of ministries concerned, experts and representatives of farmers groups and NGOs.

Sources said the National Land Use Policy will have guidelines for land use for agriculture, housing, urbanization, forestry, water bodies, embankments, roads and high-

ways, railway, educational institutions, industries, mining, health facilities and for other purposes.

Khushi Kabir, Coordinator of Nijera Kori, said the policy should be more people-oriented and have provisions for protecting the environment and biodiversity.

At the earlier meeting on September 18, many experts suggested the government to have elaborate discussion on important issues like the existing land holding pattern, the trend and record-keeping, she said. Poor farmers are becoming marginalised. This trend has to be checked, she said.

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Executive Director of ALRD, an NGO, emphasised reforms in land laws and record system.

Both Khushi and Mizanur said the committees to be formed at different tiers to oversee land use, as suggested in the draft policy, should be made 'functional' and not 'ornamental'.

Talking to this correspondent, the state minister said environmental aspects will be given utmost importance and suggestions from different quarters will be incorporated in the policy.

News Analysis BNP's politics of too much convenience

By Nazmul Ashraf

BNP's on-again-off-again campaign against Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena has been anything but a logical political behaviour.

Ever since the party lost the 1996 general elections — when it first discovered political bias in the former civil servant — it has been an inconsistent campaign to discredit the man the BNP itself had proposed for the crucial job.

An analysis into the relevant events highlights the gap between the BNP words and deeds. As the facts go, neither has the largest opposition party been able to prove the allegations it brought against the CEC time and again, nor has it, almost without any exception, succeeded to stick to its own public pronouncements.

It demanded resignation of the CEC whenever it lost or was in fear of losing an election, but kept quiet when it won!

It had announced after the first round of by-polls presided over by Abu Hena that the party would not contest elections while he is in office.

But it did.

The party, in the first place, has so far failed to prove any of the allegations against the CEC.

The fact remains that most of the charges have been made through public statements. And in cases when it filed complaints with the Election Commission, either the party failed to follow up on the complaints or on-the-spot inquiries found the allegations baseless.

Public statements have it that BNP chief Khaleda Zia was very much confident of winning the June 12, 1996 general elections conducted by Abu Hena, who was appointed through a consensus between her party and the Awami League.

"People must elect my party... we'll win and must win if the election is free and fair," Khaleda said on June 12, 1996, the polling day, when AL chief Sheikh Hasina alleged 'conspiracy to manipulate the election results'. Both the parties accused each other of rigging the elections.

As pictures published in newspapers the following day showed, Khaleda was all smiles reflecting her happiness about the way elections had been conducted. And Hasina put up a gloomy face fearing debacle once again.

The pictures may not have told the whole story, but the

See Page 11 Col 7

NGOs want to finish their slum projects

By Staff Correspondent

NGO leaders told the NGO Affairs Bureau yesterday that they would wind up their activities in the city slums in phases and asked the government to allow them to complete their ongoing projects, sources said.

DG of the Bureau Giasuddin Pathan told the NGO leaders at a meeting that their proposal would be conveyed to the authorities concerned.

More meetings between the two sides will be held before a decision is taken regarding eviction and rehabilitation of slum dwellers, the sources said.

Yesterday's meeting was convened by Pathan to find ways to remove slum dwellers from the city in phases and rehabilitate them back in their villages as per a recent government decision.

The meeting held at the NGO Bureau was attended by representatives of various NGOs.

Tayebi murder: Interpol help sought

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 4: The CID has sought help of Interpol to round up the alleged mastermind behind the killing of Indian national Jibran Tayebi.

In a letter to the Interpol the CID requested it to trace out Yasin Rahman Titu, son of a local industrialist, CID source said.

Meanwhile, another person, identified as Md Siddique, arrested in connection with the murder, gave his confessional statement in the court today.

But CID and Detective Branch police failed to record confessional statement of alleged main killer Osman in the court.

Earlier, Osman confessed his involvement in the murder during the five-day police remand, CID and DB sources said.

So far, the CID arrested seven terrorists in connection with the murder and five of them gave confessional statements.

Liquor poisoning kills 3 at Lalmonirhat

LALMONIRHAT, Oct 4: A liquor tragedy in the district town claimed three lives today, reports UNB.

The victims were identified as Railway sweeper Suresh, 40, Kashem, 28, and Jogesh, 45, of Sadar thana. They died at Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital and Railway Hospital.

At least 20 people fell sick after they took spiritous rectified spirit.

Ten of the sick people were admitted to the hospitals while 10 others treated at private clinics.

Local people said some homeopathic pharmacies are the main source of rectified spirit.

Over 100 people died and another 200 fell sick in Netrokona and Narsingdi early this year.

City's garbage collection system in a mess

By Staff Correspondent

The garbage collection system of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) is in a mess, with many of its recently installed demountable containers and trucks going out of service, officials said.

They said about 100 demountable containers 'have broken down' over the last few weeks while less than 80 out of the 104 container trucks are now in service.

Most of the 408 demountable containers have become unusable as they have rusted badly forcing us to withdraw more than 90 from the city roads," said an official in the DCC's Conservancy Department.

The officials said after the withdrawal their problems

See Page 11 Col 6

Osmany Udyan Felling of trees to start any day after 10 pm?

By Staff Correspondent

Police were seen picking up some floating men and women from the Osmany Udyan in the city yesterday noon and sources concerned said clearing of the park was 'in preparation' of starting construction of the NAM summit conference hall.

They also said a big local construction firm has been 'selected' to start the construction work for an 'unspecified sum of money'. The firm may start felling the trees in the Udyan sometime after 10 pm 'any day'.

The step to fell the trees at night follows protests from people of different walks of life against the government decision to build the conference hall in the lush green park, the sources pointed out.

Cases against 3 murders Hunt for Shikdar's first wife Khodeja

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Oct 4: Notorious terrorist Ershad Shikdar's first wife Khodeja Begum is being wanted by police to build up evidence regarding the killing of advocate Jahangir Kabir Fatik, telephone operator Akimul and house tutor Jahangir Hossain.

According to the judicial confession of Shikdar's bodyguard Noor-e-Alam, Khodeja had affairs with all the three.

Police are also looking for information on whether her three fiancés were killed at 'Swarnakomal' or at ice factory at Skidghat.

It is almost certain that Shikdar killed Fatik, Jahangir

and Akimul for having affairs with Khodeja, police said quoting the confessional statement of Noor-e-Alam.

Khodeja left 'Swarnakomal' in the middle of the last month along with her children after cases against murders of the three were recorded with Khulna thana.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Commissioner (HQ) of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) today said Ershad Shikdar, now in Jessore Central Jail, is physically fit to go to Khulna to face interrogation of the special teams and stand trial in the

See page 11 Col 5