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72 days to the
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IG's desire for non-police job kicks off lobbying

By Staff Correspondent
Lobbying by top police officials is going on for the post of Inspector General of Police as IGP AYB Siddiquee has expressed his desire to the authorities concerned to be posted outside the police department.

Sources in the home ministry told The Daily Star yesterday that Siddiquee verbally requested the 'highest authorities' to post him elsewhere. Siddiquee has more than one year to retire.

"Most of the top police officials are now busy lobbying for the post of IG, giving rise to grouping among their juniors", one source said.

A High Court order for reinstatement of three senior police officials has added to the lobbying. The court on July 1 ordered the government to reinstate

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Hartal: Rallies, processions in city today

By Staff Correspondent
The BNP-led opposition alliance has called a countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal tomorrow (Thursday) to protest Indian "aggression" and press the demand for resignation of the Awami League government.

In support of the hartal, main opposition BNP yesterday held a series of public rallies and brought out processions in different areas of the city, including Kotwali, Sutrapur, Dhamondi, Pallabi, Mohammadpur and Kafrel.

The BNP and Jatiya Party will hold separate rallies and bring out torch processions in the city this evening while Jamaat-e-Islami and Islamic Okya Jote will stage demonstration.

BNP will bring out torch procession from 11 places in the city in support of the hartal. Main torch procession will be brought out from BNP's central office a Naya Paltan in the evening while 10 other processions will be brought out from New Market, Mohakhali, Gopabagh play ground, Farmgate, Mohammadpur, Kafrel bus stand, Mirpur town hall, Shampur, Uttara and Rampura.

EU ambassador meets Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday said SAARC activities in many cases have turned out to be disappointing as India and the present Bangladesh government gave importance to various sub-regional groupings, bypassing the seven-nation association.

She was talking to European Union ambassador and mission chief in Dhaka Antonio Desu Menezes at her 29 Minto Road

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New round of global trade talks far from certain

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Prayer Timings
October 20

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:30	5:00
Jorh	12:45	1:20
Asr	4:10	4:25
Maghrib	5:38	5:42
Esha	7:45	8:15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Dighinala tribals blamed
30 houses of Bangalees 'torched'
From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Oct 19: Tension mounted in Khagrachhari after over 30 dwelling houses of Bangalee settlers were torched near Babuchhara bazar in Dighinala thana last night, sources said.

Administration sources said that 30 houses made with bamboo were gutted and three others damaged in the arson which took place at midnight last night.

Sources said that Bangalee

settlers blamed the tribals for setting fire while the tribals denied it.

Sources believed that the fire incident was a sequel to Saturday's clash that took place at Babuchhara bazar involving tribals, Bangalee settlers and army personnel.

With the death of another

injured, Yusuf Ali, last night at Chittagong Medical College Hospital, the death toll in the clash

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BNP, allies to boycott, resist UZ polls
By Staff Correspondent

BNP-led opposition alliance has decided to boycott the forthcoming Upazila polls and resist it until if the government tries to hold elections without opposition participation.

The decision was taken yesterday at a meeting of secretaries general of the four component parties of the alliance and its Liaison Committee with Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad. The alliance comprises BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Okya Jote.

The meeting that lasted about an hour from 11:30am also decided to intensify the

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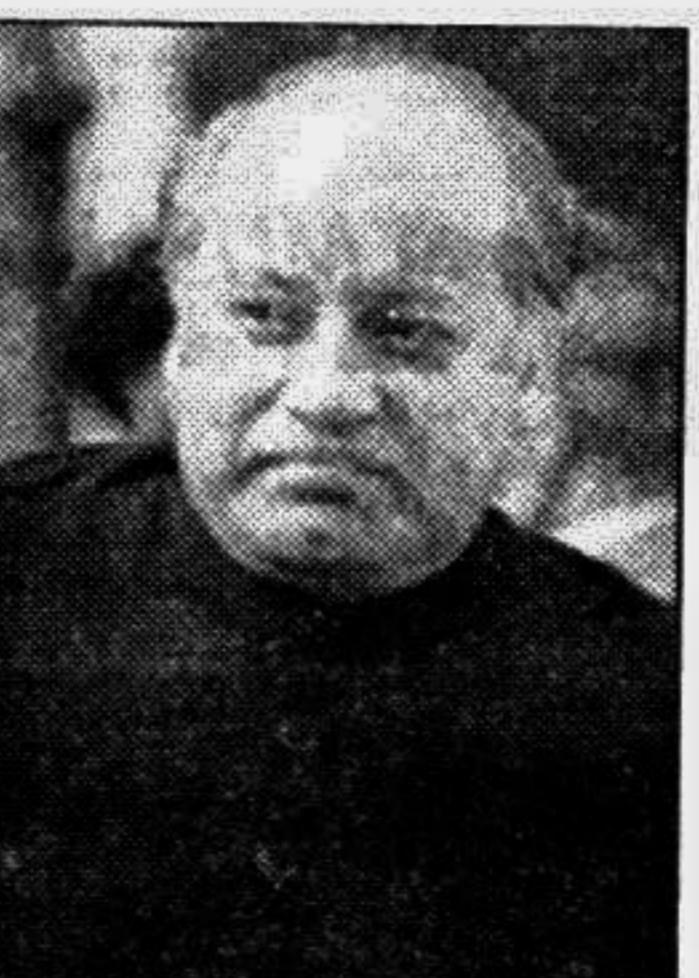
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Sharif 'treated well' in protective custody
Probe into 'aircraft incident, corrupt practices' starts



Nawaz Sharif

Ing Musharraf from landing at Karachi airport, even though it had only seven minutes worth of fuel left.

Information from all agencies is being gathered in other areas including loan default and tax evasion and other activities," he said.

The spokesman said legal procedures would be followed on bringing charges against Sharif or anyone else.

But "no conclusion" had been made yet on whether to put the deposed premier on trial before a military court, alluding to a report in Islamabad daily The News that Sharif might be tried by a field court martial.

What can I say right now is that there will be a complete

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Karwan Bazar in shambles
By Morshed Ali Khan



An unauthorised truck terminal has taken over more than half of Karwan Bazar Road at the busy business district of the city, blocking all vehicular movements through it.

The terminal was set up over the last six months ago near the Janata Tower, in front of the DCC's Zonal Office-6.

The Karwan Bazar area houses the largest wholesale vegetable market in the country surrounded by hundreds of posh corporate offices. About 200 trucks arrive there each day bringing merchandise from different parts of the country. Some do not bother to move out while others wait on the road for days to trade their merchandise.

The truck drivers who parked their vehicles on the road said they had to pay Tk 50 to the representative of the drivers' association each time they parked loaded trucks.

Munir, a truck driver from the western part of the country, showed a 10-taka receipt from the association and said, in fact, he had to pay Tk 50. The drivers also pointed at a locked room nearby with a signboard reading 'Jatiyatabadi Dal and Jubo Dal' and said the partymen were collecting Tk 500-a-day from the terminal.

Traders of the wholesale market blamed DCC for its failure to remove the terminal despite repeated appeals. Mohammad Shahabuddin, president of the traders' association, told the Daily Star, "The issue is very complicated. There is no specific law in this regard. We cannot really hold anybody responsible for such an act due to loopholes in the existing laws."

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'97 bomb attack
Charges framed against 11 BNP men

By Court Correspondent
Charges were framed yesterday in a Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court against 11 BNP leaders and activists in a case filed in connection with hurling of bombs on a police vehicle during a hartal day in 1997.

Police filed the case with Motijheel thana on September 22, 1997 accusing BNP leader Mirza Abbas, Gayeaswar Roy, JCD leader Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anny and eight others for hurling bombs on the police vehicle in the city's Naya Paltan area the same day leaving at least three police personnel injured, according to the FIR.

Police submitted the chargesheet accusing the eleven on September 19, 1998.

During yesterday's proceedings, ten of the 11 accused appeared before the court while Anasullah, a BNP activist, has been absconding since the incident.

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Seven drown in Kaligram beel in Naogaon

From Our Correspondent
RAJSHAHI, Oct 19: Seven people drowned when an engine boat capsized in Kaligram beel under Manda thana of Naogaon district yesterday evening.

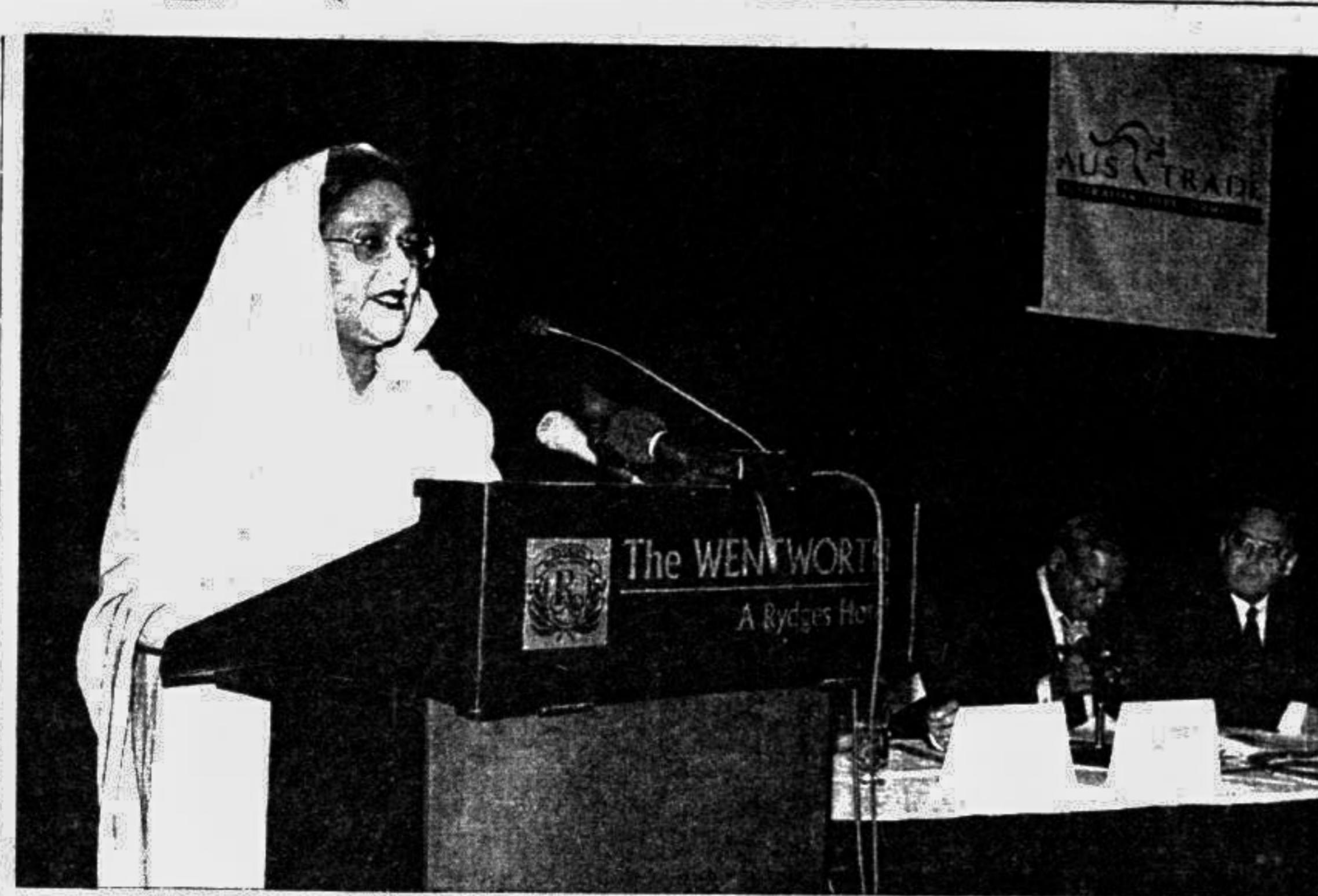
The boat driven by shallow-engine was packed with people returning from a village market at Sabaihat. It capsized in the beel due to heavy current and strong wind, witnesses said.

Local people rescued some 40 people but seven people drowned in the beel.

The dead were identified as Hurmat Ali, 60, Nirmal Kumar, 55, Akbar Ali, 60, Sefatullah, 62, Naoshad, 40, Sheuli, 8, and an unidentified child, 6.

Two others — Habibur, 30, and Monzat, 30, — remained missing till writing this report tonight.

More than 30 people were injured during the incident. Of them, six were admitted to RMCH in a critical condition.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the Australian business leaders in Sydney yesterday.

—PID photo

**PM offers package of incentives to Australians
'Invest in bigger way, be partners in progress'**

Sydney, Oct 19: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today invited Australian investors to come forward in a bigger way for investment in Bangladesh, taking advantage of a package of lucrative incentives in a liberalised economy, reports UNB.

"Foreign investors are eligible to take advantage of a wide range of liberal tax and other fiscal incentives," she told a meeting of leading businessmen and entrepreneurs and corporate leaders of Australia, sponsored by Bangladesh Trade and Investment Forum at Wentworth Hotel in the morning.

Hasina said her visit to Australia as the first ever by a Bangladesh Prime Minister symbolises the country's determination to promote and project numerous promises and potentials of Bangladesh to

Australian entrepreneurs and invite them to "join as our partners in progress."

Claiming a dramatic economic change taking place in the country, she said Australian business people, who are already in Bangladesh, know very well that Canberra's exports to Dhaka grew by 37 per cent in past two years to over 300 million Australian dollars.

Australia's exports to Bangladesh totalled 306 million Australian dollars in 1998 calendar year while its imports were only 44 million Australian dollars.

The Prime Minister attached top priority to the development of the power sector and sought investment in this area saying "we have designed a comprehensive reforms package for the energy, financial and other vital sectors of the economy."

Hasina referred to the fiscal and monetary policies being pursued to ensure faster economic growth and said: "Regulatory and administrative constraints are being constantly reviewed to simplify procedures and facilitate business transactions to remove barriers to growth."

Spelling out her government's

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PM arrives in Canberra: Talks today

CANBERRA, Oct 19: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina arrived here today from Sydney as part of her five-day official visit to Australia, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister will hold formal talks tomorrow with her Australian counterpart John Howard and a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on trade cooperation will be signed between the two countries in the presence of Sheikh Hasina during her stay in Canberra.

Australian Minister for Trade and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Mark Vailo received the prime minister at the Royal Air Force Base Fairbairn at Canberra International Airport.

A large number of Bangladeshis were also present with National Flags and bouquets to receive their beloved leader.

The Australian National University will tomorrow confer the degree of Doctorate of Law on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in recognition of her distinguished contributions to the service of society.

Young man beaten to death in city

By Staff Correspondent

A young man was beaten to death by a gang of miscreants at Madrassah Road in the city's Agargaon area on Monday night.

The dead was identified as Jasim Uddin, 15, son of Alauddin, a resident of a slum near Agargaon passport office.

Police and hospital sources said, a gang of seven miscreants attacked Jasim and Shamim while they were sitting in front of a teastall at Madrassah Road at about 7:30 pm.

The gang appeared in front of the teastall by rickshaws and had an altercation with Jasim and Shamim. At one stage, the gang beat up Jasim and Shamim mercilessly.

Jasim and Shamim were rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) by the local people where Jasim died at around 1:30 am yesterday.

The body was sent to the

Time bomb recovered in Faridpur

FARIDPUR, Oct 19: Police recovered a time bomb from inside a cinema hall at Madhukali thana headquarters today, reports UNB.

Police said unidentified persons placed the bomb in Neelabori Cinema Hall at Madhukali bazar.

A sweeper of the cinema hall found the bomb just before a show at 2 pm.

Finding a device, separated from the battery, he informed the hall owners. They later informed local police station.

On receiving the news, SP Abdul Mabud, along with some other officers and constables, rushed to the spot and took the bomb to the thana.

He informed Jessoron Cantonment about the bomb discovery.

Army explosive experts are likely to come here tomorrow, police said.

SEC bends rules to favour Beximco companies

By M Shamsur Rahman

60 days.