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Appointment of consultant soon Sheraton to be expanded for NAM Summit

Star Report

The government will shortly announce the appointment of a consultant for the Tk 42 crore 'expansion project' of the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel...

The existing surface parking facilities along the western side will be relocated at the basement, as per the design...

Government had earlier formed a technical committee headed by the chief architect M Amir Hussain...

The foreign counter-parts belong to Malaysia, Australia, UK and India sources said...

Guest houses Showcase on 2 ministries

By Staff Correspondent

The High Court yesterday served showcase notices on two ministries and some relevant government agencies...

The HC order followed a writ petition filed jointly by 18 owners of guest houses in the city...

The showcase notices were issued on the secretaries of the ministries of home affairs and civil aviation and tourism...

A special team of the Department of Narcotics Control recently sealed six guest houses in some posh residential areas...

DV application GPO to remain open on Friday, Saturday

Some counters at the General Post Office (GPO) will remain open from 9am to 5pm on Friday and Saturday...

Bofors deal

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Scindia said Rajiv Gandhi was totally innocent of any involvement in the Bofors case...

The deputy leaders of the opposition alleged that the government had brought in the name of Rajiv Gandhi in the chargesheet without a shade of evidence.

Scindia pleaded for the deletion of late Rajiv Gandhi's name from the chargesheet which, he said, would be a good gesture on the part of the government...

The trouble erupted when information and Broadcasting Minister Arun Jaitley said the name of any accused cannot be deleted under law.

The Congress members rose on their feet and shouted against the government and demanded a reply from the prime minister.

When the Treasury Bench did not relent the Congress and the AADMK members staged a walk-out.

In the Rajya Sabha too, Congress leader Kapil Sibal raised the same issue but leader of the Rajya Sabha and External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh said the government had no political animus against the accused...

Monir

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doctor to refer his son to nearby Mitford Hospital in Old Dhaka, Ahmed said.

"It was a definite case of diphtheria. Otherwise, there is no reason why Monir should die even though he had acute tonsillitis," he added.

System loss

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defaulters include government institutions and industrial, commercial and domestic consumers.

DESA's dues to PDB were accumulated due to irregular payment. DESA is incurring a loss of around Tk 20 crore per month because of under-billing and less collection.

DESA needs to increase its collection to more than 120 per cent to clear its backlog to PDB. It now has a system loss of 24.8 per cent, of which only 10 to 12 per cent is due to technical reasons.

The theft affects the power sector severely as DESA consumes more than 45 per cent of the total power generated in the country, he said.

"If DESA fails to make any improvement, the government may consider merging DESA with PDB," said another source.

Faridpur-4

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It said one company of army would be deployed to help civil administration maintain the law and order.

The Election Commission has passed a 'strict order' on all including the officials, employees and law enforcing agency men to ensure absolute neutrality during the polling at any cost.

The elections to the constituency, which was vacated following the death of Awami League MP Mosharrif Hossain in August 19, will start at 8 am and continue until 4 pm without any break.

Officially five candidates who are contesting the polls are: Saleha Begum Mosharrif (Awami League), Mostafa Amir Faisal (Zaker Party), Mohammad Moniruzzaman Tito (Jatiya Party, M-M), Prof Nasiruddin Ahmed Musa (Independent) and Krishak Mohamamd Sadek (Independent).

Meanwhile, Zaker Party and Jatiya Party (M-M) candidates have announced the withdrawal of their candidature.



Dr H B M Iqbal MP, Chairman of the Premier Bank Ltd, presenting a crest to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the inaugural function of the bank at Sonargaon Hotel yesterday.

Proceedings of Shafi Murder Case adjourned till Nov 17

By Court Correspondent

The Fifth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court yesterday adjourned the proceedings of Jalal Ahmed Shafi Murder Case till November 17 following a time petition by the prosecution lawyers.

Decomposed body of Shafi, an informer of DB, was recovered from a roof-top water tank of DB office at Minto Road on March 25.

Of the four chargesheeted accused, Inspector Ziaul Ahsan, who was released on bail from Dhaka Central Jail on September 12, appeared before the court yesterday.

Besides, the rest three detained accused — hawidar Billal Hossain, constable Abdur Rauf and canteen manager Anwar — were produced in the court at around 11 am.

During yesterday's proceedings, Mahbub Ahmed, the lawyer for Anwar, filed a bail petition. The judge Munira Mahluza rejected the bail prayer.

Stabbed to death

From page 1

near the cotton factory at Munsikhola. The victim had been missing since Monday morning. Delwar and Mohammed Ali reportedly called him out of his house.

According to the FIR, Swapan's murder was a sequel to enmity, police said. None of the accused could be arrested, they said.

Premier Bank inaugurated Bring back discipline in banking sector: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the bankers to bring back discipline and healthy competition in banking sector to let the banks make their due contribution to the country's economic development, reports UNB.

"Some irregularities are being seen in the banking sector despite massive steps for development of financial and banking sectors. Amount of classified loans of some commercial banks has reached an alarming state," she said inaugurating yet another private bank in the city.

The Prime Minister inaugurated the Premier Bank Limited at a function at Sonargaon Hotel in the morning with the hope that the Premier Bank will conduct its loan disbursement process with care and will be able to keep it free from default loan culture.

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria, Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr M Farashuddin, Premier Bank Chairman Dr HBM Iqbal, Bank advisor Sahazada Syed Nizamuddin Ahmed, Managing Director of the Bank MA Yussouf Khan and Vice-chairman Dr Arifur Rahman also spoke on the occasion.

The Prime Minister said, even in some private banks the amount of unutilised loans has become a burden for them and created obstacle to running the banks properly.

Besides, reluctance in maintaining the capital of

some private banks also created problem for bank management, she said asking all concerned to remain alert about all these.

She also stressed the importance of ensuring a corruption-free environment in the banking sector, saying that corruption destroys the social and economic system of a country. "Economic development will be possible if we can free all financial institutions from corruption."

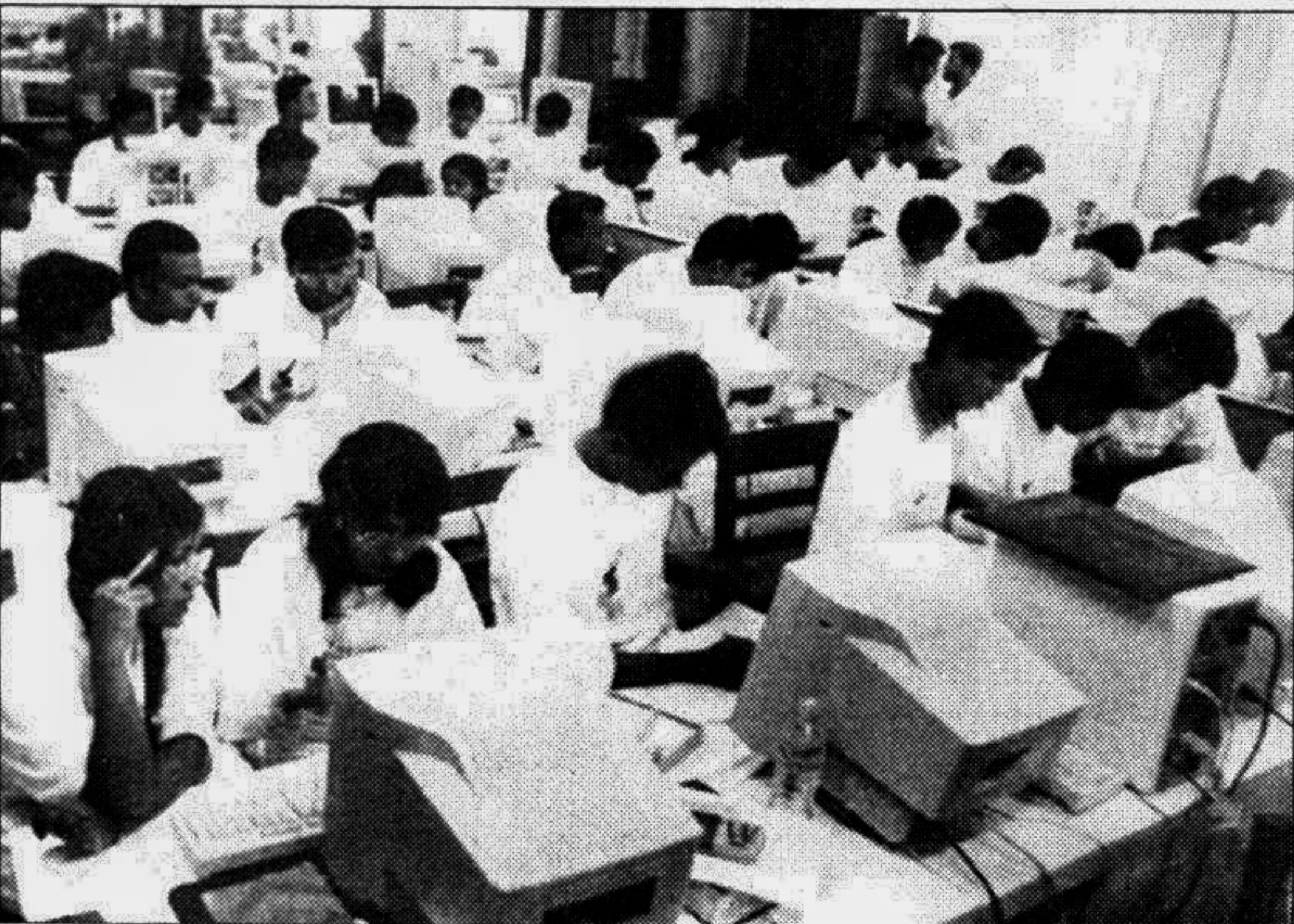
Hasina said, "We have amended Bankruptcy Act 1997 and Arthareen Adalat Ain (Financial Loan Court Act). We are also implementing the recommendations of bank reforms committee and law reforms commission for restoring discipline in the banking sector."

Proper actions are being taken against the loan defaulters, she said adding "we have realised bigger amount of default loans in comparison to any other time."

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria said corruption will not be tolerated in the financial institutions and reforms will be carried out for more competence.

Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Farashuddin said percentage of local earning as well as earning through remittances have increased in recent times. Reserve in the country is now 171 crore dollars, he added.

In the private banks, classified loans have been brought down to 28 per cent from 33 per cent, he said.



Whizkids do some brainstorming at the Intra BUET Computer Programming Contest '99 at CSE Computer Lab at BUET yesterday. —Star photo

Prokrichi-BCS Council renews call to accept demands

By Staff Correspondent

The central steering committee of the Prokrichi-BCS Central Coordination Council has renewed its call to the government to accept its demands without further delay.

The Coordination Council will hold a meeting on November 1 to prepare its future course of action which will be announced on November 2 at a news conference.

It was decided at a meeting of the steering committee at the Institution of Engineers on Monday with Engr Nurul Huda in the chair. The Prokrichi had earlier urged the government to accept its demands by October 31.

Earlier on Sunday a meeting of the steering committee had urged the government to accept its 17-point charter of demands of which it said six points could be implemented by October 31.

The meeting also reiterated its demand to cancel the government order to upgrade 321 posts of the BCS (Admn) cadre saying that it would only further increase the intra-cadre disparity, said a press release yesterday.

Shikdar, his men

From page 1

connection with five murder cases is scheduled to expire on November 7. He will be taken on remand again after the middle of next month for questioning in other murder charges, the DC said.

Police have so far procured evidence of 14 murder cases, charge sheets of which are expected to be submitted by the second week of next month, he said.

The cases are in connection with the murders of Siraj, Teko' Aziz, Akimul, Kalu, Dhakalya Aziz, Jahangir, Panna, Shatabhan, Advocate Fatik, Khalid, Insaf, Khaleque and Kamal.

Sof ar, 17 murder cases have been recorded with different police stations in the city and in the district. Shikdar has been named the principal accused in the cases.

A source in the KMP said that at least 24 people were murdered by Shikdar and his accomplices from February 26, 1995 to August 10 this year.

The victims include six smugglers of Jessore, named by Shikdar. They were killed on the same night in his ice factory at Skid Ghat.

Meanwhile, Farida Begum, mother-in-law of Shikdar, was placed on five days' remand today for interrogation in the Jahangir murder case.

The court ordered her interrogation in presence of a female police official. But till writing this report Farida was not interrogated, as no female police official agreed to remain present there fearing victimisation by Shikdar.

Today, a rickshawpuller, Sohrab Begari gave a statement to First Class Magistrate Kazi Mizanur Rahman under Section 164. He was a witness to kidnapping of Akimul by Shikdar and his accomplices from KGA avenue on February 25, 1998. Akimul was murdered at Skid Ghat on the same night, according to the judicial statement given earlier by Noor-e-Alam, one of his accomplices.

Akimul and Shikdar's first wife Khodeja allegedly used to go out from 'Swarnakamol', Shikdar's residence, in a rickshaw pulled by Sohrab of Milky Dearnha village under Rupsha thana.

Meanwhile, a three-member committee, headed by the Additional Commissioner of Income Tax, has been formed to probe alleged evasion of taxes by Shikdar.

Journalists protest police action

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) and Bangladesh Photojournalists Association (BPA) jointly held a rally in front of the BPA office yesterday morning protesting police action on photojournalists on Friday.

Addressing the rally, journalist leaders demanded resignation of the home minister for his failure to take action against the policemen responsible for 'atrocities' on innocent people as well as journalists. The leaders also demanded formation of a judicial committee to probe the police action on photojournalists during Friday's rally.

They also blamed the police for harassing the journalists and involving some of them with charges of hatching a conspiracy for killing the Prime Minister.

Presided over by BFUJ President Amanullah Kabir, the rally was addressed by BFUJ Secretary General MA Aziz, DUJ acting president Abu Saeed, General Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi, Masud Nizami, M Salahuddin, Shamsuddin Salehin.

Mansingh new Indian FS

NEW DELHI, Oct 26: India's ambassador to Britain, Lalit Mansingh, will be the new foreign secretary, the government announced today, reports AP.

Mansingh will become the highest official in the foreign ministry on December 1 following the retirement of K Raghunath, said a statement issued in New Delhi.

Records

From page 1

were elected from more than one constituencies in the 1996 general elections. A court injunction has withheld election in the Bhola-1 constituency.

So far, eight MPs have died necessitating by-polls. One such is the Faridpur-4 constituency where voting will take place today. In another such case, Kishoreganj-2, the Election Commission has not yet declared a date for polling.

In a unique case, the Tangail-8 seat fell vacant because the incumbent MP resigned but is seeking re-election as a non-party candidate. The by-poll is due on November 15.

Abdul Kader Siddiqui quit his parliamentary seat after a long-drawn dispute with the leadership of then ruling party, on whose ticket he was elected in 1996.

A recent EC ruling stripping two former BNP MPs of their parliamentary seats will require two more by-polls. The EC will soon announce sates for Sirajganj-7 and Rajshahi-5 seats — held by Hasibur Rahman Swapan and Dr. Mohammad Alauddin.

The EC said that the two lost their seats for joining the government against the decision of the party (BNP) which nominated them for the 1996 general elections.

Records show that the present parliament is followed by the fifth one as regards the number of by-elections. By-polls were held to 16 seats of the Fifth Jatiya Sangsad.

The shortest-lived sixth had no by-election.

The by-poll records of the first four are nowhere near the current Jatiya Sangsad.

Dislodge this puppet govt: Khaleda

KULIARCHAR, Kishoreganj, Oct 26: Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia today appealed to the nation to fulfill her only desire to dislodge the subservient government before it crippled the nation compromising sovereignty, reports UNB.

"I have nothing more to ask from you. You have bestowed on me lot of respect and honour. My only desire, you must throw out this puppet government through mass movement," Khaleda said in a passionate appeal to the nation.

She was addressing a huge public meeting at Pilot High School ground here this afternoon.

"I'm ready to lay down my life, but shall not leave the street. We shall not give an inch of our territory to anyone. Fall of the government is a must," she said.

Khaleda said leaders of this government would have no place to hide. They will bow down to the people and seek apology as they did before the election for their misdeeds and misrule 25 years ago.

The former prime minister said, "The conspiracy to give road and railway transit to India will be thwarted at any cost."

"It's conspiracy to merge Bangladesh with India, reduce the country to another state of India. That is why the masters of the government had helped secure the power," she added.

The BNP chairperson regretted that villagers along the border had to flee their homes and hearth in fear of Indian aggression.

"They (India) have set up phensydil factories across the border and pushing the prod-

ucts to Bangladesh in a planned way to ruin our youths. They are forging Bangladesh currency notes and foreign currencies and smuggling those across the border to destroy our economy," she added.

Begum Zia cautioned the people about smuggling of firearms from across the border. The arms, she said were being handed over to the ruling party terrorists to annihilate the opposition.

Referring to Monday's ransacking of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, she blamed the ruling party terrorists for the incident.

Death of BCL leader sparks violence at Nalitabari

SHERPUR, Oct 26: A Chhatra League leader was killed and two other activists were injured in an attack by the activists of their rival faction at Venabazar in Nalitabari thana on Monday night.

The death of BCL leader sparked violence at Nalitabari thana headquarters today.

At least a dozen houses, shops and vehicles were set on fire and the municipal office was ransacked.

Witnesses said the factional fight raged through the entire thana town with the rivals chasing each other.

A group of local people last night laid a siege to the house of Food and Agriculture Minister Motia Chowdhury and tried to prevent her from going to see the body of Yusuf.

BNP vows to foil 'conspiracy' against judiciary, press

By Staff Correspondent

BNP leaders at a protest rally in the city yesterday accused the ruling Awami League of hatching a deep rooted conspiracy to curb independence of the judiciary and freedom of press and vowed to foil the conspiracy "at any cost".

They said the Prime Minister and other government leaders have "nakedly attacked" the judiciary and the press with a motive to make the two important institutions subservient.

The AL has no respect for the judiciary and the press as it does not believe in democracy, rule of law and free press, they claimed. Recent statements of the PM and others clearly reflected the mindset of AL leaders during the post-independence period when the judiciary was made 'subservient to the executive' and all newspapers were closed, they observed.

They were addressing a rally at Muktagan, organised by the city BNP to protest the PM's "naked attack" on independence of the judiciary and the press and police action on photo-journalists on October 21 in the city.

They strongly condemned the indiscriminate lathi charge on photo-journalists during a political party's programme on Oct 21. They demanded an impartial inquiry and exemplary punishment of those responsible for the "attack" on news-

men. Presided over by city BNP convener Sadek Hossain Khoka MP, it was addressed by, among others, Moudud Ahmed, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Tariquul Islam, Mirza Abbas, Abdus Salam, Kazi Abul Bashir and Chowdhury Alam.

Abdul Matin Chowdhury accused AL of destroying democratic institutions in the country and its economy, industry and agriculture and said it is now plotting to curb independence of the judiciary and the press.

JCD-BCL clash in Barisal jail: 10 injured

BARISAL, Oct 26: The BCL and JCD activists clashed inside the Barisal district jail this morning, injuring at least 10 on both sides, reports UNB.

Jailor Zahiruddin Mohammad Babar said the clash ensued between the detained activists of BNP's student front Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal and Awami League backed Chhatra League at about 9 am. They clashed over a quarrel between two rival leaders at the jail medical centre.

As Moni and Suhad engaged in hot exchange triggering a violent clash assembling their supporters when they saw each other at the centre.

Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board Special Notice for Conversion of Digital Telephone Numbers of Dhaka city from '6' digits to '7' digits

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