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President Tudjman dead

ZAGREB, Dec 11: President Franjo Tudjman, the former communist general who led Croatia to independence during the tumultuous breakup of Yugoslavia with a nationalist fervor that contributed to the war in Bosnia, has died at age 77, report AP Reuter.

Tudjman, who had been hospitalized since undergoing emergency intestinal surgery Nov. 1, died late Friday, Prime Minister Zlatko Matesa said. The government did not give the cause of his death, but Tudjman had been rumored to be suffering from stomach cancer since 1996.

Tudjman died after six weeks of treatment for abdominal disorders, state television said today.

The television broke into its regular programmes at 2 am local time to announce Tudjman's death in a brief statement.

Thousands of Croats stood silently today outside the hospital where he died as a black hearse transported Tudjman's body through the capital to the presidential palace, where he will lie in state until a state funeral Monday.

"I came to pay the last honor to my president," said Robert Kriznik, a veteran of the 1991 independence war who was maintaining vigil at the hospital. "He fought for Croatia, I fought for Croatia."

Parliament speaker Vlatko Pavletic, who became interim president on Nov. 26, appeared briefly on television before dawn today to announce that "the big heart of President

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Another computer virus detected

Another computer virus has been detected. It is called Babylon. It came close on the heels of the alert for the millennium Mykics worm, reports UNB.

The Virus Emergency Response Team in Bangalore-based Proland Software said the Babylon virus is not known to have a destructive payload, but it could have other consequences as it is spreading very fast.

Another unique feature of this virus is that it is the first virus to infect the Windows Help (HLP) files. Babylon also behaves like a Trojan, the team said.

It said Babylon virus infects 32 Bit (PE) executable (EXE) and Windows Help (HLP) files under Windows 95 and Windows 98. However, it does not work under Windows NT.

Once the infected file is executed it stays in memory. The virus infects the target files when they are accessed, said the Proland Software team.

SL-Zimbabwe 1st ODI abandoned

BULAWAYO, Zimbabwe, Dec 11: The first of five one-day international matches between Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka was abandoned here Saturday without a result because of mid-afternoon rain, reports AFP.

Under the rules, both sides have to complete a minimum of 25 overs before calculations can be made.

Sri Lanka scored 284-9 from their 50 overs but drizzle turned to heavy downpour when Zimbabwe had played only 14.5 overs. They were 65-1 at the time.

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All brothels will be shut, all sex workers will be rehabilitated : Minister

By Shaikh Nazrul Islam

All brothels in the country will be closed down in a 'systematic way', State Minister for Social Welfare Mozammel Hossain has said.

The sex workers will be rehabilitated in phases after completion of six 'shelter homes' in the divisional headquarters by the year 2000, he told The Daily Star yesterday.

The state minister, however, said 'at the moment' he could not give the number of sex workers in the country.

More than 100 sex workers have been rehabilitated after training them in the two existing shelter homes at Pubail and Kashimpur and more are undergoing training, he said.

Around 4000 inmates of Tanbazar and Nimtoli brothels in Narayanganj were evicted by the authorities on July 22 this year. Of them, only 289 were taken to the shelter homes and many were later released from there because of agitation by them, sources concerned pointed out.

Sanghati, a coalition of 86 NGOs, on Thursday called upon the government to make known the measures taken so far for rehabilitation of the evicted sex workers.

Asked about this, the state

minister said that they were not interested in publicity of the rehabilitation activities. "We do not go for publicity to protect the social life of those rehabilitated."

Sanghati also put forward a four-point demand which include compensation to the evicted sex workers and allowing them to return to their 'houses'.

It alleged that the organisations involved in the rehabilitation process were misappropriating UNDP funds for this.

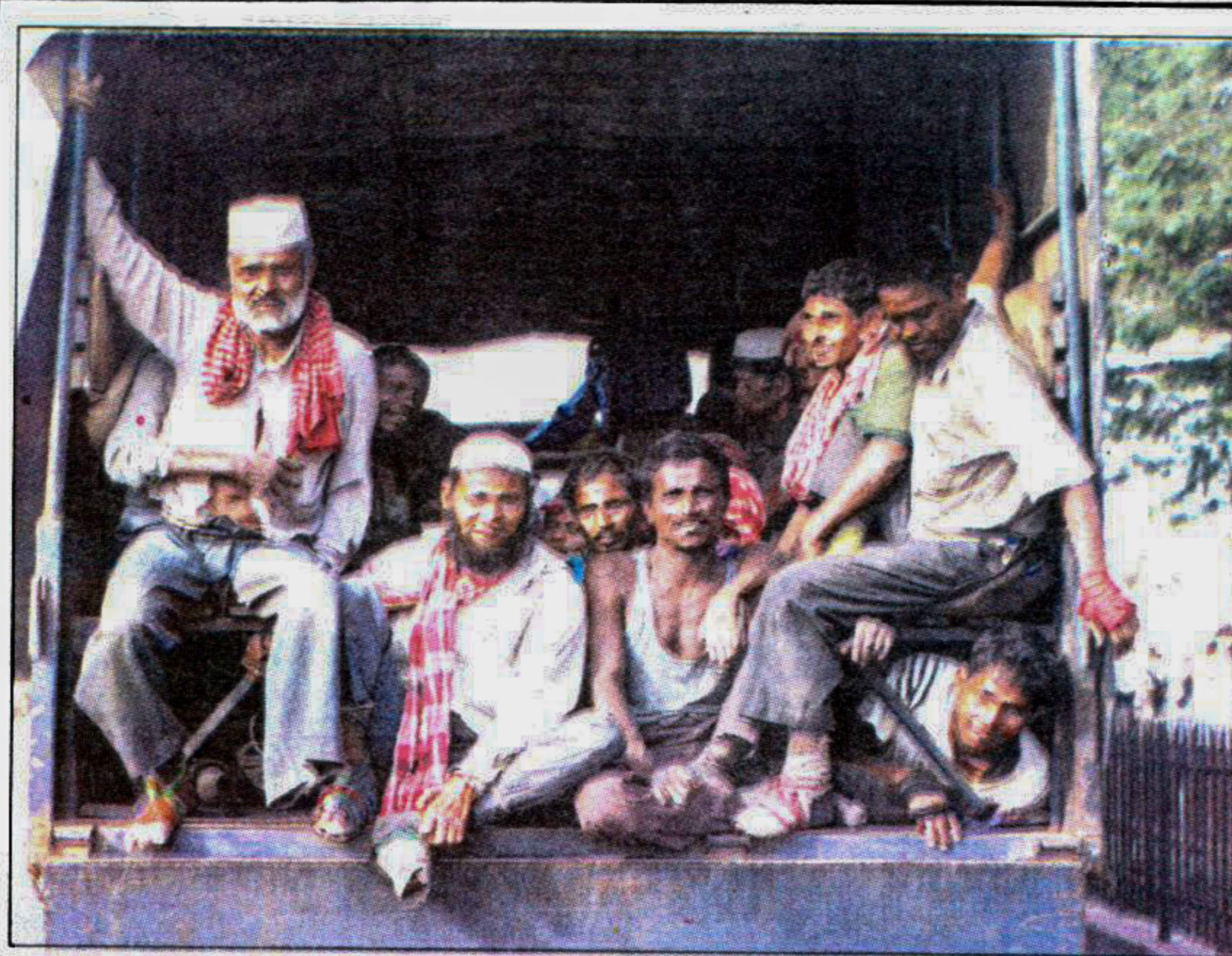
The state minister brushed aside the allegation.

In reply to a question, he said a motivation programme would be undertaken before sending the sex workers to shelter homes and those already rehabilitated would be engaged in motivating others.

It is not possible to send the evicted inmates back to the brothels which are 'torture cells', he added.

Asked why they were evicted, the state minister said, "In a democratic country, we can't allow this sort of inhuman torture."

He went on, "Many inmates were brutally killed in brothels at different times but none dared to seek justice for them".



A tale of fifty lepers

A group of about fifty leprosy victims would do something for them. But now they face eviction from Kamalapur Railway station in the city, where they lived for years on a platform.

"The Railway security forces used to take Tk 3 everyday from each of us," Rahman alleged. Rahman appealed to the PM to take immediate measures for their rehabilitation.

He said the PM had pledged that she

One of them, Motiur Rahman, told this photographer later that they had been writing to the Prime Minister for long for their rehabilitation.

He said the PM had pledged that she

—Star photo and report by: Anisur Rahman.

Hardinge Bridge point Alarming fall in water level

PABNA, Dec 11: The flow of water at Hardinge Bridge declined to an alarming level choking irrigation pumps and the river route, reports UNB.

Tomorrow (Sunday) is the third anniversary of the 30-year Indo-Bangladesh Ganges water sharing treaty signed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart HD Dev Gowda in New Delhi in 1996.

An official of the Hydrology Department of Water Development Board has said Bangladesh is unlikely to get its share of the Ganges water as stipulated in the treaty.

He said the flow of water below the Farakka Barrage came down alarmingly far less than that of last year. The flow declined by about two-thirds as on December 9 compared to that of last year, said the official.

The sharing agreement stated January 1 to May 30 as the lean period, and accordingly the flow of water down the Farakka Barrage will be monitored from the next month.

According to the Hydrology

Department, Bangladesh did not get its due share during the period from February 11 to May 31 period in 1997.

As per the treaty, Bangladesh would get a minimum of 35,000 cusecs during the lean period, but the flow had come down to only 13,823 cusecs in March 21-31 cycle in 1997.

Our Correspondent visiting GK Project and the Hardinge Bridge point on December 9 found that there was no water in the main irrigation canal of the project resulting in closer of main pump station.

Nine out of 14 pillars of the Hardinge Bridge were dried and covered under sand. Pakshi-Bheramara ferry service has been disrupting due to poor flow of water.

CCC election

Intending candidates start collecting nomination papers

CHITTAGONG, Dec 11: Intending candidates for Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) election have collected nomination papers, reports BSS.

A total of 22 nomination papers were distributed today for one mayoral post while 699 nomination papers for 41 Ward Commissioners' posts and 119 for 14 reserved seats for women, said Election Commission sources.

Sramik Federation leader shot dead at Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent JHENIDAH, Dec 11: A leader of Ganotantrick Sramik Federation was shot dead allegedly by Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal in Pagla Kanal area in the town this afternoon.

The dead was identified as Alam, 28, organizing secretary of the organisation.

The incident took place at about 5 pm when both the groups traded more than 20 rounds of shots. At one stage, Alam was shot in his chest. He died at Magura on way to Dhaka for treatment.

Police rushed to the spot and fired six rounds of shots and tear gas shells to disperse the feuding groups.

Police arrested Rana, president of Biplabi Chhatra Federation in connection with incident.

Opposition to bring out processions today

By Staff Correspondent

BNP and its partners in the four-party alliance will bring out processions throughout the country today as a part of their tomorrow's countrywide hartal programme.

The main procession in the city will be brought out from BNP's central office. Processions will also be brought out from New Market, Khilgaon crossing, Mohakhali, Badda, Farmgate, Mirpur, Shayampur, Uttara and Rampura, said a BNP press release.

Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh, will bring out its 'main procession' from north gate of Baitul Mukarram after Asr prayers. The other city units of the party will also bring out processions from different areas of the city.

A meeting of the BNP city unit yesterday called upon the people to make Monday's hartal a success as well as to observe the Martyred Intellectuals' Day on December 14 and Victory Day on December 16 with due solemnity.

Joint convener of city BNP, Abulhasan, presided over the meeting at 29 Minto Road official residence of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament.

Brig Ashfaq buried

Brigadier Shabbab Ashfaq was buried at the Banani Military Graveyard with full military honour yesterday afternoon, reports UNB.

Brigadier Shabbab Ashfaq, Commander of the 69 Infantry Brigade based at Bandarban, was found dead in officers' mess at Chittagong Cantonment on December 8.

The namaz-e-janaza for Shabbab was held at the Central Training Ground (the old Chopper's Den) of the MP unit of Dhaka Cantonment.

Army Chief Lt Gen Mustafizur Rahman, senior serving and retired military officers, his friends and relations, including son Rakin and elder brother Brigadier Faruque Ashfaq attended the janaza.

The Military Secretaries to the President and the Prime Minister represented them in the janaza.

Quikhwani of Brigadier Shabbab will be held at his 27/A Dilu Road residence in Dhaka on Tuesday, said an ISPR press release.

Fatik Murder Case Ershad Shikdar interrogated

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Dec 11: Ershad Shikdar was questioned today by ASP Moksudul Islam of CID at Jessore Central Jail in connection with Fatik Murder Case, said a source in the KMP.

The new IO expressed his satisfaction at the progress of fresh investigation. He is expected to submit the supplementary chargesheet within a week, the source added.

The source further said all-out efforts are being made to process dockets of all the 39 cases against Ershad Shikdar and his accomplices within this month. The special court is expected to start trial of Shikdar and his accomplices on January 1, 2000.

The Income Tax Department has sought opinion of the PP Advocate Kazi Abudus Salam on how to deal with tax evasion cases against Shikdar. The department also sought advice on how to serve notice upon him for hearing.

Ershad Shikdar needs to be heard by the five-member committee of Tax officials who are investigating tax evasion cases. Decision in this regard would be taken after the PP gives his opinion, said a source in the Tax Department.

Meanwhile, the new officer-in-charge is yet to be posted in the Kotwali Thana. This post has been lying vacant since last two weeks after the departure of SB Majumdar who was forced to be transferred by a powerful faction of the ruling party for hitting the underworld business of drugs in the Skid ghat area.

Some leaders of Jubo League and Sramik League threatened the OC in his office chamber just two days before he was transferred to DB of KMP, said a source.

Portuguese plane with 35 on board crashes

LISBON, Dec 11: A passenger aircraft carrying 35 people crashed today in the Azores Islands west of Portugal in the Atlantic Ocean, news reports said, according to AP.

The plane, which belonged to the Azorean airline SATA and was on a local inter-island flight, slammed into Sao Jorge, one of nine islands in the archipelago roughly 1,450 kilometers west of mainland Portugal.

The SMG was kept in the custody of Panchalaish thana where a UD case was recorded. Officer-in-Charge of the thana told this correspondent today.

He said that five army officers of the mess where the body of Brig. Ashfaq was found at 4 pm on Wednesday, were being questioned.

Sub-inspector Israfil Majumdar of Panchalaish thana has been assigned as investigation officer of the case, the OC said.

Secys general of 4 parties address rally at Ctg today

CHITTAGONG, Dec 11: Political situation in the port city is getting tense as campaigns for and against January 3 Chittagong City Corporation election are being stepped up, reports UNB.

The opposition alliance has already called for a 36-hour hartal in the port city from 6 am Monday.

BNP-led opposition alliance held combined rallies in six thanas of the city today, (Saturday) vowing to resist the election "in exchange for blood."

The rallies were held at Port Connecting Road crossing in Bandar thana, Bahaddarhat crossing in Chandgaon thana, Oxygen crossing at Panchalaish thana, Dewanhat crossing at Double Mooring Thana, Alanker Cinema crossing in Pahartoli thana and Railway Station premises in Kotwali thana.

Addressing the rallies, district level and local leaders of the four parties threatened to paralyse the port city from tomorrow (Sunday) if the government go ahead with CCC election process ignoring their demand.

The opposition alliance will hold a public meeting at Laldighi Maidan tomorrow (Sunday) to gear up campaign against the election.

Secretaries General of the four parties — Abdul Mannan

Bhuiyan of BNP, Nazirur Rahman Manju of Jatiya Party, Matiur Rahman Nizami of Jamaat-e-Islami and Fazul Haq Aminul of Islami Okiya Jote — are scheduled to address the meeting.

Meanwhile, the ruling party leaders held a five-hour marathon meeting at the residence of former Awami League leader Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury on Friday night in preparation of the CCC polls.

Labour and Employment Minister MA Mannan, Housing and Public Works and Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Engineer Mosharrar Hossain and Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury were among others present at the meeting.

BGMEA urges CEC to postpone Ctg City Corpn polls

The BGMEA has appealed to the Chief Election Commissioner to postpone the Chittagong City Corporation polls for averting political turmoil during the peak period of shipment of garments, reports UNB.

The four-party opposition alliance has called hartal on December 13-14 in the port city demanding cancellation of CCC polls scheduled for January 3.

BGMEA president Anisur Rahman Sinha in a statement yesterday suggested rescheduling the poll in consultation with the Opposition. He also suggested amendment to relevant rules for extension of the election.

He said December is the peak month for export of garments and fixation of quota for the readymade garments by the importers. Hartal at this time will affect the shipment leading to cancellation of orders by the importers.

He called upon both the government and opposition to sit across the table and resolve the political stalemate.

12-hour transport strike in 7 dists today

MYMENSINGH, Dec 11: Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation's Dhaka divisional committee called for a 12-hour strike in seven districts from 6 am tomorrow, reports UNB.

The federation called the strike protesting detention of its Kalkairi thana unit general secretary Humayun Kabir and demanding withdrawal of 'false cases' against its leaders.

No bus will leave from Mohakhali inter-district bus terminal of Dhaka for the districts of Mymensingh, Tangail, Jamalpur, Gazipur, Sherpur, Netrokona and Kishoreganj during the strike.

Seven RU Shibir activists held from campus

From RU Correspondent RAJSHAHI, Dec 11: Seven activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) were arrested from campus today, Rajshahi university police and campus sources said.

The arrested are: Mamunur Rashid, Azmol Hossain, Abdul Jalil, Omar Faruque, Shaful Islam, Humayun Kabir and Abudus Sattar.

Police said, the seven ICS activists were arrested in connection with a case filed by Bangladesh Chhatra League leader Ajoy Kumar Sarkar.

The Shibir activists protested the arrest and called a two-day strike at the varsity beginning tomorrow. They also threatened tougher agitation if their activists were not released immediately.

Police have been deployed on the campus.

Dacoity at night coach in Rajshahi

From Our Correspondent RAJSHAHI, Dec 11: A dacoity was committed in a Rajshahi bound night coach last night.

According to police, the night coach of Modern Enterprise left Dhaka for Rajshahi at 3 pm yesterday with 21 passengers on board.

When the bus reached Natore bypass under Puthia thana of Rajshahi at around 9 pm, a gang of five dacoits, who were already in the bus in guise of passengers, took control of the bus.

They swooped on the passengers and looted their valuables. They also beat-up some passengers as they tried to resist them.

The dacoits later got down from the bus near Tarapur Dhalan in Puthia thana and fled away.

When the bus reached Rajshahi, the angry passengers beat up the driver alleging that he had connection with the dacoits.

Police rushed to the spot and rescued the driver. A case was lodged with Boalia thana in this connection.

A polluted pond causing stink at 3 DU halls

By Abul Kalam Azad

A polluted pond is causing a stink at three Dhaka University dormitories, forcing students to live in unhygienic, mosquito infested conditions.

"We can't even open the windows due to the bad smell," said a resident of a hall.

About 1,500 students in Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Kabi Jasim Uddin and Mukhtijoddah Ziaur Rahman halls are affected by the stagnant pond, a sewage outlet for Jasim Uddin and Zia halls.

In 1997, DU authorities endorsed a Tk 2 crore project designed to transform the pond into a lake surrounded by trees,

a footpath and concrete benches. Two-years-later, the students are still waiting.

Dormitory residents expressed their resentment over the authorities' reluctant attitude to implement the project, which could provide some relief from the overpowering smell.

The Dhaka University authorities said the project would proceed, but refused to say whether they will take any immediate action to improve the pond's condition.

Prof. M Abdul Aziz, the provost of Bangabandhu Hall, said students were suffering and regretted the delay. "I'm well concerned about

the problem and I have informed the authorities at each and every meeting, but they haven't done anything to solve the problem," said Aziz.

"Something must be done immediately to stop the flow of toxic sewerage water into the pond. Otherwise the problem will never be solved."

The vice-chancellor of Dhaka University said the project would be implemented quickly.

"I am very concerned about the health hazards caused by the polluted pond water," said the vice-chancellor. "That is why we are going to implement the project."

AUSPICIOUS INAUGURATION OF THE 12th BRANCH OF SOCIAL INVESTMENT BANK LTD. PIONEER IN PARTICIPATORY BANKING OF THE 21ST CENTURY Insha-Allah Today The 12th December 1999 at KHATUNGONI BRANCH 96, Khatungonj, Chittagong. Insha-Allah Three more branches will be opened soon Social Investment Bank Ltd. (SIBL) (A Unique Three Sector Model-Joint Venture Bank, Targeting Poverty) Working Together for A Caring Society Head Office : 15, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka, Bangladesh Phone : 9557499, 9559014 (PABX) Fax : 880-2-9562246 E-mail : sibl@bdonline.com