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25 opposition
activists sent
to jail

By Staff Correspondent
Twenty-five opposition activists arrested while protesting against the Dhaka University's decision to confer honorary Doctorate Degree on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina were sent to the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court Dhaka yesterday rejected their bail prayers when they were produced before the court but ordered jail authorities for their proper treatment.

Lawyers of the accused told the court that the activists were tortured by Motijheel police during their remand period.

Of the activists, 20 were taken on one-day remand while five remained for two days.

**Brickbats pelted
at CCC office**

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Dec 20: Brickbats were pelted at Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) office by some agitators while a funeral procession with the bodies of two Shibir activists was passing by it this afternoon, police and witnesses said.

The Shibir activists were killed in a clash at Chittagong University on Sunday.

Glasses of two vehicles parked on the CCC office premises were damaged during the attack at 3 pm, police said.

The processionists also damaged some vehicles and stoned at shops at Chawkbazar area at 4 pm, police and witnesses said.

But police dispersed the agitators immediately.

However, security was tightened in the city and its surrounding areas fearing fresh violence as a sequel to CU clash.

**Dhaka Telecom
employees clash
in city: 3 hurt**

By Staff Correspondent

At least three employees of Dhaka Telecom Region (North) were injured when supporters of rival employees unions clashed at its Sher-e-Bangla Nagar office yesterday over transfer of an employee.

Of the injured, Aftabuddin and Humayun Kabir Swapon were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Police said supporters of Awami League-backed TNT Federal Union and BNP-backed TNT Sramik Karmachari Union clashed over recent transfer of a clerk.

They chased each other and damaged office furniture. Tejgaon police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control, police said.

Senior officials of BTTB were not available for comment last night. When contacted, Khaleque Bhuiyan, PRO of BTTB, could not confirm the incident.

JCD activists

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Earlier, addressing the rally, BNP central leader Moudud Ahmed said no government can stay in power through repressive measures. Repression and filing of false cases will rather intensify the on-going one point movement, he said.

"Our movement is not for power. It is for saving the country and democracy. The movement will continue till the autocratic and puppet government resigns and a fresh general election is announced."

He demanded immediate release of all JCD leaders and urged its activists to be prepared for a vigorous movement after the Ramzan.

BNP central leader Mirza Abbas urged law enforcers to be neutral while on duty. "You are servants of the government, not of a political party," he said addressing the rally.

Amanullah Aman MP said that the home minister was resorting to repression on opposition activists as per directives from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. "People will not spare them for their heinous acts."

Feni violence

leader and purasava commissioner Ratan and Chhata Dal activist Zakir were killed during gunfight.

Harun, Kalam and an unidentified young man were killed on Saturday.

Of the six killings, police so far registered only one case filed by Alamgir Hossain Tota, elder brother of BCL leader Ratan. Fourteen BNP men including district unit general secretary Prof Joynal Abedin, were accused of killing Ratan.

BNP sources said police refused to take a case for the killing of JCD activist Zakir in which 22 people, including ruling party MP Joynal Abedin Hossain, were named accused.

The Feni town remained tense fearing further violence at any time. Police reinforcements were sighted on the streets to avert possible trouble.

Meanwhile, the ruling Awami League staged a rally in the town today protesting the killing of BCL leader Ratan.

The alliance of 11 left-leaning parties also brought out an anti-terrorism procession in the town today. Central leaders of the alliance, Pankaj Bhattacharya, Morshed Ali and Saifuddin Khan, led the procession.

Roundtable on 'Bangladesh in the new millennium'

Civil society should come to aid of the under-privileged

By Staff Correspondent

The civil society should come forward to build a democratic, terrorism and corruption-free Bangladesh in the new millennium, speakers at a roundtable yesterday emphasized.

The civil society needs to do something about governance and politics, as the rich people are dominating the political, business and all other sectors while the majority of the people remain outside the entire ball game which is creating a 'dual society', they opined.

The roundtable on "Bangladesh in the new millennium" was jointly organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) and the Bangla Daily Prothom Alo at the BIDS conference room.

BIDS Director General Abu

**Female UP members
allege discrimination
by male colleagues**

By Staff Correspondent

Over 60 per cent of women elected to Union Parishads in Sirajganj say their male colleagues discriminate against them, a study on gender, government and society revealed yesterday.

The findings, contained in a report entitled "The Roles and Perceptions of Women UP Councillors and Their Linkage with Civil Society," were presented at a seminar organised by the PRIP Trust and the CDRFA. The study was conducted by Zarina R Khan and

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per cent people are not getting quality education or healthcare facilities."

If the civil society wants to change the situation, it has to get into the game, he said. "If you don't democratise the economic opportunities, the market will be a constrained one."

"Unless you address these problems, you are creating a serious crisis," he told the roundtable.

To address these issues, quality education and healthcare system should be provided to the majority of the people and investment in these sectors should be increased, Prof Sobhan pointed out.

Barrister Ishtiaq Ahmed said state power is being misused due to "criminalization of politics and patronization of terrorism". Crime rose to an alarming height because of poor condition in the disposal of criminal cases.

He suggested the formation of small courts with High Court judges for speedy disposal of criminal cases and dispensation of justice to the oppressed.

Prof. Mozaaffar Ahmed called for taking a forward-looking education policy without delay to improve the already 'shaken' education sector.

Referring to a study, he said 20 per cent diagnostic reports were usually misplaced and doctors signed 50 per cent reports without having a glance at them at all.

Prof. Jamilur Reza Chowdhury urged the authorities concerned to utilize local expertise and raw materials in any infrastructure-building in future.

PDB Chairman Quamrul Islam Siddiqui highlighted "extreme controlling" attitude on the part of the concerned ministries in different sectors like power and gas.

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Muntassir Mamoon.

The report did not mention when the study occurred or how many elected women from Sirajganj participated. It did reveal that researchers polled 320 members of the community, the majority of whom were men, to compare with the women's responses.

In addition to the findings on discrimination, the report indicated over 92 per cent of female representatives said they were affiliated with a po-

**Pro-Putin party
fare well in
Duma polls**

MOSCOW, Dec 20: The pro-Kremlin Unity party led centrist groups today to their strongest election showing in the post-Soviet era and provided a ringing endorsement of Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and his presidential ambitions, reports AP.

Centrist groups accounted for four of the six leading parties in Sunday's voting and were set to claim more than half the seats in parliament's lower house, the State Duma. As a result, President Boris Yeltsin could have a cooperative parliament for the first time, and economic reforms are likely to face less resistance.

Unity and the Communist Party were running neck-and-neck today for the top spot. With more than 80 per cent of the votes counted, the Communists had a slight edge with 24.4 per cent of the vote, compared to 23.7 per cent for Unity.

The Communists were the largest single faction in the outgoing parliament — and probably will be again — but their hard-line allies fared poorly and overall Communist influence appeared likely to decline.

"For the first time in 10 years the Duma will not be controlled by the Communists. This victory is hard to overestimate," said Sergei Kiriyenko, a former prime minister who leads the Union of Right Forces, a centrist group that finished fourth, better than expected.

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**Outsiders, expelled
students break
DU gate**

A group of youths broke a sealed gate of a dormitory of Dhaka University on Sunday night, few years after it was closed to check troubles, reports UNB.

They also demonstrated on the campus and shouted slogans in front of the DU Vice-chancellor's residence against police raid on the hall.

Sources said the group, comprising both outsiders and expelled students led by Mainuddin Ahmed Babu, president of Chhatra League at Sergeant Zahurul Huq Hall broke the sealed gate at around 9:30 pm Sunday.

Hall sources said a large number of general students were also present when the gate fell. It was a long-cherished desire of the general students to go to Nilkhet using the shortcut.

Babu was expelled from the university for terrorist acts on the campus and was staying in the hall along with his wife ousting hall unit general secretary of BCL Kajol few days back.

Following the incident, police raided the dormitory to arrest Babu, but failed to get him or recover anything from the hall.

The university authorities had closed the gate on the western side of the hall to check criminal acts through the passage. Hall authorities informed they did not yet take any action following the incident and that the gate still remained open.

Siddique

From page 1
vention. I have invited Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia and sought her good wishes," Siddique said emerging from the meeting held at 29 Minto Road in the evening.

He informed that he had invited all political parties, except one, to attend the convention.

When asked whether the uninvited party is Jamaat, he smiled and said yes that type of party. He, however, didn't mention any name.

On another query, he said: "I have also invited the leaders of the ruling Awami League and tomorrow I will invite the party chief to attend the function."

When asked whether Khaleda Zia had accepted the invitation and would attend it, he said: "all invitations are not for attending." But the BNP chief wished success of the convention, he added.

Later, he met with other BNP leaders and MPs present at Minto Road.

Meanwhile, Jatiya Party secretary general Nazirul Islam and president Kazi Firoz Rashid met with Khaleda Zia and invited her to attend JP's iftar party to be hosted by H M Ershad in honour of the politicians.

The iftar will be held on Wednesday at Asiatic Society premises at Tejgaon.

He informed that the JP has decided not to invite the ruling Awami League and the 11-party alliance at the iftar.

Sharif and others are accused by the prosecution of attempting to eliminate army leader General Pervez Musharraf by denying landing rights to an aircraft bringing him and about 200 passengers from Sri Lanka to the Karachi airport on October 12. Hours later Musharraf overthrew Sharif in a bloodless coup.

Sharif, during a break, told reporters that he and his party would make no compromises with the military government.

"There will be no compromise. I have told all Muslim Leaguers that there should be no compromise," he said. Sharif's trial cannot start unless the judge formally lays charges and solicitors plead from the accused.

Offences against the state ... require a mandatory procedure as given in section 196 of the

Code of Criminal Procedure," he said.

laying of charges against Sharif, his brother Shahbaz and five others.

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