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Students to keep only books & pens, not arms

PM seeks cooperation for peace on campus

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina sought help for maintaining a congenial atmosphere for studies and a disciplined academic life, reports UNB.

"We want the students to keep only books and pens, nothing else... we don't want to see brandishing of arms on the campus any longer," she said urging all concerned, including political parties and student bodies, to cooperate with the government.

Addressing the prize distribution ceremony on the occasion of National Education Week 2000, the prime minister said the educational institutions are for acquiring knowledge and wisdom, a place for practicing science and technology and flourishing values of life.

"It will be suicidal for a nation if educational institutions are allowed to be tarnished," she said adding that if everybody is sincere then it will be possible to make education free from all vices.

"We'll have to make effective contribution towards science and technology education and in the field of innovation to face the challenges of the new century," she said and urged teachers, students and guardians to get involved more in the process.

Hasina said the government

is working to implement a modern and technology-based education system in the light of Dr Qudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission report.

The Prime Minister said that for the expansion of science and technology-based education, the government is setting up 12 science and technology universities in 12 district headquarters of the country.

Mentioning that the literacy rate rose to 60 per cent, Hasina hoped that illiteracy would be totally removed from the country in next five years.

She said half the country's population being women, it is not possible to ensure the real development of the nation without the development of the women community. Facilities for female education have been raised a lot, she added and mentioned the massive participation of women in development activities.

Education Minister A S H K Sadique and education secretary Kazi Raqibuddin Ahmed also addressed the function.

Later, the prime minister distributed prizes among best teachers, students, scouts and girls guide as well as best educational institutions. She also distributed prizes among the students for best performances in extra-curricular activities.

Accolade for Prof Yunus

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, Feb 17: Gramen Bank chief Dr Mohammad Yunus of Bangladesh has been chosen for the prestigious Rathindra award by Viswa Bharati for 1998.

The award is named after Poet Rabindranath Tagore's son Rathindranath Tagore.

This announcement was made by Dr Dilip Sinha, Vice-Chancellor of the University at Shanti Niketan today.

The university will confer its highest honorary degree of 'Deshikottama' to eminent scientist APJ Abul Kalam, scientific adviser to Indian Prime Minister and well known painter Satish Gujral, brother of former Prime Minister I K Gujral.

Film director Tapan Sinha, noted musician V Valsara, noted exponent of Tagore song Subinoy Roy and Poet Shankar Ghosh have also been selected for 'Deshikottama' award to be given on the day of convocation of Viswa Bharati on February 27 at Shantiniketan.

Hazari files case against 10 under PSA

From Our Correspondent
FENI, Feb 17: Thirty more people were arrested from different parts of the town today in connection with bomb attack on ruling party MP Joyanal Hazari's car on Tuesday.

Hazari today filed a case under Section 7 and 8 of the Public Safety Act accusing 10 leaders of Jubo Dal and JCD.

Bomb attack on Ctg Customs House

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 17: Chittagong Customs House came under bomb attack during hartal hours today.

Customs and police sources said two powerful ho-made bombs were hurled at Chittagong Customs House at 2:30 pm today. The explosion rocked the entire office building, triggering panic. But no casualty or damage were reported, they said.

Home-made bombs also exploded in other places of the city during the hartal hours today, witnesses said. A rickshawpuller, Abdur Razzak, was

9 shot as BCL factions clash in Chittagong

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 17: Nine people, including three police constables and a nayek of the Ansar received bullet injuries during a BCL factional feud at West Madarbari area under Double Mooring police station in the city this evening.

The clash ensued between Nasir group and Kader group of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) in front of Pelica hotel in that neighbourhood at about 7 pm, leaving some five persons injured.

The two feuding groups opened fire on patrol policemen when the latter arrived on the spot to dissuade them from the bloody fighting.

The injured were identified as constable Abdur Rob, the body guard of the Officer in Charge of Double Mooring Police Station, constable Shahed Ali, constable Abdur Razzak and Ansar Nayek Mohammad Arif, all of whom were on patrol duty.

Apart from that five unidentified BCL men also received bullet injuries and were being given medical treatment in private clinics, in a bid to avoid arrest by police, local sources said. The injured policemen and the Ansar nayek were admitted to the Chittagong Medical College hospital for treatment. The condition of constable Abdur Rob was said to be critical by hospital sources.

Vehicular movement remained suspended till 9 pm in the area and tension prevailed. Additional policemen were deployed by the administration in the area.

Conference on N-disarmament begins in city today

An international conference on nuclear disarmament with the slogan, 'Let's Make Asia Nuclear-Free' begins in the city today, reports BSS.

One hundred and 50 participants from host country, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Fiji, the Philippines, Japan, France and the United States are expected to attend the three-day conference, jointly organised by Community Development Library (CDL) and FOCUS on the Global South, a Bangkok-based non-government organisation working for security.

The objective of the conference is not only to discuss geopolitical security, but also to forge greater unity to help take pragmatic steps to ensure security of food, environment and ecology in the South and South-east Asia," Ms Varsha Rajan Berry, research associate of FOCUS India Programme told the news agency.

Giving reason for choosing Bangladesh, a non-nuclear power, as the conference venue, Varsha said, "We have just tried to avoid India and Pakistan as both of them are nuclear powers."

She, however, said the conference was earlier slated for India as a similar conference was held in Karachi in 1998.

"We consider Bangladesh as a peace-loving country and Dhaka as one of the finest centres to hold international conferences and seminars," she said.

"Dhaka is a nice place due to its geographical location and other facilities," she added.

Constable shot dead at Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Feb 17: A police constable was shot dead at police barrack in the Barisal Centre of Bangladesh Betar last night.

According to police, Akbar Ali, 32, a police constable deployed at the Bangladesh Betar, Barisal Centre as guard, was shot dead by rifle bullet at about 11.15 pm last night.

The reasons behind his death could not be ascertained immediately, although police believe he may have been killed when he accidentally shot himself.

The body of Akbar Ali was handed over to his relatives after autopsy.

Task force on Ctg port soon

Government takes a few more steps to facilitate operations

By Rafiq Hasan

The government has taken a number of decisions to resolve the existing problems at the Chittagong port and ensure smooth loading-unloading activities, according to knowledgeable sources.

The decisions include formation of a taskforce or national committee, setting up a separate thana and magistrate courts exclusively for the sea port, formation of an users forum to look after the interest of the port-users. They also include a decision for keeping foreign exchange branches of commercial banks at the Chittagong Port area open during Saturdays.

The bank branches at the port would also remain open on Fridays, if there was a country wide day-long hartal in the week.

These decisions were taken at a meeting last month presided over by the principal secretary to the prime minister's office Dr. S A Samad.

Fazul Haq, additional secretary to the ministry of commerce, Yaqub Ali, joint secretary ministry of home affairs, A K Azad, vice president



Sadly familiar
An employee at a sweetmeat shop, hurt in a bomb blast during Thursday's hartal, being taken for treatment.
Star photo: Sk Enamul Haq

Bangladesh chamber of industry, Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury, secretary, Internal Resource division and Chairman NBR, Anisur Rahman Sinha, president, BGMEA, C K Haider, secretary, MCCI, Benazir Ahmed director, DCCI, Abul Kalam Azad secretary in charge of the ministry of Shipping and other high officials of the Chittagong port attended the meeting.

According to the decision Bangladesh Bank has already ordered keeping the commercial banks open during next Saturday.

The Chittagong port and customs will also remain open today (Friday) and tomorrow.

The task force would be formed under the leadership of the principal secretary to the prime minister's office. The secretary of the internal resources division and chairman of the national Board of Revenue (NBR), secretaries of the ministries of shipping, communication, chairman Chittagong port authority, presidents of FBCCI, Bangladesh steamer Agents Association and BGMEA will be members of

the task force.

The task force would suggest the port authority to resolve the security problems at the port.

The ministry of shipping would prepare a memorandum for formation of the task force and submit it to the Prime Minister's office.

A separate committee would be formed under the leadership of the Chittagong Port Authority to solve every-day problems at the port.

The committee comprising representatives from Chittagong Chamber of Commerce Dhaka Chamber of Commerce, freight Forwarders Association, Bangladesh Bank, Chittagong Customs and Cost Guard will meet twice every month.

The meeting observed that the existing port thana comprised the port and vast surrounding areas. The port thana could not maintain law and order inside the port properly. A separate thana should be formed exclusively for the port area.

On the other hand, the meeting requested the home ministry to arrange a separate court

at the Chittagong magistracy for rapid disposal of the cases related to the port.

The meeting decided that the 'users forum' would be formed under the leadership of the BGMEA president. The forum would identify the problems of the users and make suggestions for resolving those immediately.

A shipping sub-committee would be formed to solve the security problems at the port and it would comprise members from Chittagong Chamber, shippers council, Chittagong district administration, Chittagong Metropolitan Police, Bangladesh Navy and the Coast Guard.

The sub-committee would identify the security-related problems at the port and make suggestions to the port authority.

The meeting was told that the existing 800 members of the security force at the port were not enough to maintain law and order at the port. The existing rules and regulations should be amended and separate rules and regulations for the security forces should made.



Park or parking lot?
The Swamibagh children's park near the Syedabad terminal has been turned into a bus terminal.
Star photo: Sk Enamul Haq

Shahjalal University Hartal ends, fresh agitation programme announced

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Feb 17: The 5-day hartal called by the All Party Action Committee (Opposition) ended in Sylhet this evening almost peacefully.

The district was almost paralysed during hartal days. The life in the region, remained paralysed for nine days with weekly holidays before and after the strike.

The longest hartal was called to press for immediate renaming of the halls and buildings of the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology.

The committee leaders announced fresh agitation programme at a rally this afternoon. The programme includes a sit-in in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office on February 28 and a mass procession on March 7.

Principal Moulana Habibur Rahman, central nayeb ameer of the Khelafat Majlis, presided over the rally at the Court Point. It was addressed by Sylhet district Jatiya Party president Advocate Gias Uddin Ahmed, district BNP general secretary Ariful Haque Chowdhury and joint secretary Advocate Noman Mahmud, City Jamaat ameer Dr Shafigur Rahman, town BNP president Ahsan Reza Chowdhury and Islami Oikya Jote district president Moulana Nezam Uddin.

The speakers at the rally urged the authorities to take immediate steps for withdrawal of the names of the buildings. Otherwise, it would have to face the serious consequences. They said the ruling party is compelling the opposition to announce tough programmes.

The speakers also demanded trial of the killers of Shibir activist Belal. Belal was shot dead in BDR firing on December 25 during a clash between the law enforcers and the agitators when a grand rally of the Muk-

tijoddha-Janatar Mancha was also going on at Registry Maidan.

They also demanded immediate withdrawal of false cases against the activists during the two months agitation and release of the arrested activists.

Another rally of the All Party Action Committee (Opposition) students wing was also held at the Court Point with district convener of the Jatiya Chhatra Samaj Md Jakir Hossain in the chair. It was addressed by the district JCD vice president Najibur Rahman Najib and leaders of Islami Chhatra Shibir and Chhatra Majlis.

Meanwhile, the Sylhet district Awami League has called a joint emergency meeting of its front organisations at 6 pm tomorrow at the Sunflower Community Centre at Ambarikhan area. District president Syed Abu Nosor Advocate and general secretary A N M Shafigul Haque called upon all concerned to attend the meeting. The ruling party will hold a grand rally in the town soon to inform the people about opposition's unwanted activities on the varsity issue, Sylhet Sadar thana Muktiyoddha Sangsad also held a meeting at the District Office this afternoon with Sadar Commander Abdul Mannan in the chair. The speakers said the death anniversary of the Supreme Commander of War of Liberation should not be observed properly due to hartal called by the irresponsible opposition and enemies of the independence. These forces are out to create a state of anarchy in the country, they said.

Meanwhile, Speaker Alhaj Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury is coming to Sylhet on a one-day visit on Saturday. He is scheduled to address some public meetings on the day.

Foundation of housing complex for MPs laid

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government wants to accelerate the pace of development by strengthening local government institutions, reports BSS.

She was addressing a function to mark the foundation laying ceremony of the housing complex for the parliament members on the MP hostel premises at Nakhhalpara in the morning.

Referring to the necessity of construction of flats for the MPs, the prime minister said they have been facing difficulties in one-room flats in the hostels. She hoped that new flats will mitigate their problems to a large extent.

She asked the concerned officials to complete the construction work within the stipulated time.

A total of 216 flats on 1,260 square feet space will be constructed on the hostel premises. Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury, Housing, and Public Works and Civil Aviation Minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain and Works Secretary Sohail Ahmed also spoke on the occasion.

Rubber bullet import

By Staff Correspondent

A shipment of 250,000 rubber bullets worth about Tk 1 crore is scheduled to reach the country from Italy shortly, said sources in the home ministry.

Rubber bullet imports have increased by about 10 per cent compared to last year. However, 15 percent of the bullets get damaged due to a shortage of proper storage facilities, added the sources.

They said imports of riot gear and tear gas shells also increase annually due to more political violence.

The government imported 15,000 tear gas canisters in December, a 5,000 shell increase over the previous fiscal year.

Ershadul Bari denies allegation

By DU Correspondent

Dr Ershadul Bari, Dean of Law Faculty of Dhaka University, yesterday denied the allegation that he manipulated marks in preparing results of LLB examinations held under the university in 1997, as alleged by a DU probe committee.

In a rejoinder to a Daily Star report published on Tuesday, Dr Bari said that the allegation implicating his name was "part of a deep-rooted conspiracy hatched by vested quarters to defame me."

Dr Bari was Chairman of the Examination Committee. Besides the chairman of an examination committee, its members, examiners, tabulators and the office of the Controller of Examinations are directly and intimately involved in such a confidential work, Dr Bari said.

"My active association with the DU administration led some quarters to give such untrue, baseless and motivated news to tarnish my image in a calculated manner. Such things were done also in 1992 and 1994. I had to fight legal battle to clear my position," the rejoinder stated.

"To single out a particular person... can not but be a deliberate attempt to bring him to disrepute," it said.

The DU inquiry committee had asked me to submit a report along with explanation how marks of a few examinees could be changed," In the report, I categorically mentioned that the question of changing marks during preparation of results by tabulators did not arise at all," the rejoinder stated.

"All these clearly show that the change in marks have been made by persons other than tabulators and that the very purpose of increasing the marks to get the examinees passed have been frustrated," Dr Bari said.

Indian SC bans expansion of slums in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Feb 17: In a move to deal with mounting pollution in the capital, the Supreme Court has banned expansion of slums and ordered litterbugs to be fined, news agencies reported today, says AP.

A three-judge panel ruled Tuesday that anyone found littering would be fined 50 rupees (one dollar), and ordered local government authorities to prevent slum extensions, Press Trust of India reported.

The court directed the national and city governments and authorities to take appropriate steps for preventing any fresh encroachment or unauthorised occupation of public land for the purpose of dwelling, resulting in the creation of a slum."

The court also directed the authorities to ensure proper disposal of waste by implementing the ruling within six weeks, the Indian News of India said.

The court gave no suggestions on how the anti-slum order was to be implemented in a capital city of 12 million, growing each day with people seeking work or the opportunity to beg.

The same court recently ordered businesses operating in the city-state area of New Delhi to stop polluting the main Yamuna River, that flows reeking through central residential areas.

The court said New Delhi's residents increasingly suffer from respiratory and other diseases.

2 held with revolver in city

By Staff Correspondent

Motijheel police yesterday arrested two persons and recovered a revolver from their possession at Purana Paltan pool intersection in the city's Motijheel area yesterday, police said.

The arrested were identified as Shamsur Rahman, 30, and Wahidur Razi, 28.

Police said that the two were challenged when they were moving about suspiciously at Purana Paltan area. A mobile team from Motijheel police station hauled up the two.

When they failed to provide satisfactory answers, they were searched by the police. A revolver, along with eight rounds of bullets, were recovered from the possession of Shamsur Rahman, police added. Motijheel police has filed a case in this regard.

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Prayer Timings

February 18		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:30	6:00
Juma	12:30	1:30
Asr	4:30	4:45
Maghrib	5:55	6:00
Esha	7:30	8:00

Source: Islamic Foundation