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Clinton's visit Pre-advance team due March 1

A 30-member US pre-advance team is expected to arrive here on March 1 to carry out its ground work for President Clinton's forthcoming visit to Dhaka. Foreign Office sources here said yesterday, reports UNB.

The team will visit the places that Clinton will visit, examine security measures and talk to Bangladesh government officials.

This will be a follow-up of the visit by the US Site Survey Team on February 8.

Under the revised schedule, the US President will come to Dhaka on March 20 to begin his South Asian tour.

Both Dhaka and Washington are in consultation to set details of Clinton's maiden trip to Bangladesh.

According to reports available here, Clinton will arrive in New Delhi on March 19, stay there overnight and proceed to Dhaka the next day for a visit of about 12 hours or so before flying back to the Indian capital the same day.

About Dhaka's fresh approach to the White House to revise the itinerary of the President so that he arrives in Dhaka first, a Foreign Ministry official said, "We're discussing, nothing has been fixed up yet."

The official who asked not to be named said there would not be any accommodation problem to host the US President and his entourage for a night halt in Dhaka. There would be any dearth of hospitality or accommodation if the President stays here overnight, he said.

JS body for export of gas-fired power

The Public Undertaking Committee of the Parliament favoured yesterday export of power as gas-based value added product, reports UNB.

Power Development Board officials, who attended the meeting, said they would welcome any initiatives to set up gas-based power plants. They said export of gas-fired power to neighbouring countries would be more feasible than export of raw gas.

Committee chairman Imran Ahmed presided over the meeting held at Sarsad Bhaban and attended by its members Dairul Islam, Abul Kalam Azad, AKM Mosharraf Hossain, Shah M Abul Hossain and Faruq Khan.

The meeting dwelt on the progress of recommendations made by the committee in its previous 18 meetings regarding operational responsibility of PDB, DESA, Titas Gas and Petrobangla.

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Our new numbers

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Prayer Timings

February 24

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:30	6:00
Zohr	12:45	1:20
Aar	4:30	4:45
Maghrib	6:00	6:05
Esha	7:30	8:00

Source: Islamic Foundation

Shahjalal varsity closed sine die

Decision on naming of halls and buildings postponed: APAC demands withdrawal

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Feb 23: Shahjalal University of Science and Technology has been declared closed sine die in view of the tense situation prevailing on the campus for more than two months.

The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the Syndicate today with Vice-Chancellor Prof Habibur Rahman in the chair.

The Syndicate also postponed the Academic Council and Finance Committee meetings scheduled for February 24, 25 and election of the teachers' representatives to the Senate on March 1.

The authorities of the university yesterday postponed the decision on naming halls and buildings of the university after Bangabandhu, Jahanara Imam

and others that had evoked sharp reaction and created deadlock on the campus.

The authorities postponed the decision on naming halls and buildings as per directives of the Chancellor of the University President Shahabuddin Ahmed.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Habibur Rahman yesterday sent separate letters to the leaders of All-Party (Opposition) Action Committee informing them about the postponement of the decision on naming halls and buildings. He also sought their cooperation to end the deadlock on the campus.

He said the matter would be placed before the new Senate body to be elected, as desired by the Chancellor.

He urged the leaders of All-

Party (Opposition) Action Committee to help end impasse on the campus for the sake of restoring congenial academic atmosphere.

In an instant reaction to the decision of the authorities, the All-Party (Opposition) Action Committee said it would continue movement until the decision on naming halls and buildings of the university was withdrawn.

BNP, Jamaat and pro-Islamic parties formed the All-Party Action Committee that enforced a series of hartals in Sylhet protesting the decision of the university authorities.

They urged the authorities to name the halls and building of the university after companions (Saiyids) of Hazrat Shahjalal (RA).

Khaleda, top party lawyers plan writ against PSA

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia discussed yesterday with senior party lawyers filing of a writ petition against the newly introduced Public Safety Act.

The two-hour meeting that started on 8 p.m. at 29 Minto Road contemplated filing a writ on some specific provisions of the Act after promulgation of the Ordinance.

Meeting sources said Khaleda Zia asked the lawyers who are also party leaders to discuss the matter with the country's eminent jurists.

She told them that all political parties, eminent jurists, human rights organisations and others are against the Act and advised them to file the writ collectively, but not form a partisan perspective.

The lawyers agreed to dis-

cuss and examine the provisions of the Act collectively and take an initiative to file a writ. They told the BNP chief that the government is planning to promulgate an Ordinance about the bail provision of the Act and were of the view of filing the writ after examining the Ordinance.

A leader, who wanted not to be named, told the Daily Star that they have already examined the Act and found some provisions, including the bail and the clause relating to witness, which are contrary to fundamental rights of the citizens.

He said the writ would be filed on the basis of the particular provisions of the Act, but not against the entire law.

Talking to newsmen after

the meeting, BNP Standing Committee member Moudud Ahmed said, "We are actively considering to file a writ against the Act. Prior to filing the writ, we will talk to eminent jurists, constitutional experts and other concerned. We will try to file the writ collectively."

He, however, denied to elaborate on their plans regarding the filing of writ. "We do not want to alert our enemies. I do not want to make it public before finalisation," he added.

Besides Moudud, it was attended by Khudaker Delwar Hossain MP, former Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali MP, Nazmul Huda MP, Aminul Haq MP and Janiruddin Sircar MP. BNP Secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and M Shamsul Islam MP were also present.

Cases filed to realise over Tk 33cr from Rahman Group

Star Report

Sonali Bank (SB) yesterday filed two cases against two enterprises of the Rahman Group, a top loan defaulter in the country, with the Artha Rin Adalat for realising over Tk 33 crore.

The companies against which cases were filed are Olympia Knitting and Rahman Hosiery, Dying and Finishing Mills Ltd.

Barrister Abdullah Al Mamun filed the case on behalf of SB against Olympia for realising Tk 18.18 crore. The SB also sued Rahman Hosiery in Dhaka First Subjudge Court and Artha Rin Adalat 1 for Tk 15.92 crore. SB will file two more cases tomorrow against the Rahman Group owned by Fazlur Rahman of Narayanganj for realising over Tk 70 crore loans. Of the companies owned by the group, JC Hosiery Garments Pvt Ltd will be sued for Tk 17.01 crore and Rahman Spinning Mills Ltd for Tk 55.14 crore.

In total, SB will file 11 cases against the group for Tk 145 crore loans.

According to sources, in the first case involving Olympia Knitting, Bazlur Rahman,

managing director of the company and his wife Rukhsana Rahman have been made defendants.

In case of Rahman Hosiery, Fazlur Rahman, his wife Minu Rahman, Bazlur Rahman and his wife Rukhsana Rahman have been made defendants.

The cases have been filed to realise loans by selling the mortgaged property of the enterprises. The loans were given under the industrial scheme of the bank.

Under the new law, if the defendants lose their cases, they can appeal only after making 50 per cent down payment on the loan amount.

The Rahman Group had created widespread controversy after it complained to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance Ministry against Bangladesh Bank for not allowing it to reschedule loans.

The SB, after giving multiple rescheduling facilities to the group, had finally served it with a final notice to make down payment by February 22, 2000. The group, however, failed to make the payment.

Body to probe 'irregularities' in Drug Admin Department

The government has formed a high level committee led by additional secretary of the Ministry of Health Dhiraj Kumar Nath to investigate 'irregularities' in Drug Administration Department, an official handout said here yesterday, reports BSS.

The committee will prepare a report if any irregularities are found in registration of imported and manufactured drugs.

The committee will submit a report with recommendations to the ministry concerned within one month, the handout said.

Other members of the committee are: Director General of Health Directorate Professor A B M Ahsanullah Director of Drug Administration Professor Mohammad Zahurul Huq and Professor of the Pharmacology Department of Dhaka Medical College Abdul Malek.

Senior Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Health Mohammad Raisul Alam Mondal will act as the member secretary of the committee, the handout added.

Two alleged muggers beaten to death

By Staff Correspondent

Two alleged muggers were beaten to death by mob at the Kadomtali Lake at Golambazar under Keraniganj police station yesterday.

Police identified the dead as Iqbal and Farooq, Babul, who was injured and later shifted to DMCH from Mitford Hospital for treatment managed to escape last night.

Hospital sources quoting the witnesses said that a gang of three muggerers at Golambazar snatched money from an unidentified person at about 5:30 pm. When the victim cried for help, people along with businessmen chased the gang. They started fleeing away from the area and at one stage got on

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Demolition drive Police, slum dwellers clash at Tejgaon railgate: 30 hurt

By Staff Correspondent

At least 30 people were injured in clashes between police and slum dwellers at Tejgaon railgate slum in the city yesterday.

The clash began when police and railway officials tried to demolish the sprawling shanty town stretching from Kaminapur railway station to Tejgaon rail crossing.

Earlier, the slum was demolished in August last year.

Police fired rubber bullets and teargas canisters to disperse the angry mob. Those who sustained pellet injury were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. They are, Ayesha, 40, Momtaj, 38, Jahana, 35, Belal, 22, Jamila, 40, Anis, 18 and Hamidul Islam.

Five on-duty press photographers were also injured as police charged baton on them, witnesses said.

Tejgaon police said more than 10 police personnel, including the officer-in-charge of the police station were injured during the clash. A policeman who was critically injured was admitted to Rajarbagh Police Lines Hospital.

The Dhaka-Sylhet Joyonka express train was stopped at the Tejgaon rail station for more than half an hour as the slum dwellers set fire to the rail.

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More rotten rice seized in Ctg: Three arrested

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 23: Another 2000 sacks of rotten rice were seized and one person was arrested in this connection in the city this afternoon.

Defective branch of police, recovered the rotten rice from a godown of Hamidia Oil Mill at Nasirabad under Panchlaish thana.

One Zakir Ahmed was caught red handed from the spot for his alleged involvement in it. Police sealed the godown with the rotten rice reportedly imported from Pakistan and filed a case under Special Power Act in this connection.

Meanwhile, Chaudgaon police arrested two persons accused in Chaudgaon rotten rice hoarding case from Agrabad in the early hours of today.

They were identified as Nazrul Islam, 38, proprietor of a trading company and Abul Hossain, 30. They were arrested from the office of one Ocean Enterprise.

Police recovered over 3000 sacks of rotten rice yesterday.

Khaleda invited to attend TV programme

Leader of the Opposition in parliament Khaleda Zia has been invited to attend the BTV programme, "Deshbhashir Mukhomukhi" on Friday where Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will answer questions from the people, including the audience, reports UNB.

Khaleda Zia will also be invited to appear before such a BTV programme, State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed told journalists yesterday.

He said the BTV could also arrange a separate programme

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Level of EC aid to Dhaka to remain intact: Nielson

By Rafiq Hasan

The European Community considers Bangladesh the "most important country as regards assistance and development co-operation" after states in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) region.

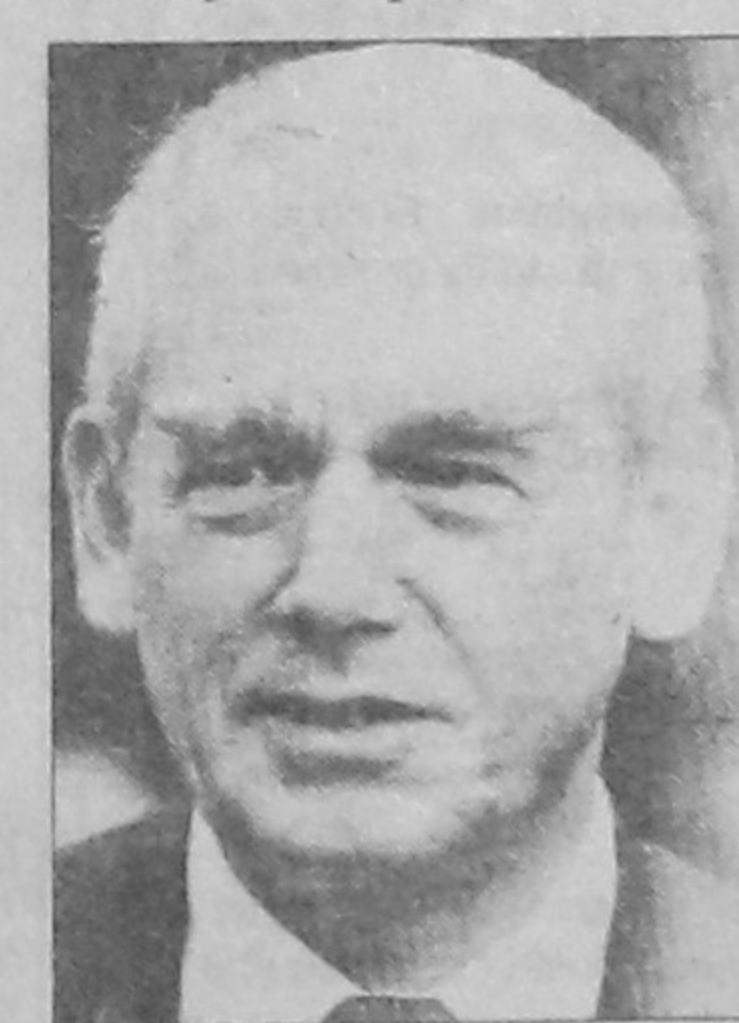
"As Bangladesh is the leading spokesman of the least developed countries, we think it should get our attention after ACP region," said Poul Nielson, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid at the European Commission (EC).

He was talking to The Daily Star Tuesday night at the VIP Lounge of Zia International Airport prior to his departure after a three-day visit to Bangladesh. He led a five-member EC delegation.

Traditionally, the European Community had an extended development co-operation with ACP countries under the LOME agreement. The ACP covers 71 countries.

"Although we have shifted to cash aid from food aid, the level of our assistance to Bangladesh will remain the same," he said.

Dispelling the confusion regarding EC's food aid to Bangladesh, the EC Commis-



Poul Nielson

sioner said, "There should not be any misunderstanding regarding the issue because we are going to disburse the equivalent amount of cash."

The EC is providing Bangladesh around 100 million euro per year for various development projects under food for work and in family planning, health, micro credit and com-

Long stay of prisoners at BSMMU: Probe ordered

By Staff Correspondent

The Vice-chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) has ordered the hospital management committee to investigate the situation in its prison cell where a number of under trial prisoners have been staying.

The order of VC Prof. MA Kaderi followed a report in The Daily Star on February 16 that a number of under trial prisoners of Dhaka Central Jail were staying at the BSMMU prison wing for months, and even years, allegedly in collaboration with some doctors.

Meanwhile, BSMMU authorities sent one of the four prisoners back to jail on Saturday last. The remaining three are still at the prison wing of the hospital.

Aziz Ahmed Michel alias

Titu, a notorious criminal of the city and accused in a number of murder cases, was sent back to jail. He stayed at the prison wing for eight months and ten days, sources at the hospital and DCJ said.

They however said BSMMU authorities have nothing to do with Cap (ret) Nurul Huda, an accused in Serniabat murder case, as he was shifted to the wing in August 1997 following a High Court order.

BSMMU authorities informed the court twice within the last one and half years that Nurul Huda no longer needed to stay there. They are now awaiting a court order, the sources said.

The rest two prisoners are Syed Sajjad Mahiuddin Hasan, accused in Shazneen Tasnim Rahman murder and rape cases and Runtu, accused in a case

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IN MEMORY



Tomorrow the 25th February, 2000, reminds us of the sad demise of our beloved Founder Chairman Late Hamidur Rahman Sinha. To pray for his departed soul a milad mahfil has been arranged today the 24th February, 2000, after Asar prayer at his village home Dohuri, Kalma Union, P.S. Louhajong, Munshiganj and on Friday the 25th February, 2000, following Jumma prayer at the company's Head Office, 55, Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1209. All his relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to participate in the milads.

Members of the ACME Group of Companies