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Outlaws kill constable, loot police camp in Madaripur

MADARIPUR, July 1: A constable was killed and all the arms were looted from a police camp at Shubchar in a fierce attack by outlaws at 5.30 pm today, reports UNB.

According to firsthand information, an armed group, believed to be members of outlawed Sarbahara Party, attacked suddenly the outpost manned by about 19 police officials and constables.

The gunmen stormed into the camp firing at random when the inmates were unprepared, says the report.

The camp is located about 2 miles off the thana headquarters.

One of the sentries, identified as Thandu Mia, died in the shootout, police said.

In minutes they looted all the 19 arms at the camp when the police stood hapless, said a police officer at the district control room.

The looted firearms included to SMGs and 17 rifles. The attackers first shot down the sentry and then damaged the wireless set before overrunning the police outpost.

On information, two platoons of police of the armed battalion rushed to the spot from the police headquarters in Dhaka.

Police launched a massive search operation.

Special drive in Khulna to nab criminals, outlaws

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, July 1: Police launched special drive in 60 police stations in Khulna division early this morning to arrest absconding accused in murder cases, armed terrorists and members of the outlawed parties.

The drive will continue for three months, said a high police official of Khulna Range.

Police superintendents of the ten districts of the division will lead their respective special teams formed with BDR jawans, APBN and riot police.

Twenty special teams have been formed with five platoons of BDR, five platoons of APBN and 157 riot policemen.

They will be guided by all officers-in-charge of the police stations in case of emergency.

The source further said that the special drive till September 30, 2000 will not at all be politically-biased as directed by the IGP Nurul Huda during a conference of police superintendents of Khulna division held in Jessore on June 27.

The police superintendents have also been asked to ensure that no murder and terrorist acts are reported from any of the ten districts during the three-month long special drive.

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Prayer Timings

July 2

June	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
July 2	5-15am	6-50pm

July 2	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-45
Zohr	1-00	1-20
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-50	6-55
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

26 million homeless One-fourth of urban people live in slums

By staff correspondent

Growth of urban slums and spurt in homeless population are two of the 'greatest challenges' the country is now facing, a study said.

There are now approximately 1.2 million households in urban slums or 24 per cent of the total urban population are living there. Some 0.6 million more households are either squatting or homeless, resulting in total homeless population of 2.6 million. Of them, one fifth could be floating women and one tenth could be street children," it pointed out.

The study on 'Needs Assessment Survey of the Disadvantaged Women and Children in the Urban Areas of Bangladesh' was conducted by Concern Bangladesh, an NGO. It covered urban population of Dhaka, Khulna, Chittagong and Rajshahi cities and Jessore, Comilla and some other major towns.

The target population for the survey included socially and economically disadvantaged women and children, especially sex workers, the disabled and the street children.

An earlier study on 'Floating People and Slum Population' by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics showed that 50 per cent of them were in Dhaka city, followed by 12 per cent in Chittagong, 10 per cent in Khulna and eight per cent in Rajshahi city.

'Interventions have been outlined to redress the grievances and alleviate sufferings of disadvantaged women and children in order to bring about qualitative changes in their lives,' the study said.

The studies also showed that urban population is increasing by about six per cent a year while the overall population growth rate is 1.6 per cent.

The NGO study said apart

from brothel based sex workers, 33 per cent of the floating women are 'mainly engaged in sex work' as a means of livelihood. The number of such floating sex workers would range from 83,000 to 171,000.

Besides, five per cent of the disadvantaged children are engaged in sex work. There are about 13,000 child sex workers aged 10 to 15.

Among the disadvantaged women, the study said, brothel sex workers are the youngest (mean age 25 years), followed by floating women (mean age 28) while the floating disabled women are the oldest (mean age 34).

'Brothel sex workers are not only the youngest but they are also more literate. Of them, 15 per cent attended school, followed by floating sex workers (11 per cent) and least literate are floating disabled women (3 per cent),' the study said.

Deaths from beating on rise

31 killed in country last month

By Shaikh Nazrul Islam

At least 31 people were beaten to death in separate incidents in the capital and different parts of the country last month, according to police and newspaper reports.

The death toll from beating was 26 in May.

Of those killed in June, five including a 13-year-old domestic help were in the city, eleven in Faridpur, two in Jhenidah and one each in Bogra, Nilphamari, Gazipur, Feni, Thakurgaon, Mymensingh, Laxmipur, Jessore, Dinazpur, Cox's Bazar, Tangail, Thakurgaon and Chittagong.

The victims included eight housewives, beaten to death by their husbands or family members. Three of them were reportedly pregnant. One housewife was beaten to death for alleged extra marital relationship.

Ten persons were killed on suspicion of being dacoits, muggers and thieves.

The 13-year-old domestic help - Rashid - was beaten to

death by two brothers at their Zakir Hossain Road residence at Mohammadpur on June 22 when Tk. 600 was found missing from the house.

Police arrested them when the family attempted to dump the body of the boy. They were

later sent to Dhaka Central Jail.

BSS news agency had reported that on June 21, eight alleged dacoits were beaten to death at Kamardangi village in Sadar upazila of Faridpur district.

But the SP of Faridpur when contacted told this correspondent that investigations found the report baseless. He however did not elaborate.

According to the BSS report, 15 people arrived at Kamardangi in the evening in a country boat. Challenged by the villagers, they failed to answer questions and started fleeing.

The villagers chased and caught eight of them, beat them to death and threw the bodies into a nearby river. The rest fled away.

In another incident at Faridpur town, a sex worker was beaten to death by a client on June 17 when she started screaming as he tried to escape.

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NCBs to cut interest rate on some types of deposit

By Shahriar Karim

The Nationalised Commercial Banks (NCBs) yesterday decided to cut interest rate on some types of deposit in a move considered necessary following reduction of lending rate last month, sources concerned said.

The four NCBs decided to fix interest rate on short term deposit (STD) at five per cent as against six per cent earlier. They also decided to reduce the rate of interest on savings accounts and fix it at seven per cent. Earlier, Sonali Bank and Rupali Bank's interest rate was 7.75 per cent and that of Agrani Bank and Janata Bank was 7.5 per cent.

The four NCB boards yesterday took the decision jointly, the sources said.

Earlier in the first week of last month, the four NCBs cut the lending rate for some thrust

sector industries to 10 per cent from 13.5 per cent to help expedite industrial growth.

Justifying the move to cut interest rate on deposits, a senior banker said that otherwise the NCBs would have to bear a loss of Tk 23 crore to give a Tk 500 crore term loan.

However, observers think that the decision would discourage small depositors. They would now go for government sponsored savings instruments which bear higher interest.

The finance minister, while proposing the budget for fiscal 2000-2001 had lowered interest rate on savings instruments, which was a demand of the industry and business circles. However, the government later restored the earlier rate much to the surprise of business bodies.

Transport strike on Feni, Ramgarh, Khagrachari routes begins

From Our Correspondent

FENI, July 1: Transport owners and workers unions halted traffic on four routes today protesting robberies and extortion on Feni-Ramgarh-Khagrachari roads and arrest of three transport workers.

They went on indefinite strike following a decision taken in separate meetings of transport owners and workers unions at Feni and Ramgarh on Friday afternoon.

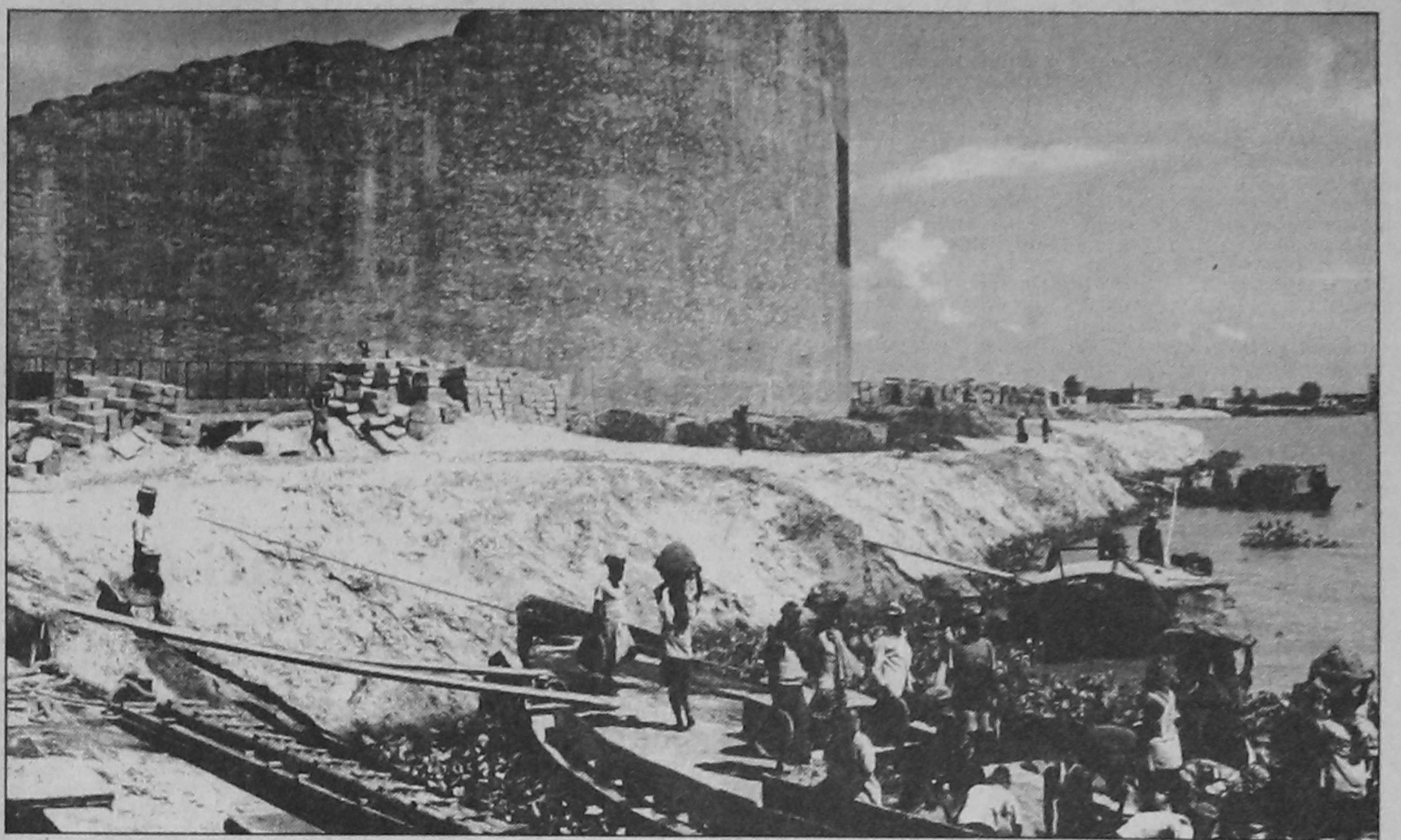
The transport workers became angry when the dacoits looted buses, trucks and jeeps one after another at Talbari on Feni-Ramgarh road on Friday morning.

The workers alleged that police did not turn up to help them despite repeated appeals.

On Thursday, a bus dacoity was committed in front of Muhuriganj highway police outpost on Feni bypass.

The leaders of transport owners and workers alleged

See page 12 col 1



Workers reinforce the outer boundary of the Shaheed Intellectuals Memorial at Rayerbazar with sand and earth to shield it from erosion by the Buriganga, rising steadily for the last few days. The Memorial, opened last year, had been threatened by the river, chipping away the earth work, reported to have been done in haste with poor compaction. — Star photo by Sheikh Enamul Huq.

Only 1400 traffic police control over 8 lakh vehicles in city

70pc of them lack training, admits top official

Star Report

Only 1400 policemen of DM-F's traffic department are engaged in maintaining traffic in the capital where more than three lakh registered motor vehicles and 80 thousand licensed rickshaws are plying, sources said.

Besides, over four lakh illegal rickshaws and carts and a large number of unlicensed motor vehicles have made the city's traffic situation precarious with frequent jams on important points, the sources added.

But about 70 per cent of the traffic force has no training on maintaining traffic. Serajul Islam, DC (South) of the department, admitted replying to a question. He refused to make further comment.

"Our force should be at least doubled to ensure smooth traffic movement at major city

points".

Other officials said inadequate training is not only resulting in poor service from traffic policemen but also causing injury to some of them while discharging duties.

They said the force is inadequate to ensure smooth traffic in the 17th mega-city of the world. But mere increasing the strength is not the only solution to the deteriorating traffic situation, they observed.

"We have identified a large number of points where permanent deployment of at least one traffic constable is necessary. But we can not do that due to limitation of force", said a high official.

The situation can be improved to some extent by strictly enforcing the Twelfth Schedule of the Motor Vehicle Ordinance 1983, which pro-

vides for fine for defying rules, he said.

Taking advantage of shortage of force, the unit and unlicensed vehicles, illegally parked vehicles and vehicles without required documents are escaping the punishment, he added.

"During peak hours traffic policemen are mostly engaged in frantic efforts to keep the traffic moving and do not get time to take care of violation of rules", he said.

The traffic department arranges 10 to 15 days' training on primary lessons of traffic control for the new recruits at the department but this is not at all sufficient, another official said.

"Sometimes they give wrong signal or do not understand what to do", he said pointing out the lack of training.

BCL activists ransack office room of student bodies at DU

By Staff Correspondent

A group of BCL activists ransacked and locked the office room of two student organisations on the Dhaka University campus yesterday.

The incident took place soon after the activists of Nari Pragati and Pragati Paribrajak Dal (Propod) along with other student organisations brought out a procession on the campus protesting reported rape of a young woman by some BCL activists on Wednesday night.

A group of more than 20 BCL activists stormed into the office room at the DUCSU building at around noon. A few activists of Nari Pragati and Propod were then the office room, witnesses said.

The BCL activists also hurled abusive words at them, ransacked the office room and locked it, witnesses added.

According to earlier newspaper reports four BCL activists kidnapped the woman at gunpoint when she was sitting at the Mall Chatter Wednesday evening with two of her friends, who are residents of Zia Hall.

The kidnappers held the two friends of the girl inside a room

See page 11 col 8

40 rocket launchers unearthed from school ground in Faridpur

From Staff Correspondent

FARIDPUR, July 1: Police on Friday recovered 40 rocket launchers from under the ground of Arpara High School in Madhukhali upazila, reports UNB.

A group of labourers found the rocket launchers wrapped in polythene when they were digging earth in the evening for construction work.

On information by the school managing committee, police rushed to the spot and recovered the launchers of different sizes. The arms were taken to Madhukhali police station.

Police said Jessore Cantonment has been requested to send explosive experts to test the launchers.

It is learnt that Pakistan occupation force had set up camp in Arpara School during the Liberation War. It is suspected that the occupation force left behind the rocket launchers before fleeing the camp.

CEPZ unrest US towel factory workers continue agitation

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 1: Workers of the three towel factories of US company Qualitex Group at CEPZ continued their agitation demanding reinstatement of 15 workers, CEPZ sources said.

Some workers who returned to duties during the past two days, were barred today from entering the factory premises by their leaders.

As a result, production in those factories remained suspended, CEPZ sources added.

The workers began agitation June 11 after termination of their 15 colleagues.

The agitating workers also demanded wages as per 1993 circular which was kept in abeyance by BEPZA.

Trawler loot Hunt on for ward commissioner: 3 held so far

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, July 1: Police hunt for AL-backed ward commissioner Taslimuddin Khan Babul continued till today after 474 out of 614 bags of rice looted from a trawler on Monday last were recovered from two godowns of Ghat no 7.

Police said the ward commissioner controls the two godowns.

Police also raided the ward commissioner's residence several times since Tuesday.

Meanwhile, three people have so far been arrested suspecting their involvement in the looting.

The arrested include labour leader Abdur Rahim Hujur and husband of younger sister of the absconding ward commissioner.

Hujur, vice president of Roosevelt jetty handling workers' See page 11 col 8

Violence in Ctg: 15 hurt in three incidents

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 1: At least 15 people were injured, six of them with bullets, in three separate incidents of violence in the city today, police and witnesses said.

Two factions of BCL Taher group and Chora Akbar group clashed at Chittagong Polytechnic Institute at 11 am today leaving 13 people injured, police and witnesses said.

Among them, Monir Hossain, 14, a tokai (street urchin) and three students - Suman, 20, Md Ali, 19, and Nazmul, 20 - were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) with bullet wounds.

Monir received bullet injury while the activists of BCL factions were trading fire, police said.

Other injured were released after first aid. Police said the clash erupted over admission of a party ac-

tivist into Polytechnic Institute.

Police rushed to the spot and resorted to lathicharge to bring the situation under control.

One Jamal Uddin was arrested when police raided a hide-out in a hill beside Polytechnic Institute.

Both the groups used firearms during the clash.

Additional police force were deployed in and around Chittagong Polytechnic Institute to avert further clash.

An employee of a business house, identified as Shahadat Hossain, 25, received bullet wounds in his left chest when armed terrorists fired at him at Kadamtoll at 4:30 pm today, police said.

Hossain was taken to CMCH in critical condition. Police said Hossain came under attack by the terrorists as

See page 11 col 7

Iran jails ten jews for spying for Israel

From Staff Correspondent

SHIRAZ, Iran, July 1: Ten out of 13 Iranian Jews accused of spying for Israel were given jail sentences totalling up to 13 years after a controversial closed-door trial, defence lawyers said today, reports AFP.

While judiciary chief Hossein-Ali Amiri said sentences on the 10 Jews and two Muslims convicted were less than ten years, the lawyers said that in the case of four of the Jews combined charges carried more than this term.

The remaining three Jews and two Muslims charged were acquitted, Amiri added.

Shiraz trader Hamid Tefelin, the main defendant, and Asher Zadmehr, were each given nine years for spying for Israel plus four years for "collaboration" with the Jewish state, Iran's

arch enemy, defence lawyers said.

The lawyers' spokesman, Ismail Nasser, said all the accused, who were not in court when the sentences were announced, would appeal.

"This verdict is a great mistake, it is political and unacceptable for the families and the lawyers," he said.

The verdict in the closed-door trial before a revolutionary court had been anxiously awaited across the world, amid conflicting signals on whether the death penalty would be pronounced.

International observers had expressed concern about the fairness of the trial, particularly after eight of the 13 Jews gave televised confessions to the spying charges.

Of the others convicted,

Nasser Levi-Haim was given 11 years in total, Ramin Farzam 10 years, Shahrokh Paknahad and Farhad Saleh eight years, Farzad Kashi and Javid Bentaqub eight years, Faramarz Kashi five years and Ramin Nematizadeh four years.

There were no details of sentences of fines and lashes also announced by Amiri, or how the two Muslims, who were not identified, were punished.

In a first reaction the member of the Iranian parliament for the country's Jewish community, Maurice Mottamed, said the penalties were heavy and unexpected.

"Our community is in a state of shock," he told AFP. "There is no clemency here, contrary to what we had been assured."

Tefelin's sister fainted when See page 12 col 3