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BB withdraws problem bank status of NBL

By Inam Ahmed
Bangladesh Bank (BB) has withdrawn the problem bank status of National Bank Limited (NBL) effective from August 1, according to Finance Ministry sources.

NBL was among the seven banks identified by the BB as problem banks in 1995 because of their precarious financial health.

Later, the BB formed a problem bank unit to supervise the functions of these banks and signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with them.

With the signing of the MOUs, some restrictions were also imposed on the banks regarding their loan and branch expansion operations.

The BB also put its administrators in all the problem banks.

According to banking sources, NBL greatly improved its position by making a record

A dozen ministers campaign for Amu

From Shehab Ahmed

JHALAKATI, July 28: Heavy rains dampened the campaign by ruling party stalwart and Food Minister Amir Hossain Amu today but it failed to deter him from holding a rally at Baukathi, three and half a miles from here.

Braving the rains, the Awami League candidate in parliamentary by-election in Jhalakati -2 constituency sought votes, saying that Jhalakati district did not have a minister in the last 30 years (except himself) and if he is elected, the area would be developed. 'Development' is the only message he and nearly a dozen other ministers, state ministers and deputy

ministers visiting the area have been giving to the voters.

The by-election is also being contested by nine others including Elen Bhutto, widow of Jatiya Party (Mizan-Manju) MP Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. The seat fell vacant following his death.

The mainstream opposition parties have shunned the election. Even Elen Bhutto got no support from her husband's party.

Though the JP faction has fielded a candidate - Advocate Jaiuddin Hawlader - he is missing from the electioneering. Even party leader and Communication Minister Anwar Hossain Manju, who hails

from nearby Bhandaria constituency in Pirojpur district, did not lend a helping hand to him. The minister has not visited the area since the electioneering reached its peak.

But Elen Bhutto took up her husband's mantle, telling voters that only she could complete his unfinished task of changing the lot of the local people and improving the infrastructure in this remote, water-logged area.

Her emergence in the scene, reportedly backed by 'invisible opponents' of the Awami League heavyweight, Amir Hossain Amu, and the Opposition.

Indian army halts offensive against Kashmir militants

SRINAGAR, India, July 28: The Indian army has suspended all offensive operations against Islamic militants in Kashmir for the first time in 11 years in response to a cease-fire by one of the main guerilla groups, the top general in the region said today, reports AP.

"We have stopped operations against the mujahedeen locally," Maj Gen Basant Singh told The Associated Press. He said his troops had not carried out a single operation against Islamic separatist militants since Tuesday.

"There will be no deliberate attempt against the militants on our part," Singh said. "We have issued instructions to stop these offensive operations."

Singh said the decision was made in response to a three-month cease-fire announced last week by the Hezb-ul-Mujahedeen.

"It is very difficult to identify which militant is of Hezb-ul-Mujahedeen or other outfits," Singh said, explaining the blanket halt on offensives.

However, he made it clear the army would respond if attacked.

Earlier today, suspected militants hurled grenades at a police patrol in Garida Bazaar in downtown Srinagar, killing one reserve policeman and injuring two.

In addition to the army, the Kashmir police, the paramilitary Border Security Force and groups of former militants who have changed sides operate in Kashmir.

Also, senior Indian military officers say, an estimated 3,500 militants were inside Kashmir as of March and an additional 5,000 were trained and ready to cross the border from camps in Pakistan.

Indian officers had anticipated an increase in fighting this summer.

But instead, there have been a series of dramatic developments. The government released from custody several leaders of separatist organisations and said it was willing to open talks with them on ending the violence that has killed 16,000 people since an Islamic insurgency began in 1989.

Last week, the Hezb-ul-Mujahedeen, which had threatened in May to send suicide bombers

against military camps in Kashmir, suddenly announced a three-month unilateral cease-fire.

Singh said he believed the cease-fire call meant militants were bowing to the desires of the Kashmiri people for peace. The militants cannot survive without the support of the locals and soon as the locals desire peace, the militants have to accept reality," Singh said.

Several groups, based in Kashmir and Pakistan, have been waging a year-long guerilla war in Jammu-Kashmir — the only Muslim majority state in India — demanding independence or union with Islamic Pakistan.

Other militant groups condemned the cease-fire announcement of the Hezb-ul-Mujahedeen.

DMP chief says No such order to nab Auranga, Liaquat

By Staff Correspondent

Though the Prime Minister two weeks ago ordered arrest of three "godfathers" of terrorists in the city, police claim that they have not yet received any such order officially.

According to a UNB report published in different national dailies earlier, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina ordered the Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police on July 9 to immediately arrest Auranga, Liaquat and Hannan for their alleged involvement in terrorist activities in the city.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Motiur Rahman, when contacted said, "So far we know, The Prime Minister has not given any such order."

Auranga, Liaquat and Hannan were once linked with Awami League's youth front, Jubo League. There are many allegations of murder, robbery and other criminal activities against them, according to police and press reports.

Border trade with Myanmar virtually suspended

Traders protest new BDR order

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, July 28: Bangladesh traders have kept border trade with Myanmar through Teknaf virtually suspended for a week now, protesting a new order issued by BDR, traders said.

Only small quantities of perishable goods are traded now, they said.

As per the new order, traders have to produce copies of export declaration given by the Myanmar Customs Department and export licence given by the Department of Border Trade at the check post during transportation of goods.

The traders termed it 'harassment' to them and 'encroachment' on Customs authorities activities by BDR and demanded uninterrupted transportation of goods after completion of customs formalities at Teknaf.

They said Chairman of Bangladesh-Myanmar Business Promotion Council, Rashed Mokud Khan, sent a letter to the commerce ministry yesterday seeking its intervention to resolve the deadlock by withdrawing the BDR order.

The provision for producing documents other than the 'bill of entry' is not incorporated in the border trade procedure, the letter said.

When contacted BDR Sector Commander in Chittagong Col. Waliullah said the order has been issued as per a decision of the Anti Smuggling Task Force to check smuggling of goods from Myanmar and evasion of tax.

This is neither 'encroachment' on activities of Customs Department nor 'harassment' of traders, he said.

"Rather, we are helping the

Customs to reduce tax-evasion by re-checking the 'bill of entry' with copies of export declaration issued by the Myanmar Customs Department and relevant export license," he said. He claimed that BDR personnel could act as Customs men to check goods traded through the border.

He said the new order was given in view of detection of anomalies in documents against consignments and smuggling from Myanmar in the name of border trade.

Customs sources, when contacted, said the 'bill of entry' is the "final document" for goods traded through the border. After customs clearance, other documents need not be checked by any other agency, they said.

Border trade with Myanmar began in 1995 under a bilateral agreement signed in 1994.



Inter-district buses parked illegally on the road beside Nagar Bhaban at Fulbaria wait for passengers, making traffic congestion in the area all the more worse. —Star photo

One shot dead, another stabbed in city

By Staff Correspondent

Unidentified persons shot dead a tea stall owner and fatally stabbed a young man in separate incidents in the city on Thursday night.

One of the victims was identified as Abdul Wahid, 38, who ran a tea stall at Nabinagh in Shyamapur thana. Identify of the other man aged about 25 could not be known.

According to police sources, four armed men appeared in front of Wahid's house at Nabinagh and knocked the doors at about 3:30 am. Wahid wanted to know their identity but without giving any reply, they started kicking on the door. At this, he opened the door and the gang shot him and fled away. Wahid died on the spot.

The motive behind the killing could not be known immediately.

The victim's cousin filed a

Journalist murder Massive hunt for Pagla Selim: Mona brought to Dhaka

By Staff Correspondent

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) brought Monir Hossain Mona, an accused in journalist Shamsur Rahman murder case, to Dhaka from Jessore yesterday for interrogation.

He was taken on a seven-day remand. Mona has already given some vital information regarding the murder to Jessore police.

Dr. Shamsuddoha, Special Superintendent of CID police, told The Daily Star yesterday that there were several dimensions of the case. CID is examining all possible aspects.

Another source said that CID also took Abdus Shukkur, another accused in the case, on a fresh remand yesterday.

Shukkur disclosed some names involved in the killing but CID would not divulge those for the sake of investigation.

CID is keeping watch on 'some people' in Dhaka and Jessore and may go for further arrest any moment, they said.

In Jessore, police launched a massive manhunt to nab one Pagla Selim. Mona told police that Pagla Selim financed the killers.

A leading Bengali daily quoting police reported on Friday that a meeting to plan the murder was held at the residence of Selim about 15 days before the killing.

Selim told the meeting that there was an offer of Tk five lakh from Khulna to kill Rahman. But he did not disclose the name of the 'godfather' who offered the money.

Meanwhile, Hasan, the gang leader of the so-called 'Hasan Syndicate', was shifted to Faridpur jail from Jessore jail yesterday amid tight security.

Our Staff Correspondent from Khulna adds: The CID and the Khulna Metropolitan Police are keeping an eye on a top ruling party leader who is reportedly trying to get the prime suspect in the journalist Shamsur Rahman killing case freed.

The suspect, Rafique was arrested.

Govt's double standard adds to worsening traffic situation

Buses plying between the city and its suburban areas occupy busy roads

By Raziur Rahman

Nearly one thousand passenger buses plying between the city and its suburban areas are using some busy roads of the metropolis, worsening the traffic situation.

These buses use the Fulbaria bus terminal at the heart of the city.

A government order issued in mid-eighties restricting movement of these buses on city roads is still in place. But soon after issuing the order, the government, under pressure from transport owners and workers, signed an agreement with them allowing the buses to ply in the city.

Entering the city through the New Airport Road, these vehicles are using Mohakhali, Magbazar, Mouchak, Malibagh, Kakrail and Zero Point crossings from early morning till late night.

According to a number of officials at DMP's traffic department, these buses are also responsible for heavy traffic jams at those crossings. Of those, Magbazar and Mouchak crossings are the worst affected.

Besides, the city roads connected with the crossings are also affected due to traffic jam.

At Magbazar crossing, movement of traffic comes to a halt for ten to fifteen minutes and sometimes more than that during peak hours due to traffic jam.

A number of transport workers at Fulbaria bus terminal told this correspondent that buses plying to Manikganj, Gazipur, Kapasia, Sripur, Kali-ganj and Kaliakoir use the Fulbaria terminal.

The traffic department officials said traffic jam at those crossings during peak hours could be reduced substantially if those buses stop plying through those points.

Besides, movement of other vehicles is also affected in busy Gulistan-Fulbaria area as those buses keep the roads there occupied.

The road behind the Nagar Bhaban is always kept occupied by the buses because those are parked on the road instead of the terminal.

In the mid-eighties, the government set up three terminals at Sayedabad, Gabtali and Mohakhali for inter-city buses, and those plying to suburban areas and issued an order restricting their movement on city roads. Arrangements were also made there for those buses.

But soon after, the government signed an agreement with the transport owners and workers in the face of their movement and demand from commuters who attend their work places in the city from suburban areas.

An official at DMP's traffic department preferring anonymity said they have recommended that those buses should be compelled to use Sayedabad, Mohakhali and Gabtali terminals so that those do not use the busy city roads.

The commuters can easily reach their work places from the three bus terminals as there are adequate city service buses from those places, he said.

Khaleda asks govt Take allout measures to eradicate aedes mosquito

BNP chairperson and leader of the opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia yesterday expressed concern at the outbreak of dengue fever in the country, reports UNB.

In a statement, she called upon the government to take allout steps to eradicate dengue virus carrier aedes mosquito. She also instructed her party-men to start a mosquito killing drive in their respective areas.

City Corporation of the government is yet to come up with any step to eradicate aedes mosquito despite the outbreak of the dengue fever in Dhaka three weeks ago, she said.

Khaleda said that over 50 people died of dengue fever and many have been affected by it while the government tried to downplay it as a mere propaganda by the newspapers.

The opposition leader accused the government of showing an indifferent attitude to the dengue issue although World Health Organisation warned the government of its outbreak two years back.

She called upon the people to keep their houses and surroundings clean and tidy.

Liaison body protests PM's remarks during interview with BBC

The BNP-led alliance has protested the Prime Minister's comment blaming the opposition for deteriorating law-and-order, reports UNB.

Central liaison committee of the alliance yesterday held a meeting at 29 Minto Road yesterday and adopted some resolutions protesting the PM Sheikh Hasina's remarks during an interview with BBC on July 26.

Anwar Zahid of BNP, Kazi Firoz Rashid and Mostafa Jamal Haider of JP, Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujaheed, Mohammad Quamruzzaman and ATM Azharul Islam of Jamaat and ARM Abdul Matin of IOJ attended the meeting chaired by Shamsul Islam of BNP.

The Prime Minister in fact repeated her bad practice of telling lies by bringing false allegations against the opposition," says one resolution.

Mentioning different incidents, including the unearthing of a "bomb factory" at the rest-house.

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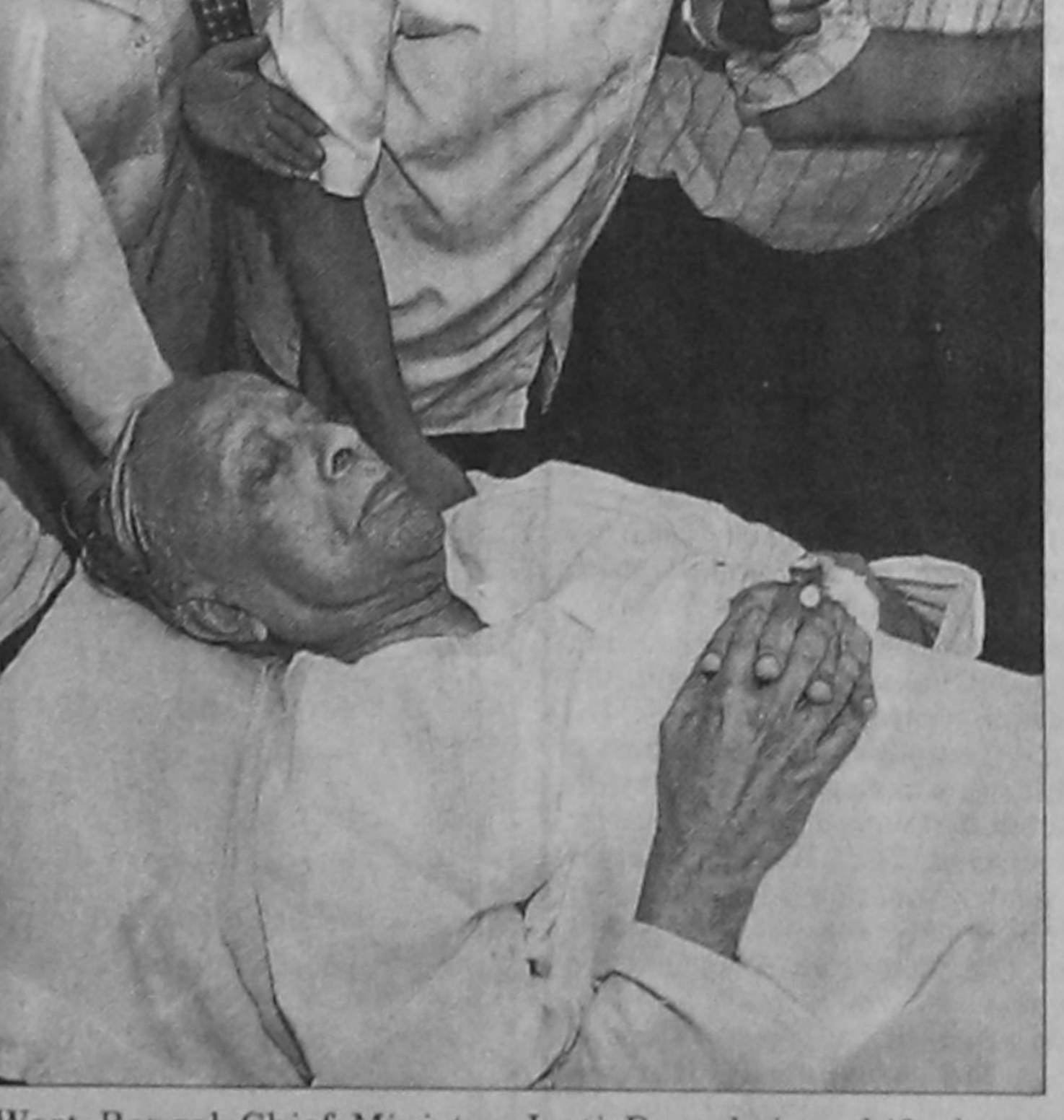
July	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
July 29	5:27 am	6:43 pm
July 30	5:27 am	6:43 pm

Prayer Timings

July 29

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:25	4:55
Zohr	1:00	1:30
Asr	5:00	5:15
Maghrib	6:55	6:58
Esha	8:15	8:45

Source: Islamic Foundation



West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu being shifted to hospital after falling ill with apparent cardiac problems during a party meeting yesterday. —AFP photo

Jyoti Basu hospitalised

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, July 28: West Bengal Chief Minister and veteran Marxist leader Jyoti Basu was today admitted to Ram Mohan Lohia Hospital after he felt unwell while presiding over a meeting of CPM politburo.

Basu was rushed to the hospital after he complained of unwellness saying "I am fainting", senior party leader Prakash Karet said.

The 86-year old chief minister was first taken to the nursing home attached to the hospital but subsequently shifted to Coronary Care Unit (CCU).

Attending doctors said Basu was admitted with low heart beat but his condition was now "stable".

The Marxist leader arrived in New Delhi on Wednesday evening to attend party's central committee meeting.

AP adds: Basu led the communists to victory in every state election in West Bengal since 1977 and headed the governing party in the state

Planting of bombs Police yet to nab Mufti Hanman

Police have launched a massive hunt for Mufti Abdul Hanman, alleged mastermind of Kotalipara bomb planting incident, official sources said, reports BSS.

Police have already raided several hideouts of Hanman in the southwestern districts of the country to arrest him, they said.

A team of Gopalganj police today arrested Wahiduzzaman, a close associate of Hanman, from Khulna city.

With his arrest, the number of arrests made in connection with the bomb incident rose to 23.

Gopalganj police have already sent messages and photographs of Hanman to different bordering districts and thanas to prevent his escape from the country.

They have also sent relevant documents to Dhaka and Khulna metropolitan police

Dengue infection No blood transfusion needed unless platelet counts are below 5000

By Naimul Haq

Experts have said that a dengue patient does not need blood transfusion unless the blood platelet counts are less than 5,000 per cubic millimeter.

However, transfusion of platelet may take place earlier if there is a tendency of bleeding anywhere in the body, they added. Four bags of blood make one unit of platelet.

The suggestions came against the backdrop of rising number of dengue patients crowding the Red Crescent Blood Centre at Mohammadpur and other blood banks in the city.

Some dengue patients and their relatives who came at the centre on Wednesday became so agitated at the severe crisis of blood bags that the authorities had call in police. There are

now enough blood bags in the centre.

Most patients without having proper knowledge on blood component therapy are rushing to blood centres in the city for platelet. There is a common notion among the patients that platelet transfusion is necessary when platelet count is below 50,000 per cubic millimeter.

"There is a mad rush round the clock for blood here at the centre," said one doctor at the centre. "This is for the first time that the centre is facing such an unusual rush for blood component."

The authorities said 90 per cent of the patients are now asking for blood platelet from the centre and the demand for blood has sharply increased

Another FIR-named accused held from Comilla

CHITTAGONG, July 28: Shahedul Karim Huru, another accused in Chittagong killing case, was arrested from Comilla town today, reports UNB.

Police raided the house of one Moinul Haq at Ramnagar Ashoktala in Kotwali thana in the morning and caught Huru from the hideout.

Huru, accused no 13 in the FIR, is son of Sultan Ahmed alias Shamsu driver of KB Aman All Road in Bakalia in the port city.

Five accused, including the suspected killer group leader Salahuddin alias Nasir, have so far been arrested in connection with the killings of eight people, including six BCL activists at Bahaddarhat on July 12.

Police sources said they became sure that Jamaat-Shibir men were involved in incident.

"We seized papers from the Jamaat office on Wednesday that proved it," one police official said.

Police also identified the subscribers of the mobile phones used for talking to the killers and seized the recorded papers of their conversation from the telephone authorities.