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## Discord over trade union rights at EPZs

# US likely to slash GSP facilities by half

By Rafiq Hasan

The US government is likely to cut by fifty per cent the GSP facilities for imports from Bangladesh as the government did not allow trade union right in Export Processing Zones.

The GSP Sub-committee at the US Trade Representative Office (USTRO) has rejected the government's explanation on the issue.

Saying it is 'unacceptable' as it failed to incorporate 'essential elements', according to a message received at the Prime Minister's office.

Glulam Hussain, Commercial Counsellor in Bangladesh embassy in Washington sent the message after meeting the Sub-committee Chairman, Jon Rosenbaum.

"It is learnt from Rosenbaum that the Sub-committee is preparing to recommend to the President for consideration of a partial (50%) cancellation of Bangladesh's GSP benefits, to be effective from October 1, 2000," the message said.

The formula prepared by the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA) for selecting representatives to the Workers Welfare Committee does not recognise workers' right of association.

Rosenbaum told Hussain. There will be no formal hearing on the issue in the Sub-committee and its recommendation will be effective after the US President's approval, the

message said. However, the Sub-committee may consider a meeting with any delegation from Bangladesh, it said.

When contacted, official sources said the Foreign Minister or the State Minister for Foreign Affairs, whoever accompanies Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during her forthcoming visit to US, will meet the Sub-committee on the issue. The Prime Minister leaves for US on September 3.

The Sub-committee's move follows a petition by AFL-CIO, the largest federation of trade unions in US, for revocation of facilities under GSP (Generalised System of Preference) for not allowing

trade union in EPZs in the country.

Bangladesh government had committed withdrawal of restriction on trade union activities at EPZs by 1997 in phases.

When contacted BGMEA President Anisur Rahman Sinha told The Daily Star that although Bangladesh's annual exports to US under GSP facilities are worth only 38 million dollars, the matter is related to the country's image abroad.

"If GSP facility is cancelled, the US-Bangladesh relation will be seriously affected," he said.

Immediately after hearing the news, Sinha met Commerce Minister Abdul Jalil and re-

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WASA authorities have started digging up the one way road from Kataban towards Hatirpool, closing down one of its two lanes for installation of sewerage lines, resulting in continuous traffic jam. — Star photo

## Top ten in 5 edn boards

By Staff Correspondent

Mohammad Rezwanaul Huq of Barisal Cadet College has secured the highest marks - 959 - in this year's HSC examinations under five education boards.

He got distinctions in mathematics, physics, chemistry and statistics.

Two others - Mohammad Abdullah Ibne Anwar and Mohammad Ruhul Amin - of the same college and S M Shahriar Nirjon of Dhaka College followed him securing 953 marks each.

Nirjon stood first in the Science Group under Dhaka Education Board.

S M Iftekharul Amin of Jhenidah Cadet College secured the third place in the combined

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## S'pore Challenge final today

By Sports Reporter

Pakistan take on South Africa in the final of the Singapore Challenge 2000 cricket tournament at the Kallang Stadium today.

Pakistan booked their place with an all-win record in the league phase while the Proteas made it by winning against New Zealand - the third team in the tri-nation series - in the last game on Friday.

Ekush Television and Sony Max will provide live coverage of the match with the telecast beginning at 8 am Bangladesh time.

## Inside Today

### Article

## Dialogue on Development: From Darkness to Light

Column: Beneath the Surface  
by Abdul Bayes

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## Supplement

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Page 9

August	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Aug 27		6-21 pm
Aug 28	5-39am	

## Prayer Timings

August 27		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-05
Zohr	12-45	1-30
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-40	6-45
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

## 37.47 pc pass HSC exams

Success rate lowest in three years

By Staff Correspondent

The average percentage of pass in Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinations this year is 37.47 per cent, the lowest in three years and 15.93 per cent lower than last year's.

The five education boards in the country published the results yesterday.

Out of total 5,05,000 examinees under Dhaka, Chittagong, Comilla, Jessore and Rajshahi

boards, 1,86,234 passed.

The percentages of pass are 35.38, 37.92, 40.38, 37.12 and 36.55 in Dhaka, Chittagong, Comilla, Jessore and Rajshahi boards respectively.

The number of candidates were 1,50,141 under Dhaka Board, 29,666 under Chittagong Board, 74,654 under Comilla Board, 93,151 under Jessore Board and 1,22,474 under Ra-

shahi Board.

In Dhaka Board S.M. Shahriar Nirjon (Roll-104087) of Dhaka College topped the combined merit lists of Science, Agricultural and Home Economics groups. He secured 953 marks with letters in four subjects.

In Humanities, Islamic Studies and Music groups, Ju-

See page 11 col 7



Rezwanaul Huq, first in JB



Shahriar Nirjon, 1st in Science group, DB



Saiful Alam, 1st in Commerce, DB

## DB Science merit list

Top 10 positions in the combined merit list of Science group under Dhaka Board as reported by UNB:

S M Shahriar Nirjon (roll 104087) of Dhaka College, 953 marks with four letters; A B M Rubaiyat Islam Sadat (roll 104088) of Dhaka College, 949 marks with four letters; Md Raquibur Rahman (roll 105362) of Notre Dame College, 941 marks with four letters; Md Mahmudul Hasan (roll 103873) See page 12 col 4

## DB Humanities merit list

Top 10 positions in the combined merit list of Humanities group under Dhaka Board as reported by UNB:

Jurana Aziz (roll 356277) of Mymensingh Girls Cadet College, 877 marks with four letters; Farzana Aktar Mishra (roll 356281) of Mymensingh Girls Cadet College, 843 marks with two letters; Nargis Aktar (roll 308769) of Vignarunisa Noon College, 828 marks with two letters; Monowara Begum See page 12 col 5

## DB Commerce merit list

Top 10 positions in the combined merit list of Commerce group under Dhaka Board as reported by UNB:

Md Saiful Alam (roll 556725) of Dhaka Commerce College, 868 marks with three letters; Mohammad Imtiaz Khan (roll 556732) of Dhaka Commerce College, 861 marks with three letters; Rezwanaul Haque Jami (roll 556730) of Dhaka Commerce College, 845 marks with three letters; Hossain Md Shahidul Haq (roll See page 12 col 1

## 86 girl students of Motijheel School & College pass

By Staff Correspondent

Agitation on the streets for their rights to sit for the HSC examinations has finally paid off as a total of 86 out of 109 girl students of Motijheel Model High School and College passed the exams.

Of the successful students, 21 got first division, 60 second division and the rest got third division.

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A section of the 132 female students of Motijheel Model School and College, who came out successful in this year's HSC examinations, celebrating their victory in front of their college yesterday. — Star photo

## Nazrul's death anniversary today

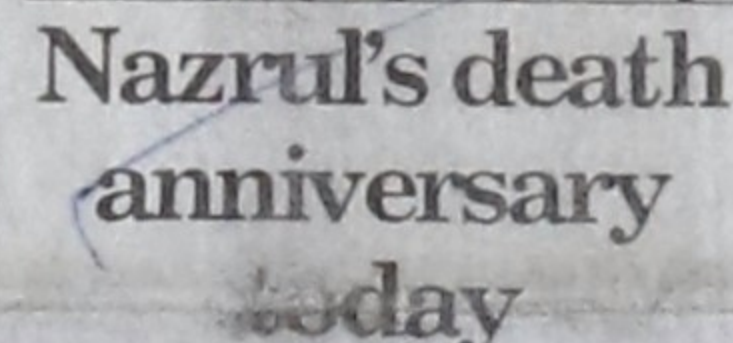
By Staff Correspondent

The 24th death anniversary of national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam will be observed today.

A number of organisations have taken up elaborate programmes to observe the day.

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy will hold a discussion meeting at its gallery bhaban at 5 pm which will be followed by a cultural function.

Eminent journalist Obaidul Huq will be the chief guest at the function. Professor Abul Kasem Fazlul Huq, poet Mohammad Rafiq, artist Khalid Hossain and Professor Selim Al Din will take part in the discussion.



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## Boral murder Brother-in-law of Alamgir held

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Aug 26: Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) today arrested Zahiduzzaman, 30, brother-in-law of Alamgir Kabir, president of Chittalmari thana Juba League.

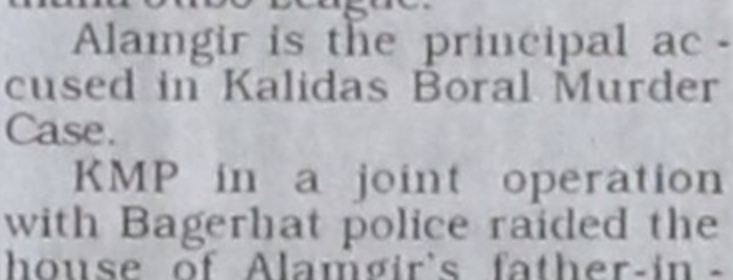
Alamgir is the principal accused in Kalidas Boral Murder Case.

KMP in a joint operation with Bagerhat police raided the house of Alamgir's father-in-law at Haji Mohsin Road under Khulna thana at noon today and recovered three live cartridges from the possession of Zahid.

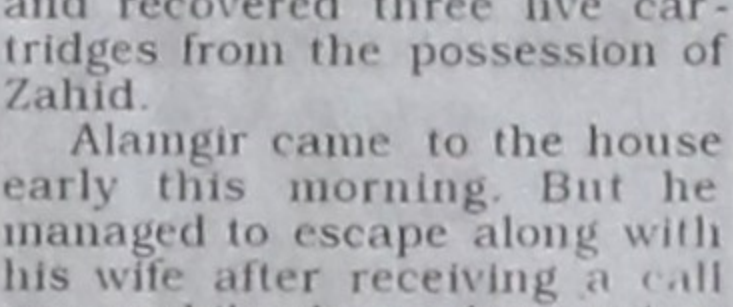
Alamgir came to the house early this morning. But he managed to escape along with his wife after receiving a call over mobile phone about police raid, Bagerhat district police source said.

Hunt for Alamgir in the city is still going on, police said.

Nahid Mahfuza Alam, 1st among girls, DB



Nahid Mahfuza Alam, 1st among girls, DB



Jurana Aziz, 1st in Humanities, DB

## Our alliance is of parties, not of persons: Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has said her party has formed alliance with parties, not individuals.

"We believe in rule of law... We have total respect for law and confidence on court. Law should be allowed to take its own course if any one commits any crime or does any corruption," she said referring to the High Court verdict on Janata Tower case against Ershad.

The Leader of the Opposition in Parliament was talking to the office-bearers of Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) at her official residence. DRU President M Anwarul Haq led the team.

She replied to a volley of questions on political situation in the country, BNP and the four-party alliance and the demand for increasing the number of women's reserved seats in parliament.

She said BNP has agreed to contest the next general election and form government jointly with other parties of the

opposition alliance to ensure political stability.

Asked about her surprise visit to Ershad's residence after the High Court verdict, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said it was for signing another joint declaration.

The signing was scheduled for August 27. It was done ahead of the schedule but it had absolutely no connection with the High Court verdict," Bhuiyan said.

She was asked whether BNP would return to parliament and vote for extension of the tenure of women's reserved seats.

Khaleda said, "The issue is very important. The number must be increased. But the ruling party has placed a bill in this regard without consulting the opposition. They want to extend the tenure but not to increase the number of seats."

She said if BNP goes to power, the number of women's seats in parliament will be in-

creased.

"We have definite plans and concrete proposals on the issue. We will disclose our plans at an appropriate time," she added.

She said although the tenure of present reserved seats for women expires in April 2001, the issue can be resolved if the government announces early national election.

Asked whether BNP will participate in election under Awami League if the provision for caretaker government is repealed, she said the matter is now sub-judice. BNP reiterated that the provision was passed unanimously and it was the demand of all political parties.

"No political party will participate in election under Awami League".

She was asked to comment on Communication Minister Anwar Hossain Manju's recent statement that he was doubtful about holding of the next gen-

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## Ershad-Khaleda meeting a political hypocrisy: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday termed "political hypocrisy" the Ershad-Khaleda meeting immediately after the High Court's judgement on Janata Tower corruption case, reports UNB.

"Our government did not file the case... It was Begum Zia who had filed all the cases against Ershad and the High Court gave the verdict. But immediately after the verdict Khaleda rushed to Ershad's house... It's a sheer political hypocrisy and they have been exposed to the people," she said.

Hasina, president of ruling Awami League, made the remarks while addressing a meeting marking the joining of chairmen of 9 Union Parishads of Gabtali thana under Bogra district at Ganobhaban yesterday evening.

The Prime Minister said it was Begum Zia who publicly declared Ershad as corrupt and killer of her husband and now joined hands with Ershad following political bankruptcy to

bluff the people.

Hasina said Awami League never indulged in falsehood to gain political benefits. But BNP and its allies are doing politics to secure power and for personal gain without caring for welfare of the common man.

"Since 1950 a false campaign was orchestrated against Awami League. Before the last election Begum Zia had launched a propaganda that if Awami League is voted to power, there will be no mosque, no azan from mosque. The region from CHT to Feni will be turned into India if the peace accord is signed. But she has been proved utterly wrong today," the Prime Minister said.

Welcoming the UP chairmen to Awami League, Hasina said she and her party stood for the cause of the people. Recalling her struggle for restoration of voting rights she said Awami League came to power with people's mandate in a free and fair election in 1996.

UP chairmen who joined the

Awami League are Arifur Rahman of Gabtali Union, Abdur Razzak Mondal of Narnamala Union, Aminul Islam of Mahishaban Union, Abdur Razzak of Ragoli Union, Abdu Hamid of Dugahata Union, Manoranjan Roy of Dashkhinpara Union, Saiful Islam Paltu of Nepaliti Union, Talequl Islam of Khotapara Union and Habibur Rashid Habib of Amrul Union.

Hasina said the government wanted to give wide power to local government bodies for conducting massive development programmes in rural areas.

She said her government believed in balanced development of all regions of the country. "We are carrying out development works in all areas without any political consideration. We have earned people's confidence through our work and we will be doing it in future," she told the newcomers to Awami League.

## Involve pvt sector, community-based bodies in keeping Metropolis clean

The Daily Star-Bangladesh Scouts workshop in city told

By Staff Correspondent

A workshop on 'Waste Disposal in Dhaka City' yesterday stressed the need for active participation of the private sector as well as community-based organisations and proper coordination among the agencies involved in waste disposal to keep the metropolis clean.

Besides, the existing laws in this regard must be strictly implemented to stop disposal of untreated sewage. Industrial waste and clinical waste as these are contaminating surface water and might cause severe ground water contamination in near future, the workshop suggested.

The day-long workshop was jointly organised by The Daily Star and Bangladesh Scouts. Held at the Dhaka Metropolitan Scout Bhaban, the workshop was moderated by Dr Nizamuddin Ahmed of BUET and participated by representatives from the agencies concerned with disposal of waste. Department of Environment (DOE), experts from BUET and people belonging to different professions.

Around 5,000 tons of solid waste are generated in the city every day while Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) is able to dispose of 3.5 tons.

Chief Health Officer of DCC Dr Mohammad Ashraf said

DCC has only 5,000 cleaners to remove solid waste. "We need more manpower. But due to financial and other constraints, it is not possible to have that now."

Prof Mujibur Rahman of BUET said DCC has to give priority to waste disposal. Its budget allocation for conservancy services is inadequate, he pointed out.

The participants emphasised recycling of solid waste as the waste at the dumping spots of DCC is contaminating surface water and may also contaminate ground water in the near future.

Prof Firoz Ahmed of BUET

said nowhere in the world, solid waste is dumped in open place.

Director General of DOE Khondakar Rashidul Huq said an eight-member committee is studying the feasibility of using waste to produce energy. But Prof Nazrul Islam of BUET noted that proposal for generation of power from waste was rejected several times in the past.

About clinical waste, participants expressed concern as most of the clinics in city's residential areas are dumping those along with other solid waste in DCC dustbins, creating serious hazards.

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