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PM calls on President

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called on President Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday to apprise him of the outcome of her recent visit to Kuwait, reports UNB.

Terming the visit as "extremely successful", she said it would widen the existing bilateral relations, particularly in the field of economic cooperation.

The Prime minister also apprised the President of her deliberation at the 9th OIC summit and a special session of the OIC summit held in Doha, Qatar on the Palestine situation.

She said her participation in the 9th OIC summit, and meetings with heads of government and state attending the summit, have yielded positive effects in widening and strengthening relations with those countries.

President Shahabuddin appreciated her successful visit to Kuwait and participation in the 9th OIC summit in Qatar.

He said these visits would help boost bilateral relations with Kuwait as well as with the OIC member countries.

Autonomy of Betar, TV: Rule nisi on govt

By Special Correspondent

A Division Bench of the High Court yesterday issued a rule nisi upon the government to show cause within four weeks why it shall not be directed to consider the implementation of the report by the Commission for Framing Rules and Regulations for the Autonomy of Bangladesh Betar and Television, which was submitted on June 30, 1997.

The rule was issued by Justice ATM Monwaruddin and Justice Mojammel Hossain on a petition filed by Masood Alam, Ragib Ahsan on behalf of Odhikar, a coalition for human rights organisations in cooperation with Freedom Foundation.

Moving the petition, Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud argued that the petitioner has sufficient

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HC sitting at night evokes mixed reaction

By Special Correspondent

The sitting of a Division Bench of the High Court late Tuesday night granting anticipatory bail to Editor of the Inqilab AMM Bahauddin on sedition charges has evoked mixed reaction from lawyers and others.

Eminent lawyer Barrister Syed Ishtiaque Ahmed said it was not desirable that the Judiciary and the Executive would confront each other.

"When a problem has arisen over an issue where a judge has been accused on a grave matter, the anticipatory bail issue has put us in an untenable situation.

"The sensitivity of the criminal charges is such that it is being discussed everywhere", he told a function in the city on Thursday, welcoming new lawyers.

There had been instances of judges and the Chief Justice giving orders from their residences in cases in which the plaintiff could suffer heavily because of ill-motivated executive order. But I have no knowledge about an order by the High Court at late night for anticipatory bail. The matter was discussed in parliament. The Executive and the Judiciary are again nearing a confrontation course. Can't we avoid it? If so, let us all become active about our own responsibility", he added.

Dr Kamal Hossain described the situation of confrontation

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Sutrapur Murder FIR-named accused held

By Staff Correspondent

Sutrapur police arrested an FIR-named accused in the sensational double-murder case from Ghatnighar area in Sutrapur on Saturday night.

The arrested was identified as Liton, son of late Nayeb Ali of Ghatnighar area.

A team of Sutrapur thana police headed by OC Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal raided Ghatnighar area from 2 pm to 11 pm and arrested Liton.

Two teenage boys were murdered inside Sutrapur Rifles Club at Loharpool on September 15.

Mutilated bodies which were cut into six pieces each, were recovered from a manhole at Loharpool under Sutrapur thana the following day.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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A campus for criminals

Mugging, harassment and prostitution in DU territory on rise

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka University campus has become a safe-heaven for criminals and anti-social elements, especially at night. While the infamous armed clashes between rival student factions is fast becoming a rarity, incidents like mugging, harassment, prostitution etc have increased alarmingly.

Families living on the campus don't dare to go out of their houses after dusk in fear of falling prey to the organised gangs that are carrying out the crime.

Sources say that a section of dishonest university night guards, employees and their family members are assisting the criminals for personal interest. They also have the backing of some non-student terrorists, expelled former students and members of the law enforcing agencies.

The recent recovery of the body of a mugger from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) compound and the rape of a garment factory worker at the Zahirul Haq staff quarters bear testimony to the disturbing trend.

The most disgraceful feature at present is the free movement of a large number of prostitutes in and around the DU premises after midnight. These women mostly stay inside the Suhrawardy Udayan and other suitable places of the campus during daytime.

The staff quarters of fourth class employees are

one of the main crime centres. Clubhouses at the quarters are being used for gambling, drinking and other unlawful activities.

According to sources, Babu, son of an SM Hall staff: Surya Sen Hall employees Razu, Hossain, Islam, Sayem; Zahirul Haq Hall's Sohel and Kalla Kamal of Babupura slum are actively involved in campus crime.

Despite measures taken by the university authorities from time to time, the gangs are continuing to operate in tandem. The common victims of their atrocities are the students, teachers, rickshaw-pullers and auto-rickshaw drivers.

The Teachers Student Centre (TSC) crossing, Shabagh, Kataban, the Nilkhel-Palassy link road, Central Shaheed Minar and its surroundings and Fuller Road have become notorious for snatching and hold-ups.

The Shaheed Minar and its adjacent areas, the mausoleum of the three national leaders, SM Hall and DU gymnasium premises virtually turn into a red-light zone at late night. The sex-workers and their clients care little for privacy.

It is alleged that a section of police, guards and employees of the university allow these acts to go unhindered as they get a share from the prostitutes' earnings.

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Use hi-tech to develop medicinal herbs: PM

By DU Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said that medicinal herbs can be used for human welfare through appropriate application of modern science and technology.

"In recent times due to production of medicine based on the technology of developed countries, our own resources have not been given due attention. But our traditional medicinal herbs could be properly used for human welfare through appropriate application of modern science and technology," she said while inaugurating the 10th Asian Symposium on Medicinal Plants, Spices and other Natural Products (ASOMPS-X-2000) at the Osman Memorial Hall yesterday.

The Prime Minister also reiterated the government's commitment to "increase forest resources, preservation of bio-diversity" for a sound environment.

The government is always ready to render all sorts of assistance and co-operation to the scientists for their efforts," she said at the largest-ever assembly of scientists in the country.

Some 150 scientists from 40 countries across the world are taking part in the six-day symposium.

The Prime Minister also underscored the need for a shift to agro-based industries from the traditional agriculture system for optimum utilisation of the country's limited but fertile land resources.

"For this we have to ensure production and utilisation of vegetables, flowers, spices etc side by side with herbal plants through application of modern technology," she said. "We need far reaching and scientific planning for protection of plants, culture of most essential and vanishing plants and creating balanced use of it."

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Dearth of drugs hits heart institute hard

Poor patients even beg for life-saving medicines

Star Report

The National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) is beset with frequent shortage of medicine supply. The lone state-run centre for treatment of heart ailments in the country has been operating for the last two years without sufficient stock of life-saving drugs.

The poor patients have been hit hard by infrequent and inadequate flow of important medicines, for they are the ones who turn to the Institute for treatment within their limits. The NICVD's failure to provide as many as 20 very expensive drugs has reportedly prompted some poor patients to even resort to begging.

At the Coronary Care Unit (CCU), where mostly high-risk heart patients are kept, the shortage is

most acutely felt. Ziaul Karim, Kaiser Ahmed, B. Nath and Elias Choudhury, under treatment at the CCU, are among those who had to purchase the Sreptokinase injection, which costs between Tk 2,500 and 3,000 in nearby pharmacies.

The prices are outrageous but there's little we can do. People's life and death sometimes depend on the drugs," they complained.

The nurses and the store officials admit to inadequate supply of emergency life-saving medicines.

"Most of the patients have to wait for treatment until the prescribed medicines arrive. This can be fatal at times," said an attendant.

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The arrested was identified as Liton, son of late Nayeb Ali of Ghatnighar area.

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Mutilated bodies which were cut into six pieces each, were recovered from a manhole at Loharpool under Sutrapur thana the following day.

Montana Gov. Marc Racicot,

enlisted by the Bush campaign to lead the Republican Party assault, alleged that ballots had been dropped, misfiled and mishandled by exhausted or pro-George official.

"I think when the American people learn about these things, they're going to ask themselves, What is the name of God is going on here?" he said.

Eleven days after America voted, the final tally of overseas absentee ballots showed Bush lengthening his lead from an almost invisible 300 votes to a still-minuscule 930 out of 6 million votes cast.

All sides readied arguments for Monday's hearing before the state Supreme Court, reports AP.

As court-challenged recounts

paused for the night in two countries, Gore had a net gain of 67 votes, which if they are counted would cut Bush's lead to 863.

There was conflict in the overseas count, too, as the Republicans charged Democrats with systematically challenging votes cast by members of the armed forces.

In rebuttal, Gore spokesman Chris Lehane accused Bush of injecting "raw, crass partisan politics into a situation that ought to be guided by the laws of our land."

All sides readied arguments for Monday's hearing before the state Supreme Court. Ruling unani-

Businessman shot dead in city

By Staff Correspondent

A gang shot dead a businessman near his house at East Monipur area of the city yesterday.

The victim was identified as Golam Mowla, 45, a supplier of food and clothes to different medical college hospitals. He hailed from Kulshi Chatkhil in Noakhali.

Police said three unidentified miscreants appeared near Mowla's house and shot him in the head as he came out for a morning walk at about 6:30. They fled the spot immediately.

The motive behind the killing could not be known.

The victim's elder brother filed a murder case with Mirpur police station without any one.

None could be arrested till the filing of this report last night.



Friends and neighbours try to console the relatives of Golam Mowla, the 45-year-old businessman who was gunned down near his residence in Mirpur yesterday.

- Star photo

Number of defaulters stands at 12838, says Kibria

The number of loan defaulters, who took loan of Tk 10 lakh and above from scheduled banks, was 12,838 till June 30 this year, the finance minister told Parliament yesterday.

Replying to a question of Kamal Ahmed Majumdar (Awami League-Dhaka), Shah A M S Kibria said the amount of default loan was Tk 16,260 crore 30 lakh. Till December 1999, Tk 1,515 crore 33 lakh was realised.

In reply to a supplementary from Waziruddin Khan (AL-Pabna), the finance minister said the government has enacted the Bankruptcy Act, set up task force and special courts, and enhanced the power of Bangladesh Bank to expedite realisation of default loans.

Discipline has been restored in the banking sector, he said, assuring the House that there would not be new bank loan defaulters in future following the policy and measures taken by present government.

Responding to Begum Husne Ara Wahid (AL), the finance minister said that per capita income in

1999-2000 was Tk 19,178 as against Tk 14,028 of 1995-96 fiscal.

In response to a supplementary, he said the increase in per capita income had a positive impact on the poor people, reducing the number of those living under the poverty line.

Kibria attributed higher production in agriculture and industrial sectors and increase in exports to the growth of GDP to more than 5 per cent for the last four years that contributed to the rise in per capita income.

In reply to another supplementary from Golam Faruq Ovi of Jatiya Party, he said public borrowing by government is a usual practice in different countries, including USA, France and UK. In USA, he said, public debt is counted not in terms of billion, but in trillion.

Public borrowing is needed by a government because of the gap in earnings and expenditures, he added.

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