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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 Monowaruddin and Justice Mojammel Hossain on a petition filed by Masood Alam Ragib Ahsan on behalf of Odhakar, a coalition for human rights organisations in cooperation with Freedom Foundation.

Moving the petition, Barrister Rokunuddin 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 Ghuntighar area in Sutrapur on Saturday night.

The arrested was identified as Liton, son of late Nayeab Ali of Ghuntighar area.

A team of Sutrapur thana police headed by OC Abu Hana Mostafa Kamal raided Ghuntighar 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.

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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 haven 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 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 Udyan 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; Zahurul Haq Hall's Sohail and Kaila; 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, Shahbagh, Kataban, the Nilkhet-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 Osmani Memorial Hall yesterday.

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

ment. "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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The panel of speakers at the national convention on the demand for increase in the number of and direct election to the reserved seats in the Jatiya Sangsad, which was sponsored by ADAB at the Institution of Engineers auditorium yesterday.

—Star photo

## 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 Streptokinase 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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## Bush lengthens lead as war of words on

WASHINGTON, Nov 19: George W. Bush's campaign fiercely attacked the hand-counting of votes in Florida's presidential election, depicting it as a process riddled with human error and bias. Al Gore's lawyers defended the effort in papers filed with the state Supreme Court, reports AP.

Montana Gov. Marc Racicot,

enlisted by the Bush campaign to lead the Republican Party assault, alleged that ballots had been dropped, misfiled and mis-handled by exhausted or pro-Gore officials.

"I think when the American people learn about these things, they're going to ask themselves, 'What in 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.

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-

mously on Friday, the justices stopped Florida's Secretary of State Katherine Harris from disallowing the hand recounts and certifying Bush the winner, at least until it can consider the issue.

Controversy trumped certainty from one end of the state to the other.

While Republicans charged Democrats with constructing a flawed recount process, Democrats said the Republicans were forcing interminable delays.

"We will all be here until Christmas if this continues," said Charles Burton, a member of the Palm Beach County canvassing

board deep into the hand recount of 462,350 ballots.

Neither man emerged from the Nov. 7 election day with enough Electoral College votes to claim victory. In the United States, the presidential election is won not by gaining more of the popular vote, but by winning a majority of electoral votes, which are divided up by state.

The complicated Electoral College system means it is possible to win more of the popular vote and lose the election. This year, it also means that whichever candidate wins in Florida wins the presidency.

Gore has pressed for the

recounts, in the hope they will allow him to overtake Bush's narrow lead.

By the time counting shut down for the night, recounts from 259 of 609 precincts in Broward county showed Gore with a gain of 79 votes, but totals from 31 of 531 precincts in Palm Beach County showed Bush with a gain of 12. The canvassing board had counted 202 precincts, but they released vote totals only from precincts where no questionable ballots remained.

In Miami-Dade, where 654,000 ballots awaited a hand review, one official said the hand recounting could stretch to the start of December.

## Businessman shot dead in city

By Staff Correspondent

A gang shot dead a businessman near his house at East Monipur in Mirpur 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 Chakhal 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, reports UNB.

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 Waziuddin 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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## 'Mohiuddin dragged Bangabandhu out & Noor, Huda fired on him'

Showing individual complicity in the killing of Bangabandhu, the chief prosecution counsel yesterday made his comment on evidences against four of the convicted army officers saying they were directly involved in the August 15 carnage, reports UNB.

Advocate Serajul Huq, on the 56th day yesterday of death reference and appeal hearings in the Bangabandhu Murder Case, said Maj (ret'd) Mohiuddin (Lancer) was the first person to enter Bangabandhu's residence.

And as per plan, he dragged out Bangabandhu from his room. Maj Noor Chowdhury and Maj Bazul Huda fired on him as Bangabandhu was brought to the staircase.

The third entry into Bangabandhu's house was made by Major Aziz Pasha and Risaldar Moslemuddin. "Taking the stengun from Moslemuddin, Major Pasha killed the inmates in a room, including Begum Mujib and two daughters-in-law Sultana Kamal and Rosy Jamal," the lawyer said.

At this stage, the court wanted to know why Pasha was disarmed while going for an operation.

The government pleader submitted that Pasha, as

per evidence, was carrying a wireless set and he took the arms from his assistant. "And even though he was not carrying arms with him that does not prove that he did not kill the women."

Moreover, sometimes officers do not carry arms and Pasha came to Bangabandhu's house from Sernibat's residence and might have thought that by that time all the family members had been killed. And killing the women by taking arms from Moslemuddin was nothing unusual, he argued quoting evidences.

Referring to witnesses, Adv Serajul Huq said having killed the women inmates, Pasha came down when Bangabandhu's youngest son, 10-year-old Russel, was crying and asking the army men to take him to his mother.

Pasha ordered a havildar to 'take him (Russel) to his mother'. Huq told the court and commented that it means Pasha had ordered the havildar to kill Russel as well.

Giving individual account about Major Noor, who, along with Major Huda, fired on Bangabandhu, Adv Serajul Huq said one witness saw Noor fire on Mujib and another witness said when Noor reached

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## AL factions clash in Barisal: 30 injured

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 19: At least 30 people were injured, eight of them by bullets in a gunfight between two factions of ruling Awami League at Muladi thana headquarters of the district in the early hours today.

Police and witnesses said that activists of a faction led by Yousuf Engineer and Malek Rari, members of the convening committee of AL Muladi thana unit attacked and ransacked eight houses of their rival faction led by Bhulu doctor, convenor of the committee at about 5:30 am.

They used firearms and lethal weapons during the attack. Later, the activists belonging to Bhulu launched a counter attack, resulting in fierce gunfight between the two factions.

Both factions exchanged 60 to 70 gunshots and exploded bombs during the clash that continued for about two hours.

Police intervened at around 7:30 am and brought the situation under control. They arrested 30 people, including Yusuf Engineer and Malek Rari from the spot.

Police also recovered one foreign-made gun, two pistols, two rifles, three pipeguns, four randaos, one chapati and 30 bullets from the possession of the arrested.

The bullet injured Mashkur, 25, Zakir, 39, Shoeb, 35, Rana, 25, Farvez, 26, Tuhin, 22, Barek, 23, and Enamul, 25, were admitted to Barisal Medical College Hospital.

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## Rejoinder

Suraiya Akhter, vice principal of Dr Mohila College in a rejoinder on a news item titled "Dispute over Malika College intensifies" published in The Daily Star Friday denied the college authorities' allegations that she was trying to grab the college properties.

In her rejoinder, she said she has been continuing as vice principal of the college for the last 16 years and there was no such allegation against her.

Suraiya Akhter, who is also an adopted daughter of late Dr Malika Al-Razee said that the allegations made by the college authorities were 'false and baseless'.

## Attack on procession at N'ganj: 25 hurt

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Nov 19: At least 25 people, including women and children, were injured when a group of ruling party activists attacked a procession at Jamtala in the town this morning.

The processionists were marching towards local Titas Gas office demanding adequate gas supply to Masdar area.

When they reached Jamtala, the attackers led by Jubo Jubo leader 'Tower Tokal' Selim blocked the road and beat up the processionists mercilessly, leaving 25 injured.

Meanwhile, the businessmen in the town today blocked the main roads for an hour demanding resumption of gas supply to several dyeing factories.

Thousands of workers of dyeing factories led by prominent business leaders of the town blocked the BB road in Chashara point at 4:30 pm. They also demanded

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