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AL walks in, out of JS

Main opposition to come back today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Joining the eighth parliament for the first time yesterday, lawmakers of the main opposition Awami League (AL) staged a walkout at 9:30pm against the denial of floor.

Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Hasina later briefed newsmen on the AL's walkout. However, she said her party will continue to participate in the next sittings.

Earlier, the AL lawmakers protested in the House killings and persecution during the last eight-month rule of the BNP-led coalition government.

Fifty-seven out of the 58 AL members moved on to the House, led by opposition leader Sheikh Hasina at 7.40pm. AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman, MP was absent because of his illness.

"We have decided on joining parliament to speak against the miseries of the people who were victims of persecution sponsored by the BNP-Jamaat coalition government," Hasina told the House before the Speaker started the day's business.

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Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina holds the picture of recently killed baby Naushin while her deputies display those of others killed in the last eight months after the speaker turned down her proposal that the House observe a one-minute silence to show respect to the victims yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Axe finally falls on Adamjee Jute Mills

SHAHRIAR KARIM and RAZIUR RAHMAN

Finally goes the white elephant. The government yesterday decided to close down the Adamjee Jute Mills, the largest jute plant in the world, to put a cap on the huge losses the enterprise incurs every year.

The decision was taken at the weekly cabinet meeting yesterday with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the chair.

The cabinet also decided to offer golden handshake to the workers and staff of the mill and earmarked Tk 300 crore for the purpose, according to cabinet sources.

Currently, there are 17,093 permanent workers, 6,100 temporary workers, 1,448 staff and 448 officials employed at the jute mill.

It could not be known when and

how the government would execute its decision as the cabinet members decided to remain tightlipped on the issue fearing protests from the militant workers of the Adamjee.

The apprehension also heightened as a section of the Adamjee workers under the banner of 'Committee to Save Adamjee Jute Mill' has already started lobbying at different levels of the government to keep the mill open, according to sources.

"But the government is firm this time to execute the decision to save the economy from facing the huge loss every year on account of the Adamjee," a cabinet member told The Daily Star.

According to different sources, each year the government has to count about Tk 200 crore in loss to run the mill. From 1971 till 1998, the government had to pump in Tk

321.93 crore as subsidy to the mill. Once a pride of the country, the enterprise was set up in phases during 1951 to 1964. The government nationalised it after the War of Independence in 1971.

Adamjee's accumulated loss stands at Tk 1,200 crore and its current liabilities are Tk 750 crore, according to sources.

It was learnt that after closing down the mill the government will clear the illegal installations and colonies in and around the mill which have sprouted over the years. To avoid any untoward incident, the government has decided to motivate the local people and local political leaders before going for the

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Sony's killing Main suspect caught

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch (DB) of police yesterday arrested two persons including one of the prime suspects in connection with the killing case of BUET student Sabequn Nahar Sony from the city yesterday.

A team of detectives led by assistant commissioner SM Aktaruzzaman, also the Investigating Officer of the case arrested Mushfiq Uddin Tagar, one of the main suspects, from in front of the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel at Karwan Bazaar at about 2:00pm.

Acting on a tip-off, the team went to the spot in front of the hotel at about 11:00am and waited for Tagar who was inside the hotel. Tagar was arrested about three hours later as he came out.

Police said Tagar had lied to them about his identity to escape arrest. But the DB searched him and found a diary and cards with names of some top JCD leaders. He was then taken to the Dhaka University where some students positively identified him as Tagar. Afterwards, he was taken to the DB office in Minto Road.

Tagar told the DB that he gradu-

ated from the Department of Philosophy of the Dhaka University in 2001 and was a resident of SM Hall.

"On the day of the incident, I went to the BUET campus and found Sony in a critical condition and took her to the Dhaka Medical College

Hospital (DMCH). But I fled when I came to know I was implicated in the incident," he said.

Another source said that after the

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Mushfiq Uddin Tagar



Masum Billah

People's back pressed to wall, Hasina tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the breakdown of law and order, rising crimes and unabated 'corruption' over the last eight months have pushed the people against the wall.

In her maiden appearance in the eighth parliament yesterday, Hasina, also the president of the main opposition Awami League, came down heavily on the BNP-Jamaat-e-Islami

coalition government for 'unleashing state terrorism and corruption'.

Barely three minutes after entering the House, the opposition leader took the floor and came up with statistics of 'victims of repression' let loose by the 'BNP-Jamaat axis'.

She said between October 1, 2001-- when the national elections were held -- and April 30 this year, as many as 7,064 people were murdered in the country and roughly

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Commentary

The President is neutral, show him the door

BNP gives a bizarre twist to the highest constitutional office

MAHFUZ ANAM

Bangladesh has just averted a great tragedy. Due to the timely action by a few 'patriotic' young MPs, the country has been saved from the nasty clutches of a 'neutral' President. The President instead of being partisan was guilty of the 'impeachable crime' of being neutral.

Not only was this 'no good' President trying to follow the Constitution, he had the temerity of trying to adhere to the norms of this high office and practise the values that Presidents in the parliamentary system follow in

every democracy.

How dare he does not visit the grave of BNP founder late President Ziaur Rahman even though it was only a party event and not a state function! The party that made him a national leader and then the President has the 'right' to expect him to be a party yes-man even after he assumes the presidency. How can the Constitution and national interest be more important than the party? Force him to resign. If not, then impeach him.

For the 'crime' of being neutral he was shown the

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PHOTO: AFP

Run man run... South Korean coach Guus Hiddink looks at striker Lee Chun-Soo as he runs during a late afternoon training session yesterday, ahead of their semi-finals clash against Germany today.

One-way route

REUTERS, Seoul

At any other time in the World Cup's 72-year history Germany would have considered a semi-final against South Korea as a free pass to the final -- not now.

In the wake of the co-hosts' extraordinary achievements in the last three weeks, Tuesday's clash in the Korean capital has become anyone's game.

Germany in the semi-finals is no surprise -- this is the 10th time they have been one game away from the big one -- but for Korea, without a win of any sort in 14 attempts spanning five previous World Cups, it is almost beyond comprehension.

What is more, they go into it absolutely expecting to beat the three-times champions, who incredibly really believe they are the underdogs, and take on either Brazil or Turkey in the final.

"We will approach the match once more like a bunch of young dogs," said

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Govt seeks stay on HC order on Speedy trial law

UNB, Dhaka

The government yesterday moved the Supreme Court seeking stay on operation of Sunday's High Court order stopping proceedings of a criminal case at Lalmonirhat under the Speedy Trial Law.

The High Court on Sunday also asked the government to explain why the law should not be declared 'un-constitutional and void'.

Attorney General A F Hasan Arif moved the petition before the chamber judge, Justice KM Hasan.

He was strongly opposed by Barrister Rakanuddin Mahmood.

After hearing their contentions, the judge directed that the petition be heard by the full bench of the Supreme Court on June 26.

Grameen Match Report

'Death threat' to Babar Jamuna Group owner quizzed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chairman of Jamuna Group Nurul Islam Babul was yesterday interrogated by three different intelligence agencies following his alleged threat on the life of State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar.

Sources said upon being instructed by the prime minister, a Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC) com-

prising the SB (Special Branch), CID (Criminal Investigation Department) and NSI (National Security Intelligence) interrogated Babul for four hours non-stop from 11:00am at the SB office yesterday.

Babul, who is also the owner of Daily Jugantar, was questioned about his source of income as well as the property and businesses he

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Finlay tea

Profile of a 'criminal'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader Mushfiq Uddin Tagar never thought he would one day become a notorious criminal in the city. He is one of those who did not get involved in student politics willingly, but situation forced him into it. The present trend of student politics helped him turn into a criminal, according to sources in the ruling BNP's student wing.

Born in a middle class family in Magura district, Tagar got enrolled in 'Philosophy department of the Dhaka University in 1993-94 academic session and was allotted a seat in Salmullah Muslim (SM) Hall.

Like many other students from outside the capital, he also faced difficulties in having a seat at the hall. But he had no alternative but to find one to solve his accommodation problem.

SM Hall was then under the 'control' of the JCD with the BNP in power. A group of JCD men led by the then general secretary of the hall unit Shahid used to guard the hall gate. They used to harass and ask unnecessary questions to newcom-

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DHL Spec Report