

## "Hell broke loose"

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was around 1:30 in the morning. The Shamsunnahar Hall premises were unusually busy with female students chanting slogans.

In came four assistant proctors. "We got to check your identity," one of them said.

"There are outsiders among you. We need to identify them."

The girls obeyed. "As we opened the gate and came out, all hell broke loose," said Shaon, one of the victims.

Police, stationed outside the gate in riot gear, swooped on them, swinging their batons in wild rage.

"It was madness out there with panic-stricken students crying and running to and fro to escape police atrocity," she said.

"I must run. Run for your life," she thought. "Hide yourself. The animals are coming to get you. Run... run... run. They can't get me. No. If I get caught, they will maul me to meatball."

Then she fell down. "There was a downpour of batons, boots and obscenities from all directions. Eventually, I was dragged up and bundled into a police van. I felt sick, felt like throwing up. There were ten or more others in the van."

"I saw two policemen drag a student out of her first-floor room and beat her mercilessly," said another student.

She was one of the fortunate few to have evaded boots or batons or obscenities.

"They even chased some students into their rooms and dragged them out, all the while swearing in abusive language," she said, preferring anonymity for obvious reasons.

"I was running to escape the attack," said another victim. "But a policeman pulled my scarf and dragged me away in front of the main gate."

A third-year philosophy student

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# Dark episode at DU

## Police swoop on Shamsunnahar Hall; assault female students; nearly 200 hurt; strike today; BDR deployed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police in a midnight swoop yesterday stormed into a female residential hall of Dhaka University (DU) and brutally beat up hundreds of students that set in motion a chain of protests and violent incidents throughout the day.

During the one-and-a-half-hour long unprecedented action that started at around 1:30am and ran through 3:00am, police in riot gear dragged and pulled students from their bed of the Shamsunnahar Hall, and beat up and abused them, according to witnesses.

The policemen also took 18 students to the Ramna Police Station at dawn. They were released at noon in presence of the hall provost. However, they have been asked to appear before court. More than 50 students sustained wounds in the police atrocities.

Many students had their dresses ripped while being dragged by the policemen. Besides physical torture, the police also verbally abused the female students, some of the victims said.

Four assistant proctors including a female one of the university were present during the police raid inside the hall, residents said. They kept mum while all this brutality took place.

When contacted, Shafi Ullah, one of the assistant proctors, said the situation called for 'such an action against the unruly students'.

The incident triggered violent protests on the campus throughout the day. Thousands of agitated students took to the street, and vandalised and torched vehicles to protest police atrocities. Police arrested 27 students during the agitation.

Another 50 students were injured as police clubbed the agitating students, and activists of the ruling BNP's student wing Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) repeatedly attacked several protest processions on the campus.

A huge procession under the banner of general students was brought out on the campus at about 11:45am to protest the police atrocities. Students from various halls and the Arts Building joined the procession spontaneously.

The procession marched toward the VC's office and staged a sit-in there. When police asked the students to leave the place, angry students locked in an argument with them. At one stage, police charged baton on the students leaving at least 100, mostly female, injured.

The angry students threw brickbats at police and vandalised at least 20 vehicles. They also set fire to a university bus. The driver of university proctor's private car was chopped with machete during the incident.

Police shot at and teargassed students to disperse them. However, they regrouped again and took out separate processions from the Mal Chatter to

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Two female students of Dhaka University lie wounded yesterday as police attack on a procession to protest the overnight raid on the Shamsunnahar Hall.

## Home minister discusses DU incident with VC

UNB, Dhaka

Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury held a meeting with Dhaka University authorities and government officials in the evening to decide how to tackle the campus situation arising out of yesterday's incidents.

State Minister for Education Ehsanul Haq Milon, State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfulzaman Babar, Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury, Inspector General of Police Mudabbir Hossain and other senior officials of police and Special Branch were present in the meeting.

Asked about proceedings of the parleys, DU VC Prof Chowdhury told UNB that they discussed the campus situation and reviewed the incidents that took place on the campus.

## AL hartal on Aug 15

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) has called a half-day country-wide hartal on August 15 protesting a government decision that cancelled the official programmes of national mourning day.

The AL at its Central Working Committee (CWC) meeting presided over by the party's Acting President Abus Samad Azad also came down heavily on the government's attempts of banning the student politics, 'gagging' of the press and other repressive acts of repression.

It would stage demonstrations throughout the country on July 31 terming the government decision to nullify national mourning day

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## Home ministry asked to amend police law

BSS, Dhaka

The cabinet committee on law and order yesterday asked the home ministry to bring amendments to the police law to make it more disciplined, capable and efficient.

"The home ministry was asked to bring necessary amendments to the police law to make the force more disciplined and effective in the backdrop of the changed situation," said an official handout issued after a meeting of the committee with LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in the chair.

The home ministry was also directed to take measures to form counter intelligence units to monitor the activities of police and to maintain computerised records at police stations according to the decisions of a previous meeting.

The committee asked police to intensify its drive against terrorism recovering illegal weapons and arresting the miscreants.

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Barrister Moudud Ahmed, Food Minister Abdullah Al

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## Skirmish at Benapole

### BDR, BSF exchange fire over farmer's killing



Wife of Mohammad Yusuf, who was shot dead yesterday by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF), wail over husband's body. The killing sparked off skirmishes at the Benapole border.

STAR REPORT

The Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and the Indian Border Security Forces (BSF) traded fire for about half an hour yesterday near the Benapole border over the killing of a local man.

A hail of bullets from Indian border guards left a Bangladeshi national dead near the Benapole check post yesterday morning.

According to witnesses, Mohammad Yusuf, 40, a farmer of Shakharipta village in Sarsha upazilla, was shot dead four to six yards inside Bangladesh territory, 200 yards south of Benapole check post and also an important land port, BDR sources said.

Afterwards, the BSF suddenly opened fire at 10.30am and the BDR retaliated immediately.

Exchange of sporadic fire continued for half an hour.

The Bangladesh government last night officially condemned the killing of a Bangladesh national.

The tension was defused following a telephonic conversation

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## 4 JCD leaders sued under Speedy Trial Act for CMC incident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Charges under the Speedy Trial Act have been framed against four leaders of the Chittagong Medical College (CMC) unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) in a case accusing them of toll extortion.

The Court of Metropolitan Magistrate Wahiudul Islam Khan framed the charges after hearing both the sides - the prosecution and the defence.

The accused are Md Shahadat Hossain Bhuiyan, general secretary of the CMC unit of JCD; Mahbubur Rahman, senior vice president; Mamun Alam Khan, vice president and Kazi Omar Faruq, member of the unit.

Panchlaha police arrested them on July 15 on charge of toll extortion.

Following their arrest, JCD activists went on the rampage, causing disruption of normal activities at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital for about 18 hours and suspension of academic activities at the CMC for two days.

## Dialogue on student politics ban soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is actively considering a ban on campus politics in all educational institutions and will soon start dialogues with political parties and professional bodies.

The ruling BNP, since forming the government on October 10 last year, had been giving clear indications to ban campus politics involving the students and teachers from the country's educational institutions.

The prime minister in her speeches in the Jatiya Sangsad warned of banning campus politics and called

for the support of all.

Sources said the move to ban campus politics, once and for all, was made to end all anarchy and violence on the campuses and to restore a congenial academic atmosphere.

Students and teachers with political affiliations have been disrupting the academic atmosphere of the country's leading educational institutions.

The leading political parties time and again used such students and teachers for their own vested interests.

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## Bangladesh off track to help the hungry

### At 145th, no change in country's HDI standing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Among the SAARC countries, only Sri Lanka and Pakistan are "on the right track" to reach the UN goal of halving the people in hunger by 2015, while Bangladesh, Nepal and India are "falling far behind".

Overall, the Maldives and Sri Lanka have done better than other SAARC countries in achieving the eight goals set by the UN Millennium Summit in 2000, said the UNDP Human Development Report (HRD), 2002 released yesterday in Dhaka simultaneously with other cities around the world.

Bangladesh has ranked 145th among 173 countries of the world under the jurisdiction of United Nations in human development, the report said. The country stood eighth among 36 countries of the lowest grade.

UNDP Resident Representative

Jorgen Lissner launched the report titled "Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World" at the Supreme Court auditorium.

"Bangladesh's record in achieving targets in the health and sanitation sector is satisfactory. It's status as being 'far behind' in respect to

halve the population suffering from hunger is disappointing given the large number of poverty alleviating programmes sponsored by the government and NGOs over a long period of time," it said.

The review on the HRD, 2002,

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## Police club Old Dhaka traders

### Hartal observed to protest extortion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 25 people including three policemen were injured when policemen tried to disperse a procession during a dawn to dusk hartal called by the local businessmen in the city's Kotwali area yesterday.

The businessmen of Kotwali areas clamped on a strike in the area to protest the attack and extortion by an organised gang and drug abuse in the old part of the city.

Early yesterday morning, the businessmen closed down their shops and took to the streets. They chanted slogans in support of their demands. They also brought out procession in the afternoon that was resisted by the police.

Police charged batons to disperse the agitating people. Several people were injured during the clash between the agitators and the police. The injured were admitted to the nearby Mitford Hospital, National Hospital and local clinics.

The clash continued for hours making North South Road a sheer battleground.

The situation became even more complicated when the supporters of local commissioner Hossin Mollah brought out an anti-hartal procession in the afternoon. The procession threw brickbats at the police leaving a police sub-inspector and two constables of Kotwali police station injured. The SI Shorab Hossain, 40, received injuries in the forehead and was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College. Kotwali police, however, could not confirm the injury of the other two injured constables when contacted last night.

The duty officer of Kotwali Police Station said that they have arrested six people for their alleged involvement with the riot and attack on the police force.