

## Altat terms attack on newsmen barbaric

UNB, Dhaka

Home Minister Altat Hossain Chowdhury, State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar and State Minister for Education Ehsanul Huq Milon yesterday visited the Dhaka University (DU) reporters injured in police attack.

They went to the South Asian Hospital to see the DU Correspondents who were roughed up by policemen on the campus yesterday afternoon.

Four DU correspondents of SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## 73 DU teachers demand VC's exit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seventy-three teachers of Dhaka University at a meeting yesterday demanded immediate resignation of Vice-chancellor Professor Anwarullah Chowdhury and Proctor Professor Nazrul Islam.

Right after the police attack on agitating students yesterday, the aggrieved teachers met at the Dhaka University Club and condemned the police action that left scores of teachers, students and journalists injured.

The teachers resolved that the vice-chancellor and the proctor must resign as they have totally failed to carry out their responsibilities.

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## JCD men aid police, BDR to 'enforce law' at DU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The entire Dhaka University campus has remained sealed for the last five days, with at least 1,500 armed police personnel, paramilitary BDR, ansars and members of different intelligence agencies in plain clothes on patrol.

Over 500 armed police and a good number of BDR personnel have been deployed around the campus including the five entry points, student halls, vice-chancellor's residence, the Central Shaheed Minar, TSC and the Milton Chatter to tighten security measures.

Nobody was allowed to use any of the campus' thoroughfares yesterday.

The large contingent of security personnel which also included the Special Branch (SB) and the Detective Branch (DB) of police, the National Security Intelligence (NSI) and the Director General of Forces Intelligence (DGF), had transformed the entire campus into a

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## AL asks govt to resign

UNB, Dhaka

The Awami League presidium in an emergency meeting yesterday asked the people to build a united resistance against the government for "brutal attacks" on Dhaka University students and make tomorrow's hartal a success.

The meeting asked the government to step down for its "utter failure to protect the teachers and students of Dhaka University".

"This meeting is demanding immediate resignation of the failed, inefficient and corrupt government of Khaleda Zia," a resolution of the meeting said, calling upon the people to make today's hartal a success.

The AL presidium meeting held at the party's Dhanmondi office with acting President Abdus Samad Azad in the chair said the government, which is launching repeated attacks on students and teachers of Dhaka University, and journalists have lost its right to stay in power.

It also demanded removal of the Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor, immediate opening of the DU, a stop to attacks on teachers and students.

The presidium also decided to stage countrywide demonstrations on July 31 against the "shameless and barbaric" attacks on the students.

# Police go berserk at DU

## Cops and JCD men launch joint assaults; 50 protesters, teachers and journalists wounded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 'joint assault' by police and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists at the Dhaka University yesterday left at least 50 protesting students, scores of journalists and teachers injured.

The assault began at around 12:15pm, with police lobbing hundreds of teargas canisters into a sit-in demonstration, participated by nearly 400 students, in front of the Rokeya Hall.

Earlier, at around 9:30am, police intercepted several hundred students near the National Museum when they tried to enter the campus for the sit-in against the vice-chancellor and the proctor. But leaders and workers of the BNP-backed JCD were let in.

At this stage, the students took off their shoes and slippers and showed those to on-duty policemen and the JCD activists and started chanting slogans.

Meanwhile, another group of students had already begun demonstrating in front of the Institute of Fine Arts. At around 11:15am, the students agitating near the museum broke the barricade, joined the other group and headed towards the Rokeya Hall.

The protesters, including many female students, sat down on the stretch of road between the vice-chancellor's residence and the Rokeya Hall, which had earlier been marked by the students as a "free zone".

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Police beat up a demonstrating student at Dhaka University yesterday (L) while Professor Anwar Hossain, chairman of bio-chemistry department of the university, lies wounded on the street after being assaulted by the law enforcers on the campus.



PHOTO: STAR

## Musharruf regrets Pak 'excesses' in 1971

UNB, Dhaka

Pakistan President Pervez Musharruf yesterday regretted the "excesses" committed during Bangladesh's War of Independence in 1971, but called for burying the past in the spirit of friendship.

"Your brothers and sisters in Pakistan share the pain of the events of 1971. The excesses committed during that unfortunate period are regrettable," Musharruf wrote in the visitor's book after placing a wreath at the foot of the National Memorial at Savar.

"Let us bury the past in a spirit of magnanimity. Let not the light of the future be dimmed. Let us move forward together... I am confident that with our joint resolve Pakistan-Bangladesh friendship will flourish in the years to come."

The Pakistan president went straight to the memorial from the Zia International Airport (ZIA) on a helicopter.

Earlier, Acting President Jamiruddin Sircar and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia received the Pakistan president and First Lady Sehba Musharruf at the airport. A 21-gun salute heralded the visit of the first South Asian leader since the October general elections, as the special aircraft carrying the military ruler touched down at 4:22pm.

The Pakistani general was given a guard of honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of the Bangladesh Armed Forces at the tarmac. Army band played national anthems of Pakistan and Bangladesh.

He took the salute from a decorated dais and later inspected the guard. Sircar was also on the dais.

Khaleda introduced her cabinet colleagues in the presentation line.

In a written arrival statement, Musharruf took a swipe at bitter neighbour India saying that "massive Indian military buildup" along the Indo-Pak border is violating peace and security in South Asia.

He said the primary aim of his visit was to discuss with Khaleda ways and

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Pakistan President Pervez Musharruf and wife Sehba Musharruf upon their arrival at the Zia International Airport yesterday.

## Probe body may seek reopening of DU hall

## Composition of committee rages controversy

ZAYADUL AHSAN

The one-member judicial commission to probe Wednesday's police atrocities in the Shamsunnahar Hall may ask the Dhaka University (DU) authorities to open the hall to facilitate its investigation.

It will also seek more time to submit the report, sources at the commission, headed by Justice Tafazzal Islam, said.

As the DU authorities asked the students to leave the halls on Saturday, it has become difficult for the commission to have versions of the victims and gather evidences. At the same time, the commission has received a letter empowering it to investigate the incident after the office hour of the day before yesterday. As a result, it now has very little time to conduct the probe by the deadline that ends tomorrow.

Although the government announced formation of the probe body on July 24, the circular in this regard was issued on July 27.

However, some female students have already met the justice at his chamber to narrate their tales of harassment and police excesses. Later, he immediately set up a formal office of the commission at the National Academy of Education Management. Some students have already submitted their names and addresses to this probe office.

According to sources, Justice Islam wanted to visit the DU campus to gather evidences, but decided against it considering the volatile campus situation. He will be receiving personal accounts and evidences at the new

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## VC finally admits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Vice-chancellor (VC) Prof. Anwarullah Chowdhury finally admitted at a briefing yesterday that the Shamsunnahar Hall incident is grievous.

"I'm ready to resign, if the judicial probe committee finds me guilty," Prof. Chowdhury told reporters at his office in the afternoon.

However, the VC has urged all to wait until filing of the probe report before they hold him responsible. Earlier, the VC blamed for the July 24 overnight raid on the hall declined to resign. "I won't resign under any pressure and conspiracy of some identified wrongdoers," he vowed.

No policeman entered the female student halls, nor did they misbehave with resident students, he said.

At the briefing, Prof. Chowdhury

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## BCL hartal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the main opposition Awami League (AL), enforces a countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal today to protest Wednesday's police atrocities in the Shamsunnahar Hall at Dhaka University.

The hartal is part of the BCL's three-day programme announced at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) on Saturday.

Earlier, the BCL observed a "hated day" on Sunday and called for a strike in all educational institutions on Monday.

The BCL leaders at the press

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## EC asks Home to nab Sandwip polls spoiler

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) has asked the home ministry to hunt down the intimidators responsible for the Sandwip municipality polls fiasco.

The EC at a one-hour meeting yesterday with six out of the 54 election contenders decided to dispatch relevant documents, including newspaper clippings, to the ministry today to help carry out an investigation into the zero turnout of the election.

The July 20 election yielded no result, as the armed men of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami allegedly intimidated the electorate into staying off the polling centres. Subsequently, the EC cancelled the polls.

To shore up confidence among voters, the EC has decided to arrange a re-polling under military supervision. It also invited the contenders to the meeting yesterday, but the majority of them did not turn up.

Those who attended the meeting told the commission that they absented themselves from the election because of intimidation.

Since the last general election,

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## Batting blues again

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh are steering at yet another defeat when they were bowled out for only 164 in their first innings against a under-strength Sri Lanka at the Sinhalese Sports Club Ground in Colombo yesterday.

But thankfully, it will not be another innings defeat as the generous Sri Lankan captain Sanath Jayasuriya decided not to enforce the follow on despite the tourists fell ten runs short of the target on the

second day of the second and final Test.

The home side, starting the day on 301 for eight, added a further 72 runs before being all out for 373 shortly after the first drinks break.

The Bangladesh innings, which was in a shambles, lasted only for 66 overs. Sri Lanka made 25 without loss at stumps, a lead of 234 runs already.

The tourists faced the prospect of being bowled out well below the 100-run mark when they were

reduced to 87-7. However, debutants Taposh Baishya and Alok Kapali showed real character to dig the side out of the hole.

Taposh will remember the Test for years to come. The young pacer, who took a wicket in the first innings, top-scored with an unbeaten 52. It was a harsh lesson from the number nine batsman for his seasoned mates in the team.

He shared 37 runs for the eighth wicket with Kapali (39) after the brittle Bangladesh batting tumbled like nine pins.

The third highest score in the Bangladesh innings was 15 by skipper Khaled Mashud.

But left-arm pacer Monjurul Islam deserves all the praise for showing his application in a lost cause. The number ten did not score a single run in the ninth wicket stand of 40 with Taposh, but defiantly occupied the crease for an hour and ten minutes.

Taposh hammered six boundaries in his gutsy 103-ball knock. Jayasuriya, who tormented the

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## AL cancels meet with Musharruf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) yesterday asked for cancellation of a scheduled meeting with the visiting Pakistan President Pervez Musharruf just 24 hours before it was to take place.

The AL sent a letter to Foreign Secretary Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury yesterday to communicate the decision.

"Due to unavoidable circumstances, the Bangladesh Awami League delegation is unable to meet the Honourable President of Pakistan as scheduled. You are requested to cancel the programme. Please confirm," the letter said.

An AL delegation was scheduled to pay a courtesy call on Musharruf at his Sonargaon Hotel suit at 4:30pm today, the second day of the Pakistan president's three-day official visit here.

Acting AL chief Abdus Samad Azad was scheduled to lead the delegation in the absence of party

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## EC bid to bar criminals from electoral fray

NAZRUL ISLAM

The Election Commission (EC) has initiated a process to put a stop to criminals and candidates contesting elections to different tiers of government by taking advantage of bails, stay orders and appeals.

The commission has drafted a proposal seeking reforms to age-old electoral laws to keep criminal elements off local-body elections.

A 12-point proposal in this regard has been submitted to the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development for approval.

The process will culminate in electoral reforms to ensure that criminals and convicts stay out of general elections, according to EC sources.

The quasi-judicial body has had a series of meetings with legal experts following elections to the Dhaka, Khulna and Rajshahi city corporations, in which over 200

candidates with criminal records took part.

The suggestions, incorporated in the proposal, have political significance as many politicians, charged in different criminal cases, managed to contest in elections by obtaining stay orders or filing writs with the higher judiciary.

The latest EC move marks a major step towards electoral reforms since the last caretaker government approved major changes to electoral laws in September last year.

It has proposed introduction of a provision that would require candidates to detail personal information in a prescribed form.

Also, a member of a local government would have to submit an asset statement to the EC on expiry of his or her tenure.

Existing laws only require members of the local governments to submit an asset statement after they

take oath of office. They are not bound by any law to submit such a statement after they leave office.

The EC has also proposed that tenure of elected representatives be dissolved automatically with the expiry of their terms.

It observed that while elections to city corporations, upazila parshads and other local government bodies get delayed for one reason or the other, the incumbents stay on in the office until new members are elected and sworn in.

The EC has also proposed that people elected to constitutional bodies be barred from taking any position on local governments. In this regard, it has suggested that a person resign from his or her constitutional position to run for a local body.

The EC proposal contemplates ban on multiple candidature in city corporation polls to save the public

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