

Benazir's nomination papers rejected, Sharif's accepted

REUTERS, Ratto Dero, Pakistan

Pakistan's election officials rejected yesterday former prime minister Benazir Bhutto's nomination to stand in October elections, saying she had been convicted of failing to answer corruption charges. "She's been convicted by an accountability court. She's not qualified to contest elections," Ikhlaq Hussain Larik, the local returning officer in the southern town of Ratto Dero, said in announcing the decision. A lawyer for Benazir, Ayaz Soomro, accused the election authorities of "double standards" and said he would challenge the decision before an election tribunal. Around 100 supporters of Benazir shouted angry slogans in protest against the decision. Benazir, who lives in self-imposed exile in London, was nominated as candidate in two towns in her native Sindh province. Election officers in Larkana, about 26-km will announce their decision on her eligibility today. On Thursday, poll officials in Lahore gave preliminary approval to ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif to contest the October 10 polls. They said no one had objected to his nomination, even though the military government has said that he like Benazir would be arrested if he returned from exile to Pakistan. The acceptance of Sharif's nomination papers comes as a big blow for



Benazir Bhutto



Nawaz Sharif

the Musharraf government which earlier brought in a new rule barring the persons convicted by courts to contest the polls. Sharif, who lived in exile in Jeddah along with his family including that of his brothers, was convicted and sentenced for life for preventing the plane carrying General Pervez Musharraf from landing in Karachi during the military coup in October 1999. After that he was exiled to Jeddah following a deal between Pakistan and Saudi Arabian governments. All nominations still require formal approval from the national Election Commission following an objection and appeals process lasting until September 12. Local media said yesterday that the candidate for a pro-government party in Larkana had filed an objection to Bhutto's candidacy there on the grounds she had been twice thrown out of government and was involved in "anti-state" activities. The Dawn newspaper said it had asked the candidate, Ali Gohar Junejo, to show documents to support his charges, but he had said he did not currently have any. **Corruption charges** In July, Benazir was sentenced to three years in prison by a special court for failing to appear before it to answer corruption charges. **SEE PAGE 11 COL 7**

2 army men killed in Cox's Bazar road accident

BSS, Ctg

Two army personnel were killed and ten others injured in a road accident in Satkania on Chittagong-Cox's Bazar highway yesterday morning, police and hospital sources said. The accident took place near Noyakhil bridge when a Chittagong Cantonment-bound army jeep from Cox's Bazar fell into a paddy field as its driver lost control over the steering, sources said. The dead were identified as Sergeant Sahin, 37, and Corporal (driver) Safikul, 32. Army personnel travelling in other vehicles rescued the injured and sent them to nearby Dohazari health complex. Later, the injured army personnel were brought to the CMHC for better treatment. They are Mukul, Kaiyum, Mohammad Shahabuddin, Chin Chang Chakma, Nasir, Shahidul Islam, Kamrul Islam, Hashem, Nurul Islam and Anis.

Punish culprits involved in wheat scam: Dr Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President of the Gono Forum Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday demanded immediate punishment to five ruling party lawmakers and ten officials involved in the wheat procurement scam. Addressing a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity in the city, Dr Kamal also asked the government to make public the probe committee report on the scam. The government did not take any step in the last ten months to curb corruption, he alleged. It is high time the government formed an independent anti-corruption commission, he felt. Both the Awami League and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party pledged to form such an independent body, but neither of them took any initiative, he complained. Dr Kamal expressed concern over the growing insecurity in society and the rising trend in killing, rape and other crimes. **SEE PAGE 11 COL 7**

DOWN TO EARTH Pitfalls lurking on city roads

ASM NURUNNABI

The city is bedeviled by multifarious problems gradually making it hard to live in. One such problem is the many hazards lurking on the city roads. One such hazard is the large number of open manholes as their covers were stolen due to lack of proper vigilance by law enforcement. Such manholes present potential death traps for unwary road users particularly after dusk. Even during daytime, many city roads are flooded after heavy rain such that these open manholes are submerged and become indistinguishable. It is easy to understand the gravity of the risk which all vehicular and foot traffic are exposed to. Under the circumstances, it is of paramount importance to make sure that the essential covers of these manholes are protected at any cost. Another serious hazard on the roads is posed by jumbo garbage containers placed along the roadside. Already under heavy strain due to the burgeoning traffic, the city roads are further constricted as these huge dumpsters take up considerable amount of road space. This makes it very difficult for vehicles to negotiate these obstacles, raising the risk of road accident. The most galling aspect of these dumpsters is that they are almost always full and garbage spills onto the road as city corporation's garbage trucks do not empty them regularly. The spilled garbage gives out violently nauseating stench all around, vitiating the surrounding environment. The other hazard is posed by the numerous rickshaws plying the city roads at night without any kind of light, which greatly raises the prospect of road accidents. In the event of power failure when streetlights

are out, this ominous phenomenon is all the more pronounced and greatly compounds the associated hazard. Pedestrians in the city has increased to mammoth proportions and zebra crossings have been marked at road junctions and other convenient points to help facilitate movement of foot traffic. But the lack of civic sense about the importance of using these designated crossings is evident from the general tendency of pedestrians to make a dash for the other side of the road whenever there seems to be an opportunity. Zebra crossings are designed for pedestrian safety, but few seem to have the patience to wait for the go-ahead from the traffic police or the green light to cross over to the other side through zebra crossing. Many city-dwellers are unaware of even the rudiments of traffic rules and do not regard jaywalking as a violation of traffic rules. In this respect, it is important for the traffic policemen to enforce the use of zebra crossing in order to ensure better road safety. Apart from zebra crossings, foot over-bridges have been constructed at different points in the city where there are no zebra crossings or where the traffic moves very fast. But once again, these over-bridges are scarcely used by people who prefer risking their lives to taking the trouble to get on the bridge. These bridges have become the favourite haunts of a large number of hawkers doing brisk business in various merchandises. Beggars and vagabonds also take shelter there creating such an unwholesome environment that some pedestrians, who would otherwise **SEE PAGE 11 COL 8**



PHOTO: STAR

The Awami League (AL) brought out a procession (left) in the city yesterday to protest the attack on the motorcade of AL President Sheikh Hasina in Satkhira; and a bus (right) goes up in flames, as outraged AL men set fire to it on the Bangabandhu Avenue.

Anomalies in JU mark sheet Discord over appointment of alternative examiner

JU CORRESPONDENT

The Jahangirnagar University (JU) authorities and an examination committee of the JU are in sharp disagreement over the order for appointment of an 'alternative examiner' for checking a number of answer scripts for the second time, dropping the mark sheet prepared by the internal examiner. The authorities gave the order following detection of gross anomalies in the mark sheet, sources said. The examination committee for honours final examination of 1999 of the department of Government and Politics at a meeting on Monday refused to comply with the university authorities' order for appointment of an alternative examiner.

The order is not in conformity with the university examination rules and appointment of an alternative examiner is not valid in the context of anomalies found in the mark sheet, it said. "The examination committee does not agree to bear the responsibility of carrying out any order that is not in consistency with the university rules", it said in a letter to the JU authorities. If any such move is made, the authorities have to bear the responsibility, it added. Results of the examination which ended on December 12 last year have been 'stalled' for an indefinite period following detection of gross anomalies in the mark sheet prepared by the internal examiner, the sources mentioned.

The vice-chancellor (VC) on July 29 ordered appointment of an alternative examiner, but he is yet to take any action against the internal examiner. "The authorities do not even dare to question the internal examiner for the irregularities because she is very much influential", a senior teacher at the JU said, seeking anonymity. A tabulator had first detected the irregularities while checking marks given by the internal examiner and the external examiner. In a letter to the VC on May 23, the tabulator said the mark sheet was full of over writing. Besides, the internal examiner submitted marks of 92 students although 91 students sat for the **SEE PAGE 11 COL 3**

BCL sets five buses afire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least three people were injured, one critically, when unruly youths reportedly belonging to Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of Awami League, set fire to at least five passenger buses and damaged several others in different parts of the city yesterday. Sources said the BCL activists, on their way back from the Awami League's central office at Bangabandhu Avenue after protesting an armed attack on Sheikh Hasina's motorcade at Satkhira, set ablaze a double-decker bus at Baitul Mokarram. They also set fire to buses in Dhanmondi, Kamalapur and near the Sheraton Hotel in protest against the armed attack on the AL chief's motorcade. Three persons were injured, one of them critically, when a petrol bomb was hurled on a double-decker bus near Sheraton Hotel at **SEE PAGE 11 COL 2**

Three alleged criminals held with arms in Ctg

BSS, Dhaka

The Detective Branch (DB) of police yesterday arrested three alleged criminals with a foreign made gun from Ibrahim Dovash Colony under Kotwali police station. Acting on a tip off, detectives raided a house and arrested the three. They are Erajul Hoq, 28, son of Abdul Gani of Sadinagar village in Hathazari thana, Ratan, 35, son of Babul Kanungo of Nishitpur village and Basu Talukder, 35, son of Jagadish Talukder of Maliara village. Both hail from Patiya thana, a CMP press release said.

7 policemen suspended in Rajshahi

BSS, Rajshahi

Seven police personnel of Paba thana were suspended on Thursday on charge on negligence of duties. The suspended police personnel are Sis Ameer Toimur and Ashrafi Khanom Sharmi, ASI Abdul Mazid and constables Shaleha Begum, Shahnaz Parvin, Abu Raihan and Jamal Uddin. According to police, one girl was raped at Hatgodagari village under the same thana on Tuesday night and the victim lodged a case in this **SEE PAGE 11 COL 7**

Outlawed party man shot dead in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A member of an outlawed party was gunned down at village Baraihati under Tala Upzila yesterday. A gang of armed men called Bijon Sarkar, 40, son of Bishawjit Sarkar, out of his house at 2:00pm and shot him point blank. He died on the spot. Being informed, Tala police rushed to the spot and recovered the body. They sent it to Satkhira Sadar Hospital for autopsy. Police said Bijon might have been killed by his rivals due to internal conflict. A case was filed with Tala Police Station in the regard. Police could not arrest the killers till writing of this report last evening.



PHOTO: STAR

Workers of the Biswasahitya Kendra fill aedes-breeding holes in trees with cement to prevent rainwater spills on the Ramna Park in the city yesterday. The organisation has engaged 100 workers in the special drive against dengue.

Dengue strikes back, CCC yet to wake up

NURUL ALAM, Chittagong

Though dengue has struck back, adequate preparedness programmes are not at hand and the Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) is yet to launch a massive anti-mosquito drive. About 20 dengue patients were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) so far. However, there was no death from the disease, hospital sources said. The Chief Conservancy Officer of CCC when contacted said measures will be taken shortly to launch a crash programme to eradicate menacing mosquitoes. He said larvicides have been sprayed in drains and other mosquito breeding grounds.

CMCH sources said the dengue surveillance committee formed last year has been reactivated and it is monitoring the situation. But other sources said the committee is not as active as it was last year. Other bodies formed to create awareness and keep surveillance are still maintaining a low key. The CCC finished its job by holding a seminar on dengue a few days back and initiating publicity through megaphones in different areas of the city. In that seminar, a decision was taken to open a 'dengue corner' in the city to provide 'first aid' to dengue patients and to send the 'serious' ones to CMCH. Ward commissioners were asked to

launch awareness and cleanliness programmes in their respective areas. Talking to The Daily Star, CCC Mayor Mohiuddin Chowdhury said, "Initially we maintained a low-profile as the dengue situation in Chittagong is not so alarming as in Dhaka. Now we are trying to activate our people to launch dengue prevention campaign and awareness programmes. We have revived activities of the dengue committee". CCC officials claimed that the dengue patients admitted to CMCH were possibly infected with the virus during their visits to Dhaka. They also claimed that the recent heavy rainfall in Chittagong came as a 'blessing' and washed away the aedes mosquito larvae.