

## CU BCL calls off siege programme

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong University (CU) unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) has called off its indefinite siege programme on the university campus after a fruitful discussion with the university authorities at the Teachers' Club in the city's Lalkhan Bazaar yesterday evening.

However, the first day of scheduled classes of the university that reopened yesterday after a 12-day vacation could not be held as the siege continued throughout the day. The BCL had enforced the indefinite siege programme to press home their 11-point demand.

The university shuttle train plied irregularly between the CU campus and the city under police protection after a BCL leader identified as Nazmul Hasan Imon was arrested from the city's Tiger Pass area on charge of forcibly stopping the train.

Earlier on Friday evening, five buses for transporting university teachers were damaged by some unidentified students at the Telephone and Telegraph (T&T)

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## Graft case Hasina to appear in court today for bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Former prime minister and Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina, accused in a graft case in connection with a contract for the Meghnaghat Power Plant, will appear in the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, today for bail, sources said.

Hasina will appear in the court at about 2:00 pm.

The Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC) submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM's) Court, Dhaka, on October 14 against Hasina and three others.

The three other accused are former state minister for power Prof Rafiqul Islam, former state minister for LGRD Ministry Syed Abul Hossain and A K M Islam, manager of SACO International Ltd, owned by Hossain.

The prime minister's office on October 3 approved inclusion of the names of Hasina and Abul Hossain in the case, filed with Ramna thana on December 11 last year.

The case was originally filed against former state minister for

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## Hartal passes off peacefully in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A half-day hartal passed off peacefully in Khulna city yesterday.

The hartal was called by district and city Awami League to protest arrests of Awami League leaders including former Whip Mostafa Rashidi Shuja.

Army personnel were seen assisting the police in maintaining law and order during hartal hours.

District and city Awami League jointly held a press conference at about 12:30 pm. It was attended, among others, by former state minister and general secretary of city Awami League Talukdar Abdul Khaleque, MP, president of district AL Shaikh Haroon-or-Rashid and city AL Advocate Manjurul Imam.

According to written statement read out by Haroon-or-Rashid, army has been deployed to eliminate Awami League, not to arrest crimi

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# BAF chopper crashes killing all four crew

ABDULLAH -AL MAHMUD, Ctg

An airforce chopper crashed yesterday in Cox's Bazar killing all the four crew.

The Bangladesh Airforce (BAF) training helicopter, MI 17200, crashed when it collided with a television relay station tower at Ukhiya at 4:35pm 15 minutes after it took off from the Sergeant Zuhurul Haq Airbase in Chittagong.

The dead are Wing Commander Kazi Kamrul Newaj, 39, Flying Officer M Sabbir Ahmed, 23, Warrant Officer Zahir Hossain, 40, and Sergeant Abdus Samad, 35.

Wing Commander Newaj was manning the chopper when it crashed. He died while being taken to hospital. Sergeant Samad's body was missing for

some time and later it was found in the debris.

Immediately after the crash, two airforce rescue helicopters flew to the spot. Security forces cordoned off the television relay station for rescue operation, police and eyewitnesses said.

Whether the TV station was damaged or any of its staff injured could not be known.

Eyewitnesses and sources said the helicopter was on a training flight when its blade hit the tower of the TV station and crashed.

Unofficial sources said the chopper was engaged in installing the antenna of the TV station.

This is the third crash in a span of about three months. At least six BAF men and three civilians were killed in two separate aircraft crashes in Chittagong during the time.



PHOTO: ABDUL MONAYEM KHAN

The airforce chopper which crashed into a television station in Cox's Bazar yesterday burns in flames. The chopper crashed few minutes after it took off on a training flight, killing all the four crew.

## Hasina backs army drive but warns against HR violation



PHOTO: STAR

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina addresses a rally at the Paltan Maidan in the city yesterday.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina has promised her party's support to the army's ongoing anti-criminal drive but cautioned against any human rights violation in the process.

Hasina told a huge rally at the Paltan Maidan in the city yesterday afternoon that she hoped the mop-up operations would be kept within constitutional confines.

The rally was organised to denounce the "failure and inefficiency of the government, law and order downside, price-hike of essentials, politicisation and nepotism."

Her offer for cooperation and caution against human rights violation came a day after alleged deaths of two "criminals" during interrogation following their arrest by the army.

"The Awami League will be on

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## Probe into Biman outstations soon

STAR REPORT

The civil aviation ministry will send investigation teams to all the 28 overseas stations of the Biman Bangladesh Airlines to probe alleged corruption, mismanagement and wastage of resources by officials.

"The objective of the probe is to reduce Biman's operational cost," said State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin. He said the investigation team would also try to help in stopping harassment of the passengers and ensure better services to them.

Two investigation teams already visited the London and Dubai offices of Biman and found financial mismanagement, according to ministry sources. Following this, the decision to investigate other Biman offices was made.

According to sources, each investigation team will make a set of

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# One more dies during army interrogation

## 140 arrested on third day of crackdown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One more person died yesterday allegedly during interrogation, as the army crackdown on criminals across the country entered its third day. About 140 people were arrested and 16 firearms, 349 rounds of ammunition, and 110 crackers recovered.

Abul Khair Ratan, who was arrested with five others during a raid in Kashiganj upazila in Gopalganj on Friday night, died at

the Gopalganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital around 6:30pm.

The army took him to a temporary and tortured him, members of Ratan's family alleged.

Our Correspondent said a large number of army personnel were guarding the hospital and letting no one in.

Family members of the dead rushed to the hospital after hearing the news but were not allowed to see his body, sources added.

In the capital, meanwhile, the army raided the residences of leaders and activists of different political parties, including two Dhaka City Corporation ward commissioners.

The residences of Monwar Hossain Dipu alias Dipjal and Haji Abul Hashem Hashu at Mirpur and Mohammadpur respectively were raided in the evening. Both, however, avoided arrest.

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# Work together to face post-MFA regime

## PM urges RMG, textile sectors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the backdrop of discord between the country's readymade garment (RMG) and textile sectors, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged entrepreneurs of both groups to work together to face competition after quota is abolished in 2004.

Assuring all types of government assistance to the sectors, Khaleda said, "We have to take up effective plans and determine strategies right now to survive in the competition."

Khaleda also put emphasis on making the textile sector self-reliant as well as on expansion of backward linkage industry. Everyone has to be careful so that the textile sector is not affected after 2004, she observed.

She said the government has taken up a comprehensive Tk 2.34 crore study to determine the new strategy to face the post-2004 situation. "The preliminary report has also been made public. We would make necessary arrangements in light of the recommendations of the final report," she said.

Khaleda was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural of a four-day Bangladesh Apparel and Textile Exposition 2002 (BATEXPO) at the Bangladesh-China Friendship

Conference Centre yesterday.

Talking on issues like disbursement of outstanding cash incentive and implementation of SAARC cumulation, the prime minister said she would ask the ministry to take decisions after discussing the issues with all concerned.

The apparel exporters are in favour of SAARC cumulation as they say it would boost export, but the textile sector is dead against it for fear of adverse effect.

Khaleda Zia also said Canada, New Zealand, Norway and the European Union had granted quota-free and duty-free access of Bangladeshi garments because of her government's right initiatives. "All-out efforts have been taken for quota-and duty-free access of Bangladeshi RMG to the USA," the prime minister said.

Among others, Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, Industries Minister MK Anwar, State Minister for Commerce Barkatullah Bulu and BGMEA President Kutubuddin Ahmed spoke at the inaugural function.

Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury said

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PHOTO: STAR

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia opening BATEXPO 2002 yesterday.

# Business leaders welcome army deployment

STAR REPORT

The business chambers have welcomed army deployment to improve law and order and urged the government to chalk out a detailed plan to refurbish the police force for an effective and permanent solution to the problem.

They also felt that the army should be given appropriate authority to do the task of curbing crime.

The Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) in a statement said army deployment to improve the deteriorating law and order "rekindled hope in the business community."

The Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) also appreciated the army drive and said, "This has been overdue as the trade and industry have been stressing that law and order constitutes an important element of business environment."

The MCCI also urged all to cooperate with the ongoing drive "so that it becomes possible to achieve the desired improvement at the earliest". The

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# Abducted young man murdered in Ctg: 4 held

BSS, Ctg

Police recovered the body of an abducted young man from a ditch in the city's Halishahar area in the early hours of yesterday.

A gang of miscreants abducted Mohammad Ilias, son of Mohammad Jasim Uddin, from his Halishahar Housing Estate residence on Thursday and then killed him, police said.

Police recovered the victim's body at around 4 am. The body bore marks of injury.

Following a case filed by victim's brother, police raided the Swandeeji para slum in the city and arrested four alleged killers.

The arrested persons are Belal Hossain, Tahikul, Kamal Uddin and Mohammad Mainuddin.

# Saifur, Huda's UZ stance irks many in BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman and Communications Minister Nazmul Huda have sparked off resentment among cabinet members and BNP policymakers by voicing their opposition to revival of the upazila parishad.

Most cabinet members and BNP leaders believe that such an open stance point to the absence of a chain of command within the government.

Whereas Huda has repeatedly gone public with his anti-upazila stance, Saifur likened the local government system to "something Anglo-Indian" during a news briefing at his office on Thursday.

Sircar has, meanwhile, circulated a letter to all ministries and other authorities concerned that says the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat "does not support upazila", sources said.

The letter has raised questions in the rank and file of the government as to why and under which provision did the speaker issue the letter.

Neither the Speaker nor the parliament secretariat can give an opinion on such an issue, many observed.

Saifur and Huda have also come under severe criticism for taking public stance on upazila when the proposal for its revival lies pending with the cabinet.

Revival of upazila, abolished in 1991 by the then BNP

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