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## Govt interference led to Bac failure

Antigraft body DG says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The director general (DG) of the newly formed Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday said the now defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) had failed to play an active role in combating corruption due to government interference.

"It was impossible for us to work beyond influence since we were dependent on the government," said Maj Gen (Retd) MA Matin, who served as the Bac DG for more than two years, at a meeting of the Commission with its staff.

Justice Sultan Hossain Khan, chairman of the three-member Commission, addressing the meeting pointed out that corruption and development are inter-related. "Weak leadership has blocked the way of our development," he observed.

Commission Member Maniruddin Ahmed was also present at the meeting but the other member M Maniruzzaman Mia did not turn up. He is expected to join on December 11 after resigning from a private university where he is serving as the vice-chancellor.

The ACC top officials at the meeting at the Commission's office

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## RECRUITMENT OF 20,000 STAFF

# Cancel order revoked on pressures

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of pressure from the rank and file of the ruling BNP, the government yesterday withdrew the November 20 order that cancelled the recruitment of several thousand class three and four employees under district administration.

The staff recruitment done before October 28 would remain valid, according to yesterday's establishment ministry notification signed by Shamsuddin Ahmed Bhuiyan, senior assistant secretary (Administration-3).

The government earlier cancelled all completed and incomplete recruitment of class three and four employees for district administration and lower level offices amid controversy. In the meantime, around 20,000 people were

recruited. Officials said 55 out of 64 districts had completed recruitment before October 28 in line with a government order to complete recruitment against 70 percent vacant posts of lower level staff by October 31. These people will now retain the jobs.

Sources said the government has finally bowed to the pressure from the ruling party despite stopping the recruitment process in the wake of widespread allegations of political interference, irregularities, nepotism and corruption.

The establishment ministry yesterday faxed the notification containing the withdrawal order of its earlier circular to all divisional and deputy commissioners.

Sources alleged some dishonest district level officials in connivance

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## JAUNDICE ATTACK DU to test all hall students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) authorities will carry out medical tests on all resident students suspected of having been infected by hepatitis virus.

A special team of medical experts is already working at the DU dormitories to identify sick students while doing blood tests.

"Until now, we've tested 659 resident students. Of them, only 27 have jaundice and another 118 students having hepatitis A virus positive are suffering from moderate sickness of the disease," said DU Proctor Dr AKA Firoz Ahmad.

Besides, the DU has also made contracts with three private medical institutions to carry out diagnosis and, if need be, admit patients.

"Another medical team from the Health Directorate is now working to identify the nature of the viral attack. Based on the team's findings, we'll take preventive measures to check further spread of the virus," Dr Ahmad said.

Liver disease specialists from Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University are on alert for consultation if any situation arises at the residential halls.

Of the 17 DU residential halls, only three have the maximum of affected students.

# Tk 3,000cr umbrella plan to help the flood-hit

REJAUJL KARIM BYRON

The government will undertake a single project, instead of multiple projects, at an initial cost of some Tk 3,000 crore to rehabilitate people affected by the recent spate of floods.

The government with the help of the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) will inject the funds into the economy estimated to have incurred about Tk 12,000 crore in losses due to the series of floods.

The WB will provide \$190 million and the ADB \$180 million, which together equals to about Tk 2,000 crore, while the government will provide the rest.

The WB and the ADB have been suggesting the government undertake a single project, instead of multiple projects, for the rehabilitation.

The Planning Commission

yesterday informed the parliamentary standing committee on planning ministry yesterday at a meeting about the project. The meeting discussed the project and other post-flood-rebuilding activities.

The project proposal is under process and likely to be placed before the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) soon for clearance.

"We recommended that the prime minister hold meetings with the finance minister along with the secretaries in each or every other month to learn about how this project is being implemented," Chairman of the standing committee Akbar Ali told The Daily Star after the meeting.

The Planning Commission has also told the parliamentary body that it has formed a committee headed by commission's member Fazlur Rahman to scrutinise different components of the flood reha-

bilitation project proposal.

This committee has received 64 project proposals from different ministries and of these, 32 have been accepted and cleared by the finance minister. These proposed projects would be incorporated in the flood rehabilitation programme as its components.

The 32 components will be covered under the ministries of local government, education, youth and sports, cultural affairs, energy and power, textiles and jute.

An allocation of Tk 10 crore has been set aside for Sylhet City Corporation and another of Tk 50 crore for Dhaka City Corporation. The sums will come from block allocation in the Annual Development Programme (ADP).

The Planning Commission added that the Tk 3,000 crore project cost is a primary estimate calculated on the basis of the 32 components

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## Graft case against Cantt OC

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A graft case has been filed against the officer-in-charge (OC) and two other cops of Cantonment Police Station on charge of taking bribes of Tk 3.70 lakh.

Farhat Ahmad Shirin of Baridhara's DOHS in the city filed the case with the Court of Metropolitan Sessions Judge, Dhaka Saturday.

She accused OC Abdul Malik, Sub-inspector Mahbul Alam and Shahidul Islam of taking the money from her.

Judge Mohammad Matiur Rahman took the case into cognisance and ordered to write to authorities for obtaining sanction against the accused to proceed with the case, as they are government officials.

Shirin in the complaint said she filed a petition with the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka on June 26 to get her private car back from Shahid Sarwar Nizam.

After hearing, the magistrate directed OC Malik to seize the car and keep it in his custody.

The accused after receiving the court order through Shirin became furious and rebuked her for filing the

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## RAB KILLINGS Rights activists concerned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human rights activists at a national conference yesterday expressed their concern over the extra-judicial killings by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and violation of human rights.

The two-day conference on 'Protection of Human Rights: Role of Civil Society, NGOs and Media' organised by Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Australian High Commission in Bangladesh started at IDB Bhaban in the capital yesterday.

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## Rab members roughed up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seven youths beat up some Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members and took away a cellphone on Dhaka-Chittagong highway Friday.

The youths including their leader Muslim were subsequently picked up by police from Godnail in Siddhirganj upazila the next day.

Earlier on Friday night, a patrol team of the Rab approached a halted Dhaka-bound bus, Sagarika, in Shimrail in Siddhirganj.

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## AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACKS

# AL walks out as Speaker rejects JS probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) lawmakers yesterday walked out of parliament as the Speaker turned down their demands for an all-party parliamentary committee to investigate the August 21 grenade attack and a discussion on the judicial probe report into the same incident.

Deputy Opposition Leader Abdul Hamid, who led the brief walkout at 6:15pm, demanded formation of a parliamentary inquiry committee comprising members of all the parties and headed by the Speaker to monitor the investigations and find out the perpetrators of the grisly attack.

On a point of order, he said, "Three months have elapsed, yet no headway has been made in investigations into the crime that killed at least 24 people and injured several hundreds."

He also demanded a fresh discussion on the August 21 incident in the House to allow the opposition law-

makers participate in it. Demanding to place the probe report of the judicial commission as well as those of Interpol and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in parliament the AL MPs said people have the right to know the contents of those reports.

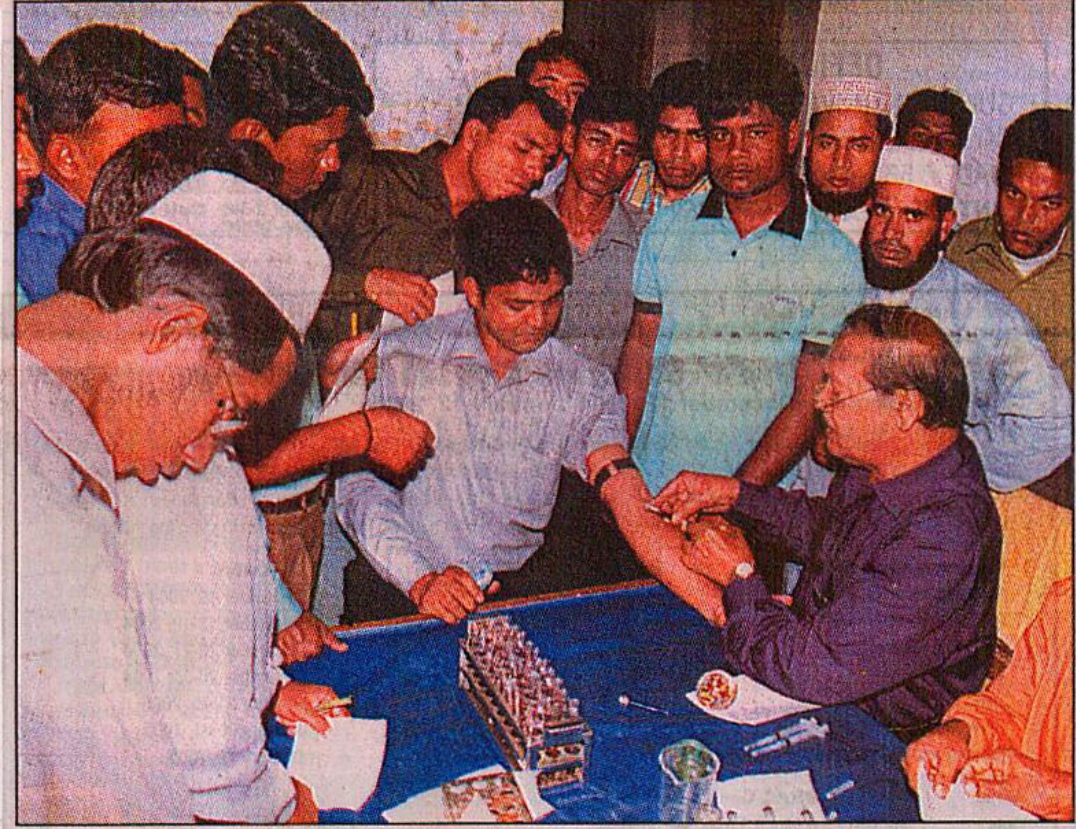
Senior AL lawmakers Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim and Mohammad Nasim also placed the same demands on points of order.

Selim said the August 21 grenade attack was aimed to hit Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina and has evoked widespread condemnation at home and abroad.

"If the matter is not unveiled, democracy would be at stake," he said suggesting the issue be resolved to stop repetition of such incidents in future.

Nasim said people do not know what the judicial commission report contains and, for that matter, what the Interpol or FBI said in their reports submitted to the government.

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Students crowd Dhaka University Medical Centre for blood tests yesterday, as jaundice continues to rage through the university dormitories.

# 50 hurt in transport staff, student clash in Barisal

Over 40 vehicles wrecked, burnt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

At least 50 people were injured yesterday in a two-hour fierce clash between road transport workers and Barisal B M College students, who also wrecked and burnt over 40 three-wheelers called tempo and buses in the city.

A 2km stretch of area in the western part of the city turned into a virtual battle field littered with burning and ruined vehicles, wounded people, brickbats and sticks amid shouts of assaults, counter-assaults and retreats.

City roads and streets remained empty of traffic for two more hours after the fight until police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) could diffuse the tension.

Witnesses said a large group of students led by BM College students

union leaders, mostly members of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Islami Chhatra Shibir, went to Nathullahad bus terminal at about 10:30am. They tried to block the roads and highways as part of a programme to drive home their demand for upgrading the college to a university.

But the transport workers and owners at the terminal led by some local BNP leaders resisted the students' bid to block the highway and halt transport services.

Student sources said as the transport workers and owners chased and attacked the students, a furious clash ensued that gradually spread from Nathullahad bus terminal to Natunbazar tempo stand.

Of the wounded students, 22 were admitted to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College and

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# 166 feared dead in China mine blast

AFP, Beijing

A gas explosion ripped through a coal mine in north China's Shaanxi province yesterday, trapping 166 miners in what threatens to be the worst disaster to hit the world's biggest coal producer in recent years.

A total of 293 miners were in the Chenjiashan coal mine in Tongchuan city at 7:10 am (2310 GMT) when the blast occurred. Some 123 escaped or were rescued soon after and four more were hauled out alive 10 hours later.

"So there are now 166 trapped," an official from the Shaanxi provin-

cial coal mine safety supervision bureau surnamed Duan told AFP.

The trapped miners were located deep underground and it was impossible to tell whether they were still alive, local officials said.

"We're still trying to rescue the miners. We've managed to save a few people so far," added Duan. "We haven't seen any bodies yet."

Seven local teams of rescuers were frantically trying to reach the miners and an additional 10 teams from nearby mining jurisdictions had been called to assist, Xinhua news agency said.

But some 10 hours after the

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# Govt asked to reply why Rab not be run as per law

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) in a rule yesterday asked the government to explain in four weeks why it should not be directed to operate elite anticrime force Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) within the bounds of the law.

The HC Division Bench of Justice Shah Abu Nayeem Muminur Rahman and Justice Mainul Islam Chowdhury issued the rule in the wake of a public interest litigation

filed in the High Court on October 25 that challenged the constitution of Rab and sought an injunction against its operations.

Law, home and Cabinet Division secretaries and the additional inspector general of police, who is in charge of Rab, have been asked to reply to the court rule.

Senior Supreme Court lawyers Razvir Rahman Chowdhury and Sheikh Golam Hafiz filed the petition that termed the law leading to

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