

DU VIOLENCE
Probe body
chief visits
incident spots

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The one-member judicial commission, formed to probe the recent violence on the Dhaka University campus, visited yesterday different parts of the city to determine whether simultaneous incidents there had any connection with the campus outrages.

The country saw sporadic bursts of violence on August 21 and 22 which emanated from a trifling incident at the Dhaka University.

Commission Chairman Justice Habibur Rahman talked to people in the city's English Road, Phulbari police box, North South Road and Kamlapur's BRTC bus stand areas.

He asked them to show up at the commission office on Sunday and Monday to give their version of the incidents.

Justice Habib told journalists that though the commission's

INFLATION CURBING MEASURE
BB sticks to its guns
amid IMF insistence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Monetary Fund (IMF) yesterday reiterated its earlier stand of contractionary monetary policy for Bangladesh to rein in inflation but the central bank opposed the idea.

During a meeting with the central bank governor, a visiting IMF mission said there is no alternative to adopting tight monetary policy to check inflation.

The IMF mission led by Thomas Rumbaugh, adviser of Asia and Pacific IMF departments, discussed macroeconomic situation with Bangladesh Bank (BB) Governor Dr Salehuddin Ahmed.

Sources said the central bank officials pointed out that without

taking any tight measures, private sector credit growth recently went down significantly.

The private sector credit growth was 15.12 percent in June 2007—the figure was 18.27 in June 2006.

Sources said if any tight policy is taken after the recent devastating floods, it would hamper supply and incur more inflationary pressure. The IMF mission, however, advised that tight monetary policy should be persuaded after post-flood economic recovery.

"We also give supply top priority so that inflation could be checked," BB governor told journalists after the meeting held at the central bank.

Inflation rate has been rising during recent months, last June it reached 9.2 percent. Sources said

the inflation rate went beyond 10 percent in July this year.

However, the IMF said inflation rate increased due to high money supply and persuaded the government to adopt tight monetary policy. In line with the IMF's suggestions, BB in a monetary policy statement said it would follow contractionary monetary policy.

The business community along with economists, however, opposed the idea and said lack of proper supply mechanism is the reason behind high inflation.

The IMF mission landed in Bangladesh on Tuesday for a two-week visit. The mission came to discuss Policy Support Instrument (PSI) and will stay here until September 17.

Govt to bring
amendments
to Emergency
Power Rules
Says Mainul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law and Information Adviser Barrister Mainul Hossain yesterday said the government would soon bring some amendments to the Emergency Power Rules, 2007.

He said there would be provisions so that detained family members of the politicians behind bars get bail. He, however, did not elaborate on the matter.

"It would not be right to tell you more about the amendments before they come," Mainul told reporters while entering his office in the morning.

Replying to another query, he said the government has not yet decided how much indoor politics the political parties would be allowed.

He said rules and regulations in different sectors would be relaxed



PHOTO: STAR

A policeman helps pedestrians cross Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue at Paribagh in the capital yesterday. The foundation stone for a foot-over-bridge was laid there on September 16, 1996 but the project is yet to be implemented.



PHOTO: STAR

Damaged level crossing near FDC in Tejgaon in the capital forces vehicles to use a narrow strip of the road. The photo was taken yesterday.

Reforms talks
possible
despite ban
on politics
Says Dr Kamal

UNB, Gazipur

Eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday said the political parties can sit with the Election Commission (EC) for discussion on reforms despite ban on indoor politics.

Talking to newsmen before attending a reception here, Dr Kamal, also the president of Gono Forum, said his party is in favour of dialogue with the EC. But he urged for facilitating a congenial atmosphere for free, frank and meaningful discussion.

Bangladesh faces tsunami threat
Reveals study

AP, Bangkok

More than 1 million people in South Asia's Bay of Bengal could be swept to their deaths by a tsunami if a giant earthquake were to hit off the coast of Myanmar, according to a study published Thursday.

But the study's author, Phil Cummins, said he does not have enough data to say whether such a cataclysmic event—a quake projected to be from 8.5 magnitude to 9.0 magnitude—is likely to hit parts of Myanmar and Bangladesh in the next few decades or in several hundred years. Smaller quakes in the immediate area are rare.

"I don't want to cause a panic. There is no reason anything like

this would happen soon," said Cummins, of Geoscience Australia, the federal agency that carries out geoscientific research.

The threat of tsunamis has taken on added urgency in recent years after a 9.3-magnitude earthquake off Indonesia's Sumatra island in December 2004 triggered a tsunami that killed more than 230,000 people and left a half million homeless in a dozen countries. Myanmar and Bangladesh suffered relatively minor damage from the tsunami, with 61 people and 2 people killed, respectively.

Previous research had shown the potential for large quakes in the Bay of Bengal area but Cummins' said his study, which appears in

Thursday's issue of the journal Nature, is the first to suggest a big quake could spawn a tsunami "that could have pronounced impact on the Chittagong coast and the Ganges-Bhramaputra delta at the northern tip of" the bay.

The numbers of people at risk from a tsunami, Cummins wrote, may be "over a million," given that the region is home to Bangladesh's second largest city of Chittagong and there are tens of millions of people living just above sea level in the region.

Cummins has not presented his findings to the governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh. Officials from Myanmar and

ACC allowed
to quiz Falu
at jail gate
COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday permitted the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to interrogate detained former BNP lawmaker Mosaddak Ali Falu at the Dhaka Central Jail gate in connection with a graft case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mizanur Rahman passed the order after ACC Assistant Director Jahangir Alam submitted a petition to interrogate Falu for the sake of proper investigation.

ACC Assistant Director Rahilee Khatun filed the case with the Motijheel Police Station against

BARAPUKURIA COAL MINE
Production resumes
after toxic gas glitch

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Production at Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Ltd (BCMCL) of Dinajpur resumed Wednesday night. Production was halted Tuesday afternoon when carbon monoxide (CO) gas was found emitting from phase-1110 of the coalmine.

Following large-scale CO emission from phase-1110, the authorities of BCMCL sealed off that mining area on Wednesday. They pulled out miners from phase-1109 on Tuesday to monitor the mine's condition, sources said.

GRAFT SUSPECTS
ACC sees no
relation with
Gen Moeen's
statement

UNB, Dhaka

Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury yesterday said the ACC has no relation with the list of corruption suspects as mentioned by the army chief at a meeting with the business community on Wednesday.

"We have no relation with the list. It is good if we have the list. That will make our task easy. If not available, we ourselves will prepare the list," Mashhud told a correspondent when his attention was drawn to the statement of the army chief during the regular briefing.

Army Chief Gen Moeen U Ahmed had assured the business community that there would not be any more list of corruption suspects.

"We are using the information

Universities,
colleges start
reopening from
tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Academic activities in all public universities and colleges across the country will gradually resume from tomorrow.

Noakhali University of Science and Technology and all public and private colleges under the National University (NU) and will reopen tomorrow, while Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (Kuet) will resume academic activities from Sunday.

Besides, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), Shahjalal University of Science & Technology (SUST) and Sylhet Agricultural University (SAU) will reopen on September 10 and Chittagong University (CU) on October 23.

Following the clashes between students and law enforcers in Dhaka University and other universities and colleges, the government on August 22 imposed curfew in six divisional headquarters and shut down all universities and colleges directing to vacate all dormitories.

Verdict in gold
smuggling case
deferred for
seventh time

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The verdict of a gold smuggling case, filed 16 years back against former president and Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad was adjourned for the seventh time yesterday.

Dhaka First Additional Metropolitan Sessions' Judge Mohammad Abul Bashar re-fixed September 18 for pronouncing the verdict.

Earlier, the judgment was adjourned for six consecutive dates on different excuses.

Wadud Bhuiyan's
close aide held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Police yesterday arrested Khagrachhari District Jubo Dal President Abdus Salam from a house in Tabalchhari under Rangamati.

Sources said, acting on a tip off, Rangamati police led by Sub-inspector Iqbal Ahmad, raided a house in Tabalchhari and arrested Salam.

Salam, a closed aide of former BNP lawmaker Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, is an accused in Awami League leader Nurul Islam murder case. He went into hiding after

US strikes in Baghdad
kill 14 sleeping civilians

AFP, Baghdad

US combat helicopters and tanks bombarded a Baghdad neighbourhood in pre-dawn strikes yesterday, killing 14 sleeping civilians and destroying houses, angry residents and Iraqi officials said.

The US military, which has deployed thousands of extra troops in the Iraqi capital to try to stem rampant violence, said the operation was aimed at Shia extremists and the houses destroyed were "enemy strongholds."

Iraqi defence and interior ministry officials said US helicopters fired on houses in the Al-Washash neighbourhood of Mansour district in west Baghdad between 2:00 am and 3:00 am.

Abu Ali Saad, a resident of the mainly Shia enclave, said US military vehicles had arrived in large numbers in Al-Washash during the night.

"There were tanks and

armoured vehicles and many troops," 35-year-old Saad told AFP while surveying the rubble of his neighbour's house.

"The tanks started firing then the helicopters came. Missiles were fired from the air. Houses were destroyed. A family of five were killed in this house," he said, referring to his neighbours.

"We are a peaceful neighbourhood. There are no militia here. There were no exchanges of fire. We were all sleeping."

A US military statement said Iraqi and US forces had engaged Shia extremist militants who were part of a "terrorist cell" operating in Al-Washash.

When Iraqi and US forces entered the area they came under fire from "more than a dozen extremists firing from the rooftops of surrounding buildings," the statement said.

The fire was returned and air

Presidential
term ends
on Nov 15
Says Musharraf
following court query

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan military ruler Pervez Musharraf's term as president will end on November 15, his lawyers said yesterday, after a court ordered him to clear up uncertainty over his plans for re-election.

Musharraf, a key US ally, is planning to seek a second five-year term as president amid fierce opposition to suggestions that he may try to prolong his tenure as army chief.

"The term of office of the president expires on November 15, 2007," said a statement filed by his lawyers to the Supreme Court.

Government sources have previously said that Musharraf planned to call a new presidential election by the federal and provincial assemblies some time between

PHOTO: AFP

Computer generated simulation shows an asteroid striking the Earth in Mexico's Yucatan peninsula around 150 million years ago, triggering the extinction of dinosaurs and the rise of mammals.

Asteroid breakup wiped out dinosaurs!

AFP, Paris

The extinction of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago can be traced to a collision between two monster rocks in the asteroid belt nearly 100 million years earlier, scientists report on Wednesday.

The smash drove a giant sliver of rock into Earth's path, eventually causing the climate-changing impact that ended the reign of the dinosaurs and enabled the rise of mammals—including, eventually, us.

Other asteroid fragments smashed into the Moon, Venus and Mars, pocking their faces with mighty craters, the