

Conviction and release

**FROM PAGE 1** said. "The way the cases were run and presidential pardon was granted has impaired credibility of the legal process."

The teachers now need to file an appeal with a higher court against their conviction, he observed.

M Hafizuddin Khan, a former adviser to caretaker government, said the government should not have made a drama out of the release of teachers and students. It was to let them off then why having them convicted.

"Releasing the convicted teachers does not show the government's magnanimity. If similar situation arises in future, I wonder how that will be controlled after this bad example," he added.

Referring to teachers' arrest, he said, "The government calculations have gone wrong. It probably wanted to punish the teachers, but failed for pressure from different quarters."

Thanking the government for freeing teachers and students, rights activist Sultana Kamal said, "What is happening today will become an example for future and so we should not do anything that might return to shame our conscience."

Akbar Ali Khan, head of regulatory reforms commission, said the issue should be resolved peacefully and without delay.

Another former adviser, SM Shahjahan, said, "A number of murders were committed on Dhaka University campus over the years, but I never heard any of the cases regarding those going anywhere. Had both the government and university authorities taken the decisions they are taking now, things would not have been this bad."

Lauding the release of the four teachers, Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain said, "We all wanted a solution to the unrest and a return to normal in Dhaka University."

He, however, stopped short of commenting on the conviction of the three teachers or the government decision to prosecute seven students on charge of assaulting an army man in August.

The Awami League's acting General Secretary Syed Ashraf Islam expressed sadness at the conviction of the three teachers because "it ripped the dignity of the Dhaka University teachers to shreds."

"What is the point in pardoning them as soon as they were convicted?"

Welfare body

**FROM PAGE 16** meeting with mid-level officials of BGMEA, BKMEA and officials and workers' leaders of seven garment factories of Mirpur area held in the conference room of the Ministry of LGRD and Labour and Employment with its Adviser Anwarul Iqbal in the chair.

Addressing the meeting, the adviser urged the mid-level officials to work for the welfare of the owners and workers of the garment factories.

He also urged the workers to work sincerely and not to get confused with rumors.

The adviser also declared a move to file cases with labour court against the management of 150 garment factories who failed to implement the agreed minimum wages scale.

Labour and Employment Ministry Secretary Ashfaq Hamid and senior officials of the ministry were also present at the meeting.

Army vehicle

**FROM PAGE 1** vehicle during the August 20-22 violence were dropped from the charge sheet Monday. Shahbahg police yesterday submitted the final report against the rest seven students in the case filed by the army personnel on August 26 in connection with torching his vehicle and assaulting him at Shahbahg.

After Sub-inspector Asgar Ali Khan, investigation officer of the case from Shahbahg Police Station, submitted the final report before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka appealing for discharging them from the charge, the court accepted it.

The students are Kazi Muhammad Zahidul Islam Biplob, Deen Islam Angel, Rafiqul Islam Sujon, Liton Mahmud, Manobendra Dev, Deen Islam and Asaduzzaman.

Charge against Rashedul Habib, Muhammad Ibrahim, KM Mahub Alam Shyamol, Enamul Haque, Golam Azam Khomeni, DU correspondent of Khajabazar Patrika, Kased Ali, Chanchal Karmakar, ABM Shamsuddoha, Siddique Nazmul Alam, Kamruzzaman, Sohel Rana Tipu, Abdul Karim, Abul Hasan, Arifuzzaman, Delwar Rahman Dipu, Mizanur Rahman, Rashedul Mahmud and Sarwar Alam were dropped Monday.

Three days before the army personnel filed the case, police filed a case in connection with the same incident. On January 7, charges were pressed against the seven and 18 others who are absconding.

Talking about the charges, the education adviser said, "There is clear and strong evidence that the seven were involved in violent activities. However, we have taken

Hopefully, an appeal would clear them of any wrongdoing," he said adding that it is hard to believe that teachers would be involved in violence.

On moving ahead with the case against the seven students, Ashraf said the decision has jeopardised their future and urged the government to refrain from such an aggressive approach.

The BNP's pro-reform leader Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman welcomed the release of the teachers, saying, "The pride of Dhaka University has been restored; it reflects the sincerity on all sides to resolve the ongoing crisis."

On the bid to prosecute the seven students, he said, "Truth has to be respected. It's a sensitive issue; we must tread delicately but surely to establish peace in the country."

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon said the decision has proved again that an unpopular government views Dhaka University as an opposing force.

He said, "It's a sign of the government's vindictive attitude and this will not bode well. It shows that they are in a lot of troubles and they're desperate."

Pintu

**FROM PAGE 16** is complete, the IO added.

A BNP central committee leader, Pintu was taken to the court of additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Golam Rabbani at around 4:30pm. He was arrested on January 18 in Dhaka.

In the bail petition submitted to the court, the defence lawyers mentioned that their client was implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass him adding that Pintu's name was not included in the FIR (first information report). He was shown arrested in the case on the basis of a false allegation, they added.

After the hearing, the court ordered to send Pintu to jail.

Sources in the CID said though the investigators have confirmed information about the role of Pintu in the ghastly attacks, he denied of having any links to the incident during the interrogation.

He also did not give any information about the connections of former home ministry boss Lutfozzaman Babar and Hawa Bhaban to the attack, the sources added.

In a recent statement to a court, operations commander of Harkatul Jihad Al Islami (Hujji) Mufi Abdul Hamman said the plot to launch the grenade attacks on the Awami League rally on Bangabandhu Avenue in 2004 was hatched at a meeting at the Dhanmondi residence of Pintu.

The grisly attacks left 24 AL leaders and activists dead and scores injured.

Aug 21 attack

**FROM PAGE 16** They have been there since the Indian police arrested them at Delhi Railway Station on February 26 in 2006 with 3 kg of high-powered explosives RDx, two electronic detonators and two pistols.

If the brothers could be brought back, important leads about the involvement of detained former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu and other masterminds in the grenade attacks would surface.

"As Muttakin and Mursalin were involved in the plot to carry out the August 21 attacks, once they are brought back, they would be brought face to face with Pintu so that he cannot avoid his and other masterminds links to the attack," an investigator told The Daily Star seeking anonymity.

Brac Bank

**FROM PAGE 16** case, told The Daily Star that they have made no further arrests and are yet to recover more stolen goods.

The DB so far arrested eight people in this connection and recovered about 200 tons of gold ornaments, five diamonds and Tk 3 lakh in cash. Among the arrestees, only Raju is on remand while the others are in jail.

"The masterminds might be arrested with the stolen goods after Raju's interrogation," Nasirullah added.

A number of the locker renters whose valuables were stolen expressed concern about the recovery efforts. Sources said 43 of them so far submitted their claims to the bank authorities. However, none submitted their claim giving the estimated value of their missing things.

Abedur Rahman Sikder, head of Marketing and Corporate Affairs of BRAC Bank Ltd, said, "We could not assess the loss as 17 of the affected people have not submitted their claims yet."

At least 15 lockers were allegedly empty.

"After the submission of claims of all affected customers, we would start procedures to estimate the loss," Sikder said.

**BDR** **FROM PAGE 1** its allegations that Bangladesh harbours Indian separatists and terrorists, Brig Gen MA Bari replied in the negative. He, however, said that they would examine whatever information the BSF has given.

Earlier at a BDR-BSF director-general level meeting, India had given Bangladesh a list of 1,000 Indian criminals hiding in Bangladesh, IGRA Tiwari said.

Both sides also agreed to solve the issues of push-back and push-ins on the basis of dialogue if those arise again.

Brig Gen MA Bari said that the nationals of both the countries detained by BDR and BSF would be released on humanitarian grounds as per the laws of the respective countries.

4 DU teachers

**FROM PAGE 1** were detained by the joint forces while five other teachers surrendered to a court following issuance of arrest warrants against them.

None other than the teachers and students of DU and RU has yet been convicted, although police initially implicated 84,000 unnamed persons in 59 cases filed with different police stations in Dhaka, Rajshahi and other parts of the country.

A government formed one-member judicial probe commission in its report submitted to the chief adviser on November 15, said the three-day student protest was initially spontaneous, but later a vested quarter and some politicians' added fuel to it.

The commission of Justice Habibur Rahman Khan made a 28-point recommendation for ensuring congenial atmosphere in educational institutions, requesting the chief adviser to make the report public. But the report has not yet been made public in over two months.

The military backed administration also has yet to take any step to ensure trial of the killers of a rickshaw puller who was shot dead during the violence on RU campus.

The local police station on October 22 submitted the final report on the killing of rickshaw puller Afzal Hossain saying they could not identify the killers.

Freed teachers

**FROM PAGE 1** the social science faculty, said, "Despite the torture and harassment, we did not let anyone tarnish the image of Dhaka University."

"We have struggled for the truth... If necessary, we will be in jail for five years instead of two years but we cannot let the image of the university be destroyed," he said, adding that they will raise their voice against any repression and injustice.

Prof Neem Chandra Bhowmik, chairman of applied physics and electronics department, said, "We have always spoken for the establishment of truth and justice and we will keep doing this in future."

DU teacher Prof Muhammad Samad said Duta will organise a solidarity meeting at 11:00am today on the campus where the released teachers will narrate the torture and harassment they suffered in the last few months.

The Technical Education Board is an autonomous body and so it did not seek permission from the health ministry before introducing these courses on health services, Education Secretary Montajul Islam told the meeting.

He said he had talked to the TEB and it stopped approving such courses.

Talking to The Daily Star over telephone, TEB Chairman Dr Netal Chandra Sutradhar, however, said, "There is a legal basis for the Technical Education Board to approve health technology courses."

"The Technical Education Board is a regulatory body and different courses like diploma engineering, textile, agriculture and SSC vocational have been running through its approval," he said.

When contacted, Prof MA Based, president of Bangladesh Association of Medical Technology Institutes (BAMI), an association of the TEB-approved health institutes, said, "We have heard that the

institutions will have to continue their activities as they are doing now until the authorities take a decision in a year or two."

Shefeytulla said, "The IHTs approved by the Technical Education Board are only doing certificate business. Even question arises on the quality of education these institutes are providing. The students of these institutes are being deceived."

"We recommended bringing all these institutes under one umbrella and that all these institutes should be approved by the health ministry and obey its rules and regulations," he said. An act will be formulated soon to run all IHTs by the Board of Diploma Education, he added.

The recommendations included forming a standing committee to monitor these IHTs and report their performance to the health ministry. On the basis of that report, the ministry will then affiliate the IHTs with it within a year.

The private IHTs approved by the TEB will also get a chance to be affiliated with the health ministry after fulfilling the conditions of the amended Establishment Regulation of Health Technology Institutes in private sector, Shefeytulla said.

Experts said health technologists equipped with better understanding, knowledge and skills, especially in highly advanced imaging service like MRI, CT Scan and radiology, are an integral part of the pathological laboratories. They are equally essential in the physical medicine department for rehabilitation of the physically challenged.

Unfortunately, the number of medical technologists in the country is only 10,653, according to the health ministry.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline suggests the ratio of doctor and medical technologist to be 1:5, but it is exactly the opposite in Bangladesh, they said.

To meet the WHO guideline requirement by 2025, 4.29 lakh medical technologists have to be prepared in the country.

Wholesale market

**FROM PAGE 1** Bangladesh Vegetable Oil Refiners' and Vanaspati Manufacturers' Association fixed the price of 5-litre bottled soyabean oil at Tk 494 at the maximum, effective from yesterday for 15 days. But the price was up to Tk 499 yesterday.

At Moulavi Bazar, the largest wholesale market in old part of the capital, price of non-brand soyabean oil, which sold at Tk 92-Tk 93 a litre on Monday, rose by Tk 1 per kg over the price on the previous day.

Edible oil traders at Karwan Bazar wholesale market said they bought the best quality palm oil from Moulvi Bazar at Tk 3,170 a maund on Monday and at Tk 3,220 a maund yesterday.

"Distributors are showing reluctance to supply oil to wholesalers in a bid to increase its price," said a wholesaler at Karwan Bazar.

"We are now selling Indian coarse rice at Tk 25.50 - 26.50 a kg since it was imported at \$320 per tonne. But when we will start selling rice imported at higher price, we cannot sell it at less than Tk 32 a kg," said a wholesaler at Badamtali market.

Monir Hossain, a rice miller from Chapai Nawabganj, said he incurred a loss of Tk 60,000 by selling 17 tonnes of rice to wholesalers in Dhaka. He attributed this to higher paddy price in rural markets.

Meanwhile, following a meeting with BDR and joint forces,

Institutes certifying

**FROM PAGE 16** diploma or training.

Conflicts arose between the IHTs approved by the health ministry and the TEB, hampering the quality of education while the country lacks skilled health technologists, essential for ensuring quality health service to people.

Following the dispute, an inter-ministerial committee was formed on September 6 last year with the direct intervention of the chief adviser.

Shefeytulla is the member secretary of the committee, which decided at its meeting to run all IHTs under the health ministry.

In its November 18 report, the committee said the 77 institutes approved by the TEB should be affiliated with the health ministry-approved State Medical Faculty.

The other members of the committee are the additional secretary for health ministry, joint secretary (vocational and madrasa) for education ministry, and the joint secretary for law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry.

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No hike in prices

**FROM PAGE 1** price of fuel in domestic market, said Tamim, who attended one of the two meetings that focussed on the demand and supply of diesel and electricity.

CS Karim chaired this meeting and Food and Health Adviser Shawkat Ali chaired the other meeting on fertiliser situation.

Agriculture ministry sources said the government would give around Tk 3,500 crore subsidy on urea and non-urea fertilisers this fiscal year.

Tamim said it is not possible to run the BPC with huge losses year after year. The government will have to find a way to reduce the subsidy.

"We are heading towards a critical situation and we need an alternative to subsidy on fuel and other sectors because the huge subsidies are putting pressure on the national exchequer," he added.

Agriculture ministry officials placed at the meeting on fertiliser an estimate showing that 12 lakh tonnes of urea are required in the current Boro season. The meeting noted that the stock of urea now is satisfactory, and there is a small shortage of non-urea fertilisers this fiscal year.

The BPC has been instructed to ensure smooth supply of diesel in this Boro season keeping in view the total demand for 8.38 lakh tonnes.

Iraqi lawmakers vote to change Saddam flag

**AP, Baghdad** Iraq's parliament yesterday passed a law to change the Saddam Hussein-era flag, meeting the demands of Iraq's Kurdish minority who threatened not to fly the banner during a pan-Arab meeting in the Kurdish-run north next month.

The measure, which expires in one year, was approved by show of hands, with 110 lawmakers of 165 present voting in favor of removing the three stars and changing the calligraphy of the words "Allahu Akbar" in a symbolic break with the past.

A law to establish a new banner must be passed in one year.

The absence of Iraq's internationally recognized flag during a regional gathering on the territory of a founding member of the Arab League would have created negative publicity in the Arab world, where many see the Kurds as being too close to the Americans or harboring separatist intentions. In Iraq, not flying the country's flag would be seen as fresh evidence of the Kurds' go-it-alone policies.

To head off embarrassment for the Shiite Arab-dominated central government, parliament in Baghdad had scrambled for a solution in time for the conference.

"It's a potentially explosive issue and we need to tread carefully," said Haidar al-Abadi, a legislator with Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's Dawparty.

Many Kurds remember Saddam's forces hoisting the Iraqi flag during campaigns of persecution that saw thousands killed with poisonous gas.

Mashhud

**FROM PAGE 16** rallies, human chains, free discussions will have to be organised in a bigger way as part of the campaign to prevent corruption.

ACC commissioners Habibur Rahman and Abul Hasan Manjur Mannan, Secretary Mokhles ur Rahman, director general (prevention and research) and some members of the corruption prevention committees also spoke on the occasion.

Many Kurds remember Saddam's forces hoisting the Iraqi flag during campaigns of persecution that saw thousands killed with poisonous gas.

A division bench comprising Justice Khademul Islam Chowdhury and Justice MA Hye passed the order upon a revision petition, which was earlier rejected by the special court.

Abdul Hye, an officer of the now-defunct bureau of anti-corruption, filed the case against Nasim and another person on January 8, 2002.

According to the prosecution, Nasim had allowed WorldTel Holdings Ltd to install 3 lakh digital telephones in the capital without floating tender.

Advocate M Enayetur Rahim appeared for Nasim, also a front-ranking Awami League leader.

Freedom fighters

**FROM PAGE 16** Muktiyoddha Oikya Parishad termed it "distorting real history of Liberation War."

They urged people to be careful about the "conspiracy of the adviser".

Muktiyoddha Oikya Parishad along with Muktiyoddha Shanghati Parishad, Muktiyoddha Naval Commando Association, Muktiyoddha Smriti Rokkha Parishad, Mahila Muktiyoddha Parishad, Muktiyoddha Kendria Command Council, Muktiyoddha Samannay Parishad, Muktiyoddha Sangram Parishad and Muktiyoddha Ainjeebi Parishad made the joint statement.

Meanwhile, Forum for Secular Bangladesh and Trial of War Criminals of 1971 published a joint announcement of 71 organisations, in booklet form, demanding trial of war criminals. They will send the English version of the booklet and related documents to foreign embassies and heads of mission in Dhaka today.

Sheikh Helal

**FROM PAGE 1** Director Syed Ahmed, who is also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted charge sheet against the two to chief metropolitan magistrate's court, showing 23 people as prosecution witnesses.

The court told the relevant authorities to publish advertisements in newspapers after different police stations submitted reports on attachment of property of six of the accused, including ex-PDB boss Kamal, which the court ordered last week.

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, now behind bars, is also an accused in the case.

The five others, whose names will appear in the advertisements, are Aziz Khan, managing director of Summit Industries and Mercantile Corporation Private Ltd, its director Farid Khan, United Group Chairman Hasan Mahmud Raja, its Director Abul Kalam Azad and curator of Bangabandhu Memorial Trust (BMT), Sayed Siddiqur Rahman.

ACC Deputy Director Sabir Hasan lodged the case with Tejgaon Police Station on September 2 last year, the watchdog's Deputy Director Morshed Alam, also the IO, submitted charge sheet to Dhaka's chief metropolitan magistrate's court on January 10 this year.

Seven people were accused of corruption in the first information report (FIR), but the name of BMT curator Sayed Siddiqur Rahman was included in the charge sheet after investigators found his involvement in the offence.

Abbas denied the army was planning an offensive against

Next target was US Karachi Consulate

**PTI, AFP, Islamabad** A teenaged boy arrested last week on suspicion of involvement in former Pakistan premier Benazir Bhutto's assassination has told investigators that his next target was the US consulate in the southern Pakistani city of Karachi.

Aitezaz Shah, the 15-year-old who was trained as a suicide bomber, told officials that he had been asked to attack Benazir Bhutto in Karachi in case she escaped the bid on her life in Rawalpindi.

Shah was part of a five-member squad sent by Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan commander Baitullah Mehsud to kill Benazir Bhutto. He had earlier said a member of the squad named Bilal killed Benazir Bhutto by shooting her and detonating his explosive vest as she was leaving an election rally in Rawalpindi on December 27.

The boy was arrested in Dera Ismail Khan town of North West Frontier Province along with an accomplice named Sher Zaman on Thursday.

Shah told interrogators on Monday that after Benazir Bhutto's assassination, he was directed by his minders to move to Karachi to target the US consulate, the Dawn newspaper quoted sources as saying.

The sources said Shah also told his interrogators that he had received terrorist training with two terror suspects Bilal and Ikram, whose names were mentioned in a phone conversation between Baitullah Mehsud and another unnamed militant leader that was intercepted by security agencies a day after Benazir Bhutto's assassination.

The other militant leader had named three men Bilal, Ikramullah and Saeed as the persons who had carried out the attack on Benazir Bhutto.

Meanwhile, British detectives helping Pakistan investigate the murder of Benazir Bhutto may quiz a teenager and another man held for alleged involvement in the plot to kill her, officials said Tuesday.

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The 15-year-old, named as Aitezaz Shah, was arrested on Friday in the northwestern city of Dera Ismail Khan and allegedly told police he was part of a back-up squad tasked to assassinate the former premier.

Next target was US Karachi