

STUDENTS DEMO Sher-e-Bangla agri university closed sine die

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sher-e-Bangla Agriculture University (SAU) was closed yesterday for an indefinite period following violent student demonstrations over their 7-point demands.

The agitating students gave a 24-hour ultimatum for meeting their demands, defying the SAU authorities' order to vacate dormitories by 5:00pm.

However, at around 8:00pm, a number of students were seen leaving their dorms, said witnesses.

Dr Ruhul Amin, proctor of SAU, told The Daily Star that last week, when the university was officially open, students of levels 2, 3 and 4 went on vacation without approval from the authorities.

As a disciplinary measure, the academic council of the university

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RMG workers go berserk in Savar

More than 30 factories, 2 banks, 3 markets vandalised over death rumour

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Garment workers vandalised over 30 factories, two banks and three markets and set fire to a lorry and damaged over 40 vehicles in Savar yesterday following the rumour of a fellow worker's death in a road accident.

Over 100 workers and pedestrians were injured during the attacks launched by several hundred garment workers who also blockaded the Abdullahpur-DEPZ road for five hours causing immense sufferings to commuters.

Rupali, factory operator of

Sharmin Group, and her sister Dipali of the same factory were hit by a lorry while they were crossing the road in front of the factory at Narasingapur at about 8:00am yesterday.

A doctor of Sharmin Group rushed seriously injured Rupali to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) from where she was later shifted to a clinic.

Sub-Inspector Mazharul Islam of Ashulia Police Station, who rescued the victims, told The Daily Star last night that the two workers had not died although at first he thought Rupali died.

Hearing the news of the acci-

dent, over 1,500 workers of Sharmin Group came out on the street and set fire to the lorry that hit the two workers and beat up its driver Abul Hossain. Later, police rescued and arrested the driver.

Firefighters rushed to the spot to douse the fire but they had to leave the scene soon in the face of protest by the workers.

Meanwhile, over 3,000 workers of nearby Mettler Apparels, who had gathered in front of their factory to protest its closure two days ago, joined the agitating workers of Sharmin Group.

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A garment factory that came under attack of angry workers, left, on DEPZ-Abdullahpur highway in Ashulia yesterday; and firefighters douse the flames in a truck the protesters set afire.



PHOTO: STAR

Obama effectively clinches nomination

AP, Washington

Barack Obama effectively clinched the Democratic presidential nomination yesterday, based on an Associated Press (AP) tally of convention delegates, becoming the first black candidate ever to lead his party into a fall campaign for the White House.

Campaigning on an insistent call for change, Obama outlasted former first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in a historic race that sparked record turnout in primary after primary, yet exposed deep racial divisions within the party.

The AP tally was based on public

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No wholesale arrest being made

IGP rules out law, order slide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad yesterday denied any slide in the law and order and claimed that no 'wholesale arrest' is being made.

"The law and order situation is under control. There has been some murders and robberies in the recent weeks which gave the impression that the situation has deteriorated," the IGP told reporters after a meeting with Home

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Arrest figure crosses 10,000

1729 more held in 24hrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The joint forces arrested 1,729 persons including 97 in the capital in the 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, in the ongoing nationwide special anti-crime drive that had begun on May 28.

With the latest arrests, the total number of detainees in the drive now stands at 10,054, including some leaders and activists of political parties, officials in the police headquarters said.

Meanwhile, Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman told reporters at the chief adviser's office that the arrests are being made to prevent violence in the run up to the local and general elections.

During the drive the crack forces also recovered 17 firearms, two bombs, and 36 rounds of bullets raising the total number of recovered firearms and explosives to 50

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PHOTO: STAR

A showroom parks its cars on the pavement obstructing entrance to a foot-bridge in Kakrail in the capital. The photo was taken yesterday.

Govt working on ways to 'release' 2 ex-PMs

Khaleda, Hasina won't accept any condition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities have taken an initiative to find out how to release the two detained former prime ministers either conditionally or unconditionally to ensure their participation in the ongoing dialogue with political parties, but both want unconditional release.

Sources said the two former premiers -- Sheikh Hasina and

Khaleda Zia-- might be released either on parole or on bail within a few days but they have to accept several conditions. One source however said the government might consider anticipatory bail for the two top leaders.

In the last few weeks, unofficial talks between the two leaders and the authorities at various levels, also caretaker government advisers, took place at the special jail

where both (two leaders) have been kept detained, the sources said seeking anonymity.

Talks were held with Hasina also at Square Hospital on Monday when she was taken there for eye check-up. The Awami League (AL) president might be taken to the hospital again shortly.

AL acting General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam on Monday

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Govt set to propose Tk 25,600cr ADP

57pc to be implemented with foreign funds

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government is going to propose Tk 25,600 crore outlay for the next fiscal year's Annual Development Programme (ADP), 57 percent of which will come from foreign funding, planning ministry sources said.

The draft ADP will be placed before the National Economic Council (NEC) meeting on Saturday with Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed in the chair.

The national budget for the FY 2008-09 will be placed on June 9.

The government will provide

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COALMINE GRAFT CASE HC rejects Mojahid's bail petition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday rejected a petition for anticipatory bail filed by Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General and former minister Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid in Barapukuria coalmine graft case.

An HC bench comprising Justice Khondker Musa Khaled and Justice Moyeenul Islam

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Ex-MP Salahuddin, MAH Salim jailed

Convicted of amassing illegal wealth, extortion

STAR REPORT

Former state minister for communications Salahuddin Ahmed was sentenced to 13 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) on two counts in a corruption case yesterday.

Meantime, a Dhaka court yesterday jailed detained former BNP lawmaker MAH Salim alias Silver Salim for five years' RI on charge of extorting Tk 10 lakh from a construction firm owner in 2003.

Judge AKM Arifur Rahman of Special Court-10 also fined the detained ex-state minister Tk 2 crore, defaulting on which will hand him one more year in jail.

His wife and co-accused Hasina Ahmed was acquitted on all charges.

Salahuddin was jailed for 10 years for amassing wealth illegally and for three years for hiding information about his wealth in the

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Business leaders fear political instability

Want talks with parties to succeed, return to democracy soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Business leaders yesterday told the government that they fear the current political crisis will give rise to political instability jeopardising the possibility of holding a credible general election.

They also demanded a return to democracy through credible elections.

The government, in turn, assured the business leaders that there is no reason to have doubts regarding the upcoming elections or the ongoing politico-electoral dialogues, but said political parties also have a responsibility to break the stalemate, for moving forward towards the elections.

In the first meeting of a series of

dialogues between the government and citizen groups, the business leaders also offered to work as mediators between the government and political parties, to break the deadlock.

In response to a number of business leaders' suggestion that the poll should be held regardless of the success or failure of the ongoing dialogues, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed assured them that the general election will be held by December 31 at any cost.

"We are concerned about the current political crisis because we fear that political stability and conditions for credible elections could be jeopardised," said Federation of Bangladesh

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Parties have key role to make talks a success

Say two advisers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political parties have a greater role to play in making the ongoing dialogue a success since it was actually their proposal, two advisers of the caretaker government said yesterday.

"The political parties proposed the dialogue... it is the responsibility of all quarters, especially of the political parties, to make the dialogue a success for stability and advancement of the country," Education Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman said.

He made the remarks when asked if the government was trying to communicate with the former prime ministers Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia to make sure that

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