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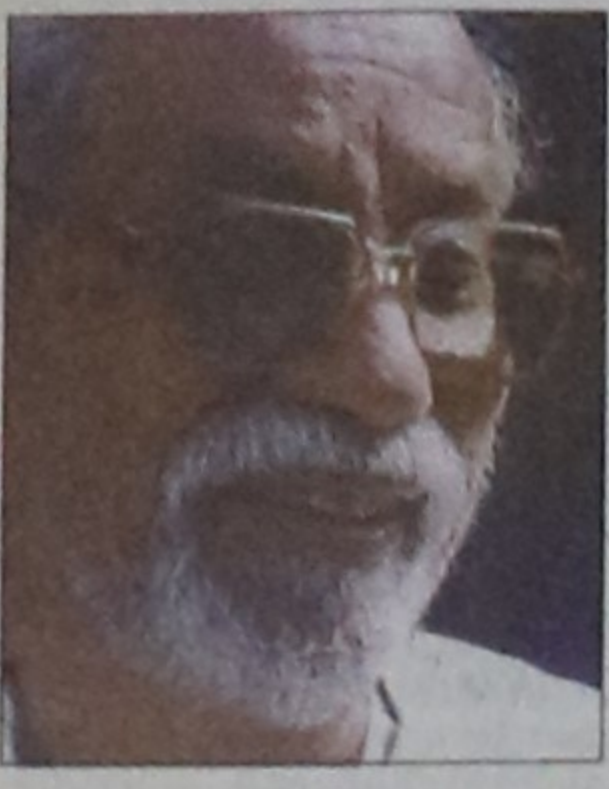
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Language hero Gaziul out of life support

PM visits him
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The condition of ailing language movement veteran Gaziul Haque has improved considerably. Chief of the intensive care unit (ICU) of Square Hospital Mirza Nazim Uddin said

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

AHSANULLAH UNIVERSITY
Unruly students confine teachers, staff for 10hrs

Freed after police action; 20 hurt; 5 held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police freed over three hundred teachers and employees of Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology (AUST) from their terrible ordeal of confinement for over 10 hours at its Tejgaon premises.

About 600 students of the Civil Engineering Department of the university confined those teachers and employees to the university building at 11 am protesting the expulsion of their two fellow students.

Police freed them at 9 pm by charging truncheons on the agitating students leaving around 20 students injured while five others were arrested.

The students padlocked the main entrance of the university and vandalised its furniture demanding cancellation of the authorities' decision of expelling the two students.

During the agitation, they also set chairs, tables and other furniture on fire in the evening and said they would not sit for the exams scheduled for Saturday.

Witnesses said confined teachers and staffers of the university including women remained unfed from 11 am to 9:30 pm.

The university authorities on February 3 expelled those two students of the Civil Engineering Department for three terms for their brawl with students of the Electrical Engineering Department on November 27.

Following the incident of November 27 a probe committee was formed that recommended expulsion of the two students on January 10.

But the protesters termed the investigation report biased and demanded withdrawal of the decision. They said they would stay back on the campus until their demand is met.

AUST Vice-Chancellor Kazi Shariful Alam told The Daily Star many of the

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Help cut poverty, up food output

PM urges aid agencies

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought cooperation of all concerned, including aid agencies, in increasing food production to remove poverty from Bangladesh and other South Asian countries as poverty breeds many other problems in the region.

She made the remarks when Anoop Singh, director of the Asia and Pacific Department of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), called on her at the Prime Minister's Office, when they discussed national and international economic scenarios.

The IMF official assured the prime minister of enhancing the multilateral funding agency's assistance for Bangladesh's development sectors.

The premier observed that "development did not take place in Bangladesh in the past at an optimal level as democratic practice was hampered many times in the country".

About the urgency of food output, she told the IMF director that poverty is the main problem in the South Asian region and food production through developing the agricultural sector can

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Sajeda new deputy leader of House

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) presidium member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury succeeded Zillur Rahman as deputy leader of the House yesterday.

Awami League Parliamentary Party made the decision at a meeting at the ruling party's conference room at Sangsad Bhaban in the afternoon with Prime Minister and party chief Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The post fell vacant as Zillur Rahman resigned all posts in parliament and the party after being elected president.

Chief Whip Abdus Shahid proposed the name of Sajeda Chowdhury and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashraf Islam seconded it.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Faruk now too critical of Tifa

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commerce Minister Faruk Khan yesterday said the proposed latest draft of Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (Tifa) would be detrimental to Bangladesh's interests.

"The draft of TIFA placed by the USTR (US Trade Representative) in April last year will cause troubles for Bangladesh in areas like intellectual property rights and

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NBR sitting on PSI auditor bid

Vested interest groups resisted auditor appointment in last 9 yrs to gobble up huge public money

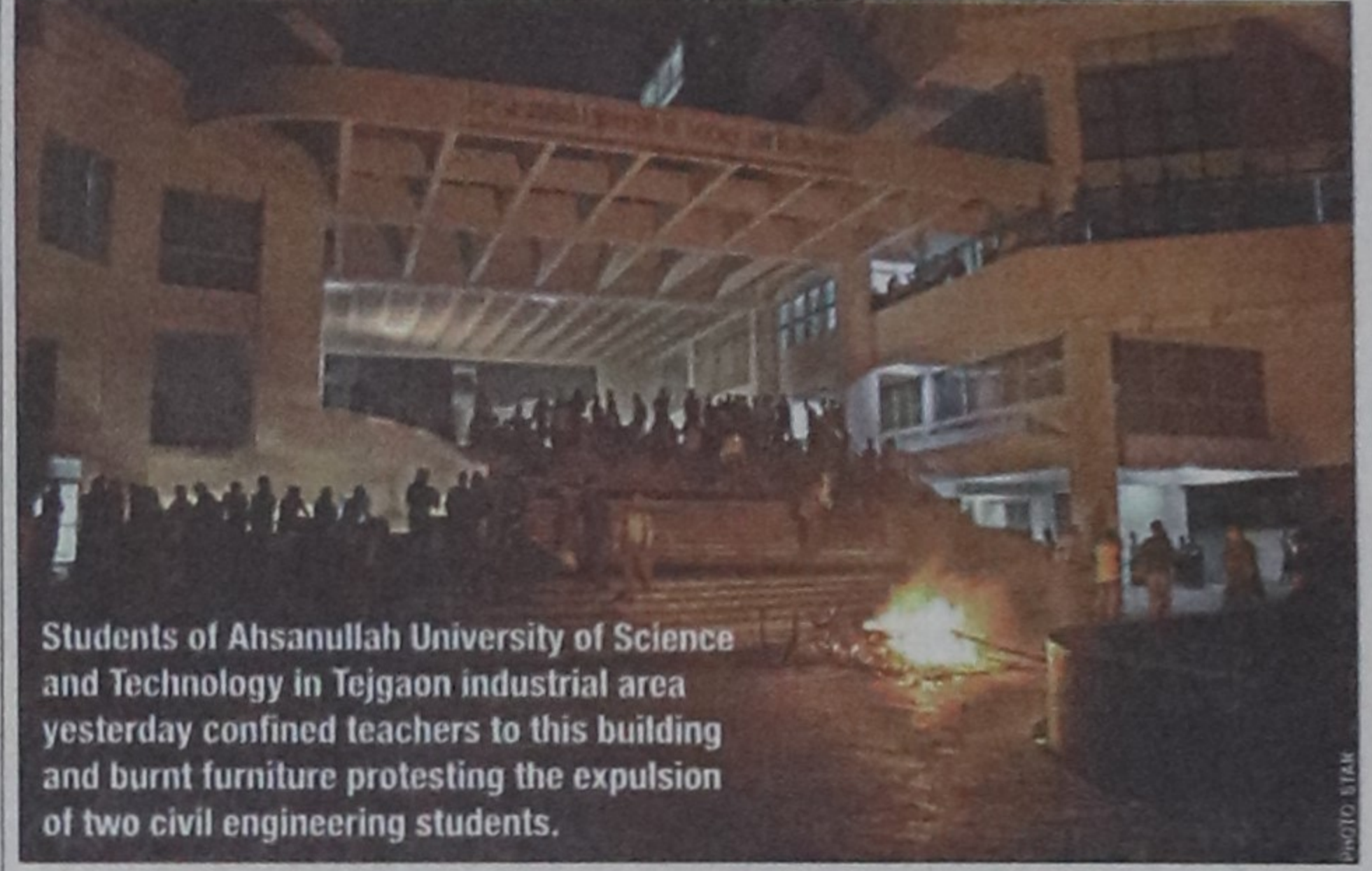
SHARIER KHAN

unenthusiastically sitting with an offer to appoint US company National Marine Consultants Inc (NMCI) as the auditor for a two-year term for a fee of Tk 140 crore.

"The PSI system will be abolished in December next. At this point, we are not sure about the benefit of having the auditor," said a highly-placed NBR source, adding, "But we have not closed the appointment bid. If the

Now on the fag end of the PSI system, NBR is

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



Students of Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology in Tejgaon industrial area yesterday confined teachers to this building and burnt furniture protesting the expulsion of two civil engineering students.

Ekushey Padak '09 goes to 13

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirteen distinguished persons of the country will be awarded the Ekushey Padak-2009 in recognition of their outstanding contributions to their respective fields.

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs yesterday made a list of the awardees. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will hand over the award to the persons at Osmani Memorial Auditorium at 11:00 am on February 20.

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BNP to hold convention on post-poll violence

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

The main opposition BNP has taken an initiative to organise a national convention on post-election violence in a bid to create public opinion against "torture and repression on their supporters" across the country after the December 29 elections.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has assigned a group of former leaders of Jatiyatabdi Chatra Dal, student wing of BNP, who are known as 'student leaders of 80's'. Besides, a convening committee might

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Lankan troops seize rebel bomb factory

28 Tigers killed in fighting

AFP, AP, Colombo

Sri Lankan troops killed 28 Tamil rebels and seized a cache of weapons and ammunition in their latest push for victory in the island's drawn-out ethnic conflict, the government said yesterday.

Security forces captured nine mortar tubes from a fortified camp at Kuppilankulam on Wednesday, the defence ministry said in a statement, adding 28 Tamil Tiger guerrillas had been killed in fighting in the area.

Also seized were a workshop for making hand grenades and roadside bombs, and several vehicles including an armour-plated van used by Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, the ministry said.

Soldiers took control Thursday of a bomb-making facility in the village of Sugandirupam, where the rebels transformed 81mm mortar shells into roadside bombs, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Also Thursday, the Red Cross sent a ferry on a second trip into the war zone to evacuate wounded civilians trapped in a coastal school being used as a makeshift hospital. The ferry brought 240 patients to the town of Trincomalee inside government-controlled territory Tuesday.

Military officials have speculated that Prabhakaran may have slipped out of the country by boat as his fighters have been driven back

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AL-BNP CLASH 50 houses ransacked, 15 injured

A CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

At least 15 people, including a woman, were injured and 50 houses were ransacked in a fierce clash between two groups of people at Najarpur village in Sadar upazila yesterday.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

US, Russian satellites collide in space

AFP, Washington

US and Russian satellites have collided in the first known major space accident of its kind, creating two clouds of debris that were being tracked by experts yesterday.

A communications satellite belong to US company Iridium hit a disused Russian military satellite on Tuesday, officials said.

According to US space agency Nasa, there is a small risk that the orbiting International Space Station could hit one of two clouds of debris.

The collision took place 800 kilometres (500 miles) above the Earth, Russia's Interfax news agency quoted the head of the country's space forces as saying.

"A collision occurred between an Iridium 33 satellite and a Russian Kosmos 2251 military satellite," Major General Alexander Yakushin said.

The Russian satellite was launched in 1993 and ceased to function two years later, he added.

Nasa was tracking hundreds of particles of debris from the collision, and said the orbiting International Space Station faced a small risk of being struck.

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Very few new books by female authors

RAKIB AHAMMED and AMENA KHATUN

The number of books authored by women brought out at the Ekushey Boi Mela this year has been low so far.

Eight publications and organisations at the fair, however, are selling books exclusively on women and gender issues.

These are Nari Grantho Probartana, Bangladesh Lekhika Sangho, Nandini Prakashoni, Banolata Sahitto

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23 Celebrating 23 years of Achievements

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A parakeet takes off from a Palash tree in DC Hill park in Chittagong. The tree is in full bloom as spring has just set in. PHOTO: ZOBAER HOSSAIN SKAFER