

DMC shut after BCL clash kills 1

20 hurt; extortion, control of hall led to factional fight

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Medical College was closed for an indefinite period yesterday following a series of clashes between two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) that left a top BCL college unit leader killed and at least 20 people injured.

BCL General Secretary Abul Kalam Asad Rajib, a 4th year student of the College, was first admitted to Orthopedic Hospital and later shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and Combined Military Hospital (CMH) where he died at about 6:30pm, victim's cousin Shovon Haidar confirmed The Daily Star.

Residential students at its three hostels, except overseas female students, left the hostels before 4:00 pm yesterday as the authorities at an emergency meeting asked them to vacate the dorms by the time.

Sources at Dr Fazle Rabbi Hostel said the clash ensued at about 12:15 am when some 50/60 of its resident students led by College unit BCL leaders swooped on the room of Rajib and his followers with machetes, iron rods, wood sticks, cricket stumps and other weapons to establish supremacy on the campus.

Some resident students joined the melee to protest toll collection allegedly by Rajib and his men, a student of the

college said.

But Yusuf who also was injured during the clash told The Daily Star that the incident did not erupt between the two groups following the toll issue. The rival group of Rajib attacked him (Rajib) and his followers for taking control of the hall.

During an hour-long melee, attackers beat Rajib and his followers and ransacked their 10 rooms. They allegedly threw Rajib down from second floor of Dr Fazle Rabbi Hostel onto its ground, leaving him critically injured.

On condition of anonymity, a resident of the hostel told The Daily Star that Rajib and his men Monday evening interfered

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Green Crescent ran illegally

It has no permission for madrasa, orphanage; launched activities in another upazila in Bhola without authorisation

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The UK-based controversial NGO Green Crescent was illegally operating a madrasa-cum-orphanage where the Rapid Action Battalion busted a mini ammo factory on March 24 in Bhola, say sources at the Department of Social Service.

Following the chilling arms and ammo haul

from a well-furnished building of the madrasa in remote Ramkeshob village, a probe by the Department reveals Green Crescent has no permission to operate such institutions.

"Green Crescent was registered with the office of the Department of Social Service in Doulatkhan upazila in Bhola in 1999. Nothing was mentioned in its declared programmes in

SEE PAGE 12 COL 6

Govt warnings go in vain

8 educational institutions shut in 3 months
RAKIB AHAMMED

Higher educational institutions across the country are being shut down one after another following clashes involving Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of Awami League (AL), since AL-led government came to power following a landslide victory in the ninth parliamentary polls.

Yesterday Dhaka Medical College was declared closed sine die following a series of

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



In the wake of nationwide power cuts, the business of backup power supply is booming. The photo shows generators on the Buriganga in Keraniganj supplying power to nearby buildings during load shedding.

PHOTO: STAR

18 more BDR men held for mutiny

Sofar 800 detained

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab yesterday detained 18 BDR personnel in connection with the massacre and looting of gold ornaments during the bloody mutiny at the Pilkhana BDR headquarters.

The law enforcers detained them from Pilkhana after being ascertained through video footages and information from intelligence agencies of their involvement in dumping army officer's bodies in mass graves and looting gold ornaments during the mutiny, Rab sources said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Clarification

Jamaat-e-Islami's Assistant Secretary General Abdur Razzaq, in a clarification to a news report titled "Conversation" with Mutineers, Razzaq quizzed 'published yesterday in The Daily Star, said that the report saying that the CID quizzed him regarding conversations he had with BDR personnel during the mutiny was totally untrue.

In the clarification, Razzaq said the CID investigators at the headquarters did not ask him any questions regarding any alleged 'telephone conversation' but asked whether he has a mobile phone and asked for its number.

Razzaq also said that he never had any conversations with any mutineers on February 25-26 or any other days before or after.

The CID officials summoned the Jamaat leader on March the CID headquarters on March 30 in connection with the BDR mutiny.

24 out of 38 parties submit poll expenses

BNP, Jamaat, many others fail to produce incomplete reports; AL statement not made available to media

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Twenty-four out of 38 political parties that contested the December 29 parliamentary election last year submitted their poll expenditure reports to the Election Commission (EC) yesterday, the last day for submission of those.

But almost all of them including BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami came up with incomplete reports which did not meet the legal requirements like disclosing the amount of money received as donation to their electoral fund, EC Secretariat officials said.

BNP's one-page report is more incomplete than those of other parties, and it did not give details of its expenditure of Tk4.49 crore, Tk1 lakh less than the ceiling.

The ruling Awami League (AL) submitted a 38-page expenditure report.

	<p>► Around Tk 4 crore</p>
	<p>► Tk 4.49 crore</p>
	<p>► Tk 74.72 lakh</p>

EC officials gave journalists access to reports of all the parties except AL, and refused to give any information on its report.

The AL report was kept in the office of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda, who was not in office yesterday.

Contacted, Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakawat Hossain said AL's report is under the CEC's custody, and he has nothing to do with it right now.

SK Habibullah, member of finance sub-committee of AL election committee,

told journalists that their party nominated 263 candidates and spent around Tk 4 crore for the parliamentary polls. It spent around Tk 1.50 crore for electoral campaign.

Habibullah, who submitted AL's expenditure report to the EC, said the party had collected around Tk 2.50 crore from the sale of its nomination papers. He however did not say whether the party had received donation to its electoral fund from other sources.

BNP's report, signed by party Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain, only contained some major heads of its polls expenditure, and no information about its electoral fund.

The report said the party nominated 259 candidates and gave Tk 1.20 crore to its nominees. But it did not give the names of candidates who received the money.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Veterans of AL, BNP kept in the dark

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN and HASAN JAHD TUSHER

Most of the senior leaders of Awami League and BNP are in the dark about the election expenses returns their parties have lately submitted to the Election Commission (EC).

They do not know who prepared the expenditure reports and if they were even approved at all.

They also have no clue how much money was distributed among the candidates for the December 29 general election.

Some of them however said party committees or councils can approve the reports later.

Several senior BNP leaders said the report was yet to be placed before the standing committee for discussions or approval.

They said they do not know anything about the amount withdrawn from the party account for election purposes.

According to the BNP constitution, the treasurer's

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Probe-influencing govt high-ups under scanner

3 accused ex-investigators start to reveal story of misdirected probe into Aug 21 grenade attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) is now focusing on the then government high-ups who influenced three CID investigators accused of misdirecting the investigation of the August 21 grenade attack case.

The CID yesterday appointed an investigation officer for the case filed against the three ex-CID officials in connection with corrupting the probe into the August 21, 2004 grenade attack on an Awami League rally on Bangabandhu Avenue.

Meanwhile, two of the three accused ex-CID officials told The Daily Star that they produced three accused before the magistrates for recording confessional statements following directives of the then high-ups.

The three are accused of forcing people to make confessional statements before a magistrate in the August 21 grenade attack case, destroying evidence and not recording confessional statements of the real culprits.

According to CID sources, the case was filed to identify those who played a role in misdirecting the probe from behind the scene.

Requesting anonymity, a senior CID official said, "So far we know that a number of former ministers and some senior officials of a law enforcement agency were behind it."

Accused retired assistant superintendent of police Abdur Rashid, who was one of the investigation officers of the grenade attack case, told The Daily Star Monday over phone, "We produced the three persons before the magistrates following directives from the home ministry cell set up to monitor sensational cases."

The FBI and other foreign experts had cleared them for recording the confessional statements, Rashid claimed, adding, "I never tortured or forced anybody to confess before the magistrate."

Denying his alleged involvement in destroying evidence, he said, "I have no personal interest in the case... why would I misguide the investigation?"

Another accused retired CID official said, "The confession was recorded by the magistrates. We were not in the process."

ASP Fazlul Kabir, who filed the case against the three former CID investigators Sunday

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Nat'l defence policy drafted

Minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has drafted national defence policy, Planning Minister AK Khandker told the House yesterday.

Replying to a query of Awami League (AL) lawmaker Nasimul Alam Chowdhury, Khandker, also in charge of the defence ministry for the parliamentary business, said the government has initiated steps to formulate a national defence policy.

"The government has already prepared a draft policy on national defence policy by forming a council. It will be finalised on consultation with competent people," the minister said.

Preparing a national defence policy has been discussed for a long time but none of the previous governments completed the task.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Fire safety laws enough, enforcement missing

The Daily Star-IAB roundtable told

TAWFIQUE ALI and HELEMUL ALAM

Slack enforcement of existing laws and lack of public awareness make any multi-storied building vulnerable to fires, rendering life and property unsafe, said experts at a roundtable on "Fire Safety in Our Buildings" yesterday.

Noted architects, structural engineers and high-ranking government officials took part in the discussion jointly organised by the Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB) and The Daily Star at the latter's conference room.

"There are adequate laws and code on fire prevention and safety measures," said Chief Architect of public works ministry's architecture department ASM Ismail, adding, "What we lack is implementation."

Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC), 1993, made legally binding in

HIGHLIGHTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening Fire Service and Civil Defence Directorate Integration of all fire related laws, rules and codes All buildings must have workable fire-safety measures Avoiding highly flammable construction materials Wasa, DCC should install hydrant at public places

2006, has a detailed chapter on fire protection measures. Construction of any building must follow this code.

Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, an eminent structural engineer, said structural design of a building is supposed to

ensure inherently a minimum fire rating with low flammable construction materials and emergency exits.

The very spirit of fire safety should be safety of life, said architect Bashirul Huq. "We need to contain the fire at the source. Most dangerous element of fire is smoke that takes lives."

As per Fire Prevention and Dousing Act, 2003, Fire Service and Civil Defence authorities are empowered to inspect any building and check their compliance with the required fire-safety provisions.

In case of non-compliance or negligence, they can notify the building owner for rectification or declare the building unsafe for public use.

Unfortunately, there has been no such instance of declaring a building unsafe in the six years since the law was enacted, the speakers said.

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4

Graft confessors to get punished

Those who sought Tac clemency may lose job, hints law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said yesterday the government plans to dismiss public servants who confessed their offences, sought clemency from the Truth and Accountability Commission (Tac) and surrendered their illegally earned money during the tenure of the past caretaker government.

No corrupt government officials or employees should be allowed to remain in service, and action will be taken against them in the interest of rule of law, he said.

Talking to journalists at his secretariat office, the law minister said if the corrupt ones continue in their jobs, it would encourage other public servants to indulge in corruption.

A committee will be formed to probe charges against government servants confessing their guilt to Tac (now defunct), and departmental action will be taken against them.

Sources mentioned that 452 corrupt people including 351 public servants had sought clemency from the Tac and pledged to surrender illegal money amounting to Tk 36 crore. Of this, Tk 34 crore has been realised.

ADB downbeat on Bangladesh

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Asian Development Bank yesterday projected this year's GDP growth at 5.6 percent, down by 0.6 percentage points of the previous year's achievement and around one percentage point lower than the central bank's projection of 6.5 percent for the current fiscal year.

The 5.6 percent growth is the lowest for Bangladesh in five years. ADB pointed to impacts of the global economic slowdown in its annual outlook report.

The Manila-based international lender predicted that the slowdown is not likely to wane in the next fiscal year, rather it may be more critical for Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2