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FIRE AT CHEMICAL FACTORY

7 burnt alive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seven workers of a chemical factory were incinerated while four others, including three women, severely burned as a fire broke out at the factory in the capital's Dakkhin (South) Jatrabari yesterday.

Injured Sheuli, 21, Rimu Begum, 26, Aminur Begum, 25, and Md Bishu Miah, 20, were rushed to the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital in a critical condition. Doctors said the women suffered 60 to 90 percent burns while Bishu 38 percent. The injured women are in the Intensive Care Unit.

Victim Bishu Miah told The Daily Star that the fire originated from a heating machine used for packaging. 11 workers were in that section of the factory when the fire broke out. Kohinur and injured Rimu were operating the machine, he added.

Fire fighters, however, suspect that the fire might have originated from one of the boilers. According to them, there were several kinds of combustible chemicals stored in the factory.

Sabina Nilufar, who lives opposite to the factory, Lily Chemical Company, said a

wall of the factory collapsed with a bang around 4:40pm. She heard horrible screams from the factory and saw the inferno gulping the factory.

She said following the incident a terrible wave of heat melted the windowpanes of her first floor flat. Scared, she moved her family members and some valuables in no time, added Nilufar.

Locals said huge smoke and heat engulfed the area causing suffocation. Had the stocked items in the factory caught fire the whole area would have witnessed a disaster similar to the Nimtoli tragedy, thanks to the rapid action from the firemen, added the locals.

Abdur Rashid, deputy director (DD) of Fire Brigade, told The Daily Star that the bodies found inside the factory burned beyond recognition. Charred body parts were found here and there on the floor.

The DD said six fire-fighting units rushed to the spot and doused the blaze in

Meanwhile, relatives of the workers thronged Sir Salimullah Medical College morgue around 8:00pm. A heart racking **SEE PAGE 15 COL 8**



Firefighters are searching for sources of the fire at a chemical factory in the city's Jatrabari yesterday. The blaze claimed seven lives and wounded four other workers.

Don't try to save war criminals

PM asks Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday, in the parliament, blasted Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia for criticising the ongoing process of trying war criminals.

Khaleda, also the BNP chief, on Tuesday said a conspiracy is on to throw the nation into chaos in the name of war crimes trials four decades after a general amnesty was accorded to the collabora-

tors of invading Pakistani army.

"I urge the opposition leader not to throw the country into chaos by opposing the trials of war criminals. The entire nation wants the trials, and the international community is also extending support for the trials," Hasina said.

Hasina, also the leader of the House, was delivering her concluding speech to the sixth session of the parliament.

Referring to a recent opinion poll conducted by The Daily Star and Neilsen, the premier said only 12 percent people are against the war crimes trials.

"So, I urge the opposition leader not to try to save the war | the recruitment process. SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

RECRUITMENT

PM says no to nepotism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

yesterday again warned her they are found involved in influencing recruitment: OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna tarnishing government image.

Shahiduzzaman Sarker

League (AL) president, was: at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

versy over recruitment of field: ment employees. level health assistants across the: allegations that some AL law-: the charge sheet are questionable. makers have been influencing:

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

No bail for 29 Pabna AL men

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina : 4 more accused of attack party deputies of actions if on officials surrender

"All recruitments shall be : A Pabna court yesterday rejected bail petitions of 29 Awami conducted in a transparent: League, Jubo League and Chhatra League leaders and activists way. No nepotism will be accused of attacking administration officials and vandalising tolerated," AL lawmaker: their cars during a recruitment test last month.

Md Parvez Shahriar, senior judicial magistrate of Pabna, quoted the premier as saying. : turned down the petitions and ordered to send them to jail, Hasina, also the Awami court sources said.

Twenty-five accused were produced before the speedy trial speaking at the AL: tribunal around 11:00am while four other accused appeared Parliamentary Party meeting: before it upon surrender earlier in the morning.

Jubo League activists Faruk and Firoz Hossain, who are also The premier's warning came: accused in the case, are absconding since the attack on in the wake of recent contro- : September 17 foiling the recruitment test of class-III govern-

Arguing for the bail petitions, Md Abdul Ahad, counsel of the country. There are widespread: accused, said the place and time of the occurrence mentioned in

> "How could the same accused persons attack two examination centres within a few minutes?" he asked the court, adding | Justice Gobinda Chandra SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Govt given 6 months more to remove jetties from Dhaka rivers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday extended for six months its earlier order that had directed the government to remove all structures including the jetties from four rivers around the capital Dhaka.

The rivers are Buriganga, Balu, Turag and Shitalakkhya.

Following the extension order, the government has got time till May 30 next year to remove the structures. Earlier, the deadline was November 30 this year.

The court also directed the government to submit progress reports on implementation of its directive in every

three months to this court. An HC bench of Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and

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BANGABANDHU AIRPORT

From Trishal to Faridpur

Govt shifts the proposed site mainly for 2 reasons

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The government plans to shift the proposed Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib International Airport to greater Faridpur district from Trishal in Mymensingh.

Against the backdrop of divided opinions among the ruling Awami League rank and file over construction of the airport at Trishal, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave go-ahead with the

The government policymakers, who are favouring its construction either in Madaripur or Shariatpur districts, gave reasons that Faridpur is the birthplace of father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur, giving the Mongla seaport importance, according to highly placed government sources.

Primarily they preferred Rajoir in Madaripur, sources added. The influential legislators approached Hasina over the last couple of months and convinced her in this regard. The premier gave them go-ahead signal and entitled one of her close aides to look into the matter.

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Setting Trends for Others to Follow.

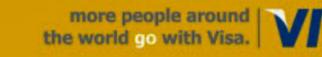
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