

### Hasina calls on Shahabuddin

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, accompanied by the party General Secretary Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, met the Acting President, Mr Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, in Dhaka on Saturday and protested the arrest of Mr Kader Siddiqy, reports BSS.

During the meeting Sheikh Hasina who is also the leader of the Eight-Party Alliance, reiterated her party's claim that the conviction of Mr Kader Siddiqy by a Martial Law Court in 1978 was illegal.

She further said that it was inconsistent with reason and sense of patriotism that the valiant freedom fighter like Kader Siddiqy be put into jail, she said, adding while the killers of Bangabandhu were allowed to roam about freely.

Sheikh Hasina demanded immediate release of Mr Siddiqy.

The Acting President explained the legal aspects of the matter to the Awami League leader.

## 'Hit on Israel a dilemma for Bush'

NICOSIA, Jan 19: Iraq said today its missile assaults on Israel had posed the biggest political and military dilemma for US President George Bush that he had ever faced, reports Reuter.

It said that Iraq's missiles would wreck the allied coalition facing Baghdad.

In Algiers, the Iraqi Charge D'Affaires said Baghdad had launched 19 missiles against Israel and the attacks would continue. He said one missile hit the Defence Ministry in Tel Aviv.

The dilemma into which Bush has fallen after Iraq hit the Zionist entity with missiles is more difficult than any military or political dilemma Bush has ever faced, especially as he was adamant in showing Israel was not involved in his aggression on Iraq, it said.

"It is certain that Bush has confessed to himself only that his aggression on Iraq has been completely defeated... his weak coalition will be wiped

out and melted by the Iraqi missiles and their burning fires," it said.

#### Rift deepens

Reports from Cairo say: Iraqi missile strikes on Israel deepened a rift in the Muslim world with the public in many countries jubilant at the attack on an old enemy, but Arab allies in the US-led anti-Iraq coalition holding firm.

From Mauritania to Pakistan and from Niger to Sudan hundreds of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets on Friday and today, hailing the assault on the Jewish state and denouncing the US-led bombing of Iraq and occupied Kuwait.

But Egypt, Syria and Arab Gulf states with troops in the multinational force confronting Iraq stood by their commitment to the alliance.

Street protests, biggest in Algeria where an estimated half a million people demonstrated peacefully across the

country, turned violent in Karachi, Pakistan, and Nouakchott, Mauritania, with police firing tear gas to break up anti-American marches.

Western and Arab officials had forecast that a war with Iraq would unleash a wave of anti-western violence in Muslim countries and possibly attacks by pro-Iraqi guerrillas in Europe.

Palestinian guerrilla groups have called for attacks on Western interests and a radical Palestinian leader today predicted a long war.

#### Australia, America

In Australia, Sydney police said, at least 10,000 protesters, chanting "No blood for oil" and "bring the frigates home" marched on the U.S. and Israeli consulates Saturday.

Similar marches were staged in Canberra, Adelaide, Brisbane and Hobart in what organisers said were Australia's biggest peace

marches since the Vietnam War.

Protesters took to the streets across the United States and Canada during Friday with more than 150 arrests in the Californian cities of Los Angeles and San Francisco.

#### Germany

Away, tens of thousands of German took to the streets on Friday to protest against the Gulf war while others stopped work and held silent vigils.

In Berlin, more than 10,000 children with candles and banners crammed the main Kurfuerstendamm shopping avenue.

Earlier, several hundred pupils blockaded the inner city motorway and brought rush-hour commuters to a standstill. There was a similar action on a busy bridge over the Rhine in Cologne.

Berlin Railway staff halted their underground and suburban trains for several minutes.

### Proposed hartal at Tangail withdrawn

By Staff Correspondent

The proposed day-long hartal, which was called by the Kader Siddiqy Repatriation Committee at Tangail was withdrawn because of Bishwa Jtama.

The hartal call was given to protest the arrest of Kader Siddiqy, who is contesting the parliament election from Tangail-8.

Kader Siddiqy was arrested Thursday from Jheridah under the Special Powers Act. He has been sent to Jessore Central Jail and put under 120 days detention.

He was served with a body warrant as he was convicted by a Martial Law Court in 1976 and sentenced to seven years R.I including a fine of Taka three lakh on charge of high treason.

Kader Siddiqy's nomination paper was submitted from his home district and it was accepted by the Returning Officer as no one challenged his candidature.

According to the people representation order, no convicted person is allowed to contest the election. But, a source in the Election Commission, which is maintaining silence over the issue, told The Daily Star that his nomination paper remains valid till the election is held because there is no provision to cancel the accepted nomination paper. However, the source said anyone can challenge the election before the election tribunal to be formed after the polls, if he is declared elected.

### Zia

From Page 1

ter Salam Talukder said Ziaur Rahman made the politics people-oriented and his party a people's party.

He cautioned that "if you don't elect honest and efficient candidates in the February 27 parliamentary election. There will be no difference from the previous parliament."

He said, Zia was the leader of independence war and Begum Khaleda Zia is the leader of the anti-autocratic movement.

Prof. Badruddoza Chaudhury said, Ziaur Rahman gave us our national identity. "We are Bangladeshi", he said.

Presided over by JSSS executive committee convenor Khurshid Ali Mollah, the meeting was also addressed by, among others, President of National Press Club Mozammel Huq, former Secretary-General of Journalists Syed Zafar, former President of Bangladesh Federation of Journalists Syed Zafar, former President of Bangladesh Federation of Journalists Syed Zafar, former Minister Planning Minister Fashuddin Mahtab and Vice-Chairman of BNP Afzuddin Fakir.

Two cassettes on Ziaur Rahman were presented to Begum Zia by the Dhaka University unit of JSSS and Sanskritik Forum.

The discussion meeting was rounded off with a musical soiree.

Similar programmes were chalked out elsewhere in the country.

## Operation Desert Storm

### Bush's bodyguards

WASHINGTON, Jan 19: A clumsy secret service agent provided proof on Friday that President George Bush's bodyguards are carrying gas masks like the ones being given combatants in the Gulf to guard against a nerve gas attack, reports Reuter.

### Leave Baghdad

LONDON, Jan 19: A British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Correspondent said by telephone from Baghdad today

### Ijtama

From Page 1

Islamic scholars from home and abroad have been delivering speeches highlighting different aspects of Islam, the holy Quran and hadith. Devotees have been listening to them with rapt attention defying the cold wave sweeping the country.

The Ijtama management committee has made all arrangements for the convenience of the devotees. Separate pandals have been erected and restaurants opened for the devotees from foreign countries.

Bangladesh Railway has arranged special train services and BRTC bus services to enable the devotees to reach the Ijtama site.

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, Red Crescent, Gajipur unit, Tongi Pourashava, Masjid Mission, Islamic Council and Bangladesh Medical Association, Gajipur district unit have opened separate clinics and mobile hospitals. Mills and factories adjacent to the Ijtama maidan, have made arrangements for water and ablutions.

A police camp has been opened to ensure law and order.

The 'Akheri Munajat' will be held in the early hours of Monday. Amir of the Bishwa Tablig Jamat Hazrat Moulana Enamul Ehsan will conduct the munajat.

### Jatiya Party

From Page 1

measures to ensure free polls. The proposals included repeal of the Special Powers Act, 1974, release of all party candidates including the party chairman and former president, Ershad so that they can participate in election campaign, withdrawal of warrants of arrest against party leaders, announcement of a code of conduct for election, recovery of illegal arms, and equal publicity of all political parties over radio and television.

In the afternoon while addressing an adjourned meeting of the Working Committee of Jatiya Party, Mizan Chowdhury asked all party workers to launch election campaign. He also asked them to help maintain law and order in their respective areas. He said, JP is an established political party of the country and it has supporters at the grassroots level.

It may be mentioned that Jatiya Party earlier named 266 party candidates where it did not mention the name of former president Ershad. Before the announcement of the list of the party candidates, many of them were not even consulted by the party leaders. The JP leaders, when contacted, could not say how many candidates actually submitted their nomination papers. A Party source said, many of their candidates are now contesting the election independently due to adverse political situation.

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that the authorities had asked all foreign journalists to leave the city, reports Reuter.

### Iraqi POWs

RIYADH, Jan 19: US forces stormed nine Kuwaiti oil platforms used by Iraqi troops to fire on allied aircraft and took nine prisoners of war, a military spokesman said Saturday, reports Reuter.

### Causeway closed

MANAMA, Jan 19: Bahrain and Saudi Arabia have decided to close the 25 kilometre King Fahd Causeway linking the two Gulf nations because of the war, a Customs official here today, reports AFP.

### Iraq's \$ 30,000 offer

NICOSIA, Jan 19: Iraq today offered rewards for the capture of Allied pilots shot down behind Iraqi lines. Any Iraqi capturing a pilot would be given about 30,000 dollars while non-Iraqi Arabs would be given 20,000 dollars, reports Reuter.

### Open cities

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 19: Malaysia is to launch a diplomatic initiative to have the holy cities of Makkah and Medina in Saudi Arabia declared "open cities" to ensure they are not attacked in the Gulf war, a Foreign Ministry official said Saturday, reports AFP.

### Zia-Ershad system

From Page 1

government to ensure democracy, rule of law and overall wellbeing of the nation.

Addressing them at the Bangabandhu Bhaban, she said her party stood for parliamentary system to make the future government accountable to the people for their deed.

The present presidential system, which she termed 'Zia-Ershad' system, could not solve the acute problems prevailing in the country's political, economic and social fronts.

## Iraq's N-capability

From Page 1  
night's operation, the first allied captives of the war. But he had no details of Iraqi casualties.

The United States had lost three aircraft in 24 hours for a total of six since the war began, said Johnston, Chief Executive Officer of Central Allied Command Headquarters in Riyadh.

### 40 Iraqi troops killed

According to another report: 40 Iraqi soldiers were killed Friday in a firefight with US marines in side Kuwait, the

### Austerity steps

ties and to take necessary steps against hoarding of any commodity with the help of relevant authorities.

Closure of petrol pumps on Friday and prohibit sale of any petroleum products on that day.

Transportation of goods belonging to the public sector, should be done through railway instead of road transport as far as possible.

Official visits by the government officials inside the country should be done by railway instead of using government vehicles where railway facility is available.



Begum Khaleda Zia chairperson of BNP and leader of 7-party alliance laying wreaths at the mazar of Late President Ziaur Rahman on the occasion of his birth anniversary. —Star photo

## Iraq hits Israel again

From Page 1

reinforced concrete shelter in Tel Aviv and below a crater 2.5 metres (eight feet) deep and seven metres (25 feet) across in the ground.

Three people were taken from here to hospital for shock," he said.

ABC said one missile crashed into the heart of Tel Aviv near the Defence Ministry.

CBS news correspondent Tom Fenton said there were four blasts in Tel Aviv and seven in Jerusalem and that he saw smoke to the north of Tel Aviv.

The Pentagon said three missiles were fired at Israel from western Iraq Saturday. The White House said President George Bush, at his Camp David retreat, was awakened and told of the latest attack.

Air-raid sirens heralded the morning barrage and sent

Israelis hurrying into sealed rooms to don gas masks against possible chemical agents.

Saturday's missile attack came on the Jewish Sabbath, a day after Iraqi missiles hit Tel Aviv and Haifa, injuring a dozen people.

Israel, which earlier had threatened to strike back for any attack, did not immediately retaliate. But officials reiterated Defence Minister Moshe Aren's warning after the first attack that the country would respond.

The United States and its allies had urged Israeli restraint following Friday's attack, to preserve Arab involvement. US has expressed concern that Israeli involvement could split Arab countries in the anti-Iraq coalition.

### 'Patriot' for Israel

AFP reports from New York

The United States has sent Israel two batteries of advanced Patriot air defence missiles capable of knocking out Iraqi missiles that have eluded allied bombing raids and hit Israel, the New York Times reported Saturday.

Washington is also sending technicians to assemble the launchers quickly and teach the Israelis how to use them, the newspaper reported, quoting military officials.

### Saraswati puja today

Saraswati puja, a religious festival of the Hindu community will be observed Sunday. Saraswati, the Goddess of learning, bestows blessing for education and erudition. The puja will be celebrated in educational institution as well as in houses.



Awami League chief and 8-party leader Sheikh Hasina addressing a group of lawyers of Jubo Ainjibi Samity who called on her yesterday. —Star photo

## Gulf war inches closer to Asia

The Gulf war inched closer to Asia Saturday with a bomb blast in the Philippines and US warnings of a "credible threat" from terrorists in Thailand, report Agencies.

An Iraqi was killed and another seriously injured Saturday when a bomb they tried to plant near a Manila neighbourhood where foreign diplomats live exploded prematurely, police said.

"The bomb was so powerful one half of the body of one of the Iraqis was found on the rooftop of a nearby house," metropolitan Manila Governor Jejomar Binay said. Security forces in the

Philippines — a logistical lynchpin for US forces in the Gulf — have been on a heightened state of alert to deter possible pro-Iraqi terrorist incidents.

In Thailand, the US embassy advised Westerners to stay at home after the State Department in Washington said it had "received a credible threat involving terrorist action in Bangkok during the next 48 hours."

The State Department said the threat was aimed at "US, Israeli, British and Australian installations, United States and European flag carriers (airlines) and their offices,

and places where foreigners congregate."

Foreign Minister Arthit Urairat, seeking to allay fears, said in Thai government, police and intelligence units "have taken measures to cope with any incident."

Organised by Labour unions and pacifist groups, the demonstration lashed out at the US-led attacks on Iraq and Israel's policy on Palestine, but did not address Iraq's occupation of Kuwait.

## The Midnight File

### US psychological campaign

NEW YORK, Jan 19: The United States is waging a psychological campaign that includes broadcasting anti-government propaganda into Iraq and a plan to smuggle radios in so Iraqis can pick up American transmissions. The New York Times said, in a report from Washington that the campaign, which the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had been authorised to join, was designed to shake Iraq's confidence, undermine its military and deceive its leaders about US military intentions, reports Reuter.

### Gaddafi leads protests

TUNIS, Jan 19: Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi led anti-war protests in Libya on Saturday which the state News Agency Jana said were attended by one million people. Jana said demonstrations took place in Tripoli and in several other Libyan cities and towns. Gaddafi led a big demonstration in the Libyan capital, reports Reuter.

### Mines floating off Bahrain

BAHRAIN, Jan 19: The U.S. navy warned merchant ships on Saturday they entered the Gulf at their own risk after mines were confirmed floating off Bahrain and were reported off the United Arab Emirates, reports Reuter.

### Bomb scare at Dubai bank

DUBAI, Jan 19: The Dubai headquarters of Citibank was evacuated Saturday after a telephoned bomb threat. An eyewitness saw no evidence of any explosion and said sniffer dogs were combing the site, a modern angular glass and concrete building near the central business district of this Gulf port. Citibank is a unit of New York based Citicorp, reports Reuter.

### US diplomats leave Lebanon

BEIRUT, Jan 19: American diplomats in Lebanon have left the country, fearing an Arab backlash because of Gulf war. Security sources said on Friday Ambassador Ryan Crocker and his staff flew to Cyprus by helicopter after Palestinian and Arab extremist groups threatened to attack US interests to avenge air strikes by the US-led coalition on Iraq, reports Reuter.

### Blast kills four in Pakistan

RAWALPINDI, Jan 19: At least four people were killed and more than 47 injured in a bomb explosion at a local cinema house Saturday, police sources said. All the wounded were admitted to hospital and four were in serious condition, hospital sources said, reports AFP.

### Reporters attacked in Amman

AMMAN, Jan 19: An Italian journalist was in hospital on Friday after he and four colleagues were attacked by a large crowd of pro-Iraqi youths, one of the group said. Television reporter Lilli Gruber said the five Italians were punched, kicked and spat at when they went on Thursday to Jordanian Army Reserve Headquarters to report on youths trying to sign up for duty after the US-led bombing raids on Iraq, reports Reuter.

### Ten killed in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, Jan 19: Paramilitary police shot and killed 10 civilians in Jammu-Kashmir Saturday when their vehicle was ambushed by Muslim militants, witnesses said. But police officials said four civilians, including a woman, were killed and 10 others seriously wounded in crossfire between paramilitary troops and Kashmiri militants in Srinagar, reports AP.

## Riyadh normal

From Page 1

Dhahran and Khafji border before the allied forces started Operation Desert Storm.

Kazi Dastagir said nothing had happened till Saturday in Saudi Arabia except firing of an artillery shell at an oil refinery in Khafji on Thursday. One missile was fired from Baghdad to Dhahran, which was destroyed by a Patriot missile by the allied forces, he said. Life is completely normal in Saudi capital and there was no disruption in business activities. Banks were functioning in full swing, he said.

Ambassador Dastagir said air raid sirens were blown only twice on the first day of the war and there was no blackout in Riyadh. He even said no blackout was reported from the vulnerable Eastern Province.

He further informed that minister (Labour) of Bangladesh Embassy visited Dhahran, Jubal industrial belt and Khafji border area over the last few days. He talked to our nationals working in different installations and circulated the advice sheets among them. The advice sheets contained: work hard without panic, don't pay heed to rumours, keep the gas mask ready and follow the civil defence instructions. He visited 17 labour camps where

Bangladeshis are working now. The ambassador said people in the Eastern Province were panicky before the war began. Since nothing has happened so far, the situation is gradually returning to normal in the vulnerable zone, he said.

Kazi Colam Dastagir said the situation in Jeddah, Makkah, Medina and Yanbu was completely normal as these places are out of Iraqi missile range.

BSS adds: About 10,000 foreigners have crossed into Jordan from Iraq and Kuwait after the outbreak of the war in the Gulf and an unspecified number of Bangladeshis are among them. Additional Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman told newsmen on Saturday.

However, he said, the number of Bangladeshis was presumably small because most of these foreigners were from Iraq and hardly 250 to 350 Bangladesh nationals were in Iraq when the war began.

Mr Rahman said the government was in constant touch with Bangladesh missions in the Gulf countries and latest reports spoke of no casualties of Bangladesh nationals anywhere.

"Our troops in Saudi Arabia are safe," he said, adding that the Foreign Ministry was in touch with the concerned officials in charge of the troops.

## 8-Party splits

From Page 1

small parties. They said they waited days after days to hear from Awami League. But the AL leaders did not talk to them frankly and sincerely.

They held Awami League responsible for the present state of affairs and said Awami League had acted against the national welfare.

The break-away parties pledged to fight the elections unitedly with the Five-Party Alliance and other small parties with the common objective of establishing parliamentary democracy in the country.

The components of the new jote are Baksal, CPB, NAP (Mujaffar), Ganatantri Party, Gana Azadi League (Samad), Gana Azadi League (Nurul Alam), Workers Party, JSD (Inu), BSD (Khalequzzaman), BSD (Mahbub), Sramik-Krishak Samajbadi Dal, United Communist League, Oikya Prokriya, Samayabadi Dal and Janata Mukti Party.

The leaders of the new combine hoped that they would play a vital role in the parliament. While giving reaction to the formation of new electoral alliance, Abdur

Razzak, General Secretary of Baksal, told The Daily Star that this new alliance would contribute towards fulfilling the aspirations of the people as reflected during the mass movement.

CPB General Secretary Saifuddin Ahmed Manik deplored the attitude of Awami League regarding an electoral accord and mentioned that seat-sharing was not the major point for unity. "We had no alternative to the formation of this new alliance for implementing the modality for power transfer on which the three alliances agreed in November last year," he said.

The leader of the Five-Party Alliance Rashed Khan Menon termed the formation of the new electoral alliance as a "historic event". "Our move will maintain balance in the parliament which will make it effective," he added.

Suranjit Sengupta, a leader of Ganatantri Party, said the new unity was inevitable and the third stream in Bangladesh politics had come for a historical necessity. "This will consolidate the future democratic process," he said.