

If you miss your copy of the Daily Star today, please don't hesitate to call the Circulation Manager immediately on Tel: 246023-4 (PABX), 863035, 863036. The Daily Star is at your service day in and day out.

The Daily Star

Let us devote our efforts to ensure free and fair polls on February 27. Cast your vote judiciously and allow others to exercise their rights.

VOL. 1 NO. 23 REGD. NO. DA 781

MAGH 22, 1397 BS,

DHAKA TUESDAY FEBRUARY 5, 1991

RAJAB 19, 1411 HIJRI

12 PAGES: PRICE TAKA. 3.00

Inside today

International

Saddam still a formidable enemy



Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein remains a formidable enemy despite Allied bombing, says US official. Page 5

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

Dhaka is popularly known as the city of mosques from time immemorial. Page 3

Sport



NZ skipper Martin Crowe misses 300 by a run. Page 8

Feature

Development

ITU has launched a project to upgrade engineering services in the broadcasting organisations in 14 countries including Bangladesh. Page 7

NEWS BRIEFS

Barre in Kenya

NAIROBI, Feb 4: A spokesman of the United Somali Congress (USC) claimed that deposed Somali President Mohamed Said Barre has fled to Kenya's northern town of Wajir, reported Kenyan newspaper 'Daily Nation' today, says Xinhua.

Saudi diplomat

KARACHI, Feb 4: Unidentified gunmen fired at the home of a Saudi Arabia diplomat in Karachi today slightly wounding a guard, police said, report Reuters.

Cheney's hope

WASHINGTON, Feb 4: US Defense Secretary Dick Cheney has expressed the hope that the Gulf war could be resolved by conventional weapons. In an interview with ABC news Cheney said, "This is a different set of circumstances, and I'm hopeful and confident that we can resolve it by conventional weapons," reports Kyodo.

Protest against Karbala bombing

MULTAN (Pakistan), Feb 4: Hundreds of Muslims staged a demonstration today to denounce the bombing of Muslim holy places in Iraq by US warplanes, witnesses said.

Air raids on govt offices, industrial installations in Baghdad

Iraqi posts in Kuwait pounded

RIYADH, Feb 4: The US battleship USS Missouri pounded Iraqi bunkers in southern Kuwait with its 16-inch guns in the first use of naval gunfire against Iraqi targets in the Emirate, the US Central Command said today, according to agencies.

A senior US military officer said that the USS Missouri, which is in the Gulf, had "taken out some of the bunkers very efficiently."

The officer, speaking on condition that he would not be identified, described the targets as "prefabricated reinforced bunkers," but could not say whether they were inland or coastal positions.

US troops exchanged fire with Iraqi troops across the border and attacked targets inside Kuwait with air and artillery bombardments, officials said.

In the largest engagement, a battalion-sized task force fired its 155 millimeter artillery guns at Iraqi ground radar and infantry near the Umm Gudair oilfield in southwestern Kuwait, 1st Marine Division staff officers said.

Allied forces mounted missile and air strikes on the key southern Iraqi port of Basra during the night and early today, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported.

- ★ US, Iraqi troops trade gunfire
- ★ Allied bombing raids go on
- ★ Iraq's hit-and-run tactics
- ★ 9 more Allied planes downed
- ★ Preparations for ground battle
- ★ Iraq taunts enemies
- ★ Iraqi troops ready for more Khaqi-like incursions
- ★ 126 Iraqi planes destroyed so far

Three huge explosions were heard today in the nearby Iranian town of Khorramshahr, the agency said.

An Iraq multiple-launch rocket battery, separately but around the same time, opened fire on targets inside Saudi Arabia.

Two Marine FA-18 fighter-bombers dropped bombs and destroyed the site, they said.

Earlier, Marine light armored vehicles exchanged cannon and small arms fire with Iraqi troops in Kuwait, but no casualties were reported.

No US ground troops entered Kuwait and there were no reports of Iraqi troops or equipment crossing into Saudi Arabia.

B-52 bombers could be heard pounding Iraqi positions inside Kuwait overnight Saturday.

Allied warplanes carried out extensive raids on Baghdad late Sunday and early Monday, jolting residents from their beds and sending them fleeing to shelters.

Travelers arriving from Amman, Jordan, said Allied trucks had also attacked Iraq, with one driver killed and others injured along the highway.

Baghdad radio reported 77 air raid overnight and said See Page 12 Col. 7



A repatriate family at Zia International Airport. Seventy-five Bangladeshis returned home from Iraq yesterday. —Star Photo

Steps being taken to shift Ershad to Central Jail

A top legal adviser of the Government promised before court Monday that immediate steps were being taken to institute criminal proceedings against ousted President Ershad and shift him to jail, reports UNB.

Deputy Attorney General Af Hasan Arif gave an under taking before the High Court that "all possible steps are being taken by the Government to send Ershad to Dhaka Central Jail and institute criminal proceedings against him as early as possible," according to a press release issued by Dr. Kamal Hossain's office.

The writ petition challenging Ershad's nomination was disposed of on the assurance given during proceedings on the writ moved by Dr. Kamal Hossain on Sunday.

The petition was filed by Abul Hossain, a resident of Rangpur, saying the Returning Officer had acted in accordance with the law in rejecting the nomination papers of Ershad and that the Election Commission's acceptance of the appeal against the rejection was "palpably illegal".

Ershad, detained in a house at Gulshan in the capital, is set for contesting the parliament

election from five constituencies in his home district Rangpur.

All his nomination papers were earlier cancelled by the Returning Officer on the ground that he had not approached through the Home Ministry, but were later accepted by the Election Commission following appeal filed by Ershad's lawyer.

Dr. Kamal Hossain, during the proceeding, argued there was no justification for exempting Ershad from the strict application of the Jail Code and the Prisoners Act. See Page 12 Col. 6

Jamaat doubts impartial election

By Staff Correspondent

Acting Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Abbas Ali Khan has said his party wants to establish a welfare state in line with Quran and Sunnah with the verdict of the people.

He was speaking as chief guest at a meeting at Malibag Bapani Bitan crossing on Monday.

The Jamaat leader said, all will be equal in the eyes of law in an Islamic society.

He said Jamaat was participating in the coming elections with a view to establishing the great ideals of Islam in all spheres of life.

Zia-Ershad model unprecedented: Hasina

SYLHET, Feb 4: The Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina said here today the existing presidential form of government could never ensure political stability in the country nor achieve socio-economic emancipation of the people, reports BSS.

She said the model practised by Zia-Ershad regimes was an unprecedented experiment in the present day world political history as the Sangsad and the Council of Ministers were used like rubber stamps for legalising their evil doings.

"Whereas, in the presidential system, as we see in countries like the USA that the President is strictly accountable to the Senate and the Congress", she added. Addressing a big public meeting at Sylhet Alia Madrasah ground here, Sheikh Hasina categorically stated that people's democratic rights could be ensured only by the parliamentary form of government for which a massive verdict (of the people) was essential in the forthcoming polls.

She appealed to the people to vote for Awami League and the Eight-Party Alliance nominees so that the dawn of democracy and freedom that was ushered before the nation with the fall of autocracy was See Page 12 Col. 1

Rafsanjani ready to meet Iraqi, US leaders

Gorbachev urged to take fresh peace move

MOSCOW, Feb 4: The Soviet Communist Party has called on President Mikhail Gorbachev to launch a fresh political initiative to end the Gulf War, a statement published today said, reports Reuters.

A plenary session of the party's Central Committee Thursday urged the Soviet leadership to take the necessary additional steps before the international community and the United Nations to end the bloodshed.

The statement, published by the main Communist Party daily Pravda, expressed deep concern over the dangerous development of events in the Gulf.

Soviet diplomatic efforts would help to preclude irretrievable damage to the environment and direct the military conflict into the channel of political solution in the spirit of UN Security Council resolutions. The Soviet Union has

backed the US led coalition of forces trying to secure withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait, but has refused to commit troops.

Meanwhile, AP reports say: Nearly three weeks into the Gulf War, Non-Aligned nations are pressing ahead with efforts to halt the fighting despite few signs of interest from Washington or Baghdad.

The would-be peacemakers -- from Iran, Algeria, Pakistan See Page 12 Col. 5

Donors prefer to take up Jamuna bridge with political govt

Star Report

Jamuna multi-purpose bridge authority is scrutinising the tender documents for construction of approach road, although the World Bank and other donors prefer to take up this project with the political government.

The Jamuna multi-purpose bridge project was taken up at an estimated cost of Taka 2,250 crore. Asian Development Bank pledged to provide 150 million US dollars for the project. No other donors including World Bank committed See Page 12 Col. 6

Morale is high, say returnees from Iraq Bunker network shields civilians

By Shahiduzzaman Khan

Iraqis are keeping their morale high in the face of mounting air raids on their country by the US-led multinational forces. Civilian casualties are low as most of the residents of Baghdad are taking shelter in well-fortified bunkers, Bangladeshis returning from Baghdad say.

On Sunday a total of 75 Bangladeshis were the first to arrive home since the war began on January 17. They include 32 employees of Hyundai

Construction Company based in Baghdad. 25 employees of Al-Rasheed Hotel of Baghdad and two Bangladeshis newsmen who went to Baghdad to cover war, Bangladesh Biman brought them from Bombay where they gathered from the war-torn country.

The returnees say massive air raids are being carried out on Baghdad and its outskirts. On an average eight attacks are being made daily on the key See Page 12 Col. 3

Fasting for waiving death penalty continues

By Staff Correspondent

Some of the condemned prisoners were continuing their hunger strike on Monday to press home their demand for commutation of death penalty.

Government on Sunday asked the striking prisoners to appeal personally if they had any reason to pray for mercy, sources said.

The condemned prisoners on January 26 sent a joint application to the Acting President praying for waiving their death penalty.

Jail sources said they had not yet received any prayer from the prisoners.

Misrule again if they come back: Khaleda

From Our Correspondent

PATIYA (Chittagong), Feb 4: Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) chief Begum Khaleda Zia today said production oriented politics would be reintroduced in the country and former President Ershad and his associates would be tried if her party was voted to power.

Addressing a huge public meeting at the Patiya College ground this afternoon Begum Zia reminded the people of the 'misrule' of a party during the 1971-75 period.

Without naming the party she said, this party was now trying to come back to power

by bluffing the people only to re-establish its misrule.

This party was rejected by the people as it had failed to fulfil their hopes and aspirations following the nine month long Liberation War in 1971, she added.

During the reign of this party people were deprived of food and clothing, the BNP chairperson added.

The nation would again be in the grip of corruption if that party was voted to power, Begum Zia said.

Begum Zia alleged that See Page 12 Col. 2

Depressed demand for fertilisers

Star Special

High prices of agricultural inputs and low level of farm credits have led to depressed demand for fertiliser and irrigation equipment in current Boro season.

The government has set the target for Boro production at over 7.1 million tons. Last year, production was 6.3 million tons, according to official estimates.

While production target is higher, sales of agricultural inputs up to January are much lower than what has been produced. See Page 12 Col. 6

CEC for strict application of law

COMILLA, Feb 4: The Chief Election Commissioner, Justice Mohammad Abdur Rauf, today called upon all officials involved in conducting the forthcoming elections to conduct the polls properly to realise the long cherished expectations of the people, reports BSS.

The Chief Election Commissioner was addressing the officers of different levels of Chittagong division and Noakhali, Comilla and Sylhet upazilas at Bangladesh Rural Development Agency.

Justice Rauf said the government had made the Election Commission strong and powerful to create a proper atmosphere for holding free and fair elections.

He said the Election Commission would not hesitate to apply the laws strictly, if necessary, to make the elections free of corruption.

UZ chairman participates in electioneering

By Staff Correspondent

Savar Upazila Parishad Chairman Firoz Kabir on Sunday attended an election meeting of Jaitiya Party (JP).

Government recently ordered the UZ chairman not to participate in any electioneering to keep its neutrality in the ensuing polls. A central JP leader, Firoz Kabir was the chief guest in the meeting organised in connection with the party's election campaign.

Administrative snags may affect proper census

By Staff Correspondent

About two and a half lakh enumerators and supervising staff will do the third national head count in Bangladesh from 12 to 15 March.

The census, official sources say, is designed to collect more qualitative data than any time before. But due to lack of adequate administrative initiative the work may not be as efficiently done as expected, reliable sources say.

Sources say, backed by experienced gained through two national censuses carried out in 1974 and 1981, the agricul-

tural census of 1983-84 and the economic census of 1986. The Bureau of Statistics now has a set of efficient officers. But their services are not being properly utilised, sources complain.

Technically the Population and Housing Census Project, 1990 was sound. It has the required equipment including optical mark readers and computers to process data. Administrative weaknesses, however, will affect its operational efficiency, a senior official of the Bureau of Statistics

told the Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

It is gathered that the secretary, Statistics Division, who is also the national census commissioner is scheduled to retire in April, half a month after the head count. Personal initiatives and drive seen during the 1981 census to streamline things are absent, the bureau source said.

Thus the Population and Housing Census Project 1991 is finding it difficult to get its financial requirements cleared See Page 12 Col. 1