

Focus on election- '91

Peace procession

From Page 1 Col 5 treatment at Sadar Hospital, alleged that muscle-men of Jatiya Party attacked them. Their conditions were critical, hospital sources said.

Sandbag export

From Page 1 Col 8 level was then set at about 23 per cent above KEBICO's ruling Minimum Export Price (MEP). Before this, sandbags could be sold at MEP. But the price level, according to traders, was hiked for sandbags in an arbitrary manner.

The ministry by its intervention in the competitive international market wanted to sell sandbags at premium prices because of the opportunities created by the Gulf crisis. But, a sizeable market was lost in the process, the sources said.

KEBICO's present offering level for sandbags is 10 per cent above the MEP. The price was lowered after one particular local company managed to obtain its approval to sell sandbags at that level when the general offering level for others was still 23 per cent above the MEP.

Concerned circles observed that even the latest price level for sandbags was higher than the international rates. Meanwhile, the Jute Ministry on Tuesday asked the jute mills in both public and private sectors to indicate their own prices to KEBICO for export sales of sandbags.

Khaleda supports newsmen's demands

Bangladesh Nationalist Party chief Begum Khaleda Zia Tuesday called for fulfilling the just demands of the newspaper employees, for speedy resolution to the problems created out of the amendment to the Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Services) Act of 1974, reports BSS.

Begum Zia, in a statement, said with the promulgation of the news ordinance, an unstable situation has been prevailing in the newspaper industry. The journalists of the newspapers and news agencies and other employees in the meantime have demonstrated in the streets for meeting their just demands, she said.

The BNP chief said the journalists had played a glorious role in the "ousting of autocrat Ershad". They must have been consulted before doing something about such a sensitive law in the present national context, she opined.

Tribunal

From Page 1 Col 8 against him shall not be quashed.

Meanwhile the office of the Special Tribunal, which will try the ousted president for possessing illegal arms has been set up at the official residence of the former leader of the opposition in parliament at Gulshan. The former leader of the opposition ASM Abdur Rob has vacated the house.

The house located in front of Gulshan Club has been chosen for the tribunal office for security reasons. An official source told the Daily Star that it would be a security risk to take Ershad to the district court.

One member Special Tribunal has been set up to try Ershad under the Arms Act. If convicted, the ousted president may be awarded life imprisonment.

Editor : S. M. Ali



Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a campaign rally in Cantonment area yesterday. —Star photo

Women's rights

From Page 1 Col 7 that during 1972-74 period, the women of the country were forced to starve and wear nets while during the nine years of autocratic rule by the Ershad repression on the women soared to highest point. Sogera Morshed and Mahiya Islam were killed by the armed miscreants and the university girl students were tortured by the police when they took to streets to protest the illegal rule.

Being a woman, I know you have to face many difficulties in the society, Begum Zia told the gathering women in an emotion-choked voice and urged them to vote for her in the coming polls. 'In return' she said, 'I will ensure bright future for you and your children'.

BNP, if elected to power, will resume all the programmes launched during its rule.

Jatiyatada! Mahila Dal Chief of the area Farida Khatun chaired the meeting while BNP local leaders Delwar Hossain and Ahmed Faruk and Jatiyatada! Chhatra Dal leader Arif Ahmad also addressed the meeting.

Systems loss

From Page 1 Col 7

Others are using old meters totally unserviceable or faulty which causes suffering to the consumers and also incurs financial loss to the PDB.

These faulty as well as outdated meters are considerably responsible for the high system loss, says a PDB source. He mentioned that a study was conducted in 1987 by Korea Power Engineering Company (KPECE) to assess the condition of power meters and to suggest ways for reducing the system loss. The KPECE was appointed by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through World Bank.

The KPECE report recommended for replacement of 90 per cent of PDB's meters since these were too old to function properly. Afterwards, World Bank provided a fund of 16 million US dollars for the procurement of new meters for PDB.

But the PDB is yet to utilise the funds since the board could not fulfil the condition attached to it. The condition was to procure the meters through international tenders where local manufacturers would get 15 percent price preference. But there is a government directive on PDB to buy locally manufactured meters.

Substantial reduction of system loss was one of the major conditions of World Bank for financing the power sector. A World Bank team, which visited Bangladesh recently, has already made it clear that the bank would not provide more funds for the power sector if the conditions were not met.

Cr PC

From Page 1 Col 5

approval of higher court for raising the case again for cases dismissed in this process.

Provision has also been made for giving bail to accused of unobtainable reopened case. Besides, a new Section 35-A has been incorporated in the Code by providing arrangements for consideration while ordering conviction by the Court on certain conditions in the period of 'hajatbash'.

10 injured in AL-BNP clashes

From Our Correspondent MUNSIGANJ, Feb 12 : At least 10 persons were injured at a election campaign clash between Awami League and BNP activists at Char Dumuria and Kangshapur village under Molla Kandi union.

Eye witnesses said that both the parties used arms, cocktails and lethal weapons. AL activist Shaif Beg (45), was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with serious injury and nine of other injured persons who are BNP supporters were sent to Munsiganj Sadar Hospital.

Jamaat

From Page 1 Col 4 Referring to the third responsibility of the government, he said establishment of a disciplined society guaranteeing the security of life and property of the people and human rights was the main purpose behind the formation of a government.

He reiterated that his party wanted the administration of the honest people to punish the criminals and protect the honest.

Don't cast vote

From Page 1 Col 7 tried on the last leg of her five-day electioneering in the northern part of the country. Hasina was accorded a hearty welcome as she arrived here in a motorcade.

Poll funds: Many yet to submit statements

By Staff Correspondent Eight to ten per cent candidates did not submit statements of their assets and liabilities, and sources of election funds within the stipulated time which expired on January 28, reports reaching Dhaka from the districts say.

Returning officers, however, expect to receive some statements soon as many candidates staying away from their constituencies are reported to have sent their statements by post.

Violators of this amended provision of the Representation of the People Order, 1972 are liable to punishment which may include, besides declaring their elections void, jail terms for two to seven years.

The Representation of the People Order, 1972 requires a candidate to submit the statements within seven days following the withdrawal of nominations. The last date of withdrawal of nominations was January 21.

The Election Commission may take cognizance of violation of the law upon applications filed by candidates abiding by the law.

The Representation of the People Order 1972 says the Election Commission may appoint as many election tribunals, as may be necessary to try such cases. A tribunal will consist of a person who is or has been a district and sessions judge or an additional district and sessions judge, the order says.

A candidate will be guilty of 'corrupt or illegal practice' if he makes a false statement, meets election expenses from sources other than those mentioned in his statement, or is guilty of bribery, personation or undue influence among others.

Hasina, already behind schedule by several hours, also spoke briefly at Panchbibi, Khetlal, Akkelpur, Punat, Jamalganj and Battali. She left here tonight for Nuogon.

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina will address the rally of Village Doctors' Association at Bangabandhu Avenue at 2 pm today (Wednesday).

Sheikh Hasina will also address a public meeting at Dhanmondi Maidan at 3 pm while she will address a meeting at 4 pm at Madhubagh and another meeting at 5 pm at Siddique Bazar, Dhaka.

The Midnight File

Gorbachev proposes disbanding of Warsaw Pact structure

PRAGUE, Feb 12: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in a message to Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel proposed disbanding the military structure of the Warsaw Pact by April 1, the Czechoslovak CTK news agency reported yesterday. Observers noted that Gorbachev's proposal was put forward not long before the scheduled summit meeting of Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary, reports Xinhua.

Democracy aid for Haiti

WASHINGTON, Feb 12: The United States announced on Monday it was donating \$2 million dollars to help Haiti complete its transition to democracy. A statement from the Agency for International Development said the sum represented a significant increase over the 54 million dollars provided in 1990, reports Reuter.

Syrian crude oil for Jordan

DAMASCUS, Feb 12: Syria has agreed to sell Jordan crude oil and refined products at market prices in an effort to help Amman make up for the loss of Iraqi supplies, officials and oil industry sources said on Tuesday. Iraqi oil exports to Jordan of about 60,000 barrels per day (BPD), transported by road, had covered Jordan's needs after Saudi Arabia cut off supplies last September, reports Reuter.

4m hit by Chernobyl N-blast

PARIS, Feb 12: A Soviet diplomat said on Monday more than four million people, including 800,000 children, had been affected by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. Vladimir Lomeko, Soviet Ambassador to the UN's cultural agency UNESCO, said in a speech the effects of radiation from the 1986 nuclear explosion had spread far from the site of the power station that exploded, reports Reuter.

24 swept away by floods

QUETTA, Feb 12: At least 24 people were feared dead after being swept away by floods in Pakistan's south-western Baluchistan province after the heaviest rain for several years. Five bodies were found while rescuers were still searching the Nihing and Kaichkor rivers in the Mekran region, Mekran Commissioner Irfan Kasi said on Monday, reports Reuter.

Newspaper chain on auction

ISLAMABAD, Feb 12: Pakistan's largest chain of state-owned newspapers will be auctioned in the government's privatisation drive, a spokesman said on Monday. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Information Adviser Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, said present owners of privately-run newspapers would be barred from buying the National Press Trust papers, reports Reuter.

Soviet nationals' expulsion

STOCKHOLM, Feb 12: Several Soviet nationals, most of them diplomats, are about to be expelled from Sweden accused of spying and recruiting agents for Soviet military intelligence. Swedish national radio reported Monday, The Soviet nationals had spied on Swedish defence and defence industry, the radio said, reports AFP.

US rules out

From Page 1 Col 5 ground battle begins, a report said.

Syria had previously maintained that its forces in Saudi Arabia would only defend that country.

According to Radio Dubai, Syria has criticised Baghdad's Scud missile attacks on Israel saying they had helped win money and sympathy for the Jewish state.

Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam addressing a meeting of Ministers, officials and trade unionists said, a settlement of the Gulf crisis was impossible until Iraq withdrew from Kuwait.

Khaddam said that Iraqi Scud missile attacks on Israel enabled it to get weapons, money, moral backing and international sympathy.

Soviet President Gorbachev's personal envoy Yevgeny Premakov arrived in Baghdad early Tuesday for talks with President Saddam Hussein of Iraq on a Soviet diplomatic mission to end the war.

Premakov made a stop-over in Tehran Monday, on his way to Baghdad and held talks with the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Mousavi.

He told newsmen after the talks that the Soviet Union supported the Iranian peace initiative for a settlement in the Gulf.

He said the current Soviet diplomatic effort could be coordinated with steps taken by Iran.

NAM MOVE

Non-aligned foreign ministers, meeting in the Yugoslav capital, Belgrade, discussed a draft proposal to send a NAM mission to Iraq seeking a peace settlement.

Radio reports said the draft document calls for simultaneous withdrawal of Iraqi and multi-national forces from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and stationing of a UN peace-keeping force in Kuwait.

If the document is finalised by the 15 foreign ministers, it would despatch a small non-aligned group to Baghdad and Kuwait to explain the proposal.

Iraq is not attending the non-aligned meet in Belgrade and no reason has been given for Iraqi absence.

SAUDI DENIAL

Meanwhile Saudi Arabia denied on Monday it had dropped a Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Gulf peace plan before the Gulf war began under pressure from the United States.



Principal Dewan Mohammad Azraf addressing the inaugural session of the annual general conference of Dhaka Union of Journalists at the National Press Club auditorium yesterday. —Star photo

Wage war with pen

From Page 1 Col 7 used in this region after the partition of the country, he added.

Principal Azraf said it was clear that we had not yet been able to imbibe the spirit of full freedom in our mind and despite giving lip service to democracy, true democratic consciousness was still far off.

Dewan Moha imad Azraf said the journalists needed courage and patience for passing through the path of truth and justice. 'If they follow the true path, victory must go to them', he said.

He said the journalists would have to wage war with their pen when the independence of the country is endangered by the autocracy. A real and ideal journalist would be he who dared to take such a heavy responsibility, he said.

BFUJ President Reazuddin Ahmed, in his speech, regretted that despite the caretaker government repealing several ordinances as per demands of many pressure groups it had imposed a 'black law' for the journalist community by amending the Newspaper Employees (condition of services) Act, 1974. He called upon the three political alliances to pressurise the caretaker government to withdraw the amended Ordinance and announce the Wage Board award soon.

BFUJ Secretary General Amanullah Kabir said the caretaker government was yet to annul the much talked about Special Powers Act which

Wage Board award or review not acceptable: BSP

Anwarul Islam, Secretary General of Bangladesh Sangbadpatra Parishad (BSP), on Tuesday said that the Parishad would not accept the journalists' Wage Board award given by the Ershad regime or any review relating to it unless there was a study of the financial crisis in the newspaper industry, reports BSS.

In a statement of behalf of BSP, Mr Islam termed the Wage Board award a controversial one as it was a one-sided decision of the Ershad regime. 'Twenty-five per cent dearness allowance was implemented before the full award was given without caring about the financial crisis in the newspaper industry,' the BSP Secretary General said pointing out the Parishad's demands for decrease in the price of newsprint, withdrawal of taxes and duty on newspapers and increase of advertisement budget.

He appealed to the journalists and employees of the newspaper industry to help usher in an elected government which would make a judicious solution to their problems.

He hoped that the journalists and employees of the newspaper industry would play a constructive role in this hour of transition to democracy keeping in mind that their salary structure could not be ensured by harming the industry.

The statement also called upon the Acting President not to step into the trap laid by what it called conspirators.

The statement also called upon the journalists, press workers and employees to make the Federation programmes a success.

The session was adjourned till 10.00 am today.

Wage Board

From Page 1 Col 8

Mosharraf Hossain and Bazur Rahman Milton respectively president and secretary general of BNPWF, Jahangir Kabir and Mir Mozammel Hossain respectively president and secretary general of BNEF in a joint statement Tuesday also called for repeal of the Ordinance amending Section 11 of the Newspaper Employees (Conditions of service) Act 1974. Otherwise, the statement warned, the government would have to bear the responsibility of stalemate that appears inevitable in the industry.

The statement termed the formation of the committee to look into the Wage Board award as a means to buy time.

The Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) Act 1974 clearly states the modalities for forming the Wage Board, formulating recommendations and announcing the award, the statement said and added: fresh consultation on the recommendations framed by the Board constituted under the Act amounted to ignoring the Wage Board, itself.

He said that the pilot-less aircraft were being used for guiding US ships in their bombing of Iraqi positions in Kuwait.

Iraqi occupation troops are moving from exposed positions into fortified Kuwait apartment blocks, a London-based Kuwait group reported today.

It also said the bodies of six Kuwaitis, including a woman and all showing signs of torture, were found on Sunday.

Exiled Kuwaitis say Iraqi troops have killed several people during searches of homes for food and communications equipment.

In another development, Syria has decided to send its troops into Kuwait when the