

100 shops gutted by fire in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Mar 25: More than one hundred shops with huge quantities of merchandise gutted by a fire at a hawker market opposite to Chittagong Municipal Model High School here today.

The Fire Service sources said the shops were destroyed along with the merchandise in the two-hour long fire that originated from an electric short circuit. Eleven fire fighting vans fought for an hour to bring the fire under control. Civil Defence and police personnel also assisted the fire men.

The affected shop keepers said the shops were full of garments, cosmetics, stationery and household items stored for Eid sales.

Jetties saved

Meanwhile, Our Correspondent adds: Chittagong Port Jetties have been saved from a devastating fire Monday. The fire broke out while oil pilferage was taking place from the ship M.V. Lalia near Chittagong Drydock.

Remain united

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had been appreciated in the outside world and pointed out the formation of a new Council of Ministers by the party which emerged majority in Parliament.

Justice Shahabuddin said the independence had provided the nation with an opportunity to build its own future. He called upon all to utilise fully such opportunity to achieve economic emancipation of the people.

The Acting President said with the restoration of democracy his government had removed barrier to freedom of the press by amending partially the Special Powers Act and Press and Publications Act.

The administration had been made effective and dynamic through certain steps, he said adding that now the state machinery was more active in reaching the national goals.

Justice Shahabuddin said in a democratic system there might be difference of ideology and opinion but all should be united and firm in achieving the desired national goals.

He said if such norms were practised then democracy would be primarily established in the country and the people's aspirations would be fulfilled gradually.

Smuggled sugar

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plaining the reasons why the corporation is unable to supply sugar at competitive prices. He said the government would not like that the interests of consumers suffer because of any price distortions. If fiscal rearrangements or any other countervailing moves are needed to make the sugar industry competitive and cost efficient, the government is prepared to take such measures, he added.

The meeting noted that prices of most essentials had not registered any uptrend over the last one week.

Among others, Principal Finance Secretary Korshed Alam, Food Secretary Ahsanul Haq, Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank Mahbubur Rahman and the Chairman of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh attended the meeting.

The meeting discussed in details the production situation, stock and import position of essential commodities. It noted that stock and supply position of food and other items is satisfactory and there is no reason for price rise.

The minister directed the concerned agencies to evolve a more effective mechanism to monitor the prices of essentials and take steps, wherever necessary, to check any unwarranted rise in prices of essentials.

The meeting discussed the imports of some items like soyabean oil and pulses in details. The discussions focussed on matters connected with possible smuggling of some imported items across the border.

The minister instructed the concerned authorities to maintain a closer vigilance on soyabean import operations.

A substantial volume of imported soyabean oil, both refined and crude is feared to have been smuggled out. Unabated smuggling has led to higher imports of the item, financed under the Wage Earners Scheme (WES).

Importers of crude and refined soyabean oil in first seven months of current fiscal 1990-91 totalled Taka 323 crore, the meeting was told. The figure in terms of opening of im-



Prof Aminul Islam (Right) and Muhammad Yasin are seen with Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed after they received Independence Day Award 1990 at Bangabhaban on Monday. Story on page 3

Independence Day today

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The day began with a 31-gun salute in the capital.

The national flag will be hoisted atop all public and private buildings on the day which is a national holiday.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will attend a rally of school and college students and juvenile organisations as chief guest at the National Stadium at 8 A.M.

Leaders of political parties will visit the National Mausoleum at Savar to pay respects to the martyrs.

The day's programme includes holding of sports competitions, illumination of public buildings, photo and art exhibitions on the Liberation War, holding of seminars and symposia on the attainment of self-reliance in every sphere of national life.

The Acting President will also host a reception at Bangabhaban this evening.

Newspapers will bring out special supplements while Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television will broadcast special programmes, on the day.

Different organisations have also chalked out elaborate programmes in observance of the day.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party has chalked out a day-long programme to observe the Independence Day.

The programme will begin with the hoisting of the national and party flags atop the BNP central office at 8 am, leaders and workers of the party will start for the Jatiya Smriti Soudha at Savar to lay wreaths as a mark of respect to the martyrs.

They will also offer prayers at the mazar of late President Ziaur Rahman on the way back from Savar.

Awami League will start the day with the hoisting of national and party flags atop the AL central office at Bangabandhu Avenue and at the Bangabandhu Bhaban at 6 am.

AL chief Sheikh Hasina accompanied by central leaders will garland the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at his Dhanmoldi residence at 7 a.m.

At 8.30 a.m. leaders and workers of the party will start for the national memorial at Savar to lay wreaths as a mark of respect to the martyrs.

Bangla Academy will hold a discussion meeting and a recitation session at the Academy premises today at 3 pm, in observance of the National and Independence Day.

Nazrul Jatiya Sangskritik Academy will observe the day by placing wreaths at Jatiya Smriti Soudha and praying for the martyrs.

Bangladesh Book Publishers and Sellers Association will hold a book fair today at Central Public Library.

The fair will continue till April 5 and will begin at 10 am and end at 7 pm every day.

Freedom Party will hold a discussion meeting on the Independence Day at its central office at 5 pm.

The Shilpakala Academy will start a three-day pro-

gramme beginning today which includes placing wreaths at the national monument for the martyrs at Savar in the morning and a discussion at its auditorium at 11 am. Photography exhibition will also be held at the Shilpakala Academy gallery.

Bangladesh Shishu Academy began its two-day programme yesterday at the Academy to celebrate the day.

The DUCSU will hold an exhibition football match at Dhaka University ground tomorrow at 3 pm.

Special prayers will be offered in mosques, mandirs, churches and other places of worship for he peace and progress of the country.

Double secretariat

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oped into a parallel decision-making body and in some cases ministries played a very small role.

The Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation for instance, was by and large controlled by the Public Division of the President's Secretariat, said a secretary.

Begum Khaleda Zia's first meeting with senior government officials on Saturday was taken as an indication that she is going to assert as the virtual chief executive.

During the flag-end of the Jatiya Party regime, no important decision could be taken without interference from the President's Secretariat.

Bureaucrats now believe that such interference will no longer exist. This in turn will help speed up decision-making.

Senior bureaucrats also believe that the honesty of Begum Zia makes her call for the establishment of an honest

Independence will be meaningful if promises to voters are kept : Mizan

The Acting Chairman of the Jatiya Party, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury Monday expressed the hope that the coming days would bring happiness, peace and prosperity for the country and the people, reports BSS.

In a message on the occasion of the National and Independence Day Chowdhury said that there was scope to evaluate the nation's 21st independence day in a different way.

He said the people still remember the current movement and the promises given to the voters in the elections.

He said those who are responsible for running the government are entrusted with the task of implementing those promises and pledges. "If a little of those promises are implemented then holding of this year's independence day will be successful", he said.

Mr Chowdhury emphatically said that Jatiya Party was the first political party which set an example in the country's history by voluntarily relinquishing the responsibility of running the government showing utmost respect to democratic values.

Hegemony

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People's Congress that was expected to concentrate on economic issues, that commercial relations with the United States are profitable to both sides.

But a decision by the US Congress now to renew "most favored nation" trading status to China would "also harm the interests of a number of other countries and regions," he said.

With Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh expected here next week, Li said sino-Soviet relations "will continue to develop."

BNP interviews 258 women candidates

The Parliamentary Board of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party interviewed 258 women candidates in two days seeking nomination for 30 reserved seats for women in parliament, party sources said Monday, reports BSS.

Prime Minister and Chairperson of BNP Begum Khaleda Zia presided over the interview sessions held in four sittings on Saturday and Monday at the party's Election Office in Dhanmoldi.

On Monday 151 women candidates from Dhaka and Chittagong divisions were interviewed in two sessions from 10 am to 2 pm and 2 pm to 4 pm while 107 women candidates from Khulna and Rajshahi divisions were interviewed on Saturday.

Prominent among those interviewed were Tahmina Begum Doli, a former Ambassador, Begum Nawab Ahsanullah, Selina Rahman, Sarwari Rahman, Singer Ajnuna Ara Begum, news caster Chowdhury Rina Naser, Ashiqua Akbar, Rabeya Chowdhury, Farida Hasan, Rawshan Elahi and Dr Abeda Hafiz.

Former advisers

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former adviser for food and education, said the students sacrificed their lives during Pakistani regime to live in a free atmosphere, which was not attained even after the War of Liberation and they had to sacrifice more. This should not be allowed go on, he said.

Prof. Zillur Rahman Siddique, former adviser for education said students were the main force in any movement that had taken place in the country. They upheld the tradition again last year, he added.

Prof. M. A. Majed, former adviser for health and family planning congratulated the students for their contributions and hoped they would play the watchdog role as they played before in realising their commitments.

Alamgir M. Kabir, former adviser for social welfare and women affair called upon the students to continue movement till injustice and disparity were removed from society.

Former adviser Kazi Fazlur Rahman urged the students to prepare history of our liberation war and also those who had sacrificed their lives in the recent anti-autocracy movement.

The meeting was addressed by Rafiqul Islam, Chowdhury A. K. M. Aminul Haque, Anisuzzaman, B. K. Das, Imamuddin Ahmed, Prof. Wahiduddin Ahmed, A. B. M. Musa and Fakrudin Ahmed.

Mostafa Faruk, President of Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, presiding over the meeting called upon the government to implement their ten-point demand.

For instance a good number of senior information officers in the Press Information Department (PID) get salaries equal to those of deputy principal information officers.

Darwans and liftemen of the Central Secretariat say that their work has increased with the coming of the political government to power.

They say that the number of visitors to the secretariat has increased after falling drastically during the three-month tenure of the interim government.

AL amendment

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would go for a massive movement.

The political and administrative quarters which took the initiative to obtain the consent of the BNP and the Awami League on certain national issues before preparing the President's speech to parliament are still continuing their efforts.

Parliament session which will begin on April 5, Friday is likely to be adjourned for two days before the beginning of the discussion on the President's speech.

This setting of parliament will also to endorse the ordinances which were passed by the President for the holding of a free and fair election.

Hasina

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oppression and injustice and resist conspiracies against the spirit of the Liberation War.

Sheikh Hasina urged the democratic and progressive forces to unitedly resist the enemies of independence and democracy. She called for building up unity of people like that of 1971 for establishing parliamentary democracy and said the unity is essential for safeguarding independence as well as ensuring economic emancipation of the people.

The Midnight File

Oil wells emitting poisonous gases

CAIRO, Mar 25 : Kuwaiti Minister of Oil Rashid Al-Amiri said there were five or six oil wells that emit the poisonous hydrogen sulfide in the air, while other 25 wells are emitting carbon monoxide and sulfur dioxide. Al-Amiri added containing the emission of these poisonous gases is among the top priorities of his ministry, reports Mena.

Nawaz Sharif visits Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Mar 25 : Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif paid a brief visit here today to congratulate the Kuwaiti Emir on the liberation of his country and discuss bilateral relations in the aftermath of the Gulf war, reports AFP.

Mali to lift emergency

BAMAKO, Mar 25 : Mali's embattled government has agreed to opposition demands to end a state of emergency, free political prisoners and withdraw troops from the streets after three days of the worst political violence the West African country has known, opposition sources said today, reports Reuter.

16 killed in Jammu avalanche

JAMMU, Mar 25 : At least 16 persons were killed in house collapses after an avalanche hit the Laridora village in Bara-mulla district in north-west Kashmir. Army was assisting the civil administration in the rescue operations and 16 bodies have so far been recovered from the debris. Search for others is continuing, an official spokesman said today, reports PTL.

Bandits kill five in Pakistan

KARACHI, Mar 25 : Bandits shot dead five policemen in a village near Larkana in southern Pakistan and later attacked a police post, police said today. A police spokesman in the Sindh provincial capital Karachi said two police were wounded in the incident on Saturday night.

Basic issues

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democratic system. But the basic objective of responsible politics is to place the interest of the country and the nation above everything, she stressed.

Seeking the blessing of Allah the merciful, Begum Zia said on this occasion let us all take the pledge for building a happy and prosperous Bangladesh unitedly.

She said her government would give utmost emphasis on establishing a people-oriented administration and strengthening the national economy depending on the blessing of Allah and remembering the trust reposed in us by the people. There was no alternative to eliminating corruption for taking the country on the road to progress and prosperity, side by side some of our main objectives include establishment of a peaceful and welfare society free from terrorism, she added.

Congratulating all on this auspicious occasion, the Prime Minister recalled with gratitude the martyrs who had sacrificed their valuable lives for the realisation of a dream of our bright future. "On this historic day I also recall with gratitude and deep respect the contributions and struggle of Moulana Abul Hamid Khan Bhasani, Sher-e-Bangla, A K Fazlul Huq, Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy and

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for our freedom and independence and unforgettable Shah-eed President Ziaur Rahman, who declared national independence, for their contributions in realising our coveted goal, she said.

There was no scope, Begum Zia said, to explain the background of achieving our independence. The whole world knows the supreme sacrifice we had to make and shed the stream of blood for our independence. There are few nations in the world which had to pay so dearly for independence, she added.

The Prime Minister said this year's Independence Day has some distinctive characteristics. The Independence Day this year has come following a long struggle by the democratic loving people to free the country from the clutches of the nine years rule of dictatorship and autocracy, she said.

She said you all know during the nine years of autocratic rule, the country was engulfed by favouritism in phases. The country was turned into a slaughter house by the then illegal government and its cronies, consequently, honesty became hostage to corruption. So was the innocent people to terrorism and practices and principles to irregularity, she said.



Killer father of Rashedul Islam, Raihanul Islam, being taken to the Dhaka Central Jail after having been convicted for murder of his son on Monday. —Star photo

Rashidul murder : Father gets life term

Mr Raihanul Islam, a businessman, has been awarded transportation for life for killing his son Rashedul Islam, a lecturer of the Dhaka University, reports BSS.

District and Sessions Judge of Dhaka, Mr Mohammad Habibullah, pronounced the judgement Monday in a packed court house, the two daughters and wife of the accused broke into tears hearing the judgement.

The prosecution case was that Mr Raihanul Islam shot dead his only son Rashedul Islam on June 25, 1990, night at their Uttara residence.

Following the incident, the assailant father Raihanul Islam,

once a government official, made a confessional statement to the magistrate that he had killed his son.

After completing the investigation, the police charged the accused father.

The defence case was that accused Raihanul Islam shot his son in his own defence and not to kill the latter.

The prosecution examined 13 witnesses.

The prosecution was conducted by Deputy Attorney General Moazzem Hossain, assisted by Public Prosecutor Shamsul Huq and others. Advocates Sohrah Hossain, Dewan Abul Abbas, Afsaruddin and others appeared for the accused.

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