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# The Daily Star

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**A million Kurdish refugees have massed along the border waiting to cross in to Iran, and 20,000 others have already entered the country.**  
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### President's Speech

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#### Dhaka Day by Day



**Six young enthusiastic artists of the Institute of Arts and Crafts, without a sponsor or adequate guidance from teachers, banded together for an exhibition at the gallery of the Institute.**  
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## Parliament urged to save and instal nation in a dignified position

# Shahabuddin tells JS to find way for his exit



The Fifth Parliament in its inaugural session Friday. — Star photo

A Staff Correspondent

Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed on Friday told the Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) that he wants to be relieved of his responsibility "at the earliest" to avoid any dichotomy in running the government.

In his inaugural address to the fifth Jatiya Sangsad, he called upon the elected representatives to resolve promptly "the constitutional problem" about transfer of power and his "reversion" to the office of Chief Justice of Bangladesh.

He said, the cabinet that has been formed after the freest and fairest parliamentary election "in the last 20 years of our history" is a "party cabinet" and he is the "neutral interim president." "The cabinet will consider issues from a party angle and I would do it from a neutral angle. Hence it is essential for me to leave before any conflict of opinions has emerged", he told the Sangsad.

The Acting President said his principle task was to hold parliamentary elections within three months following his assumption of office when the former government relinquished power at the conclusive phase of the movement

"for restoring democracy after unseating autocracy". The election process which started on January 10, 1991 is now over with the opening of the fifth parliament, he noted.

In his address, Justice Shahabuddin narrated the socio-economic situation prevailing in the country. He drew attention of the elected representatives and the new government to the hard facts of socio-economic life in "one of the poor countries of the world" to save and instal the nation in a dignified and honourable position.

In an emotion-choked voice, he detailed out various measures taken by the interim government for holding free and fair election. At the same time, effective steps were taken to tackle the most pressing and immediate administrative, economic and other issues including allegations of corruption against the functionaries of the former government, jail riots and freedom of the press.

He said he intended to carry out the needed reforms in the judiciary of the country during his short tenure but the shortage of time limited



Abdur Rahman Biswas, the newly elected Speaker. — Star photo

## Speaker elected breaking tradition

By Staff Correspondent

Abdur Rahman Biswas and Sheikh Razzak Ali both belonging to the BNP have been elected Speaker and Deputy Speaker respectively of the fifth parliament.

The House was set in a division to elect the Speaker and Deputy Speaker breaking all tradition and precedence in the parliamentary history of the nation. The division was called for, when the opposition party Awami League proposed the names of Salahuddin Yusuf as speaker and Asaduzzaman as deputy speaker against the BNP can-

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## Drastic cut in unproductive spendings and import needed : Acting President

# 99 pc funds for development budget come from foreign assistance

Star Economic Report



Acting President Justice Shahabuddin addressing Parliament Friday. — Star photo

Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed in his inaugural address on Friday to the fifth Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) stressed the need for a drastic cut in unproductive expenditures and import of luxury items to reduce the current heavy dependence on external assistance.

He drew the attention of the Sangsad to the critical economic issues facing the country.

The budget deficit in 1990-91 will further escalate because of shortfall in revenue receipts and additional expenditures for payment of 10 per cent dearness allowance to the government employees and repatriation of about a hundred thousand Bangladeshis from Kuwait, he said.

The Acting President noted that attempts to reduce dependence on foreign assistance failed in the past years.

The quantum of foreign aid in 1973 budget was 74 per cent and the degree of dependence went on rising over the years. In 1989-90, 99 per cent of funds for the developing budget came from foreign aid and only one per cent could be provided from domestic resources.

He pointed out that the surplus in the revenue budget in 1989-90 stood at only Taka 0.38 billion compared with Taka 10 billion target. The revenue income was Taka 67.78 billion while revenue expenditure increased to Taka 67.40 billion in the last fiscal year. The share of domestic resources for the development budget was marginal.

About the budgetary outlook for current fiscal year, the Acting President said the projected income in the revenue budget was Taka 80.5 billion against an estimated expendi-

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## Division, walkout mark opening session

By Staff Correspondent

The fifth Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament), which met on Friday had two lively sittings with all but a few of the members present.

The election of a new speaker and a new deputy speaker took an unusually long time since the Treasury Bench and the Oppositions failed to come to a consensus and there was no option but to go for a second sitting.

The session began in a very jubilant mood. The members, elected in free and fair polls following the mass upsurge of 1990, looked confident about institutionalising democracy which was destroyed in the last nine years of autocratic rule.

The Awami League (AL) MPs were in their traditional pajama-Mujib coat. Sheikh Hasina, Leader of the Opposition was wearing a yellowish saree.

Begum Khaleda Zia, Leader of the House, were an off-white

'jamdani' saree. Before the quorum bell stopped, members of both the benches exchanged greetings.

The inaugural sitting began with Shamsul Huda Chowdhury, Speaker of the dissolved parliament, in the chair. Witty Chowdhury was able to draw attention of MPs by his remarks.

The Speaker could hardly start the business of the House when four MPs including Sheikh Selim of AL, Nurul Islam Moni, an independent, and Fazle Rabbi of Jatiya Party stood up simultaneously on points of order. The Speaker was quick to rule out their points of order but JP members staged a walkout to protest the detention of three of their leaders — deposed, President HM Ershad, former Vice-President Moudud Ahmed and former minister Mahmudul Hasan.

Rafiqul Islam Mia, BNP MP See Page 10 Col. 7



Shamsul Huda Chowdhury: Goodbye to the longest-serving Speaker. — Star photo

## Longest-serving Speaker retires

By Staff Correspondent

Shamsul Huda Chowdhury retired after being in office for six years as Speaker when the fifth Parliament elected new Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas.

Famous for his wit and humour Chowdhury told the members of parliament 'this marks the beginning of your journey, and the end of my

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Sangsad session adjourned

The Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) session was adjourned by Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas at 4 pm Thursday to meet again at 11 a.m. on April 7, reports BSS.

### Baker to visit Israel

WASHINGTON, Apr 5: US Secretary of State James Baker will visit Israel and Egypt next week in a fresh bid to resolve the Israeli-Arab crisis, the state department announced today, reports AFP.

### Kurdish protester shot dead

ISTANBUL, Apr 5: A man was shot dead outside the Iraqi consulate in Istanbul today after a group of protesters began throwing stones at the building, Turkey's semi-official Anatolian news agency said, reports Reuter.

### PLO leaders' assassin to die

TUNIS, Apr 5: Palestinian convicted of assassinating three PLO leaders in Tunisia on January 16 has been sentenced to death by a Palestinian Military court in Yemen. PLO sources in Tunis said today, reports Reuter.

## US will pull out of Iraq

GENEVA, Apr 5: US forces will withdraw from Iraq soon regardless of whether Baghdad accepts the tough UN resolution dictating the terms for an end to the conflict, a US official said today, reports Agencies.

"We're going to pull out soon. I can't give you a definite date but it's not conditioned on whether Iraq accepts the resolution", US Assistant Secretary of State John Bolton told reporters.

"If Iraq doesn't accept the resolution, they don't get a ceasefire and they don't get their oil flow turned back on, which is why we think ultimately they're going to have to accept it".

US President George Bush sent Bolton to Geneva on Thursday night to try to coordinate aid for refugees fleeing the forces of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Iraq said today that it had "totally crushed" the anti-government revolt that has swept the country in the wake of the Gulf War

and it offered a partial amnesty to Kurdish rebels.

"Iraq has totally crushed all the acts of sedition and sabotage in all the citizen of Iraq," the ruling Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) announced in a meeting chaired by President Saddam Hussein.

Amid mounting international concern over the Kurds, the RCC, quoted by the Iraqi news agency, said it was offering an amnesty to Kurdish rebels, except for those who had carried out acts of "premeditated murder, rape or theft."

Reuter reports say: Saddam Hussein discussed the suppression of Kurdish rebellion with senior aides today, the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported.

It said the meeting of the Revolution Command Council (RCC) was briefed by Vice-Chairman Izzat Ibrahim on the return of security and stability to northern towns and areas after the speedy and total collapse of the gangs of thieves

and agents.

Ibrahim, Saddam's Number Two, took charge of crushing post-Gulf War revolts by Shi'ites in south Iraq and Kurds in the North.

INA suggested the RCC may have also discussed the UN Security Council's Gulf ceasefire resolution, saying the meeting covered regional and international developments.

It gave no details. Baghdad has yet to accept the UN resolution which would strip Iraq of long-range missiles, chemical and biological weapons and impound part of its oil revenues to pay war reparations.

In New York, France, Britain and the United States pressed the UN Security Council to adopt a resolution today demanding Iraq should stop its military onslaught against Kurds.

The three countries also want Baghdad to allow humanitarian groups into Iraq, to reach those in need of help after President Saddam Hussein's forces crushed an uprising

## Seen from the Gallery

Reazuddin Ahmed

The inaugural session of the Fifth Parliament differed from previous ones in many ways.

The lively show on the first day Friday appeared to augur well for the rest of the session. Yet the division in electing the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, departing from the tradition of unanimity, marred the spirit of cooperation between the Treasury bench and the opposition. The division came as a fait accompli because of the insistence of Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina for it despite Khaleda Zia's request to withdraw the candidature of Salahuddin Yusuf.

It was anybody's guess why Sheikh Hasina opted for a defeat fully knowing the strength of the BNP in the House. It seemed that the ego domi-

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## JP MPs appear to be outcasts in Sangsad

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Party members in the fifth Parliament desperately tried to make their presence felt in the house during the inaugural session on Friday. They staged walkout twice demanding release of deposed President H.M. Ershad and other party leaders.

Members of both the Treasury Bench and the Opposition joined hands to thumb the table when the JP

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## Over half of MPs newcomers

By Staff Correspondent

More than a half of the members of the Fifth Parliament are newcomers. Reliable sources say at least 146 MPs out of 290 elected from general seats are for the first time.

Seventy-eight of the newcomers belong to the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party. In Bangladesh Awami League 44 out of 87 MPs are new faces. Out of 18 MPs in Jamaat-e-Islami, 16 are newcomers. Similarly four out of five

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## Tributes to martyrs of democracy

The Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) Friday paid tributes to 106 persons who had sacrificed their lives in the last few years during movement against autocracy, reports BSS.

The obituary reference adopted by the Jatiya Sangsad said the names of those valiant sons who had laid down their lives during the democracy movement would be written in golden letters in the history of our democratic movement.

## PSC report shows dismal picture of unemployment

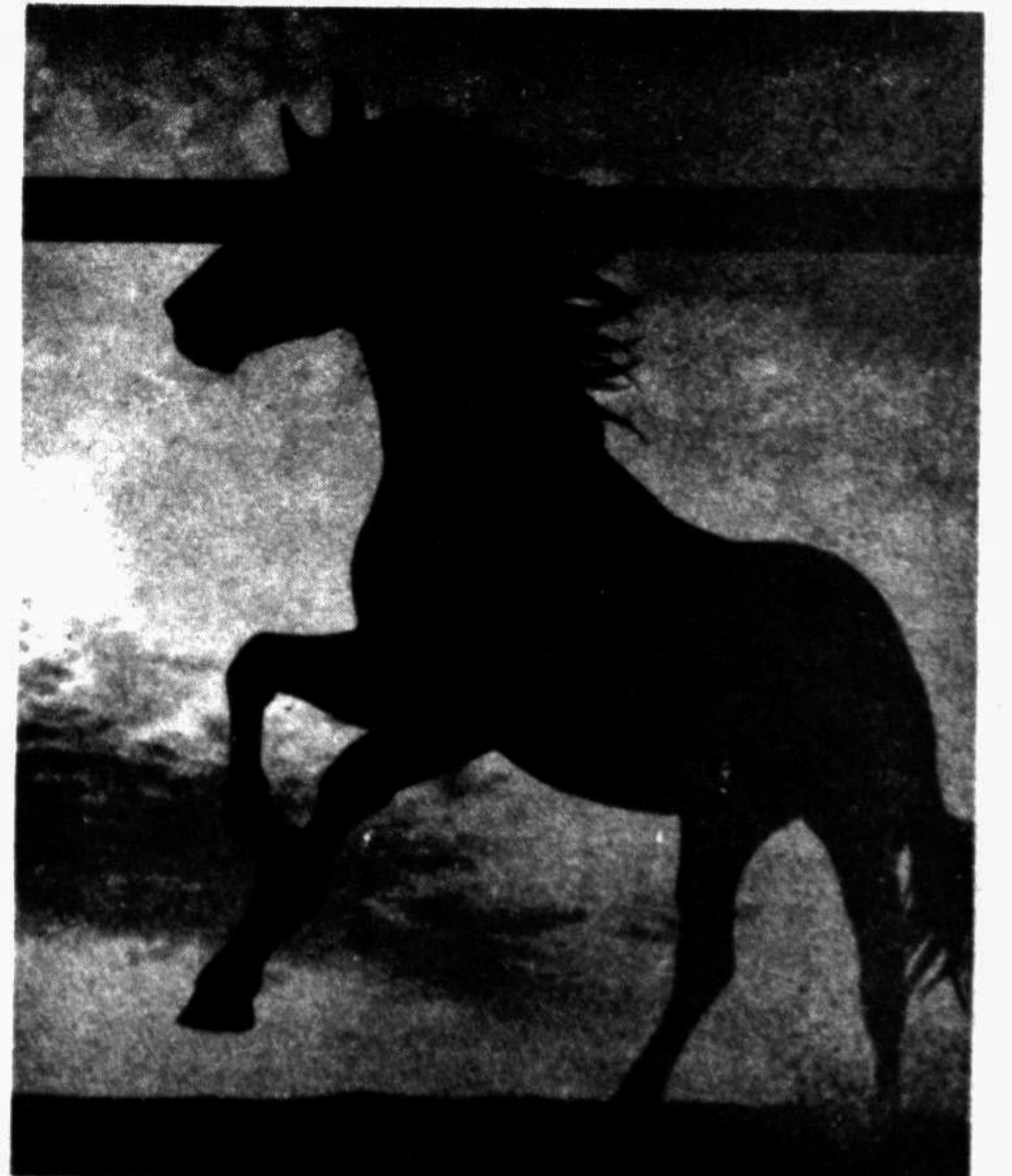
By Staff Correspondent

The Annual report of the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (PSC) showed a dismal picture of the country's unemployment situation.

The report said the number of educated applicants for the Superior Service posts was rising every year while the number of vacant posts is being reduced. PSC's annual report was made public on Friday.

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## Green Delta Never Looked Back .....



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