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The Daily Star

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VOL. 1 NO. 89 REGD. NO. DA 781

BAISAKH 6, 1398 BS,

DHAKA SATURDAY APRIL 20, 1991

SHAWAL 5, 1411 HIJRI

10 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 3.00

Special security measures taken

Ershad shifted to Central Jail

By Staff Correspondent



Deposed President H. M. Ershad was shifted to Dhaka Central Jail on Thursday night from Gulshan sub-jail. He had been interned in Gulshan sub-jail since his arrest on December 12. A chocolate colour safari clad Ershad was escorted by two senior police officials to the Central Jail at about 11-15 pm, jail sources said. His wife, Begum Raushan Ershad and son Shaad Ershad are still in Gulshan sub-jail, the sources said. The former president, who stepped down on December 6 last year in the face of a mass upsurge against his nine-year-long autocratic rule, was arrested on December 12 under the Special Powers Act. He was put under preventive detention in a

government house in posh Gulshan residential area along with Raushan Ershad and their son. The Gulshan villa was later turned into a sub-jail. Ershad has been accommodated in a two-room cell called 'purano (old) hajrat', which has been fully renovated for the former president. 'Purano hajrat' was earlier used as staff hospital. At his new place of internment, Ershad gets the privileges of first class division. He has been provided separate accommodation and cooking arrangements, jail sources said. Special security measures have been taken both inside and outside the Central Jail. Extra reinforcements of BDR and armed police are

guarding the former president inside the jail. Round-the-clock vigilance has been arranged. Outside the jail premises, special BDR and armed police battalions are waiting in vans. Jail sources said the room in which Ershad is staying is nearly 40 feet by 50 feet in size. Special arrangements have been made to cook food for Ershad under the supervision of the jail authorities within the premises of his cell, the sources said. The ousted president has been provided with four fans but no air conditioner. Asked about the possibility of providing A/C in Ershad's room, a jail source declined to make any comment. On April 10, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia

declared in the Jatiyo Sangsad (parliament) that she would take necessary steps to transfer Ershad to the Central Jail within 12 hours. Sheikh Hasina and other members of the Opposition Bench supported the move, but members of Jatiyo Party of which Ershad is chairman staged a walkout in protest. During the election campaign, BNP insisted on Ershad's transfer to the Central Jail from the post Gulshan villa. All-Party Students Unity (APSU) also demanded his transfer to the Central Jail. But Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina said, 'It does not matter where he (Ershad) stays, but he should be tried.' As the Leader of Opposition, See Page 10 Col. 1

Consensus on form of govt urgent, 5-party tells Khaleda

Leaders of the Five-party alliance Friday called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her residence and discussed different political issues including the form of government, reports UNB. The leaders stressed on initiating discussions among the leaders of the three main-line alliance and their parliamentary groups immediately to reach a consensus on the system of government. They advocated reversion to parliamentary form of government from existing presidential system to fulfil what they said outlines of the November 19 joint declaration of the 7, 8 and 5 party alliances. The leaders said that establishment of parliamentary system would institutionalise democracy in the country. Begum Zia told the alliance leaders that the issue was being discussed in the party hierarchy. The Five-party leaders who called on the Prime Minister included Rashed Khan Menon MP, Hasanul Huq Inu, Kazi Arif See Page 10 Col. 3

Inside today

International



Sir David Lean, the British director who won 28 Oscars for his films in a distinguished career of half a century is dead. Page 5

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Business

According to a report released by the Statistics Department of Bangladesh Bank, the country earned Tk 4,893 crore from exports last year. Page 8

NEWS BRIEFS

IJO session begins today

The 15th session of the International Joint Organisation (IJO) committee on projects begins today (Saturday), reports BSS.

The three-day session will be attended by representatives from exporting and importing member countries, observer countries UN agencies, FAO, ITC, UNIDO, under ESCAP, inter-governmental organisations and non-governmental organisations.

2 killed in city

Two persons were killed and another was seriously injured when an auto-rickshaw collided head on with a speeding truck near Agargaon crossing at 11-15 a.m. Friday, police said, reports UNB.

Kuwait: Human rights abuse

LONDON, Apr 19: The Kuwait government today acknowledged that human rights abuses took place after Iraq's withdrawal from the Emirate and said offenders would be brought to justice, reports Reuter.

Rust jailed for attempt to kill

HAMBURG, Apr 19: Matthias Rust, the German youth who in 1987 embarrassed the Soviet military by landing his light plane in Red Square was jailed for two and half years here Friday for attempting to kill a nurse who rejected his sexual advances, reports AFP.



Eid congregation at the National Eidgah in Dhaka Wednesday.

—Star photo

Kurds, Baghdad open talks

TEHERAN, Apr 19: Representatives of Iraq's main Kurdish rebel groups have been holding negotiations with the Iraqi government in Baghdad since Thursday, a source close to the rebels said here today, reports AFP. The source said four members of the Kurdistan Front, an umbrella organisation for the rebels, were demanding the release of all prisoners "before any accord."

Foreign Minister Ahmad Hussein Al-Khodair is representing the Iraqi Government, the source said, declining to be named. Earlier AP said: A senior

United Nations officials said Friday that an agreement signed with Baghdad authorities to help Kurdish refugees return home would remain an "empty shell" if governments withhold urgently needed funds, reports AP. Sadruddin Aga Khan, who is in charge of humanitarian efforts in the Gulf, said there would need to be "very serious consultations" before any UN involvement in the Kurdish refugee camps planned by the American military.

He told a press conference the UN did not have the resources to manage such a massive operation at short notice. See Page 10 Col. 7

"We are no match for hundreds of (US) helicopters and thousands of troops," he said. He added that conflicting American and U.N. plans for the refugees would likely be reconciled in the future. But he said he did not know when or how.

Sadruddin and Iraq's new Foreign Minister Ahmed Hussein Khudayer Al-Sammaraei on Thursday signed an agreement on joint relief efforts for Iraq's uprooted during and after the Gulf War. It provides for the establishment of UN relief centres to help refugees return home. See Page 10 Col. 7

Big fire in city

By Staff Correspondent. Two incidents of devastating fire in the city during the last two days of the Eid vacation caused heavy damage to property. No casualty was reported.

A fire broke out on Friday afternoon at Ramkrishna Mission Road and gutted a printing and packaging complex. According to Fire Service sources, the fire originated at the Link International Packaging and Printing Ltd at 3-48 pm and soon engulfed the whole establishment including the adjacent staff quarters. Six See Page 10 Col. 4

5 killed, 24 hurt as train hits another

From Our Staff Correspondent. CHITTAGONG, Apr 19: At least 24 persons were killed and 24 others injured when two passenger trains met an accident at the Chittagong Railway Station Tuesday last. Official sources said, an incoming train from Sylhet, 104-down, crashed into three rear coaches of the outgoing train Sagarika, bound for Chandpur. In the mishap the rearmost compartment of the incoming train was torn away killing five persons including a woman and two Railway employees, and injuring 24 other passengers.

A four-member probe body See Page 10 Col. 4. Of the injured, 12 were admitted to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) and two to the Chittagong Railway Hospital. Ten other injured persons were released after first aid.

Eid-ul-Fitr celebrated

Eid-ul-Fitr, the greatest religious festival of the Muslims, was celebrated throughout the country on Wednesday with due solemnity, reports UNB.

In the capital, the main Eid congregations was held at the National Eidgah at High Court premises where Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed offered his prayer. Several ministers and diplomats from Muslim countries also offered their prayers in the Eidgah. Khetib of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque Moulana Obaudul Huq led the prayer.

In all the congregations See Page 10 Col. 7. The sources said at least two people — one civilian and a BDR jawan — were seriously injured in sporadic exchange of fire which continued till this afternoon. Exchange of fire between BDR and BSF were also reported from Dharmada and

4 including BDR man killed BSF incursion into Meherpur village

MEHERPUR, Apr 19: At least three Bangladesh nationals, including one BDR personnel, were killed in an exchange of fire with Indian Border Security Forces (BSF) at the frontier outpost of Kazipur in Gangni upazila today, reports UNB.

BDR sources said the skirmish erupted early today when the Indian BSF opened indiscriminate fire on Bangladesh territory.

The two civilians killed were identified as Akram Hossain, son of Osman Ghani, and Mokbul Hossain, son of Kasimuddin, both from Kazipur village.

BDR Naitk Subedar Abdur Rauf who received bullet injury during the exchange of fire died while he was being taken to Gangni hospital.

The sources said at least two people — one civilian and a BDR jawan — were seriously injured in sporadic exchange of fire which continued till this afternoon.

Exchange of fire between BDR and BSF were also reported from Dharmada and

Chilmari border outposts today, BDR sources said.

The border skirmish today was a sequel to another border clash last Sunday in which a BDR personnel was killed when BSF opened fire on Badipara village of Meherpur district, local people said.

Meanwhile, BDR sources in Dhaka this evening said that a BSF personnel was killed in today's clash and the body was lying on Bangladesh territory until evening.

Two civilians were reportedly killed and two BDR jawans injured during the clash, they said. The injured BDR jawans were being sent to Dhaka for treatment.

Local people said Indian BSF have mobilised additional troops on their side of the border.

The body of the BSF personnel, killed in today's clash, was handed over during a flag meeting between BDR and the Indian BSF at 7 this evening.

During the meeting, BDR lodged a claim with the Indian BSF for Tk 50 lakh as compensation for damages caused to Bangladesh nationals.

Hasina happy at moving Ershad to jail

Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, Sheikh Hasina, called on the Acting President, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, at his official residence in Dhaka on Friday, reports BSS.

Sheikh Hasina conveyed Eid greetings to the Acting President as she could not attend the Eid reception at Bangabhaban because of her indisposition.

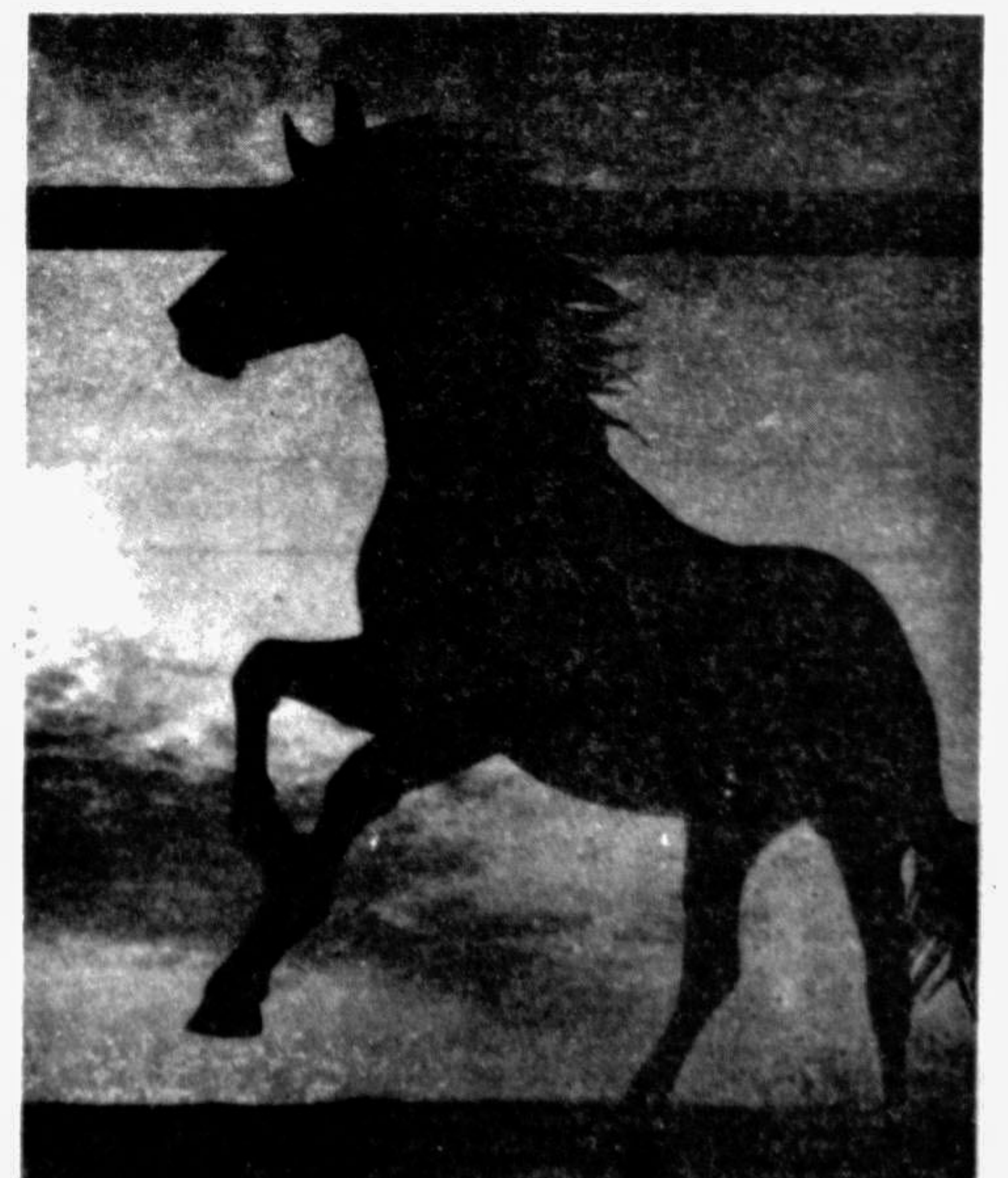
The Awami League chief expressed her great satisfaction that former President Ershad, who is facing trial on several charges, has been shifted to Dhaka Central Jail.

Awami League leader Mohammad Nasim MP, was present.

Pahela Baishakh celebrated

Pahela Baishakh, the first day of the Bengali new year, was celebrated throughout the country amid traditional pomp and festivities, reports UNB. Various socio-cultural See Page 10 Col. 3

Green Delta Never Looked Back



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Japan-Soviet summit fails

TOKYO, Apr 19: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev undertook today to find a solution to a territorial dispute with Japan given time, but said only a compromise would lead to a settlement, reports AFP. "The best way to find a solution is to establish an atmosphere of mutual trust," he told a press conference here early today.

The conference came after Gorbachev and Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu signed a

joint communique at the end of three days of marathon talks in which they undertook to continue negotiations on a peace treaty ending World War II hostilities and settle national boundaries over the Kurile Islands.

The four islands to the north of Japan were seized by the Soviet Union at the end of World War II.

Gorbachev refused to say how long these negotiations would take, stating only that

the two sides had "lost a lot of time" by setting preconditions and taking an intransigent stance on the issue.

"My experience tells me the most dangerous and unproductive thing is when you draw up a model and try to impose it in an artificial way," he added.

"Whenever you have an ultimatum coming from one side, nothing will work," Gorbachev said, alluding to Japan's refusal to grant financial aid to

Moscow while the four islands remain under soviet control.

Explaining his decision not to return two of the smallest islands as agreed in a 1956 treaty signed when the two countries reestablished diplomatic ties, Gorbachev said more than 30 years after the event there was no point in reviving "missed" opportunities.

Japan rejected the original offer and Moscow withdrew its See Page 10 Col. 4