

## Prices of essentials register rise

Star Economic Report

The prices of essentials in the market registered a rise by 3.21 per cent after the announcement of the proposed budget, according to a survey conducted by the Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB).

The tax proposals under the budget will however be effective from July 1 after the approval by the Parliament.

The soyabean price marked the highest rise by 17.64 per cent, the CAB said. It started rising at least two weeks before the announcement of the budget. Soyabean oil now sells at Tk 40 per kg in the retail market, the survey added.

Mustard oil recorded a price rise by 10.11 per cent. It now sells at Tk 62 per kg. The coconut oil price rose by 13.52 per cent.

The price of egg only remained unchanged.

The prices of other essentials also showed an upward trend. Rice (fine) price went up by 1.97 per cent while the

prices of coarse varieties were up by 1.05 per cent.

The price of flour increased by 1.38 per cent and, the prices of dal and spices shot up by 3.21 per cent and 7.34 per cent respectively. Vegetables were dearer by 10.33 per cent and beef, by 1.44 per cent. The prices of different kinds of fish went up by 4.79 per cent, soap by 1.53 per cent and betel leaves by 9.09 per cent.

CAB said the consumers expected that the prices of some essentials would decline after the announcement of the budget. But the prices of all the commodities shot up, although taxes were proposed to be reduced on some of the commodities.

CAB said the government should inform the people about the enhancement and reduction of duties and tax rates, proposed under the budget, and this potential impact on the price levels.



This is not a road block put up by striking transport workers. Trucks are regularly kept parked at the entrance of the busy thoroughfare in front of Nawab Yusuf Market at Naya Bazar in the city. Policemen on duty seldom intervene to effect a discipline on the normal flow of traffic by removing the obstruction. Transport workers say they have no parking place at Naya Bazar, a busy commercial area in the old city. And they are forced to keep their trucks in this way, some drivers say. —Star photo

## Strike aggravates power situation

By Staff Correspondent

Power supply was disrupted in more areas of Dhaka city and elsewhere in the country Tuesday aggravating the situation.

The disruptions were caused by a 72-hour strike of the workers and employees of the Power Development Board (PDB) which began Sunday.

PDB union called the strike to realise their five-point demands.

In Dhaka city, more areas were affected by power disruption causing sufferings to the people. Power supply to many localities including Nawabpur, Thattar Bazar, Siddique Bazar, Basabo, Lalmitia and a part of Mirpur was disrupted yesterday.

Gopibagh, Ramkrishna Mission Road, Fulbaria, part of Maghbazar, Siddheswari and other areas remained without power since Monday morning.

Suffering of the city dwellers was multiplied by the scarcity of water caused by power failures that affected the domestic water pumps.

Industrial belt of Narayanganj and Tongi were also affected by the power disruption that hampered production. Vast areas of Narayanganj town remained without power till last night.

In Chittagong, three 33 kv power lines went out of operation for which most of the city plunged into darkness. Production in the industries was also affected.

Power disruptions were also reported from Comilla, Bogra, Rajshahi and Khulna.

A PDB source said that the strike is scheduled to be over at 6 am today (Wednesday) and that the authorities hope to restore power supply as soon as the workers resume duties.

### IDA

From Page 1 Col. 8 projects - three in agriculture sector and one in infrastructure sector according to a government handout.

Ambassador A H S Ataul Karim and World Bank Vice President Atilla Karaosmanoglu signed the agreements yesterday on behalf of the Government of Bangladesh and the IDA respectively.

The agreements are on shallow tube-well and low lift pump irrigation project, national small irrigation development project, agricultural support services project and third inland water transport project.

Vice President of World Bank Atilla Karaosmanoglu expressed satisfaction at the improvement of aid climate for Bangladesh since the establishment of the democratic government. Aid to Bangladesh would be significantly enhanced if the implementation of projects improves, he added.

Ambassador Ataul Karim thanked World Bank for its role in mobilising donors support for Bangladesh in the recently-held Aid Consortium met at Paris. The democratic government attaches top priority to agriculture sector. Ambassador Karim said and hoped that donors would provide increased assistance.

### Jamaat

From Page 1 Col. 8 Internal resources had decreased by Tk 260 crore and revenue surplus decreased by Tk. 341 crore.

The council also demanded increase in subsidy in the agricultural sector.

The council expressed its satisfaction as the rural development, flood control and water resource, education, electricity, gas and transport sector have been given due prominence.

It expressed concern over the decrease of allocation in the industrial sector. The allocation in this sector in 1986-87 fiscal year was Tk. 709 crore which stood this year at only Tk. 200 crore and in the new budget it stood at Tk. 118 crore.

The Jamaat working council hoped the budget of a democratic government would be more people-oriented than the past and would reflect the hopes and aspirations of the people.

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## Benazir charged with contempt of parliament

ISLAMABAD, June 18: Speaker of the National Assembly Gohar Ayub Khan formally charged Pakistan's main Opposition Leader Benazir Bhutto Tuesday with committing contempt of the Parliament by calling it a bogus House, reports AFP.

He held in order a privilege motion tabled Monday by several members of the ruling Islamic Democratic Alliance (IJI) on Ms Bhutto's remarks at a press conference here Wednesday that 70 members were elected fictitiously in the October 1990 elections.

The elections were stolen and the IJI robbed her People's Democratic Alliance (PDA) of its victory, she had said, adding that the presence of 70 strangers has made the National Assembly a bogus house.

Ms. Bhutto, who defended herself, during the daylong debate in the lower house, would only substitute bogus with 'fictitious' while reiterating her claim that the elections were massively rigged.

The Speaker, who had reserved his ruling Monday, said utterance of the word bogus or fictitious by the leader of the

opposition, who had been herself leader of the house and prime minister, for this August and sovereign house can not go without taking exception.

Accusing MPs of rigging in the elections reflects on their conduct, lowers their prestige and tends to obstruct them in the performance of their duties by diminishing the respect due to them, Khan said.

The country's constitution says that election to a house can be not called in question save by an election petition, he said, adding that the defeated PDA candidates were at liberty to file petitions before the election tribunals.

Charging the members with rigging of the elections constitutes breach of privilege and contempt of the house, he ruled.

Holding the motion in order, Khan referred it to the House Privilege Committee, which will give its report after hearing the parties.

Ms Bhutto, who spoke for 75 minutes opposing the motion and defending her assertion, told the house Monday that she was being targeted for speaking the truth.

The 70 'fictitious' members Ms Bhutto listed at her Wednesday news conference included Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, his brother Shahbaz Sharif and several ministers besides a number of senior IJI leaders.

She said the government should resign, fresh elections be held under a neutral caretaker set up and electoral reforms be introduced to avoid rigging in the future.

Some IJI leaders, calling her move anti-democratic, said Ms Bhutto should be tried for sedition as under the country's constitution contempt of parliament is tantamount to treason.

"I am being targeted for speaking the truth," Ms Bhutto said in an emotionally charged address.

"I have paid the price in the past and I am ready to pay the price even now" she said substantiating her statement with press clippings and reports by foreign election observers.

Some 45 PDA deputies, comprising 20 percent of the 217-member house, had endorsed her remarks.

## JS debate on budget

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Would it be just to create more educated unemployed to do anti-social activities out of frustration or to create productive manpower? he asked.

He said the law and order situation had deteriorated due to corruption in law enforcing agencies, and suggested to utilise the services of the armed forces at peace time to maintain law and order.

Col (ret) Akbar called for lowering bank interest rates and prices of gas and petroleum products to help lower cost of production in mills and factories. He urged the government to extract hard rock and coal from the northern part of the country to reduce imports.

A former minister, Col Akbar called for inculcating patriotic feeling by all. He criticised doctors and nurses for ill treatment of patients in

government hospitals and said they should realise that they received education under a highly subsidised system. He called for prohibiting use of plastic bags to encourage the use of jute bags. He also thanked the Finance Minister Saifur Rahman for keeping new taxes to the minimum.

Col (ret) Shawkat Ali of AL urged the government to be democratic in its words and deeds and said that chairmen of district councils and mayors of municipal corporations should not be nominated. For an interim period, however, members of parliament may be made chairmen of district councils, he said.

He urged the government to define the duties and responsibilities of MPs by a law so that they could fulfil their obligations to their constituents without interfering in others' activities.

## India poised for unstable govt

From Page 1 Col. 4

taken by the newly-elected members of Parliament. "You cannot constitute a parliamentary party until you know how many members it will have," Mukherjee said.

Rao said Congress would emerge strong enough to manage the country on its own, even without a majority.

"It will be possible to form the government and run it. But it is necessary on certain issues to find support from other parties. On the whole, I don't expect any difficulty running the government," he said on national television.

He said the leadership question would be decided "in two or three days. We are now building up a consensus in the party."

With 453 of the 511 contested seats declared, Congress won 215 and its closest rival, the Hindu right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party, won 96, Indian television reported.

The Janata Dal led by former Prime Minister VP Singh was the chief loser, winning 43 compared with 143 it won in 1989.

Singh, who split from the Congress Party in 1987 accusing its government of corruption, also did not rule out cooperating with the new government. But he said he preferred to be in the opposition.

"The people need an opposition," he said on television. "Otherwise, it will be left to the BJP."

Mukherjee, the Congress spokesman, said contacts have begun with the Left Front, comprised of two communist parties and several other socialist factions. The front, which was allied with Singh's Janata Dal, won 46 seats, according to incomplete returns.

The centrist party, which has ruled India for all but four of the 44 years since independence, will dominate Parliament but was projected to fall about 40 seats short of the 256 needed for a majority, state-run television said.

Small-party allies and independents could give Congress and additional 20 supporters in the Lok Sabha, or the House of the People. It would therefore need to court coalition partners from among political rivals.

Possible partners from a leftist combine and the centrist National Front alliance of former Prime Minister VP Singh showed initial hesitation about joining a binding coalition with the Congress.

Jaipal Reddy, a spokesman for Singh, said a pre-election understanding between the National Front and the leftists would continue to operate. "We will continue to function as one political entity," he said.

### DU VC

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of the fifth Senate of the university at the Administrative Building.

"I become shocked to find the students who unitedly fought against autocracy, engage themselves in bloody confrontation at the instigation of evil forces," the VC said in an emotion-choked voice.

Prof Moniruzzaman said the situation on the Dhaka University was "explosive" and may turn into bloody struggles any moment with the DUCSU and hall union elections nearing.

Different student bodies were trying to increase their influence and dominance on the campus by arms power.

The Vice-Chancellor reiterated his administrations neutrality and said commitments by the political parties and efficiency of the law enforcing agencies were must to free the campus from terrorism.

Congress has said it is willing to consider an alliance with any party except the Hindu right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party, its chief rival, which was coming second in the election tallies.

The current elections were held 18 months after the previous general elections, in which the Congress and Gandhi were ousted from power by Singh's alliance.

Nearly 300 people were killed during the campaign and the voting, making it the most violent balloting in India's history.

On Tuesday, a parliamentary candidate from Punjab state was killed in a bomb blast in his home. Press Trust of India reported.

Elections in Punjab are scheduled Saturday for both Parliament and the state legislature. Punjab was given a later date than the rest of the nation in order to strengthen security measures.

Sikh militias campaigning for an independent nation have vowed to stop the elections. So far they have killed three candidates for Parliament and at least 19 for the state legislature.

The latest victim, Shaminder Singh, belonged to a moderate Sikh party

### JP public meeting today

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Party will hold a public meeting today (Wednesday) at 3 pm at Baitul Mukarram premises demanding the release of its Chairman H M Ershad, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and other party leaders.

Maudud Ahmed and Shah Moazzem Hossain, Acting Chairman and Secretary General respectively of the party, in a joint statement issued on Tuesday urged all to join the meeting to make the party programmes a success.

### City College polls peaceful

By Staff Correspondent

Elections to the Dhaka City College Students Union were held peacefully Tuesday.

A total of 188 candidates from 11 panels and two independents contested for the 21-seats of the union.

The election to the students union was held after a break of 34 years.

Casting of votes was held from 8 am to 2 pm amid tight security measures.

Till writing of this report at 11.10 pm, counting of votes was going on.

### Pak Judge

From Page 1 Col. 4

mismanagement.

He was trying Ms. Bhutto's husband, Asif Ali Zardari, along with her top aide and former chief minister of Sindh province Qaim Ali Shah, and Masroor Ahsan, a senator and chief of the PPP in this southern city.

Zardari, jailed since October 10, is charged with abetting the abduction of a London-based Pakistani businessman and allegedly extorting a huge ransom.

The other PPP leaders on trial were among more than 50 people arrested in connection with firing on camps of the ethnic Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) in August last year that left 29 people dead.

Junejo had rejected the bail plea of Shah, who is a deputy in the Sindh provincial assembly. Shah was later released on parole to attend the current assembly session.

Sammilita Oikkyia Parishad in a similar move announced a protest rally at 9 am in the town.

Islami Chhatra Shibir condemned the decision on the meetings and alleged that it was an act of diverting the present movement.

Shibir urged the Vice Chancellor to withdraw the decision to hold the meetings and said that the authorities would be responsible if any untoward incident took place.

Meanwhile, alternative classes of the university were held on Tuesday for the third consecutive day. About 100 teachers are conducting the classes.

## The Midnight File

### IAEA team to visit Baghdad

VIENNA, June 18 : A new mission of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will visit Baghdad next Saturday to inspect Iraq's nuclear capability, a spokesman said here today, reports AFP.

### 8 killed in Pak explosion

PESHAWAR, June 18 : At least eight people, most Afghan refugees, were killed and 18 injured in a powerful bomb blast today at a restaurant in Landi Kotal, a town bordering Afghanistan, witnesses said, reports AFP.

### Jamuna devours more areas

Massive erosion by the surging Jamuna devoured several villages in Manikganj and Sirajganj leaving some 1,000 families homeless while weather experts Tuesday forecast early flood in country's eastern parts, reports UNB.

### BCIC urea sales cases

## Shahabuddin, 7 others acquitted

By Staff Correspondent

The Divisional Special Judge Mohammad Ali Khan on Tuesday honourably acquitted former BCIC Chairman Col (Retd) Syed Shahabuddin Ahmed and seven others implicated in four cases related to the export of urea.

The others acquitted honourably are Murad Waiz former Commercial Director BCIC, GE Saleuddin former GM (Export) BCIC, now GM Kohinor Battery, Ahmed Yakub Jamil, Addl Chief Manager (Export) BCIC, Aminur Rashid, Managing Director of Desh Trading Company, AH Bashiruddin Ahmed, Managing Director of Unitrade International Limited, Shahidullah, Managing Director of Octagonal Limited and Sarwar Kamal, Managing Director of Macdonalds Bangladesh Limited.

They had been charged with the misappropriation of US dollars 3,40,000 equivalent to Taka 10 crore by sale of 80,000 tonnes of urea to four parties at \$122 per metric tonne when the international price was allegedly \$160 per metric tonne.

The Court held that the prosecution had failed to prove the charges brought against the accused persons and acquitted them after a long trial.

The FIR and chargesheet were filed by the Bureau of Anti Corruption at the direction of the Director General of the Bureau of Anti Corruption.

Setabuddin Ahmed, Special Public Prosecutor appeared for state.

These false and fabricated cases were started on 17 June, 1989 on orders of deposed President Ershad.

Col Shahabuddin had hardly served three and a half months

as Chairman BCIC before being transferred over telephone as Chairman, Bangladesh Jute Corporation on 22 January, 1989.

As Chairman Col Shahabuddin had ordered the closure of BCIC, Eskaton Rest House and re-instated 54 officers and staff of BCIC earlier terminated.

Col Shahabuddin also reported the gross misuse of transport, manpower and resources of the BCIC to the deposed President on 9 January, 1989.

Murad Waiz was suspended while the other two officers continued to serve in the BCIC.

Col Shahabuddin was made OSD on 13th May, 1989, suspended on 14th May in Bangladesh Jute Corporation. On May 21, 1989, his passport was seized followed by massive slander sponsored by the deposed President in the government controlled media.

He was re-instated on 21 September, 1989 and reverted back to Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation only to be terminated immediately.

Two cases were started in November, 1989 against him related to the period he had successfully served as Chairman Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation. In both these cases he was honourably acquitted in October, 1990.

In all six cases were started against Col Shahabuddin and in all six he has been honourably acquitted.

Barrister AR Yusuf represented Col Shahabuddin in all six cases.

The same Court is also trying former BCIC Chairman and Industries Secretary Mosharrar Hossain and his wife Zeenat Mosharrar.

## Budget termed pragmatic

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ruption through establishing accountability in public actions, increase self-reliance through domestic resource mobilisation and some other pragmatic steps.

Hossain said this year's budget proposed to reverse the trend of unwieldy growth in unproductive public spending. The revenue expenditure under the revised budget for 1990-91 was kept almost at the original level, while the revised estimate of the development expenditure was higher by Tk 453 crore, he said. Such stringent budgetary changes were long due, he added.

On domestic resource mobilisation, Dr Hossain appreciated government's fiscal measures aimed at 554 crore Taka more revenue earning for fiscal 91-92. This will increase the financing from internal resources to Tk 974 crore, which would be nearly 13 per cent of the development outlay. This would be a modest improvement of the situation over the past but would be difficult to achieve the target of self-reliance mentioned in the budget, he observed.

Termining political opposition as a major constraint to domestic resource mobilisation, he said if government succeeds in raising more revenues from "upper income groups" and providing benefits to the low income groups through appropriate public expenditures programme, the opposition forces will weaken.

Dr Mahubb, however, said that upper income groups evade income taxes through "settlements" with tax collection machinery and indirect taxes are mostly shifted to consumers. He said this year's budget does not suggest any remedy to this trend.

He said though the Minister talked about expanding income tax base through increasing efficiency in tax collection, the enhanced earnings from this have been proposed to increase by only Taka eight crore on the basis of existing taxes while the collection from indirect taxes will rise by Taka 471 crore, he added.

Dr Mahubb shared the views of the Finance Minister that priorities must be given to education, health and agriculture with a view to achieving the goal of poverty alleviation.

He said allocation for the education sector is only two per cent of our national income compared to 3.4 per cent in India, 3.2 per cent in Thailand. "We need to give a big push on education and that is why marginal increase in allocation for the sector will not suffice," he said.

On the issue of foreign aid utilisation, Dr Mahubb said the financing of public expenditure has been enhanced this year and thus dependence on foreign aid for development continues to remain at an alarmingly high level. He said rising share of foreign loans will raise our debt servicing liability.

"If we fail to use foreign aid judiciously, as in the past, we shall impose additional burden on future generations," he added.

(Details on Business Page)

### BCL-JCD clash in Sirajganj 30 injured

SIRAJGANJ, June 18 : Thirty students, including two JCD leaders, were injured as the student activists of Awami League and BNP fought pitched battle here today, reports UNB.

### Yeltsin

From Page 1 Col. 7

they will resist radical economic reform plans proposed to encourage a Western rescue programme for the Soviet Union.

Prime Minister Pavlov, who recently accused Western banks of mounting a "credit blockade" against Moscow, told parliament on Monday he had no faith in a plan worked out by economist Grigory Yavlinsky in association with US economists.

The plan, hammered out over three weeks at Harvard University, has been submitted to Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin.