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Dhaka Day by Day



Darkness descended
 upon a family when the
 rainbow of joy was only
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NEWS BRIEFS

PM addresses today

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will address the nation over radio and television at 7.15 pm today (Sunday). The address will be made on the eve of the Victory Day on December 16, reports BSS.

Audit report submitted

The Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh, Golam Kibria, today submitted the audit and accounts report of the foreign missions, offices of Bangladesh Biman and branches of nationalised banks stationed abroad to President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban. The reports will be placed before the Jatiya Sangsad for evaluation, reports BSS.

Discussion on terrorism

By DU Correspondent

A three-day discussion on the topic 'terrorism is the Hindrance to the Transition to Democracy' will be held at TSC Square from today (Sunday) at 3 pm. The participants are, among others, Work Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah, Dr Kamal Hossain, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Rashed Khan Menon, Hassanul Haque Inu, Poet Samzur Rahman, Fazl Ahmed, Prof. Momtazuddin Ahmed, Ahmed Safa, Prof. Emajuddin Ahmed and Dr Anwarullah Chowdhury.



HOMAGE: People from all walks of life gathered at the Martyred Intellectuals' Memorial at Mirpur in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Glowing tributes to martyrs

By Staff Correspondent

The nation paying deep homage to the martyred intellectuals observed the Shaheed Budhijit Dibash (Martyred Intellectuals' Day) pledging to build a society they envisioned. The observance of the day was specially significant this year as the country was observing the day, freed from the shackles of the autocratic rule foisted on the nation nine years ago.

The day's programmes opened with the laying of wreaths at the Mirpur Memorial erected in memory of the martyrs, since early morning. Besides, discussions and cultural functions were held at different places.

Blood donation and exhibition were organised by different political parties and various socio-cultural organisations and professional groups in observance of the day. National flag and flags of the parties and organisations were hoisted half-mast.

Political parties including the Awami League and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party hoisted black flags at the party offices. Bangladesh Radio and TV put up special programmes on the occasion. Newspapers published special supplements in remembrance of the day.

The Mirpur Memorial witnessed a sombre look with streams of people carrying

banners and placing wreaths since early in the morning.

Local unit of the Awami League erected a dais adjacent to the monument. Awami League central leaders Dr Kamal Hossain and Kader Siddiqi addressed the gathering. Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal also put up a dais. A number of cultural organisations including theatre groups staged dramas held musical scores and exhibited paintings on the theme of the Liberation War.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas placed wreaths at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Memorial at 6.30 am. Biswas stood in silence at the altar of the monument to pay homage

to the martyrs while the President's guard of regiment played the last post.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia placed wreath at the memorial as the day dawned.

She stood there for a few minutes in solemn silence to pay her homage to the martyrs. Ministers, Mayor of the Dhaka City Corporation, state ministers and members of parliament belonging to the ruling party were present on the occasion.

Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Razzak Ali placed wreaths at the memorial in the morning. The BNP

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Guard against trouble-makers, urges BNP

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukdar on Saturday called for invigorating and consolidating democracy in the country to pay true homage to the martyred intellectuals.

"We can show the best respect for the departed souls of the martyred intellectuals if we can firmly establish democracy in the country," he said while speaking at a discussion in memory of the martyred intellectuals.

Organised by Bangladesh Nationalist Party, the discussion was held at its Dhanmardi Central Office. Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandakar Mosharruf Hossain, Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Environment, Forest, Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al-Noman, Chief Whip Khandakar Delwar Hossain, Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal President and Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation Mirza Abbas Juba Dal General Secretary and State Minister for

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Don't smear sovereignty AL warns PM

By Staff Correspondent

The Acting President of Awami League Abdus Samad Azad Saturday voiced a note of warning to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia against any attempt to stain the sovereignty of the country.

Speaking at a discussion organised by the party marking the Martyred Intellectuals Day, he said, "you (Begum Zia) should not smear the sovereignty of the country and mislead the nation."

Launching an attack on the ruling party for trimming the Victory Day celebrations, he said "we still do not know why the Victory Day celebration was cut short and who they wanted to make happy?"

The acting chief of Awami League said the nation was now united to preserve the values and ideals of the Liberation War.

The government of Ziaur Rahman and even the autocratic government of Ershad did not postpone the Victory Day, parade of the Armed Forces. He said adding that the ruling party could organise the celebration in consultation

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Himalayas still rising

WASHINGTON, Dec 14: Mount Everest and other peaks in the 1,500-mile (2,400 km) long Himalayan chain are still rising, US and Nepalese scientists said on Friday, reports Reuters.

The 29,029-foot (8,848-metre) Mount Everest and a few other peaks are rising by one to four mm (0.04 to 0.16 inch) a year — at most the width of a telephone cord — scientists from the University of Colorado and the Nepalese government said in a statement.

Some Himalayan moun-

tains have risen a total of half a meter (yard) since the last survey was taken in 1847, but erosion caused by rivers in the lowlands may be stripping the entire chain of about five mm (2 inch) in height, they said.

"What is actually happening is that the mountains are going up, and the valleys are going down. There are no rivers eroding the top of Everest," Colorado Geology Professor Roger Bilham said.

He said the survey was not taken to resolve controversies. Mount Everest's stature

as the world's highest mountain has been challenged by scientists since a 1987 survey said another Himalayan mountain, may be 29,068 feet (8,859 metres) high.

The Himalayan chain is being squeezed upward as the Indian continent pushes against the Asian continent and during earthquakes the Himalayas rise more abruptly, the scientists said.

The earthquake that struck in the Himalayan foothills of India in October probably caused an area to

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AL to boycott Bangabhaban on Victory Day

Awami League Saturday condemned the government for not observing the Victory Day on December 16 in a befitting manner and decided to boycott the day's official function at Bangabhaban, reports UNB.

A resolution adopted at a meeting of the party's central committee said the people expected that the 20th anniversary of the Victory Day should be observed with due importance but they were frustrated at the government's

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Anti-smuggling drive may be deferred again

By Staff Correspondent

The government has again decided that the nationwide anti-smuggling drive scheduled to begin from December 17 be deferred till December 31, a Home Ministry source said Saturday night.

The anti-smuggling drive and operation against the contraband items will now begin from January 1, the source added.

An official announcement in this regard is expected to be made within a couple of days, he said adding that a list identifying the contraband items would also be made public soon.

A joint statement signed by 11 leaders of various shopowners associations said that, an

agreement was reached between the government and the representatives of the shopowners at a meeting at the conference room of the Home Ministry Saturday evening.

The meeting was attended by high officials of Home and Commerce ministries and by the leaders of shopowners associations.

During the five-hour meeting the leaders of the associations made some commitments to help the government anti-smuggling drive. According to the commitment, the shopowners pledged that shopowners will not purchase, accept, sell or store any com-

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Press most free in India, Bangladesh

WASHINGTON, Dec 14: Only in India and Bangladesh are the news media "most free" Freedom House, which monitors the state of freedom around the world, says in its latest annual report, says PTI.

In Bhutan, says Freedom House, the media is "partly free" while in Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, it is "least free".

Freedom House says that restrictions on the media decreased in many countries in 1991. A significant exception to this trend was that the news media were "stringently controlled" for 40 days during the war against Iraq, but most Americans, when polled, approved wartime censorship and even after the fighting stopped.

Journalists reported little of what was blacked out dur-

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Chance for pact with workers brightens

By Nurul Kabir

Bilateral discussion between the Textile Ministry and the leaders of public sector cotton and textile mills workers yesterday has created a fair chance for signing an agreement within December 18.

It may contribute to withdrawal of the 72 hours of road and rail barricade programme of the industrial workers scheduled to begin from 6 am of December 22.

The jute mills workers and the public sector cotton and textile mills workers earlier jointly announced the programme to press home their 8-point and 6-point charters of demands respectively while the Sramik Karmachari Otkhya Parishad (SKOP) announced a 48-hour work stoppage from the same date.

Major demands of all these three trade bodies are almost identical. Those include halt to denationalisation of the public sector industries, fixation of minimum wages for the industrial workers at Taka 1400 and repeal of the labour laws that go against the interests of the workers. Government has already declared that it had no immediate plan for disinvestment of the jute industries. On the other hand, after two days

of meetings between the Jute Minister and the leaders of Paikal Sramik Karmachari Sangram Parishad, the concerned parties have reached a consensus on rest of the issues of the jute mills workers' 8-point charter of demands resulting in forming a draft committee on December 12 to prepare the text of the agreement to be signed before December 22.

According to competent sources, the Textile Minister Major Abdul Mannan (Retd) was eager to go for signing the agreement with the leaders of the textile mills workers yesterday. He has verbally agreed to meet almost all the demands of the workers including the formation of wage commission and inclusion of the workers representative in the commission.

It may be mentioned that the proposed commission is supposed to submit its report within three months after its formation and its recommendation about the amount of wage would be implemented with effect from July, 1991.

For the interim period, the Textile Ministry like that of the jute, has agreed to pay

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Three killed as train derailed near Rajshahi

RAJSHAHI, Dec 14: At least three persons including a minor boy were killed when four boggies of Parbatipur-bound Uttara Express train derailed this afternoon at Talabpara, about 40 km east of Rajshahi, witnesses said, reports UNB.

Railway officials however confirmed one killed and eight injured.

A couple of journalists from Rajshahi who visited the scene of accident said they saw three bodies trapped under the boggies.

The bodies seemed to be of one male, one female and a minor boy, said a reporter adding there might be other victims under the boggies which fell on the field, about

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Transport owners call strike Thursday

By Staff Correspondent

All surface transports including buses and trucks, would go off the road on Thursday as the Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Samity, the organisation of the transport owners has called a day-long token strike to press home its 19-point demand.

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