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Inside today

Metropolitan

Ashes for living



Ashes are not the end of everything, not at least for a woman like Surjabanu. She earns a living from ashes for herself and her three children.

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Article

The Gulf crisis: Seven lessons Harvard University Professor Joseph S. Nye Jr scans the crisis from economic point of view.

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International

Iraq fires 10 Scuds into Riyadh



Iraq fired 10 Scud missiles into Saudi Arabia overnight, aiming for the first time at the capital Riyadh.

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Interview

35 days to the Pedestal of Power Excerpts from The Daily Star interviews with Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Saddam rejects Gorbachev plan

NICOSIA, Jan 21: Iraqi President Saddam Hussein today rejected a Gulf peace plan by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, telling the Kremlin chief that US President George Bush would have to pay for his aggression, reports Reuters.

Radio Baghdad, monitored in Cyprus, broadcast the text of a message sent by Gorbachev to Saddam on Friday in which he proposed a ceasefire in the Gulf war to be followed by an Iraqi pullout from Kuwait.

Iraq severs accords

NICOSIA, Jan 21: Iraq Monday severed "all accords and conventions" it had signed with Saudi Arabia. The move was approved at a meeting of the decision-making Revolutionary Command Council, the Iraqi News Agency said in a dispatch, reports AFP.

'America is angry'

WASHINGTON, Jan 21: President George Bush said Monday that "America is angry" over the brutal treatment of allied prisoners of war but said the action would not lessen the US-led war effort against Iraq, reports Reuters.

Holland expels Iraqi diplomats

The Hague, Jan 21: Dutch authorities are expelling five Iraqi embassy staff, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said today. The Netherlands considered "the level of relations between the Netherlands and Iraq do not justify maintaining so many personnel," reports AFP.

Tamil rebel bases bombed

COLOMBO, Jan 21: Air Force planes bombed and strafed suspected strongholds of rebel Tamil separatists in northern Sri Lanka Monday, military sources said. Most of the attacks took place in Kilinochchi district where a 24-hour curfew was imposed on Sunday, reports Reuters.

Round-the-clock bombing on Baghdad, Kuwait Khafji heavily damaged

- * 10 Scud missiles fired on Riyadh, Dahrn
- * 25 airmen missing; Allies
- * 160 Allied aircraft downed: Iraq
- * Iraqi targets in Kuwait shelled
- * Allies have flown 8.100 sorties
- * 40 civilians, 31 soldiers killed: Iraq
- * Iraqi decision on POWs is a violation of Geneva Convention: Red Cross

NICOSIA, Jan 21: Iraq said Monday its Scud missile strikes against Saudi Arabia had devastated frontline enemy positions and targets deep inside the eastern province, reports Reuters.

An official Iraqi communique, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation, said the Saudi border town of Khafji had been heavily damaged in the Sunday night attacks.

"During these strikes, our units inflicted significant losses on the enemy's positions, men, weapons and equipment," said the communique, carried by the Iraqi news agency.

The US-led allies in Saudi Arabia said 10 Iraqi Scuds were fired towards Riyadh and Dahrn on Sunday night. Military spokesmen said nine were knocked out by Patriot anti-missile systems and the 10th crashed into the Gulf.

No casualties were reported. The Iraqi communique said enemy air attacks had continued throughout Kuwait on

Sunday night. It said enemy planes had "violated" the Iraqi border with Turkey in a separate attack in northern Iraq.

American jets have been flying combat missions into northern Iraq from an airbase at Incirlik.

The communique said 18 aircraft and missiles had been shot down since Sunday afternoon but did not specify how many were planes.

Iraq said earlier it had destroyed 160 allied aircraft since Operation Desert Storm began on Thursday to drive Iraqi occupation troops out of Kuwait.

The US-led allies say they have lost 14 aircraft to Iraqi ground fire.

AP report from Riyadh: US military officials conceded Monday they are "nowhere near" wiping out Iraq's missile launching capability.

Saddam Hussein's forces fired 10 Scud missiles at Saudi Arabia Sunday night, and all but one were intercepted by American Patriot batteries, Air Force Maj. Gen. Burton Moore said. The tenth fell in the wa-

ters of the Gulf. Moore said that allies had flown more than 8,000 sorties. He said that two more Iraqi planes were shot down in the past 24 hours. He said a U. S. Navy F-14 Tomcat was lost during the same time period. That is the ninth U. S. aircraft lost to 'hostile fire'. He said a total of five allied planes also had been lost in the period.

Moore said the allied attacks against Iraqi forces were continuing round-the-clock. "We are always pursuing Iraqi troops both in Iraq and in Kuwait," he said.

President Saddam Hussein said Iraq is holding back its military might to confront U. S.-led forces in a ground war to hold Kuwait and Baghdad announced another allied aircraft kill Monday.

AFP reports: Heavy overnight bombing shook Baghdad and raid siren alert was sounded early Monday, the Cable News Network reported from the Iraqi capital.

The U. S. Navy said it launched Cruise missiles at See Page 10 Col. 2



Iraqi television claimed in a broadcast January 21 this man was British Lt. Adrian Nichol captured by Iraqi forces in the Gulf. Nichol, 27, has been listed missing after his Tornado Jetfighter was downed earlier in the war. — AFP photo

Ijtema concludes

From Our Correspondent

TONGI, Jan 21: The three-day Bishwa Ijtema concluded today with the offering of 'Akheri Munajat' (concluding prayer).

Izzat Maulana Enamul Ehsan (Hadratji Hujur), the Amr of Bishwa Tablig Jamaat, conducted the Munajat for peace and prosperity of the Muslim Ummah.

About 10 lakh devotees including 2,500 foreign delegates from 56 countries participated in the 'Akheri Munajat'.

UN will not send poll observers

By Staff Correspondent

Additional Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman said yesterday the United Nations did not respond to the invitation of the Bangladesh government to send observers during the parliament election.

Talking to a group of journalists at the Foreign Ministry briefing centre Reaz Rahman said the United Nations was not in a position to send any observer, because the organisation required pre-sanction of the cost to be involved in sending observers.

Hasina and Khaleda : Where they stand

By S. M. Ali

Star Special

Both Sheikh Hasina and Begum Khaleda Zia, leaders of the Awami League (AL) and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) respectively have affirmed that if voted to power in the February election they

in two separate exclusive interviews with The Daily Star last week, conducted by this writer with assistance from a team of senior colleagues.

The interviews covered a wide range of issues, from a

used by both—after years of autocratic rule. However, to the Awami League leader, authoritarian rule had lasted 15 years, which included the government of the late President Ziaur Rahman, while, to the

Extracts from the interviews, Page 6

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possible change in the political system to the fate of the Special Powers Act, from the state of the economy to the question of the trial of the deposed President Hussain Muhammad Ershad. Questions put to the leaders were similar but not identical. Both answered forcefully and confidently, often in minute detail. Above all, both appeared to be in good spirits.

Apart from the support offered by the two leaders to the liberal policies on the private sector and foreign investment, the interviews underscored the shared commitment of Sheikh Hasina and Begum Khaleda Zia to the maintenance and strengthening of the democratic system—the "hard-won liberation," the term

chairperson of BNP, it was confined to the rule of H. M. Ershad.

Even on support for the private sector, the two approached the issue from different standpoints. If to Begum See Page 10 Col. 1



Devotees offering Akheri Munajat (Concluding prayer) at the end of three-day Bishwa Istema held at Tongi. — Star photo

1,018 candidates withdraw from election race

By Staff Correspondent

A total of 1,018 candidates in 291 constituencies have withdrawn their candidature from contesting the February 27 elections. Monday was the last day for withdrawal of candidature. Earlier, 3,820 candidates filed nomination papers from 300 constituencies to the returning officers to contest the elections to Parliament.

According to Election Commission Source, 50 candidates out of 196 in eight con-

stituencies in Dhaka city withdrew their candidature. One hundred and forty six candidates will now contest the elections in all these constituencies.

In Chittagong, 81 candidates withdrew their candidature from 15 constituencies in the district leaving 139 candidates for all these seats.

In four constituencies of Cox's bazar district, 20 out of 51 candidates withdrew their candidature.

Our Khulna Correspondent reports: 31 candidates out of 88 in six constituencies of Khulna have withdrawn their nomination papers. Awami League, BNP, JP and Gonotantik Oikya Jote candidates are competing in all the six constituencies.

Twenty candidates out of 60 have withdrawn from four constituencies in Munshiganj. See Page 10 Col. 7

Shifting of Ershad to central jail not yet decided

By Staff Correspondent

Home Secretary M.A. Sayeed said yesterday the government had not yet decided to shift ousted president H.M. Ershad to the central jail.

Talking to newsmen at a briefing session at the Foreign Office the home secretary said the Gulshan villa where the former president is interned, had been declared a sub-jail, under jail code. He told a questioner that the shifting of the former president to the central jail was a matter of high-level political decision and there was no such decision at this moment.

The All-Party Students Unity (APSU) has given 72-hour ultimatum to send Ershad to the central jail.

Vote to end politics of killing : Hasina

From Our Staff Correspondent

TUNGIPARA, Jan 21: Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina formally launched election campaign this afternoon here with a call to put an end to the politics of 'killing and conspiracy' by casting vote for her party candidates in February 27 polls.

She was addressing a public meeting here this afternoon after offering Fatcha at the Mazar of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Sheikh Hasina arrived here See Page 10 Col. 8

Modalities to deploy armed forces during polls soon

By Staff Correspondent

Defence Secretary Siddiqur Rahman has said the government was working out modalities to deploy armed forces during the election.

He was talking to newsmen at a briefing session at the Foreign Office yesterday. The briefing was also attended by Home Secretary M.A. Sayeed, Information Secretary A.Z.M. Nasiruddin, Additional Secretary Foreign Affairs Reaz Rahman.

Home Secretary M.A. Sayeed said armed forces would be kept reserved at all upazilas as well as at some strategic points to maintain law and order during the election. He said the government was now working out the expenditure to be involved in deployment of army, BDR and police and their movement during the election period. The decision of deployment of army is a part of total plan to ensure a free and fair election, he added.

Iraq to hold POWs at civilian targets

By Staff Correspondent

GENEVA, Jan 21: Iraq's decision to show allied prisoners of war on television and move them to target areas is a clear violation of humanitarian law, the International Committee of the Red Cross said Monday, reports AP.

Red Cross spokesman Peter Fluege said Monday that the provisions of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949 apply to any soldier from the moment that he is captured.

Spokesman Peter Fluege was asked to comment on a statement by the Iraqi Ambassador to Paris, Abdul Al-Hashimi, who said Sunday the convention would only apply to men the allies officially acknowledged were captives.

Fluege noted that Article 17

of the convention states that a prisoner is bound to give only his name, date of birth and serial number or 'equivalent information'.

Prisoners who refuse to answer 'may not be threatened, insulted, or exposed to any unpleasant or disadvantageous treatment of any kind', the article says.

Baghdad television on Sunday broadcast interviews with seven purported allied pilots that it claimed to have shot down.

On Monday, Baghdad Radio said that because of alleged rocketing of civilian targets by allied planes, it was decided to move more than 20 allied POWs to 'civilian, economic, education and other targets.'

Fluege told Germany's Saarland state radio in an interview Monday that the Red Cross is working to try to help US prisoners of war taken in Iraq. But he said it would be at least a week before specific information on the prisoners would be available.

Meanwhile, Reuter report says: Iraq's Ambassador to the United Nations said on Sunday that all allied prisoners of war taken so far by Iraq in the Gulf war would be treated humanely and were better off in custody than in battle.

According to AFP, Baghdad Radio monitored in Nicosia reported: Nearly 20 prisoners of war have been moved to economic and scientific sites.

Foreign nationals told to go home

A STAR Report

British mothers and children have been advised to leave Bangladesh, while some US diplomats have been staying in their embassy building since Friday, reliable sources said.

"Visitors from the UK are being asked to consider very carefully whether they need to come out," British national said requesting anonymity. Some British nationals had already left Dhaka, he added, but could not give the number.

The essential staff of US Embassy have been staying in their fortified building at Baridhara since Friday after a group of Saddam supporters staged demonstration in front of the embassy.

"We are doing our emergency works only. We are passing our days like hartal days," an employee of the embassy said.

He said the Bangladeshi employees of the embassy had been allowed leave. Only the Americans are staying in the embassy, he said but did not disclose the number of staff stranded.

UNICEF has declared its office in Dhaka closed from Sunday. "We are feeling insecure. So we decided to close the office," UNICEF official said. Earlier the house of UNICEF chief was attacked by some unruly people.

The other western embassies and foreign agencies have taken precautionary measures following the outbreak of the Gulf war.

The Bangladesh Government has tightened the security in the diplomatic areas. Procession and assembly of more than five people in Gulshan and Baridhara have been banned.

Presidential system not introduced by us: Khaleda

Bangladesh Nationalist Party chief Begum Khaleda Zia said here Monday that for achieving development of a country it is not the system of government alone but the sincerity and honesty of the party and persons at the helm of affairs that matter, reports BSS.

Referring to a political party which had introduced parliamentary form of government during its regime, Begum Zia said as terrorism and anarchy were given indulgence, parliamentary form failed.

The party then introduced the presidential form of government but again failed to lead the country properly, she said, adding that party always experimented with people's sentiments but could not deliver the goods.

Addressing the residents of Gulshan, Uttara and Cantonment areas at the party's See Page 10 Col. 6

Gulf war overshadows electioneering spirit

By Shahiduzzaman Khan

The hectic electioneering throughout the country has been overshadowed by the prevailing Gulf war. The war in the Gulf has shaken the public nerves and in fact the spirit of poll campaigns has been dampened.

As I undertook a tour to Manikganj, Narsinghdi, Rajbari and Faridpur, I saw hundreds of arches erected on the roads in support of different candidates. Some wayside rallies were held. Party activists were seen holding demonstrations in rural areas and towns. But people were seen more active in holding rallies in support of Saddam's stand in the Gulf war.

carrying large portraits of Saddam and wishing victory for him (Saddam). Some carried the effigy of President Bush and burnt it before dispersing.

Soon after the war broke out public sentiment had gone into Saddam's favour. I have seen people eagerly listening to the Akashbani and Radio Australia rather than the BBC or the VOA. Many people made it no secret that they had lost confidence in the BBC or the VOA as they broadcast 'biased' news in favour of the West.

In mosques and religious institutions special prayers were offered for the Muslim ummah and victory of Islam. Milad mahfils and feeding of

the destitutes were also being organised.

Meanwhile on the last day of the withdrawal, many candidates withdrew their nominations. The newly formed 14-party Combine, comprising six parties of the Eight-party Alliance, Five-party Alliance and two left-leaning parties had decided to contest separately breaking away from the Awami League.

New polarisation is taking shape centering round the BNP and Awami League. I was told that many candidates had purchased new jeeps and microbuses for poll campaigning. The rural areas are witnessing influx of city youths in their lo-

See Page 10 Col. 1