

If you miss your copy of the Daily Star today, please don't hesitate to call the Circulation Manager immediately on Tel: 246023-4 (PABX), 863035, 863036. The Daily Star is at your service day in and day out.

# The Daily Star

VOL. 1 NO. 22 REGD. NO. DA 781

MAGH 21, 1397 BS,

DHAKA MONDAY FEBRUARY 4, 1991

RAJAB 18, 1411 HIJRI

Let us devote our efforts to ensure free and fair polls on February 27. Cast your vote judiciously and allow others to exercise their rights.

12 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 3.00

## Allied raids release nerve gas

# Scuds hit Israel, Saudi Arabia: Iraqi airfields, tanks blown up

NICOSIA, Feb 3: Iraq lobbed more Scud missiles into Israel and Saudi Arabia early today and hinted it would use chemical weapons in the battle to keep Kuwait, reports Agencies.

"We will use all force and arms in our possession, beginning with the knife and bullets, arms of annihilation, and ending with the weapons of mass destruction, because nothing deserves to live after Iraq," said the Defence Ministry newspaper Al-Qadisiyah.

Chemical weapons have yet to be used in the Gulf war but Iraq has large stocks of artillery shells with chemical warheads and used such weapons during the eight-year war against Iran.

Al-Qadisiyah said Iraq held "the reins of power" on the battlefield. Allied commanders said they had won both the sea and air war and were concentrating on bombing Iraq's ground forces, including elite Republican Guards.

Allied air raids on Iraq's chemical weapons facilities sent nerve gas into the atmosphere, French military spokesman said today.

The Allies had detected traces carried 'almost everywhere' by the wind but the

levels were too low to trigger an alert, General Raymond Germanos said.

The gas was apparently released after air raids on Baghdad's chemical weapons plants, he said.

French Army Medical spokesman Jean-Claude Rouv-

cure said the Allies were using extremely sensitive detectors which could pick up traces of gas well below danger levels.

The cloud had apparently come from chemical weapons plants or storage facilities, he said, and had steadily become diluted in the atmosphere.

It was nerve gas, not the blistering agent mustard gas, he added.

NBC television quoted an Iranian official as saying that scores of Iraqi pilots who have flown to Iran, apparently seeking refuge from Allied air attacks, were not acting on

orders from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

The network quoted Rahaet Khorasani, head of Iran's parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, as saying the pilots acted on their own initiative. Khorasani reportedly said his conclusion was based on de-

briefings of the airmen "and other sources."

British forces in the Gulf region were warned this week that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has authorised front-line commanders to use chemical weapons at their discretion, the Sunday Times reported.

The allies are now bracing themselves for a nerve or mustard gas attack that could come at any time, the newspaper said.

It quoted US Defense Department sources in Washington as saying the use of chemical weapons is no longer a question of if, but when.

In London, a Ministry of Defence spokeswoman said she was not aware of the warning to British troops.

The Sunday Times said the order to British troops also included the information that some of Iraq's chemical agents could lose their potency if not used soon.

Iraq used chemical weapons against Iran during their 1980-88 war.

Many Allied troops in the Gulf have received protective suits and antidotes to protect against chemical attacks.

British Defence Secretary Tom King has said it is likely Saddam would launch a chem-

ical attack on Allied land forces.

That view has echoed by General Sir Peter de la Billiere, the commander of Britain's Gulf forces, who said on Saturday: "Nobody wants to fight in a chemical environment, but I would expect, knowing the man Saddam Hussein, that he will use it when he feels he can cause most destruction."

The Allies accept that only a part of Iraq's chemical arsenal has been destroyed by Allied bombing though they believe they have irreparably damaged production plants, the Sunday Times said.

"Apart from artillery shells, Pentagon sources said that Iraq still has aircraft capable of delivering chemical bombs, though whether they would breach Allied defences was doubtful," the newspaper reported.

Iraq said on Saturday it would fight with everything from knives to weapons of mass destruction to hold on to Kuwait.

Since war erupted over their heads more than two weeks ago the people of Baghdad have grown used to awakening to skies heavy with thick, black smoke.

See Page 12 Col. 7

### Inside today

#### International

##### Sea, air battle won



The Commander of Allied Forces claims the sea and air battles against Iraq were won. Page 5

#### Metropolitan

##### Whither coins?



One-poisha and five-poisha coins are now vanishing species of Bangladeshi currency. Page 3

#### Editorial

##### At Home & Abroad

S.M. Ali's weekly column begins. Page 4

#### Feature

##### Health

Chinese herbal medicines are becoming more and more well-known around the world. A feature by Nasreen Sobhan. Page 7

##### Sport

Martin Crowe leads Kiwi fight-back. Page 8

#### NEWS BRIEFS

##### B-52 goes down

A B-52 bomber went down in the Indian Ocean on Saturday as it was returning from a mission in support of Operation Desert Storm, the Defense Department said Sunday, reports AP.

##### Avalanche kills 24

ISLAMABAD, Feb 3: At least 24 people died in an avalanche that ravaged the Pakistani-administered part of Kashmir, official sources said today. The avalanche hit Neelum valley overnight and caused widespread destruction in four villages, reports AFP.

##### Funeral in Vilnius

VILNIUS (Lithuania), Feb 3: Several thousand people turned out in the Lithuanian capital Saturday to attend the funeral of a local youth shot and killed by Soviet troops after trying to evade conscription into the army.

##### Flood in Iran

NICOSIA, Feb 3: Almost 90 villages have been destroyed and more than 10,000 people are homeless as a result of floods in southeastern Iran, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported Sunday. Thousands of hectares (acres) of farmland and a great number of province, the agency said, reports AP.

## AL to put Zia's ministers on trial

### Economic recovery to take 15 yrs: Hasina

Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina said in Dhaka Sunday that alleviation of poverty, achievement of political stability and giving democracy an institutional shape would be the major tasks before her party to accomplish if it came to power with people's mandate in the coming election, reports BSS.

She was addressing a briefing session, arranged by the Overseas Correspondents Association of Bangladesh (OCAAB) at Sonargaon Hotel. Presided over by Mr. Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, President, OCAAB, the session was at-

tended, among others, by Awami League President Member Dr. Kamal Hossain, and President of Awami League unit in the United States Mr. Nurul Islam Anu.

Sheikh Hasina said Awami League believed in the transfer of power through ballot and not through bullet as had happened in the country during the last fifteen years. Participation of the people in the governance of the country could only be ensured by the parliamentary system of government, she maintained.

She regretted that constitutional process was trampled

time and a gain during the last 15 years for changing the government. The fall of the autocratic government of ex-President Ershad after nine years of relentless struggle had given an opportunity to the people elect the representatives of their choice in the February 27 under a neutral government, she added.

Tracing the history of capturing power through unconstitutional means since 1975, Sheikh Hasina said some generals had seized power through coups, imposed a po-

See Page 12 Col. 2

### APSU brigade to maintain poll peace

The All-Party Students Unity (APSU) has decided to constitute a students brigade with a view to maintaining peaceful atmosphere in the polling centres so that the voters could exercise their right of franchise freely and fearlessly and overall electoral activities including voting and counting could be held properly, according to an APSU press release. The APSU central committee will coordinate the brigade activities centrally, reports BSS.

### Mahmudul Hasan sued for corruption

The Anti-corruption Bureau on Sunday instituted a case against former Agriculture Minister Maj Gen (Retd) Mahmudul Hasan for abuse of power as a minister during 1988-89 for attaining pecuniary benefits for himself or for others causing financial loss to Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) or government to the tune of Taka 5,411,91,329 an official handout said, reports BSS.

General Hasan in collaboration with some businessmen issued purchase order ignoring the suggestions of BADC tender committee to procure 11,460 low lift one cusec engine at the rates higher than prevailing market price, the handout said. The case has been filed in the Ramna thana under bpc 401/109 and under 5(2) clause of 1947 No 2 anti-

See Page 12 Col. 8

### BDR to guard 24,200 centres

## Armed Forces to be deployed in 460 UZs

The Government has worked out elaborate arrangements for deployment of Armed Forces including the BDR to maintain peace and discipline during the February 27 parliamentary polls, reports UNB.

The arrangements were discussed at a high level meeting Sunday at the President's Secretariat with Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed in the chair.

The meeting was attended, among others, by Chief of Army Staff Lt. Gen. M. Nur Uddin Khan, Cabinet Secretary Siddiqur Rahman, Home Sec-

### PDB being overhauled, Chairman removed

The Bangladesh Power Development Board Chairman was withdrawn on Sunday in what is believed to be the beginning of an overhaul in the PDB administration, reports UNB.

Shamsul Islam was transferred to Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) as its Chairman.

Reliable sources indicated his replacement might set off major administrative changes in the board for reforms in the power sector which donors have long been pressing for. Some top officials of PDB including the Chairman were said to have been behind a staunch opposition to launching the Dhaka Electric Supply

Authority (DESA) and transfer of PDB's power lines to Rural Electrification Board.

DESA was due to be inaugurated on February 1, but it was not possible because of employees' opposition. The PDB employees unions have threatened to go on wildcat strike if DESA is launched.

The interim government seems to be in a quandary with the World Bank and other donors warning to stop all assistance to the power sector unless agreed reforms implemented and the PDB employees barring it.

Series of talks of the Energy Ministry with PDB workers and employees' unions over

See Page 12 Col. 3

### EC acceptance of Ershad's nomination challenged

#### Supreme Court Correspondent

A Writ petition was filed on Sunday by S. M. Abul Hossain of Rangpur challenging the acceptance of nomination papers of the former President H. M. Ershad by the Election Commission in five seats of Rangpur Constituencies.

Dr. Kamal Hossain, senior counsel appearing before a Division Bench of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court comprising Mr. Justice Abdul Jalil and Mr. Justice Quazi Shaifuddin submitted that the rejection order of the Returning Officer of Rangpur was correct and that the order of the Election Commission to accept the nomination papers was illegal.

In support of his contention he said since Ershad is in a sub-jail, the Jail Code is applicable and there is a bar (under Rule 657 read with Rule 42 and 660) in giving anything to or receiving anything from the detenu without the approval of the jail authority and as such the nomination papers filed by or on behalf of Ershad were actually smuggled out of the sub-jail in violation of the Jail Code and as such the same cannot be accepted by the Election Commission.

### Munir joins striking prisoners, Khuku deserts

#### By Inam Ahmed

The hunger striking condemned prisoners in the Dhaka Central Jail have split. A group of the prisoners have given up the strike and taken food, jail sources said. But the majority is still continuing the hunger strike to press for commuting the death penalty.

Sources said Munir Hossain, sentenced to death in Rima murder case was among the striking prisoners. But Khuku, another condemned prisoner in Rima murder case is taking food, the jail sources added.

The condemned prisoners sent appeal to the Acting President on January 26 for a waiver of their punishment. But jail sources said the prisoners now not only want their sentences commuted but also unconditional release.

Some of the prisoners refused to take supper on January 31 to press home their demand. The next day all

See Page 12 Col. 1

## BNP pledges alternative jobs for farmers

Begum Khaleda Zia, Chairperson of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and leader of the Seven-Party Alliance, Sunday reiterated her pledge to take up the unfinished development programmes of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman for implementation in Rural Bangladesh, reports BSS.

In this context, she said, if voted to power, her government would ensure the availability of electricity in every nook and corner of the country through the Rural

Electrification Board which was launched by Shaheed Zia to bring about a change in the life of the rural people.

Begum Zia was talking to the elected representative of Rural Electrification Associations of the country at the party's Banani office Sunday evening. President of the Chandpur Rural Electrification Association Principal Mogbul Ahmed apprised Begum Zia of various problems they were facing now. BNP central leaders Ahmed Nazir and Firoze Noon were present on

the occasion.

Begum Zia said Shaheed President Zia constituted Rural Electrification Board in 1977 to supply electricity in the rural areas and since then, 42 rural electrification associations had been floated covering 233 upazilas of the country.

Small factories and irrigation networks are being benefitted by the electricity supplied by these associations, she said adding that it was realistic approach of the BNP government of that time for the de-

See Page 12 Col. 6

Reliance is not just a Name. You can come and see for yourself.



In just 2 1/2 years, Reliance has proved that it is not just another Insurance Company. Reliance is here to meet the needs of a changing world. Our strong back-up of human resources, in-depth market know-how and wealth of experience give us the strength to provide the security for all your general insurance needs.



EXPERIENCE \* STRENGTH \* SECURITY

**RELIANCE INSURANCE LIMITED**

B58 BUILDING, 8 RAJUK AVENUE  
DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH  
Phone: PABX: 240105-6  
235080

Telex: 671186 RIL BJ