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# The Daily Star

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.

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## Inside today

### International

**US prepares for land, sea assault**



**Bush orders his top military experts to assess the timing and need for a land war against Iraq.**  
Page 5

### Metropolitan

**Campaign fever grips CHT**

**Our Staff Correspondent after visiting Chittagong Hill Tracts submits reports on campaigning for parliamentary polls in these areas.**  
Page 2

**Vending beauty on the wayside**



**A thing of beauty, particularly when it is on a city footpath, is undoubtedly a most delightful surprise.**  
Page 3

### Feature

**Banking and Finance**

**Huge bad debts ail nationalised banks.**  
Page 6

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Ban on arms

The Government has imposed a ban on carrying licensed fire arms from February 20 to March 2 to maintain peace and discipline and check possible misuse of fire arms during the elections, reports BSS.

### 46 bombs recovered

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANJ, Feb 6: Police recovered 46 high explosive abandoned bombs from the Fatuallah launch that early morning today. The bombs were kept into gunny bags covered with beans.

### Iraq to sever ties with US

NICOSIA, Feb 6: Iraq said today it was cutting diplomatic relations with the United States and its major allies in the Gulf war. Baghdad radio quoted a foreign ministry statement as saying Iraq had decided to cut relations with the United States, Britain, France, Spain, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, reports Reuters.

### Two killed in Pak blast

LAIHORE, Feb 6: A bomb ripped through a village bus stop Wednesday, killing two people and wounding 30, five of them seriously, police said. No one has claimed responsibility for the explosion, which destroyed the bus stop at Khui, on the Pakistan-India border, about 60 miles (100 kilometers) northeast of Lahore, reports AP.

## 150 including children killed in air raids on Nasariyah, says Iraq

# Allied missiles rain down on Baghdad

Allied bombs and missiles rained down on Baghdad overnight, smashing a bridge, hospital, communications center and homes, Iraqi officials said Wednesday, according to agencies.

An Iraqi military spokesman on Wednesday morning said the allies had carried out 263 more air raids and missile attacks during the night. Iraq also claimed it had shot down two enemy warplanes overnight.

The first resounding explosion echoed through Baghdad shortly after midnight. As on most nights since the war that began Jan. 17, many Baghdad residents fled to shelters to

ride out the attack that lasted until dawn. Iraqi defense officials said four cruise missiles missed their targets and hit residential areas in the city.

- ★ Two Allied planes downed
- ★ US amphibious force moves in
- ★ Infra-red missiles directed at Iraqi tanks
- ★ Missouri in action for third day
- ★ Republican Guard not quite finished
- ★ Scud attacks taper off

Two surface-to-surface rockets destroyed the Al-Jomhouria bridge in downtown Baghdad. It was the second hit on the 33-year-old bridge this week.

About 150 people, including 35 children, were killed in an Allied air raid overnight on the southern city of Nassariyah, Iraqi authorities said Wednesday.

It was by far the largest death toll reported by Iraq in any single raid since the US-led air offensive began.

A US Marine amphibious assault force was moving into place Wednesday in the Gulf. See Page 10 Col 3



A French soldier from the 11th Navy Infantry Regiment rushes towards a truck carrying a shell on Tuesday during a training operation in an undisclosed place in the Saudi desert. — AFP photo

## Commitment to 'four state principles' reiterated

# AL pledges parliamentary form, mixed economy

Star Staffers

The election manifesto of Awami League was announced on Wednesday in Dhaka with the pledge to introduce parliamentary form of government and mixed economy. The manifesto reiterated party's commitment to four state principles — nationalism, democracy, secularism and socialism.

Announcing the manifesto Awami League President Sheikh Hasina hoped that the people would give mandate in favour of the programmes of her party on February 27 elections. She assured that if voted to power, her party would revert to pre-Fourth Amendment Constitution, restore the spirit of the Liberation War, weed out corruption and would establish a happy democratic society.

She saw a unique opportunity in the coming parliamentary elections to exercise right of franchise to elect a truly representative government after 15 years of what she termed 'autocratic rule'.

Having stated the political and constitutional framework the manifesto reiterated guarantee of freedom of speech and freedom of press. All black laws including the Fifth

See Page 10 Col 1



Sheikh Hasina announcing election manifesto at a press conference Wednesday. — Star photo

## APSU lathi rally for shifting of Ershad Feb 10

The All Party Students Unity (APSU) Wednesday demanded trial of deposed President Ershad before the parliamentary elections, reports UNB.

In a statement, APSU leaders asked all its units in the city to make a success of the lathi procession on February 10 in support of their demand for the trial of Ershad and his associates as well as shifting the former president to the Central Jail.

As part of its action programme, APSU will hold a procession and rally at the Dhaka University campus on Feb 8 and processions and rallies in all the educational institutions on Feb 9.

## SPA needed to detain ex-Govt leaders: Hasina

# It is not important where Ershad stays

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina told a press conference in Dhaka on Wednesday that ousted President Ershad should be tried in accordance with the law of the land.

Replying to a question whether Ershad should be shifted to Central Jail Sheikh Hasina said, "It is not important who stays where. One should not commit excesses regarding this issue as we also were put under house arrest." She reiterated her demand that Ershad must be

tried for corruption and plundering of national wealth.

Answering a question on repeal of Special Powers Act Sheikh Hasina said if the law was repealed Ershad could not be detained. So the law must not be repealed as it is required to keep Ershad and his ministers under detention.

Sheikh Hasina posed a question to newsmen "Would you call a law which can detain Ershad black or white?" She said the Special Powers Act was not repealed by Zia

See Page 10 Col 1

## Peace moves begin in Iran

TEHERAN, Feb 6: Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Belonogov met in Tehran today with Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Belayati to discuss an Iranian peace initiative to end the Gulf war, Foreign Ministry officials said.

The proposal, announced Monday by President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, is based on an undisclosed "idea" and "recommendations" to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. It has been welcomed by Moscow as "very positive."

Mr. Belonogov before leaving Moscow told Tass news agency that to date "all peace initiatives, unhappily, have come up against the hardliners in Baghdad." He said any initiative

"should contain as an integral element a proposal for the future of Kuwait", which Iraq has occupied since August 2.

Both Iran, which has proclaimed itself neutral in the conflict, and the Soviet Union have denounced the Iraqi invasion and have demanded an immediate withdrawal.

Tehran is awaiting President Hussein's response to the peace recommendations and continues to be at the center of discussions on ways to end the conflict.

Turkish President Turgut Ozal telephoned Rafsanjani on Tuesday and was briefed on the Iranian leader's plan. The Turkish Foreign Minister, Kurtceban Altinmetin, is coming to Tehran today for talks

with senior officials.

The English-language daily Tehran Times, which is close to the government, said the leader of Algeria's Islamic Salvation Front (ISF), Sheikh Abbas Madani, would arrive Wednesday in Iran.

The paper, citing informed sources, said the pro-Iraqi ISF leader would hold talks with Iranian officials on events in the region.

Meanwhile U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez De Cuellar indicated Tuesday he was unlikely to answer an Iraqi letter criticising him not speaking out against the U.S.-led air attacks on Iraq.

"I have many things more important to think about," the

See Page 10 Col 7

## Bangladesh Bank predicts economic gloom

Star Economic Report

Bangladesh Bank has projected a gloomy economic picture in 1990-91 because of the fallout of the Gulf war.

The annual report (1989-90) of the central bank released on Wednesday said the economy achieved a 5.8 per cent growth in 1989-90 compared with 2.3 per cent in 1988-89. The higher growth performance of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) last year was because of favourable weather conditions and increased agricultural production.

But, growth prospects for 1990-91 remain clouded because of the rise in oil prices and return of a large number of Bangladeshi nationals who were at work in the Gulf region.

The problems arising out of the current developments in the Middle East, particularly the oil price-hike, large-scale repatriation and rehabilitation of stranded Bangladeshi nationals from Iraq and Kuwait have caused a severe adverse impact on the economy, the report said.

The bank observed the magnitude of the adverse impact of the developments in the Gulf on a least developed country like Bangladesh will

largely depend on "the duration and ultimate solution of the crisis".

Giving an account of the state of economy in 1989-90, the bank reported that overall agricultural production which declined by 0.02 per cent in 1988-89 increased by 5.6 per cent last year. Food production rose 14.6 per cent to a record 18,987 million tons. Industrial sector witnessed a 8.4 per cent growth last year compared with 2.3 per cent in 1989-90.

Despite a favourable growth performance, the balance of payments situation was seriously strained last year.

The payments picture showed an overall deficit of 100 million Dollars compared with a surplus of six million Dollars in the preceding year.

There was a high surge in imports. Import payments increased to 2,272 billion Dollars in 1989-90 from 2,094 billion Dollars in 1988-89. Exports were up but the rise was slower than that of imports. Export receipts totalled 1,486 billion Dollars compared with 1,281 billion Dollars in 1988-89.

According to Bangladesh Bank, repayment of Kuwaiti deposits, imports of foodgrains

in cash foreign exchange, large imports by commercial importers under the liberalised import policy and delay in receipts of anticipated foreign aid caused severe pressures on the country's foreign exchange reserves which stood at 520 million Dollars at the end of last fiscal year.

Foreign aid commitments increased 15 per cent to 2,144 billion Dollars in 1989-90. The total outstanding foreign debt of the country on June 30, 1990 was 10.35 billion Dollars. Repayment of external debt liabilities stood at 19.5 per cent of its export receipts. The country spent 26.6 per cent of its export earnings in 1988-89 for external debt servicing.

The bank reported that private unrequited transfers to Bangladesh declined by 34 million Dollars to 802 million Dollars.

This amount included 761 million Dollars as remittances by the Bangladeshi nationals working abroad. The bank said a number of measures like raising of margin requirements for opening import letters of credits, rationalisation of import tariff and austerity in use of foreign exchange in different sectors

See Page 10 Col 7

## Five-party resents US concern

By Staff Correspondent

The Five Party Alliance Wednesday protested the interest shown by the United States ambassador about ousted President H. M. Ershad during the envoy's meeting with the Acting President Tuesday.

In a statement, the alliance convenor Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan said the alliance noted the news in the national press and state media about Ambassador William B. Milam's meeting with the Acting President.

Bhuiyan said the news gave the impression as if the Acting

See Page 10 Col 8

## 'AL curbed people's rights by SPA' Ershad must be taken to jail: Khaleda

FENI, Feb 6: BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia today said running future government clearing the rubbish left over by autocracy will be a tough task for any party elected in the Feb 27 parliamentary polls, reports UNB.

Addressing a series of election meetings in her own Feni constituency, she said the 9-year rule of Ershad regime had left the national economy in ruins.

"The economy has been crippled by nine years of rampant corruption, plunder and smuggling out of resources ...

recovering the nation from the ruins will be a very, very difficult task for any future governments," she said.

Urging the people to vote for the nominees with BNP's election symbol "sheaf of paddy", Khaleda assured them that BNP would again salvage the nation in 1991, as it did after winning the 1978 election. See Page 10 Col 7

## Be strict for fair holding of polls, officials asked

NATORE, Feb 6: The Acting President, Mr. Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Wednesday asked the officials to strictly implement the government instructions for the smooth holding of free, fair and impartial Jatiya Sangsad polls in February 27, reports BSS.

"If you remain vigilant and perform your duty with a great sense of responsibility election is bound to be free and fair," he said while addressing the Deputy Commissioners and Superintendents of Police of the districts under Rajshahi Divisions here at Uttara Garobhaban.

The Acting President said his government would do whatever was necessary for the maintenance of peace and order during elections so that everyone could cast vote without any fear.

Justice Shahabuddin reminded the officials that they should maintain complete neutrality in their words and deeds, and remain loyal to the government instructions.

The Acting President said the people had struggled for the last eight years for a free and fair election.

## Review of certain projects approved earlier ordered

By Shahiduzzaman Khan

Government has ordered a fresh review of the projects, which were approved and given go-ahead in the months of September, October and November last year by the past regime. Local Government Ministry sources say.

The move was taken with a view to assessing the requirements of the areas covered under the projects. Government wants to see whether political influence had any bearing on the approval of the projects during the time. After recommendations of the sponsoring Ministry and clearance by ECNEC in selective cases a project needed earlier, the President's approval. The project approval procedure has however been changed after the fall of Ershad regime.

During the last quarter of 1990, work on many projects slowed down due to political turmoil.

(Details on Business Page)

## Naziur's Bhola property attached

BIOLA, Feb 6: All the immovable and movable properties of former minister Nazur Rahman at this district headquarter were attached today, reports BSS.

The members of law enforcing agencies headed by sub-inspector of Bhola thana in the presence of a first class Magistrate attached three houses and objects found.

Police made seizure list of one two-storied palatial building and two other one-storied buildings and goods. All the doors of the houses have been locked and sealed.

The houses, spread over an area of two and half acre of land having a boundary wall, are now in police custody.

The properties have been attached because of Nazur Rahman's failure to surrender before the authorities by January 31.

Police will attach the village properties of Nazur Rahman tomorrow.

In  
The Daily Star WEEKEND MAGAZINE  
Tomorrow

- ★ S. M. Ali pays tribute to Abdus Salam, a pioneer of independent journalism.
- ★ The drama of Shombhu Mitra who turns 75.
- ★ A look at Kuwaiti art and its Islamic heritage.
- and
- ★ 'Write to Mita'—Social service weekly column starting tomorrow.
- ★ Plus other lively features from home and abroad.

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