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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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A solution must begin with pullout, says US



Saddam has told a Soviet envoy he is ready to seek a peaceful solution but Allies must stop bombing.

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Exotic orchids from Thailand, ferns from Nepal, passion fruit from Sri Lanka adorn Lily Rahman's garden. But she is trying to grow a blood-red tulip.

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Tarek Aziz to meet Gorbachev

MOSCOW, Feb 13: Iraqi Foreign Minister Tarek Aziz is to meet President Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow next Monday, presidential spokesman Vitaly Ignatenko announced today, reports AFP.

### Candidate held for dacoity

BARISAL, Feb 13: A candidate for the parliamentary polls from Mehendiganj (Bakerganj-4) constituency Abdur Rahman Khan and another person have been arrested last night for their alleged involvement in a dacoity recently, police sources said Wednesday, reports BSS.

### Bihar Governor dismissed

NEW DELHI, Feb 13: The President, Mr R Venkataraman, tonight dismissed the Bihar Governor, Mohammad Yunus Saleem, and accepted the resignation of Mr Surjeet Singh Barnala as Tamil Nadu Governor, reports PTI.

### Chinese envoy in Damascus

DAMASCUS, Feb 13: A Chinese envoy arrived in Damascus today on the first leg of a four-nation tour to find a peaceful solution to the Gulf war, officials said, reports Reuters.

### Allied bombers hit buses

RÜWEISHIED (Jordan), Feb 13: Allied bombers hit two buses full of civilians fleeing the Gulf war in Kuwait and Iraq, killing about 60 people, refugees reaching Jordan today said, reports Reuters.

### Primakov in Iran

NICOSIA, Feb 13: Soviet envoy Yevgeny Primakov arrived in Iran today to brief Iranian leaders on his Gulf peace mission to Iraq, reports Reuters.

## It was a well-known military target, says US Baghdad bunker hit: 400 killed

BEIJING, Feb 13: A shelter in Baghdad housing some 15,000 civilians, mostly women and children, was hit by Allied bombing Tuesday night, causing the worst civilian casualties so far, the American Cable News Network (CNN) reported today. Residents at the scene were quoted as saying that more than 400 people might have died.

CNN correspondent Peter Arnett said in the broadcast, monitored here, that he personally saw ten bodies being loaded from the destroyed shelter in a 'middle-class residential area' with 'no immediate military targets within a mile.'

Arnett said he was told that the shelter withstood the 1984 Iran-Iraq war raids. The shelter, which was usually occupied by women and children in the night while the men stayed at home, received tremendous amount of bombing, the report said.

Arnett said Iraqi officials took reporters to the scene. Firemen were still trying to find people trapped in a series of chambers of the shelter.

"We were shown the bodies of 30 women and children, charred beyond recognition," Arnett said. Ten more bodies were seen on a truck.

Two bombs punched through the reinforced roof of the shelter in a complex containing a supermarket and a mosque in a western district of Baghdad, he said.

"The Iraqis regard this as a major disaster tragedy," Arnett said.

Arnett has repeatedly accused the United States of bombing civilian targets and says thousands have been killed.

Arnett said air raids carried out for most of the night caused tremendous damage.

British Broadcasting Corporation correspondent Alan Little reported from Baghdad: "Attacks continued for most of the night. Targets around the

city were picked off one by one."

In Washington the White House said today a Baghdad bunker destroyed by an Allied air raid was a well-known military target and implied that

spokesman Marlin Fitzwater told reporters.

Meanwhile Iraqi President Saddam Hussein assured the Soviet Union that he would cooperate to find a peaceful solution to regional problems in-

- ★ Security Council meet on Gulf war
- ★ Saddam to cooperate with USSR for peace
- ★ 50 oilfields ablaze in Kuwait
- ★ Iraqi frontline troops bombed
- ★ French Jaguars in action
- ★ US forces beat back Iraqi patrol
- ★ Explosions rock Iranian border towns
- ★ Iraq reiterates threat to use non-conventional weapons.

cluding the Gulf War while at the United Nations the Security Council was scheduled to meet on Wednesday for the first time since the war began.

Meanwhile more than 50 oil

fields in Kuwait, are now on fire, BBC quoted an American official as saying.

A Pentagon spokesman said, the Iraqis had deliberately started the fires to create smoke to conceal their positions. But he said, they hadn't had any significant impact on Allied military operations.

Meanwhile Allied planes bombed Iraq's Republican Guard and frontline troops in Kuwait during the night, US military sources said today.

But there were no exchanges of ground fire between troops dug in on both sides of Saudi Arabian border.

US and Allied planes are flying more than 2,500 sorties every 24 hours in the campaign to weaken Iraqi troops and pave the way for a land offensive to drive them out of Kuwait.

Four battalions of Saudi and US artillery, US Marine Corps aircraft and the battleship Missouri pounded the Iraqis for three hours.

US pilots said they did not find any missile launchers used by Iraq to fire Scuds at Israel and Saudi Arabia. There was no sign of any missiles being fired during the night.

French Jaguar fighter-bombers destroyed aircraft shelters in south eastern Iraq with laser-guided missiles today, spokesman Colonel Francois Regnaud said.

They also hit artillery positions in southern Kuwait, and returned safely to base.

In another development, American forces beat back an Iraqi reconnaissance patrol and exchanged artillery fire with Iraqi gunners on the northern Saudi border with occupied Kuwait, the US military said on Tuesday.

Iraqi patrols are constantly testing the border to discover Allied strengths and weaknesses.

With its air force grounded, and lacking satellite observation, Iraq's only way to plot

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Rokeya Begum of Bangladesh Customs shattered the 100m hurdles record with a time of 15.3 seconds on the third day of the 19th national athletics championships at the Army Stadium, Banani yesterday. —Photo Mohsin

## Foreign Office yet to mend its ways

By Staff Correspondent

No action has been taken to remedy the irregular appointments in foreign service given by the past regime.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Office officers and employees seem to be restive over delay in removing the appointment anomalies.

The officers who have long been trying to get these appointees removed say they were taken in and posted, both inside and outside the country, violating the existing recruitment rule of the ministry.

They also alleged that the administration was mum over the allegation of corruption

against the men appointed by the previous government. The cadre service officers, in this context, cited the case of MHG Mohiuddin, the brother-in-law of former president Ershad, who has dodged a government order to come back and is residing in official residence in New York at the cost of government funds though he has been suspended from his representative to UN job of permanent.

Another case was that of Major (Retd) Mostafa Kamal who was appointed Deputy Chief of Protocol of Foreign

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## Zia, Ershad must be tried, says Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina has said that democracy in the country has been under the boot for the last 15 years and the rule of juntas began after August 15, 1975.

UNB adds: Addressing another huge election rally at Dhanmondi Maidan last night, she asked the people to resist any heinous design against transition to democracy through Feb 27 elections.

Hasina said, "My politics is not aimed at capturing power but safeguarding democratic rights of the deprived multitude and ensuring their economic emancipation."

"Ershad and late Zia must be put on public trial on charges of violating the country's constitution", she said amidst cheers from her enthusiastic supporters.

Hasina also said those in the autocratic regimes who embezzled public fund and smuggled a major portion of their ill-gotten fortune out of the country for last 15 years would have to give account to the people.

Addressing the grand convention of village Doctors Association as chief guest at Bangabandhu Avenue on

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## UPs, Poursavas entrusted with JS poll duties

The Acting President has promulgated a new ordinance entrusting upon the union parishads and the poursavas with some specific responsibilities for the maintenance of law and order in the interest of holding free and fair parliamentary polls, reports BSS.

Under the ordinance titled Union Parishads and Poursavas (Special Responsibility) Ordinance 1991, the union parishads and poursavas will perform the specific task of maintaining law and order in

their respective areas during parliament election. In the event of any failure to discharge duties, the government, according to the new ordinance, would dissolve the particular union parishad or poursava, a PID handout said Wednesday.

The ordinance entrusted upon the union parishads and poursavas the following responsibilities for the maintenance of law and order in their respective areas during the parliament elections period beginning from the last date of

withdrawal of candidature until seven days following the polling:

- a) maintenance of law and order,
- b) keeping constant contact with members of law enforcing agencies and extending all necessary assistance,
- c) resisting all attempts to break law and attempt to disrupt peace and informing the concerned officials about these attempts,
- d) stopping all attempts to foil free and fair elections and informing such attempts to

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## Irregular bank loan for foreign trip

By Shahiduzzaman Khan

Twenty high officials of the Telephone and Telegraph Board went on a three-month training programme to Ireland recently without the approval of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC).

The training programme was scheduled to be funded by the World Bank. As a rule Technical Assistance Project Proforma (TAPP) should be placed before the Planning Commission and after its approval the ECNEC should rec-

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## Reject those who killed democracy: Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia on Wednesday called upon people to reject those elements who did not redeem their pledges.

She was addressing a big campaign rally in Bostila High School ground under Mohammodpur thana from where she is contesting the polls.

"We promised not to participate in any elections under the autocratic regime of Ershad. We kept word by boycotting all the polls held during nine years of autocratic

rule. "Our party will also keep its promise if voted to power", Begum Zia assured.

In an oblique reference to a political party, she said, the party having contradictions between its words and deeds cannot bring any good to the nation. It would betray people as it did in the past, she said. She said the '72-74 government had failed to fulfil people's hopes and aspirations and created a reign of terror, anarchy and corruption in the country. It introduced a single-

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## Perestroika doomed

BERLIN, Feb 13: Former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze said on Tuesday his troubled country's reform process appeared doomed but could still be rescued if democracy-minded citizens joined forces, reports Reuters.

Asked in a German television interview if perestroika was finished because of economic collapse and ethnic unrest, Shevardnadze replied: "If I'm going to be really open and honest, this kind of change appears to be looming."

"But I think perestroika and new political ideas can be

saved if our society really wants it, if democratically-inclined people join forces," he added.

The ZDF Television network said it was Shevardnadze's first foreign media interview since he abruptly resigned in December in protest against what he called creeping dictatorship.

Shevardnadze said there were still "powers in our country who could hold up the dangerous process" of release to Stalinist authoritarianism.

He was interviewed at his modest Moscow office where he is setting up a foreign pol-

icy think tank with other former diplomats to focus on regional conflict and disarmament.

Shevardnadze said his resignation was intended as a signal that Perestroika was in grave danger.

"My resignation was the cry from the soul of a person who saw a danger growing, saw how the reaction of backward facing people became ever more audacious," he said.

"It was the response of a man who grasped that he could only turn to the whole people. This is historic struggle for democracy."

## Export shortfall may rise to Taka 1410 crore

Country's export shortfall is likely to go up to 392 million US Dollar or Tk 1410 crore in the current fiscal year due to lingering crisis in the Gulf, according to a latest official estimate available on Wednesday reports UNB.

Officials appeared concerned about the latest estimate of loss, about double the earlier projection at 100-200 million Dollar in the worst possible turn of the Middle East situation.

The interim government, however, has initiated moves to look for alternative markets. Several trade delegations, officials said, are likely to undertake exploration tour of the countries of Asia-Pacific region and Europe shortly.

They said the Commerce Ministry, in view of sagging exports, was now working for downward rescheduling of the this year's original export target. The target was 1734 mil-

lion US Dollar or Tk. 6067 crore.

According to government projection, all the major exportables-jute, jute goods, garments, leather, tea and frozen foods-will fall far short of targets.

Item-wise latest assessment of losses are as follows: Raw jute 31.11 US Dollar, jute goods 99.50 million Dollar, leather 67.45 million Dollar, garment 152.92 million Dollar.

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The Ordinance amending the Newspaper Employees (Condition of Services) Act-74 must be withdrawn immediately.

And the final Wage Board award must be announced without further delay.

Repeal all black laws including Special Powers Act '74.

Twentyfour-hour token strike will be observed in all newspapers and news agencies of the country on February 17. No newspapers will come out the next day.

## Hearing in Ershad's Arms case quashing continues

Supreme Court Correspondent

Former President Ershad in a petition for quashing of the arms case against him heard before a Division Bench of the High Court Division on Wednesday challenged the legality of his trial.

Kazi Shahadat Hossain placed the petition and affidavit-in-opposition filed by the government. He submitted that since there is a clear protection under the law the trial is liable to be quashed. While he was on his leg the court rose for the day.

The government is contesting the Rule. Attorney General and others were eager to see that Ershad faces the trial.

At one stage in the hearing

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## JP hopes to get second place

Acting chairman of the Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury said here Wednesday that the coming parliamentary elections would provide a fair trial for democracy in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Talking to the members of the Overseas Correspondents Association Bangladesh (OCA), Mr. Chowdhury however, said "We also could not give fair trial for democracy during our tenure".

He said everybody expected that a free, fair and neutral election would take place under the present government.

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## Dhaka, Tokyo sign tax, investment treaties soon

Star Report

Dhaka and Tokyo will sign a tax treaty and an investment protection treaty soon to encourage Japanese investment in Bangladesh. The tax treaty will be signed within this month, according to reliable source.

The tax treaty has been desired by Japanese businessmen and financial companies to avoid double taxation. Japan has tax treaties with all Asian

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