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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.

10 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 3.00

Inside today

International



A member of the exiled Kuwaiti government beams a smile as thousands of Allied troops move closer to front.

Page 5

Article

Future directions of development

Qazi Khaliquzzaman Ahmad discusses the need for simultaneous approach to democratic order and economic emancipation.

Page 4

Metropolitan



Of sticks, twigs and leaves

Tale of a distitude woman who earns her bread by collecting wastes, twigs and leaves.

Page 3

Feature

Travel & Leisure

An exclusively male collectors' market for the playthings of the past has emerged in the West.

Page 6

NEWS BRIEFS

Palestinians' food blocked

AMARI CAMP, Feb 16: A convoy of Israelis on Friday brought sacks of food to Palestinians suffering from a month-long curfew, but soldiers banned them from distributing it.

Institutions closed from February 25

All educational institutions in the country barring the universities and medical colleges will remain closed from February 25 to 28 because of the elections, a Government handout said Saturday night. reports BSS.

Medical aid to Iraq

TEHRAN, Feb 16: A 50-tonne load of medical aid donated by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was dispatched to Iraq today via the Iranian border post of Khorram, the Iranian news agency IRNA said, reports AFP.

Ground war 'inevitable'

AMMAN, Feb 16: Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, just back from Baghdad talks with Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, said today a ground war was inevitable in the Gulf. He urged US President George Bush to avert a catastrophe, reports Reuter.

Scuds fired at Israel

JERUSALEM, Feb 16: Iraq fired two missiles at Israel today, chief army spokesman Nachman Shah said. Air raid sirens warning of the attack sounded and the army told all Israelis to don gas masks and shelter in sealed rooms against a possible poison gas attack, reports Reuter.

# World leaders split over Iraqi offer to quit Kuwait

## No ground war till Kremlin talks

### Highlights

- ★ Gorbachev gets US understanding not to launch ground offensive until Kremlin's talks with Tareq Aziz on Sunday.
- ★ Washington sees chance of uprising against Saddam.
- ★ Iraqi offer is an important beginning: Moscow.
- ★ World must not reject Iraqi offer outright: Primakov.
- ★ Rafsanjani is sending high-level team to Baghdad.
- ★ Allied soldiers are frustrated by US reaction.
- ★ Iraq is ready to fight on if US spurns its willingness.
- ★ Security Council debates Iraqi proposal.

was two weeks ago of seeing an uprising against the Iraqi leader.

#### World divided

Meanwhile, Reuter reports, world leaders are divided over whether Iraq's conditional offer to quit Kuwait is a peace overture or a ploy to delay a ground attack by the Gulf Allies.

The New York Times, quoting administration officials said Bush had agreed to a Soviet request to delay a ground attack until after Iraqi Foreign Minister Tareq Aziz held talks in Moscow on Monday.

Reuter Correspondent Maamoun Youssef reported disappointment among residents of Baghdad that the proposal from the ruling Revolu-

tion Command Council (RCC) had been rejected.

Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh welcomed the statement as 'an important beginning'. The proposals also won the support of Iran and Yemen, Jordan, Libya, Tunisia, Pakistan and Indonesia.

Foreign Ministers of eight Arab states aligned against Baghdad, meeting in Cairo on Saturday, reaffirmed demands for an unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and called for new security and economic cooperation arrangements after the war.

#### Iran-Soviet move

The focus of last-minute diplomatic moves to avert a

See Page 10 Col 3

### Ershad suffers nervous breakdown

## Court adjourns without hearing in arms case

By Staff Correspondent

Special Tribunal set up to hear the case.

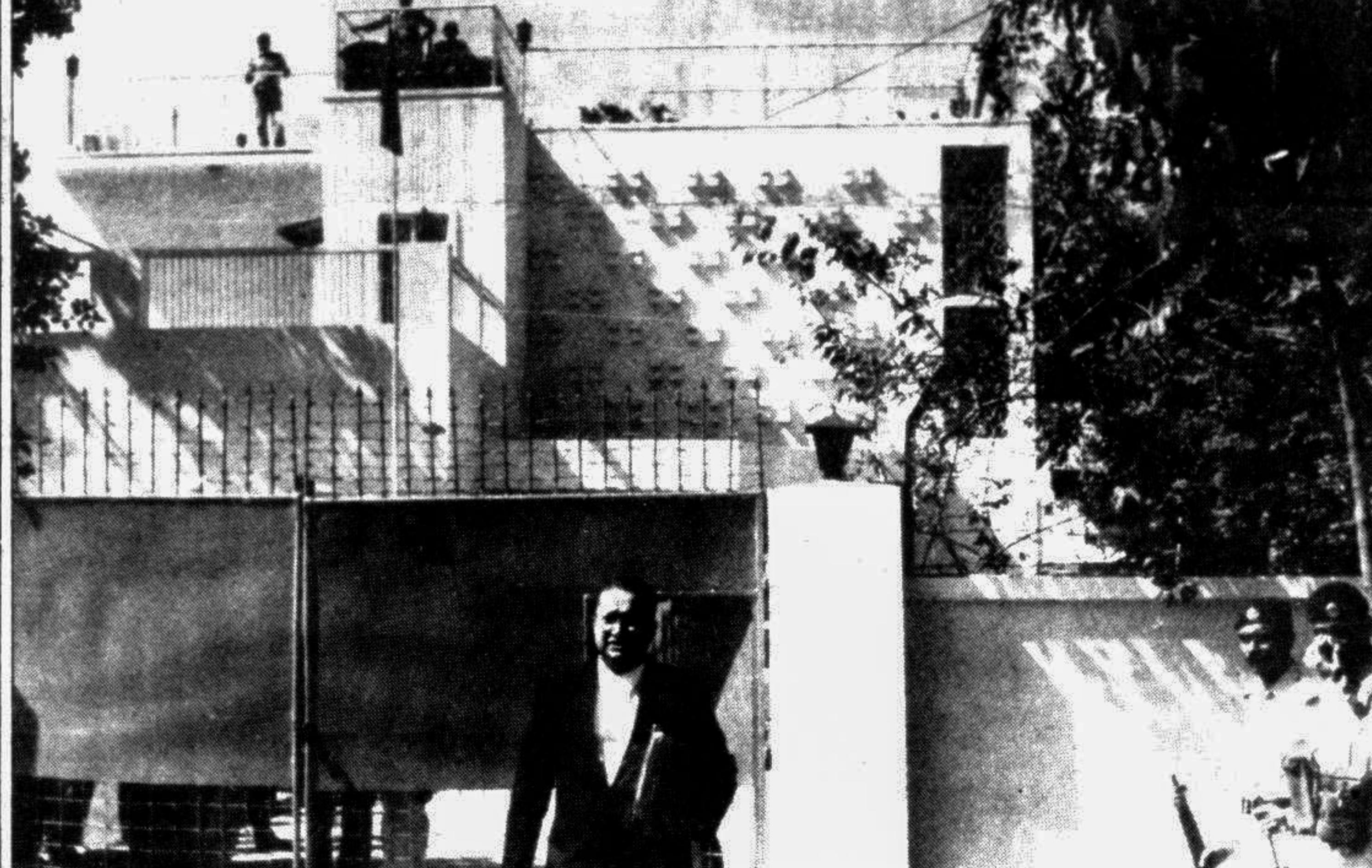
Just after the sitting of the Tribunal at a house in Gulshan at 10:30 a.m., Defence Counsel Barrister Kazi Shahadat Hos-

sain submitted that his client (Ershad) was in the state of a complete nervous breakdown accompanied by high blood pressure, asthma and stomach sickness.

He pleaded that the trial be put back for seven days as his client being an old man needed time to recover.

Attorney General Aminul

See Page 10 Col 7



A lawyer, defending former President Ershad in the arms case against him, leaves the building at Gulshan which houses the Special Tribunal set up to hear the case.

—Star photo

### Prisoners still in control

By Staff Correspondent

Dhaka Central Jail was under control of the revolting prisoners for the second day on Saturday, jail sources said.

The agitating prisoners were pressing for bringing back one of their leaders, who pioneered the previous revolt, from Mymensingh Jail and their release within 10 days, the See Page 10 Col 1

### Nation will reject betrayers: Khaleda

RANGPUR, Feb 16: Begum Khaleda Zia, chief of Bangladesh Nationalist Party, today expressed the hope that the nation would reject the national betrayers and the corrupt elements through voting the nationalist force to power in the coming polls, reports BSS.

Addressing a big election rally at the Town Hall premises here, Begum Zia said her party was the only nation-

alist force which could set the nation in the right direction toward development by implementing the unfinished task of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman.

The BNP chief also addressed a series of public meetings at Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts on the third day of her electioneering tour of the north-western region of the country.

See Page 10 Col 2

### No election if Ershad not freed : JP

Jatiya Party processionists held a meeting blocking the busy Mymensingh Road near Titus Gas head office at Kawran Bazar on Saturday where they warned that election would be foiled if Ershad was not released shortly. "There will be no election keeping Ershad in detention," the speakers emphasised, reports UNB.

The processionists damaged two motorbikes and an autorickshaw in the city.

See Page 10 Col 1

### BNP betrayed accord : Hasina

MADRIPUR, Feb 16: Sheikh Hasina, chief of Awami League and leader of the Eight-party Alliance, today said the surge of popularity in favour of 'boat' indicated that Awami League would form the next government to consolidate democracy in its true perspective, reports BSS.

"If voted to power, my government will consolidate democracy for transfer of

power through constitutional means," she said, adding that parliamentary system of government would have to be installed to ensure constitutional changes in the Zia-Ershad style of government. The Awami League chief said parliament needed two-thirds majority for such a change and called upon the people to give their mandate in favour of

See Page 10 Col 5

## 3 student leaders killed

Star Report

Two prominent student leaders of Gouradi Upazila in Barisal and another student leader in Chittagong were killed on Saturday. Another Awami League leader was also wounded in bomb explosions in Barisal.

Khril Hasan Tipu, President of Gouradi Upazila Chhatria League, and H.M. Kamal, President of Gouradi College Unit Chhatria League, succumbed to splinter wounds at Barisal Medical College Hospital.

Local Awami League leaders blamed BNP's student wing Chhatria Dal for the killing.

They bombarded BNP activists in Ghugrai village in Chandpur.

Mohammad Halaluddin (26), President of Fatikchari

Union of Bangladesh Chhatria League (H-A) was attacked when he was going towards Kazir Dewri in a rickshaw.

The assailants blocked his rickshaw and hit him on the head with Chinese axes and other lethal weapons.

Halal died on the spot and the assailants fled in a microbus, police said.

Panchalish police recovered the body half an hour after the incident sent it for post-mortem.

Chhatri League blamed Islami Chhatri Shibir for the killing.

Halaluddin's body was taken to his village home in Fatikchari in the evening. A

See Page 10 Col 1

### Increased debt servicing burden will affect aid flow

By Moazzem Hossain

services produced in the economy.

The increased debt servicing burden will reduce the availability of foreign assistance in net terms in current fiscal year.

The net disbursement figure represents foreign aid availability in gross terms minus debt servicing payments.

According to official sources, the gross disbursements in 1990-91 are projected at 1730 million Dollars including 260 million Dollars in food aid, 460 million Dollars in commodity aid and 1010 million Dollars in project aid.

This amount is 80 million Dollars lower than last year's gross aid disbursements of 1810 million Dollars.

In first five months up to November in the current fiscal year, 720 million Dollars of foreign aid were disbursed, representing about 41 per cent of the projected amount for the year.

The disbursed amount was 98 million Dollars for food, 524 million Dollars for project and 97 million Dollars for commodity aid.

Disbursements slowed

See Page 10 Col 7

### AL introduced presidential form of govt : Menon

Five-Party leader and Workers Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon on Saturday said the demands for parliamentary form of government and an answerable parliament were not the demands of any single political party but of the entire people of the country, reports BSS.

Addressing an election rally for Five-Party Alliance nominee

Paresch Chandra Saha in Muktagacha, he said the presi-

See Page 10 Col 6

### AL violating code of conduct : Nirmal Sen

By Staff Correspondent

Sramik-Krishi Samajbadi Dal has lashed out at Awami League for violating the code of conduct in the election cam-

paign.

Announcing the 21-point programme of the party on Saturday at a press conference, acting first secretary of the party Nirmal Sen alleged that leaders and workers of Awami League were not following any role in different constituencies.

Citing examples of the irritating activities of Awami League workers Nirmal Sen said, on February 10 Awami League workers attacked a

procession of the Five Party

See Page 10 Col 6