

## Focus on election- '91

## 83 foreign journalists to cover election

By Special Correspondent

A total of 83 foreign journalists are expected to cover the parliamentary elections. The journalists include representatives from leading newspapers, radio and television of the world.

Indian journalists topped the list with 27 expected to cover the elections. Some of them have already arrived in the city.

Leading Indian newspapers like The Hindustan Times, Financial Express, Ananda Bazar Patrika, The Statesman, The Hindu, The Telegraph and The Sunday will send their

representatives. Associated Press will send their bureau chief of New Delhi. Barbara Crossette will represent the New York Times of USA.

A seven-member German television crew are expected to cover the polls. Besides, German radio will send their bureau chief of New Delhi. A Russian correspondent will also be sent by Novosti News Agency.

A three-men Japanese TV Asahi crew and a newsman from Tokyo-based Nihon Keizai Shimbun will cover the elections. Sandra Jean Burton, a

Hong Kong-based Time magazine correspondent is also expected to arrive.

Two Swedish radio correspondents, a correspondent of Czechoslovak news agency will cover the elections.

Derek Brown, Delhi-based bureau chief of the Guardian of United Kingdom is expected to arrive shortly. Radio Australia will also send one representative. Besides two other Australian journalists are also expected to arrive. More correspondents from Sweden, Norway, USA, UK, Denmark are likely to cover the polls.

## Amar Ekushey today

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Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University and the Dhaka University Teachers Association placed wreaths. They were followed by leaders of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, Dhaka Union of Journalists and National Press Club.

The processionists were carrying banners. Volunteers of the Dhaka University Central Students Union virtually failed to discipline the overenthusiastic barefoot processionists. They could not announce the names of the organisations which were among the first to place wreaths.

However, discipline was restored 15 minutes after the Acting President left the minar premise.

The observance of the Shaheed Day is of special significance this year as the nation is marching ahead for the restoration of democracy through the February 27 elections after ousting a nine-year autocratic rule. In a message to the nation on the eve of the day Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed paid homage to the language mar-

## Tribals coming back, getting enrolled

A large number of tribal people of the hill tracts are returning home to exercise their rights of franchise taking the advantage of the government's decision to extend the last date for enrolment of their names in the voters' list, reports BSS.

According to information received in Dhaka, 310 tribals in Khagrachhari submitted their names to the Chief Election Commissioner when he visited the place on February 18.

## Khaleda

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compromising movement and fulfilled all its commitments in the past. If elected, BNP would establish democracy, rule of justice, and development-oriented politics and meet basic needs of people, the BNP chief reiterated. Regarding the absconding ministers and other accomplices of Ershad, she called upon the authorities to arrest them without further delay.

The BNP chief expressed resentment at the decision not to send Ershad to jail. If voted to power, all the culprits including the former president would be tried, she assured her audience.

Regarding the killings of students, housewives including Sharmin Nizam alias Rima, Mahlia Islam and Sogera Morshed and innumerable others, she said all the killers would be tried.

Chaired by Lokman Hossain Fakir, the meeting was also addressed by BNP leaders Jahannara Begum, Jamiruddin Sarkar and Firoz Namin.

## Ershad

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file a writ petition to vacate the stay order. Meanwhile, the three-member medical board has checked ex-president Ershad and declared that he is medically fit to face the trial.

The trial was scheduled to begin on February 16. But due to illness Ershad was not produced before the tribunal and the judge of the tribunal ordered formation of a three-member medical board to investigate the health condition of Ershad.

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## Zia resorted to killings

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para, Mohishala, Islampur, Munshibazar, Teenchara, Talima Bazar, Monikandi, Char Borohashpur, Kolashdi and Matkandi.

AL Secretary General Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, Sheikh Selim, Abdul Wajed Chowdhury, Abdur Rouf Master, Imamuddin Chowdhury and Kazi Abdur Rashid spoke at these meetings.

Sheikh Hasina warned the people against the machinations of Jamaat Razakar and Albadra who were out to deceive the people in the name of religion. She said if they were voted, Jamaat would again engage itself in trading religion and disrupt social harmony.

On the other hand, Sheikh Hasina told the gathering that if they vote for the plough or sheaf of paddy people's desire for democracy would again land into the hands of autocrats. She said it was only boat which could ensure democracy.

Sheikh Hasina said to stay in power Ziaur Rahman resorted to killing, all sorts of unconstitutional means and corruption. She said only to make his power secure, 600 officers and 25,000 jawans of the army were killed during his tenure. Another 400 detainees were killed in jail. Moreover to preserve his

powerbase, he (Zia) hanged Col Taher, his comrade during the Liberation War.

Awami League chief charged that the way Zia came to power through arms by killing democracy, Ershad did the same thing. The ministers of Zia and Ershad during last 15 years amassed huge black money, but on the other hand 90 per cent of the people went below poverty level, she said. She said collaborators and associates of Zia and Ershad during 15 years looted nearly Taka 50,000 crore that came as foreign aid.

Sheikh Hasina said, 'Insha Allah if voted to power we will bring back the money smuggled out by the associates of Zia and Ershad and spend those for improving the condition of the poor by setting up industries.'

Referring to the leader of a political party who is contesting the election from Nagarkanda, Sheikh Hasina said she had betrayed with bloods of Bangabandhu and joined hands with Zia clique to become minister. She asked the people not to vote for this betrayer.

Sheikh Hasina said trial of Bangabandhu's killers will be held.

After winding up her tour to the south-western districts Sheikh Hasina will reach the capital today (Thursday).

## Jamaat will do away with 'family rule'

Acting Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Abbas Ali Khan Wednesday said his party would establish a stable political system so that autocracy never came back, reports BSS.

Addressing a public meeting at Basabo Maidan in Dhaka, Khan said Jamaat would establish full Islamic democracy if voted to power.

He said the past governments had pleaded for democracy but in fact they established autocratic and family rule. Jamaat would do away with this practice and establish ideal Islamic social system and democracy, he added.

Khan alleged that some parties were violating election code of conduct. He called for maintaining neutrality by the administration during the election.

## Two leaders provoking anarchy : Inu

CHITTAGONG, Feb 20 : Hasanul Huq Inu, General Secretary of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Inu) and leader of the Five-party Alliance today expressed his concern on future of democracy and alleged that the leaders of two major political parties were inciting people for anarchy, reports BSS.

Inu was addressing a projection meeting at Agrabad Lucky Plaza square here this afternoon. Presided over by Sayed Mohammed Yunus the meeting was also addressed by Ashok Kumar Sen, Advocate Liakat Ali, Abdur Rab, Nurul Islam and Nuruddin Jahed Manju. Five-party Alliance candidate for Chittagong-8 (Doublemooring-Port) constituency.

Inu said the two parties would not be able to form government even if any one of the two bagged 160 parliamentary seats, because of their weak leadership.

He advised the major parties to strengthen democracy by adhering to democratic norms before ascending to power, otherwise the elected government even would not be allowed to remain in power by the vested quarters.

Inu said that only a government of national consensus would be able to solve the growing socio-economic and political problems.

## ATPs

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Aviation Ministry told The Daily Star that they are expecting the report from the five-member enquiry committee within a week. The committee, headed by a group captain of the Air Force, was constituted to look into the causes of the accident at Saidpur airport in December in which one of the ATP aircraft was involved. This committee is mainly investigating the material cause and human error if any, responsible for the accident.

Meanwhile, one engine of the aircraft, that caught fire in the accident, has been sent to Canada for a thorough check by its manufacturer Pratt and Whitney. 'We are also waiting for a report from the manufacturer about the cause of the accident', says the ministry source. Future flight operations by ATPs will depend on these reports, he said.

Biman bought three ATP aircraft from British Aerospace at a total cost of US 50 million Dollars and two of these were delivered in September last year. But after frequent snags in the new aircraft and after the Saidpur accident, both the ATPs were grounded while government decided not to take delivery of the third one.

A three-member team of British Aerospace recently visited Dhaka to negotiate with the government for a settlement of the issue. The discussions ended inconclusively but are expected to be resumed soon.

Government is insisting on replacing the ATPs by other aircraft like jet-engine 146 manufactured by British Aerospace. But, British Aerospace did not agree this step would tarnish the image of ATPs as well as its own.

'We are trying to settle the issue amicably and we will negotiate further', said the ministry source.

## The Midnight File

## 1,00,000 Asians in Kuwait, Iraq

BANGKOK, Feb 20: There may still be about 1,00,000 Asian migrant workers and members of their families in war-torn Kuwait and Iraq, according to a latest report of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Asia-Pacific regional office. A comparison of the population they had in those countries before August 2 last year and the number who have since been repatriated indicates that there may still be some 50,000 Bangladeshis, 11,000 Indians, 5,000 Pakistanis, 15,000 Filipinos, and 5,000 Thais in the immediate region surrounding the present military hostilities, the report said, says Xinhua.

## 20 drowned in Andhra Pradesh

NEW DELHI, Feb 20: At least 20 people travelling in two boats drowned when a young girl shouted 'snake, snake,' causing a stampede which overturned the boats. Those killed in the accident Tuesday were among more than 30 persons crossing a river in two boats near Peddamlam in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, United News of India said, reports AP.

## 13 killed in Bihar clash

NEW DELHI, Feb 20: At least 13 people were killed late Tuesday when members of a left-wing group clashed with a private army of farmers in the crime-prone eastern Indian state of Bihar. The deaths occurred in Tishkore village near the state capital Patna when activists of the Indian People's Front (IPF) and Mazdoor Kisan Sangh (worker and farmers' forum) clashed, the Press Trust of India said, reports AFP.

## 60 hurt in Indonesian blast

JAKARTA, Feb 20: At least 60 people were injured when dynamite stores exploded early today in a huge Indonesian oilfield run by US company Caltex, but the US embassy said it was probably not an act of terrorism, reports Reuters.

## Ferry catches fire in Philippines

MANILA, Feb 20: A ferry caught fire off the central Philippine island of Leyte but navy ships rescued all 176 people on board, the navy said today. The 943-tonne Princess Milka, owned by the domestic firm Georgia Lines, was on its way from Leyte to the southern city of Surigao when fire broke out on board on Monday, reports Reuters.

## No new talks on Panama canal

PANAMA CITY, Feb 20: President Guillermo Endara, reacting to a growing debate on the future of the United States military in Panama, said on Tuesday he will not renegotiate the 1977 canal treaty. 'The head of state has categorically determined that during his term, which ends August 31, 1994, even if the United States proposes a new negotiation, he will reject it,' a statement from the President's office said, reports Reuters.

## Discovery's lift-off delayed

CAPE CANAVERAL (Florida), Feb 20: The space shuttle Discovery's planned March 9 lift-off could be delayed after US space agency engineers said on Tuesday they had found to cracks in door hinges, reports Reuters.

## Mizan's call to vote for Ershad

RANGPUR, Feb 20: The Acting Chairman of the Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury today appealed to the people of Rangpur to vote for former President Ershad on February 27, reports BSS.

He was addressing a big public election meeting here at local Public Library maidan this afternoon. Azizur Rahman, President, Rangpur District Jatiya Party, chaired the meeting. Sharfuddin Ahmed Jhantu, Sadar Upazila Chairman, was also present in the meeting.

Mizan Chowdhury said that former President Ershad had initiated development activities and during his rule upazila system was introduced, salaries of teachers increased and High Court bench outside Dhaka set up. Ershad also wanted that none should be illiterate by 2000 AD, he added.

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury also said that former President had initiated a programme by acquiring money from different sources for the construction of the Jamuna Bridge, but he expressed doubts whether the bridge would at all be constructed after the fall of Ershad.

He said, 'I would not say that the government since liberation to 1975 and from 1975 to 1982 did all bad work. Rather those governments also worked for the people.'

Later he offered munajat to Almighty Allah for early release and health and welfare of Ershad.

He also said Ershad had

## Shahabuddin

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imbued with the spirit of self-determination and cultural pride of our people. Justice Shahabuddin hoped the heritage of 'Ekushey February' which inspired the nation to step forward from one victory to another would once again inspire the people to lead towards democracy.

The Acting President also said the 'Shaheed Dibash' which carries the blood-stained memories of the language martyrs was the source of inspiration of our national awakening.

He paid homage to the great language martyrs, saying that the national awareness which was created through the sacrifices of 'Ekushey February' had finally led the nation to freedom.

He said due to the sacrifices of the martyrs our language has attained its glorious place.

## Shah Moazzem won't contest from Munshiganj-1

Shah Moazzem Hossain, former Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary General of Jatiya Party, has withdrawn his candidature from the Munshiganj-1 constituency in the coming Jatiya Sangsad election, according to a press release in Dhaka on Wednesday, reports BSS.

The announcement was made by Abdul Hal Khan, chief polling agent of Shah Moazzem Hossain, through a statement.

Shah Moazzem Hossain through a letter of authorisation had empowered Abdul Hal Khan to take final decision regarding his candidature in the coming Jatiya Sangsad election. His letter was released to the press.

## Mizan playing bourgeoisie tricks : Nirmal

Acting first secretary and coordinator of the Five-party Alliance Nirmal Sen Wednesday criticised the statement made by Jatiya Party Acting Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury regarding the 'so called neutrality' of the government of Ershad, reports BSS.

While addressing an election meeting at Bansbaria in Gopalganj, a leader of the Srani Krishak Samajbadi Dal Nirmal Sen said Mr Chowdhury's claim of so called neutrality of Ershad government was nothing but a hoax.

Mr Sen said leaders of the brand of Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury were very capable to play bourgeoisie tricks in politics. But people can never be baffled by such rhetoric, he said.

Mr Sen said when the farmers were being driven away from their health and homes in the name of realising the agricultural loan, these people played safe even though they usurped the people's money.

A Patriot anti-missile missile streaks toward an Iraqi Scud over Tel Aviv on Tuesday evening.

—AFP photo

## Allies ready for G-day

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Brigade — were told by their commander on Tuesday the ground war would be nasty but short.

Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani appealed to US-led Allies on Tuesday to delay a ground offensive so Iraq could be persuaded to quit Kuwait through diplomatic efforts.

Meanwhile, The Soviet Ambassador to the United Nations, Yuli Vorontsov said he expected Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz to return to Moscow Wednesday and he hoped for a positive reply to the peace plan, details of which are still secret.

Meanwhile a Soviet newspaper said on Wednesday 'having already decided the date of the land attack... the leaders of the anti-Iraq coalition are hardly going to show interest in a peace plan which would deprive western governments of their own plan — the destruction of Iraq's military and economic potential and the removal of (Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein from power.'

The Communist Party daily Pravda, in an editorial headlined 'give peace a chance', echoed the criticism.

Meanwhile, General Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the U.S. forces in the Gulf, said the Iraqi army is 'on the verge of collapse', after more than a month of Allied attacks, the Los Angeles Times reported on Wednesday.

In an interview in Riyadh, Gen. Schwarzkopf described Iraqi forces as 'hurting very badly'.

'Our assessment of them is that they are on the verge of collapse,' he was quoted as saying.

Allied air attacks are destroying about 100 tanks a day.

NICOSIA, Feb 20: Iraq said today its forces inflicted heavy casualties on Allied troops who mounted an attack across the Kuwaiti border, reports Reuters.

In a report from the Iraqi capital, it said explosions rocked part of the city for more than four hours.

'Heavy bombardment of Baghdad was resumed and explosions were heard every five minutes,' it said.

Allied air attacks on Kerbala, an Iraqi city held holy by Shiite Muslims, have killed 52 people, wounded 250 and damaged 25 mosques and churches, according to an Iraqi toll given to an Iranian journalist on Wednesday.

The US Defence Department on Tuesday accused Iraq of faking bomb damage to a mosque in the southern city of Basra and denied that allied bombs had caused the damage.

Rear Admiral Mike McConnell, an intelligence specialist with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Iraqi engineers on February 8 neatly removed the dome of the Al-Basrah Mosque and destroyed the second storey to make it look like