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Inside today

International



Elvegia R Mendoza was recently promoted to become the first woman general in the Philippines.

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Weekend Magazine

'Up the Brahmaputra with a Pair of Paddles' By P.J. English

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Article

Convicts paint a better future

"We are not the write-offs that society thinks we are", says one convict. He is among the many who take up painting in India's first art school for convicts.

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Tomorrow



M. SYEDUZZAMAN
ON
Economic Objectives And Targets For The New Government

A former Finance Minister of Bangladesh and an internationally-known expert on economic development M. Syeduzzaman has joined the ranks of regular contributors to The Daily Star.

The first article of his two-part series on the current economic scene in the country, which identifies the challenges and options for the new administration appears in tomorrow's issue of The Daily Star.

THE TWO ARTICLES ARE INFORMATIVE, RELIABLE AND THOUGHT-PROVOKING, A MUST READING FOR ALL WHO ASK FOR CHANGES IN THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC POLICIES, FOR A NEW ERA IN DEVELOPMENT.

It is all in The Daily Star tomorrow. Do not miss it.

NEWS BRIEFS

CU teacher hurt in attack

CHITTAGONG, Mar 21: Dr Mukhmd-e-Mulk, Associate Professor, Political Science Department of Chittagong University, was attacked and badly injured early this morning at his campus residence by some miscreants, reports BSS.

US to cut aid to Jordan

WASHINGTON, March 21: The Senate voted yesterday to cut off US military and economic aid to Jordan because of the anti-US stance the Middle Eastern nation took during the Gulf War, reports Xinhua.

Sehri and Iftar Timings

05:00 Friday 4:41 am 6:17 pm
06 Saturday 4:40 am 6:18 pm

Sahabuddin briefs Council of Ministers on economic situation

Quick preparation of budget emphasised

By Staff Correspondent

Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed briefed the new Council of Ministers Thursday night on the economic situation and the tasks lying ahead.

In his first meeting with the new Council of Ministers at Bangabhaban after Iftar, the Acting President outlined the problems faced by different sectors, and explained the need for holding a free and fair election.

Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed told the Prime Minister, Ministers and State Ministers that the new national budget has to be prepared very quickly, and at the same time

preparations would have to be made to seek foreign aid at the Bangladesh Aid Consortium meeting scheduled to be held in Paris in the first week of June.

A cabinet source said that the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia formally thanked the Acting President for holding a free and fair election.

Briefly narrating the nine-year movement, Begum Zia urged the Acting President to look after the families of those who were killed at different stages of the movement.

Meanwhile, the newly-appointed ministers have started attending their offices.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia went to Sylhet to offer feteha at the mazar of Hazrat Shah Jalal (RA).

It was not decided till Thursday where her office will be located, a reliable source said.

On their first day in office the Ministers and State Ministers held series of meetings with senior officials to get acquainted with their activities.

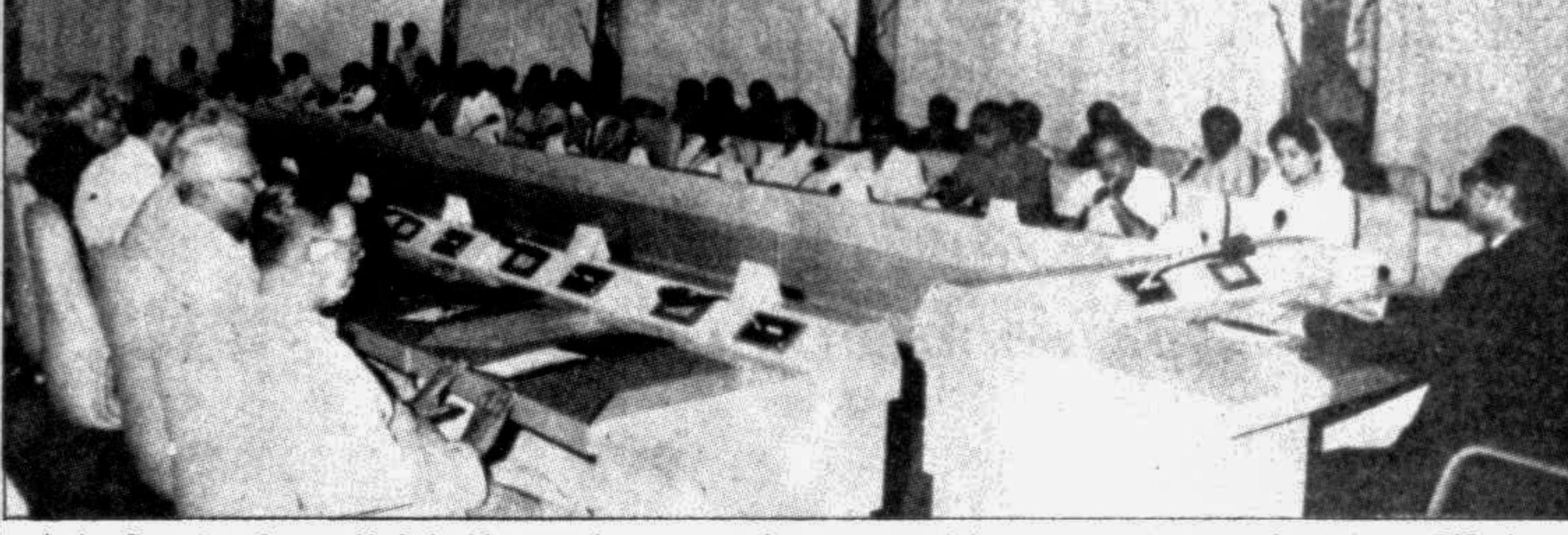
Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar who is the Minister for Local Government, Rural

Development and Cooperatives told The Daily Star that he had a meeting with the senior officials of all the divisions of the ministry.

During the meeting he let the officials know about the commitments made by the BNP to the people and discussed ways of implementing them. He is also the Secretary General of the BNP.

Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia, State Minister for Labour and Manpower said he tried to accustomed himself to the activities of his ministry by having meetings with senior officials.

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Acting President Justice Shahabuddin presiding over the first meeting of the Council of Ministers Thursday. —PID photo

Task Force reports

Industries in dire straits

Star Economic Report

About 50 per cent of the industrial units in the country are sick. The credit squeeze by Development Financing Institutions (DFIs) is hurting genuine industrialists while loans from the DFIs remain unpaid by many. Resources in private sector continue to shift from manufacturing to trading, smuggling and other activities.

The 14-member Task Force on Industrial Policy noted this in its report to the government.

With S. M. Al-Husseiny, Chairman, Bangladesh Public Service Commission as its convener, the Task Force has reviewed the industrial activities in the economy over the past two decades.

It was one of the 29 Task Forces, set up in early January by the government to examine the socio-economic situation, prevailing in different sectors, and to suggest measures to rejuvenate the economy.

The Task Force on Industrial Policy has reported that private investments in industries declined in the eighties.

Investments in trade and services were twice as high as in manufacturing in the latter half of the eighties. About 50 per cent of private investment target-in industries remained unattained in the Third Five Year Plan period (1985-90).

The overall growth of industrial production was significantly lower in the 1980s (about 2.5 per cent a year since 1980-81) than in the 1970s (4.3 per cent during 1975-76 through 1979-80), according to the Task Force.

It reported that shifting of resources from manufacturing to trading and other activities in the eighties has rendered the hope of a long-term industrialisation an elusive one. The expected foreign investment has also not trickled in.

He also demanded cancellation of all amendments in the Constitution including the

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Overall, exports constituted a meagre seven per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the late eighties as against six per cent in the late sixties.

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APSU rally for repeal of black laws

By DU Correspondent

The leaders of All-Party Students Unity (APSU) in a rally Thursday demanded repeal of all black laws and undemocratic articles from the Constitution.

The leaders said students would continue movement till their ten-point demand was realised.

They also demanded immediate arrest of armed hoodlums who created terrorism in the Dhaka University campus in last few days.

The rally held at the foot of Aparajeya Bangla monument was addressed by Nazimuddin Alam, Shahi Alam, S.M. Kamal Hossain, Abdus Sattar Khan and Moshrefa Mishu.

Nazimuddin Alam, Assistant General Secretary of Dhaka University Central Students Union (DUCSU) demanded publication of white paper on misappropriation of public money and property by the autocratic regime looted.

Shahid Alam, President of Awami League-backed Chhatra League said if armed hoodlums were not arrested immediately to stop the politics of murder, the students would remove them from the campus as was done with Niru and Avee.

He also demanded cancellation of all amendments in the Constitution including the

See Page 12 Col. 8

Sheikh Hasina
Leader of
Opposition

Sheikh Hasina, Leader of Bangladesh Awami League Parliamentary Party, was on Thursday officially recognised as the Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad, reports BSS.

According to a notification

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Thousands of people — men

Mustafiz sets tone of foreign policy

Closeness with Muslim states, good relations with neighbours

Foreign Minister ASM Mustafizur Rahman on Thursday pledged to reactivate late President Ziaur Rahman's foreign policy of "close friendship with Muslim countries" and "good neighbourly relations with countries in the region", reports UNB.

The pattern of our foreign policy will be completely identical with the policy adopted by Ziaur Rahman to ensure maximum welfare of the people, the new Foreign Minister told newsmen.

In his maiden press interview immediately after assuming his office Thursday morning, Mustafiz expressed concern over the omission of the "Guarantee Clause" from Bangladesh-India Water Sharing and Agreement. This will have to be restored to obtain our legitimate share, he said.

Bangladesh, under the agreement signed in Dhaka in 1977 along with the guarantee clause, was allowed to use 60 per cent of the total flows of the common river Ganges in lean period.

Bangladesh, got 34,000 cusec of water and India 23,000 cusec under the provision of the pact with the clause.

But the clause was dropped in an agreement initialised by ousted President Ershad and late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India on October 7, 1982 in New Delhi, resulting in the prevailing water problem.

The newly appointed Foreign Minister, also a senior BNP leader, however, said Bangladesh is always in favour of resolving bilateral issues. See Page 12 Col. 1

4 shot dead by BSF in Chhagalnaiya

FENI, Mar 21: Four Bangladeshis were shot dead by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) at a frontier village in Chhagalnaiya upazila here today, officials said, reports UNB.

Another villager was also wounded with bullet as the Indian border guards opened fire at village south Jashpur at about 4 pm, BDR officials said.

Injured Jasimuddin (36) was rushed to hospital in a critical condition. The dead were named Rahimullah (38), Sabahuddin (32), Joynal (24) and another unidentified person, all from the same village.

Sources said BSF went on shooting on a group of Bangladeshis while they were quarrelling with neighbouring villagers of India over the use of a common river water. BSF men took away the bodies of Joynal and the unidentified victim.

Later, in a flag meeting at about 10 tonight, the BSF assured the BDR officials of returning the bodies. Two other bodies were sent to Feni hospital for post-mortem.

Mixed reaction to allocation of portfolios

By Staff Correspondent

The formation of the Council of Ministers and the allocation of portfolios have created a mixed reaction inside Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and among the members of the public.

BNP insiders feel that a good number of leaders of the party who had been in the forefront of the movement for nine years have not received due attention.

According to them, some newcomers in the party have got prominence at the expense of those who had been active in waging movement and keeping the party intact against repeated assault from the Ershad regime.

It is gathered that even some cabinet ministers and See Page 12 Col. 6

Khaleda Zia warns against smuggling

SYLHET, Mar 21: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today offered Fateha at the mazar of Hazrat Shah Jalal (RA).

She also prayed seeking divine blessings for the nation and the Muslim Ummah as well.

The Prime Minister also visited the mazar of Hazrat Shah Jalal and offered Fateha.

From the Osmany Airport, the Prime Minister was taken to the Circuit House in a ceremonial motorcade. She was presented with a guard of honour there.

After a brief stay, Begum Khaleda Zia and her entourage then went to the mazar of Hazrat Shah Jalal to offer Fateha. She and other members also said their Jahan prayer at the mazar mosque.

The Prime Minister and her entourage members then went to the mazar of Hazrat Shah Jalal, six miles away from Sylhet town.

Thousands of people — men

See Page 12 Col. 2

AL move to identify causes of debacle

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League working committee has empowered its central secretariat to identify the causes of the Party's debacle in the parliamentary elections and to pinpoint the weaknesses in its organisational activities.

The secretariat has been given one month to do this and prepare a report with necessary recommendations.

This decision was taken at the meeting of the AL Central Working Committee that ended Thursday evening.

The adjourned meeting of the committee began at the Bangabandhu Bhaban Wednesday with party chief Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

After a thorough discussion on the situation prevailing in the country, the meeting adopted a political resolution which is expected to be announced today (Friday).

A source, who was present at the meeting told the Daily Star that during the deliberations, the working committee members expressed their determination to continue the struggle to establish a parliamentary democracy.

They stressed on strengthening the party from the grassroots level and urged immediate steps and action from the leadership in this regard.

Some members at the meeting expressed their dissatisfaction at the publication of the text of Kamal Hossain's letter in a section of press.

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AL won't put candidates for women's seats

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League will not put any candidate in the April 4 elections to 30 reserved seats for women in the Jatiya Sangsad (parliament), party sources said.

Meanwhile, BNP which emerged as the single largest party in the February 27 parliamentary polls, has decided to contest in all the 30 reserved seats. The party will select 30 candidates tomorrow and the day after among over 300 women seeking nominations from the party to contest the polls. Jamaat-e-Islami which supported BNP to form government with its 18 MPs-elect is likely to share two seats with BNP.

Kamal Hossain off to Canada

Awami League Presidium member Dr. Kamal Hossain Thursday left for Calgary, Canada, to attend a United Nations Centre for Transnational Corporations (UNCTC) petroleum law experts meeting scheduled for March 26, reports UNB.

He will also address the inaugural session of a seminar on "right to development" in Calcutta organised by International Law Association (ILA), as Chairman of one of its international committees.

Wife of former adviser commits suicide

By Staff Correspondent

Syeda Aklima Khanam, 49, wife of former Health and Family Planning Adviser Dr. A. Majed Khan allegedly committed suicide at her Banani residence Wednesday midnight.

Police said she hanged herself from a ceiling fan of her bed room.

Guilshan police rushed to the residence brought the body down and sent it Dhaka Medical College Hospital for post-mortem.

The motive was not known. A case of unnatural death has been lodged with Guilshan police station by Dr. Majed.

