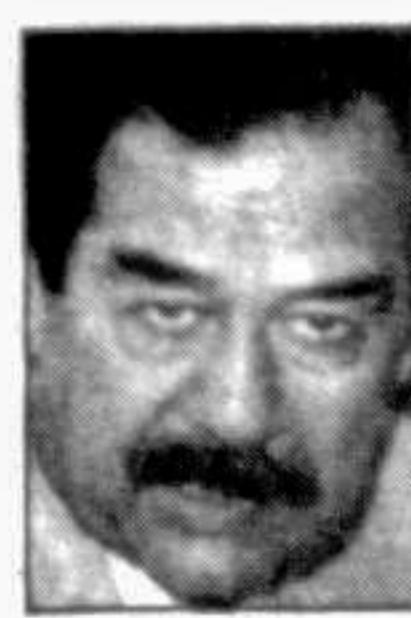


Inside today

International



Iraq's seniormost Shi'ite scholar Grand Ayatollah Abolqassim Al-Khoei who appeared with Saddam on television last week has been kept under house arrest in Kufa. Page 5

Article

Nikhil Chakravarty, a noted Indian political columnist writes, "There is no anti-India feeling as such in Bangladesh. But Bangladesh with its natural sensitivity would not like to be under the thumb of a Big Brother neighbour. Page 4

Feature

Education

Female teachers in primary schools: the emerging trend. Page 6

Metropolitan

Kind-hearted pickpockets!



The Railway Mail Service letter sorting office near Kamalapur Rail Station has a system that returns stolen or lost things. Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

3 held with Tk 1 cr gold

By Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Mar 29: Three Filipinos have been arrested here today on the charge of gold smuggling. Sea Customs officials recovered 1300 tolas of gold worth about Taka one crore and an amount of cash Tk. 1300 from them.

1 arrested from DU hall

Police raided four residential halls of Dhaka University and arrested one person from Surjor Sen Hall in the early hours on Friday. The arrested is learnt to be an outsider, reports UNB.

Mujahideen beaten back

KABUL, Mar 29: The Afghan Mujahideen offensive against Khost has been beaten back after two weeks of fierce fighting, according to officials and foreign observers in the capital Kabul, reports AFP.

Beirut bomb blast kills 3

BEIRUT Mar. 29: A car bomb blast killed three people and wounded eight in Beirut today hours after the Syrian backed government ordered all militias to surrender their weapons, reports Reuter.

Sohri and Iftar timings

Ramzan Day Last time for Sohri Iftar
13 Saturday 4.32 am 6.20 pm
14 Sunday 4.31 am 6.20 pm

10 hurt in renewed clashes : Students asked to leave hostels

Medical College closed sine die

By DMCH Correspondent

Dhaka Medical College (DMC) was closed indefinitely on Friday as Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Jatiyatabdil Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists of the college were locked in fresh clashes in which at least 10 students were injured.

Of the injured, three JCD workers were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

On Thursday, the rival student groups entered into clash over selection of the new Health Minister. Choudhury Kamal Ibne Yousuf, as the chief guest at the prize giving ceremony of the college's annual sports competition. In the clash two JCD supporters were hurt.

The disciplinary board of the college on Friday morning took the closure decision as its efforts to bring the two conflicting groups at the negotiation table failed. The resident students were ordered to vacate the college's two hostels by 12 noon.

But a number of the JCD workers returned to their hostels after they had been attacked by their rivals near Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University on their way. Monirul Rahman Choudhury, Masum and Manju of JCD were wounded in the attack. They were undergoing treatment at the DMCH.

The college authorities held a meeting with the leaders of JCD and BCL immediately after Thursday's untoward incidents on arrival of the Health Minister. The meeting agreed to maintain peace on the campus. At the meeting BCL leader Abul Hasnat regretted the incidents. Police forces were also withdrawn from the college area following the meeting.

See Page 10 Col 5



Students leaving hostels following closure of Dhaka Medical College for an indefinite period after renewed clashes between rival student groups on Friday. Star photo.

Iraqi troops retake Kirkuk: rebels plan retaliation

DAMASCUS, Mar 29 : Kurds fighting to topple Iraqi President Saddam Hussein said today they had retreated from the northern oil city of Kirkuk after fierce battles with government troops.

"Our forces retreated from Kirkuk. They are about two km (one mile) outside the city," a spokesman for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), one of several anti-Saddam groups, told Reuters in Damascus.

He said the rebels had launched a new drive to regain Kirkuk at 6 pm (1800 GMT).

The city, with a population of about 270,000, had been in Kurdish hands since last week.

The official Iraqi News Agency said on Thursday government troops had recaptured the city in a swift offensive.

Kurdish spokesman said earlier on Friday that their forces still controlled most of the city which was under heavy bombardment by artillery, missiles and tanks.

In Cairo an Iraqi envoy said on Friday the post-Gulf war rebellion against his government was nearly under control.

The situation has stabilised after the Iraqi armed forces were able to gain control over most areas in the south and (the northern towns of) Kirkuk and Daquq were cleared of rebel forces," said Kassim Al-Hamoudi told reporters.

"The armed forces are on the way to gaining control of all areas in northern Iraq," he added.

See Page 10 Col 3



Amparo Bautista is nailed to the cross for 30 minutes during a re-enactment of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on Good Friday on March 29 in the province of Bulacan north of Manila. AFP photo.

Act under review to reintroduce 'gram sarkar'

Mostafa Kamal Majumder

The Palli Parishad Act of 1989 is being reviewed to pave the way for reintroduction of 'gram sarkar' which was abolished by ousted President Ershad in 1982.

The Palli Parishad Act was passed in June 1989 by the fourth parliament for introduction of village governments essentially of the 'gram sarkar' type.

The law provided for the election of a 'palli parishad' (rural council) in all recognised villages. Each 'palli parishad' was to comprise a 'parishad pradhan' (council

See Page 10 Col 6

Probe into Comilla jail firing continues

From Our Correspondent

COMILLA, Mar 29 : The one-man enquiry committee continued its investigation into Wednesday's firing at the Comilla Central Jail, in which eight prisoners were killed.

The committee formed with the District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Hamidul Huq will submit its report to the government within 15 days.

The jail authorities have started repair works. The jail buildings and a handloom factory inside the jail were damaged in the clash between the prisoners and the guards.

Jail sources said Tajul Islam, convicted in

See Page 10 Col 7

Sirajul Haque quits AL to defend Ershad

Star Report

Awami League leader Advocate Sirajul Haque resigned from the party president on Friday and remained firm on his decision to defend deposed President HM Ershad in the arms case.

Ershad is facing trial for possessing illegal arms and funds at his official residence.

In a letter to the AL General Secretary Begum Sajeda Choudhury, Sirajul Haque offered his resignation from the party president showing "moral ground". He requested the party chief to treat the letter as resignation from primary membership as well, if the party feels embarrassed by his decision to defend Ershad.

In the letter, he expressed his determination to defend the former President in the arms case, it is learnt.

When contacted, Sirajul Haque confirmed his resignation.

Awami League Publicity Secretary Mohammad Nasim told The Daily Star that the party would expel Sirajul Haque for defending an autocrat like Ershad. He said when the party chief would return to the capital, the issue would be discussed. He confirmed that Sirajul Haque would not get the chance of resigning from the party. He will have to face punishment for embarrassing the party by defending Ershad, he said.

Advocate Sirajul Haque along with former Attorney General Barrister Rafiqul Haque met the deposed President on Tuesday last at the Gulshan sub-jail to discuss the case.

Ershad requested Sirajul Haque to defend him in the arms case. Sirajul Haque, who

declined to appear before the court to defend Ershad is learnt to have been giving brief to Barrister Kazi Shahabat Hussain. Kazi Shahabat and three other lawyers have been appointed by the relatives of Ershad to defend him in the arms case.

With the polling in Kushtia-2 constituency, election to the 300-member parliament is now complete. The election to this constituency was countermanded due to the death of a candidate on February 27.

In all seven candidates contested the election. Third, Fourth and Fifth positions were secured by Jatiya Party (Ahsan Habib Lincoln-24,615), JSD (Hasanul Haq Im-21,411) and Awami League (Md Shafiq Islam-17,553) nominees respectively.

Mr Saidur Rahman Biswas Shantu of Zaker Party got 907 votes, while Mr Shakhat Ibn Moin Chowdhury of Freedom Party got 130 votes.

Chief Election Commissioner Justice Mohammad Abdur Rauf was in Kushtia during election which was held in peaceful manner, sources added.

BNP bags another JS seat

Mr Abdur Reuf Chowdhury, a nominee of Bangladesh Nationalist Party, was officially declared elected Friday in the Kushtia-2 constituency where election was held Thursday.

Election Commission sources told BSS that Mr Chowdhury got 50,193 votes in 113 centres. His nearest rival was Jamaat's Abdul Wahid who got 29,868.

With the polling in Kushtia-2 constituency, election to the 300-member parliament is now complete. The election to this constituency was countermanded due to the death of a candidate on February 27.

In all seven candidates contested the election. Third, Fourth and Fifth positions were secured by Jatiya Party (Ahsan Habib Lincoln-24,615), JSD (Hasanul Haq Im-21,411) and Awami League (Md Shafiq Islam-17,553) nominees respectively.

Mr Saidur Rahman Biswas Shantu of Zaker Party got 907 votes, while Mr Shakhat Ibn Moin Chowdhury of Freedom Party got 130 votes.

Chief Election Commissioner Justice Mohammad Abdur Rauf was in Kushtia during election which was held in peaceful manner, sources added.

JP MPs will not take oath today

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Party MPs will not take oath today. The Parliament Secretariat had fixed March 30 as the date of those MPs who failed to take oath on March 17, 18 and 19.

The Jatiya Party Parliamentary Party (JP) at a meeting Friday afternoon with Deputy

See Page 10 Col 1

Khaleda tells World Bank officials Govt firm on carrying out economic reforms

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

Begum Zia was talking to the World Bank Director, Country Department in Charge of Bangladesh Shinji Asanuma and the World Bank Chief of Mission in Bangladesh Mr Christopher Willoughby, at her residence in Dhaka. Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman was present.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

Begum Zia was talking to the World Bank Director, Country Department in Charge of Bangladesh Shinji Asanuma and the World Bank Chief of Mission in Bangladesh Mr Christopher Willoughby, at her residence in Dhaka. Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman was present.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said Friday that the government wanted to promote efficiency in all sectors of government activities through dynamic management and provide goods and services at reasonable prices to give relief to the consumers, reports BSS.