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# The Daily Star

Drive carefully and observe all traffic rules. The man you are likely to kill by rash driving may be yourself.

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## Inside today International



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**Dressed to kill**



**Dress sense is non-existent among middle and upper class working women. It is certainly within everyone's means to look clean and efficient.**

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## Business

**Resumption of loan sanction by House Building Finance Corporation is unlikely before its transformation into Bangladesh Housing Bank.**

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Bush ordered CIA to aid Iraqi rebels

WASHINGTON, Apr 3: President George Bush signed official orders early this year authorizing the Central Intelligence Agency to aid rebel factions inside Iraq, according to several intelligence sources, reports AP.

### Smuggled sugar seized: 18 held

The regional Anti-smuggling Task Force has arrested 18 persons stated to be involved in smuggling and seized 8,504 kg of Indian sugar following a drive at the main market of Feni town on April 2, reports BSS.

### DMP rounds up 247

The Metropolitan Police, on the second day of their special drive, rounded up 120 more criminals taking the number of arrests made in the last two days to 247, reports BSS.

### Restriction

Restrictions have been imposed from today midnight against carrying any arms, explosives and holding of rallies, procession and demonstrations around the Jatiya Sangsad building to facilitate peaceful holding of parliament session from April 5, reports BSS.

## Shahabuddin may relinquish office

Star Report

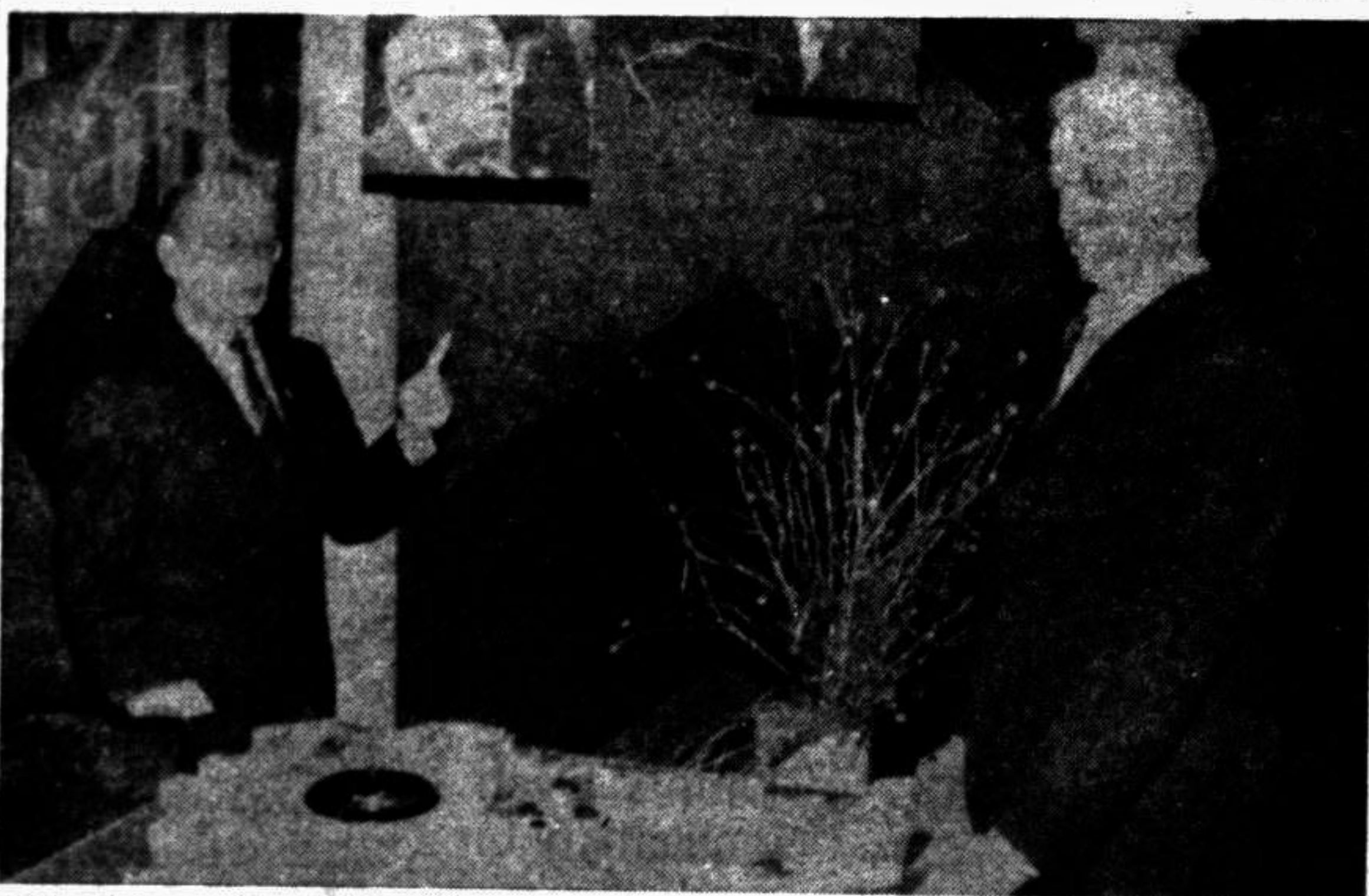
Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed may relinquish his office (office of vice-president) soon after the Speaker is elected in the inaugural session of Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) on Friday. If the Acting President vacates his office, power of the President will vest in the Speaker as per Article 55 (2) of the Constitution.

Article 55 (2) reads "At any time when both the offices of President and Vice-President are vacant or when both President and Vice-President

are unable to discharge the functions of their respective offices on account of absence, illness or any other cause, the Speaker shall act as President until a new President is elected." A BNP source said that handing over of power to the Speaker will reflect the spirit of the Joint Declaration of the three political alliances, which calls for giving power to a sovereign parliament. Central theme of the declaration is handing over power to the Speaker, asserted a BNP source.

But Awami League-led Eight-party Alliance and left-leaning Five-party Alliance differ with this interpretation of BNP. These two alliances hold that the sovereign parliament means the parliamentary form of government. BNP's departure from the declaration will be a clear betrayal with the Joint Declaration, they maintain. A BNP constitutional expert said the sovereign parliament does not mean a parliamentary form of government. A parliament is sovereign when

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Wax figures of Soviet President Gorbachev (L) and Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin preside over a map of the Soviet Union made to look like a roulette table at Madame Tussaud's wax museum in Moscow. Overlooking the display is a photograph of former Soviet academic Andrei Sakharov. —AFP photo

## Jatiya Sangsad session tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The fifth Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) goes into its inaugural session tomorrow (Friday) heralding a new era of democracy. Formed through a free and fair election on February 27 after nine years of anti-autocracy movement, the parliament represents all shades of political opinion.

The inaugural session will be a brief one, but it is expected to indicate how politics will be shaped in the country in the coming years. People are eagerly awaiting the session to see how their elected representatives are going to solve the questions of transfer of power and form of government.

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## Unscheduled meet of BNP standing body

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP Parliamentary Party (BNPPP) failed to take any decision about the nomination of Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Deputy Leader of the House and Whips of the Parliament at its meeting Wednesday.

Later Khaleda Zia called all members of the standing committee of the party last night at 10 a.m. at her residence to discuss the issue. Till the filing of the report at 12.30 midnight the meeting was continuing.

Earlier, when asked Khaleda Zia told The Daily Star that it would take only a few minutes' time to nominate the Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

The meeting between the representatives of BNPPP and the Awami League Parliament

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## JP to support parliamentary form of govt I am not repentant, says Ershad

By Staff Correspondent

Deposed President HM Ershad on Wednesday expressed his wish to contest the presidential election. But at the same time, he said he will support parliamentary form of government if BNP and Awami League jointly move any bill in parliament. He however said the acting chairman of Jatiya Party will decide his party stand in this regard.

While talking to newsmen at the Sangsad Bhaban, where he came to take oath as MP he said he is not at all repentant for the alleged misdeeds during his nine years' rule. Ershad said, "I don't own any responsibility for any killing."

When asked what is his reaction to the alleged killing of 85 persons and injuring about 1000 others during his last days in power, Ershad said, "to maintain law and order police resorted to action at that time. So, why should I be responsible for these killings?" He put a counter question whether the present government took any responsibility for the killing of 12 people in jails during the recent days.

He said the recent election was fair but not impartial. If Jatiya Party would get equal opportunity like other political parties it could do much better

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## Huda to chair JS opening session

By Staff Correspondent

Speaker of the dissolved Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) Shamsul Huda Choudhury will preside over the opening session of the new parliament. The House will elect a new speaker and a deputy speaker in the opening session.

Briefing newsmen at the end of the BNP Parliamentary Party meeting at the Sangsad Bhaban on Wednesday evening, Secretary General of BNP Abdus Salam Talukder who is also IGRD minister said the meeting discussed procedural matters relating to the opening session of parliament.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia presided over the BNP PP meeting.

Salam Talukder said Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed will address the open-

ing session of parliament as per constitutional provisions. Parliament will meet at 9 am tomorrow (Friday) with the outgoing Speaker Shamsul Huda Choudhury in the chair. As soon as the House meets a new speaker and a deputy speaker will be elected by the members. A five-member panel of chairmen will be constituted.

The House will be adjourned for a few minutes when the new speaker and the deputy speaker will take oath from the Acting President.

The House will resume its business with the new speaker in the chair. Then obituary references will be proposed by the leader of the house. Salam Talukder said 44 ordinances

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## Ershad, 27 others take oath: Three wanted MPs-elect did not turn up

By Staff Correspondent

Deposed President Ershad and 27 other MPs-elect of the Jatiya Party were sworn-in yesterday.

The oath was administered by the Chief Election Commissioner Justice M. A. Rouf at Committee Room No 1 of the Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) building at 10 am on Wednesday.

Ershad was escorted by police to parliament house from the Gulshan sub-jail and taken straight to the Committee Room.

Three Jatiya Party MPs-elect Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Anwar Hossain Manju and Sardar Amjad Hossain, wanted by police did not arrive at the swearing-in ceremony.

JP insiders said that the three MPs-elect may surrender to police in a couple of days to take the oath as decided by the party.

Ershad was brought to the parliament building at 9:30 am with former Vice-President Moudud Ahmed and former Home Minister Mahmudul Hasan arriving there under police escort before him.

On Ershad's entering the Committee Room senior JP leaders including outgoing Deputy Speaker Reazuddin Ahmed Bhola Mia, T. M. Fazle Rabbi and Khurram Khan burst into tears and began embracing him.

Khurram Khan and T. M. Fazle Rabbi reaffirmed their loyalty to Ershad and touched his feet.

However it appeared that Ershad was trying to ignore Moudud Ahmed before the oath-taking.

Every time Moudud tried to draw Ershad's attention, the deposed President turned his head the other way.

The presence of press

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## Poor nations seek share in Gulf reconstruction work

SEOUL, Apr 3: The Philippines urged the United Nations Wednesday to help poor countries adversely affected by the Gulf War share in postwar reconstruction work, reports Agencies.

Philippine Foreign Undersecretary Pablo R Suarez Jr also appealed for joint international efforts to address the acute problems of many heavily indebted developing countries.

"My delegation wishes to suggest that ESCAP (the UN

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) and related international organisations coordinate efforts to help those affected countries participate in an effective manner in the evolving task of reconstruction and rehabilitation in the Gulf region," Suarez said.

The Gulf crisis, Suarez said, dealt a heavy blow to the Philippines and many other ESCAP members. They suffered in trade, energy supplies, tourism and remittances

from workers who lost jobs in the Gulf, he said.

Those affected countries should be allowed to share in postwar reconstruction by providing manpower and materials, he said.

He said the Philippines' foreign debt now represents 63 per cent of its gross national product in current prices, and the country has to pay 3.7 billion dollars a year, or 28.5 per cent of its total export earnings, to service its debt.

The holding of a major United Nations conference in South Korea has encouraged the country to vigorously push its entry into the world body this year.

Seoul wants South and North Korea to join the United Nations simultaneously, but with separate membership. Pyongyang opposes the idea, claiming that this would perpetuate the national division.

The 47th session of the United Nations Commission

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## AL discusses bill to amend Constitution

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League Parliamentary Party (ALPP), which met for over an hour Wednesday at Sangsad Bhaban, discussed different aspects of the bill to be brought in parliament for amending the constitution for reintroducing parliamentary system, Awami League will move the bill in the first session of the fifth Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament).

The meeting, held at the committee room, was chaired by party's Presidium member Abbas Samad Azad who is likely to be nominated as the Deputy Leader of ALPP by party

chief and Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina. Sheikh Hasina did not attend the meeting which has been adjourned till 11 a.m. today (Thursday).

The meeting was scheduled to begin at 10 am, but was delayed by over two hours. Waiting newsmen were told by ALPP members that Sheikh Hasina would turn up for presiding the meeting after the departure of former President Ershad from Sangsad Bhaban. Ershad came there for taking oath along with other Jatiya Party members, but after the

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## CPB urges BNP to go for parliamentary form

By Staff Correspondent

Shamsuddoha, leader of Parliament Party of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), has urged BNP chairperson and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia to take an initiative to switch over to parliamentary form of government.

He was addressing a meeting organised by CPB in front of its central office at Purana Paltan Wednesday.

There was no alternative to parliamentary form of government to give democracy an institutional shape, Shamsuddoha said. He called for realisation of the joint declaration of three alliances, Communist Party will cooperate if BNP comes forward with any proposal based on the joint declaration of November 19, he said.

The three alliances agreed in their November 19 joint declaration that the interim government will hand over power to a sovereign parliament to which the government will remain accountable, he reminded his audience.

The CPB leader said the presidential system gave birth to autocracy and was responsible for the killing of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and President Ziaur Rahman.

The present Constitution which gave birth to autocracy must be amended, he said, adding a consensus among the parties in parliament is necessary to amend the Constitution for bringing an end to autocracy.

CPB stands for post-5th Amendment Constitution of 1972, Shamsuddoha said.

## APSU postpones Apr 5 programme

The All-Party Student Unity (APSU) has decided to postpone its programme for submitting memorandum to the new parliament on April 5, reports UNB.

The student alliance sources said Wednesday the decision was taken after discussions among the components which threw the programme without the consent of Jatiyatubadi Chhatra Dal.

APSU at a meeting on March 30 announced the programme for placing the memorandum containing its 10-point demand, when the 5th parliament goes into session.

## Nor'wester hits Bandarban town: Thousands homeless

CHITTAGONG, Apr 3: Fifty persons were injured and about one thousand houses including educational institutions and prayer houses damaged when a nor'wester lashed Bandarban Hill District town and adjacent upazilas for an hour this morning, official sources said, reports BSS.

The police line of the town was seriously affected as five barracks were blown away at Balaghat. Thousands of people were rendered homeless at Armypara, Malpara, Siddique Mouja, Barishal Para, this station, Hafzbona and eight other places. Trees were also uprooted and standing crops damaged.

Severe hailstorms also hit

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## Saifur talks to The Daily Star in Seoul

### Strict austerity to cut Govt spendings

From Mahfuz Anam

SEOUL, Apr 3: The newly elected government of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will follow a free market-oriented economic policy.

All assistance will also be given to the private sector to generate sustained growth in the economy.

In an exclusive interview to The Daily Star correspondent in the South Korean capital, Seoul, Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman also said that the first priority of the government would be to reduce current government expenditure by cutting down on costs wherever possible, reducing wastage, improving

the efficiency of government machinery and introducing strict austerity measures in every sector of government activity.

The government will examine very carefully the need and function of every government office and try to cut down wherever possible.

The interview was given to The Daily Star correspondent during the Finance Minister's three-day visit to South Korea to address the 47th session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in the capital Seoul.

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## Asanuma twins assistance with Govt's performance

A senior World Bank official has said the donor community appreciates Bangladesh's transition to democracy but cautioned that additional external support will depend on the policy the new government is going to pursue.

"It is not simply because it is a new government and a democratic government that donors would change their position of support... it all depends on what it is going to do," said Shinji Asanuma, the visiting World Bank Director for Asia region, in an exclusive interview with UNB here Wednesday.

"In fact the support is very much predicated on what the new government says or does," observed the Japanese-born World Bank official, who is here for groundwork on the

coming Aid Bangladesh Consortium meeting in Paris scheduled for late May.

He said the basic economic philosophy of the BNP government as reflected in its 19-point election manifesto was more in line with what the donor community expected from a responsible government.

Asanuma, however, expressed reservation about some election pledges of the ruling party, including exemption of farm loans and the construction of Jamuna multi-purpose bridge project.

He wondered if the poorest segment of the rural population would be the real beneficiary of farm loan exemption. "There are other proper alternative ways like income generation to give relief to the poor."

About the multi-million Dollar Jamuna bridge project, Asanuma who is well conversant with politico-economic situation of Bangladesh said, "We do not oppose the project... we were never against the bridge. The only question is affordability."

"It is potentially a worthy project but the problem is to determine what other investments can be displaced by the project... and neither the World Bank nor the government (of Bangladesh) is in a position to judge this."

In this context, he was critical of the economic mismanagement during the Ershad regime. "The planning process broke down and Ershad sponsored many more projects which the country simply can't

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## Security Council meets on Gulf war ceasefire

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 3: The Security Council opened its meeting on a ceasefire resolution that would pave the way for Allied troops to withdraw from Iraq and demand the destruction of Baghdad's dangerous weapons, reports Reuters.

A vote on the US-initiated resolution is expected after several delegations, including Yemen, Zaire and Zimbabwe, Cuba and the Ivory Coast, address the Council on the measure. The meeting began an hour-and-a-half behind schedule.

If Iraq formally accepts the

resolution, a ceasefire comes into effect, allowing the United Nations to move observers into a buffer zone between Kuwait and Iraq.

Iraq will be asked to scrap Scud missiles, pay war reparations and do without all but essential goods for months.

"It's a bad, bad resolution, but sometimes you have to swallow the bitter pill," Iraqi Ambassador Abdul-Amir Al-Anbari told reporters.

But Anbari said he did not know what Baghdad's official response would be to the document he has called humiliating and an interference in

Iraq's internal affairs. US Ambassador Thomas Pickering, who beat back objections to the text from several non-aligned nations on Tuesday, said, "We believe this is a tough but an extremely fair resolution."

British Ambassador David Hannay said the document brings to a substantive conclusion the 13 resolutions on the Gulf crisis the Council has adopted since Iraq invaded Kuwait last August 2.

Iraq said today, its troops had recaptured Sulaimaniya, the last major town in Kurdish rebel hands.

Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, fearing brutal reprisals after their post-Gulf war uprising, fled towards Iran, Turkey and Icy mountain sanctuaries ahead of President Saddam Hussein's advancing army.

The official Iraqi news Agency INA reported the inhabitants of Sulaimaniya 'joyfully greeted' Saddam's troops.

It did not say when the cradle of Kurdish nationalism had fallen but its capture appeared to spell the end of a month-long attempt by Kurds and Shi'ites in Iraq's south heartland to topple Saddam.

Soviet Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov dubbed the unprecedented, lengthy ceasefire document as the mother of all resolutions.

The resolution reflects Washington's desire to get a permanent ceasefire and extricate its ground forces from Iraq while civil war rages.

In a last-minute compromise sought by Soviet Union, the text was altered to exclude the destruction of missiles with a range under 150 km (95 miles). This would remove any missiles capable of reaching Israel but leave intact battlefield weapons.

Iraq also must channel some of its future oil revenues into a fund for war damages.

Once its weapons of mass destruction are destroyed Iraq can export oil and any other goods and will have access to assets frozen abroad.

Sulaimaniya was stronghold of the Kurd's best known recent leader, Mustapha Barzani, whose son Masoud heads the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), one of several groups campaigning for autonomy from Baghdad. The town has long had a reputation of being the first to rise and among the last to fall.

Star and Starlings

Monday	12.00	1.00
Tuesday	12.00	1.00
Wednesday	12.00	1.00
Thursday	12.00	1.00