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The Daily Star

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NEWS BRIEFS

Crime situation reviewed

A meeting to review the criminal activities that committed during the last week in different parts of the Dhaka city was held Sunday, at DMP headquarter with Police Commissioner A M M Shajahan in the chair. A DMP press release said Sunday night, reports BSS.

PM addresses police today

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will address the senior police officials at Rajarbagh Police Line this (Monday) morning, reports UNB.

Campus situation reviewed

A joint meeting of the Provosts, House Tutors and Assistant House Tutors of Dhaka University Sunday reviewed the campus situation prior to its reopening, reports UNB.

Aquino hopeful of new bases pact

MANILA, Apr 21: President Corason Aquino said Sunday she was hopeful that the Philippines and United States will finish talks and sign a new military bases agreement before the current lease expires in September, reports AP.

Church roof collapse kills 7

POMPIGNAN (France), Apr 21: The roofing on the nave of a church collapsed during a classical music concert, killing seven people, including two young girls, and injuring 13 others, officials said Sunday, reports AP.

Gulf Air to cut labour force

MANILA, Apr 21: Gulf Air is expected to cut its expatriate labour force after a reported loss of 36 million dollars (95.4 million dollars) for 1990, the airline's chairman said in an interview published Sunday, reports AP.

Houses of some Jatiya Party leaders raided

Mizan arrested, sent to Jessore jail

By Staff Correspondent

Former Prime Minister and acting Chairman of Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury was arrested in the early hours of Sunday and sent to Jessore Central Jail.

He was arrested under Section 54 of CRPC and later put under detention for 120 days under the Special Powers Act of 1974.

A contingent of police led by DC (North) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) along with a group of Special Branch officers cordoned off the Gulshan residence of Mizan Chowdhury around 1 am and arrested him at 2 am.

He was taken to Gulshan police station at about 3-45 am. According to family sources, after the arrest Mizan Chowdhury sought some time from police for prayer and other preparations.

During his stay at Gulshan thana, Mizan's family members including his wife were present. Some JP leaders and workers gathered at the police station, but they were not allowed to see him.

Mizan Chowdhury was sent to Jessore Central Jail at 3 pm on Sunday. A police squad led by a senior ASP of the Special Branch escorted him to Jessore. A requisitioned microbus of T & T Board was used for carrying the detained JP leader, which was followed by a truck-load of policemen.

Before his departure for Jessore from Gulshan thana, Mizan Chowdhury wearing white 'Panjama' and 'Panjabi', was seen depressed. He showed no interest to talk to

waiting newsmen and only said, "I am tired, I have nothing to say."

There has been a corruption case filed against him recently regarding a loan he received from Shilpa Bank.

He has been charged for obtaining financial benefits by illegally securing exemption from the payment of arrear interest and penal interest to the tune of Taka 1 crore 27 lakh of Shilpa Bank.

Mizan Chowdhury assumed the responsibility of leading Jatiya Party as its acting chairman after the arrest of party chairman deposed President H M Ershad in December last year.

According to JP sources, houses of some other leaders of Jatiya Party including Shamsuzzaman Mintu, Abu Hussain Babla, Abdus Salam were raided by police, but they managed to escape. The residence of another JP leader, Azam Khan, who was accused of killing Awami League leader and Vice-Chairman of Red Cross Matzuddin Ahmed of Kaliganj, was also raided, said another source.

Jatiya Party workers brought out processions at different places of the city on Sunday and demonstrated protesting arrest of Mizan Chowdhury.

The party will hold a meeting in the premises of Mizan Chowdhury's House on Monday to protest the transfer of its chairman to the central jail and the arrest of the acting chairman and in demand for their immediate release.



I am tired, Mizan Chowdhury, being whisked into a microbus, tells newsmen waiting at Gulshan thana, before he was sent to Jessore jail on Sunday. — Star photo



Ershad being escorted to the special tribunal Sunday. — Star photo

I know my limitations, Ershad tells Tribunal

By Staff Correspondent

The Special Tribunal on Sunday resumed hearing in the trial of deposed President Ershad.

Four more prosecution witnesses were cross examined in connection with the arms case against Ershad.

The Ballistics Expert of Police Saleh Mohammad was also re-examined yesterday.

Ershad, who was shifted to the Dhaka Central Jail from the Gulshan sub-jail last Thursday was taken to the Tribunal at about 8:30 am for security reasons.

The hearing of the second case related to the recovery of money from Ershad's house was postponed. The date for hearing the case has been fixed for May 7.

The prosecution witnesses who made statements before the Tribunal yesterday are the Assistant Military Secretary to the President Lt. Col. Atiqur Rahman Munshi, the storekeeper and caretaker of the Toshakhana at Bangabhaban, Yar Ali, the Confidential Officer of the Cabinet Division, Asaduzzaman and the Imam of

Rajarbagh Mosque Maulana Abdul Quddus.

During the examination of the witnesses the prosecution hammered on the point that the recovered arms were not gift items because had they been so they would have been deposited at the Toshakhana and the register at the Toshakhana would have carried the list of items.

The Prosecution also produced the Toshakhana registers from 1972 to 1990 before the Tribunal.

See Page 10 Col. 3

Another case against Ershad

Anti-Corruption Bureau Sunday filed another case against former President Hussain Muhammad Ershad for amassing wealth beyond known sources of income, reports UNB.

Filing the case with Dharmodi Thana, Senior Anti-Corruption Officer Md Ghulam Mortuza said it was found that an FDR (Fixed Deposit Receipt) of Tk 48,56,726 was being maintained in the name of Ershad.

The FDR on Agrani Bank branch at Green Road was made last year in January for a period of 36 months. The receipt No. Ka-0154576/3046 is in the name of deposed president Ershad, police said.

The case was filed under Section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947.

See Page 10 Col. 1

Maudud rules out joining BNP

Maudud Ahmed, a Jatiya Party MP, on Sunday ruled out a speculation that he would join BNP, reports UNB.

Talking to reporters at the Parliament lobby Sunday afternoon, the former Vice-President said he was not aware of any such speculations and the question of his joining BNP does not arise at all.

"I belong to Jatiya Party and I will continue to belong to Jatiya Party", a smiling Maudud told a questioner.

He was Deputy Prime Minister in the Ziaur Rahman government but later deserted BNP to join the Ershad government.

See Page 10 Col. 2

Uproar over border incident in JS

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) resumed its session Sunday after a nine-day recess on account of Pahela Baishakh (Bangla New Year Day) and Eid-ul-Fitr, amid an Opposition uproar calling for an adjournment.

The Opposition members pressed for an adjournment of the House to consider the situation arising out of last Friday's incident at the border outpost of Kazipur in Gangni upazila under Meherpur district.

The incursion by members of the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) into Bangladesh territory, leading to the killing of at least three Bangladesh nationals including one Bangladesh Rifles man has caused grave concern.

The Opposition members shouted while pressing for an immediate adjournment of the House to consider the issue.

Opposition members served ten adjournment notices on the matter.

Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas allowed one adjournment motion on the subject.

Deputy Leader of the House Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury told the House that the government would welcome any debate on the incident by the members of the House who represented the people of the country.

"We share the concern of the Opposition members over the incident", he said.

The Speaker wanted the discussion on the adjournment motion to be held at a later date. But the members of the Opposition including Suranjit Sengupta of Ganotantri Party and Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim of the Awami League pressed for consideration of the adjournment motion on the day.

Amid an uproar by other opposition members, the Speaker announced that the

discussion on the adjournment motion would be included in the agenda for Monday.

The Speaker then took up the call attention notices for consideration.

Three such notices were served by the Opposition members. The Speaker admitted one relating to the outbreak of diarrhoeal diseases in the southern parts of the country.

The motion was tabled by Independent member Nurul Islam Moni.

See Page 10 Col. 2



Reazuddin Ahmed

Barring a brief heated exchange over the killing of a student leader of the Tejgaon Polytechnic Institute, the House was still in an Eid mood on Sunday. The nine-day recess appeared to have had a favourable impact on the members' temperament and they are looked relaxed and in the mood for business.

The members exchanged Eid greetings before the House resumed its sitting at two in the afternoon with Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas in the chair. The Leader of the House remained tight-lipped while the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina spoke on two occasions. Sheikh Hasina made a few futile attempts to provoke the Leader of the House

See Page 10 Col. 7

3 bills passed, 1 withdrawn

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) on Sunday passed the Premises Rent Control Bill providing for refixation of rent every two years, protection of tenants from willful eviction and prohibiting acceptance of advance.

The House also passed two other bills during the sitting which lasted till 9-40 pm. The bills are: The Supreme Court Judges (Remuneration and Privileges) (Amendment) Bill, and the Hindu Religious Welfare Trust (Amendment) Bill.

The Union Parishad and See Page 10 Col. 3

PDB suffers 40 per cent systems loss

By Staff Correspondent

Power Development Board (PDB) suffers a systems loss of 40 per cent.

This was stated by State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Dr. Khondoker Mosharraf Hossain in the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) on Sunday in reply to a question by Dr. Kazi Abu Yusuf (AL).

The State Minister said PDB's system loss occurs in three phases. These are: Production, transportation and distribution.

The minister identified the technical reasons for system loss which are: a) increased power transmission through relatively narrow lines, b) overloaded transformer, c) unbalanced distribution lines, d) power supply through long distribution lines and e) system power factor getting narrower.

The State Minister also listed non-technical reasons behind system loss. These are: See Page 10 Col. 1

Economic policies to be reformed

Star Economic Report

The government will introduce drastic economic policy reforms to create a healthy and competitive environment for the promotion of a growth-oriented private sector.

This was stated by Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman on Sunday while inaugurating the 12th meeting of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) at the conference room of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI).

The Finance Minister said, taxation, tariff and import

policies will be recast to reduce the preponderance of smuggling operations and curb "rent-seeking activities".

He presented a very grim picture of the economy because of rampant corruption, utter mismanagement and financial and economic indiscipline under the nine-year autocratic rule of Ershad.

The meeting of the consultative committee of the NBR considered various proposals of the Chamber bodies and trade associations for the forthcoming national budget.

State Minister for Finance See Page 10 Col. 7

368 industrial units denationalised so far

By Staff Correspondent

Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan told the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) on Sunday that 368 industries were denationalised from July, 1975 to March, 1991.

Replying to a question from Rashed Mosharraf (AL), the Industries Minister said the government had earned Taka 200.85 crore by selling these industries. The minister also furnished a list of the industries which were denationalised.

Replying to another question from Nurul Islam Moni (Ind), the minister said the government had set up five in-

dustrial units in the country under the public sector between 1982 and 1990.

These industrial units are: Palash Urea Fertilizer Factory, Chittagong Urea Fertilizer Factory, Natore Sugar Mills, Rice Bran Oil Extraction Plant and Bangladesh Bread Factory Limited.

The minister said, balancing, modernisation, renovation and expansion (BMRE) work was done in 13 public sector industrial units during the same period. The units are: Chittagong Chemical Complex, North Bengal Sugar Mills, See Page 10 Col. 7

Bill to reorganise banking sector

By Staff Correspondent

Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman on Sunday introduced in the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) Bank-Company Bill, 1991 for reorganising the banking sector.

The bill aims at providing a new legal framework for the banks in both public and private sectors. The proposals for a new law governing the operations of the banks in the changed domestic and international situation were received from Bangladesh Bank, commercial banks and financial institutions for amendments to the Banking Companies Ordinance of 1962.

The aims and objects of the bill said the banks were na- See Page 10 Col. 3

'Haripur Oilfield not leased out to foreign firm'

By Staff Correspondent

State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Khondoker Mosharraf Hossain told the Jatiya Sangsad on Sunday that the Haripur Oilfield was not leased out to any foreign company.

In reply to a question from Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim (Awami League), the Minister said that only a 25-year agreement was signed with the Canadian company Scimitar for the development and exploration of the Oilfield.

Replying to a supplementary question, the Minister said that no foreign company See Page 10 Col. 1

Petroleum prices may be refixed

By Staff Correspondent

The government is actively considering refixation of petroleum prices in the country.

State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Dr. Khondoker Mosharraf Hossain informed this to the House on Sunday in a written reply to a question of Nurul Islam Moni (Independent). He said the government was not aware of any price hike of petroleum products recently.

The Minister said though complaints were received to this effect on one or two occasions, it was not found true after an investigation.

Iraqi army pulls back as US convoy rolls in

SULOPI, (Turkey), Apr 21: A convoy of 33 US military vehicles moved into northern Iraq early Sunday to protect the construction of camps for Kurdish refugees, reports AP.

The few Iraqi soldiers on the border waved and smiled at the Americans, and assisted the US forces by helping clear mines from a bridge the convoy crossed, US military officials said. The convoy headed for Zakho, about six miles (10 kilometers) inside Iraq.

In a Turkish camp in the Cukurca region along the border, Turkish troops trying to

stop a riot over a food shipment shot and killed one Iraqi Kurdish refugee and wounded five other refugees Sunday, the Anatolia news agency reported.

Several other refugees have been reported killed in similar disturbances since the beginning of the month.

The US convoy followed the arrival in Zakho on Saturday of more than 400 Marines by helicopter.

The convoy, which included armor and howitzers, will provide weaponry to support those soldiers in the defense of refugee camps. It also car-

ried tents, blankets and food for the settlements near Zakho 17 miles (27 kilometers) from Sulopi.

US officials intend to show the camp to Kurdish leaders in an effort to attract refugees from the mountains where they are suffering from lack of food, medicine and shelter. The model camp is in a valley where the climate is less harsh and food and medical care will be provided. The US military plans to begin operating other camps within two weeks.

Officials estimate 800,000 of Iraq's 4 million Kurds fled

to the mountains along the Turkish border after their rebellion failed. About 1.5 million are thought to have sought refuge along the border with Iraq.

Meanwhile, Saddam Hussein's troops withdrew Sunday from the northern Iraqi town of Zakho as US Marines forged ahead with building a tent village for Kurdish refugees.

But the Marines were surprised Sunday to find 200 Iraqi police in that town after the departure of two Iraqi battalions stationed there in the

wake of Saddam's crackdown on a Kurdish rebellion. The police immediately withdrew.

Iraq's state-run press on Sunday bitterly denounced the use of US troops to protect safe havens for Kurds in northern Iraq.

"This provocative behavior is blatant interference in Iraq's domestic affairs and a flagrant violation of international law," wrote Al-Thawra, the voice of Saddam Hussein's ruling Arab Baath Socialist Party.

The army newspaper Al-Qadisiya said: "The American dream is to fragment Iraq and

to impose complete US domination over it."

The US Navy has sent an aircraft carrier into the Mediterranean to warn Saddam Hussein not to interfere with the US relief effort for Kurdish refugees, naval officers said Sunday.

"It's a good show of support for the refugees and a signal to Saddam Hussein and his men not to attack the refugees," said an officer with the US Naval forces Central Command. "He knows from the Gulf War about the capabilities of the US."