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**The animations of their body were contemporary, while the dance steps at times took Aussie Aboriginal or Amazonian strides.** The audience applauded their bullet-like poses in clothes a la mode  
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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Entry into Sangsad area restricted

None will be allowed to enter into the restricted area of the Sangsad Bhaban without valid pass from today (Saturday) till the end of the session, the drive way will remain open only for the flag cars and no other transports will be allowed to enter the drive way. The southern gate of the Sangsad Bhaban at level 3 will remain closed today (Saturday), reports BSS.

### Ershad's case: Hearing today

The hearing of corruption case against the deposed President Ershad resumes today (Saturday) after more than a month. Deposition and cross examination of more than 50 witnesses in the case were completed. Attorney General Aminul Haq is expected to place the arguments in the one-man special court of District and Session Judge Mohammadullah, reports UNIS.

## Ambassador Soe Myint says Rangoon keen to defuse tension

# Burma violates airspace

By Staff Correspondent

A Burmese helicopter and a jet fighter intruded into Bangladesh's airspace last week amid mounting tension that followed the December 21 attack on a BDR post, along the border between the two countries, sources said. Official sources at the border said the Burmese aircrafts which flew low over the Bangladesh territory had returned quickly. However, the sources did not elaborate. Meanwhile, Bangladesh

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman raised the issue of the airspace violation to the Myanmar Ambassador in Dhaka U Soe Myint when he called on the Minister Friday. The Burmese envoy is learnt to have told the Foreign Minister that he was not aware of such incident. The violation of Bangladesh airspace by the Burmese airforce has further heightened the tension prevailing along the 176-mile border with the heavy military build-up by the

Burmese authorities since December 21. UNB adds: Bangladesh has expressed concern over troops build-up by Myanmar (Burma) along the border following the December 21 attack on the BDR outpost in Bandarban district. A Foreign Office spokesman said the country's concern was conveyed to Myanmar Ambassador in Dhaka U Soe Myint when he called on Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman. See Page 12 Col 7

## Powdered-milk prices go up

By Staff Correspondent

Prices of powdered milk registered a steep rise in the city markets in the past two days. A tin of two kg is now selling at Taka 282 to Taka 285. Only about five days ago, the same was sold at Taka 262 to Taka 265 each. The recent price-hike was mainly due to a fresh imposition of tax on the item. The government last month increased the tax on powdered milk (upto 2.5 kg tin) from 20 per cent to 25 per cent, while the tax on powdered milk in bulk was raised from 40 per cent to 45 per cent. Wholesalers in Chawkbazar say the tax-hike has a cascading effect on different cost factors of powdered milk. The retailers are now lifting the item in small quantity, say the wholesalers. The retailers inform that the sale of the item has fallen slightly due to the price hike.

## JS winter session opens today in gathering storm

By Staff Correspondent

The fourth session of the fifth Jatiya Sangsad begins today at 11:30 am. President Abdur Rahman Biswas will address the parliament's first session of the new calendar year in accordance with the Constitution. This will also be the first address of President Biswas in Parliament. The session is expected to be a long and stormy one since it will deal with some major political and legislative business. Burning issues which will dominate the winter session include Upazila Parishad Repeal Ordinance, Indemnity Repeal Bill, election of Golam Azam as Jamaat chief and the Bangladesh-Burma border situation. On the eve of the session, parliamentary parties of BNP, Awami League and Jamaat-Islami met at the Sangsad Bhaban on Friday to finalise their strategies. Other opposition parliamentary parties and groups were also busy preparing their plans for the session. According to Parliament sources, ten ordinances, which were promulgated after the third session of the parliament, will be placed before the House in this session. The ordinances are: the Local Government (Upazila Parishad and Upazila Administration Reorganisation) See Page 12 Col 4

## Scouting to be geared up: PM

MOUCHAK (Gazipur), Jan 3: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said here today that scouting programmes would be further geared up in educational institutions to help realisation of values among the young generation, reports BSS. Inaugurating the third national cub camporee here, Begum Zia said the members of scouts had been making important contribution to the development of child health programmes. She said the rate of child mortality had gone down to zero in those villages where scouts had participated in the implementation of E P I programmes under the child health projects. The inaugural function was also addressed by Chief National Scouts Commissioner. See Page 12 Col 4

## Crackdown on smugglers' hideouts to start soon

By Masud Hasan Khan

The task force, bent on ending sale of smuggled goods in the country, would start crackdown on secret hideouts from sometime this week, officials said. They said the swoop on the illegal commodities in the capital and elsewhere in the country would be carried out as part of the nation-wide anti-smuggling drive. Seizure of smuggled goods at places will be conducted on reports of information, the officials said. The ongoing drive against smuggling which began from the New Year's day includes search and seizure operations at the markets and shopping centres across the country. High government officials in Dhaka on Friday said that the national anti-smuggling com-

mittee will hold a meeting in the capital on Sunday to devise means to curb further the illegal cross-border trade and sale of contraband items inside the country. The meeting, chaired by the Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, would be participated by chiefs of the three services, secretaries of the concerned ministries, top officials of BDR and police and the chairmen of the port authorities at Chittagong and Khulna, said an official who preferred anonymity. The sources said that Sunday's meeting was expected to discuss elaborately, among other things, the steps to beef up the security along the border and narrow the gap between BDR posts and

## Mukim Gazi recaptured

By Staff Correspondent

Mukim Gazi, the mastermind of Monday's raid at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court hajat was recaptured by police Friday afternoon along with two of his accomplices from Demra area. The two others are Lutfar Rahman alias Arju, one of the four Monday escapees, and Mohon alias Ripon another Dhaka Central jail escapee during last year's jail mutiny. Mukim Gazi, Lutfar Rahman alias Arju, Disco Babul alias Hanif and Manik alias Sani fled from the Court hajat when some of their accomplices fired gunshots and exploded crackers in the Court hajat premises on Monday afternoon. Police later arrested Manik alias Sani from Kamalapur area Tuesday evening. Babul is still



Arju and Mukim Gazi (right) after their capture yesterday. — Star photo



TA TA THOI THOI: On stage at the Institute of Fine Arts in the city yesterday an Indonesian girl Indasha celebrating birthday of Zainul Abedin. — Star photo

## Ganga Jal on sale

NEW DELHI, Jan 3: For centuries, Hindus have called it the nectar of God and have believed that just a drop brings salvation. Now it comes as a new vintage for the water goblets: water from the Ganges River, reports AP. Two Indian businessmen have built a plant high in the Himalayas to bottle Ganges water for sale in India and abroad. And they're not the least bit fazed by the prospect of competing against better-known mineral water. "This is something much more superior," said Ved Prakash Gupta, one of the partners in the venture. According to Gupta, his water is not only clean, refreshing and liver-friendly, it's holy. The brand name is Ganga Jal, the respectful term for holy water in the Hindi language. The Ganges is one of the world's filthiest rivers, but the pollution starts downstream in the densely populated plains. "Ganga Jal" is scooped up near the fountainhead of the river at an elevation of 2,590 metres (8,550 feet) near the Hindu pilgrimage town of Gangotri 310 kilometers (190 miles) north of New Delhi. Gupta and his partner, Ashok Gupta, claim their water cures cholera, diarrhoea, asthma, diabetes, migraines, high blood pressure and acne. Less open to question is the claim that it's good for dehydration. See Page 12 Col 3

## Palestinians stay away from talks as Israel expels 12

JERUSALEM, Jan 3: Palestinian negotiators said Friday they have suspended plans to go to peace talks in Washington because of Israel's decision to expel 12 alleged Arab militants from the occupied territories, reports AP. A statement read by Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi appealed to the United States to make the Israeli government "nullify this grave breach of international law." It said the delegation would wait for the PLO to

make a decision on future participation on the peace talks. Ashrawi earlier today denied a report the Palestinians had already decided to withdraw from the next round of talks. "The only decision we took was that we will postpone the trip to Amman today and there is no decision to boycott yet," she said. The statement, read to reporters after the Palestinian negotiating team conferred for two hours, said.

"The Palestinian delegation views this latest development with utmost seriousness and grave alarm. We have therefore suspended our plans to travel to Washington DC, pending the decision of the legitimate political leadership of the Palestinian people, the PLO, which is currently meeting to evaluate these developments and which will announce the appropriate decision in due time." Answering questions, Mrs Ashrawi said she expected the See Page 12 Col 6

## Temperature may fall further

By Staff Correspondent  
The second phase of the cold spell now sweeping across the country is likely to continue for another two to three days, the Met Office said Friday night. It said that the temperature might fall by one to two degrees Celsius everyday during the period and, at the end of the period, the temperature might come down to four degrees Celsius at Rangpur, Dinajpur, Sirimangal and Sylhet districts. According to the Met Office, the current cold wave started lashing since Thursday after a two-day respite. The See Page 12 Col 7

## Northern transport workers threaten strike

From Our Correspondent  
PAINA, Jan 3: A meeting of the transport owners of 16 northern districts of the country on Friday threatened to paralyse vehicular movement from Monday. The meeting held at the Pabna Diabetic Association auditorium also urged the government to take measures for implementing decisions taken at the tripartite meeting on December 20 at Natore. A joint meeting between the government, transport owners and workers on December 20 decided to give appointment letters to the transport workers on daily or monthly basis. Sources said that transport workers in almost all the districts except Pabna began working on daily appointments. The Pabna transport workers demanded appointment on a monthly basis. As a consequence, bus service between Dhaka and some northern districts has been disrupted because of the refusal of the transport workers of Pabna to work on daily appointment.

# Russia to take over Soviet missions around world

MOSCOW, Jan 3: Russia is taking over former Soviet embassies around the world, but offered to represent the diplomatic interests of other members of the new commonwealth, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Friday, reports AP. As of Friday, 105 countries had recognized the Russian Federation as an independent state, said Vitaly Churkin, who held his first briefing Friday as spokesman for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Relations. Russian President Boris Yeltsin has emerged as the most powerful leader in the former Soviet Union, and his state has taken over many Kremlin functions. Russia is also the main pillar of the new Commonwealth of Independent States and has

taken the permanent Soviet seat on the U N Security Council. Churkin, the former chief spokesman for the Soviet Foreign Ministry, declined to provide details on his appointment by Yeltsin. "I prefer not to make any personal statements," he said. But he added: "I am as amazed as most of you are by the fact that we are meeting again at a briefing." Churkin said the foreign ministers of the 11 members in the new commonwealth will meet by January 10 to discuss the status of former Soviet embassies, among other issues. He said former Soviet embassies and missions are becoming Russian, but the foreign ministers will discuss

possibly sharing former Soviet property abroad. Russia's ambassadors are helping other former Soviet republics establish diplomatic contacts and can represent their interests if the host countries give consent, he said. He said Russia supports a British proposal for a Security Council summit to discuss the breakup of the Soviet Union. But he said the timing and agenda of the meeting would be discussed "through diplomatic channels." AFP reports: A group of Russian deputies demanded today the government's resignation over price increases as newspapers reacted bitterly to the measures putting an end to seven decades of state subsidies.

The opposition deputies published an open letter in the conservative daily Sovetskaya Rossiya calling for an end to this experiment against the people which came into force on Thursday, tripling prices in the stores. "The government and most of the parliamentary leaders of Russia, by choosing the path of political and economic adventurism, are carrying out an experiment on the Russian people's backs by pushing them into misery, chaos and anarchy, the statement said. The press, meanwhile, commented that the measures had failed to bring goods in short supply back into the stores. Newspapers ran headlines

saying, 'empty shelves and new prices,' and 'freedom, but not the one we were dreaming of,' as they reacted to Russia's decontrolling of prices. Ukraine also freed prices on Thursday and Belarus was to follow the same route on Friday. "When we are going to see the merchandise," the papers asked. Sovetskaya Rossiya said the hike in prices, which have tripled on average, was a real 'shock therapy' as it had not led to the reappearance of stocks. "Fainting and even death in queues is happening with increasing frequency everywhere," the paper said. The radical daily Komsomolskaya Pravda blamed the situation on bad organisation

by the stores, saying the population was morally prepared for the 'shock'. Many shops failed to open on Thursday, lacking both goods and instructions on the application of the free prices. Pravda noted that the elderly were particularly hard hit by the measures. It quoted one lady from Voronezh, south of Moscow, who said the price hikes were 'a crime against the country'. The paper published a cartoon depicting a guillotine of prices, with a Russian consumer under the blade. Russia's first deputy economy minister, Andrei Neechayev, said in an interview with the newspaper Trud that the government was prepared for a 'tough social reaction'.

## Outsiders main obstacle: DUAAC

Dhaka University Academic Atmosphere Council has observed that outsider, staying at the residential halls of the university, were the main obstacles in regaining the academic atmosphere in the campus, reports BSS. The observation was made in a meeting Friday presided over by Vice Chancellor Prof Moniruzzaman Mia. The meeting discussed in detail the present campus situation. It decided to hold an anti-terrorism rally in the Dhaka University campus on January 12 to inform the students and the people of the real condition of the campus. The Meeting decided that the Vice Chancellor will address the rally and a joint statement on behalf of all student organizations will also be issued in the rally. Reviewing the law and order of the university, the meeting observed that general students were facing different problems because of the activities of non-student outsiders. It also discussed various measures to be taken to expel trouble makers and keep congenial atmosphere in the campus.

## Non-govt teachers to be included in new pay-scale

Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar Friday said teachers and employees of the non-government educational institutions would be included in the new pay-scale, reports BSS. He was addressing a rally of teachers organised by Bangladesh Teacher's Association Oikya Front held at Tejgaon College premises in the city. Presided over by Principal Mukarram Hossain, the rally was also addressed by State Minister for Education Principal Md. Eunus Khan, Principal Tofael Ahmed Chowdhury, Principal Monir Ahmed, Principal Moazzem Hossain, Nurullah and Dr. Saydur Rahman. The Education Minister said, the government will establish a welfare trust for the non-government teachers and it will start functioning very soon. He said the present democratic government had already promoted about 1600 teachers of the government colleges and solved many problems of the teachers community. Jamiruddin Sircar said the government had allocated maximum funds for education sector in the national budget. The front consists of Principal council, Bangladesh Teachers Association and Ban-

## 3 killed, 30 hurt in bus plunge

By Our Correspondent  
MYMENSINGH, Jan 3: Three persons were killed and 30 others injured when a passenger bus plunged into a roadside ditch near Sarchapur 20 miles north east of here this morning. The Dhaka-bound bus, carrying about 40 passengers of Haluaghat-Mymensingh Road skidded off into a 30-foot dry ditch when it was crossing Sarchapur Bridge. Three persons died on the spot four of the seriously injured were admitted to the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. Others were released after first aid.