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NEWS BRIEFS

Exploration of gas, oil in CHT soon

Two foreign companies will start joint exploration of gas and oil in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Officials said the government signed agreement with the BHP Petroleum Company of Australia and Amoco of the United States on January 8 in this regard. The drive will start soon and be completed by June next, reports UNB.

3 Shantibahinimen surrender

CHITTAGONG, Jan 19: Three members of the outlawed Shantibahini today surrendered at Duddhichhari army camp, 70 miles off Rangamati town. Official sources said that Robin Kanti Chakma (Jiku), identified as Shantibahini regional commander, Ajit Chakma, 2nd Lt and Corporal Poritosh Chakma surrendered with some arms and ammunition, reports UNB.

Hijackers, cops clash in Sylhet

SYLHET, Jan 19: Three policemen and four pedestrians were injured when a group of hijackers clashed with a police patrol party at Zindabazar of the town today. The clash occurred when police tried to nab the hijackers who snatched Tk 20,700 from Sowab Ali. Snatchers, mostly youths, pelted bricks at the police patrol party and smashed the police van. Police arrested two hijackers, reports UNB.

100 rebels killed in Djibouti

DJIBOUTI, Jan 19: About 100 rebels were killed by troops in campaigns in northern Djibouti, the government said Sunday. The joint police-military operation against the rebels left five troops dead and 10 injured, the statement said. It did not say when or exactly where the offensive took place, reports AP.

1 killed, 3 missing as boats collide

PABNA, Jan 19: A young man was killed and three others were missing after two mechanised boats collided midstream in the Jamuna river today, reports UNB.

Seven others were injured in the rivercraft accident in which one of the boats capsized, witnesses said.

Stricter rules to deal with unruly MPs proposed

Mahfuz Ullah and Nurul Kabir

A member of the Jatiya Sangsad (JS), failing to behave in the House, will face stricter penalties under provisions proposed to deal with undue conduct of the members.

If the amendments sail through parliament the Speaker will be better equipped to deal with an unruly member.

The House Standing Committee on Rules of Procedure

finalised its recommendations on the fresh provisions yesterday which will be placed for approval before the House during the current session.

Parliamentary sources told the Daily Star last night the Standing Committee had its final session yesterday with the Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali in the chair. All but Barrister Nazmul Huda and Suranjit Sen

Gupta of the 10-member committee were present at the meeting. Both Huda and Sen Gupta are currently abroad.

The proposed measures, according to sources, which were planned to discipline the members of the House in a better way, differ with the provisions laid in the existing Rules of Procedure.

The scope of members for

seeking discussions on matters of urgent public importance has also been broadened while that of placing questions for answers has been curtailed.

Under the proposed amendments, even if a matter of importance is rejected there will be provisions for a upto 30-minute discussion on the subject.

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Women devotees on their way to Fort to attend the Bishwa Ijtema yesterday.

— Star photo

Beleaguered Rohingyas live in utter misery

From Our Correspondent

MARICCHYA (Cox's Bazar), Jan 19: The hill was bare. The green canopy which once provided minimum shelter to the animals was gone. Now, the rugged terrain, about 20 kilometers south of Cox's Bazar Town, is a refuge to some 5,000 Rohingyas Muslims, who fled their real homes in Myanmar due to atrocities by its troops.

A handful of thatched huts were too inadequate, warm clothes were scarce, drinking water had to be fetched from a far away tube-well and sanitation was poor. Many of the distraught people, who were forced to desert their homesteads in Myanmar, lived on a single meal a day. Even the naked children for-

got their usual fun and play and remained mute.

However, a few workers of some voluntary organisations were trying to help the refugees with meagre supply of food and medicines. Naju Mia, who crossed Bangladesh border with his wife, three sons and two daughters, did not know what to do. A 37-year-old Mia was a small trader in Busidong. Telling a harrowing tale of repression in his homeland, he said the Myanmar troops took over his small home and forced his family out at gunpoint.

"They took my house, money, a little stock of rice and cattlehead. My neighbours also lost everything," he said.

Noor Ahmed (20) of

Keprudong village in Busidong, Myanmar, said the troops arrested his father Kashem Ali 15 days back and he was still missing. "They surrounded our home and told us to get out," Ahmed said, adding that 10 cows owned by his father were lost too.

Vice President of the Rohingya Samaj Kalyan Samity Sirajul Islam, who was present, informed that people from nearly 14,200 homesteads were evicted from several villages in Busidong alone and almost all of them entered Bangladesh after December 21.

Their homes were demolished he said and new settlements sprang up with people chosen by the Myanmar au-

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Ijtema concludes today

The Akheri Munajat of the 3-day Biswa Ijtema seeking blessings from the Almighty Allah for continued peace, progress and prosperity of the nation as well as the Muslim Ummah, will be held today at 11 am, reports UNB.

The Munajat is expected to be led by 77 years old Islamic scholar Hazrat Moulana Enamul Hasan (HZ) from India, Ijtema sources said.

The grand congregation of the world muslims, said to be the second largest gathering of Muslim devotees after the holy Hajj, on the bank of river Turag in Tongi was organised by the Tabligh-e-Jamaat.

Highest number of devotees, estimated to be about 10 lakhs including 7,000 from as many as 65 countries, attended the Ijtema this year.

Devotees from the United States, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, India, Pakistan, The Netherlands, Jordan, Chad, Ethiopia, Sudan, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, The United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Malaysia, Fiji, Australia, Yemen, Turkey and other countries attended the Ijtema.

Eminent Islamic scholars from home and abroad are delivering holy "Bayans" throughout the day from Saturday in different languages — Arabic, Urdu, English, French and in Bengali.

Meanwhile, some devotees including a 77 year old Saudi Arabian Ahmed Ibrahim attending the Ijtema fell sick and were being treated in different hospitals.

A number of devotees were reportedly attacked by diarrhoea and other waterborne diseases, although extensive arrangements providing sanitary, medicare, water, electricity were being provided by Tongi Paurashava, the organisers and other organisations.

When contacted, Prof Abdus Subhan, Chairman, NCTB said the curriculum had been revised

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School curriculum revised

Star Report

The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) has introduced new textbooks for the students of Class One with effect from January this year. A set of three books for each student has been published by revising and updating the curriculum.

The first phase of revision and modernization of the school curricula-based on the recommendations of the Quadrat-i-Khuda Commission began in 1975 and the process ended in 1984.

Since 1984 there has been no major revision of the curriculum. The inadequacies of the curriculum at the primary school level have been pointed

out by the country's educationists at different times.

The second phase of revision of the curriculum began in 1981 when the government decided to implement universal primary education. The latest revision has been made with the objectives of creating scope of education for more children, to minimise the drop-outs and to equip the children with lessons suiting to needs of life.

The NCTB went through a lengthy process before revising the curriculum. The new books Bengali, Arithmetic and English were tested in 100 primary schools located in different less advanced areas of

the country.

The books were originally planned for 1991 but the NCTB failed to produce those for reasons beyond its control.

Under the present arrangement the revision process will be completed in 1986. The students who are at present enrolled in Class One will continue to receive new books every year and it is expected by the time they graduate from primary schools their level of learning will be different even from their immediate seniors.

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Shamir loses majority, may face no-confidence

JERUSALEM, Jan 19: Two far-right parties officially pulled out of the government Sunday, wiping out Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's majority in parliament and making early elections almost certain.

The Hebrew daily Maariv said the Knesset, or parliament, was expected to dissolve itself this week and set national elections on June 9, instead of the scheduled date of Nov. 3.

The Tehiya and Moledet

parties had announced last week they intended to quit Shamir's Cabinet over Arab-Israeli peace talks in Washington.

The two parties maintain the government's plan to offer autonomy to Palestinians amounted to the first step toward a Palestinian state in the occupied territories.

Both parties advocate annexing the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which Israel seized in the 1967 Middle East war. Moledet wants the 1.7 million

Palestinians expelled from the territories. The two parties are mostly supported by Jewish settlers in the occupied lands.

Ministers Rehavam Zeevi of Moledet and Yuval Neeman of Tehiya officially submitted their resignations at the weekly Cabinet meeting. They take effect in 48 hours.

Zeevi told Israel radio that "in principle we wait this government to be toppled as soon as possible."

Moledet has two seats and Tehiya three in the 120-member

Knesset. Their departure leaves Shamir with the backing of 59 legislators.

The next step in toppling the government would be a vote of no-confidence in the Knesset, which the opposition Labor Party is expected to call for on Monday.

Shamir already has rejected an offer from left-wing parties to keep a minority government in power if it continued the peace process.

The prime minister has said he expects to go forward

20 hurt as JCD, BCL clash in Khulna AL office ransacked, minister's car attacked

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 19: At least 20 students were injured, two of them critically, in clashes between Jatiya Chhatra Dal, student front of BNP and Chhatra League, student front of Awami League this evening.

The Chhatra Dal activists reportedly ransacked the city and district Awami League offices while Chhatra League activists damaged the car of the Industry Minister.

Awami League called a half-day hartal in the city on Tuesday in protest against the attack.

According to eyewitnesses the clash began during the City College students union election in the morning.

The Chhatra Dal brought out a victory procession after winning elections in two colleges. City and Girls colleges in the city.

The procession reportedly came under attack while passing by the Awami League office near Shahid Huda Park. The agitated JCD activists attacked the city and district Awami League office and ransacked furniture, it was learnt. During this period no leader or worker was present in the office. Soon after the incident the car of Industry Minister came under attack near Awami League office. Manik and Jewel, two Chhatra League workers — were admitted to a local clinic in critical condition while fifteen were released after first aid.

The JCD also claimed that ten of their colleagues were injured by the Chhatra League workers.

While talking to newsmen at the local press club the Awami League leaders alleged that the police played the role of onlookers during the period. Shamsur Rahman Mani, an AL central committee member and local leader Mollah Latifur

Rahman were present.

A tense situation was prevailing in the city till writing of this report at 11 pm. A special squad of police was deployed there.

The JCD won the elections in Khulna City college and Government Girls College held today. The Chhatra League secured the post of General Secretary at Girls college.

Our DU Correspondent adds: The Chhatra League (S-A) President and General Secretary in a joint statement condemned the attack during polls at the Khulna City College that left two Chhatra League leaders injured Sunday.

The BCL leaders blamed the activists of Jatiya Chhatra Dal for the attack. BSS from Khulna reports several female student leaders and workers of JCD were injured when they were attacked while passing in a procession in front of the Awami League office in the city Sunday evening.

The JCD students of Boyara Girls College who won the students union election Sunday brought out a victory procession. The procession was stated to have been attacked while it was passing by the Awami Office located at Khan A Sabur Road.

Another student procession led by JCD was brought out in celebration of their victory in the City College students union polls.

Awami League and Chhatra League leaders alleged that the activists of the JCD had attacked and ransacked the Awami League office at Khan A Sabur Road and caused extensive damage to it.

Denying the charges, JCD leaders said the Chhatra League workers attacked their supporters while they were passing by the Awami League office.

Chowdhury's death sends Observer into a spin

By Staff Correspondent

The future of the management of the Bangladesh Observer and the weekly Chitrali goes into a state of uncertainty with the death of Hamidul Huq Chowdhury, according to media circles.

Till his death Saturday, Chowdhury was the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Al-Helal Printing and Publishing Company Limited, publishers of the two publications.

As the founding owner he wielded overall authority in all of the company's affairs, sources said, adding that none of the existing directors, reportedly seven in number now, including the chairman, could play an effective role in the decision-making process.

Hamidul Huq Chowdhury also functioned as the chief

Executive of the company and was the sole signatory to all cheques.

Launching the erstwhile Pakistan Observer in 1949, Hamidul Huq Chowdhury always had the controlling interest of the company. But after 1971 the company was taken over by the government as he lived in exile till 1978. The company was returned by the government in 1984.

According to the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Al-Helal Printing and Publishing Company Limited formulated in 1983, the company had four directors at the time. They were Hamidul Huq Chowdhury, his son Khaled Hamidul Huq, daughter Najma Huq and M.A. Malek.

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'People's court' to try Golam Azam Mar 26

By Staff Correspondent

A 101-member committee comprising noted citizens announced Sunday that the trial of "war criminal" leader Golam Azam would be held in a people's court at Suhrawardy Uddyan in the city on Independence Day (March 26) if the government did not expel him immediately.

The same 'court' would also try all the war criminals in phases, a declaration of the committee said.

Signed by eminent lawyers, writers, university teachers, freedom fighters, journalists, Artists and other intellectuals, the declaration also demanded

a ban on politics of religion-based political parties including the Jamaat-e-Islami.

The country's development and progress will not be possible unless the enemies of independence are rooted out from the soil, the declaration viewed.

The nation will not attain dignity with the enemies remaining active in the country, it added.

The committee termed the initiative to try the 'war criminals' as the second phase of the country's Liberation War. It urged all the freedom fighters

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Riyadh seeks US help to topple Saddam

NEW YORK, Jan 19: Saudi Arabia has urged the United States to help topple President Saddam Hussein using air strikes and by arming and providing intelligence to the Iraqi opposition, the New York Times reported today, says AFP.

The newspaper said Riyadh's plan was to scatter the Elite Republican Guards posted around Baghdad to protect the Iraqi President and to annihilate the force with air raids.

There has to be a combination of a major air operation and then leave the rest to the Iraqi people, it quoted a senior allied source as saying.

The source had discussed the Saudi proposal with aides to U.S. President George Bush, the paper said. Detail on Page 5

Asad Day today

Asad Day will be observed today (Monday) marking the 23rd anniversary of martyrdom of the student leader in the 1969 mass upsurge, reports UNB.

The student-mass uprising against the dictatorship of military strongman Ayub Khan of then Pakistan strengthened the movement for self-rule which eventually culminated into the liberation struggle of Bangladesh in 1971.

Various political, student and socio-cultural organisations have chalked out programmes in observance of the day in befitting manner.

The Shaheed Asad Parishad has taken up a 5-day commemorative programme beginning Monday morning.

It includes Quran khwani and offering of wreath to the martyr's mazar at Shipkur in

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'No question of drafting Raushan to replace living Ershad'

Acting Chairman of Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury MP Saturday denied that Begum Raushan Ershad was approached to take up the party leadership in the absence of party chairman, former president HM Ershad.

Talking to UNB, Chowdhury termed "baseless and a figment of imagination" the report which appeared in a section of the press that the former "First Lady" was approached by top ranking UP leaders to take the helm of the party.

Raushan Ershad, released Wednesday on bail, has been suffering from multiple complications and undergoing treatment at the Uttara residence of her sister Mamata Wahab, her family sources said. Chowdhury said, "the centre" See Page 12 Col 7

Vajiralongkorn visits BAF Academy

JESSORE, Jan 19: Thai Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn visited the BAF Academy here and enjoyed the scenic beauty of Sundarbans at Hiron Point in Khulna during a day-long tour of those two places today, reports BSS.

The Prince, who flew in here this morning, went to the BAF Academy and saw the cadets attending classes there. The commandant of the academy briefed him about the training programme.

Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn was taken to different sections of the academy where he saw with keen interest the training of the cadets. He also in-

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Tk 340 cr ADB loan for city development

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide a loan of US Dollar 91.5 million equivalent to Taka 340 crore to Bangladesh under an agreement signed in Dhaka Sunday between the two sides, reports BSS.

Joint Secretary of ERD KM Ejazul Huq and newly appointed Resident Representative of ADB Geert Van Der Linden signed the agreement

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