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VOL. II NO. 17 REGD. NO. DA 783

MAGH 16, 1398 BS,

DHAKA THURSDAY JANUARY 30, 1992

RAJAB 24, 1412 HIJRI

12 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 4.00

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Biswas assents to three bills

President Abdur Rahman Biswas Wednesday assented to three bills passed by the Jatiya Sangsad during its current session. The bills are: the Investment Board (Amendment) Bill, 1992, the Local Government (Upazila Parishad and Upazila Administration Reorganisation) (Repeal) Bill, 1992, and the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 1992, reports BSS.

### Poetry festival begins Feb 1

A two-day 6th National Poetry Festival '92 will begin on February 1 at the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) of Dhaka University. The slogan of the festival is "Poetry must resist fundamentalism" (Kobita Rukh-bey Moulabadi), reports UNB.

### JS privilege body meeting today

The fifth meeting of the Jatiya Sangsad Standing Committee on privileges will be held at 12 noon today (Thursday) at the conference room of the Speaker in the Sangsad Bhavan. The chairman of the committee, Speaker Shaikh Razaque Ali, will preside, reports BSS.

### Mongla port work disrupted

**From Staff Correspondent**  
 KHULNA, Jan 29: Activities of the Mongal Port were disrupted as the stevedores stopped working from Tuesday evening due to non-payment of arrears bills by a shipping agent. The negotiation is on and the crisis is expected to be resolved by tomorrow (Thursday).

## Tension has subsided: Foreign Office spokesman

# We have no intention to fight: Myanmar envoy

By Sabir Mustafa

Termining the third flag meeting in the Myanmar town of Mongdow last Tuesday as "positive", the Myanmar Ambassador to Bangladesh said that all outstanding issues would be taken up at the forthcoming meeting between the foreign ministers of the two countries.

"Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman is a seasoned diplomat, as is our Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw.

They know what to do and they are doing everything possible to solve the current problems", Ambassador Soe Myint told The Daily Star Wednesday, adding, "Everything will be fine".

Myint's sense of optimism was echoed by a senior government official Wednesday, during a rare briefing given to the press by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mahmud Ali, Additional

Foreign Secretary in charge of the South Asia desk, told reporters that the third flag meeting between representatives of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Myanmar's Luntlun border security force, had gone off smoothly with the BDR delegation "garlanded and warmly received".

"Tension between our two countries has now subsided and we are very pleased about the outcome of the talks with

the Myanmar side," Ali said, while declining comment on why Myanmar had still not agreed to return the weapons it has looted from the BDR outpost attacked Dec 21.

The issue and the question of the refugees, Ali said, would be discussed between the two foreign ministers when U Ohn Gyaw visits Dhaka, the date for which had not yet been fixed.

Mahmud Ali informed re See Page 12 Col 3

## Row over Speaker's remark disrupts JS session

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League and Jatiya Party members Wednesday separately staged walkouts from the House protesting certain "regretful" remarks made by the Speaker and a Treasury Bench cabinet member against an AL member.

All AL members vacated the floor at around 5:40 pm, followed by the JP members, expressing resentment at Speaker Shaikh Razaque Ali's note of warning to AL member Shamsul Huq and the subsequent comments by State Minister for Communications Fazlur Rahman Patal.

The JP members followed by the Awami League MPs returned following hectic negotiations between Opposition and Treasury Bench members during a prolonged break for Maghreb prayers which lasted for nearly three hours and an appeal to the opposition members from the Deputy Leader of the House A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury.

Earlier, Shaikh Razaque Ali sternly warned the AL member from Mymensingh when he tried to draw the attention of the Speaker on a call notice. See Page 12 Col 1

## Large foreign currency reserve worries economists

By Inam Ahmed

The news of a large foreign currency reserve has worried the economists.

Economists and business community view the reserve to the tune of over \$ 1275 million as an ominous sign for the country's economy.

The foreign exchange reserve (FER) almost doubled on December, 1991 from 638 million dollar on December 30, 1990. Concerned sources said this reserve of foreign exchange was mainly due to less import reflecting the sluggishness in economic activities.

However, the government now views that economy will again be revamped as some See Page 12 Col 7

## 7 killed as bus rams rickshaws in city

By Staff Correspondent

At least seven people were killed and eight others injured when a passenger-bus rams a private car, dozens of rickshaws and several pedestrians near the Zia International Airport in the city Wednesday afternoon.

Witnesses said, the bus first hit the private car, Dhaka Dha-123, and then rams into a dozen of rickshaws and pedestrians on its way to escape at about 3 pm.

Seven people including a minor boy died on the spot when the bus ran over them. The injured persons, mostly in critical condition, were rushed to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH), police said.

The bus driver, however, escaped leaving the bus on the spot and Cantonment police seized the bus (Tangail Da-305).

Barring one, Hafizur Rahman, none of the dead persons could be identified. The bodies were sent to the morgue of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

UNB from Jhenidah reports: Angry people halted road traffic between Jhenidah and Magura districts for more than three hours after a boy was crushed under a military jeep in the town Wednesday morning.

Local people put up barricade on the road demanding punishment of the jeep driver. Police later removed the road-blocks.

Fakiruzzaman (12) of village Kalamonkhan in Sadar upazila was run over by the army vehicle while passing the Dhopaghata bridge in the town. He died on the spot.

The body was brought to the Sadar police station.

Meanwhile, another blockade for four hours on the Jhenidah-Kushtia road disrupted normal traffic Wednesday morning after a bus worker was beaten by students. The trouble erupted over the demand of fare by a Jhenidah-bound bus conductor, who was allegedly assaulted by the students of Basantapur High School in Shalkupa upazila.

Mosharrar, beaten heavily, was admitted to the Ujania Health Complex.

Following the incident, Motor Sramik Union men barricaded the road, halting traffic up to 2:30 pm. The road-blocks were withdrawn after assurance by the authorities of punishing those involved in the incident.

A UNB report from Serajganj says: A truck loaded See Page 12 Col 7

## Arrest of BCL leader triggers clash in city

By Staff Correspondent

Angry people clashed with police, damaged and set fire to vehicles in the New Market and Science Laboratory areas in the city Wednesday evening following the arrest of a student leader.

Ashru, a leader of the Dhaka College unit of the Chhatra League (SA) was arrested by Special Branch (SB) of police from a residence at 2-24 Tajmahal road in Muhammadpur at about 7:30 pm Wednesday.

Ashru was charged with the Galib and Litor murders in the Dhaka University campus October 27 last year. Police said Ashru was the 12th accused in the cases.

Following the news of his arrest angry people came out on the roads, clashed with police on duty, damaged and set

See Page 12 Col 2

## Outsiders fire gunshots, ransack rooms in JU hall

By JU Correspondent

About six or seven intruders stormed into A F M Kamaluddin Hall of Jahangirnagar University Wednesday early morning and ransacked six rooms including the room of JUCSU Vice President Mantruzzaman Manir.

Around 3 am, the outsiders, in mask, forcibly entered into the hall and locked the attendant guard inside the guest room, sources said.

The attackers locked all the rooms of first and second floors, and damaged rooms No 227, 228, 327, 328, 329, 330. The miscreants also fired six rounds of gunshots and exploded some handmade bombs.

None was injured in the incident.

Saidur Rahman, former acting VP of JUCSU and inmate of VP Manir, was injured when he jumped from the first floor to escape the attack.

The provost of KU Hall Dr Khaliquzzaman Elias immediately visited the spot and showed concern over the incident.

While talking to this correspondent the GS of KU Hall Students Union Hasan Romal said the attack had been planned to kill the JUCSU VP. He emphasised on strengthening the security of the halls.

In protest of the attack the Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) JU unit brought out a rally on the campus. Later, at a rally, the JCD leaders demanded investigation into the incident. The meeting was addressed by Md Mintu and Rezaul Karim.

## AL MP assaulted in Jamalpur

JAMALPUR, Jan 29: An Awami League MP was allegedly assaulted by political opponents on his way to a polling centre in Madarganj upazila where union parishad elections were held today (Wednesday), reports UNB.

Golam Azam, the Awami League MP from Jamalpur-3, said he was attacked by a group of youngmen on his way to a polling booth at Madarganj Government College centre. The attackers took away some cash and his wrist watch, he alleged.

Golam Azam filed a case with Madarganj police accusing two activists of BNP. The District Awami League issued a statement condemning the incident.



On stage at National Press Club are Bafa artistes with 'Nakshi Kanthar Math' on the occasion of DUJ annual general meeting yesterday. — Star photo

## Scores injured: Voting postponed in 12 centres Police firing, bomb blasts mark 7th day of UP polls

Authorities postponed polling at 12 centres of 8 unions on the 7th day yesterday of the Union Parishad polls following clashes, hijacking of ballot papers and voting irregularities, officials said, reports UNB.

More than 50 people, including a BDR jawan and an Ansar constable, were injured and police fired 41 rounds of blank shots in at least 26 centres of two unions to quell the situation.

Eight people were arrested from Blichari Primary School centre at Kakra union of Chokoria upazila in Cox's Bazar district where police fired 38 rounds of shots to stop a clash.

Police also fired three rounds of shots in the air at Shahidpur centre of No 9 union of Habiganj Sadar upazila when a group of miscreants tried to snatch ballot papers blasting hand bombs.

Voting was postponed in one centre each of Dubagh union, Shewla union and Kur-arbar union at Bianbarbar

upazila in Sylhet district, two centres of Goapadia union and one of West Gumdandi union in Boakhal upazila of Chittagong district, one centre of Kakra union under Chokoria upazila in Cox's Bazar district, three centres of Baro Shalgar union in Debiddar upazila, one centre of Peria union of Nangolkot upazila in Comilla district and one centre of Jahangirpur union in Nandail upazila of Mymensingh district.

The officials said election was held yesterday in 310 unions of 45 upazilas in 35 districts.

A report from Sylhet said authorities postponed polling in 6 centres out of total 26 in seven unions of Bianbarbar upazila.

At least 30 people, including a BDR jawan and an Ansar, were injured when some miscreants exploding cocktails tried to enter the Garua Primary School centre in Shewla union.

A report from Sirajganj adds: At least 35 people in-

cluding four policemen were injured when police and local people clashed at a polling centre under Raiganj upazila yesterday, police and witnesses said.

Among the injured policemen, two were serious and admitted to Bogra Mohammad Ali Hospital.

Meanwhile, authorities have postponed the election at the Krisnapur Primary School polling centre following the clash.

The clash began when mob tried to hijack the ballot box. Police shot two rounds of bullets to disperse the mob, witnesses and voters said. Police, however, denied the action.

Both sides resorted to stone-throwing and using sticks. Violence and allegations of casting votes forcibly in Chandaigna and Dhulib polling centres under Raiganj have also been reported.

Another report says: At least 15 people were injured in a See Page 12 Col 8

## Violence marks RU strike

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 29: The strike called by the Chhatra Oikya at Rajshahi University on Wednesday was marked by violence.

The Chhatra Oikya, an alliance of several student organisations excluding JCD, BCL (S-A) and Shibir, went on a strike demanding withdrawal of cases against 60 student of the university.

During the strike a group of youths stormed the central auditorium of the university where the National Zoology Conference was inaugurated.

Witnesses said that the youths damaged the window pane and furniture of the auditorium and forced the organisers to postpone it.

They allegedly attacked the post office, university branch of Agrani Bank and Press Club. Another group reportedly damaged a bus of the Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) at Binodpur gate adjacent to the university.

They also reportedly damaged the pitch and pavilion on at the university stadium forcing the postponement of the final match of the inter-university cricket tournament between the RU vs Agricultural University.

The malaria protozoa dodged dozens of chloroquine

## Malaria spreading

By Staff Correspondent

A drug resistant malarial germ, carried by vector mosquitoes of the hilly areas, has gripped the eastern part of the country killing 167 people during the last two years.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) officials fear that the germ, scientifically known as plasmodium falciparum, which dodge off mild anti-malarial drugs except quinine, could spread across the rural areas throughout the country.

WHO representative in Bangladesh Dr ANA Abeyesundere says health officials have detected 32779 out of an estimated 43156 cases in the eastern frontier areas attacked by the drug resistant malaria.

Speaking at a press conference in the capital Wednesday, Abeyesundere said the malarial germ, transmitted by the vector mosquitoes from the eastern Indian states and from Myanmar, was detected in Sherpur, Sunamganj, Maulvibazar, Comilla and in all the districts of the Chittagong region. The hilly districts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts are the worst affected, he said.

The malarial protozoa dodged dozens of chloroquine

in the first and second lines of treatment bowed only to quinine, sulphate Abeyesundere said.

Giving a picture of the country's malaria situation, the WHO representative said because of the lack of vigour in the country's anti-malarial programme, the diseases have staged a comeback after many years.

An estimated three crore people of Bangladesh are now either affected or exposed to malarial diseases, he said.

Director of the government's Primary Health Care Dr Md Shamsul Islam, WHO malarialogist in the country Dr RS Giri, former Senior Regional Malaria Adviser to WHO Dr KM Rashid, Brig (Retd) QMS Hafiz, the WHO National Programme Officer in the country and WHO Administrative and Programme Officer RS Bhatnagar were present at the press conference.

Dr Abeyesundere said that an appropriate malaria control strategy was required for the country not only to save human lives but also to reduce health-related hazards.

The Anti-malarial activities See Page 12 Col 7

# Yeltsin announces sweeping nuclear arms cuts

MOSCOW, Jan 29: Russian President Boris Yeltsin offered today to join the United States in a global space-based Anti-missile Defence System, calling for an end to the US Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) and its Russian counterpart, reports AFP.

In a televised speech, Yeltsin said Russia was ready "on the basis of reciprocity with the USA, to eliminate existing anti-satellite systems and to work out an accord to ban completely the weapons which have been specially constructed to hit satellites." "We are ready jointly to

work out and subsequently to create and jointly operate a global system of defence in the place of SDI, he said.

AP said Yeltsin announced a sweeping series of nuclear arms cuts Wednesday and urged the world's other nuclear powers to sharply cut back their own arsenals.

Speaking hours after President Bush announced his plans for cutbacks in the US arsenal, Yeltsin said some 600 long-range nuclear missiles have been taken off alert and production of long-range nuclear bombers is being sharply curbed.

"I want to emphasize that we are not talking about our unilateral disarmament," he said. "The United States is taking parallel steps in a gesture of goodwill. It is now possible and necessary to move much further along this road."

Bush offered in his State of the Union address Tuesday night to eliminate 1,500 of 2,000 nuclear warheads on US land-based missiles, reduce by one-third the number of warheads on sea-based missiles and convert some bombers to non-nuclear roles.

Bush's offer, which he discussed with Yeltsin, was condi-

tioned on the former Soviet states agreeing to eliminate their most potent land-based missiles, which carry 2,460 warheads. It was not clear how many of those warheads are among those Russia has taken off alert.

"Nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction in the world must be eliminated," Yeltsin said, urging Britain, France and China to sharply reduce their nuclear arsenals.

Such arms cutbacks should allow Russia to better focus on urgent domestic needs and restructure its crippled economy.

It was Yeltsin's first major pronouncement on disarmament since the Soviet Union dissolved last month and came one day before he is to depart for the West on a trip that will include attendance at a UN Security Council session on Friday.

Yeltsin spoke of creating an international agency to monitor disarmament as the United States and Russia try to depart from the nuclear stand off that has marked their relations for decades.

As long as nuclear weapons remain, he said, "we believe... they should no longer be

aimed at corresponding targets in Russia and America."

the land-based sea-based nuclear missiles taken off alert carry 1,250 of the estimated 17,000 nuclear warheads Russia is believed to have.

Yeltsin said he has urged the leaders of Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, the other former Soviet republics with nuclear arms, to institute similar cuts. In all, the former Soviet states are thought to have 27,000 nuclear warheads. Russia is prepared to eliminate all existing sea-based long-range nuclear missiles

(Related story on Page 6)