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The Daily Star

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BANGLADESH AIR EXPRESS INTL. LTD.

VOL. II NO. 22 REGD. NO. DA 783

MAGH 21, 1398 BS,

DHAKA TUESDAY FEBRUARY 4, 1992

RAJAB 29, 1412 HIJRI

12 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 4.00

Inside Today

Article

Which Commonwealth is Which?

When the groupings of most of the states of the former Soviet Union called itself the Commonwealth of Independent States the word commonwealth was suddenly all over the headlines. Many people could be forgiven for thinking that suddenly Russia had joined the group of 50 former British empire countries

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International



1992 the year of reconciliation with India, says Pak premier Sharif

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Business

Trade balance improved in 1990-91

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Kapil Dev takes his 400th Test wicket

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BTV to telecast live World Cup cricket

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Dhaka Day by Day



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Supplement

We publish a two-page supplement on the National Day of Sri Lanka

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NEWS BRIEFS

Ravi Shankar arrives today

World renowned sitarist Ravi Shankar arrives in city today on a five-day official visit to Bangladesh, a Shilpakala Academy press release said, reports BSS.

German team due today

A four-member German delegation led by the Deputy Foreign Minister, Helmut Schaefer, member of the Federal Parliament, arrives in Dhaka today on a three-day official visit to Bangladesh, an official handout said. During his stay, Schaefer will make courtesy call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and Speaker Shaikh Razaque Ali, reports BSS.

Govt has failed, says Opposition in debate over border situation

We are ready to save sovereignty: FM

Star Report

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman has assured the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) that the country is fully prepared to face any eventuality arising out of situation prevailing along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border.

A confident Foreign Minister said the present government and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party along with 330 members of Parliament will fight shoulder to shoulder with the people to protect the national sovereignty and geographical integrity of the country.

The Foreign Minister gave the assurance while winding up the general debate on the Bangladesh-Myanmar border situation in Parliament yesterday.

Earlier, participating in the discussion the members of the Opposition termed the actions of the government inadequate in handling the influx of Rohingya refugees but expressed their willingness to extend support to the government in facing the crisis.

Most of the Opposition members termed the foreign policy of the government

genial but did not suggest measures to deal with the problem.

Answering to opposition criticisms the Foreign Minister said the basic principle of the foreign policy as laid down in the Constitution is to resolve international conflicts peacefully. The government is pursuing this policy which has already yielded some results, the Foreign Minister added.

Narrating the development of events, Rahman said to face the situation arising out of the December 21 incident, four options were open to

Bangladesh: peaceful negotiations, internationalisation of problem, confrontation and war.

Asserting that Bangladesh believes in peaceful solution of the problems the Foreign Minister said other options were still open, not exhausted.

Quoting from Article 25 of the Constitution, the Foreign Minister said alterations of the fundamentals of the foreign policy were not welcome. Foreign policy in a democratic country develops on the basis of bi-partisan consensus and such policy needs little change

with the change in external relations, the minister added.

Rahman said the democratically elected government of the country was following a foreign policy as stipulated in the Constitution.

Dwelling on the friendly relations between Bangladesh and Myanmar the Foreign Minister said Bangladesh has 176-mile long border with Myanmar and since the independence of the country there has been no conflict or tension along the border.

However, three lakh Muslim refugees entered into

Bangladesh in 1978 when the government of Myanmar initiated the search to identify citizens. The problem was solved through peaceful negotiations and the refugees were sent back, the minister added.

Rahman said the Muslim refugees again started coming into Bangladesh early 1991. As the number of refugees went up, the minister said, he visited Myanmar in November 1991. Following the visit the Myanmar authorities agreed to take back the refugees and as the list of refugees was under

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Countdown to Shaheed Day

Star Report

The period between March, 1948 — when East Pakistan's chief minister Khwaja Nazimuddin agreed to students' demands to argue the case for making Bengali a state language with the central government — and January 1952, turned out to be the lull before the storm.

It also turned out to be a period of increasing alienation of the Muslim League government from the people, from the realities on the ground.

That alienation was brutally exposed on January 27, 1952 when the same Khwaja Nazimuddin, now the prime minister of Pakistan, declared at a public meeting at the Paltan Maidan in Dhaka that

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Two flag meetings with Myanmar

By Staff Correspondent

Border guard Commanders of Bangladesh and Myanmar held simultaneous flag meeting Monday to explore measures to further defuse border tension that had escalated since December 21.

Officials in Cox's Bazar district reached by telephone told the Daily Star that two flag meetings between the border security forces of the two neighbours took place at 12 noon Monday.

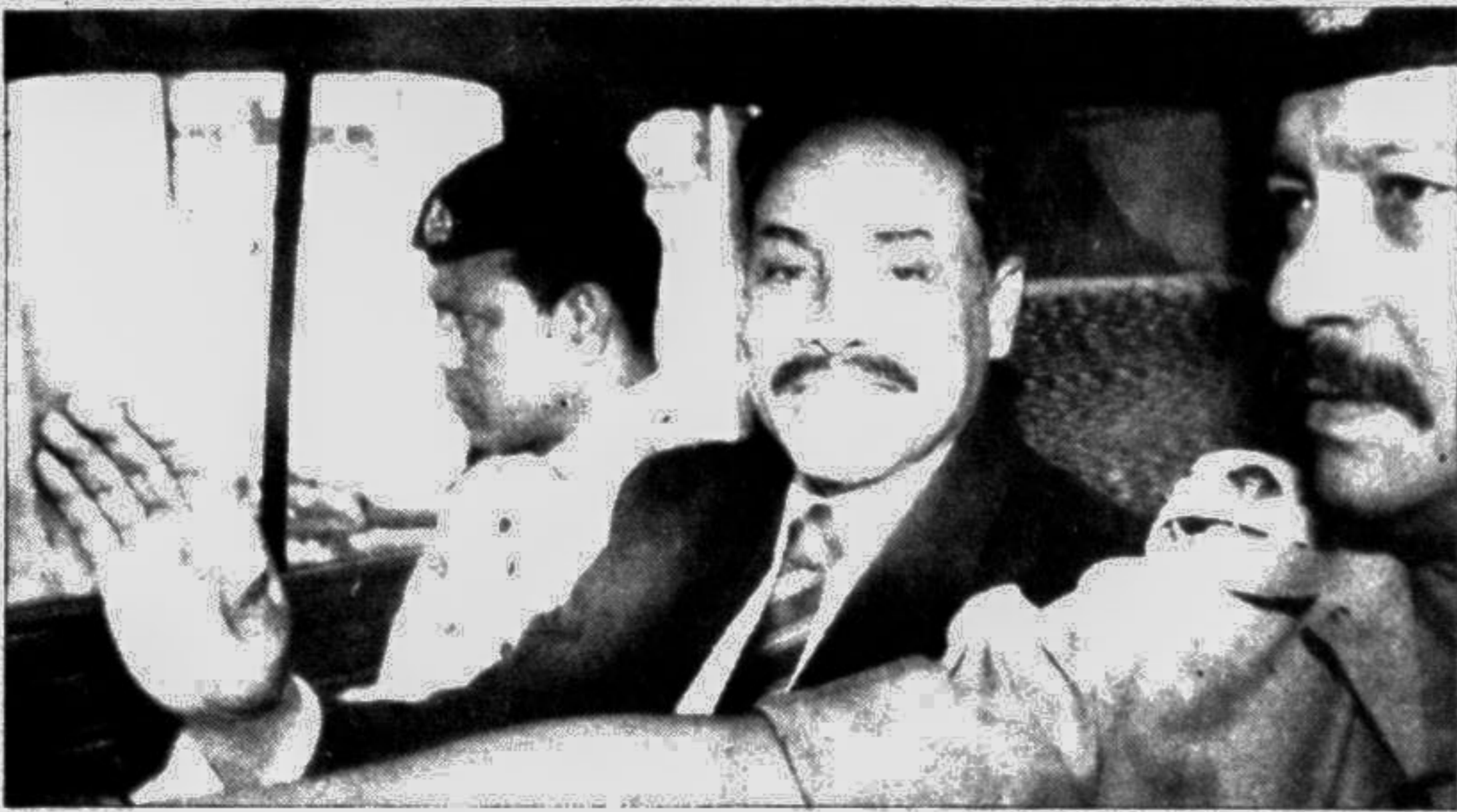
They said that the meeting, one held at Lembuchhari at Naikhyangchhari Upazila of Bandarban district and another at Gundum in Cox's Bazar, discussed possible steps to improve border situation.

The simultaneous talks, held at the company commander level, lasted an average one hour each, the officials said.

The details of the flag meetings could not be available.

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Ershad jailed for 3 more years in money case



AFTER JUDGEMENT: Apparently unmoved Ershad waving at the pressmen while being taken to the jail yesterday. —Star photo

General Ershad who ruled the country for nearly 9 years was yesterday (Monday) sentenced to 3 years simple imprisonment for amassing wealth beyond known sources of his income, reports UNB.

Neither his wife nor political associates were present when the special judge Mohammad Ali Khan handed down the conviction at 11.55 am in a jam-packed makeshift court room opposite the Central Jail.

The 62-year-old general was already sentenced in June last year to 10 years rigorous imprisonment for keeping illegal arms. He is facing four more corruption cases and officials say about a score others are in the offing.

Overthrown from power by a mass upsurge in December 1990, Ershad wearing a black coat and red-stripe tie was sitting in an armed chair in the

dock looking vacantly at the judge as he pronounced the 50-minute judgement.

"I hold that the charge... has been proved against the accused beyond all reasonable doubt," said the learned judge in his 62-page judgement.

"So the accused is held guilty of the offence of criminal misconduct under section 5(1) (e) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947, punishable under section 5(2) of the said Act."

"The accused is in custody for more than one year which may be taken into consideration for the purpose of determining the term of imprisonment. In view of the above, I hold that three years sentence is enough to meet the ends of justice," the judge added.

Immediately after the verdict, defence counsel Kazi Shahadat Hossain commented "the judge was fair and we have

no complain against the judgement." The chief defence counsel Strajul Haq was conspicuously absent in the court yesterday.

Attorney General Aminul Haq who appeared on behalf of the state observed: This is for the first time in Bangladesh that public accountability of the President for possessing property beyond known sources of income has been established in internationally accepted fair norms of trial... definitely it's a glorious day for Bangladesh.

Although we are a poor country we have an impressive judicial system which means everyone is being dealt with in accordance or in due process of law, added the Attorney General.

The Bureau of Anti-Corruption accused the deposed president of amassing

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Vajpayee for all-party meet on Tinbigha

CALCUTTA, Feb 3: The BJP leader, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today said that the Prime Minister, PV Narashima Rao, should convene an all-party meeting to discuss the Tinbigha issue before leaving out the corridor to Bangladesh, reports PTI.

Vajpayee told PTI here that there was enough scope for improving the international agreement on the issue to allay the fear of the people living there.

The BJP leader, who held a 40-minute meeting with the West Bengal Chief Minister, Jyoti Basu, on the issue, said that he had told the Marxist leader that the international agreement should be implemented in such a manner that the people there could not feel unsafe.

The BJP leader said that under the Indra-Mujib agree-

ment leasing out of Tinbigha was linked with exchange of enclave but there was no initiative by the government in this regard till today.

However, there were sufficient provisions for the modification of the agreement, which were to be effectively utilised for the benefit of the people of Tinbigha, he said.

Referring to his meeting with Basu, he said that he had discussed current political situation and other broad-based issues, including the forthcoming central budget.

Vajpayee said that the Congress(I) should evolve a consensus of different political parties on the areas where a major thrust should be given in the budget. If the Congress (I) is keen to remain in power, it will have to take this into account, the BJP leader said.



Imelda unveils 'secret' of her fortune

MANILA, Feb 3: Ferdinand Marcos, accused of looting the Philippine Treasury, actually made his wealth from Japanese World War II booty which he used in the secret but profitable trade of precious metals, his widow claimed today, reports AFP.

But former First Lady Imelda Marcos said the late dictator, a former anti-Japanese guerrilla elected to Congress after the war, never declared the wealth to tax authorities because the rising politician thought it might be 'embarrassing.'

The widow refused to give details on how her husband discovered the Treasure of Japanese General Tomoyuki Yamashita, plundered from all over Southeast Asia, how much it was worth, or where it is kept now.

Biman will have to spend Tk 2 cr more to pay for salaries

By Asiuzzaman

Biman Bangladesh Airlines, the national flag carrier, will incur an additional expenditure of about Taka two crore per year to implement the agreement providing pay rise of the employees of the corporation.

The agreement was signed on January 28 between the employees and the management of the organization following agitation for 13 days.

The agreement, approved by the board of directors, is pending approval by the Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, say Biman sources.

The present agreement, when implemented, will be an increase of about 67 per cent over the present cost to meet the cost of salary and allowances of the employees. The corporation, at present, spends Taka three crore yearly for salary and allowances of some 5500 employees.

The Biman employees started agitating from January 16 demanding removal of anomalies from their pay scale compared with the National Pay Scale.

After a series of negotiations, besides rallies and processions by the employees, both the employees and management reached a consensus to eliminate the anomalies from the pay scale. The management also agreed to drastically revise three types of allowances, given to Biman employees as a 'special case.'

Official sources say, the airline earned a net profit of Taka 8.33 crore during the first

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2 killed, scores hurt on 11th day of UP polls

At least one person was killed and scores injured in poll violence on the 11th day of Union Parishad elections Monday, reports UNB.

Voting in at least five centres were postponed following incidence of firing, clashes and ballot box snatching.

Officials said one person was killed when police opened fire as a mob attacked them at Khamar Marail School centre in Betakapa union of Palashbari upazila in Gaibandha district.

Our correspondent however, claimed two persons were killed in the firing.

Some 50 people were injured in the gunfire and police-mob clashes, according to agency.

The district administration said the trouble started when election officials postponed polling at the centre after some supporters of a chairman candidate tried to stuff ballot boxes.

Voting was also put off at two centres of Mohodipur union in the same upazila of Gaibandha district after untoward incidents, Election Commission said.

In Brahmanbaria, polling was postponed at Panisbar High School centre in Sarail upazila of Brahmanbaria district when a group of miscreants snatched 7 ballot boxes in a melee.

BDR fired three blank shots to quell the poll violence at the centre, local officials and witnesses said.

In Chittagong, EC said, voting was put off at one centre of Chadaha union in Satkania upazila.

In Bogra, at least 25 people were injured when supporters of rival candidates clashed in a post-election encounter at Gabtali upazila.

The clash was a sequel to Sunday's incident when an un-

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Shots fired during strike on DU campus

By DU Correspondent

Several shots were fired on the Dhaka University campus during the students strike called by the Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya(GCO) Monday.

The shots fired in front of the 'Arts Building' of the DU created panic among the general students and the scheduled examinations could not be held.

The call for the country-wide student strike was given

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Islamic bomb posing threat, fears West

LONDON, Feb 3: Western specialists believe the race by Iran and other Islamic nations to build the bomb poses the most serious threat of spreading nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War era, reports AP.

They say North Korea and India are also major nuclear threats, and that the nuclear arsenal of the former Soviet Union, divided among four republics, poses a potentially greater danger to the world now than it did during the Cold War.

In the early 1960s, US officials feared massive nuclear proliferation would produce

dozens of nuclear powers by the turn of the century, said Dr. Martin Navias, a lecturer in the Department of War Studies at King's College, University of London.

About 40 to 45 nations have attained the technical capability to develop nuclear warheads, he said, "but the fact is that very few countries have succeeded in developing nuclear weapons."

He said the declared nuclear powers — the United States, the four Soviet republics, Britain, France and China — have been joined by only four undeclared nuclear

states: Israel, South Africa, India and Pakistan.

Navias gave two reasons: Some nations with nuclear potential decided it was not in their interests to develop weapons, and some who tried found it more difficult than anticipated.

With the Soviet collapse, the possibility of buying ready-made weapons or components and the experts to put them together, increases the likelihood that new members will join the nuclear club.

"The most frightening potential is — through the former Soviet Central Asian republics,

into the Indian sub-continent, into Indonesia," said Paul Beaver, publisher of Jane's Defense Weekly.

Before the Gulf War, Iraq had the most advanced nuclear programme in the Arab world. UN experts charged with dismantling it discovered three projects to make weapons grade uranium, but said success remained several years away.

Iraq's ability to run three separate programmes proves, Beaver said, that "if you throw a lot of money at a project and get the right people, you can do anything."

The Iraqis remain a problem, Navias said, because they might still be hiding nuclear material and facilities.

"One of the things we learned about Iraq is that we don't know how much we don't know," he said.

Navias and the other experts now see Iran as a greater short-term threat.

"It has the money and the motive and the capability to build a nuclear and missile programme and to pay for the people who are needed to do it," said Gary Milhollin, director of the Wisconsin Project on

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CONVOCATION

Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology
 Dhaka, Bangladesh

Notice

It is notified for information of all concerned that Convocation-1992 of BUET (Third convocation) will be held on 29th February, 1992 as per changed schedule.

Programme of the Convocation will be announced soon in the Dailies.

Controller of Examinations
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