

## Barrage of rockets hits Stepanakert : 7 killed

MOSCOW, Feb 23 : The capital of the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region in Azerbaijan came under intense rocket fire Sunday, killing at least seven people, news reports said, reports AP.

More than 100 rounds hit Stepanakert, and targets included the military barracks of a motorized regiment of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Interfax news agency said.

At least one soldier was killed and 10 were wounded in the attack, the agency said.

The ITAR-Tass news agency

said six civilians died in the shelling of Stepanakert early Sunday, which caused heavy damage. "Many victims are under the rubble or in burning houses," the agency said.

The regional military commander sent a letter of complaint to the Azerbaijani leadership, which came on Armed Forces Day.

Col. Gen. Valery Patrikeyev said the shelling of the barracks was "blasphemous" because it fell on Feb 23, considered a holiday honouring all military men in the former Soviet Union.



THE REFUGEE — the government-built refugee shelters at Dachupalang-1 in Cox's Bazar district. The thatched-bamboo camps have been built to house an estimated 500 Rohingya families who entered Bangladesh to escape ill-treatment in their homeland.

## Fundamentalism

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caste had never enjoyed any facility in post-liberation period, rather they were utilised by the party in power for their own interest.

She said shaheed president Ziaur Rahman was the first to give them due respect. "Shaheed Zia wanted to include people from all walks of life and integrate them into the national uplift work," she said. The late president had appointed a member of the scheduled caste group minister in his cabinet. He did not want to differentiate between members living in the same society, she said.

we cannot check the population boom, all development programmes would fail.

She said the government would give top priority to the betterment of those people who are neglected and deprived in society. She said the present government would give due consideration in their problems.

Referring to the local demands including the nationalisation of the local college, Begum Zia said the matter would be considered when overall programme for nationalisation of colleges come up for consideration. She said the autocratic regime had nationalised a large number of educational institutions without providing necessary facilities only for its cheap popularity. "We do not want to give false promises," she said adding "we will prove our commitments through deeds."

The Prime Minister, however, regretted that the BNP did not get anyone by its side when it was ousted from power. She said had those forces strengthened the hands of BNP, the autocratic regime could not have remained in power for a long period.

Begum Zia said shaheed Zia had spent one night with the members of scheduled caste in the area to know their problems. "He wanted that as equal citizens of Bangladesh the members of scheduled caste should enjoy all facilities," she said adding people lived in close harmony during Zia's period.

Mirza Golam Hafiz referred to the Vested Property Act and said the government would do everything possible for the welfare of the people.

Majid-ul-Haque called upon the people to strengthen the hands of the government of Prime Minister Begum Zia for attaining overall development.

Kamal Ibne Yusuf urged them to rally round the flag of BNP to fulfil the dreams of shaheed president Ziaur Rahman.

The Prime Minister said time has come when all should work together for increasing production in fields and factories to make Bangladesh self-reliance.

Referring to the various programme taken up by her government, the Prime Minister said that people's participation is a must for the successful implementation of the programmes. She urged them to keep the size of their family at a minimum, adding "if

Prof Abdul Mannan said the BNP government would always protect the rights and privileges of the minority community.

Gayeswar Roy said people belonging to all caste and creed should work together for the betterment of the society.

Kartik Chandra Thakur regretted that although the members of the scheduled caste had fought for the liberation of the motherland their hopes were shattered when Awami League came to power and snatched away their rights. He said the stipends for the scheduled caste students were withdrawn, the quota system for them was done away with and the Ramna Kali Mandir was turned into Suhrawardy Uddayan. He also criticised that the Enemy Property Act was turned into Vested Property Act during the Awami League rule.

## Deep sea men

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told The Daily Star Sunday that they would seek international support for their 10-point charter of demands.

Meanwhile, the Labour Directorate has issued a directive to prosecute 10 owners of the trawlers for failing to appear before the Tripartite Consultative Committee (TCC), official sources said.

Thakur said that shaheed president Zia had included Rasa Raj Mandal as a cabinet minister.

Earlier on arrival, Prime Minister was received by hundreds of people including women and children. The women members of the scheduled caste greeted her with 'traditional Ulu'. She was also greeted with 'Ulu' as she began her speech.

When contacted, a leader of the Bangladesh Marine Fisheries Association Captain Hussain Imam said that they did not receive any notice from the Directorate for any hearing.

Terminating the ongoing strike "illegal," he said that the striking workers had gone on strike violating a status quo order by the court of the Assistant Judge in Chittagong.

A labour union can not be formed comprising the workers of different establishments with different owners, the leader said clarifying the legal aspect of calling a strike, and added that some 300 crew of 16 fishing companies had joined the strike.

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B K Sood, Asian regional representative of the Geneva-based International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers (IFFAAW) Saturday deplored the abstinence of the deep sea fishing trawlers owners from tripartite conciliation and the subsequent announcement of lockout.

He said that the employers' action was a gross violation of the ILO Convention and the labour laws of Bangladesh.

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Khandaker Golam Mostafa, Additional Secretary, has been made Executive Chairman of the Board of Investment. Md Matur Rahman, Additional Secretary, has been appointed Chief Controller of the Office of the Chief Controller of Export and Import.

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## Stranded Pakistanis to be settled in Punjab, Pak ML delegation assures

The visiting Pakistan Muslim League delegation visited the Geneva Camp at Muhammadpur in the City Sunday, reports UNB.

Leader of the delegation SM Bashir had talks with the stranded Pakistanis living in the camp and assured them that they would be repatriated and settled in Punjab.

Muslim league is a partner of the Islamic Democratic Alliance (IDA) now ruling Pakistan.

The three-member delegation which arrived in city on Friday on a private good will visit, will proceed to Chittagong today (Monday) to address a local Muslim League meeting.

Chief of West Bengal (India) Muslim League AKM Hasan, who arrived Sunday on a good will visit, will also speak on the occasion.

Pakistan and Indian Muslim League leaders are scheduled to attend a Bangladesh Muslim League Convention on Tuesday.

## Arakan village

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Shantibahini are in league with the Myanmar military. He also alleged that the Shantibahini had crossed into Myanmar and burnt down two Rohingya villages late last year.

On the other hand, Zakaria claims that his group has contact with Karen rebels on the Thai-Myanmar border. "Our arms come from that area, from Cambodia and Thailand," he said. The Karens are also fighting for their rights, and they are very useful to us. The weapons are mainly Russian, American, and Chinese. The Mujahideens reportedly have some 500 to 600 assault rifles, automatic rifles and machine guns.

Finance has apparently not been a problem. There is a large Rohingya community in exile, in England and the US and funding is assured. Zakaria complained that Rohingyas who had done well in Bangladesh were the ones who contributed very little, despite being successful businessmen.

Talking about splits in the Rohingya political scene, Zakaria told The Daily Star that the Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front was created by dissatisfied RSO members. "Nurul

Islam, the leader of ARIF, wanted more power," he claimed. Despite smaller factions the RSO remains the leading political force. Most of the refugees in Bangladesh are supporters of the RSO.

Though many of Myanmar's Mogs are involved in the persecution, against the Rohingyas the Mog community also has resistance groups within Myanmar.

These groups, sharing a common interest with the Rohingyas, often co-operate with them, according to Zakaria. But he considers this a relationship of pure convenience.

As for the future of a political compromise to the Rohingya issue, Zakaria is not very optimistic. "The Myanmar government is very stubborn," he said. And if the democratically elected government of Suu Kyi comes to power? "I am not entirely sure of her attitude towards this minority," answered Zakaria. "When her father called a minority communities conference, all the others were invited except the Rohingyas. I can only hope that with her liberal Westernised background she will be stronger on human rights."

## Call to boycott anti-liberation elements

By Staff Correspondent

The national coordination committee for implementation of the spirit of the Liberation War and elimination of the killer-collaborators will hold a public meeting on March 3 at the Baitul Mukarram Square.

The leaders of the coordination committee announced the programme at a press briefing held yesterday afternoon at the Jatiya Press Club.

Founded on February 11, the coordination committee earlier announced various programmes aimed at 'socially boycotting anti-liberation forces as well as politically resisting them'.

The leaders of the committee have also called upon the people to launch mass communication programmes identical to those of the central ones at the district and upazila levels. The Convener of the committee, Jahanara Imam, Member Secretary of the committee, Professor Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Abdur Razzak MP of Awami League and Kazi Arif Ahmed of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal were the leaders of the committee who were present at the press briefing among others.

Explaining the background of the formation of this organisation, they said Jamaat-e-Islami, along with other anti-liberation forces who collaborated with the occupation army of Pakistan during the country's Liberation War, had staged their political resurrection and is now frequently posing a threat to the sovereignty of the country. They have shown the audacity of formally electing Golam Azam, a citizen of Pakistan, the Ameer of Jariyat.

Another one was given two years RI in the case.

The Additional District Magistrate Mohammad Golam Kibria announced the judgement here today.

Accused Tajul, the recipient of the forged deed and the false owner Manohar Pal were given 5 years RI and fined Tk 5,000 each in default of which they have to undergo one year more RI.

The writer and identifier of the deed Mizanur Rahman was sentenced to two years RI and fined Tk 2,000 in default of which to suffer three months RI.

Five other accused were acquitted from the charges. They are: Deed writers Ihabbur Rahman and Sudhan Chandra Sarkar and witnesses Jalal Hossain, Nonaranga Pal and Azizur Rahman.

Biroja Rani Debnath, widow of Shashanka Debnath submitted a petition to Sadar upazila court on August 15, 1988 against 11 people including Tajul for making forged deeds to grab her husband's 3.34 decimal land.

Shashanka Debnath was killed on October 16, 1987 by Tajul and his gang. They also killed Birojabala and her 5 children on September 5, 1989.

## Nidarabad murder Tajul gets 5-yr RI for forgery

BRAHMANBARIA, Feb 23: Two people, including the principal convict in the sensational Nidarabad murder case, Tajul Islam, were sentenced to five years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) for forging a deed, reports UNB.

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Shashanka Debnath was killed on October 16, 1987 by Tajul and his gang. They also killed Birojabala and her 5 children on September 5, 1989.

The District and Sessions Judge court on June 20, 1990 sentenced nine people including Tajul to death and 26 others life term for killing Birojabala and her 5 children.

Assistant Public Prosecutor Nurul Islam conducted the case on behalf of the state while advocate Akshir Hossain Chowdhury moved for the accused.

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## The Midnight File

### Israeli, Arab negotiators prepare for talks

WASHINGTON, Feb 23: Putting aside several explosive distractions, Israeli and Arab negotiators prepared Sunday to resume Mideast peace talks under the supervision of an increasingly restless President Bush. The fact that Israel, Syria, Palestinian Arabs, Lebanon and Jordan all agreed to send their delegations here indicated a joint commitment to keep negotiating even though their talks until now have been inconclusive, reports AP.

### Opposition walks out of Nepali parliament

KATHMANDU, Feb 23: Members from all but one opposition party walked out of parliament Sunday, demanding Prime Minister Girtija Prasad Koirala make public all agreements concluded recently with India. The leader of the main opposition Nepal Communist Party, Bharat Mohan Adhikari, said Parliament should halt all further business until members were informed of several reported agreements between Nepal and India arrived at during Koirala's visit to India in December, reports AP.

## WFP food aid

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southeastern districts of Bangladesh.

The UN agency representative S S Wijeratne said a visiting UNICR team had been working with relevant government departments to map out the programme and hoped that the task would be completed this week.

Experts including hydrologists, nutritionist and project planners are now visiting refugees to determine what kind of aid will be needed for them.

He said, after finalisation of the programme, the donor countries would be urged to provide funds to support it.

Wijeratne informed that initially, US dollar 1 million from emergency reserve fund was being used to meet immediate requirement.

Describing the situation as 'very bad', the UNICR representative further added that six camps had so far been opened in district of Cox's Bazar to give shelter to about 50 thousand refugees.

The number of refugees is going up gradually as the influx of Rohingya Muslims from Arakan province of Myanmar continued unabated. The unofficial estimate put the figure at over one lakh.

At present, Red Crescent and World Food Programme (WFP) are looking after the refugees, besides the government agencies.

Jamshed Anwar, Chief of Asian Bureau of the UNICR, is scheduled to visit Bangladesh next week, Wijeratne said. D'Souza, Bangladesh desk chief at the Geneva-based UN relief agency, is already in

Bangladesh to see the condition of the refugees.

Wijeratne expressed his agency's desires to be a party to 'voluntary repatriation' of the Myanmar refugees.

He referred to the UN and UNICR's earlier role in repatriation of the refugees in Namibia, South Africa, Sahara and Cambodia.

"Refugee problem is a legitimate concern of world body", Wijeratne said, adding, "it can, with blessings of the Security Council, initiate tripartite negotiation to settle issues between the two countries."

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### Regional EFA consultation

A three-day Regional Consultation of Education For All (EFA) network begins here today (Monday). About 60 representatives from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Maldives and Sri Lanka as well as from international agencies like UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, ISESCO,

### CHT students

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students also submitted a memorandum to the Home Minister demanding immediate release of the six detained leaders of the Council. They urged the authorities to stop indiscriminate arrests in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

A press release of the Council said that the sit-in was later withdrawn as the Home Minister assured them of looking into their demands.

The memorandum submitted to the Home Minister said that the fate of the detained students were not known.

### Aid Club sanction

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should be on disbursement." He suggested a combined effort by the government and the donors to implement projects and increase the flow of disbursement.

He added that the level of commitment was not important. The focus should always be on disbursement.

Meanwhile, he said that a WB mission was arriving today (Monday) to finalise the draft of the Bank's memorandum following discussions with government officials. The Country Economic Memorandum (CEM) will be placed before the donors in Paris.

Replying to a question, he said that he feared that the economy would not grow as projected for this year despite quite good projections in the agricultural sector.

The economic growth for the year 1991-92 was estimated at 5.7 per cent. Willoughby blamed the feared decline partly on the low level public sector activity and private sector hesitation.

He however pointed out that the country was going through transition in financial reforms which would understandably take time to settle down. "It is understandable that there will be a slow period when past bad practices are being corrected."

Referring to the budgetary management, Willoughby said that the government was cautious not to exceed the limits of expenditure since the adjustments made in August following the pay hike for government officials and employees. "Thus, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was able to conclude that the government within the limits of the budget and balance of payments projected for the year," he added.

He advised against any further wage increases to keep this trend uninterrupted. "Excessive wage hikes will imply the accelerated need to devalue the currency," he said.

According to him, a devaluation is necessary following such wage hikes to maintain the international competitiveness of the country's economy. "You have to preserve competitiveness by corresponding devaluation of the currency."

More than 60 engineers of the Water Development Board, Local Government Engineering Bureau and other organisations and some BUET teachers attended the day-long seminar.

During his five-day trip ending Tuesday Dr Ranklor will meet senior government officials to inform them of the prospects and effective uses of geo-synthetic technology in Bangladesh.

## Attack on Nizami: AL demands withdrawal of 'false' case

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina and its General Secretary Sajeda Choudhury Sunday demanded withdrawal of the 'false', 'conspiratorial' and 'motivated' case filed by Jamaat leader Matur Rahman Nizami against 10 leaders and workers of their student wing, Chhatra League.

Nizami lodged the case against 10 Chhatra League activists including Ashim Kumar Ukil and Quamruzzaman Ansari in connection with his (Nizami's) assault at the Dhaka University on May 27 last year.

The AL leaders in a statement issued last night said that Nizami registered the 'false' case against their student activists in connection with the incident in which the angry students, teachers and employees resisted participation in a meeting by the head of the rajakars, Nizami.

"It is normal that presence of an anti-liberation element would cause furore at a place like the Dhaka University campus," the AL leaders commented.

## Bodos kill 6

NEW DELHI, Feb 23: Tribal guerrillas opened fire at a village in northeastern India, killing a pregnant woman and five men, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported today, says AFP.

## Warning against using DDT powder

The government has totally prohibited the use of DDT powder, which is being smuggled into Bangladesh from India, in agriculture and in the manufacture of mosquito coils and cautioned the peasants and the people about it, reports BSS.

An official handout issued in Dhaka Sunday said the government was aware that Indian-manufactured insecticides were being smuggled into the country and peasants of different bordering districts of Bangladesh including Jhenaidah, Jessore, Meherpur, Chuadanga, Satkhira and Kushtia were freely using it.

The smuggled insecticides include Thiodan, Thionol and Hilbis, the handout said adding that the use of these unregistered insecticides was prohibited and a punishable act under Insecticide Ordinance, 1971.

It said the persons found guilty of using or hoarding these insecticides can be sentenced to both imprisonment and fine.

Field level information revealed that the use of these insecticides caused damage to crops and death of frogs and other useful insects, the handout said.

It urged all to inform the law enforcing agencies and handover to them those who are involved in unlawful acts of selling and hoarding these insecticides.

## Two killed in road mishaps

By Staff Correspondent

Two persons were killed in road accidents in Dhaka and Gazipur Sunday.

Shakhawat Amin, 35, a former lecturer of Management of Habibullah Bahar College, died on the spot when a minibus hit his motorbike from behind at about 10.30 am at Bangla Motor in the city.

Our Gazipur Correspondent reports: A 12-year old school boy was crushed under the wheels of an oil-tanker at 5.30 pm in Gazipur.

The boy, Mohammad Abdul Halim, was a student of Class Four.

## Obituary

Sayra Khatoon, mother of Zahurul Huq, a former President of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) died Sunday night, reports BSS.

She was 77.

The deceased who had been suffering from old age complications expired at the Rajbargh residence of Zahurul Huq, who is a senior staff reporter of Dainik Bangla.

Namaz-e-janaza of Sayra Khatoon will be held today (Monday) after Zohr prayers at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque and she will be buried at Shahjahanpur Graveyard in city.