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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**Twelve hurt in Sirajganj clash**

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 3: At least 12 people were injured in a clash at Kalbari Girls High School premises here today. The clash started when a group of hooligans tried to enter the school when a sports and cultural programme was being held, reports UNB.

**Open market sale of Ata**

Government has started selling Ata under Open Market Sale (OMS) at the price of Tk 11 per kg from Monday following a rise in its price in the open market. Officials said six tons of Ata were sold on Monday and Tuesday under the OMS system in various markets of Dhaka, reports UNB.

**Cabinet discusses Artha Rhin ordn**

The Cabinet has considered the 'Artha Rhin Adalat (second amendment) Ordinance, 1992', to amend the 'Artha Rhin Adalat Ain-1990' at its regular weekly meeting held yesterday at Bangabhaban with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair, reports BSS.

**Farmers protest canal digging**

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 3: Hundreds of farmers in Chandigarh village of Sadar upazila staged demonstrations in the town today protesting excavation of Betnal canal inaugurated on February 19. The farmers in a memorandum handed over to the DC complained that the canal digging would damage crops, reports UNB.

**Bus kills 2 in Jessore**

JESSORE, Mar 3: A speeding bus rolled over a rickshaw in Monirampur upazila of the district today killing a five-year old boy and his mother on the spot. The victims were identified as Zobeda Khatun (28), wife of Abdul Gafur of village Taherpur of the upazila and her son Nazmul (5), reports UNB.

**Awami League extended meeting ends**

## Kamal retracts statement on Feb polls fairness

By Nurul Kabir

Dr. Kamal Hossain defended his initiative to form 'democratic forum' claiming that it was not detrimental to the interest of Awami League (AL) and invited Sheikh Hasina to lead the organisation as its adviser.

Dr. Hossain made this observation while deliberating

on different political and organisational issues of the party at the concluding session of three-day extended meeting of the party that ended last night.

Also, Dr. Hossain retracted his earlier stand on the parliamentary polls held last year by clarifying that his qualifying statement on free and fair

election was applicable only to the constituency from which he contested, not to the whole country.

In a two-hour speech Hossain tried to explain his other activities vis-a-vis loyalty to the party.

He made a passionate appeal to his colleagues not to

misunderstand him and emphatically said, 'for the rest of my life I will remain loyal to the AL.'

Kamal, party sources say, drew a comparison of the situation with that of the Six-Point Movement when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman 'organised



Thousands of Rohingyas are still coming in to Bangladesh everyday and taking shelter in different places from Teknaf to Marichha. The picture shows refugees on Teknaf-Cox's Bazar Road Monday. — Star photo

**Regional chief talks to Star**

## UNHCR ready to broker Rohingya issue solution

By Farid Hossain

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, expressing concern at the increasing influx of Rohingya refugees, has offered to Myanmar (Burma) her good offices to help resolve the tragic problem, a UN official said on Tuesday.

'The High Commissioner is very concerned over the increase in the rate of influx. This is alarming,' said Jamshid Anvar, director of UNHCR, Asia Bureau in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star.

Anvar, who flew here Tuesday on a six-day visit, said High Commissioner Sadako Ogasawara had written to Myanmar Foreign Minister Ohn Gyaw expressing her concern and offering her good offices to assist in resolving the 'tragic problem as soon as possible.'

He said the High Commissioner would issue an international appeal to aid the refugees either today (Wednesday) or tomorrow.

A team dispatched by the UNHCR has estimated that 15 million US dollars will be needed to feed about 50,000 refugees until end of this year.

'The estimate was made on the basis of the needs of 50,000 refugees. But now the number is increasing,' he said.

The High Commissioner has raised her initial emergency aid from 1 million dollars to 3 million dollars with another 2 million dollars coming from World Food Programme, Anvar said.

'This money is sufficient to cope with the initial need until end of March,' he said.

Quoting from government estimate Anvar said 17,400 refugees arrived on Friday.

Saturday and Sunday that raised the official number of refugees to more than 90,000.

'This is two times higher than the figure Bangladesh quoted when your Foreign Minister requested for UNHCR help on Jan 30,' he said.

Referring to the condition of the refugees Anvar said 'people are coming in pitiable condition, hungry, exhausted, sick and a lot of them suffering from injuries.'

'This is alarming and we don't know when it is going to stop,' said Anvar, an Iranian national working for UNHCR for past 23 years.

Asked about the prospects of repatriation Anvar said the UNHCR is 'ready to be available to arrange the return home of the refugees' provided some conditions are fulfilled.

The conditions are: the government of Myanmar must provide access to the UNHCR to be able to monitor safe return of the people and certify that people on return will not be subjected to any persecution and discrimination.

Another essential role of the UNHCR will be to ensure that the people who are now in Bangladesh I decide on their own—willingly and voluntarily to return to Myanmar.

Asked if High Commissioner Ogasawara is expected to visit the refugees Anvar said 'that possibility is not excluded.'

He said the High Commissioner is in touch with the UN Secretary General Dr. Boutros Ghali about the situation.

The number of UNHCR offices is 120. The number of UNHCR offices is 120.



**Historic March**

A Star Commentary

Another day of protest and general strike across the country. With the increasing tempo of the non-violent, civil disobedience movement, state repression reached new heights. Over 100 people were killed by troops across Bangladesh on March 4.

By now Dhaka wore a militant look. Street barricades were put up wherever there were streets to be barricaded; during hartal hours the roads

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**New Zealand match on**

SYDNEY, Mar 3: New Zealand scored an emphatic 48-run win over Zimbabwe in Napier, New Zealand, on Tuesday to take a stronghold at the top of the World Cup

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## 'Punishment by Bangabandhu makes Azam Pak citizen'

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief and opposition leader in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday demanded expulsion of Golam Azam saying that he was a Pakistani citizen and living illegally in this country.

She was addressing a big rally in Baitul Mukarram premises which was organised by 'National Coordinating Committee for Implementation of the Spirit of Independence War and Annihilation of Killers and Collaborators of 1971' in support of the planned trial of Golam Azam on March 26 in 'peoples' court' at the Suhrawardy Uddyan.

Presided over by the convener of the committee Jahanara Imam, the rally was addressed, among others, by Begum Sufia Kamal, Nurul Islam Nahid, Hasanul Huq Inu, Shah Attul Islam, Golam Kuddus, Shami Kaiser, Abdul Aziz (Bir Pratik), Col.(Retd) Kazi Nuruzzaman and Kazi Aref Ahmed.

Sheikh Hasina said that if the collaborators of 1971 and the killers of 1975 were not tried or expelled, the rule of law would never be established in this country.

She said that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman punished and took steps against the leading collaborators. 'Because of that step, Golam Azam still remains a citizen of Pakistan,' she added.

Some of the 'war criminals' were also kept in jail for trial, but after Mujib's killing the then government started rehabilitating the killers of Mujib as well as the collaborators of Pakistani Army, she alleged. She also complained that the process of rehabilitation was still on.

Those who have no faith in country's independence must be expelled from this country, she resorted.

Sheikh Hasina expressed her gratitude to the coordinating committee members for making a single platform of pro-independence forces and urged the people to be present at Suhrawardy Uddyan on March 26 during Golam Azam's trial.

As many as 10 political alliances, parties and pro-liberation groups and 14 students' organisation supported the rally and trial of Golam Azam in 'peoples' court.

Golam Azam was accused of collaborating with the Pakistani occupation forces in 1971 and was stripped of citizenship after Liberation.

He came to Bangladesh 1978 to see his ailing mother and afterwards involved himself with Jamaat politics. Now he heads Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh.

Nurul Islam Nahid said that Home Minister told Parliament that Golam Azam was not a citizen

of this country but the government had not yet taken any step in this regard.

Rather the government gave sanctuary to the anti-Liberation forces, he alleged.

Hasanul Huq Inu said that if the government did not take step against Golam Azam immediately, the 'anti-razakar movement' might turn into an anti-government movement.

He said that this government helped the fundamentalist forces more than any other previous government.

Begum Sufia Kamal said that patriotic people shed blood in 1971 to get rid of the 'razakers' but those razakers were now being rehabilitated in every strata of the society.

Abdul Aziz urged the people to get ready for 'another war of independence.'

Col.(Retd) Kazi Nuruzzaman said that the defeated force of 1971 was now forming armed groups in different areas of the country but the government remained mum about all their activities.

A seven-point resolution was adopted in the rally with which several thousand participants expressed their solidarity raising their hands.

The demands of the resolution include trial of other collaborators step by step after Golam Azam, government's intervention to free Chittagong

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## We became independent not to be a market for others: PM

NARAYANGANJ, Mar 3:

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said, 'we must remember that we had become independent not to be market for others,' reports BSS.

She was inaugurating here today the launching ceremony of Ro-Ro roll-off-roll-on ferry 'Bir Shrestha Jahangir,' constructed locally by the dockyard and Engineering Works Limited, an enterprise of Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC).

The Prime Minister described the launching of the ferry as the first step towards economic progress and prosperity.

The ferry was built with financial assistance from the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) for the fleet of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC).

Speaking on the occasion, Begum Zia called for utilising local expertise and materials for construction purposes without depending on imports.

'By building this ferry locally we have proved once again that we are capable of doing things well,' she said adding 'all we need is encouragement, a sense of direction and initiatives.'

The function was also addressed by the Prime Minister. See Page 12 Col 2

## 252 m cft of Sundarbans wood vanishes in 24 years

By Staff Correspondent

Forest and Environment Minister Abdullah al-Noman Tuesday expressed grave concern over the alarming deforestation rate and continued degradation of the environment in the country.

Painting a grim picture of the deforestation, he said that a total of 391.34 million cubic feet of the growing stock of wood in the Sundarbans and in the Chittagong Hill Tracts was cut down during the last 24 years.

The Minister was inaugurating a seminar on 'Environment and Development' at the Planning and Development Academy auditorium in Dhaka Saturday.

Organised by the Society for International Development (SID) - Bangladesh Chapter, the inaugural function was also addressed by the Canadian High Commissioner in Dhaka Emile Gauvreau, SID-Bangladesh President ATM Shamsul Haque, Secretary General of

the Organisation Fatema Zohora and seminar secretary Nilufar Banu.

Noman who attended the function as chief guest, said that various components of the environment should be exploited in a balanced manner. 'Over exploitation of any one of the components may disturb the ecosystem to an irreversible degree,' he added.

He said that an estimated 989,000 hectares of land in the country have been de-

graded of which one lakh and 28 thousand hectares had reportedly been protected and rehabilitated until 1985.

He said that all the major forests in the country have fallen prey to acute deforestation. Quoting data, Noman said that the growing stock in the world's biggest mangrove ecosystem, the Sundarbans, was reduced to 465.66 million cubic feet in 1984 from 717 million cubic feet in 1960.

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বাংলাদেশ চিনি ও খাদ্যাশিল্প করপোরেশন  
আদমজী কোর্ট, ১১৫-১২০, মতিঝিল বা/এ  
ঢাকা-১০০০

## পবিত্র রমযান উপলক্ষে পোষ্টম্যান সয়াবিন এর খুচরা বিক্রয় মূল্য

পবিত্র রমযান উপলক্ষে বাংলাদেশ চিনি ও খাদ্যাশিল্প করপোরেশনের আওতাধীন ঢাকা ডেজিটেবল অয়েল ইন্ডাস্ট্রিজ লি: এর উৎপাদিত পোষ্টম্যান সয়াবিন তেল এর খুচরা বিক্রয় মূল্য নিম্নরূপ ধার্য করা হল :-

- ১। প্রতি কেজি (লুজ) ৩৫.৭৫টাকা।
- ২। চার লিটার (কনটইনারসহ) ১৫০.০০টাকা।

সম্মানিত গ্রাহক/কার্ড হোল্ডারদের জ্ঞাতার্থে জানান যাচ্ছে যে আমাদের ডিলার ও ন্যায্য মূল্যের দোকান সমূহে ঢাকা ডেজিটেবল অয়েল ইন্ডাস্ট্রিজ এর উৎপাদিত পোষ্টম্যান সয়াবিন তেল এর পর্যাপ্ত সরবরাহ রয়েছে।

ঢাকা ডেজিটেবল অয়েল ইন্ডাস্ট্রিজ এর ডিলার ও ন্যায্য মূল্যের দোকান মালিকদের জানান যাচ্ছে যে তাঁরা যেন সম্মানিত গ্রাহক/কার্ড হোল্ডারদের সুবিধার্থে আমাদের প্রতিষ্ঠানের ডিলারশিপ সাইনবোর্ড ও কাপড়ে লেখা ডিলারশিপ ব্যানার আকর্ষণীয়ভাবে প্রদর্শন করেন এবং অত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লেখিত নির্ধারিত মূল্যে সয়াবিন তেল বিক্রয় করেন।

কোন ডিলার বা ন্যায্য মূল্যের দোকান মালিক নির্ধারিত মূল্য অপেক্ষা বেশী দাম চাইলে বা কোন অজুহাতে সরবরাহ করতে না চাইলে উপযুক্ত ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণের জন্য সম্মানিত গ্রাহক/কার্ড হোল্ডারদের নিম্নোক্ত টেলিফোনে অবহিত করতে অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে ৪-০৬৭১/৭৪৭২৮, ২৪০৪১২