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# The Daily Star

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Diplomatic ties with Kyrgystan

**MOSCOW, Mar 5** Bangladesh and Kyrgystan signed a protocol on Tuesday at Bishkek establishing diplomatic and consular relations between the two countries. An agreement on commercial and economic cooperation between the two countries was also signed on the same day, reports ISS.

### Prices of beef, mutton re-fixed

The Dhaka City Corporation Thursday at a meeting re-fixed the maximum prices of beef and mutton at Taka 55 and 85 respectively for the holy month of Ramzan and called upon the meat sellers to maintain the new price. The meeting decided to set up a control room at the City Corporation central office to oversee the prices of essentials.

### Slum dwellers call for hartal in Ctg

**CHITTAGONG, Mar 5** Slum dwellers here today called for a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the port city on April 20 and announced an action plan as part of agitation demanding halt to their eviction. It includes protest rally at the Shaheed Minar on April 15, siege on the city on May 5 and hunger strike-unto-death on May 15, reports UNB.

### Sehri transmission

Radio Bangladesh has decided to run a Sehri transmission as usual during the holy month of Ramzan commencing from 3:45 am till the Azan of Fajar Prayer. This programme will continue till 29th Ramzan and will be simultaneously broadcast by all the regional stations of Radio Bangladesh, reports ISS.

### 25 injured in JCD-BCL clash

**SIRAJGANJ, Mar 5** Twenty-five people were injured, four seriously, in a clash between activists of Jalyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and pro-Awami League Chhatra League at a college in Raiganj upazila of the district today.

## Anvar hands over Tk 25m cheque to Khaleda

# Massive world aid for refugees needed: PM

Bangladesh Thursday received Tk 25 million from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to defray immediate expenditure of the Myanmar refugees, reports UNB.

A cheque for the amount was handed over to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia by visiting UNHCR Director for Asia and Oceania Jamshed Anvar when he called on her here Thursday afternoon.

The amount is part of 2.7 million US dollars released

from the emergency fund of the High Commissioner, Sadako Ogata, to meet the immediate needs of the refugees.

The Prime Minister told the UNHCR official that the huge influx of Myanmar refugees had created serious problems for Bangladesh and it should be resolved before the onset of the monsoon which is likely to aggravate the situation.

BSS adds: Begum Zia also underlined the need for mas-

sive international assistance to provide adequate relief to the huge number of refugees.

UNB picks up: Begum Zia mentioned the plight of the Rohingya Muslim refugees and appreciated the prompt response of the UNHCR in tackling the situation, Bangladesh is doing its best for the refugees out of its limited resources, she added.

She said her government was trying to solve the problem bilaterally and in a peaceful manner and Foreign

Minister had visited Myanmar to settle the issue amicably.

Begum Zia thanked the UN High Commissioner for Refugees for writing to the Myanmar Foreign Minister to settle the issue on an urgent basis.

She recalled that in 1978-79 Bangladesh faced a similar problem which was resolved bilaterally with the support of the UNHCR.

The Prime Minister invited Sadako Ogata to visit

## AL suspends Montu, raps Kamal

By Nurul Kabir

Awami League (AL) Central Working Committee has resolved to suspend the party membership of Mostafa Mohsin Montu, General Secretary of the party's Dhaka District unit, and issued a show cause notice asking him why he should not be expelled from the party.

The Working Committee meeting, according to sources, has also verbally asked Dr Kamal Hossain not to involve himself 'organisationally' with democratic forum. The AL Working Committee arrived at

the decision on Montu's suspension yesterday at 3 am at the Mintu Road residence of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament. The meeting, however, began on Wednesday morning at the central office of the party.

The punitive measures against Montu came out against the backdrop of his alleged involvement in the killing of AL's student wing leader Manruzzaman Badal on January 9 this year.

Earlier, AL district level



## Historic March

A Star Commentary

A single decision by General Yahya Khan on March 6, 1971 exemplified his whole approach to the issue of demands for political rights by the Bengalee people.

Yahya appointed Lt. Gen. Tikka Khan, known as the Butcher of Baluchistan for his barbarous suppression of the Baluchi people's struggle for freedom in 1965, as governor and martial law administrator of East Pakistan.

As far as Yahya was concerned, not even the bloodbath unleashed by the army between March 1 and 5 was enough.

In the evening, Yahya spoke on the radio.

In the speech, Yahya tried

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Director of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Jamshed Anvar called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office Thursday. — PID photo

## Filming PM hampered as DFP runs out of stock

Directorate of Films and Publications (DFP) failed to cover all functions of the Prime Minister for the last two days due to shortage of raw films, reports UNB.

Sources said the problem in the DFP, the only organisation to produce national news reels, started with the audit of films used for the Prime Minister's coverage.

The audit team comprising of a director, two deputy directors, an assistant film producer, an assistant director and a senior cameraman took account of expenditure of films from July 91 to October 91.

Confidential report of their findings said 103 news shots out of total 149 were wastage, but did not state any reason.

The shortage of films arose after suppliers reportedly re-

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## Donors willing to finance flood plan

Staff Correspondent

Donors have agreed to extend necessary financial support in implementing the Flood Action Plan (FAP).

This was disclosed yesterday by Christopher Willoughby, Resident Mission Chief of the World Bank.

Briefing newsmen on the outcome of the five-day meet on the FAP, Willoughby said the donors had appreciated the plan and committed assistance to support the 150 million dollar programme.

Earlier, yesterday morning the donors' group known as the Local Consultative Group (LCG) had a closed door meeting to review the outcome of the meeting and discuss its role in assistance.

The five-year FAP (1990-

95) was developed by the World Bank following a request from the government. The devastating floods of 1987 and 1988 prompted the government to seek international help and the issue was taken to the G-7 summit in Paris.

Since its inception the FAP has come under criticisms from different lobby groups, especially environmentalists on the plea that proposed embankments under the plan would affect the environment by displacing thousands of people.

Willoughby referring to the environmental aspects stressed on three issues of environmental concern. These are, according to him, com-

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## Stop exodus, UNHCR to Myanmar

Human Rights Commission (HRC) has called upon the Myanmar government to stop exodus of refugees to Bangladesh and create conditions to facilitate their early repatriation, reports UNB.

The Geneva-based Commission unanimously adopted a resolution at its current session on Wednesday, expressing grave concern over the continuing exodus of the Myanmar refugees to neighbouring countries in recent months.

The resolution introduced by France mentioned that almost 80,000 Myanmar Muslim refugees had entered Bangladesh, according to a message received here Thursday.

Out of the total 53 members of the Commission, delegations from 31 countries, including India and Senegal, cospon-

sored the resolution which was adopted by consensus.

Prior to the adoption of the resolution, the representative of Japan supported the decision of the Commission to discuss human rights situation in Myanmar.

The Bangladesh delegation made a factual statement on the refugee situation at the 48th session of the HRC currently being held in Geneva.

The Human Rights Commission is the highest international forum entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring global human rights situation.

Meanwhile, BSS says: UNHCR will issue an international appeal shortly for the alleviation of the sufferings of the Rohingya Muslims taking shelter in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has said that the

number of refugees from Myanmar may reach two lakhs by the end of April, this year, if the exodus continues unabated.

Addressing the 48th session of the Human Rights Commission in Geneva on Tuesday, the Bangladesh Representative said there had been a steady flow of Myanmar refugees and the problem had now assumed alarming proportions.

"At present 1000 to 2000 refugees from Myanmar are coming into Bangladesh every day" he said adding that the number could even surpass two lakhs by the end of April.

In another development: Chairman, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BRCS) called for coordinated efforts to tackle the shelter and sanitation problems of Myanmar.

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## BCL (S-A) factions engage in shootout on DU campus

By DU Correspondent

Gunshots, chased by rival groups of Chhatra League (S-A) activists created panic on Dhaka University campus on Thursday.

The clash ensued when a group of armed youngsters, allegedly ousted activists of Chhatra League, came at the TSC and opened fire from behind the DU Snacks (DUS).

The pro-Awami League BCL (S-A) activists countered the other group from Shamsur Nahar Hall areas, eye witnesses said.

The attackers were reportedly the supporters of the faction of BCL known as the Third World.

According to witnesses the

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## Ramzan begins tomorrow

Moon was not sighted anywhere in Bangladesh Thursday and the holy month of Ramzan will begin on Saturday (March 7). The National Moon Sighting Committee announced in Dhaka last night, reports BSS.

The committee, which met at the conference room of the Islamic Foundation last evening, announced the decision after no dependable reports about moon sighting were available from any part of the country. The meeting was presided over by Moulana Aminul Islam, a member of the committee.

The committee said that no reports were available from any dependable source about the moon sighting.

## UNHCR wants large piece of land to camp Rohingyas

Star Report

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on Thursday requested the government to provide a large piece of land to set up a big camp to accommodate the growing number of Rohingya refugees.

Jamshed Anvar, the visiting Regional Director of the UNHCR, conveyed the request to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia when he called on her in the afternoon.

According to UNHCR sources, the request was made

for land further north where the topography is flatter and much suited for the setting up of bigger camps.

Earlier, the UNHCR technical assessment team reported that only the hilly land areas were potential camp sites, as the low-lying paddy fields were too wet placing severe constraints on the size of future camps.

According to Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) working in the Cox's Bazar region, the crucial issue in the international relief efforts at the moment is the availability of land to set up large camps. They pointed out that the land parcels presently available are limited in size, enabling the operation of small camps only.

A source quoted Jamshed Anvar, the Director of the UNHCR's Asia and Oceania Bureau, as saying that his mission's focal points was to ask the government for additional land.

NGO sources also added that small camps are not only cost-prohibitive but they are also difficult to keep under security control. Noting that is still unclear how the government will react to such a request for land in the interior of the country, they said, much of the land in the area is private property and the UNHCR demand may send prices soaring and may also displace landless farmers.

## Four hurt in clash with extortionists

By Staff Correspondent

At least four persons were injured when extortionists exploded crackers and fired gun shots at Mirpur and Malibang areas in the city Thursday evening.

A group of alleged extortionists attacked on a Construction Farm at Mirpur Section-12 at about 7 pm last night as its owner, earlier, declined to give them tolls.

The attackers fired gun shots and exploded crackers leaving three people injured there. Two of the injured sustained bullet injuries while the

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## England, South Africa win big

**SYDNEY, Mar 5** Veteran allrounder Ian Botham lifted England to a memorable eight-wicket win over arch-rival Australia in the World Cup on Thursday night and left the defending champions on the brink of elimination from the tournament, reports AP.

Botham had career-best limited-overs figures of four for 31 as England dismissed Australia for 171. He then scored an aggressive half-century.

The victory lifted England to seven points from its opening four games of the tournament and leaves it in second spot behind New Zealand and virtually certain of a semifinal spot.

Australia suffered its third defeat in four matches and probably need to win all four of their remaining matches to qualify for the semis.

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## Clients' outburst over bank employees' whims

By Staff Correspondent

Angry clients smashed window panes of a number of cash counters of the Bangladesh Bank head office Thursday when a section of employees suspended work demanding time scale.

Witnesses said that the clients got angry when the Bank employees suddenly suspended their work in support of their demands at about 9-30 am Thursday.

However, the situation came under control when the higher authorities intervened. None was injured in the incident.

## Jam Sadiq Ali dead

**KARACHI, Mar 5** Jam Sadiq Ali, the flamboyant chief minister of Pakistan's southern Sindh province and arch-enemy of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, died early Thursday. He was 75, reports AP.

Sadiq Ali died at his home in Karachi of cirrhosis of the liver. The Sindh administration declared three days of mourning, closing government offices and schools.

The ailing chief minister had been slipping in and out of a coma for most of the past month since he collapsed Feb 11 during his daughter's wedding ceremony.

## Smuggled Indian sugar leaves home stocks unsold

By Asiuzzaman

Several thousand tons of sugar remain unsold from the previous year in the 16 sugar mills of the country as another crushing season comes to an end this month.

Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation (BSFIC) officials said on Thursday that 7,900 tons of sugar from the last season (1990-91) are stocked in the godowns of the Corporation.

The target of the current season 91991-92 is 2,08,000 tons, the source added.

production of 2,46,492 tons of sugar but about 8,000 tons still remain unsold although our national annual requirement is 3,50,000 tons," an official of BSFIC said adding "This shows how much smuggled Indian sugar has flooded the market."

Last year the production target was 1,99,000 tons which was exceeded by 47,492 tons because of bumper production of sugarcane and dull market of gur (molasses), the source added.

Indian sugar is being sold in most of the border districts

at Taka 20 to Taka 22 per kg while our selling mill rate is Taka 25," the source said adding that "to compete with smuggled sugar, the authorities had to re-fix sugar price from Taka 27.74 to Taka 25 in March last year.

Last year the corporation incurred a loss of about Taka five crore because of these problems, the source maintained.

The source said that this year the target may not be achieved as hundreds of hand and power crushers are being

operated in mill zones for gur production.

This year the prices of gur is higher than last year's. The Molasses Control Ordinance 1956" was slackened in 1984 in mills areas which hampered adequate supply of sugarcane in the mills, the source said.

It was imposed later in 1986 but only on the power crushers and the law is still gravely violated in all the areas.

The sugarcane purchasing rate is now Taka 40 per maund, also higher in comparison with that in India, the

source said adding "the Indian sugar industry is enjoying many government facilities including subsidy." The industry there is also exempted from production duties, he added.

The BSFIC has 16 sugar mills with 26,000 workers and employees (during season) and 600 officers and employees in Dhaka office. The mills are: Panchagar Sugar Mills, Thakurgaon Sugar Mills, Sirajganj Sugar Mills at Dinajpur, Shampur Sugar Mills at Rangpur, Rangpur Sugar Mills at Gaibandha, Joypurhat Sugar

Mills, Natore and Uttarabanga Sugar Mills at Natore, Rajshahi Sugar Mills, Kushtia and Habiganj Sugar Mills, Carew & Company at Chuadanga, Faridpur Sugar Mills, Zeal Bangla Sugar Mills at Jamalpur, Kalachackra Sugar Mills at Kishoreganj and Deshbandhu Sugar Mills at Narshingdi.

Each mill requires 20,000 tons of sugarcane daily on an average during the crushing season, the source said adding that 2.5 lakh acres of land are now under sugarcane farming.

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