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## NEWS BRIEFS

### ECNEC okays five projects

Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) Wednesday approved five projects involving a total outlay of Tk 203 crore with a foreign currency component of Tk 158.38 crore. Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman chaired the ECNEC meeting and approved the projects, reports UNI.

### Japanese aid for Rohingyas

Japan has decided to release 135 million in Japanese yen (Approx. one million US dollars) to UNHCR as emergency assistance to the Burmese refugees sheltered in Bangladesh, reports UNI.

### Orphans on hunger strike

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 18: Inmates of Government Shishu Sadan (Orphanage) began an indefinite hunger strike today demanding adequate food, medicine and sanitation facilities. About 200 children joined the strike which started at 6 pm, orphanage sources said, reports UNI.

### Heroin recovered: Four arrested

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Detective Branch Wednesday recovered 150 grams of heroin from Kutub Khan area of Demra and arrested four persons in this connection, a DMP press release said, reports BSS.

### Schri and Ifar timings

March 13	19	Schri	Ifar
14	20	4:43am	6:16pm

## Police raid RU halls : 59 held

# GCO, Shibir call hartal: BIT closed

RAJSHAHI, Mar 18: The Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya today called for a half-day hartal in the city tomorrow (Thursday) to protest the death of one of its leaders in Tuesday's police firing at the Rajshahi University campus. The Islami Chhatra Shibir has also called a half-day hartal

From Our Correspondent on the same day. According to Boalta thana, police raided several residential halls on campus early today and arrested 59 persons from the area. Police, however, refused to divulge the identities of those arrested. Yasser Arafat alias Pitu, a leader of the JSD-backed

Chhatra League (N-S) and an activist of the GCO, was killed and over 80 others were injured as activists of the GCO and Islami Chhatra Shibir clashed and police opened fire in the RU campus Tuesday afternoon. Pitu's body was sent to his Rangpur home today. See Page 12 Col 4



Dhaka University Arts Building premises during yesterday's strike called to protest the killing of Moin Hossain Raju Friday. —Star photo

## GCO observes strike to protest RU killing

By DU Correspondent The student strike called by the Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) protesting the killing of Yasser Arafat Pitu at Rajshahi University was observed at all the educational institutions, in the city Wednesday. No classes were held at Dhaka University and other educational institutions during the strike and the offices were also closed. Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya held a rally in front of the National Press Club yesterday at 11 am protesting the in-

## Khaleda-Bush talks today

WASHINGTON, Mar 18: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia arrived here today for a five-day visit to the United States at the invitation of President George Bush, reports BSS. Begum Zia was greeted at the Dallas Airport by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Teresa Scheffer. Bangladesh ambassador to Washington Abul Ahsan, local BNP leaders and Bangladeshi community living in Washington were also present at the airport to receive her. President Bush will welcome her at the White House on March 19 in accordance with the traditional protocol and hold an hour-long discussion on various matters relating to bilateral regional and international issues. The influx of thousands of Myanmar refugees to Bangladesh will figure in prominently during their talks. This is the first visit by Begum Zia to the US since becoming the Prime Minister of Bangladesh last year. Begum Zia was the special guest in one of the breakfast meetings of a group of Senators here today at the US Capitol Hill. On her arrival at the imposing Capital Hill, Begum Zia was received by Senator Durend Burger. Sixteen senators were present at the meeting. The chairman of the group, Senator Stevens of Alaska welcomed the Prime Minister at the meeting. Begum Zia was introduced to the members present as the head of the democratically elected government of Bangladesh. She expressed their desire to work for strengthening bilateral relations between Bangladesh and the USA. The Prime Minister also attended a meeting with the

members of Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives at the Capitol Hill. Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Dante Fascell welcomed Begum Zia at the meeting. They exchanged views with the Prime Minister on a wide range of issues, which are of importance to the congress. Meanwhile, Congress woman Susan Molinari called on Begum Zia at her hotel suite today and discussed matters of mutual interest. Ms Molinari, elected from one of the New York constituencies, said she and her colleagues in the Congress have been working together to bring about closer relationship between the two countries. She said she was keen to put in her efforts so that Bangladesh receive greater international help and cooperation. Begum Zia thanked the Congress representative for her interest in Bangladesh. She explained various steps taken up by her (Khaleda's) government to Ms Molinari particularly for the uplift of women. She hoped that the existing relations between the two countries would further expand. Another report says, Edward Turner, the founder and owner of Cable News Network (CNN) and his wife famous film actress Jane Fonda made a courtesy call on Begum Zia at her hotel suite here today. Turner said that there was a common complaint that Third World countries could not project their socio-economic and political issues in the international media because of the domination of Western coun-



## Pakistan reach World Cup semis

SYDNEY, Mar 18: Thirty-six matches and nearly a month after it started, cricket's World Cup has been paried to four teams, reports AP.

The cuts were not kind for some teams Wednesday. Defending champions Australia, fighting to regain credibility after a disastrous start to the tournament, were out of the playoff picture before they started play Wednesday against the West Indies.

Australia's archrivals, New Zealand, who had a perfect 7-0 record before Wednesday, were easy losers to Pakistan. The victory helped Pakistan advance to the semifinals, knocking out Australia in the process.

That set off a trans-Tasman Sea war of words, with accusations that New Zealand, knowing they could play their semifinal in Auckland if Australia were out of the picture, may not have tried as hard as they could.

If it had come to an Australia-New Zealand semifinal, the match would have been played in Sydney. See Page 12 Col 1

## Home Minister asks organisers to leave it to Govt

# 'Trial' body bent on trying Azam in 'public court'

The organisers of the 'public trial' of Golam Azam are determined to go ahead with their March 26 programme, a press conference was told yesterday. Leaders of the National Coordination Committee for Implementation of the Spirit of Liberation War and Annihilation of the Collaborators and Killers of 1971 have warned that the Government will be responsible for any situation arising out of the move taken by the Government to bar the planned trial. The press conference was held in the afternoon at the Taher Auditorium of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal office at Gulistan, hours after a meeting between Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury and the

Committee leaders at the Secretariat. A total of 12 representatives from the 'trial committee' attended the nearly two-and-a-half-hour meeting with the Home Minister. State minister for Law Aminul Huq, and senior officials of the Home Ministry were also present. The 12 organizers who attended the meeting are: Convener of the national coordination committee, Jahanara Imam, Member-Secretary Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Abdul Razzak MP, Kazi Aref Ahmed, Prof Abdul Ahad, Syed Hasan Imam, Advocate Gaztuz Huq, Lt Col (ret'd) Abu Osman Chowdhury, Lt Col (ret'd) Kazi Nuruzzaman, Asim Kumar Uki, Shafi Ahmed and Syed Jahangir. Justifying the planned trial

initiated by the Committee, Jahanara Imam told the press conference: "So far the trial of Golam Azam could not be held under the law of the land. The previous governments also failed to try him. We believe the trial is now possible because of the democratic atmosphere prevailing in the country." She revealed that the Minister had asked the organisers of the trial to abandon their programme and leave it to the Government for a decision. In response, the Committee members told the Minister continue with the trial excluding the charge of violation of the Article 38 of the Constitution, Imam said. The Article in the See Page 12 Col 5

## Hasina demands judicial probe into Rajshahi incident

By Staff Correspondent Awami league chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina Wednesday condemned the killing of Yasser Arafat Pitu, a student of the Rajshahi University and a leader of the Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) by police and Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) activists. She also demanded judicial enquiry into the incident and punishment to the culprits. In a statement she said that police and armed Shibir activists attacked the supporters of the GCO when they formed a human chain in protest against the 'false' cases lodged by the ICS against 60 of their leaders. Pitu was killed on Rajshahi University campus Tuesday when police opened fire and the ICS simultaneously attacked a procession of the See Page 12 Col 4

## Akram Point seen suitable for deep draught anchorage

From Munir U Ahmed KHULNA, Mar 18: Akram Point, 35 miles inside the Passur Channel from the Outer Harbour is the most suitable site for establishment of a deep draught anchorage for the country, according to experts. Ships over tens of thousands tonnage cannot enter the Karnaphuli river and have to wait at the Outer Anchorage far out into the Bay for lighterage. This is not the case with the Akram point which can not only take in ships up to 50,000 ton displacement but also possibly, if appropriately developed, can berth them making lighterage unnecessary, saving huge sums of money. According to experts, Akram point has some advantages for deep draught anchor-

age: 1) Swath of No-land and Swath of No-Ground — two deep water areas are close to the point; 2) mangrove forests at the point prevent tidal surge; 3) deep forest along the point can provide safe anchorage of vessels and prevent bank erosion. 4) Three-fourths of the country is connected by river with the point. There has been suggestions for establishment of a deep-draught anchorage facility near Kutubdia but experts have been maintaining that such a port near Chittagong was not feasible in view of the high rate of accretion of land along the coastal belt of Chittagong. Experts favour establishment of deep draught port at Akram Point because the See Page 12 Col 7

## Gunshots rock DU

By Staff Correspondent A report received late night Wednesday says that 17 rounds of gunshots were heard from the premises of Surja Sen Hall of the Dhaka University, campus sources said. The gunshots created panic in the nearby Sergeant Zahurul Haq Hall.

The residents of Zahurul Haq Hall responded by firing a couple of gunshots fearing an attack from the students of Surja Sen Hall. But there was no confrontation.

Resident students of both the Halls of Dhaka University were involved in armed conflict in recent days.

Meanwhile, police personnel were deployed between Haji Md Mohsin Hall and Sergeant Zahurul Haq Hall area.

## 126 lawyers say 'Public trial' recognised internationally

By Staff Correspondent A total of 126 lawyers of the Supreme Court Bar Association Wednesday dismissed an earlier contention by 72 lawyers that the concept of 'public trial' was "unconstitutional".

A joint statement of the 126 lawyers termed the contention by the 72 lawyers "expression of their anti-people character." A group of 72 lawyers, including the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association Dr. Rafiqur Rahman, in a statement on Monday termed the concept of public trial unconstitutional and contrary to the rule of law.

The 126 Supreme Court lawyers pointed out that the concept of public trial was an internationally recognised way of reflecting public opinion.

Those lawyers who made statements against the planned trial of Golam Azam were never heard to be eloquent against his role during the 1971 War of independence and his continued violation of the country's Constitution, the statement added.

The signatories to the statement included Barrister Shafique Ahmed, Barrister Shawkat Ali Khan, MA Wahab, Gaztuz Huq, AKM Shamsuddin Ahmed, Subrata Chowdhury, Joyntul Abedin and MA Tareq.

## De Klerk wins mandate for end to white rule

CAPE TOWN, Mar 18: South Africa's President Frederik De Klerk won an overwhelming mandate for reforms ending white minority rule today, according to the results of Tuesday's whites-only referendum, reports AFP. With just two results outstanding from the 15 regions, the largest district, Pretoria, gave him a 57.2 per cent majority in favour of continuing negotiations with black leaders on bringing South Africa's black majority to power. De Klerk had said he would resign and call elections if he lost the vote. Only one region — Pietersburg in the northern Transvaal — recorded a "no" majority with 56.8 per cent to 42.9 per cent of the 87,659 people opposed to the reforms. The leader of the "no" campaign in the referendum, Andries Treurnicht, quickly conceded defeat. Treurnicht, who heads the pro-apartheid Conservative Party (CP), said the "hysterical

claims of the possibility of sanctions or a bloodbath and the ghost of unemployment were clearly just too much for many voters." De Klerk's main negotiating partner, African National Congress (ANC) President Nelson Mandela, said he was "very happy indeed" at the "yes" result. "We are trying to normalise the political process in this country. A 'no' vote had the potential of destabilising that process. An overwhelming 'yes' vote means that process is now on track," Mandela told state television. The 287,720 "yes" votes in Pretoria took De Klerk over the 1.4 million mark he needed to be sure of an absolute majority of the 3.3 million electorate, given a turnout of 85 per cent. Turnout in Pretoria was 89.2 per cent, bringing the average turnout to 84 per cent. After 13 regions, De Klerk had 68.5 per cent of the vote, with 31.2 per cent for Andries Treurnicht's Conservative

Party and the "no" campaign, with 0.3 per cent spoil papers. De Klerk was due to address the nation before the presentation of the national budget, but the late results from Tuesday's referendum may force the President to delay his speech. While white South Africans awaited the results of a crucial referendum on the country's political reforms, police today reported that fresh violence in black townships had left 14 dead. The orgy of violence has claimed about 300 lives since February 20 when President Frederik De Klerk announced the whites-only plebiscite which was held Tuesday. Of the deaths reported Wednesday by police, six were related to attacks on black commuters in townships near here. Police said that the slashed bodies of two men were found next to the railway line in Soweto on Wednesday.

## Press Note 'Police fired shots in self defence'

A government press note last night said that the police had fired shots in Rajshahi Tuesday in self defence when the situation went out of control, reports BSS. Giving a background of the situation resulting in the death of one student, the Press Note said some supporters of the Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya proceeded in a bus at 10-45 am Tuesday to 'gherao' the office of the Rajshahi Deputy Commissioner, demanding withdrawal of cases against 60 students of the Rajshahi University and trial and ouster of Professor Golam Azam. The police obstructed them when they tried to move towards the court in the form of procession near the Sonali Bank at about 11-15 am, the Press Note said. It said the processionists had tried to move ahead, ignoring police objection and threw stones at the police, who broke up the procession by bursting tear-gas shells.

