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The Daily Star

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Supplement

The Daily Star publishes a 4-page Supplement on "US Business in Bangladesh" today. Price for this 16-page issue remains unchanged.

NEWS BRIEFS

Projanma '71 team meets Hasina

A 25-member delegation of Projanma-71 yesterday met the Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina and submitted a memorandum to her highlighting various problems facing them and programmes taken for national reconstruction upholding the spirit of Liberation War, reports BSS.

BNP emergency meet today

An emergency meeting of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will be held today (April 16) at 11 am at its central office, reports BSS.

US Ambassador holds reception

US Ambassador William B Milam held a reception Wednesday evening to celebrate the opening of "US Business in Bangladesh" trade show at the Baridhara embassy premise in Dhaka. Some members of the cabinet, representatives of business community, senior journalists and the elite of the city were among others present on the occasion, reports BSS.

'Delhi pact doesn't preclude Azam from facing trial'

AL abandoned trial of war criminals : Rafique

By Staff Correspondent

The general debate on Golam Azam's stay in Bangladesh and issues relating to the people's court continued for the third day in the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) yesterday.

The two-hour and twenty-minute discussion concentrated more on the legal aspects of the issue while the Treasury benches argued in favour of a legal settlement and the Opposition voiced political aspects.

From the MPs, Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar, Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia, Sudhangsu Sekhar Halder and Suranjit Sen Gupta participated in the discussion.

The Speaker, Shaikh Razzaque Ali, raised many questions for satisfaction of all concerned and for convenience in formulating a decision expected today.

Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia who initiated the deliberations on 'Golam Azam's stay in Bangladesh and people's court' at 08.05 last

night maintained that as a freedom fighter he wanted to try Golam Azam for his anti-people role during the country's War of Independence in 1971.

Barrister Rafique, however, argues that it was not possible to try Golam Azam as a war criminal under the International Crime Act 1973 unless it could be proved that he (Golam Azam), along with the Razakers, was an auxiliary force placed under the Pakistan armed forces indulged in conducting genocide during the Liberation War of the country in 1971.

Rafique said that an investigating cell was formed and a prosecutor was appointed by the state in 1973 under the International Crime Act to identify the war criminals.

The investigating cell identified 195 military personnel who committed war crime but they were sent back to Pakistan under the tripartite 'Delhi Agreement' signed by the Foreign Ministers of

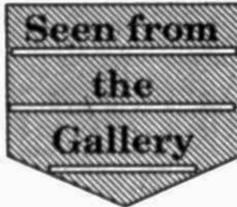
Bangladesh, India and Pakistan on April 9, 1974.

Rafique went on to say that the investigating cell was abolished and appointment of the prosecutor was cancelled after the 195 prisoners of war were allowed to return home which meant that the then government of Bangladesh did not have any intention to identify any people as war criminals.

The demand of trying of Golam Azam as a war criminal was therefore, Rafique asserted, did not justify the spirit of the abolition of the investigating cell by the AL investment in 1974.

'But even then as a freedom fighter I am in favour of trying Golam Azam for the crime he committed against humanity', Rafique said, adding, 'in that case we have to go by the law of the land that requires adequate evidences against Golam Azam.'

On the question of people's court Rafique said, there could be no trial at people's court in



By Mahfuz Ullah

It may well be called the proceedings of the proceedings. Probably, for the first time in its history the Jatiya Sangsad heard the most illuminating, the most enlightening and the most educating discussion on a national issue yesterday.

The issue was how to deal with Prof Golam Azam Those who took part in the discussion were all lawyers and it was also quite an interesting coincidence that both the

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Bodies on Indemnity, Anti-terrorism Bills granted 70-day extension

Two Parliamentary Committees on the draft Indemnity Ordinance 1975 (Repeal) Bill, 1991 and the draft Anti-Terrorism Bill, 1992 were allowed by the Jatiya Sangsad tonight to report back to the House by another 70 days, reports BSS.

Dhaka complies with UN move against Libya

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh is complying with the United Nations sanctions on Libya, a senior Foreign Ministry official said last night.

The UN sanction, ratified on March 31 by the Security Council, ordering stoppage of arms sales and air travel to the West African Muslim country took effect from 0401 GMT yesterday (Bangladesh time 10 am).

The UN sanctions also called upon countries to cut staff of Libyan missions. The Bangladesh Biman has already postponed its once-a-week flight to the Arab capital, Tripoli, said the official.

Monday's (April 13) Biman flight to Tripoli was cancelled as Libya itself cut links with the outside world Tuesday for 24 hours to mark the anniversary of the 1986 US air strike.

Biman's Managing Director said that Britain's Lloyd's, insurers of the airline's aircraft, has already withdrawn its insurance cover.

Asked if security of Bangladeshis in Libya was in any way threatened and whether the Government was considering repatriation of its nationals in view of a possible deterioration of the situation, the Foreign Office official said he did not foresee such a development.

'Most of them are working in Libya, remitting a good amount of money that contributes to our economy and they're working under the protection of the Libyan government', said the official requesting anonymity.

Asked what would be Bangladesh's role in this situation, he said 'we want a peaceful settlement through negotiations'.

'Libyan mission in Bangladesh is already moderately sized', the official told The Daily Star when asked if the Government had plans to ask Libya to reduce the strength of its Dhaka mission. (Details on Page 5)

BCL feud leaves two with tendons severed

Three activists of Chhatra League (H-A) were stabbed in an intraparty conflict on the Dhaka University campus yesterday, reports UNB.

Police and witnesses said tendons of two of the victims were slit after the stabbings in front of the Salmullah Hall gate at about 1 pm.

The injured were identified as Shamim Ahmed Kobid, a 1st year student of Bengali, Hafiz of 3rd year in Islamic History and Shahadat Hossain, final year, Management Department.

Shamim and Hafiz, residents of the hall, whose tendons were cut, were rushed to the

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Obhi in capital?

Obhi, known as a terror of Dhaka University, is reportedly back in the capital after a sojourn abroad, reports UNB.

'We have also heard that he is now here,' a police official told UNB tonight on condition that he not be named. 'We're after him.'

Golam Faruq Obhi, an accused in the Dr Milon Murder case, and two of his associates crossed border last year in the face of a police hunt for the killers of Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon. The case is now under trial.

Dr Milon was shot dead on November 27 in 1990 at the

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22 public trial body members get bail

By Staff Correspondent

A Metropolitan Magistrate Court Wednesday granted bail to 22 persons accused of involvement in the 'Gana Adalat' (people's court) that tried controversial Jamaat chief Golam Azam on March 26 for war crimes.

The court also exempted them from appearing personally during hearings of the case.

The 22 accused including Jahannara Imam Surrendered in the court of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate KH Abdullah who granted them

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Accountability at all levels a must : PM

SARDA (Rajshahi), Apr 15: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said here Wednesday that the country's police force would have to change their age old views and attitude under the changed democratic atmosphere to ensure accountability and transparency of the administration, reports BSS.

Begum Zia said the transparency and accountability

had to be ensured at all levels of administration as these were the safeguards of democracy.

The Prime Minister was addressing a function organised to mark the passing out of the trainee Assistant Police Supervisors of Sarda Police Academy.

Begum Zia said under the democratic social system the place of the police force was besides people. She said the success of the police depended on the confidence of people on them and the close relationship between the two.

Because of this she said, the present government wanted to build up community oriented police system in the country.

Reminding the police force of their great responsibility to maintain law and order the Prime Minister said continued peace and stability for devel-

See Page 12 Col 3

PM sees sunken Padma

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Wednesday walked down the bank of Padma at the frontier village of Kandirpara to see for herself the flow of the river, reports UNB.

She also visited Yusufpur Agricultural High School in the

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A colourful procession organised by the students of the Institute of Fine Arts was brought out in the city yesterday in celebration of Pahela Baishakh. —Star photo

'China won't intervene on behalf of Rohingyas'

BEIJING, Apr 15: China made clear today it would not intervene on behalf of tens of thousands of Muslims flooding into Bangladesh from Myanmar to escape persecution by the military government, reports Reuter.

Visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, in a meeting with his Chinese counterpart Qian Qichen on Monday appealed to Beijing to use its influence over Yangon's government to help the refugees.

According to an account of the meeting by the Iranian news agency IRNA, Velayati, called on China to urge Yangon to stop persecuting Muslims.

He urged Qian 'to exploit his good offices with the government in Myanmar to stop the banishment of Muslims in

See Page 12 Col 6

Rohingya issue nearing solution, says Ghali

An agreement has surfaced on the repatriation of Myanmar refugees from Bangladesh said a report submitted by a UN special envoy after his fact finding mission in the two countries, reports UNB.

UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali announced at a press conference in Geneva on Friday that 'an agreement in principle had been obtained on the repatriation of the refugees who had left Myanmar for Bangladesh'.

Ghali made the announcement after he had received the report from UN Under Secretary General Jan Eliasson who was sent to Bangladesh and Myanmar to make a on-the-spot appraisal on the situation.

The chief executive of the world body said he had just received the 'good news that his special representative who visited successfully Yangon and

Dhaka in the last few days', according to a delayed message received here today.

'We are on the point of resolving the problem of some 200,000 Myanmar refugees in Bangladesh', said the UN Secretary General.

Eliasson, during his stay in Dhaka, had stressed the need for 'safe and voluntary repatriation of the refugees' to find a durable solution of the problem.

'The solution lies only in the return of all refugees to their homes' the UN official asserted.

Myanmar Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw is due to undertake a 6-day visit to Bangladesh from April 23 in a bid to resolve the problem through bilateral discussion.

More than 200,000 Rohingya Muslims have streamed into Bangladesh from

See Page 12 Col 6

Pahela Baishakh celebrated

Musical soiree, cultural function, discussion, handicraft exhibition and fair marked the celebration of Pahela Baishakh, the first day of the Bengali new year 1399, all over the country Tuesday, reports BSS.

The day was declared a public holiday.

In Dhaka city, a large number of socio-cultural organisations had chalked out elaborate programmes in celebration of the day. The programmes included Baishakhi Mela, book fair, Nakshi Kantha exhibition, folk songs, and other events that portrayed the life and culture of the people of this country.

A week-long Baishakhi mela inaugurated by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at Dhanmondi Club ground Tuesday, musical programme organised by Chhayana, a leading cultural organisation of the country at Ramna Park, See Page 12 Col 4

Another 4500 Rohingyas arrive

By Staff Correspondent

Another 4,550 Rohingya Muslims have arrived in Teknaf swelling to 2,07,025 the number of Myanmar refugees fleeing into Bangladesh to escape a military crackdown.

The fresh arrivals have been registered on Monday and Tuesday at the Cox's Bazar office of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, an official reached by telephone said.

Quoting government records maintained since January the official said 285 refugees, most of them children, have died of diseases.

Najibullah goes into hiding? Largest Afghan air base falls to Mujahideen

KABUL, Apr 15: Hardline Muslim guerrillas took control of the country's largest military base Wednesday, creating doubts about the future of a UN-sponsored plan to end the 13-year-old civil war, reports AP.

With reports of fighting around Kabul, the guerrillas urged troops loyal to the Communist-style government of President Najibullah to accept general amnesty and surrender before it's too late.

The Russian Embassy ordered the evacuation of half of the 40-member staff, citing security concerns and fears its employees might taken hostage in retaliation for the 1979 invasion and nine-year occupation by the Soviet Red Army.

In Pakistan, the staging arena for the Afghan resistance, the government called an emergency meeting Wednesday night of the main guerrilla leaders in what was

described as ahead-bashing session' to dispel any ideas of destabilizing the Kabul government.

Moderate rebel commanders, meanwhile, scrambled to try to prevent the more radical fighters from attempting to make deals with disaffected troops in other areas of the country.

Najibullah's government made no comment about fall of Bagram Air Force Base to

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