

# Bangladeshi students face hardship in CIS

By Sohel Manzur

About 1000 Bangladeshi students studying in former Soviet Union on Soviet government scholarship are facing acute economic hardship due to inadequate amount of grants vis-a-vis the unprecedented rise in the cost of living, according to Foreign Office sources.

A large number of students studying on scholarships from other sponsors and on self-financing basis in the republics of the newly formed Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are facing the same fate, sources close to the students say. The number of such students, however, could not be ascertained as the number was not available with any concerned department of the Bangladesh government. According to sources, the situation is critical even though the amount of scholarships from the former Soviet government has increased about three to four times. The amount of scholarships from other sources, however, increased a little.

All the republics of CIS are still continuing to provide the grants committed by the former Soviet Union, a source says, adding that all the republics other than Russia are unwilling to continue it for long due to changed economic condition.

These states have already communicated their unwillingness to the foreign students and the Foreign Offices of the concerned countries, the source adds.

The authorities of the CIS

are now offering partial compensation to the Bangladeshi students instead of scholarships.

About 80 students go every year to the former Soviet Union on scholarship and each of them get an amount of 120 roubles per month as scholarship from the Soviet government. The amount was increased to 350 to 450 roubles per month in the context of the rise in the cost of living.

The scholarships from other sources were increased from 100 roubles, to only 130 and 160 roubles.

The majority of the Bangladeshi students are studying in Russia and others, in Ukraine. Most of them are studying Engineering, Medicine, Computer Science and Agriculture.

According to close relatives of the students, studying in the newly independent Soviet republics, the prices of food have increased about ten times compared to the previous prices. There is also an acute shortage of other essential commodities, in the market, they added.

The Bangladeshi students have been asked by the authorities to bring in dollars in cash through unofficial channels from Bangladesh to face the price hike.

There is an increasingly number of Bangladeshi students who are going to the republics on their own with the intention of migrating to Western Europe and the United States of America.



Bodies of some of the victims of Muktagachha accident.—Star photo by Ataul Karim Khokon.

## 25 killed

From Page 1 Col 7

identified as Amroon (70), Selma (6), Monowara (10), Kabu Sheikh (50), Juddis (30), Mamata (12), and Abdul Gafur (60). Identity of the rest could not be ascertained.

The injured were released after being given first aid at the MMCH.

Deputy Minister for Health and Family Welfare Sirajul Haq visited the spot on his way back to Dhaka from Jamalpur.

Parliament member from Madaraganj area Mirza Azam in a statement condoled the death of 25 people in the accident and expressed sympathy to the members of the bereaved families.

A pall of gloom descended on Jamalpur town as the district administration announced the news of the fatal accident at noon. It asked relatives of the victims to collect their bodies from MMC Hospital.

## Magura

In another mishap, at least 20 passengers were injured when a Dhaka-bound bus fell into a ditch after it was hit by a speeding Magura-Kamarkhali road on Friday night.

Eight of the injured were admitted to the Magura Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

The critically injured were identified as Nirmal Chandra (24), Rokon Ali (26), Mozammel (45), Enayet Ali (75), Abdus Sattar (50), Bejoy Kumar (60), Kawsar Ali (28), and Moniruzzaman (28).

## Ghali in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH, Apr 18: UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali arrived here today to inspect the largest-ever UN peacekeeping operation and to inject new enthusiasm into a process still awaiting international financial contributions, reports AFP.

# JS adjourned

From Page 1 Col 5

Hossain, State Minister for Establishment Nurul Huda, Whip Mahbul Alam Tara, and Akbar Hossain went to the room of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad. Leading members of the Opposition, including Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim, Tofael Ahmed of Awami League, Maudud Ahmed of Jatiya Party, Suranjit Sen Gupta of Ganatantri Party, Shahjahan Straj of JSD, Nurul Islam Mond (Ind) led the other team.

After thorough discussions, Opposition sources say, they put forward four points as pre-conditions for negotiations.

The Opposition demands include formation of a tribunal to try Golam Azam, withdrawal of cases against the sponsors of 'people's court', fair treatment to the members of the Opposition and non-use of the television to serve political interest of the ruling party. Sources say, the television report on the throwing of files by the Opposition on Thursday evening was not liked by the Opposition members.

The ruling party, sources say, indicated to the Opposition that it was ready to refer the case to the Supreme Court and willing to withdraw the cases against the sponsors of 'people's court'.

Falling to reach an understanding both the parties went to the chamber of the Speaker at 10.15 pm. Opposition members told journalists that they were making a courtesy call on the Speaker.

During their presence in the chamber of the Speaker it became clear that the Opposition was not going to attend the session.

The Treasury Bench requested the Opposition to be

present in the House for a few minutes allowing the Speaker to announce the adjournment.

To discuss this proposal with the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina the Opposition delegation left the chamber of the Speaker and at around 0.15 hours their decision declaring inability to be present in the House was communicated to the Speaker.

The session then resumed with members of BNP and Jamaat in the House.

As the House resumed, the Deputy Leader of the House in his statement said that for about seven hours they have discussed with the opposition members.

Referring to Opposition request for some more time Prof Chowdhury urged the Speaker to adjourn the House till 7 this evening.

Reciprocating the words of Prof Chowdhury, Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain said that they needed some more time to reach a consensus. He said that they believed, the parliamentary system would continue and requested the Speaker to adjourn the House.

The Leader of the House, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was present in her Sangsad chamber from 5.30 in the evening.

BNP sources said she personally guided the terms of negotiations through her emissaries. She had a meeting with the Speaker for about 30 minutes.

Parliament secretariat sources say, the Speaker had already prepared his ruling in the light of discussions on the subject.

Unprecedented security measures were taken and riot police were posted inside the House. The galleries were overcrowded.

# Two killed in city road mishaps

By Staff Correspondent

Two persons were killed and two others injured in two separate road accidents in the city Saturday.

One person was killed and two others injured when a truck knocked down an auto-rickshaw at Gabtoli Bus Terminal at about 5 a.m.

The auto-rickshaw driver, Jahangir (25), succumbed to injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). The injured persons were passengers. In another accident a 12-year-old boy, Sharif Mia, was crushed by a speeding truck near Farmgate at about 3.45 p.m. yesterday.

The driver, however, managed to escape with the truck.

## 3 hurt in blasts

Our DMCH Correspondent adds: Three people were injured in cracker explosions at Gulistan in the city Saturday morning.

The victims were identified as M Sarwar Mia (25), Mohammad Hossain (23) and Abu Sayed (27). They were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

The victims told this correspondent that when they got down from a bus at about 9 a.m. at Gulistan, several crackers suddenly blasted in the area.

# Pak army chief meets Noor Uddin

Visiting Pakistani Army Chief General Asif Nawaz yesterday called on Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan at the Army Headquarters, reports UNB.

They discussed matters of mutual interest.

Pakistani High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Kamal was present on the occasion.

General Asif Nawaz also met with Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral Mohammad Mohamminul Islam and Chief of Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Altaf Hossain Choudhury at Naval Headquarters at Banani and the Air Headquarters respectively.

The Pakistani Army Chief later called on Defence Secretary Anisur Rahman at his office at the Old High Court Building.

Earlier, on his arrival at the Dhaka Cantonment, General Asif Nawaz went to the 'Shikha Anirban', the eternal flame, and placed floral wreaths there in honour of the members of the Armed Forces martyred during the Liberation War in 1971.

He then went to 'Senakunja', a multi-purpose civic complex, where a smart contingent of Bangladesh Army presented a guard of honour. General Asif Nawaz inspected the guard and took salute. He also planted a sapling in front of the 'Senakunja'.

The Pakistani Army chief later visited the Defence Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC) at Mirpur. Commandant of the DSCSC Major General Muhammad Mahbubur Rahman received the distinguished guest.

# BPC to pump Tk 10cr more on freight of crude

CHITTAGONG, Apr 18: The country will have to pay an additional amount of about Tk 10 crore in foreign exchange every year in freight for transportation of crude oil as the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) has suddenly decided to prohibit oil-tankers operating for over 15 years from calling at the country's ports, reports UNB.

Sources in the shipping circle said a new clause, which came into effect this week, has made it mandatory that tankers carrying crude to Bangladesh must be within the 15-year age limit, instead of the previous 20-year limit.

As a result of the new restriction, BPC will have to pay more for carrying crude for the Chittagong Refinery as freight for newer ships is much higher, the sources said adding that tankers within the 15-year age limit are not readily available.

When contacted, a senior official of the Bangladesh Shipping Corporation, which charters tankers for BPC, said imposed the new restriction upon a request from BPC following problems with a 22-year-old tanker, 'TT Energy', which was reportedly responsible for an oil slick in the Bay of Bengal.

During its second voyage, 'TT Energy' also developed engine trouble which delayed its arrival by about two months.

The BSC official, however, said that there was hardly any one difference between a 15-year-old vessel and a 20-year-old one insofar as operational efficiency is concerned. But, he added, the age limit must not exceed 20 years.

# The Midnight File

## Italian airlines pilots to stage 24-hr strike

ROME, Apr 18: Pilots with Italy's state-controlled airline Alitalia are to stage a 24-hour strike later this month, a trade union spokesman said today. The strike will ground flights by the Italian flag carrier on Monday April 27. Disgruntled pilots are demanding that working conditions and pay be brought into line with those of other major European airlines, reports Reuter.

## Fire kills six in England

HOVE, England, Apr 18: Six people were killed when fire swept through a house during a party in the southern England town of Hove today and police said arson may have been the cause, reports Reuter.

# Hartal protesting move to sell Rly property

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 18: A half-day hartal was observed here today demanding the withdrawal of decision of the Bangladesh Railways to sell the abandoned property of the department at Jimkhana.

The hartal was called by the Narayanganj Shahar Unnayan Sangram Parishad (Action Committee for the development of Narayanganj town). The committee also demanded adequate civic amenities for the town-dwellers.

No vehicle plied on the roads of the town and railway communication between Dhaka-Narayanganj was disrupted during the hartal. Dhaka-bound buses operated from Fatullah and those coming from the capital could not go beyond that place.

Attendance in government and non-government offices was thin.

The Sangram Parishad held a rally at the Diamond Hall to press home its demands.

Presided over by Alhaj Khwaja Mohiuddin, the rally was addressed among others by former MP, Mobarak Hossain, BNP leader Alhaj Shamsul Islam Chowdhury, Jatiya Party leader Khwaja Ahsanullah, Freedom Party leader Kamal Ahmed, Zaker Party leader Shaikh Delwar Hossain and former Chairman of the Narayanganj Paurasabha, Nazimuddin Mahmud.

## Syria

From Page 1 Col 4

diplomatic sanctions on Libya over the 1988 Lockerbie bombing.

So far, only Iraq and Sudan in the Arab world have said they will not honour the sanctions. Neither country has taken concrete steps to violate them.

Reuter adds: Libya opened a new sea link with Malta today to minimise the impact of a United Nations embargo that has grounded its international flights.

A loud whistle in Tripoli Port signalled the departure of a high speed hovercraft sailing for the first time to Malta as part of Libya's declared efforts to help foreigners leave.

# Nor'wester kills 3 in B'baria

BRAHMANBARIA, Apr 18: A severe Nor'wester which lashed three upazilas of the district Friday night left three people dead and more than 100 injured, reports UNB.

The storm with a wind-speed rising up to 112 km per hour also battered some 3,000 houses and damaged crops in vast areas, official and local sources said.

The dead were named Jarina (10) and her sister Shoma (7) of village Atala and Shahin (5) of Gajuria in Sadar upazila.

Seriously injured three were admitted to the Sadar hospital.

The Nor'wester, which started at 8 pm and lasted 20 minutes, uprooted 16 poles of the Ashuganj-Brahmanbaria transmission line, snapping power supply in the district.

Telelink with six upazilas also remained cut off since last night.

Met office recorded 56 mm rainfall in the district last night.

## Vague decisions

From Page 1 Col 7

of the Taka would fail to achieve the desired effect for a heavily import-dependent country like ours. He suggested seeking alternative ways to boost export.

The entrepreneurs demanded more export incentives like concessionary rate of interest and cash subsidies. However, the minister ruled out the subsidy prospect.

Commenting on tariff protection for local industries, the Minister said that any such step would trigger similar steps by other countries which would make our market virtually captive.

Commenting on the export performance, Anwar said that 55 per cent of the export target had been achieved until February as against 56 per cent in the last fiscal year. He pointed out that this year's target is about 25 per cent higher than last year's.

The entrepreneurs also complained that frequent power failure led to about a 50 per cent drop in production in the industrial units. They demanded special facilities to use standby generators to combat such situations.

(Detail on Page 7)

# UN move for evacuation

From Page 1 Col 5

interim government and for Najibullah's safe passage out of the country. The Soviet-installed president stayed out of sight Saturday, reportedly at the UN offices in Kabul.

Rebel commander Ahmed Shah Masood also sent a message on Saturday to the resistance leaders based in the Pakistani border city of Peshawar, urging them to form an interim government because "the situation is getting out of control."

Afghan Foreign Minister Abdul Wakil told a news conference that he had held extensive talks on Friday with Masood. While ruling out any immediate deal between the two sides, Wakil said other meetings would follow.

AFP from Washington says, ousted Afghan President Najibullah should be allowed to leave Kabul in order to facilitate a peaceful settlement of the country's civil war, a senior State Department official said Friday.

The Department also voiced concern over the safety of the United Nations envoy for Afghanistan, Beron Sevan, who on Friday continued talks with the government and rebel forces in an effort to set up a transition government.

"We don't think it serves any purpose to complicate the process further with Najibullah's future... so it's just as well if he's out of there," the senior official said on condition of anonymity.

Najibullah was caught trying to flee the country Thursday and later stripped of all power. He remains in Kabul, according to the State Department.

Department spokesman Richard Boucher refused to comment on reports that Najibullah might be under United Nations protection in the Afghan capital.

The Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) called on Afghan guerrillas Friday to exercise restraint and expressed the hope of a

smooth transfer of power to an interim administration.

OIC Secretary-General Hamed al-Ghaidi expressed the hope that the process of the transfer of power to an interim administration will be smooth and lead to the effective exercise of the right of self-determination by the people of Afghanistan.

Zahir Shah, the former king of Afghanistan, appealed today in Rome for national unity and a peaceful solution to the crisis in his homeland.

PTI from Delhi adds: India will go by the United Nations decision on the future of Najibullah.

External Affairs Ministry sources said that it was the responsibility of the UN to deal with Najib's future.

The sources did not see the possibility to Najib leaving his country in the next 24 hours or so.

Earlier India today said it would continue to recognise the government in Afghanistan in the changed situation following Najibullah's relinquishing his post as president.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said this when newsmen asked whether India would recognise the coalition government which has assumed powers in Kabul.

A Moscow report says: The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is concerned that former members of the Soviet armed forces imprisoned in Afghanistan may be converted to hostages and ransomed for war reparations.

"I think our prisoners of war (POWs) are being held as political hostages and I am worried there are going to be problems over their release, such as demands for war reparations," military advisor General Ruslan Aushev said, quoted by the ITAR-Tass news agency.

Aushev, head of the CIS heads of state military advisory council, said there was little prospect of a prompt release of the POWs.

# Pakistan won't give asylum to Najibullah

ISLAMABAD, Apr 18: Pakistan ruled out today any possibility of granting asylum to deposed Afghan ruler Najibullah, who remained in a UN building in Kabul, a Foreign Office spokesman here said, reports AFP.

"We have neither received nor are we considering any request for asylum," the spokesman told a press briefing, describing the situation as fluid in Kabul where some "sporadic firing" has taken place today.

"According to our information Najibullah is in the UN premises in Kabul where he went on Thursday," the spokesman said.

"Citing latest reports from the Pakistani mission in Kabul, he said a group led by Army Chief General Nabi Azimi 'is in control of Kabul city at this stage' and has the support of some Generals and Watan Party members.

"It is difficult to say if Kabul is under martial law as the situation there remains fluid," he added.

# PWD employees suspend programme

Public Works Department (PWD) Employees Union Saturday decided to suspend their programme, which was scheduled to start today, for one month following a fruitful discussion between their leaders and the government, an official source said Saturday, reports BSS.

## Tribals

From Page 1 Col 8

According to the officials, 6,567 returnees of 2,346 families were registered till March 4 and the rest 21,491 of 6,643 families are yet to be registered, although both the categories are getting equal relief and rehabilitation facilities and attention.

When contacted, Chairman of the Local Government Parishad of Khagrachhari Samiran Dewan said the tribal refugees in large numbers were coming back to their ancestral land availing of all-out assistance extended by the local authorities and prevalence of communal harmony in the region.

# Ctg boat mishap: Search continues

From Our Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Apr 18: A search operation led by the district police began this morning also the Sandwip channel following the sinking of a passenger boat in which about 100 persons feared drowned Friday.

Police sources said that no other bodies were recovered and that while only two bodies, one of an old man and the other of a woman were recovered by the fellow passengers immediately after the boat sank. The search is continuing.

District police, talking to this correspondent, dismissed the possibility of more casualties in the boat accident saying that most of the passengers were able to swim to the shore excluding the two persons whose bodies were recovered.

# Two bodies recovered

By Staff Correspondent

Police recovered two bodies from two busy areas of the city in the last two days.

The body of one of the victims, identified as Adul Hossain (40), a night guard of IFIC Bank, Motijheel Branch, was recovered from his office building on Saturday morning.

His body was found near an electric switchboard in the first floor of the building.

Motijheel police said he might have been electrocuted, but the body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy.

Our DMCH correspondent adds: Tejgaon police recovered the body of a young man from Zia Uddin near the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

The victim was identified as Ajhar Hossain (25). His body was sent to the DMCH for autopsy.

# Saifur leaves

From Page 1 Col 8

member of the Planning Commission, General Economic Division (GED), Dr Sheikh Hoqud Ali, Economic Relations Division (ERD) Secretary Enam Ahmed Chowdhury, Internal Resources Division (IRD) Secretary and Chairman of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) Nurul Hossain Khan and Joint Secretary of ERD Ayub Qadri.

The head of Bangladesh embassy in France and Bangladesh Ambassador in Brussels will join the delegation in the consortium meeting.

After the Paris consortium meeting the Finance Minister and the ERD Secretary will visit Brussels as guests of the government. They will discuss bilateral issues between Bangladesh and Belgium.

The Finance Minister is expected to return home on 25 April.



Committee for Implementation of the Spirit of the Liberation War brought out a torch procession in the city Saturday demanding execution of Golam Azam.—Star photo

## Urgent Notice

★ Do you want to avoid disconnection of your Telephone/Telex lines?

★ If so, kindly arrange to pay all bills including arrears and use Telephone/Telex without any interruption.

★ In case of non receipt of bills, kindly contact concerned Telephone Revenue Offices and collect all bills and make payment immediately.

★ Because disconnection drive is on for non payment of bills.

DFP (BA) 3312-15/4 We are always at your service  
G-425 Bangladesh T & T Board

**Editor: S. M. Ali**  
**Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam**

Published by S. M. Ali on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd.,  
52 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at  
Offset Printing Dialogue Publications Ltd., 19 Kazi  
Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. Editorial, News &  
Commercial Offices: 28/1, Toynbee Circular Road,  
Dhaka-1000. Tel: PABX- 246023-4, 245061-2.  
Advertisement: 245063 & Ext. 20. Fax No. 88-02-  
863035. GPO Box No. 3257. GRAM: DAILY STAR,  
DHAKA.