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Inside Today

Article

**The Fifth JS
 Session: A Fiasco
 or Worse?**

Column: Passing
 Clouds by Zillur
 Rahman Siddiqui
 Page 4

International



**Beauties start arriving
 in Bangkok for Miss
 Universe pageant May 9**
 Fifth round of ME talks
 open in Washing-
 ton today
 Page 5

Business

**Jute mills to start
 third shift soon**
 Page 7

Feature

**Science and
 Technology**

**Superconductivity—an
 epoch-making
 possibility**
 Page 8

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Of guns and gunmen
 Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

INF Tir arrives tomorrow

CHITTAGONG, Apr 26: An Indian naval ship, INF Tir, is expected to reach here on April 28 on a four-day goodwill visit, diplomatic sources said today. The ship will anchor at the jetty-1 and remain open to the public and students on April 29 and 30. Journalists will also be invited to visit the vessel, reports UNB.

Five lakh tonnes of salt produced

Five lakh metric tonnes of salt have already been produced in the country during the current season. This was stated at the 4th meeting of the parliamentary Standing Committee on Industries Ministry at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, in Dhaka Sunday. Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan presided the meeting, reports BSS.

AL working body meet Apr 29

An emergency meeting of the Central Working Committee of Bangladesh Awami League will be held on April 29 at 10 AM at 29, Minto Road, an Awami League press release said in Dhaka Sunday night, reports BSS.

City BNP meet today

A meeting of the secretaries of the city BNP secretariat will be held today at 4 pm at the office of Salauddin-Ahmed MP at Sena Kalyan Bhaban. City BNP president Lt Gen (ret'd) Mir Shaukat Ali will preside over the meeting, reports BSS.

U Nu in good shape

NEW DELHI, Apr 26: Myanmar dissident U Nu, freed from jail Saturday by the junta in Yangon, is in very good shape, reports AFP.

Fierce battle for control of Kabul

KABUL, Apr 26: Fierce fighting raged today for control of Kabul, a day after Mujahideen guerrillas took over the Afghan capital and carved it up into rival power centers. Mujahideen owing allegiance to commander Ahmed Shah Masood battled guerrillas from the Hezb-i-Islami of his arch rival Gulbudin Hekmatyar in the city centre. Regime soldiers fought on both sides despite an appeal by government Deputy Defence Minister Nabi Azmi Saturday night for troops to follow the orders of Masood, Defence Minister and head of a commission announced Saturday to

administer the capital. Red Cross sources said at least 186 people were wounded in the fighting and admitted to their hospital casualties from other hospitals were not known. Heavy fighting raged around a complex of four hospitals, including a children's hospital in central Kabul, after Masood's warriors escorted the Presidential Palace following a stiff battle. Hekmatyar's troops positioned themselves on a ridge and pounded the city center with tank fire and medium artillery, witnesses said. Masood's men fired back

with tanks standing near the radio station, which they captured Saturday, as gunfire thundered elsewhere in the city. The Presidential Palace was captured by Masood's Jamiat-Islami as rival guerrillas who had poured into the city Saturday with no resistance from the Soviet installed regime plunged into a bloody battle for Kabul. Jamiat and its allies from a northern Afghan coalition, headed by Uzbek militia commander Abdul Rashid Dostam, a Kabul government deserter, flew in plane loads of reinforcements from the northern

cities of Mazar-i-Sharif and Charikar. Soviet built Antonov 37 transporters and helicopters flew them in as Masood tried to consolidate his gains of Saturday, Masood, 39, and his allies hold the adjacent military and civilian airports. Hezb troops were holed up with government generals allied to them at the Interior Ministry, which reliable sources said the Jamiat was planning to storm. The position there this evening was unclear. Dostam's troops had told reporters that they believed former Defence Minister Aslam Watanjar,

former Vice-President Mohammad Rafi and ex-interior Minister Raz Pukteen were also holed up in the ministry. Another flash point was the headquarters of the national guard at the Bala Hissar Fort, where Dostam commanders said the Hezb had managed to take the high ground. Diplomatic sources close to the Afghan military said Masood's men had managed to take the fort out of the Hezb's control. Scattered fighting was reported near the Bulgarian and Polish embassies, the battle most intense near the

Bulgarian mission where Iran-backed Hezb-i-Wahdat troops aligned with Masood were trying to flush out Hekmatyar loyalists. A 122-mm rocket landed in the ground of the Bulgarian embassy and a shell hit a parking area below the Intercontinental Hotel. No casualties resulted. Mujahideen lowered the national flag at the hotel and firing shots in the air raised a green Islamic flag, witnesses said. A major battle for an abandoned Russian barracks, a leftover of the Soviet occupation. See Page 12 Col 7

Plea for deferring punitive measures against sick entrepreneurs

By Sohel Manzur
 The high-powered body on sick industries has decided to request the government once again to instruct the banks and financial institutions concerned not to take any legal action against the sick entrepreneurs upto June 30. The Ministry of Industries earlier in February instructed ten banks and DFIs (Development Financing Institution) to abstain from taking any punitive measures against the sick units upto April 30 as per See Page 12 Col 5

Delhi averts talks on the Ganges India now wants Brahmaputra waters be shared

By Mahfuz Ullah

The recent high-level Bangladesh delegation for water sharing talks came back from New Delhi 'empty-handed' with an experience of unequal treatment that amounted to 'insults' in diplomatic parlance. Adding new dimensions to the negotiations this time, the Indian side asked Bangladesh to prepare for the sharing of the Brahmaputra waters. It said that if Bangladesh did not agree to divert waters of the Brahmaputra, then India would unilaterally divert at the upstream, sources said. The six-member Bangladesh delegation, led by Minister for Agriculture,

Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control M Majid-ul-Haq went to New Delhi April 21 attend a two-day ministerial level meeting and returned on April 24. The visit was considered 'extremely important' by Bangladesh in view of the lowest ever flow of water in the Ganges and the forthcoming visit of the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia to India, authoritative sources said. The Prime Minister has already been briefed about the outcome of the discussions that has dampened the exuberance being attached to her expected visit, sources said. The flow of the Ganges has

come down to 10000 cusecs according to latest reports and salinity has reached the agricultural lands of Faridpur. Bangladesh believes, of the 10000 cusecs, half comes as leakage through the 138 sluice gates of the Farakka barrage and the rest is regenerated by ground water discharge, sources said. Delegation sources said, though the visit took place at the insistence of Bangladesh it was expected that India would respond to the water-shortage problem of a lower-riparian country like Bangladesh. But the Indian side, according to sources, while ignoring the ur-



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia talking to a tornado-hit family of Tarondia Union of the Iswarganj Upazila, Mymensingh yesterday. —PID photo

Khaleda visits tornado-hit areas

MYMENSINGH, Apr 26: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today visited tornado-hit areas of Mymensingh and Kishoreganj districts and assured the affected people of necessary assistance for their rehabilitation, reports UNB. She went to the calamity-ravaged areas to see for herself the extent of damage wrought by violent storms that hit Kishoreganj on April 17 and Mymensingh on April 22. According to officials, 17 people were killed in the municipal area and Sadar, Ishawarganj and Gouripur upazila of Mymensingh while 13 people reported dead in four unions of Bajitpur upazila in Kishoreganj. Addressing a gathering at Majdhar village of Bajitpur See Page 12 Col 8



Jahanara Imam addressing a Nirmul Committee rally in the city yesterday. —Star photo

Nirmul body calls hartal May 18 No alternative to movement: Imam

By Staff Correspondent

Ekattorer Ghatok Dalai Nirmul Samannaye Com-mi-tee has called a half-day hartal May 18 to press for execution of people's court verdict on Golam Azam. "We are giving another 15 days to the government to accept people's verdict, otherwise the hartal will be observed in Dhaka," Jahanara Imam, convenor of the committee to a 'grand rally' at Bangabandhu Avenue on Sunday. The people's court passed a verdict on March 26 that Golam Azam's 'crimes' during independence war were punishable by death. "There is no other way but

to continue movement as the democratically elected government is behaving like an autocratic one," Imam, who presided over the huge rally, said. The rally was also addressed, among others, by committee member Abdur Razzak, Kazi Aref Ahmed, Lt col (ret'd) Kazi Nuruzzaman, Foyez Ahmed, Gazilul Huq, Haasan Imam, Dr Ahmed Sharif, Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Nurul Islam Nahid, Ahad Chowdhury and Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Meys. Jahanara Imam urged the freedom fighter, ministers and MPs to join the movement.

"The people will receive you with flowers as heroes", she said. Imam said that the country was now clearly divided into two camps — 11 and a half crores people in one camp and rest in another. She said that there was a conspiracy in Parliament against us. The opposition MPs who supported the cause of liberation showed ways and means to try 'war criminal' Pakistani citizen Golam Azam and an agreement was about to reach but finally the ruling party deceived the opposition. Imam said that the issue of See Page 12 Col 2

Rains come at last

By Staff Correspondent

As if in answer to a million prayers, the rains came last night. City dwellers, gasping from the scorching heat of the past several days breathed a sigh of relief when the showers started at exactly 11.30 PM. Thunder and lightning began half an hour earlier and the heat that persisted did not want to give in until it was compelled to do so by the gusts of wind that preceded the blessed rain. City dwellers yesterday also may have thought that it was another game of hide and seek by Peter and Paul. The same game played on Saturday evening that left them frustrated and a little hotter.

Dhaka-Yangon accord likely today

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh-Myanmar Working Group yesterday achieved 'progress' in framing the modalities of refugee repatriation and an agreement may take shape today. "We've made progress and expect to finalise an agreement tomorrow (Monday), a Foreign Ministry spokesman told The Daily Star last night. Apart from a general agreement on the repatriation, a second one dealing with technicalities of the repatriation process is also expected. The official, Additional Foreign Secretary A H Mahmood Ali, declined to give details. The two sides are scheduled to hold the concluding round of talks today where the two Foreign Ministers will lead

the respective delegations. According to sources, the Working Group will have another session this morning before the ministerial level discussions. Foreign Minister A S M Mustafizur Rahman and his Myanmar counterpart Ohn Gyaw are to initial the agreement. The other one, on the modalities, will be signed by Bangladesh's envoy to Yangon Mostafa Farouq Mohammad and Myanmar's Ambassador in Dhaka Soe Myint. Envisaging a permanent solution to the influx from across the border that dates as far back as 18th century, Dhaka officials are insisting that the UN play a role to ensure that the refugees are safe and also See Page 12 Col 3

Sher-e-Bangla's anniversary of death today

The 30th anniversary of death of Sher-e-Bangla A K Fazlul Huq will be observed today throughout the country, reports BSS. Various organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the day. The programmes include laying wreaths at the Mazar of the late leader, milad, Quran khwani, and discussion meetings. Sher-e-Bangla Parishad will hold a discussion meeting at Islamic Foundation auditorium at 5 pm today. President Abdur Rahman Biswas will attend the function as the chief guest while it will be addressed among others by Principal Dewan Mohammad Azfar, Dr Kazi Din Mohammad, A K Fazlul Huq, Dr Nurul Huq Bhuiyan, and Gias Kamal Chowdhury. See Page 12 Col 7

Donors want BNP to fulfil poll pledges

By Staff Correspondent

Consortium members at the recently concluded Paris Aid Club meeting asserted that the BNP government should act to fulfil its electoral economic mandate. Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman said Sunday. Briefing newsmen at the Zia International Airport on his return from Paris, the Finance Minister said that the political and economic mandate of the government was 'fully engaged' by the development partners at the meeting. The donors also endorsed the government's macro-economic policy and the reform programmes undertaken, he

said. The success of the financial stabilisation programme, fiscal and monetary policies and revenue collection was also lauded. "They said that Bangladesh has created a stable economic framework and is well poised for sustainable economic development," he added. However, he said that the GDP growth rate had to be increased to at least five per cent to keep up with the targeted programmes of poverty alleviation and human resources development. The development partners also called for increasing rev- See Page 12 Col 5

BCI affair Bangladesh Bank asked to report within 7 days

Star Report
 A meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on finance was held Sunday to discuss the situation of Bangladesh Commerce and Investment Ltd (BCI) which recently went into liquidity crisis. The meeting decided to ask the Bangladesh Bank to probe into the BCI affairs and prepare an investigative report on its present situation, sources said. The meeting also decided to ask the Governor of Bangladesh Bank to explore legal implications for revival of the investment company. The Bangladesh Bank's report will also state the government's responsibilities in case of bankruptcy of any financial institution. The committee has asked the Governor to prepare the report within seven days.

Dhaka busts WB prediction on jute sales

By Nurul Kabir

Bangladesh, defying the World Bank (WB) prediction, has already sold more than five lakh tons of raw jute and jute products in the international market this year, authoritative sources said. According to sources the WB predicted that Bangladesh could be able to sell three lakh tons of jute and jute products in the international market in 1991-1992 fiscal year. According to jute minister Brig.(ret'd) Hannan Shah, only Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) sold three

lakh tons of jute and jute products within the first nine months of the current fiscal year. Of the total of three lakh tons of jute and jute products sold, two lakh tons had already been shipped while one lakh tons was awaiting shipment, the Minister added. The Jute Minister, talking to this correspondent last night, said that he was hopeful of selling 50 thousand more tons of raw jute within the next month. Bangladesh Jute Mills Association (BJMA) has sold one lakh and 60,000 tons of

jute and jute products within the first nine months of the current fiscal year while Bangladesh Jute Spinners Association (BJSA) has sold a total of 50,000 tons of jute products within the same period. Jute Ministry sources confirmed. Despite the fact that Bangladesh was going to sell the amount of jute and jute products more than double the amount the WB predicted, the Bank had been consistently showing a tendency of discouraging flourishing of jute industries in the country, offi-

cial concerned regretted yesterday. Incidentally, neighbouring India had been selling about two lakh 50 thousand tons of jute and jute goods per annum for the last few years, the Jute Ministry sources said adding, "According to a new understanding with the WB, India would be exporting four lakh and 50 thousand tons of jute and jute products by 1995." The observers here consider the WB's attitude towards Bangladesh jute industries a mysterious one.

5 killed as tornado hits Lalmonirhat

LALMONIRHAT, Apr 26: A tornado hit six unions of Pachgram upazila Saturday night killing five and injuring at least 100 people, official sources said, reports UNB. Unofficial count, however, stood at 12 killed. The tornado raged through 21 villages of Srirampur, Pachgram Sadar, Kutlibari, Bawra, Jongra and Jagathar unions at around 11 pm. About 5000 homestead were completely destroyed including 30 educational institu-

tions, a custom office, Burimari checkpoint and Allauddin Nagar Railway station. The deceased were identified as Lutfar Rahman (24) and Sadiqul (8) of Jongra village, Morium (18) of village Kutlibari, Mafzuddin (65) of Jagotbari village and Zhalow Begum (16). They all belong to Jongra Union. The injured were admitted to the Pachgram health complex. Meanwhile, the Deputy See Page 12 Col 6

Gunshots rock DU campus

At least 30 rounds of gunshots were exchanged Sunday on Dhaka University campus between two rival factions of pro-JSD (Inu) student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League (N-S), reports BSS. Campus sources said it was a sequel to the Saturday's incident which took place on the campus at about 3 pm and See Page 12 Col 6