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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**Hasina leaves for S Arabia today**

Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina leaves Dhaka today for Saudi Arabia to perform holy Hajj. Sheikh Hasina will leave Dhaka at 12 noon by Saudia Airlines. She sought blessings of the countrymen, reports BSS.

**Saudi relief team due today**

An eight-member Saudi delegation arrives in Dhaka today. The delegation led by Prince Turkey bin Jalaway, supervisor of the Dammam-based International Islamic Relief Organisation (IIRO), will visit primary health care and training institute and other programmes run by IIRO at Cox's Bazar, reports BSS.

**DUJ appeal**

The President and General Secretary of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) M Shahjahan Miah and Altaf Mahmud, in a statement yesterday urged the government to send the senior reporter of Dainik Bangla Sunil Banarjee abroad immediately for treatment. Banarjee has been suffering from complicated heart ailments, reports BSS.

## Home Ministry takes stock of overall situation No headway in Teknaf talks on Rohingya repatriation

Star Report

The officials of Bangladesh and Myanmar have once again failed to set a new date for the repatriation of the refugees.

The fifth round of official level talks, since signing the repatriation agreement, held yesterday at Teknaf ended inconclusively.

Official sources said Bangladesh side proposed for holding a higher level talks on June 15 at the Myanmar town of Maungdaw but the Yangon side did not commit anything.

The Myanmar officials, however, reiterated assurances that they would take steps to stop exodus.

The Myanmar officials also handed over a list of 2600 refugees who they said could be repatriated immediately. Earlier, they had given a list of 6400 for repatriation in early stages.

Bangladesh Commissioner for Rohingya Relief and Rehabilitation Khandker Shahidul Islam led the home side as Burmese Immigration Director Aung Sein headed the Burmese delegation at the talks held at the C&B Dak Bangaloo.

Meanwhile, amid growing uncertainty over the repatriation of the Rohingyas, the

Foreign Office yesterday briefed the heads of the diplomatic missions in Dhaka on the situation.

The envoys were apprised of the latest developments and specially the complications that have made things difficult, said a source. The details could not be known.

The April 28 agreement between the Foreign Ministers of Bangladesh and Myanmar stipulated that the repatriation would start in three weeks and a supplementary agreement set a deadline around mid-May.

Several rounds of meetings between officials of the two

countries followed to work out details of the physical arrangements but failed to start the process.

More than 50,000 have crossed into Bangladesh after the signing of the agreement and they are still coming in.

In a related development, Home Minister Abdul Mattin Choudhury chaired a high-level meeting that discussed the security and social issues concerning the refugees and their repatriation.

The meeting, reviewing the latest developments, took a number of important decisions. See Page 12 Col 4



Police firing tear gas shells to disperse clashing transport workers at Fulbaria Bus Terminal in city yesterday. — Star photo

## Environment at stake to support luxury of rich nations : PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Thursday underlined the need for establishing global eco-democracy to preserve the environment, reports BSS.

Addressing the nation over radio and television on the occasion of the World Environment Day and the holding of Earth Summit at Brazil, the Prime Minister said: "We are of the opinion that the global environment can not be preserved keeping the two-thirds of the world population in poverty."

The meeting, reviewing the latest developments, took a number of important decisions. See Page 12 Col 4

She said environment should be viewed within the framework of development. In this backdrop, she said, "We have raised the demand for global eco-democracy along with other Third World countries preconditions of which are realisation of basic human needs including food, clothing, shelter, medicare and education of all the people of the developing countries."

She said the problem of environment was a global issue and it was not possible for any country to solve it alone. See Page 12 Col 1



### Environment Day today

The World Environment Day will be observed in Bangladesh today as in all other countries. The theme of the day this year is "Only One Earth: Care and Share". The day bears the special significance this year as the Earth Summit attended by world leaders and environmentalists and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is on. See Page 12 Col 3

## Vatican defends position at Rio Fewer delegates show up on second day

RIO DE JANEIRO, June 4: The Vatican on Thursday defended its position on birth control, telling Earth Summit delegates debating humanity's destruction of the planet that the church does not support procreation at any cost, reports AP.

The comments by Archbishop Renato Martino came as the delegates began general debate on treaties to protect the environment, including a pact on global warming that the United States has blocked from having teeth.

Fewer delegates showed up at the RioCentro convention hall than had been present at Wednesday's opening session, when UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali called for unity in nursing a sick planet.

"The position of the Vatican in relation to procreation often has been incorrectly interpreted," Martino said. "The Catholic Church does not propose procreation at any cost, but rather insists that transmission and care of human life must be done with the greatest responsibility."

"Human life is sacred and the goal of public policy is to improve the well-being of families," he said, it is the right of parents to decide the size of the family... without pressure from any type of government or organization."

His comments reflected controversial remarks preceding the summit by the Most Rev. George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, who said that the Roman Catholic Church's position against contraception helped knock population control off the summit agenda.

The Vatican denied it had done so, saying the issues of population, environment and poverty could not be tackled in isolation.

### FM leaves for Rio

Foreign Minister A S M Mustafizur Rahman left here Thursday evening for Rio de Janeiro to lead the Bangladesh delegation at the current Earth Summit, reports BSS. He will deliver his speech at the summit on June 10.

## Tofael, Razzaque, Nasim, SP Mahboob sued for slaying Siraj Sikder

Seven people, including three Awami League leaders and former police and Rakkhibahini officials, were sued Thursday on charge of killing Siraj Sikder in captivity in 1975, reports UNB.

Sheikh Mohiuddin Ahmed, President of the Siraj Sikder Parishad, filed a case with the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate in connection with the "pre-planned murder" of the radical political leader during the Awami League rule.

The accused leaders are -- Mahbubuddin Ahmed, the then Police Super of Dhaka, Abdur Razzaque, Tofael Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim, E A Chowdhury, former IG and Chairman of Pubali Bank, Sarwar Hossain Mollah, Director of the now-disbanded Rakkhibahini, and Col (Retd) Nuruzzaman, Director General of the Rakkhibahini and now Ambassador to Sweden. CMM Shahibuddin Ahmed

examined the complainant and ordered Tejgaon police to investigate the allegation and report.

The complainant alleged "great freedom fighter, popular leader and engineer Sirajul Haque Sikder alias Siraj Sikder was killed by the accused on January 2, 1975 at the instigation of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Captain Mansur Ali, the then Home Minister, late Sheikh Kamal and Sheikh Fazlul Haque Monto."

It was further stated that Siraj Sikder, who was reportedly chief of the outlawed Sarbahara Party, was arrested on January 1, 1975 from Chittagong New Market area and brought to Dhaka by air. From the airport, he was taken to the Special Branch office.

Sikder was handcuffed and produced before Sheikh Mujib, the then President. At that time, Captain Mansur Ali, Sheikh Kamal and Sheikh

Fazlul Haque Monto were present, according to the case.

There was an exchange of hot words between Siraj Sikder and Sheikh Mujib on the political role of Sikder. "At one stage, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman rebuked him seriously."

Sikder boldly protested and requested Mujib to behave with him like political man. "At this stage, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman became furious, and the accused No 1 ordered the accused No 1 to eliminate him."

The accused No 1 -- Mahbubuddin Ahmed -- carried out the order on January 2 with assistance of the other accused persons, the complainant said.

Siraj's father, Abdur Razzaque Sikder, tried to lodge FIR, the statement said. "But police discouraged him and refused to take any legal step."

## Transport workers clash at Fulbaria

By Staff Correspondent

Two groups of transport workers clashed at Fulbaria Bus Terminal Thursday afternoon to take control of the bus terminal.

The clashing groups opened fire and exploded crackers during a half an hour clash which ensued at around 4 pm.

Police rushed to the spot, lobbed tear-gas shells and resorted to baton charges to disperse the mob and to bring the situation under control.

Ramma police said no one was hurt during the incident and no immediate arrests were made.

The two groups of transport workers also clashed on Tuesday last on the same issue which left one person wounded during exchange of gun shots.

## DU examinations rescheduled

By Staff Correspondent

The Honours and Master Degree examinations of the Dhaka University have been deferred by about a month considering the inconvenience to the examinees because of the uneasy situation prevailing on the campus.

Exchange of gunfire between two belligerent factions of the Awami League-backed Chhatra League continued till Thursday deteriorating the situation further. Over 30 shots were fired on midnight Wednesday and Thursday afternoon spreading panic among the general students.

Residents of the three halls, where the feuding groups were staying, continued vacating their dormitories fearing a fierce gunbattle between them.

The DU examinations scheduled to begin June 30 have been shifted to July 28 this year.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Deans and Chairmen of the faculties and departments of the university held Thursday with Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof Wakil Ahmed in the chair.

According to the revised schedule the MA and MSS examinations of 1989 and the BA and BSS examinations of 1990 will begin July 28 instead of June 30 while the first part MA and MSS examinations will begin August 1 instead of July 4.

Meanwhile, of the two groups, expelled Awami League leader Mostafa Mohsin Mantu-backed 'third world group' managed to maintain its control over Zahurul Huq Hall till Thursday while the other, 'Gopalganj-Barisal' group was controlling the SM Hall and Jagannath Hall of the university.

## WASA move to solve water crisis by 2020

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (WASA) has finalised a study report to solve the water crisis in the capital in phases by the year 2020.

It has also started another survey to introduce the computerised billing system to replace the present "fauly one" and to ensure equal distribution of water among the seven million city dwellers.

The survey which started from Monday (June 1), coincided with a special drive to realise its Taka 30 crore in outstanding bills from the consumers. WASA Chairman, Group Captain (Retd) Nurul Islam said at a press conference at WASA Dhaban Thursday. He, however, declined to comment on whether the wa-

ter rate would be enhanced in the coming budget but said that the rate was last increased in 1986 by 25 percent.

WASA's present water rate is Taka 14.77 per thousand gallons on an average, Taka 1.09 lower than the production cost.

The WASA Chairman said that the study conducted at a cost of Taka two and a half crore French donation, suggested that water supply had to be increased by an additional 35 crore gallons to meet the demand.

WASA can, at present, supply 14 crore gallons of water daily, half of the total demand and the system loss and misuse of water has made the situation worsen. A century-old water works

and 153 deep tubewells currently pump out the water.

He also said that the number of deep tubewells would be reduced in the capital and six more water works set up in different areas as it was proved that tubewells could never fulfil the increasing demand for water.

The WASA Chairman said that work on the second water treatment plant with a 20-crore-gallon capacity would start soon at a cost of Taka 340 crore and would be completed by the year 1995. Initially the plan would produce five crore gallons of water daily, he added.

About the drainage system he said that a Taka 129-crore Asian Development Bank project was on to improve the

drainage system and 50 percent of work had already been completed.

The Chairman said that the 22 canals that criss-cross the capital were being used for the drainage system.

Islam also said that half of the capital was still deprived of sewerage system to where lines would be expanded.

Currently repairing works on 350 km sewerage lines were on, he added.

On the system, loss of WASA, he said that it ranged between 45 to 50 per cent.

Islam said that one per cent system loss meant a drain of Taka 40 lakh to the organisation.

Of the system loss, he further said that, about 20 per cent was due to... See Page 12 Col 4

## 20 lakh to perform hajj this year

DIHAHRAN (Saudi Arabia), June 4: More than two million Muslims are expected to make what Saudi officials hope will be a trouble-free pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca this year, reports Reuter.

After several years marked by war, controversy and dramatic accidents, Saudi officials said they were confident no major incidents would mar the Hajj despite official forecasts of a 40 per cent increase over last year's 1.5 million pilgrims.

The hajj, one of the five rites every Muslim is obliged to perform at least once in his or her lifetime, reaches its

climax next Wednesday in a mass prayer on a holy mountain close to the sacred city of Mecca.

One problem, though, could be heat. Meteorologists are forecasting a hot Hajj, with temperatures in Mecca rising to 43-47 degrees Celsius (109-116 degrees F).

Pilgrims will find some relief inside Mecca's massive grand mosque, which can take up to 600,000 worshippers and for the first time will be air conditioned.

Fahd's own charity will give away 40 million one-litre bottles of chilled water to thirsty pilgrims.

## DUTA threatens indefinite strike

Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA) yesterday warned it would go on an indefinite strike from Saturday demanding arrest and exemplary punishment to a student who had assaulted a teacher, reports UNB.

The warning came at an emergency meeting which demanded that Sheikh Ansar Ali be rusticated from the university and his honours degree be cancelled for assaulting Dr Badrul Alam, an associate professor of the Physics Department, on May 31.

The meeting presided over by DUTA president Dr S M A Faiz also demanded that the university authorities identify and punish those involved in violent activities which took place in the department following the incident.

It resented that the authorities did not take any action against the offender despite a case lodged with police after the incident and the demand for his punishment raised by... See Page 12 Col 4

## UCBL chairman funnelled Tk 20 cr to own business

Bangladesh Bank has detected that two of the directors of United Commercial Bank Limited (UCBL) have funnelled about Taka 20 crore from the bank to their private enterprise without any permission from the BB, according to BB sources.

The two UCBL directors are Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury (Babu), who is also the chairman of the bank, and his wife Mrs Akhtaruzzaman.

The BB, meanwhile, by an order, has removed them from their position of directorship. The irregularities were detected during a BB inspection recently.

It was found that the directors... See Page 12 Col 7