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NEWS BRIEFS

Solar eclipse tomorrow

A total eclipse of the sun will take place on Tuesday. It will begin at 03:51 pm and will end at 08:30 pm on the same day. However, the central eclipse will begin at 05:02 pm and will end at 07:19 pm. The maximum duration of the total phase and magnitude of the eclipse will be 5 minutes 25.5 seconds and 1.06 respectively, reports BSS.

DU senate session today

The annual session of Dhaka University senate will be held at the administrative block at 4 pm Monday. Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof. Moniruzzaman Mia will preside over the session, reports BSS.

Teachers postpone programme

Bangladesh Government College Professors' Society and Lecturers' Society Sunday announced postponement of their work abstention programme from July 1. The society postponed the programme in view of the assurance given at the two-day meeting with the Minister for Education Zamiruddin Sircar and State Minister for Education Prof. Younus Khan, reports BSS.

SPGRC appeal

The stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC) has urged upon the Pakistan government and the Chairman, Rabita Trust, to make official announcement and appeal to the world bodies and Islamic countries for procurement of fund required for repatriation and rehabilitation of Pakistanis stranded in Bangladesh, reports BSS.



PAIN AND PLEASURE OF FREEDOM: A petrified girl beside her burnt house, one of the 45 in Colonytary village in Angorpota mouza. A sense of insecurity pervades the area following the incident of arson done by the militants opposed to the corridor facility which ironically coincided with the joyous opening ceremony Friday (left) and people using the 150-metre long brick-laid passage (right).



—Star photo by Pavel Rahman

Opposition may come back in House today

By Mahfuz Ullah, Nurul Kabir and Assiuzzaman

Differences between the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Opposition in Parliament barring Jamaat-e-Islami have narrowed following series of informal negotiations yesterday. Leaders of both the groups expressed optimism about the possibility of a dramatic development paving way for the Opposition to be back in Parliament today.

Awami League (AL) Parliamentary Party is scheduled to meet at three this afternoon to discuss the BNP of-

fer on the four-point demands put by the Opposition. If the AL Parliamentary Party approves the formula, there will be a meeting of combined Opposition to approve the return to House. Opposition leaders told the Daily Star that they were 'optimistic about a positive move from BNP.'

In the backdrop of on-going negotiations and BNP's indications to accommodate some of the Opposition demands, the routine evening press briefing in the chamber of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was

cancelled yesterday.

Later, talking to a group of journalists Muhammad Nasim, Chief Whip of the Opposition, said on record that they were optimistic about the outcome of the negotiations. He, however, added that the Opposition would continue to boycott the sessions until a 'satisfactory' solution was reached.

Earlier, the Opposition preferred to term the nature of solution 'honourable.' Tofael Ahmed MP, who was present during the conversations, said

that informal negotiations were going on and added that it was not difficult for the government to meet three out of four demands put forward by the Opposition. He, however, did not specify the demands.

The four-point demand of the Opposition include: trial of Golam Azam under International Crimes Act, 1973, dropping of charges against 24 sponsors of Gano Adalat, ensuring due honour to the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and extending

See Page 12 Col 4

Police open fire on transport strikers in Khulna: 1 killed

By Staff Correspondent

One person was killed in Khulna and at least 15 passengers were injured in the capital as the indefinite transport strike passed its seventh day on Sunday.

A rikshaw-puller was killed when police opened fire on a group of agitating transport workers stoning a caravan of tank lorries at Manik Tala, eight kilometres from the town at around 1:30 pm. The lorry convoy was approaching Khulna town to supply fuel to the petrol pumps.

The passengers were injured in the capital as the striking workers and their hired 'mastans' hurled several bombs at passenger buses at Agargaon, Banani, Mohammadpur, Gulshan and Mahakhali.

Meanwhile, police raided the Mahakhali Bus Terminal and arrested three members of a bomb-making gang with 20 litres of acid. Arrested Younus Ali, Monir Hossain and Habib confessed to the police that their group

See Page 12 Col 5

Mostafiz hails 'corridor of friendship'

By Staff Correspondent

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman Saturday described Tinbigha as a 'corridor of freedom' for the 16,000 people of Dahagram-Angorpota enclaves, and thanked the government and people of India for their help in implementing the 1982 accord.

In a written statement to parliament, Rahman also expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister of West Bengal Jyoti Basu for 'his constructive role'.

The resolution of this 18-year-old problem proves that all issues can be settled through peaceful negotiations if there is sincerity and good intentions, Rahman told the House, which was barely half-full due to the continuing boy-

See Page 12 Col 1

No classes held in DU

By DU Correspondent

No classes were held in the Dhaka University Sunday as a group of students imposed a day-long strike to protest the expulsion of a Physics Department student accused of assaulting his teacher.

The strike, enforced by the newly-formed Committee for Protection of Students' Rights (CPRS), came a day after supporters of Sheikh Ansar Ali, a final year student, rampaged through the campus forcing teachers to flee the Arts Building and smashing administrative offices and classrooms.

No fresh violence occurred during the strike when administrative offices and classrooms were put under lock and key.

See Page 12 Col 3

Commentary

Halt this slide to chaos or we are all doomed

by S M Ali

With the stage set for what some fear will be a bloody confrontation between anti-government protesters and the police over the Golam Azam issue near parliament on Tuesday, we have barely 24 hours to halt this dangerous slide to chaos.

To avert the disaster, what we need is a phone call from Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to Sheikh Hasina — or from the Awami League chief to the BNP

leader — asking for a face-to-face meeting to explore all the avenues for restoring sanity to the present madness.

Whoever takes the initiative will earn the gratitude of the whole nation, not simply for averting one crisis but for setting a new trend in motion, one that may eventually produce a reasonable working arrangement between the ruling party and the opposition, within the framework of par-

liamentary democracy. But to do so, the two leaders would require political courage, far-sightedness and the ability to place the interest of the nation above their narrow partisan gains and losses.

Yet, the two must know that this political courage would not be even a fraction of the boldness that our national leaders, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Shaheed

See Page 12 Col 7

Come back, there's still time, Saifur urges Opposition

By Staff Correspondent

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman Sunday made a fervent call to the boycotting Opposition MPs to return to Parliament today (Monday) and join the budget deliberation.

'There is still time. I hope that you will join the budget debate tomorrow. We shall listen to you and we want to accommodate your views. Rahman repeated his statement while swinging his hands to the empty Opposition seats in the House.

The Finance Minister was winding up the discussion on the supplementary budget for fiscal 1991-92.

Barring those of Jamaat-e- See Page 12 Col 1

PM outlines strategies for poverty alleviation

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Sunday underlined the need for integration of rural economy with national economy for fruitful and effective poverty alleviation, reports BSS.

Productive employment opportunities and growth policy are to be diligently pursued in

the rural areas, she said adding if poverty is to be removed fruitfully and effectively, we will have to turn a new look to our village and think deeply about the rural people. Villages are to be made the focal point of all our development.

Addressing the inaugural See Page 12 Col 6

Polling cards before pouira polls

By Staff Correspondent

The Election Commission (EC) will issue 'polling cards' before the next paurasabha and city corporation elections.

The EC is also planning to provide 'identity cards' to voters before the next parliamentary elections, said the Chief Election Commissioner.

See Page 12 Col 6

Hearing of appeal against HC verdict

'12th Amendment and dissolution of UZ Parishad contradictory'

The hearing of the appeal against the verdict of the High Court on the promulgation for dissolution of the Upazila Parishad was held Sunday for the second day before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, reports BSS.

The Chief Justice, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, presided over the five-member bench.

Barrister Amirul Islam, appearing on behalf of the petitioners, submitted that after the passage of the 12th Amendment (last year), the participation of the people

through their elected representatives at all levels of administration of the republic was reinforced.

Similarly, Articles 59 and 60 having been restored by the same amendment to the Constitution, there was further mandate of the republic to vest the authority of the local government to the elected representatives, he said.

The petitioners' counsel stated that the repeal ordinance of upazila, made an act, was in violation of the constitutional mandate (awarded

through 12th Amendment) to which the present government has been a party for revival. The passage of the 12th Amendment and the dissolution of Upazila Parishad are contradictory acts, he maintained.

The petitions were filed on behalf of Ahsanullah Master, Upazila Chairman of Gazipur, and Qudrat E Elahi, Upazila Chairman of Sonargaon.

Islam said with the passage of the 12th Amendment, the relevant portion of Article 11 See Page 12 Col 1

Plea to make JS bound march a success

By Staff Correspondent

Different political parties and their front organisations yesterday held rallies and brought out processions in the city in support of tomorrow's march towards the Jatiya Sangsad.

The National Coordination Committee for Realisation of the Spirit of the Liberation War and Resistance to the Killers and Collaborators of 1971 earlier announced the programme to press home its five-point demand. The demands include trial of Jamaat leader Golam Azam under the International Crimes Act and withdrawal of cases against 24

See Page 12 Col 3

Ex-air chief faces corruption charges

Former chief of air staff Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) Momtazuddin Ahmed was indicted yesterday on a variety of charges including acquisition of property (disproportionate to his income) through illegal means and submission of statement of assets (immovable and moveable property) and liabilities containing false and incorrect information, reports BSS.

Zeenat Ara, first Additional Sessions Judge of Dhaka and presiding over the Anti-corruption Tribunal No. 2, brought the charges against the former air chief under Section 4(2) (A) (B) and

Section 5(1) of the Anti-Corruption Act of 1957.

The charge included non-disclosure of a three katha plot in the name of his wife Shamim Momtaz at Uttara in his statement. His wife applied in December 1986 and later obtained allotment from Rajuk, although he was earlier (March 1986) allotted a plot measuring 578 square yards (over seven katha) at a nominal price of Taka 578 at DOHS (Defence Officers Housing Society) at Banani.

Formal allegations were also brought against Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) Momtazuddin saying that he constructed a

four-storied building in his DOHS plot showing a value of Taka 24 lakh, although PWD engineers on evaluation found that the building costs Taka 37,68,429.36.

Another allegation against the former air chief relates to his purchase of a car (a reconditioned Toyota Corolla) in August 1991 at Taka 5,20,000 in which he falsely showed that the money was given by his father, a government servant who retired in 1972.

Yet another allegation against him was that he held 1250 shares of a company named Special Products Limited in the name of his mi-

nor son who is still a student. The shares valued at Taka 100 each are held with one M. Shahzad Ali of United Traders Limited and an acquaintance of Momtazuddin Ahmed.

The charges are that in his asset, the former air chief did not disclose the shares held in the name of his son.

The court fixed August 1 as the date for recording evidence. The case against Ahmed who is on bail began in August last year when the government ordered enquiry on the basis of some information obtained by the Bureau of Anti-Corruption.

BUDGETARY RELIEF NEEDED TO SAVE THE EXPORT INDUSTRIES

In an emergent meeting, the representatives of the following Exporter's Associations of Bangladesh, on detailed deliberations on the proposed budget of 1992-93 demanded withdrawal of the following provisions of the budget, detrimental to the country's exports:

1. Deduction of 1% income tax at source on export value.
2. Mandatory Pre-Shipment Inspection as proposed in the budget for raw material imports of export oriented industries.
3. Reduction of income tax rebate to 50% on export earnings as against 100% provisions provided for in the existing industrial and Export Policy which have already been approved by the government and widely circulated nationally and internationally.

The meeting further held that while the exporters of the neighbouring competing countries like India enjoy 100% tax rebate, in addition to a number of other incentives, the proposed budget of Bangladesh has taken back all incentives and imposed new burden of taxes making the country's exports uncompetitive in the world market.

The meeting further demanded inclusion of the following provisions in the budget for enhancement of the export earnings of the country:

Full implementation of the incentives provided for Export Oriented and Export linkage industries in CHAPTER XI OF THE INDUSTRIAL POLICY OF 1991 AND IN CHAPTER IV OF THE EXPORT POLICY OF 1991-93.

Non fulfilment of the above demands will extinct the Export led growth of the country and thus losing employment and much needed foreign exchange.

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| 1. Mr. A.H. Chowdhury Bangladesh Jute Exporters Association. | 2. Mr. M. Nasir Vice-Chairman Bangladesh Finished Leather Exporters Association. |
| 3. Lt.Col.(Retd.) M. Anisuzzaman Acting Chairman Bangladesh Terry Towel and Linen Manufacturers & Exporters Association. | 4. Professor Masuda M. Rashid Chowdhury Senior Vice-President Bangladesh Handicrafts Manufacturers and Exporters Association. |
| 5. Mr. Syed Toufique Ali Bangladesh Fruits Vegetables & Allied Products Exporters Association. | 6. Mr. Yahia Khan Chairman Garment Accessories Manufacturers Association of Bangladesh. |
| 7. Mr. Abul Quasem Haider President Bangladesh Corrugated Cartons Manufacturers Association. | 8. Mr. Mohammad Mosharrif Hossain President Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association. |