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The Daily Star

SHAH ALI AHMED SHOPPING CENTRE, 51 NEW BANGAL ROAD, DHAKA - 1000

VOL. 11 NO. 324 REGD. NO. DA 781

POUSH 6, 1399 BS,

DHAKA SUNDAY DECEMBER 20, 1992

JAMADI-US-SANI 24, 1413 HIJRI

12 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 4.00

Inside Today

Article

Is there a Case for an Independent Television Channel ?

Column: On The Record by Shah AMS Kibria Page 4

International



President Bush meets with the Palestinian delegation to the Mideast peace talks at the White House on Friday
Page 5

Living

When Decors and Collections Speak of Roots
Page 8

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Multi-facets of Rickshaw Journey
Page 3

Announcement

"Living" — A new weekly Star feature
 The Daily Star launches a new weekly feature page today — Living.
 The page focuses on various aspects of everyday living in Bangladesh and outside, ranging from decor to fashion, hobbies to cookery. Materials include reports and features, illustrated by photographs and visuals.
 Contributions from our readers to this new feature page is welcome.
 Now, please turn to Page 8 to see what the new feature is all about.
 Editor

NEWS BRIEFS

Biennial meet of Press Club today

The ninth Biennial General Meeting of Jatiya Press Club will be held today at the club auditorium. General Secretary and Treasurer of the club will submit their reports at the meeting, beginning at 10 am. Election of office bearers and members to the management committee of the club will be held on tomorrow, reports BSS.

BNP central body meet today

An extended meeting of the BNP central committee will be held at 10 am today at the party central office. Party chief and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will preside over the meeting, reports UNB.

Two killed in Ctg road mishap

CHITTAGONG Dec 19: Two persons were killed and another was injured seriously in a collision between a truck and a taxi in front of Alanker Cinema Hall at Pahartali here today. According to Pahartali Police, taxi driver Dulal Mia (30) and another victim who was not identified died on the spot when the two vehicles collided head on, reports BSS.

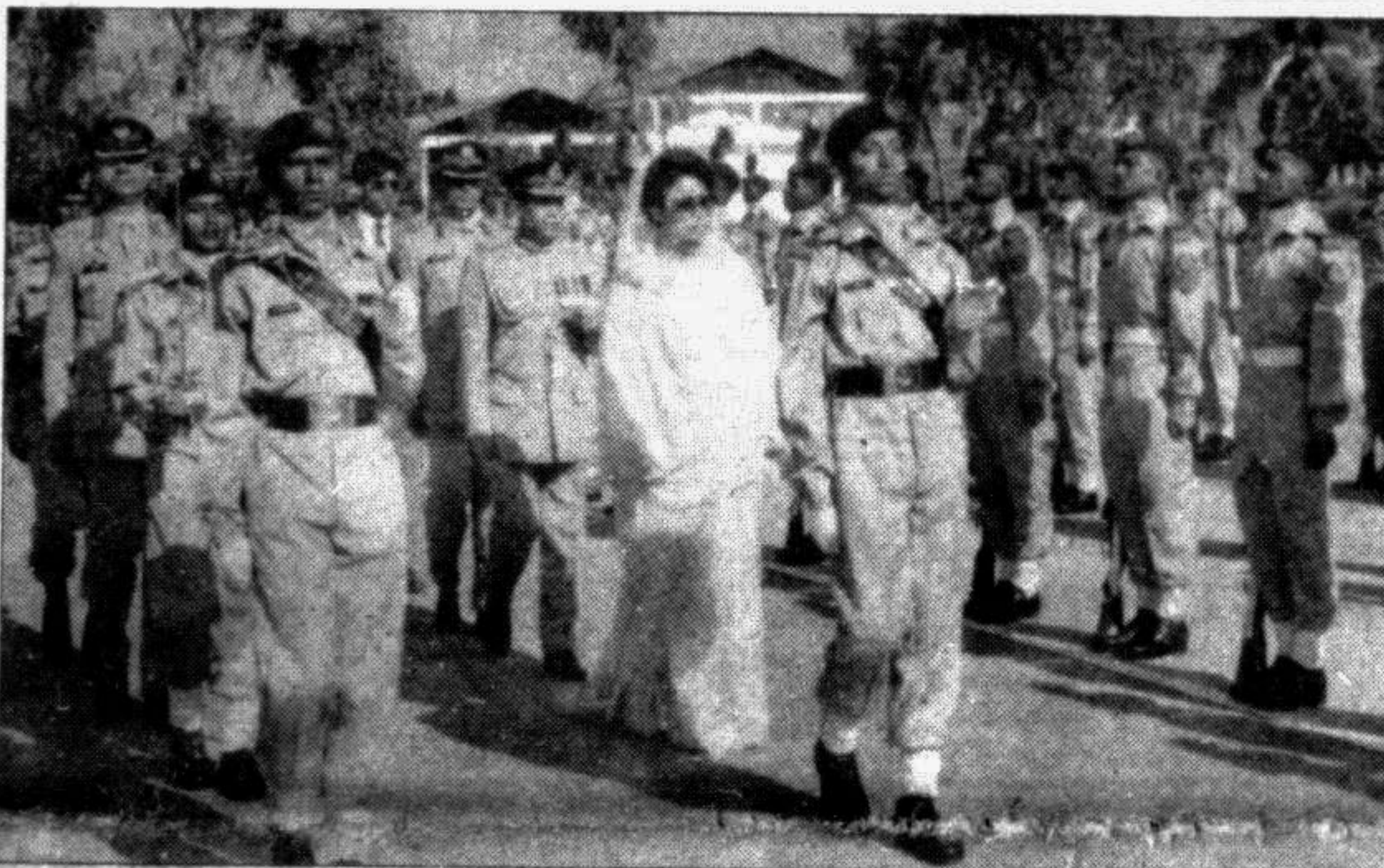
China visit cut short

Yeltsin rushes home to 'restore order'

MOSCOW, Dec 19: President Boris Yeltsin broke off a visit to China today and rushed home, declaring that "the master must restore order" to thwart what he called a bid to dismember his government, reports Reuter.
 The Kremlin leader said it was vital to save the core of his reformist government, in spite of the replacement of radical acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar by the more conservative Viktor Chernomyrdin.
 Itar-Tass news agency quoted Yeltsin as saying on arrival in Moscow it was essential to start the formation of a new government immediately — and the main thing is to preserve the nucleus of the

Gaidar government.
 The Russian capital was calm and it was not clear why Yeltsin had scrapped a planned visit to Shenzhen in southern China to dash home.
 He told reporters he would hold talks with Chernomyrdin and first Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeiko on Sunday and Monday with a view to forming a new cabinet by Tuesday.
 The surprise move appeared aimed at seizing back the political initiative.
 It showed his determination to rebound from Monday's humiliating climbdown when, under pressure from the conservative supreme legislature, he dropped Gaidar and replaced

him with former Soviet technocrat Chernomyrdin as Prime Minister.
 "Someone has started fighting for government portfolios too early, to pull the government apart. So the master must return to restore order," Yeltsin told reporters.
 His statement that the government was under threat contrasted with assurances earlier in the week that there was no danger of sweeping cabinet changes or a retreat from reform.
 "The government must be left in place so that it can operate and work on reform. Therefore, I will not let it be removed under any circumstances," Yeltsin said.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inspecting the President's Parade at Bhattiary parade ground yesterday. — PID photo

PM tells cadets at Bhattiary Develop alternative local military hardware

BHATTIARY (Chittagong), Dec 19: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today stressed the need for strengthening the country's defence through skill development in keeping with the time, reports BSS.
 Speaking on the occasion of the President's Parade marking the commissioning of the gentlemen cadets of the 27th BMA long course and the 8th special short course at the academy parade ground here Begum Zia said the success depended not on arms only but the skill of those who were behind the weapons.
 The Prime Minister, who is also in charge of the Ministry of Defence, emphasised the need for developing alternative local military hardware for strengthening the country's defence system.
 Given the good intention, resource constraints could not stand on way to improving the

defence system, she said. She stressed the need for proper use and maintenance of the military hardware.
 The colourful parade was attended, among others, by Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, Irrigation Minister M Majedul Haque, Communications Minister OI Ahmed, Planning Minister Zahiruddin Khan, Mayor of Chittagong Meer Nasruddin, parliament members, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister K M Rabban, Defence Secretary MA Malik, chiefs of staff of the navy and air force, diplomats, senior military officers, high civil dignitaries, local elite and parents and relations of the gentlemen cadets.
 On her arrival at the parade ground the Prime Minister was received by the chief of army staff Lt Gen Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan, the local Area

JS body discusses rules on PM's presence in Jatiya Sangsad

By Staff Correspondent
 The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Rules of Procedure of the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) yesterday debated a proposed amendment to a certain clause in the Rules seeking mandatory presence of the Prime Minister in the House at least once a week during sessions, Committee sources said.
 Parliament functions under principles enshrined in the Rules of Procedure of Sangsad.
 Rashed Khan Menon, MP, of the Workers Party moved the amendment to Clause 41 of the Rules in the sixth session of the present Parliament and wanted that the Prime Minister, also Leader of the House, be present in the Jatiya Sangsad during sessions on every Saturday to answer questions relating to the government policies on different issues.
 See Page 12 Col 8

Security Council condemns deportation of Palestinians

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 19: The Security Council late on Friday strongly condemned Israel's deportation of about 400 Palestinians to Southern Lebanon and demanded their immediate safe return, reports Reuter.
 Israel said the UN resolution was unjust and disappointing and ignored that those banished belonged to fundamentalist groups which advocated violence. It says the deportees could return in two years.
 Meanwhile, the Palestinians dumped by Israel in a mist-shrouded South Lebanon no-man's land grappled today with despair that they might never return to their homes.
 A Gaza report adds: Israeli soldiers shot dead six Palestinians in the town of Khan Yunis in the occupied Gaza Strip today, hospital sources said.

BJP leader shot dead in Kashmir

NEW DELHI, Dec 19: A leader of a Hindu fundamentalist party was shot to death Saturday by suspected Muslim militants in the first possible retaliation against Hindu politicians blamed for the razing of a mosque in northern India last week, reports AP.
 The leader, Santosh Thakur, was killed by unidentified gunmen in Jammu-Kashmir state where Islamic guerrillas are fighting a three-year-old war for independence against mostly Hindu India.
 Thakur, who was the regional general-secretary of the pro-Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was shot near his house in the town of Doda, United News of India news agency reported. He died on the way to hospital.
 The area is 335 miles (540 kilometers) northwest of New

Delhi.
 Authorities clamped curfew across the Hindu-majority town called in the army to prevent further trouble, the report said.
 The situation in the town was "very tense but under control," United News quoted district officials as saying.
 Reuter says: Indian Human Resource Development Minister Arjun Singh, widely seen as having prime ministerial ambitions, said today that the time was not right to change the country's leadership.
 "This is not the time to say I told you so," said Singh, who has long been campaigning against the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which the government and the ruling Congress Party hold responsible for the upheaval.

Armed men kill one, stab 3 on Barisal-bound bus

From Staff Correspondent
 BARISAL, Dec 19: Supervisor of a Barisal-bound night coach was killed and two Ansars on duty were injured when a group of muggers stabbed them at Gauranadi in the small hours of Saturday.
 The muggers snatched away two rifles along with five rounds of bullets from the Ansars.
 Witnesses said that the muggers were travelling in the coach in disguise of passengers and ordered the driver to stop the coach when they came to Gauranadi thana of the district. They stabbed the driver as he refused to do so and then attacked the two ansars on duty in the coach.
 The muggers numbering eight also stabbed the supervisor Nurul Islam, when he tried to save the driver by grabbing hold of one of the muggers. Nurul Islam died on the spot.
 The injured persons were admitted to the Gauranadi Thana Health Complex. The muggers were reportedly traveling from Dhaka.

Commentary

Hasina should take a responsible line in her statements

By S.M. Ali

If insinuations and innuendos can form the basis of political statements, the Awami League (AL) President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, Sheikh Hasina has set up a record, but caused totally unnecessary confusion in the public mind on a couple of vital issues facing the country.
 According to a news agency report, she told a rally in Chittagong on Friday that she wondered about the "mystery" that India's "push back" drive for demolition of the Babri Masjid took place after Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's visit to New Delhi and the Jamaat-IBJP meeting in the Indian capital.

No matter how the AL leader put it in Bangla, the insinuation was perfectly clear. Having suggested in recent weeks that Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao had obtained the agreement of Begum Zia for the "push back" operation when the latter visited New Delhi, Hasina now throws a hint that the two prime ministers might have also discussed the demolition of the historic mosque at Ayodhya at the same meeting.
 As if the AL leader now indirectly accuses both Rao and Zia of being involved in or at least being in the know of the most heinous plot hatched

by militant Hindus to destroy the Babri Masjid.
 Whether one calls it just an insinuation or an indirect allegation, this is the most irresponsible statement ever to come from the leader of Hasina's stature, from one who leads the opposition in the parliament as the head of the alternative government.
 While serious political analysts here, not to mention diplomatic circles, may just dismiss the statement as unworthy for any careful consideration, tens of thousands of people who heard Sheikh Hasina at the rally probably
 See Page 12 Col 1

Ban communal politics, minorities demand

By Staff Correspondent
 Bangladeshi Hindu Buddhist Christian Ojha Parishad at a rally in the city yesterday put forward a 5-point charter of demands that included reconstruction of the damaged houses and temples, compensation for the losses incurred and ban on fundamentalist politics in the country.
 General Secretary of the parishad Dr Nimchandra Bhounik announced the demands contained in the declaration adopted in the rally.
 The declaration alleged that five persons were killed, over 700 others injured and about 2400 women harassed during the recent communal disturbances in the country triggered by the demolition of Babri Mosque in India. Besides, it added, about 2800 houses, 2500 business establishments and 3500 temples and places
 See Page 12 Col 3

Hasina tells Ctg public meet Riots outcome of secret BJP-Jamaat meet

CHITTAGONG, Dec 19: Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina today said the demolition of Babri Mosque and outbreak of communal strife in the region was the "outcome of secret meeting between LK Advani of BJP and Abbas-Nazim of Jamaat-e-Islami," reports UNB.
 Addressing a public meeting at Boalkhali Gumdandi Pilot High School this afternoon, she blamed the fundamentalists and fanatics for disturbing communal harmony in the countries of South Asia.
 Fundamentalists and fanatics razed the Babri Mosque in India and their associates Jamaat-Shibir fundamentalists demolished temples and attacked minorities in Bangladesh under a clandestine entente to destabilise the situation in the subcontinent, Hasina said.
 The Awami League Pre-
 sident said her party condemned both the incidents in India and Bangladesh and demanded that those who staged communal violence in the name of religion be brought to justice.
 Hasina was critical of the BNP government for its failure in protecting the life and property of the minorities.
 "There is no room for fundamentalist and communal elements in independent Bangladesh," she added.
 The Awami League leader also rebuked the ruling BNP for its "subversive policy" and said BNP was eloquent about the Parakka issue but remains silent after assuming power. Even the Prime Minister did not raise the issue during her meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao in New Delhi.
 Criticising BNP and Jamaat
 See Page 12 Col 6

'Environmental hazards must be minimised'

Foreign Minister A.S.M. Mostafizur Rahman yesterday stressed the need for developing the scientific and technological aspects of the Islamic countries so as to check their environmental degradation, reports BSS.
 There is a growing awareness that real development and sustaining environmental are interlinked and as such the environmental hazards must be minimised at all costs, he said while inaugurating the second OIC-United Nations sectors meeting on science and technology with special emphasis on environment.
 The opening ceremony was also addressed by Dr. A.M. Patwary, Director General of the Islamic Centre for Technical and Vocational Training and Research (ICTVTR), Dr. Faoud Khanbour, Officer-in-Charge United Nations Environmental Progress (UNEP), Bahrain, Dr. Ararat R. Altamemi, Director General, IFSTAD, Jeddah, Ous-
 See Page 12 Col 8

UAE to deport 250 Bangladeshis for protesting Babri Mosque demolition

United Arab Emirates has decided to deport about 250 Bangladeshis for taking part in the demonstration there to protest demolition of the Babri Mosque in India, according to a report reaching Dhaka yesterday, says UNB.
 Diplomatic sources said the government in the Gulf State listed 250 Bangladeshis working in Abu Dhabi who will be sent back home.
 Demonstration is strictly prohibited in the Emirates, the sources said.
 Reports also said all the 250 Bangladeshis awaiting deportation have been staying illegally in the Emirates.

Poverty alleviation tops SAARC summit agenda

Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman, who is also the new Chairman of SAARC Standing Committee, yesterday said that the agenda of the rescheduled Seventh Summit of the regional forum would put emphasis on three core issues of poverty alleviation, economic growth with social justice and trade within the region, reports BSS.
 Describing the core issues as the key challenges of the region. The abode of one billion people with so many of them living below the poverty line, he said that the seven summit leaders of the region would go into deliberations to chart the course of cooperation for solving these basic problems.
 South Asia as a region, he said is facing the problem of achieving growth, both economic and social. He said both poverty alleviation in the region and achievement of socio-economic growth could not be possible with its own resources alone. It depends on

outside help also.
 The question of socio-economic growth, he said, would get priority consideration over other issues.
 Country studies he said, were conducted by each member country in 1987 followed by a regional studies on the question of trade within the region and the concept of South Asia Regional Preferential Trade was developed.
 The concept he said, now awaits implementation for which the summit leaders will deliberate on the issues related to it.
 The summit leaders would, he said, consider among other things the report of the independent South Asian Commission, setting up the SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians' Association, the feasibility study of the panel of experts on South Asia Development Fund (SADF), plan of action for the adoption of SADF, and the plan of action for the observance of

SAARC year of the disabled.
 The independent South Asia Commission, he said, has been set up to study on how to bring the marginal people in the region into the mainstream.
 The thrust of the summit, he said, would be to bring about a regional commitment for poverty alleviation, deliberate on the national framework and get international support for the cause.
 The setting up of infrastructure, identifying priorities, and projects to be financed from the five million dollar South Asia Regional Fund (SARF), established at the Islamabad Summit, will also be considered by the summit, he said.
 The South Asia Regional Fund, he said, has started with a seed capital of five million dollars.
 He said the pre-feasibility study on setting up South Asia Development Fund (SADF) was on. He also said Asian Development Bank and other
 See Page 12 Col 3

Move to realise taxes from corps fails

By Inam Ahmed
 The government effort to realise taxes due from different public corporations and autonomous bodies has yielded little fruit as most of them are now suffering from an acute liquidity crisis, according to sources in finance and industry ministries.
 The National Bureau of Revenue (NBR) had issued letters to the relevant governing ministries of these corporations in September to clear their due taxes.
 The unrealised amount in taxes from these corporations totals about Taka 250 crore. In addition to this amount another Taka 500 crore remains uncollected from the private organisations.
 According to the sources, only Bangladesh Shipila Rin Sangstha (BSRS) responded positively to the NBR call.
 BSRS has already paid about Taka three crore and agreed to pay another Taka 50 crore of its due tax.
 On the otherhand, some units of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC)
 See Page 12 Col 6

BSRS Order '72 to be amended

By Sohel Manzur
 An ordinance titled "Bangladesh Shipila Rin Sangstha (Amendment) Ordinance, 1992" will be promulgated soon, according to official sources.
 President Abdur Rahman Biswas has already signed the Ordinance that is now awaiting notification in the official gazette, the sources say.
 According to the Ordinance, the Sangstha will be deemed to be a banking company for the purposes of Bank Companies Act, 1991 and Bangladesh Bank Order, 1972 and any other law for the time being in force relating to banking companies.
 The government has amended five articles, replaced two and abolished one of the previous BSRS Order, 1972 through the Ordinance. A new article and a clause have also been added in the order.
 The authorised capital of the company has been fixed at Taka 200 million that would be subscribed by the government and it may also be increased from time to time as per requirement.
 According to the Ordinance, the Board of Directors will consist of a Managing Director and eight other Directors. The government will appoint them 'at any time, and may also terminate the appointments without assigning any reason'.
 The Managing Director and the Directors will hold office for certain periods and on certain terms and conditions.
 The new Article, added with four clauses after Article 39 as Article 39A is, "(1) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Order, the Government may, if in the national interest it deems it expedient so to do, transfer, by agreement, the entire undertaking of the Sangstha to any company registered under the Companies Act, 1913 (VII of 1913), on such terms and conditions as may be settled with such company, (2) Where the entire undertaking of the Sangstha has been transferred
 See Page 12 Col 7

Biman's extra flights to KL until year-end

By Staff Correspondent
 Bangladesh Biman will operate extra flights to Kuala Lumpur until the end of the year to facilitate an expected increased number of passengers.
 According to informed sources, Malaysian authorities will continue to issue visas to Bangladesh citizens on arrival in that country upto December 31. Later visa regulations will be made stringent for all Bangladeshis visiting Malaysia. They will have to obtain visas in advance and need Malaysian sponsors for the purpose.
 Biman authorities believe that the facility to get visas on arrival until the year end will increase the number of passengers to Kuala Lumpur, for which extra flights have been arranged.
 Biman sources said that the airlines would operate four extra flights to KL during this period and arrange more if needed.
 The airline normally operates one flight a week to KL. A Biman press release last night said that if any KL-bound
 See Page 12 Col 6