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NEWS BRIEFS

Bank Rate lowered
 Bangladesh Bank has lowered the bank rate to 8 per cent from 8.5, said a BB press release yesterday. The new rate took effect from yesterday, reports BSS.

Modhu Mela in Sagardari today
 "Modhu Mela" (fair) in observance of the 170th birth day of Poet Michael Madhusudan Dutta will be held at Sagardari in Keshabpur thana of Jessore district today. Social Welfare and Women's Affairs Minister Tariqul Islam will formally inaugurate the mela, while Jute Minister ASM Hannan Shah will attend as the chief guest, reports BSS.

PM's mass contact programme
 BOGRA, Jan 24: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today delighted thousands of villagers when she undertook a two-hour mass contact programme in different areas of Amrul, Chopinagar and Khotapara unions in Gabtali Thana of the district. Begum Zia, who concluded her two-day hectic programmes in two northern districts of the country today, covered about 36 kilometres at Mazira, Aaria Bazar, Amrul, Demazani, Brikhustia, Bihigram, Shahinagar, Duffia and Dablagari of Gabtali thana, reports BSS.

Strike in Sylhet quarries called off
 From Our Correspondent
 SYLHET, Jan 24: The strike in all the quarries called by the Stone Merchants Association and Labourers Association has been called off following a fruitful discussion with the government yesterday.

50 injured : AL chief blames govt Hasina in crossfire at Laldighi Maidan

CHITTAGONG, Jan 24: At least 50 persons were injured, most of them with bullets, as violence before and after address of Sheikh Hasina, the leader of the Opposition in parliament, marred a public meeting here today afternoon, witnesses and police said.

The injured included three police personnel who were admitted to the police hospital while the others were rushed to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital and local clinics, doctors said.

Sheikh Hasina was rescued by police and taken to safety at the adjacent Chittagong Metropolitan Police headquarters.

From Staff Correspondent
 when the shooting spree began after her address at the largely attended public meeting at Laldighi Maidan in the heart of the city.

The meeting was organised to commemorate mass killing here on January 24, 1988. Sheikh Hasina stayed inside

police headquarters for some time.

Chases and counter chases between the supporters of two rival factions of the Awami League continued till 7 pm outside the Laldighi Maidan, police and witnesses said.

Police and witnesses also said the rivalry between the supporters of the two factions in the Awami League and the Chhatra League led to the clashes here.

The indiscriminate gunfire that began after the end of Sheikh Hasina's speech at the AL city unit organised meeting was a sequel to an earlier

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Police obstructing JP women processionists in city yesterday. — Star photo

Awami League calls half-day hartal in Ctg today

Awami League has called for a half-day hartal in Chittagong today (Monday) and 6 am to 12 noon on Tuesday (Jan 26) all over the country to protest firing in Chittagong Sunday, reports UNB.

The party will hold demonstration and procession in Dhaka city and a rally at Bangabandhu Avenue at 3 pm today in support of the country-wide hartal.

The programme was finalised at an emergency meeting of the Awami League Working Committee last night with Abdus Samad Azad in the chair.

Awami League Chief Sheikh has cancelled all her programmes on January 26 and 27. She was scheduled to tour to Rajshahi, Rohanpur, Natore and Gurudaspur on these days.

The decisions of the

See Page 12 Col 8

Govt firm to break poverty circle: PM

BOGRA, Jan 24: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today expressed her confidence that the present government with the people's support will break the circle of poverty and march ahead on the road towards progress, reports UNB.

"There is no alternative to industrialisation," she said assuring government assistance of loans for small and cottage industries.

Begum Zia also called upon the women to integrate themselves in different development activities and take the opportunity of loans for setting up of small industries. "The government will provide loans for poultry, pisciculture, dairy farms, gardens and orchards, and other income generating projects," she said.

The Prime Minister recalled the initiatives of

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200 shops, BKB branch gutted in Munshiganj

From Our Correspondent
 MUNSHIGANJ, Jan 24: A devastating fire gutted 200 shops and a Krishi Bank branch office at the Tungbari Bazar, 15 km from here at the small hours of Sunday, witnesses and fire service sources said.

Local officials estimated the loss at Tk 12 crore.

The fire originated from a tailor house of the bazar and spread to other tinshed shops, the sources said adding that the Krishi Bank was also housed in a tinshed cottage.

Electric short circuit was believed to be the cause of the fire.

UNB adds. The local administration imposed curfew on the devastated bazar from 6 pm today till Monday morning to prevent looting of damaged goods and property.

No human casualties were reported.

BNP has established politics of terrorism: Hasina

From Staff Correspondent
 CHITTAGONG, Jan 24: Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina said today that the present government had established politics of terrorism instead of that of development in the country.

Addressing a public meeting of the Laldighi Maidan here organised by Chittagong chapter of the Awami League in commemoration of the mass killing here January 24, 1988, the opposition leader alleged that due to rampant acts of terrorism the country had been pushed into a chaotic situation with the lives of people

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JS resolution on Babri Mosque Dhaka reviewing Delhi's statement

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi
 The JS adopted the ruling BNP sponsored resolution Wednesday after four days of debates, rejecting seven others moved by Opposition MPs including leader Sheikh Hasina.

The Indian government took "strong exception" to the fact that the resolution condemning the perpetrators of the 16-century mosque demolition and demanding its reconstruction at its original site was moved by the ruling party.

The ruling BNP in Bangladesh has thought it fit to indulge in public denunciation

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APAO confce opens '30000 children go blind a year'

By Staff Correspondent
 Thirty thousand children in Bangladesh go blind every year because of Vitamin-A deficiency and other common childhood diseases like diarrhoea and measles.

This was stated by President Abdur Rahman Biswas while inaugurating the 14th congress of the Asia-Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology (APAO) at Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday.

He also informed the meeting that another 60 thousand people become blind annually due to cataract, a thin

See Page 12 Col 8

Baghdad denies provocation US jet bombs Iraqi radar site again

WASHINGTON, Jan 24: A US Navy jet bombed a radar site in southern Iraq on Saturday after apparently being fired on by Iraqi anti-aircraft guns in the third such incident in three days, the Defence Department said, reports Reuter.

The jet and two other

American warplanes on patrol in the no-fly zone in southern Iraq returned undamaged to the US aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk in the Gulf.

Defence officials said there was no immediate indication if a laser-guided 1,000-pound (450 kg) bomb dropped by an A-6 attack jet from the Kitty Hawk damaged the search radar that attempted to track it and two F-18 jets.

Clinton has been informed about the latest incident, a White House spokesman said, but declined to comment on whether the administration considered it a breach of Iraq's ceasefire pledge.

The Pentagon said in a statement that a Navy A-6 intruder jet was flying a routine night patrol over the region at the time of the incident.

AFP adds: Baghdad today denied provoking a new US attack insisting it was abiding by its ceasefire.

"None of our anti-aircraft defences opened fire or activated its radar," an official spokesman said, quoted by the Iraqi News Agency. "No such incident took place."

Police stop JP women's march

By Staff Correspondent
 Some female activists of the Jatiya Party Sunday broke a police barricade and brought their procession to its destination, the Jatiya Press Club from the Zero Point.

Nearly two dozen members of the JP's female wing brought out the procession from the Muktagong area at around noon and started marching towards the Press Club via Zero Point. Police then moved in to stop the

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10 get ten yrs RI under anti-terrorism law

CHITTAGONG, Jan 24: Abu Baker Siddique, Judge of the Anti-terrorist Tribunal here today sentenced 10 persons to 10 years rigorous imprisonment (RI) and fined Taka 5,000/- each in default to suffer two years more RI, on charge of terrorist activities and looting, reports BSS.

The prosecution story is that some 10 to 12 persons armed with fire arms and crackers assembled unlawfully and exploded crackers at Burma Colony on October 13, 1992.

They also set fire on houses and then looted valuable articles worth about Taka eight to nine lakh from the residents of Burma Colony.

Dhaka puts up candidate for post of FAO DG

Star Report
 Bangladesh has put up Salahuddin Ahmed, presently the Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), as its candidate for the post of Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), according to official sources.

The election of the chief executive of the Rome-based organisation will be held in November this year.

Ahmed, the Home Secretary before taking up the post at WFP, will be up against a number of other strong candidates to succeed Edouard Saouma, the current Lebanese.

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Enam doesn't see reason for less foreign aid

By S Y Bakht
 added.
 The longest serving ERD Secretary, Chaudhury is leaving for Jeddah tomorrow to join his new assignment as the Vice President of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB).

In an interview with The Daily Star, the former ERD Secretary also talked about the disbursement situation which he noted was not bad at all, the problems in implementation, the conditionalities imposed by donors and the role of IDB among the member states.

Noting that although the government, very recently, had done very well in macro-economic management and had

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Enam A. Chaudhury

An invitation to the investors

Dhaka Export Processing Zone, the second EPZ of BEPZA will go into operation soon.

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Projects accepted would be provided factory space or fully developed and serviced land with electricity, water, gas and telecommunication.

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NON-FISCAL

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- Freedom from National Import Policy restrictions
- Off-shore banking facilities available
- Re-location of existing industries from abroad allowed
- All customs formalities done within EPZ

For more details please contact

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