



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a public meeting at Mirpur yesterday. — PID photo



Sheikh Hasina addressing an election meeting at Mirpur yesterday. — Star photo

# The Midnight File

## Six Afghan factions agree on peace formula

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Jan 31: Six Afghan Mujahideen groups have agreed on a peace formula that calls for a ceasefire in the current fighting in Kabul and elections in less than a year. Mujahideen sources said here today. The Pakistani and Saudi ambassadors to Afghanistan brokered the formula that was agreed at a meeting of the group at the eastern Afghan town of Jalalabad, the sources said, reports Reuter.

## Gayoom to give religious lectures in Morocco

COLOMBO, Jan 31: Maldives President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom is to go on a lecture tour of Morocco during Ramadan at the invitation of King Hassan II, the country's high commission here said today. King Hassan II invited Gayoom to participate in a programme of religious addresses during the Ramadan month which begins in February, the Maldives High Commission (embassy) said in a statement, reports AFP.

## Troops target opposition leaders in Zaire

BRAZZAVILLE, Congo, Jan 31: Following two days of riots, troops attacked the homes of government opponents Sunday killing at least one person, a human rights leader said, reports AP. Buane Kabue, leader of the Zaire Human Rights League, also said at least 100 people had died in two days of rioting that began when Zairian regular army troops refused to be paid with apparently worthless 5-million Zaire notes newly printed at the orders of President Mobutu Sese Sese. Kabue and others reached by phone from Brazzaville said Kinshasa was quiet Sunday morning, with little traffic. An overnight curfew has been imposed. The French ambassador and six other foreigners were killed during the violence Thursday and Friday, and France and Belgium have sent troops to help evacuate their nationals. Ten French soldiers arrived Friday to guard the embassy and about 60 French soldiers originally refused permission to enter Kinshasa crossed the Congo River about 10 am (0900 GMT) Sunday to begin evacuating an estimated 150 French nationals. Mobutu warned the Belgian soldiers not to cross the Congo River from Brazzaville to Kinshasa, saying they did not have authority to intervene in their former colony. He said he would arrange for the evacuation of any foreigners who wanted to leave.

## Missions

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Bangladesh while Vietnam, one of the last outposts of communist rule, is emerging as a key player in eastern Asia. The decision to open mission in Hanoi is a wise decision considering Vietnam's prospects as an emerging superpower in the region, said one Dhaka diplomat. "From geopolitical point of view, Vietnam could as well be a prospective trading partner for Bangladesh," the diplomat added. Vietnam, despite its avowed policy of pursuing communist dogma, is opting for economic reforms and opening to the West.

## Youngman found dead in city

By DMCH Correspondent  
An unidentified youngman was murdered at Haji Para, Rampura in the capital Sunday. He was about 22. On an information Sabujbagh police rushed to 62 Haji Para and recovered the body from inside a locked vol-canting shop at around 4 pm yesterday, said police. Sabujbagh police said that the victim could not be identified. The victim's hands were tied up and there were several bruises on the body. The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) morgue for autopsy last night after the primary inquest by police. No arrest was made, said Duty Officer of Sabujbagh Police Station.

## Ekushey

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important events in the SAARC countries. It also marked in red the national days of seven SAARC countries. March 26 was mentioned as Bangladesh National Day, but the Victory Day, December 16, was not printed in red. The 12-page calendar contains paintings by eminent artists of the SAARC countries.

## FM: Mosque incident

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explain he said the French Prime Minister will also be busy with elections in his country. Agencies add: Replying to a question on the repatriation of Chakma refugees from the Indian state of Tripura, Rahman said the talks between the governments and the tribal Shantibahini leaders made substantial progress and a ceasefire still continued. The Foreign Minister said that as per proposal of the Shantibahini leaders, he is going to move a bill in parliament today (Monday) seeking to defer the local bodies elections in the Chittagong Hill Tracts by one year to enable the Chakma refugees to return and join the hustings. Replying to questions on Russian President Boris Yeltsin's reported remark in New Delhi during his recent visit that India, China and Russia could combine to ensure balance of power in the world, he said he found not much rationale behind such proposal. Asked whether it was a kind of "ganging up" by three countries, Rahman said any such combination would appear unworkable without Pakistan which also enjoyed capability of producing nuclear power. On repatriation of the "stranded Pakistanis," the Foreign Minister said these people were being settled in Punjab and in the constituency of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. One cannot foresee any trouble because they were not being rehabilitated in Sindh, he said. OCA President Zahiduzzaman Faruque welcomed the Foreign Minister at the briefing, while General Secretary Farid Hossain presented the vote of thanks.

## Vote-rigging alleged Hartal in Faridpur today, Jessore tomorrow

FARIDPUR, Jan 31: District unit of Awami League today called a half-day hartal in the town tomorrow (Monday) in protest against alleged rigging in pourashava election. — UNB. The hartal call came at a rally of the party held in front of Chalkbazar Jamia Mosque this afternoon. Local Awami League leaders alleged that their chairman candidate Hasibul Hasan Lablu was defeated to the independent candidate Fazlul Kabir Chand by a small margin because of rigging in the election. A meeting jointly organised by AL, JP and five party alliance at Daratana square at 5 pm today demanded the Election Commissioner to cancel the election results and hold a fresh one immediately. They also announced their decision to gherao the office of the Deputy Commissioner, Jessore at 10 am tomorrow (Monday) in support of their demand and college a day long hartal in the town on Tuesday.

## Illiteracy root of poverty : PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday identified widespread illiteracy as the root of country's poverty and backwardness, reports UNB. She said the government is making relentless efforts to reverse the situation through wiping out illiteracy. But she said spreading education could prove to be a great challenge. However difficult the challenge may be, she asserted. "We shall have to surmount it." The Prime Minister was inaugurating a 2-day conference on "Primary and Mass Education Problems and Remedies" at the International Conference Centre here yesterday morning.

There may be differences of opinion, but regarding education there can be no two opinions, Begum Zia said and called upon all irrespective of party affiliation, opinion and social standing to come forward for spreading education.

She pointed out that the country's education system, dating back to 1854, had progressed very little. The nation has achieved barely 25 per cent literacy rate. "If we progress at this speed, we will require another seven hundred years to make our entire population literate."

Referring to the resource constraints, Begum Zia said it can only be overcome by educating the masses and added the present government had laid stress on education which is her party's political commitment. "Our goal is to achieve Education for All by the year 2000," she said.

Pointing out that women constitute half of the country's population, Begum Zia said stressed had been laid on education of women.

## Zardari granted bail

KARACHI, Jan 31: An appeals court on Sunday granted bail to Asif Ali Zardari, the jailed husband of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, reports AP. The Sindh High Court set Zardari's bond at 500,000 rupees (dhs 20,000) on an illegal possession of weapons charge. But the High Court must agree to grant bail on pending charges of kidnapping and extortion before Zardari can be freed. A hearing on those charges was scheduled for Monday.

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## Khaleda

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the local school, and women. Chaired by the BNP chief in Uttara Kudrate Elahi Liton, the largely-attended meeting was also addressed by the State Minister for Religious Affairs, MA Mannan, Dhaka City Mayor Mirza Abbas, MP, Mir Shauqat Ali MP, Amanullah Aman, MP, Salauddin Ahmed, MP, Dr Moin Khan, MP. Major (Retd) Quamrul Islam, MP, ATM Alamgir, MP, BNP nominee in the by-poll Syed Mohammad Mohsin and some party leaders of Harirampur. The Prime Minister told the meeting there were two trends in the country's politics—the politics of production and development and the politics of destruction, anarchy and terrorism. "BNP has pursued the first trend and carried forward development and production activities in the country" she said, "they (meaning the opposition) were engaged in the politics of ruination, which the countrymen has already rejected."

The PM listed the people-oriented steps her government had adopted and sought people's cooperation to implement them. She urged the locals not to vote for those who did not want uplift and welfare of the masses. The PM announced that the Kamarkhal School would be developed new schools set up, and Harirampur area provided with other facilities including electricity. She asked the womenfolk of the locality to take the advantage of loans for poultry, dairy and cottage industries, offered by her government and contribute to their respective families and also the national economy.

## Industries' workers postpone strike call

The Sammilita Sangram Parishad of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation, Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation and Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation's Workers' Federation have postponed their proposed 72-hour strike call scheduled to begin on February 2 for next two months, an official source said last night, reports BSS. The decision came out following the fruitful discussion between the Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan, Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Industries Secretary Dr Ekram Hossain and the labour leaders of the Sammilita Sangram Parishad.

The meeting also decided that further discussion will continue to chalk out the specific measures to solve the problems of workers and employees of the corporations. The labour leaders of the meeting also requested for early implementation of the Wage Commission report. The Labour Minister agreed to consider the request.

Iskander Ali and Joynal Abedin President and General Secretary of the Bangladesh Chemical Workers Federation, Mostafizur Rahman Chowdhury and AKM Nazrul Islam, President and General Secretary of Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporations Employees and Workers Federation, Alauddin Miridha of Bangladesh Sugar Workers Federation and Wadud Sharif General Secretary BSFC Central Employees Union took part in the discussion, the source said.

## JS session

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The proposed bill is aimed at enabling the tribal Chakma refugees to return to the hill tracts from Indian state of Tripura and join the hustings. Talking to overseas correspondents based in Dhaka, the Minister described the talks between the government and the Shantibahini leaders as "quite positive" and said the bill is being moved as per proposal of the Shantibahini.

## Gold-smuggling case Lankin went to ZIA to 'release friend's goods'

By Court Correspondent  
Former Russian information officer Vladimir I Lankin Sunday admitted that he went to the air freight godown at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) to get released to the consignments I became request from one of his closest friends in Dhaka. "But my friend Kalim bin Gulshan did not tell me that the consignments were full of gold", Lankin told The Daily Star yesterday as he was being taken to the Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate on completion of a four-day police remand. Lankin and two other Bangladeshis Ambrose Gomes and SM Ratan were arrested in connection with smuggling nearly two maunds of gold into the country from Singapore last Monday. When all the three accused were produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate after the end of four-day police remand yesterday, Lankin made a confessional statement under Section 164 of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) and was sent to the Dhaka Central Jail while two others Gomes and Ratan, both staff of clearing and forwarding agents were taken on a further two-day remand by Detective Branch (DB) police for questioning. Swapon Das, a staff of the Russian Embassy in Dhaka, who was also arrested in connection with the sensational gold case will be produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate today (Monday). "When the gold was found in the consignments I became stounded. If I had known I would never have gone to get the consignments released", Lankin told The Daily Star.

No bail petition for Lankin was moved in the Court yesterday. But his lawyers Abdul Mannan Khan and Fazilatunnessa submitted a prayer before the Magistrate for first class division in jail for Lankin. The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Shahiduddin Ahmed fixed today (Monday) for hearing on the prayer. Advocate Nazrul Islam prayed for bail for Ratan and Gomes but the Magistrate rejected the bail petition and granted two-day police remand on another prayer by the DB for further questioning. The lawyer defended Ratan and Gomes saying "these two people are staff of clearing and forwarding agents and are not responsible for the smuggling... they were only representing their agents to get the consignments released."

However the Court Inspector Manwara Begum argued that Ratan and Gomes should not be granted bail as the case was under investigation.

## Work stoppage at DMCH continues

By DMCH Correspondent  
Doctors, nurses and other staff of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) abstained from duties for three hours from 10 am to 1 pm yesterday the second consecutive day of their programmes in protest against storming of the hospital by armedmen last Thursday. They also held a press conference at the hospital in the morning demanding official investigation into Thursday's incidents and punishment to persons involved. Hundreds of Dhaka University students assaulted doctors and staff of the DMCH and ransacked several rooms Thursday following death of a university student Yusuf Ali Sheikh.

Students alleged that Yusuf died unattended at the DMCH while doctors said that he was brought dead. Fresh action programme will be announced today.

## Poura elections

From Page 1 Col 7  
of the just held elections were the people's protest against the undemocratic behaviour of the government. The ruling party candidates' defeat in the majority of seats by those of the Opposition indicated that the government was not acting according to the will of the people, Nasim said adding the BNP should get the message for the sake of its own survival as the ruling party and for democracy to be put on a firm footing in the country. Jatiya Party leader Monirul Hoque Chowdhury expressing his reaction on the polls said that the result of the pourasabha elections clearly showed that the Opposition secured more seats than the ruling party. "It was a clear no confidence of the people in the incumbent government", the JP leader added. The JP leader also believed that the government should go for a mid-term parliamentary poll to get fresh mandate of the people to govern the country following the pouira election results. Poll Results on Page 2

## Hasina

From Page 1 Col 7  
Mohammad Nasim MP, the AL candidate in the election Kamal Majumder and Abdus Samad Azad MP. Later in the evening Hasina addressed the second rally at Mirpur No-10 square. It was her last campaign meeting for the election scheduled for February 3. It was addressed, among others, by Abdur Razzak MP, Momtaz Hossain, Obaidul Kader and Amir Hossain Anu. Both the meeting venues were decorated with banners, placards and the party symbol "Boat". The AL will organise a procession today (Monday) at 2 pm at Mirpur as part of the campaign. Earlier, on the way to Mirpur from her Mintoo Road official residence, her motorcycle made a brief stop at the Gulshan house of industrialist Aziz Sattar who died Sunday of cancer. Sattar was a friend of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Hasina who delivered almost identical speeches at the two rallies, said that in parliament, the BNP MPs had objected to most of the AL's people-oriented proposals like primary schools in every village and reductions in prices of diesel and had passed the Anti-terrorism Bill to "terrorise the country."

The BNP's development programme only aimed at improving the condition of ministers, party MPs and their relatives, Hasina alleged. "I think the Mirpur people who had voted BNP candidate Harun Mollah will now correct themselves and vote for boat," she hoped.

She also said that the so-called uncompromising leader had compromised with the deposed autocrat and nominated one of his close aides. On the way from one meeting venue to the other, the Opposition leader offered Asar and Magreb prayers at the Mirpur Mazar.

## Doctors observe strike in Sylhet

From Our Correspondent  
SYLHET, Jan 31: Doctors in all the government and health complexes including the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College observed 24-hour work abstention today at the call of the Sylhet district unit of the Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) in protest against the arrest of a Lecturer of Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College. Syed Abu Qasem, a Lecturer of the Pathology Department of the Medical College, was arrested by Sylhet Katwali thana police on January 18 for his alleged involvement in a murder case of Chahalgaia thana under Feni district.

## 10 hurt: Defeated candidates' supporters clash

SIRAJGANJ, Jan 31: At least 10 people were injured and three houses ransacked in a clash between the supporters of two defeated chairman candidates here at Al-Mahmud Avenue in Hossainpur area of the town today (Sunday), reports UNB. According to preliminary estimate property worth about Tk one lakh was damaged in the clash.

## Iraq

From Page 1 Col 5  
Maurizio Zifferero, ending a six-day routine inspection visit, said the key test would be Iraq's answers to questions about foreign suppliers to be presented by UN inspectors in the next few weeks. "They know that this is a stumbling block. We cannot even conceive of giving them a declaration of compliance without being satisfied or fully satisfied on the procurement side," he told reporters before leaving Baghdad for Bahrain with his eight-member team.