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# The Daily Star

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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**Gunmen open fire at minister's house**

From Our Correspondent  
 FARIDPUR, Feb 1: Unidentified gunmen opened fire at the residence of Health Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf in the town today. None was injured. Witnesses said that several persons riding four motorcycles arrived in front of the Tarar Mela Road residence of the minister and shot five rounds at about 7 pm.

**Shab-e-Barat February 8**

Holy Shab-e-Barat will be observed in the country on February 8 (Monday). Bars and wine shops will remain closed from sundown on February 7 to February 8 night on the solemn occasion, reports UNB.

**Heart bypass on B Chowdhury done**

Bypass surgery on Professor AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Deputy Leader of the Jatiya Sangsad was done yesterday afternoon in Singapore's Mount Elizabeth Hospital, according to a message received from the island state. The operation was successful and the condition of Prof Chowdhury is stated to be good, reports BSS.

**ALPP meets today**

Awami League parliamentary party will meet today at 9:30 am at the conference room of the leader of the opposition in parliament Sheikh Hasina will preside over the meeting. Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim has requested the party MPs to attend it, reports UNB.

**Murder of port contractor: 3 held**

CHITTAGONG, Feb 1: Port police today arrested three persons in connection with the murder of port contractor Tofazzal Ahmad in the port area yesterday, reports BSS.

## Heated 'debate' in JS over AL fear of vote-fraud in Mirpur

By Staff Correspondent

Parliament, deviating from the Rules of Procedure, last night entered a heated 'debate' after the Awami League (AL) assumption that the ruling BNP would rig the Mirpur by-election and the latter's strongly protesting it.  
 At a phase in the debate Shaikh Razzak Ali, presiding over the session, asked the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina not to violate the rule while giving her speech in the House.  
 The Speaker told the Opposition leader that she should not force the Chair to switch off her mike by means of going beyond the Rules of Procedure.  
 In reply to the Speaker, Hasina argued that there was

no convention in the world that the chair may put off the mike of the Opposition leader while he or she was addressing the House.  
 The Speaker asserted that nobody including the leader of the opposition could violate the Rules of Procedure.  
 Hasina, however, asserted that she had the right especially when it was necessary to deliberate on issues of national interest.  
 In a bid to argue on her stance, Hasina said that the rules were made, and if necessary, amended, by the MPs.  
 Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah, Minister for Public Works, however told the House later that the Leader of the Opposition could not violate

the rules until they were amended in the House in her favour.  
 The 45-minute unscheduled debate, however, began with AL MP Tofael Ahmed claiming that the ruling BNP, with a view to influencing the result of the by-election scheduled for tomorrow, recently disbursed a grant of Taka 7,500 to each of the 150 mosques in the Mirpur constituency from the public exchequer.  
 In support of his claim the AL MP told the Chair that he could produce a taka 7,500 bank cheque in the House, issued by the government yesterday in favour of the Shewrapara Jame Mosque.  
 The moment Tofael finished,

Sheikh Hasina took the floor to accuse the ministers of rigging the just held pourashaba polls.  
 She said where there was a Minister during the polls, there was terrorism and rigging of votes.  
 The opposition leader, however, particularly accused the Agriculture Minister and Acting Deputy Leader of the House Majid-ul-Hoque, Food Minister Shamsul Islam, LORD Minister Salam Talukder and Social Welfare Minister Tariqul Islam of rigging pourashaba elections in their respective constituencies.  
 On the Mirpur by-election to be held tomorrow, Hasina told the House that government  
 See Page 12 Col 5

## 'Ghost ships' call at Ctg outer-anchorage

By S Y Bakht

Chittagong Port officials are failing to trace the whereabouts of some ships anchoring at the outer-anchorage of the Port and establishing radio contact.  
 In an official letter late last year, the Member (Operation) of the Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) disclosed that within a four-month period the radio control room recorded the arrival, without prior announcement as required of four such ships at the outer-anchorage of the port.  
 However, the letter noted, at the Berthing Meeting held April 16 it was decided to send a CPA Pilot to the outer-anchorage as no local agents made any announcements about those two ships at the  
 See Page 12 Col 8

## 222 to get plots in Uttara

The Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkya (Rajuk) has initiated process to allot residential plots to 222 out of 508 applicants who had applied for plots in Uttara Model Town in 1986, Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, reports BSS.  
 Making a statement he said 6171 applications were received for plots in Uttara following newspapers advertisements in 1986 and 4517 were given the plots.  
 Of the remaining 1654, the minister said, 1146 applicants had withdrawn their deposit money, leaving the cases of 508 under examination of the authorities.  
 He said finalisation on the  
 See Page 12 Col 7

## Where there is problem there is BNP: Khaleda

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday lashed out at a certain opposition party which, she said, failed to see the government's development achievements, reports UNB.  
 In a veiled attack on the Awami League, she alleged that they had gone out of their mind and were engaged in spreading canards.  
 "BNP government is implementing development programmes across the country in keeping with our election pledges... we have initiated the politics of production and development", she told a huge rally at Mirpur Section 10 crossing in the afternoon.  
 In a last-minute campaign for Wednesday's crucial by-election for Mirpur constituency, seen as a test of popularity for the ruling party, Begum Zia said BNP will go ahead with its politics of production and development. "We want to ensure the welfare of the people... where there is problem there is BNP."  
 She called for people's support for continuing with the government's development programmes and sought votes for her party candidate in the February 3 by-election in Mirpur.  
 The Prime Minister highlighted some redeeming features of her government. She

said the per capita income has gone up from US 170 dollars to US 210 dollars since it came to power in early 1991.  
 Begum Zia further pointed out that her government has implemented development work of nearly Taka 18,000 crore during the last two years.  
 "But there is one political party which does not see any development", she said listing the uplift programmes of her government.  
 Begum Zia said two separate political trends have been created in the country. On the one hand, she said, is the politics of development and production — which is led by BNP. The other is the politics of destruction, indiscipline and anarchy which, she alleged, is being led by a certain political party.  
 "They want to cripple the present parliament, a fruit of nine years of struggle against autocracy", she alleged.  
 The Prime Minister called upon the people of the area to integrate themselves with the development activities of the government. She said a number of programmes have been undertaken for development of Mirpur.  
 Begum Zia assured that a hospital will be built soon for the huge population of 22 lakh living in the Mirpur area.  
 See Page 12 Col 3

## Hasina visits Mirpur areas

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday visited Mirpur Tinsed No 13 and 14-8 and Mirpur quarter No 14 on an election campaign for her party nominee Kamal Ahmed Majumder, reports UNB.

Hasina talked to the cross-section of people and urged them to vote for "boat" on February 3 parliamentary by-election.

The opposition leader also visited the riot police quarter in Mirpur.

## Candidates, agents asked to collect pass

Candidates of the February 3 parliamentary by-election in Mirpur constituency, their election agents and polling agents have been asked to seek permission from the authorities to enter the polling centres, reports UNB.  
 A press release of the Election Commission said yesterday anybody other than voters, election officials and the Magistrate on duty will need a written permission from the Election Commission, Returning Officer or Presiding Officer to enter the polling centres or stay there to oversee polling.

## Bills to defer polls to three CHT councils

Three separate amendment bills were yesterday introduced in the Jatiya Sangsad seeking the extension of time limit to hold elections to the local government councils of three hill districts — Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban — by 545 days from the expiry of tenure of these councils, reports BSS.

The bills were introduced by the Foreign Minister ASM Mustafizur Rahman.

The statements of objects and reasons of the bills said that as per Section 10 of the Hill District Local Government Act of 1989, elections to the three local government councils were scheduled to be completed within January 9 of 1993.

On November 5, 1992, in a meeting with the Convenor of the committee for resolving the problems of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, the Communications Minister, Oli Ahmed, the leaders of the so-called Shantibahini had requested to postpone the election till the return of the Bangladesh tribals staying in the Tripura state of India and till the end of talks with them (Shantibahini).

The Convenor of the Chittagong Hill Tract affairs in agreement with the other members of the committee  
 See Page 12 Col 1

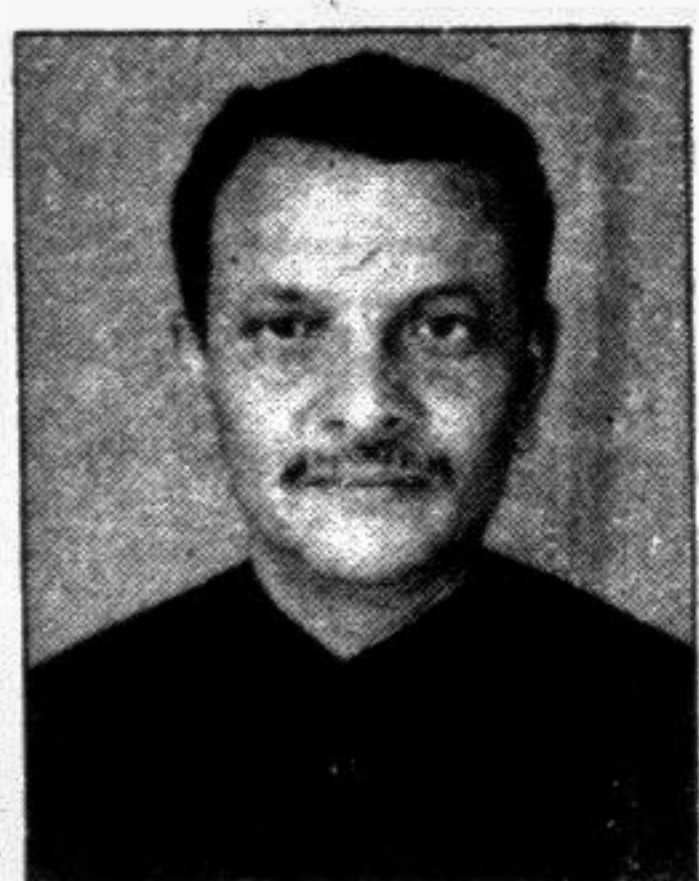


Visitors at a stall in Bangla Academy Ekushey Book Fair yesterday.  
 —Star photo

## Population Day today

National Population Day will be observed today throughout the country with its theme focused on newly married couples to bring them under family planning services, reports UNB.  
 The day also opens a Family Planning Week to be observed all over the country.  
 Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday called for active participation of all in population activities.  
 In a message Begum Zia said every year more than 11 lakh and a half lakh newly married couples begin their conjugal life.  
 She said it has become urgent to bring the fertile newly married couples under the concept of planned family. She said the selection of slogan of this year's National Population Day 'first child after 20 to the newly married wife and the second at least after two years', has been appropriate.  
 She said the conscious people of the society should collectively come forward to motivate the newly married couples with the spirit of the slogan.  
 To mark the day, different socio-cultural organisations have chalked out programmes, including colourful procession, reception to the newly wed couples, award to the best family planning workers, seminar, discussion and sports.

## Curtain comes down on campaign



## I must win if vote is fair, says Kamal

Awami League candidate in the Mirpur by-election Kamal Ahmed Majumder fears violence during balloting scheduled for tomorrow in the parliamentary constituency.  
 "If the by-poll is held neutrally and peacefully, I must win it by 30,000 votes," Majumder told The Daily Star in an exclusive interview at his campaign office in Mirpur yesterday.  
 Commenting on his main rival Syed Mohammad Mohsin  
 See Page 12 Col 4

## Last-minute vote-seeking in Mirpur

Mirpur residents yesterday witnessed last-minute campaigning mainly by the major parties — BNP, Awami League and Jatiya Party — for their respective candidates in tomorrow's by-election to the Dhaka-11 (Mirpur) constituency of Parliament.  
 The nearly month-long campaign got a new dimension with the country's two top leaders — BNP chairperson Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and AL chief and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina's addressing campaign meetings during the past few days urging voters to elect their respective candidates.  
 Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday addressed a big public meeting at Mirpur bringing an end to her four-day publicity tour for the party nominee, Syed Mohammad Mohsin.  
 The opposition leader Hasina, on the other hand, concluded her four-day campaign for AL candidate Kamal  
 See Page 12 Col 2



## BNP victory is inevitable, says Mohsin

By Nazmul Ashraf  
 Syed Mohammad Mohsin, contesting the Mirpur by-election on the BNP ticket, hopes tomorrow's balloting takes place peacefully and neutrally.  
 Talking to The Daily Star at his Mirpur residence yesterday, Mohsin confidently said, "BNP's victory in the by-poll is inevitable."  
 Asked about the other contestants, Mohsin, educated in the United States, replied, "To  
 See Page 12 Col 3

## National Poetry Festival begins

By DU Correspondent  
 The seventh two-day National Poetry Festival '93 began yesterday (Monday) with participants calling for unity against the anti-liberation elements.  
 The festival opened at the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) Square of the Dhaka University with eminent poet Begum Sufia Kamal as the chief guest.  
 More than two hundred poets from different parts of the country are participating in the festival.  
 Poet Syed Samsul Huq presided over the inaugural session of the festival yesterday morning organised by the Jatiya Kabita Parishad (National Poetry Council).  
 The slogan of the festival is "Joy Banglar, Joy Kabita".  
 Addressing the function Sufia Kamal said that we could easily root out the anti-liberation criminals if 11 crore people of the country unite.  
 Shamsul Huq in his speech expressed dismay over the situation that the persons who struggled to force the government try the anti-liberation forces have now been themselves charged with 'so-called  
 See Page 12 Col 7

## Month-long Ekushey book fair begins

By Staff Correspondent  
 The largest cultural and literary festival of the nation Amar Ekushey Granthamela (a book fair to commemorate the Historic Language Movement) began Monday at the Bangla Academy premises in the afternoon.  
 Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman inaugurated the fair that would remain open for a month offering new books on various subjects for the readers. Director General of the Academy Prof Harun-ur-Rashid presided over the inaugural function while Director Nurul Huda delivered the address of welcome.  
 The book fair organised by Bangla Academy in cooperation with the Pustak Prokashak O Biktreta Samity is participated by a total of 338 publication houses and socio-cultural and literary organisations while the academy compound and in the adjoining road was 480. Last year the number of organisations was 272 and the number of stalls, 375.  
 Most of the stalls have started selling books to the public since 4 pm yesterday. Some stalls could not operate  
 from the first day as their decoration were yet to be completed.  
 A large number of people visited the fair on the first day although the sale was few according to some stall owners.  
 "Most of them came to observe and prepare their mind to buy on the following days", one of them said.  
 An early morning rain yesterday turned some areas of the academy premises into a quagmire, which deprived a few stalls between the two main gates of the academy of clients. Although the rain was a welcome relief to a large number of people as it saved them from a late-winter dusty air of such a crowded place.  
 The remarkable aspects of this year's book fair are, the increase in the number of book stalls, setting up of an electronic display board atop the academy building for providing information about books and introduction of raffle coupon for buyers of Bangla Academy books worth Taka 100.  
 Bangla Academy has published a total of about 100 new books and reprinted 43 books  
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## Feasibility of shifting Rohingya camps discussed

Feasibility of shifting the Rohingya refugee camps from the vicinity of forest in Cox's Bazar was discussed at a high-level meeting here yesterday, reports UNB.  
 The discussion took place when United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) mission Chief Darioush Byandor called on Environment, Forest and Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al-Noman at his office.  
 They, officials said, also talked the issue of damage to the forestry in the area by the Myanmar refugees as well as ways and means of protecting the forest resources from further damage.  
 Senior Programme Officer of the mission Kedar P Neupane, Economist of the Programme and Technical Support Section Josef F Auer, head of the sub-office of the mission at Cox's Bazar Stefano and Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forest Aktar Ali Khan were present in the meeting.

## Jahanara Imam returns

By Staff Correspondent  
 The Anti-Fundamentalist Committee for Resistance of the Killers and Collaborators of 71 would start fresh movement soon as its convenor returned home Monday after medical care in the United States.  
 "I will start working for the committee from tomorrow (Tuesday) after overnight rest," Jahanara Imam told several hundred supporters outside the terminal of Zia International Airport on her arrival on a British Airways flight in  
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## Political stability a must to woo foreign investors in S Asia

NEW DELHI, Feb 1: Cash-strapped South Asian countries trying to woo elusive Japanese companies agreed on Monday that they must restore political stability in the region to attract sceptical foreign investors, reports Reuters.  
 Economic experts from Tokyo and the seven-member South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) at a seminar in New Delhi said Tokyo was wary of investing in a region lacking political stability.  
 "No doubt... the sensitive question of political stability must figure quite prominently in the thinking of the Japanese corporate sector as far as investing in South Asia is concerned," said Bangladesh's ambassador to India, Farooq Sobhan.  
 Sobhan said Japan was also watching the progress of economic reforms in SAARC, which groups Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.  
 "Whilst there is a strong

measure of support for the economic reform programmes in the different South Asian countries, there is perhaps the feeling that these reforms need to take root and that much more still needs to be done in the area of implementation," he said.  
 The experts, meeting for the second time in less than a year, agreed on the need to model SAARC after the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), which groups Indonesia, Malaysia,

The Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Brunei.  
 "While by 1991 the number of Japanese investments in industrial ventures was close to 3,000 in the ASEAN countries, it was just over 100 in the SAARC countries," Sobhan said.  
 India's External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh said boosting economic ties with Japan could help improve political ties among the member states of SAARC.  
 "Economic cooperation be-

tween South Asian countries assisted by Japan can go a long way in removing misgivings, promoting collaboration and creating interest in the well-being of one another."  
 The new climate created by recent economic reforms in South Asian countries had generated "great opportunities for increased Japanese investment," he said.  
 "There is also a proposal to set up a Japan-South Asia centre in Tokyo on similar lines as Japan-ASEAN centre," he

said.  
 At the end of 1990, cumulative Japanese investments in South Asia represented only 0.02 per cent of Japanese investments abroad, Singh said.  
 Japan's 6.5 billion US dollar trade with the countries of South Asia amounted to around 10 per cent of its 62 billion US dollars trade with ASEAN countries.  
 "Japanese investment in this region has also been extremely small, less than two  
 See Page 12 Col 7

See Page 12 Col 7