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## NEWS BRIEFS

### DU exams postponed

All the examinations, both course and traditional systems, under Dhaka University scheduled for February 6 and 10 have been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances. The fresh dates for the examinations will be announced soon, reports UNB.

### Hasina hails people of Mirpur

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday congratulated the people of Mirpur for giving "a clear verdict" in favour of her party candidate Kamal Ahmed Majumdar in the February 3 parliamentary by-election. In a statement, Hasina said that through the by-election, the people of Mirpur had demonstrated their no confidence against the "incompetent government ignoring intimidation, temptation and repression," reports UNB.

### 1100 grams of heroin seized

JHENIDAH, Feb 5: Police seized 1100 grams of heroin from Hat Gopalpur in sadar thana of the district today (Friday) and arrested three people for their alleged involvement. Acting on a tip, police raided a tea stall of one Shamsuddin at Hat Gopalpur in the morning and seized 700 grams of heroin. Another 400 grams of heroin was recovered by police from the house of Alhaj Hossain of village Barbari on a confidential statement by Shamsuddin, reports UNB.

### Two students hurt in bomb blast

MANIKGANJ, Feb 5: Two school students were injured, one seriously, in a bomb explosion at Shibbalaya today (Friday). The explosion occurred at about 10.30 am in the house of Abdur Rashid at Shibbalaya where the two boys were making hand bombs. Police was informed by the local people, reports UNB.

## Mirpur by-election results

# Awami League to seek legal action

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League Friday accused the government of violating the Constitution and said it would seek legal action against the government's alleged intervention in the Mirpur by-election results. Speaking at a press conference at The Jatiya Press Club the AL leaders demanded re-election at 18 polling centres. "We have already sought legal action against the violation of the Constitution and as part of it have tendered written complaints to the Returning Officer," said KM Jahangir, Chief Election Agent of the Awami League candidate. Barrister KS Nabi has already been appointed legal counsel to start the process, he said. The AL leaders putting forward an 11-point allegation further said that some 'dishonest' officials in collusion

with DMP Commissioner Mirza Raqibul Huda manipulated Wednesday's by-election results at some polling centres in Mirpur. Awami League, chief coordinator in the Mirpur by-election Begum Matia Chowdhury and nominee Kamal Ahmed Majumdar were present at the press conference. Jahangir accused that the government had violated the Articles 118 (4), 119 (1) and 126 of the Constitution. The articles gave the Election Commission complete freedom to hold the election saying that the executive authorities would cooperate with the Commission in carrying out its responsibilities. Awami League leaders also alleged the ruling party of violating the PRO 1972 and the Election Code of Conduct. Awami League leaders said

that the BNP ministers Goyeshwar Roy, Sadek Hossain Khoka, Major Mannan and Maya Mirza Abbas had tried to influence the election officials and the voters, despite earlier requests from the Election Commission not to move around in the constituency on the election day. Jahangir said the EC empowered with Article 26 of the Constitution had requested the ministers not to be present at Mirpur during the time of voting on February 3 in the interest "of fair and neutral election". Jahangir said the EC also asked the DMP Commissioner not to go to Mirpur on the election day in the 'interest of fair and neutral polls' and entrusted the Additional Police Commissioner with the responsibility to maintain law and order there. See Page 12 Col 1

## AL calls 6-hour hartal today

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League has called hartal in the city today from 6 am to 12 noon in protest against what it said manipulation of the Mirpur by-election results and police harassment on in Mirpur Wednesday. The AL also has called a nationwide eight-hour hartal on Wednesday from 6 am on the same issue. The Mirpur wing of AL has, meantime, called a weeklong half day hartals from Saturday excepting the day of holy Shabe-Barat of February 7. In support of tomorrow's hartal, the party brought out a torch procession from Bangbandhu Avenue yesterday evening. The processionists paraded the streets in old Dhaka. Sheikh Hasina has appealed to the people to observe half-day hartal in the city today and countrywide on February 10 protesting "media coup and See Page 12 Col 8

## Shantibahini truce violations hamper peace process

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Feb 5: The Shantibahinim continue to violate the truce they unilaterally declared last year jeopardising the prospects for a negotiated settlement of the Chittagong Hill Tracts' troubles. At least 30 incidents violation of ceasefire have taken place in the Hill Tracts in the last three months, security sources said. Yesterday, the Shantibahinim kidnaped four workers from a brickfield at Kaptai. On January 16 last, they also ambushed an Army patrol at Rangamati in which one soldier was critically injured. A similar incident occurred on January 13 at Bandarban. Meanwhile, the insurgents have also geared up their drive for toll collection. The Shantibahinim kidnaped about 50 tribals and non-tribals during the last three months. They were, however, released after payment of ransom. Security sources say the tribal rebels appear to have been using their ceasefire period to regain their economic strength as well as to mend internal problems. They are visiting houses in plain clothes with arms and collecting tolls. Sources said the amount collected through tolls in the last three months could be around Taka six crore. The Shantibahinim were earlier in severe economic hardship and their toll collection fell far below Taka one crore following a ban by the government on the extraction of bamboo and wood from hill districts in 1989, officials said. Before the ban, the insurgents used to extract toll from bamboo and timber merchants. The ban was lifted on December 24, last year.

## 10 multinationals bid for JMBA project

Star Report

Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority (JMBA) has received technical offers from 10 multinational companies through tenders received by the authority on Monday last, according to official sources. Of the tenders six were for the bridge and the rest for the river training works, the sources said. Out of the total four components of the Jamuna Bridge Project, tenders for two components (two approach roads in east and west sides of the river) had already been received in January, the sources said, adding that the JMBA was now scrutinising the technical offers submitted by the companies. After selecting some of those firms through evaluation of their offers, the authority would seek financial offer from them before issuing work orders, they said. The tenders for the works were floated on September 1, 1992. The project would involve about 528 million US dollar. The work order of the project is likely to be issued by the middle of this year and the final work would begin in January next.

## US to study fairness of Bosnian peace plan

WASHINGTON, Feb 5: President Bill Clinton said on Thursday an international peace plan for Bosnia was important but he stopped short of endorsing it, saying the United States still was reviewing its options on the civil war there, reports Reuter. The White House said the President would support the peace plan if all the parties to the civil war there accepted it. The Bosnian Muslims are opposed. "I think anything, any effort that increases the chance of some ultimately peaceful solution is important," Clinton told reporters. "But I think the United States has under review now all of its options in that area. And I think at this time the position the Secretary of State has taken is the one that we have agreed on and the one I think is proper," Clinton said. Secretary of State Warren Christopher told reporters he was taking some time to study the "fairness and feasibility" of the peace plan, which was worked out by Lord Owen, a former British Foreign Secretary, and former US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. The plan would divide

Bosnia and Herzegovina into 10 semi-autonomous provinces — three mostly Serb, two mostly Croat, three mostly Muslim and two mixed. All would be tied together by a loose central government. White House spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers denied Clinton was trying to block the plan or was shirking a leadership role in solving the Bosnia crisis, as some critics have claimed. Clinton "is just now saying that if the parties agree to it, that he would support it. But so far all the parties have not agreed to it," Myers said at a news briefing. She said Clinton was consulting with his National Security Advisers and would have a more definitive announcement on US policy toward Bosnia in the near future. However, she said there was no specific timetable. Silajdzic called for enforcement of UN resolutions on Bosnia, international control of all heavy weapons used by both sides in the conflict and an end to the siege of Sarajevo. "If we do not soon lift the siege of Sarajevo, we are talking about not tens of thousands See Page 12 Col 8

## 1,142 more Rohingyas go home

COX'S BAZAR, Feb 5: A total of 1,142 Rohingya refugees of 245 families returned home today (Friday) under the supervision of UNHCR, reports UNB. Official sources said the 23rd batch of the Myanmar refugees from Nayapara transit camp in Teknaf thana left for their home in Arakan province voluntarily in the presence of UNHCR officials on the bank of the bordering Naaf river. With this, the total of refugees repatriated stood at 19,831 out of some 2.65 lakh sheltered in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts. Additional Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner AFM Solaiman Ahsan was also present during the repatriation from 7.30 am to 10 am. The next batch of the refugees is expected to go home on Sunday (February 7).

## Hearing on Babri Mosque cases Feb 22

LUCKNOW, Feb 5: The special full bench of the Lucknow High Court today fixed February 22 for hearing on whether the suits relating to Ram Janmabhoombi-Babri Masjid cases stood abated following acquisition of certain areas at Ayodhya by the central government, reports PTI. The State of Uttar Pradesh and the Hindu Mahasabha while filing their objections against the amendment application moved by the Sunni Waqf Board in the said suits raised the above objection. It was contended that since all the suits relating to the disputed site had already been abated as a result of the acquisition vide ordinance number eight of 1993 issued by the centre, the application for amendment moved by the Waqf Board was "misconceived and not maintainable." It was further contended that the present bench had been specially constituted for hearing the suits and since the said suits already stood abated, the authority of the bench had also come to an end and no application could be entertained by it now.

## AI airbus with 254 catches fire after take-off

NEW DELHI, Feb 5: All 254 people on board an Air India airbus were reported unhurt after the plane landed in a southern Indian city with an engine damaged by fire after take-off, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said today, reports AFP. The incident occurred late Thursday when pilots of the Air India flight from Trivandrum to Saudi Arabia spotted fire in one of the engines and circled over the Arabian Sea to dump fuel before landing, PTI said.

## Six killed, 39 injured in road accidents

Six people were killed and 39 others injured, 23 of them seriously, in two separate road mishaps in Manikganj and Bandarban yesterday, report agencies. UNB adds: Three people, including a woman, were killed and 25 others injured when a minibus fell into a road side ditch near Kolda Bazar at Harirampur on Dhaka-Chittka highway yesterday. Tara Mia (45) of Dhankora in Shaturithana, Renuka (60) of Harirampur and another unidentified young man died on the spot. Of the injured 15 were admitted to Manikganj Sadar Hospital with serious wounds. Police and witnesses said the Dhaka bound minibus fell into the ditch when the driver tried to give side to a truck coming from opposite direction at about 3-30 pm. Police seized the truck but the driver managed to flee the scene.

BSS from Chittagong adds: Three persons were killed and 14 others injured, eight of them seriously when a Bandarban bound bus turned turtle at Kushalpararmoor at Bandarban town yesterday. Officer in charge of Bandarban told BSS over telephone here that a picnic bus carrying 45 passengers from Sitakunda thana when reached at Kushalpararmoor near Bandarban bus stand suddenly the driver lost its control. As a result, the bus skidded off the road. One Uttom Sen died on the spot while the seriously injured Ekhlas and Uttom Pal died on way to Bandarban Hospital. The seriously injured eight persons were rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital and the rest injured were locally treated. The driver and assistants of the bus managed to escape. The bodies were taken for autopsy.



AL activists brought out a torch procession in city yesterday in support of today's hartal. — Star photo



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia last night visited the residence of JCD activist Asad in Mirpur. — PID photo

## Clashes continue in Mirpur

By Staff Correspondent

Sporadic clashes between supporters of Awami League and BNP continued in Mirpur Friday. Houses of several leaders of Awami League at Mirpur were ransacked and damaged late Thursday night and early Friday. Groups of armed men stormed the houses of local Awami League leaders Tofael Ahmed, Abdul Aziz and Abul Hossain Mollah, allegedly assaulted the inmates and ransacked the houses. However, one of the victim's uncles, Delwar Hossain, in a statement said that a vested group of the ruling party was trying to play a game over the death of Asad. Awami League supporters yesterday brought out several processions in protest against alleged rigging in the Mirpur by-election and support of today's six-hour hartal. They also put up barricades at different points at Mirpur with logs, witnesses said. Tense situation was still

sacked the houses. Following the killing of a college student Mohammad Asad at 9:30 pm Thursday at Mirpur Section-6, 'fresh violence engulfed the area mid-night Thursday night. The armedmen who went on rampage in the areas blasted scores of crackers and fired gunshots. Asad was shot dead by a group of unidentified gunmen and Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) claimed that Asad was their worker and was killed by Awami League supporters. However, one of the victim's uncles, Delwar Hossain, in a statement said that a vested group of the ruling party was trying to play a game over the death of Asad. Awami League supporters yesterday brought out several processions in protest against alleged rigging in the Mirpur by-election and support of today's six-hour hartal. They also put up barricades at different points at Mirpur with logs, witnesses said. Tense situation was still

prevailing in the areas. Blasts and gunshots were frequently being heard in the area, local people said. Mirpur police said that heavy contingent of police was deployed to prevent fresh violence. The duty officer of Mirpur Police Station said that the situation was normal Friday night. Meanwhile, namaz-e-janaza of Asad was held at his residence at Mirpur Section-6 and he was buried at the Mirpur graveyard. Salam condemns killing of Asad BNP Secretary General Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder yesterday strongly protested the Thursday's killing of the Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) worker Asad Mahmud at Mirpur reportedly by the Awami League activists and demanded exemplary punishment to the culprits, reports BSS. See Page 12 Col 3

## Khaleda visits Asad's residence

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia last night visited the Mirpur residence of Asad Mahmud, a Chhatra Dal leader who was shot dead Thursday night at a nearby house, reports BSS. The Prime Minister talked to the relatives of Asad and assured them of stern action against the killers. The relatives of Asad including his father Abdus Sattar and mother Sabera Katun broke into tears while describing to the Prime Minister how Asad was killed. The Prime Minister consoled them and prayed for the departed soul. Asad was watching television at BNP leader Hasan's house Thursday night when the miscreants spayed him with bullets through a window, killing instantly. As the Prime Minister, arrived at the residence of Asad Mahmud, people of locality gave slogans "crush the dark hands of terrorists."

## India closes its Kabul embassy

KABUL, Feb 5: India decided today to close its Kabul embassy after one of its staff was killed by a rocket in fighting between Mujahideen rebels and Afghan government troops, reports Reuter. The closure, billed as temporary, was announced in the Afghan capital, where a leading peace negotiator warned that Afghanistan's battling leaders could become bogged down in a Lebanon-style protracted war. An Indian embassy official said all 17 staff, including six diplomats, would leave for

Delhi on a scheduled Afghan Ariana Airlines flight on Saturday. The moment conditions return to normal and we can function normally we will be back," the diplomat said. An Indian security guard was killed on Tuesday when a rocket fired by renegade Mujahideen fighters slammed into an embassy tennis court as he was walking past. The Iranian ambassador, a wounded diplomat and 13 staff flew out this week and most Pakistani diplomats have left.

Among the few embassies still open are those of Turkey and China. Sporadic artillery fire rocked the capital on the 18th day of rocket exchanges between government troops and fighters of the radical Hezb-i-Islami Party and its Shia Hezb-i-Wahdat Allies. Hospitals say 3,000 people have been injured in the latest round of fighting and hundreds killed, although the exact number of deaths was not known since few bodies are brought to hospitals.

AP adds: Hospitals in the capital were flooded Thursday with dozens of people wounded by hundreds of rockets fired by rebels trying to oust the Islamic government. Hospital officials estimated 12 or more people killed in the rocket barrage. Most Afghans bury their dead quickly, in keeping with Islamic custom, and do not report the deaths, so accurate tolls were not available. More than 350 people have See Page 12 Col 4

## Cop killed in gunbattle with Sarbaharamen

BARISAL, Feb 5: A constable was killed in a two-hour gun battle between police and Sarbaharamen at Gazirhat village in Mehendiganj thana on Thursday night, reports UNB. Abdull Latif (40), a police constable of Mehendiganj thana, died of gunshot wounds on the spot. Police said a police patrol, headed by ASI Kamal Krishna Das, confronted a group of Sarbaharamen partymen at Gazirhat

of Bhasanchar union at about 10:30 pm. The Sarbaharamen gunmen opened fire on being challenged by police. The body of Abdull Latif was brought to Barisal today (Friday) afternoon and his namaz-e-janaza was held at the police line after Magreb prayer. Earlier, DIG of Barisal Range Police Ziauddin Ahmed and SP Anisur Rahman visited the spot.