DOWN TO EARTH

A Museum with Hopeful Prospects

By AS M Nurunnabi

The Bangladesh National Museum located on an attractive site at Shahbagh, Dhaka is a definite addition to the cultural amenities of the city. Having integrated the crstwhile Dhaka Museum which was established in 1913 at Nimtali, the national museum came into being in a new shape in 1983. For a national museum to be properly equipped, the short period of its existence is apparently inadequate. The setting and architectural style of the museum attract attention. It allows for openness and expansiveness. These aspects are also evident in the display of

the objects in the museum. The exhibits, covering a wide range of subjects on ancient arts and crafts historical relies and cultural heritage, fauna and flora, etc. of the country, are displayed in fortythree galleries. In its scope, collection and display technique, the new museum, as compared with the old, appears to project a definite improvement. Since a museum is 30 thousand volumes of books a steadily growing entity, no to facilitate the work of reparticular gallery at any given time can be said to be comprehensive and complete. Yet some galleries attract attention for their variety of collection, such as the galleries on War of under the auspices of the mu-Liberation, Zainul Abedin's works of art, traditional paintings, contemporary arts, musical instruments, sculpture, plants of Bangladesh, boats of Bangladesh, etc. On the other hand, in some galleries, the objects appear to be sparsely displayed.

Museum sources said that there are at present one lakh objects in the store and at the moment the museum display only one-third of that number. From the inner layout of the museum, it appears that there is still enough vacant space and work is in progress in some areas for erecting additional display facilities. Fina ncial constraint is reportedly one of the factors standing in the way of maximum use of the objects lying in store, though it is understood that in musiology it is the normal principle that all the objects kept in store are not put on display; a part of is held back for purposes of research and renovation.

The museum has an annual budget of 1.85 crore. According to authorities concerned, the multiplicity of programmes and activities that the museum has embarked upon has put pressure on the budgetary provision.

The total number of visitors daily average 2500 to 3000 on week days and 5000 to 5500 on Fridays. The museum charges Taka 2/- per head as entrance fee.

The museum has three branch museums under it. Besides, the Usmani Museum

Sylhet, the two other branches have been recently opened, the Ahsan Manzil in old Dhaka and the Zia Memorial Museum in Chittagong.

The museum has six departments under it, namely i) history and arts, ii) ethnology and decorative arts, iii) natural history, tv) contemporary arts, v) preservation and chemical laboratory and vi) public edu-

Under the public education department, a variety of activities are organised. To help children and adolescents acquire direct knowledge of our history and culture, the museum with its own transport bring school students of Dhaka and neighbouring areas and arrange guided tours of the museum. To make the village people conscious of our history and cultural heritage, mobile exhibitions tour the districts. Film shows are arranged in the museum auditorium free of charge twice every week. The museum has a rich library of searchers. The museum has two auditoria the main and the other for children, in which seminars, symposia and other cultural programmes are held seum. The auditoria are also let out to outside:s for similar

purposes. On the occasions of the Bengali New Year's day. 21st. February, Independence Day and Victory Day, various programmes are arranged un der the auspices of the mu seum. Seminars are held twice every month on the cultural heritage of Bangladesh.

Some of the important projects of the museum which are reportedly under way at present are: (a) Work for preservation of the cultural heritage of each district, (b) A video film on the singers' community of Bangladesh, (c A video film on the fauna and flora of the Sunderbans, (d) A 16 mm film on Dhaka- a city of mosques, (e) Republication of the museum's journal entitled Lalitakala. The sources said that these projects would have a smooth sailing if there is no budgetary hindrance in

A museum is regarded as a cultural university of a country Since, as custodian of a nation's history and culture it re flects the different phases of their evolution, its importance in the life of a people can hardly be exaggerated. Ob servers accordingly hope that no financial constraint should hinder the growth or implementation of the various plans and programmes of the national uniscum



National Museum at Shahbagh

- Star photo

Attack on UNITA

hqs: 30 killed

raged in the Angolan pro-

vinces, including an attack on

Huambo in which 30 UNITA

soldiers were killed, state

radio and media said today

capital Luanda, where rebels

sabotaged the main water-

works two weeks ago, but

elsewhere there was no appar-

ent let up in the fighting

which resumed when UNITA

rejected UN-supervised elec-

in six provinces across the

vast Southwest African coun-

try, including the elimination

of a UNITA rebel company in

Huambo, the guerillas' central

fled the scene, leaving behind

Salam

From Page 1 Col 4

In a statement here

Barrister Salam Talukder said

the armed hooligans backed by

the Awami League had dis-

rupted the public life through

killing the BNP workers and

attacking their houses, looting,

damage, firing and bomb blasts

in different parts of the city

including Mirpur before the

announcement of the results of

the by-election of Dhaka-11

The BNP Secretary General

condemned such terrorist acts

and said these actions had

manifested the characters of

the defeated forces in the

He asked the identified

Barrister Salam demanded

force to refrain from doing loss

of lives and the properties of

exemplary punishment for the

persons responsible for the

killing of JCD worker Asad. He

expressed deep sympathy to

the members of the bereaved

family and prayed for the

peace of the departed soul.

seat of the Jatiya Sangsad.

election.

the BNP workers.

The radio said many rebels

highlands headquarters.

an assortment of weapons.

The radio reported clashes

Water was restored in the

reports Reuter.

tions held last year.

LUANDA, Feb 5: Fighting

AL: Legal action

From Page 1 Col 4

Violating the EC's request, he said Police Commissioner Huda went to Mirpur thana and gave instruction to his subordinate police officers. He also visited the election control room at Mirpur No. 10 crossing at 8-15 pm and cre ated an unpleasant situation there.

He further said the announcement of the results through radio and television quoting UNB declaring the BNP nominee elected unofficially as a gross interference in the EC conduct and clear violation of aforesaid Articles 118 (4) and 119 (1) of the Constitution.

In his written statement Jahangir depicted the situation how he was misguided in Mirpur by the election officials just before the time of vote counting and tabulation and the subsequent developments

on Feb 3. lle also mentioned incident of firing at Shaheed Smriti Centre and election irregularities at some centres including

Rupnagar and Bagbari. Replying to a question, Jahangir said the Awami League will go to High Court

and the Election Tribunal to seek justice. Begum Matia Chowdhury said that the Mirpur elec-

torates had voted in favour of the AL candidate but the government had manipulated the results. Kamal Ahmed Majumdar

demanded repolling in 18 centres, claiming that he won the election by a minimum margin of 1926 votes.

Majumdar said the Presiding Officers of 18 centres did not give the certified result sheets to his polling

Kamal alleged the BNF leaders of unleashing terror ism in the Mirpur areas follow-

ing the February 3 election. He said that BNP activists backed by the police have attacked the residences of at

least 25 local AL leaders. Armed terrorists of BNP had attacked and ransacked houses and shops of party leaders, including Tofael Ahmed and Abul Kashem in Mirpur, he said. Wife of Tofael Ahmed was badly injured by

the terrorists, Kamal added. Kamal also alleged that Mirpur thana police had ransacked his main election office in Mirpur, took away important party papers and documents, and beat up guards and employees of his office.

Mayon volcano may erupt again

LEGASPI, (Philippines), Feb 5: Philippine authorities warned today that Mayon volcano might crupt again - and with more force - anytime, while suspending all rescue efforts as the toll of dead and missing neared 90, reports AFP.

The official Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology raised "alert level four," the second highest warning on the scale of five, early Friday.

"A hazardous explosive eruption is possible within hours or days," the institute

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Several hundred former The Widnight File Soviet tanks missing VIENNA, Feb 5: Several November toll, the source said the split of the old Czec-

hundred former Soviet tanks have gone missing although they should have been destroyed as scheduled under the 1990 disarmament treaty concerning Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE), a West European diplomat said today, reports AFP.

The West demanded clarification after the problem was noted last November.

But the latest figures provided on December 15 show that the "situation remains confused" regarding equipment targeted for destruction in the former Soviet republics, according to the source.

He said there was some suspicion of "tampering" with figures of "several hundred" armoured troop transport vehicles and artillery pieces showed up again on Russia's lists during the December review, after they were considered as destroyed on the

ISLAMABAD, Feb 5: Rallies

were staged in Pakistan today

answering a call by the funda-

mentalist Jamaat-e-Islami (J1)

Party to express solidarity with

the "freedom" movement in

Indian-controlled Kashmir.

was in the Punjab provincial

capital of Lahore where wit-

nesses said up to 4,000 people

gathered to here, JI chief Qazi

Hussain Ahmed denouncing

Indian "atrocities" against the

in a procession in Peshawar,

capital of North West Frontier

Province (NWFP), residents

in Quetta, capital of South-

western Baluchistan province

because of an official ban on

public gatherings in con-

nection with Saturday's

meeting there of 10-nation

regional economic cooperation

thern Sindh province, hun-

dreds of youths gathered in a

Park but police did not allow

them to form a procession as

Maghi Purnima

today

Bangladesh will observe the

Maghi Purnima today with re-

holy religious celebrations of

the Buddhists, marks the holy

announcement by Lord Buddha

of his passing away (Nirvana)

on Baishaki Purnima day at

Chapal Choitta in Boishali.

Later, he embraced Nirvana at

the foot of a shal tree at

Kushinagar on Baishaki Pur-

ation has drawn up an

extensive programme in cele-

bration of the day at the inter-

national Buddha Bihar at

Prachar Sangha will also ob-

serve the day through similar

programme at Dharmarajik

A week-long Thegorpuri

Mela will be held at Pativa in

Chittagong in observance of

the Maghi Purnima. Buddhists

from different parts of the

country would assemble at the

Iran pardons

619 prisoners

tual leader, Ayatollah Ali

Khamenei, has pardoned 619

prisoners as the nation cele-

brates the 14th anniversary of

the Islamic revolution, the

Islamic Republic News Agency

NICOSIA, Feb 5: Iran's spiri-

mela, beginning today.

Buddha Bihar at Kamalapur.

Bangladesh Buddha Krishthi

Merul Badda.

Bangladesh Buddhist Feder-

ligious fervour, reports BSS.

The Buddhist community in

Maghi Purnima, one of the

In Karachi, capital of Sou-

A planned rally was put off

A few hundred participated

The main gathering today

reports AFP.

Kashmiris.

organisation.

"We do not want to make a big deal out of this because we understand the chaos." In the former Soviet Union, the source said, noting that there was still time left since the CFE treaty, signed in Paris in November 1990, set a threeyear deadline for destruction

"But we are insisting that the collective reduction obligations be carried out."

The 30 states that signed the CFE treaty- the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation countries, Eastern European states in the old Warsaw Pact, and former Soviet republics in the treaty zone which runs from the Atlantic to the Uralssent representative to a special conference here Friday.

It was called to ratify an agreement between Prague and Bratislava on how they would handle their arms and troops reductions following

restrictions on public assembly

Reports received here said

rallies were also held in sev-

eral other cities and towns in

The JI has convened

meeting of country's political

and religious parties in Lahore

Saturday to discuss the situa-

tion in Kashmir and evolve a

joint stand on the Kashmir is-

Lahore, the JI chief urged the

international community and

the United Nations to help

Sharif, in a statement on the

occasion, said the Kashmiris

were waging a "valiant struggle

for their emancipation from

India accuses Pakistan of

providing material aid to the

Muslim insurgents in the New

Delhi-controlled southern two-

thirds of Kashmir, a charge

tends moral support to what it

calls a legitimate Kashmiri

movement for self-determina-

Woman militant

leader held

in Kashmir

Security forces today arrested

a key woman militant leader

opposing Indian rule in Jammu

and Kashmir state, a New

Delhi government spokesman

He said they arrested Asiya

Andrabi, 33, chief of the

Dukhtaran- e-Millat (daughters

of Muslim faith) militant group

in Srinagar, Kashmir's summer

Andrabi's husband Moham-

mad Kasim, an important lea-

der of the underground

Islamic group Jamiat- ul-

Mujahideen was also arrested

in the raid, the spokesman

He refused to give further

The Dukhtaran-e-Millat be-

came active in Kashmir six

years ago when it launched a

campaign against obscenity in

public places. Influenced by

the Iranian Islamic revolution,

it has also campaigned for the

played an active role in organ-

ising protests against Indian

security forces in the Muslim -

The group's volunteers have

A violent separatist uprising

has been raging in Kashmir

India's only Muslim majority

state since 1990, in which

over 9,000 people have been

veiling of Muslim women.

majority Kashmir valley.

said, reports BSS.

capital.

SRINAGAR, India, Feb 5:

Pakistan says it only ex-

Indian subjugation.

denied by Islamabad.

the "oppressed" Kashmiris.

Addressing the crowd in

Prime Minister Nawaz

sue, party sources said.

are also in force there.

Punjab and NWFP.

Pak Jamaat expresses

solidarity with Kashmiris

hoslovak republic into two states last month.

Under the 1990 CFE text. the Soviet Union said it had slightly more than 20,000 tanks and would destroy about 7,000 to give it a new total of

When the Soviet Union be came defunct, the treaty obli gations were divided among former Soviet equipment in eight republics- Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Kazakhstan.

. But the source said it was clear that even under Russia's revised figures "several hundred tanks" are still awaiting destruction.

On other points, the source said Russia had dropped its strict interpretation of some of the complex inspection mechanism outlined in the treaty which it had used last year to block Western inspectors from certain military sites.

Mahathir's Feb 12 visit aimed at boosting trade,

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad will visit Bangladesh and Pakistan from February 12 to 17 to boost trade and investment, the Foreign Ministry said Friday,

While in Bangladesh, Mahathir will hold talks with his counterpart Begum Khaleda Zia, officiate at the opening of the Malaysian Trade Center and be presented with a key to the city of Dhaka, a

Trade between Bangladesh the official said.

February 14 to 17, Mahathir on joint ventures in palm oil, including one between Malaysia's Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA)

major suppliers of labour to Malaysia. Mahathir will also discuss making formal arrangements to protect the interests of both the workers and their employers in Malaysia.

Mahathir will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, International Trade and Industry Minister Rafidah Aziz. Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Abdul Hamid Othman

Faisal was attacked when he was going to undertake organisational activities from his residence.

Motificel Thana Unit of JCD held a protest rally here vesterday to condemn the attack on the JCD leader.

manded exemplary punishment to those responsible for the attack.

The rally was followed by a

Speakers at the rally de-

procession which paraded dif-

investment KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 5;

reports AP.

Foreign Ministry official said.

He will also visit Chittagong to see the Export Processing

and Malaysia is still very small and Bangladesh is keen to sell more of its raw materials, especially jute and semi-manufactured products, to Malaysia,

While in Pakistan from will sign several agreements and Mapak of Pakistan.

Bangladesh and Pakistan are

2 JCD leaders hurt in armed attack

Mahbub Amir Mohammad Faisal, assistant General Secretary of Tejgaon College Students Union and Cultural Secretary of Jativatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Motisheel Thana Unit, was seriously injured when the armed miscreants of the Jatiya Party attacked him at Shahidbagh crossing on Thursday evening a JCD press release said here yesterday, reports BSS.

announced Friday, reports AP. killed. ferent streets. India shuts Kabul embassy

From Page 1 Col 5

been reported killed over the past two weeks in reignited battles between troops of the Islamic government, and guerillas led by radical fundamentalist Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

In Islamabad, Pakistan, UN envoy Sotirious Mousouris urged the Afghan factions to lay down their weapons or risk losing badly needed aid.

"If this situation continues for very long the donors may be discouraged, and when a country is put on the shelf it is very difficult to take it off again, given the other demands," said Mousouris, the UN secretary-general's representative in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Hekmatyar has vowed to destroy Kabul unless President Burhanuddin Rabbani hands power over to a leadership council representing the 10

Muslim factions that ousted a Communist regime last April after a 14-year civil war. He accuses Rabbani, an

Islamic scholar, of sharing power with former Communists and betraying the holy war against the Marxist government.

Rabbani stands fast, saying he was fairly elected in December to a two-year term by a national assembly of tribal elders, religious scholars and prominent rebel commanders.

Hekmatyar and some other rebel leaders claim the assembly was bogus and that Rabbani's government bought off delegates.

On-and-off factional fighting has razed entire neighbourhoods of sun-baked mud homes in Kabul and reduced a swath of downtown to rubble. A third of the capital's 1.5 mil lion people have fled.

The latest outbreak followed government attacks on

Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami bases south of the city. Afghanistan's warring fac-

tions are bitterly divided over what constitutes an Islamic state and by religious and tribal rivalries. Most embassies have evacuated non-essential staff from

Kabul, Iran, India and Pakistan said this week they would withdraw most of their embassy staffs. On Monday, four people in a

UN convoy were killed outside the eastern city of Jalalabad, in a lawless area controlled by Hekmatyar's guerillas. No one claimed responsibility. "It was murder in cold blood," said Mousouris, who is

investigating the killings. The United Nations with drew its non-Afghan staff from castern and southern Afghanistan on Wednesday, saying the Kabul government could not guarantee their

Kuwait and use force to repel any incursions. A resolution, adopted by a unantmous 15-0 vote, authorised the troops under Chapter 7 to the UN Charter, which entitles them to use force in case of violations, reports Reuter. 25 people burnt alive

UN okays sending troops to

frontier between Iraq, Kuwait

proved sending a battalion of 750 soldiers and support staff to

patrol the potentially explosive frontier between Iraq and

UNITED NATIONS, Feb 5: The Security Council today ap-

as bus rammed tractor ISLAMABAD, Feb 5: At least 25 people were burnt alive when a passenger bus rammed into a tractor trailer in central Punjab Province today, the official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) said. The accident occurred near the town of Veharim, when a speeding passenger bus on its way to Chistian from Lahore, collided with a trailer coming from the opposition direction, the agency said, reports AFP.

Mitterrand to renew ties with Indochina

PARIS, Feb 5: French President Francios Mitterrand will renew his country's old tics with Indochina next week as the first western head of State to visit Vietnam and Cambodia in decades, reports

A highlight of the trip will be his visit to Dien Bien Phu, where Vietnamese forces defeated the cream of the French army in a 60-day battle in 1954 that changed the region's destiny.

France is set to rediscover Indochina," Mitterrand's spo-

Italian PM survives no-confidence vote

ROME, Feb 5: The spectre of political chaos in Italy receded today after Prime Minister Giuliano Amato survived a crucial no-confidence vote in Parliament, reports Reuter.

Amato's shaky coalition, facing the stiffest test of its seven-month life, won the vote comfortably after two days of often heated debate. Financial markets, which

had been edgy all week, heaved a sigh of relief and sent bonds to session highs in Milan while the lira edged upwards in their wake.

Amato's victory margin of 66 vote with eight abstentions in the 630-seat Chamber of Deputies (lower house) compares with the government's

nominal majority of just 16. The result bears out ana lysts' convictions that mem bers of parliament (MPs) would rally round the government rather than risk plunging the country into a deep political abyss.

Zillur From Page 1 Col 2

tories in the previous by-polls had damaged the image of BNP government both nationally and internationally. This led the government to manipulate Mirpur by-election results in its favour, the AL leader told a public meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue in city.

Rahman charged BNP of winning the 1991 general elections bluffing the people and displaying its failures in all stages of national life during the last two years.

"And now it (government) has assumed the role of autocrat in a bid to cling to power," he said and went on, "its autocratic character was nakedly displayed when the Mirpur poll voters were influenced by the administration and the results manipulated."

The city branch of AL organised the meeting to protest the manipulation and drum up support for today's 6am-12 noon citywide hartal against the government's role.

Party leader Abdul Mannan, Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, Mofazzal Hossain Choudhury Maya and other addressed it. City AL chief Mohammad Hanif presided.

Praising the Election Commission's steps for ensuring free balloting in the byelection, the AL General Secretary said polling was 'almost free and fair' but the government's interference into the EC matters began after counting of votes in 115 cen-

The AL leader called on the city dwellers to express their no confidence in the 'autocratic' government of Khaleda Zia and protest the rigging and result-hijacking in the by-election by observing today's half-day hartal.

AL presidium member Abdul Mannan in his speech thanked the Mirpur voters for giving their mandate to the party nominee. The voters were not involved in the dirty game of manipulating the results, he said adding it was the government which destroyed people's faith in fair balloting.

By rigging election, he said, no government in the past succeeded in clinging to power and warned this government would too be overthrown by the masses for disrupting the process of holding fatr polls.

kesman Jean Musitifli told reporters. Almost 40 years have passed since Dien Bien Phu ended France's centurylong rule of the region and led to the creation of communist north Vietnam.

Mitterrand is scheduled to arrive in Hanot on Tuesday for three-day visit, to be followed by a two-day trip to Cambodia's capital Phonm Penh and Ankhorwat ancient temples He will have an opportunity

to pay tribute in person to the 22,000-strong UN troops now deployed in Cambodia to prepare for next May's planned Parliamentary elections.

Musitelli said that a Presidential poll might be held before the May elections. 'It would be the best guarantee for smooth Parlia-

mentary elections," he said. "For France, Prince Norodom Sihanouk is the best candidate, the man most like to unite Cambodians and pro pare a future coalition govern ment," he said.

Diplomats said Mitterrand's visit to Hanoi, the first by a French President will signal France's approval for political and economic changes undertaken somewhat cautiously by the country's reformist communist leaders.

AL hartal

From Page 1 Col 5 conspiracy" by ruling BN# to snatch away people's verdict in

Mirpur by-election, In a statement yesterday the Awami League President alleged that the government, apprehending a certain debacle in the by-election, had resorted to a dirty conspiracy to manipulate the result in its

"Specific allegations are there that announcement of election results were stopped at the direct intervention of the head of the government,' Hasina said referring to the stoppage of supplying results Wednesday to the Election Commission after 78 polling centres.

She said the Election Commission tried to build up an independent image for institutionalising democracy despite all odds and obstacles. But the authority of the EC in conducting the polls independently was challenged.

The ruling party had announced the results by conspiracy and media coup in utter violation of the election rules, the opposition leader

Pointing to several figures of election results announced by the government, Hasina said the discrepancy in the results clearly shows that BNP had changed the result sheets and took shelter of media to bring the result in its favour.

"The democracy loving people, under no circumstances, will accept this rigged result of Mirpur parliamentary by-election," she said.

The Awami League chief also called for building united resistance to foil the "heinous conspiracy" of the BNP government against democracy and verdict of the people.

Bosnia

From Page 1 Col 7 of death, but hundreds of thousands," he said.

He said the Serbs should be given a deadline to end the siege. "If they do not comply, they should be bombed.

Committee members were sympathetic, saying the United States and European nations should do more to end the "I am ashamed because my

own government has, at least until now, been a partner in Europe's refusal to take definitive action to stop the violent aggression by one country on the sovereign ... territory of another," said Senator Dennis Deconcini, co-chairman of the committee. He and congressman Steny

Hoyer, the other co-chairman, have introduced a resolution calling for the enforcement of the UN no-fly zone over Bosnia, lifting the international arms embargo on Bosnia and opening all detention centres.