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Of books, bangles and basic things Page 3

ANNOUNCEMENT

To mark the significant occasion of the visit of the Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad to Bangladesh, we considered it befitting to publish a six-page supplement. This has forced us to drop some of our regular pages including the Weekend Magazine and the Business section. We profusely apologize to our readers for this inconvenience and request their kind indulgence to bear with us on this occasion.
 — Editor

NEWS BRIEFS

Khaleda greets Rafsanjani

The Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, has greeted President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the occasion of its 14th anniversary of Iranian Islamic Revolution, reports BSS.

Kamal Amrohi dead

NEW DELHI, Feb 11: Indian film-maker Kamal Amrohi, who graduated from suspense thrillers to lavishly-mounted historical costumed dramas, died today at the age of 76. Amrohi, whose career dated back to the silent movie era, died of heart failure at a hospital in Bombay where he had been ailing, his son Tajdar Amrohi told the Press Trust of India. A widower, Amrohi was married to Meena Kumari, a movie actress famed as the eternal 'Tragedy Queen' of Indian cinema, reports AFP.

BUTA concerned at RU incidents

Bangladesh University Teachers' Association (BUTA) yesterday expressed grave concern at the serious incidents and brutal killings in Rajshahi University on February 6. In a statement, Prof S M A Faiz and Prof M Shamsur Rahman, President and Secretary General of the association strongly demanded finding out the persons responsible for the incident and to give them exemplary punishment, reports BSS.

Three killed in bus plunge

FARIDPUR, Feb 11: Three people were killed and 45 injured, 12 seriously, when a bus plunged into a ditch from a bridge at Ohopghat on the Faridpur-Kamarkhali highway today (Thursday). Police and witnesses said the bus tumbled off the bridge by smashing its railing while overtaking another bus at about 1 pm. Two of the dead were identified as Rabinranath Biswas (32) and Asif (2). Another victim was an unidentified old man of about 60 years. All three died on the spot, 32 kilometres off the district headquarters, reports UNB.

22 women's hostels soon

The government will construct 22 working women's hostels in the country to reduce residential problems of career women. This was stated by the State Minister for Social Welfare and Women's Affairs, Mrs Sarwari Rahman yesterday evening, reports BSS.

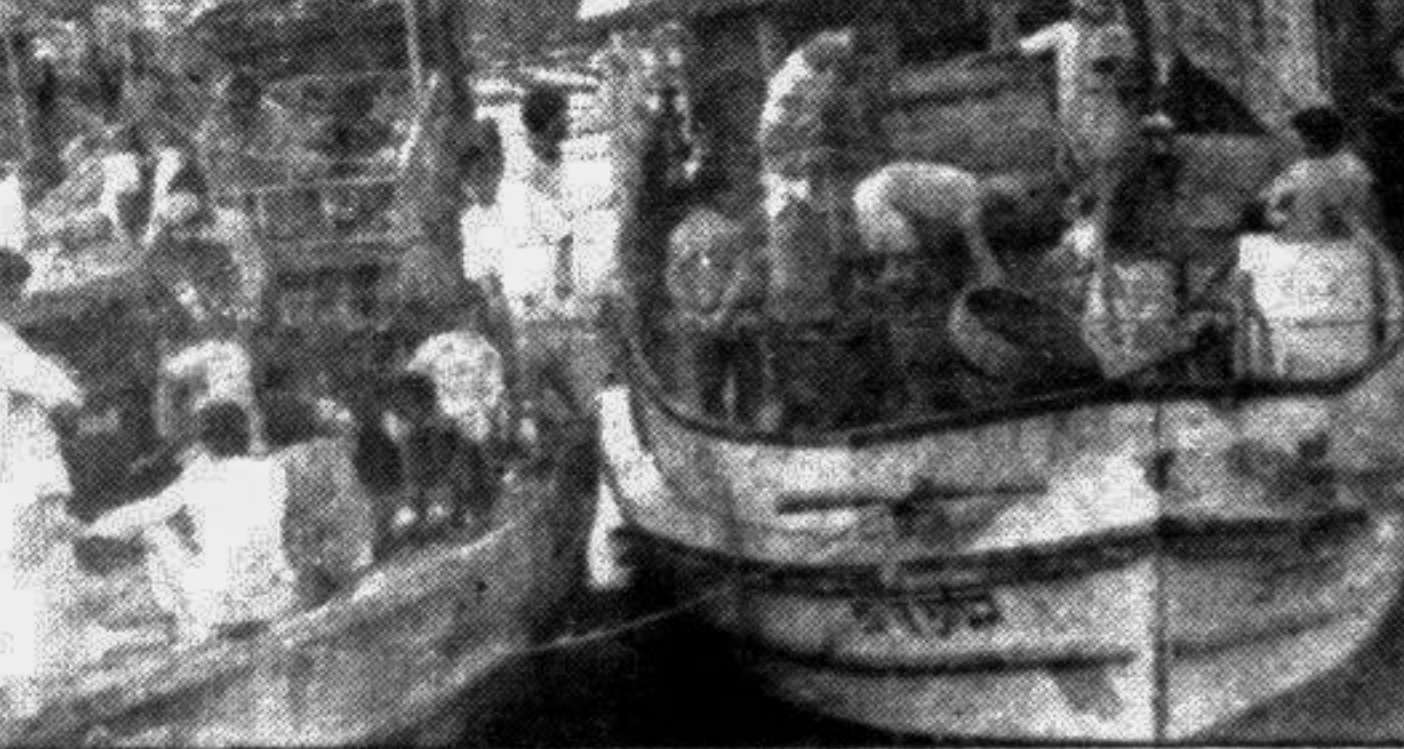
Bosnian hijacks Lufthansa plane with 104 on board

FRANKFURT, Feb 11: A lone gunman hijacked a Lufthansa jetliner carrying 104 passengers and crew to the Middle East on Thursday and ordered it flown to New York, German authorities said, reports AP.

The plane was expected at John F Kennedy International Airport on Thursday afternoon from Hanover, where the plane refused after being hijacked over Austria. It was the first hijacking of a Lufthansa plane in more than 15 years.

A radio station said a ham radio operator taped a radio conversation between the plane and authorities indicating that the hijacker intended to release all hostages and surrender in New York.

The ARD television network and the N-TV news channel reported that the hijacker was a Bosnian man with complaints about the United Nations, which has been trying to arrange a peace accord in Bosnia's ethnic war.



A large number of trawlers are anchored at Sadarghat as they cannot go fishing for want of ice (above) and fish wholesalers at Shwarighat in city selling fish at exorbitant price as supply has fallen (below).



Fish rot as ice factory strike on

Fish rot as ice factory strike on

Star Report
 The strike in the ice factories has already hit the fish markets with tons of fish rotting at Shwarighat. Supply of fish has also dropped by about 50 per cent at the wholesale points and frozen fish export has also been hit hard due to the slump in supply.

ingo Marek, spokesman for the Lower Saxony Interior Ministry, said the hijacker's only demand was to refuel the plane and 'be flown on to New York.'

Marek, speaking on N-TV, said he was not aware of any negotiations between the hijacker and German authorities. It was the first Lufthansa hijacking since October 1977, when gunmen forced a flight to go to Mogadishu, Somalia. The plane was recaptured by German commandos.

The last time a hijacked plane crossed the Atlantic apparently was in September 1976. In that incident, five Croatian nationalists hijacked a TWA plane flying from New York to Chicago and forced it to go to Paris, where they surrendered.

Thursday's hijacking occurred over Austria as the plane, a twin-engine Airbus 310 carrying 94 passengers and 10 crew, was flying from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and returning to Frankfurt, Germany.

After about 90 minutes on the ground, the plane took off at 1:44 pm (1244 GMT) and headed for New York, Lufthansa said. Bill Cahill, spokesman for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, said the plane was expected at 1:45 pm local time (1845 GMT).

It appeared no one was allowed off the plane in Hanover. Officials of the FBI and the Port Authority said they were making preparations to deal with the hijacker once the plane arrived.

German police said it was unlikely the plane would have taken off unless it had received permission to land in New York.

The plane's crew reported the hijacking about a half-hour after leaving Frankfurt, authorities said.

"According to information from the chancellor's office in Bonn, a man with a pistol subdued the pilots," the ARD network said.

A spokesman for the Austrian Bureau for Civil Aviation said the Lufthansa airliner, Flight 592, was hijacked soon after entering Austrian airspace near Lofer.

The pilot reported he had a passenger with a weapon on board and asked us to turn back. We gave him the permission," the spokesman said.

Warm welcome to Mahathirs today

Star Report
 A warm welcome will be accorded to Malaysian Prime Minister Dato Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad when he arrives in Dhaka this afternoon on a three-day official goodwill visit to Bangladesh, his second in ten years.



Dr Mahathir



Madam Mahathir

Dr Mahathir will be accompanied by his wife Dato Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah

during the visit which takes place at the invitation of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

Nineteen gun salute with herald the guests arrival in the capital. Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman will welcome them at the Zia International Airport.

See Page 12 Col 7

106 Indians cross into Bangladesh

CHITTAGONG, Feb 11: At least 106 Indian refugees belonging to Tripura tribe snaked into Bangladesh territory in the past one week and took shelter in the villages of Panchhari ihapa under Khagrachhari district, security sources said.

Thirty three refugees entered Panchhari near Indian border on February 4 while another batch of 73 arrived on February 8 and all of them took refuge in the houses of their fellow tribal people or relatives in Buddhapara, Kestamonipara and other nearby villages, sources added.

The refugees alleged that the youth organisation gutted their houses and tortured them accusing them of patronising the Indian tribal insurgent front All Tripura Tribal Force (ATTF).

See Page 12 Col 8

Resist politics of hartal, gherao: Khaleda

NAGARPUR (Tangail), Feb 11: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia asked the peace-loving people of the country to stand against the destructive politics of hartal, strike, siege, gherao and setting public property on fire, thus helping the government continue its development and production-oriented programmes, reports BSS.

"We have to stop the politics of hartal, gherao, destruction and setting the public property on fire... we have to stop the destructive activities and to carry on the nation-building activities... there should be now work and only work" the Prime Minister told a huge gathering at Nagarpur Government College field here.

See Page 12 Col 6

JP MPs walk out over 'humiliation' of Mizan at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent
 Jattya Party (JP) MPs staged a walk out in Parliament yesterday evening protesting harassment of their leader Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury by the Customs officials at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) Wednesday.

Chowdhury, acting chairman of the JP, along with two of his party colleagues, was reportedly humiliated by the Customs officials in the name of checking baggage prior to his departure for Jeddah for performing Umrah.

One of the JP leaders, Nurul Islam Milton, accompanying Chowdhury, is said to have

Malaysia's sultans agree to constitutional amendments

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 11: Malaysia's hereditary sultans agreed Thursday to constitutional amendments that will sharply curtail their legal immunity, ending a month-long confrontation and defusing a potential constitutional crisis, Deputy Prime Minister Ghafar Baba announced, reports AP.

According to sources attending Ghafar's conference, the Deputy Prime Minister said that the rulers, who wield limited constitutional powers, reversed an earlier rejection of the amendments and have accepted the legislation with some modifications.

On the second day of rulers' meetings, the sultans and the government of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mahathir Mohamad issued a joint statement on the issue.

Hasina visits Rajshahi today

Another RU teacher assaulted
 RAJSHAH, Feb 11: A teacher and a hall official of Rajshahi University were assaulted today (Thursday) on the closed campus allegedly by some activists of All-Party Students Unity in a continued backlash to the February 6 gunfight, reports UNB.

See Page 12 Col 7

Ekushey '93

Discussion, drama on

Star Report
 On the 11th day of Amar Ekushey programmes yesterday, Bangla Academy organised a discussion meeting on "Recitation Practice in Bangladesh" at 4 pm at its premises.

Syed Hasan Imam, Golam Mostafa, Prof Naren Biswas, Kazi Abu Zafar Siddiqi and Nasim Ahmad took part in the discussion. Eminent artists of the country recited poems after the discussion meeting.

As part of the programmes organised by the Sammito Sangskritik Jote, Mohona Natya Gosthi staged a street drama in the Central Shaheed Minar compound.

Meanwhile, police guarded Oasis Books, an Ekushey book stall, yesterday as some students attacked it protesting sale of 'controversial' books.

Today's programme of Bangla Academy: Discussion on the practice of Rabindranath Tagore's songs in Bangladesh in the afternoon. The speakers are Wahidul Huq, Prof Sanjida Khatun and Dr Mridul Kanti Chakravarty. Musical source in the evening.

Feni blast: 3 more die, death toll may rise

FENI, Feb 11: Death toll from the gas cylinder blast in Feni rose to 9 with three more people reported to have succumbed to their wounds suffered in the disaster, reports UNB.

Police and local villagers today said the three people died after they were taken to their homes with severe injury.

There were at least 38 people, including a child and two women, still being treated at Feni Sadar Hospital. Six seriously wounded were sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

See Page 12 Col 3

People may move for govt's ouster, says Imam

By Staff Correspondent
 Jahanara Imam yesterday warned the government that the people in the movement against Golam Azam and his Jamaat-e-Islami party might lose patience and move for its ouster.

See Page 12 Col 3

BJP to defy ban, hold rally Feb 25

NEW DELHI, Feb 11: The Indian government announced a ban today on a proposed rally here by the main Hindu-revivalist party, setting the stage for a potential confrontation with the largest opposition group, reports AFP.

The cabinet made the decision amid fears that the rally by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) (Indian People's Party) could turn violent. Home Minister Shankarrao Chavan said in a statement.

The BJP which has been stepping up pressure on the government to hold early elections, had pledged to gather more than one million supporters at the Boat Club ground near parliament in central Delhi on February 25.

The party immediately announced plans to hold an emergency meeting Friday and stressed that it would go ahead with the rally, billed as the largest ever in the Indian capital.

The BJP, which is seeking to build a Hindu temple in Ayodhya on the mosque site, led the campaign which resulted in the destruction of the 16th century Islamic shrine on December 6.

More than 1,800 people have died in Hindu-Muslim violence across India since then.

In his statement, the Home Minister said that "this is just not the time for provocative actions."

The government has, therefore, decided that it cannot at this time and in the present circumstances give permission to the BJP for holding the proposed rally.

Referring to Ayodhya, Chavan added: India has already been witness to the events of December 6.

In spite of assurances by the BJP and its allies, the organisers of the (Hindu temple-building drive) at Ayodhya failed completely to contain or control the situation there.

"That memory inspires little confidence that the rally now being called would be peaceful and free of untoward incidents."

"The government has,