

Come to CHITTAGONG Come to BANGKOK THAI RESTAURANT

The only place for ORIGINAL THAI FOOD & SEAFOOD in CHITTAGONG (NO BRANCH). Please try us and you will love BANGKOK THAI RESTAURANT more than ever before.

1403 ASIAN HIGHWAY, OPPOSITE Y.M.C.A. NASIRABAD, CHITTAGONG. TEL: 226603. Fax: (0860) 811-225238

VOL. III NO. 41 REGD. NO. DA 781

The Daily Star

FALGOON 13, 1399 BS, DHAKA THURSDAY FEBRUARY 25, 1993 RAMADAN 2, 1413 HIJRI 12 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 4.00

FOR YOUR SAMPLE AND DOCUMENT SHIPMENTS IN 180 COUNTRIES

CALL: 232224, 237784, 236653, 239145, 239217, 252432

BAKULI EXPRESS

BAKULI EXPRESS CO. LTD. 85, Motilal C. A. Dhaka-1000

Inside Today

Article

After Putting Sultans in their Place, what will Mahathir Do Next

Column: At Home and Abroad by S M Ali Page 4

International



Mercenaries, volunteers battling in Bosnia

Page 5

Supplement

A four-page special supplement on the National Day of Kuwait

Pages 7, 8, 9, 10

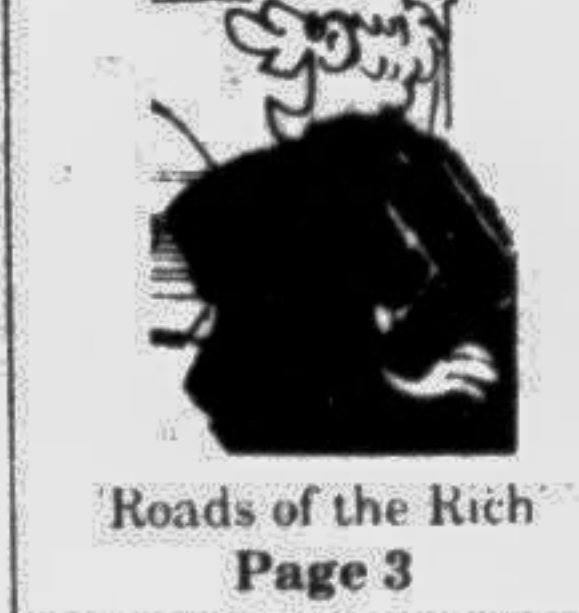
Business

Crude prices rise by \$19 per barrel

Page 6

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Roads of the Rich

Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

PM takes Iftar with orphans

The Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, had her Iftar on the first day of the holy month of Ramadan yesterday with about 300 inmates of five orphanages of the city at her Sugandha office. The Prime Minister freely talked to the orphans (both boys and girls) and enquired about their well-being. State Minister for Social Welfare and Women Affairs Sarwar Rahman, and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister K M Rabbani, among others, attended the Iftar, reports BSS.

Hasina slates attack on Banglabazar

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina has condemned Tuesday's armed attack on daily Banglabazar Patrika office saying "such incident can't take place without the backing of the government". "This is an attack on press freedom," she said in a statement yesterday. The Awami League President remarked that the discriminatory policy regarding distribution of advertisement to stifle the voice of the press and the attack on Banglabazar office are not isolated events, reports UNB.

RU probe body fixes interview time

RAJSHAHI, Feb 24: The enquiry commission of Rajshahi University incident on February 6 has fixed the time of interview for the interested persons with the commission from 10 am to 4 pm instead of 10 am to 5 pm due to holy Ramadan. The interview is being held at Rajshahi Circuit House from February 23 to March 1, reports BSS.

Sheri, Iftar Timings

Ramzan	Feb.	Sheri	Iftar
2	25		6.05 pm
3	26	5.02 am	6.05 pm
4	27	5.01 am	6.06 pm

Delhi sealed off to thwart today's BJP rally

NEW DELHI, Feb 24: The government closed central New Delhi on Wednesday to prevent hundreds of thousands of Hindu nationalists from holding a banned rally, reports AP.

Carrying machine guns and wooden clubs, policemen and paramilitary troops caused huge traffic jams by closing roads headed toward Parliament during the evening rush hour.

The Bharatiya Janata Party, the Hindu nationalist group that plans to hold the rally near Parliament on Thursday, announced that its top officials would lead groups trying to break through police cordons from five different directions.

Despite calls to its activists to remain peaceful, the BJP's decision to go ahead with the rally set the stage for the biggest confrontation yet between Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao's government and the powerful right-wing opposition.

Many doubted that the BJP could keep its activists under control. In December, it failed to stop Hindu fanatics in the

city of Ayodhya from demolishing an ancient mosque.

On Wednesday, the government told the first session of Parliament since Ayodhya that 1,940 people have been killed in the riots, far more than the media had been estimating.

The worst Hindu-Muslim violence in India in 46 years has led to a clash between the governing Congress Party and the BJP, which is trying to ride a surge in Hindu nationalism to power.

On Wednesday, thousands of police and soldiers dressed in padded vests and holding wooden shields and clubs conducted riot-control maneuvers on the lawns near Parliament.

Using their machine guns, the forces spent the day in drills that had them charge forward with their weapons extended.

Tens of thousands of BJP activists and religious leaders have been arrested in the capital and in other areas of northern India to prevent them from heading to the rally.

PTI adds: Nearly one lakh BJP activists have been de-

See Page 12 Col 2

Machinery import: VAT withdrawn, duty cut

Total Value Added Tax (VAT) has been withdrawn and import duty lessened on imported machinery in the interest of industrialisation, a National Board of Revenue press release said in Dhaka yesterday, reports BSS.

According to the changed policy local industries shall have to pay import duty at the rate of 7.5 per cent instead of the existing 10 per cent. Industries established in underdeveloped areas or those exporting 70 per cent or more of its total products shall have to pay only 5 per cent import duty on machinery. Bank guarantee shall be accepted for the rest 2.5 per cent.

Besides, Value Added Tax had been withdrawn in full from imported machinery.

These decisions have been taken for industrial development, expansion of export and proper utilisation of local raw materials, the release added.

Ogata may visit Bangladesh in mid-April

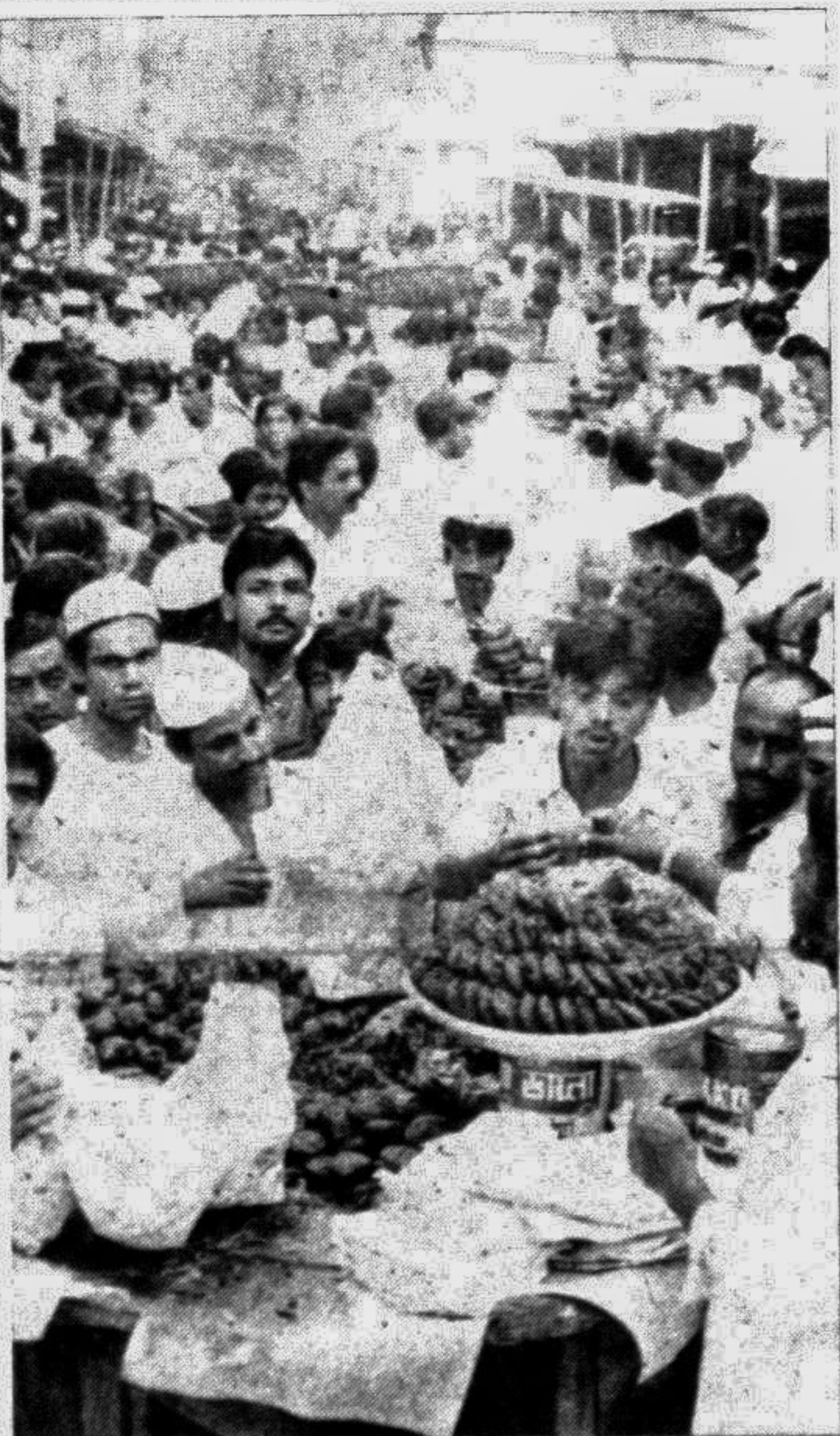
United Nations High Commissioner for Relief Sadako Ogata is expected to visit Bangladesh in mid-April to look into the Rohingya refugee problem, reports UNB.

Foreign Office sources said yesterday Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had invited the chief of the Geneva-based UN relief agency to visit Bangladesh.

She has accepted the invitation and is looking forward to travelling Bangladesh to see thousands of Myanmar Muslims living in camps in south-eastern region of the country.

Her tour is likely to yield a broad-based understanding between the government and UNHCR on solution to the Rohingya refugee problem through their quick repatriation.

Diplomatic sources said Ogata was also interested in visiting Myanmar from where nearly 265,000 Muslims had fled to Bangladesh to escape persecution by the Myanmar troops.



People crowding Chawk Bazar to buy traditional Iftar items yesterday. — Star photo

Prices of essentials rise

By Staff Correspondent

Prices of essentials in the market sky-rocketed on the first day of ramzan yesterday.

The price of average size chicken worth Taka 70 went up to Taka 120, the hitherto 60 Taka per kg beef rose to Taka 70 and the Taka 90 mutton soared as high as Taka 100 per kg.

The buyers were hard pressed to find that prices of all types of essentials, particularly Iftar items, like pulse, onion, ginger, lemon, gram (full and broken), soybean and brinjal went up by Taka 2 to Taka 4 within a couple of days.

The prices of ginger went up to Taka 24 from Taka 20, gram (chhola) went up to Taka 22 from Taka 18, onion from Taka 10 to Taka 14, gram pulse from Taka 23 to 25, moog pulse from Taka 36 to Taka 38, brinjal from Taka 9 to Taka 10, cucumber from Taka 16 to Taka 20 and dried chilly from Taka 22 to Taka 28.

The best lemons were sold for Taka 16 for four pieces a week ago. But now the price went as high as Taka 28 while the lowest is Taka 8.

Soybean oil in the whole sale market rose by Taka one per litre.

The price of Elders butter oil has increased from Taka 60 per kg to Taka 80 in the last few days.

Essential sellers at the Kawran Bazar said, "Just wait, the price will reach the sky this year."

See Page 12 Col 7



Gorbachev 'condemned to death'

MOSCOW, Feb 24: A mock court found former President Mikhail S. Gorbachev guilty in the collapse of the Soviet Union and sentenced him to death, "eternal damnation and disgrace," a newspaper reported Wednesday, reports AP.

The action of the eight-person mock court, while having no legal effect, showed the anger still felt toward Gorbachev.

Many Russians feel betrayed by Gorbachev, whose policy of perestroika paved the way for the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991. He is often still blamed for the deteriorating standard of living as well as soaring crime, hyperinflation and other woes unheard of during the Soviet era.

The panel, largely ignored by Gorbachev, deliberated for four days before accusing him of high treason, which would carry a death sentence, the report said.

See Page 12 Col 8

JS discussion on Shaheed Minar Vandals will soon be arrested: Matin

By Staff Correspondent

The Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury yesterday assured parliament that the government would soon arrest the vandals who recently desecrated the Central Shaheed Minar and punish them.

The House yesterday took up the desecration of the Shaheed Minar by a group of armed hoodlums February 20 for a short discussion with a total of 12 MPs belonging to the BNP, the Awami League (AL) and the Jatiya Party (JP) participating it.

A group of vandals desecrated the Minar February 20 evening tearing down the red sun and setting it ablaze. The vandals also spilt the paint and brush work on the walls facing the Minar.

No Jamaat MP took part in the discussion in spite of Sheikh Hasina, the AL chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament accusing it of attacking the Minar immediately after the incident's taking place.

While participating in the discussion on the issue the MPs, irrespective of party affiliations strongly condemned the desecration and felt that those responsible for the heinous act should be punished.

They also felt the need for a unanimous resolution to be adopted in House condemning the incident and wanted a parliamentary inquiry committee to be formed to probe the incident.

But the whole discussion, according to Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, was 'talked out'.

Although both the BNP and the AL unanimously felt the need to ensure punishment to those who dared to dishonour the historic Language Movement by means of attacking the Minar, they differed on identifying the criminals.

The Awami League MPs told the House that it was done by the evil forces, hinting at the Jamaat, that actively opposed the nation's War of Independence in 1971.

Attack on the Shaheed Minar and opposition to the country's Liberation War were virtually synonymous, the AL MPs argued saying that no citizen believing in the sovereignty of the country could commit such a crime against the martyrs of the Language Movement.

The BNP MPs, on the other hand, specifically accused the AL-backed Chhatra League activists of attacking the Minar.

Giving an account of the incident, Amanullah Aman MP of the Treasury bench, who is also the Vice President (VP) of the Dhaka University Central

See Page 12 Col 7

AL stages angry walkout over Aurango issue

Awami League members staged an angry walkout from the Jatiya Sangsad as the Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni refused to allow further discussion on the issue of their party member Hemayetullah Aurango, who has been served with a fresh detention order, reports BSS.

They, however, returned to the House after 5 minutes and took part in debate on the president's address.

Earlier raising the issue, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad alleged that despite release order by the court, parliament member Hemayetullah Aurango was not released from Mymensingh Jail. He also accused the government of violating constitutional provisions and breach of privileges of all members by serving fresh detention order against Aurango.

Samad said Aurango, an MP from Awami League, was arrested on a "fabricated charge" of twelve years ago and the government had barred the MP from attending the parliamentary sessions till date.

See Page 12 Col 4

JS okays 3 more identical bills on city corps

Parliament yesterday passed three more identical bills with provision for direct election to the post of Mayor of Dhaka, Rajshahi and Khulna city corporations, reports UNB.

A similar bill was passed by the House Tuesday night providing for direct election to the post of Mayor of the Chittagong City Corporation and indirect election of women commissioners from reserved seats for women.

Local Government and Rural Development Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder piloted all the three bills in the morning sitting of the House yesterday.

The bills are: The Dhaka City Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1993; The Rajshahi City Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1993; and The Khulna City Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1993.

These were adopted by voice vote with certain amendments from the Treasury Bench members Abu Yusuf Mohammad Khalilur Rahman, Salahuddin Ahmed and Nurul Islam Mont.

Population, health project moves at snail's pace

Star Report

The implementation of the Fourth Population and Health Project is moving at a snail's pace and remains far behind the target fixed for the first year in its five-year timeframe.

According to official sources, the 601.40 million US dollar project, under implementation since July '92, could so far attain a little over 30 percent of the target for the year.

The project, financed by a consortium of donors led by the International Development Agency (IDA) of the World Bank and the government of Bangladesh, incorporates a total of 61 schemes in the population and health sector.

The sources said that the slow rate in project implementation was due to delay in signing the agreements with the donors while some bureaucratic bottlenecks were also responsible.

The Bangladesh government provides 165.10 million

US dollars of the total project cost in local currency while the rest has been committed by the consortium.

Among the 11 donors in the consortium, nine including the IDA have already signed agreements with Bangladesh for funding the project. But, the agreement with Japan is still under process while DANIDA of Denmark has conveyed its unwillingness to contribute.

A well-placed source said that DANIDA had stepped back as Bangladesh could not comply with "hard conditions" of the donor to provide a fund of 2.80 million dollars. As regards delay in signing the agreement with JICA of Japan for 9.10 million dollars, the source said that Bangladesh was facing hard conditions in this case also.

The largest contribution from donors, 180 million US dollars, comes from the IDA for which an agreement was

See Page 12 Col 6

Dhanmondi Lake: No clean-up action yet

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhanmondi Lake is emitting a stench following a steady flow of sewage into it, local residence alleged Wednesday.

The authorities concerned have not yet taken any action to stop the sewage from entering the lake nor any measure to purify the polluted lake water, sources also alleged.

Most of the fish have died in the past few days and the lakeside trees have also been affected by the pollution.

The water level of the lake has also risen because of the inflow of sewage from a pipe linked recently to the lake as part of a development work.

Some of the fish that were caught were sold in the city markets facing a scarcity of fish due to the strike by the ice factory owners association, local people alleged.

Residents said that such incidents of the lake waters being polluted had happened

See Page 12 Col 1

Balding men, take good care of your hearts

CHICAGO, Feb 24: Balding men, take good care of your hearts, doctors say, reports AP.

Their advice comes after a study found men under age 55 with severe hair loss had about three times greater risk of suffering heart attacks than men with full heads of hair.

Men in the same age group with mild to moderate baldness on the tops of their heads had about a one and a half times greater risk, and men with receding hairlines but no baldness on top faced no increased risk, researchers found.

They compared 665 male heart-attack victims under age 55 with 772 similar men who had suffered no heart attacks. Researchers reported their findings in this week's issue of The Journal of the American Medical Association.

The results generally support several previous studies

See Page 12 Col 1

'Golam Azam failed to avail repatriation'

By Staff Correspondent

Golam Azam failed to avail the opportunity to return during the repatriation process under which at least 1,28,000 Bangladeshis including 28,000 military personnel, stranded in Pakistan returned home after Liberation in 1971, Attorney General Aminul Haque said yesterday.

"But he (Azam) left Pakistan for Saudi Arabia in December 1972, before the repatriation process began," replied Barrister AR Yusuf acting on behalf of the petitioner on the fourth day's hearing of the Writ petition challenging the cancellation of the citizenship of Golam Azam at the Single Bench of the High Court Division comprising Justice Anwarul Haque Chowdhury.

"Even those who were elected, in by-elections after Awami League members were disqualified, to the Pakistan National Assembly came back during the repatriation process and many others, who were stranded in Pakistan, came back via London and other places," noted the Attorney General while pointing out that Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury also came back from Pakistan via London.

The day's hearing began at 2:10 pm when Barrister Yusuf started reading the 134-page split decision verdict on the day while discussions took place on various points in it.

Barrister Yusuf quoted Justice Sarkar as saying that Azam "is not a citizen of Bangladesh as he actively participated in the anti-Bangladesh movement" and

See Page 12 Col 4

Lack of funds, obsolete machinery main problems

by S Y Bakht

Lack of funds, old machinery, poor management, excess and low skilled workers and high production and utility costs are the primary reasons for the ongoing crisis in the country's jute manufacturing sector, said Jute Minister Brigadier A S M Hannan Shah (Retd).

The two major problems are lack of funds and obsolete machinery while another pertinent problem is poor management in the jute mills, he added. The problem of lack of funds, he noted, had been further compounded by the huge amount of interest on the staggering debt and loans incurred by the jute mills.

However, in an interview with The Daily Star, the minister was optimistic about the future of the jute sector. "I see a very bright future for our golden fibre with the awareness in the world for a pollution free environment."

Asserting that the problems of the Jute sector are "surmountable", he went on to outline the various steps already initiated to make the sector viable including reduction of the workforce. Over 17,000 workers have gone into voluntary retirement so far in the public sector jute mills, he said.

The government, he added, is also considering providing financial assistance, including waiving of interest on bank loans, and setting up of a 2.5 million US dollar fund for export support scheme for the jute sector.

Talks are currently underway, the minister said, with the World Bank to initiate the jute sector restructuring programme from the next fiscal year, while noting that there still remains a number of unresolved issues in the negotiations.

Brig. Hannan Shah at

Crisis in jute sector-1

tributed the high production costs at the mills, which exceeds the exports price, to obsolete machinery, unsustainable debt burden and high electricity and JOB oil costs.

Average production costs for hessian cloth, he noted is about 22 US dollars per 100 yards while mills are "compelled" to sell it for about 14 dollars. Similarly, he said, the production cost per 100 bags of sacking is about Taka 22,000 while the international market price is only around Taka 17,000.

According to the European Commission jute sector manufacturing study (JUMS) completed last year, the aggregate net loss in the jute sector for the 8-year period starting from 1983-84, including prior year adjustments, stood at Taka 5612 per ton for the public sector jute mills while for the private sector ones it stood at Taka 4018 per ton.

"If certain measures are taken, namely the electricity costs and JOB oil costs are brought into par with our main competitor, that is India, and the mills are not burdened with the old debt/loan interests, then this difference will be substantially lowered, or to be precise, we will be able to bring it within tolerable limits."

The minister pointed out that in India there is no additional charge for peak-hour use of electricity as in Bangladesh. "In fact, it is the reverse in India, less you pay the more

See Page 12 Col 2

Anger drowned in flood of laughter

Start Report

An acrimonious debate between Fazlur Rahman Patel of the BNP and Mohammad Nasim of the Awami League in parliament yesterday finally ended up with the whole House bursting into a laughter and Matia Chowdhury a bit embarrassed.

Fazlur Rahman, State Minister for Communications, while deliberating on the Shaheed Minar incident told the House that all the evil now existing in the country had their roots in the 1972-75 AL rule. The

See Page 12 Col 6