

# Yeltsin-hardliners showdown today

MOSCOW, Mar 9: President Boris Yeltsin will propose sharing power to an emergency session of Russia's hard-line Congress, a spokesman said Tuesday, reports AP.

## JS: Corruption

From Page 1 Col 8  
Rafiqul Islam Miah. Rising on point of personal explanation he refused the allegation of corruption in his ministry.

If any member has got specific evidence of corruption against any minister, he should come up with prior notice. Sweeping allegation of corruption on the basis of newspaper reports is intended only to tarnish the image of others, he added.

In support of his contention, Barrister Rafiq quoted from Kaul and requested the Speaker to expunge the remarks of Firoze.

The Works Minister further said he is ready to clarify the matter if the Speaker allowed discussion in the House under appropriate rule.

Taking the floor, Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim said inquiry committee reports holding the Works and the Energy ministers responsible for corruption were published in prestigious dailies like Sangbad and Ittefaq.

Quoting Dr Iqbal Mahmud inquiry committee report, Nasim said the Energy Ministry paid illegal compensation of Taka 56 crore to Saipem for construction of North-South pipeline of Petrobangla.

"BNP government is plundering crores of taka of the people," Nasim said raising his voice and demanded the matter should be discussed in the House for which he had already given notice.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali who tried to water down the situation assured Nasim of his ruling after examining the notice.

# No proof of corruption

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seven crore 38 thousand.  
After the fall of the Ershad regime the cabinet at a meeting on August 12, 1991 decided to complete the construction work as per the architectural design with the present contractor and ordered enquiry regarding misappropriation and irregularities during the construction work.

The summary of the project submitted to the then Acting President who was holding charge of Works Ministry suppressed some important relevant facts and information. As a result the cabinet in considering the summary submitted on July 15, 1991 was misled to the effect that construction work of the house could not be completed within the allocated sum of Taka seven crore 38 thousand.

The enquiry committee report observed that administrative approval had not been taken in due time as per the rules.

The report said the construction work started in March 1990 but the Chief Engineer had sent the file for the approval of the administrative ministry in October 1992.

The enquiry committee report maintained that prior approval of the administrative ministry was required for the floating of any tender but in this particular case this approval was not taken.

The report observed that even the supervisory committee had ordered the contractors before the approval of the supplementary tender for changes in the design at various times.

Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah expressed his dissatisfaction at the irregularities and cost escalation leading to an additional expenditure of Taka six crore 67 lakh.

The Works Ministry sources said that the Additional Chief Engineer had sent the file to the ministry on October 15, 1992 seeking additional allocation of Taka six crore 67 lakh though the monthly progress reports earlier sent by the Additional Chief Engineer had never indicated any additional expenditure requirement.

Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah constituted a departmental enquiry committee to find out the irregularities and causes of additional expenses and identify persons responsible for the irregularities.

Barrister Rafiq who unearthed a number of irregularities, corruptions, misappropriation and bungs in his ministry and departments took action against a number of officials soon after his assumption of the charge of the ministry.

Shah Hannan Committee report observed that though the 30 Hare Road House had

ideas" about sharing power with Yeltsin.

Yeltsin and the Communist-dominated Congress of People's Deputies are headed for a political showdown Wednesday. The Congress has sharply curbed Yeltsin's executive powers, blocking his political and economic reform.

Khasbulatov, who leads the Congress, expects some deputies to try to start impeachment proceedings against Yeltsin if it is determined that the president acted unconstitutionally. Such efforts have failed at virtually every Congress.

Yeltsin spokesman Vyacheslav Kostikov said Yeltsin was willing to compromise with the Congress, Russia's highest parliamentary body.

Frustrated, Yeltsin said after last December's Congress session he would go directly to the people in an April 11 referendum and ask them who should rule Russia: the president or parliament.

Russia's smaller standing legislature, the Supreme Soviet, rejected Yeltsin's proposed power-sharing plan Friday, saying that only the Congress could approve such an agreement. In the proposal, Yeltsin agreed to surrender some powers if legislators stopped blocking his government.

Kostikov said Yeltsin did not consider that proposal either "an ultimatum or a final alternative."

"The president will be ready to drop the idea of a referendum if the Congress agrees to consider a compromise," Kostikov told reporters.

Spurious drugs seized: 3 held  
Dhaka City CID police seized spurious medicines worth Taka 30 lakh along with manufacturing equipment and arrested three persons in this connection, according to a CID press release yesterday, reports BSS.

been constructed for the use of the Vice-President it has been proved that the house was in fact meant for the President as the mansion had rooms for the President's office, accommodations for the Presidential Security Force and ADC.

The adoption of such unfair means, the enquiry committee constituted by the cabinet said such double standard does not behave persons holding very high offices including the President.

The deposed President also had involvement in maneuvering the very unusual speed of preparing the finalisation of the architectural design within three days time, cost estimation and projection within three days and invitation and floating of tenders completed within two days time after the submission of the projections.

The report said the whole process was completed between November 27, 1989 and December 2, 1989.

The committee in its report held responsible the then Chief Architect Shah Alam Zahuruddin and Chief Engineer M A Rouf for this unnecessary and irrational hasty decision and collaboration with this unfair means.

The vested group also suppressed some important relevant facts and information to Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah as they had suppressed it to the then acting President who was holding the charge of the Works Ministry.

Works Ministry sources said the vested group beyond the knowledge of the ministry had ordered the supply of three fountains on August 9, 1992 and suppressed the facts that these three fountains were not included in the cabinet approved budget.

Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah ordered the completion of the on-going works of the house urgently at a meeting on August 29, 1992 and the vested group installed three fountains costing Taka 20 lakh.

Barrister Rafiq who is also the Joint Secretary General of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party and a front ranking leader of the anti-autocracy movement has cleansed some extent his ministry and departments saving Taka 300 crore in a year by plugging the loopholes, curbing the corruption and bungs, recovering state properties and selling the recovered residential plots through tenders.

The Works Minister talking to BSS reiterated that he was determined to totally cleanse his ministry and departments under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

Barrister Rafiq said that he was ready to answer each and every query of the members of parliament.



Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed receiving bouquet from Khandakar Mahbubuddin, President of Supreme Court Bar Association, at a reception yesterday accorded to him on his selection as an 'Honorary Master of the Bench' by the Grey's Inn of the United Kingdom. Attorney General Aminul Haq looks on.

## SC Bar accords reception to Shahabuddin

Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed was yesterday accorded a reception by Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association on his selection as an 'Honorary Master of the Bench' by the Grey's Inn of the United Kingdom, reports BSS.

Presided over by Kh Mahbubuddin, President of the Bar, the reception was also addressed by Attorney-General Aminul Haq, Barrister Asrarul Hossain and AFM Ali Asghar.

Speaking on the occasion the Chief Justice said he would continue to put in his efforts to ensure proper functioning of the country's judiciary.

In this context, Justice Shahabuddin sought cooperation of all concerned and said after inspection in 19 districts it was revealed that indiscipline and irregularities existed in many places of judiciary at the district level.

Referring to the words of praise, mentioned by other speakers while felicitating him, the Chief Justice said it was not his credit alone to hold a peaceful, free and fair election and transfer of power to a democratic government.

He recalled that as the Acting President of Bangladesh he did one thing to his satisfaction and that was to ensure freedom of the press.

Justice Shahabuddin said as the Acting President he had promulgated ordinance bringing five amendments to ensure freedom of the press.

Justice Shahabuddin was given a standing ovation by the members of the Bar for his decoration with the coveted 'Honorary Master of the Bench,' earlier received by a few celebrities.

Businessman  
From Page 1 Col 4  
business. He also owned the building at Tajmahal Road.

When Haque was taking 'if' alone in his bed room after the day-long fasting, the gunmen entered into the room and shot at Haque on the left chest.

A young boy, Khandker Azhar Hossain Tipu, a nephew of the victim, who opened the main door in response to the calling bell said that the killers took maximum five minutes to carry out the killing and snatched two gold-chains from the necks of wife and the youngest son of Haque before escaping.

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SKOP: Govt won't bow  
From Page 1 Col 4  
may result in a deep turmoil in society.

In a memorandum, the employers demanded withdrawal of the proposed national minimum wages saying that the implementation of this would wipe out the country's industrial competitiveness due to cheap labour.

The delegation also said that the report of the Commission did not link wages to productivity and, therefore, it had become an incomplete report.

The BEA demanded that the report be scrapped and a new commission formed to produce a complete report based upon the linkage of wages and productivity.

The employers also demanded that the Tripartite Consultative Committee (TCC) be directed to identify the hurdles to linking wages to productivity.

The delegation further told the Prime Minister that the increase in wages would not only make the public sector industries unviable, but also have a damaging effect on the

# Diarrhoea takes 10 more lives

Ten more diarrhoea patients died in the last 24 hours while some 1,339 people were attacked by the disease in 13 districts. Diarrhoea Control Room sources said yesterday, reports UNB.

With reports of these new deaths, the toll from the epidemic rose to 972 since its outbreak in early January.

Of the latest death figure, two came from Pirojpur, two from Patuakhali, two from Bhola, two from Barisal, one from Khulna and one from Jhalakathi.

The district-wise break-up of diarrhoea attack in the last 24 hours is: Barguna-58, Pirojpur-50, Bagerhat-50,

Patuakhali-109, Khulna-123, Jhalakathi-84, Bhola-149, Barisal-159, Narayanganj-49, Gopalganj-9, Kishoregonj-34, Netrokona-23 and Dhaka-442.

Unofficial sources believed the death figure and the number of people attacked by the disease could be much higher.

So far, the highest number of 244 people died in Pirojpur district, followed by 165 in Barguna and 145 in Patuakhali.

The death toll in other districts is: Bagerhat-136, Khulna-60, Jhalakathi-86, Bhola-74, Barisal-24, Narayanganj-2, Gopalganj-12, Kishoregonj-11, and Netrokona-9.

# GK pumps stop

From Page 1 Col 3  
India has unilaterally diverted water to keep Calcutta port navigable.

Last year, the water level at the Hardinge Bridge came to an all-time low - 4.76 metre - on March 28 when the project's pumps were about to put off, the officials said.

This year, it is further low already. WDB found the water height at the Hardinge at 4.44 metre on March 8.

On March 1, when this year's operation should have begun, water level was only 4.46 metre at the Hardinge Bridge.

Two kilometres down the bridge, at Bheramara, where the pump house is located, water level is even lower. At the pump house point, water height was 4.35 metre on March 1.

If the pumps were operational, the water level would be lower by 0.15 metre, putting the height at 4.20 metre on that day. The pumps cannot be put into operation when water level is below 4.27 metre at the pump house point.

On Sunday, March 7, 1993, the flow of the Ganges was found at 12,547 cusec at Hardinge Bridge, which is all-time record low, down from last year's 13,500 cusec.

Under the Ganges-Kabodak project, known as G-K project, the 120,000 acres of land mainly under Kushtia and Faridpur districts is irrigated at a cost of Tk 23 crore in 1969-70 in the first phase and then in 1982-83, spending Tk 50.89 crore in the second phase. The implementation of the indigenously-financed project began in 1954.

Since the Farakka was commissioned, the project has suffered adversely.

According to the WDB officials, the present situation will also have adverse ecological effects on the area.

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## Notice on Ershad's salary as MP sent to JS body

A notice on the payment of salary and allowances to former President Ershad as member of parliament was referred to the Privilege Committee for early consideration, reports UNB.

In his ruling on the notice served by Advocate Fazle Rabbi of Jatiya Party, Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali hoped the Parliamentary Privilege Committee will examine the matter on priority basis.

Ershad who returned from five seats in Rangpur took oath as an MP on April 3, 1991.

The former President has been sentenced to 10 plus 3 years in jail for keeping illegal arms and amassing wealth beyond known sources of his income.

Ershad filed a petition in the High Court against the judgement of the special tribunal which had sentenced him 10 years in jail on June 12, 1991.

Although he has taken oath as MP, he could not attend the House as he is in jail.

## Insurance

From Page 1 Col 5  
with people's growing confidence in insurance industry. It was necessary to amend the Insurance Act, 1938 with a view to improving the sector's management and service on the one hand and reducing corruption on the other.

The opposition MPs opposed the bill arguing that the proposed law was devoid of guarantee clause to protect the client's money.

They, however, supported government's decision to help grow the insurance industry in the private sector.

Speaking in favour of popularizing insurance culture, the opposition MPs urged the government to guarantee the people from the dubious business in a section of insurance companies in the private sector so that no one's money could be plundered.

Rahmat Ali MP of the Awami League and Sheikh Ansar Ali of the Jamaat brought a few amendments to the bill, with a view to increasing rate of commission for the commission agents involved with the insurance companies. Their amendment proposals, however, were rejected by the House by voice vote.

Earlier, the minister argued that the increase of commission for the agents would virtually affect the common people purchasing insurance policies.

## Eid shopping

From Page 1 Col 5  
Mouchak Market, Gausta Market, New Market that mainly sell ladies' items and the Elephant Road shops that mainly sell gents' items. Shopkeepers, however, say that sales are lower than those in the previous years.

A big shop at Alpina Plaza, Elephant Road, that sold items worth Tk 30,000 a day in mid-Ramzan last year is only making Tk 20 to 23 thousand this time. "It seems people do not have much money in their pockets," the shopkeeper said.

Some shops at Elephant Road are shirts and pants at sky-high prices.

Garments smuggled from Thailand, and Bangladeshi products with foreign labels are also up for sale at exorbitant prices.

At some shops in Monsur Bhaban, Elephant Road, T-shirts are being sold at Taka 1750 each. There are also T-shirts selling at Tk 600 to Tk 800. A couple of years ago, such T-shirts were sold for Tk 250 to Tk 400.

Prices of locally made shirts at the Elephant Road vary between Tk 275 and Tk 1200. Foreign jeans are being sold at no less than Tk 800.

Prices of several other products in the Eid market are as follows: baba suits for children Tk 120 to 170, salwar kamis (two piece set) Tk 300 to 340, frocks Tk 200 to Tk 700, children's T-shirts Tk 120 to 160, lehenga Tk 700 to Tk 7000, three piece Tk 650 to Tk 1800, koti Tk 300 to Tk 800 and children's lehenga Tk 300 to 2000.

Due to the stiff competition, most of the designs of ready-made garments are common.

A large number of newly designed saris have arrived in the city markets, specially at the Bailey Road ones. The prices are shockingly high between Tk 2000 and Tk 10,000. However, cotton saris are cheaper and as low as Tk 300.

"I could not buy a single saree in the last three days," a lady while bargaining for a saree in a shop at Bailey Road said, "because of the price."

The only "super flop" market in the city is the Century Arcade in Moghbazar, according to some shopkeepers in the market. "Even in such a season, there are days we hardly sell anything," one shop owner said.

# The Midnight File

## Major suffers parliamentary defeat over Maastricht Treaty

LONDON, Mar 9: Prime Minister John Major has suffered a damaging parliamentary defeat at the hands of rebels in his own party opposed to closer British ties with Europe. Conservative rebels on Monday voted opposition parties to defeat the government by 22 votes - 314 to 292 - on a minor amendment to legislation ratifying the Maastricht Treaty on European community economic and political union, reports Reuter.

## Legal immunity of Malaysian Sultans ends

KUALA LUMPUR, Mar 9: Malaysia's parliament today overwhelmingly approved amendments to the Constitution to remove the legal immunity of the country's nine hereditary rulers. The bill was supported by 167 members of parliament, including those from the two main non-Malay opposition parties, reports Reuter.

## Muggers shoot at travel agent, snatch Tk 4 lakh

By DMCH Correspondent  
Muggers shot at a city travel agent and snatched away Taka four lakh from Fakirpur area Tuesday.

Police said that Mobarak Hossain, owner of the KMC Travel Agency at Motijheel, was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital and later shifted to Mohakhali Chest Hospital after being wounded by a group of unidentified gunmen.

The muggers opened fire and snatched his briefcase containing Taka four lakh.

## Garments

From Page 1 Col 7  
the Bangladesh-India border at Benapole.

There are also controversy among the relevant authorities as to who will supervise the Utilisation Permission (UP) of raw materials, informed sources said. Presently, the Customs Department is dealing with the issue.

According to concerned business circle, the importers of yarn and fabrics had been allowed 30 per cent UP since export-oriented garments factories went into operation in the country in late 80s.

The percentage was a provisional one until recently. Meanwhile, the National Board of Revenue (NBR) constituted a committee to fix up the wastage rate of raw materials under the UP in March 1990. However, another committee in this regard was formed later as the earlier one failed to submit its report on time. As a result the 38 per cent wastage rate continued.

In an unexpected move, the Customs authority announced a 10 per cent wastage rate on January 11 this year which the importers rejected instantly saying it was quite unrealistic.

The government relaxed the rate at 29.5 per cent after it held several rounds of talks with the importers of yarn and fabrics. This rate was cancelled on February 23 last without giving any reason.

Presently, there is no authorised rate of wastage materials. The business circle feels that an expert committee be formed to investigate the matter thoroughly to fix a reasonable rate and, until then, the importers be allowed to bring the raw materials according to the previous rate.

## AJM clash

From Page 1 Col 7  
chases and counter-chases between the supporters of the two groups at the Dhaka Baru Colony. The violence soon spread to New Colony area.

The police lathi charged the mobs in the evening and lobbed a number of tear-gas shells and fired rubber bullets to bring the situation under control.

The situation at Adamjee remained tense till filing this report last night.

## Bosnia

From Page 1 Col 7  
whether Bangladesh would participate in any attempt made by the United Nations for establishing peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina as it did in Iraq and Kuwait, the Foreign Minister said. "As a member of the United Nations, we shall always wait for a call from the world body."

The Foreign Minister gave an account of the atrocities committed by the Serbian militia forces which pushed 4.5 million Bosnian population in the utter difficult situation. The 2.5 million Bosnian Muslims were forced to leave their homestead under a blue print of an ethnic cleansing. Thousands of women were raped and hundreds of people were killed by the Serbian forces, he said.

The Foreign Minister said Bangladesh had been playing a bold and active role on the Bosnia-Herzegovina from the very beginning. In this connection, he referred to the relentless efforts of the Bangladesh government with the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations.

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