Janata Tower case

Ershad's aide paid Tk 75 lakh to Nirman on behalf of boss

A close aide of the deposed President H M Ershad yesterday told a Special Judge's Court that he had handed over Taka 75 lakh on behalf of his boss for the construction of the multi-storied building, Janata Tower, in the capital's Kawran Bazar Commercial Area, reports BSS.

Brig (retd) Sharif Aziz, who served as Private Secretary to President Ershad (who was also the Supreme Commander of Armed Forces) between April 1987 and January 1990, told the Special Judge's Court of his role in the transaction of money to Nirman International Limited for the construction of Janata Tower. Begum Raushan Ershad is the Chairman of Janata Publishers Limited, which owns the Janata Tower.

The former general is the principal accused in the Janata Tower case now being heard in the Special Judge's Court chaired by Additional Sessions Judge and Special Judge Md Ansaruddin Sikder.

When asked by Attorney General Aminul Haq what role he had in the transactions, Brig Aziz said in three installments (each time Taka 25 lakh) he paid K Z Islam of Nirman a sum of Taka 75 lakh in total for the construction of Janata Tower. The transactions were made during his tenure as PS to he Supreme Commander, he said.

Ershad's desence counsel objected to a query by the Attorney General to the effect from where Brig Aziz got the money. The court recorded the objection and heard the witness saying that he received the money from his boss, the Supreme Commander.

Brig Sharif Aziz who is PW-29 in this case is the first of the five new witnesses who have been summoned to make

From Page 1 Col 8

tioners, pleaded with the court

on the need to take immediate

effective measures to stem the

deteriorating judicial environ-

created among the sub-ordi-

nate judges under which

judges have become scared as

they have been made to feel

that their promotion and mat-

ters relating to their discipline

lie with the law ministry," he

said, adding "that ought not to

Constitution, which calls for

consultation with the Supreme

Court regarding promotion of

sub-ordinate judges, should be

interpreted in such a manner

so that consultation with the

Supreme Court becomes not

only effective but also mean-

ingful, the counsel for the peti-

"Scared judges," he empha-

Assuring a full hearing on

During the morning session

sised, "are worse than corrupt

the petition, the court ruled

that during the next session

the Writ would be heard on the

on the day the court deferred

the hearing for the afternoon

session because of the absence

that he would like to hear the

government side before pro-

ceeding with the hearing on

ney General Aminul Haque

sought a months time, while

assuring the court that a

Attorney General added that

"there is a likelyhood that con-

sultation would take place be-

tween the President and the

Chief Justice of the Supreme

General sought an extension

and again on February 14 he

8 nor westers

likely this

month

country and Khulna, Barisal

and Dhaka divisions are likely

to experience 6 to 8 moderate

nor westers during the current

east yesterday predicted that

the other parts of the country

may also have 3 to 5 moderate

nor westers during the period.

at least one depression is

likely to be formed over the

Boy of Bengal at the end of the

The forecast also said that

A monthly Mct Office fore-

month, reports UNB.

current month

Noth-eastern region of the

On February 2 the Attorney

Seeking more time the

solution may be arrived at.

Earlier, on January 3 Attor-

Justice Choudhury noted

of the Attorney General.

Article 116 of the

have been the case.

tioners pointed out.

application itself.

the petition.

Court."

judges."

"An environment has been

Promotion of Sub-judges

yesterday.

deposition on the prayer of the

Brig Aziz who was retired from the army in February this year joined desence services in 1968, he informed the court.

Ershad is charged in this case with misuse of his official position and resorting to corrupt practices in procuring the land on which Janata lower is situated and also in funding the construction of the tower

Construction firm Nirman International Limited built Janata Tower under an agreement signed with JPL, the court was told earlier.

During cross examination by Khandakar Mahbub Hossain, defence counsel of General Ershad, Brig Sharif Aziz said as the aide of Supreme Commander he used to organise meetings between K Z Islam and his boss. He stated that he did not retire on physical or mental ground and added that his normal retirement would have taken another 6 to 7

Brig Sharif rejected a suggestion that he had made the deposition under duress to belittle Ershad politically.

When asked by Begum Raushan Ershad's lawyer Sharfuddin Ahmed Mukul, the PW-29 affirmed that he made a statement to the investigating officer about the case, but did not remember the date. He said he knew he might one day have to make deposition in

Brig Sharif Aziz admitted that he has a house in Gulshan, whose plot he got allotted from RAJUK in 1988. The single unit two storied house has been rented out at Taka 67 thousand per month, he told the court. On being crossed, Brig Aziz denied to have received the plot through per-

sought another month's time.

On that occasion, the hearing

was adjourned till April 2,

which being a holiday was held

bar from around the country,

the Writ challenged the exer-

cise of power by the President

while promoting Sub-Judges

without taking into considera-

tion the recommendations of

the Supreme Court and the

impugn action of the law min-

istry in allowing two of the

Sub-Judges to be superseded

The respondents in the pe-

tition include the Law Minister

and Bangladesh through the

Cabinet Secretary, the Secre

tary, Ministry of Law and the

Secretary, Ministry of Es-

Malpractice

From Page 1 Col 8

The firm had managed

clearance from the Export

Promotion Bureau (EPB) by

showing forged bill of landing

tected by the US Customs and

they immediately registered a

strong protest with Bangladesh

act of the Pakistani firm was a

sort of "transshipment" which

is a breach of the textile

agreement between Bangla-

protest, the Commerce Minis-

try immediately scrapped the

export license of the firm and

initiated legal action against it.

But, according to highly

placed sources, the Commerce

Ministry plan eventually fell

flat as the higher authorities

interfered into he matter and

ordered "softer action." The

firm was fined 675,000 US

dollars to be paid in four in-

stallments and its exports li-

installments and then success-

fully influenced the authorities

through their legal counsel to

waive payment of the rest two

authorities last month ordered

the Ministry of Commerce to

refrain from realising the fine

tics has recently expressed

anger over the failure of Bang-

ladesh government in taking

k gal action against the forgery.

egation, during its visit to the

Unfield States last November,

faced embarrassment as the

US side enquired about the

actions taken against the

Pakistani firm

The Bangladesh textile del-

Meanwhile, the US authori-

from the Pakistani firm.

Sources said, the higher

The Pakistani firm paid two

cense restored

installments

On receipt of the US

desh and the United States.

To the US government, the

The discrepancy was de-

and invoice, the sources said.

ladesh garments in USA

in the process. '

tablishment.

authorities.

Filed by 12 members of the

suasion. He also rejected defence suggestion that he made the deposition for the twin objective of safeguarding his valued property and also to be relieved of legal complications arising out of a litigation against allotment of plots including his own one.

A total of four witnesses made their deposition yesterday. Cross examination of Lt Col (retd) Nurul Haq, member, estate RAJUK and the last witness of the day remained incomplete.

Till now four former army officers including three who worked very closely with the deposed general at one time or other made their deposition in this case.

Col Haq during deposition told the court that a plot of land at Kawran Bazar Commercial Area was sold to ATAB, the highest bid of auction held in January this year at Taka 18.30 lakh per katha. He said in a similar auction, RAJUK sold a plot of land in the same area last year at Taka 15 lakh per katha.

Other witnesses of the day included advocate Abdul Wahab and Mohammadullah, Assistt. Director of RAJUK

Advocate Wahab is the man who first filed a case against Ershad and three others for misuse of power in allotting Janata Tower plot by lodging an FIR with Tejgaon thana on 12-3-91.

He testified his signature in the photocopy of the FIR.

On being cross examined by defence lawyers, Advocate Wahab said he had lodged the FIR of his own free will. He said he had later learnt that his FIR was bagged with a similar case filed by Bureau of Anti Corruption.

The hearing will resume today.

Professionals

From page 1 col 7

newly achieved democracy was not sale in the hands of a section of bureaucrats who connived with the autocratic regime.

The country's professionals had joined the anti-autocratic movement with the hope of an accountable administration led by the public representatives, he said.

Prof. Majed said that under the present administration system, there was no scope for accountability to the people because the public representatives had no share in it.

He alleged that the government had served show cause notices on three of the leaders of the professional groups and said that the statements and the demands did not belong to the individuals but to four national organi

The leaders also alleged that "certain over-enthusiastic secretaries" of some ministries had been active to obstruct the movement by the profession-

There are 20,000 engineers in the country of which 10,000 are registered with the IEB. The total number of agriculturists is 12,000 of which 8,000 belong to the Krishibid institution.

According to BMA, there are 20,000 doctors in the country of which half of them are BMA members. A total of 8,300 doctors are employed in the government's cadre service, BMA officials said.

Opposition call

From Page 1 Col 8 March 26 and 28 by resorting to police action.

This government does not believe in spirit and values of the liberation war, it has become the subservient of antiliberation evil forces."

The resolution warned that people will never tolerate further attack on the spirit of lib cration war, people's fundamental rights and democracy.

Blasts, looting

From Page | Col 8 at 10 am yesterday.

House members said that the men who hurled the cracker at the house escaped immediately.

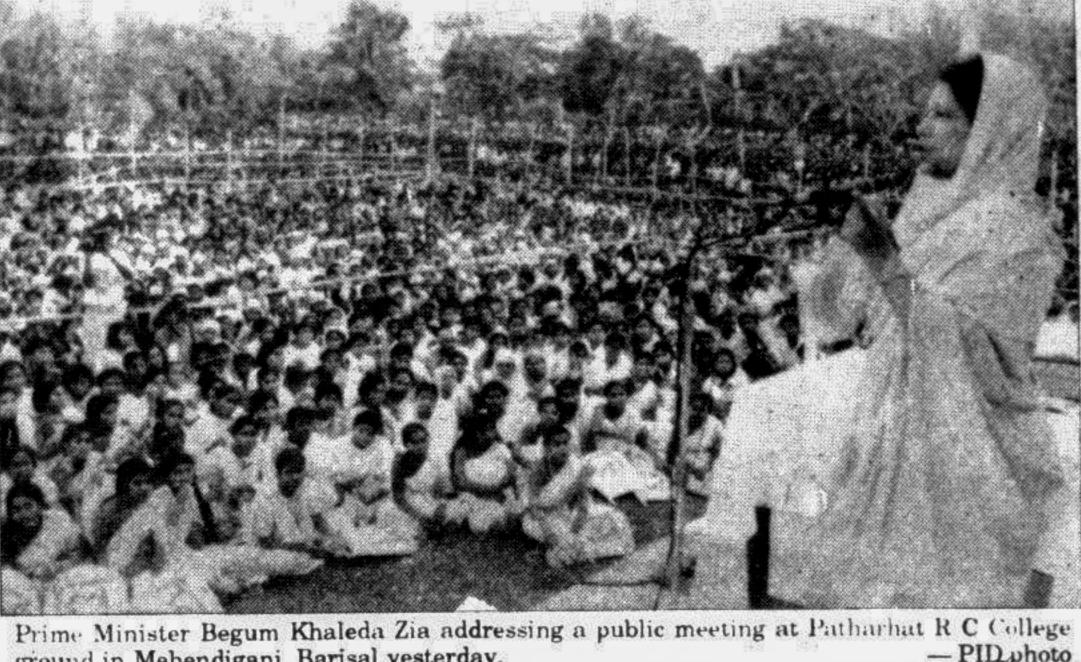
In another incident, a group of extortionists looted Tk 17,000 and left three persons injured when they stormed into the Romroma Hotel and Restaurant at Green

Road yesterday evening. Of the injured, Shamsul Haque, 20, was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with a bullet injury while two others ishak, 30 and Siddig, 20, were rushed to a private medical

clinic. A restaurant staff said that the extortionists earlier demanded Tk 50,000 as toll but

the manager refused to pay. The extortionists opened gun shots and blasted crackers in the hotel and looted the cash yesterday, he said.

pretty unusual.



ground in Mehendiganj, Barisal yesterday. - PID photo

Bankers asked to expedite recovery

Saifur sees favouritism in loan disbursement

Rahman vesterday asked the bankers to expedite the processing of loan-default cases specially those involving Taka 25 lakh or more, reports BSS.

He was addressing the directors of banks and other financial institutions at a review meeting on the banking sector in the conference room of Ministry of Finance.

The Minister directed the banks to prepare monthly statements on outstanding loans and defaulting borrowers and asked them to expedite the process of loan recovery through coordinated follow up

The Minister regretted that credit goes not where it is required, but where there are connections' The Finance Minister sug-

gested the setting up of investment cells in all the banks for prompt processing of investment applications. These cells should coordinate with the branches so that

posed of in a month. Saifur Rahman said that from now on the first two items in the agenda for board meetings of banks should be disposal of credit proposals and recovery of loans. He said

the applications can be dis-

Finance Minister M Saifur there should be incentives for timely repayments in the form of discounts or rebates.

The Minister said that bankers have to be responsible and responsive to people's welfare. Credit delivery should be performed on the basis of character security, rather than on physical security. The good borrowers should be rewarded, and the bad borrowers should be punished, not vice versa as is the current practice, he

He urged the banking community to develop financial relationships with the clientele and undertake creative, entrepreneurial and mission oriented banking for developing the economy.

Saifur Rahman stressed the importance of easy availability of credit in the rural sector for promoting agricultural activities side by side with provisions for extension services. He said there were bottlenecks and corruption in the rural credit delivery programme. The situation must be improved and there should be freer flow of credit to the farmers for activities like horticulture, poultry and dairy farming, fodder and feed mainufacture, and fisheries, he said.

SAARC summit

Fron Page 1 Col 4

the summit was called off at the last moment

When late Bangladesh President Ziaur Rahman mooted the idea of the Seven-Nation South Asian Economic Cooperation, the concept was greeted with a large degree of scepticism by different quar-

But the utility of the proposal for the economic bene fits of the vast multitude living in the region was gradually appreciated and the concerned countries eventually veered towards the view that the idea bore consequences of far-reaching positive results.

The officials of seven coun tries initially burnt midnight oil in preparing the pros and cons of the regional coopera tion and their unremitting works reached the zenith when the SAARC came into being launehing through the first summit.

The nascent SAARC made a modest beginning with coop eration in selected areas but gradually came to cover a lot of areas of direct benefits to the common people in the region.

Area analysts say that the SAARC has over the last few years blossomed into a mean ingful economic forum and it is time that the group addresses itself to more hardcore eco nomic issues meeting the aspi

rations of the people of the South Asia.

The seventh summit is expected to take up such hard core economic matters in addition to consolidating the gains made so far by the SAARC. While the bilateral issues

are not covered by the SAARC arena, the SAARC gatherings either at the heads of government or foreign ministers or even foreign secretarics level have always provided a desirable opportunity for the member states to discuss rather vexed bilateral matters.

Such discussions might not have produced resolutions of the pugnacious issues but cast a sobering effects on the overall environment in the region. the area analysts said.

For instance, they pointed out, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's talks with Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao would focus on such crucial is sucs like the sharing of the waters on the Ganges and with the Pakistan Prime Minister on early repatriation of the "stranded Pakistanis" from Bangladesh.

The seventh SAARC summit is expected to provide a collective stimulation to the efforts for common goods by the states, whose ties are often be devilled by occasional strains at bilateral plane

\$ 1.6 b US aid package

From Page 1 Col 5 signalled it would support

Moscow's long pressed plea to become a member of the international trading organiza tion, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

"The US private sector as sistance programme supports Russia's historic transition to a market-based economy," said a White House fact sheet on the programme.

"The United States has a great deal to gain from a strong successful, democratic Russia," Clinton said Saturday. with Yeltsin at his side after their first session. "It is in our interests, and I am very encouraged by the things that President Yeltsin has stood for and the fight that he's wag-

For his part, Yeltsin scpa rately told reporters: "For him (Clinton), what is happening in Russia is just as important as the national interests of America. You understand That's very interesting and

"I am very satisfied," he

added "You know, we devel oped a kind of psychological perception, contact with each other despite the difference in

Yeltsin is 62, Clinton 46. "The Boris Yeltsin that President Clinton met with today did not look, act or talk like a politician on the ropes. Strobe Talbott, the president's chief adviser on Russia and US note-taker at the session, said Saturday night

Clinton was very impressed with "how vigorous, how ready to go President Yeltsin seems to be," Talbott said.

val Huq group of Purbobanglar As Yeltsin climbed into his Communist Party. limousine at the end of a two-According to police, the hour meeting, Clinton retwo 'outlawed' groups were marked that Yeltsin struck locked in clash yesterday at 11 him "as a fighter," Talbott pm at South Narayanpur, 13 said. "The chemistry between kilometres from Jhenidah. the two was very good." About 30 rounds of shots were traded between them during Russian Foreign Minister

the clash. Andrei V Kozyrev said Sunday The victims of the gunbattle that if Yeltsin did not survive are: Abdul Khaleq, 38 of his struggle with hard-liners at Kushobaria village and Oliar home, "that will mean, to my Rahman, 30 of Laksmipur vilmind, disaster." lage of the district.

The Midnight File

Relief airlift to Sarajevo resumes

SARAJEVO, Apr 4: The humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo resumed today with a Canadian C-130 arriving from Ancona on Italy's Adriatic coast, at 7:59 am (0559 GMT), reports AFP.

> Israelis urge govt to open talks with PLO

JERUSALEM, Apr 4: About 1,000 Israelis took to the streets of Jerusalem to urge their government to open talks with the PLO and establish peace quickly, reports AFP.

Diarrhoea takes 7 more lives

Diarrhoea claimed seven more lives and attacked 1,534 people in 24 hours till 9 am yesterday, reports UNB.

Diarrhoca Control Room sources in Dhaka said that with the new deaths, the toll rose to 1,552 since the outbreak of the disease in early January.

Khaleda

From page 1 col 7

The Prime Minister urged

the people from all walks of

life to resist those who are

hatching conspiracy against

development and existence of

Urging people to work

unitedly for building the coun-

try, she said, The real identity

of all, irrespective of their re-

ligions and caste is that every

In an oblique reference to

the Awami League, she said

that the people had rejected

them as they had betrayed the

people in the past during their

regime immediately after the

need for maintaining a peace

in the society to implement

eign investors will be discour-

aged, industrialisation ham-

pered, trade blocked and pro-

duction halted," the Prime

ment's development measures,

Begum Zia said that 19-point

programme of late President

Zia is being implemented in

phases to take the country

forward towards self- reliance.

that the government was

working to meet the people's

five basic needs: food, clothing,

housing, education and medi-

problems, the Prime Minister

assured that Rasik Chandra

High School would be nation-

area would be brought under

rural electrification pro-

Earlier, the Prime Minister

Water talks: Gov

failed to realise

rights, says JP

By Staff Correspondent

Party at a meeting Saturday

expressed grave concern at

the situation arising out of uni-

lateral withdrawal of water by

the Indian government from

It also criticized the gov-

ernment for its failure in real-

ising the rights of the country

in recent water talks saying

that Jatiya Party was able to

realise 34 thousand cusecs of

water during its rule while the

BNP government failed to re-

alise even 10 thousand cusees.

icized the proposed South

Asian Preferential Trade Agr-

cement (SAPTA), which is

awaiting approval of the Se-

venth SAARC Summit and said

that if the agreement was

implemented Bangladesh will

presided over by JP Senior

Vice-President Mizanur Rah-

man Chowdhury was addre-

ssed, among others, by JP Par-

liamentary Party leader Ba-

rrister Moudud Ahmed, MP

Strajul Hossain Khan, Sunil

Gupta, Shamsul Huda Chow-

dhury, Major Gen (Retd)

Shamsul Hug, Col (Retd) M A

Maleq, Sarder Amjad Hossain,

Dr T I M Fazle Rabbi Chow-

dhury, Skeikh Shahidul Islam,

Abdus Sattar, Begum Syeda

Razia Fayez and Barrister

2 killed as rival

Sharbahara

parties clash

From Our Correspondent

tivists of Sarbahara Party

Kamrul group were killed last

night in a gunbattle with its ri-

JHENIDAH, Apr 4: Two ac-

Anisul Islam Mahmud.

The Presidium meeting

be flooded with Indian goods.

The JP Presidium also crit-

The Presidium of Jatiya

gramme.

premises.

the Ganges.

Responding to the local

In this context, she said

Referring to her govern-

development activities.

Begum Zia stressed the

"If there is no peace, for

body is a Bangladeshi."

people," she added.

the country.

liberation.

Minister said

Of the latest deaths, four were in Laxmipur, two in Jessore and one in Jhalakati.

Sheraton

From Page 1 Col 5 Relevant officials of the seven nation SAARC are due to reach Dhaka April 6, the Foreign Ministers April 7.

The heads of state or government are expected to arrive April 8-10, the sub-committee sources informed.

According to the committee sources, the incumbent Chairman of the SAARC President Ranasinghe Premadasa of Shri Lanka arrives April 8 while Maldives President Mamun Abdul Gayoom, King of Bhutan Jigme Singe Wangehuk and Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif reach April 9. Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao comes April 10.

The SAARC summit was first planned for December 12 and 13 '92 then for January 12-13 this year. But both the schedules had to be cancelled as Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's was unable to attend because of his preoccupations at home.

As on the previous occasions, security teams of the SAARC countries are now checking the Sheraton Hotel, the hotel management said and added that such teams from India and the Maldives had completed their checks in the past couple of days.

College and Patharhat Muslim The hotel management had stopped taking new boarders alised. She also said that the since a month ago and the present boarders have been requested to depart from the hotel April 6 at 12 noon from which none but the persons planted a sapling at the college concerned with the summit would be permitted entrance into the hotel with valid passes, officials said.

Fresh arrangements at the hotel would incur no additional expenditure as all necessary steps had been taken prior to the postponed summit dates, an official said.

No change in the hotel's ar rangement to accommodate the SAARC leaders and officials has been made and nothing added to the previously extended facilities, carried out as part of the hotel's expensive renovation programme, an official stated.

To accommodate the SAARC VVIPs, the Dhaka Sheraton has provided for each head of state or government and his/her entourage equal facilities on each of the seven floors, prepared for the summit VVIPs, organisers said.

On each floor, they added, similar suits have been readied to accommodate the heads of states or government and accordingly similar suits have been allocated among the FMs, secretaries and others.

A government source said that the two-day SAARC summit programmes would witness a minor change - the banquet to be hosted by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia would now be held at the Sonargaon Hotel instead of at the earlier decided venue of Senakunja. The change has been made fearing inclement weather, the source mentioned.

Lanka

From Page 1 Col 3 mal consultations on the eve of the next annual SAARC Summit which has been fixed for April 10 and 11 in Bangladesh.

The proposed emergency summit is also expected to prevent the spreading of volatile issues with possible cross-border repercussions, Shri Lankan officials said.

Communal tension in one country could have repercussions in a number of neighbouring countries and such a situation could lead to outside interference in the region, a senior official said.

Face to face discussions by SAARC leaders could avoid escalations of such events and prevent crisis from spreading beyond one's borders, he said.

SAARC, founded in 1985 to boost regional economic and political cooperation, now groups India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Shri Lanka and the Maldives.

Sharif supports Ishaq's move for reelections

ISLAMABAD, Apr 4: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif agreed Sunday to support President Ghulam Ishaq Khan's bid for re-election, hoping to settle a political impasse that threatened to topple his government, an aide said, reports AP.

There has been a mutual lack of trust and confidence, said Sharif's close adviser Petroleum Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan.

"But we feel the worst is now over. We will convey our decision to the president." It was not known whether the president accepted the

peace offering.

BJP renews campaign for fresh polls

NEW DELHI, Apr 4: Indian Hindu revivalists, buoyed by a court verdict quashing the recent dismissal of one of four Hindu nationalist state governments, have renewed their campaign for new elections, reports AFP.

Lal Krishna Advani, leader of the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), or Indian People's Party, said Saturday that Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao had lost the moral authority to rule following the verdict.

FM inaugurates Diplomats' Assoc

The Foreign Minister, Mostafizur Rahman, yesterday inaugurated 'The Diplomats' Association of Dhaka' at a function here, reports BSS.

Speaking at a function to launch the association, organised by the diplomats working with the foreign missions the Foreign Minister briefed them about the forthcoming SAARC summit.

The diplomatic personnel in the foreign missions launched the association with the objective of creating opportunities interaction among themselves and organise discussions once a month where guest speakers would be invited.

Such associations are there in all the capitals with the membership drawn from among the diplomats beginning with the number two and those junior to him in the missions. The ambassadors do not become members.

Diplomats of all the foreign missions in Dhaka joined the association. The embassies of the USA. China and Japan took the initiative to organise it

Slum fire

From page 1 col 7 spread rapidly in the whole slum area, built 40 years ago"

Some influential people had built 167 houses on the land named Lalmath Slum, Pearabagh, and the slum dwellers had to pay Taka 150 to 250 per house as monthly rent, slum dwellers said.

Most of the men in the slum are rickshaw-pullers while the women work as maid servants, they said.

BSS from Chittagong says: A fire which broke out at Momin Road here Sunday gutted 20 thatched houses and other property

The fire caused an estimated loss of about Taka five lakh. Fire Service source said. The cause of the fire was

not immediately known.

Chittagong Newspaper Hawkers Multi-purpose Cooperative Society leader Monir Ahmad in a separate statement said Sunday night that 19 newspaper hawkers were affected in the fire incident at Momin Road. These hawkers have lost everything as their dwellings have been gutted, he

UNB from Jamaipur says: Ten dwelling houses were gutted and property worth about Tk 10 lakh was damaged in a devastating fire at Chandra in the town Sunday. Four people, including a

woman received burn injuries in the fire that originated from a lamp, witnesses said. Of the injured Julckha

Begum (60) was admitted to Sadar hospital with serious burn injuries. Fire Brigade personnel

rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control after an hour-long effort.

· C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at The Sangbad Ltd., 36 Purana Paltan, Dhaka. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No. 11; Road No. 3; Dhanmondi R/A., Dhaka-1205. PABX 500092-4. Advertisement: 500091 (Direct) Fax No. 88-02-863035. GPO Box No. 3257. GRAM: DAILY STAR DHAKA

Published by the Editor on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motificel

Editor: S. M. Ali

Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam