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NEWS BRIEFS

Rohingyas' return may resume Apr 23

COX'S BAZAR, Apr 21: The repatriation of Rohingya refugees is likely to resume on April 23 (Friday), an official source told BSS here last night. Meanwhile UNHCR representatives gave clearance to a total of 160 refugees after getting their assent to go back to their homes in Myanmar.

Karma Dorjee meets Khaleda

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday sought cooperation of Bhutan in implementing various SAARC programmes aimed at welfare of the people of the region, including those for poverty alleviation and women's uplift. She was talking to the outgoing Bhutanese Ambassador, Karma Dorjee, reports UNB.

Milam calls on Hasina

US Ambassador to Bangladesh William B Milam yesterday called on Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina at her parliamentary office. They exchanged views on matters of mutual interest, reports UNB.

Sharif starts campaign, files petition

Mazari-Bhutto tussle over portfolios, other conditions

ISLAMABAD, Apr 21: Pakistan's newly-formed national union government saw its first wrangles today between Benazir Bhutto, who wants the immediate dissolution of four provincial assemblies, and the new Prime Minister who does not want to move on the matter, reports AFP.

Bhutto, who after three years in the opposition camp has marched firmly back to political center stage, has said that she had set three conditions to support the operation mounted by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan against his former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

They were the dissolution of the National Assembly, decreed Sunday at the same time as Sharif's dismissal, the holding of free and fair elections, in principle set for July 14, and the dissolution of provincial assemblies, which has yet

to be carried out.

"Suspicion is too strong but we find they are not moving fast enough", explained a spokesman for Bhutto's leftist Pakistan People's Party (PPP).

According to Bhutto, the dissolution of the provincial assemblies — Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan and North West Frontier Province — is an indispensable condition for holding elections.

All four assemblies are administered by the conservative Pakistan Muslim League (PML), the party which was in power until now, and the polls could be manipulated on a massive scale in a situation where the provincial administrations would be both participants and referees.

The new Prime Minister, 64-year-old Balkh Sher Mazari, a leading League figure, argues that the dissolution of the assemblies is up to the

provinces themselves, and not a matter for the central government.

The explanation cuts no ice with the PPP, since any dissolution order must be given by the provincial governors, seen as mere messengers for Islamabad.

In the Punjab, the huge central province now in the hands of Sharif followers, a behind the scene operation is under way to tilt power in the Mazari camp, possibly short-circuiting the dissolution process demanded by the PPP.

A tussle also appears to be shaping up for the distribution of portfolios in the new government, which Mazari has promised will be formed very soon.

Informed sources say the next government will consist of 25 to 30 portfolios, of which a third will go to the PPP, a

third to the League and a third to groups wanting to join the coalition, such as the fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami or the MQM, the party representing the interests of the Mohajirs, Urdu-speaking refugees from India.

The first clash took place over the post of Minister of Finance which had been coveted by Hamid Nasir Chaittha, a League leader, and which was finally given to Feroz Leghari, one Bhutto's right hand men.

The battle is still under wraps, as Bhutto and Mazari, are committed to putting an end to the "politics of confrontation," which has seen the dissolution of three national assemblies in Pakistan since 1988.

Ex-Prime Minister Sharif, who Wednesday began his electoral campaign with a train trip across his home state of

Govt to introduce English upto Degree level

The government has constituted two separate committees to expedite introduction of English at Degree level and removal of session jam from all levels of education, reports UNB.

The committees were formed at a high level meeting held here yesterday (Wednesday) with Education Minister Barrister Jamruddin Sircar in the chair.

One of the committees has been set up with Mohammad Ali, Member of the University Grants Commission (UGC), and Shah Matur Rahman, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Education, as its Chairman and Member-Secretary respectively to find out ways and means to introduce English at all levels.

The meeting emphasised on learning of English language and decided to introduce it from primary to degree levels.

To remove the session jam, the meeting also decided to

hold SSC, HSC and Degree examinations as per academic calendar and publish results in time.

It also formed another committee with UGC Chairman Prof M Shamsul Huq and Chairman, Dhaka Education Board Obaidul Huq, as its Chairman and Member Secretary respectively to make recommendations with regard to removing session jam.

Education Secretary Ershadul Huq, Chairman of UGC, Prof M Shamsul Huq, Vice Chancellors of Rajshahi University, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Agriculture University, Khulna University, Sylhet Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Islamic University, Open University, National University, Chairman of four Education Boards and other concerned high officials of the ministry attended the meeting.

We say 'dal bhat' but hope to give fish, rice: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia hoped that Bangladesh, as chairman of SAARC, can keep substantial contributions for the welfare of the people in the region, reports UNB.

"Our responsibility was not over by making the 7th Summit successful," she said.

Begum Zia was addressing the heads of government and non-government agencies and individuals at the field level who worked for the Summit held in Dhaka on April 10-11.

Lauding the contributions of all, the Prime Minister said the people of the country, by making the recent SAARC Summit a success, have proved that they uphold national interest above everything.

Mentioning her "Dal Bhat" concept which aims at ensuring basic needs of all individuals, she hoped that she would be able to help more than that. "We are speaking of Dal Bhat, but we also hope to provide fish and rice."

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BCL factions' clash for control of DU hall

By Staff Correspondent

Two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) one backed by Awami League and the other by dissident leader Mostafa Mohsin Montu exchanged gunshots at noon and at night Wednesday over taking control of the Dhaka University Hall of the Dhaka University.



A ransacked room of the Dhaka University Registrar Building yesterday. — Star photo

When the supporters of the two factions confronted each other at noon in the hall and its surrounding areas firing shots, police lobbed several rounds of teargas shells to disperse the armed groups.

The armedmen again fired at least eight gun shots at around 9:45 pm Wednesday turning the campus tense, witnesses said.

Immediately after the incident at night police cordoned off the three halls — SM Hall, Zahurul Haq Hall and Jagannath Hall — of the university reportedly known as haven for the supporters of both the factions to avert further violent clashes.

Our DU Correspondent adds: The BCL (M-I), in its version, alleged that the Mantu group had insulted and ousted its supporters and activists when they went to their respective seats being officially attached with the hall.

These BCL (M-I) supporters had been ousted by the Montu backed BCL (M-L) group at different times, from the hall BCL (M-I) leaders added.

Witnesses said that a large

Dozens of rooms ransacked

By DU Correspondent

A group of examiners damaged three motor vehicles and ransacked dozens of rooms at the Dhaka University yesterday to demand shifting their examinations.

The general students panicked at the time.

The preliminary first part final examinations are scheduled to begin May 8.

Witnesses said that a group of about 55 students of different departments went to the office of the Vice-Chancellor at about 12:30 pm to demand rescheduling of their examinations.

The agitated students went on the rampage as they were not satisfied with the decision of the University authorities on the schedule of the examinations, sources said.

The angry students then damaged two minibuses and a private car parked near the office of the Vice-Chancellor.

The students also ransacked some office rooms at the Administration building, sources said.

Police soon rushed to the spot and chased the agitating students, witnesses said.

The trouble-making group came to the Arts Faculty building and also ransacked a number of offices and class-

Delivery of judgement in Azam's case begins

By Staff Correspondent

The delivery of judgement on the writ petition challenging the cancellation of the citizenship of Golam Azam began Wednesday.

The Single-Judge Bench of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court comprising Justice Anwarul Haque Choudhury started dictating the judgement in a packed courtroom at 10:45 am and continued until 4 pm with a 75-minute break.

At the end of the day's hearing, Justice Choudhury said: "It (delivery of the judgement) will not take more than tomorrow." The Court session resumes today at 10:30 am.

Delivery of judgement began following a 20-day hearing of the arguments of the counsel for the petitioner, Barrister A R Yusuf and the State counsel, Attorney General Aminul Huq, on the impugne government notification, issued on April 18, 1973, disqualifying the petitioner from being deemed to be a citizen of Bangladesh.

While dictating the judgement on the day Justice Choudhury summed up the statement of facts and the arguments earlier placed by both sides.

Stiff security measures were enforced in and around the Supreme Court Building on the day. A large contingent of police was present in the com-

Dhaka, Yangon meet to review repatriation on Apr 30

Bangladesh and Myanmar will begin a two-day meeting in Yangon on April 30 to review the ongoing repatriation of the Rohingya refugees, officials here said yesterday, reports UNB.

The 14th meeting of the officials of the two neighbours is expected to work out measures to hasten the repatriation of the Myanmar Muslims sheltered in camps in the southeastern hilly regions of Bangladesh.

Since the repatriation began in August last year, more than 22,000 refugees returned to their homes voluntarily out of the total 1,65,000 Rohingya.

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Teachers discuss BAU situation with Hasina

A delegation of Bangladesh Agricultural University Democratic Teachers Forum yesterday met with opposition leader Sheikh Hasina and discussed prevailing situation on the campus, reports UNB.

During the meeting at the parliament office of Hasina in the afternoon, the delegation, headed by Prof Abdul Jalil, complained that a ruling "party nominee" had been appointed to the post of Vice-Chancellor of the University in contravention of all rules and conventions.

The delegation members demanded a "democratic ordinance" for the Agricultural University and sought cooperation from the opposition leader in realisation of their demand.

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ICFM to focus on plight of Muslim minorities

The 21st Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) will be held in Karachi April 25-29 as scheduled despite political unrest in Pakistan following the dismissal of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, reports UNB.

The conference will be inaugurated by Balkh Sher Mazari, acting Prime Minister of Pakistan.

The dismissal of the government overnight will not affect OIC Foreign Minister's conference next week in Pakistan", said a OIC Secretariat press release in Jeddah on Tuesday.

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman leaves here today (Thursday) night to at-

tend the conference in Karachi. He will lead a five-member Bangladesh delegation to the moot.

The tragic predicament of the Muslim minorities in non-Muslim states across the world will be sharply focused at the OIC foreign ministers meet in Karachi.

Diplomatic sources in Dhaka said yesterday repression and mass extermination of the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina and grim condition of the Muslims in India will also figure prominently in the five-day conference and the OIC is expected to take steps to see that they live in peace, harmony and security in their respective countries.

The struggle of the Muslim Moros in the Philippines and

Kashmir for their right of self-determination will also be highlighted during the deliberations of the OIC foreign ministers. OIC, as a matter of policy, extends all possible support to Muslims all over the world in their struggle for the right of self-determination.

Pakistan may move a resolution urging a threadbare discussion on the condition of the Muslims in India following demolition of Babri Mosque.

The sources said Islamabad may also insist on the adoption of a resolution by the conference censuring India for her failure to protect the historic mosque and safeguard lives and property of her Muslim minority.

The latest developments in

Anwar Hossain Manju held under SPA

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Party leader Anwar Hossain Manju, MP, was arrested under the Special Powers Act Wednesday.

The Printer and Publisher of the Daily Ittefaq and former communications Minister, Manju was picked up from his Dhanmondi residence by plainclothes policemen at around 6:30 pm.

Dhanmondi police confirmed that he was arrested by the Special Branch under the Special Powers Act, but could not specify the charges against Manju.

Till the writing of this report, the JP leader was being detained in the Dhanmondi Police Station and the officer in charge said that he would be produced before the court today.

Muslim leader gunned down in Bombay

BOMBAY, Apr 21: Four gunmen killed a Muslim leader in central Bombay on Wednesday, and hundreds of police were deployed to prevent another outbreak of communal violence in the city, reports AP.

The assailants drove into Byculla neighbourhood in a taxi and fired 11 bullets at Ziauddin Bukhari, 53, as he stood in front of a shop, police said. Bukhari is the chairman of Ulama, a committee of theologians that controls the city's mosques.

This is not a Hindu-Muslim thing. This is personal rivalry with some gang connections, CD Rokde, deputy commissioner of police in that area of the city, told The Associated Press.

But riot police and paramilitary soldiers were rushed to

Election of Yusuf from Ctg -7 declared void

CHITTAGONG, Apr 21: The first Additional District Election Tribunal (2) Judge Muhammad Ismail Meah today declared null and void the election of Muhammad Yusuf from Jatiya Sangsad seat Chittagong-7, reports BSS.

The judge ordered for re-election at the constituency. NDP nominee Gias Uddin Quader Chowdhury who also contested from the same constituency along with Muhammad Yusuf filed a suit against the latter to the effect that Yusuf in violation of Presidential Ordinance No. 155 of 1972 contested the election by retaining the post of Lower Division Assistant-Typist, of Karnaphuli Jute Mills.

Yusuf was declared elected as he got majority votes.

Gias Uddin Quader Chowdhury challenged his election in the election tribunal.

The judge said in his judgement that Muhammad Yusuf did not resign from the government service while contesting the election and thus he violated the law. The judge examined several witnesses and relevant papers of Yusuf and found him guilty of violating Presidential Order No 155 of 1972.

Tough Malaysian visa rules half Biman's passenger load

KUALA LUMPUR, Apr 21: Tough new visa rules stopping tourists from working in Malaysia have hurt the flag-carrier airlines of India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh, halving passenger loads, industry officials said today, reports Reuter.

Air India, Air Lanka, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and Bangladesh's Biman Airlines have asked Malaysia's Tourism Ministry to review the rules, which came into effect at the start of the year.

Under the rules, Malaysians must sponsor tourists from the four countries and take responsibility for their departure.

"Our passenger load has been affected very seriously by the visa ruling," said S V B Rao, Air India's manager in Kuala Lumpur.

Rao said Air India, which has been operating in Malaysia for 25 years and flies thrice weekly to Kuala Lumpur, had to scrap its third flight when the visa ruling took its effect

on passenger loads.

"Currently we are only able to fill half of the 205 seats on each flight. Making it very uneconomical. We do not know for how long we will be able to continue with these flights under the circumstances," he said.

Industry officials said Air India flights to Kuala Lumpur were usually fully booked before the visa ruling was implemented. Most of Malaysia's ethnic Indians migrated from India more than a century ago

in search of jobs in the plantation sector and civil service, leaving behind relatives.

Rao said apart from the difficulty visiting Indians faced in getting local sponsors, the procedure also took up to three months for clearance.

"These two factors are seemingly deterring Indians from coming to Malaysia as frequently," he said.

Immigration officials said the ruling was introduced to ensure that only genuine tourists from the four coun-

tries came into Malaysia.

More than 300,000 illegal immigrants — mostly Indonesians but including Pakistanis, Indians, Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans — were given amnesty by the government last year and allowed to work in the plantation and construction sectors.

Another 224,000 foreigners who did not register under the amnesty exercise are at large in Malaysia. Authorities have begun hunting them after imposing a freeze on the re-

crutment of foreign labour.

PIA manager A R Syed said the airline had suffered a serious fall in the number of passengers on its twice weekly flights to Malaysia because of the visa regulation.

"Our passenger load has fallen by between 45 and 50 per cent," said Syed.

"The new visa ruling is only expected to dampen further our passenger loads. We hope the Malaysian government will revise the regulation to ensure

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