



Inside Today

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Rembrandt Comes to Town Page 3

Article

Do Economists Wreck the Economy? Page 4

International

Sudanese oppose Sharia law
LTTE mourns Premadasa's death Page 5

Business

US-Japan row plunges ADB's lending programme into uncertainty
Aga Khan visits working women Pages 6, 7

NEWS BRIEFS

Aga Khan hosts dinner for PM

Prince Karim Aga Khan, spiritual leader of the Ismailia Community, last night hosted a dinner in honour of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at Hotel Sheraton. Ministers, members of parliament, high civil and military officials, diplomats and members of the Ismailia Community attended the dinner. The Aga Khan, who flew to Dhaka on May 3 on a four-day visit, received Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the hotel, reports BSS.

BNP PP meets Sunday

The parliamentary party of BNP will meet at 11:00 am on Sunday at the Sangsad Bhavan. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will preside over the meeting which is expected to discuss political and economic situation in the country and matters to be deliberated in parliament that begins its 9th session the same afternoon. Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain has requested all members of the parliamentary party to attend the meeting, reports UNB.

Dakhil Exams begin

The Dakhil Examination 1993 of Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board began yesterday. A total of 56 thousand candidates are appearing in the examination at 238 centres through out the country. Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Strear visited Dakhil Examination Centre at Dhaka Alia Madrasah in Dhaka, reports BSS.

SMC exams from May 15

SYLHET, May 5: All examinations of Sylhet Medical College, scheduled for May 8, will now commence on May 15, the authorities announced today. The college has been closed since last Monday following a clash between the activists of Chhatra Shibir and Jaitiyabadi Chhatra Dal, reports UNB.

30 hurt as Jotdars, landless clash

PADMA, May 5: Supporters of local Jotdars clashed with landless farmers at a village in Chalmohar thana today (Wednesday) leaving at least 30 people injured, reports NB.

School boy slaughtered

CIUADANGA, May 5: A school boy was slaughtered by an armed group at village Hasanhati in Sadar thana Wednesday morning, police said, reports UNB.

BATEXPO '93 opens in city

Explore new markets, raise exports: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday expressed the hope that the country's export earnings would exceed the target during the current fiscal year under the government charted strategy of 'export-led growth through private sector' to increase economic growth, reports BSS.

She, however, said in spite of this positive indication in

export 'we still have to cross a long way. We have to increase our export earnings manifold.'

The Prime Minister was addressing as chief guest the inaugural ceremony of the Bangladesh Apparel and Textile Exposition-93 sponsored by the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) at a local city hotel Wednesday afternoon.

Begum Zia iterated the importance of further consolidating Bangladesh's position in the international garments market by exploring newer markets and improving the quality of products more competitively.

The inaugural function was addressed, among others, by Commerce Minister M K Anwar, State Minister for



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visiting stalls after inaugurating the Bangladesh Apparel and Textiles Exposition '93 (BATEXPO-93) organised by the BGMEA in the city yesterday. — PID photo

Delhi asks Dhaka for transit to link its N-E part with sea

Bangladesh Communications Minister OH Ahmed has called upon India to solve the problem of the Ganges water sharing, reports BSS.

He was talking to Indian State Minister for Foreign Affairs R L Bhatta in New Delhi Tuesday, a message from the Indian capital said yesterday. Ahmed said that due to the numerous upstream withdrawals of water from the Ganges by different states in India, the people in Bangladesh were suffering severe hardships.

The Communications Minister said that the Ganges had been flowing through Bangladesh for thousands of years and added that the upstream interference with the natural flow of the river was only causing difficulties for a vast population in Bangladesh.

The agrarian economy of

Bangladesh, he said, was heavily dependent on the river's waters to meet the pressing needs of irrigation and other requirements for its very sustenance.

The Indian minister said that small concessions could be made here and there but this would not be much useful.

Bhatta requested for transit facilities through Bangladesh to link north eastern India with the sea.

The Bangladesh minister described it as a 'new idea' and said that unless the outstanding problems like the Ganges were solved it would not be possible to consider the new proposal.

Referring to the Ganges problem Ahmed said once this was solved other smaller problems should not take much time for solution.

Referring to the Indian proposal for link canal Ahmed said that highly overpopulated Bangladesh with very limited land area had no land to spare for such a project.

Bhatta said that new proposals could be made to solve the problem in a spirit of goodwill.

Bhatta said that it was a matter of satisfaction that the Chakma problem was rapidly approaching a solution and expressed India's wish to see the Chakma refugees return home immediately.

The Indian minister requested the Bangladesh minister to convey his country's deep appreciation and congratulation to Bangladesh for 'very successfully' hosting of the seventh SAARC summit conference.

See Page 12 Col 8

Shibir strike paralyses Rajshahi University

RAJSHAHI, May 5: A strike enforced by the Islami Chhatra Shibir halted official work and transport on the closed campus of Rajshahi University today, reports UNB.

Shibir gave the strike call at a sit-in on Tuesday to press home its demands, including release of six of its leaders and arrest of the 'killers' of 12 of their slain leaders.

The RU bus could not ply due to the strike.

The Shibir workers assembled near the main gate of the administrative building at noon, where RU unit acting president Habibur Rahman, city unit secretary Mahbulbul Ahsan Bulbul and local Shibir leader Abdul Jabbar spoke. Earlier, they brought out a procession on the campus.

Meanwhile, the university authorities have banned all sorts of meetings, processions, strike and siege on the campus for 18 days beginning May 8 and decided to take legal actions against anyone violating the prohibition.

It was also decided that the authorities would not play any role in getting the release of anyone arrested for involvement in terrorist acts.

The decisions were taken at a Senate meeting at the administrative building this evening with Vice-Chancellor Prof Anisur Rahman in the chair.

The university Syndicate, at its meeting on April 12, decided to reopen all residential halls on May 7 and resume classes on May 8.

The university was closed since die on February 6 after violent clashes between the activists of the Islami Chhatra Shibir and the All-Party Students Unity (including the JCD) left five students dead.

Khulna Hardboard Mills shut due to mechanical fault

From Staff Correspondent KHULNA, May 5: The Khulna Hardboard Mills, the only one of its kind in the country, has been closed from today due to mechanical fault.

According to the Managing Director of the mills, a fault developed in the hotpress ramp unit at about 12-45 and the mills had to be closed from one this afternoon.

"It will take more than 10 days to reopen the mills," he added.

About 30 lakh taka will be needed for replacing the faulty parts, the MD remarked. He further said, although the mills had outlived its actual guarantee period of 20 years by more than seven years, no substantial replacement of its parts was carried out since its inception.

He, moreover, admitted that the mills would sustain a loss of more than eight lakh taka during the closure period.

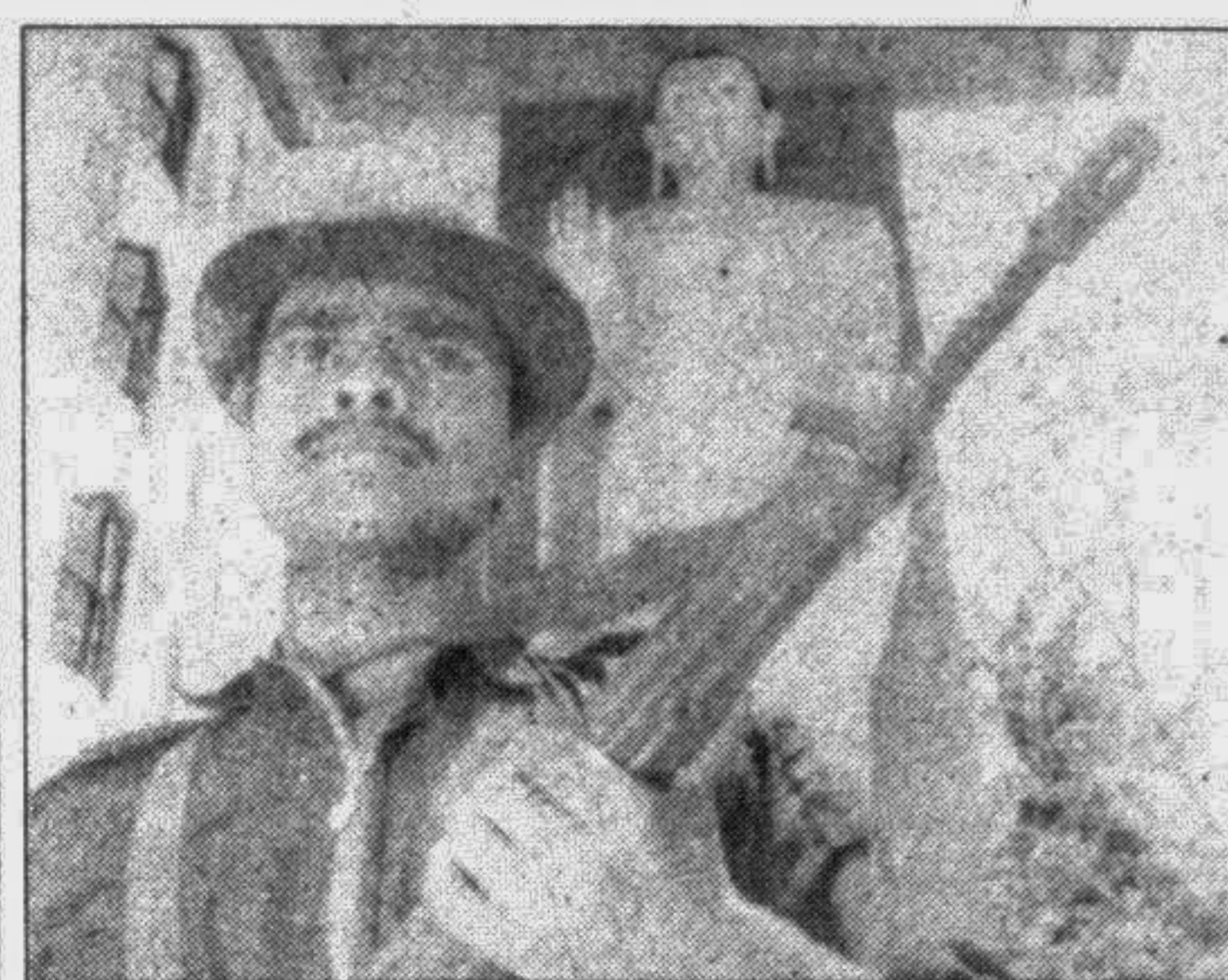
Buddha Purnima today

Buddha Purnima, the most sacred Buddhist festival, will be celebrated all over the country today by nearly 10 lakh Buddhists in a spirit of reverence and festivity, reports BSS.

The day has been declared a national holiday. Buddha Purnima — the full moon day in the month of 'Vaisakha' — commemorates three most significant events of Lord Buddha's life. On the same day — he was born, attained supreme enlightenment and passed away.

The Buddhists of Bangladesh, mostly based in

See Page 12 Col 3



A soldier stands before a huge statue of Lord Buddha Wednesday, one day before the funeral and cremation of slain President Ranasinghe Premadasa. — AFP photo

Premadasa's funeral today Unprecedented security for foreign guests

COLOMBO, May 5: Dozens of foreign dignitaries began arriving here today for President Ranasinghe Premadasa's state funeral with authorities enforcing tighter security measures to protect them, reports AFP.

PM to attend

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia leaves Dhaka for Colombo this morning to attend the funeral of Ranasinghe Premadasa, the assassinated President of Sri Lanka, reports UNB.

Begum Zia, who is the current chairperson of the SAARC, will be accompanied by Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman and Energy Minister Prof Khondker Mosharraf Hossain.

Begum Zia is expected to return home at night. BTV will telecast the funeral live starting at 3:45pm this afternoon.

Queen Ashidori Wangmo Wangchuck, one of the four wives of the King of Bhutan, was the first to arrive under an unprecedented security blanket for the dignitaries who include two heads of government and a vice-president.

Meanwhile, tension mounted in Colombo today as thousands of minority Tamils fled the Sri Lankan capital ahead of the funeral of Premadasa who was killed by a suspected Tamil rebel, police said.

Constables and anti-riot squads were being brought in from the suburbs and provinces to avert a violent anti-Tamil backlash after Premadasa's state funeral here Thursday, a police officer said.

Police have raided a number of Tamil boarding houses here and picked up at least 20 young Tamils men for questioning, another officer said.

"Nothing is being left to See Page 12 Col 7

SKOP's 72-hr strike call AL, JP undecided

By Nazmul Ashraf

The Awami League and the Jatiya Party are still undecided regarding their support to the planned 72-hour labour strike called by the Sramik-Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) for May 11-13 while the Jamaat-e-Islami has opposed the programme altogether.

However, the left-leaning 5-party combine, the four-party Patriotic Democratic Front and some other smaller parties have already extended their full support to the three-day shutdown.

The SKOP, an umbrella body of 18 trade union federations, and the combine of five other trade union federations in the jute-textiles-cotton-sugar-BSEC sectors, earlier simultaneously called the shutdown demanding implementation of the accords the government signed last No-

member with the labour leaders about various demands of the employees and workers belonging to the industrial units.

The accords provided for salary increases, abandonment of the government's distinction policy and fixation of minimum wages for the labourers.

The Daily Star correspondent talked to the leaders of the major political parties last night in the wake of a statement released to the press on Tuesday by the Bangladesh Employers' Association (BEA) calling upon the mainstream opposition parties not to support the planned labour strike.

Awami League General Secretary Zillur Rahman told The Daily Star that his party had not yet decided on the issue of the SKOP shutdown.

See Page 12 Col 1

Fear of terrorist attack Delhi bans airport visit. beefs up security

NEW DELHI, May 5: All Indian airports were closed to visitors and security was beefed up in New Delhi following warnings the capital could be the target of terrorist strikes similar to the March blasts in Bombay, police said today.

Entry into airports was restricted only to passengers and authorised personnel for 14 hours last Tuesday following an alert from the Home Ministry that bombers could strike, the Press Trust of India said.

The airports alert followed a tip-off of a possible terrorist attack in New Delhi from Bombay police, investigating the March 12 bomb blasts which killed 300 people in the western metropolises.

Federal Home Minister Shankarrao Chavan and New Delhi Police Commissioner Mukund Behari Kaushal toured the city by night to ensure tighter security following the tip-off, police officials said.

Officers with automatic weapons took up positions on See Page 12 Col 3.

Low turnout mars Sindh by-polls

KARACHI, May 5: A poor turnout here today marred the first by-elections held under a two-week old caretaker government, as a major party warned voters to stay indoors amid fears of violence, reports AFP.

Paramilitary troops patrolled the city as tension prevailed following the weekend murder of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) chairman Azim Tariq. Police said about 200 people including 'anti-social elements' were arrested on the eve of the elections to maintain peace.

Witnesses said several polling stations were empty two hours after voting had started while at some places

even the agents of the candidates were not visible.

Three people were injured in a clash between rival groups in Badin about 90 kilometres north of here, the official Associated Press of Pakistan said.

Reports reaching here from Badin said some federal ministers and People's Democratic Alliance (PDA) deputies were attacked by opponents while campaigning for their candidates for allegedly chanting provocative slogans.

PDA supporters have charged the ministers presence was part of the provincial government's plan to 'rig' the elections. Polling was ordered in 20

of the 24 Provincial Assembly seats vacated by deputies of the ethnic-based Mohajir Quami Movement (MQM) in protest against an army crackdown in the troubled Sindh province last summer, in which hundreds of MQM activists were arrested on alleged terrorism charges.

The MQM, representing Urdu-speaking settlers who came from India after the Subcontinent was partitioned in 1947, is well entrenched in the southern province.

The party's main faction boycotted by-elections, but pro-government dissidents calling themselves the MQM Haqiqi participated in the See Page 12 Col 7

Bosnian Serb leaders urge parliament to accept peace plan

PALE (Bosnia), May 5: The Bosnian Serb self-styled parliament went into full session today to consider whether to accept or turn down the Vance-Owen peace plan for Bosnia-Herzegovina, reports AFP.

The session began around noon (1000 GMT), two hours later than intended, after intensive consultations among the deputies. Bosnian Serb leaders had been seeking to find a compromise acceptable to both the parliament and the inter-

national community on the plan.

Serb leaders pleaded with the Bosnian Serbs parliament to adopt the peace plan today stressing that there was no other alternative but to vote for peace.

Serb President Slobodan Milosevic, who along with several other leaders addressed the parliament Wednesday before it began its debate on the peace plan, said adopting the plan is a decision in the interest of the Serb population in Bosnia and elsewhere.

Stressing that the plan would guarantee Bosnia's Serbs 'equality and freedom,' he urged the 82 deputies to settle unresolved questions at the negotiating table and not at the expense of new victims.

Yugoslav President Dobrica Cosic, in a moving speech, told the parliamentarians that they were 'deciding not only the future of their territories but of all of Yugoslavia.'

"We don't have any more energy for war," he said. He added that although the plan is not fully satisfactory it

offers us in times of peace what we were not able to obtain in the trenches."

The Vance-Owen plan, brokered by the United Nations and the European community, calls for the division of Bosnia into 10 semi-autonomous provinces which would be equally split between the Serbs, Croats and Muslims. Sarajevo would be neutral.

Under the plan, the Serbs, who now make up one-third of the republic's population and control 70 per cent of its ter-

ritory, would have to withdraw from regions they seized in the year-long war in Bosnia.

The United Nations had also proposed sending 70,000 troops to enforce the plan which was signed Sunday in Athens by Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

It is being contested by hardline members of the parliament. Karadzic warned the deputies today that a western military intervention was 'very, very real' if they refuse to

bend on the issue.

Montenegrin President Momir Bulatovic told the deputies to show wisdom by opting for the plan which offers them 'honorable solutions.'

Greek Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis, who had been invited by Milosevic to address the parliament, urged deputies not to 'commit suicide' and reminded them that the international community was determined to use force if they reject the plan.

Food deficit in SAARC states likely to grow

By Staff Correspondent.

The gap between production and need of food in South Asian countries is likely to grow to about 45 million metric tons by the year 2000, according to the head of an international research organisation.

At present, the gap is about 11 million tons, Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute Per Pinstrup-Andersen said at a recent briefing for the staff of the US Congress.

Andersen said hunger would increase dramatically in See Page 12 Col 8

Akhtaruzzaman Babu granted bail

By Court Correspondent.

Akhtaruzzaman Babu, MP, one of the accused in the murder of leading businessman Humayun Zahir, was granted interim bail Wednesday.

Babu — an Awami League Member of Parliament — who has eluded arrest so far, surrendered himself before the court of the District and Sessions Judge Dhaka, for his bail yesterday.

Earlier, a lower court had issued warrant for his arrest and ordered the confiscation of his personal property.

The court granted Babu bail on a bond of Tk 7,00,000 (seven lakh) and the surrender of his international passport. Besides, two Parliament Members — K M Jahangir and Rahmat Ali of the Awami League — have stood surety.

Lawyers for Babu argued that Babu's name was implicated in the murder case with an ulterior motive to harass him politically.

See Page 12 Col 2

One killed, 12 hurt as armed groups clash in city

By Staff Correspondent

A young hawk was shot dead and at least a dozen people were wounded in a bloody clash between two groups of armed men at Shaheenagar, Lalbagh, in the city Wednesday.

Intermittent gunshots and blasts rocked the area during the 45-minute clash which began at 1:00 pm, witnesses said.

The hawk, Abdul Mannan (18), who sustained bullet injury on the left side of his chest, succumbed at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) at 2:20 pm — immediately after being admitted there, reports our hospital correspondent.

Both police and local people said that the clash was a sequel to a long-running feud between two groups of armed men of the area.

Witnesses said that the clashing groups fired scores of See Page 12 Col 1

US scholar visits

By Staff Correspondent

The United States policy in South Asia could mainly be focused on the nuclear non-proliferation, human rights and democratisation issues, a US Professor of Political Science said Wednesday.

Giving a talk on the policy options of the administration of US President Bill Clinton at The Daily Star office yesterday, Prof M Glen Johnson said that America could also press hard on the intellectual property rights issue and adopt a sterner view vis-a-vis China in its Asian policy.

See Page 12 Col 6

Floods in Assam

NEW DELHI, May 5: A flash-flood triggered by non-stop rains swept away 40 villages in Assam and submerged a key highway linking the northeastern state to rest of India, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said today, reports AFP.

Some 50,000 people were marooned in Assam's Karamganj district after their homes were swept away in the flood waters, triggered by three days of non-stop rains in the southwest of the state.