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NEWS BRIEFS

Army team off to Rwanda

The first batch of the Bangladesh Army contingent left Dhaka for Rwanda Tuesday night. Bangladesh is sending the army contingent comprising an infantry battalion and other elements for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). They were seen-off at Zia International Airport by senior army officers including representatives from the Armed Forces Division. The batch was led by Lt Col Farooq Ahmed. East Bengal, reports BSS.

BIT semester exams Jan 2

CHITTAGONG, Dec 8: All semester examinations of 1991 and 1992 of the Bangladesh Institute of Technology (BIT) here will commence on January 2, 1994. The date for filling up examination forms has been extended up to December 14, 1993, reports BSS.

45.05 pc pass CU B Sc exam

CHITTAGONG, Dec 8: The University of Chittagong today announced the results of B.Sc Pass Examination-1992, reports BSS.
A total of 2066 students appeared at the examination of whom 913 came out successful. The percentage of pass is 45.05.
Of the successful students, only nine secured first division, while 351 got second division, and 553 secured third division.
204 students appeared at the B.Sc pass complementary examination-1991 of the university of whom 145 passed. The percentage of pass is 71.07.

JS winter session prorogued Govt ready to accept helpful ideas: PM

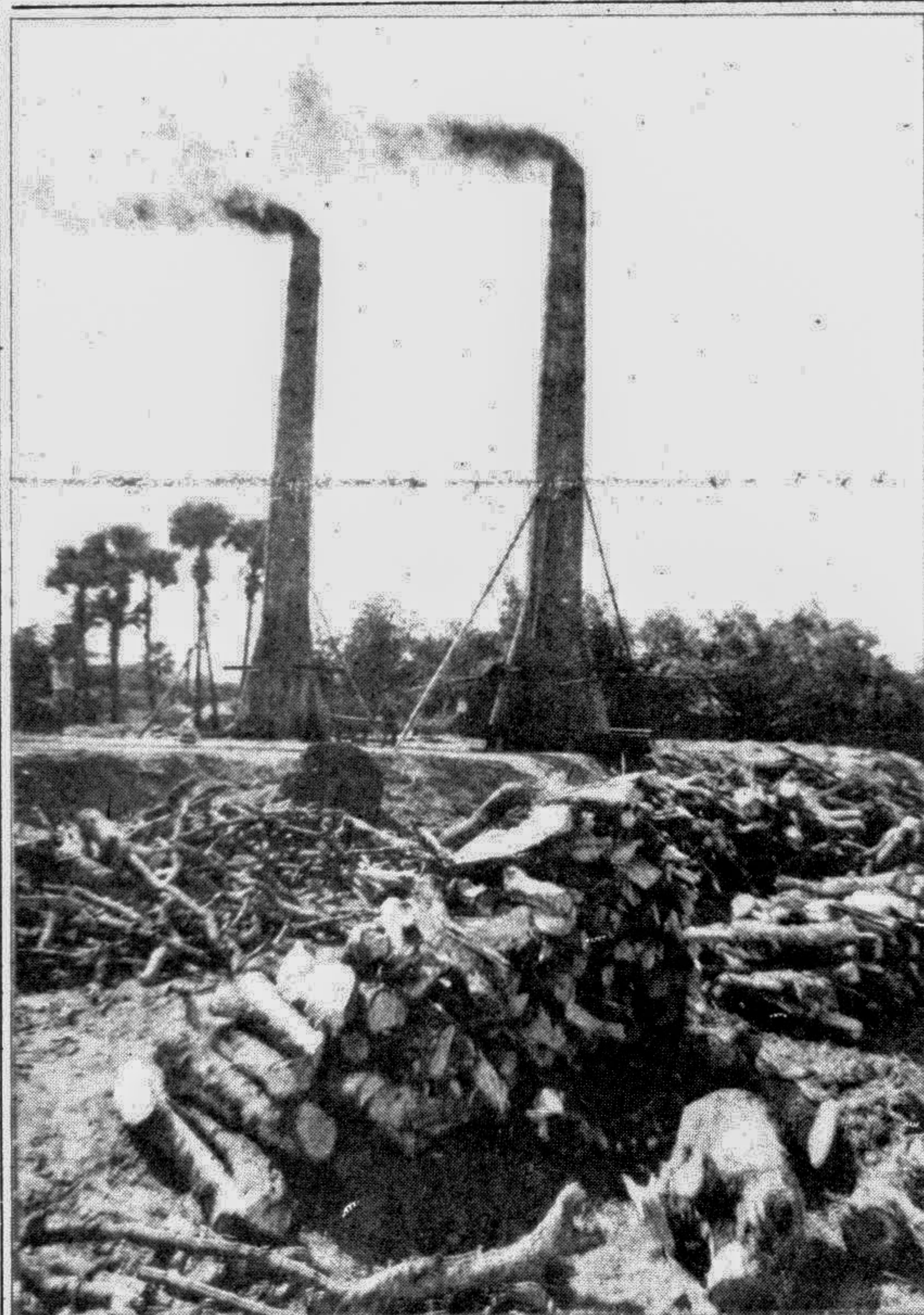
By Staff Correspondent

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday prorogued the twelfth session of the country's fifth Jatiya Sangsad (JS).
Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali announced the prorogation order of the President at 11:05 last night. The JS went into session on November 21 last.
The leader of the House and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, in her winding up speech last night, expressed her hope that the coming session of parliament would be more effective in terms of addressing the problems of the people. In this connection, she observed that the members of parliament could utilise the sessions better if they refrained from launching personal attacks against each other.
Referring to the formation of

the Treasury Bench proposed parliamentary committee on the local government, accommodating the opposition members in the body, the Prime Minister once again told the House that her government was ready to accept the constructive ideas of the opposition. She thanked all concerned who cooperated in the smooth functioning of the winter session of parliament. The Leader of the House especially thanked Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali for his patience to help resolve different crises during the session.
Earlier the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, Abdus Samad Azad, called upon the Prime Minister to take initiatives to make Parliament more effective. The Deputy leader said to the Prime

Minister: We have enjoyed your presence in the House during the session.
The Leader of the Opposition, Sheikh Hasina, was not present in the House on the concluding day of the session yesterday.
The Deputy Leader of the Opposition expressed dissatisfaction that the issues like repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance, and the separation of the judiciary from the executive wing of the state were not settled by the House. Samad Azad thanked all concerned who helped the session function effectively.
The Deputy Leader especially thanked the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina for what he said her role in saving

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Brickfield owners are using logs as firewood despite availability of huge stocks of imported coal in the country. —Star photo

3 pc Third World defence cut can address its 3 major problems'

By Staff Correspondent

A mere three per cent cut in the defence budgets of the Third World countries would save them around 1.3 trillion US dollars by the year 2000 — which is enough to address the problems relating to poverty, population boom and education.
At a press conference arranged by the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) and the Khan Foundation following the International Parliamentarians Conferences which concluded in the city yesterday, the State Minister for Planning, Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan termed the conferences 'a success'. He expressed the hopes the parliamentarians around the world would work for defence cuts in order to promote a sustainable global development.
The press conference chaired by the Deputy Chairperson of the Pakistan Senate Noor Jehan Panazel was addressed by among others Tanzanian MP Meshack A Maganga, Swedish MP Lena Klevenaaas and Indonesian MP Dr W Sudjoko.

The achievements would be circulated among about 1000 MPs of 70 countries who are members of the New York-based PGA. They might act as a pressure group for promoting democracy by strengthening the parliamentary system, ensuring education for women and participation of the grassroots level leaders at the decision making process, fighting environmental degradation, reducing mother and child mortality through better health facilities, and changing the legal frameworks wherever necessary to ensure human rights.
The Swedish MP, Lena Klevenaaas said, the whole world was concerned at the high consumption of the North which was mainly responsible for global environmental degradation and also, at the population boom — which was hindering development.
"When we will get back to our countries, we shall try to go for actions against these problems," she said adding the MPs would

try to pursue the northern countries to grant more money for environmental projects around the world.
Supporting the views of the Swedish MP, Dr Moyeen urged the northern countries to take up more projects for development and environment. The north should spend more for such issues because in all respects the Southerners are losers. Although the North was giving huge aid to the South, ultimately, the South is paying back more than it receives, he said.
Lena pointed out the environment pollution in the South was less than in the North, but added, the South should immediately take precautionary measures against pollution.
She said the parliamentarians would campaign for cleaner industrial products and recycling which would be environment-friendly.
She added, the MPs would also campaign in favour of changing the attitude towards

Noisy debate over preliminary report on agri ministry

The House yesterday witnessed a noisy and heated debate lasting about two hours when the preliminary report of the Parliamentary Special Probe Committee was presented by Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali, reports BSS.

As proposed by Deputy Leader of the House, Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury the House formed the 15-member committee with the speaker as its Chairman on July 13 last to probe allegations of corruptions against Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation and Flood Control Majid Ul Haq following challenge and counter challenge between the minister and Awami League member Tofail Ahmed.
When the Speaker presented the preliminary report which said that there was a stalemate in the functioning of the committee as its terms of reference were yet to be determined, Awami League member Lt Col (Retd) Shawkat Ali objected to the comment.
The Speaker repeatedly said there was no scope of debate on the report under the Rules of the House.
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MPs demand tough laws to curb road mishaps

By Staff Correspondent

Treasury and opposition benches yesterday demanded tougher laws and their strict enforcement to curb the growing road accidents which claim hundreds of lives across the country every year.
Reckless driving, bribery by a section of unscrupulous policemen and transport officials and, trade unionism, were identified by the MPs as the major causes of road accidents.
Some twenty five MPs, including Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, spoke on the issue during one-and-a-half hour discussion.
The Awami League MP, Prof Rafiqul Islam, submitted a notice on the matter of public importance for a discussion.
Home Minister Matin Chowdhury said, the people were kept hostages in the hands of driver and some transport union leaders.
"We failed to amend the law to provide for death sentence of

JS body on local govt formed

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday adopted a Treasury Bench proposal for constituting a 15-member special parliamentary committee, headed by the Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali, to decide on the composition and functions of the district level local government.
The House accepted the proposal moved by the LGRD Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder by voice vote. Only Shajahan Siraj said 'no' to the proposal.
The special committee includes seven members each from the Treasury and the Opposition Benches.
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3 killed, 9 hurt in separate incidents

By DMCH Correspondent

Three persons were killed, and nine others injured in separate incidents in the city and its suburbs yesterday.
A pedestrian was killed when a speeding Aricha-bound truck ran over him at Amin Bazar in Mirpur yesterday morning.
The victim, an unidentified youngman in his thirties died on the spot.
In another road accident, a businessman was killed when a night coach knocked him down at Daudkandi on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway early Wednesday.
The victim Mohammed Abdul Majid, 28, was seriously injured and rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the doctors declared him dead.
Meanwhile, a day labourer was crushed under the wheels of a speeding truck at Fatullah-Narayanganj at about 9 am yesterday.
The victim Mohammed Shah Alam, 22, was seriously injured and died on the way to the

Ministries dither about ATD project funding

By SY Bakht

Differences between two ministries is delaying the approval of the Agribusiness and Technology Development (ATD) project to be funded under an 80 million US dollar USAID grant assistance.
The Ministry of Planning is now raising objections about a number of points included in the project concept paper (PCP) submitted earlier by the Ministry of Agriculture. The project was subsequently included in the Annual Development Programme for 1993-94 after the USAID agreed to fund it.
According to sources, the USAID has informed that the grant assistance may lapse if the approval of the project is delayed beyond December 31.
The ATD project is scheduled to be discussed in an inter-ministerial pre-ECNEC meeting, convened by the Secretary of the Planning Division today. The project failed to get the approval in another pre-ECNEC meeting held a few months ago, because of objections raised by the Economic Relations Division (ERD) of

the Finance Ministry.
In a letter to the Agriculture Secretary last October, the Planning Division Secretary raised a number of questions, based on the ERD objections, about the project outlined in the PCP.
However, in reply, the Agriculture Secretary, in a letter issued yesterday, outlined a number of clarifications relating to the objections raised and in support of the project.
The USAID had agreed to fund the project on a 38 million dollar technical assistance grant and another commodity grant of 42 million dollars. Four contractors, IFDC, WINROCK, Mississippi State University and RONCO of USA, were selected for the technical assistance (TA) portion of the project by the USAID earlier through a bidding process as per the agency's guidelines.
In his letter, the Planning Division Secretary questioned why the project was included in the ADP as an investment project instead as a technical assistance project. He also observed.
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BJP strike triggers top security alert

LUCKNOW, Dec 8: India's main Hindu opposition party enforced a strike Wednesday in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh and plunged the National Parliament into uproar over the arrest of its top leaders a year after the razing of the Babri Mosque, reports AFP.

The general strike called by the Hindu revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), triggered a top security alert and evoked a mixed response in the sprawling state of 140 million people, officials said.
BJP president Lal Krishna Advani and seven other Hindu leaders, who were arrested in the state capital here Tuesday after refusing bail, were meanwhile whisked away by the authorities to a secret location.
The government ordered heavy security deployment across the state, amid fears of Hindu-Muslim violence during the day-long strike.
But the protest had an impact on normal life only in the BJP strongholds.
"They have more troops on the street than our activists," a BJP spokesman said.
The strike, which the party claimed shut down 80 per cent of the state's trading centres and took commercial transport off the roads, was peaceful except for a clash between the BJP supporters and police in the town of Basti.
Officials and witnesses said schools and banks operated as usual and traffic was normal in Lucknow, one of the largest cities in northern India.
In New Delhi, furious BJP members paralysed parliamentary proceedings, demanding the unconditional and immediate release of Advani and the seven others.
"No Advani, no house," they chanted, compelling the speaker finally to cancel the day's sitting.
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NAFTA: Clinton signs legislation

WASHINGTON, Dec 8: President Clinton celebrated a political victory Wednesday as he signed legislation to implement the North American Free Trade Agreement. He called it "a defining moment for our nation," reports AP.
"I believe we have made a decision now that will permit us to create an economic order in the world that will create more growth, more equality, better preservation of the environment and the greater possibility of world peace," Clinton declared.
The trade agreement, scheduled to take effect Jan 1, over the next 15 years eliminates tariffs and other barriers to the movement of goods, services and investment among the United States, Canada and

Maharashtra jolted again

NEW DELHI, Dec 8: An area of the country where 10,000 people died in an earthquake two months ago suffered a moderate quake Wednesday, but no casualties or damage were reported, reports AP.
The latest tremor in central India measured 5.3 on the Richter scale and jolted the Koyana region of Maharashtra state at 7:12 am (01:42 GMT), said VP Kamble, a seismologist at the meteorological observatory in New Delhi.
Two tremors then rumbled across the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Goa, but their force was not known, he said.
On Tuesday night, another tremor jolted Latur district in Maharashtra and some mud-and-straw huts collapsed.

Saifur asks auditors to detect fake accounts

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday asked auditors to the bank and financial institutions for carrying out more searching and investigating auditing instead of a ritualistic one to safeguard the depositors' money, stop defalcation and ensure an accountable and transparent system, reports BSS.
"You have to help stop benami (fake) accounts business, report suspicious accounts and point out the weaknesses of the bank management. Do not let the banks be used as a vehicle of money smuggling or blacking," Rahman told the auditors.
The Finance Minister was addressing the senior auditors to the banks and financial institutions at the Finance Ministry conference room here yesterday afternoon.
Former Deputy Prime Minister and former president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants Jamaluddin Ahmed, former State Minister Atauddin Khan, A H Chowdhury and Mustaq Ahmed

also spoke.
Finance Secretary Nasimuddin Ahmed, Bangladesh Bank Governor Khorshed Alam, Internal Resources Division Secretary Dr Akbar Ali Khan, Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank M A Hannan and high officials of the Ministry of Finance, managing directors of the banks and financial institutions and leading auditors to the banks and financial institutions were present.
"For God's sake detect the benami (fake) accounts—help stop loan advances to the persons having no whereabouts. Do not conduct your auditing so mechanically. Point out serious lapses," the Finance Minister asked them.
He also expressed his dissatisfaction at the delay in finalising audit reports of most of the bank and financial institutions and said more delay means more hiding of facts.
Rahman said the government would soon enact a very strict law to end benami (fake)
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Begum Rokeya Day today

By Staff Correspondent

The Begum Rokeya Day will be observed throughout the country today with due honour.
To observe the day, different socio-cultural organisations have taken programmes.
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TV Women's Affairs Ministry will hold a discussion on the works, ideals and struggle of Begum Rokeya on the day at Planning and Development Academy, Nilkhet, at 10 am.
State Minister for Women's Affairs Sarwari Rahman will be present as chief guest while
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Polythene: Fresh dialogue assured

By Staff Correspondent

Food Minister Mir Shawkat Ali yesterday assured the manufacturers of polythene bags of initiating fresh dialogue on the government order that banned the manufacturing and marketing of polythene from next year.
He said the bags and other items made of polythene would ultimately be banned since these have adverse effects on the country's environment. What the government can do at present is extend the time limit, so that the entrepreneurs can get more time to switch over to another product by conducting balancing, Modernisation, Rehabilitation and Expansion (BMRE) in their factories, he pointed out.
Mir Shawkat Ali was addressing as chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of a seminar on "Polythene Shopping Bags: Usage and Problems" organised by the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) yesterday.
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Nabajug's test flight after repair

Biman's DC 10-30 aircraft 'Nabajug' which skidded off the runway while landing on May 18 last, completed a three-hour circuit over Dhaka yesterday during its first test flight after repair, reports BSS.
Biman sources said the 'Nabajug' which had undergone thorough structural and other necessary repairs, is scheduled to be sent to Rome on December 13 for a routine 'D' check.
The aircraft is likely to join Biman's fleet around the middle of January, 1994, after completing the 'D' check which will take a month, the sources added.
Abdul Mannan, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism, was present at the airport during the test flight.
Nabajug was flying in 123 passengers and a 12-member crew from Saudi Arabia. It skidded off the runway, made slippery by prolonged drizzles, at Zia International Airport while landing. The plane was damaged but there was no incident of death or any serious injury.

Bangladesh, India exchange plots for High Commissions

Bangladesh and India yesterday signed the documents and registration papers for mutually exchanged plots in their respective capitals to construct their high commissions, reports BSS.
Bangladesh, under an agreement reached between the two countries, got an allotment for nine bighas of land in Chanakyapuri Diplomatic Zone in New Delhi to construct its high commission. In reciprocity Bangladesh, under the same agreement, had allotted 12 bighas of land to India in Baridhara Diplomatic Zone in Dhaka for the same purpose.
Rajuk Chairman Humayun Khadem and Indian High Commissioner K Raghunathan yesterday signed the documents on behalf of their respective governments in a registration ceremony held in Dhaka.