

# The Daily Star

Nirman Tiles

In Broken Marble Tiles Brighter Home At Lesser Price Tel: 605957, 861985

## Inside Today

### Article

#### A Certain Joy in Remembrance

Column: Passing Clouds by Zillur Rahman Siddiqui Page 4

### International

#### MQM to oppose Benazir in Sind province

Milosevic's party leading in parliament polls Page 5

### Business

#### Tea export rises by 8m kgs

BJP vows to launch campaign against new GATT accord Pages 6,7

### Living

Keeping Children Safe; Following Trends Blindly; The Challenge of Being a Good Hostess; Cookery; Skin Problems Page 8

### Metropolitan

#### Dhaka Day by Day



Satisfaction from Serving the Needy Page 3

## NEWS BRIEFS

### 2 killed in bus plunge

PAABNA, Dec 20: Two people were killed and 35 injured, when a dozen of them seriously, when an inter-district bus plunged into a roadside ditch on the Pabna-Nagarbari highway last night. The dead were identified as Tanu, 2, who died on the spot and Jobeda Khatun who died on way to Kashinathpur Health Centre. Nine of the injured were admitted to Sadar Hospital while three rushed to Kashinathpur Health Centre. Police and witnesses said the Dhaka-bound night coach from Ishurdi tumbled into a water-filled ditch after a front wheel was disintegrated, reports UNB.

### Israel-PLO talks today

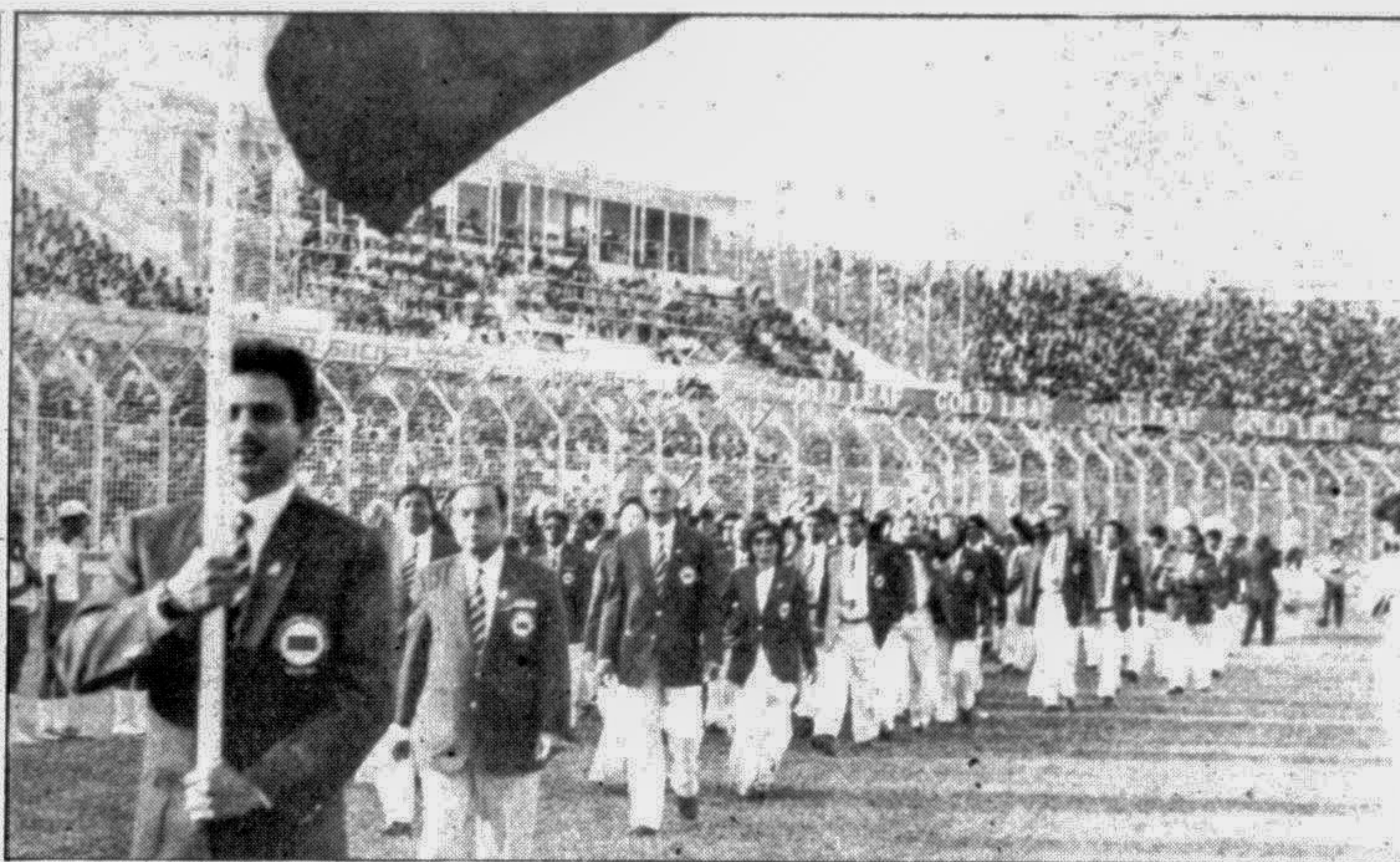
JERUSALEM, Dec 20: Israel and the PLO were to hold fresh talks Tuesday, probably in Cairo, amid reports of progress in their bid to launch autonomy on the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho. The new round of talks would be in the framework of a liaison committee set up to oversee implementation of the September 13 autonomy deal, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's spokesman said today, reports AFP.

### Benazir to visit North Korea

ISLAMABAD, Dec 20: Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto will visit North Korea at the end of her planned two-day trip to China starting next week, an official statement here said today. The December 29-30 visit to Pyongyang is in response to an invitation from the North Korean leader Kim Il Sung, it said. Bhutto will be the first Pakistani head of government of state to visit North Korea, it said, reports AFP.

### Balazino NATO Dy Secy Gen

BRUSSELS, Dec 20: Sergio Silvo Balazino, Italy's Ambassador to Canada, has been appointed Deputy Secretary General of NATO, the alliance said today. It said Balazino, whose appointment was made by NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner, would start his new job on February, reports Reuters.



Shooting ace Ateequr Rahman carries the flag as the Bangladesh contingent marches past at the colourful opening ceremony of the Sixth SAF Games at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. —Star photo

## Japan finally agrees to co-finance JMBP

By Inam Ahmed

Putting all speculations to rest, Japan has finally agreed to co-finance the long cherished Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Project (JMBP). The long wait for the Japanese green signal came to an end last night, diplomatic sources in Dhaka said.

In a special message to the World Bank (WB) Headquarters in Washington, Japan has conveyed its decision to finance the Jamuna bridge project.

Japan is expected to disburse its credit of 200 million US dollars as soon as other formalities are completed.

With the go-ahead signal from Japan, the WB and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) will resume their work regarding the prestigious project of Bangladesh.

The WB and the ADB are to contribute 200 million dollars each for the 700 million US

dollar project, which had been awaiting Japan's positive response.

The green signal came ten days after a high-level Japanese team's visit to Dhaka. The delegation discussed with the government different issues including technical, engineering and resettlement plans.

The WB and the ADB are ready with their contribution for the Jamuna bridge project but they could not approve the financial packages without firm support from Japan.

Now that Japan has finally agreed, the awarding of the various construction work components of the JMBP will go on as scheduled and there was no need for extension of the bid validity dates, sources said.

Of the estimated 700 million US dollars, the Government of Bangladesh would provide 100 million dollars to fill the gap be-

tween the donors' contribution and the actual cost.

Japan's decision comes at a very crucial moment because of all the complications that could have arisen from a possible delay. One source said, adding: "We have been able to avert a huge cost escalation."

Japan's green signal came because we could satisfy them with answers about all the questions raised by them," another source said.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, on his return from Japan late last month, had mentioned that "Japan's decision is only a matter of time."

Japan had expressed reservations about the question of resettlement of people to be affected by the project. Informed sources said the original resettlement programme was subsequently revised, raising the cost to 47 million dollars from 16 million dollars.

## Dhaka, Yangon may begin border trade soon

COX'S BAZAR, Dec 20: Bangladesh and Myanmar are likely to begin border trade shortly, reports UNB.

The indication came from the talks held here today between border security forces of the two countries.

Officials said after two-and-a-half hour talks that it was agreed that the two neighbourly countries would go for border trade to benefit their peoples.

The nine-member Bangladesh delegation headed by BDR Chittagong sector commander Col Kazi Ashrafuddin Ahmed and the 14-member Myanmar delegation led by Director of Border Immigration Col Than Ayeeder met at the BDR rest house on the beach.

Jute bag, CI sheet, MS rod, asbestos sheets, cement, aluminium utensils and old clothes of Bangladesh have a great demand in Myanmar. Bamboo, timber, betel nut, shrimp and spices may be imported from Myanmar, officials attending the meeting said.

Both sides agreed to resolve See Page 12 Col 7

## Advani, six others freed

LUCKNOW, India, Dec 20: Seven top Hindu leaders arrested 13 days ago over the razing of the Babri Mosque last year were released today following a court order, reports AFP.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Vijay Verma ordered the release of Lal Krishna Advani, President of the Hindu-revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and six others in this northern city.

The state has created a situation whereby this court has no option but to release (them) from judicial custody," Judge Verma said. "They will be required to appear as and when the court needs them during the trial."

Officials said that besides Advani, the others released included former BJP President Murlidhar Joshi, and Kalyan Singh, a former Chief Minister of the northern state of Uttar Pradesh where the Babri Mosque was located.

But the judge did not order the release of Pawan Pandey, a member of the Hindu militant group Shiv Sena (Shiva's Army), who was also arrested on December 7. No reason was given.

## Candidates in 3 cities file nomination papers today

By Staff Correspondent  
Candidates for the posts of mayors and commissioners in three cities — Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi — will file their nomination papers today. The papers will be scrutinised tomorrow. Withdrawal of nominations has been fixed on December 30. Elections of these three city corporations will be held on January 30 next. All the major political parties have meantime finalised their candidates for the city corporation polls. Our Chittagong Correspondent See Page 12 Col 8

## SAF Games get off to colourful start

Sports Reporter

An absorbing spell of sonorous symphony and opulence tinged the Dhaka Stadium and a winter afternoon in a rare colour of mirth and radiance as the Sixth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games got off to a glorious start yesterday.

Over 1200 participants from the seven SAARC member nations — India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and hosts Bangladesh — gathered in a kermess designed to mark the opening of the region's sporting bonanza.

There was that little expected lapse in the schedule and baggage mostly at the entry points, but when the show started and the tune got turned, all the heat and fever wore off to usher in a mood of appreciation.

After the aloof array of VVIPs and VIPs, which included President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, had taken their seats following a short stay of the latter at the dais as the chief guest and, of course, the playing of the national anthem, it all started happening.

Paratroopers from the Bangladesh Army schussed down from the cloudless azure sky on the sprawling lush green bowl. First to get down to the earth was the paratrooper carrying the Indian flag, then Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, the Maldives and hosts Bangladesh.

Then it was an unceasing procession of diverse displays. Runa Laila, the leading female singer of the country, who has been flown all the way from London just to lip-sing to a prerecorded song of hers. Atop a funny looking automobile float an overweight Runa really played her role as the prima donna. Her's was a welcome song followed by the speech from the PM who, draped in a deep saffron coloured saree, delivered her formal speech as the special guest from the VIP gallery.

Abdur Rahman Biswas declared the meet open in a delightfully transient utterance. Ace swimmer Mosharraf Hossain and former sprinter Sufia Khatoon brought the Games torch into the ground and Zakaria Pintu, a reputed footballer of the yesteryears, ran up to ignite the cauldron of a torch perched atop the gallery at the

northern side of the stadium. Then began the marchpast of the players and officials. Preceded by young, petite ladies carrying placards of the names of the participating countries, the actors and the actresses of the week-long stage showed up. Kiran Srestha bore the flag of Nepal — the hosts of the first SAF Games way back in 1984, and the 250 members of the squad took the field by the north gate of the stadium in their traditional dress of churdars and caps.

The Pakistanis, numbering up to 172, donned in green blazers, followed the Nepalese with Ashraf Ali Chengizi bearing the national flag. India's ace runner and a speculated sweeper of more than one gold in this meet, Bahadur Prasad, led the 248-strong Indian contingent out on the green.

Sayed Ali was the Maldives' flag bearer as a group of 170 men and women strolled out. See Page 12 Col 4

## SAF Games to strengthen ties: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia welcomed participants of South Asia's biggest sports extravaganza that began here yesterday, saying it would build bridges of understanding, narrow down differences and forge new friendships among the SAARC-member nations, reports UNB.

"The South Asian countries you represent are also united by the spirit of SAARC. Occasions such as this will further strengthen our ties. This will help create an environment of cooperation and cordiality," she said addressing the colourful opening function of the 6th SAF Games at the National Stadium in the afternoon.

The aim of the SAF Games is not just to go faster, higher and stronger singly but to advance together, be it in sports or in any other field of human development.

The SAF Games are not to be seen as a mere competition among countries. Nor are these See Page 12 Col 3

## Irregularities in Zia Fertilizer: 40 found guilty

Forty people have been found guilty of causing financial loss to the Zia Fertilizer Company through the purchase of unnecessary spare parts and other irregularities, reports UNB.

This was disclosed yesterday by Industries Secretary A H M Abdul Hye in a meeting of the "Action Taken Committee" of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Accounts, says a Sangsad Secretariat press release.

Legal measures are being taken against the accused, he told the meeting presided over by ruling party MP Anwarul Hossain Khan.

The meeting at Sangsad Bhaban discussed the bunglings and the progress in taking action against the criminals as per recommendation of the Standing Committee.

It also discussed the problem of excess manpower of the Zia Fertilizer Factory. The secretary informed the meeting of prompt measures under process in this respect also.

## Strike paralyses Kashmir valley

SRINAGAR, India, Dec 20: Muslim militants attacked Indian troops as a strike paralysed the Kashmir valley today following the arrest of one of the most wanted Kashmiri guerrilla leaders, reports AFP.

Militants staged attacks on security pickets and bunkers in this Kashmir summer capital with grenades and assault rifles following the arrest of a leading militant, Ahsan Dar, at his Srinagar home, police said.

No casualties were reported today but 11 people died in violence overnight, including four members of the security forces killed when militants detonated a land-mine under their vehicle, police said.

Dar, the 40-year-old commander of the Muslim Mujahideen, was captured along with a deputy and three other top guerrillas late Sunday by the Border Security Force (BSF) following a tipoff.

A former schoolteacher, Dar was one of the most charismatic leaders of the four-year-old Muslim separatist rebellion in Kashmir. See Page 12 Col 3

## Kamal for training institute to improve skills of judges

Gano Forum president Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday proposed that a separate judicial training institute be set up to improve skills of the judges for the improvement of the judicial system, reports UNB.

"We want to establish rule of law, but it is not possible without improving the existing judicial system," he said.

The GF president was addressing a seminar on "Judicial Reform in Bangladesh" arranged by the Society for Legal Studies, an organisation of the law students of the Dhaka University, at the TSC yesterday afternoon.

President of the Ainjibi Samannya Parishad Advocate Shamsul Haq Chowdhury, Supreme Court lawyer Barrister Lutfur Rahman Shahjahan and Consultant of a Canada-based law school Kazi MA Hamid also spoke at the seminar, presided over by the chairman of the Law Department Dr ABM Mafizul Islam Patwari. Secretary general of the BCS (Judiciary) Association M Golam Murtaza Majumder presented the key-note See Page 12 Col 7

## Woman robbed at Dhanmondi

By Staff Correspondent  
A gang of muggers riding a baby taxi robbed a female rickshaw passenger of her gold bangles and a chain and blasted two cocktails while escaping the scene at Road No.3, Dhanmondi at 9.40 pm yesterday. The incident occurred in front of the residence of the Deputy Minister for Health and the office of The Daily Star. The muggers let behind an old cap, a rubber sandal and the remains of the cocktails on the spot. Pedestrians and residents of the area, who gathered there after the lady, accompanied by a child had raised a hue and cry, told The Daily Star correspondent. See Page 12 Col 1



Bangladesh's Kaiser Hamid, in white, is challenged by a Maldives defender during their VI SAF Games soccer tournament Group B opener at the Mirpur Stadium last night. Kaiser muffed a penalty kick, costing the hosts a valuable point, the match ending goalless. Report on Page 10. —Star photo

## BNP govt gave nothing to country till now: Hasina

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Dec 20: Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina said here today that the BNP govt gave nothing to the country during its two and a half year rule.

She accused the government of "corruption and terrorism" and called the ruling party incapable of safeguarding the hardearned democracy.

"Democracy has been crippled in the hands of BNP," Hasina said.

Hasina also blamed the BNP for betraying the election pledges.

Addressing a public meeting at the Public Library premises here she blasted the government for not heeding to her party's demands including repeal of Indemnity Ordinance that blocked the trial of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Presided by the District AL president Anisul Haq Chowdhury, the meeting was also addressed by its presidium members Abdul Mannan, Amir Hossain Amu and Ivy Rahman. Hasina blasted the govern-

ment also for non-implementation of the joint declaration of the three alliances, 4-point agreement signed in parliament, 10-point demand of the students and agreement with the workers.

She accused the government of selling out, nationalised mills and factories at throw away prices. Shayamapur Sugar Mill in Rangpur having assets of more than Tk 100 crore is being sold at Tk five crore, she said.

"During the two and a half years of rule of BNP, it could not set up a single factory. On the contrary, thousands of workers and employees lost their jobs," she said.

She said if her party was voted to power it will ensure basic needs of the people and reintroduce subsidy in the agricultural sector, set up agro-based and cottage industries to create employment opportunities.

Earlier, 38 lawyers led by Rangpur Bar President Advocate Nazrul Islam joined the Awami League.

## 'Black diamond' available in beach sands

Bangladesh can save several crore taka every year through extraction and commercial use of ilmenite, a heavy metal available in beach sands, said a senior faculty member of the Engineering University yesterday, reports UNB.

Ilmenite, known as black diamond, has been found in 17 areas of the country's 550 km coastal belt. Deposits of the metal worth Taka 1,500 crore could be separated from beach sands, which will meet domestic demand of about 25 years.

Briefing newsmen about the findings of a research at the Department of Metallurgical Engineering of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Prof A S W Kurny said that 43,54,504 tons of heavy metal were found in beach sands of which 10,25,558 tons are ilmenite.

Ilmenite is the raw material of titanium metal, used in paints, leather processing, radication protection shield, refrac-

See Page 12 Col 1

## Minister tells seminar on Islamic common market Time to develop mechanism for stronger economic ties

By Staff Correspondent

Industries Minister M Zahiruddin Khan yesterday said if the Muslim countries failed to act properly in response to the changing economic phenomena of the world they would be marginalised.

He said the Muslim world should not keep its eyes closed at a time when enormous changes were taking place throughout the world in the form of economic reforms and restructuring.

The Islamic countries at this moment must develop a number of institutions and mecha-

nisms to help increase economic cooperation among themselves, Zahiruddin Khan said.

The minister was addressing as chief guest the concluding session of the three-day seminar on an Islamic Common Market, organised by the Islamic Economic Research Bureau in collaboration with the Islami Bank, Bangladesh Limited and Al-Baraka Bank, Bangladesh Limited at Hotel Sheraton.

Khan said the concept of an Islamic Common Market is not detrimental to other global eco-

nomic groupings; rather, it is complementary to the expansion of the world economy.

The western countries have been restructuring their economy to get themselves prepared for the post-industrialised period of their economies and a number of new countries are appearing as new economic powers, he said. With a few exceptions, the Muslim countries are lagging behind in this race, he added.

Referring to the resource constraints of the Muslim coun-

See Page 12 Col 1