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NEWS BRIEFS

**Badru Haider
invited to US**

Former Chief Justice Badru
Haider Chowdhury has been
invited to join the 42nd Na-
tional Prayer Breakfast to be
held on February 3 at the
Washington Hilton Hotel. US
President Bill Clinton, First
Lady Hillary Clinton, members
of Congress, US government
officials, diplomats and dele-
gates from over 50 countries
will attend the function. The
National Prayer Breakfast in-
cludes 'special activities' sur-
rounding the annual breakfast
for the international guests.
Reported by NB

**Qatar air chief
meets Noor Uddin**

The visiting Qatar Emiri Air
Force Commander Colonel (air)
Ahmed Abdullah al-Kuwari called
on Chief of Army Staff Lieuten-
ant General Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan at the army
headquarters yesterday. He
stayed with the chief of army
staff for sometime and ex-
changed pleasantries. Later, the
Qatar Air Force chief called on
Chief of Naval Staff Rear
Admiral Mohammad Mo-
hammud Islam at the naval
headquarters, reports BSS.

Stones seized

RAJSHAHI, Jan 3: Members
of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR)
recovered one touch stone and a
white stone weighing 13 Kgs
and four Kgs respectively from
Bagmara thana of Rajshahi on
Saturday. Besides, a valuable
statue made of touch stone
weighed about four kilo-
grammes was also recovered
from a train of the Rajshahi
railway station on December
28 last, reports BSS.

PM may inaugurate service Jan 31

Two private airlines get STOL licences

By Asiuzaaman

Two private aviation firms
have received provisional li-
cences for operating STOL
(Short Take-Off and Landing)
services in the country.

The Borak Travels (Pvt) Ltd
and the Royal Bengal Airlines
got the licences from the Civil
Aviation Authority of Bangladesh
(CAAB) yesterday. The applica-
tions of six other firms are under
the consideration of the auth-
orities.

These two firms have ful-
filled the primary requirements
to get the licences," one senior
CAAB official told The Daily
Star.

Initially airstrips in Barisal,
Comilla, Shamshernagar in
Sylhet, Lalmonirhat, Thakur-
gaon and Ishurdi have been

renovated for the STOL services,
which are expected to begin on
January 31.

The CAAB official said,
"Prime Minister Begum Khaleda
Zia may inaugurate the ser-
vices, which will open a new era
in the country's aviation sector."

When contacted over tele-
phone, Managing Director of
Borak Travels, Mohammad Noor
Ali told The Daily Star that two
Russian aircraft would arrive in
Dhaka by January 20 for the
operation of the services.

The 18-seater AN-28 aircraft
have been taken on lease from
Moscow Airways, he said,
adding that his company is
ready to operate STOL services
from January 31 if the CAAB
completes necessary arrange-
ments.

"We would like to operate to
five of the six destinations, ex-
cept Comilla, and the inaugural
flight would be to Barisal," Noor
Ali added.

Explaining, Noor Ali said a
market survey conducted by his
company showed that Dhaka-
Barisal would be a very viable
sector. This was mainly because
people living in the latest divi-
sional headquarters of the
country are mainly dependent
on time-consuming, often risky
water transportation and a very
arduous road link.

The executives of the other
company which got the licence
to operate STOL services were
not immediately available for
comments.

2 security men
suspended for
lapse at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

The chief security-in-charge
of Civil Aviation has been
transferred and two other se-
curity personnel of Biman and
the Civil Aviation Authority
have been suspended for neg-
ligence.

The actions against the offi-
cials were taken at a meeting of
top officials of Biman and the
Civil Aviation Authority with the
State Minister for Civil Aviation
and Tourism, Abdul Mannan in
the chair at the Zia International
Airport (ZIA) yesterday, according
to a top level source at the airport.

The actions follow Sunday's
incident in which a stowaway,
identified as one Ujjal Kumar
Roy, 24, entered the airport's
top security zone, the apron
area, after scaling over a fence
and sneaking into a Biman DC-
10 aircraft. The aircraft was due
to fly to London.

According to the source,
Ruhul Amin, an assistant director
(administration) of Civil
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Grameen seeks \$100m
fund for replications
in poor nations

By S Y Bakht

The Grameen Trust has
launched an ambitious drive to
raise a 100 million US dollar
fund from international donors
for a five-year project to help
set up micro-lending pro-
grammes, modelled after the
Grameen Bank, for the poor in
other developing countries.

According to Grameen Bank
(GB) officials, the United
States Agency for International
Development (USAID) and the
World Bank have already made
firm commitments to provide
two million dollars each for
the fund this year.

A non-profit company
established by Prof Muhammad
Yunus, the founder of the
Grameen Bank, in 1989, the
Grameen Trust has already
helped set up 10 such replica-
tion programmes under a pilot
project funded by donors. Prof
H I Latifee, formerly of the
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Department of Economics at
the Chittagong University, has
recently joined the trust as its
managing director.

"The Grameen Trust is
seeking 100 million dollars
over the next five years (1994-
98) in new grant funding in
order to use its unique expertise
and capacity to accelerate
the adoption of the Grameen
Bank Approach (GBA) in all areas
of the world where abject
poverty persists," states the
project proposal prepared by
Prof Yunus.

The specific areas to be
funded under the project in-
clude: providing seed funds for
pilot projects; scaling up funds
for successful projects; training
potential replicators; publishing
training materials; conducting
research; and monitoring and evaluating
the

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Cabinet okays
proposal to
amend Property
Ordinance '82

The cabinet had approved, in
principle, a proposal to amend
the Acquisition and Requisition
of immovable Property Ord-
inance of 1982, an official
handout said here yesterday.
reports BSS.

The amendment will simplify
the process of land acquisition,
decentralise the executive power
given by the law and ease out
the process of land acquisition
for development projects.

The approval was given yes-
terday at the regular weekly
meeting of the cabinet held at
the Bangabhaban with Prime
Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in
the chair.

The amendment will also en-
sure prompt payment of com-
pensation to the affected land-
owners and sharecroppers for
the standing crop.

Ministers, state ministers-in-
charge of different ministries
and divisions attended the
meeting.

JU teachers'
strike today

By JU Correspondent

The Jahangirnagar Univer-
sity Teachers' Association
(JUTA), will observe a strike
today protesting the alleged
delay in convening the Univer-
sity Senate session.

Today's strike is in keeping
with the JUTA's action pro-
gramme decided on December
28.

According to the JUTA deci-
sion, the teachers will not
cooperate with the university
administration from tomorrow
if the date of the Senate ses-
sion was not announced by to-
day.

The teachers also decided
to boycott the programmes to
be attended by the acting VC
Prof Abul Hossain and will not
invite him to any of their func-
tions.

Prof Abul Hossain was ap-
pointed acting VC of JU by the
Chancellor following the resig-
nation of Prof Kazi Saleh
Ahmed — the then VC — in the
wake of an armed campus
vandalism on July 29.

Meanwhile, campus sources
said, the acting VC has report-
edly decided to convene the
Senate session on April 18. He
is also likely to arrange polls
for selecting the registered
graduate members in the
Senate.

DUTA token
strike Jan 9

By DU Correspondent

The teachers of the Dhaka
University will observe a token
strike for one hour from 10 am
on January 9 (Sunday) to
protest the government's re-
ported initiative to amend the
University Ordinance, 1973.

The decision was taken at a
meeting of the executive
committee of the Dhaka Uni-
versity Teachers' Association
(DUTA) yesterday afternoon.

Earlier on December 29 the
DUTA, at a meeting, said that
the government's initiative
would 'spoil the academic at-
mosphere' of the universities.

Presently, the Dhaka, Ra-
jshahi, Chittagong and Ja-
hangirnagar Universities follow
the 1973 Ordinance.

Professionals
warn of fresh
agitation

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of the agitating
professionals in government
service have called upon the
government to 'take positive
and credible steps' towards
implementation of their 17-
point charter of demands.

Announcing a stay of their
campaign, leaders of the
Prokrishi-BCS Central Action
Council said they would launch
an all-out agitation from April
8 if the authorities failed to ac-
cept their demands.

Russian television reported
that a farmer was killed in the
explosion and fire led by the
plane's fuel tanks, which had
been filled for the five hour
flight to Moscow.

The State Committee for
Emergency Situations — a gov-
ernment agency that deals with
natural disasters and major ac-
cidents — said it had no knowl-
edge of any casualties on the
ground.

Doctors, rescue workers and
civil defence troops rushed to
the crash site, but "there were
no survivors," said Glebova, the
spokeswoman.

The aircraft crashed and
burned completely, she said.
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Drug stores at the Chankharpool area in the city remained closed yesterday, causing immense

sufferings to the patients at the nearby Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The Bangladesh

Chemists' and Druggists' Samity called the day-long countrywide strike.

— Star photo

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Indo-Pak talks on Kashmir end inconclusively Delhi, Islamabad no nearer

ISLAMABAD, Jan 3: India
and Pakistan ended two-days of
talks on Kashmir here today
still wide apart and without set-
ting a date for future negotia-
tions, reports AFP.

A joint statement issued
after four sessions between
Indian Foreign Secretary J N
Dixit and his Pakistani coun-
terpart Shaharyar Mohammed
Khan said the talks addressed
"all aspects" of the Kashmir
problem.

The Himalayan territory has
been divided into Indian and
Pakistan-ruled parts since the
partition of the subcontinent in
1947.

"Both sides recognised that
there are basic divergences," the
statement said, adding that it
was agreed that "sincere efforts

would be made to resolve the
problem."

Despite the deadlock, Dixit
said it was significant that both
sides had got down to the negotia-
tions table after a long gap.
Talks will lessen tension, he
said.

"Despite fundamental differ-
ences, the two sides have
agreed to find ways to resolve
the disputes," he added.

Pakistan is insisting on the
implementation of 1948-49
United Nations resolutions call-
ing for a plebiscite in Kashmir.
India says the resolutions are
obsolete.

"India's position on the irre-
levance of UN resolution has
been articulated many times,"
Dixit said.

The two countries have
See Page 12 Col 4

Dhaka-Yangon talks postponed

The 16th round of senior of-
ficial level meeting between
Bangladesh and Myanmar, sched-
uled for January 5-7 at the
Arakanese town of Sittwe,
has been postponed due to pre-
occupations of the Myanmar of-
ficials, reports UNB.

The Myanmar authorities on
Sunday requested for postponing
the talks saying that their
officials were engaged in other
pressing tasks.

Now a fresh date will have to
be fixed for holding the meeting
which was initially due in
October last year.

The 15th round of talks be-
tween senior officials of the two
countries was held in Dhaka
last September.

Hasina warns
against rigging
in city polls