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# The Daily Star

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Badrul Haider invited to US

Former Chief Justice Badrul Haider Chowdhury has been invited to join the 42nd National 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 delegates from over 90 countries will attend the function. The National Prayer Breakfast includes "Special activities" surrounding the annual breakfast for the international guests. (BSS)

### Qatar air chief meets Noor Uddin

The visiting Qatar Emir Air Force Commander Colonel (air) Ahmed Abdullah al-Kuwari called on Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan at the army headquarters yesterday. He stayed with the chief of army staff for sometime and exchanged pleasantries. Later, the Qatar Air Force chief called on Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral Mohammad Moaiminul 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 kilograms 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 Asiuzzaman

Two private aviation firms have received provisional licences 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 applications of six other firms are under the consideration of the authorities.

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

Initially airstrips in Barisal, Comilla, Shamshearnagar in Sylhet, Lalmonirhat, Thakurgaon 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 services, which will open a new era in the country's aviation sector."

When contacted over telephone, 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 arrangements.

"We would like to operate to five of the six destinations, except 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 divisional 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.



Drug stores at the Chankarpool area in the city remained closed yesterday, causing immense suffering to the patients at the nearby Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The Bangladesh Chemists' and Druggists' Samity called the day-long countrywide strike. — Star photo

## 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 setting a date for future negotiations, reports AFP.

A joint statement issued after four sessions between Indian Foreign Secretary J N Dixit and his Pakistani counterpart 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."

The statement emphasised the need for continuing dialogue, but no date or venue was announced.

Dixit and Khan, at a joint press conference, said the talks which began Sunday had helped in reducing tension over a bloody Muslim separatist movement in Indian-held Kashmir.

India made "suggestions" on ending the dispute which Pakistan would consider after receiving further details, Khan said before seeing off the Indian diplomat on a flight to New Delhi from the international airport here.

"We will see how can we proceed on these suggestions," Khan said.

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

"Despite fundamental differences, 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 calling for a plebiscite in Kashmir. India says the resolutions are obsolete.

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

The two countries have agreed to continue talks.

## Interview series with DCC mayoral candidates

# I will fight urban terrorism : Manzur

By Nazmul Ashraf

Manzurul Ahsan Khan would launch a crusade against black money if he won the mayoral election in Dhaka.

"I am contesting the polls as part of my struggle to establish an alternative political trend against the politics of black money, terrorism and toll collection," the 10-Left parties candidate told The Daily Star in an interview yesterday.

He said if elected, he would give top priority to curbing urban terrorism. The leftist politician said "Terrorism must be rooted out first because it breeds many social evils."

Enumerating his other objectives for contesting the election, Khan said: "I want to protect the interests of the common masses who have built this city and have kept it operational. My war will be waged against a handful of opportunists enjoying undue benefit by depriving others."

The Left parties candidate has termed the present plans to develop Dhaka city as "destructive," saying the urban planning projects were causing environmental pollution and in some cases, were only helping a section of contractors to earn money illegally.

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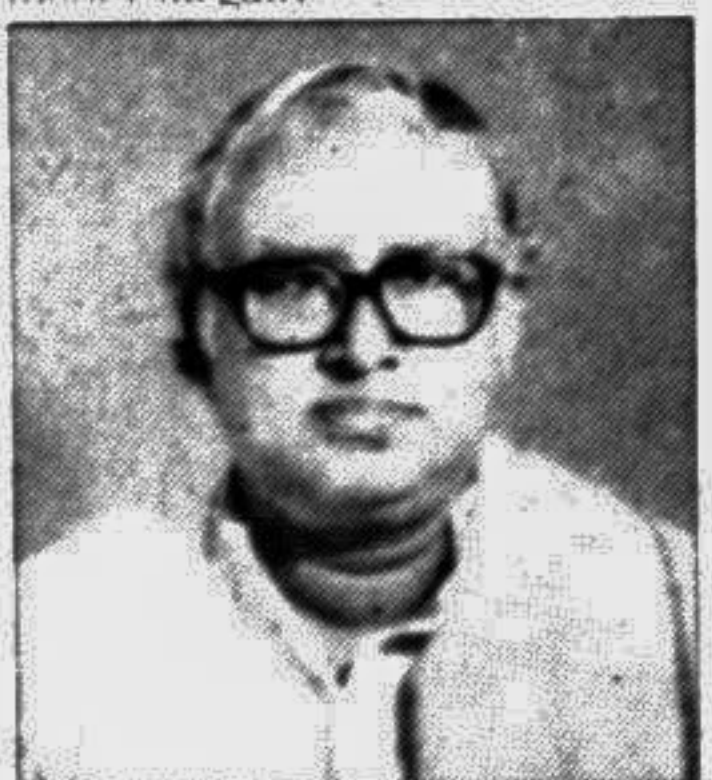
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Manzurul Ahsan Khan

## 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 security personnel of Biman and the Civil Aviation Authority have been suspended for negligence of duty.

The actions against the officials 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 sneaked 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 Aviation, said the officials were suspended for negligence of duty.

## Chemists, druggists threaten strike on Jan 10-11

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Chemists and Druggists Samity has threatened further strikes, on January 10 and 11, and even an indefinite shutdown of drug stores across the country from January 26 if its demands were not met within a week.

Meanwhile, drug stores in the country remained closed yesterday.

The Samity is pressing for realisation of its five-point charter of demands which includes reduction of recently raised drug licence fees.

The druggists want withdrawal of the government decision to increase the drug licence renewal fee by 50 per cent, announced in July last.

The association's other demands are: increase in the commission on wholesale and retailing of medicine, withdrawal of all enhanced licence fees, adequate training for the pharmacists and the immediate resumption of issuance of new drug licences.

The president of the Samity, in a press release said, during yesterday's strike the patients, especially in the hospitals, were suffering.

## 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 programmes, 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 replication programmes under a pilot project funded by donors. Prof H I Laiffee, formerly of the 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 include: 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 project.

## 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 Ordinance 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 yesterday 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 ensure prompt payment of compensation to the affected landowners 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 University Teachers' Association (JUTA), will observe a strike today protesting the alleged delay in convening the University Senate session.

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

According to the JUTA decision, the teachers will not cooperate with the university administration from tomorrow if the date of the Senate session was not announced by today.

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 functions.

Prof Abul Hossain was appointed acting VC of JU by the Chancellor following the resignation 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 reportedly 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.

## Political leadership needed to attract foreign investment

By Staff Correspondent

A strong leadership capable of attracting foreign investors is the need of the hour for rapid development of the country, said parliamentarians, bureaucrats and businessmen at a discussion meeting in the city Monday. They also stressed the need for developing the country's infrastructure and projecting the nation's image abroad.

Over 25 businessmen, politicians and bureaucrats took part in the discussion meeting on "Bangladesh: Future Prospects for Rapid Economic Growth" organised by the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), a local NGO, at Hotel Sheraton.

Morshed Khan, the Prime Minister's Special Envoy, speaking at the meeting, said the government and the opposition must work together to attract foreign investments for economic development of the country. "When we woo the workers to go on strike, we cannot expect foreign direct investment" (FDI) to come here," Morshed Khan said.

"The best window for the foreign investors is the local investment scenario," Khan maintained. "If local investment is sound, FDI will come."

He also stressed the need for a harmonious growth of the agriculture sector. "We have to provide subsidy to the agri-sector, if needed," he said.

Dr A Moeen Khan, State Minister for Planning, who was present as the chief guest, said there was no time to sit idle.

"We must start lobbying and acting to attract foreign investments right now," the minister said. "Whoever forms the government after the next elections will enjoy the benefits of the present effort."

Dr Khan said, the government should have a minimum intervening role in the industrialisation of the country and added Parliament should pass laws to ensure interference-free investment.

## 16 killed, 57 hurt in road accidents

At least 16 people were killed and another 57 injured in road accidents in different districts of the country yesterday, report agencies.

UNB reports: Six people, including a woman and her daughter, were killed in three road accidents in Bogra yesterday, police said.

Dola, 30, wife of an additional district magistrate, their daughter Tanla, 16, and car driver Mathur Rahman died on the spot when a truck collided with the car on the Bogra-Rangpur road in the evening.

Police seized the truck, but the driver fled.

In another accident, two people were killed and another was injured when a truck knocked down a rickshaw in Sadar thana on the Bogra-Natore road in the morning.

The dead were identified as Wajed Ali Fakir, 25, and Tuku 32. Injured rickshawpuller Tajnu was rushed to the Mohammad Ali Hospital in a critical condition.

A minor girl, Shadhana was crushed under the wheels of a speeding truck at Chaklana area in Sonatala thana on the Bogra-Sonatala road at about 1:30 pm.

A Moulvibazar report says: Two people were killed and another was injured critically in a road accident while carrying a...

## 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 reported initiative to amend the University Ordinance, 1973.

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

Earlier on December 29 the DUTA, at a meeting, said that the government initiative would "spoil the academic atmosphere" of the universities.

Presently, the Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong and Jahangirnagar Universities follow the 1973 Ordinance.

## 120 perish in Russian plane crash

MOSCOW, Jan 3: A Russian passenger jet crashed and exploded into flames Monday near the Siberian city of Irkutsk, killing all 120 people aboard, including 17 foreigners, authorities said, reports AP.

It was the second aviation disaster in eight days in the former Soviet Union, raising questions about the safety of the state-run Aeroflot airline and scores of smaller, spin-off companies.

The Tu-154 jet that crashed Monday belonged to Baikal Air, one of many new regional carriers. Russian television said a farmer also was killed on the ground, but officials handling the emergency could not confirm the report.

The jet had just taken off on a regularly scheduled flight to Moscow, 4,100 kilometers to the west, when one of its three engines failed.

"The captain radioed the control tower that his No. 2 engine was on fire and he was turning around," said Yekaterina Glebova, spokeswoman for the State Committee for Emergency Situations.

"Then he radioed again and said that the engine was completely out and they had lost control of the airplane.... Then it just disappeared from the radar screen," Glebova told The Associated Press.

The plane crashed in a snowy field at a livestock farm 11 kilometers outside Irkutsk, a city of 650,000 people.

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 government agency that deals with natural disasters and major accidents — said it had no knowledge 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.

## 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 Prokrihi-BCS Central Action Council said they would launch an all-out agitation from April 8 if the authorities failed to accept their demands.

Speaking at a press conference yesterday at the central office of the BMA in the capital, the leaders criticised a recent government press note, terming it confusing.

Convenor of the Central Action Council Dr. MA Majed, and central Prokrihi leaders Ruhul Matin, Dr. Gazi Abdul Huq, Javed Iqbal, Dr. Gul Hossain, ANH Akhter Hossain, Dr. Mushtaq Hossain, Monirul Islam, Dr. AB Bhuiyan, Professor Abu Yusuf, Ahsanul Huq and Dr. ZA Matin Al-Helal attended the press conference.

The Prokrihi leaders said...