## Regional tensions won't affect SAARC: Silwal

The new Secretary General of the SAARC Yaday Kant Silwal vesterday allayed fears that contentious bilateral issues in the South Asian region could affect the progress of the SAARC and said regional tensions in no way would stand on the SAARC advancement, reports BSS.

"Regional tensions have not affected many other regional groupings and as such why should it afflict the SAARC?" He asked during a press briefing with the Overseas Correspondent Association of Bangladeshi(OCAB) at the National Press Club here.

This is the first visit of Silwal to Bangladesh after he took over the responsibility of new SAARC Secretary General on January 1, 1994.

An experienced diplomat, Silwal was Nepal's Foreign Secretary till his assumption of the new assignment.

The post of SAARC Secretary General rotates among the member nations and Silwal is the fourth person to adorn this office after Bangladesh, India and the Maldives have occupied this.

Answering questions about bilateral tensions in the region vis-a-vis the SAARC, the SAARC Secretary General said there is absolutely no reason why vexed

bilateral matters should affect

He said these problems were there when SAARC was conceived and born and the SAARC is meant to prosper

Silwal said the ASEAN is progressing effectively despite having serious bilateral problems at one stage between Malaysia and Indonesia and relations among the European Commission are not also free from trouble, but the regional forums are prospering.

He said the SAARC acquired a new dimension following the last and seventh summit that signalled the beginning of the second cycle of the summits. More and more hardcore issues are being now dealt with. he said.

Silwal listed poverty alleviation as a top priority and said all efforts are being made to achieve this objective.

He told a questioner that the SAPTA will be implemented in due course and said the SAARC will also make endeavour for elimination of terrorism in the region.

dent of the OCAB introduced guest while Farid Hossain general secretary, gave the vote of

but provides diplomatic and

moral support to a campaign

which it describes as a legiti-

mate struggle for self-deter-

in a statement Tuesday, sug-

gested that the next round of

bilateral talks with India lay

the groundwork for a referen-

dum in the northern Indian

state gripped by a Muslim sep-

should aim at finalising the

modalities for the holding of a

plebiscite to ascertain the

wishes of the people of Jammu

and Kashmir," the Pakistani

reiterated that "Jammu and

Kashmir is an integral part of

India" and said the Pakistani

proposal was "a propaganda

exercise to obfuscate the reali-

Blast in Lankan

bus: 40 feared dead

40 persons were feared killed

and 40 others wounded, many

of them seriously, when a

powerful bomb exploded in a

passenger bus near village

Pambuwewa in the north-

western Anuradhapura district.

this morning, police said, re-

JP defamation

suit against

3 ministers

dismissed

From Staff Correspondent

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate

here today dismissed a

defamation suit filed by the

Jatiya Party mayoral candidate

Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury

against the three BNP minis-

Moudud Ahmed moving the

suit alleged that Communi-

cations Minister Oli Ahmed,

Industries Minister Zahiruddin

Khan and Fisheries and

Livestock Minister Abdullah Al

Noman in there speeches at

the Laldighi Maidan meeting

yesterday had tarnished the

image of Mahmudul Islam.

There speeches, Moudud

maintained, were defamatory

and offensive to Mahmudul

JP central leader Barrister

ters from Chittagong.

CHITTAGONG, Jan 19: The

ports PTI.

COLOMBO, Jan 19: At least

ties of the situation."

But the Indian spokesman

"Further bilateral talks

The Pakistani government.

## India rejects fresh talks on plebiscite in Kashmir

 NEW DELHI, Jan 19: India today rejected a proposal by Pakistan that further talks between the two countries pave the way for a referendum in disputed Kashmir, reports

"Pakistan should not have any doubts whatsoever on this score," a foreign ministry spokesman said in a statement, adding that Delhi did not see the need to conduct a plebiscite in any part of India.

Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state, is claimed by both India and Pakistan and the rivals have fought two of their three wars since independence from British colonial rule in 1947

India, which holds the southern two-thirds of Kashmir, accuses Pakistan of providing arms and training for the Muslim separatist movement in Indian Kashmir

### Zia's birthday

Speaking at a discussion arranged at the mazar premises, Deputy Leader of Parliament Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury said those who want to give leadership to the nation must acquire unique personal qualities like those of the late President.

BNP secretary general and LGRD Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Food Minister Lt General (retd) Mir Shawkat Ali, Chief Editor of the Financial Express Reazuddin Ahmed, Editor of the Bangladesh Times.Mahbub Anam, Pro-Vice Chancellor of the National University Prof Mahbubullah also spoke on the occasion.

first president after independence who had taken up specific programmes for the development of the country, imbued with the spirit of the

"He was one of those rare leaders throughout the Subcontinent who were free from all black spots in personal life,"

he said. Barrister Talukdar said a country like Bangladesh which has achieved independence

through a Liberation War must have a political goal. "Only through Bangladeshi

nationalism, introduced by Shaheed Zia, this goal can be achieved," he said.

Barrister Talukdar said those who do not believe in Bangladeshi natioinalism in fact look at nationalism with a narrow outlook, ignoring the spirit of the independence war and the sovereignty of the country.

Reazuddin Ahmed said Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman had initiated the process of a stable democracy and the present government has put in its efforts to give it an institutional shape. Introducing the elections for city

corporations is a glaring example, he said. Prof Mahbubullah said Shaheed Zia was such a leader who had effectively motivated the whole nation towards de-

velopment, progress and pro-

duction. The organisations which placed wreaths at the mazar included the Zia Parishad, the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, DUCSU, JASAS, Zia Forum, Zia Shishu Kishore Sangathan, the Jatiyatabadi Mahila Dal, and the Jatiyatabadi Krishak Dal.

the SAARC. weathering this situation.

Sayed Kamaluddin, presi-

# Pakistan denies the charges

mination

aratist rebellion.

statement said.

over the Himalayan territory.

From Page 1 Col 5 and discussions were also held at the mazar premises since early morning. Begum Zia spent some time there. She also visited the blood donation camp organised by the Zia Jubo Forum at the Zia Uddyan.

Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury said Ziaur Rahman was the Liberation War.

Islam. The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, after hearing both sides for more than half an hour, dismissed the suit.

A large number of people through the court building premises to witness the hear-

Police had to tighten the security and around the Chittagong Court building to maintain law and order.

### Khaleda, Hasına

From Page 1 Col 5 party chairperson Khaleda Zia is scheduled to visit Rajshahi, Khulna and Chittagong on January 23, 25 and 26 respectively. She will address several

Begum Zia will address a public meeting at the Manik Mia Avenue on January 27 while Sheikh Hasina will address a meeting at the same

venue the following day. Besides, both the BNP and the AL chiefs would continue their door-to-door canvassing until January 28, the last day of

campaigning. Hasina began campaigning for the AL candidate Hanif in Dhaka on January 10 and went from door to door to seek the votes for her party's nominees. Begum Zia took up a similar. programme from January 13 tosolicit votes for Mirza Abbas.



Two of three muggers, hadly lynched by a mob after being arrested by police at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday, seen lying in a ward of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, tied to their - Star photo

# TO CAST A VOTE 2 DCC polls

### diary By Staff Correspondent

Promises, promises and promises — that's what polls are all about, it seems. At least for the residents of Khilgaon. An aspirant ward commissioner from the area has even promised a removal of the Kamalapur Railway Station, of course, if elected!

Abdul Qader is harping on the theme that the country's biggest rail terminal is the root

of all traffic jams in the area. His grievance is understandable. The Khilgaon levelcrossing near the station is on a major shunting line and everyday, traffic going both ways has to suffer, often for hours on end, because the level crossing gate remains closed.

A university employee was served with a show cause notice from the authorities recently, reportedly for not seeking prior permission for contesting the DCC

commissioner elections. Rustam Ali, an independent candidate of ward no. 57, had earlier sought the BNP nomination but failed. Nevertheless. determined to run, Rustam submitted his candidature as an independent without taking any leave or permission from the Dhaka University, where he works.

With only 10 days to go for the polls, the makeshift campaign stalls are getting more crowded with each passing day. The bamboo and thatched stalls have already become convenient spots for the local idle youngsters to gossip and chat away their hours. What more, often there are free cigarettes and tea!

According to a campaigner, the candidates have to spend between 100 and 800 taka a day for each camp. Some of the candidates have even provided television sets or cassette players. And to talk of bringing down these 'unauthorised' constructions

### Brickfields asked not to use

firewood The government has urged the people to refrain from using firewood in the brickfields. except bamboo-roots, which is an offence under the Brick Burning (Control) Law, reports

The Ministry of Environment and Forest yesterday said it has been observed that firewoods are being used in the brickfields in different parts of the country, adversely affecting the forest resources as well as environment.

It reminded that people violating any provision of the law or conditions of the licence for brickfield were liable to suffer punishment. and said that authorities concerned had been asked to take stringent measures

### against the law-breakers. BCS (Edn) calls off programme

The BCS General Education Association has called off its strike, scheduled from today, after a meeting with Education Minister Jamir Uddin Sircar at his residence Tuesday night. reports UNB.

The Association called the strike to protest the killing of Jayanta Kumar Day, a teacher of the Sunamganj Government College and the attack on Atul Chandra Chanda, an Associate Professor of the Rajendra University College, Faridpur.

### Construction of second Buriganga bridge soon sured that the plan of the

The Baily Star

ZINZIRA, Jan 19: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today said construction work of the second bridge across the river Buriganga will start soon to make Zinzira a part of the capital, reports UNB.

The Prime Minister was addressing a huge public meeting at Aganagar Kathuria ground arranged by local BNP on the occasion of the 58th birth anniversary of the party's founder President Ziaur Rahman.

She said that groundwork of the project had already been started. Foundation for the Taka 138 crore Babubazar-Zinzira bridge project was laid by President Ziaur Rahman in February 1981, but it was shelved by the past regime.

The bridge will be built entirely from local resources and with local expertise. The Communications Ministry sources informed that tender for the bridge would be invited on January 23.

The bridge is designed to expand the over-populated capital and the Prime Minister assured that all steps for building Keraniganj into a modern town have been taken.

Referring to the displacement of some people in constructing the bridge, she as-Khaleda continues

mass contact

BNP chairperson Begum

Khaleda Zia yesterday contin-

ued her hectic mass contact in

the city seeking votes for her

party's mayor candidate Mirza

developing Dhaka city accord-

ing to the liking of its resi-

dents," she told an election

meeting at the Nawab Yusuf

Market as part of the massive

his work;" she said, mention-

ing the doings of Abbas during

his tenure as Mayor of Dhaka.

She urged all to cast vote for

from 6 pm to 10 pm. During

her four-hour campaign,

Begum Zia addressed about a

dozen election rallies at the

Nawab Yusuf Market, Kotwali,

Chakhbazar Crossing,

Islambagh Park House, Lalbagh

Kella crossing, Lalbagh Bhata

Masjid, Chankherpul, Azimpur

Battala crossing, Azimpur

Chhata Market, Hazaribagh

Park, Hazaribagh Market and

Nawabganj Chowdhury Market.

Mirza Abbas was with her.

She made a whirlwind tour

him in January 30 polls.

"You all know him and about

"Mirza Abbas thinks about

Abbas, reports UNB.

campaign.

### Vote for 'fish' to free DCC of terrorism: Hasina

bridge had been made in such a

way that they would not be af-

fected. "And if anyone is af-

fected, he will be duly compen-

In response to some local

demands, Begum Zia said the

31-bed hospital in Keraniganj

fire station will be set up and

the Zinzira-Dohar road will be

change if the development pro-

cess initiated by the present

government continues, she

said, but lamented that hartals

and other activities of indisci-

pline by the opposition were

over the Buriganga was one of

the election commitments of the

The new bridge is expected

BNP. "We are fulfilling all our

election pledges one by one,

to usher in a new era of devel-

opment for Zinzira, famous for

its cottage industries, the Prime

Minister said and asked the lo-

cal people to set up more indus-

tries for achieving self-reliance.

eration of her government in

this regard, particularly in get-

ting bank loans.

She assured of allout coop-

the BNP chairperson said.

Construction of the bridge

hindering development efforts.

The face of the country wil

completed soon.

will be upgraded to a 50-bed.

Awami League president Sheikh Hasina vesterday urged people to vote for 'fish' in the mayoral election to free Dhaka city of terrorism and corruption of the ruling BNP, reports

"Cast vote for Hanif, if youwant a city free of violence corruption and hooliganism. she told an election meeting at the Biswa Road in Sabujbagh in the afternoon.

Hasina, also the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, said "Our victory in the city corporation elections will lead the nation to a greater vic-

Conducting a hectic campaign in favour of Hanif throughout the day she addressed over a dozen of wayside rallies at Postagola, Alambagh, Jurain, Muradpur, Dholaipar, Fakirerpol, Outer Circular Road, the Kamalapur railway station, Peerjangi Mazar, Malibagh crossing under Demra, Motisheel and Sabujbagh police stations.

## Shiv Sena calls strike in Maharashtra tomorrow

BOMBAY, Jan 19: Hindu militants today called a general strike across India's Maharashtra state to protest the renaming of a university after Bhim Rao Ambedkar, the hero of the untouchable community, reports AFP.

The dawn-to-dusk strike would be observed Friday, the

### BMA: Talks From Page 1 Col 8

BMA leader told this correspondent late last night that they would consider calling off the current strike only after the government agreed to make an official announcement regarding the agreement with the BMA.

The BMA leaders are scheduled to meet at five this afternoon to evaluate the whole situation.

Meanwhile, the senior teachers of all the medical colleges of the country stopped private practice as part of their action programme to force the government to accept their 21-point charter of demands. Our DMCH correspondent

says, the number of patients at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital dropped to 998 yesterday from 1030 the previous While seven patients died at

the hospital yesterday, the

BMA volunteer doctors operated on 22 patients on emergency basis. Some 38 patients left the hospital voluntarily while 100

others were admitted.

Shiv Sena Party announced here in the state capital a day after police foiled its bid to stage a public rally in the tense city of Aurangabad, site of the campus. Party leaders were meeting

here to discuss how to make the strike a success to make up for the loss of face they suffered over their inability to hold the much-publicised rally.

Shiv Sena supremo Bal Thackeray, a cartoonistturned-politician who is a selfproclaimed admirer of Adolf Hitler, had vowed to lead the Aurangabad protest in defiance of a police ban imposed amid fears of violence.

He tried to drive to Aurangabad but was intercepted by police, who served him with orders to return. Thackeray accepted the orders and turned back without offering resistance.

### Haryana releases water to Delhi NEW DELHI, Jan 19:

Haryana today started release of 25 MGD of water to Delhi on an ad-hoc basis, Haryana government sources said, reports The move on humanitarian

grounds followed a written request from the Delhi Chief Minister, Madan Lal Khurana to his Haryana counterpart, Bhajan Lal in which he had stated that the supply of water would not create any legal right in favour of Delhi, the sources said.

### Saifur leaves for France. Switzerland today

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman leaves for London today (Thursday) on a fortnightlong official visit to France and Switzerland as Chairman of the board of governors of the World Bank and IMF, reports

He will chair the first

January 27-30.

### Muggers

From Page 1 Col 7

Later, another police conthe policeman said.

The on-duty policeman said. "We five police personnel nabbed the muggers but failed to rescue them from the wrath of hundreds of enraged people who beat them up and hurled brickbats at them."

### STOL licence

From Page 1 Col 8 Earlier, the authorities awarded PATOL to Borak Air. Royal Bengal Airlines and Air Parabat to operate STOL aircraft to six domestic destinations where the national carrier Biman is not operating.

issued by the CAAB yesterday. January 31, as expected, because the licensed companies are yet to position their aircraft in Dhaka for inspection and clearance.

It said the CAAB, however, would make its STOL-ports in Barisal, Shamsernagar, Comilla, Lalmonirhat, Thakurgaon, Ishurdi and Dhaka's Tejgaon airport operational by January

it would take about ten days to scrutinise the documents submitted by the operators and to accord necessary clearance for commencing commercial

### Entertaining

From Page 1 Col 5 January 30 polls.

She listed the measures undertaken by the present government to reduce country's import dependence, boost export earnings, raise foreign investment and transfer of technology and said her government has attached importance to economic diplo-

She said the present government has brought in qualitative changes in the country's economic policies and asked the diplomats to raise the demand of the country's products and services abroad through public relations and publicity.

The Prime Minister pointed out that the country had earned over Taka 4000 crore in foreign exchange by sending 2.5 lakh persons abroad with jobs last year. She thanked all concerned, specially those workers who had sent remittances out of their relentless hard labour abroad.

She asked the diplomats to look after the Bangladeshi workers abroad and to ensure their safety and help stop harassment in getting work

## Biman

for lease and outright sale op-

None of the local representatives of the bidders was available for comment regarding the Biman decision.

meeting of the joint committee of remuneration of the executive directors and their alternates of the World Bank and the IMF in Paris January 24-

Saifur Rahman will also participate in the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos in Switzerland

deployed on regular patrol.

stable, Mohammad Azizuddin and another Ansar man who were on duty near the Abahani Club, followed their colleagues to help arrest the muggers,

Meanwhile, a press release clarified that the STOL service is not likely to start from

The press release also said

operation.

one found guilty under this Section and fined upto Tk 200 by a summary court cannot appeal against the verdict, the Election Commission remained the contenders in the

The EC called on all concerned, including the candi dates and their activists and supporters, to refrain from entertaining people with food and drinks at the election of-

### fices and camps. Econ diplomacy

From Page 1 Col 7 ties of our missions more effective, rational, action-oriented and coordinated one in the light of the recommendations of the commission.

Begum Zia pointed out that if they could attract positive responses from the foreigners then it would help accelerate the pace of development and turn the country into a self-reliant one.

permit.

## From Page 1 Col 8

Biman's financial evaluators had reportedly favoured the offer by Concorde Multitrade. However, the firm's financial capability and genuineness were seriously questioned by the media.

PESHAWAR, Jan 19: Afghan rebel forces seeking to topple President Burhanuddin Rabbani agreed to a truce today after heavy fighting broke out in Kabul ending a two-day luli. Afghan sources in neighouring Pakistan said. A coordination council of Rabbani's opponents led by Prime Minster Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Destum said it had agreed to halt fighting from 6.00 am Kabul time (0130 GMT) tomorrow after an appeal by a council of Mujahideen guerilla commanders, reports Reuter.

GENEVA. Jan 19: Serb-dominated Yugoslavia and rival Croatia signed an accord Wednesday aimed at improving relations, a move apparently meant to pressure Bosnia's Muslimled government into a peace settlement. Both countries agreed to open 'representative offices' in each other's capitals, Zagreb, Croatia, and Belgrade, Yugoslavia, on Feb 15, re-

### Pandemonium in Pak NA

## Opposition's comment angers Nusrat

ISLAMABAD, Jan 19: Pandemonium gripped the Pakistani parliament Tuesday when the opposition raised a current family feud in the ruling Bhutto family and later staged a walkout from the House. reports AFP. Begum Nusrat Bhutto, mo-

Bhutto, intervened angrily as a close aide of opposition leader and former premier Nawaz Sharff started to speak about the Bhutto family row. "I will not allow any one to,

talk about my family members," said an emotion-charged Nusrat Bhutto. "Nothing is wrong in my family. The press has exaggerated the matter," she said, as members from government and opposition benches en

invectives. Earlier. Sharif's lieutenant,

gaged in a heated exchange of

### Willoughby

From Page 1 Col 4 neers, saying that a properly structured field assignment would help bridge the gap between technical studies and the rural reality and meet the vast needs of the countryside and small towns.

"...A significant part of the

curriculum for engineers in Thai and Malaysian universities has long been involved in community development projects and even some North American universities have developed a similar approach for involving students with needy communities," he said. Willoughby also said a sus-

tainable future development of Bangladesh would depend on the engineers. "Whether the engineers will be able to make their contributions effectively depends most critically at this time on whether they can develop more sustainable organisations to carry these contributions," he observed.

by S M Al-Hussainy, a former president of the IEB, was also addressed by Muflehur R Osmany, Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the guest of honour. The World Bank official, however, suggested some measures for designing the institu-

tional structures that, he felt,

would improve the opportuni-

ties for the engineers to con-

The function, presided over

tribute to national development. The measures include transferring as much of the rural and peri-urban power distribution network as possible to the private sector, thereby improving services and avoiding the expensive duplication of investment; accelerated modernisation of accounting and management information system; and the establishment

of cost centres for improved

internal accountability.

ডিএফপিবো)-৫০২-১৯/১

商-350

Shaikh Rashid Ahmed, a former minister, said the power tussle had badly split the Bhutto family, eroding even a

'personally apologised" for what he called use of abusive language in the House. The House uproar followed

Party (PPP) meeting, chaired by her daughter, which raised speculation that a reconciliation was under way. Reports said Nusrat Bhutto was expected to accompany her daughter when she travels

### differences quitely. Eyes gouged out

From Staff Correspondent

gouged out both eyes of one Manik, 35, yesterday night at Bilwabari High school ground under Kashipur of Kotwali

According to Kotwali police, Manik was taken out of his house forcibly in the dead of night by these people to the school ground.

police rescued Manik this morning and sent him to the

## Hospital

member, police claimed. From Page 1 Col 3 assessment immediately. "Such

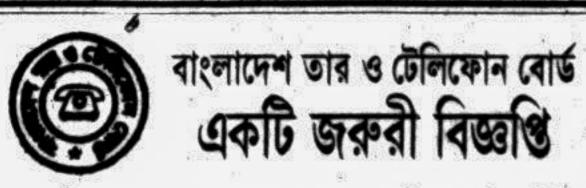
assessment would act as the

in the country," he said. The recommendations call for setting up a cell to monitor and analyse international treaties that might affect the development of Bangladesh, changing the education curriculum according to the needs of the society, ensuring micro-economic stability, taking necessary steps to revitalisé the jute sector and en-

couraging the growth of small industries. Jamilur Reza pointed out that a task force set up by then acting president Shahabuddin Ahmed had made a number of recommendations for changing the administrative system, but

those recommendations were

shelved. Urging the leader of the Opposition to place the recommendations, made in the seminar, before the Jatiya Sangsad, he said, "We hope the recommendations will be im-



কাজের কারণে নিম্নবর্ণিত তারিখ-ও সময়সূচী অনুযায়ী উক্ত ডিজিটাল এক্সচেঞ্জদ্বর বন্ধ থাকবে। মগৰাজার (৮৩) এক্সচেঞ্জ ঃ ২০শে জানুয়ারী বৃহস্পতিবার রাত

টেলিফোন গ্রাহকবৃদের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, সম্প্রসারণ

১০টা হতে ২১শে জানুয়ারী শুক্রবার সকাল ৬টা পর্যন্ত। পুলশান (৮৮) এক্সচেঞ্জঃ ২৭শে জানুয়ারী বৃহস্পতিবার রাত ১০টা হতে ২৮শে জানুয়ারী শুক্রবার সকাল ৬টা পর্যন্ত।

উল্লিখিত সময়ে এক্সচেঞ্জ দুটির সন্মানিত গ্রাহ্কবৃন্দের অন্তর্গামী ও বহির্গামী সকল কল বন্ধ থাকবে। গ্রাহকবৃন্দের এই সাময়িক অসুবিধার জন্য বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ড আন্তরিকভাবে দুঃখিত।

বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ড

**Editor: Mahfuz Anam** 

গ্রাহক সেবাই আমাদের লক্ষ্য

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# The Midnight File

## Opponents of Rabbani agree to ceasefire

## Yslavia, Croatia sign peace accord

ports AP.

relationship of mutual respect which should exist between a mother and daughter.' An opposition spokesman later said the opposition would ther of Prime Minister Benazir remain away from the National Assembly until Nusrat Bhutto

> Saturday's presence of Nusrat Bhutto at a Pakistan People's

to Davos in Switzerland for a visit and that the two had privately agreed to sort out the

BARISAL, Jan 19: A group of about ten to fifteen people

After getting information from the local people, Kotwali

Medical College Barisal

He is a "Sarbahara Party"

guideline for all new projects

plemented."

