

## Inside Today

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## Metropolitan

## Dhaka Day by Day

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## Notice

Today's 16-page issue of  
The Daily Star includes a 3-  
page supplement on Shri  
Lanka's National Day and a  
one-page supplement on  
Fashion Expo - 94.

## NEWS BRIEFS

Greetings to Lankan  
President, PM

President Abdur Rahman  
Biswas has felicitated his Sri  
Lankan counterpart Dingiri  
Banda Wijetunga on the occa-  
sion of the National Day of Sri  
Lanka today. In another mes-  
sage, Prime Minister Begum  
Khaleda Zia has felicitated the  
Prime Minister of Sri Lanka,  
Ranil Wickremasinghe, on the  
same occasion, reports BSS.

Chinese FM due  
in city Feb 24

Qian Qichen, Vice Premier  
and Foreign Minister of the  
People's Republic of China ar-  
rives in Dhaka February 24 on  
a four-day official visit.

Officials are attaching much  
importance to the forthcoming  
visit of the Chinese Foreign  
Minister who will discuss the  
entire gamut of Sino-  
Bangladesh bilateral relations.  
The Chinese minister will  
also call on President Abdur  
Rahman Biswas and Prime  
Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.  
"He is scheduled to hold ex-  
tensive discussions on bilateral  
issues and other issues of mu-  
tual interest with his Bangla-  
deshi counterpart and high  
officials," a Foreign Ministry  
spokesman said.

CU convocation  
Feb 6

CHITTAGONG, Feb 3: The  
first convocation ceremony of  
the University of Chittagong  
will be held on February 6 at  
the university play ground. The  
Chancellor of the University  
Prime Minister Begum Khaleda  
Zia will preside over the con-  
vocation, reports BSS.

## Jatiya Sangsad session from tomorrow

Better Govt-Opposition  
understanding likely

By Nurul Kabir

The thirteenth session of  
the present Jatiya Sangsad  
(JS), scheduled to begin to-  
morrow morning, is likely to  
produce better understanding  
between the treasury and  
Opposition benches on differ-  
ent issues.

Following the Awami  
League victory in the mayoral  
elections in two major cities —  
Dhaka and Chittagong — the  
treasury bench leaders are  
likely to give more patient  
hearings to the Opposition's  
views on different socio-politi-  
cal issues, sources in the rul-  
ing BNP said.

On the other hand, the  
main opposition Awami

League, too, is expected to  
adopt a more responsible ap-  
proach in order not to suggest  
that success in the recent city  
polls had gone to its head.

"We shouldn't do anything  
in the House which might  
make people think that we  
had become conceited follow-  
ing our victory," Opposition  
Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim  
told this correspondent last  
night.

Many contentious issues,  
including the Parliament Sec-  
retariat bill, are likely to be  
resolved during the coming  
session.

The special parliamentary  
committee report on the sep-

aration of the judiciary from  
the executive is also likely to  
be submitted before the House  
this time. However, the report  
will contain split opinions.

However, despite the pro-  
fessed intentions of the major  
parties to listen to each other,  
the House could still witness  
heated debates on some seri-  
ous political issues because the  
Opposition is certain to assert  
its demand for holding the  
next parliamentary polls under  
a neutral caretaker govern-  
ment.

An influential Opposition  
leader told The Daily Star that  
See Page 12 Col 4

## Lalbagh incident : Aziz still at large

## Property of 16 confiscated

By Staff Correspondent

Police yesterday raided the  
houses of 16 absconders ac-  
cused of killing six persons in  
a post-polis violence, at  
Nawabganj in the city on  
Monday and confiscated their  
property.

The Chief Metropolitan  
Magistrate, Dhaka on Wednes-  
day had ordered the confi-  
scation of the property of the  
accused, absconding since the  
killings.

During their day-long opera-  
tion police seized all the be-  
longings of principal accused  
MA Aziz from his Abdul Aziz  
Lane residence. But police did  
not seize anything from the  
Shaheen Chocolate Factory  
owned by Aziz. The factory has  
been closed following the  
killings.

Yesterday, police arrested  
another person — Mohammad  
Siraj Sikder — from the  
Nawabganj area for his alleged  
involvement in the murders.  
Siraj was taken to the city's  
Detective Branch office for  
interrogation.

With this, the number of ar-  
rests made in connection with  
the armed attack on the sup-  
porters of the area's ward  
commissioner-elect, M  
Humayun Kabir, rose to ten.  
But only three arrested  
persons were mentioned in  
the police diary lodged by  
Humayun Kabir. The other  
See Page 12 Col 7



Police confiscating household effects of Abdul Aziz, the  
main accused of the Lalbagh murders, under a court order  
yesterday. —Star photo

SPA used to harass political  
opponents : State Deptt report

The number of detenus under  
the Special Powers Act in the  
country was less than 900  
last year compared to 3,000 in  
1992, reports UNB.

A US State Department re-  
port on the Human Rights sit-  
uation in Bangladesh, released  
in Dhaka yesterday, said 97  
per cent of the 365 cases of  
detention were found to be il-  
legal when reviewed by the  
High Court.

"In fact, the government  
has used the SPA to harass po-  
litical opponents," the report  
said.

It said prisoners died in po-  
lice custody and most of the  
deaths occurred during the  
police remand.

The government, however,  
said no prisoners died as the  
result of maltreatment by po-  
lice or jail authorities.

"Police continue to employ

psychological and physical tor-  
ture and other abusive treat-  
ment during interrogations,"  
although the constitution for-  
bids torture. Torture includes  
beatings and use of electric  
shocks, the report said.

It further said prisoners  
suffer the most abuse, such as  
beatings and forced kneeling  
for long periods. A number of  
cases were filed in 1993 with  
magistrates against police  
abuse but none of the reports  
of the magistrates was made  
public nor legal action taken.

Quoting Home Ministry fig-  
ures, the report said 2,171  
people were arrested under  
the Anti-Terrorism Act during  
the first nine months of 1993.

"The judicial system is in-  
efficient and has a serious back-  
log. According to the Ministry  
of Law statistics, the lower

courts have over 2,18,000  
criminal and civil cases on the  
docket, some dating back over  
a decade," it said.

"The High Court division of  
the Supreme Court reports a  
backlog of over 5,000 cases  
which are over 10 years old.  
The government reports that  
26,352 of those awaiting trial  
are currently in prison. Over  
half have been in pre trial de-  
tention for less than six  
months, while 2,263 have  
been awaiting trial in prison  
for over 2 years," the report  
said.

About the trial of deposed  
president Ershad who had  
been convicted and sentenced  
to 20 years in jail, the report  
said "his (Ershad) trials have  
been open to the press and  
public and conform to stan-  
dard Bangladesh legal prac-  
tice."

UK to provide £39.5m  
for five projects

By Staff Correspondent

The United Kingdom yes-  
terday agreed to fund five pro-  
jects, worth 39.5 million  
pounds sterling, in Bangladesh  
during the current year, in-  
cluding a gas infrastructure  
development project and set-  
ting up of a national herbarium.  
This was included in the  
minutes of the 1994 annual ad-  
visory talks on development coop-  
eration between Britain and  
Bangladesh signed on the day  
at the Economic Relations  
Division (ERD) of the Finance  
Ministry.

The British delegation at  
the talks was led by John  
Kerby, Under Secretary for  
Asia and the Pacific in the

Overseas Development  
Administration (ODA) and the  
Bangladesh side was led by Md.  
Sirajul Islam, Joint Secretary,  
ERD.

The British delegation dis-  
closed at the meeting that the  
total British aid disbursement  
to Bangladesh in 1992-93  
stood at 65.7 million pounds  
sterling (about Tk 394 crore)  
from all sources including in-  
vestments by the Common  
wealth Development Corpora-  
tion.

Maintenance of British aid  
at a high level would depend  
on continued progress with  
economic reforms, practical  
See Page 12 Col 3

Prokrichi's fresh  
agitation  
programme

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of the Prokrichi-  
BSC Central Action Council  
yesterday announced a three-  
month long programme to  
press for realisation of their  
17-point charter of demands.

Under the programme,  
some 17 thousand profession-  
als will observe a protest week  
from February 5 to February 10  
at all district headquarters.  
This will be rounded off with a  
rally at the Institution of  
Engineers on February 10.

From February 11 until  
April 4, the leaders of the  
Prokrichi will exchange views  
with representatives of differ-  
ent sections of the society  
See Page 12 Col 8

JS Petition Body  
takes decisions  
on 7 issues

A meeting of the Petition  
Committee of Jatiya Sangsad  
was held yesterday at the  
Sangsad Bhavan with the  
Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali in  
the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting took some  
important decisions on seven  
petitions including complaints  
of irregularities regarding al-  
lotment of plots by RAJUK at  
Baridhara and Gulshan areas  
and problems of the private  
medical college set up by  
National Professor Nurul Islam.

The committee brought the  
issue of RAJUK plots under the  
consideration on the basis of  
applications of the persons  
who were allotted land in  
Baridhara but did not get the  
possession till now, a press  
release of the Bangladesh  
Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat said.

The committee brought the  
issue of the private medical  
college into cognizance follow-  
See Page 12 Col 8

DEDO pays Tk 48.5 cr  
back to exporters

By A Special Correspondent

The Duty Exemption and  
Drawback (DEDO) directorate  
has refunded Taka 48.5 crores  
in customs duties and VAT  
paid by the exporters for im-  
port of materials used by them.  
In the last financial year DEDO  
refunded Taka 112 crores to  
the exporters.

Duty drawback is an at-  
tempt to help exporters in  
Bangladesh to import raw ma-  
terials freely. The amount of  
drawback equals the customs  
duties and VAT paid by the ex-  
porters while importing inputs  
that had gone into their export  
goods. Businesses supplying  
goods against national/intern-  
ational tender or against  
inland back-to-back letters of  
credit to exporters having  
Customs approved bonds or to  
foreign vessels or aircraft  
against payment of foreign  
exchange are also eligible to

get duty drawback.

The DEDO Directorate,  
which was set up in Septem-  
ber 1989, replaced the sys-  
tem of duty repayment through  
the Collector of Customs House  
used originally by the exporter  
to import his inputs. Drawback  
claims had to be made to the  
National Board of Revenue  
(NBR) where a Directorate of  
Inspection examined each  
application.

The DEDO authorities claim  
that the office is providing  
one-stop service for the ex-  
porters. They have already  
worked out flat rates of duty  
drawback rate for 720 items —  
a number larger than the num-  
ber of items actually exported.  
Sources say that export items  
receiving drawback are mostly  
non-traditional items.

Most DEDO drawback pay-  
See Page 12 Col 7

BNP strives to identify  
causes of polls debacle

By Special Correspondent

Smarting from the unex-  
pected shock of their dramatic  
defeat in the city polls, the  
policy-makers of the Bangla-  
desh Nationalist Party (BNP)  
have been reviewing the  
situation and discussing possi-  
ble strategies to gear up or-  
ganisational activities.

According to sources con-  
cerned, the BNP high com-  
mand is now busy analysing the  
polls results and trying to pin-  
point the causes of the party's  
debacle in the country's two  
major cities, particularly in the  
capital. Other than looking for  
the political reasons, the  
party's central leadership is  
more keen to identify its spe-  
cific organisational weaknesses  
vis-a-vis the city polls and find  
answers to the actual prob-  
lems.

Meanwhile, speculations on  
possible cabinet reshuffle as  
well as a major recasting of the  
party leadership, both at the  
central and city levels, are rife  
among the rank and file of the  
ruling party.

Party cadres aired their  
grievances against the leader-  
ship at a meeting of the city's  
leading workers Wednesday. A  
number of speakers at the  
meeting, giving vent to their  
feelings of frustration, primar-  
ily held the policies pursued by  
Finance Minister Saifur  
Rahman and Home Minister  
Abdul Matin Chowdhury re-

sponsible for the party's defeat  
in Dhaka and Chittagong.  
Demands for their resignations  
were also raised. Food Minister  
Mir Shawkat Ali, who heads  
the BNP's city committee, also  
came under fire for his failure  
in conducting Mirza Abbas'  
election campaigns efficiently.

Sources said the party's  
top-notchers have already  
gauged the feelings of the  
cadres about a thorough reor-  
ganisation of the party ma-  
chinery and the need to pro-  
vide it with a dynamic leader-  
ship.

Since the national council  
of the BNP last September, the  
party is yet to have a new cen-  
tral committee, which was to  
have been appointed by the  
party chief Begum Zia. The  
Dhaka city unit of the party  
also lacks a full-fledged com-  
mittee. Just a few days before  
the national council four office-  
bearers were appointed by the  
BNP chairperson to run the  
city committee and constitute  
the full committee.

Among the four, Mir  
Shawkat Ali was appointed the  
city committee's president.  
State Minister Sadeque  
Hossain and ex-mayor Mirza  
Abbas were made vice-presi-  
dents while Salahuddin Ahmed,  
MP, was appointed general  
secretary. However, this four-  
man committee is still func-  
See Page 12 Col 7

Govt has lost right to  
stay in power: AL

By Staff Correspondent

Acting chief of the Awami  
League Abdul Mannan said yes-  
terday the present government  
had lost the right to stay in  
power after "rigging and ter-  
rorising" the just-held city  
corporation elections.

"It is the government's re-  
sponsibility to ensure peace  
and neutrality in the elections  
but the BNP government at-  
tempted to win the polls by  
hook or by crook," the AL  
leader told a public rally at  
Bangabandhu Avenue in the  
capital.

However, Mannan said, all  
evil designs of the govern-  
ment failed to foil the victory  
of the AL mayoral candidates in  
Dhaka and Chittagong.

The rally, with Mannan in  
the chair, was organised as  
part of the AL's nationwide  
protest programmes against  
the post-polls carnage at

Lalbagh in the capital in which  
six persons were murdered.

Presidium members of the  
party: Abdus Samad Azad, MP,  
Tofael Ahmed, MP, Abdur  
Razzak, MP, Amir Hossain Amu  
and Abdul Jalil, general secre-  
tary Zillur Rahman and the  
mayor-elect Mohammad Hanif  
also addressed the rally.

Abdus Samad Azad said  
'rigging and terrorism' by the  
ruling party in the city polls  
had once again proved that no  
elections under the BNP govern-  
ment could be held in a  
free, fair and peaceful manner.  
He demanded the next Jatiya  
Sangsad elections under a  
care-taker government.

By voting against the BNP,  
Samad Azad said, the people  
had rejected the autocratic  
steps of the present govern-  
ment.

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9 new High Court  
judges to take  
oath Sunday

Nine new additional judges  
of the High Court division of  
the Bangladesh Supreme Court  
are expected to take oath on  
Sunday, reports NFS.

Informed official sources  
said, the President has en-  
dorsed the appointments.

The new additional judges  
are: Barrister Asaduzzaman,  
Md. Nurul Islam (Solicitor),  
Barrister Manwar Uddin, Mirza  
Asaduzzaman Al-Farooq (Secre-  
tary, Ministry of Law), Barris-  
ter Fazlul Huq, Muhammad  
Habibullah (Addl. Secretary,  
Ministry of Law), Advocate  
Bazlur Rahman Talukder,  
Barrister Syed Amirul Islam,  
and Barrister Tofazzal Islam.

The new appointments are  
expected to ease the backlog  
of cases in the High Court aris-  
ing out of a shortage of judges.  
Currently there are only 30  
judges to dispose of about 70  
thousands pending cases, re-  
sulting in manifold problems  
in the smooth functioning of  
the High Court division.

Two judges of the High  
Court division retired last  
December.

The initiatives to increase  
the number of benches come  
shortly after the Old High  
Court building — previously  
used by the Ministry of  
Defence — was handed over to  
the Supreme Court recently.

15,000 fell sick due  
to chemical waste  
dumping in Pabna

PABNA, Feb 3: Some 15,000  
people living near the Square  
Pharmaceuticals are falling  
sick due to air pollution by the  
bad odour from the chemical  
waste of its basic plant, reports  
UNB.

Local people said the phar-  
maceutical company last year  
began to produce antibiotics at  
its basic plant in the town  
dumping the chemical waste in  
a nearby pond instead of  
taking it to a recycling plant.

Earlier in October, last year,  
a group of experts from the  
Environment Directorate de-  
clared the plant closed after a  
large number of people  
brought out several proces-  
sions in the town protesting  
the dumping of waste.

Local people alleged that  
the authorities of the phar-  
maceutical company are yet to  
remove the waste dumped in  
the pond even after four  
months of the closure of the  
plant.

When contacted, Civil  
Surgeon Dr Matur Rahman  
said the air pollution in the  
area would continue if the  
waste is not removed immedi-  
ately and people would be af-  
fected by different diseases.

BSF pushes in 42  
into Bangladesh

SATKHIRA, Feb 3: Two gro-  
ups of Indian Muslims were  
forcibly pushed into Bangla-  
desh by the Indian border  
security force (BSF) through  
Bhokra border at dead of  
Wednesday night, reports  
UNB.

Some 31 Bangla-speaking  
Indian Muslims including 12  
children, pushed through the  
border without any resistance,  
have taken shelter at Kaliganj  
bus terminal, police and wit-  
nesses said.

Another group comprising  
11 Indians including 5 chil-  
dren pushed into Bangladesh  
by the BSF on the same night  
were living in an inhuman  
condition under the Kalia  
bridge.

The BSF has now taken new  
tactics of pushing in Indian  
nationals in small groups at  
dead of night, residents near  
Bhokra border said.

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## PM's son weds

The marriage of Tareq  
Rahman, eldest son of late  
President Ziaur Rahman and  
Prime Minister Begum Khaleda  
Zia was solemnised yesterday  
with Zobaidda Khan Jhunu, the  
youngest daughter of former  
chief of Bangladesh Navy late  
Rear Admiral Mahbub Ali  
Khan, reports UNB.

The simple ceremony, held  
at Senakunja in Dhaka Can-  
tonment, was attended by  
close relatives of the two fami-  
lies.

A reception party will be  
held at Senakunja on February  
8 at which leader of the op-  
position leaders of political  
parties, all members of parlia-  
ment, diplomats, senior jour-  
nalists and elite of the city  
have been invited, family  
sources said.

Besides, family members of  
the initiators of the anti-auto-  
cratic movement including  
See Page 12 Col 1



General Secretary of the Awami League Zillur Rahman addressing a public meeting at  
Bangabandhu Avenue organised to mourn the deaths of six persons in a post-polls carnage  
at Lalbagh in the city last Monday  
—Star photo