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NEWS BRIEFS

JU cases against four JCD men

By JU Correspondent The Jahangirnagar University authorities have lodged cases against four activists of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal for their alleged involvement in the terrorist activities on February 5 on the campus that resulted in the closure of the university. The FIR filed with the Savar police, according to unconfirmed sources, said that the alleged four were seen during the armed vandalism. On February 5, a group of ousted JCD men stormed one residential hall to repair their hold over campus politics.

'Build original Shaheed Minar'

By DU Correspondent The Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) has demanded the construction of the Central Shaheed Minar according to the original design by late Hamidur Rahman. The DUTA, in a discussion held at the University Club with its president Prof Md Shahadat Ali in the chair, also urged all concerned to take steps to uphold the spirit of the Language Movement.

Canadian envoy calls on Hasina

High Commissioner of Canada, Jon J Scott, called on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina at her Parliament office yesterday. They discussed matters relating to political, social and economic affairs of the two countries, reports BSS.

Table with 4 columns: Rmdn, Feb, Sehri, Iftar. Rows show dates 11, 12, 13 with corresponding times.

Writ petition rejected Court orders fresh polls in 3 DCC centres

By Staff Correspondent A division bench of the High Court yesterday gave a verdict in favour of the Election Commission's decision of holding fresh polls in three centres of the Dhaka City Corporation. The bench, comprising Justice Abdul Jalil and Justice Ruhul Amin, discharged the rule nisi it had issued on February 8 upon the Election Commission and the Government refraining them from holding re-election in three centres (numbers -479, 480 and 482) under Ward No. 57 of the DCC. While pronouncing the verdict, the court rejected the writ petition of a commissioner candidate, Abul Ahsan Talukdar, saying the petition had no substance and also vacated the stay order on the re-polling. The judgement was read out in nearly one and half an hour yesterday on hearing the lawyers of both the sides for three days. With the vacation of the court's stay order and rejection of the writ petition, the EC has now no bar in arranging fresh polls in the three centres. The results of these centres were cancelled on grounds of malpractices in balloting. The division bench had issued the rule nisi and the stay order on February 8 for two weeks following Talukdar's writ challenging the EC order for re-polling. Later, the mayor-elect and another commissioner candidate Khwaja Habibullah appealed to the court to vacate the stay order because the order was barring the mayor and the commissioners elect from taking oaths. At the end of the verdict, the court also rejected the prayer of Kazi Golam Mahub, a lawyer for the petitioner, for a certified copy of the judgement. Khandakar Mahbubuddin Ahmed also appeared for the petitioner while Dr Ahmed Hossain for the EC. Shawqat Ali Khan, K S Nabi, Fazlur Rahman, Nurul Islam Sujan, Abdul Momin Talukdar and others appeared for Mohammad Hanif and Khwaja Habibullah. Meanwhile the commissioner candidate Abul Ahsan Talukdar is planning to appeal in the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court against the judgement. This was stated by his lawyer Kazi Golam Mahub, while talking to The Daily Star last night.

Opposition demands discussion on corruptions Speaker asks for documents

By Staff Correspondent The opposition demand for a full dress discussion on the alleged corruptions of the cabinet ministers and the treasury bench members' protests against the 'unsubstantiated' allegations marked the proceedings of the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) yesterday. Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali assured the opposition members that the chair was ready to consider their motion on the issue provided they submitted necessary documents required under the Rules of Procedure. The debate on the issue eventually revolved round the legal way of making such allegations and both the treasury and opposition benches finally agreed to the Speaker's observations on the subject. The opposition members told the chair that they could well substantiate their allegations while the treasury bench said the ministers, if the discussions took place, could refute the opposition allegations of corruptions. The Speaker asked the opposition members to submit the relevant documents about alleged corruptions as early as possible. The unscheduled debate on the issue started when opposition chief whip Mohammad Nasim rose on a point of order to demand a full dress discussion on the alleged corruptions of 17 ministers. Tofael Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim and Azizur Rahman of the Awami League (AL) and Suranjit Sengupta of the Gonoantri Party submitted four separate but similar notices of adjournment motions demanding discussion on a press report which claimed that the Bureau of Anti-Corruption had sought the Prime Minister's permission to investigate the alleged corruptions of some 17 ministers. Demanding that their notices be disposed of immediately, Mohammad Nasim said the Prime Minister seemed to be "an obstacle" for Anti-Corruption Bureau investigations into the alleged corrupt practices of the ministers. When Nasim was half way through, the treasury bench members started protesting his remarks and requested the chair to stop Nasim's microphone on the ground that the AL legislator was making a sensitive statement in violation of the Rules of Procedure. Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Pannu who was presiding over the sitting put off Nasim's microphone to give floor to Professor Badruddoza Chowdhury. Professor Chowdhury told the House that the treasury bench was ready to discuss the opposition allegations provided the allegations were made as per rules. Referring to Nasim's statement, the deputy leader said, "It is not proper that someone taking the floor in the name of raising a point of order, will start making wholesale allegations." See Page 12 Col 3

Customs must give clearance to export items within 24 hrs

A high-level meeting yesterday adopted a set of important measures to remove bottlenecks to development of import-export trade and to gear up bank financing in agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors, reports UNB. All customs formalities in respect of shipment of exports must be completed by the customs authorities within 24 hours, the meeting directed. Chaired by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, the meeting also decided that the customs administration for Export Processing Zone (EPZ) be simplified to remove difficulties faced by the entrepreneurs. Banks will take special care and expeditious measures in case of export and import financing and undertake publicity drive to inform all involved in this trade about the measures. The decisions were taken after reviewing the current status of training for industry, agriculture, livestock, fisheries including shrimp cultivation, poultry and import-export trade. As per the decisions, additional government incentives for cattle development in the form of enhanced rate of assistance and sharing of freight cost for importing calves will be ensured. These facilities will be available for three years. Banks will provide all assistance to the importers of cattle and poultry feeds and medicines in the private sector and livestock extension services will be made available. Duties on import of special drugs for hatcheries will be reduced. Banks will make funds available for shrimp cultivation on government-leased areas. Lease period will be enhanced appropriately.

Donors suggest faster reforms, better aid utilisation

By Staff Correspondent Resident Representative of ADB Van der Linden and IMF Resident Chief, Slaheddine Khenissi were also present. The donor representatives stressed the need for faster reform, more trade liberalisation and faster privatisation for macro-economic stability. The current growth rate is not enough for Bangladesh, Khenissi said. "Although the rate could be good for many countries, Bangladesh needs to go higher." The representatives also stressed the need for reforms in the bureaucracy and for faster project implementation. They said that in the last 20 years, ten per cent of all aid projects under the Annual Development Programme (ADP) had turned out to be unsuccessful and 15 per cent partially successful. Only 40 per cent of the projects were implemented fully. ADB representative Linden said, "No projects would be successful unless there is a sound policy environment prevailing." He said the policy reforms undertaken by the government should be communicated to the people to make the process participatory. Political consensus is a must for reforms, Willoughby commented. When asked about their comment on the recent city corporation elections, Willoughby insisted that the on-going reform programme has no effect whatsoever on the election results. "Not even one per cent of the result was influenced by the reform," he maintained. See Page 12 Col 8

City polls debacle hurts many BNP workers: Rafiq

A senior leader of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has said the party's debacle in the recent mayoral elections in Dhaka and Chittagong has lowered the morale of some party workers. Talking to the UNB yesterday, Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Mia, who is also the party's Joint-Secretary General, said there were many workers who felt disheartened at the election results in the country's two major cities. But, he added, it would be wrong to infer from it that the rank and file of BNP stood completely demoralised. Rafiqul Islam Mia listed misunderstanding among workers, over-confidence in certain cases and lack of coordination at various levels of the organisation as the reasons for the party's poor show in the city corporation polls. Analysing the factors that contributed to BNP's electoral setback, he said that during its three-year tenure, the present government introduced a series of reforms to restore See Page 12 Col 1

BNP fails to table bill

By Staff Correspondent For the first time in the fifth Parliament, the ruling BNP could not table a bill because neither the minister in charge nor the state minister was present in the House. Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman was to place the Financial Loan Court (Amendment) Bill, 1994, as per Order of the Day yesterday but he did not come to the House. In the absence of the Finance Minister, the State Minister for Finance Mujibur Rahman was ready to introduce the bill. But when Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali requested the state minister to table the bill he was also not in the House. Some treasury bench members said that he had gone out of the House for Zohr prayers. The Speaker kept the bill pending for another day at the request of the Deputy Leader of the House, Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury. Some opposition members were found commenting "look at the sincerity of the minister which reveals the performance of the government." The State Minister for Finance who entered the House afterwards did not seek permission from the chair to introduce the bill.

Storms lash two dists: One killed

From Our Correspondent KUSHTIA, Feb 22: A nor-wester accompanied with heavy rain swept over Kushtia and adjoining areas at about 11:30 pm yesterday. The storm which continued for about half an hour at a speed of about 70 to 80 kilometres per hour caused widespread damages to mango sprouts and other crops including tobacco. The storm also damaged kutchha houses and severed electricity lines plunging the areas into darkness. Large number of telephone lines went out of order while low-lying areas were submerged with rain water. Details of the damage in the See Page 12 Col 1

Contraband worth Tk 13.58 lakh seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent Airport Customs surveillance team seized gold, medicine and foreign currency equivalent to Tk 13.58 lakh from four incoming passengers at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) during last two days. The Customs seized 11,015 US dollars and 1,65 lakh Japanese yen from two passengers, Mesbaul Haque and Selim Akand, who arrived in Dhaka from Singapore yesterday. Customs Inspector Mannan Majumdar held Mesbaul Haque with 8,165 US dollars and the Japanese yen while he was passing through the green channel in the airport. Another passenger Selim was held with US dollar in the customs area. Both the passengers came to Dhaka by Singapore Airlines at 1 am yesterday See Page 12 Col 1



Floral offerings on the occasion of Amar Ekushey bedeck the foot of the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday.

Nation pays homage to language martyrs

By Staff Correspondent The nation paid homage to the martyrs of the historic Language Movement Monday with a renewed pledge to strengthen the democratic institutions and root out communalism from the country. Thousands of barefoot people, wearing black badges and carrying bouquets, poured into the Shaheed Minars across the country to honour the heroes of the 1952 Language Movement which sowed the seeds of independence of Bangladesh in 1971. The day was a public holiday and the national flags were hoisted at half-mast atop the public and private buildings. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was the first to place wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar at one minute past mid-night Sunday. She was accompanied by her cabinet colleagues and the BNP leaders. Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Emajuddin Ahmed received the Prime Minister when she arrived at the Shaheed Minar premises. Prof Emajuddin, who was accompanied by the teachers of the university, was the second person to place wreath at the altar of the Shaheed Minar. Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina paid tributes to the martyrs of the Language Movement Monday at 5:45 am by placing wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar. She was accompanied by party leaders Abdus Samad Azad MP, Zillur Rahman, Abdur Razzak MP, Amir Hossain Amu, Abdul Jalil, Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, Obaidul Kader, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and Abdul Mannan. Leaders of the Dhaka University Central Students Union (DUCSU) and the leading student organisation placed wreaths at the Shaheed Minar immediately after placing of wreath by the Vice See Page 12 Col 4

9 get 7-yr RI each in Nurjahan murder case

From Our Correspondent SYLHET, Feb 22: Nine people were sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) each in the Nurjahan murder case in Moulvibazar today. Nurjahan, 20, daughter of Asif Ali of Chhatakhara village in Kamalganj thana of the district, 'committed suicide' on January 10 last year following the insult and injustice meted out to her by the village headmen for her second marriage. Additional District Magistrate Aminur Rasul delivered the 77-page judgement today after examining 21 witnesses. The accused are Moulana Mannan, Munir Sardar, Neyamat Ullah, Ijamat Ullah, Abdul, Sona Mia, Deen Mohammad, Abdul Aziz and Borhanuddin. They were also fined Tk 2,000 each in default to suffer See Page 12 Col 7

6 stabbed in city

By DMCH Correspondent At least six people were stabbed in separate incidents in the city during the last two days. Selim, 23, a third-year student of Political Science of the Dhaka University was stabbed by a group of unidentified persons at his 321, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall room at about 5 pm Tuesday. In another incident a final-year student of MBBS of Mymensingh Medical College was stabbed by some mastans at Malibagh at about 1 am Tuesday. The victim, Mohammed Nasir ul Gani Khan, 24 was admitted to the DMCH with injuries on his head. A supervisor of Nazia Garments, was attacked by one of his colleagues at his office at New Eskaton following a feud at about 4 pm Tuesday. The victim, Mohammed Moazzem Hossain, 25, was See Page 12 Col 6

Bangladesh's first defeat in ICC Trophy

Sports Reporter Bangladesh suffered first loss in the fifth ICC Trophy Championship when they lost the finale of Group B to the UAE by a yawning margin of six wickets on Monday, in the Kenyan capital Nairobi. A sparkling hundred by Opiener Jahangir Alam, only the third by any Bangladeshi in the meet for the associate members of the ICC, went in vain as UAE overhauled Bangladesh's score of 233 for seven with almost four overs to spare. Sent in to bat first Bangladesh rattled 233 for seven with Jahangir making 117 not out; Selim Shahed scored 56. The UAE team comprising players from India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka tore the Bangladesh attack apart later in the day. The win gives UAE the top place in Group B while Bangladesh too have qualified for the next round as the runners up. Bangladesh play top-seeds Holland today in the league basis quarter finals which start from today.

Energy situation reviewed

The National Committee on Energy and Mineral Resources yesterday reviewed overall power, fuel and gas situation in the country, reports UNB. Chaired by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, the meeting also reviewed the activities and programmes of the Power Development Board (PDB), Rural Electrification Board (REB), Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) and Geological Survey Directorate. Finance Minister Saifur Rahman, Communications Minister Col (Retd) Oli Ahmed, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandakar Mostafar Hossain, Industries Minister Zahuruddin Khan, Commerce Minister Shamsul Islam, State Minister for Planning Dr Moyeen Khan and other members of the committee attended the meeting, held at the International Conference Centre. It discussed the progress in finalisation of the new National Energy Policy. The meeting was informed that the commit- See Page 12 Col 8

BEXIMCO clarifies

(Following is an abridged version of a rejoinder received from Beximco). An advertisement was published in this newspaper by one so-called 'Health For All' regarding the use of Ketotifen as an asthma prophylactic and antihistamine. The contents of the advertisement are incomplete, biased and misleading. The ad tried to question whether Ketotifen is an "asthma prophylactic and superior antihistamine". However, the world renowned texts and references like Martindale, The Extra Phar- See Page 12 Col 8

Advertisement for 'অঙ্গণা' (Angana) featuring a woman's portrait and text about health and social issues.