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Inside Today

Article
Spring and the Renewal of Debate on Reforms
Column: Along My Way by S B Chaudhuri Page 4

International
Demonstrators in Arab capitals call for 'holy war' against Israel

Business
Total quality control can help boost export potentials: Experts
EU moves closer to patch up fisheries dispute with Norway Pages 6, 7

Development
No Headway yet for Slum Dwellers' Rehabilitating the Mentally Impaired; Today's Tool for Success in Business; Jute Producers Hitch a Ride on the Biodiversity? Page 8

Metropolitan
Dhaka Day by Day

Developing Children's Intellect Page 3

Israel orders arrest of Jewish leaders

JERUSALEM, Feb. 27: Israel's Cabinet on Sunday ordered the arrest of Jewish extremist leaders and said it will disarm radical settlers in the occupied territories in a bid to smother a wave of Arab fury following Friday's massacre of Muslims, reports AP.

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid also announced that authorities will start releasing some 800 to 1,000 Palestinians held in Israeli prisons.

Earlier, the army sealed off the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip for an indefinite period, blocking more than one million Palestinians from entering Israel.

An army spokesman said the clampdown launched late Saturday was to prevent Arab attacks in Israel.

The actions by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's Cabinet, which had been expected, were announced amid a third day of violence throughout the occupied territories.

The unrest again spilled over into Jaffa near Tel Aviv and other normally peaceful Arab towns in Israel.

Since Friday, when 39 Muslims were slain in the Hebron mosque by a lone Jewish gunman, a total of 63 Arabs have been killed.

Sarid said the 14-man Cabinet voted unanimously that the extremists "will be forced to disarm" and that legal authorities were "instructed to examine the possibility of outlawing these extremist groups."

He said the government empowered the army to restrict settlers' movements inside the occupied territories, but stopped short of banishing them from these areas because of "legal problems."

The main target of the crackdown was Kach, a militant anti-Arab movement founded by Rabbi Meir Kahane. See page 12 Col 2

Fresh incentives for exporters likely

by S Y Bakht

A number of additional incentives for the exporters are likely to be approved at the first meeting of the high-powered National Export Promotion Council scheduled to be held tomorrow, according to a well-placed source at the Commerce Ministry yesterday.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to chair the meeting of the council set up to coordinate efforts to boost the country's exports.

The meeting is scheduled to review the existing export trade along with the sector's performance during the first six months of the ongoing fiscal year and may even readjust the export target set for the year, the source said. It would also discuss the government's long-term export strategy and its implementation.

He, however, declined to elaborate on the possible new incentives likely to be discussed at the meeting.

"Various proposals forwarded by the exporters would be discussed at the meeting and a number of decisions are expected to be taken," he said.

The World Bank, in a recent review report prepared on behalf of the donor community, observed that the government's de-regulation and liberalisation steps taken so far had failed to have an impact at the individual entrepreneurs level and urged for speeding up the liberalisation of the economy.

The Commerce Ministry source also acknowledged that "more concessions and liberalisation steps are needed to further facilitate exports."

Chamber leaders and exporters are expected to attend the meeting along with the permanent members of the council, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam, Industries Minister A M Zahiruddin Khan and State Minister for Planning Dr. Moin Khan.

The National Export Promotion Council was set up in 1992 as part of the government's long-term strategy to develop the export sector during the eight year period upto 2000.

But the outline of the council's function was only finalised in February 1993 and after a government order on its formation was issued in December, the date for the first meeting was fixed.

At that time the government announced that the council would take 'positive' steps to boost exports and would also 'constantly' exchange views with the exporters at the administrative level.

Regular consultations with the exporters was a long expressed demand of the business. See page 12 Col 7

JMB project to be placed before ADB Mar 8

The Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge (JMB) Project will be placed for approval before the executive board of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), one of the co-financiers of the 700-million US dollars plus projects, on March 8 next, reports BSS.

This was stated by the visiting ADB mission headed by Director of Programme Department (West) of the bank, N Morita, when the mission called on Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman at his office chamber yesterday.

ADB is expected to sanction 200 million dollars for the project. Other two co-financiers of the JMB Project are World Bank and Japan and of them World Bank had already sanctioned 200 million dollars for the project. Japan is expected to provide 200 million dollars and the rest 100 million dollars plus will be provided by the government of Bangladesh.

During the discussion with the Finance Minister the ADB mission talked about the on-going development projects funded by ADB in Bangladesh. The mission discussed the 331 million dollars projects approved by the bank in the sector of road construction, primary education, Jessore-Khulna drainage and second district water supply projects for nine towns.

The mission also discussed the projects in the pipeline of the bank for Bangladesh. It discussed the projects in the pipeline of the bank for Bangladesh. It discussed the projects in the pipeline of the bank for Bangladesh. See page 12 Col 2



Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina talking to the visiting Chinese Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, when he called on her at the Sangsad Bhavan yesterday. — Star photo

Qian happy over AL-CPC ties

The visiting Chinese Vice Premier and Foreign Minister, Qian Qichen, had a meeting with Leader of the Opposition in parliament and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina at her parliament office yesterday, reports UNB.

They exchanged views of matters relating to present economic development of China as well as various programmes of the Awami League.

Meeting sources said the top-ranking leader of China expressed satisfaction at the friendly relations developed between the Awami League and Chinese Communist Party.

Qian recalled the visit of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to China in 1953 and 1957 and said the bonds of friendship between the two peoples were established then.

During the meeting, Hasina said peace and political stability are the basic requirements for economic development and hoped that existing friendly relations between Bangladesh and China would further strengthen in future.

Among the delegation members, Assistant Foreign Minister Wang Yingfan and Chinese Ambassador in Bangladesh Zhang Xujiang were present. Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad, Adviser to the Awami League President, SAMS Kibria, and party's international Affairs Secretary Abu Hassan Chowdhury MP were also present.

Issues with neighbours should be solved bilaterally: Qian

By Staff Correspondent

Chinese Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen expressed the hope the water sharing issue between India and Bangladesh would be solved through bilateral negotiations.

Addressing a crowded press conference at the Padma state guest house at the end of his four-day visit yesterday, Qian said Bangladesh's concern about the water problem is understandable and added 'generally when a river flows through different countries it creates problems.'

Responding to a question if the water sharing issue was discussed during talks in Dhaka, Qian replied in the affirmative. He said, 'I was not asked to be a mediator. And I do not think we should be a mediator in the issue.'

Qian stressed the need for settling all bilateral issues between neighbours for creating a healthy atmosphere in the South Asian region.

The Chinese Vice Premier said that in the context of the changed global scenario, the economic development was the dominant factor.

'Unless the developing countries succeed to attain good living standards, it will be difficult to compete with the developed economies,' he said.

In reply to questions on Beijing's move to improve ties with New Delhi, Qian said, his country's relations with India were improving. He, however, emphasised that any kind of improvement in relations with India would in no way affect China's relations with other nations.

During the 40-minute press conference, the Chinese leader, who is also the fourth highest member of the Politburo, said China wanted to see South Asia as a nuclear-free zone. 'We do not want to see the region embroiled in an arms race.'

The top-ranking Chinese leader said arms proliferation would not ensure security of the region and hoped the countries would give priority to economic development. 'In the present day world, the security of a nation depends on its economic strength', Qian said.

Answering a question on Kashmir, the Chinese Vice-Premier said, 'China's policy on Kashmir remains unchanged.'

Referring to the UN resolutions on the issue Qian said the Kashmir and other problems between India and Pakistan. See page 12 Col 4

JS adjourned Obituary refs for Mahfuz, Baten, Palestinians

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad (JS) did not take up its scheduled legislative business yesterday as the House was adjourned shortly after the question-answer hour because of the death of a former state minister and lawmaker Abdul Baten.

Abdul Baten, who was also a member of the standing committee of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), died at the Combined Military Hospital early yesterday morning.

Deputy Leader of Parliament Professor Badruddoza Chowdhury requested the chair to adjourn the House to allow the See page 12 Col 1

Bangladesh bow out of ICC with a win

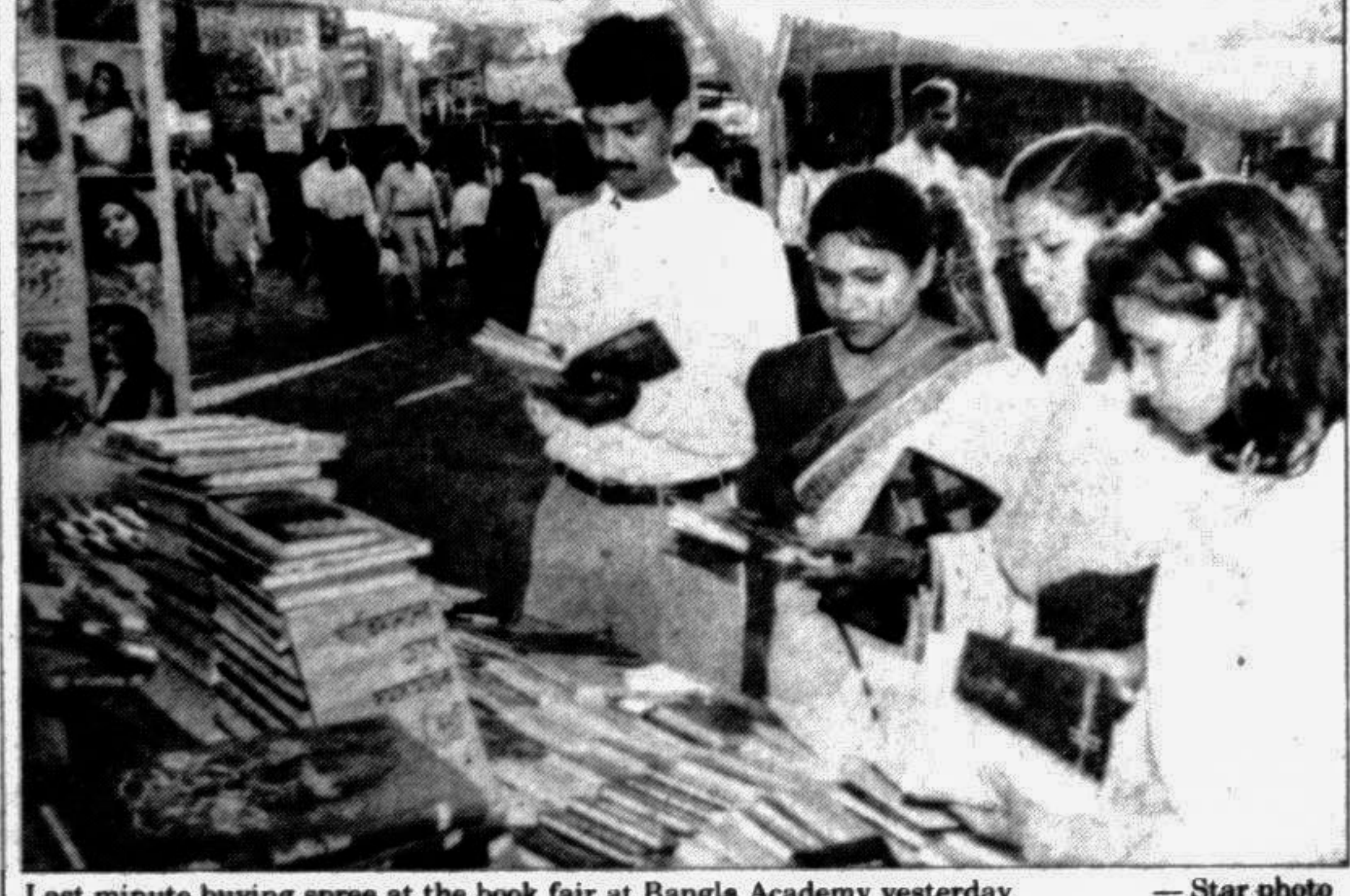
Sports Reporter

Bangladesh got a win at long last, at a time when they were no longer in need of it beating Hong Kong by 57 runs in their last match of the fifth ICC Trophy in Kenyan capital Nairobi yesterday.

After three defeats in a row starting from the last group match against the UAE and ending in the crucial and decisive loss to Kenya on Friday, Bangladesh, one of the favourites of this on-going world championship for the ICC associate members, reversed the trend albeit belatedly to sign off on a winning note. The tragedy and irony of it all is that Bangladesh no longer belong to a competition that saw them ranked only after top-seeds Holland or the Netherlands.

So diabolical a medley of bad luck, poor form and want of the never-say-die attitude it was for Bangladesh in this meet that they could not last till the semifinals to be in with a chance to finish among the top three finishers, let alone the title. The catch of this years competition is that three top finishers will play in the next World Cup to be co-hosted by India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 1996.

Man of the match Minhazul Abedin Nannu was Bangladesh's hero yesterday. He turned in a fine all-round show scoring 66 runs and capturing 9 wickets to pave the path for a winning farewell for Bangladesh.



Last minute buying spree at the book fair at Bangla Academy yesterday. — Star photo

Bangla Academy fair ends today Books worth Tk 8cr sold this yr

By Shamsad Mortuza

In respect of new publications, Agami Publishers was in the second position with 53 new books including the most talked-about novel 'Chhappano Hajar Bargamile' by Humayun Azad.

However, Humayun Ahmed, Taslima Nasrin and Imdadul Haq Milon continued to be the most favourite writers. Surprisingly, the academy this year has decided not to announce the 'best-seller' list reportedly to avoid controversy.

'Regarding best sellers, we had to rely on the verbal figures provided by the book-sellers themselves,' said a director of the academy adding, 'Which often prompted controversy.'

The academy, however, will give awards to three best decorated stalls.

A panel of judges comprising artists and architects, has already nominated the recipients which will be officially announced at 11 am today. Prankito-Jan, BRAC, Biswa Shahitya Kendra, Shahitya Prakash, Bidhya Prakash are few of the stalls that have earned appreciations from the visitors.

There were, however, mixed reactions over the presence of the food stalls with bizarre names and stalls for selling products, ranging from handicrafts to cassettes, garments to safety pins.

The traditional *meta*, held in observance of the *Shaheed Dibash*, was to some extent marred by the presence of these stalls. But, the most disastrous event of the fair was witnessed on the night of February 11, when a fire broke out damaging five book stalls. The fire, which reportedly originated from a cigarette butt, albeit brought under control within 10 minutes left a lasting sense of fear among the visitors.

The annual month-long books gala closes today at its traditional venue in the Bangla Academy premises.

During the month, hundreds of thousands of people gathered in the Academy premises to browse over a sea of books, to meet the men behind the pens and to pick up the books of their choice.

According to an unofficial estimate, books worth more than Tk eight crore were sold during the month, which is twice the sale figure of last year. The amount was Tk 4 crore last year.

Seven hundred and thirty-two organisations, of which only 373 are publishers, put their products on display at the *meta*. As was expected, the host Bangla Academy topped the list of publishers with some 80 books. Until yesterday, the academy has earned Tk 16 lakh from the seller of its publications.

Care-taker govt Quest for a constitutional formula

Opposition parties in Parliament continued deliberations on a constitutional formula for an interim caretaker government to hold future national elections, reports UNB.

Leaders of different opposition groups yesterday met at the Sangsad Bhavan with Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in the chair and discussed the modalities of framing a single bill from the Opposition seeking amendment to the Constitution to make provision for caretaker government.

Deputy Opposition Leader Abdus Samad Azad, Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, Tofael Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim and See page 12 Col 8

Ground water level falls alarmingly

The ground water level of the capital city has dropped alarmingly posing a threat to the high rise buildings, particularly in Motijheel and Cantonment areas.

Experts told PROBE news agency that the ground water level fell drastically in Dhaka city in the last five years — the maximum of 16 feet being recorded in Motijheel followed by 15 feet in Cantonment area and the minimum of seven feet in Rayer Bazar area.

Experts said the average mining of ground water level in the city is about 2.30 feet per year and if this trend continues, the level will fall by more than 20 feet in the next 10 years.

Consequently, there will be no water in the space between sand particles and land subsidence is inevitable to fill this void. A tremor will accelerate the land subsidence and may cause extensive devastation.

The experts suggested that measures be taken immediately to stop withdrawal of ground water and start the use of surface water by installing treatment plants to save the city from land subsidence.

'The rate of withdrawal of ground water in the city is very high as compared to the recharge,' said Dr. Sajjad Hossain, Chairman of the Department of Geology, Dhaka University.

He feared that the city's high rise buildings may cave See page 12 Col 3

Police trade fire with terrorists in city

By Staff Correspondent

Four police officers chased six terrorists trading gunshots with them but failed to arrest any of them in the city yesterday afternoon.

An Inspector of the Detective Branch (DB) who was in the team said, 'We chased them from T & T colony to Maghbazar rail crossing but failed to nab as they mingled with the crowd.'

Police said that they recovered a sawed-off rifle with four bullets and a revolver loaded with a bullet left by the terrorists on the spot.

The terrorists sped away riding on two rickshaws while the police men chased them on foot. The DB team comprised two Inspectors and two Sub-Inspectors.

Inspectors A B M Sultan Ahmed and Saifur Rahman fired from their revolvers after the terrorists hurled crackers and opened gunfire at See page 12 Col 2

DUCSU, hall union polls April 12

By DU Correspondent

The elections to the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) and 14 hall students' unions will be held on April 12 after a lapse of about four years.

The polls schedule will be announced today, according to DU sources.

The date of the DUCSU polls was announced yesterday at a joint meeting of the Deans of faculties, Provosts of halls and the Proctor with the Vice-Chancellor Professor Emajuddin Ahmed in the chair.

Professor A K M Abdul Alim of the Department of Islamic History and Culture has been appointed the Chief Election Commissioner.

The last DUCSU and hall union elections were held on June 6 in 1990 and the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal swept the polls at that time.

The office bearers of the present DUCSU, elected in 1990, ended their tenure on June 6, 1991.

The DUCSU polls scheduled for August 5, 1991 was postponed following fierce gunfight on July 22 on the Dhaka University campus between the JCD and pro-Awami League Chhatra League.

Meanwhile, students' organisations including JCD, the student wing of ruling BNP, pro-Awami League Chhatra League, the Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikyo (GCO) have congratulated the Dhaka University authorities for announcing the DUCSU and the hall union elections.

In another development, the students of the Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) yesterday urged the Dhaka University authorities to amend the election rule allowing them to contest the DUCSU and hall union elections. See page 12 Col 8

9 CBA leaders of AJM held

From Our Correspondent, NARAYANGANJ, Feb 27: Police today arrested nine leaders of the 'Adamjee Jute Mills' Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA) including its vice-president Abdur Rashid (senior) from a ganja den near the Bihari Colony of the AJM.

Siddirganj police said Rashid was wanted in 12 criminal cases while a number of cases were also filed against each of the eight others on different charges.

Other CBA leaders arrested were: Abdus Samad Molla, Aslam Member, Amjad Hossain, Chan Mia, Akhtar Hossain, Bachchu Mia, Mohiuddin and Chand Box.

Meanwhile, a statement, signed by the CBA Publicity Secretary, condemned the arrests and demanded immediate release of the labour leaders.

The statement observed that the 'planned arrests' just before the Eid-ul-Fitr were made only to create tension and foil the on-going agitation demanding bonus and other financial benefits to the workers.

NDP leader arrested

By Staff Correspondent

Special Branch (SB) of police yesterday evening arrested a National Democratic Party (NDP) leader Khandker Golam Mortuza from the city's Shantinagar area while he was passing the area by a rickshaw.

The NDP leader is likely to be sent to the Dhaka Central Jail today with an order of 120-day detention. He was sent to the Ramna police custody yesterday evening.

A source in the city unit of the SB said that Mortuza was arrested following an order by the Home Ministry. He was charged with anti-state activities.

The SB received the order from the Home Ministry some eight months before, said the source.

Shetri, Ifar timing:

Rmds	Feb	Shetri	Ifar
16	28	—	6:04 pm
17	Mar 1	5:01 am	6:05 pm
18	Mar 2	5:00 am	6:05 pm