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# The Daily Star

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## Inside Today

### Article

**Education as Spring-board for Economic Reforms**  
by Abdul Bayes  
Page 4

### International

US rejects fresh UN call for more peace-keepers in Bosnia



Benazir asks Afghan factions to settle differences soon  
Page 5

### Business

US revives 'Super 301' trade law  
S Africa pushing deeper into Gulf market  
Pages 6, 7

### Rising Stars

With Goldsmiths for Safekeeping; The Cruel Twist of Fate; Heart to Heart; Arranged Marriage; Guilty Forever; Lost Days; Quiz Club  
Page 8

### Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Fires on the Pavement  
Page 3

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Appointments

**By Staff Correspondent**  
The services of Muhammad Abu Sayeed, a secretary of the government now serving on deputation to the World Bank as Alternate Executive Director has been extended on contract from February 14 to October 31, 1994 following his retirement on February 13 on attaining 57 years, says a government handout. Bazul Rahman Chowdhury, Director General of NIPORT has been appointed Additional Secretary in the Cabinet Division.

### Fishing nets recovered

CHITTAGONG, Mar 4: Detectives of the Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMC) recovered 1150 pieces of foreign current fishing nets worth about Taka twenty from a fishing trawler named F B Sha Amanat at the river Karnaphuli here last night, a CMP press release said here tonight, reports BSS.

### UN food convoy fails to reach Kabul

ISLAMABAD, Mar 4: A UN food convoy has failed to reach Kabul despite agreement with warring factions that relief goods be allowed passage without hindrance. UN sources said here today. The six-truck convoy, carrying about 90 tonnes of grain for the people of war-ravaged Kabul, left for the Afghan capital Wednesday from the eastern city of Jalalabad, reports AFP.

### Shetri, Ifar timings

Rmnd	Mar	Shetri	Ifar
21	5	—	6:06 pm
22	6	4:57 am	6:07 pm
23	7	4:56 am	6:07 pm



Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala (C) is supported by security guards after he fainted in Parliament in Kathmandu yesterday. — AFP photo

### Stalemate in JS continues

## Another round of talks today

By Asiuzzaman

The treasury bench negotiators will hold another round of talks today (Saturday) with opposition leaders to resolve the stalemate in Parliament arising out of a comment by the Information Minister.  
"We are expecting a positive outcome from tomorrow's meeting", a member of three-men treasury bench delegation told the Daily Star. Time of the meeting will be fixed this morning.  
"Our party chairperson and Prime Minister has ordered for an honourable solution of the crisis", the source said adding that the Information Minister has also softened his position.  
Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah, Labour Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiya and acting chief whip Mahbubul Alam Tara have been assigned for negotiations.  
The opposition parties walked out from the House in protest against Nazmul Huda's remark which allegedly hurt the religious feeling of the opposition members on Tuesday.  
The situation was further complicated when Nazmul Huda made a number of press statements in support of his parliament comment.  
The source said that Nazmul Huda had already said that he would accept the decision of the negotiators.  
"We will try to resolve the issue under parliamentary norms and hope the opposition will be accommodative," See Page 12 Col 8

### Koirala faints in parliament

KATHMANDU, Mar 4: Nepali Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala fainted today as he defended his government against an opposition motion of no-confidence and was rushed to a nearby hospital, witnesses said, reports Reuter.

Sources at Kathmandu's teaching hospital said later Koirala was "fully conscious" and his blood pressure was normal.

Koirala collapsed more than one hour into a speech rebutting opposition allegations of corruption and incompetence in his Nepali Congress Party government.

Koirala is not certain to win the vote, despite having a majority because of splits within the Nepali Congress Party.

More than 40 Congress deputies stayed away from an emergency meeting on Monday ahead of the no-confidence motion.

Koirala's family members said he had been suffering from a coronary ailment recently and was also diabetic.

### Ex-Euro Parliament VP tells Daily Star

## Water issue should be resolved internationally

By Masud Hasan Khan

Wilfried Telkamper, former Vice President of the European Parliament, has said that Bangladesh's water problem is international in nature and it should be resolved internationally.

The water problems inside Bangladesh due to the Farakka barrage must be resolved by all the countries benefiting from the Ganges, he said in an interview with The Daily Star yesterday.

Telkamper, who is now visiting Bangladesh, pointed out that the industrially developed countries also had their share in the ecological disasters in the developing countries and these countries should come forward to help resolve the environmental problems.

He said the fate of the Flood Action Plan (FAP) should be decided not only by the policy planners of Bangladesh or donors. The decisions should be taken by the people and Parliament. The water management projects should be implemented with participation of the people," he said.  
During his visit, the German

MP from Freiburg called on Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, Environment Minister Akbar Hossain, some members of Parliament, secretaries of several mini-



W. Telkamper

stries and representatives of the leading NGOs.  
He also visited the Tangail Compartmentalised Pilot Project under the FAP.

The Green Party MP said that some allegations had reached Germany from different quarters in Bangladesh

against the FAP on the ground that it lacked due consultation with the people.

Speaking on the Bangladesh-German relationship, Telkamper said that Germany's support to Bangladesh's railway sector would continue.

He informed that a high-power German delegation would visit Bangladesh in the next two months to explore projects.

Giving a resume of the German people's struggle against the recent rise of fascism, the MP said his country was a democratic and multi-cultural country and not against foreigners.

He, however, admitted that only a small radical part of the population, which was frustrated by the unification and its obvious fallout, was responding to the 'peculiar political clout' created by the neo-Nazis.

Pointing out the on-going white campaign against the fascists, Telkamper hoped that they would never be able to win Parliament seats in the coming German elections.

## Many dissidents held in China Crackdown follows exit of US human rights envoy

BEIJING, Mar 4: Police have detained several prominent dissidents in a crackdown at the end of a visit by the top US human rights envoy, reports said Friday, reports AP.

The envoy was in Beijing earlier this week to tell the communist government that it had to improve its human rights record to continue enjoying most-favoured national trade status with the United States after June.

"I am disturbed to learn of new reports of detentions in China," John Shattuck, Assistant Secretary of State for human rights, said Friday in a

statement from Shanghai before leaving for Hong Kong. "I again call on the Chinese government to release those who have been incarcerated solely for the peaceful expression of their views."

While in Beijing, Shattuck met with China's most famous dissident, Wei Jingsheng, who was detained by police Friday.

A friend said Wei called from the police station to cancel all of his appointments through Saturday. The dissident was uncertain when he might be released, and it was unclear whether his detention had anything to do with his

meeting with Shattuck.

Police have previously issued warnings to Wei, who has been outspoken ever since he was released from prison last September after serving more than 14 years for his pro-democracy activity. The dissident had told Shattuck that Washington should take a tougher stance against Beijing.

On Thursday, Zhou Guoqiang, a prominent dissident who supported a 'peace charter' calling for non-violent political reform, was detained by police for 'illegal activity,' the Beijing-backed Hong Kong China News Agency reported.

## WASA running at loss

By A Special Correspondent

The Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) is running at a net loss. WASA's own estimate shows it to be a profitable operation because the estimate does not include interest due on loans.

WASA's long term assets are financed by the government. Most of the money that the government has put in WASA are from the World Bank. Total debt service liability of WASA is 45 per cent of total annual revenue. WASA never fully services this debt leading to accumulation of arrears.

After a recent review of WASA's financial performance upto June 1993, a World Bank mission has established that by glossing over interest due on loans, WASA has been presenting a misleading picture of its financial performance. The World Bank mission has estimated that during July 1992 to June 1993 WASA incurred a

net loss of Taka 4.2 crores. WASA books showed a profit of Taka 1.1 crore for the same period. The World Bank has accused WASA and the government of non-compliance of financial covenants.

In the face of strong reaction from the World Bank WASA has decided to use some of its reserves to reduce its debt service areas. WASA will pay Taka 50 crore in debt service in this financial year. Out of this amount Taka 20 crore will be on account of current debt charges and Taka 30 crore will be on account of arrears.

Poor financial condition of the water utility is linked with its institutional and financial efficiency. WASA produces over 700 million litres of water per day — mostly from groundwater sources — for distribution through 134,000 water supply connections. More than half of

this water, 392 million litres, are not accounted for leading to a system loss of 56 per cent. Again, of the water use that is billed for, 90 per cent is collected.

In the recent years WASA has become increasingly reliant on groundwater sources. One hundred and seventy-nine deep-tubewells provide 95.5 per cent of daily production of water by WASA. Consequently, power consumption is high representing 56 per cent of WASA's net operating expenditure. Staff salaries account for about 16 per cent of net operating expenditure.

Since 1992 tariff increases have helped to keep pace with increase in WASA operating costs. Water tariff was raised by 25 per cent in 1992. The government has authorised WASA to raise tariff annually until the end of the present financial year.

### 4 found guilty of bombing WTC

NEW YORK, Mar 4: A jury Friday found four Muslim fundamentalists guilty of bombing the World Trade Center (WTC) last year, reports Reuter.

The verdicts came in the fifth day of deliberations by the jury of eight women and four men. They began deliberations on February 23, just three days before the explosion which left six people dead and injured more than 1,000 in the worst terrorist act on US soil.

The defendants in the case were Mohammad Salameh, Nidal Ayyad, Mahmud Abouhalima and Ahmad Ajaj. Each was charged with 11 counts.

The conspiracy charge was the main allegation in the indictment. Although it carries a maximum sentence of only five years in prison, other related charges could send the men to prison for life.

Because there were no witnesses who could place any of the defendants at the landmark New York building on the day of the blast, the government built its case on a complex chain of circumstantial and scientific evidence. Prosecutors presented 207 witnesses and 1,003 exhibits during the trial, which began in September.

### Barisal docs go on 4-hr strike from today

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 4: Doctors in Barisal today announced a fresh four-hour strike programme withdrawing their earlier call for an indefinite strike from tomorrow.

Doctors in the Sher-e-Bangla Medical College and Hospital, Sadar Hospital and Barisal TB Clinic and Hospital will stop work from 11 am to 3 pm from Saturday.

This decision for a four-hour strike was taken in view of the sufferings of the patients, hospital sources said.

Hospital doctors are on partial work stoppage for the last ten days demanding the arrest and immediate punishment of the persons responsible for the physical assault on Dr Sajal Banerjee, Assistant Professor, Cardio Vascular Department of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College on February 23, last.

Doctors are also keeping away from private practices in their chambers and private clinics since the incident.

### British minister pelted with eggs

MANCHESTER, Mar 4: British Health Secretary Virginia Bottomley was pelted with eggs here today by students protesting hospital closures around Britain, but she took it in good spirits, reports AFP.

"I'm fine," said Bottomley, 45, after her hair and jacket were splattered with raw eggs as she visited new units at Trafford General Hospital.

"Having been a student at the University of Essex and the London School of Economics I understand the syndrome of student protest," she said.  
Police arrested two women students from the University of Manchester for breach of peace.

### 1000 flats to house govt officers, employees

By Nazmul Ashraf

The construction of 1000 flats in different parts of the capital for housing the government officers and employees will start soon, according to official sources.

A recent meeting of the ECNEC had finally approved a project in this regard bringing about some minor changes in the original Project Concept Paper (PCP). The project was first approved by the ECNEC in the middle of last year.

According to the latest decisions of the ECNEC, flats of various sizes in six-story buildings would be built in between the existing buildings of the government colonies, spread over different city areas. Earlier, it was decided that the new buildings would be 12-storied. Sizes of the buildings were reduced, after a series of review meetings on the issue, considering that the

construction of sky-scrapers would create problems relating to environment, maintenance, architectural design and site and also the cost of construction.

The Works Ministry and the Public Works Department in consultation with the Planning Commission, the Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) and the Economic Division would rationalise the cost of the project. The project would be implemented from the capital development sector of the government's revenue budget.

The construction of the new residences for the government staffers would take three years to be completed. The PCP said adding, however, the project period might be extended by another two years.

### UN close to accord on int'l forces in occupied areas

WASHINGTON, Mar 4: PLO envoy Nabil Shaath today said the United Nations were near agreement, with US backing, on a proposal for an armed international presence in the Israeli-occupied territories, reports Reuter.

While he said discussions on "modalities and timing" for such a presence were still underway, Shaath was adamant that the presence would involve armed "security people."

Shaath, speaking to reporters after talks with Secretary of State Warren Christopher, said there was a "real effort to come out with a (UN Security Council) resolution today" that would condemn last week's massacre of Muslims by a Jewish settler in the occupied West Bank.

"The UN resolution is a resolution that states the requirements for the Palestinian people that can be satisfied by the Security Council, including the international presence in the occupied territories that would provide security for the Palestinian people," he said.

AFP adds: Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin today discussed the PLO's conditions for resuming peace talks during a telephone conversation, Egypt's official

news agency Mena reported.

Meanwhile, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres today urged the Palestine Liberation Organisation to resume Middle East peace talks as fast as possible.

"We would like the PLO to return to the negotiating table as quickly as possible, but we do not accept that all the settlers should be punished collectively for a massacre," Peres told reporters.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, Israelis shot dead two knife-wielding Palestinians in separate attacks while in the West Bank two more Palestinians were killed during clashes with the army.

### Benazir phones Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto yesterday phoned her Bangladesh counterpart Begum Khaleda Zia at her residence to exchange pleasantries, PM's office sources said.

During the 10-minute conversation at around 11:30 am Benazir was learnt to have discussed the latest situation in Kashmir and other issues, the sources said.

Pakistan has been seeking Bangladesh's support to help adopt a resolution in the Human Rights Commission expressing concern over human rights violations in Kashmir.

In the resolution submitted late last month to the Geneva-based commission, Pakistan also proposed to send a fact-finding mission to the area.

Early last month, the Pakistan Prime Minister sent a special emissary to Begum Zia reportedly seeking support on the Kashmir issue.

It was not clear what Begum Zia told to her Pakistan counterpart over the issue during yesterday's conversation.

### Red alert in Jammu

JAMMU, Mar 4: A red alert was sounded in Jammu as authorities launched a massive hunt to crack down the militants who gunned down two persons and wounded four others in Nanak Nagar locality here last evening, official sources today said.

They told PTI that the alert was sounded in entire Jammu region following reports that some militants had sneaked into this sensitive border town from across the border with the intention to create violence on massive scale.

The incident occurred when the militants holding AK-47 rifles, escaped after spraying bullets on the people who were roaming about the area around 2000 hours, the police said.

The police later removed the injured to the hospital where two persons succumbed to their wounds.

### One stabbed to death in city

By Staff Correspondent

A youngman was stabbed to death at KP Ghosh Street under Kotwali Police Station in the city yesterday afternoon.

The victim, Shaheen, 25, died on the spot. None of the killers could be traced, said police.

Witnesses said that some unidentified people stabbed Shaheen at KP Ghosh Street repeatedly around 4 pm yesterday.

Police said Shaheen was wanted against a number of criminal cases. He lived in a slum near the Mitford hospital.

## GRATITUDE

We express our sincere gratitude to all those relatives, friends and admirers of Late Hamidur Rahman Sinha, our beloved founder-Chairman, who have prayed for the salvation of his departed soul by participating in his namaje-janaja, burial and Kul Khawani and those who have sent condolence messages to us personally or on behalf of their respective organisations through either letters or telephone. Their sympathetic words shall provide us with the courage to bear this irreparable loss. We regret our inability to send this message to all of the aforesaid persons individually. May the Almighty Allah bless us all.

On behalf of the sons & daughters of the deceased- Board of Directors

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