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NEWS BRIEFS

Hanif takes over today

The newly elected Mayor of the Dhaka City Corporation, Mohammad Hanif, will take over charge today at the head office of the corporation's Fulbari Nagar Bhaban. Hanif is expected to address the officials of the corporation after taking over his responsibility at 11:30 am, reports BSS.

New Thai envoy

By Staff Correspondent Thailand's new ambassador to Bangladesh Sunthorn Vithayameth arrives in Dhaka shortly to take up his new assignment. He succeeds Vichai Vannasin, who left Dhaka yesterday. Vichai has been appointed Thailand's ambassador to New Delhi. Meanwhile, Jong Kyoubin, the ambassador-designate of South Korea has already arrived in the city. Jong will present his credentials to the President on March 20.

Housewife robbed

A housewife was robbed of her cash and ornaments worth about Tk 20,000 from Taitala area in the town yesterday. Nadira Begum, 56, wife of Nazirul Huq, was robbed by three hijackers when she was passing the area riding in a rickshaw at about 8 in the morning, reports UNB.

Russia to try '91 coup leaders

MOSCOW, Mar 11: Russia's Supreme Court decided today to resume the trial of the hardline communist leaders of the failed 1991 coup, reversing a military court which cancelled the hearings after an amnesty voted by Parliament. Itar-Tass reported, says AFP.

Urs at Biswa Zaker Manjil Mar 19

The annual urs of Hazrat Enayetpuri will be held at the Biswa Zaker Manjil in Faridpur district on March 19. It will be inaugurated by present peer Hazrat Maulana Shah Sufi Faridpuri, reports UNB.

Sehri, Iftar timings

Rmdn	Mar	Sehri	Iftar
28	12	—	6:10 pm
29	13	4:50 am	6:10 pm
30	14	4:49 am	6:11 pm

Delhi won't allow UN or OIC fact-finding team

Pak-occupied Kashmir is equally disputed : US

WASHINGTON, Mar 11: Pakistan-occupied Kashmir is also a disputed territory, Ms Robin Raphael, Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, has said, adding that US believed the Kashmir dispute would best be solved through bilateral talks in the spirit of the Shimla Agreement, reports PTI.

Reiterating that the US regarded the whole of the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir as an unresolved issue, Ms Raphael told the Ackerman subcommittee of the US Senate yesterday, "It has been our policy since 1947."

"We believe," she said, "that the best way for that dispute to be resolved is by discussions and negotiations between India and Pakistan in the spirit of the 1972 Shimla Accord."

"As a practical matter, it is important that any settlement and resolution take into account the desires of the people of Kashmir," she said.

When Ackerman asked in what form this could be done, she replied, "that is for the parties to decide."

She said that a lot of human rights abuses are still occurring in Kashmir both on the part of the militants and the security forces. While recent steps by the government of India had increased accountability, the improvement had yet to be reflected on the ground.

APP from Delhi adds: India will not permit the United Nations or the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to send fact-finding teams to Kashmir, Minister of State for External Affairs Salman Kursheed said today.

He also denied a Pakistani claim that India had agreed to allow envoys from Muslim nations to visit Kashmir in exchange for dropping a resolution at a UN commission meeting in Geneva which condemned India for human rights violations in the state.

"New Delhi-based ambassadors of oil member-states are free to travel to Kashmir any time," said Kursheed, who spearheaded the successful diplomatic campaign in Geneva to thwart the Pakistani resolution.

Experts from Bangladesh, India and Nepal attending a seminar of the countries of Asia and the Pacific held in Delhi in September, 1992 had decided to conduct the survey to explore the possibility of improving the regional telecommunication system.

A survey mission visited the three countries from August 14 to September 13 last year.

Regional telecom network likely

A move is underway to set up a regional telecommunication network linking Bangladesh, Nepal and India.

An official source told PROBE news agency that the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) is currently considering a survey report of a New Delhi-based telecom consultancy firm to set up the network.

Experts from Bangladesh, India and Nepal attending a seminar of the countries of Asia and the Pacific held in Delhi in September, 1992 had decided to conduct the survey to explore the possibility of improving the regional telecommunication system.

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Jumatul Wida observed

Jamatul Wida, the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan, was observed yesterday in the country with due solemnity and religious fervour, reports UNB.

Special prayers were offered in all mosques of the country seeking divine blessings for the peace, progress and prosperity of the nation and the Muslim Ummah.

Thousands of Muslim devotees offered their prayers at the biggest Jumma congregation at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque.

A waz mahfil on the significance of Jumatul Wida and Eid-ul-Fitr was also held at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque.

BSS adds: The Muslim devotees sought blessings of Almighty Allah for taking back the control of the Al-Quds Mosque the first Kaaba of the Muslims at Jerusalem, from the occupation of Zionist regime.

Last Jumma was observed as Al-Quds Day throughout the world by Muslims.

Special prayer was offered for the peace of the souls of

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Bus terminals now haven for black-marketeers

By Staff Correspondent

Black-marketeers are making extra profits at the bus terminals of Gabtoli, Sayedabad and Mohakhal where the rush of inter-district bus passengers almost doubled yesterday.

Passengers trying to reach their destinations before the Eid-ul-Fitr were compelled to buy bus tickets at 10 to 50 per cent higher price.

Passengers at Gabtoli Bus Terminal alleged that a 60 taka bus ticket was being sold in black market at Tk 100 while a 100 taka ticket at Tk 150.

According to the Road Transport Owners' Association, these days some 60,000 passengers were leaving Dhaka on some 1,000 buses and minibuses from the three terminals. Normally, some 35,000.

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BBC series on history of Liberation War soon

By Staff Correspondent

The BBC is to broadcast a series of programmes based on the War of Independence of Bangladesh every Friday from March 25, according to a fax message issued by the BBC's Dhaka Correspondent.

With the series titled 'Fight for Freedom: Bangladesh's War of Independence', the BBC endeavours to tell this history in an objective way and from a neutral standpoint.

The series is based on interviews made by Ataus Samad of the Bengali Section of the BBC, with very senior journalists of Bangladesh, political leaders who directly participated in different movements, sector commanders, freedom fighters, including the one who killed his father for being a collaborator of the Pakistani army, present generation youths and people from all walks of life.

Many unknown facts and forgotten incidents will be revealed in this series, the fax message says. The series will be broadcast on Fridays during the third transmission at 1630 GMT.

As a consequence, the coal in the government stock remained unsold for a long time and it is now being cleared at cheaper price resulting in losses for the government, said the source.

The Coal Directorate under the Commerce Ministry has a 125-member staff including

six officers who will be absorbed in other services of the government, said a high official.

Explaining why such a huge quantity of coal remained unsold at government depots, an official source said this coal was imported a few years ago by the Directorate from Raniganj (India), Indonesia, Mozambique and Swaziland. Tk 2964 per tonne was fixed by the government as selling price of these high quality coal. But due to liberalisation of the country's import policy, coal, irrespective of quality is being imported by the private sector mostly from the eastern part of India. This coal is much cheaper than those imported earlier under the public sector.

The existing stock of 125,000 tonnes worth about Tk 37 crore are stockpiled at the depots in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Chuadanga, Mairajganj, Kulaura, Mymensingh, Faridpur, Barisal, Jessore, Chandpur, Sirajganj, Parbatipur, Shantahar and Rajshahi.

The Directorate of Coal has been handling the import and marketing of coal in the public sector. However, after liberalisation of import policy, the government allowed free import of coal by the private sector and decided to abolish the Directorate.

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most of the deaths occurred in Mabopane, some 20 kilometres north of Pretoria, where looting and rioting broke out and South African police crossed the border to "protect South African citizens," SABC said.

AP adds: Armed White extremists poured into the Black homeland of Bophuthatswana on Friday to bolster its auto-ritarian ruler in what loomed as the bloodiest showdown yet between supporters and opponents of political reform.

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50 killed in South African clash

MMABATHO, Mar 11: At least 50 people, including three white extremists, were killed and hundreds injured today in bloody clashes in Bophuthatswana, the public service commission said, reports AFP.

Most of the deaths occurred in Mabopane, some 20 kilometres north of Pretoria, where looting and rioting broke out and South African police crossed the border to "protect South African citizens," SABC said.

AP adds: Armed White extremists poured into the Black homeland of Bophuthatswana on Friday to bolster its auto-ritarian ruler in what loomed as the bloodiest showdown yet between supporters and opponents of political reform.

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A beautician laying an intricate design on the palm of a girl with a cone of henna yesterday. A large number of women were seen crowding the city's beauty parlours as Eid festival nears.

— Star photo

PM discusses issues with 2 ministers

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday held an exclusive meeting with Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman and Energy Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain at her residence.

Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain briefed the Prime Minister about the latest situation in Dhaka University and DUCSU.

When contacted over telephone, the Foreign Minister said, "It was not any formal meeting. She just called me after iftar to know the situation in Magura."

Dr Mosharraf also said he had informed the party chief of the latest situation inside Dhaka University and DUCSU.

But a reliable source said another common issue concerning the two ministers was also discussed at the meeting. He did not elaborate.

Pak citizen with \$ 21000 held at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

A Pakistani citizen, Sayeed Akhter, was held at ZIA International Airport (ZIA) with foreign currency equivalent to Tk 8,64 lakh yesterday morning.

Customs surveillance men arrested Sayeed on a charge of carrying 21,000 US dollars. He was bound for Singapore by a Bangladesh Biman flight.

A customs official said that on suspicion they scanned a brief case of Sayeed and found the currency hidden in a powder case. He had also Bangladesh and Pakistani currencies with him, the official added.

Sayeed, charged with an attempt to smuggle out foreign currency, was detained in the Cantonment police station. He is likely to be produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate.

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Minu assumes office

RAJSHAHI, Mar 11: Mizanur Rahman Minu took over the charge from Administrator and Additional Deputy Commissioner Aminul Islam as Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation at a simple ceremony at the mayor's office here this afternoon, reports BSS.

Almost all the newly-elected ward commissioners were present. Speaking on the occasion, Minu called upon the city dwellers to extend their whole-hearted support and cooperation to him for implementation of various development projects.

He said he would work to make Rajshahi a modern city. Referring to his election pledges, he said, "I will work for the overall benefit of the city people and all-round development of Rajshahi City Corporation."

He categorically said that credit would go to the government if he could serve the people of this city in a much better way.

The function was also addressed by the Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong, Omar Faruk who was mayor-in-charge during the interim period and the chief executive of the Chittagong City Corporation Abu Hafiz.

Earlier, Mohiuddin was ac-

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Sergeant murder: One more held

By Staff Correspondent

Police arrested another suspect killer of police sergeant Muhammad Hasanul Haq from the city's Patuatuli area last night.

Kotwali police arrested Ahmed Hossain alias Ahmed while he was roaming around the area around 10:30 last night. Ahmed, 30, was detained in the city's Detective Branch office.

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