

## Tk 179 cr project for 5 medical colleges

Star Report

The government has approved a project involving Tk 179 crore for setting up five medical colleges in Dinajpur, Bogra, Faridpur, Khulna and Comilla.

Funded by the government, the project is expected to be implemented by 1996.

The new medical colleges have already started administrative functions while students have been admitted for the first year courses. Since the institutions are yet to have their own buildings, the Medical Assistant Training Schools in Comilla, Faridpur and Bogra are now being used temporarily for the purpose while houses have been rented in Khulna and Dinajpur to run the colleges.

"The new colleges will be attached to the 250-bed hospitals of the districts to provide facilities for practical education to the medical students", said an official in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The project proposal for establishing these five medical colleges was placed at the ECNEC meeting in June last year, which was finally okayed by the cabinet recently.

To expand opportunities of medical education in the country, the then government decided in 1978-79 to establish medical colleges in Comilla, Noakhali, Pabna, Khulna, Faridpur, Kushtia, Bogra and Dinajpur. However, the whole plan remained unimplemented after the change of government in 1982.

The ministry source said that due to a shortage of accommodation, only a few of the aspiring students get the opportunity of medical studies in the country while about two thousand students go abroad every year for medical education.

"Considering the situation, the government has agreed to implement the decision of 1978-79 for establishing more medical colleges in the country", the source added.



Mayors Mohammad Hanif of Dhaka, Prasanta Chatterjee of Calcutta and A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury of Chittagong with two other guests attending a discussion meeting held yesterday to mark Masterda Surya Sen's birth centenary at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city.

## SAARC Press Clubs' confce

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countries of the region," she said.

Lauding the role of the National Press Club and the journalist community of the country in the anti-autocracy agitation, she said the journalists of this country never compromised with falsehood and injustice.

"Now the tide of democracy can be felt in our newspaper industry. The journalists are at full liberty to write. We firmly believe that proper and responsible journalism can make valuable contribution to nation-building efforts," she observed.

The inaugural function over, Begum Zia exchanged greetings with some of the foreign delegates attending the meeting.

BSS adds: SAARC Secretary General Y K Silwal paid special tribute to SAARC Chairperson Begum Zia's dynamic leadership and firm commitment to regional cooperation which had contributed immeasurably to the success of the seventh summit in Dhaka in April last year.

Silwal said the information process needed to go beyond the present event-orientation to process-orientation and the formal institutions of SAARC, NGOs and the media needed to work together to achieve this end.

National Press Club President Hassan Shahriar said that journalists in Bangladesh had been working under a remarkably free atmosphere since the removal of autocracy and establishment of parliamentary democracy.

"Censorship has gone and restrictive parts of the law have been repealed. There are as many as 47 dailies and more than 150 weeklies published regularly in Bangladesh, which many here see as a sign of unprecedented spurt of publications over the last three years due to the newly-found freedom of press," Shahriar said.

Renowned Indian journalist Hiranmay Karlekar underlined the need for closer cooperation among the journalists of the region and termed the South Asian Press Clubs

Conference as a milestone in that direction.

Karachi Press Club president Hasan Abedi acclaimed the initiatives of Bangladesh National Press Club and urged all to give a serious thought to the idea of building a bridge among South Asian nations.

Eminent journalists representing press clubs of the SAARC member countries are attending the two-day conference.

Finance Minister M Salfur Rahman, Shipping Minister M K Anwar, Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni, Information Minister Nazmul Huda, Members of Parliament, diplomats, leading entrepreneurs, members of the National Press Club and elite of the city attended the inaugural session.

Later, at the plenary session held at the National Press Club, Karachi Press Club president Hasan Abedi as moderator, leaders of delegation placed their country papers.

## Pak-Bangla stock markets

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investment climate will deteriorate, both for the local and the foreign investors."

He suggested that the government should immediately consider off-loading the shares of various listed companies currently being held by the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB), the Sadhan Bima Corporation (SBC) and the state-owned scheduled banks.

"The government should immediately take up a crash programme and set specific dates to off-load these shares," Alam said.

The government-owned financial institutions are presently holding an estimated Tk 110 crore worth of shares of different companies listed with the stock exchange.

He welcomed the recent government decision to off-load Tk 100 crore worth of shares of the state-owned gas and oil companies within the next one year.

Terming it as a "pragmatic, bold and a timely decision," he added "We hope this decision doesn't get stuck in bureaucratic red tape."

He urged the government to form a task force to fix a specific time table for off-loading the shares of the energy and gas sector companies. "Good quality shares have to be offered so that more investors

## CEC

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Haq of the BNP, Kazi Zafar Ahmad and Advocate Hasan Siraj Suruj of the Jatiya Party and Sheikh Ansar Ali of the Jamaat were present in the meeting.

The meeting, however, ended in a brawl as Tofael Ahmed alleged gross violation of some election rules by the ruling BNP.

He alleged that the Deputy Commissioner of Magura was directly involved in the campaign for the BNP candidate. Police Super was transferred after the announcement of election date and armed 'mastans' of the BNP were threatening the Awami League supporters to cast their votes on paddy 'Sheaf', the election symbol of the ruling party.

BNP's Akhteruzzaman was furious at Tofael's version. At one stage, both were seen rolling up their sleeves.

The Chief Election Commissioner intervened to calm them.

In preparation for tomorrow's polls, 50 magistrates have been posted for spot trial and punishment in any violation of election rules.

Besides, 1,300 police and 1,224 Ansars have also been deployed at different polling centres to maintain law and order. Paramilitary BDR personnel will remain stand-by.

**Croats, Muslims free 864 prisoners**

ZAGREB, Mar 19: Bosnian Croat and Muslim forces freed 864 prisoners today, almost half of the total currently held. A day after the two warring groups signed an agreement in Washington to create a joint federation, aid workers said, reports AFP.



Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa (R) shake hands with Chinese counterpart Li Peng before their meeting at the Great Hall of the People Saturday. Hosokawa's three-day visit is expected to focus on the North Korean nuclear crisis and bilateral economic ties.

## BCCI executives' trial postponed

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates, Mar 19: The trial of former top executives of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International was postponed Saturday until April 2, pending a report on financial damages caused by the bank's collapse to Abu Dhabi's ruling family, reports AP.

The court, in a closed door session, ordered international auditing firm Arthur Anderson to speed up its report on losses suffered by BCCI shareholders, mainly the Abu Dhabi government, said court officials.

Judge Shihab Abdul-Rahman was quoted by court sources as saying that the report is essential for the shareholders' lawyers to present their civil claims.

The Al-Nahyan family owned 77.4 per cent of BCCI stock when it collapsed in July 1991 after international regulators moved against it on charges of massive fraud and other irregularities.

## Tributes paid to Surya Sen

By Staff Correspondent

Tributes were paid yesterday to Surya Sen, the legendary freedom fighter of British India, on his birth centenary, which is on March 21.

Speakers at a rally in front of the Central Shaheed Minar recalled with deep gratitude "Masterda" Surya Sen's bold and valiant role in the seeking to end British colonial rule in the subcontinent.

They called upon all to rekindle the spirit of Masterda Surya Sen to resist communalism and fundamentalism.

The rally marked the opening of the birth centenary celebrations in Dhaka and in his home district of Chittagong.

Inaugurated by Justice Debesh Chandra Bhattacharya, the rally was attended by the mayor of Dhaka Mohammad Hanif, the mayor of Chittagong Mohiuddin Ahmed Chowdhury and Proshanto Chatterjee, the mayor of Calcutta.

Comrades of Masterda — Binod Bihari Chowdhury, Prof Pulin Dey, Proshanto Dasgupta, Dr K P Ghosh and Purnendu Sengupta paid glorious tributes to Surya Sen. Justice Kemaluddin Hossain was in the chair.

On August 19, 1930, at the peak of the anti-British movement, Surya Sen, along with his comrades, raided and captured the Chittagong armoury, the Reserve Police lines, and the telegraph and telephone office in their brave but futile bid to liberate Chittagong from British rule.

Surya Sen was captured, tried and later hanged on January 13, 1934 by the British.

The body was then thrown into the Bay of Bengal in an iron safe.

"Surya Sen is not only the son of Chittagong but of whole Bangladesh," the Dhaka City mayor remarked. "His contributions have paved the way for the liberation of Bangladesh."

"Bangladesh achieved freedom in 1971 but economic freedom is yet to be achieved," Hanif said.

Calcutta City mayor Proshanto Chatterjee, here on special invitation, also recalled the role of Surya Sen who, he observed, had taught the Bengalees to fight against autocracy.

The Calcutta mayor also warned against distorting the historical truths.

Chatterjee also underlined the need to strengthen the ties between Dhaka and Calcutta.

He proposed a cultural and sports exchange programme between the two cities. The proposal was gladly accepted by his counterpart in Dhaka.

The centenary observance committee will bring out a colourful procession on Monday — Sen's birthday — in the city as part of their programme. A three-day long programme will also begin at Chittagong to commemorate the 100th birth anniversary of Masterda Surya Sen.

## BNP believes in work, not in publicity: PM

MURADNAGAR (Comilla), Mar 19: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today urged the people to strengthen the hands of the BNP to lead the country towards progress and prosperity, reports UNB.

The BNP believes in work, not in publicity," she said listing the development programmes of her government aimed at improving the lot of the people and making the country self-reliant.

Begum Zia was addressing a public meeting at the Sreekal College ground here this afternoon.

Presided over by tharia BNP president Nurul Islam, the meeting was also addressed by Communication Minister Col (Retd) Oli Ahmed, Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah, State Minister for Relief Harun Al Rashid, Rabeya Chowdhury MP, Asia Khatoun MP and other local leaders.

The Prime Minister said the present government has undertaken programmes to reduce dependency on import and stressed the need for increasing production in fields and factories.

Terming villages as the focal point of development, she asked the people to set up small and medium scale industries in the rural areas to create employment opportunities and help check migration to the big cities.

She assured all cooperation from the government including bank loans for self-employment projects.

The Prime Minister said if the development programmes initiated by her government are implemented properly the country would achieve progress and self-reliance.

Referring to overall development during the last three years of the BNP rule, she said, "We will be able to contribute 33 per cent from local resources to the national budget this year."

She however, said that certain political parties seeing the achievements of the BNP government is trying to mislead the people by orchestrating propaganda.

The Prime Minister reminded that the nine years of autocratic regime had plundered national wealth and the post-independence government had looted the aid meant for the poor keeping them starving.

She urged the people to work together for fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of commonman.

After the meeting, Begum Zia distributed cattleheads, poultry and sewing machines among distressed people of the area.

**Clash in Kushtia Textile Mills: 20 injured**

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Mar 19: At least 20 persons were injured in clashes between the labourers of the Kushtia Textile Mills (KTM) and "hired goons" of the mill owners at the mills premises in Kushtia town at 12 noon today.

Among the injured, labour officer of the mills Mohibul Haq, 40, store officer Nazrul Islam, 42, labourers Habibul, 25, Masum, 25 and Nazrul, 28, were admitted to the Kushtia General Hospital.

The labourers observed a hunger strike at the mills premises from 10 am today protesting the retrenchment of eight workers from the mills before Eid-ul-Fitr.

Witnesses said, some musclemen, allegedly hired by the mills authorities attacked the labourers. But the labourers also attacked the goons and the officers of the mills.

The mills remained closed for the day.

## JSD (Inu) 'demand day' April 14

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), led by Hasanul Huq Inu, will hold its central council sessions on December 11 and 12 this year. This was decided by the party's national committee following a two-day meeting of the body which ended yesterday.

The JSD national committee also decided to observe a countrywide 'demand day' on April 14.

Meanwhile, the party's national body, in a resolution, observed that the government headed by Begum Khaleda Zia had failed to run the administration effectively. During three years of the BNP rule, a large number of public sector industries had been sold out at a throw away prices but no significant development had taken place in the private sector, the resolution added.

The resolution, however, criticised the major opposition parties in parliament for their alleged indifference towards addressing people's causes effectively.

**China objects to UN sanctions against DPRK**

SEOUL, Mar 19: China will not agree to sanctions against North Korea as a means to pressure the isolated communist state into abandoning any nuclear ambitions, Beijing's ambassador to South Korea said in an interview released today, reports AFP.

"The Security Council, the sanctions or any other stringent measures, China cannot agree to," ambassador Zhang Tingyan told the Yonhap news agency.

"Such measures (sanctions) are not only ineffective, they would complicate matters, aggravate the situation," the agency quoted Zhang as saying adding that Beijing supported the normalisation of Washington-Pyongyang ties because it would enhance peace and stability in the area.

"It is an international rule now to solve all issues through negotiations, why should the

North Korean nuclear problem be an exception?" he added.

China, seen as the Stalinist North's last major ally, had earlier warned western powers against sanctions, and Japan and South Korea have both expressed doubts over whether they might be counter-productive.

The release of the interview by Yonhap came shortly after the North stormed out of an inter-Korean meeting in the border truce village of Panmunjom today charging the South with being uncooperative over a proposed exchange of presidential envoys.

The North-South envoy exchange and satisfactory inspections of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of the North's suspect nuclear sites are preconditions set by Washington for a US-Pyongyang meeting which had been scheduled for Monday.

## The Midnight File

### British soldier killed in Bosnia blast

LONDON, Mar 19: A British soldier serving with the UN protection force was killed in an explosion close to Vitez in central Bosnia, a British Ministry of Defence spokesman said today. The spokesman said the explosion took place at Stari Vitez, a Muslim district of the city, close to the "confrontation line" separating Bosnian government and Croat forces, reports AFP.

### PLO executive body discusses UNSC resolution

TUNIS, Mar 19: The PLO executive committee met today in Tunis to discuss the UN Security Council resolution condemning the Hebron massacre, PLO officials said. They said the meeting, chaired by PLO leader Yasser Arafat, was discussing implementation of the council's decision and talks with an Israeli delegation expected on Sunday in Tunis, reports Reuters.

### Iran opens embassy in Brunei

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, Mar 19: Iran has opened an embassy in Brunei, becoming the second mid-eastern Islamic country after Oman to have a diplomatic mission in this oil-rich state, officials said Friday. Teheran diplomats raised their national flag at a brief ceremony at a hotel here early today to mark the opening of the embassy, reports AFP.

## Magura by-polls today

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Justice Rouf had gone immediately prior to his departure for Dhaka. Some people, including AL leader Tofael Ahmed, implored the CEC to change his mind and stay in Magura for Sunday's polls. At one stage his vehicle was also surrounded and a barricade put up on the road. But an adamant Justice Rouf refused to be moved and started on his way back to the capital.

His family confirmed that the CEC reached home at around 1 am Sunday.

Questioned by newsmen in Magura to explain his decision, Justice Rouf said he would explain everything by duly issuing a statement through his EC information officer.

Meanwhile, DC Magura Nirmal Sarker, talking to pressmen last night, said although all six rooms of the Circuit House had been reserved to act as the Election Commission's Secretariat, yet Leader of the Opposition and AL chief Sheikh Hasina occupied one of the rooms yesterday.

Another district administration source, requesting anonymity, told this correspondent that Hasina had not sought any permission to use the room.

However, Hasina left the Circuit House at around 1:00 pm.

Asked if he knew anything regarding the CEC's departure, DC Nirmal Sarker said the CEC had not given any specific reasons for his decision.

During his meetings with the leaders of the parties contesting the polls yesterday, Justice Rouf had suggested the formation of all-party observer teams to monitor the polls in all the 19 unions of the constituency. All the parties except the ruling BNP agreed to the CEC's proposal and offered volunteers.

Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan

**DUCSU polls**

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genial academic atmosphere," are the reasons behind the BCL's decision to boycott the polls.

Regarding the allegation that BCL activists were ousted from their halls, the Vice-Chancellor said the BCL leaders were asked to submit a list of the ousted students so that they could be given accommodation in their respective halls. But they did not. Prof Emajuddin said, adding "they are now alleging the presence of the armed hoodlums, in the halls but they did not come up with any list of them to help the authorities take action."

He, however, said the DU authorities are beginning talks in various halls from today to arrange the come-back of the ousted students.

Meanwhile, the nomination papers of the DUCSU elections will be distributed from today and the leaders of various students organisations, including the main contenders the Jatiyabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikkyo (GCO), have started lobbying for their candidates.

Nazimuddin Alam, Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anny, Habibunnabi Soheli, Shahjahan Hawlader Sultan, Shirin Sultana and Manwar Hossain Rana are the probable candidates for the Vice President, General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary posts of the DU Central Students Union from the JCD. A committee, headed by the LORD Minister Abdus Salam Talukder will take the final decision regarding the candidates.

Roknuzzaman Rokon and Obaidur Rahman Chunnur of BCL (B-K), Aslam Khan of Chhatra Union and Mostaq Hossain Tulu of Samajtantrik Chhatra Front are the probable candidates for the VP and GS posts of DUCSU from the Ganatantrik Chhatra Union.

The last date for filing the nomination papers is March 27. The scrutiny of the nomination papers will also be completed the same day.

### Calcutta tickets

From Page 1 Col 4

and employees if specific cases be proved.

The sources said they were told by Biman that the Calcutta flight was fully booked for the next 15 days. A number of travel agencies also expressed their inability to confirm a ticket but most of them had said: "It could be managed if the client paid at least Tk 1,000 over the normal fare for every seat."

Subsequently, the ticket was managed at the high rate. The normal Dhaka-Calcutta return fare is Tk 3,427.

Biman operates 18 flights a week, mostly by its smaller ATP and F-28 aircraft while the Indian Airlines runs four flights.

One agency owner said that for the past six to seven years they have been facing tremendous rush in the Calcutta sector.

"Possibly this rush has prompted some agencies to realise higher rates," he admitted.

He said that usually such rush was earlier experienced during the Eid and Puja holidays but now it is almost a regular feature. He also said that the price of a Dhaka-Bangkok ticket is Tk 16,000 but a Calcutta-Bangkok ticket costs Tk 9,000 only, which is also one of the reasons for the rush on this sector.

The agency source, however, said that it was not possible for an agency to collect such tickets without the help of some Biman employees.

### Hebron massacre

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more than 50 Palestinian civilians and injured several hundred others.

It also calls on Israel to continue taking measures to prevent 'illegal acts of violence by Israeli settlers', including confiscating their weapons.

Israel ordered five leaders of extremist groups held without trial after the Hebron killings and at least 18 others had their movements restricted and were ordered to hand in their guns. Two militant anti-Arab groups, including one with links to the gunman, have been banned as terrorist organisations.

The Council resolution asks the United States and Russia, as co-sponsors of Arab-Israeli talks, to continue their efforts to invigorate the Middle East peace process and to back up the measures aimed at protecting the Palestinians.

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