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NEWS BRIEFS

PM condoles death of Rani Chuni Dorji

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has condoled the sudden passing away of grandmother of the King of Bhutan. In a message of condolence sent to King Jigme Singye Wangchuck of Bhutan, the Prime Minister said, "We are deeply saddened to learn of the sudden passing away of our royal grand-mother, her majesty Rani Chuni Dorji," reports BSS.

Indian citizens held with pistols

RAJSHAHI, Mar 28: A squad of 20 rifle battalion arrested two Indian citizens along with two pistols from Chalkmukharpur area yesterday.

4 Sarbaharamen killed

CHUADANGA, Mar 28: Four members of the outlawed Purba Bangla Communist Party were killed Sunday night by unidentified gunmen. The victims were identified as Rahman, Surat Ali and two brothers Madin and Mohan, reports BSS.

DUCSU elections postponed

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka University authorities, after a series of meetings yesterday, decided to postpone the DUCSU and hall union elections scheduled to be held on April 12.

The committee formed to conduct the DUCSU polls took the decision last evening acting on a suggestion made by the Provosts' committee.

The provosts, Proctor and Assistant Proctors of the Dhaka University met the student bodies yesterday afternoon to discuss the campus situation ahead of the scheduled polls. The Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League

Earlier, the BCL (M-I) ob-

served a strike on Sunday and has called another tomorrow demanding the resignation of the DU VC. They gheraoed the office of Vice Chancellor Prof Emajuddin for an hour.

They also staged a protest rally when the VC came out of the IBA building after attending a seminar yesterday morning.

In another meeting, the Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) also decided to boycott the DUCSU polls, terming the campus situation 'volatile'. It held the BCL (M-I) responsible for the deterioration of the campus situation.

Earlier, the BCL (M-I) ob-

AL won't attend today's EC hearing

By Nurul Kabir

The Awami League will not appear at the Election Commission hearing today of its complaints regarding alleged rigging in the by-election to the Magura-2 Jatiya Sangsad constituency.

Barrister K S Nabi, member of the AL's advisory council, had filed the petition before the EC Sunday. The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) agreed to hear the petition at 11 this morning.

Barrister Nabi, while talking to this correspondent last night, observed that the hearing was now irrelevant after the gazette notification of the results Sunday.

Replies to a question, Barrister Nabi said, "I may at best send a junior advocate to the EC informing it of our decision not to appear at the hearing."

According to the official results, BNP nominee Kazi Salimul Huq defeated AL nominee Shafiquzzaman in the March 20 polls by a margin of more than thirty thousand votes.

Barrister Nabi observed that

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Hand over power to caretaker govt: Hasina

MOULVIBAZAR, Mar 28: Sheikh Hasina today asked the ruling BNP to hand over power to a neutral caretaker government for holding parliamentary elections, reports BSS.

Democracy and people's voting rights are not safe under the BNP," she said. The present government has become "a champion of vote de-politising even the past records of deposed president Ershad," she added.

Awami League president and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Hasina made the remarks while addressing a big rally at the Nabiganj GK High School ground in the afternoon.

According to the official results, BNP nominee Kazi Salimul Huq defeated AL nominee Shafiquzzaman in the March 20 polls by a margin of more than thirty thousand votes.

She said, "unprecedented rigging" in Magura-2 by-election proved that polls under the present government would never be free and impartial.

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia being presented a bouquet by a small boy upon her arrival at the Narita Airport in Tokyo yesterday on a four-day state visit. With the Prime Minister are Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman (L) and Finance Minister Saifur Rahman (R). — AFP photo

Formal talks today

TOKYO, Mar 28: The visiting Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and her Japanese counterpart Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa will hold formal talks here tomorrow, reports BSS.

The two leaders will review historical and regional relations between the two countries besides discussing regional and international issues of common interest.

Earlier, Begum Zia arrived here this afternoon to begin a five-day official visit to Japan with the objective of fostering closer economic cooperation between the two Asian countries.

Bangladesh is attaching importance to build confidence of the Japanese private sector entrepreneurs to attract their investment in the wake of the country's adoption of the free market economic system.

Soon after her arrival at the See Page 12 Col 7

PM urges Bangladeshis in Japan to invest back home

TOKYO, Mar 28: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is residing here to invest in Bangladesh and encourage Japanese investors to do the same to accelerate the pace of national development, reports BSS.

Begum Zia, who arrived here this afternoon on a four-day official visit at the invitation of her Japanese counterpart Morihiro Hosokawa, was addressing a reception accorded her by the Bangladesh Society in Japan.

President of the society Sharif Chowdhury also spoke in the largely attended reception.

The Prime Minister, who is attaching high priority to economic diplomacy and inviting foreign investors to Bangladesh for its speedy uplift, listed various measures undertaken

by her government for creating a congenial investment climate in the country.

She gave a brief resume of the ongoing economic reforms, development programmes and her government's priorities and said Bangladesh had been successful in attaining some degree of self-reliance by way of reducing her dependence on foreign assistance.

Begum Zia said the trend of self-reliance set by her government would gradually gain momentum if Bangladeshis residing abroad help attract overseas investment.

The Prime Minister said that her delegation was carrying warm greetings for the people and government of Japan from the people and government of Bangladesh.

She assured the See Page 12 Col 7

Tornado hits Savar : 150 injured

SAVAR, Mar 28: More than 150 people were injured and several hundred houses damaged as a tornado hit seven villages here this afternoon, reports BSS.

Villagers said the tornado, which continued for about 20 minutes, damaged several hundred houses and uprooted trees and electric poles.

Of the injured, five were admitted to Savar Thana Health Complex, 10 to Dhamrai Health Complex and 14 to Kallakoir Health Complex. Seven others were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Besides, a large number of people were given first aid.

The affected villages are: Paichail, Dhamsoma, Nayatek, Nalami under Dhamsoma union, Kabirpur, Baldgaon and Chonteki in Shimulia union. Two bazaars — Kabirpur and Ziraniabazar — were also battered by the tornado.

Kazi Kamal takes oath

Kazi Saleemul Huq, who was elected MP from Magura-2 constituency in the by-elections a BNP nominee, took oath at a simple ceremony at the Sangsab Bhaban here yesterday.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali administered the oath.

The seat fell vacant following the death of Asaduzzaman MP of the Awami League.

The function was attended, among others, by Local Govt, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam, Tukukder, Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Food Minister Mir Shakwati Ali, Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Mia, State Minister for Planning Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan, State Minister for Education Principal Md Yunus Khan, State Minister for Textile Major (retd) Abdur Mannan, acting Chief Whip Mahbubul Alam Tariq, whip Abdul Karim, whip Ashraf Hossain, Abdul Gani MP, Amanullah Aman MP, and Barkatullah Bhulu MP.

Amirul-Mesbah panel sweeps JU senate polls

The entire panel led by Prof Amirul Islam Chowdhury and Prof Mesbahuddin Ahmed got elected for a three-year term in the Jahangirnagar University Senate election of the registered graduates yesterday.

Other major contestants in the election were led by Prof Khandaker Mujahidur Rahman and Prof Enamul Huq Khan.

The winning panel is to form a 25-member Senate body. Out of 585 voters 517 cast their votes. Polling took place at two centres on the university campus and the National Press Club.

The first senate election of the university was held in 1981. Subsequent elections could not take place due to various reasons. The last election was held in 1988 but the election results were declared null and void by the then Vice-Chancellor Prof Kazi Saleh Ahmed as there was accusation of vote rigging and other irregularities.

Khulna BIT closed

From Staff Correspondent

RKHULNA, Mar 28: The authorities of the Bangladesh Institute of Technology (BIT) today declared the institution closed *sine die* following an uneasy situation prevailing on the campus for the last few days.

Students of the BIT started boycotting classes from Sunday. Several BIT students alleged harassment by the students of the Khulna University in an incident occurring near the Dak Bunglow on March 24, involving the institute's trans-



The Bangladesh Awami League brought out a procession in the city yesterday protesting alleged rigging and publication of the official results of the Magura-2 by-election. — Star photo

Plans underway to re-organise state-run hospitals

By S Y Bakht

In a bid to improve the health service delivery mechanism, the government is planning to re-organise the management and administrative system of the state-run hospitals, according to an authoritative source at the Health Ministry.

The plan includes placing a full team of hospital management experts in all secondary and tertiary level hospitals, providing a more transparent job description for the employees along with adequate career planning provisions and improving the service delivery system.

Doctors who currently run

the state hospitals do not have any idea about hospital management resulting in the misuse of scarce resources," said the ministry source. However, he said, the government has no plans, as reported in a section of the press, to allow private sector participation in managing the state-run hospitals.

The planned overhaul of the state-run hospitals is based on a report entitled 'Study on Hospital Organisation and Administration' completed recently with assistance from the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Conducted by a team of lo-

Awami League lacks confidence in JS: Rafiq

Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah yesterday said those who have asked their MPs to refrain from attending meetings of the JS standing committees and other House committees have clearly expressed their lack of confidence in the institutions of Parliament, reports BSS.

It's an irony of fate that the Awami League which day in day out sheds crocodile tears for parliamentary democracy is urging its members of Parliament to boycott meetings of the parliamentary committees," Miah said reacting to the Awami League high command's recent directive to party MPs.

Referring to the plant AL programme to lay siege to the Secretariat on April 7, Rafiq, Joint Secretary General of the ruling BNP, observed that it

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Rail link with Sylhet restored

Railway communication with Sylhet was restored at 12 noon yesterday after the repair of a small bridge near Shayestaganj which had been damaged by the current spate of flash flood from across the border, reports BSS.

A railway official said workers and engineers working for 12 hours completed the repair work and restored train services from 12 noon.

The lines on the age-old railway bridge near Shayestaganj on the Dhaka-Sylhet were washed away on Sunday night by the flood water, disrupting railway communication between Sylhet and rest of the country.

Rival transport workers clash in city : 2 killed

By Staff Correspondent

Clashes between two groups of transport workers left two persons killed and many wounded as passengers ran for safety.

Several gunshots and blasts rocked the terminal building.

Police said they tried several times to disperse the workers but the situation could be brought under control only after the deaths of two workers.

Police also picked up over a dozen troublemakers from the spot but declined to give their names.

Of the injured, three — Shaheed, Selim and Zakir, all identified as transport workers — were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The bloody clashes began at about noon yesterday following the skirmishes on Saturday and Sunday.

Armed with sawed-off rifles, revolvers, pistols and other

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42 killed, 250 injured as tornadoes hit 5 US states

ATLANTA, Mar 28: A series of tornadoes killed at least 42 people and injured scores more in rural Alabama, officials said today, reports Reuter.

More than 250 people were injured in the series of severe storms that cut a path of destruction across five states Sunday, authorities said.

The worst death toll was in the northeastern Alabama town of Piedmont, where a tornado slammed into the Goshen United Methodist Church during a palm Sunday service, devastating the brick structure with about 140 worshippers inside.

Authorities