

# Economy on verge of collapse: Hasina

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the national economy was now on the verge of collapse for inefficiency of the BNP government, reports UNB.

She was talking to a delegation of the Bangladesh Sick Industries Association which called on Hasina and apprised her of various problems faced by them.

A good number of potential industrial units have fallen sick because of mismanagement of the industrial sector by the government, Hasina said.

Tajul Islam, Giasuddin Ahmed, Salamat Ullah, Habibur Rahman, Kazi Tajul Islam and Aminul Islam Danesh were on the delegation.

Chairperson of the party sub-committee on Industries and Commerce Begum Sajeda Chowdhury MP, Syed Abul Hossain MP, Dr. Mizanul Haq MP, Mafizur Rahman, ASHK Sadeq and Dr. AK Azad Chowdhury were present.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Hasina has congratulated ANC leader Nelson Mandela on the election day when the South Africans exercised their right of franchise to set up a government of their choice.

In a message to Mandela, she said after centuries of the cruel apartheid system, the people of South Africa under his dynamic leadership exercised their fundamental right of universal adult franchise.

Greeting the African National Congress (ANC) leader and the heroic South Africans on the historic occasion, Hasina remembered those African heroes who had

sacrificed their lives for this great day.

"The darkness of apartheid that had enveloped your country for centuries could not eclipse your cherished dream of building a society upholding the universally recognised principles of respect and dignity for human beings regardless of colour, creed or religion," said Hasina.

She said that the cruel suffering and 26 years of imprisonment suffered by Mandela bear a close similarity to the life of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who, too, had suffered more than two decades of incarceration to achieve independence and dignity for the Bengali nation.

The Awami League president hoped that the day would come when the leaders of Africa, Asia, Europe and America will work together to make the world a better and happier place to live in.

She wished Mandela happy and long life to carry on the struggle for the cause of South Africans and for the well-being of mankind.

Another report adds: Japanese Ambassador Shigeo Takenaka called on Sheikh Hasina at her Parliament office yesterday.

They discussed political and economic affairs of the two countries.

During the meeting Hasina conveyed her goodwill and felicitations to the newly elected Prime Minister of Japan Tsutomu Hata.

She also expressed her shock at the death of 158 Japanese in Tuesday's plane crash at Nagoya airport.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia bade farewell to the pilgrims travelling by the first Hajj flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines which left Zia International Airport for Jeddah yesterday evening. —PID photo

## Huda's directive for payment of govt ads

Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda yesterday directed the authorities concerned for the immediate payment of arrears bills of the government advertisement, reports BSS.

The Information Minister gave the directive when he was apprised of the problems of the newspapers by the delegation of the Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Parishad (BSP) which called on him at his office.

Barrister Huda accepted its demand for increasing the number of insertion of the government advertisement from the present four to six, and directed the authorities concerned for the immediate implementation of the same.

The BSP delegation stressed the need for an equitable and objective outlook in the distribution of the government advertisement. It also demanded release of a government advertisement to the Dainik Janakantha and other weeklies.

## One more Comilla jail prisoner dies

From Our Correspondent

COMILLA, Apr 27: Another inmate of the Comilla Central Jail died last night, raising the toll of such deaths to three in the last 15 days.

The prisoner Joyanal Abedin of Chardarbeshpur village of Sudharampur thana under Noakhali district, died at the General Hospital, jail sources said. He was admitted to the hospital after being attacked by diarrhoea.

Two other prisoners of the jail died last night.

The deaths cause resentment among the other prisoners. The jailer could not be contacted for comments. Jail sources said he was on leave.

## 500 RU students begin hunger strike

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Apr 27: Some 500 examinees of Rajshahi University have started a hunger strike in front of the Vice Chancellor's official residence from 7:30 am today demanding shifting of their honours final examinations, due to begin June 12.

The students were demanding the rescheduling of their examinations so that they could watch on TV the World Cup soccer finals that begin in the United States on June 17.

VC Prof Anisur Rahman could not go to his office today as the striking examinees kept his way blocked for the whole day.

The honours final examinations also staged a sit-in in front of the VC's office last Monday to press home their demand.

Meanwhile UNB reports, another group of students submitted a memorandum to the VC demanding holding of the examinations on schedule.

## Shantibahini

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and was convinced of the economic rehabilitation process for the returnees.

He told the returnees that he would inform the remaining refugees in Tripura of the on-going arrangements and progress of the rehabilitation process.

The members of the team visited re-settlement areas at Rangbar, Panchhari, Parachaea, Gobongpuria, Pankhalypara, Battali and Kamalchhari. They also visited village at Rangamat today.

# Neutrality of BNP beyond doubt: PM

COMPANIGANJ (Noakhali), Apr 27: The Prime Minister today quashed the opposition demand for elections under a caretaker government, saying the neutrality of the BNP government in all polls in the last three years was beyond doubt, reports UNB.

The assertion by Begum Khaleda Zia came at a huge public meeting here in the wake of repeated demand by major opposition parties for a caretaker administration for ensuring free, fair and impartial elections.

The defeat of the ruling party in the mayoral elections in Dhaka and Chittagong has well proved that free and fair national polls can be held under this government," said the Prime Minister.

The Awami League and the Jatiya Party enforced country-wide hartals this month demanding a caretaker government for which the Constitution has no provision.

Begum Zia said a number of by-elections to Parliament were held since her party came to power in 1991. Besides, polls to the union parishes, pourashavas and city corporations were held free and fair.

Making a dig at the Awami League without naming it, the Prime Minister said it had legalised an illegal government by taking part in 1986 elections during the Ershad regime.

Begum Zia was sarcastic about the identical programmes of the Awami League and the Jatiya Party, launched against the government.

"One which killed democracy by introducing the single party rule and the other which snatched away power from an elected government have now joined hands," she said.

Begum Zia was highly critical of the Opposition for boycotting Parliament sessions. Parliament is the right forum to resolve the problems through discussions; but the opposition was creating obstacles to the functioning of democracy by boycotting Parliament, she added.

She went on to say that "People do not want hartals, strikes, gheraos and destruction; they now want peace and

## BNP won't ask opposition

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"We are looking forward to the May 2 extended meeting of the AL although we do not expect anything dramatic from that meeting," Talukder said by telephone.

He said his party's policy makers would sit before May 4 to review the situation.

The ruling party secretary general reiterated that the opposition can press their demands in Parliament as per the constitution and the Rules of Procedure.

There are ample scope to protest against government decisions inside Parliament, he added.

He said the provision of a caretaker government was contrary to the spirit of the parliamentary form of government. A government would run the country for five years and a caretaker administration set up just before the election seems unjustified under the parliamentary system, he added.

"If the opposition had specific suggestions for strengthening the independent Election Commission, then we can offer our utmost cooperation," Salam Talukder said.

A caretaker formula suits the presidential system of government, he claimed.

"Which one they prefer - a caretaker government or fair election - if they are in favour of a fair election then they can insist on strengthening the Election Commission," Salam Talukder pointed out.

He continued "they (AL) have even questioned the fair-

## First Hajj flight leaves for Jeddah

The inaugural Hajj flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines left Dhaka for Jeddah yesterday evening with 301 ballottee pilgrims on board, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia saw them off at the Zia International Airport.

Earlier, she met with the pilgrims and talked to them at the airport lounge and on board the DC-10 aircraft. She expressed her good wishes for their safe return.

She requested the pilgrims to pray for the peace, progress and prosperity of Bangladesh during the Hajj at the Holy Kaba.

Before the departure of the flight, Begum Zia joined the pilgrims at the airport lounge in a prayer.

A total of 6,200 ballottee pilgrims will perform the Hajj under government arrangement this year. Some 21 ballottee Hajj flights, each carrying 301 pilgrims, will be operated this year.

A Biman office has been set up at the Hajj Camp at the Open University campus in Gazipur to facilitate travel formalities of the pilgrims.

## Caretaker govt has no accountability, says Rafiq

COMILLA, Apr 27: Housing and Public Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah today said that a caretaker government had no accountability because it was not elected by the people, reports BSS.

On the other hand, a democratically elected government had the people's mandate and therefore, it had accountability to the people, he said.

The minister, who is also holding the additional charge of the Ministry of Law and Parliamentary Affairs, was addressing the members of the Comilla District Bar Association on the occasion of the foundation stone-laying ceremony of the District Judge's Court building here.

Referring to the demands of the Opposition for holding elections under a caretaker government, the minister said there was no guarantee that those elections would be fair and free.

The minister in this connection referred to the statement by the Leader of the Opposition on the election results held under the caretaker government in 1991 and said that she had complained there was subtle rigging in the 1991 parliamentary elections.

The minister said that the Election Commission was the only constitutional authority which could hold free and fair polls.

In this regard, the minister said the Election Commission might be entrusted with more powers through discussions and mutual understanding for making the elections free and fair.

The minister also urged the politicians, lawyers, intellectuals and the democracy-loving people of the country to put in their best efforts to institutionalise parliamentary democracy. Otherwise, the hard-earned democracy might be endangered, he observed.

## Govt firm

From Page 1 Col 4

made in the government press note on Tuesday as 'blatant lies' and alleged the government has been making the situation more critical by influencing a small group of teachers.

A meeting of the liaison committee yesterday decided to gherao the Shikha Bhaban and the Thana Nirbahi Offices across the country at 10 am today.

In a bid to hold the SSC examinations—due to commence country-wide May 2—successfully, the Education Minister convened a meeting of the Bangladesh Government College Professors' Association, the Government College Lecturers' Association, the Bangladesh Government College Teachers' Association and the BCS General Education Association yesterday.

The leaders of the associations assured the government of their full cooperation in holding the examinations smoothly and peacefully. They also urged the government and the striking teachers to solve their problems through discussions, not through boycotting the examinations.

The Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar, however, urged the leaders to discharge their duties under the supervision of the ministry and the four education boards of the country.

Some leaders of the non-government teachers' and employees' associations also had a separate meeting with the Education Minister and the State Minister for Education yesterday.

They also assured the ministers that they would not boycott the SSC examinations.

They said they are not in favour of realising their demands at the cost of the students.

# The Midnight File

## UNSC okays 6550 troops for Bosnia

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 27: The Security Council on Wednesday approved the deployment of 6,550 more peace-keeping troops to help protect UN-designated "safe areas" in Bosnia after the United States lifted its objections to the expanded force. Last month, the United States cited cost concerns in objecting to UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali's recommendation to send 10,650 more peacekeepers to the former Yugoslavia. The United States forced the council to approve only 3,500 additional peacekeepers, reports AP.

## Murtaza Bhutto granted bail

LAHORE, Apr 27: A special court here today granted bail to Murtaza Bhutto, brother of Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, in a case of alleged involvement in terrorism in Punjab province. Earlier, he had been granted bail by another special tribunal here in a separate case, in which he faces charges of conspiracy to murder. He is not guaranteed liberty yet, though, because he faces charges in still another case being heard in a Karachi court, reports AFP.

## Tax VIP cards for 4 cos

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1991-92 fiscal with a view to giving incentive to the tax payers who had been contributing immensely to our economic development pursuits.

The Finance Minister pointed out that as a respectable nation we shall have to depend on our own resources for carrying out development activities. "We no longer can depend on international charity," he added.

Referring to the selection of only one individual and four corporate bodies for acceding tax VIP cards for the year 1992-93, the Finance Minister said it demonstrated a poor performance in the country's tax administration. Had the tax administration been dynamic and effective, the number of such tax VIPs would have been more," he said.

Expressing his surprise, the Finance Minister wanted to know as to where were those big shots and giant

## Fishing company

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Police also found various unauthorised equipment and banned current nets among 350 items in the godown at Sadarghat in the city.

The company has been accused of being engaged for long in smuggling involving crores of taka and of anti-state activities, police said.

Allegations of keeping unauthorised equipment and installing an additional wireless base station have also been brought against the company. These equipment can be used not only in the deep sea but also to establish illegal contact with other countries.

Protesting the allegations, a senior executive of Sea Resources Ltd said the base station were legal and authorised by the T&T Board.

Police, with help from the Navy, Customs and T&T Board, is investigating the allegations with permission of the court. The investigation began Tuesday following a complaint lodged by one Abdur Razzak at Panchlaish thana against Sea Resources Ltd and its resident director Chamman.

None has been arrested yet.

Sea Resources Ltd was set up in 1982 as joint venture company with Hartford Thailand Ltd. Thai National Chamman Pean Peakr holds 49 per cent share.

The company exports sea fish worth 50 million taka annually while its supply to local markets is worth about 100 million taka.

The matter will be discussed at an inter-ministerial meeting," said a Home Ministry official who wished not to be identified.

The violation of the airspace by Indian airforce Migs-21 took place at a time when the Indian Army Chief General Bipin Chandra Joshi is visiting Dhaka on a goodwill tour.

## Tofael refutes charges

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Referring to the Prime Minister's observation that the people of Bhola refused to observe hartal on April 26, Tofael said, the local unit of the AL exempted the areas from the general strike because of the inauguration of the power plant linking Bhola with the national grid.

"The Prime Minister should be aware of the fact that the local AL unit exempted the area from the strike in order to uphold the interest of the people living in Bhola and its adjoining areas," Tofael said and added that he himself had raised in Parliament the demand for the power plant.

About a minister's criticism of Tofael Ahmed for his absence from Bhola on the occasion, Tofael said the government had failed to show the generosity of inviting him to attend the inauguration of the power plant.

"It is unfortunate that the government does not recognise the Opposition as a partner in national development," Tofael said. He also observed that in a parliamentary democracy, the Opposition is a part and parcel of the government.

The AL leader, in this connection, accused the government of politicising the development activities of the country.

About LGRD Minister Salam Talukder's comment that the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina had been feeding the Dhaka-based foreign diplomats with 'misinformation', Tofael said "This was an irresponsible comment and such a remark from a minister

who is a Barrister was not expected."

"A minister should be aware of the fact that the Leader of the Opposition has both the status and the constitutional right to exchange views on the situation of the country with the foreign diplomats," the AL leader observed.

Referring to the Prime Minister's fresh commitments, made in Bhola on April 26, for development in the areas, Tofael said, "If the commitments are fulfilled, the people of the southern district, as well as myself, would be happy."

The AL leader, however, added that most of the commitments of the Prime Minister made especially during two separate by-elections in the district, were yet to be fulfilled.

## RU senate election today

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Apr 27: The election of 25 senate members from the registered graduates' quota of the Rajshahi University will be held tomorrow (Thursday). As many as 188 candidates from three panels and some independents are contesting the election.

GF relieves Nahid, Yusuf of membership

Nurul Islam Nahid, office secretary and Mohammad Yusuf, MP, control committee member, have been relieved of their membership of the Gano Forum, a meeting of the party resolved yesterday.

## South African polls

From Page 1 Col 4

for the second day of balloting in this unprecedented, all-race election.

Some polls opened several hours late when voting materials didn't show up in time for the scheduled 7 am start. President F W de Klerk and election officials appealed for patience as lines more than a half-kilometer long formed, from rural KwaZulu homeland to downtown Johannesburg.

"I don't think it will affect the freeness and fairness of the election. What is required is patience by the voters affected," de Klerk said, adding that planes and helicopters were being ordered to get voting material to places they were needed.

Right-wing extremists have vowed to wage war rather than live under black rule, and the bombings shattered hopes for a peaceful election. But Van der Merwe said the arrests should serve as a warning to militants that "using violence to achieve their aims is not only futile and pointless, but will ultimately lead to their own destruction."

Despite late-arriving ballots and waits so long in some places that people collapsed, the mood among most voters Wednesday was jubilant. Lines snaked through white suburbs and black townships. Many people brought folding chairs, warm drinks and breakfast rolls.

"It is the beginning of a new era," Mandela said after

**বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ড**

**টেলিফোন সেট ব্যবহার সম্পর্কে**

**একটি বিশেষ ঘোষণা**

- ★ সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, এখন থেকে গ্রাহকগণ নিজস্বাই খোলা বাজার থেকে টেলিফোন সেট ক্রয় করে ব্যবহার করতে পারবেন।
- ★ এ জন্য বর্তমানে প্রচলিত সংস্থাপন চার্জ বাবদ আদায়যোগ্য ৭,৫০০/- টাকার মধ্য হতে সেট বাবদ ১,৯০০/- টাকা বাদ যাবে।
- ★ গ্রাহকগণ নিজ দায়িত্বে টেলিফোন সেট সরবরাহ, মেরামত ও পরিবর্তন করবেন।
- ★ টেলিফোন সেট যাতে টি এন্ড টি র লাইনে কাজ করতে পারে - তা নিশ্চিত হয়ে ক্রয় করবেন।
- ★ টেলিফোন সেট ক্রয়ের পূর্বে, ডিজিটাল এক্সচেঞ্জের গ্রাহক ক্রয়কৃত টেলিফোন দ্বারা Call barring সত্বে কিনা তা নিশ্চিত হবেন।
- ★ এই ব্যবস্থা ১লা মে, ১৯৯৪ থেকে কার্যকর হবে।

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