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NEWS BRIEFS

Biswas, Khaleda greet Mandela

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday felicitated Nelson Mandela on the occasion of his election as the President of the Republic of South Africa.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia also greeted President Nelson Mandela, reports BSS.

2 Thai navy ships arrive

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, May 10: Two Thai navy ships arrived here today to take back the Thai nationals rescued in the Teknaf coast after the May 2 cyclone. The ships included a patrol ship and a frigate.

New Filipino envoy named

By Staff Correspondent Jose E Calingasan has been named the new ambassador of the Philippines to Bangladesh. He replaces Cesar C Pastores who has retired from government service.

The new Filipino ambassador is expected to arrive in Dhaka on May 15 accompanied by his wife Madame Luisa.

Mandela takes oath as president

S Africans to walk tall



Nelson Mandela acknowledges the greetings of the people attending his inauguration yesterday in Pretoria as South Africa's first democratically elected President. His daughter Zinani looks on. — AFP photo

PRETORIA, May 10: Nelson Mandela took the oath of office to become South Africa's first black president today in a glorious celebration ending the agony of apartheid and marking the country's return to the world community. 'Let freedom reign!' Mandela proclaimed, reports AP.

'I do hereby swear to be faithful to the Republic of South Africa,' Mandela said, standing on a podium overlooking the Pretoria skyline and enclosed in seven tons of bulletproof glass.

He eagerly began the oath before the chief justice asked him. Shouts of 'Viva Nelson Mandela! Viva!' rang out from the ecstatic crowd as he finished.

In his inaugural speech, Mandela called apartheid 'an extraordinary human disaster that lasted too long.'

'We shall build the society

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Reforms must be harmonised with objective realities: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said the politico-socio-economic vulnerabilities should be taken into consideration while implementing structural reform in the country, reports UNB.

'We must give special thought to how far our economy could absorb and withstand the reforms. We must also consider how far the reforms are to be accelerated,' she said.

Begum Zia was inaugurating a day-long seminar on the 'Reforms, Growth and Poverty Alleviation in Bangladesh' organised by the Finance Ministry in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Bangladesh Bank at a local hotel in the morning.

The Prime Minister observed that structural adjustment programmes which had already been set in motion for obtaining the benefit of a market economy had, in some cases, created unwanted pressure on certain sections of the people.

She said her government has undertaken various programmes for the safety of those who are coming under unwanted pressure in the greater interest of the country.

'The path of development is not strewn with roses. Uplift always calls for sacrifice and hardship,' she said seeking

cooperation from all for implementing economic reform programmes and increasing investment to change the lot of the poor.

Begum Zia said structural reforms have already brought in a remarkable success in the country's macro-economic management and the rate of inflation is now at its lowest.

As a result, she said, export earnings have increased; the foreign reserves position is highly satisfactory and revenue income has already posted a commensurate increase.

Due to diversification of crops and implementation of

7 killed, 50 hurt as bus, truck collide in Daudkandi

From Our Correspondent

COMILLA, May 10: Seven persons were killed and 50 others injured in a bus-truck collision on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Gazipur of Daudkandi thana at 9 am today.

Three died on the spot and the rest succumbed to their injuries in hospital.

Three of the dead have been identified as Md. Hanif (32), Nurul Islam (40), Md. Shaheen (35) and Abdul Mannan (40). Three persons in

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various programmes to develop human resource, agricultural production had increased and the rate of the poverty had come down substantially, she said.

Begum Zia, however, said that the declining rate of poverty or the pace of development is not enough in our context. 'We will have to raise the current growth rate of 5 per cent to at least 7 or 8 if we are to reduce poverty in the shortest possible time.'

To achieve this target, she said, the government has brought necessary changes in development strategies and is ensuring grassroots-level participation in the perspective plan.

She said after assumption of office, her government has given top priority to poverty alleviation harmonising with open market economy.

Besides, structural adjustment strategies are being implemented with the aim to remove wastage, mobilise internal resources for development and generate more employment and growth.

'The government is bearing a loss of Tk two to two and a half thousand crore every year for running any of the public sector enterprises. We must remove wastage of all sectors.'

Begum Zia said the govern-

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Private investors should take up small scale power projects

By Staff Correspondent

An Asian Development Bank (ADB) expert yesterday suggested that private investors should take up small scale power projects in the present economic context of Bangladesh.

Speaking at the international forum on private investment in the power sector of Bangladesh yesterday, an expert from the World Bank (WB) said the bank will provide financial assistance directly to the government or to the private sector with a government guarantee and a clear commitment to improve the sector performance.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), an affiliate of the WB, provides loan for power projects for upto 15 years to private investors only, an IFC expert said.

Two sessions of the five-day forum, organised jointly by the Energy Ministry and the USAID, was a chaired yester-

day by Internal Resources Division (IRD) Secretary and National Board of Revenue (NBR) Chairman Dr Akbar Ali Khan and Chairman of the Public Service Commission (PSC) S M A Fayed.

Energy Advisor to the World Bank Anil Malhotra presented a paper on 'financing of power projects in developing countries: the role of World Bank.'

Project engineer of the ADB S Chander presented a paper on 'private power projects in Bangladesh — development perspective.'

IFC chief of mission, in Bangkok Dilip Pathak presented a paper on 'investing in development.' The two sessions were also addressed by Bhupesh Gupta of the Ge Capital.

To share the Indonesian private power experience, Director of private power of Energy Ministry of Indonesia Moeljadi Oetji and principal

engineer on electric power system design Ontowirjo Soewarno presented two papers describing the way Indonesia was privatising power.

Describing how the WB can help government in pursuing private power, Malhotra said through extensive economic analysis and policy work, WB can help the government create appropriate conditions for stimulating efficient power sector development 'With appropriate tariff structures, regulatory policies, stable macroeconomic conditions for private investment and growth.'

He said the WB allocates only 15 per cent of the cumulative total of bank lending for the power sector.

'But the growth of power sector in Asia annually demands us 60 to 100 billion dollars, which is 15 times the total WB annual lending. So the

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Agitation threatened

Opposition sticks to caretaker govt

By Staff Correspondent

The Opposition parties in Parliament yesterday reiterated their demand for a caretaker government for holding free and fair polls and said that if their demand was not accepted, the only alternative left for them would be street agitation.

The Opposition stand was once again made clear at a press briefing at the Sangsad Bhaban chamber of Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad.

Samad Azad, Jatiya Party's Moudud Ahmed, Jamaat-e-Islami's Moulana Abdus Sobhan, Ganatantri Party's Suranjit Sengupta and Awami League's Mohammad Nasim and Tofael Ahmed spoke at the press briefing.

None from the Gana Forum, IOJ, Workers Party and NDP was, however, present at the briefing.

Samad Azad said that if the ruling party tabled a bill for caretaker government then the Opposition parties could discuss whether 'the caretaker provision will be a permanent one or for several terms.'

Asked about any example of such provision, Samad Azad said, 'It is the people who will set the example.'

He claimed that the Speaker had assured him that the report of the special committee formed to probe corruption would be placed and discussed in the House but he placed it in a half-empty House.

'We insisted that both Tofael and Majidul Huq should make the statement before the committee but when our effort failed, we said that the matter should be placed before the House for further discussion.'

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BNP leaders open to ideas within framework of Constitution

Ruling BNP leaders yesterday said they were ready to accept any suggestions within the framework of the Constitution to improve the electoral system for ensuring free and impartial elections in the country.

Talking to UNB separately in the Parliament lobby this evening Deputy Leader of the House prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, BNP Secretary General and LGED Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder and Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia, however, disagreed with the opposition plea for a caretaker government to conduct polls.

The concept is against the spirit of democracy and the Constitution, they said.

Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury said the government may consider any suggestion within the constitutional framework to improve the electoral system

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Indian warplanes violate Bangladesh airspace again

LALMONIRHAT, May 10: Indian airforce fighter planes twice flew into Bangladesh airspace Monday night creating panic among the local people and construction workers of a Burimari frontier project, reports UNB.

Villagers and local officials said Indian planes made two sorties, at 9:55 pm and 10:10 pm, flying one kilometre into the country's airspace over Burimari land port area.

Earlier also, Indian fighters had violated Bangladesh airspace twice and BSF fortified its strength along the border apparently to obstruct work on the Loop Channel Project undertaken to protect the land port from erosion by river Dharala, country's only transit route for the import of goods from neighbouring Nepal and Bhutan.

Hasina calls to unmask pseudo-democrats

Sheikh Hasina yesterday called for utmost vigilance against pseudo-democrats who deprive the people of their democratic rights and try to perpetuate their rule through undemocratic means, reports UNB.

'Guard against and unmask pseudo-democrats... They are even depriving the people of their rights to franchise,' she said at an international seminar on 'Asia and Pacific: Democracy, Economic and Social Development' in Tokyo.

The two-day seminar began yesterday as part of the council session of the Socialist International.

The session in which Hasina spoke was chaired by Norwegian Prime Minister Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland, according to a message received

in Dhaka.

She said Bangladesh is grappling with basic issues such as peaceful succession and transfer of power, fraud-free and fair elections, role of Parliament and a democratic political culture free from conspiracies, assassinations and coups.

Hasina, the Awami League president and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, said a freely elected sovereign Parliament must be the cornerstone of the state and the fountain of law and political legitimacy.

The mass media, she said, must be free both in letter and spirit. She regretted that in Bangladesh there is now total government control over tele-

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Budget on June 9

By Staff Correspondent

The budget for 1994-95 fiscal year will be presented before Parliament on June 9, according to authoritative sources.

Earlier, it was decided that the budget would be presented on June 2, but as the date comes shortly after the Eid holidays and may create dislocation in the printing process at the BG Press, the new date has been decided.

However, the post Eid session of Parliament is likely to be summoned on June 1.

Last year the budget was presented on June 10.

Govt sympathetic to teachers, Sircar tells JS

The Education Minister, Jamiruddin Sircar, last night said the government was sympathetic to the teachers and called upon those who were on strike to join duties and extend cooperation in conducting the on-going SSC examinations, reports BSS.

Making a statement in the Jatiya Sangsad on the steps taken to fulfil the 12, out of 15 demands of the teachers of private schools and college teachers the minister said the problems could be resolved through discussions only. He also sought cooperation of all concerned including the opposition to solve the problem through discussions.

People would never appreciate any efforts to realise any demands of the non-government and government school-college teachers keeping the examinations as hostage, the Education Minister pointed out.

Aircraft soon to start STOL service

By Staff Correspondent

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan yesterday informed Parliament that two firms would shortly bring aircraft to start STOL (short take-off and landing) service in the country.

Replying to a call attention notice of fellow party member Helaluzzaman Talukder, the minister said six firms have been given Provisional Air Transport Operational Licences (PATOL) after the cabinet had approved the STOL service under the private sector.

He said, work on an airport for the STOL service in Bogra would start soon. Tk three crore has already been ear-

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বাংলাদেশ হাউস বিল্ডিং ফাইন্যান্স কর্পোরেশন

গৃহ নির্মাণ ঋণ সুবিধা

আপনি জানেন কি?

- এইচবিএফসি গ্র্যাপার্টমেন্ট লোন কিম চালু করেছে। মাঝারি আয়তনের গ্র্যাপার্টমেন্ট কেনার জন্য দীর্ঘমেয়াদী ঋণ দেয়া হচ্ছে। এ সম্পর্কিত প্রশ্নপত্র কর্পোরেশন ভবনে অবস্থিত জনতা ব্যাংক শাখায় পাওয়া যাবে।
- গৃহ নির্মাণ ঋণ সুবিধা সহজতর করা হয়েছে। আবেদনকারীদের পরামর্শ দেয়ার জন্য কাউন্সেলিং কাউন্টার কাজ করছে। প্রয়োজনে কাউন্টারের সহায়তা গ্রহণ করুন। ঋণ পাওয়ার জন্য কোন দালালের স্বরণাপন্ন হবেন না।
- নিয়মিত পরিশোধকারীদের জন্য বহরান্তে ইনসেনটিভ প্রদানের ব্যবস্থা এ বছর হতে চালু করা হয়েছে। বিপুলসংখ্যক গ্রহীতা যারা লোন রিসিডিউলিং এর সুবিধা গ্রহণ করেছেন তারা এবং সকল নিয়মিত পরিশোধকারীদের ইনসেনটিভ প্রদান করা হবে। জুন '৯৪ পর্যন্ত সময়ের কিস্তি পরিশোধ করে ইনসেনটিভের সুযোগ নিন।
- মাসিক কিস্তি পরিশোধের সময়সীমা ৭ তারিখ হতে বাড়িয়ে ১৫ তারিখ করা হয়েছে। অর্থাৎ মাসের ১৫ তারিখের মধ্যে কিস্তি পরিশোধ করলে (মাসিক কিস্তির আসলের ওপর) পুরো মাসের সুদ সুবিধা পাওয়া যায়। এই সুযোগ নিয়মিত গ্রহণ করুন।
- রিসিডিউলিং এর সুবিধা গ্রহণ না করে এখনও পর্যন্ত যারা খেলাপী রয়ে গেছেন তাদের বিরুদ্ধে আইনগত ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হচ্ছে। খেলাপীদের প্রথম তালিকা শীঘ্র প্রকাশ করা হবে।

ঋণের কিস্তি সময়মত পরিশোধ করুন এবং অপরকে ঋণ গ্রহণের সুযোগ দিন

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