## Dudayev regrets failure to protect Chechens

MOSCOW, Jan 24: Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev today expressed regret he had not been able to protect his people from Russian forces, Ekho Moskvy radio reported, says

The independent radio station, which said it reached Dudayev by telephone in the early hours today, quoted him as saying: "My heart aches for those destitute whom I could not defend."

Dudayev, whose forces in the Chechen capital Grozny have been pushed back by Russian troops to south of the Sunzha River dividing the city. denied a Russian military victory was near.

The Russian troops do not control anything. They have simply massed in various places and are completely sur rounded," he said defiantly He added that the only

thing that stopped the Chechens striking at Russian forces more fiercely was the presence of civilians nearby. Dudayev asserted 100

Russian servicemen were being killed for every one of his

He said added that, since there were no reports of Chechen captives, it was clear the Russians were not taking prisoners.

"Yet in this situation we are being asked to give back to Russian mothers their cap-

#### Arjun Singh From Page 1 Col 8

government

Even if the party does not split. Rao could lose more support if it does badly in the state elections, leaving Singh in a position to unseat him.

Congress lost three of the four states where elections were held late last year, and Singh blamed the rout on Rao's lack of charisma and the public perception that his economic reforms were hurting the poor But Rao dismissed these

charges. "I do not accept the view that the vote is a verdict against the economic reforms. he told Press Trust of India in an interview on Tuesday. Singh, who was addressing

meetings in the southern city of Madras, was told about his suspension by reporters.

"I know that I have done nothing against the Congress Party," he said.

Rao indicated earlier Tuesday that he might take action against Singh when he told a party meeting that "discipline in the Congress will have to be enforced when somebody crosses the limit."

### Gangsters

From Page 1 Col 7 none came to lodge any com-

Earlier, namaj-e-janaza of Sabbir was held at Nabigani Eidgah Maidan this morning. In another incident, eight

shops were gutted and 17 damaged at the yarn market at Tanbazar park early today. Local people said the fire might have originated from an electric short circuit. Some youths looted the shop soon after the fire engulfed the whole yarn market, they alleged.

Firemen from Mondalpara and Hajiganj fire stations rushed to spot and brought the fire under control. But it took them two hours.

A case was registered with Narayanganj police in this connection.

tured sons. We are not peacekeeping organisation. The question of prisoners will be settled after a truce and agreements.

Dudayev called for a ceasefire, a disengagement of forces, the peaceful withdrawal of Russian forces from Chechnya and the deployment of international observers.

Referring to his son Avlur who was reported on January 15 to have been killed in Grozny. Dudayev said: "I have received information that he is dead, but I myself have not seen him

#### PM: Lanka

From Page 1 Col 8 country, following Pope John Paul II last week, after the new People's Alliance government came to power in August last vear This is the first time the two leaders are meeting one another. The two countries have cooperated closely to increase inter-regional trade through SAARC

On arrival at Colombo airport. Begum Zia will be welcomed by Foreign Ministry officials and the Bangladesh High Commissioner in Colombo. The Prime Minister will then be airlifted by helicopter to the army playgrounds, adjoining the Presidential Secretariat The formal welcoming ceremony will take place at the secretariat with President Kumaratunga, Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike. Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirigarmar and other cabinet ministers welcoming her. Begum Zia will pay a cour

tesy call on President Kumaratunga before the two delegations hold official talks in late afternoon. This will be followed by an official reception in her honour hosted by President Kumaratunga at the Hilton Hotel in Colombo.

Thursday, Prime Minister Bandaranaike will pay Begun Khaleda Zia a courtesy call at the Hilton Hotel where she will be staying. The Leader of the Opposition Ranil Wickremasinghe will also pay a courtesy call on the Bangladesh leader and it will be followed by a farewell call by President Kumaratunga.

She will fly back to Dhaka around 1.30 pm.

#### Barricade ends

From Page 1 Col 8 tense, said our Narayanganj Correspondent. The workers of the Adamiee Jute Mills and other industries there held a gauebana janaza for the dead worker, wore black badges and organised rallies. A huge procession of the workers was in tercepted by police near the Hajigani Fire Station in the morning while it was heading towards the Deputy Commi ssioner's office, he said adding the police baton charged to disperse the procession.

The processionists reassembled and went to the DC's office and protested Monday's killing.

The sponsors of the agitation also organised two rallies - one at Jatrabari crossing and another in front of the Jativa Press Club in the city.

Speaking at the rallies. leader of the Patkal Sramik Karmachari Sangram Parishad, Abul Bashar urged the government to accept their demands immediately. Otherwise, he warned, they would announce fresh agitation programmes from the national convention of the workers to be held in the city on January 27.

# Tofael, Moudud at confce

From Page 1 Col 5 economic situation, the AL adopted the free market economic policy as "most suitable for our country."

The AL leader said political stability for economic development can be ensured through consensus among all major political parties. "There must be a stable set of economic policies formulated after a proper debate in Parliament.

If his party comes to power. Tofael said, it would ensure robust, bold and firm governance to create an enabling investment environment, fostering a climate of trust that would allow the private sector to flourish without being subjected to too much regulation. "We intend to vigorously promore foreign direct investment."

He also emphasised having a more appropriate labour policy to protect the interests of

the workers. "I hope that you go back with increased understanding of the investment opportunities available in Bangladesh," Tofael told the 200 or so foreign investors attending the

conference. Moudud Ahmed pointed out that Bangladesh's economic policy has been consistently improved over the last 19 years or so. "This continuity should be noted by the investors and it should be taken as an assurance that the policles are unlikely to change with a change of government."

Talking about disruptive hartals and strikes. Moudud referred to an earlier offer he had made to the ruling party on the floor of Parliament to give an undertaking not to call



Tofael Ahmed any hartals in future if the ruling BNP also provides a similar undertaking that it will not call hartals when it is in the Opposition.

"We cannot afford to miss this bus for attracting foreign investments, because Bangladesh has much to offer to the foreign investors," he added.

Moudud also referred to some 28 million-strong capable workforce, a large number of skilled managerial personnel and huge untapped natural resources in the country.

He underscored the need for removing bureaucratic and legal complexities in financial and social sectors that are creating obstacles in foreign and local investment.

"The dead laws are not suitable to adjust or facilitate investment in a changed economic scenario. These should be reformed," he said.



Smoke from a hand bomb, allegedly hurled by Opposition activists enforcing yesterday's halfday hartal in the city, which exploded in front of the Awlad Hossain Market near Farm Gate as Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's motorcade was passing through in the morning.

#### Hartal in city

From Page 1 Col 7 ment which she inaugurated, a crude home-made bomb exploded as the velticles passed

Begum Zia went to the conference venue amid tight security as Opposition activists put up strong pickets in the Farm Gate area

Witnesses said Opposition political workers gathered in the area since early morning and demonstrated there, led by Awami League leaders Matia Chowdhury and Advocate Sahara Khatun

At about 10 am, police guarding the area asked a procession to leave the VIP road for allowing the Prime Ministers motorcade to pass to wards Sonargaon Hotel At one stage, an altercation

started between the police and the activists, which led to police chasing the activists who were baiting them. Police then started beating

Matia Chowdhury and Sahara Khatun were injured Sahara Khatun suffered a serious blow on one of her knees and was admitted to a

up some of the activists, when

Matia Chowdhury was pi cked up and taken to the

nearby private clinic.

Tejgaon police station. Two other female activists belonging to the pro-Awami League Chhatra League -Saima and Dana - were also taken into police custody. All of them were later released.

Police lobbed tear gas shells to disperse the mob Later, when the PM's mo

torcade was returning from Sonargaon Hotel, a bomb exploded near the car carrying Everyone in the area, from

Farm Gate to the Bijoy Sarani crossing, panicked, running helter skelter. Police resorted to baton-charge and in the melee that ensued even some innocent bystanders, men and women, were beaten up.

Bombs were also set off near the GPO crossing and nearby Golap Shah Mazar, and in Kawran Bazar, Khilgaon, Asad Gate, Green Road and Bijoy Nagar areas.

During the early part of the hartal hours, vehicles except rickshaws, remained off the streets. From noon onwards more and more vehicles ventured out.

In the morning, a few double-decker buses came out on the streets under police protection but later those were withdrawn.

Educational institutions. shops and private offices remained closed while banks and financial institutions worked behind closed doors.

Hartal supporters brought out small processions in different parts of the city.

Our Dhaka Medical College Correspondent said four people were admitted to the DM CH with splinter and shrapnel injuries.

After the hartal hours the Chhatra League, Jatiya Party and Jatiya Juba Samaj held separate rallies in front of the Jatiya Press Club.

#### Clinton orders freeze on assets of 12 ME groups

WASHINGTON, Jan 24 President Bill Clinton has ordered a freeze on the US as sets of 12 Middle East groups described as terrorist organisations, the White House said today, reports Reuter.

White House spokesman Mike, McCurry said Clinton had signed an executive order to block the assets in the United States of certain terrorist organisations that threaten to disrupt the peace process" in the Middle East.

The groups include Hamas, Hizbollah, Islamic Jihad, Abu Nidal. Black September, the Fatah Revolutionary Council. Kach, the Palestine Liberation Front, and the Islamic Group, McCurry said. He did not name the others, but said there would be more information released later today.

# Dhaka offers best deal

From Page 1 Col 4 role in linking the two growth regions of East and South Asia. "I call upon you to take advantage of this historic opportunity and invest in the economic prosperity of Bangladesh, she told the investors.

The trend of investment that has been set in motion since the restoration of democracy in Bangladesh is only the beginning of a new horizon of growth and prosperity in this region, the Prime Minister

We in Bangladesh have the vision of a country which will overcome and conques pover ty. We want to stand proudly alongside the dynamic economies of Asia and the world For realising this vision, we seek you as active partners."

Bangladesh is now on the verge of a rapid economic take-off. Begum Zia said, and a hardworking workforce, favou rable policy framework and substantial investment from home and abroad are the three key elements needed for this march forward

The people of Bangladesh provide the first element and the government is providing the second. We invite you (investors) to provide the third. Together we can make a historic transition.

She observed that the government has recognised that public and private investments from both home and abroad are necessary for achieving the country's development objec-

Before her government as sumed power, the total in vestments registered with the BOI were a dismai 389 million US dollars. Begum Zia pointed out. Compared to this, registered investment during March-December in 1994 alone stood at 1.7 billion US dollars, including nearly 1 billion US dollars from direct foreign investments and joint venture.

This dynamism in the country's economy is a consequence of the restoration of democratic order in Bangladesh", she said. "Democracy is a unique system which promotes efficiency, creativity and biossoming of the intellect."

In order to achieve economic transformation, all segments of society must be active and willing partners, the Prime minister said. The government is fully aware of this reality, she added.

We have a fast expanding private sector. Side by side. there is a shrinking but supportive public sector. Their

objective is identical - to harness the potentials of our

The Prime Minister said Some people say that Bangladesh is a small country. but we consider it to be a big country of 120 million people. Its strategic location adds to its importance in the realm of trade and investment."

Bangladesh once was a legend of wealth and prosperity and merchant ships used to sail abroad for trading but colonial exploitations led to the collapse of the economy and industry of this country. she recalled.

Today we are striving to retrace that path and recapture the lost glory. Our principal asset in this endeavour is our people' Begum Zia said adding that her government has been making allout efforts to develop human resources.

She mentioned that the previous government had spent 10 to 12 per cent of the annual development expenditure for human resource development while the present government increased it to 28 per cent of total development Listing her government's

steps to ensure education. primary health care, development of women and children. supply of pure drinking water and priority to social-welfare sectors. Begum Zia said: "Our achievements in these fields have exceeded our targets." Due to the correct mea-

sures taken by the present government, she said people have already started getting positive results of socio-economic development programmes. Our infrastrurcture like electricity. telecommunica-

tion, ports and highways are being developed fast. Our goal is to reap the benefits of the global free market as we enter the 21st century" the Prime Minister said. The conference was spon-

sored by six foreign and 14 local companies. The foreign companies are: Citicorp, Crosby Securities, Global Emerging Markets. Smith New Court (East Asta) Ltd. UBS Securities (East Asia) Ltd., and W I Carr.

The local sponsors are the Apex Tannery Group. AB Bank. BGMEA. the Dhaka Stock Exchange, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Karnaphuli Fertilizer Company. Rupali Bank, Sonali Bank, BSRS, the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh, the Pacific Group of Companies and Square Pharmaceuticals.

# Saifur: No restrictions

From Page 1 Col 4

raw materials and capital machinery have increased, reflecting the enthusiasm of the entrepreneurs for setting up industries in the country, the munister added. The Finance Minister also

said the private sector has started assuming the prime role in economic development and individual people are now the core of the development He said proportion of local

funds in the annual development programme has increased to 38 per cent from zero in four years. The growth rate has also gone up to 9.3 per cent in fiscal 1993-94 from only 5.5 per cent in 1991-92. The government has also raised the social sector investment to 28 per cent of the ADP in the current fiscal from the previous 10 per cent, he

Special Envoy to the Prime Minister M Morshed Khan said Bangladesh is now the best place for investment in South Asia with its stable macro-economic fundamentals and homogeneous character of the He said the government has

gone for a massive liberalisa-

tion of its economic activities

and withdrawn the restrictions

on foreign investments. The

package of incentives offered to the foreign investors was also more attractive than any country in the sub-continent. Khan added.

FBCCI President Salman F Rahman said the private sector of Bangladesh is going through a very exciting time with a lot of challenges ahead.

He said at the initial stage. reforms were very painful for the private sector, as was the case in many other countries. "We have overcome that

stage and now the private sector is growing with great potentials," the FBCCI chief said and added that a massive increase in private investment took place in the last few years as a result of the reform mea-

Mokammel Hug and Euromoney Managing Director Richard Ensor were the other speakers of the inaugural session of the conference. Manipur violence

**BOI** Executive Chairman

NEW DELHI, Jan 24: At least nine people, including seven paramilitary soldiers. were killed on Tuesday in renewed fighting between Indian security forces and separatist guerillas in the remote northcastern state of Manipur, a news agency reported, says AP.

. claims 9 more

## Call for hartal in Sylhet Jan 28

From Staff Correspondent SYLHET, Jan 24: A day-long hartal has been called in the town on January 28 protesting voting irregularities' and failure of the administration to

Sunday's local elections. Babrul Hossain Babul, an independent candidate called the hartal at a public meeting held this afternoon at the Court-Point area of the town.

provide security in centres in

### Restaurant ransacked

By Staff Correspondent

A group of young men stormed into a restaurant, ransacked it and beat up its staff in the city's Dhanmondi area yesterday evening.

Witnesses said, an armed gang of about 25 youths some of whom were refused free-entertainment in the Khai Khai Parlour at Dhanmondi. Road No-5, in the afternoon carried out the raid at 6:30

The restaurant staff held one identified as Jahangir Alam of Kathal Bagan and handed over him to the Dhanmondi police.

One of the owners of the restaurant said that the gunmen fired two shots and exploded crackers while they were fleeing the scene. But none was injured in the inci-

Sajedur Rahman, the owner of the restaurant lodged a case with the Dhanmondi police.

## Barricade causes Tk 3 cr loss : BR

The railway department sustained a loss of Tk three crore due to the three days of road-raff barricade programme enforced countrywide by jute and textile mill workers, said a press release yesterday, re ports UNB. On the first day of the pro

windowpanes, shutters an engines of inter-city trains Simanta Express and Prabhati Express were damaged, and Tejgaon and Pahartali stations ransacked. The loss was esti mated at Tk two lakh. Ghorasal Flag station was at tacked on the second day causing loss of property worth Tk 2.06 crore. Some 220 sleepers

and 1.800 feet of railway track

near the station were uprooted

and its control panel, genera-

gramme on Sunday, it said

tor and point machine dam Besides, the Railway incurred huge loss by returning money to the passengers who bought tickets but could not travel due to the barricade programme, the press release

# The Midnight Eile

## Soldiers occupy Congress building in El Salvador

SAN SALVADOR, Jan 24: About 200 demobilised soldiers occupied El Salvador's Congress building here today. demanding back pay owed by the government, various sources said. In a related incident, some 100 other soldiers took over the Armed Forces institute for Social Benefit, reports AFP.

#### Fresh efforts for peace in Bosnia

SARAJEVO. Jan 24: International negotiators, hoping to capitalise on recent breakthroughs in United Nations confidence-building efforts, converged on Bosnia on Tuesday to persuade the country's warring parties to resume peace talks. A fragile four month truce, which took effect on January 1 and which is generally holding everywhere apart from the Bihac pocket in northwestern Bosnia, gave new impetus to the mission from the United States, Russia, Germany, Britain and France, reports Reuter.

#### 1 killed, 20 hurt in Natore road accident

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Jan 24: One person was killed and at least 20 others were injured in a road accident at Modalpara here to-

The mishap took place as a passenger bus on the Gurudashpur-Ahmadpur route overturned and fell into a roadside ditch when a speeding truck tried to overtake the bus at Modalpara under Baraigram thana at 11 am today.

Mokhles, 25, a passenger of the ill-fated bus died on way to hospital while 20 other injured passengers were admitted to local thana health complex.

The driver of the bus managed to flee the accident apot A case was registered with Baraigram police.

## Hasina may chair

From Page 1 Col 5 Addressing a plenary session of the conference along with Awami League leader Tofael Ahmed yesterday, the JP leader suggested that the AL chief, as the leader of the largest opposition party should have been invited to chair the closing session to emphasise the commitment to growth of all major political parties in the country.

#### Hasina From Page 1 Col 7

the government has not kept its commitments to profes sionals, workers and students. Presided over by city AL Vice President. Reazuddin

Ahmed, the rally was also ad-

dressed by city unit leaders Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and Akhtarul Alam. The rally was followed by a procession which paraded some city streets chanting slogans in support of the call for

#### 3 bodies From Page 1 Col 8

Motifheel' Police Station for further interrogation.

Sabujbag police also recovered the body of an unidentifled man aged about 24 near the Banashri Apartment proect at Rampura yesterday morning.

Police believed it was a case of homicide.

'His eyes were gouged out and the body carried several marks of cuts and bruises." said a police officer. Another unidentified man

in his 20's died after he was run over by a speeding truck near the IPGMR Hospital at Shahbag around 4 in the after-

#### Railway From Page 1 Col 4

ADB proposal for reforms is now being considered by the government, "BR still has a tremendous

potential in the transport sector. Without major improvements in the transport sector. economic growth could be slowed. Our cities and highways are already gridlocked by traffic jams, and there is growing concern about what more roads and traffic will do to our environment," a source concerned noted Trains have many natural

energy than cars and lorries. cause less pollution and take less space than road transports. Above all, they can be An increasing number of Asian countries including China, Thailand, South Korea, Vietnam are seeking foreign assistance to improve their

railways. In the developing

advantages over other forms of

transport. They consume less

countries, foreign investors are often frustrated by a limited network of pot-holed roads and creaking railway tracks. Unlimited prospects lie before BR in a country with 120

million people who crave for

better transportation.

We wish Bangladesh Investment Conference

hartal today.

a success. Let it contribute to the rapid progress of Bangladesh, the Emerging Tiger of Asia.



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**Editor**: Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd. 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandj R/A, Dhaka-1205, PABX: 500092-4. Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Pax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No. 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.