

## Opposition bid to form coalition in Manipur

NEW DELHI, Feb 23: No party won a majority in the Manipur state election, and opposition groups tried to form a coalition today to take control of the legislature from the Congress Party, reports AP.

The governing Congress Party emerged the single largest group with 21 seats, followed by 18 for the regional Manipur People's Party, United News of India reported. The Janata Dal Party won seven, and the other 13 were won by independents or six small parties, the news agency said.

Chief Minister Rishang Keishing of the Congress Party said he expects the governor to ask him to form a coalition government in Manipur.

But the Manipur People's Party was trying to do that today and expected to team up with the Janata Dal and other parties.

If it forms a governing coalition, that would be the latest in a series of setbacks for the Congress Party of Prime

Minister P V Narasimha Rao. Late last year, it was routed in three states elections, even though India's economy was improving.

The results of five other state elections will be announced next month, and if the Congress Party loses them that could force Rao to slow down his free-market economic reforms, and make it difficult for his party to win the next general election in 1996.

One of the five upcoming state elections will be held in Bihar state next month, but the independent Election Commission has warned that it could postpone the ballot because of a violent campaign and widespread fears of election fraud.

Many opposition parties have complained that Chief Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav of the Janata Dal Party is intimidating candidates and transferring honest state government officials.

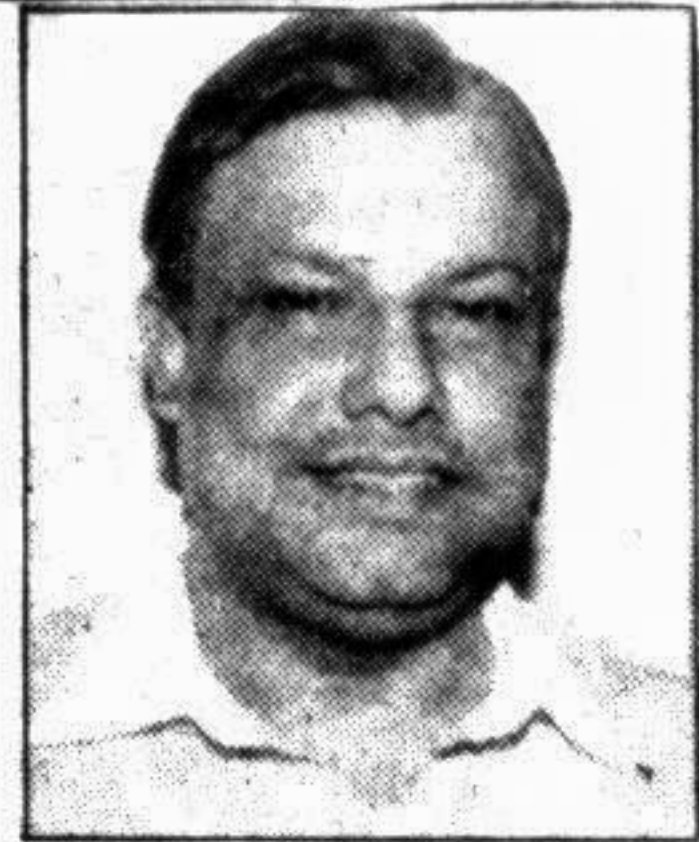
## Garments factory equipment recovered: 9 held

By Staff Correspondent

Detective police yesterday arrested nine persons accused of robbery in the Jamuna Fashion Wear Garments at Mohakhali in the city. The arrests were made during a two-day drive in Dhaka and Narayanganj. Police also recovered goods and machinery of the garments factory worth about Tk six lakh.

The arrested persons were identified as Abdul Jalil Mollah, A Hamid, Abdul Mannan alias Moon, Shah Alam, Hossain Khan, Md Yunus, Anwar Hossain, Md Zuhais and Milon.

They reportedly looted goods and machinery worth about Tk 10 lakh from the Jamuna Garments Factory on February 6 midnight.



Redwan re-elected BGMEA president

By Staff Correspondent

Redwan Ahmed, a member of Parliament from the ruling BNP, was re-elected president of the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers' and Exporters' Association (BGMEA) yesterday.

Other office-bearers of the BGMEA executive body are S M Fazul Huq - 1st vice president, M A Taher - 2nd vice president, Nurul Haque Sikder - vice president and M Jinnat Ali Mian - treasurer.

Members of the election Board Lt Col (ret'd) Anisuzzaman and Safiullah Chowdhury conducted the elections held at the BGMEA conference room.

Earlier on February 16, one-third of the members of the 27-member executive committee of the trade body were elected through direct voting.

## Boy killed in cracker blast

By Staff Correspondent

A teenage boy was killed when a cracker in a shopping bag he was carrying exploded in the city yesterday evening.

Two others were injured in the explosion at West Nakhla-para, according to sources.

The deceased, Iqbal, 19, was carrying some crackers in a polythene bag, sources added.

## Khaleda: Direct talks

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their demands in the House, not to deprive them of their rights.

The Prime Minister said that if her government had got cooperation from the Opposition, the achievements could be much more than what had been attained during the past three and a half years.

Giving a long list of development activities accomplished by this government, she said "If we still get their cooperation we will be able to march forward to build a happy Bangladesh."

Begum Zia pointed out that under parliamentary system, the ruling party and the Opposition worked together for the development of the country. "One can not help the people by keeping oneself away from his duties."

The BNP Chairperson said the next year will be the century 25th year of our independence and we should now take fresh vow for the development of the country."

Begum Zia said the BNP government salvaged the country from an economic disaster. Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, who addressed the inaugural session of the fifth Parliament as acting President, had said in his speech "Country's economy is shattered," she recalled.

"The elected government has placed the economy on a firm footing," she said, pointing out the mobilisation of domestic resources and record foreign exchange reserve.

"This government's programmes for the development of education have been lauded by foreign countries. So far some Tk 3,500 crore has been spent in the education sector, with priority to spread of education in rural areas, Begum Zia said.

The government has also taken up fresh urban-based education programme involving an expenditure of Tk 60 crore which would start from Dhaka," she said.

Referring to the acute traffic jam and over-population in the capital, the Prime Minister said "considering the problems of the city dwellers our government decided to construct three flyovers at Magh-bazar, Sayeedabad and Mohakhali." It will cost about Tk 100 crore, she added.

The government has taken up another ambitious housing project in Yousufganj which will provide 30,000 plots. Besides, 3,000 more flats are being constructed for government employees, Begum Zia said.

Mentioning her recent visit to the JMB project site, she said construction work of the multi-million dollar Jamuna Multi-purpose Bridge is going on in full swing and is expected to be completed by 1997.

Begum Zia said the performance of her government proved that progress and prosperity of the country are possible if there is democracy and a democratic government is in power.

## Pak-Bangla ties excellent, says new Pak envoy

The new Pakistan High Commissioner to Bangladesh yesterday described the Dhaka-Islamabad relations as "excellent" and hoped that the bilateral ties would be further strengthened in the coming days, reports UNB.

"We want a problem-free relation between Dhaka and Islamabad," High Commissioner-designate Karam Elahi told newsmen at the airport on his arrival in the city.

"There is a lot of understanding and cooperation between the two brotherly countries," he said adding that he would try his utmost to contribute to further strengthening of ties between the two countries.

The Pak envoy is expected to present his credentials to President Abdur Rahman Biswas shortly.

A career diplomat, Elahi was earlier posted in the Pakistan missions in Kabul, Tehran, Belgrade, Washington and London.

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erment. The court subsequently issued rules upon the respondents on January 18.

After preliminary hearing, a division bench, comprising Justice A M Mahmudur Rahman and Justice Hamidul Huq, issued a rule upon the Speaker, the Parliament Secretary, the Law Secretary, the Election Commission, Sheikh Hasina, Moudud Ahmed, and Matur Rahman Nizami to show cause why the collective resignations should not be declared illegal and void.

The court also directed the Speaker to refrain from giving any decision on the resignation letters till the disposal of the petitions.

The special bench of the High Court Division was constituted on January 30 by the Chief Justice following a prayer by the counsels for the respondent opposition leaders.

Hearing of the writs began before the larger bench on February 1 and after 15 days of hearing, the bench began delivering judgement on February 20.

In the writ challenging the validity of the resignations, Barrister K S Nabi appeared on behalf of Awami League president Sheikh Hasina, Barrister Moudud Ahmed, parliamentary party leader of Jatiya Party, on his own behalf, and Barrister Abdur Razzaque appeared on behalf of Matur Rahman Nizami, the parliamentary party leader of the Jamaat.

In the writ challenging the Speaker's role A B M Nurul Islam appeared for the petitioner while Abdur Wadud Khandaker and Barrister Asrarul Hossain appeared for the Speaker.



A Russian boy holding a poster that reads: "No peace without justice" stands between demonstrators lying on the ground in front of the Defence Ministry in Moscow yesterday during a protest against the war in Chechnya. — AFP photo

## DU drafts list of Liberation War martyrs

By DU Correspondent

The Dhaka University authorities have prepared a draft list of the martyrs of the Liberation War which will be included in the memorial plaque under construction on the campus.

The university authorities in a press release yesterday urged that if anyone has any proposal for addition, change or correction in the list they may contact the Chief Engineer of the university by March 9.

The memorial plaque will contain the names of martyred teachers, students, officers and employees of the university.

## DU student stabbed

By Staff Correspondent

A student of the Dhaka University was stabbed at the Ekushey Bô Mela (book fair) premises yesterday evening.

The victim, Liton, 22, is a second year student of the Statistics Department.

Witnesses said that Liton criticised and exchanged abusive words with a young man for dancing with a girl in front of a stall in the mela.

The young man and his friends then attacked Liton and stabbed him on his head and neck, sources said.

Later, some of the friends of Liton rushed to the spot and took him to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

## Dhaka invited to attend OIC expert group meet

Bangladesh has been invited to attend an OIC expert group meeting on the role of women in development to be held in mid April in Iran, reports UNB.

Ambassador of Iran to Bangladesh Mahmood Bayat conveyed the invitation to the State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Begum Sarwari Rahman at her office yesterday.

The state minister has also been invited to attend the meeting, said an official hand-out yesterday.

The ambassador also conveyed the Iranian Women's Affairs Minister's invitation to Begum Sarwari Rahman for a state visit according to her convenience.

The State Minister expressed thanks to the government of Iran and hoped that the existing friendship between the two countries would be strengthened further in the future.

## Opposition rebuffs ruling

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he does not like it.... But he has no right to reject those," the AL chief said.

Hasina said the Speaker is being used as a weapon for fulfilling the wishes of the ruling party and its chief. He is just implementing the decision of BNP standing committee, she alleged.

In fact, the Speaker and the government are working against the hopes and aspirations of the people and thereby prolonging the rule of BNP, through time-killing tactics, Hasina said.

The Speaker has undermined the dignity of his office and sanctity of the Constitution because he is involved in implementing the blueprint of the ruling BNP, Hasina said.

She also said Parliament has been turned into a one-party and illegal House following the resignation of the opposition MPs.

"We have resigned from Parliament to give democracy an institutional shape and materialise the hopes and aspirations of the people and our resignations will remain effective," she added.

## 4 killed, 7 hurt in Savar, Sirajganj road mishaps

Four people including a school girl were killed and seven seriously injured in separate road accidents in Savar and Sirajganj yesterday, reports UNB.

Hena Akhtar, 14, a student of class V of Doshaid High School in Savar thana was killed on the spot after a Dhaka-bound bus hit her in front of M H Hall of Jahangirnagar University on the Dhaka-Archa Highway at 7:30 am, police and witnesses said.

Hena, daughter of Jamir Ali of village Aukhpara, met the accident as she was crossing the road.

Another Dhaka-bound bus knocked down an unidentified young woman, 26, at 10 am at Bahampur on the highway.

In another accident at Jajabari in Hemayetpur, seven people were injured when a speeding Aricha-bound coach lost control and hit them at 9 am yesterday.

The injured were sent to local hospitals and Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

A Sirajganj report says. Two people were killed in separate road accidents in two thanas of the district yesterday.

Police said Farhad Hossain, 31, a van-puller, was crushed under the wheels of a speeding truck on Sirajganj-Belkuchi road at Dighalkandi in Sadar thana at 10 am.

Police seized the truck, but the driver fled scene.

In another accident, Abul Kashem, 37, was run over on Bogra-Nagarbari highway at Chandaikona in Raiganj thana yesterday.

Witnesses said Kashem met the accident when a Nagarbari-bound truck knocked him down from behind at 11 am.

Separate cases were filed with the local police.

## Resignations rejected

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atic process, clearly stipulated in the Constitution, he added.

Article 67 (2) of the Constitution says: "A member of Parliament may resign his seat by writing under his hand, addressed to the Speaker and the seat shall become vacant when the writing is received by the Speaker or, if the office of the Speaker is vacant or the Speaker is for any reason unable to perform his functions, by the Deputy Speaker."

"We have to read Article 67 (2) of the Constitution together with rules 177 and 178 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament," the Speaker noted.

Article 177 of the Rules of Procedure (ROP) says: "A member who desires to resign his seat in Parliament shall intimate, in writing under his hand, addressed to the Speaker, his intention to resign his seat in the House and shall not give any reason for his resignation."

"Provided that if any member gives any reason or introduces any extraneous matter, the Speaker may, in his discretion, omit such words, phrases or matter and the same shall not be read out in the House."

The reason assigned and *en masse* resignation by 144 members of Parliament assigning reason already indicated is designed to frustrate the democratic process and push the country into a constitutional crisis with unpredictable consequences," the Speaker said in pin-drop silence in the House.

Prime Minister and Leader of the House Begum Khaleda

## Jute workers' mourning procession today

Jute and textile workers will stage demonstrations in the capital today to protest killings and police action during their rail and road blockade programme, reports UNB.

They will bring out a mourning procession after a protest rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club at 3 pm.

Addressing a press conference in the city yesterday, Convenor of Patalal Sramik Karmachari Sangram Parishad Abul Bashir claimed that 15 people were killed in police action during their blockade programmes in January and this month. Another four workers remained missing, he said.

The dead included Abul Kalam, Abdul Latif, Mukim, Dulal, Siraj Hashem Khan, Abdul Halim, Tajuddin, Abdul Mannan, Solaiman and Bachchu Mia, he said.

## One beaten to death in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 23: One person was reportedly beaten to death by a mob and another brick-field owner was abducted during their blockade programmes in January and this month. Another four workers remained missing, he said.

The Deputy Leader of the Jatiya Sangsad Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday emphatically said Parliament should remain the centre of all political activities in the country, reports BSS.

Winding up the discussion in support of the motion of thanks to the January 13 presidential speech, Prof Chowdhury said that the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) would continue to pursue its production-oriented politics and run the political affairs of the country at the will of the people.

The Deputy Leader of the House described the speech delivered by President Biswas as a valuable document which reflected the forward looking approach and political competence with which the BNP government is handling the affairs of the country in all fronts especially in the economic arena.

Touching the unprecedented successes in the economic front of the country, he mentioned the all-time high foreign exchange reserve of Tk 13,000 crore, bringing down the rate of inflation to 1.8 per cent from 9 per cent in 1990-91, allocation of over Tk 4,000 crore from domestic resources for funding the Annual Development Programme during the current fiscal.

He referred to the expansion of trade and commerce through elimination of barriers and bolstering of the stock market where transactions had gone up by five per cent.

The deputy leader also mentioned the implementation of the Jamuna Bridge project at a cost of Tk 3,600 crore, fixation of minimum wages for industrial labourers, preparation of draft labour law, declaring shrimp culture as an industry and making paper pulp from green jute.

The Deputy Leader of the House urged the politicians irrespective of political beliefs and opinions, to rise above petty party interest and work for the country and democracy and for the welfare of the people through making the Jatiya Sangsad as the centre of all political activities.

The House then adopted a resolution on the motion moved by L K Siddiqui on January 23, thanking President Abdur Rahman Biswas for his inaugural speech before the Jatiya Sangsad on January 23.

Earlier, L K Siddiqui lambasted the Opposition for practising 'double standard' in politics.

Participating in the discussion in support of his motion of thanks to the January 23 presidential speech, Siddiqui

## Shibir calls hartal in Ctg, Cox's Bazar tomorrow

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Khairul Islam, 28, was kidnapped from a city market by gunmen while he went there for Eid shopping on Wednesday afternoon. He was later killed, eyewitnesses said.

His body was sent to his village home for burial after namaz-janaza at Laldighi maidan.

## Govt to restrict movements of truck in city, JS told

Home Minister Abdur Matin Chowdhury yesterday assured the Jatiya Sangsad that the government will take all possible measures to streamline traffic and restrict movements of trucks in the capital, reports BSS.

Replying to a resolution by private member K J Hamida Khanam on the movements of trucks in the city during day time, he said trucks are barred from plying in the capital between 7 to 9:30 am and again between 4-6 pm to help regulate traffic and reduce case of accidents.

## 2 Sarbaharamen

From Page One

spot. By that time labourers at the site and the local villagers rounded them up and beat them mercilessly. At one stage they gouged out the eyes of the Sarbaharamen. They were handed over to Muladi police and later admitted to Muladi Health Complex.

Police recovered one country-made pistol, six rounds of cartridges and three cocktails from their possession. A case was filed with the police.

Besides, Uzirpur thana police arrested another six Sarbaharamen - Sahabuddin, 25, Mizan, 30, Dulal, 27, Manjur, 28, Saha Alam, 35 and Delwar, 35 from different areas of the thana today.

## Cultural exchange

From Page One

agreed to exchange educational delegations during the term of the current exchange programme. It was further agreed between the two sides for exchange of delegations of cultural officials and cooperation between the libraries and exchange of literary works and books.

Both the sides will also exchange delegations comprising people from the fields of art, culture and literature. Besides, they will encourage exchange and cooperation between institutions of sports between the two countries. The exchange of delegations of information, broadcasting and television personnel was also agreed.

Chinese Ambassador in Bangladesh Zhang Xu-Jiang and other members of the visiting delegation were present at the signing ceremony.

## The Midnight File

### Yeltsin ready to take over control of reforming army

MOSCOW, Feb 23: Russian President Boris Yeltsin said here today that he was ready personally to take over control of reforming the army, following military inefficiency displayed in the Chechnya conflict. "Chechnya has shown us once again that we have fallen behind in military reform," Yeltsin said after laying a wreath at the tomb of the unknown soldier to mark armed forces day, reports AFP.

### Badruddoza emphasises JS should be centre of all political activities

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