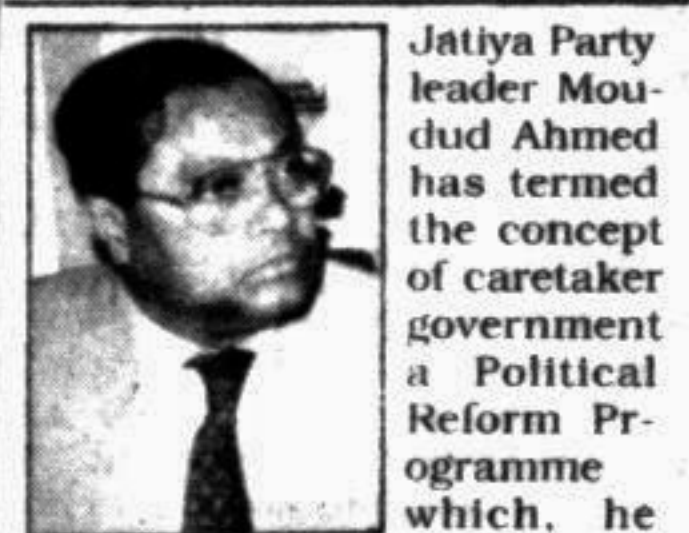


Untying the Gordian Knot of Our Politics

A SERIES OF INTERVIEWS AND ARTICLES ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL CRISIS



Jatiya Party leader Moudud Ahmed has termed the concept of caretaker government a Political Reform Programme which, he says, will help democracy take its root in the country permanently. "Unfortunately, the ruling party did not look at this proposed reform in the right spirit, which in fact has led to the present crisis. On the other hand, the government took an arrogant position on this issue," says the JP leader. According to him, the only way out for the government is to resign immediately, dissolve Parliament and hold general elections under a non-partisan neutral caretaker government. Full text of interview on Page 4.

Tomorrow: Interview of Rafiqul Islam Mia, member, standing committee of the BNP and Minister for Housing and Public Works.

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NEWS BRIEFS

City BNP meets today

A meeting of all vice presidents of the Dhaka City BNP and all presidents, general secretaries and organising secretaries of the party's Dhaka city thana units will be held today at 7 pm at the residence of the city BNP president and Labour Minister, Lt Gen (Retd) Mir Shaukat Ali, reports BSS.

UNAB symposium

The United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) arranged a symposium in Dhaka yesterday in support of the World Summit for Social Development now being held in Copenhagen. Educationist and researcher Raushan Jahan was the main speaker.

Agreement on WSSD declaration

COPENHAGEN, Mar 10: Delegates to the United Nations social summit (WSSD) here finally agreed today on a plan to end poverty and social injustice but warned that results would not come quickly or easily, reports Reuter.

Leaders from across the globe are expected to approve the plan on Sunday.

Summit committee chairman Juan Somavia told reporters that a draft declaration over which governments have argued day and night allweek was 'basically finished' with only the wording of a clause on the logistics of development still to be finalised.

He said the conference's

declaration of war on poverty was a radical departure from previous approaches to the problem.

"I truly believe this is a historic commitment. We have been talking about tinkering with poverty — what we are saying here is that poverty should not exist," Chile's UN ambassador said.

The first of some 120 leaders were already in the Danish capital today as Somavia, one of the summit's principal founders, announced there was an agreement for them to sign.

South African President Nelson Mandela, Cuban President Fidel Castro and Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng had

arrived by mid-day but Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat cancelled plans to attend, saying he was too busy with Middle East peace talks.

Asked by reporters on his arrival what he expected from the summit, Castro replied in Spanish, "Let's wait and see."

Mandela was more forthcoming: "I expect us to go into the problems that worry the world — hunger, poverty... which undermine the effort of the international community to better the lives of human beings," he said.

The Copenhagen conference, billed as history's biggest gathering of world leaders, See Page 12 Col 7

Dhaka reaffirms vow to ensure basic edn

From Masud Hasan Khan

COPENHAGEN, Mar 10: Bangladesh today reaffirmed its commitment for ensuring basic education to all for achieving sustainable development.

The commitment was made at a mini summit of nine most populous states now pursuing ambitious programmes for higher education and eradication of illiteracy.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was scheduled to address the mini summit but later it was cancelled.

Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, Indonesian President Suharto, Bangladesh Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman and leaders of Pakistan, China, Brazil, Egypt, Mexico and Nigeria and chiefs of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNESCO were

present at the informal mini-summit at the Bella Centre auditorium.

Reading out a joint communique on behalf of all the nine countries, the Indian prime minister appealed to the world leaders attending the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD) to give due consideration to education in the upcoming Copenhagen Declaration.

"Education for all is essential in overcoming exclusion and achieving social integration in modern societies; it is instrumental to the success of efforts to reduce unemployment and eliminate poverty," the communique said.

Bangladesh at the summit fully endorsed the joint communique.

See Page 12 Col 4

PM addresses summit today

COPENHAGEN, Mar 10: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will address the first day of the plenary session of the WSSD summit tomorrow, reports BSS.

The two-day session will be participated by the world leaders at the Bella Centre in the Danish Capital to devise ways to tackle the three key challenges — poverty alleviation, employment creation and social integration.

World leaders have already arrived here to deliberate on the critical social issues confronting the present world of over 5.5 billion people at the UN sponsored summit.

Begum Zia, who is leading the Bangladesh delegation at the summit, said that the commitments at the highest political level should be projected in a way to identify the means to meet the basic needs for social progress.

The Prime Minister will call See Page 12 Col 8

Poor manpower, corruption hinder quality control of drugs

By Sharier Khan

Lack of manpower and facilities, faulty operating method and corruption in the Drug Administration are hindering its main function — the quality control of drugs, an authoritative source said.

According to the Director of the Drug Administration, the qualities of most local drugs in the market vary from time to time due to lack of proper technical facilities of the manufacturers and costs of ingredients.

Each year, the Drug Administration (DA) collects Tk 16 lakh worth of samples of medicines for testing their quality. Yet, this year the gov-

ernment has allocated a mere Tk 4 lakh for the purpose. In other words, the DA is dependent on the drug manufacturers and chemists for free supply of drugs and medicines for sampling. That is why, in most cases, the manufacturers only provide the DA with samples from the best batches of production. As a result, random sampling to test efficacy is ruled out.

Again, due to corruption by a section of unscrupulous employees of the DA, many drug manufacturers get away with their poor quality products, observed sources in the Chemists and Druggists' Society.

Corruption, coupled with dissatisfaction, have taken deep roots in the drug administration, noted a well placed source in the DA, requesting anonymity.

There is hardly any provision for promotion of the 66 officers in the DA across the country, comprising 11 inspectors and some 40 superintendents. One frustrated superintendent said he has been serving in the same post for the past 15 years.

Also, there are only 24 offices of the DA covering the medicine markets in the country's 64 districts.

See Page 12 Col 1



People gather around a destroyed motorcycle and a car at the site of a bomb blast which killed 10 in front of a Shiite mosque in Karachi during Juma prayers yesterday. — AFP/UNB photo

Share market: Index down, transactions up

By Sohail Manzur

The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) closed last week with the index 0.177 per cent down compared to that of the previous weekend, but the transactions of shares were high due to a buying spree prompted by the price fall of new issues.

Market operators said prices of the new issues were very high because speculations were high. The prices were corrected last week creating a buying rush among the share traders.

The composite price index

closed at 826.70 points as against 828.17 points of the previous weekend, although the index picked up to 837.44 on the second day of trading last week.

Analysts said the market during the last two months happened to be a buyers' market, as a belief was strong that buyers of the present time would be the real gainers of the booming bourse.

The prices of shares are still very low and have been ranging within a small limit,

which would no longer remain after the involvement of the institutional equity investors in the private sector, likely to appear on the bourse within a few months, they said.

A total of 448,020 shares and debentures worth Tk 73.155 million were traded last week as against 233,166 shares and debentures worth Tk 46.95 million of the previous week.

Market capitalisation of the listed securities closed last week at Tk 42.73 billion after

Gen Manzur murder More people questioned

By Staff Correspondent

Investigators continued their efforts to gather more information regarding the 1981 killing of Maj Gen Manzur, CID sources said yesterday.

No fresh arrest was made in connection with the case but several other persons were questioned. The sources declined to give details.

Another source said five people were questioned Friday, two of whom were brought to the CID office at Malibagh. CID control room sources neither confirmed nor denied this.

It was not clear whether jailed former president H M Ershad was interrogated or not yesterday. Ershad was the See Page 12 Col 6

WB suggests turning T&T into PLC

By Krishna P Roy

The World Bank (WB) has suggested conversion of Bangladesh Telephone and Telegraph Board (BTB) into a public limited company (PLC) for its 'effective autonomy'.

The bank is of the view that conversion of BTB into a PLC should be adopted as a medium term objective over the next 2 to 4 years.

This would result in formal separation of ownership and day-to-day managerial control, the WB says in its final report on telecommunication sector reform.

The bank says, it would be the only means whereby BTB's employees can in future be recruited, paid and

managed in accordance with a much more commercial and customer-oriented approach.

This is crucial to overcome many of the factors that have hindered BTB's level of performance in the past, says the report compiled recently.

The process of converting BTB into a PLC could itself serve as a vehicle for defining and implementing a full reform, the bank study says.

It, however, says there are several obstacles to the immediate conversion of BTB into a PLC.

The quality of accounting information in BTB would also not be adequate for a limited company.

See Page 12 Col 8



DANCE AS YOU LIKE: International Women's Day Celebration Committee organised a function at the city's Ramna Balamul yesterday. — Star photo

Opposition calls 48-hr hartal from tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The major opposition political parties have called a 48-hour hartal throughout the country from 6 am tomorrow.

The Awami League, the Jatiya Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami have called the hartal to press their demands for dissolution of parliament and general elections under a non-party caretaker government.

The hartal call was given on January 25 at separate rallies in the city at the end of a country-wide strike on the day.

The Awami League yesterday brought out a torch procession in the city in support of the 48-hour hartal.

See Page 12 Col 6

No environment for foreign investment, says Hasina

RAJSHAHI, Mar 10: Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina today said the government had failed to create environment for foreign investment due to its wrong policy, indecision and lawlessness, reports UNB.

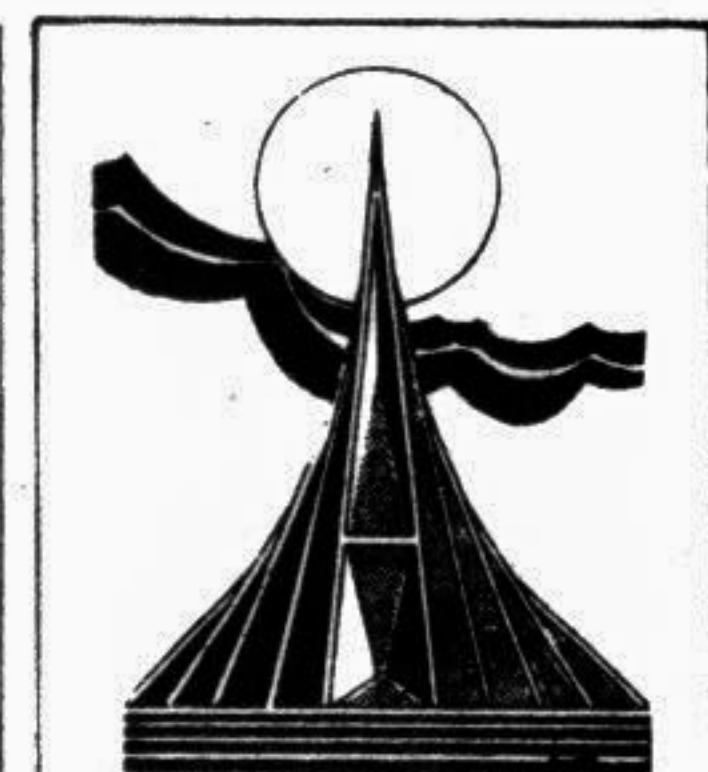
She also identified looting, terrorism, bribery, complication in disbursing loan and administrative loopholes as the impediments of

investment.

Hasina was talking to a group of businessmen led by President of the Rajshahi Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mohammad Ali Sarkar at the local Circuit House this morning.

Hasina refuted frequent statements by vested groups that people's movement ham-

See Page 12 Col 5



Looking Back at March towards Independence

On this day in 1971 Sheikh Mujibur Rahman received a telegramme message from Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who informed that he would be very much willing to meet Mujib in Dhaka to discuss important issues. Tajuddin Ahmad issued a series of directives to the people asking them to keep the "economy in full gear". The Chhatra Union circulated copies of its leaflet which contained a call for establishing an independent, sovereign state in favour of the people inhabiting the eastern wing of Pakistan. Air Vice Marshall (ret'd) Asghar Ali Khan sensed or smelled an imminent disintegration of Pakistan. As many as 24 prisoners fled from the Barisal jail. The conflict between the police and the prisoners took place in Comilla.

(More on page 4)

Indian team likely to visit CHT March 14

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 10: A four-member Indian delegation from Tripura including two state ministers and Chakma refugee leaders, is expected to visit the Chittagong Hill Tracts March 14 to see the condition of the repatriated tribal refugees.

An official source says, the visit of this delegation is aimed at restarting the third phase of Chakma refugee repatriation from Tripura.

Officials here said the delegation is expected to include Food Minister Keshab Majumdar and Sports Minister Jee-ten Chakrabarti of Tripura.

The delegation will visit Ranggarh, Dighinala and Panchhari of Khagrachhari district and different areas of Rangamati district.

The delegation is also ex-

See Page 12 Col 7

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