

**Untying the Gordian Knot of Our Politics**

A SERIES OF INTERVIEWS AND ARTICLES ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL CRISIS

**M Ahmad**  
Chairman of Civic Watch-Bangladesh and President of the North South University, maintains that intolerance, lack of statesmanship, absence of understanding and putting self and party interests above national interest are among the main reasons for the present political stalemate. According to him, political sagacity calls for seizing every opportunity at the right moment for an amicable settlement.

Full text of his responses to The Daily Star questionnaire is on Page 4.

Tomorrow: An article by **Mohammed Abu Hena**, Secretary General PROKRICH-BCS Central Council.

**Inside Today**

**Article**

**Turkey: Passage into EU**  
Arshad-uz-Zaman writes from Istanbul Page 4

**International**

**Kazakh MPs defy President's parliament dissolution order**  
Page 5

**Business**

Transfer of technology from North to suit condition of road network, seminar told  
Benazir opens ECO summit  
Pages 6,7

**STOCK MARKET**

DSE Index	626.96 (+0.09%)
Market capitalisation Tk	42.74 billion
Turnover in volume	98992
Turnover in value Tk	20.65 million

**Feature**

**Science and Technology**

Food security threatened by 'crazed' patent system; The sky's the limit, complain the ozone critics  
Page 8

**Metropolitan**

**Dhaka Day by Day**

The Fun of Hartal - Page 2

**NEWS BRIEFS**

**Bangladesh trade fair in Yangon**  
YANGON, Mar 14: The first Bangladesh trade exhibition was jointly inaugurated here today by the visiting Bangladesh Minister for Commerce and Information Md Shamsul Islam and Myanmar Minister for Trade Tun Kyi.

**BHMS exam postponed**  
The Dhaka University authorities have postponed the first professional BHMS examination scheduled to begin today for unavoidable circumstances, a university press release said yesterday. The fresh date of the examination will be announced soon, reports BSS.

## Farmers block roads, loot fertiliser

**By Staff Correspondent**

The total mismanagement in the distribution system of fertilizer was again highlighted yesterday by another round of clashes, road blockades, seizures and allegations of black-marketing reported from around the country.

Meanwhile, yesterday Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah personally distributed fertilizer among the farmers in his own constituency of Muradnagar in Comilla while a review meeting of the distribution situation in the Khulna division was also held in Khulna under the chairmanship of State Minister for Industries Lutfar Rahman Khan.

Our Narayanjanj Correspondent says, two lakh 54 thousand metric tons of urea fertilizer packed in 5,486 bags were seized from railway wagons at the town station today.

Led by magistrate Abdul Malek, police seized the fertilizer which was lying in 20 wagons since March 10. Each bag, containing 50 kgs was booked in the name of two private firms. It was learnt that the wagons were loaded from Ghorasal and Ashuganj, where the major fertilizer factories are situated.

UNB reports: A government official in Pabna Tuesday alleged that the entire 800 metric tons of fertilizer released for the district was sold by the dealers in the black market.

Deputy Commissioner Ashraf Haq Chowdhury told reporters that 300 metric tons of urea were lifted by M/s Juthi Enterprise of Gazipur from the Jamuna Fertilizer Factory on February 15.

Another 500 tons of urea, he said, were released to M/s River Traders of Narshingdi from the Ghorashal Fertilizer Factory on February 18.

Both the dealers were supposed to supply the consignments to the district administration in Pabna, the DC said but failed to fulfil their commitments.

He alleged that the dealers had sold the entire quantity at Manikganj in the black market.

In Jamalpur: Five people were injured in a clash between two groups during distribution.

See Page 12 Col 1

## Gen Manzur murder case Interrogation of Latif, Rahman continues

**By Staff Correspondent**

CID officials yesterday continued interrogation of Major General (ret'd) Abdul Latif and Lt Colonel Shamsur Rahman who were arrested Sunday night in connection with the murder of Major General Abul Manzur in 1981.

According to CID sources, the investigators were trying to find out with whom Gen Latif, then a Brigadier, had telephonic conversations before assigning Major (ret'd) Kazi Emdadul Huq to take custody of Gen Manzur from the Hathazari police on June 1, 1981.

Major Emdad, who is now in the Dhaka Central Jail, in his statement before a magistrate last week, reportedly mentioned that Col Shamsur Rahman was involved in the killing of Manzur. Shamsur Rahman had identified the body of Gen Manzur at the Combined Military Hospital.

Chittagong after it was taken their the following morning, according to the autopsy report.

CID officials said no fresh arrest was made in this connection since Sunday nor was anyone interrogated although there was a strong rumour in the city that a former Army chief was questioned.

The source said that fresh arrests are unlikely unless these two former army officials, now in police remand, make their statements before a magistrate under Section 164 of the CrPc.

He also hinted that Gen Latif and Col Shamsur Rahman may be taken to Chittagong for more detailed investigation.

The source would not elaborate, saying only that the investigating officer of the case can give the actual details.

Emdad's family sources told

See Page 12 Col 4

## 'Political uncertainties slow down pace of reforms'

**By S Y Bakht**

The pace of the ongoing economic reform process has slowed down recently because of the current 'political uncertainties' prevailing in the country, government officials acknowledged yesterday.

This acknowledgement was made during a wrap-up meeting with World Bank officials to review the draft country economic memorandum (CEM), prepared by the bank ahead of the Paris Aid Consortium meeting next month, sources attending the meeting said.

The government side, however, contended that despite of problems progress has been made in the implementation of some reform initiatives and informed that, as agreed earlier, one nationalised commercial bank (NCB) is going to be privatised soon as part of the reform in the banking sector, the sources noted.

Correction in some of the statistical data included in the draft CEM was also sought at the meeting.

Chaired by Lutfullah Majid, Secretary, Economic Relations Division of the Finance Ministry, the meeting was held at the NEC Bhawan starting at 10 am Tuesday. Senior government officials from various line ministries, Bangladesh Bank officials, World Bank Resident Mission Chief Pierre Landell-Mills and other Bank officials attended the meeting lasting nearly three hours.

Referring to the slow pace of the reform programme, the draft CEM had raised questions about the government's political commitment to the various reform initiatives.

The donors must take note of the political situation prevailing in the country, 'one official was quoted as having said at the meeting, while denying the contention that there was a lack of political commitment on the part of the government.

The official also pointed out that reform is a painful process, particularly adversely affecting the poorer sections of society, and emphasised the need to put in place adequate safety-net programmes, the sources said.

The government officials, however, noted that despite of the difficulties progress has been made in implementing the reform measures in a number of areas, including the power, financial and banking sectors, the sources pointed out.

The draft CEM cautioned that the unfinished reform agenda would limit the success of the achievements of the past few years and warned that the failure to carry forward the reform process would impair the growth prospects of the country's economy.

Among other issues, it was critical about the lack of progress in the reform initiatives in the financial sector, expressing concern at the high proportion of non-performing loans and the poor loan recovery rate, and the privatisation drive, while noting that the annual losses in the 200 or so state-owned enterprises amounted to nearly one per cent of country's GDP.

The government side noted that Rupali Bank is being readied for privatisation while the Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha (BSRS) is being converted into a commercial bank as part of the banking sector reforms agreed with the donors earlier. However, Finance Ministry officials at the

See Page 12 Col 1



Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto (C) inaugurates the summit of the 10-nation Economic Cooperation Organisation yesterday in Islamabad. She is flanked by Foreign Minister Asaf Ahmed (L) and Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh. — AFP/UNB photo



Commonwealth Secretary General Chief Emeka Anyaoku called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her hotel suite in London yesterday. — PID photo

## Security at JMB project site tightened

**Star Report**

The authorities have deployed a big contingent of police to ensure security of the officials and contractors of the under-construction Jamuna Multi-purpose Bridge (JMB) at the project site following an incident last week which left a Dutch expert injured, according to sources.

Tangail police has detained 25 persons allegedly involved in the March 7 incident.

Seventy-two police personnel have been deployed at the project site as part of strong security measures.

According to district administration officials in Tangail, hundreds of agitated workers had attacked experts of a Dutch construction firm and employees of the JMB authorities on March 7 in the morning.

The attackers, belonging to recruiting agent Padma Builders, became agitated when they heard that Dutch firm

See Page 12 Col 7

## Khaleda, Emeka discuss issues in London

LONDON, Mar 14: Commonwealth Secretary General Chief Emeka Anyaoku today called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her hotel suite, reports BSS.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to Commonwealth countries and the recently concluded World Summit for Social Development in the Danish capital of Copenhagen.

The Prime Minister underlined the need for extending more support of the Commonwealth to Bangladesh in its development efforts.

Earlier, Begum Zia attended the Commonwealth Day reception last night at Marlborough House here.

On her arrival at the Marlborough House the Prime Minister was received by Chief Emeka Anyaoku.

Head of the Commonwealth, Queen Elizabeth II was present at the colourful reception.

Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, President of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister of

Dominican Republic M. Eugenia Charles and Prime Minister of Bermuda Sir John W. Swan and representatives and dignitaries of other Commonwealth countries attended the reception.

Queen Elizabeth II, Begum Khaleda Zia, Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Robert Mugabe and Emeka Anyaoku spent some time together.

British Prime Minister John Major earlier welcomed Begum Zia in London by sending her bouquet along with a letter at her hotel suite.

John Major, who is now out of the country wrote a personal letter:

"I wanted to welcome you warmly to London ... I am afraid that I shall be abroad while you are here."

He said British Secretary of State Douglas Hurd, would be meeting Begum Zia.

The British prime minister also wished to see the Bangladesh leader at the Commonwealth heads of government meeting later this year.

## AL wants power transfer thru voting: Hasina

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday said they wanted transfer of power through voting but the BNP was hatching conspiracy to snatch the people's right to vote through ballot piracy, reports UNB.

We want transfer of power through fair polls and want to free the nation from the misrule of this government," she said addressing a gathering of leaders and workers from different political organisations who joined the AL.

Jhenidah Jatuya Party leader

See Page 12 Col 3

## Consumer Rights Day today

**By Staff Correspondent**

World Consumer Rights Day will be observed in the country as well as in other parts of the globe today.

The theme of this year's celebration is — 'Be Conscious of Your Rights.'

Over 200 consumer organisations around the world will celebrate the day marking the tenth anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the guide-

See Page 12 Col 8

## Private banks asked to rectify lapses by June

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday called upon the private banks to strictly adhere to the financial discipline and banking rules, reports BSS.

The minister was addressing a meeting of the chairmen, managing directors (MDs) of various private banks held in the conference room of the Bangladesh Bank. State Minister for Finance M Mujibur Rahman, special envoy to the Prime Minister Mursheed Khan, secretary, banking division, ATM Shamsul Huda and high officials of the Bangladesh Bank were present in the meeting.

The Finance Minister said bankers are the trustees of the people's money and bounded by the Banking Act, Trust Act, Securities Act and Criminal Procedure Code. He said, the government always wants healthy development of private sector banking and the bankers should always pursue healthy and sound banking practices to put banking institutions on sound footings.

He urged the private bankers to rectify their lapses and unfair banking practices, if any before the 30th June next. Otherwise, the finance minister warned that the government won't hesitate to take any tough measures to protect depositors' money.

The Finance Minister said private bankers have to take the responsibilities for their own faults and lapses in case any bank is about to sink and should never think that government would come to their rescue with a life boat tip of rescue operation.

He directed the Bangladesh Bank to issue circular so that chairman of the banks can not interfere in the day to day normal functions of the banks. He said, such unwarranted interference only creates problems and impose undue pressure on the managing directors and other executives of the banks.

The minister said chairmen of the banks should make themselves present and preside in every board meetings of the banks and should remember that they are not full executives and should not put themselves in the positions of the chief executives of the banks.

At the same time, the MDs of the banks would not be allowed to escape responsibility.

See Page 12 Col 8



## Looking Back at March towards Independence

On this day in 1971, Sheikh Mujib announced, on a Radio Pakistan broadcast, that the non-violent, non-cooperation movement would continue until Awami League's goal was achieved. He further announced a fresh programme of action to be followed as the struggle entered its third week.

In his programme, Sheikh Mujib said: "The heroic struggle of the people marches forward. All those who cherish freedom and are struggling for it the world over, should regard our cause as their own. Our people have proved how a determined and united people can be a bulwark of freedom against those who conspire to rule by force."

Meanwhile, Letters of Credit have been opened for importing 3,17,500 tonnes of rice from Pakistan, India, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam so far and the rice would reach the country during the current month and by April 15.

This was revealed at a re

See Page 12 Col 8

## Rice from India, Pakistan arrives

Two ships carrying 20,000 tonnes of rice from India and Pakistan reached Chittagong port on Sunday, reports BSS.

The ships MV Safar carried 10,000 tonnes of rice from India and MV Ficalr 10,000 tonnes from Pakistan respectively.

See Page 12 Col 8

## SKOP discusses action programme

**By Staff Correspondent**

The Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) at a meeting yesterday discussed two alternative proposals for workers' strike a 48-hour or a 24-hour strike — later this month or early next month to press their eight-point demand including implementation of the Wages Commission award in the private enterprises.

According to meeting sources, the SKOP leaders will again meet this morning at its Tophkana Road office in the city.

Chaired by Abdullah Sarkar, the meeting decided to announce fresh agitation programmes at a press conference tomorrow.

The SKOP leaders met a day before their March 15 deadline for the government to accept their eight-point demand.

Other demands of the SKOP, the umbrella body of

See Page 12 Col 3

## Tongi poura polls Submission of nominations today

The candidates for the April 10 Tongi model municipal election will submit their nomination papers today, reports BSS.

The nomination papers will be scrutinised on March 16 while the last date of their withdrawal is March 21.

The Election Commission has appointed deputy commissioner of Gazipur as the returning officer and district election officer as the assistant returning officer for conducting the polls.

The Tongi model municipal election will be the second election, after Dapunia union of Mymensingh last year, where voters will cast their votes with identity cards.

Election Commission sources meanwhile said that out of 72 thousand voters' identity cards, 52 thousand have already been prepared with the voluntary services of 56-member central steering committee, comprising the local, sub-district and district leaders of the municipal area.

See Page 12 Col 3

## Patel, Joshi take oaths as new Gujarat, Maharashtra CMs

GANDHINGAR, Mar 14: Sixty five year old veteran politician and the Bharatiya Janata Party leader, Keshubhai Savdas Patel, was today sworn in as the 21st chief minister of Gujarat, reports PTI.

The oath of office and secrecy was administered to Patel by the Gujarat Governor, Dr Swarup Singh at an impressive ceremony held near the lawns of the state assembly building here.

A large number of party leaders, government officials and other dignitaries attended the ceremony.

Patel, the leader of the opposition in the outgoing state assembly, was elected leader of the party's legislature wing at its meeting here yesterday.

Meanwhile, Manohar Joshi, deputy leader of the Hindu militant Shiv Sena, was sworn in as the first non-congress Chief Minister of Maharashtra state at a colourful ceremony attended by some 100,000 supporters.

Joshi, sporting a saffron turban, took the oath in the regional Marathi language, followed by Gopinath Munde, leader of the BJP, who was sworn in as Deputy Chief Minister.

In a speech after the swearing-in ceremony, Shiv Sena supreme Bal Thackeray said the new Maharashtra government would expel 'illegal immigrants' from Pakistan and Bangladesh living in Bombay.

"We will have no misplaced humanitarianism in this matter," said Thackeray, whose party is known for its anti-Muslim leanings. "I will ask the police also to find these people and send them out."

The alliance of two rightwing Hindu parties Shiv Sena and the BJP vowed today to rename its capital Bombay after a patron saint of this financial hub of India.

The ultra-militant Shiv Sena spearheaded a drive since 1971 to rename this city of 12 million people.

Shiv Sena wants to rename the city as Mumbai after the Hindu goddess Mumba Devi, considered Bombay's patron saint. The city was named Bombay during the British colonial rule.

"We will now pursue it at an official level with New Delhi as we have been voted into power," Sena leader Pramod Navalkar said.

See Page 12 Col 3