

### Dhaka's call to resist new forms of racism

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination will be observed in the country today, reports BSS.

The occasion marks the anniversary of the day in 1960 when at a peaceful demonstration against the apartheid 'pass laws' in Sharpeville, South Africa, police opened fire, killing 69 blacks.

Proclaiming the international day in 1966, the General Assembly called on the international community to redouble its efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon the nations of the world to resist together the 'evil trends' of emergence of new forms of racism, racial discrimination, intolerance and xenophobia throughout the world.

Begum Zia, in a message to mark the day today, reaffirmed Bangladesh's 'unequivocal opposition and rejection of racism and racial discrimination in all its forms and manifestations.'

### N'ganj clash

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Narayanganj district JP, arrested him and took him in a microbus around 5 pm today.

Shamim Osman, younger brother of Nasim, tried to prevent police from arresting his brother and made a call over the loudspeaker of a local mosque to free Nasim from police custody.

At this stage, some 60 to 70 AL and JP workers armed with bamboo sticks came out on the scene and snatched Nasim. They hurled over 100 cocktails at police. Police then opened fire causing injuries to many.

Following the incident, all shops in the Narayanganj town closed and traffic movement between Dhaka and Narayanganj was suspended for three hours from 5 to 8 pm today. A mob damaged 15 vehicles and set a minibus on fire at Chashara.

No arrest was made till the filing of this report late tonight and police was patrolling Narayanganj town.

### New book on law published

By Staff Correspondent

Chief Justice M Habibur Rahman yesterday described framing of the 1972 Constitution as a great event in the country's history and noted that it has undergone 'violent changes' over the years.

"The Constitution of 1972 is a great event in our national history," he said.

The Chief Justice was speaking as chief guest at the launching ceremony of a book — Constitutional Law of Bangladesh — written by senior advocate Mahmudul Islam and published by the Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA).

"Our Constitution has, however, suffered like the land of a country of violent changes," the Chief Justice observed. "The Constitution has on occasions been amended with an eye on a particular person. Let us hope the days of foreboding are over."

Held at the Dhanmondi office of BILIA, the ceremony was also addressed by former chief justice Kemaluddin Hossain, Justice Mostafa Kamal, Barrister Ishtiaq Ahmed, Dr Kamal Hossain, Barrister Mainul Hossain and Barrister Amir-ul Islam.

## Nerve gas attack

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tack, which would be one of Japan's worst incidents of terrorism ever.

Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama expressed outrage and demanded a full investigation.

"We absolutely can't allow this kind of indiscriminate murder of innocent citizens," he told reporters.

Authorities refused to discuss suspects — either individuals or groups — and would not say whether they included Aum Shinri Kyo, a religious cult that has been accused of making sarin.

The group, which has been linked by news reports to several unsolved kidnappings, denied any involvement in today's poisonings and threatened in a statement to sue anyone who suggested there was a link.

Two unexplained incidents earlier this month could yield clues. On March 15, three mysterious attacks were discovered at a Tokyo subway station, each containing three tanks with an unknown liquid, small motorised fans, a vent,

and a battery. One was giving off a vapour.

Ten days before that, 19 train riders in Yokohama, a port city near Tokyo, were taken to hospitals complaining of eye and respiratory pain from an unknown source of fumes.

Hospitals in central Tokyo were inundated with victims of today's attack. Doctors and nurses rushed frantically to administer CPR, give oxygen and hook up intravenous drips.

"When I got to the hospital, I couldn't move my hands enough to write my name and I could barely speak," said commuter Masashi Ito.

The poisoning struck at a cherished national institution. Tokyo's clean and efficient subway network. The trains run on precise schedules, carrying 2.7 billion passengers a year, about twice as many as the New York subway system.

The attack also came as Japan was still recovering from the physical and emotional devastation of the January 17 earthquake in Kobe that killed nearly 5,500 people.

## Manzur murder

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eventually come around to owning their respective responsibilities by signing confessional statements.

Their remand expires March 23.

Sources also said that CID officials had been making enquiries at various cantonments and military establishments, including Bogra.

Sources said one mid-ranking serving officer had also been summoned to Dhaka from Bogra for questioning. However, the name or rank of the officer could not be gathered.

Meanwhile, another source, refusing to be named, said that a former general now serving

### Water Day

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country are suffering from acute water scarcity where ground water levels have gone down by an average of three to 26 meters, according to recent reports.

The water availability condition of 16 northern districts has become even more serious, the NGO officials pointed out, where 50,000 shallow tube-wells reportedly have gone out of order.

Quoting official figures, the NGO Forum officials said the ground water shortage has made about three lakh out of an estimated 14 lakh shallow hand pumps of the country inoperative.

Besides, 2,000 deep tube wells have also gone out of order due to lack of sub-soil water, said S M A Rashid, Director of the NGO Forum.

The country's total daily need of water for drinking, household use and irrigation is 48,000 cubic litre but due to lowering ground water level, only 24,000 cubic litre is being extracted, she said.

In addition, rainfall in the last monsoon was 26 per cent less than the previous season.

"This falling water level is posing a serious threat to our national drive to supply safe drinking water and sanitation to the people," Rashid said adding that the agriculture and other water-related activities were also being seriously hampered.

If the present trend of lowering water level continues, 50 per cent of the country's total area might suffer from lack of adequate water for drinking, domestic needs and irrigation, he cautioned.

as the country's ambassador had been recalled to Dhaka for questioning in connection with the deaths of both Gen Manzur and President Ziaur Rahman.

Despite frantic efforts, this could not be confirmed till late last night.

Our Chittagong Correspondent, in a despatch yesterday, said a court in the port city has called for the dossier relating to the assassination of President Ziaur Rahman by April 11.

Police sources in Chittagong hinted that the case may be reopened because it is linked to the subsequent death of Manzur in unexplained circumstances inside the cantonment while in Army custody.

On June 1, a first information report (FIR) was lodged with the Kotwali thana by a police officer regarding Zia's death. Yet, to date, there has not been a final police report on the matter, which was later conveniently allowed to slip into obscurity.

A field general court martial, constituted in June 1981, tried 32 Army officers of whom 13 were executed, 10 given prison terms ranging from seven to 14 years while nine were acquitted.

### Husband of slain Monwara Begum held in city

By Staff Correspondent

The police have arrested the person accused of killing his wife at their Mohammadpur house in the city on Saturday.

Sheikh Nooruddin, 60, allegedly murdered his wife, Monwara Begum, 55, mother of four children, Saturday noon.

According to sources, the local thana police arrested him from his residence at M/12, Noorjahan Road, at about 5:30 pm yesterday.

Giasuddin Sarker Rinku, eldest son of Nooruddin, filed a murder case on the day of the murder.

Meanwhile, Nooruddin is reported to have denied the charge of killing his wife.

He was handed over to the Detective Branch police last night.

### SAIC meeting begins

The 9th meeting of the governing board of the SAARC Agricultural Information Centre (SAIC) began yesterday in the SAIC conference room at Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) Complex in the city, reports BSS.

Representatives from SAARC member countries Bhutan, India, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the host country Bangladesh are participating in the three-day meeting.

### AL rally

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The AL city branch organised the rally at Bangabandhu Avenue in the afternoon protesting Sunday's police action on its workers in the capital.

Chaired by Monir Hossain Khan, the rally was addressed by Tofael Ahmed, Abdur Razzak, Amir Hossain Amu, Muzaffar Hossain Paltu, Mofazzal Hossain Choudhury Maya and others.

### Fire victim

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Rashid yesterday distributed relief materials including saarees, lungees and biscuits among the victims of Sunday's fire.

Responding to the demands of the local people to widen the lanes and bye-lanes of the locality for facilitating fire brigade vehicles to enter in the areas in times of any emergency Mir Shawkat assured them of taking appropriate steps in this regard.

### 3824 to perform Haj under govt management

A total of 3824 Bangladeshis will perform Haj under government management this year, an official handout said, reports BSS.

The government has introduced computerised lottery system to ensure impartial allocation of houses at Makkah and Haj flights to and from Makkah.

Minister for Religious Affairs Muhammad Keramat Ali formally inaugurated the lottery at Population Census Bureau here yesterday.

The Haj flight will start from April 13 continuing till April 26. While the return flight will start from May 13 and continue till May 23. Bangladesh Biman will carry 301 people on its first Haj flight.

JP Office Case

### Cross-examination of PWs ends

The cross examination of prosecution witnesses (PWs) in the corruption case against deposed president Hussain Mohammad Ershad and two others including a former minister concluded yesterday with the examination of the investigating officer, reports BSS.

Ershad, former Works Minister Mostafa Jamal Haider and former Works Secretary M A Rouf are charged with abusing their official positions for spending about Taka 82 lakh of state funds for renovating and refurbishing an abandoned house used by the then ruling Jatiya Party.

Kutrik Chandra Das, whose cross-examination concluded yesterday, is also the complainant of the Special Case No 50 of 1993. Presently a senior ASP with the police headquarters in the capital, Das was an officer of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption when the case was filed in early 1993.

Zinat Ara, Additional District and Sessions Judge (First Court), Dhaka, fixed March 20 for the accused persons to make their statements about the allegations under Section 342.

### Tewari quits party posts

NEW DELHI, Mar 20: A senior leader of India's ruling Congress (I) party, Narain Dutt Tewari, widely seen as an ally of Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao's arch-rival Arjun Singh, resigned from his official party posts here today, reports AFP.

Tewari told a news conference that he had quit from the powerful Congress working committee and other party offices due to threats of "dire disciplinary action," the Press Trust of India said.

### Bihar

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districts, the Hindu said.

Fears of violence have dogged the elections in the state, located in the Hindi-speaking heartland of India, prompting the election commission to reschedule the polls to allow paramilitary troops to move from place to place.

The state, with a total of 324 legislative constituencies, is administered by the Janata Dal.

The situation was 'tense but under control'.

### EU wheat

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Integrated Food-Assisted Development Project (IFADEP) which, over a period of six years, will provide Bangladesh with a total of 5,62,000 tonnes of wheat valued at 73 million ECU (Taka 376 crore).

Bangladesh had been granted substantial annual allocations of food aid by the European Union since independence, however, beginning mid-1994, these traditional deliveries are being replaced by agreed projects to enhance the developmental impact of the food aid by providing complementary financial and technical assistance resources totalling 30 million ECU (Taka 154 crore). The EU's total commitment for IFADEP amounts to 103 million ECU (Taka 530 crore).

### JFF

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Jamuna Fertilizer Factory (JFF) was earlier suspended on Saturday last for mechanical fault. Some 1,700 tonnes of granular urea are produced daily in the factory, established in 1990 at Tarakandi in Jamalpur.

The JFF produces more than 20 per cent or 5.61 lakh tonnes of the total of about 22 lakh tonnes of urea produced annually in six fertiliser factories in the country.

Production in Chittagong Urea Fertilizer Factory was suspended Tuesday night as the salinity level in the Karnaphuli river, the factory's lone source of sweet water, increased alarmingly. The factory produces, 1,700 tonnes of urea per day.

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For the convenience of the participants, the last date of registration has been extended until Saturday, 25 March 1995.

The other details of the programme will remain unchanged.

Secretary  
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