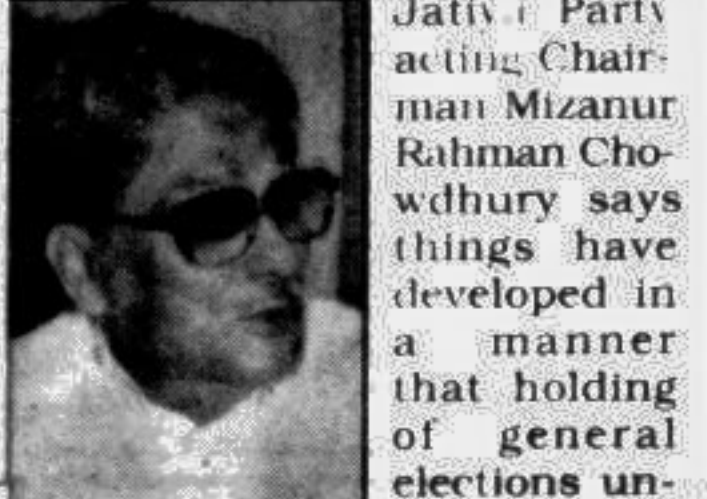


Untying the Gordian Knot of Our Politics

A SERIES OF INTERVIEWS AND ARTICLES ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL CRISIS



Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury says things have developed in a manner that holding of general elections under a caretaker government is now the only way out of present political crisis.

The JP leader feels that a political understanding between the government and the Opposition is a must for the sake of democracy and country. But there would not be any understanding if the government does not change its attitude towards the Opposition, he asserts.

Full text of his interview is on page 4.

TOMORROW: Interview of Mohammed Nasim, Organising Secretary of Bangladesh Awami League.

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STOCK MARKET

DSE Index	797.75 (-0.41%)
Market capitalisation Tk	44.06 billion
Turnover in volume	130684
Turnover in value Tk	22.86 million

Law and Our Rights

Spectre of black laws still looms large; Legal framework for investment in Bangladesh-II Page 8

Farmers try to block urea wagons 2 killed in Gaibandha police firing

Two persons were killed and 30 others injured, three of them by bullets, when police opened fire on farmers agitating for fertiliser, near the Mahimaganj rail station in Gaibandha yesterday.

Meanwhile, traffic on the Dhaka-Khulna highway was disrupted for about three hours yesterday as farmers blocked the road in Kaliganj thana demanding immediate supply of fertiliser.

The firing victims were identified as Tuku, 35, of Dirai village and Badal, 37, of Shalmara under Gobindaganj thana. Three seriously injured

were admitted to the Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

Meanwhile, Rafiqul Islam, who was injured in police firing during an agitation against fertiliser crisis in Myensingh, died at the PG Hospital Monday night. His body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy yesterday.

Our Correspondent quoting sources said police and farmers clashed when hundreds of agitating farmers tried to block the transportation of urea fertiliser from Mahimaganj to Gobindaganj.

The farmers staged a demonstration during the un-

loading of fertiliser from rail wagons at about 11 am. A magistrate was supervising the work.

The agitating peasants demanded distribution of fertiliser among them at the station site.

At this, the situation deteriorated and police opened fire when a group of farmers snatched away a rifle from an Ansar.

UNB quoting witnesses said hundreds of farmers assembled at Nimala and put barricade on the road at about 9 am. More than 300 vehicles were

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350-m litre a day emergency programme City water supply will be increased by 50pc

The government has undertaken an emergency programme to increase the supply of drinking water in Dhaka by 350 million litres per day and also improve the capital's sewerage system, reports UNB.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, which reviewed the progress of different projects under 1994-95 Annual Development Programme of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD).

The Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (WASA) at present is able to supply only 760 million litres against the daily requirement of 1290 million litres — causing a deficit of 530 million litres.

The meeting held at the International Conference Centre yesterday afternoon de-

ecided to undertake an interim project which is expected to increase water supply from different existing pumps in Dhaka by 100 million litres.

Work of the proposed Sayedabad Water Treatment Plant will start immediately. The plant is likely to produce 225 million litres per day.

In addition, the Chadnighat pump station in old Dhaka will

IDA city water project may be delayed

Star Report

The negotiations for the 170 million US dollars Fourth Dhaka Water Supply and Sanitation (FDWSS) project are likely to be delayed as the government is yet to fulfil the conditionalities imposed by

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undergo Balancing, Modernisation, Rehabilitation and Expansion (BMRE) for the first time in 40 years. The BMRE is expected to enhance the station's supply capacity by 25 million litres per day.

Stressing the need for improving the city's sewerage system, the meeting directed Dhaka WASA to complete work of the planned Narinda Sewerage Treatment Plant on an emergency basis. Taka 300 million has been sanctioned for the work.

The meeting, attended by LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Deputy Minister for LGRD Abdul Hye and other concerned officials, took accounts of 79 local government projects and 25 projects under rural development.

The LGRD minister in-

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Opposition's barricade programme tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The mainstream opposition parties are scheduled to enforce a road-rail barricade across the country tomorrow to press their demands, including resignation of the BNP government and general elections under a caretaker administration.

The parties — the Awami League, the Jatiya Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami — announced the barricade and other identical agitation programmes at the end of the 48-hour hartal on March 13.

The next programmes of the three parties include 'Dhaka Siege' on March 28.

Meanwhile, the Left Democratic Front (LDF), an alliance of eight left parties, has called a half-day hartal on March 25 demanding a caretaker government and protesting the price spiral of essentials including fertiliser, rice and paper.

Gen Manzur murder case Latif's confessional statement recorded

By Court Correspondent

The metropolitan magistracy, Dhaka yesterday recorded the bail prayer of Major Gen (ret'd) Abdul Latif after recording his confessional statement under Section 164 of CrPc.

Gen Latif, arrested on March 12 for his alleged involvement in the killing of Maj Gen Abul Manzur in 1981, was produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) court by the CID police yesterday afternoon.

On order of the court, Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Abdul Mannan recorded the statement of Latif at his chamber under heavy police guard.

Latif was brought to the court at 1 pm in a white microbus and later shifted to the chamber of the metropolitan magistrate at around 2 pm where he recorded his confessional statement upto 7 pm.

Then, he was produced at the court custody. The court

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ISPR's request

By Staff Correspondent

The Inter-Service Public Relations yesterday, in a press release, noted with regret that some newspapers were publishing 'speculative, uninformed and exaggerated' reports regarding arrests and interrogation of in-service army officers serving in different parts of the country.

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Looking Back at March towards Independence

On this day in 1971, a rally of exmilitary officers and sepoys was organised near Baitul Mukarram with the objective of taking a vow to participate in the struggle for independence. Numerous processions and rallies were organised in the city. A rally of poets and writers was organised, particularly a poetry reading session was held in the afternoon to animate and activate the spirit of liberation.

More on page 4

Kuwaiti PM may visit in May

Prime Minister Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Abdullah Al-Sabah of Kuwait is expected to pay a four-day visit to Bangladesh in the third week of May, officials said yesterday, reports UNB.

This will be the first visit by the Kuwaiti Prime Minister to Bangladesh.

Exchange of high-level visit between the two countries also took place in the past.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited the oil-rich Gulf state in 1992.

Ameer Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah of Kuwait came to Dhaka on a state visit in 1980.

Saifur off to Washington

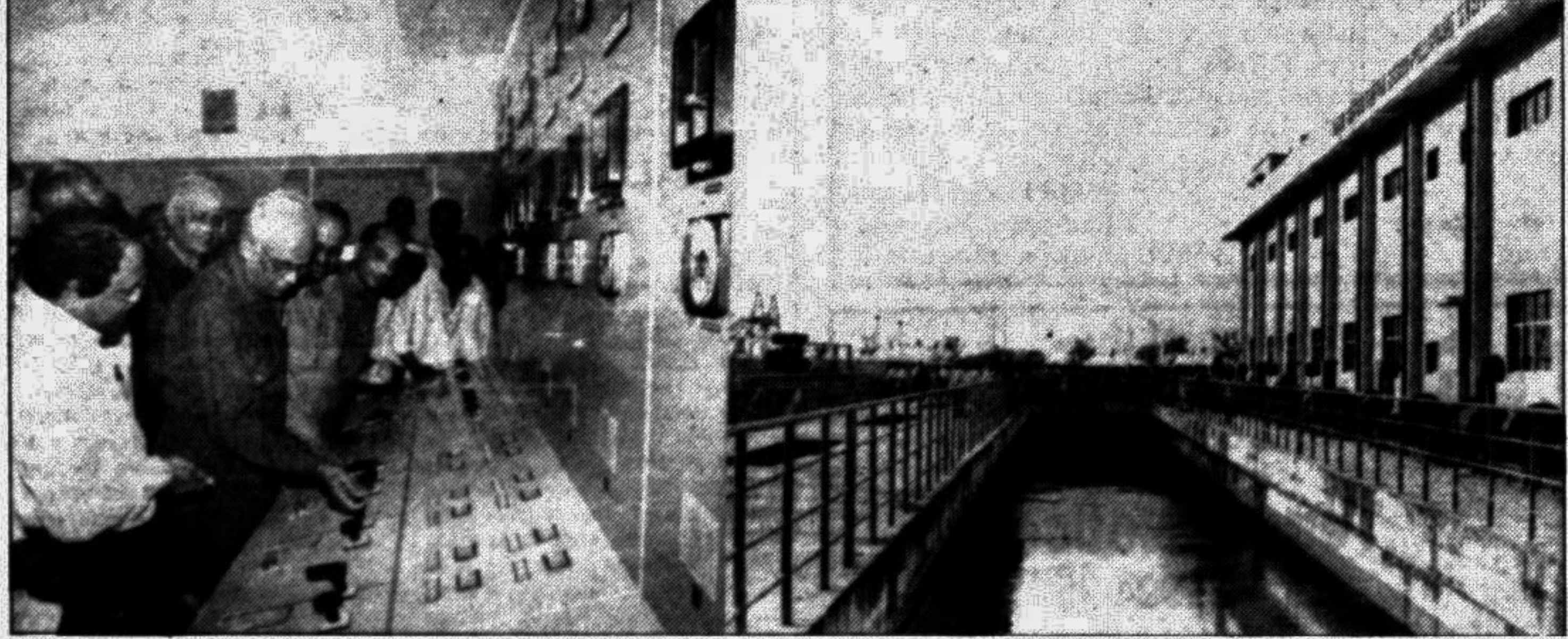
Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman left for Washington last night for a pre-Aid Club consultation with the officials of World Bank where he is expected to reassure the WB of Bangladesh's total commitment to reforms, reports UNB.

An Economic Relations Division (ERD) source said the issue of current slowdown in reforms, as alleged by the World Bank in its country memorandum for next month's Aid Club meeting, is most likely to crop up during scheduled consultations.

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This patient at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital was left under the care of a sleeping attendant yesterday as nurses continued their country-wide strike. — Star photo



Agriculture and Water Resources Minister M Majid-ul-Haq inaugurated the Pabna Irrigation and Rural Development Project at Bera in Pabna yesterday. — PID photo

Pabna irrigation project opens

By Staff Correspondent

PABNA, Mar 21: The Tk 384.04 crore Pabna Irrigation and Rural Development Project was formally opened here today.

Inaugurating the project, located about five kms upstream at the confluence of the rivers Padma and the Jamuna, Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Maj. Gen. (Ret'd) M Majid-ul-Haq expressed the hope that it would open up a new horizon of development in the life of people of the region.

The project, comprising a total area of 1,84,534 hectares in the nine thanas of Pabna district, two thanas of Natore district and one thana of Sirajganj district, should help

achieve an additional yield of 1,93,726 metric tons of paddy and other crops whose estimated worth is Taka 120 crore annually.

The project cost was borne by the Bangladesh government and foreign loans — Tk 157.42 crore and Tk 226.62 crore respectively.

The Pabna project, situated in Bera thana of Pabna, was executed to provide flood protection to an area of about 1,84,534 hectares and improved drainage condition to an area of about 1,38,812 hectares and irrigation facilities to another 30,000 hectares of land. The first phase of the project, which was inaugurated today, will

cover irrigation facilities to 21,862 hectares of land along with full benefits of the flood control and drainage facilities.

The execution of the project started in full swing during 1983-84 and was completed in 1991-92.

Addressing the opening ceremony the Agriculture Minister, in an oblique reference to neighbouring India, said that the country which posed as 'Our friend and big brother has already pushed the whole northern region of our country towards desertification by withdrawing water unilaterally. We have to draw the attention of the world's conscience on this issue of life and death.'

See Page 12 Col 3

Dhaka to verify deportees' claims, take up issues with Riyadh

Bangladesh will immediately take up with the Saudi government for redress of any instance of a Bangladeshi being deported in spite of possession of valid documents to stay there, reports BSS.

A spokesman of the Foreign Ministry yesterday said that the reported claims of some deportees to be in possession of valid work permits would be verified after they submit documents to the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and

Training at Kakrail or its zonal offices outside Dhaka.

A senior official of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower was present at the press briefing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Commenting on some of the recent media reports as well as comments on the matter, the spokesman termed baseless the media allegation that the Bangladesh Government or the Bangladesh missions evaded responsibilities in re-

spect of repatriation of Bangladeshi overstayes in Saudi Arabia.

The spokesman said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the Bangladeshi missions in Riyadh and Jeddah would immediately take up the issue with the Saudi government.

The spokesman said that Bangladeshis had not been specifically targeted for deportations as had been re-

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Rajuk Commercial Plot Auction Notice

Most ideally located Residential-Cum-Commercial Plot No. 11 and 17 measuring more or less 410.31 Sqr. Metre (6 Katha 2 Chattak) and 366.00 Sqr. Metre (5 Katha 8 Chattak) respectively on Road No. 113-A at Gulshan, Dhaka will be allotted for 99 years lease, on open auction.

Applications on prescribed form to be obtained with terms and conditions from Janata Bank, Rajuk Bhaban Branch, Dhaka on payment of Tk. 200/= (Taka Two hundred) only in cash (Non-refundable) and will be received by the Deputy Director (Estates) from intending bidders up to 2.00 PM on 2-4-95 for Plot No. 11 and on 4-4-95 for Plot No. 17.

The auction will be held on 3-4-95 for Plot NO. 11 and on 5-4-95 for Plot No. 17 in the conference room, 3rd floor of the Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka at 10 AM.

Chairman
Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha
Dhaka

DFP-6487-20/3
G-424

