

**Untying the Gordian Knot of Our Politics**

A SERIES OF INTERVIEWS AND ARTICLES ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL CRISIS

Four trade union leaders — Abul Bashir, Abdullah Sarkar, Lutlar Rahman and Wajedul Islam — stressed the need for immediate solution to the persisting political impasse and said that the stalemate on caretaker government issue had deepened the economic crisis. They observed that proper democratic practice is imperative for political stability and a stable governing system. Their interviews are on page 4.

**Inside Today**

**Sport**



Tyson released; MSC-Abahani clash today; Booters lose in Colombo Pages 8,9

**International**

Shahir Shah seeks BJP's help to end Kashmir crisis Pak businessmen observe strike Page 5

**Notice**

Today's 24-page issue of The Daily Star contains a 12-page colour supplement on the Independence and National Day.

**Holiday**

The offices of The Daily Star will remain closed today on the occasion of the Independence Day. There will therefore be no issue of the paper tomorrow.

## 24 yrs of freedom

**By Staff Correspondent**  
The nation celebrates the 25th Independence and National Day today with a renewed pledge to protect and uphold the independence and sovereignty of the country and consolidate democracy to reach the fruits of freedom to the commonman.

The independence was proclaimed on this day in 1971. The valiant people of the country had waged a war against the occupation Pakistani forces to liberate the motherland.

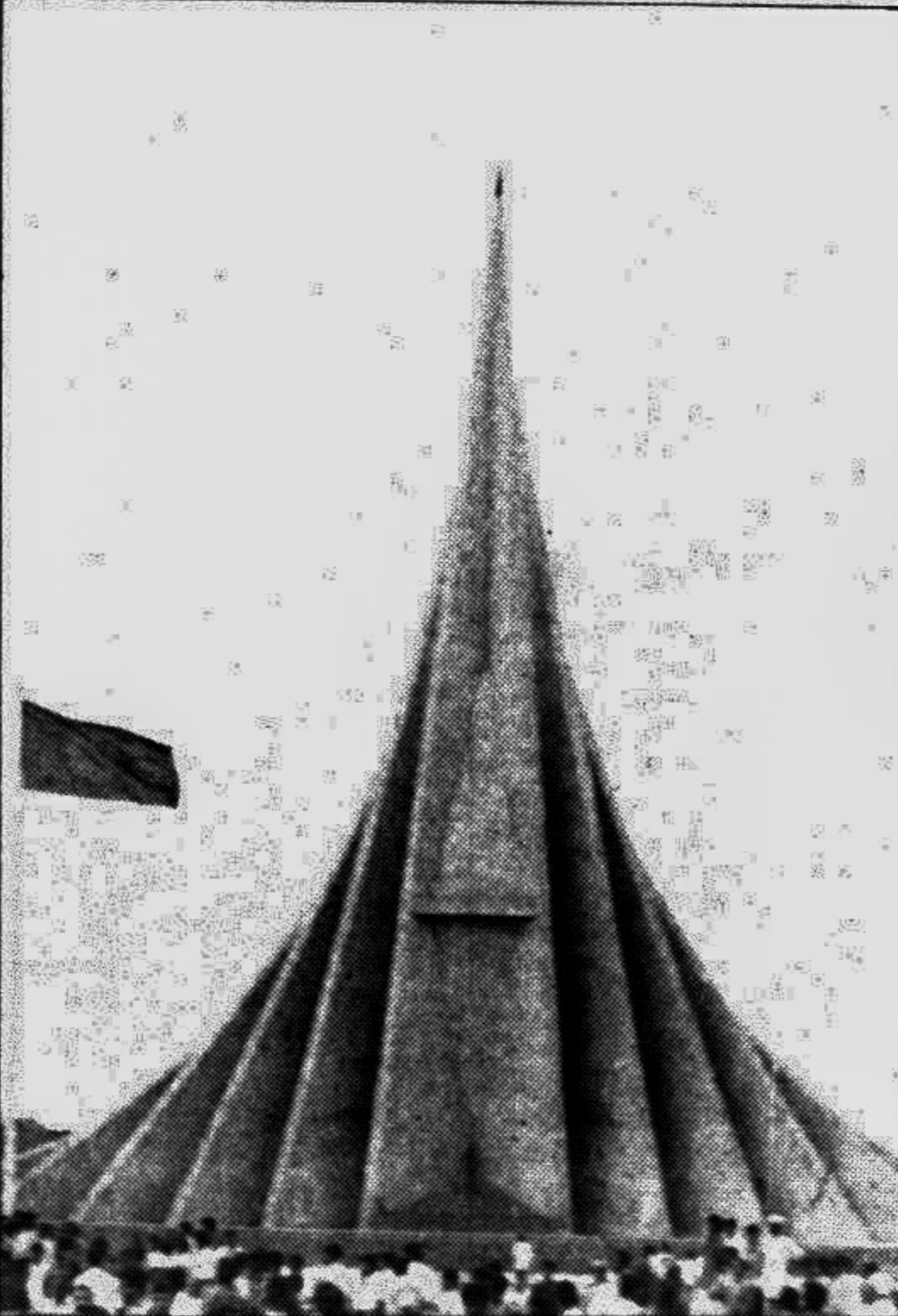
Freedom fighters, members of the armed forces, BDR, Police and the people unitedly fought the war that lasted nine months and cost over 30 lakh lives.

In a message on the eve of the day, President Abdur Rahman Biswas called for fresh pledges for building a happy and prosperous Bangladesh.

He urged all to come forward unitedly to consolidate democracy and expedite the process of bettering the lot of the people.

The President paid glowing tributes to the valiant fighters for independence and those who embraced martyrdom in the fight.

In a message, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia called upon the people to be imbued with patriotism and real spirit. See Page 11 Col. 6



The National Memorial in Savar

## WB predicts 7 pc growth by 2000 if reforms are accelerated

The country's GDP growth rate would gradually increase to seven per cent by the end of the decade, only if the ongoing economic reform initiatives are expedited, according to a recent World Bank projection. Under the accelerated-reforms scenario, the Bank predicts that the GDP growth rate would gradually rise from below five per cent in the first half of the 1990s to about seven per cent by the year 2000.

This would also involve a corresponding increase in the rate of investment from an annual average of 12.8 per cent of the GDP in FY 90-94 to 16.1 per cent in FY 95-99 and 18.7 per cent during the first part of the next decade.

Referring to the recent slow pace of reforms, the Bank insisted that the government

must reiterate its commitment for a faster reform process. Prospects for faster growth are strong under an accelerated reform programme, the Bank said, with the sustained macro-economic stability, comfortable budgetary and balance of payment situation and foreign exchange reserves.

"But the government must move in all fronts to remove the perception of policy uncertainty, establish credibility of commitment to market-based reforms, and thus, ensure rapid growth," observed the Bank in the recently completed country economic memorandum (CEM), prepared for presentation at the Paris Aid Club meeting next month.

The critical areas identified for accelerated reforms include establishing a facilitating

**Star Report**

business environment, trade policy reforms, improving public resource management and administration, administrative reforms and also speeding up the reforming process of the financial sector, further to rationalisation and the privatisation drive.

Saying that the faster pace of reforms would complement the existing macroeconomic stability, the Bank emphasised that it should be carried out in all these areas to ensure the success of the rapid growth efforts.

"Incomplete reform effort would limit the likely achievements toward higher growth," it cautioned. "And the failure to accelerate the stalled reform programme would not alter the current growth performance and weak prospects. See Page 11 Col. 6

## Forest fire rages in Maheshkhali

**From Our Correspondent**  
COX'S BAZAR, Mar 25: A wild forest fire has been raging in Maheshkhali island of Cox's Bazar district for the last two days. The fire has already destroyed a huge area of forests, according to information reaching here. Local people have been trying to extinguish the blaze, but in vain. The affected areas. See Page 11 Col. 4

## Foreign investments in CEPZ rise to \$128 m

**From Nurul Alam**  
CHITTAGONG, Mar 25: Foreign investments continued to pour in Bangladesh's first operational export processing zone in Chittagong which has so far drawn investments of 128 million US dollars, a three-fold increase in about three and a half years, officials said. The total investments in Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) may reach around 500 million dollars in the next two years if the current pace of inflow of foreign investments continued, said a senior official of the zone. "We are receiving frequent. See Page 11 Col. 2

## Export earnings up by 39 pc

**Star Report**  
The country's export earnings during the first six months of 1994-95 stood at 1790.79 million US dollars, showing an increase of 39.12 per cent over that of the corresponding period of the previous fiscal. According to the latest data released by the Export. See Page 11 Col. 6



Founder-Managing Director Prof Mohammad Yunus receiving the Independence Day Award 1994 for the Grameen Bank from Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the Osmany Memorial Hall in the city yesterday. — PID photo

## Khaleda calls for united efforts

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday made a clarion call to all to work unitedly irrespective of party or group affiliations for the overall development of the country, reports UNB. "Let us work with responsibility, sincerity and constructive attitude for building the nation," she said at a function while distributing the Independence Day Award 1994 at the Osmany Memorial Hall yesterday afternoon. Two institutions and three individuals received the Independence Day Award for 1994 for contributions in their respective fields. The Bangladesh Geological Survey Directorate, that played a significant role in finding mineral resources and compiling necessary data, received. See Page 11 Col. 1

## Hillary Clinton's visit: Advance team due today

**By Staff Correspondent**  
An advance team, led by David V. Note of the US administration, is due to arrive in the capital today to finalise the detailed programme of Hillary Clinton's visit to Bangladesh. The visit is scheduled to fly to Dhaka from Kathmandu on April 2 on a. See Page 12 Col. 6

## 70 hurt as BNP, AL, JP activists clash at N'ganj

**From Our Correspondent**  
NARAYANGANJ, Mar 25: At least 70 people were injured as the activists of the BNP, the Awami League and the Jatiya Party fought pitched battles here this afternoon. Fifty of them were admitted to the Narayanganj Sadar Hospital and different clinics while the rest were released after first aid. The conditions of 14 were stated to be critical, doctors said. According to witnesses, pistols, revolvers, rifles, crude bombs and sharp weapons were freely used in the clashes that terrorised the entire port town for one and a half hours. After the clashes, the. See Page 11 Col. 1

## Independence Day Award '95

The government yesterday announced the names of seven persons for the Independence Day Award-1995 for the outstanding contribution in their respective fields, reports BSS. The recipients of the award are: S M Ali for journalism (posthumously), Ferdousi Rahman (music), Abdul Karim Sahitya Bisharat (literature), Ambar Ali (education), Abdullatif Al Muttif Sharfuddin (science), Zakaria Pintoo (sports) and Iqbal Mand Banoo (social science).

## PM-Chandrika talks to focus on economic ties

**By M Anwarul Haq**  
Political and economic ties between Dhaka and Colombo are expected to be bolstered further during the forthcoming three-day official visit of Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga. The Sri Lankan President arrives in the capital on March 28 at the head of a nine-member delegation. Her entourage will include foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar and Minister for Internal and External Trade, Commerce and Food, Kingley Wikramaratna. See Page 11 Col. 3

## Manzur's murder Kazi Emdad will be shifted to Ctg jail tomorrow

**By Court Correspondent**  
Maj (retd) Kazi Emdadul Haq, an accused in Maj Gen. Abul Manzur murder case, will be shifted from the Dhaka Central Jail to Chittagong District Jail tomorrow and will be produced in the court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) in the port city the next day. Sources concerned with. See Page 12 Col. 1

## Ship carrying wheat loses anchors in Bay

**From Staff Correspondent**  
CHITTAGONG, Mar 25: A Greek flag carrying vessel 'MV Taxiarchis' which arrived here from the UK with 35,000 metric tons of wheat has been declared 'general average' by its owner as its anchors were torn at the outer anchorage. The local agent of the ship. See Page 12 Col. 2

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