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NEWS BRIEFS
PM returns today
 Prime Minister Begum
 Khaleda Zia will return home
 today after a three-day official
 visit to South Korea. She is ex-
 pected to arrive at 6:10 pm by
 a VIP flight of the Biman
 Bangladesh Airlines at Zia In-
 ternational Airport. Begum Zia
 left Dhaka for Seoul Thursday
 morning, reports UNB.

Hasina returns
to Dhaka
 Awami League chief Sheikh
 Hasina returned to Dhaka yester-
 day after a four-day exten-
 sive tour in greater Rajshahi.
 She visited some remote areas
 of Naogaon, Chapainawabganj,
 Natore and Rajshahi during
 her mass-contact programme
 in the northern districts, re-
 ports UNB.

One killed in
Jhenidah clash
 JHENIDAH, May 26: A
 young man was killed and ten
 other people were injured in a
 clash over a land dispute at
 village Kongshi in Sadar thana
 today, police and hospital
 sources said. Lokman 30, of
 the village, died on the spot
 when he was hit by sharp
 weapons. The body was sent to
 Sadar Hospital morgue. Two
 rival groups of villagers clashed
 with lethal weapons like dao,
 surki, spear and lathi, at 9 am
 today, reports UNB.

Transport strike
call rejected
 The Dhaka-greater Noakhali
 Inter-district Mini-bus Own-
 ers' Association yesterday
 unanimously rejected the
 transport strike call for May
 28-29, reports BSS.
 The strike call was given by
 a section of the Bangladesh
 Sramik Federation (Wajuddin
 Khan-Habibur Rahman Khan).

Kim assures Khaleda of all help for economic development ROK to build \$100m industrial complex in Bangladesh



South Korean President Kim Young-Sam ushers visiting Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the reception room of the Presidential Blue House in Seoul, South Korea yesterday.

Dhaka urges Korean investors to be 'partners in progress'

SEOUL, May 26: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said here today Bangladesh is now a land of exciting opportunities on the fringe of emerging markets, reports UNB.

"We have come to offer you (Korean investors) a share in the attractive opportunity that Bangladesh provides today to all investors," she said while inaugurating the Bangladesh Investment seminar at Hyatt Hotel here in the afternoon.

The Prime Minister said that in our list of top investing countries, ROK stands sixth with proposed investment of around 150 million US dollar and many of the projects have already gone into production.

"We are very keen to work with you to move ahead as partners in progress," she said and hoped that the Korean investors would respond positively to her invitation to invest in Bangladesh.

Describing the macro-economic scenario of Bangladesh, Begum Zia said it is characterised by development financing from local resources at an increasing rate, higher foreign exchange reserves, very low inflation rate, convertibility of taka and, highest allocation for human resources development.

With increased competitiveness through significant reduction in a small geographic space, Bangladesh offers one of the cheapest labour in the world, she said.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister said at the moment, **3 accords signed**

SEOUL, May 26: Bangladesh and South Korea entered a new era of cooperation as the two countries signed agreements here today, reports UNB.

The Foreign Ministers of the two countries initialled the accord on cooperation in the field of science and technology, following the summit between Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and president Kim Young Sam.

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NATO airstrikes on Serb shells kill 71 civilians in Tuzla

PALE, Bosnia-Herzegovina, May 26: NATO warplanes pounded an ammunition dump near this Bosnian Serb headquarters for a second day today, firing missiles that triggered a huge blast and raised a cloud of smoke and dust a kilometer (half-mile) high, reports AP.

UN officials said the attack was in response to Serb shelling of the government-held city of Tuzla late Thursday. At least 71 people were killed by shells that landed near a crowded cafe.

But the Serbs remained defiant, UN sources said the Serbs had threatened to kill three UN monitors in Pale if there were more airstrikes. Tuzla's center was shelled again and Serbs surrounded 200 UN troops at weapons-collection points near Sarajevo, UN officials said.

A missile or rocket fired by Serbs killed one person in western Sarajevo.

The UN chief for former Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi, said Thursday's attacks took out two ammunition bunkers, and the Friday attack took out six more.

US Defence Secretary William Perry indicated the air raids were likely to continue.

"I believe it will be a robust action, a vigorous action," he told a news conference in Rome. "In time, it will achieve the expected result, but I don't expect it to occur immediately."

NATO jets appeared to make multiple runs at the city said.

LTTE massacres 42 civilians

COLOMBO, May 26: In their first massacre of civilians since breaking a cease-fire last month, Tamil rebels attacked a village of Sinhalese and Muslim people in northeastern Sri Lanka early Friday and killed at least 42 of them, an official said, reports AP.

The guerillas fired rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns at a military camp that surrounds and guards the isolated village of Kallarawa in Trincomalee district, then set fire to the camp and some of the village huts, a military official said.

Kim praises Dhaka Ties with Seoul excellent: PM

SEOUL, May 26: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today (Friday) described the Dhaka-Seoul relations as excellent and said that, "We share common aspirations for our development and progress," reports UNB.

She also emphasised that the "excellent political relations" between the two countries should be transformed into effective cooperation for mutual benefit.

Begum Zia was addressing a state banquet given in her honour by President Kim Young-sam and Madam Kim at the Presidential Palace here.

Begum Zia said her government believes in political stability and peace for sustained economic development. Bangladesh has established socio-political stability through a democratically elected government, she added.

"Our economy has opened to the world, rapid moves towards privatisation have exposed our economy to market forces," she said.

See Page 12 Col 1

Hasina alleges at public meets BNP men obstructing voter registration

NATORE, May 26: Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina alleged here today that the ruling BNP activists were obstructing the registration of voters belonging to the opposition parties and "illegally registering people of their choice as voters" in different parts of the country.

"We've received reports that armed activists of the BNP were preventing the registration of eligible voters supporting the opposition parties and registering the people of their choice unlawfully. The BNP does not want that all the qualified voters get registered because it is contemplating rigging the next polls," Hasina said while addressing public meetings in the district.

She, however, did not mention the areas where such incidents involving activists were taking place.

Hasina instructed her party workers to guard against the ruling party's "malpractices", sign the voters' registration forms carefully and make sure that none of the eligible voters supporting her party fail to get registered.

On the concluding day of her four-day visit to some northern districts, Hasina today addressed public rallies at Kanikhali, madrasa crossing, Banpara bazar, Waliabazar and Karimpur in Natore district and Dashunia and Tebunia of Pabna district.

Besides, she visited the houses of Juba League worker Faruk and Chhatra League activist Bakul, killed recently by their political opponents in Natore town. The AL chief also saw for herself some burnt houses at Goshalpara village of the district prior to her return to the capital.

Some 200 dwelling houses were destroyed in the area.

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Biman's DC-10 grounded due to engine trouble

A DC-10 aircraft of Biman Bangladesh Airlines was grounded on Thursday when engineers detected a major trouble in one of its three engines, Biman sources said yesterday.

Biman engineers detected 'serious oil leakage' in the engine after the aircraft, on a return Hajj flight from Jeddah, landed at the Zia International Airport (ZIA).

"The breakdown would cause a massive disruption of Biman's schedule, including the Hajj flights which would continue till April 4," the sources said.

An engineer of the national flag carrier, however, said the aircraft could be operated for short landing but it would be risky.

"With such a trouble the aircraft cannot fly for more than two hours at a stretch," a senior official of Biman's engineering wing told The Daily Star. "It is also difficult for Biman to put an aircraft idle for several days," he added.

Biman currently has five DC-10-30 aircraft (one procured on lease) to cover 26 international destinations.

Sources in the engineering wing said that an engine would be available within a few days to replace the faulty one.

According to a source, Biman's Directorate of Engineering had informed the authorities earlier that they immediately needed a spare engine.

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Again! Move for independent vote tabulation

WASHINGTON, May 26: A man scaled the White House fence today near the east entrance to the US president's mansion and was immediately apprehended, the secret service said, reports Reuter.

The man, identified as Andrew Jopling, was not armed and the first family was never in any danger, the service said. It was the second such incident this week.

On Tuesday night a 37-year-old pizza delivery man carrying an unloaded pistol was shot in the arm when he scaled the fence in the southeastern section of the White House garden and struggled with a guard.

The same shot fired by a secret service officer also shattered the bone in the left arm of the guard.

In today's incident, a white male scaled the fence off east executive avenue, spokesman said.

Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA), a combine of different non-government organisations, civic, social, professional and cultural bodies is planning to undertake independent vote tabulation (IVT) to help check manipulation in vote counting.

"We shall introduce IVT in all 300 parliamentary constituencies during next general elections along with launching a massive voter awareness programme, Fakhruddin Ahmed, chairperson of the alliance told The Daily Star yesterday.

Fakhruddin, a former adviser to the interim government of Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, said they would seek cooperation of all political parties as well as national and international bodies working to promote democracy and development.

The FEMA, though yet to be launched formally, started work in which some 45,000 people would be involved throughout the country. The alliance is likely to be formally launched next month.

"A number of organisations has already assured us of their involvement in the process and we have got positive response from international communities who are working to promote democracy and development in Bangladesh," Fakhruddin said.

Elaborating the idea of introducing IVT, he said it was not a new concept, but it

See Page 12 Col 1

Mongla Port underutilised

Situation, poor infrastructure facilities and inadequate policy support have contributed to a sharp decline in the volume on cargo shipment through the Mongla Port in Khulna.

According to official figures, the volume of cargo handled by the port fell from 26.5 lakh tonnes in 1991-92 to 19.3 lakh tonnes in 1993-94 while during the first 10 months of the current fiscal it stood at 16.39 lakh tonnes.

Faced with continuous siltation and irregular dredging in the shallow patches of the Pussur channel, the port is facing underutilisation of its jetty, mooring and anchorage facilities resulting in shrinkage of its cargo handling and revenue collection.

Both port officials and local businessmen point out that extremely poor infrastructural facilities, including the absence of rail-lines and inadequate road links, have contributed to the decline in the use of the Mongla Port, the country's second-most important sea outlet.

"You will not find any port in the world without rail tracks", said Md Rezwanul Haq, chairman of Mongla Port Authority.

"To have a competitive edge, traders are inclined towards having quick movement of their cargo. The absence of rail and road transportation with the centre, and real lack of any effective communications, has virtually kept the jetty operation underutilised", he told this correspondent.

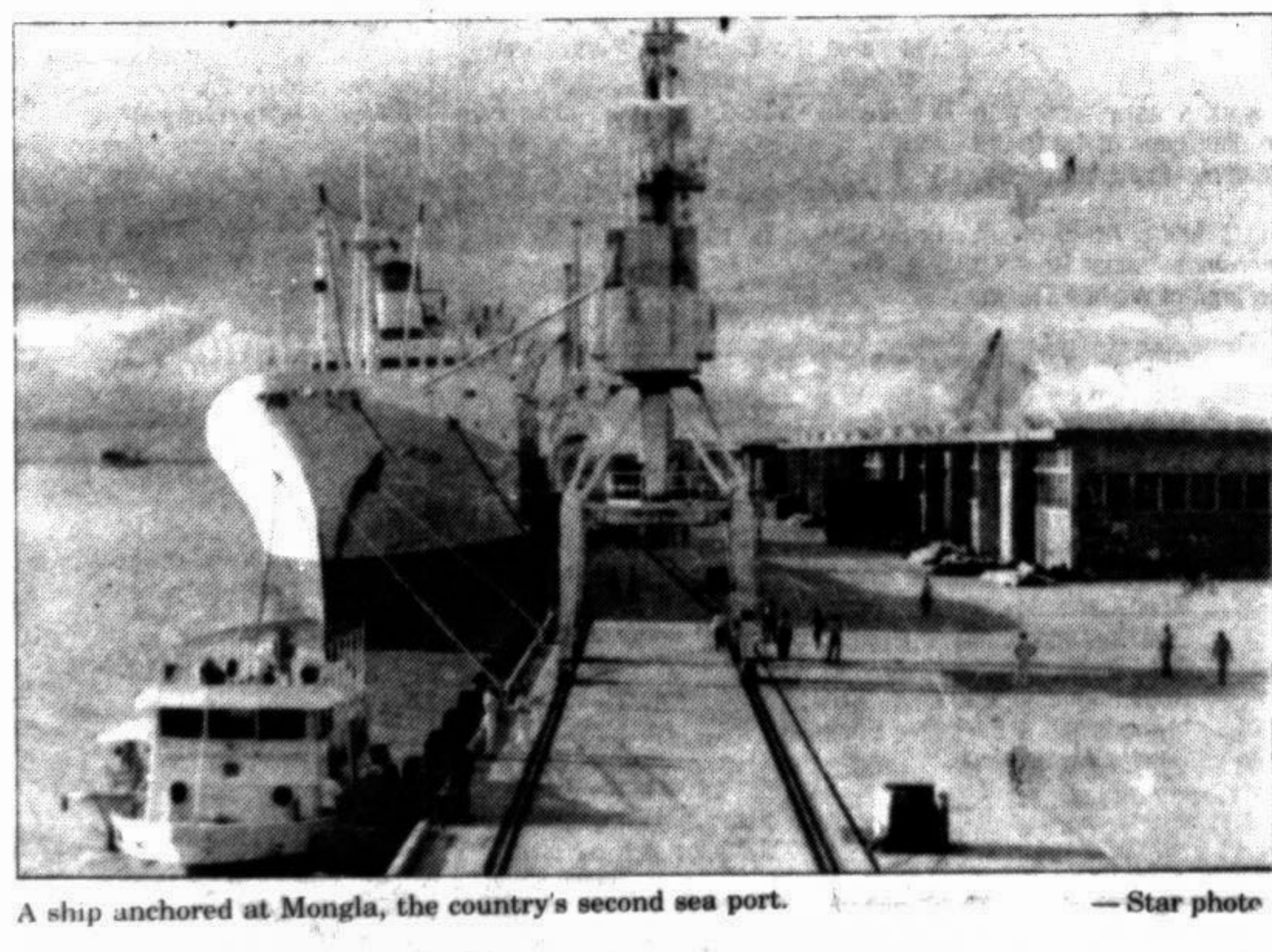
The permissible draught, on an average seven metres, prevents the large vessels from anchoring at Mongla, says a mariner of Bangladesh Shipping Corporation, requesting anonymity.

"There is a strong need to have regular capital dredging in the Pussur channel to attract foreign vessels for anchorage and maintain a minimum draught level to allow vessels to move from fairway to jetty. Otherwise, four transit shed, two warehouse will remain unutilised throughout the year contributing almost nothing to the exchequer", he adds.

Business leaders blamed the successive governments for showing a "step motherly attitude" towards Khulna by not constructing Rupsha bridge and not setting up an airport, an age-old demand of the residents of this port city.

"The vested interests within the successive governments did not want to see the Mongla port flourish", alleged Nazrul Islam, president of Khulna Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

See Page 12 Col 3



A ship anchored at Mongla, the country's second sea port. — Star photo

DSE loses over Tk 2b in a week

By Sharier Khan
 The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) lost Tk 2.12 billion in market capitalisation in just one week ending Thursday last while the All Share Price Index fell by 35.66 points.

Yet it was one of the busiest weeks for the DSE in terms of volume and value of trading which, on an average, nearly doubled last week compared to that in the previous week.

The trading was vibrant last week due to an amazing increase of purchase of Shine Pukur Holdings shares. The Shine Pukur sold 4 lakh 13,100 shares in the week. In the recent months, no other single issue had such a big sale. However, Shine Pukur shares were traded one to four Taka below the Face Value (FV) Tk 100 per share.

The shares and debentures of more than 35 issues sold at prices below their FV while shares of seven issues at their FV level on the closing day of the week Thursday.

Details on page 6

Registration of voters continues: Holiday today

By Staff Correspondent
 The voter registration programme for preparation of a new electoral roll continued for the second day yesterday throughout the country.

The enumerators knocked the doors in many areas of the city yesterday and are yet to visit many more areas.

Enumerators would continue collecting information about individual voters till May 31.

One has to be physically present in the area where he or she wants to be a voter and one can be registered as a voter from only one particular area, Election Commission (EC) officials said.

A number of people hailing from places far from the city told this correspondent they would get themselves registered as voters in the capital since it is difficult for them to go to their village homes within the stipulated time.

The government has already declared a general holiday today to enable the officials and employees of the public and private organisations to enlist their names as voters.

Many political activists and people hailing from the adjoining areas are also expected to be present.

See Page 12 Col 4

Garments Sramik leaders support BGMEA stand

Trade unionists, echoing the sentiment of the manufacturers, have said that the campaign against Bangladesh's garments capitalising on the use of child workers is designed to destroy the booming industry, reports UNB.

"It's a conspiracy to destroy the industry", Harunur Rashid, President of the Sammlita Garments Sramik Jote (SGSJ), told a press conference in the city yesterday.

He alleged that some local and foreign NGOs were engaged in hatching this conspiracy and urged the government to take stern action against those organisations.

See Page 12 Col 2

Rule nisi on Rajuk chief, DCC mayor

A bench of the High Court division has issued a rule nisi on Rajuk Chairman, Mayor of the Dhaka City Corporation, Secretary of the Ministry of Works and two other respondents to prevent the use of residential plots in the Gulshan Model Town for any purpose other than residential shall not be declared to be without lawful authority, reports BSS.

The division bench comprised Justice A M Mahmudur Rahman and Justice Mahfuzur Rahman.

The rule nisi was issued on a writ petition filed by former deputy prime minister Jamaluddin Ahmad questioning and impugning the legality of the use of residential plots of Gulshan for the purpose of shops, business houses, offices and restaurants.

Rokanuddin Mahmud, Bar at Law, appeared for the petitioner. He was assisted by advocates Murad Reza, Raja Levashish Roy and Faisal Mahmud Faizee.