

JUICE  
JAM  
PICKLE  
KETCHUP  
SHERBET

**PRAN** for Health

SQUASH  
VINEGAR  
KEWRA-  
WATER  
ROSE-  
WATER

Standard Chartered  
**Fingertip  
Convenience**  
Standard Chartered

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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**32 arms recovered**

Law enforcing agencies  
seized 32 different types of  
firearms, 46 bullets and 38  
explosives from different  
parts of the country yester-  
day, the 37th day of the  
countrywide arms recovery  
operation. During the period,  
some 358 people were also  
arrested on various charges  
including illegal possession of  
arms, according to a press  
release of the Law and Order  
Coordination Cell of the  
Election Commission, re-  
ports UNB.

**Indian envoy hosts  
reception**

The Indian High Commis-  
sioner in Bangladesh Deb  
Mukherjee held a reception  
in Dhaka yesterday in ob-  
servance of the Republican Day  
of his country. The reception  
was attended by ministers,  
political leaders, diplomats,  
officials, journalists and elite  
of the city, reports BSS.

**17 die in Indian  
road accident**

NEW DELHI, Jan 26: At  
least 17 people were killed  
and six injured when a bus  
plunged into a deep gorge in  
the Indian state of Himachal  
Pradesh today. Police said 12  
people died instantly at the  
crash scene, 27 km from  
Shimla, the state's capital,  
reports Reuters.

**Arafat-Mubarak  
meet today**

CAIRO, Jan 26: Palestinian  
leader Yasser Arafat will hold  
talks tomorrow with Presi-  
dent Hosni Mubarak on the  
next steps in the Mideast  
peace talks following Arafat's  
victory in Palestinian elec-  
tions, reports AP.  
Foreign Minister Amr  
Moussa said today that the  
meeting would concentrate  
on negotiations set to begin  
in May on a final peace treaty  
between Israel and the  
Palestinians. Egypt is ex-  
pected to continue acting as  
mediator in the Palestinian-  
Israeli talks.

**Sehri, Iftar timings**

Ram	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
6	27	—	5:45
7	28	5:19	5:46
8	29	5:19	5:47

## Extended meeting today AL to whip up allout anti-govt campaign

The Awami League brings  
in its organisational might to  
the capital today to explore  
ways to whip up an allout  
campaign at the grass-roots  
level against the ruling BNP  
and "an unilateral election"  
set for February 15.  
AL President Sheikh  
Hasina is scheduled to ad-  
dress some 3,000 represen-  
tatives of the party's district  
and thana units, members of  
the Central Working Commit-  
tee and the National Commit-  
tee as well as former party  
MPs at an extended meeting  
of the working committee at  
the Engineers Institution.  
Party leaders term the  
meeting "very important" and  
point out that thana commit-  
tee presidents and secre-  
taries have been invited to  
such a gathering for the first  
time in about five years. Had  
the AL joined the ensuing

parliamentary elections, a  
good number of the leaders  
attending the meeting would  
have been candidates, they  
said.  
Talking to The Daily Star,  
AL Organising Secretary Mo-  
hammad Nasim said that the  
meeting would review the  
latest political situation and  
discuss "necessary actions" to  
mobilise people against the  
upcoming elections.  
AL sources indicated that  
the party chief was likely to  
explain the role of the Op-  
position in its failed dialogue  
with the government as well  
as achievements in the anti-  
government movement.  
She would also explain in  
the meeting "the situation of  
compulsion" for the party and  
how far the party had given  
"concession" to the BNP, they  
said.  
Party leaders said that one

parliamentary objective of the  
meeting was to "enthuse" the  
party cadres at the district  
and thana levels who would  
implement the decisions of  
the high command.  
Indicating different prob-  
able action programmes, the  
leaders said the meeting  
would discuss ways and  
means to off-set the impact  
of BNP's election campaign,  
with particular emphasis on  
the campaign by the Prime  
Minister and BNP chief.  
An AL leader, who de-  
clined to be named, said that  
the PM would continue to  
face demonstrations all along  
her campaign route.  
Besides, today's meeting  
would also explore the means  
to attain better coordination  
of the activities of opposition  
parties at the district and  
thana levels, he added.

## Hartal called in Khulna PM addresses Bagerhat rally today

From Our Correspondent  
KHULNA, Jan 26: Prime  
Minister and BNP chairper-  
son Begum Khaleda Zia will  
address an election projec-  
tion meeting at Bagerhat to-  
morrow.  
The Prime Minister's ear-  
lier programme of a public  
meeting in Khulna tomorrow  
was cancelled after the Op-  
position had called a down-  
to-dusk hartal in the city to  
protest the PM's visit.  
Sources in the Opposition  
said activists of Awami  
League, Jatiya Party and Ja-  
maat-e-Islami will put up  
road barricades and bring out  
processions in Khulna city  
when the Prime Minister will  
pass through on way to  
Bagerhat.  
Meanwhile adequate  
preparations have been taken  
to ensure security and law  
and order in Khulna city.  
Over two thousand police,  
BDR and other security  
forces will be deployed at dif-  
ferent key points from Phul-  
See Page 12 col 8

## Security forces on alert as Shantibahini steps up attacks

From Nurul Alam  
CHITTAGONG, Jan 26:  
Security forces in the Chit-  
tagong Hill Tracts (CHT) have  
been put on alert as armed  
Shantibahini men stepped up  
sniper attacks on army posi-  
tions in recent weeks, official  
sources said.  
Security sources said that  
over the period tribal  
militants, wearing olive green  
uniforms and equipped with  
sophisticated weapons, made  
six attacks on army camps  
and patrols in Rangamati and  
Khagrachhari districts in  
violation of the "ceasefire".  
The Tibrachhari army  
camp at Naniarchar under  
Rangamati district was at-  
tacked three times, the latest  
on January 17, the sources  
said. Similar attacks were  
made on army patrols in  
Rangamati, Khagrachhari and  
Bandarban districts during  
the period. The attackers re-  
treated when security forces  
challenged them.  
No casualty was, however,  
reported.  
The attacks came as an  
agreement was reached at  
the weekend to extend of the  
'ceasefire' until February 15.  
The agreement was made  
by the Parbatya Chattagram  
Janasanghati Samity (PCJSS),  
of which Shantibahini is the  
armed wing. The PCJSS re-  
jected the proposal for ex-  
tending the ceasefire until  
March 31. The liaison com-  
mittee brokering the peace  
talks between the govern-  
ment and the rebels also  
suggested extending the  
ceasefire until March 31.  
The ceasefire has been  
periodically renewed since  
mid-1992.  
Confrontations have left  
more than 2,500 people  
See Page 12 col 7

## 18 die as India rockets mosque near Kashmir ceasefire line

ISLAMABAD, Jan 26:  
State-run Pakistan Television  
said Indian gunners had fired  
two rockets at a mosque near  
the ceasefire line in divided  
Kashmir today, killing 18  
people, reports Reuters.  
The television gave no  
other details.  
Police in Muzaffarabad,  
capital of Pakistani-held Azad  
(free) Kashmir, put the death  
toll at 15 and said nine peo-  
ple had been wounded in the  
attack, which occurred just  
after Friday prayers at around  
2 pm.  
They said one rocket had  
hit the mosque at Farwar, in  
the Kahota sector of the  
ceasefire line, and one had  
slammed into a market be-  
hind the mosque. The in-  
jured had been taken to hos-  
pital.  
EC asks candidates  
Submit statement  
on source of polls  
expense by Jan 30  
The candidates contesting  
the coming parliamentary  
elections will have to submit  
by January 30 a statement on  
possible sources of their  
election expenses, said an  
Election Commission press  
release yesterday, reports  
UNB.  
The EC asked them to  
submit the statement in pre-  
scribed form to the returning  
officer concerned with de-  
tails of their property, loans  
and liabilities, annual income  
and expenditure, and a copy  
of the latest tax return, in  
case of income-tax payees.  
A copy of the statement  
with relevant papers will also  
have to be sent to the EC  
through registered mail.  
Earlier, the EC fixed max-  
imum Tk 5,000 as personal  
expense and Tk 3 lakh as to-  
tal election expenditure for  
each candidate under Section  
44 AA of the Representation  
of the People Order, 1972.  
As per the Order, candi-  
dates are not allowed to  
make any election expenses  
from any other source not  
mentioned in their state-  
ment.  
Under section 44 BB of  
the said Order, each candi-  
date or his/her nominated  
polling agent will have to  
open a separate account with  
any scheduled bank, and all  
election expenditures to be  
borne from that account.



The Dhaka International Trade Fair witnessed an increased number of visitors yesterday on the eve of its closing today. — Star photo

## 13 dist, thana BNP leaders expelled

Star Report  
The ruling BNP yesterday  
expelled 13 of its district and  
thana level leaders from the  
party for their anti-party ac-  
tivities.  
A BNP statement said last  
night that the 13 were ex-  
pelled with immediate effect  
on allegations of disobeying  
party decisions and violation  
of party discipline.  
With these 13, BNP has so  
far expelled 17 party leaders  
and one leader of its students  
wing JCD since it started tak-  
ing disciplinary actions  
against the rebels and dissi-  
dents who are challenging  
the party nominations in the  
February 15 parliamentary  
elections.  
Talking to The Daily Star  
yesterday, BNP Office Secre-  
tary Nazrul Islam Khan said  
that the current "cleansing  
drive" was not over with  
these 13 leaders and more  
was "upcoming."  
"We are expecting a few  
more names of dissidents,  
who have not withdrawn  
their candidature till January

## Faulty distribution blamed for high urea price

By Govinda Shil and Sharier Khan  
Despite adequate produc-  
tion of urea fertiliser, its  
price remains high across  
the country due to a faulty  
distribution system, accord-  
ing to sources in the  
Bangladesh Fertiliser Associa-  
tion (BFA).  
While the mill gate price  
of a 50 kg bag of urea is fixed  
at Tk 186.25, it is being sold  
at Tk 240 to 280 at the  
farmer's level in different  
districts, the sources said.  
Prices are specially high  
in the northern region like  
Hatibandha, Chilmari and Te-  
tulia where farmers are com-  
pelled to buy per bag of urea  
for Tk 280, they added.  
But urea fertiliser supply  
from different factories from  
July last has exceeded the  
Agriculture Ministry's pro-  
jected demand for 86,483  
tonnes and there is a ready  
stock of two lakh tonnes,  
some sources pointed out.  
A press release of the  
Bangladesh Chemical Indus-  
tries Corporation (BCIC) said  
six urea fertiliser factories  
under the BCIC despatched  
1.68 lakh tonnes of urea in  
the first 24 days of January  
while the cumulative  
despatch since July 1 stood  
at 11.53 lakh tonnes. The  
cumulative despatch during  
the corresponding period of  
the previous year was 9.76  
lakh tonnes.  
In accordance with the  
recommendations of the dis-  
trict committees led by  
deputy commissioners, the  
authorities have appointed  
2231 dealers for fertiliser  
delivery, the BCIC said.  
Among them, 1973 deal-  
ers have made formal agree-  
ment for taking delivery and  
supply of urea and they have  
so far lifted 1.05 lakh tonnes  
from six urea factories, it  
noted.  
BFA sources claimed that  
the quantity of fertiliser given  
to one dealer was not ade-  
quate for him to make any  
profit.  
"Because of last year's cri-  
sis, the authorities now  
despatch lesser quantity of  
fertiliser to a single dealer to  
avert "manipulation of its  
prices," one source pointed  
out.  
"Because of the size of our  
establishments, we need big-  
ger supplies to keep our  
business viable," said Abdul  
Baten, executive secretary of  
BFA. The present quantity of  
despatch by these factories  
are too inadequate to keep  
our business viable."  
"Since the dealers are  
getting lesser quantity of  
urea, they tend to sell their  
purchase at the mill gate  
area. Therefore, the fertilizer  
which used to reach the  
farmers through one dealer  
now reach them through  
more than two dealers," a  
BCIC source said, adding,  
"Therefore more people are  
trying to keep their profit  
margin against one  
despatch."  
The demand for urea will  
continue to increase till  
March and April as farmers  
will harvest boro crops then.  
See Page 12 Col 1

## Last stock of smallpox virus to be destroyed in June '99

GENEVA, Jan 26: World  
Health Organisation has re-  
commended the destruction  
of the remaining stocks of  
smallpox, a virus officially  
eradicated in 1980, a  
spokesman for the organisa-  
tion said, reports AFP.  
The WHO's decision was  
taken by the executive  
council here Wednesday and  
will be submitted to the an-  
nual general assembly in May  
for approval, said spokesman  
Philippe Stroot.  
The two remaining stocks  
of the virus are in Atlanta,  
in the United States, and in  
Koltsovo, a Russian town in  
Western Siberia.  
The appointed date for  
their destruction is expected  
to be June 30, 1999, said St-  
root.  
In May 1980, following a  
vast vaccination campaign,  
the World Health Organisa-  
tion announced the complete  
eradication of smallpox, the  
first disease to be removed  
from the planet.  
The destruction of the  
remaining stocks would be  
the first deliberate annihila-  
See Page 12 col 8

## Bearish trend in DSE continues

By Rafiq Hasan  
The Dhaka Stock Ex-  
change (DSE) is experiencing  
continued depression due to  
political uncertainty, lack of  
fund flow and reduced buying  
activities in the holy month  
of Ramadan, according to  
market operators.  
The all share price index  
in the DSE declined by a  
stunning 57 points over the  
last week and nearly 75 per  
cent daily traded shares in-  
curred losses.  
In contrast, the average  
number of gainers during the  
week was only 21.50 issues.  
The all share price index  
dropped to 761.79 points at  
the closing of the week  
Thursday from 818.86 points  
in the previous week.  
The market capitalisation  
declined by Tk 347 crore to  
Tk 4963 crore from 5310  
crore in the previous week.  
A state of uncertainty pre-  
valled among the investors  
during the last week when  
most of the small share  
holders sold out large number  
of shares fearing political in-  
stability in the country, market  
operators said.  
Besides, issuance of about  
Tk 100 crore worth of new  
Initial Public Offerings (IPOs)  
also had an impact on the  
sales trend of shares.  
The daily average trading  
of issues declined to 83.33  
last week from 90.60 in the  
previous week.  
While a daily average of  
62.33 issues incurred losses  
last week, only 21.50 issues  
gained.  
The price index recorded  
the 'biggest fall' on Tuesday  
when it dropped by 28.58  
points in a day. The follow-  
ing day was also dull and in-  
dex fell by another 18.86  
points.  
Market operators termed  
the fall a record in the last  
five months. Price index rise  
had earlier reached a record  
of 903.04 points on October  
29 last year they pointed out.  
DSE Chairman Imtiaz  
Hossen told The Daily Star  
the money crunch in the  
banks and other financial in-  
stitutions affected the price.  
"The investors were very  
much worried about the po-  
litical developments. There-  
fore, they were hesitating to  
buy shares in large number,"  
he added.  
The investors diverted  
their money by selling shares  
See Page 12 col 7

## Huda, Morshed seek review of rivals' nomination papers again

By Staff Correspondent  
At least two influential  
ruling party candidates, for-  
mer minister Nazmul Huda  
and Prime Minister's special  
envoy Morshed Khan, have  
formally appealed to the  
Election Commission (EC)  
to review again the candidature  
of their lone rivals.  
Their two rival candidates  
had won their appeals with  
the EC and got their nomi-  
nation papers declared valid  
after those were cancelled by  
the respective returning offi-  
cers, according to a source in  
the Election Commission (EC).  
The EC will begin the re-  
view meeting today, the  
source said.  
The nomination paper of  
Mohiuddin Ahmed, running  
against Huda in Dhaka-1 con-  
stituency was rejected by the  
returning officer due to some  
'mistake' in it. He had ap-  
pealed to the Chief Election  
Commissioner (CEC) who  
overruled the returning offi-  
cers' decision during hear-  
ing last week and declared  
the nomination paper valid.  
The nomination paper of  
Mohammad Hossain who is  
See Page 12 Col 2

## Series of blasts mar Indian Republic Day celebrations

NEW DELHI, Jan 26: A  
series of bomb blasts around  
the country left two police-  
men dead today, marring In-  
dia's annual Republic Day  
celebrations, police and press  
reports said, reports AP.  
Two officers of the Central  
Reserve Police force were  
killed and another seriously  
injured when a powerful de-  
vice went off in the far-east-  
ern city of Imphal, the Press  
Trust of India reported.  
No one claimed respon-  
sibility, but police blamed in-  
surgent groups fighting to  
secede the small state of Ma-  
nipur; bordering Myanmar.  
The groups had called for a  
boycott of festivities to mark  
the declaration of India as a  
republic.  
PTI said three other  
bombs went off at different  
places in Imphal, but no one  
was injured. Three more  
bombs were detected and  
defused by security forces.  
Manipur Chief Minister  
Rishang Keishing unfurled  
the Indian flag at a police  
complex in Imphal, but "very  
few people turned out to wit-  
ness the celebrations, which  
were held amidst tight secu-  
rity," PTI said.  
A bomb blast also stalled  
the official function in the  
northern city of Jaipur, 250  
kilometers (156 miles) so-  
theast of here, PTI said. No  
one claimed responsibility.  
Another flag unfurling  
ceremony was abruptly cur-  
tailed in the northern Kash-  
miri town of Kupwara, where  
a bomb blast partly destroyed  
a government building.  
The town's most senior  
official, Brij Raj Sharma, was  
whisked away from the cer-  
emony after the explosion,  
but no one was injured, po-  
lice said.  
Muslims stayed indoors  
throughout the strife-torn  
Kashmir valley in response to  
separatist calls to observe a  
"black day" on Friday to press  
for independence from India,  
police and residents said.  
Soldiers also defused a  
missile close to a sports sta-  
dium in the Kashmiri sum-  
mer capital Srinagar, hours  
before an official unfurled the  
Indian tricolour.  
The device, timed to fire  
into the heavily-guarded sta-  
See Page 12 col 8



The controversial surface-to-surface Prithvi missile on display during the Republic Day parade in New Delhi yesterday. — AFP/UNB photo

## Bangladeshi soldier killed in Haitian truck accident

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti,  
Jan 26: A Bangladeshi soldier  
was hit by a truck and killed,  
becoming the third UN  
peacekeeper to die here in  
one week, the UN mission  
reported yesterday, reports  
AP.  
Lance Corp. Abdur Rahim,  
29, of the 850-member con-  
tingent from Bangladesh,  
died on Wednesday in Jack-  
son Memorial Hospital in Mi-  
ami, where he was flown suf-  
fering massive injuries.  
A truck struck him near  
the international airport on  
Monday, then drove off.  
"He was on foot, in pur-  
suit of a Haitian suspect,"  
said UN mission spokesman  
Eric Falt.  
Six UN peacekeepers have  
died since March 31, 1995.  
See Page 12 Col 1