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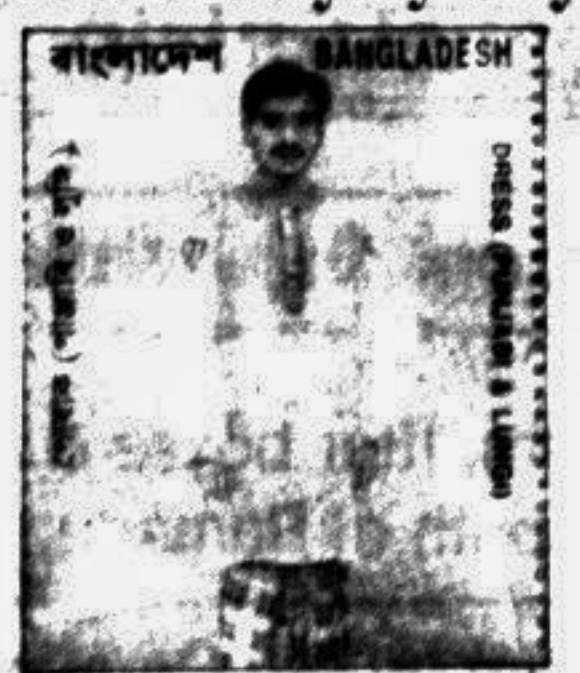
Country's 1st CNG  
project opens at  
Mahakhali  
DSE price index rises  
by 15 points  
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### DSE MARKET

DSE price index 776.51 (+1.93%)  
Market capital Tk 9090.84 cr  
Transactions in volume 300642  
Transactions in value Tk 428 cr

### Metropolitan

#### Dhaka Day by Day



Stamps on Local  
Dresses  
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## NEWS BRIEFS

### 20 injured in N'ganj clash

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 27: At least 20 persons were injured in a clash between the supporters of rival MP candidates at Arahazar thana under Narayanganj last night, police said. The clash occurred when two processions brought out by the supporters of BNP candidate Ataur Rahman Angur and independent candidate Rokunuddin Molah came face to face and exchanged provocative slogans, reports BSS.

### Pirates loot fish from trawlers

SATKHIRA, Jan 27: Pirates looted fish from two trawlers in the river Kalindi near Raimongal area on Thursday night. The trawler owners — Monsur Member and Abbas Tarafder — alleged that pirates from the neighbouring country swooped on their trawlers when they were returning after fishing from the Bay of Bengal, reports UNB.

### 29 killed in Somali clash

NAIROBI, Jan 27: A clash between two factions in Somalia killed 29 people and wounded over 60 others, a radio station operated by one of the militias reported today. The radio station said militiamen loyal to warlord Mohamed Farah Aided fought the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA), which is armed and supported by his rival Ali Mahdi Mohamed, for most of Friday in Harare, north-east of the capital Mogadishu, reports Reuters.

### Shri, Ifar timings

Ram	Jan	Shri	Ifar
7	28	-	5:46
8	29	5:19	5:47
9	30	5:18	5:47

## Hasina warns Western donors against backing 'farcical polls'

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League president Sheikh Hasina yesterday warned the Western donors against backing the "farcical elections" and called upon them not to play with the fate of the people of Bangladesh.

In an unusual and hard hitting attack on the donors, Hasina accused some of them of going along with the government in holding "unilateral elections" in the name of upholding democracy.

This government is holding this 'farce' [election] at the encouragement and support of some donor countries and leading the nation towards a state of confrontation," Hasina told an extended meeting of the AL working committee at the

Engineers Institution in the capital. The ruling BNP and its backers would be held responsible for any situation arising as a result, she cautioned.

The warning from the AL chief apparently came in the backdrop of a series of abortive behind-the-scenes dialogue between the ruling party and the mainstream opposition facilitated by a number of Western diplomats.

She said the Awami League would resist any attempt, from home and abroad, to violate the people's fundamental right to exercise their franchise and the attempt to curb the Opposition campaign for their demo-

cratic rights. "The people want to know why these countries are supporting this corrupt and incompetent government, instead of supporting people's movement for voting rights," she said.

Responding to an earlier US State Department statement on the Bangladesh elections, the AL president said "how come the champions of democracy can support an election in which the voters will not have the option to choose their representatives... an election boycotted by parties representing 69 per cent of the population."

The State Department statement had said "in the near term, we also encourage all parties to avoid violence,

coercion, or interference in the right of voters to cast their vote peacefully for their chosen candidate, and to permit the fullest possible observation and transparency of the election process."

"I ask the US and the UK if democracy will be limited only within their boundaries, and will democracy change when it crosses the Atlantic or the Pacific?" Hasina said.

"I know I may not be liked for what I am telling today but my politics is my love for Bangladesh and its people," she added.

About the economic situation, she said that the poor were becoming poorer and the poorest were living a 'sub-human' life in the slums. See Page 12 Col 3

## Clashes mark hartal in Khulna: One killed, 50 injured

KHULNA, Jan 27: One person was killed and more than 50 were injured in clashes between police and opposition activists here today as violence reignited in this hartal-bound industrial city during the Prime Minister's electioneering tour, reports UNB.

Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami enforced a day-long hartal and staged black-flag demonstration in Khulna and Bagerhat against Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's campaign for February 15 elections boycotted by the opposition.

Kamal Hossain, 14, succumbed to his wounds as police allegedly fired tear gas shells and rubber bullets to disperse the demonstrators

at Natun Rasta crossing near the Khalishpur industrial hub at about 11 am. The body of the boy was taken to Khulna Sadar Hospital.

During the 90-minute street fight between police and demonstrators before the arrival of the Prime Minister, more than a hundred homemade bombs were exploded on the scene. Two police men were also injured.

Riot police backed by armed battalion used a barrage of tear gas shells and rubber bullets to control the unruly protesters, witnesses said.

They said the angry protesters damaged and set afire about 10 shops in the area during the violence. See Page 12 Col 1

## Opposition calls 8-hour hartal in city tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The mainstream opposition political parties called a half-day hartal in the city tomorrow protesting the killing and police firing in Khulna and Bagerhat yesterday and attacks on Opposition rallies in Sylhet on January 23 and 24.

Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami, through separate press release last night, gave the eight-hour hartal call beginning at six tomorrow morning.

AL President Sheikh Hasina in a statement urged the people in the capital to make the hartal a success.

JP acting Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and Jamaat leader Abbas Ali Khan also made similar appeal. See Page 12 col 7



BDR checking autorickshaw drivers and passengers yesterday as part of its anti-hacking drive in the city. - Star photo by S K Enamul Haq

## PM at projection rally in Bagerhat Cast vote in polls to resist conspiracy

FOYLA (Bagerhat), Jan 27: BNP Chairperson Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today urged the people to cast their votes in the February 15 parliamentary polls to resist, what she called, a conspiracy against the country's independence and sovereignty, reports UNB.

She blamed three political parties, without naming them, for conspiring against hard-won democracy and independence of the country.

One of the parties, Begum Zia said, killed democracy and introduced one-party autocratic rule, another one grabbed power violating the Constitution and the last one directly opposed the War of Liberation.

"You should remain alert against these three conspirators", she said at two projection rallies at Fakirhat, Shaheed Smriti College ground and Foylathat Kamaluddin High School ground this afternoon.

The public meeting at the Fakirhat College ground was her party's first projection meeting ahead of the elections. She began the electioneering offering fatcha at the mazar of Hazrat Shah Jalal (RA) in Sylhet on January 24.

Begum Zia said the opposition parties are not partici-

pating in the forthcoming elections apprehending their sure defeat.

She said the election is going to be held as per the Constitution and urged the people to exercise their right to franchise in the February 15 elections to save the country from a grave constitutional crisis.

"Cast your valuable vote for the sheaf of paddy. Elect your representative and give him the responsibility to develop your area," she added.

Referring to the Opposition demand for a caretaker government, Begum Zia said, "We all unitedly amended the Constitution in 1991 to ensure that none can take over power violating the Constitution."

We made a law providing for electing the head of the government. The elected person can hold the post of the Prime Minister. Even if we want, we cannot make an unelected person the prime minister. The 12th amendment of the Constitution is to stop illegal takeover," she said.

The BNP Chairperson regretted that the Opposition which had voted for the 12th amendment were now agitating for an illegal demand. "They do not abide by the law" See Page 12 col 8

## AL asks workers to start campaign to unseat govt

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League yesterday instructed its party cadres to go ahead with the one-point programme aimed at unseating the government as well as to launch an all-out campaign to resist the February 15 parliamentary elections.

At an extended meeting of the AL working committee, the party high command announced a shift towards a more nationalist stance and injected enthusiasm among an estimated 2,000 representatives from different thanas, districts, former MPs, members of the national and advisory committees.

See Page 12 Col 4

## Foreign polls observers invited

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh will welcome extensive participation of foreign observers and journalists for monitoring the forthcoming general elections.

Acting on a directive from the Chief Election Commissioner, the request for participation of foreign observers was communicated to all heads of missions or their representatives here by the Foreign Secretary in briefings ending yesterday.

The envoys were called in three groups at the Foreign Office. The envoys of the European Union countries, Japan, Australia and Canada were briefed first on Thursday while those of the SAARC countries at a separate session later on the same day.

The last session took place yesterday where envoys See Page 12 col 8

## Khulna incident sparks violence in city

By Staff Correspondent

A car was set ablaze and at least 15 other motor vehicles were damaged as opposition activists went on rampage in Baughandhu Avenue and Gulistan areas in the city protesting killing of one person during hartal in Khulna yesterday.

Witnesses said the protesters also clashed with on-duty police. Police lobbed at least a dozen tear gas shells to disperse the protesters, police said.

At one stage they set fire to a car in front of the Pir Yamani Market. Fire fighters put out the fire.

Incidents of violence were also reported from Mohakhali and Mirpur areas in the city.

## Indo-Pak troops trade heavy fire along Kashmir border

JAMMU (India), Jan 27: Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged heavy fire along the Kashmir border today, a day after Pakistan claimed that an Indian rocket strike on a mosque in Pakistan-held Kashmir killed 18 people, reports AFP.

Defence officials here said "heavy exchange of firing" were going on between Indian and Pakistani troops in 11 places on the tense and rugged border dividing the disputed state since midnight Friday.

"There is heavy firing," a Border Security Force (BSF) source told AFP. "The Pakistanis are firing non-stop and we are firing at them."

But an army officer said: "It is nothing to worry about... there is not going to be any war... the Pakistanis may be upset (after the mosque attack), these (firings) are normal."

Indian and Pakistani troops exchange fire almost daily along the winding Kashmir border. The two sides routinely accuse each other of provoking the fighting, which has caused casual-

ties among villagers near the frontier.

Eighteen worshippers were killed and 20 injured Friday when two long-range rockets slammed into the border village of Kahuta, near the line dividing Kashmir between India and Pakistan.

ISLAMABAD, Jan 27: Pakistan today reported two people were killed in a rocket attack from India hours after an earlier attack on a mosque left 20 dead. The second attack occurred about 30 kilometers (18 miles) south of the border town of Rawalakot shortly after two rockets hit the mosque in the town of Kahuta Friday, said Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, state premier in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, reports AFP.

Between India and Pakistan, Pakistani officials said in Islamabad.

A Pakistani defence spokesman said the attack was a "provocation" by India and a "major violation" of the demarcation line in the disputed Himalayan territory.

India denied staging a rocket strike across the border on Friday.

An Indian defence ministry spokesman in New Delhi told the Press Trust of India news agency that the Pakistan claim that Indian troops had fired two rockets was "baseless."

In Srinagar, the summer capital of Indian-administered Kashmir, the state's senior-most army officer almost rejected the Pakistani charge.

"We categorically deny our hand in the rocket attack," Brigadier PS Bindra told AFP. "This thing has been no firing on the line of control which divides the Indian and Pakistani-held portions of Kashmir for sometime now," he added.

Defence Ministry sources in New Delhi said, however, that Indian troops had fired back on Friday after three rockets fired by Pakistani troops crashed into the Poonch Sector of Indian Kashmir.

The Pakistani attack caused a scare but no casualties, the sources said.

## CEC 'saddened' by major parties boycotting polls

By Staff Correspondent

Chief Election Commissioner Justice AKM Sadeque has accused the political parties of "creating garbage and then trying to dump it on the Election Commission."

The CEC was referring to the prevailing political situation in the country. "Be it Jamaat, BNP or any other political party, they are responsible for creating this garbage. Now they are dumping it on top of my shoulder," Justice Sadeque said while talking to a group of reporters at his office yesterday.

"I am doing everything possible within the constitutional framework to conduct the polls. Do you think I am happy about the situation? No, it is a matter of sadness for me that most of the major political parties are not participating in the elections," he said.

About violation of election rule, Justice Sadeque said his office is determined to take "stern" action against any anomaly. The CEC referred to a candidate in Magura, Kazi Salimul Haque and said that

See Page 12 Col 3

## Goods worth Tk 150 cr sold at Dhaka Trade Fair

The curtain was drawn yesterday for the last of some 1.2 million visitors to the Dhaka International Trade Fair '96 which yielded brisk business for both domestic and foreign exhibitors, reports UNB.

Commerce and Information Minister M Shamsul Islam pulled down the curtain on the 26-day fair at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the afternoon, calling it a great success in acquainting the country's products.

Officials estimated that goods, mainly consumer products, worth Tk 150 crore were traded at the fair while an amount of Tk 6,180,740 was collected as gate money up to Friday.

Customs authorities also realised approximately Tk 75 lakh as duty from the foreign participants who came from 16 countries and put a total of 63 pavilion and stalls in the fair, opened by the Prime Minister on January 2.

Bangladeshi manufacturers also managed export orders to the tune of Tk 25 crore while dozens of buyers from foreign countries like Japan, United Kingdom, Italy and the United States visited the fair.

Atlas Toy has received an order to supply toys worth 12,000 US dollar per month for one year to Japan while Bengal Fine Ceramics got order for supply of its products worth 50,000 dollars to the United Kingdom.

Bay Tannery of Bangladesh has started discussion with Astac Company Limited of Thailand to set up two joint venture projects in Bangladesh—a medical clinic and an electronic goods plant.

The commerce minister told the concluding function that efforts should be taken to bring more export-oriented Bangladeshi enterprises in the fair as the country's thrust is to develop and expand export base.

Shamsul Islam also asked the officials concerned to bring the manufacturers of the two export processing zones (EPZs) in the next trade fairs. "Our objective is to acquaint our products to foreigners, not their products to us," he said.

Commerce Secretary AM Mofazzal Kairam informed the concluding ceremony that the Dhaka World Trade Centre, after its completion, will See Page 12 col 7

## Need to recast education systems in South Asia stressed

By Staff Correspondent

Discussions at a seminar in the city yesterday underscored the need for recasting the education systems in South Asia keeping in view the dynamics of indigenous education systems.

Panelists from five South Asian countries — Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka and Nepal — shared views at the seminar on "Remaking Education in South Asia: Making of a South Asian University," hosted by the Bangladesh Study Group for Alternative Thinking (BASGAT), a non-government think-tank.

Prof Rehman Sobhan, Executive Director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, was the chief guest and Director General of the Bangladesh Institute of International and

Strategic Studies (BISS) Major General Abu Kaisar Fazlul Kabir chaired the seminar held at the BISS.

The discussants strongly suggested expansion of the spectrum of education beyond national boundaries and petty nationalist ideals. They observed that there were so many things to share and learn together without tanks, bombs and guns.

The seminar was organised in connection with the "Visiting Fellowship Programme" of BASGAT. Dr Imtiaz Ahmed, one of its directors presented the keynote paper at the seminar.

Those who took part in discussion included Dr Binayak Sen of BASGAT, Dr Ashis Nandy, Senior Research Fellow of New Delhi

based Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS); Dr Zia Mian, Research Fellow of Islamabad-based Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI); Dr Ajaya Mani Dixit, fellow of Kathmandu-based Nepal Water Conservation Foundation (NWCF) and Dr Iftekhar Zaman, Executive Director of the Colombo-based Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS).

Earlier, BASGAT Executive Director Dr Abdur Rob Khan gave the address of welcome. Prof Rehman Sobhan said the main thrust should be on recapitulation of our own capability, which so long remained neglected and "we have to address the dynamics of indigenous education systems."

The present government

was perpetuating the tradition of the previous autocratic regime putting the Task Force reports in shelves while it continued to be prescribed by foreign consultants, he said.

"It was well proved through filing of 29 reports by the Task Force that we ourselves can demonstrate a great deal of understanding our problems," said Prof Rehman Sobhan, adding that problem at the moment was lack of appropriate leadership and skills.

In his paper, Dr Imtiaz Ahmed, who is also a teacher of International Relations Department in Dhaka University, contended that "governmentalisation of knowledge not only limits competition and creativity, which

otherwise could be found in autonomous and independent schooling, but also caters to the populism of the majority community bent on organising the development of the state."

He quoted Thomas Macaulay who said that the British education policy in India was designed to create "a class who would be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect." The colonial legacy in education, particularly with respect to literacy, was far from over, he added.

"In fact, the children of South Asia are literally brought up as 'nationalist' or

'communalist,' tutored to fall in love only with the nation that they have come to share more as a result of parental blessing," Dr Ahmed said.

Dr Zia said that in Pakistan students as tender aged as nine years were taught in very first chapter of their schooling that India is our enemy and madrassahs provided military training to fight for Kashmir.

Ashis Nandy said that on the pretext of national interest, India was depriving Bangladesh of its water share actually to keep Calcutta Port alive.

Later, the floor was opened for questions and a number of people including university teachers and former government officials took part.

## 13 killed in Makkah hospital fire

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia, Jan 27: A hospital fire killed 13 people and injured 33 in Makkah, Islam's holiest city, the official Saudi Press Agency reported today, reports AP.

The agency said the blaze on Friday at Alawi Tooni Hospital was caused by an electrical short circuit. Most of the victims suffered smoke inhalation.

Sixteen of the injured were treated and released. The others remained in hospitals, the news agency said, quoting an unnamed Civil Defence official.

The victims included men and women of various nationalities. It added, without giving any breakdown.