

**MANGO JUICE**  
*Made from Fresh Mangoes*  
**PURE & NATURAL**  
**TASTY & NUTRITIOUS**  
 for Health

# The Daily Star

**Fingertip Convenience**  
 Standard Chartered  
 12 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 5.00

VOL. VI NO. 22 REGD. NO. DA 781 MAGH 22 1402 BS, DHAKA SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1996 RAMADAN 14, 1416 HIJRI

**Announcement**

The first round of the Daily Star — Philips World Cup Cricket Quiz Bonanza gets underway from today. The Star Quiz 1 form will be published everyday on the Sports Page till February 17. Star Quiz 2, the Bumper Round, will be published from February 25 till March 17. Prizes worth Tk 1,50,000 include colour televisions, CD players and two-in-ones. **Star Quiz 1 — see Page 11**

**Inside Today**

**Article**

**Coup in Niger: The Background**  
 by Prof M Maniruzzaman Miah  
 Page 4

**International**

**Asian nations to focus on economic security issues**  
 Canadian Senate passes constitutional reform bill  
 Page 5

**Business**

**Rising cereal prices plunge world into food crisis: FAO**  
 Page 6

**Supplement**

Today's issue of The Daily Star contains a 3-page supplement on the National Day of Sri Lanka  
 Pages 7-9

**Metropolitan**

**Dhaka Day by Day**

**Focus**

Law and Our Rights page is held over for tomorrow

**NEWS BRIEFS**

**Indian sugar seized**

SIRAJGANJ, Feb 3: The law enforcing agencies in a raid on a Rajshahi-Dhaka train today seized 200 kg Indian sugar and 57 bottles of phensidyl. Police said a joint squad of police and customs led by a first-class magistrate raided the train at around 1:30 pm near Sirajganj bazar and seized the contraband items, reports UNB.

**DU course system exams postponed**

By DU Correspondent  
 All course system examinations of the Dhaka University scheduled to be held from February 4 to 8 at the main examination centre have been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances. Fresh dates for the examinations will be announced soon, a DU press release said, adding that other examinations will be held as per schedule.

**22 arms seized**

The law enforcing agencies recovered 22 different types of firearms, 13 ammunition and 14 explosives yesterday, the 45th day of the countrywide arms recovery operation. During the period they also arrested 421 people on various charges including illegal possession of arms, reports UNB.

**Sehri, Iftar timings**

Ram	Feb	Sehri	Iftar
14	4	—	5:50
15	5	5:16	5:51
16	6	5:16	5:52

## Major quake kills 144 in China

BEIJING, Feb 3: At least 144 died and 480 were injured in a major earthquake that hit China's southern Yunnan province today, an official at the Kunming Seismological Bureau said, reports AFP. The earthquake, which measured seven on the Richter scale, struck the northwest of the province, near the Tibetan frontier. The latest reports we have are of 144 people confirmed dead and 480 injured," said a seismology bureau official in Lijiang County, stressing that the reports were incomplete as communications had been cut off with many of the areas worst hit by the quake. "We have lost telephone contact completely with five countries, including Mingying and Baoshan," the official said by telephone Sunday, adding that many roads had been destroyed, further hampering rescue efforts. An official in the Kunming Seismological Bureau said the death toll was likely to rise sharply as most people were at home when the earthquake struck and would have been buried in housing collapses. Zhongdian city, the capital of Diqing Tibetan autonomous region, had lost contact with the outside world, while in the seat of Lijiang county about 10 per cent of old houses had fallen down and water and electricity had been cut. The officials in Lijiang said as many as 80 per cent of buildings had collapsed in small towns and villages in the worst hit areas. China's official Xinhua news agency had put the initial death toll at 30. The mountainous and relatively isolated region at the centre of the quake is mainly inhabited by members of the Tibetan and Nazi minorities. The provincial government has sent officials to the disaster-hit area and the Provincial Seismological Bureau has sent a 50-strong team to area to monitor for a possible new earthquake. Xinhua said experts had predicted earlier last month that earthquakes measuring six to seven on the Richter scale could hit the region. Since 1930, three earthquakes measuring more than six on the Richter scale has been recorded in the Lijiang and Zhongdian area, it said. A 6.0 magnitude quake on the open-ended Richter scale can cause severe damage, while one measuring seven is



A partial view of the collapsed godowns at Tanbazar in Narayanganj. — Star photo

## Khaleda to visit Rajshahi Feb 10: Hartal called

From Our Correspondent  
 RAJSHAHI, Feb 3: The local BNP today announced Begum Khaleda Zia's visit to the city on February 10 and the Opposition also called a dawn-to-dusk hartal on the day to resist her election tour. The BNP chief and Prime Minister is contesting from two constituencies — Rajshahi city and nearby Pabna — in the forthcoming parliamentary polls. The BNP had earlier planned Begum Zia's two public meetings between February 8 and 11. To resist those, the Opposition had also decided to call hartal on the day of the visit. The BNP announced over microphones that Begum Zia would address a public meeting at the Rajshahi High Madrasa field on February 10 afternoon. The opposition parties at once announced their hartal programme and brought out separate processions in the city chanting slogans vowing to resist the visit. See Page 12 col 8

## Japan cancels annual consultation meet due this month

By Inam Ahmed and R M Titumir  
 The Japanese government has cancelled the scheduled visit of its mission for Bangladesh-Japan Annual Consultation of Economic Co-operation meeting in Dhaka, making availability of Japanese aid to the country for the next fiscal year uncertain. According to official sources, Japan, the largest bilateral donor to Bangladesh and the second among all donors, conveyed to the government on Wednesday last that it would not send the mission, scheduled to be here this month. The Japanese Embassy in Dhaka, as per instructions from its headquarters, has pointed out "the current situation which includes the election schedule and others" as the reason for holding back the mission, without elaborating. But some sources said that last Tuesday's incident at the Sonargaon Hotel, operated by Pan Pacific Hotels of Japan, might have prompted the decision. On that day, the employees of Sonargaon Hotel reportedly beat up a number of officials of the hotel after the termination of an employee. The General Manager of the hotel, who is a Japanese national, was also allegedly manhandled. Japan has taken the Sonargaon incident very seriously since it was built with the Japanese OECF loan and it is the only hotel project in the world financed under Japanese assistance, the sources pointed out. Meanwhile, a diplomatic source said Japan has also advised its private sector not to come to Bangladesh until the 'situation improves'. See Page 12 Col 1

## Opposition may call 48-hr hartal from Feb 14

By Reaz Ahmad  
 The mainstream Opposition plans to announce a fresh agitation programme today including a 48-hour hartal in the country from February 14 and gherao of the residences of ministers on February 9 and 10. Opposition sources hinted. The three major opposition parties — Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami — are contemplating to deal a final blow to the ruling BNP by going for hartal on the polling date, a source in the Opposition camp said. An opposition leader, involved in drawing up the fresh programme, told The Daily Star last night that key leaders of the three parties, in separate meetings, had finalised the programme. It may be announced today after a joint meeting of the AL, JP and Jamaat, he indicated. The leader, who did not want to be named, said that there would be some other See Page 12 Col 3

## 3 killed, 50 hurt as godowns collapse in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent  
 NARAYANGANJ, Feb 3: Three labourers were killed and at least 50 injured when six godowns with a stock of some 1,20,000 bags of salt and fertilizer collapsed at Tanbazar on the western bank of the river Shitalakshya this morning. The dead were identified as Aslam (38), Delwar Hossain Delu (30) and Mobinuddin (28). Delwar died on the spot while fatally injured Mobin and Aslam were declared dead at the Narayanganj Hospital and the Dhaka Medical College Hospital respectively, hospital and fire service sources said. Of the injured labourers, Almas (35), Babul (30), Sattar (30), Hamid (30) and Mohsin (22) were admitted to the Narayanganj Hospital while others were treated at different local clinics. The dilapidated tin-shade godowns at the RD Das Road collapsed as there was no wall to protect those from erosion of the river, said Shahabuddin Ahmed, deputy director of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), while contacted by The Daily Star. Besides, the AR Bhuiyan Memorial School, five salt crushing units and several buildings, housing 25 to 30 families, adjacent to the collapsed godowns are also under threat of collapse now as big cracks have developed because of the erosion, local people said. Most of the families of the risky dwelling houses left those earlier, they said. A spokesman of the AR Bhuiyan Trust, which owns all the six rented godowns, told this correspondent that the tenants were cautioned five days back not to use the godowns because those were threatened due to erosion by the river. But the tenants started unloading operations only two days back, the spokesman said. However, none of the tenants were available for comment. According to witnesses and fire brigade rescuers, one godown, rented out to Nazma Salt Mills, collapsed at about 9.45 in the morning in See Page 12 col 8

## Hartal disrupts city life

By Staff Correspondent  
 The half-day hartal in the city yesterday, called by the three major opposition parties, passed off peacefully but paralysed normal life. Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami had called the 6 am to 2 pm hartal protesting 'police atrocities' on students of Dhaka University on Wednesday last and demanding resignation of the Prime Minister and cancellation of what they called the farcical February 15 elections. All motorised transports stayed off the city streets while a good number of rickshaws plied from the morning as pickets were lenient to the three-wheeled establishments and education See Page 12 Col 1

## Anti-polls violence in dists

By Staff Correspondent  
 More incidents of anti-election violence were reported from Chittagong, Sunamganj and Pabna while an independent candidate in Comilla withdrew from the polls race yesterday. Meanwhile, section 144 was imposed on Cox's Bazar town yesterday to avert confrontation between the activities of Awami League and the ruling BNP. Our Staff Correspondent reported from Chittagong that several hundred processionists attacked and ransacked a BNP election office at Bibirhat under Fatukchhari thana yesterday afternoon. The procession was brought out by the supporters and activists of Awami League and Chhatra League after a rally held there, police and party sources said. Police rushed there and dispersed the anti-election activists by resorting to lathicharge. Our Staff Correspondent reported from Sylhet that the thana election office of BNP at Chhatka in Sunamganj district was set on fire Friday evening. Some unidentified people broke the window panes, poured petrol inside and torched the office. Articles including posters, list were burnt. SP Sunamganj confirmed the incident and said none could be arrested in this connection. UNB reported from Comilla: A candidate in the February 15 election from Comilla-12 (Choddogram) constituency withdrew from the electoral race yesterday responding to Opposition's call. The independent candidate, SM Shoeb, also expressed his solidarity with the Opposition demand for a caretaker government to ensure a free and fair election and urged the government to meet it. See Page 12 Col 3

## Opposition to resist PM's Ctg tour

From Staff Correspondent  
 CHITTAGONG, Feb 3: The three major opposition parties boycotting the coming parliamentary elections announced here today that they would resist at any cost the Prime Minister's electioneering campaign in the port city. At a press conference organised by the Chittagong unit of Awami League at its office at Darul Fazal market this afternoon, Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury said, "We will not allow her to visit Chittagong under any circumstances and we are already prepared to resist her election tour here". Mohiuddin, who is also the general secretary of the city unit of Awami League urged the people to protest and resist the campaign of what he said 'farcical' elections. He called for stopping the election on February 15. Mohiuddin also called upon all concerned not to allow the ministers and other election candidates to use the circuit house, guest houses owned by government and semi-government bodies and the vehicles. Otherwise, officials concerned will have to bear the responsibility for any damage done to national property, he warned. He appealed to the army, BDR and police not to allow them to be used by any body as tools of power illegally. The Jamaat-e-Islami at a separate press conference at Dewan Bazar party office at 12 noon held the government responsible for the politics of violence during the holy month of Ramadan. People should resist the politics of violence by resisting the PM's future visit here, they said. City Ameer Maulana Mohammad Abu Taher read out the written statement. City unit Secretary General Shamsul Islam, ex-MP Shahjahan Chowdhury, City unit Vice President Afzar Uddin Chowdhury and Chittagong district north Ameer Prof Ahsanullah were also present. The Jatiya Party City unit President, Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury, addressed the JP press conference held at his Panchaish residence in the afternoon. They also announced a similar programme to resist the Prime Minister's visit to Chittagong. City unit secretary Jahangir Alam, Alhaj Dastagir Chowdhury and Khorsheed Alam were present.

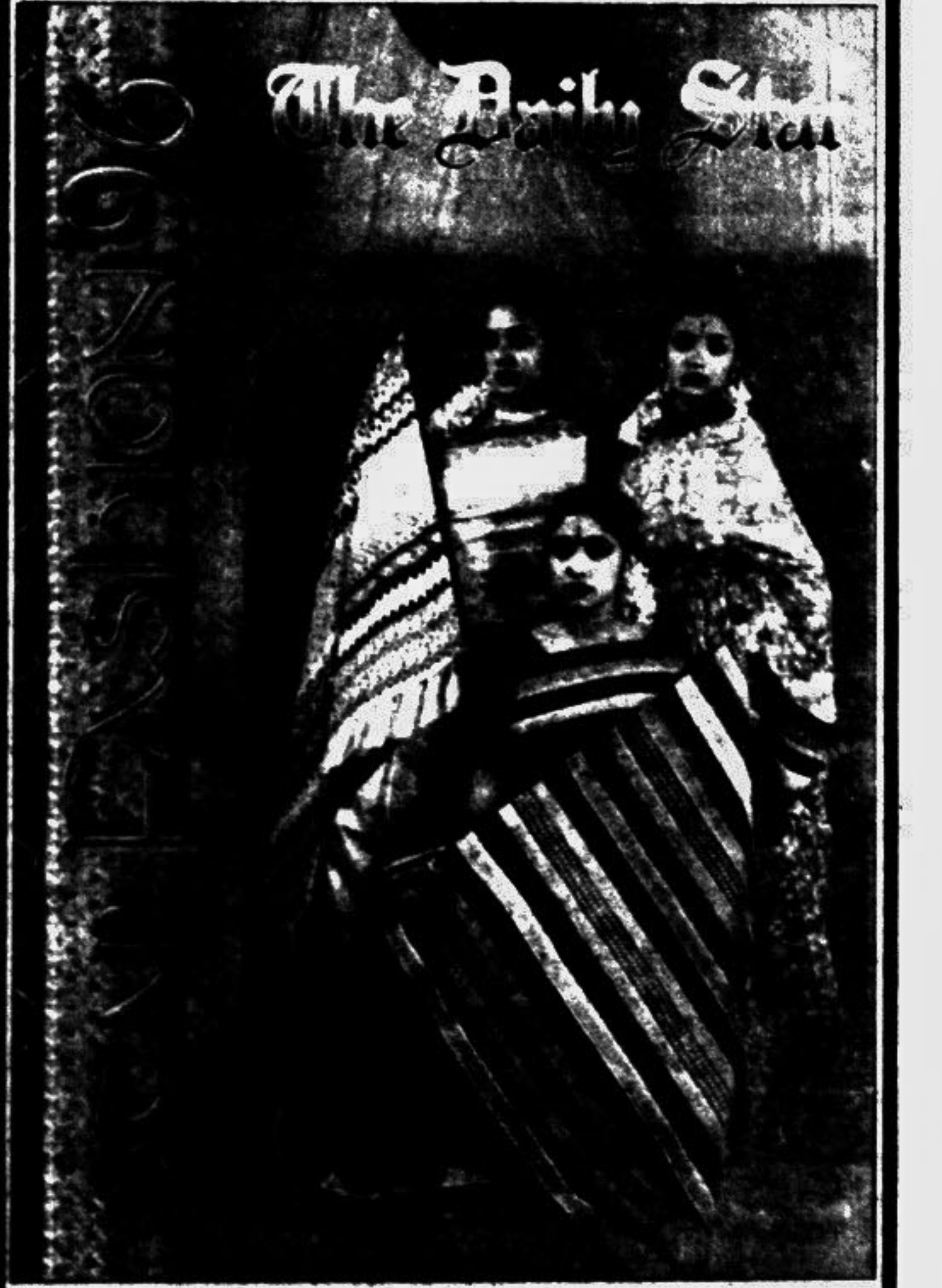
## Assault on Pabna BNP candidate: 3 AL leaders held

PABNA, Feb 3: Three Awami League leaders of Chhatmohor thana unit were arrested Friday night following the assault on a ruling party candidate, reports UNB. They are Ishaq Ali Manik, organizing secretary, Ashrauzzaman Ratan, publicity secretary, and Bashir Ahmed, office secretary. District Awami League President Waziuddin Khan and general secretary Rezaul Karim Lal protested the arrests and demanded immediate release of their party colleagues. Former MP Group Captain (td) Saiful Azam Suja and six others came under attack near an anti-election meeting of pro-Awami League Chhatra League and Jubo League at the thana headquarters while they were conducting election campaign at 8:00 pm. Fifteen people were injured in the melee.

## Income tax collection falls short of target

Income tax collection continues to remain far off the mark during the current fiscal, forcing extra pressures on indirect tax-heads in order to keep pace with the overall target of revenue earnings from taxation, reports UNB. Official sources said income tax collection during the first six months of 1995-96 fiscal was lagging behind the period's target by about Tk 49 crore. Collection during the time totalled Tk 564.02 crore against a target of Tk 612.96 crore. Instead of improvement, income tax collection fell further in December compared to the period upto November when the gap between the collection and the target was of Tk 14 crore. Sources said a record collection of Value Added Tax (VAT) was offsetting the shortfall resulting from poor income tax collection. The VAT collection during the first half of the current

**Rush Now for Your Copy of Star Fashion '96**



The colourful Daily Star Fashion Special for which you've been waiting so long is in the stands from today. Ask your hawker for a copy or get it from nearest newsstand. Price of this beautiful tabloid is only Tk 20.00.

Opposition to PM's visit to Chittagong. — Star photo

near Asad Gate in the city yesterday. — Star photo