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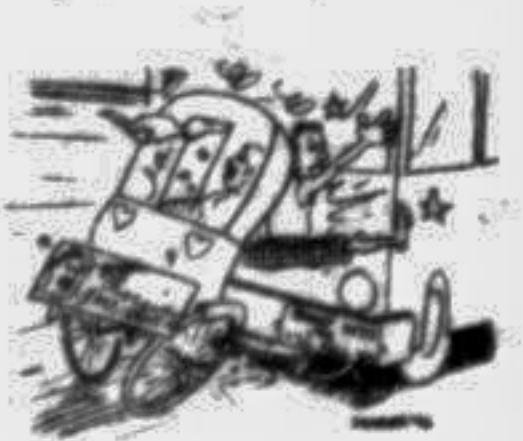
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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Businessman shot dead in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Feb 25: A businessman was shot dead last night at West Charandwip village under Boalkhali thana. Police said Bakhtiar, 25, was killed by armed terrorists after returning home from his shop at Boalkhali in the city as he helped the police arrest local mastaans.

Police recovered the body today. However, none was arrested so far.

### Attack on Inquilab Editor's house

A group of youths hurled bombs and fired shots at the Banani residence of Daily Inquilab Editor A M M Bahauddin yesterday. Witnesses said about five youths from a white private car fired shots and hurled bombs aiming at the editor's residence at about 10 pm. Police rushed to the spot but could not trace the car, reports UNB.

### Mine blast kills 2 Kashmiris

MUZAFFARABAD, Feb 25: Two Kashmiri youths were killed when an anti-tank mine exploded in a border village in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir. State officials said today. The state's chief executive Sardar Abdul Qayyum claimed that agents from India's secret service had planted the mine, which exploded in the village of Sohana Saturday, reports AFP.

### 11 die in Egyptian accidents

MINYA (Egypt), Feb 25: Two accidents took the lives of 11 people today in the south Egyptian province of Minya, most of them when a passenger van collided with a cement truck, police said. Eight passengers were killed and the remaining seven injured when their minivan tried to pass a cement truck on the main highway headed south to Sohag province, police said.

## 200 hurt during non-cooperation

# Courts attacked, rly property damaged

By Staff Correspondent

Courts in Dhaka and Rajshahi came under bomb attacks and over 200 people including 8 policemen were injured in other incidents of violence as Opposition activists clashed with police and ruling party supporters in different parts of the country yesterday, the second day of the Opposition-called 3-day non-cooperation programme.

Normal life remained paralysed and communications snapped while the Opposition activists staged militant demonstrations demanding dismissal of the "illegal" gov-

ernment, cancellation of the February 15 polls and fresh election under a caretaker government.

The angry activists clashed with police while damaging railway signal and other property at Tongi, set fire to the TNO office at Dhunot in Bogra, attacked the TNO and BNP offices at Kazipur in Sirajganj and banks at Barisal. A 6-hour hartal has been called at Barisal town for today in protest against arrest of some Opposition leaders.

In the capital, Opposition activists hurled several bombs

inside the premises of the Session Judge's court and clashed with police at Bangabandhu Avenue, Jatrabari, Demra and Mohakhali. Police fired rubber bullets and lobbed team gas shells leaving at least 25 people.

One Amanullah, a shop-owner, was injured with bullet in a cross-fire between Opposition and ruling party activists at Jatrabari.

Ten of the injured, including Amanullah were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

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Pickets hurled bombs during clashes with police in Tongi yesterday.

— Star photo

## Polls results

### No bar on piecemeal gazette, says Razzak Ali

By Reaz Ahmad and Mizan Ali

There is no legal or constitutional bar on piecemeal gazette notification, according to a single gazette notification, Sheikh Razzak Ali, Speaker of the 5th JS, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He, however, could not confirm whether there was any precedence of making a piecemeal gazette notification.

The Speaker also said that there was no legal bar in forming a cabinet before the first session of the Jatiya Sangsad. "Administering of oath of MPs is a must for that,"

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## Results of 208 JS seats gazetted

The Election Commission has declared the official results of 208 constituencies, according to a gazette notification dated February 20, reports UNB.

But the gazette was made available to the EC yesterday, five days after its publication.

The Commission declared results of 203 constituencies till February 19.

Results of six other constituencies are in the process of gazette notification. EC sources said, the constituencies are: Comilla-2, Comilla-5, Thakurgaon-2, Dinajpur-2 and Jamalpur-2.

The sources said the dates for repolling in 84 constituencies would be announced soon. Elections in those constituencies were postponed for rigging and violence.

Elections were held in 298 constituencies, out of 300, on February 15. The EC had postponed polls in 2 constituencies following the death of a candidate and in Gaibandha-1 due to a court injunction.

## Cancel gazette notification, demands AL

By Staff Correspondent

Three top Awami League leaders yesterday called on Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice AKM Sadeque and urged him to cancel the gazette notification on the partial results of the 6th Jatiya Sangsad election announced on February 20, saying that it was illegal.

AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman, Joint Secretary General Abdul Jalil, Information and Research Secretary Professor Abu Syed and International Affairs Secretary Abul Hasan Chowdhury met the CEC in his EC office at noon yesterday.

During the meeting, the AL Secretary General pointed out that his party had already demanded the EC to cancel the February 15 parliamentary elections, meeting sources said.

He alleged that the BNP government has announced the gazette notification on a piecemeal basis and published it under back date which was extra-constitutional, the sources added.

Zillur Rahman demanded the immediate cancellation of the gazette notification.

## 2 killed, one stabbed in city incidents

By DMCH Correspondent

An unidentified pedestrian succumbed to injuries he received from cutting of his tendons by some hoodlums in the city last night.

Hoodlums at Manik Mia's Dhal of Hajaribagh cut the tendons of the man, aged 35. He died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Abdur Rashid, 25, a street vendor, also received bullet injuries when he was caught in a cross-fire at the same area. Two gangs of local bullies were locked in a gunfight there.

Meanwhile, an unidentified rickshawpuller, 40, was beaten to death by one Liton at Purbha Shah Alibagh at Mirpur yesterday afternoon, said Mirpur police.

Police said, Liton being enraged by his mother's receiving injuries by the rickshaw beat the rickshawpuller who died on the spot.

In another incident, a group of miscreants kidnapped one Liton, 22, son of Mansur Ali, from Kazi Para yesterday evening. They demanded Tk. 50,000 as ransom for his release.

Later, the kidnappers stabbed Liton. He was admitted to the DMCH in a critical condition.

## Forex reserve down, food import & inflation up

By R M Titumir and Inam Ahmed

The country's foreign exchange reserve continued to decline in the first six months of the current fiscal year while the food import bill and inflation rate increased.

According to Bangladesh Bank (BB) statistics till January 14 of the current fiscal (1995-96), domestic credit climbed up by Tk 2158.87 crore or 5.98 per cent while it had dropped by Tk 220.57 crore or 0.72 per cent during the corresponding period of 1994-95.

Government borrowing from the banking system increased by Tk 114.15 crore or 1.12 per cent during the period while it had plummeted by Tk 923 crore or 9.49 per cent over the same period of 1994-95.

The private sector credit increased by Tk 2044.72 crore or 7.89 per cent against Tk 702.43 crore or 3.35 per cent during the same period of last year.

According to latest central bank provisional estimate, the excess liquidity of the country's commercial banks stood at Tk 1381.82 crore which is 3.66 per cent lower than that

of the June 29, 1995 position.

During the month of September, the industrial production indices decreased by 6.16 per cent and stood at 271.81. In contrast, the indices in September last

escalated by 4.10 per cent.

The country's foreign exchange reserves stood at 2.24 billion US dollar, equivalent to four months import. The amount was at a peak of 3.4 billion dollars in April, 1995.

Economists apprehend that government borrowing figure may increase further as substantial upward revisions have been made to the food import bill.

According to the Rice Situation Update of the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the Aman harvest this season is considerably lower than the poor crop in the previous year, and a postponement of anticipated deliveries in December 1995 to the current year, the country's food imports in 1996 are expected to remain high.

Reflecting these new developments, the FAO's forecast for Bangladesh's import was raised to 1.6 million tonnes,

which would be about 0.8 million tonnes more than the imports of 1995.

Official figures placed inflation at 5.77 per cent in September, but it may have underestimated the real rate of inflation, economists point out. With food accounting for about 60 per cent of the price index they estimate that the inflation rate is running at around 8.0 to 9.0 per cent and additional expenditure during the election may fuel more inflation.

Broad money supply growth continued and was up by Tk 166.85 crore till January 14, 1996.

Banks have increased interest rates to contain monetary pressure. According to economists, without further fiscal adjustment, inflationary pressures look set to continue.

Interbank call money rate shot up by 14 per cent in mid-February mainly due to heavy withdrawals by the government and non-availability of rediscount facility for the commercial banks from the central bank, according to a money market analyst with a foreign bank.

## Emeka's fresh move

'Commonwealth Secretary General Chief Emeke Anyaoku sent letters to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina with an offer to mediate between the two for resolving the country's deepening political crisis,' reports UNB.

BBC in its late night news quoted a source at the Commonwealth headquarters as saying that Emeke had once again offered his good office to end the staggering political stalemate in Bangladesh.

Sir Ninian Stephen, former Governor General of Australia, came to Dhaka as a special envoy of the Commonwealth Secretary General in 1994 and made an abortive attempt to resolve the crisis through government-opposition dialogue.

## Mannan Bhuiyan acting BNP SG

By Staff Correspondent

No firm decision has yet been taken for a change in the post of Secretary General of the ruling BNP. Informant party sources said last night.

Earlier, it was speculated in

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## US Congressman meets Khaleda, Hasina today

US Congressman Bill Richardson arrived here yesterday afternoon to discuss the current political situation with leaders to help Bangladesh resolve its political impasse, reports UNB.

A Democrat lawmaker, he is on the last leg of his visit to some countries in Asia and Europe to discuss US policy on different issues. His last port of call was Kathmandu, Nepal.

Richardson is due to meet Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina and other opposition leaders today.

He told reporters at the Zia International Airport that he would discuss Bangladesh's current political situation with both government and opposition leaders.

When asked if he would mediate in resolving Bangladesh's nagging political problems, Richardson said: "I will have a first hand knowledge of the situation... I will express my views. I will have a suggestion."

It's now immature to tell anything about it," he told an-

other questioner who asked about the agenda of his talks with politicians.

But the US lawmaker, who will report back to Congress on Bangladesh, made it clear that the problems here will have to be solved by the people and the leaders of the country. "Bangladesh is an important country and we are curious about it," said Richardson, who is visiting Bangladesh for the first time.

The US Congressman, who was in Pakistan and India, said that in Kashmir he had discussed with the local leaders the 'hostage issue' and humanitarian aspects of the situation in the troubled valley. "One of the hostages is American," he said.

Director General of the American Desk at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ashrafuddinoula, who greeted Richardson at ZIA, described the visit as "important."

He hoped that it would further strengthen the Dhaka-Washington relations.

Our Staff Correspondent adds: Bill Richardson will also

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Neil Fairbrother (grounded) of England makes an abortive attempt to run Jonty Rhodes out during their Group B World Cup cricket match at Rawalpindi yesterday. (Details on Page 10). — AFP/UNB photo

## Pakistan take on Holland today

Sports Reporter



Defending champions Pakistan, fresh from their impressive start against the United Arab Emirates, will take on Holland in yet another unevenly balanced encounter of the Wills World Cup at the Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore today.

The world champions, who showed signs of improvement specially in fielding in their Group B opener against UAE on Saturday which they won by a massive nine-wickets, will be looking for a repeat performance against Babes Holland with their skipper Wasim Akram spearheading the attack.

On the other hand, Akram's new-ball partner Waqar Younis, who appeared to have overcome his chronic back-pain

that kept the speedster out of the last World Cup, is expected to relieve his reputation as the most dreaded fiddle with his skipper. Not to mention the workmen-like Aaqib Javed, the unsung hero of Pakistan.

With everyone keenly awaiting to see the master batsmen in the world, Javed Miandad, who earned the rare distinction of making all the six World Cups, will hopefully be able to appear with the bat provided that Pakistan win the toss and decide to bat first.

Besides leg-spinner Mush-taq Ahmed, who won the man-of-the-match award in Pakistan's first match against UAE for his magical spell of 7-0-17-3 in the rain-reduced 33-over side affair, will certainly be a treat to watch on a typical subcontinental wicket.

Bangladesh Television will cover the match live at 10 am (BST).

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## N'ganj Jubo Dal factions clash: 50 injured

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Feb 25: At least 50 persons, including two police constables, were injured in a gunbattle between two rival groups of the Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal in Talla area of 'be town today.

The bullet injured constables are Shahar Ali, 40, and Harun Mian, 35.

Seven other seriously injured were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and different private clinics in Dhaka.

They are Nurul Islam, 35, Rony, 16, Liton, 22, Awal, 18, Titu 25, Harun, 22 and Milon 22. The rest of the injured were released after first aid.

More than a thousand gunshots were exchanged and about fifteen hundred cocktails exploded during the fierce clash that started at 3 pm. It continued for about three hours.

The clash erupted when the members of the Renu group attacked a meeting in

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## 23 killed as bomb goes off in Jerusalem bus

JERUSALEM, Feb 25:

Twenty-six people were killed today and more than 70 wounded in two bombings by suspected Islamic radicals in Jerusalem and the southern city of Ashqelon, police said, reports AFP, Reuters.

A total of 23 people were killed and more than 50 were hurt when one bomb exploded in the middle of a crowded Jerusalem bus during morning rush hour, they said. It was the deadliest single attack in Israel since 1978.

A second bomb attack against a group of soldiers hitchhiking outside Ashqelon left three dead and some 25 injured, the police said.

Police said the dead could include two suicide bombers, but they had yet to confirm this.

A caller to Israel Radio claimed the Islamic resistance movement Hamas was responsible for the two blasts.

Israel Radio's Arabic-language service said the caller

claimed the explosions were carried out by the Hamas Qasam brigades on the 50th anniversary of the killing of master bombmaker Yahya Ayyash and the second anniversary of a Jewish settler's massacre of 29 Palestinian worshippers in Hebron.

Sunday's was the first suicide bombing since an August attack by Hamas in East Jerusalem bus which killed four people.

In a bid to prevent further attacks after Ramadan, Israel had sealed the West Bank and Gaza Strip but lifted the closure early Friday, noting nevertheless that radicals were still believed preparing further attacks.

Prime Minister Simon Peres suspended all negotiations with the Palestinian authority today after the bomb-

ings.

Israeli state radio reported that Peres had instructed General Oren Shohar, coordinator of Israeli activities in the Palestinian territories to suspend all talks with Yasser Arafat's Palestinian authority.

It said Peres instructed all his aides involved in talks to freeze them.

Shohar had already met with Ahmed Korei, the main Palestinian negotiator, to inform him of the decision.

Peres also said he had asked Arafat to cancel a visit planned later today to the West Bank city of Nabulus.

Arafat condemned the attacks and said "It is not a military operation. This is a terrorist operation. I condemn it completely and I condemn any force behind it. It is not against only civilians but against the whole peace process."