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VOL. VI NO. 99 REGD. NO. DA 781

The Daily Star

BAISAKH 13, 1403 B.S.

DHAKA FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 1996

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Inside Today

Article

Jumbled Election Scene

Column: Between the Lines
 by Kuldeep Nayar
 Page 4

International

War for Eelam at crossroads as Tamils openly defying LTTE

Legal immigration to US will rise this year
 Page 5

Business

World Bank against govt intervention in fertilizer market
 ASEAN to reject linking social issues to trade
 Pages 6, 7

DSE MARKET

DSE price index 830.50 (+0.64%)
 Market capital Tk 5637.49 cr
 Transactions in volume 24884
 Transactions in value Tk 5.88 cr

Weekend Magazine

Men, women and marriage; Muslim life in India and Pakistan; A guide to beautiful hair; Asian diary
 Pages 13-16
 Teens and Twenties and Rising Stars
 Pages 8, 9

NEWS BRIEFS

CEC may address nation tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent.
 Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena is likely to address the nation over radio and television tomorrow, according to sources in the Election Commission (EC).

ALCWC meets today

By Staff Correspondent.
 An emergency meeting of the Awami League Central Working Committee (ALCWC) will be held at 6:30 pm today at Awami Foundation Office at Dhanmondi in the city. AL general secretary Zillur Rahman has requested all members of the ALCWC, who are now available in Dhaka, to attend the meeting, says a party press release.

22 firearms recovered

Police recovered 22 firearms and a large number of ammunition and explosives during the last 24 hours till yesterday evening from various parts of the country. The firearms included one rifle, three revolvers, one single-barrel gun, 3 sawed-off rifles, 12 pipe guns, one shutter gun, one LG, 57 bullets and cartridge and 6 bombs and other explosives. Police rounded up 7 people for possessing firearms and explosives and 8 cases were filed against them under Arms and Explosives Act, reports UNB.

Ex-AL leader joins BNP

Former Awami League leader of Jamalpur district Abdul Hye Bacchu, along with his followers, yesterday joined the BNP. They expressed their solidarity with the ideals of the BNP and lent total support to the leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia. BNP Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukdar was present on the occasion, reports BSS.

JU vacation

JAHANGIRNAGAR UNIVERSITY, Apr 25: The classes of the Jahangirnagar University will remain closed from April 27 to May 5 on the occasion of holy Eid-ul-Azha and May Day. Distribution of admission forms for the 1st year honours classes for the session 1995-96 will also remain stopped during the period. The forms will be available from May 6 to 19. All the examinations will, however, be held as per schedule, announced earlier, reports UNB.



Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman addressing the deputy commissioners and superintendents of police at the International Conference Centre in Dhaka yesterday. — PID photo

Chief Adviser warns DCs, SPs Cleanse country of illegal arms, or take the blame

Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman yesterday said armed terrorists are holding the nation hostage and instructed the administration to cleanse the country of illegal arms before the next general elections, reports UNB.

He also urged the political parties not to nominate any person involved in terrorism or indulge in acts of terrorism in the next elections.

Addressing the Deputy Commissioners and Police Superintendents at the International Conference Centre (ICC) in Dhaka, Rahman warned that the local administration would be held responsible for any unlawful activity anywhere in the country.

"They will have to answer why they cannot make their areas terrorism-free. No limp-pretense will be accepted."

We want to see clear results," he said.

"We have to make the society free from terrorism for holding a neutral peaceful election," he said, stressing on strengthening the security system to resist occupation of polling centres, snatching of ballot boxes, casting of false votes and other misdeeds.

"Free the country from arms — we are giving a clear order to the officials/employees of all tiers of the administration," he said assuring all cooperation of the caretaker government in performing this task.

Rahman observed neither the government nor the people expect the administration to solve all the problems of the society during the short tenure of the caretaker government.

"But if the administration advances strictly, the country can be freed from terrorism — the people of the country believe this, we also believe this," he said, adding that the government would collect information about where the armsholders, extortionists and terrorists are making people's life miserable.

The chief adviser, in this context, mentioned that the police authorities had created task force in every district and special task force in every metropolis to recover the illegal arms. A control room has also been set up in the Secretariat to monitor the situation constantly.

Observing that the terrorists often use the name of political parties, Rahman re-

See Page 12 Col 4

BNP protests transfer of DCs & SPs

By Staff Correspondent

Secretary General of the BNP Abdus Salam Talukdar yesterday protested the massive transfers of DCs, SPs and TNCs, saying the postings were made at the directive of a government, no matter which party was in power then.

Some (politicians) are speaking of politicisation of the administration during BNP rule but a significant number of civil servants, enjoying their blessings, have been posted as DCs," he said at the regular press briefing at the party's Naya Paltan central office in

See Page 12 Col 2

PLO declares end to armed struggle against Israel

GAZA CITY, Apr 25: The PLO on Wednesday declared an end to its 32-year armed struggle against Israel, voting to drop from its charter all references to the destruction of the Jewish state, a spokesman said, reports AFP.

The Palestine National Council (PNC) "has decided to amend its charter by annulling all clauses contradicting letters of mutual recognition" between Israel and the PLO signed in 1993, PNC president Selim Zaanun told journalists.

The PNC, the PLO's parliament, sat in a special closed door session late Wednesday to vote on amending the 1968 charter which commits the PLO to an armed struggle to liberate all of Palestine.

The session, attended by Palestinian president Yasser Arafat, also ordered the PNC legal committee "to start drafting a new charter to be

put before the PNC's central council at its first meeting after six months," Zaanun said.

Under the autonomy accords with Israel, the PLO had until May 7 to rid the charter of all references to Israel's destruction.

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, facing a tough election battle against conservatives opposed to the Palestinian peace agreements, had insisted on the changes before continuing the peace process.

"We have an agreement and we have fulfilled our part," said Arafat spokesman Marwan Kanafani, even as he insisted, "Israel had nothing to do with the (amendments), this is a Palestinian council."

See Page 12 col 7

Govt borrowed Tk 700 cr from banking system in 9 months

By R M Titumir and Inam Ahmed

The government's net borrowing from the banking system rose sharply in the final year of the BNP government compared to that in the previous fiscal year (94-95), according to finance ministry sources.

This recourse to the banking system for deficit financing was unforeseen in the budget for this fiscal year (1995-96).

Till March 28 of this fiscal year, two days before the BNP government handed over power to the caretaker government, the net government borrowing from the banking system stood at about Tk 700 crore, the sources said.

Compared to this, figures show that the government had retired its debts of about Tk 1,000 crore to the banking system during the corresponding period of 1994-95.

When contacted, a high of-

ficial of the central bank confirmed the increase in borrowing, but said that it could be checked to a great extent with a number of steps that the government is now taking to control budgetary deficit.

The deficit was created for a number of reasons including election-oriented tax proposals in the budget, fall in revenue collection due to political turmoil, low disbursement of aid, a huge food import bill, a politically biased Annual Development Programme (ADP) and increase in the government's expenditure, the finance ministry sources added.

They said the budget which was formulated keeping the coming general elections in mind had neither widened the tax base nor imposed any new taxes. The result was a negative impact on revenue collection. "The finance minister was

very generous in an election year and was more vote-oriented than guided by normal fiscal considerations," commented an official regarding the taxation provisions.

The ADP was also inflated with political projects, Planning Commission sources said, adding that although the implementation rate was less than that of last fiscal year's corresponding period, expenditures were much higher leading to increase in fiscal deficit.

The government is now pruning the ADP projects to leave out the politically biased projects as well as low priority ones which will help contain the fiscal deficit, an official pointed out.

The last part of the current fiscal year may witness a reduced level of government

See Page 12 col 6



Jatiya Party acting chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury addressing the participants in the 'mass hunger strike' programme of the party in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. — Star photo

DCC drive to remove illegal structures soon

By Reaz Ahmad

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) plans to launch a drive soon against unauthorized structures raised over the years on its property.

DCC had already instructed all concerned to remove forthwith all pucca and semi-pucca offices of various political parties and clubs raised without sanction of law on roads, pavements, drains, parks, playgrounds, premises of markets and other places under the Corporation's jurisdiction.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday DCC officials said they were expecting good response from the parties and persons concerned regarding removal of the unauthorized structures within the next 10

days. "Otherwise, we will draft a set of plans to combat this severe menace in the civic life," said Bijon Kant Sarkar, Senior Estate officer of the DCC. He however, could not readily provide any figures about the number of such illegally raised structures.

If the responses were not positive from the illegal occupants, DCC might go for drastic actions with necessary assistance from the office of the Chief Adviser, said another DCC official.

"As far as VIP roads of the city are concerned, we have already started the process of eviction upon instructions from the government. But the

See Page 12 col 8

Release Ershad on parole: Mizan

Acting Chairman of the Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury yesterday said his party would launch a country-wide mass movement if former President H M Ershad was not released before the coming Eid-ul-Azha, reports BSS.

Chowdhury was addressing as the chief guest at a function organised to express solidarity with their chairman who has been on a hunger strike in jail demanding his immediate release.

A large number of party leaders and workers also observed a token hunger strike in front of the Jatiya Press Club from 10 am to 5 pm.

The acting chairman said Ershad could be released from jail under the existing law. "Ershad can be given bail under the present law of the land," he said.

He said a neutral election of the poll.

The findings matched previous polls which have warned of a hung parliament and came close on the heels of another survey Monday which also put the Hindu-revivalist BJP as the

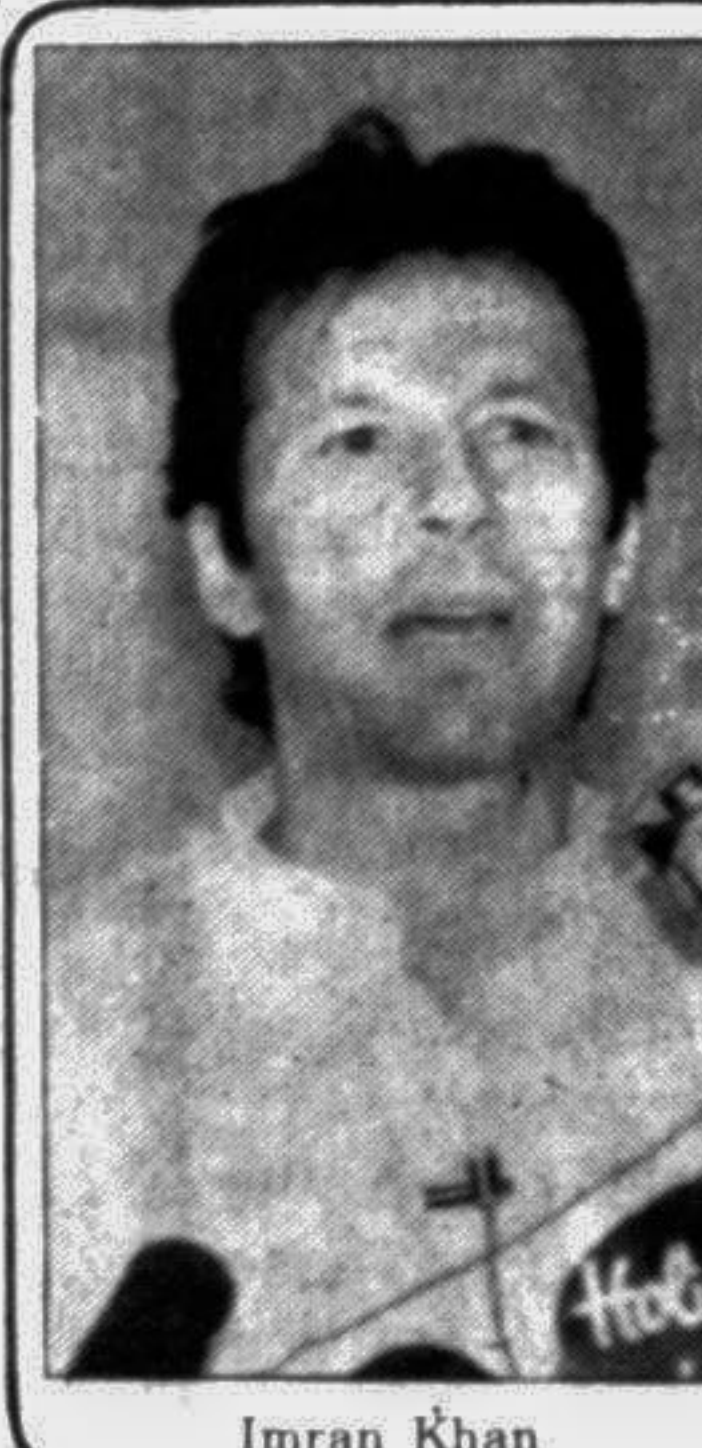
Inclement weather 2 Biman fights grounded at Ctg Airport

CHITTAGONG, Apr 25: Two aircraft of Bangladesh Biman were grounded at the Chittagong International Airport due to inclement weather today, reports UNB.

Official sources said F-28, BJ085, landed at the airport with 66 passengers from Bangkok and was scheduled to take off for Dhaka at 8:15 pm. But it remained stuck due to the stormy weather.

The said ATP, BJ 419-A, from Middle East landed at the airport at 7:15 pm and flew at 7:33 pm for Dhaka.

But it had to return to the Chittagong Airport after flying 25 minutes as it failed to land at Dhaka Zia International Airport due to bad weather, the officials said.



Imran Khan

Imran's political innings begins

LAHORE, Apr 25: Pakistan's former cricket hero Imran Khan began his political innings today by launching a reform movement to fight corruption and injustice, reports Reuters.

He told a news conference at his home town of Lahore, capital of the central province of Punjab, that he would turn his Tehreek-e-Insaf (Justice Movement) into a political party when he found that the people were inclined to support it.

Imran, a critic of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, said he was launching the movement because he found Pakistan's on the "Brink of Disaster" half a century after its creation from the partition of the Indian subcontinent at independence from Britain in 1947.

"We are dissatisfied with

See Page 12 Col 1

Cattle markets open today

By Staff Correspondent

The 17 sacrificial cattle markets in the city goes into business today as supply of cattlehead to the markets from different areas of the country continued till late last night.

The four-day markets have been set up by the Dhaka City Corporation.

During late afternoon yesterday, many prospective buyers were seen asking about the prices and sellers were also charging a very high price and again the buyers moved from one corner to the other of the markets without going for real bargaining.

At the Hussaini Dalari Road cattle market, a businessman along with his wife and young son was looking for big sized cows. He found two Australian breed cows and the seller asked Tk 95,000 and Tk

See Page 12 Col 3

AL team meets Chief Adviser

By Staff Correspondent

A three-member delegation of the Awami League called on Chief Adviser Habibur Rahman yesterday to apprise him about the party's concerns on various matters.

The AL delegation included acting President Abdus Samad Azad, party chief Sheikh Hasina's political adviser SAMS Kibria and AL president-in-charge Amir Hussain Arzu, says a party press release.

During their meeting yesterday afternoon, the AL leaders told the Chief Adviser that many transfer orders of the administration have not been effective despite the caretaker government's bid to shape up the administration which, according to them, was politicized by the fallen BNP government. This sparked off doubts and confusions among the general masses, the AL leaders pointed out.

The AL delegation also pointed out that no considerable progress was achieved in recovering illegal arms, which was a precondition for holding of a free and fair election.

AL leaders also expressed their concern about placing the Defence Ministry under the President.

Tk eight lakh snatched from Chinese project team

By Staff Correspondent

An unidentified gang snatched Tk eight lakh from a group of Chinese nationals near the Postagola bridge under Demra thana in the city yesterday afternoon.

The gang intercepted a white microbus of the Chinese nationals who were on their way to Fatullah under Narayanganj district, police said.

The Chinese team, working in a project, earlier withdrew the amount from an ANZ Grindlays bank branch at Motijheel in the city and was going to their project site, police added.

The Project Manager of the China National Overseas Engineering Corporation filed a case with Demra thana in this connection.

Senior police officials were investigating the incident till last night, police said.

Our DMCH Correspondent adds: Muggers in two other areas, stabbed two persons and

See Page 12 col 7

KU closed sine die

KHULNA, Apr 25: Khulna University was closed sine die and the residential halls were vacated today, reports UNB.

The move was taken following yesterday's incident in which students kept the Vice Chancellor in confinement at ransacked offices of VC, Registrar, the Academic Council and

Editorial on page 4

some class rooms in protest of the disciplinary action against 13 of their mates.

Witnesses said a huge contingent of police was posted around the residence of the VC and at different strategic points of the university.

Our Correspondent adds: Protesting the authorities decision, the agitating student of the university burnt the

See Page 12 Col 3

Sundarbans Fire damaged only 35 acres of shrubs

From Sharier Khan

KHULNA, Apr 25: The fire incident in the Sundarbans has damaged shrubs on an area of only 35 acres, a spot investigation reveals.

"The vegetations damaged in the fire would not even be worth Tk 2.5 lakh as was earlier feared," Deputy Chief Conservator of the Forest Department (DCCF) Salamati Al told

See Page 12 Col 2

BJP may emerge largest group in a hung parliament

NEW DELHI, Apr 25: India's ruling party is headed for a disaster in general elections starting Saturday and Hindu nationalists are likely to become the largest group in a hung parliament, according to an opinion poll published today, reports AFP.

The Congress (I) party of Prime Ministry P V Narasimha Rao may end up with its worst electoral performance since India's independence in 1947, bagging just 135-150 seats in the 545-member parliament, the survey found.

The party's share of the

popular vote could plummet to 31 per cent, less than the 34.5 per cent it secured in 1977 when it was voted out of power in New Delhi for the first time, the Times of India newspaper reported.

The main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was expected to emerge as the single largest group in parliament, the poll found.

But the BJP was not expected to win more than 200 seats in the staggered April-May ballot, not enough to form a government on its own.

An alliance of centrist-left

ist parties was expected to win around 140 seats, said the Times-commissioned survey of 26,700 voters conducted early this month across 15 states and the city of New Delhi.

"A coalition government at the centre seems inevitable, the shape of which will be dictated by the post-election development," the newspaper said of the poll.

The findings matched previous polls which have warned of a hung parliament and came close on the heels of another survey Monday which also put the Hindu-revivalist BJP as the

front runner in a split verdict. Meanwhile, Indian opposition leader and potential prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today defended his party's pledge to make an atomic bomb and attacked what he called "nuclear apartheid."

India needed to nuclear bomb for its protection, he said. "Nothing wrong in that ... he told the foreign correspondents' club here. 'Around India we see a stockpiling of nuclear weapons. China is a nuclear-weapon state,' he added

BSS adds: Vajpayee said that if voted to power, his party would maintain very friendly relations with neighbouring countries including Bangladesh.

He said India would not behave like a big brother rather favour cordial relations based on equality and reciprocity.

The opposition leader said India enjoyed its best relations with neighbours when a non-Congress party government, in which he was the foreign minister, was in power in 1977-79.

Vajpayee said he intended

to send a 'message of goodwill' to Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto if he became Prime Minister.

"But it requires two to cooperate," he stressed. He accused Pakistan of sending armed infiltrators into Indian Kashmir, where security forces are battling a Muslim separatist movement.

"Terrorism has to be put down with a heavy hand," he said, but declared himself in support of talks with Muslim separatists to solve the Kashmir conflict.