

**Inside Today**  
**Article**  
**The Lady Needs Help, Badly**  
Column : As I See It  
by Ikram Sehgal  
Page 4

**International**  
**250 m child labourers of Third World subjected to abuse**  
Pak caretaker govt intensifies austerity drive  
Page 5

**Business**  
Noor Uddin tells JS : Govt has no plan to raise fuel prices  
Turnovers set new records  
Pages 6, 7

**DSE MARKET**  
DSE price index 3358.65  
Market capital Tk 23755.19 cr  
Transactions in volume 1378742  
Transactions in value Tk 78.69 cr

**Supplement**  
Today's issue of The Daily Star contains one page supplement on World Food Summit '96  
Page 8

## JS unanimously passes Indemnity (Repeal) Bill

By Staff Correspondent

The Indemnity (Repeal) Bill, 1996 was unanimously passed in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday in the absence of BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikkya Jote (IOJ) members.

The Bill was passed through a voice vote. Some 170 legislators belonging to the ruling Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal were present in the House during the passage of the Bill.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, JP Chief H M Ershad and JSD president A S M Abdur Rob were present.

With the passage of the Bill,

the legal bar to try the killers of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, his family members and some of his political associates has now been removed.

Moment's after the passage of the Bill at 10:10 pm Ershad, Rob and a few other MPs walked to Sheikh Hasina who was seen sobbing, while a large number of ruling party lawmakers were shaking hands with a cheerful State Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Matin Khasru who delivered a 40-minute speech in a bid to show "the constitutional infirmities" of the Indemnity Ordinance, 1975.

Abdul Kader Siddiki of the AL kissed the state minister's hand and while a few others including Altaf Hossain Gollandaz were heard chanting slogans like Joy Bangla and Joy Bangabandhu in the House.

The Indemnity Ordinance was promulgated on September 25, 1975 by Khandaker Mostaque Ahmed who took over power following the killing of Bangabandhu on August 15 the same year.

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury who presided over the session deferred the "rest of the business included in the or-

der of the day," for the sake of maintaining the "solemn atmosphere" in which the Bill was passed.

While making a proposal for consideration of the Indemnity (Repeal) Bill, 1996, the state minister told the House that the nation had been waiting for the "historic moment" for the last 21 years.

Jatiya Party MP Advocate M K Alam Chowdhury expressed his support for repeal of the Ordinance, but requested the state minister for eliciting public opinion before passage of the Bill in the House on the ground that there had been some confu-

sion about the Ordinance among people.

However, JP lawmaker later withdrew his contention following the long speech made by Abdul Matin Khasru.

The State Minister for Law put forward some legal arguments to show that the Ordinance promulgated by Khandaker Mostaque had no constitutional basis.

"Under the then Constitution, only the President of the country enjoys the authority of promulgating an Ordinance, and in absence of the President the Vice President, and in absence of the Vice President the

Speaker of Parliament could take over as President," the state minister said.

"Since Mostaque was neither Vice President, nor Speaker of the erstwhile Parliament, he had no constitutional authority to promulgate an Ordinance after the killing of President Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman," he said.

An Ordinance promulgated by an illegal President was bound to be illegal itself, the state minister argued.

"Besides, any Ordinance needs to be placed before the House on the opening day of the

See Page 12 Col 1

## Pay Commission report within 6 months: Kibria

Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria yesterday expressed the hope that the National Pay Commission would be able to submit its report within six months, reports BSS.

Speaking at the first meeting of the National Pay Commission in the city the Finance Minister was of the view that the Commission would be able to make a recommendation in next six months of an appropriate pay structure for different categories of officials and employees of the government and semi-government organisations by keeping it in conformity with the cost of living. The government has constituted the National Pay Com-

## 4 projects worth Tk 855.46 crore approved

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) yesterday approved four development projects worth an involvement of Taka 855.46 crore including Taka 92.94 crore project aids, reports UNB.

The approval was made at a meeting held at NEC Bhaban with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair, said a PID handout.

The approved projects included rural water supply project (Gov-4) at a cost of Taka 630 crore 84 lakh, development of selected 350 non-government colleges at a cost of Taka 112 crore 90 lakh, rural development project-14, Infrastructure Tangail district (Phase-1) at a cost of Taka 61 crore 32 lakh including Taka 48 crore 60 lakh project aid and the project on national institution of textile training, research and design at a cost of Taka 50 crore 50 lakh including Taka 44 crore 34 lakh project aid.

## Attack on garment workers at Mirpur: 30 hurt

At least 30 workers were injured, four of them critically, in an attack on them allegedly by some hooligans at a garments factory at Pallabi in Mirpur area yesterday afternoon, reports BSS.

The clash erupted when some 40 workers sacked recently gathered in the Dhaka Woodland Apparel Limited to draw their arrears. They were attacked by some hooligans reportedly hired by the management of the factory at around 2 pm.

The workers were sacked by the authorities on charge of forming a workers' union there, alleged Kalpana Akter Jimmu, acting president of the proposed Woodland Apparel Workers' Union.

The workers of the factory alleged that two of their members, Akkas and Salam, were assaulted at Rupnagar in Mirpur.

The critically injured persons admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, were identified as Rana, 22, acting general secretary of the union, Shamsun Nahar, 24, machine operator, Shabnur, 18 and Laki, 25, workers, hospital sources said.

## 351 killed as Saudi, Kazakh airliners collide near Delhi



NEW DELHI, Nov 12: Around 351 people died today when a Saudi Jumbo jet collided in mid-air with a Kazakh cargo aircraft near New Delhi, showering the ground with charred bodies and wreckage, Indian Aviation officials said, reports AFP.

Civil aviation sources said the two planes exploded in a fireball after the collision at around 6.40 PM (1310 GMT), about 40 nautical miles west of the Indian capital.

The collision took place over Jhajhar in the Rohtak district of Haryana state bordering New Delhi, PTI said.

Director General of Civil Aviation, H S Kholia, told a press conference 351 people had died, adding: "There is no information about any survivors."

The radar blips of both the aircraft disappeared at 1840 hours.

An air vice-marshal of the Indian Air Force, P S Anand, is among the passengers, killed in the mid-air collision.

PTI quoting airport sources said most of the passengers on board the Saudi Jumbo jet were Indians while 17 were foreigners who included one Bangladeshi, nine Nepalis, three Pakistanis, two

## AL invites BNP for unconditional talks

By Staff Correspondent

The ruling Awami League yesterday formally invited the main opposition BNP, now abstaining from attending the parliament, to sit for an unconditional dialogue on the latter's 10-point demand, submitted to the Speaker on Sunday.

The BNP, however, is yet to communicate the ruling party its decision as regards the proposed dialogue.

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP chief Begum Khaleda was discussing the issue with top party leaders at her Minto Road official residence till writing of this report

The Speaker wrote to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on Monday in response to BNP's 10-point demand, submitted to him by the BNP leader.

Prof Chowdhury was, however, very critical of the contents of the Speaker's letter, especially on the query of the reply.

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## Talks with Hasina in Rome likely Outstanding issues may be resolved soon, hopes Gowda

NEW DELHI, Nov 12: Visiting Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad handed over a letter from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to Indian Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda when Azad called on him here this afternoon, reports BSS.

While receiving the letter Gowda urged the Bangladesh minister to convey his best wishes to the Bangladesh Prime Minister.

Gowda also renewed his in-

tervention to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to visit India and expressed his full appreciation and understanding of Bangladesh's position.

The Indian Prime Minister said that India and Bangladesh were friends and therefore the outstanding issues between the two neighbours could be resolved soon in the spirit of friendship and understanding.

Deve Gowda also told the Bangladesh minister that he was eagerly looking forward to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the food summit in Rome shortly.

Earlier in the day, Azad also called on Indian President Shankar Dayal Sharma and Congress Party President Sitaram Kesri. During the meeting with Sharma, the Bangladesh minister handed over a letter from Bangladesh President Shahabuddin Ahmed.

President Sharma reciprocated by expressing his warm greetings and regards for the Bangladesh President and Prime Minister.

During the meeting with Congress President Sitaram Kesri the latter expressed in unambiguous terms the full support of the Congress to Bangladesh's case in the process now going on between the two countries for the resolution of the Ganges water sharing issue.

The Congress president also said that he was aware that Ganges water sharing was the main issue between the two friendly neighbours and pledged that his party would make every effort so that this matter was resolved at the earliest.

Meanwhile, talks between the officials of the two countries

See Page 12 Col 6

## Deaths of three tigers at Mirpur Zoo 'mysterious'

By Staff Correspondent

It might take up to a month to get the viscera reports, they added.

The first tiger, found dead inside the cage at about 7 am Saturday, had mothered four cubs only a few months ago. She did not have a name. Then, on Monday, Sharma, another female tiger, was found dead in her cage.

An hour later, report reached the zoo office that Raju, aged about 20, and considered to be the grandfather of the 20 tiger population of the zoo, was in great agony and was jumping like a headless chicken, the officials said.

The post mortem of the three tigers, conducted by the Central Disease Investigation Laboratory, however, did not find any trace of arsenic, the officials said adding that viscera and blood of the ill-fated felines have been sent to the government chemical testing laboratory at Mahakhali in the city.

Three Royal Bengal Tigers which died mysteriously at the Dhaka Zoo on Saturday and Monday, were in a state of great shock' before dying, sources at the zoo said yesterday quoting the autopsy report.

The three tigers may have been poisoned to death, officials at the zoo suspected. Their bodies bore extensive injury marks in their necks, chests, elbows and lower abdomens, they said.

Meanwhile, the zoo authorities also seized the food leftovers of the dead tigers and sent them to the central laboratory for testing.

Tension gripped the Jagannath, Salimullah and Zahurul Haq halls earlier in the day as one activist of the Faridpur party-backed BCL tried to stab an activist of the Gopalganj faction on the campus.

## JP will come to power again, hopes Ershad

Deposed President H M Ershad expressed the hope that his Jatiya Party would again get the chance of serving the people by achieving majority in next general election, reports UNB.

"We have to take preparation from now for the next election," he told party's Khulna district unit leaders when they called on him at the Jatiya Sangsad lobby yesterday.

Said Ershad, "Inshaallah, we will gain majority and be able to work for the people again with their mandate."

The JP chairman directed his party leaders to work unitedly and bring people of all strata under the banner of the Jatiya Party to further consolidate its strength.

Khulna district JP leaders Mia Musa Hossain, Col (Retd) A H M Gaffar, Sardar Rabiul Islam, Advocate Manjur Alam, Advocate Azzul Huq and Monjur Rahman Biswas were present.

Zobaida Rashid, the wife of Col (ret'd) Abdur Rashid, made a confessional statement under Section 164 of the CrPC yesterday in the Bangabandhu murder case, reports UNB.

Metropolitan Magistrate Alzalur Rahman recorded the statement when she was produced before the court at noon. Later, she was set to the Dhaka central jail at about 5.30 pm.

Zobaida was first taken on a five-day police remand after her arrest on November 2 under the Arms Act.

On expiry of the 5-day remand, she was produced before the court on November 9 and the same day taken on another four days remand.

## PM leaves for Rome tonight World Food Summit begins today

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leaves for Rome late tonight to attend the World Food Summit which will call for concerted efforts by different nations to halve the number of hungry people worldwide by the year 2015.

The five-day Summit begins today. The Prime Minister is scheduled to deliver her speech at the Summit on Saturday morning.

The Summit, organised by

NGOs term Action Plan utopian

Neeman A Sobhan writes from Rome

"This is not my summit," protested Dr Jacques Diouf at a press conference on Monday.

Slightly exasperated but bristling with confidence the Director General deftly handled any skeptical queries about the Food Summit scheduled to begin in Rome today.

Diouf was reacting to a journalist who asked him whether "his" Summit did not constitute an overlapping of the kind of message already transmitted to

the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is expected to be attended by more than 6000 representatives of different nations. Some 70 heads of State and government will attend the summit from November 13 to 17 at the FAO headquarters in the Italian capital.

The 30-member entourage of the Prime Minister includes Agriculture Minister Mattia Chowdhury, Foreign Minister

Editorial on page 4

Abdus Samad Azad, the Foreign Secretary, Chairman of the Board of Investment (BOI), Chief of Protocol and Principal Secretary Press Secretary and Special Security Force of the Prime Minister, Prime Minister's sister Sheikh Rehana and her husband Dr M A Quadri and others.

The Prime Minister is scheduled to return home on November 19.

According to FAO Representative in Bangladesh Hiroyuki Konuma, a country position paper prepared by the Agriculture Ministry in collaboration with the FAO will be presented at the summit. The paper will assess food insecurity factors, analyse the present govern-

## Dr Mohammad Hossain new VC Provost resigns: Uneasy calm on BAU campus

Mizan Ali back from Mymensingh

Tension and uncertainty looms large over the Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU) following killing of two students on the campus on Saturday.

The Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) today launched a seven-day mourning programme with a mourning procession on the campus, wearing black badges to condemn the killing. It also announced a 25-day demonstration programme on the campus to protest the killing of the two BCL activists.

Meanwhile, Dr Mohammad Hossain, a professor of the department of Bio-Chemistry, was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the university yesterday with immediate effect.

Prof Hossain's appointment was announced by the Ministry of Education, a day after the resignation of Prof Dr Shah Mohammad Farouk as the Vice-Chancellor.

Provost of Shamsul Haq Hall Prof Shahjahan resigned yesterday, official sources said adding that a number of other provosts may resign shortly.

The sources, however, said that there are instructions from higher authorities not to close the university.

This correspondent while visiting the campus yesterday saw thin attendance of students in classes. All the eight residential halls for male students were under the "control" of BCL activists, sources said.

Mohammad Abdus Salam, president of the BAU unit of BCL, talking to this correspondent yesterday said, "It will take about two months to restore

See Page 12 Col 6

**Rajab month begins today**  
The holy Rajab month on Arabic calendar begins today, Bangladesh Islamic Foundation confirmed in the city yesterday. The foundation said the moon of Rajab month was sighted in Bangladesh on November 12 evening. As per the calculation, the Lailatul Miraj will fall on December 8 evening coinciding with the 26th day of the Rajab month, reports BSS.

**Milad at Ganabhaban today**  
A milad mahfil will be held today after Magreb prayers at Ganabhaban as the Indemnity Ordinance (Repeal) Bill was passed yesterday in the Jatiya Sangsad unanimously.