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Govt firm to build strong air force: PM

JESSORE, Dec 23: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today expressed government's intent to build a strong and effective air force essential for guarding the country's airspace and assured necessary support in this regard, reports UNB.

"We like to proceed towards that end by collecting modern aircraft and technology for building a modern air force at par with other countries," she said while speaking on the occasion of President's Parade marking the commissioning of 33 GDP and 37 ground courses of Bangladesh Air Force at the Bangladesh Air Force Academy (BAFA).

On arrival at the Base, the Prime Minister was received by Chief of Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Jamal Uddin Ahmed. The Commandant of the Academy, Air Commodore Lutfur Rahman, also was present.

She reviewed the smartly turned-out parade commanded by Flight Cadet Wing Under Officer Syed Shakhawat Kamal and took salute at the impressive march-past. She also presented "Sword of Honour" trophies, flying badges to the outstanding graduating cadets.

The Prime Minister presented Flight Cadet Wing Under Officer Syed Shakhawat Kamal with the coveted "Sword of Honour".

DSE reforms

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bilise the stock exchanges," he said, adding that part of the plan aims at separating management of the DSE from the council.

The management council of DSE is now predominantly manned by brokers. "But we want it to be expanded and diversified. There are now nine representatives from brokers and three nominated by the government — one of them from the finance ministry and one each from the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) and the Institute of Chartered Accountants. They (the exchange management) have agreed to carry out the necessary reforms the next three months, the source added.

He said that the SEC is planning to ensure more transparency in the exchanges. As part of this, a surveillance team, comprising an official from SEC and a representative from the DSE have already begun a surveillance and monitoring in the bourse.

Computerisation of trading and a central depository system are also in the offing for the exchanges, the source said.

Honour" for being adjudged "Best-all-Round" cadet.

She also awarded him "Commandants Trophy" for excellent performance in General Service Training. Flight Cadet Under Officer AKM Abdur Razzak got "Osmani Gold Medal" for credible performance in academics while cadet Mohammad Azmal Hossain Khan was awarded "Chief of Air Staff Trophy" for "Best-all-Round" performance from the ground course.

Two BAF officers who graduated at the Royal Malaysian Air Force Academy were also decorated with BAF flying badges.

Patients suffer as token strike at DMCH on

By Staff Correspondent

Patients in the indoor and outdoor sections of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) were facing serious problems as the Class Four employees of the hospital continued their two-hour token strike for the fourth day yesterday.

The strike is affecting normal work in the hospital severely as the employees keep off duties in the peak hours, from 10 am everyday, said a senior official of the DMCH.

The employees are protesting a reported assault on a cleaner by the Director of the DMCH on Wednesday last. They are demanding removal of the Director by Dec 26. If he is not removed the Class Four employees will declare the Director persona non grata on December 28, according to sources.

The token strike is seriously hampering work in the outdoor section as the patients are not getting outdoor tickets from the counters," said an official of the hospital.

Kerb marketmen

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82.28 points or 3.35 per cent to 2375.38 points in the day's brief trading with losers leading over the gaining issues by 73-6.

The index went down by 74.37 points on Thursday, 73.10 points on Saturday and 58.49 points on Sunday on heavy sell by retail investors who panicked because of the current spell of crisis in the market.

If the situation continues, the index will go below the 2000 point mark by this week," said a DSE official.



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PHILIPS

CHT talks

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The Chief Whip accompanied by some committee members have already arrived in Chittagong and staying tonight at the Circuit House to leave for Khagrachhari tomorrow.

The five-member PCJSS team are staying at the Dudukchhari bordering area to attend tomorrow's talks, the sources said. The liaison committee convenor Hongshad Chakma is keeping in contact with the PCJSS leaders.

Shantu Larma had reportedly fallen sick at Dudukchhari where many curious tribal visitors failed to meet him, the sources added.

Security was kept relaxed at Dudukchhari after withdrawal of eight security camps while five others were made inoperative five days ahead of the December 21 dialogue as per demand of the Shantibahini leaders to facilitate their arrival to attend the meeting, the official sources said.

Cases filed

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Bodies of the two under-trial and one convict out of the eight deceased inmates, who were killed during the operation on Sunday were returned to their families today, police said.

The Inspector General of Prisons, Liaquat Ali Khan, who rushed here after the revolt and was injured during the Sunday's combined operation, left for Dhaka with Home Minister Rafiqul Islam this evening.

Hartal

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ternoon with Rafiqul Rahman in the chair. Former telecommunications minister Tariqul Islam attended the rally as chief guest.

The jail-killing was staged in a planned way with an ulterior motive to punish the leaders and activists of BNP," Tariqul alleged.

He also blamed the Home Minister for not taking any measure even after being informed about the disorder in jail.

The rally was followed by a large procession of several thousand BNP supporters.

One chopped to death in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Dec 23: One young man was chopped to death by armed miscreants at the Udupur thana health complex early today.

According to police and witnesses, Saiful Islam was residing with his relative, Bachchu, at the hospital. Bachchu was earlier hospitalised with injuries he received during a clash in Shikarpur Bandar area yesterday.

Both of them were attacked by a group of unidentified armed miscreants at the hospital at about 4:30 am today.

Joint body

From Page 1

Joint Director of JRC. As per earlier decision, both the countries were due to nominate three members each for the meetings of the Joint Committee.

The Dhaka meeting of the Joint Committee would be presided by Lutfur Rahman.

It was learnt that the Joint Committee in its first round of meetings will finalise the Terms of Reference (TOR), methodology of monitoring and select the team of monitors who are due to be posted at four points for monitoring the flow of the Ganges water from the Farakka point. These points are below the Farakka Barrage, the Feeder Canal, the Navigation Lock and the Harding Bridge.

Student robbed

By DMC Correspondent

A first year student of Dhanmudi Law College in the city was injured when a group of muggers shot him while snatching Tk 20,000 from him in front of the Residential Model College (RMC) yesterday.

BNP procession

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retary general said. Bhuiyan also blamed the ruling party for what he said attempting to divide the police force by using a section of them for political ends. This would result in both immediate and a long-term anarchy in the administration, he added.

He called upon the government to maintain a healthy atmosphere in the administration.

Accusing the post-liberation Awami League government of appointing thousands of inefficient partymen in key positions in the administration without following rules, Bhuiyan said no question was raised about recruitments by the successive governments as servants of the Republic were for the state and not for any party or individual.

"Had such questions been raised then, not only most of those in the present cabinet, some others would have faced trial posthumously..." the BNP secretary general said. He regretted that "lawful appointments made by the (former) BNP government" was being questioned.

Jessore jail revolt

From Page 1
ately brought to the notice of the Jail Superintendent, the sources said.

The Superintendent sent an SOS to the district police when he failed to control the situation. The Superintendent was holding the charge following suspension of the DIG of the Jessore Central Jail in August, just a day after he had taken over.

The SP along with some police officials arrived at about 9 am and informed the Deputy Commissioner of the situation in the Central Jail. The DC who was reportedly attending a Silver Jubilee celebration programme reached there at around 11:30 am, the sources said.

The SP could not get into action as he was waiting for order from the DC. Even after reaching the central jail, the DC failed to gain control over the situation and by that time, the situation had gone out of control, the sources said.

Sources said that the differences between the two orders and withdrawal of the privilege of remission for certain categories of prisoners in the second order was already brought to the notice of the Home Minister and the file was also processed for the higher authorities.

Expecting adverse reaction from the prisoners for withdrawal of the earlier declared privilege, the authorities maintained hush-hush about announcing the names and number of the prisoners to be released on the occasion of Victory Day.

As the prisoners also maintain their own record and count their prison term, a large number of them were expecting release as was the case under the 1991 caretaker government.

Compared to the expectation the announcement of release of 13 prisoners, declared on the occasion of the Victory Day this year, is very less, the sources said.

A litany of charges against unscrupulous prison officials and wardens were brought by the relations of the prisoners. They alleged that a 'fee' is charged for each visit and ac-

PM praises

From Page 1

best for a peaceful solution of the stalemate, but stubbornness of the prisoners led to such an unwanted situation, Sheikh Hasina told the all-party meeting.

Political leaders and lawyers who attended the meeting, however, informed the Prime Minister that this unwanted situation could be averted if the Home Minister or the Home Secretary had talked to the prisoners as they demanded.

They also suggested the Prime Minister to take decision regarding the two opposite decisions taken by caretaker President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed in 1991 and Chief Adviser Justice Habibur Rahman in 1996.

Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed gave general amnesty to the prisoners commuting their jail term which was cancelled by Justice Habibur Rahman in 1996.

The local leaders in the meeting also raised the issue of mismanagement and corruption on the part of jail authorities and suggested reform of the age-old jail code, solution of accommodation problem in jail and expediting the trial of cases.

Responding, the Prime Minister said the government had taken steps for speedy disposal of cases from grassroots level.

The participants who spoke on the occasion include Advocate Nazrul Islam and Idris Ali of BNP, Advocate Jafar Sadik of Jatiya Party, M Idris Ali of Jamaat, Advocate Enamul Huq of NAP, Iqbal Kabir Zahid of Left Democratic Front, Kazi Abdus Shahid of Gano Forum, Abdur Razzak Khan of Jessore Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Mohiuddin Ahmed, a journalist.

Body recovered

The body of an unidentified young man was found on French Road in the city yesterday. Police recovered the body of a man aged about 30 at 9 am and sent it to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

However, there was no injury sign on the body, reports UNB.

15 truckers hurt in clash

SHERPUR, Dec 23: At least 15 truck workers were injured in a clash at Nohata in the town today, the fourth day of their indefinite strike, reports UNB.

The district unit of Bangladesh Inter-district Truck Drivers' Association enforced the non-stop strike in the district on Friday.

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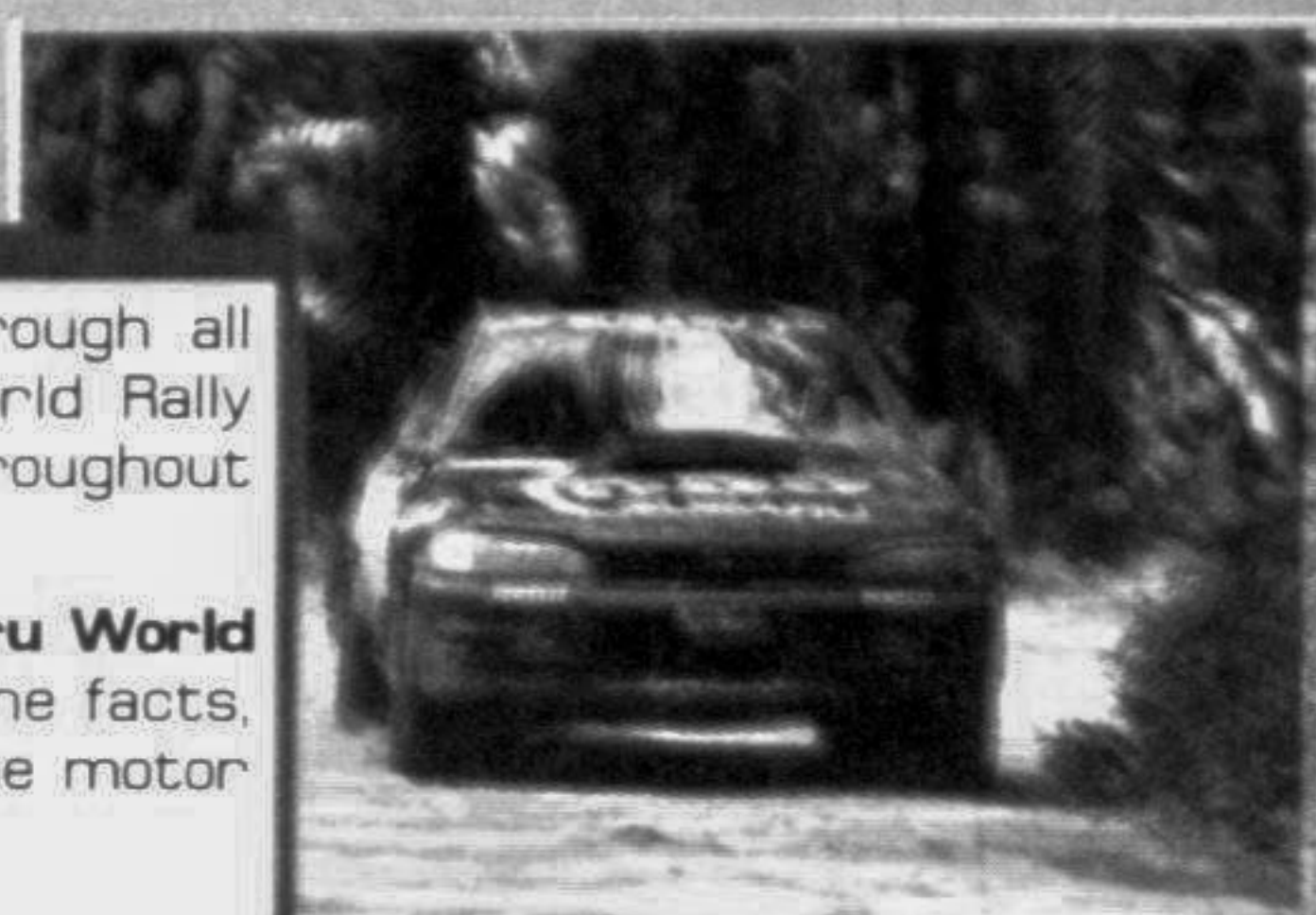
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PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Janakantha - 23, 25, 29 Dec. & 1, 4, 11, 18 January
Daily Star - 23, 25, 29 Dec. & 1, 6, 14, 21 January
Bhorer Kagoj - 23, 25, 29 Dec. & 1, 7, 13, 20 January
Observer - 23, 25, 29 Dec. & 1, 5, 12, 19 January
Ittefaq - 23, 25, 29 Dec. & 1, 5, 12, 19 January

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