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BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia giving receipt to a member of the party on the first day of the party's membership renewal and collection drive at her Minto Road official residence yesterday. — Star photo

More laboratory facilities for arsenic test

The national steering committee formed to prevent arsenic pollution at a meeting in Dhaka yesterday decided to enhance laboratory facilities in Atomic Energy Commission and Geological Survey Department to detect the affect of arsenic among the people, reports UNB.

The meeting decided that the ministry concerned would take necessary measures to test soil and water at the laboratory of the Atomic Energy Commission as it presently has facilities to test hair and water only.

The meeting, chaired by Health and Family Welfare Minister Salauddin Yusuf, was told that steps would also be taken to set up a full-fledged laboratory at NIPSO and increase the laboratory facilities of Geological Survey Department so that any kind of arsenic test could be done there.

Water Development Board has been asked to submit reports to the committee on the existence of arsenic in its project areas and also expand their project areas to help detect the

arsenic affected area, said an official handout.
It was informed that the Scientific Research Committee had taken emergency steps for conducting research under the auspices of the Atomic Energy Commission, Geological Survey Department and Water Development Board.
Several measures, including conducting IEC activities and appointment of additional physicians to detect arsenic patients, have already been taken.
The meeting was told that training for doctors and health personalities were also being conducted by the government and non-government organisations.

It also called for taking necessary measures for implementation of the decisions taken in last meeting.
State Minister Dr M Aman Ullah, Cabinet Secretary Ataul Haq, Health Secretary Mohammad Ali, Secretary in-charge of Science and Technology Ministry M Fazlur Rahman attended the meeting.

Malaysia

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Agency.
A total of 960,164 illegals had signed up under the six-month amnesty last July to register and legalise illegal foreign workers — the second such programme since 1992.
Immigration authorities have lamented that the illegal immigrants were playing a 'cat and mouse' with them.
"We have had to switch our strategies in conducting mid-night raids because the illegals are no longer staying in their quarters at night," an immigration official said.
Megat Junid called on the public, especially employers, to give their full cooperation in resolving the burgeoning problem of illegal immigrants.
The government had admitted that the number of illegals had reached a critical stage and even blamed them for Malaysia's rising social problems and outbreaks of communicable diseases amid crowded housing conditions.

Malaysia's rapid economic growth, averaging more than eight per cent yearly since 1987, has attracted the influx, officials said.

9 killed

From Page 1
ruj, 25, Azizul, 25, Tofazzal, 35, Abu Baker, 30, Akram, 40, Ali Noor, 30, Matru, 70, Sultan, 40, Alsar, 35, and Abdul Kalam, 35.
Our Narayanganj correspondent adds: Four members of a family died on the spot and another three injured critically when a bus rammed the Madanpur Bus Stand under Bandar thana.

The dead were identified Kadbanu, 35, her two sons — Din Islam 12, Ismail, 15, and nephew Imam Hossain.

The deceased hailed from Kaiza Kandi village under Phulpur thana of Mymensingh. They worked in a brickfield and were on their way to home.

The injured Shahela, 37, elder sister of Kadbanu, Rahela, 12, and an unidentified male, 32, were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The bodies were sent to Narayanganj General Hospital for autopsy.

Bandar thana police seized the bus but the driver fled soon after the accident.

A case was filed with Bandar thana.

Notice

It is hereby notified for general information that, on the occasion of ensuing 'Eid-ul-Fitr', special arrangements have been made for plying of ferries at 1st & 2nd Dhaleswari Ferry Ghats on Dhaka-Khulna Highway, Tulshikali & Maricha Ferry Ghats on Zinzira-Keraniganj-Dohar Road and Mukhtarpur Ferry Ghat on Fatulla-Munshiganj-Louhajang Road for convenience of the general public. Plying of ferry will remain suspended only for 2 (two) hours on Eid day for Eid prayers. Passengers are specially requested to get down from their transports at the time of loading & unloading of transports on & from the ferry.

Beside, passengers are also specially requested to cooperate with the staff on ferry and maintain discipline while boarding & getting down from ferry.

Md Habibur Rahman
Executive Engineer (R&H)
(Current Responsibility)
Munshiganj Road Division
Munshiganj

DFP-2026-26/1
G-357

CEC asks officials Maintain neutrality in Thakurgaon by-polls

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Muhammad Abu Hena said free, fair and neutral election is the safeguard to democracy and hence there is no alternative to holding elections with sincerity and impartiality under a democratic dispensation, reports UNB.

He was addressing a meeting in the city with the chiefs of law-enforcing agencies and officials of Rajshahi division and Thakurgaon district in preparation for by-election to Thakurgaon-1 constituency.

The voting is set for February 18 for the Parliament seat which fell vacant with the death of ruling Awami League MP Khademul Islam.

He said local administration and law-enforcing agencies must ensure overall security at the polling centres so that the voters could cast their votes freely.

Abu Hena said the administration would have to ensure a favourable atmosphere for inspiring a massive voter turnout.

He asked the officials concerned to conduct the election neutrally rising above all unholy influences.

The CEC instructed the officials to maintain law and order strictly and apply code of conduct irrespective of party and opinion. "Take stern action against the violators of code of conduct," he ordered.

"Legal action will be taken

against the officials concerned in case of failure to maintain neutrality and in negligence while taking legal measures," he told the meeting and urged officials to discharge poll duties with all boldness and courage.

Home Secretary Syed Rezaul Haq, Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner Rezwanaul-Haq, Inspector General of Police M. Azizul Haq and Deputy Director of Ansar-VDP Brigadier Enayet Karim also addressed the meeting.

They expressed their total solidarity with the measures undertaken by the Election Commission and assured all-out efforts so that the election could be held in peaceful, smooth and neutral manner.

Cold wave likely to hit again

Cold wave is likely to hit the country again shortly after a brief respite, reports UNB.

Westerners said moderate or severe cold wave is likely to sweep Rajshahi, Sylhet and Khulna divisions and Mymensingh region during the first half of this month.

A Met Office long-range forecast yesterday also predicted mild or moderate cold-spell in other parts of the country during the same period.

The bite of cold may be on the wane from the second half of this month, the forecast for February said.

President assents to four Bills

President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday gave assent to four Bills passed earlier by the Jatiya Sangsad, reports BSS.

The Bills are Artha Rin Adalat (amendment) Bill, 1997, Rangamat Hill District Local Government Council (amendment) Bill, 1997, Khagrachhari Hill District Local Government Council (amendment) Bill, 1997 and Bandarban Hill District Local Government Council (amendment) Bill, 1997.

2 killed in city

Two young men were killed in separate accidents at Mirpur and Uttara in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

One person was identified as Mohammad Motalab, 35, an employee of a saw mill at Gudaraghat under Mirpur police station. He died on the spot at around 2 pm when a stock of a tree fell on him. His body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

In another incident, Cantonment police recovered the body of a young man aged about 25, from Jasin Uddin Road in Uttara Sector-1 in the morning.

Corruption Court summons Benazir, Sharif & Imran

LAHORE Feb 2: A Pakistani High Court today summoned political party leaders Benazir Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif and Imran Khan on a petition-seeking to have them barred from public office court officials said, reports AFP.

The three have been asked to appear before the Lahore High Court in the first week of March, on an exact date to be fixed, to answer allegations of corruption.

The summons was issued on a petition filed by Javed Iqbal Jafri, leader of a local human rights group.
The petition contends that former premiers Benazir, leader of Pakistan People's Party, and Sharif, who heads the Pakistan Muslim League, face charges of financial corruption.

Imran, leader of the Movement for Justice, has been accused of 'moral corruption' over a paternity case filed in a US court by Sita White who claims Imran is the father of her four-year old daughter.

Clash over toll collection in Ctg : 10 hurt

CHITTAGONG, Feb 2: Ten people were injured, two seriously, in a clash between two rival groups of workers over toll collection from the labourers of Chittagong Jute Manufacturing Company here today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the clash began when CBA supporters of the mill tried to resist a group of workers, allegedly led by anti-CBA leader Abu, to realise toll from Eid-bonus of the workers.

The two groups chased each other with lethal weapons and exploding crackers for about two hours from 10 am, disrupting normal activities of the mill.

At least 15 houses and shops at the colony of the mill labourers were damaged during the melee.

Of the injured, Abul and Matin were admitted to Chittagong medical College Hospital with stab injuries.

Foreign secys

From Page 1
gional cooperation in New Delhi in the first week of April.
The Foreign Ministers will seize the opportunity to have this meeting when they will assemble in the Indian capital to attend a NAM Foreign Ministers' conference.
The five-day NAM conference will begin in New Delhi on April 4.

environment

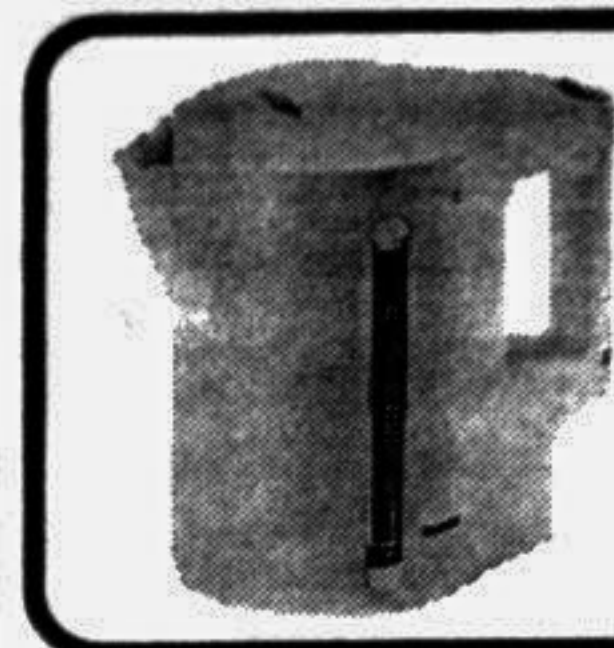
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present a pollution-free environment for our survival and for future generation," she urged all.

Keeping in mind the protection of environment, Sayeda Sajeda Chowdhury said, the government has already put temporary ban on permit system for tree felling.

Checking setting up of industries indiscriminately and movement of faulty vehicles, and shifting the slums from around the city have become imperative for protecting the environment. For this she suggested a coordinated plan.

Earlier, the Director General of the Department of Environment apprised the minister of the major activities and the achievements of the department.

The minister was informed that notices were given to 1176 severely polluting industries and actions taken against 13,881 vehicles in order to stop emission of black smoke.



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Let's make things better



PHILIPS

Mongla Port workers call off strike

KHULNA, Feb 2: The cargo handling at Mongla port resumed today as the stevedores called off their strike following a fruitful discussion between CBA leaders and the port Chairman on Saturday night, reports UNB.

The stevedores of the Mongla port, the second largest port of the country, went on strike on Tuesday to realise their demands.

Meanwhile, Dada Match Factory here reopened today after a meeting between the CBA leaders of the factory and the management on Saturday night. Jatiya Sangsad Whip SM Mostafa Rashid Suja, MP was present at the meeting.
The factory was closed on January 18.

Date for submitting application for BCS exams extended

The last date for submission of application forms for the 18th BCS examinations has been extended up to February 25 from February 15, reports UNB.
According to an official handout, the applicants will have to submit their application forms by 2:30 pm on February 25.

Women's college

From Page 1
legedly charging Tk 5000 for each subject from students who failed in the HSC test exams.

About 50 students of the college and some of their guardians also came to The Daily Star office and alleged that the college authorities also charged "a good amount of money" in the name of development works of the college and special coaching programme for the students.

Besides, the authority also demanded more than Tk 10,000 if any student wanted transfer certificate from the college, they alleged.

In the afternoon, the students and their guardians staged a protest rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club.
College authorities could not be contacted.

Traffic jam

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into a two-way street by the pressure of traffic. None could move from the Science Laboratory crossing to New Market.
The situation was compounded by the arrival of vendors and lifters on the street who found it convenient to shift their business from the sidewalks.

The owners of big shops had taken over the pavements on New Elephant Road and Mirpur Road. Vendors invaded the roads after the side-walks had already been taken over by other hawkers.

Police, who had been taking care of the Eid bazar, looking out for the snatchers, ignored the offenders of traffic law completely.

The streets were left out to the vehicle owners because of Eid shopping, one shop owner said at Elephant Road. They reportedly greased the palms of law enforcers. So, both sides are reaping the benefit.

But the plight of the people, including the police themselves, multiplied. On emergencies, not even an ambulance or a police vehicle could move, admitted a senior police officer.

"We cannot operate our wreckers to pull out the violators of parking regulations because of the traffic mess," admitted the official.

Ekushey programmes

From Page 1

Rafique said that in practicing literature, one should always care for social commitment. There is no scope to practise literature without giving proper attention to social injustices, he observed. Literature has an important role to play in changing the existing structure of the society, he said.

Kabir Chowdhury said literature should fight fundamentalism, fanaticism and oppression of women through their writings.

Today, the second day of the lecture series, Shamsur Rahman will be the key speaker. Prof Anisuzzaman will preside over the session. Prof Khondakir Sirajul Haque and Dr Biswajit Ghosh will be among the discussants.

The two-day National Poetry Festival ended yesterday in the morning session, a seminar on "Poems of Bangladesh in Post Independence Era" was held. Prof Anisuzzaman presided.

Poet Samudra Gupta presented the key-note paper while Prof Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir, Prof Sirajul Islam Chowdhury and Dr Biswajit Ghosh took part in the discussion.

In the afternoon, a session of poetry recitation was held with Fayez Ahmed in the chair. A number of poets from across the country participated in the session. In the evening, a new committee of Kabita Parishad was declared. Prof Rafiq Azad and Mohammad Samad were made president and secretary respectively of the Parishad.

A session of poetry recitation by guest poets was also held in the evening.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka University authorities have chalked out elaborate programmes for observing the Amar Ekushey, 1997 in a befitting manner.

A committee has been formed with Prof Mustafa Chowdhury as coordinator for observance of the Ekushey.

The committee was formed at a joint meeting of the Pro-

Vice-Chancellor, Treasurer, Deans, Provosts, departmental Chairmen, directors of the institutes, representatives from the DUTA, Senate, Syndicate, DUCSU and Hall Unions, Student Organisations Officers and Employees of the university.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Abul Kalam Azad Chowdhury presided over the meeting.

Land settlement survey begins in city

The government warned of severe punishment for any corruption in land recording as new settlement survey began in the capital city, reports UNB.

An official release yesterday said new settlement operation had begun in 128 out of 183 mouzas in the capital.

State Minister for Land Alhaj Rashed Mosharraf paid a surprise visit to Uttarkhan Mouza in Uttara thana yesterday to see the settlement operation.
He talked to different sections of people, including local leaders, elite and landowners, and enquired about the ongoing operation.

The minister directed the recording officials to record land properly and carefully for the greater interest of the nation.

Zobaida's bail

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Section 164 of the CrPc and the statements of the witnesses under Section 161 of the CrPc three days before hearing of the rule.

The court ordered the rule to be made returnable within three weeks from yesterday.

Zobaida Rashid, wife of Col (rtd) Khandker Abdur Rashid, another accused in the August 15th killing case, was arrested on November 2 from her residence in Gulshan in an arm case.

Subsequently she has been shown arrested in the present case.

Imran: Sticky wicket

From Page 1
commitment and will power, said Haroon Rashid former Test cricketer and now a member of the national team selection committee.

Other cricketing greats such as Intikhab Alam and Sikandar Bakht concurred, saying he needed time to learn the ropes in politics.

Khan, 44, who launched his Movement for Justice in April last year, is campaigning on a platform of clean government. Pakistan was rated the second most corrupt country (behind Nigeria) by the Berlin-based Transparency International in 1996.

Khan is challenging two former Prime Ministers who have each been sacked on charges of corruption in recent years — Benazir Bhutto, leader of the Pakistan People's Party and Pakistan Muslim League leader Nawaz Sharif.

He is a candidate in nine different constituencies but analysts say he will be lucky if he bags even one of them in the polls widely expected to see Sharif emerge on top.

After leading Pakistan to a World Cup victory in Australia in 1992, Khan retired to devote himself to raising funds for a career hospital in his hometown of Lahore in memory of his mother who herself died of cancer.

He drew criticism at home when he married Jemima, daughter of Anglo-French tycoon Sir James Goldsmith, in 1995. His opponents dubbed him a hypocrite for marrying a rich woman while preaching

austerity. But the criticism hardly dented his popularity.

"Khan has emerged with a new idea, but it will be difficult to start with. He is getting support among young and educated people and he will get good results within a few years," former ace batsman Zaheer Abbas told AFP, adding, "I wish him good luck."

Haroon Rashid said: He defeated Australians, West Indians, Indians and the English through his sheer confidence but the game of politics is entirely different.
"He has changed himself altogether and he achieved whatever he wished in his life. But there is a difference between leading a team of eleven and ruling millions of people," Rashid added.

Former fast bowler Sikandar Bakht said: "He needs time to dent the voting pattern of Pakistani politics, where people vote under the influence of feudal lords and on ethnic basis."

Intikhab Alam, who was team manager when Imran Khan was captain, said the novice politician would fall short of the crease.

"Running a team and running a country are different," Alam said. "He is perfect in lessons of cricket but it will take time for him to learn the lesson of politics."

Khan played a total of 88 Tests, scoring 3,807 runs and taking 363 wickets. He also played in 175 one-day internationals.

Polls in Pakistan today

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our victory," Sharif told a public rally in his hometown, Lahore, on the last campaign night.

Sharif said his party would usher in an 'industrial revolution' and make Pakistan a 'citadel of Islam and decent politics', adding that the Benazir brand of politics was about to be 'buried forever'.

Benazir who like Sharif addressed a string of last-minute rallies in Lahore, voiced fears that the elections would be rigged by the President.

"I have received reports that there will be rigging on 48 to 63 seats," she said, charging that between 5,000 and 10,000 bogus votes would be stuffed in the ballot boxes.

Benazir also appealed for the Pakistan army chief to ensure free and fair elections.

In a letter to general Jang Bahadur Karamat, a copy of which was faxed to the media, she claimed 65 National Assembly constituencies had been ' earmarked for electoral fraud.'

Without directly accusing President Farooq Ahmed Leghari she blamed a 'coterie' which she said was determined 'at all cost' to deprive her party of power.
Benazir urged Karamat, in

his capacity as a member of the recently-formed Council for Defence and National Security (CDNS), to ensure that such schemes do not succeed.

Imran Khan, leading his New Movement for Reform Party in its first election, has campaigned vigorously on a clean government ticket.

He has also stepped up corruption warnings in recent days, accusing the President of turning the election into a 'farce' and calling on Leghari to resign.

Khan also sought a last-minute court order to stop Benazir standing after her dismissal as prime minister for corruption and misuse was confirmed by the Supreme Court last week.

But Khan's campaign, in which he has been joined by his British heiress wife Jemima, has been tainted by a paternity suit brought by another socialist ex-girlfriend.

Sharif, who dominated Pakistani politics throughout the 1980s, to again monopolise the polls.
At the last election in 1993, the PPP won 86 seats against 68 for the MPL.
A new force in Sindh is a splinter PPP group, founded by

Benazir's brother Murtaza, who was killed in a police shootout in Karachi in September along with seven of his colleagues. The group is led by his widow, Lebanese-borne Ghinva.

Pakistan's main fundamentalist party, Jamaat-i-Islami, is boycotting the elections in protest over what it sees as Leghari's failure to debar corrupt politicians from taking part in the elections.

More than 1,800 candidates are in the arena for 214 National Assembly seats, with 4,426 vying for 479 seats in simultaneous polls to the four state assemblies in Punjab, Sindh, North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan.

Thousands of troops and police will be mobilised in a massive security operation to ensure peaceful polling at about half a million stations. Polling will begin at 7 am (0200 GMT) and close at 4 pm (1100 GMT).

While international observers started arriving today to monitor the controversial poll and a huge military operation will also be put in place for voting.

Experts from Europe, Asia and the United States have assembled to monitor the election.



বাংলাদেশ পশ্চিমবঙ্গ প্রান্তিকারক ও রঙানিকারক সমিতি এবং

বাংলাদেশ নিউওয়ার প্রান্তিকারক ও রঙানিকারক সমিতি

ব্রাসেলস এ জিএসপি বৈঠকের সাফল্যের আলোকে
রঙানিমুখী পোশাক শিল্প মালিকদের গুরুত্বপূর্ণ সভা

মাননীয় বাণিজ্য ও শিল্প মন্ত্রী জনাব তোফায়েল আহমেদ এর নেতৃত্বে বিজিএমইএ'র সভাপতি জনাব আনিসুর রহমান সিনহা সহ বিজিএমইএ ও বিকেএমইএ প্রতিনিধি দলের উপস্থিতিতে জিএসপি সংক্রান্ত সমস্যাগুলি নিয়ে সম্মতি ব্রাসেলস এ ইউরোপীয়ান ইউনিয়নের উর্দ্ধতন নেতৃবৃন্দের সঙ্গে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ সভা অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। উক্ত সভার সাফল্যের আলোকে আগামী ৪ঠা ফেব্রুয়ারী '৯৭ বিকাল ৪ ঘটিকায় সোনারগাঁ হোটেলের বল রুমে একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ সভা অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

প্রধান অতিথি : জনাব শাহ এ এম এস কিবরিয়া
মাননীয় অর্থ মন্ত্রী
প্রধান বক্তা : জনাব তোফায়েল আহমেদ
মাননীয় বাণিজ্য ও শিল্প মন্ত্রী
সভাপতি : জনাব আনিসুর রহমান সিনহা
সভাপতি বিজিএমইএ

উক্ত সভায় ও সভা শেষে ইফতার পাতিতে বিজিএমইএ ও বিকেএমইএ'র সম্মানিত সদস্যদের সাদর আমন্ত্রণ জানানো হচ্ছে।

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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