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Soumitra Chatterjee (L) of India performing in a play, 'Tiktiki', staged by the theatre group Swapna-Sandhani at the Shilpakala Academy auditorium yesterday. The group is taking part in the South Asian Theatre Festival being held in the city. —Star photo

Ershad: Troops' pullout

From Page 1 depend on fulfillment of "certain conditions". Transit is a modern concept which is working in Europe and America, he said. He, however, observed that "we have some political difficulties. We are poor and India is a big neighbour. We always have suspicion about them and that's why people here are very allergic about them."

Asked if he finds any difference between the Begum Zia government and Sheikh Hasina's, the deposed President said: "So far it is heaven and earth."

Begum Zia's government is no administration. She had done nothing for the country in last five years. She did not have knowledge about administration. Whatever form of government it is, it was one-man show."

About the Hasina administration, he said so far it is better. "Probably her government is better administration than before."

Replying to a question about a controversy over Awami League's joining the 1986 parliament election, Ershad said if they hadn't come, then martial law would not have been lifted.

Awami League and Jamaat-e-Islami participated in the elections, he said, adding Awami League has done exactly what a political party should have. "If anybody has political acumen and love for democracy, he should do it."

About BNP's boycott of the 1986 polls, he said he had talks with BNP. "They are not a political party and they have no political acumen. They had some other reasons (for boycott) which I cannot tell now."

In reply to a question, the former President said he gave three houses to Begum Khaleda Zia — two in Dhaka cantonment and one in Gulshan. "One house in Dhaka cantonment she had taken forcibly which has not yet been vacated," he alleged.

Ershad said he also gave a special sanction of a bank loan

for Begum Zia's son, Tareq. He said he could not exactly remember the amount. "Moudud Ahmed who was then the Industries Minister knows it better."

When his attention was drawn to some MPs' plea in Parliament for disclosing the names of those who had taken money from him, Ershad said he would speak about it in Parliament.

One stabbed to death in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, Mar 11: One person was stabbed to death allegedly by his relatives at Simultala village under Banaripara thana last night.

Police and witnesses said, Abdul Alim, 22, was murdered by his uncles Tofazzal Howlader and Majid Howlader and their two sons, Jahangir and Hanif following a row over a disputed land.

Abdur Rab, father of the victim lodged a case with Banaripara thana. Police arrested Majid and Tofazzal.

Bus strike in Madaripur called off

MADARIPUR, Mar 11: An indefinite bus strike by Madaripur Road Transport Employees' Union was called off from this morning, reports BSS.

The strike was called off following an agreement signed between the Madaripur District Bus Owners' Association and Madaripur Road Transport Employees' Union.

The employees union, however, threatened to resume the strike if the agreement is not implemented by March 15.

The Road Transport Employees' Union began the strike in the district from March 7 for realising their six-point demands.

JCD-BCL clash at Sirajganj Varsity College: 40 hurt

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 11: A fierce clash between two rival student groups at Sirajganj University College today left at least 40 students injured, 10 seriously, reports UNB.

Campus sources said soon after the clash the college authorities called in police and closed it for the day to avert further trouble.

Police and witnesses said the clash began at about 11:30 am when a group of pro-Awami League Chhatra League allegedly hurled abusive comments at the members of BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) as they were holding a rally at Amtala after parading the college campus.

Of the injured, Hafiz, Liton, Sharif, Rana of Chhatra League and Bhutto, Shah, Milton, Rana, Masum and Ba'al of JCD were admitted to local hospitals and clinics.

2 get life-term for killing one in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, Mar 11: Two persons have been sentenced to life in prison for murdering one Nur Hossain Bhuiya.

The convicted are Aleqa Begum, wife of Nur Hossain Bhuiya and Nurul Islam Bhuiya, his brother. They were also fined Tk 5,000 each, in default, to suffer rigorous imprisonment for one year more.

According to the prosecution, Aleqa Begum of Beluar village of Agailjhara thana had an affair with the brother of her husband. On the night of the July 6, 1995, the two in collusion with each other, killed Nur Hossain Bhuiya.

The Additional District and Sessions Judge, Abdul Quddus Mia, announced the judgment in the murder case today.

100 AL men join BNP Govt has created reign of terror: Mannan

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday alleged that the government has made the people's life miserable in its eight months rule, reports UNB.

He was addressing a joining programme at 29 Minto Road, the official residence of the leader of the Opposition in Parliament in the afternoon.

More than 100 Awami League and Jubo League leaders and workers of Laxmpur district joined the BNP at the function, said a BNP press release.

The BNP Secretary General said the people have become worried about the country's independence and sovereignty due to subservient activities of the government.

"The Awami League government has created a reign of terror in the country after assuming power," he said adding that it has come to the power by rigging the election results and seeking apology to the people for its past misdeeds," he said.

Bhuiyan said various types of crimes, particularly repression on women, have marked an unusual rise throughout the

PM urges ADAB team

Project country's true picture to dev partners

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the NGOs to implement the government efforts and development programmes in all development programmes, reports BSS.

The call was made when a seven-member delegation of the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) led by its president Kazi Faruque Ahmed met her at the Prime Minister's office.

The Prime Minister urged them to come forward to make the government development programmes a success. She said some quarters were trying to hinder the development activities of the government.

Sheikh Hasina said that some quarters were also trying to make false propaganda to tarnish the image of Bangladesh in the outside world. She urged the ADAB team to project the true and correct picture to the development partners.

The delegation members suggested that the local government should be formed with the elected representatives and a special allocation should be made from the national budget to make the local government more effective and powerful. They also called for keeping at least one-third of seats reserved for women in the local government as poverty alleviation would not be possible without women's participation.

State Minister for Planning and Civil Aviation Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir was present. The ADAB delegation included Khushi Kabir, Shamsul Huda, Mahbul Karim, Omar Faruque, Rokeya Kabir and Aroma Goun.

Trial today

From Page 1 military officials Syed Farookur Rahman, Sultan Shehriar Rashid Khan, Mohiuddin Ahmed and Abdul Wahab Joarder former minister of state for information Taheruddin Thakur and Begum Zobia Rashid, wife of another absconding accused and former military official A Rashid Khandaker.

As on previous talks, the authorities have neutralised eight security and border posts along the frontier with the North-Eastern Indian state of Tripura to facilitate arrival of the PCJSS leaders, their guards and staff.

Hasina: SPA

From Page 1 plan has also been undertaken to build monuments at Rayer Bazar killing field, where the intellectuals were killed at the fag end of the Liberation War and at Kullapathar in Kasba thana of Brahmanbaria district.

Replying to a supplementary question from Shahidul Islam of BNP whether government would construct a monument at Kalurghat radio station, she said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in his historic March 7 address, had clearly called upon the countrymen to take all preparations for the liberation war. She said Awami League under the leadership of Bangabandhu got mandate of the people in 1970 elections. "The announcement for independence can be delivered by the persons who got mandate of the people," she emphatically said adding "no other person can pronounce it without mandate."

Zia's interview

In this regard, the Prime Minister referred to the interview given by late President General Ziaur Rahman in the weekly Bichitra in 1974 and said General Zia had himself called Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as father of the nation in that interview. She said the message of Bangabandhu declaring independence of Bangladesh was read out by Awami League leader Abdul Hannan on March 26 from Chittagong.

The Prime Minister said it General Zia had given the call on March 27 for independence then why Pakistan President General Yahya declared Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib as the enemy of Pakistan on March 26 and not General Ziaur Rahman.

She said for the past 21 years false propaganda had been systematically carried out to defame the people. She said the nation and the people are conscious now and none could mislead them anymore.

country. "Now it seems that there is no law and order in the country."

He stressed the need for strengthening the party and united the nationalist forces to resist the anti-people activities being perpetrated by the present government.

JCD leader of JU assaulted on campus

By Staff Correspondent

A Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader of Jahangirnagar University was seriously assaulted by a group of young men on the campus yesterday afternoon.

Najmus Sakib alias Palash, 26, an MA student of Statistics, was under treatment at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with injuries in his face and body, hospital sources said.

Najmus Sakib, the president of the JCD unit of the Mir Mosharof Hall, was ousted from his dormitory a few days ago and was residing in Al Beruni Hall, said some of his friends who took him to the DMCH.

They said the leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League at Jahangirnagar University had assaulted the JCD leader. According to them, a group of about 12 young men kidnapped Sakib from in front of a women's hostel on the campus at about 2 pm. Later, they took him to a canteen and assaulted him with a bottle, an iron rod and pipe.

Savar police when contacted, said they did not have any information in this regard.

Day-long transport strike observed in Khulna

KHULNA, Mar 11: Transport owners and workers enforced a day-long strike here today demanding the removal of TNO and OC of Tala thana in Sathkhira district, reports UNB.

All inter-district buses of 16 routes were off the roads disrupting communication with different districts including Dhaka, Jessore, Sathkhira, Bogra, Kushtia and Rangpur.

Today's strike followed a five-day transport strike that ended Monday, enforced by the same group in Khulna-Paikgachha route demanding arrest of those responsible for an attack on a bus at Tala on March 6.

CHT talks

From Page 1 tal for the first time.

The NCCT held a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday. Meeting sources said today's talks will be crucial.

Abul Hasnat Abdullah, Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad who will lead the NCCT in today's talks, briefed the members at the meeting, sources said.

Besides four AL MPs, the NCCT includes one JP MP and two BNP MPs. The BNP MPs did not attend the previous three meetings and are not expected to attend today's meeting also, the sources said.

Ataur Rahman Kaiser, financial affairs secretary of the Awami League, is scheduled to accompany the PCJSS delegation from Duddukchhara to the capital. The PCJSS delegation will be led by his chief Jyotindryo Bodhipriyo Larma alias Shantu Larma.

As on previous talks, the authorities have neutralised eight security and border posts along the frontier with the North-Eastern Indian state of Tripura to facilitate arrival of the PCJSS leaders, their guards and staff.

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The comet Hale-Bopp appears in the sky over Merritt Island, Florida, early Monday, south of the Kennedy Space Center. The comet can be seen from late March to the beginning of April, before disappearing for the next 2,400 years. — AFP/UNB photo

AL blasts BNP stand

From Page 1

states of India which she called independence movement. Sayeed said Begum Zia had violated the spirit of SAARC by supporting their cause.

"The SAARC charter has clearly stated that no secessionist movement or terrorist group could be supported," he said.

In a counteroffensive against BNP's current allegation, Sayeed pointed to the air-drop of huge arms at Purulia in India and recovery of arms in Cox's Bazar during Begum Zia's rule. "It is BNP's time when Bangladesh was used as a transit for transportation of arms."

The Information Minister further alleged that Pakistan secret service ISI was patronised during Begum Zia's time to back up the separatists.

The issue of father of the nation came up again when a BNP member from Chittagong, Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, participating in the debate quoted some constitutional provisions and said nothing suggested that someone had been recognised as father of the nation constitutionally.

Chowdhury also referred to the Speaker's recent ruling on the issue and his (Speaker) assertion that he would resign if he could not prove it.

Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury, who joined the House after a few days, said what he had said on the issue was that relevant portions of the Constitution done through the Fourth Amendment about father of the nation had not

UN Commission session on HR begins

GENEVA, Mar 11: The 53rd session of the UN Commission on Human Rights began in Geneva yesterday, reports BSS.

Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru is leading a four-member Bangladesh delegation to the session.

Ziaur Rahman MP and Razia Matin Chowdhury MP are included in the delegation.

During his stay in Geneva, the minister is expected to meet the chairman of the session, Under Secretary General of the United Nations and the UN High Commission of Human Rights.

PM calls on President

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called on President Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday evening, reports BSS.

She informed the President about the coming independence day celebration programmes which will be graced by President Suleyman Demirel of Turkey, President Nelson Mandela of South Africa and President Yasser Arafat of the State of Palestine.

The programmes for celebration of the independence day was also discussed in detail.

Khas land

From Page 1

different agencies. According to the task force, the total unused acquired lands were 942.50 acres.

The task force suggested that the unused lands should be given to different income-generating programmes and this should be done in accordance with due allotment.

The floating and landless people could also be rehabilitated in these areas, the report said.

3 mugged

From Page 1

the members of the family with rope. A case was lodged with Demra thana. None was arrested in this connection till last night, police said.

Meanwhile, another gang of muggers stabbed one Abdur Razzak and snatched Tk 35,000 at Fakirpur in Motijheel yesterday morning. He was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), hospital sources said.

The snatchers was laid Razzak when he was travelling in a rickshaw at about 10 am.

In another incident, snatchers stabbed one Babul, 35, and a rickshawpuller, Mahbub, in Monipur area in Mirpur yesterday afternoon. They were under treatment at the DMCH. The gang, chased by the local people, fled the scene before they could snatch anything from Babul who was travelling in Mahbub's rickshaw at about 5:30 pm.

Sutrapur police said muggers took away a gold chain and a wrist watch from one Dilip Kumar Das when he was passing KM Das lane in Sutrapur at about 10 pm Monday.

President assents to 2 Bills

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday assented to two Bills passed by the Jatiya Sangsad, reports UNB.

The Bills are: The Inland Water Transport Authority (Amendment) Bill 1997 and the Bankruptcy Bill 1997, said a press release of the Parliament Secretariat.

Nat'l Child Day Mar 17

The government has decided to observe National Child Day on March 17, the birthday of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, said a PID handout yesterday, reports UNB.

BB plan

From Page 1

taken to check further fall in the market, he added.

The share-market index which rose to 3600-point mark in mid-November last year, experienced continued slide creating panic among small investors.

The DSE All share Price Index was recorded yesterday at 1473.84 point, slightly up from Monday's 1434.20.

Power

From Page 1

off. The meeting sought cooperation from subscribers and people in implementing its decisions which also include turning off unnecessary lights, fans and aircoolers, stopping water pumps, calendars and cookers and determining weekly holidays of mills and industries area-wise on different days.

It said the government has taken various steps for overall development of the power supply system and hoped that the situation will be improved by April this year.

Child trafficking

From Page 1

geon, representatives of the district bar association and the Shishu Academy, president of the press club, adjutant of BDR/Ansar/VDP, the deputy director of social welfare and representatives of NGOs.

Advertisement for '555' cigarettes. Text includes: 'নগদে কিনুন দামে জিতুন!', 'ইফোর্জ হাউজিং এর তত্ব প্রকল্প', and '555'. It also mentions 'IG ISLAM GROUP' and provides contact information for Mahfuz Anam.

Advertisement for '555' cigarettes. Text includes: 'The ONLY 555 STORE IN BANGLADESH IS NOW OPEN AT KEMAL ATATURK AVENUE, BANANI. ON THIS GRAND OCCASION, THERE WILL BE WEEK-LONG PROMOTION FOR OUR VALUED SMOKERS! COME NOW, JOIN THE EXCITEMENT AND BE PART OF THE SMOOTHNESS.' and 'SMOOTHNESS. ABOVE ALL ELSE.'

Large advertisement for '555' cigarettes. Features a large image of a pack of 555 cigarettes and the text: 'The ONLY 555 STORE IN BANGLADESH IS NOW OPEN AT KEMAL ATATURK AVENUE, BANANI. ON THIS GRAND OCCASION, THERE WILL BE WEEK-LONG PROMOTION FOR OUR VALUED SMOKERS! COME NOW, JOIN THE EXCITEMENT AND BE PART OF THE SMOOTHNESS. SMOOTHNESS. ABOVE ALL ELSE.'