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Exodus of scientists hits India's space agency

NEW DELHI, Mar 14: India's premier national space agency said today it was taking "corrective steps" against an exodus of scientists opting for the private sector, reports AFP.

As many as 560 scientists have left the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) since 1991 for jobs with private firms, a parliamentary experts' panel has reported.

The panel, which submitted its report to parliament Thursday, said most of those who left were computer experts and added as many as 135 people quit last year.

Electronics and telecommunications experts have also left. The exodus, the report said, was a "fallout" of the sweeping economic reforms in 1991, which opened India's electronics industry to private sector participation.

This flight of talents has slowed down scheduled critical work of the ISRO, it said and recommended higher salaries to "arrest this trend."

SSC invigilator assaulted

CHANDPUR, Mar 14: An SSC invigilator was assaulted by some unruly youths while he was returning home from Matlab IB Pilot School centre on the second day of the SSC examinations, reports UNB.

Witnesses said Mohammad Shahjahan, the assistant teacher of Dogorpur High School, came under attack by some examinees as he did not allow them to adopt unfair means in the examinations.

The injured invigilator, Mohammad Shahjahan, was given treatment at Matlab Thana Health Complex. A case was filed. Meanwhile, police arrested three people in this connection.

4 JCD, one BCL activists held in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 14: Police rounded up five people today for their alleged involvement in creating violence in the town, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, police conducted a drive at the SS road and Fazlul Haque road and arrested five men — four JCD and one BCL activists.

The arrest was made in connection with the clashes between Chhatra Dal and Chhatra League at Sirajganj University College on March 11 and 12, police said.

Ershad gets legal notice from Moudud

By Staff Correspondent
Moudud Ahmed, a former vice president in Ershad regime, who joined BNP a few months back, has sent a legal notice against former president and Jatiya Party chief HM Ershad for a 'defamatory' statement about him.

When asked, Moudud confirmed this and said that he was yet to get a reply to his legal notice. "What has been printed in one of the Bangla dailies as part of Ershad's speech is defamatory for me", Moudud said, without elaborating.

Sources close to the JP chief said that after receipt of the legal notice, Ershad had sent a reply. Ershad advised Moudud to ask his conscience and refresh his memory, sources added.

A section of the press recently reported, quoting Ershad, that an amount of Tk 200,000 was provided every month to Moudud for legal aid to party workers.

Ershad's statement, however, did not say for how long the money was provided and where from did the money come.

Shiite leader shot dead in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Mar 14: Unidentified gunmen today shot dead a leader of the Shiite community in the southern Punjab city of Okara, reports AFP.

Ejaz Zaman Rizvi was killed when three motorcyclists opened fire with AK-47 assault rifles on him while he was driving his car, police said.

The assailants fled after attacking Rizvi, who was a member of the provincial council of Tehreek Jafria Pakistan (TJP), a Shiite extremist political party.

Nor'wester

UNB reports: A fire broke out on an electric wire at Malibagh crossing during the storm. However, nobody was injured as the fire was brought under control soon after the incident.

The fire originated from a short-circuit. Fire Brigade sources said.

Hailstorm lashes Jhenidah

JHENIDAH, Mar 14: The season's first hailstorm with gusty wind lashed the district for about an hour tonight, reports UNB.

The storm that began at 8:15 pm damaged standing Boro crop on vast track of land, official sources said.

A ISRO spokesman, meanwhile, admitted the trend had affected the national space agency, situated in the southern city of Bangalore, hub of India's space industry.

"It has definitely affected us, but we have taken corrective steps such as recruiting additional manpower," the spokesman said.

"Once you know the trend one can easily take such measures," the spokesman said and added the exodus of 560 personnel was a small dent in ISRO's workforce of 11,000 scientists and technicians.

He said ISRO's main projects, to build a polar satellite launch vehicle (PSLV) and a geo-stationary satellite launch vehicle (GSLV), were still on schedule.

One held with arms in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Mar 14: Boalkhali police arrested one Seraj with one light gun and two cartridges from his residence at west Godandi today, district police said, reports BSS.

Meanwhile, Chittagong Metropolitan (CMP) Police arrested 40 persons on various charges from different parts of the city during the last 24 hours ending 7 am today, a CMP press release said.

Of the arrested, seven persons were held in regular cases, four as abductors and the rest were rounded up in various criminal acts, the press release added.

Bangabandhu Shishu-Kishore Mela programme begins today

A three-day programme organised by the Bangabandhu Shishu-Kishore Mela begins in the city today on the occasion of National Children's Day and the 77th Birthday of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on March 17, reports UNB.

The programme will be featured by discussion, children's rally and cultural function.

Educationalist Dr Neelima Ibrahim will inaugurate the programme at Bangladeshi Shishu Academy at 4 pm. Former Chief Justice Kemaluddin Hossain will attend the inaugural function as chief guest and Justice KM Sobhan as the keynote speaker.

Dr Kamal says Govt has released Ershad only to ascend to power

MYMENSINGH, Mar 14: Gano Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain here today said the government had released a "leader of the mafia group", Ershad, only to ascend to power, reports UNB.

He regretted that there was no protest in parliament against Ershad, a convict, even after he had called President Shahabuddin Ahmed a so-called justice. "There was no protest either against corruption, terrorism and black marketers," he added.

Dr Kamal, who was addressing a party representatives' council of five districts at the local Town Hall, called upon all to resist what he called politics of black money and corrupt people.

He said Gano Forum will observe "mass awakening day" on March 29 to protest failures of the present government in all spheres.

The council was also addressed by advocate Zahurul Islam, Enayetur Rahman, Abul Hossain, Saiful Islam, Fazlul Kader and Borhanuddin.

Israeli cabinet

From Page 1
ers of Islamic militant groups who urged him to give tacit approval to new terror attacks in Israel, the report said.

Palestinian leaders have warned of a new uprising should Israel go ahead with its plans. "We have no hope in this government," the speaker of the Palestinian legislative council, Ahmed Qureia, said today "Our people will defend their existence and their land."

Kashoggi

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spokesman added. Easter, arrested on a warrant issued last year, was identified as the Managing Director of City Trading Company.

Kashoggi also allegedly failed to put up sufficient collateral to secure a loan from the bank.

Four other warrants were issued today in separate cases involving the troubled bank.

Dhaka elected

From Page 1
review of the whole question of peacekeeping operation in all their aspects.

In view of her large scale participation in UN peacekeeping operations, Bangladesh as well as other emerging major troop contributors indicated serious interest to become full members of the special committee.

At present Bangladesh has 1,145 troops deployed in ten United Nations peacekeeping missions and is the third largest contributor to United Nations, said an official hand-out yesterday.

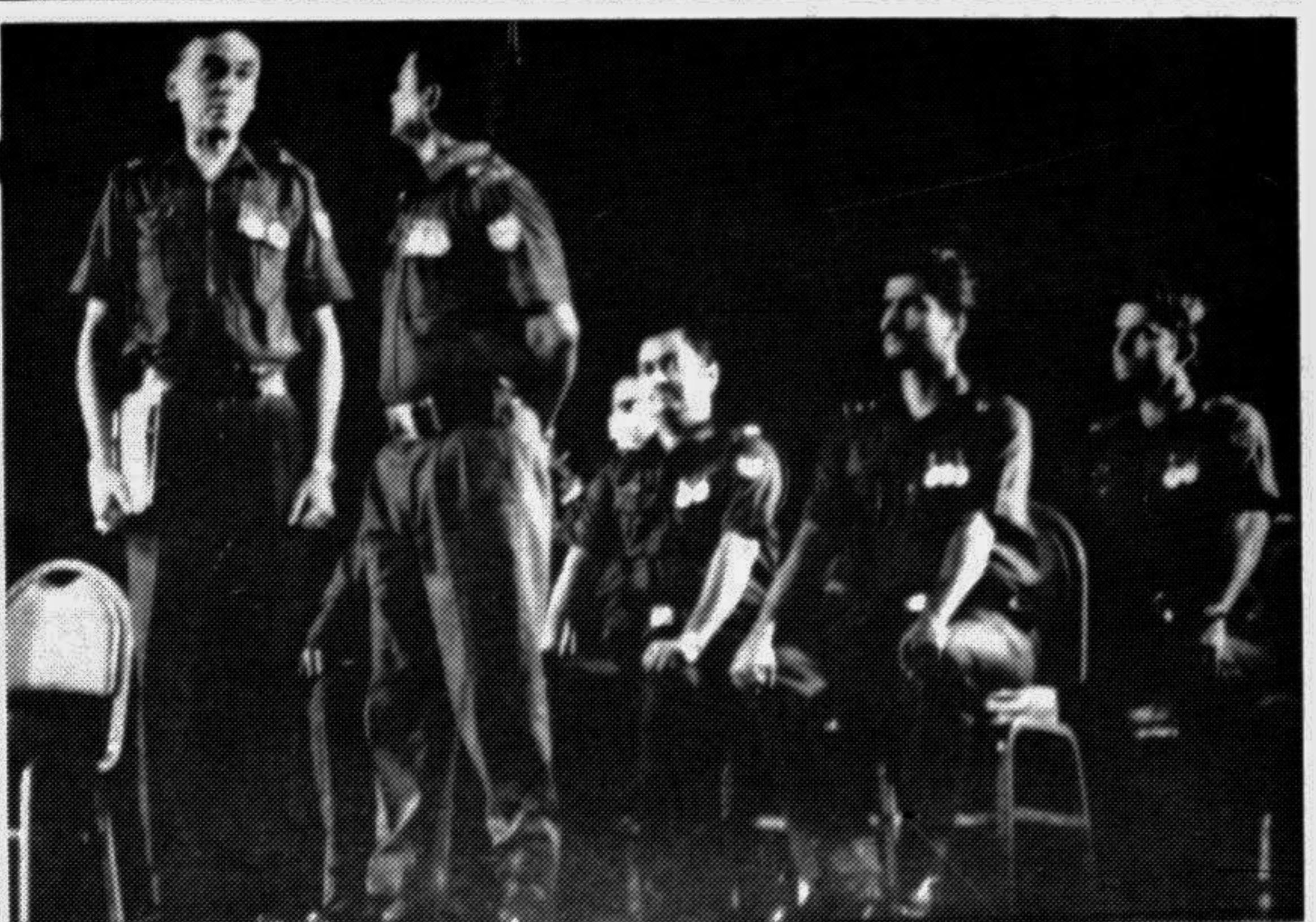


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A scene from the play 'Court Martial' staged by Indian theatre group Rangakarmi at the Shilpakala Academy auditorium yesterday. The group is taking part in the South Asian Theatre Festival being held in the city. — Star photo

Police-Transport workers' clash in Jhenidah: 10 hurt

JHENIDAH, Mar 14: At least 10 people, including five policemen, were injured in a clash between police and transport workers in the town this evening, reports UNB.

Sources said the clash began when some plainclothes policemen aboard a reserved bus refused to pay toll to transport workers at the local bus stand.

They were returning to Jessore police line after a picnic at Shilaidah in Kushtia district.

The transport workers usually collect Tk five from each vehicle passing through the bus stand.

Of the injured, five policemen and three workers were admitted to Jhenidah Sadar hospital.

Later, police officials from district headquarters came to the spot and brought the situation under control after negotiating with transport leaders.

Youth dev office to be set up in each thana

BRAHAMANBARIA, Mar 14: The government will set up Youth Development offices in the thanas across the country within shortest possible time, reports UNB.

State Minister for Youth and Sports, and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader said this while he was addressing a freshers' reception at Sanair Anjuman Ara College here today.

He further said that the official network of the department has already been extended to 230 thanas to provide jobs to unemployed youths.

He also urged the unemployed youths to involve themselves in income-generating activities utilizing the training and loan facilities provided by the government.

The minister also announced an allocation of Tk 89,000 for the development work of Brahmanbaria Stadium during this fiscal year.

Sharif

From Page 1
level talks scheduled to start in New Delhi on March 28 would lead to Sharif-Gowda summit in May.

Around 17,000 people have died in Indian-administrated Kashmir in violence linked to a separatist campaign launched in 1989.

India accuses Pakistan of giving material aid to the separatists.

Islamabad denies the charge but pledges moral and political support for the campaign, calling it a legitimate struggle for self-determination.

Clinton hurt

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surgery, she said the surgery would not require a temporary transfer of power to Vice President AL Gore.

The surgery was to take place at Bethesda Naval Hospital when he returns from Florida where he was on a fundraising visit on Thursday.

Asked whether Clinton would go ahead with a scheduled summit in Helsinki on March 19 with Russian President Boris Yeltsin, she said, "there are no plans at this time to change his agenda."

59 rivers

From Page 1
Laxmipur, Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Comilla, Satkhira, Jhenidah, Bagerhat, Khulna, Magura, Nawabganj, Pabna, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Natore, Nilphamari, Dinajpur, Barguna, Barisal, Bhola, Sylhet, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Naogaon and Chandpur.

Zillur for strong rural infrastructure

JAMALPUR, Mar 14: LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman today said strong rural infrastructure would help create new job opportunities and gear up rural business and economic activities in the country, reports BSS.

He said national progress could not be achieved without making each and every village of the country self-reliant.

Rahman said this while inaugurating the newly constructed 300 meter long Kristopor bridge at Madarganj thana under the district.

Mirza Azam MP and leaders of district Awami League and its front organisation also spoke on the occasion.

Local Government Engineering Department has constructed the bridge at a cost of Tk 2.10 crore while people of five thanas will get direct benefit from the construction.

The minister said the government had taken up a master plan to build a modern communication network in the country by constructing linkroads between each union and the district headquarters by next five years. He said there was no alternative to construction of physical infrastructure in rural areas to solve the socio-economic problems of the vast population living in the villages.

Earlier, the minister inaugurated the newly constructed family welfare centre at Shidhuli union under Madarganj thana and also addressed the inaugural function of Shantigonj-Kalibari Pali Biddut sub-station.

He said the government was determined to reach electricity to all the villages so that the people could produce more food through improve irrigation and create employment opportunities by setting up small mills and factories.

JCD dominated DU halls

From Page 1
halls alleged that 'armed terrorists' were residing in the halls despite the presence of police.

Armed elements were checking identity cards of the students at the entrances of the halls in front of police, they added.

Police recovered a walkie talkie from a ditch near Bangabandhu Hall yesterday.

Meanwhile, five activists of JCD have been expelled from the organisation. They are: Manik, Bipu, Zaman, Mukit and Alam. All of them belong to Jasimuddin Hall group.

On the other hand, expulsion order on four DU unit leaders of

Killing of DU student Probe body seeks information from all concerned

The enquiry committee formed to probe Thursday's killing of a Dhaka University student at Bangabandhu Hall has sought information from all concerned, reports UNB.

The five-member committee in its first meeting yesterday requested all concerned to give their statements about the incident verbally or in writing to its member-secretary and Proctor of the University Dr AKM Nurunnabi by March 17.

Names of those who will provide the committee with information about the incident will be kept secret, said a DU press release.

Arif Hossain Khan Taj, a second year student of Bengali Department and an activist of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal was shot dead by rival group at Bangabandhu Hall early Thursday.

The meeting at the Vice-Chancellor's residence was presided over by committee chairman Barrister Mainul Hossain and attended by its members — President of Dhaka University Teachers' Association Prof M Mostafa Chowdhury, Prof Aminul Islam and Dr AKM Nurunnabi.

They interviewed a student admitted Pangu Hospital with bullet wounds in the incident.

The committee members will interview the Provost of Bangabandhu Hall, house tutors, assistant house tutors, gateman and night guard of the dormitory today at 8 pm. They will also visit the spot.

In a second incident, a Cobra was attacked by a shoulder-launched SA-7 surface-to-air missile that missed.

There were no US casualties in either incident.

He said steps had been taken to reform the entire local government administration by identifying union parishad as the core of all development activities, formulation of village council and reintroducing of upazila system to give a fresh impetus to the rural economic activities as per hopes and aspirations of the village people. Enough power will be provided to zila parishad to strengthen the overall rural development, he added.

In this regard, Rahman laid stress on unity of different political parties inside and outside parliament for development of the country and economic freedom of the commonman.

Earlier, the minister inaugurated the newly constructed family welfare centre at Shidhuli union under Madarganj thana and also addressed the inaugural function of Shantigonj-Kalibari Pali Biddut sub-station.

He said the government was determined to reach electricity to all the villages so that the people could produce more food through improve irrigation and create employment opportunities by setting up small mills and factories.

JCD was withdrawn. They are: Sultan Salauddin Tuku, Mainuddin Chowdhury Liton, Benazir Ahmed Titu and Azhar Mukul. All of them belong to Titu group. They were expelled following a clash between rival factions.

Meanwhile, Masud Rana and Mahbulul Kaiser, joint convener of JCD DU unit, in a statement on behalf of JCD Bangabandhu Hall unit, yesterday condemned the killing of Arif Hossain Taj.

They blamed a BNP leader for the killing and termed him an agent of the government. Jatiyatabadi Samajik Sangskritik Dal, Bangabandhu Hall unit, also condemned the killing and demanded immediate arrest of those involved.

Tanks roll out

From Page 1
Balkan country.

Italian military helicopters were pulling out 330 Italians and 70 others and brought them to warships in the Adriatic, the ANSA news agency said. An estimated 1,300 Italians were in the country. The Foreign Ministry said the evacuation was continuing through the evening.

At least three Albanian military helicopters and three patrol boats sought refuge in Italy, officials said.

One of the helicopters landed at the airport in Brindisi, a southern port across the Adriatic Sea from Albania, army Col Francesco Tasca said.

Twelve military personnel in civilian clothes aboard said they wanted political asylum. Tasca said. Italian officials took away their sidearms, he said, and they were being held at the airport.

Meanwhile, US Marine Corps helicopters suspended evacuation operations over Albania today after two Cobra helicopter gunships were fired upon.

A Pentagon official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said one Cobra returned fire after coming under small-arms ground fire, as Albania, the poorest country in Europe, erupted late this week into violent anarchy.

The Cobra counterattack stopped the shooting.

In a second incident, a Cobra was attacked by a shoulder-launched SA-7 surface-to-air missile that missed.

There were no US casualties in either incident.



Mother Teresa (R) and sister Nirmala greet people at the Missionaries of Charity headquarters in Calcutta yesterday. Sister Nirmala was elected to replace Mother Teresa on Thursday, but the 86-year-old Mother Teresa said retirement was out of the question despite handing over the reins to her 63-year-old successor. — AFP/UNB photo

Delhi's direct rule in UP extended

NEW DELHI, Mar 14: Hindu nationalists suffered a rebuff today when the Indian parliament voted to extend New Delhi's direct rule over the most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, reports AFP.

Angry members of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) walked out of the Lok Sabha, the lower house, shortly before a vote on the controversial subject.

"We cannot be a party to such an action," BJP veteran Jaswant Singh said. "It is politically dishonest, constitutionally suspect and unwise."

But the treasury benches and other parties in the Lok Sabha approved the motion, put to vote by Speaker PA Sangma, extending New Delhi's direct rule over Uttar Pradesh by another six months.

The motion will now go to the upper house, the Rajya Sabha, and later to President Shankar Dayal Sharma for approval. However a motion passed by the lower house is rarely turned down by the upper house or the President.

Uttar Pradesh, a sprawling northern state of 140 million people, was put under federal rule in October after elections

left a hung legislature, as no one party had enough seats to form a government.

Federal rule was to expire on April 17, and the BJP, India's main opposition party, has been pressing New Delhi not to extend it and instead give it the chance of forming a government.

The BJP had topped the Uttar Pradesh ballot as the single largest party, although it failed to win an outright majority and the rival mainstream parties refused to help it form a coalition.

Woman robbed of gold chain

Muggers snatched a gold chain from the wife of a teacher of Dhaka University from near the Rajbargh Police Lines in the city last night, reports BSS.

The victim, Minara Siddique, alleged that a group of muggers snatched the ornament at about 10:30 pm when she along with her husband was returning to their Dhanmondi residence by a rickshaw after attending a marriage ceremony at Basabo.

Racketeer held in city

A racketeer was caught red-handed from a housing company at Mirpur Section-1 in Dhaka yesterday, police said, reports UNB.

The racketeer identified himself as Mamunur Rashid. He was handed over to police by some officials of the housing society, Basati Property Development Ltd.

The managing director of the housing society, Makbul Ahmed, received a phone-call at 8 am from a person who identified himself as a deputy tax commissioner. The caller directed Makbul to hand over two bags of rice and some cash to his representative named Mamun.

Accordingly, Mamun reached the spot at 10 am, met the managing director and requested him to hand over the said amount of rice and money.

At one stage, Mamun admitted that he and the phone-caller are the members of an organised group involved in racketeering in the city. Later, he was handed over to Mirpur police.

Doctor murder

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their involvement in the killing, police added.

Dr Hafizur Rahman was gunned down allegedly by an unidentified gang in front of his residence at Sanatanga in Zigatola under Dhanmondi thana on March 1.

Eight policemen of Hazaribagh police outpost under Dhanmondi thana were suspended earlier for their alleged negligence to duty after the killing incident.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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