

## Indian killed in gunbattle with police in Jessore: 3 arrested

From Our Correspondent  
JESSORE, Mar 18: One Indian national was shot dead in a gunbattle with police at Anandula under Sukpukuria union of Chowgacha thana last night. Two Indian nationals and a Bangladeshi were also arrested. Police recovered a number of arms and ammunition from their possession. The deceased has been identified as Bangla Biswas (30) of Bagdah thana in North 24 Pargana of West Bengal. The arrested Indians were identified as Pradip, 20, and Krishna Mistry, 19, of the same thana and the Bangladeshi as Nazrul, 30, of Kulia under Chowgacha thana. The recovered arms include one pistol, two shotguns, one pipegun and twelve rounds of ammunition, all Indian-made. The body has been sent to the General Hospital in Jessore for autopsy. The arrested have been sent to the Jessore Sadar Court. Two cases have been filed. See Page 12 Col 7

## DCCI, MCCI express concern Fresh deadlock at Chittagong port

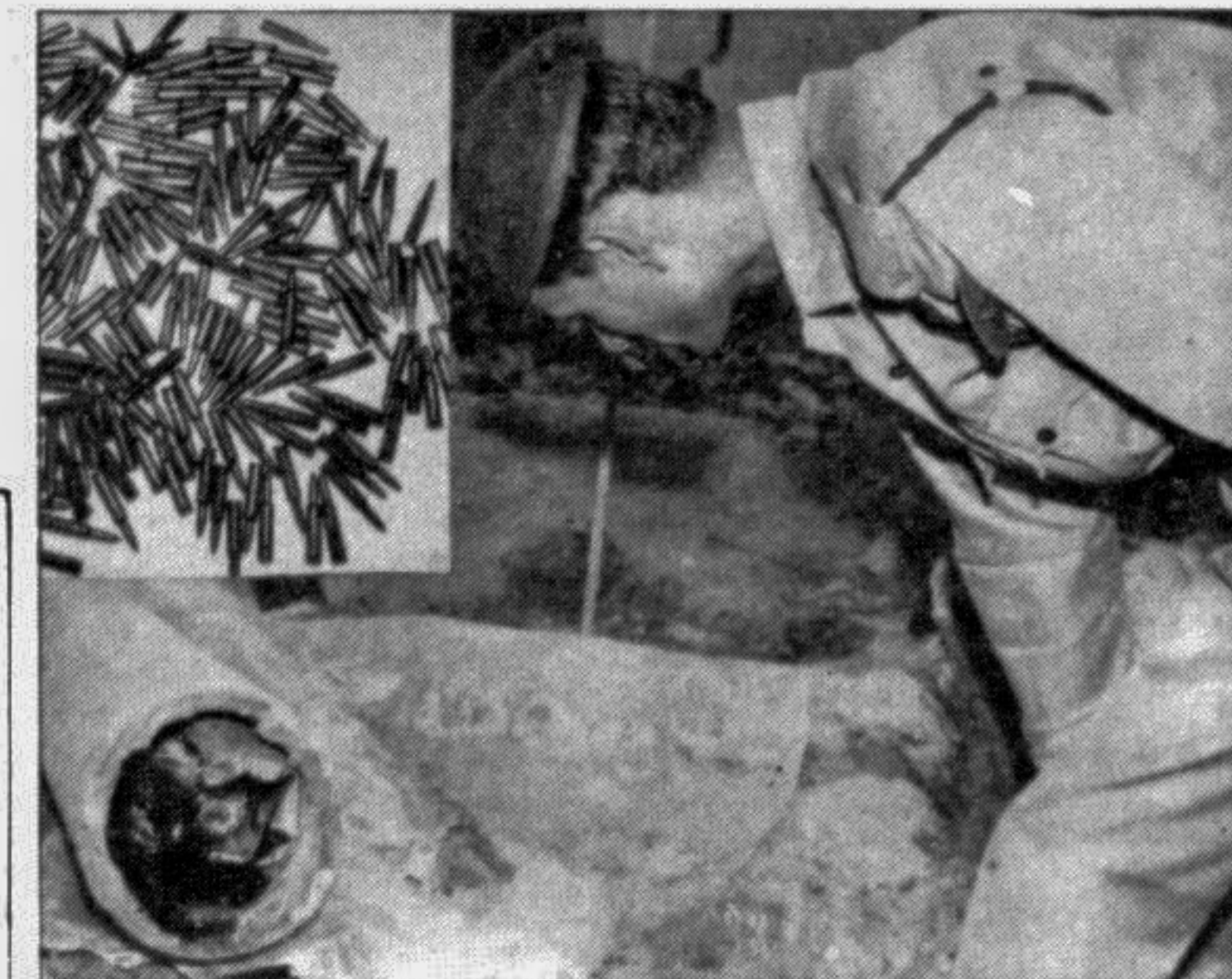
From Nurul Alam  
CHITTAGONG, Mar 18: The Chittagong Port faced a fresh deadlock today despite the end of workers' strike as the port users started boycott of the port demanding permission for use of their private equipment for handling cargo, official sources said. The port workers had gone on a wildcat strike from 2 pm Saturday when a shipping agency had taken initiative to use its own equipment for handling its container cargo at the port jetty. The CBA of the workers withdrew the strike today following agreement with the port authorities last night as the port authorities issued a notice to the shipping agency, G.C. Shipping Agency, to remove its equipment immediately, officials said. Chairman of Chittagong Port Captain Zahiruddin Mahmud said that the cargo handling could not be resumed this morning following the boycott by port users. Over 20 cargo ships fall stranded at the port due to the stand-off which costs 8,000 US dollars per day to every vessel, he said. Intervention of government's higher authorities has already been sought to break the impasse, he said. Meanwhile, the private shipping agency has not yet removed its equipment (two forklifts) from the port area. See Page 12 Col 4

## Kazi Zafar expelled after chaos at rally

By Staff Correspondent  
Kazi Zafar Ahmed, a president member of the Jatiya Party and former Prime Minister, has been expelled from the party, an announcement said last night. It followed an heated exchange between Kazi Zafar and Nazim Rahman Manju, deputy secretary general of JP, at the party public meeting at Manik Mia Avenue earlier in the afternoon. Even Ershad failed to suppress his annoyance over Kazi Zafar's speech and at one stage asked him to cut short his speech. "Such speech will not be allowed," shouted JP Joint Secretary General Nazim Rahman Manju at one stage of Zafar's speech when he was saying "we will give life but not allow import of power from India," according to UNB. Manju also was seen pushing Zafar, saying "dalal of BNP." That stirred a commotion on the rostrum. People who thronged the Manik Mia Avenue to listen to Ershad also became panicky amidst the melee. "Well, I will not say anything more," said an embarrassed Kazi Zafar and snapped his speech. Later, announcement was made of Ershad's speech and the JP Chairman started his delivery in the midst of a disarray, which however, lasted for few minutes. Earlier, Kazi Zafar Ahmed, in an oblique reference to proposed Indo-Bangla joint operation, said: "We'll not allow any step to use our army in combating insurgency on foreign lands." He also described the initiative to restore bus service between India and Bangladesh as "See Page 12 Col 7"

## Cache of ammunition recovered from under house in Gulshan

By Staff Correspondent  
A large cache of ammunition was unearthed from under an old building at Gulshan in the city yesterday. At least 16 grenades and 260 rounds of Chinese rifle bullets were recovered from a 10-feet concrete pipe buried five to six feet deep as labourers were demolishing the old building, police said. See Page 12 Col 7



A policeman examining the concrete pipe that contained ammunition including bullets (inset) dug up from under a house at Gulshan in the city yesterday. — Star photo

## Power tower collapse Political lobby in PDB union suspected

By Sharier Khan  
The probe body investigating the collapse of two towers of the East-West Interconnector Line in Pabna is likely to submit its report to the authorities tomorrow, PDB sources said yesterday. The probe body has already detected "evidences of manual manipulation" in the collapsed towers, the sources said. "There are signs of use of hack-saw blade in one of the roots of the collapsed towers. It seems, it must have been done by someone professional," one source said. "An unscrupulous political lobby in the PDB's workers' union might be responsible for the incident." The four-member probe body headed by the Chief Engineer of the PDB is continuing its investigation, the source said. It will take four to five months to remount the collapsed towers, each weighing 27 tons for regular operations, the source said. Two towers of the 230 KV East-West Interconnector line mysteriously collapsed Friday night, snapping power supply to 37 districts in the western part of the country. Power supply was restored Monday night by setting up of a temporary bypass line by a team of Power. See Page 12 Col 3

## 50 killed in Russian plane crash

MOSCOW, Mar 18: A civilian airliner crashed in southern Russia this morning, killing all 50 people on board. One Russian official said an explosion was suspected, reports AP. The Stavropol Airlines AN-24 plane crashed after taking off from the southern city of Stavropol, said Viktor Beltsova, a spokesman for the Emergency Situations Ministry. The 41 passengers and nine crew members were killed when the plane slammed into a wooded area near the city of Cherkessk, about 90 kilometres (56 miles) South of Stavropol, the spokesman said. Rescue workers flew to the site and discovered at least 17 bodies, Boris Erkenov, deputy interior minister for the Karachayevo-Cherkessia region, told the Interfax news agency. The airliner appeared to have exploded in the air because plane fragments and human remains were scattered over a 6-kilometer (4-mile) wide area, Erkenov was quoted as saying. The plane was flying at 6,000 metres (19,700 feet) when it disappeared off radar screens and crashed at 10:50 am (0750 GMT), officials said. It was headed to the northern Turkish city of Trabzon, on the Black Sea coast, 400 kilometres (250 miles) south of Stavropol. Trabzon is a popular destination among the estimated 1 million Russian "shuttle traders" who visit Turkey every year to buy inexpensive clothing and consumer goods.

## Taka devalued by 45 poisa

Taka has been devalued by 45 poisa, or about one per cent, aiming to stop depletion of the country's foreign exchange reserve, now at a very low level, reports UNB. Official sources said the new rate would come into effect from today. The selling rate of one US dollar now has been fixed at Tk 43.10 while the buying rate will be Tk 43.30. Earlier the selling rate was one unit of the greenback for Tk 42.65 and buying rate for Tk 42.85. Bangladesh Bank Governor Lutful Rahman Sarkar told UNB last night that the downward adjustment of the taka against dollar was aimed at encouraging the local exporters who need some support. Sarkar, however, maintained that the foreign exchange reserve level was almost stable and constant. Economists said the devaluation would reduce the import demands. They think that more devaluation is needed to increase exports by making goods See Page 12 Col 8

## Water policy in the offing: PM Ganga Barrage to get special priority

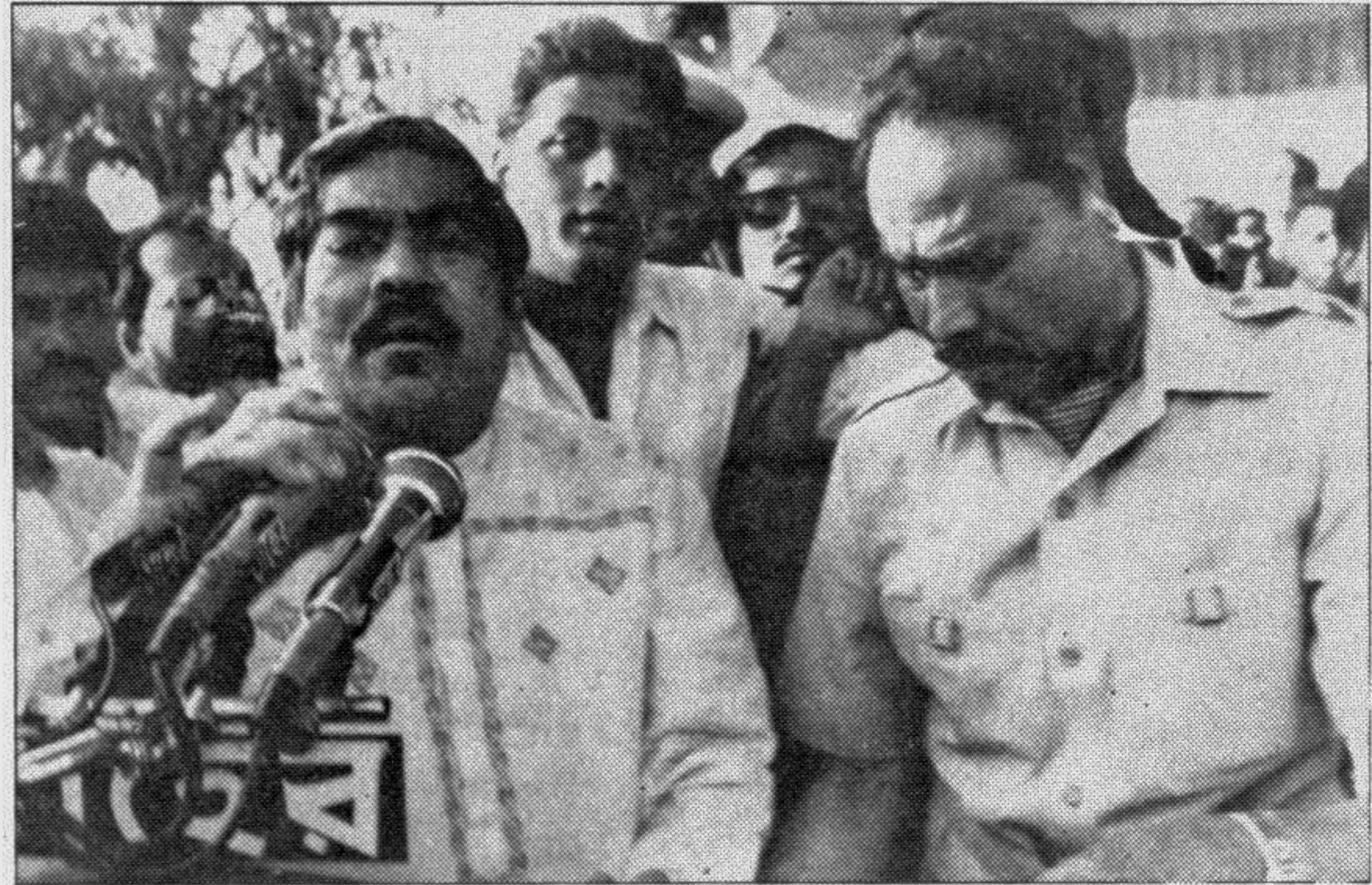
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said a comprehensive water policy to ensure optimum utilisation of water resources is in the offing, reports UNB. She said the water policy will aim at implementing both short and long term plans to make the best use of water resources with particular reference to the Ganges water. The Prime Minister was presiding over the third meeting of the National Water Resources Council at the International Conference Centre (ICC) in the city in the afternoon. Hasina, who expressed dismay for not holding any meeting of the council in last 12 years, said construction of the Ganga Barrage will get special priority in the water policy. "The economy of the country suffered, ecology was made imbalanced and people suffered a lot because of unplanned construction of road and embankment in the past," she said. She attributed this situation to undertaking of projects without considering the interest of the people and said from now on well-being of the people will be given highest importance at the time of taking up projects. Hasina said steps would be taken to make the proper use of Ganga water to be available on the basis of the Indo-Bangla Treaty. The government will go for having its due share of 53 other common rivers with India, she said adding the government is planning to use the current of small hilly rivers and tributaries to make small generation units. Bangabandhu adopted the "Mohamaya Project" using the current of Baramashichara, but the project was abandoned after See Page 12 Col 2

## US Cong urges donors to help Dhaka alleviate poverty

The US House of Representatives has called upon the international financial institutions including World Bank and Asian Development Bank and the international community to extend appropriate help and assistance to Bangladesh's efforts for its poverty alleviation, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday, reports BSS. While felicitating the governments of Bangladesh and India for signing the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty and Nepal for reaching an accord on the waters of Mahakali river, the US Congress offered its encouragement for the concerned governments to continue with their cooperation to raise the standard of living of the 400 million people living in Bangladesh, northern Indian and Nepal near the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers and their tributaries. See Page 12 Col 1

## Financial sector problems compounded over the years: WB tells PM

The visiting World Bank Mission made a presentation on financial sector reforms to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the International Conference Centre in the city yesterday, reports UNB. The WB team focussed on the impact of financial sector reforms and strategy for reforms in various countries of the world. It also narrated the consequences of delayed reforms in countries like Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. The team reviewed the weaknesses of the financial institutions in Bangladesh and stressed the need for taking reformative measures. It recognised that the problems were created long ago, got compounded over the years but needed to be addressed for long-term. See Page 12 Col 4



H M Ershad asking Kazi Zafar to cut short his speech during the public meeting of Jatiya Party at Manik Mia Avenue in the city yesterday. — Star photo

## BNP procession, rally today

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will demonstrate in the city today protesting the power crisis, question paper leakage and the government's alleged move to give India the transit facility and form a sub-regional grouping, reports UNB. It will also protest the repressive measures of the ruling party on its political opponents. The BNP will bring out a procession and hold a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club at 3:30 pm. Party central leaders will address the meeting. Party Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia is also expected to attend the programme.

## Foreign currency, traveller's cheques worth Tk 43 lakh seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent  
The security personnel at Zia International Airport (ZIA) seized foreign currency and traveller's cheques worth about Tk 43.35 lakh from a Dubai-bound passenger yesterday morning. During the scanning of luggage, the security men on suspicion challenged Abdul Hakim who was on his way to Dubai by a Kuwait Airways flight at about 10 am, airport sources said. See Page 12 Col 1

## Chairmen of three Education Boards appointed

By Staff Correspondent  
The government has appointed chairmen to the three Education Boards which were being run by acting chairmen for the last two months, according to an authoritative source at the Ministry of Education. The chairmen for Comilla, Jessore and Dhaka Boards were named yesterday, said the source adding these posts were See Page 12 Col 3

## JP can't be nationalist party, says Khaleda

BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said the Jatiya Party cannot be a nationalist force as it is working as "B team" of the ruling Awami League, reports UNB. "BNP is the only nationalist force... because it always stands by the people at the time of their distress," she told some newcomers in the BNP at a function at her Minto Road residence. Some leaders of the Jatiya Samik Party, Krishak Party, Jubo Sanghati, Chhatra Samaj and other parties from Natore joined the BNP at the function yesterday evening. The leaders include Natore Sugar Mills CBA leaders Abdul Jalil Panna and Shamsuddin Sarkar, Advocate Abdul Kader, S M Haidul Islam and Moklesur Rahman. Natore district BNP president Sirajul Islam Siraj chaired the function. Welcoming the newcomers to the BNP, Begum Zia said all who love the country and want to serve the people were joining the BNP, because it is the only party which can salvage the nation from the current crisis. "When the people are suffering from crisis of water, gas and electricity, the farmers are deprived of fertiliser, seeds and insecticides, and irrigation was stopped due to power crisis, the government has no headache." Criticising the government for signing the "unequal" water-sharing treaty with India, the BNP chairperson said the country was not getting its share of water according to the agreement. "Moreover, the government has signed another agreement to sell out the country in the name of providing India with transit facilities," she said. She said despite the torture and repression meted out by the government, the BNP gave time to it and did not announce any tough programme considering the suffering of people. But, taking the advantage, the government hatched a "conspiracy to sell out" the country, Begum Zia said. "So it should not be given anymore time."

## Attack on Jessore Palli Biddyt office: 10 injured

From Our Correspondent  
JESSORE, Mar 18: Twelve employees of the Jessore Palli Biddyt Samity-I (PBS-I) including two female employees were injured and properties worth about Tk one core was damaged when nearly three hundred armed men stormed into the PBS-I office and set it on fire today. According to witnesses, the angry people raided the main office building of the PBS-I, destroyed all important files, furniture and fittings and later set five to the building. Five motor vehicles, a new trolley, three motor cycles, computer machines and air coolers were damaged. They also attacked the staff quarters including the bungalow of the General Manager. All officers and employees of the PBS-I, were reportedly held hostage by them during the attack. Witnesses said, continuous looting was going on and around Jessore town is the cause of the attack on the PBS office. A case has been filed.

**বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক অভিযোগ কেন্দ্র**

- ব্যাংকের প্রতি জনগণের আস্থা বৃদ্ধি এবং সেবার মান উন্নয়নের লক্ষ্যে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের প্রধান কার্যালয়ে একটি অভিযোগ কেন্দ্র খোলা হয়েছে।
- এই কেন্দ্র ব্যাংক সম্পর্কে জনগণের কাছ থেকে পাওয়া অভিযোগ দ্রুততার সাথে তদন্ত করে দেখবে।
- অধিক গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অভিযোগ বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক সরাসরি তদন্ত করবে।
- অন্যদিকে, কম গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অভিযোগ সম্পর্কে সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যাংকের ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালকের কাছে তদন্তের জন্য পাঠানো হবে। তদন্ত রিপোর্টের ভিত্তিতে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করবে।
- ব্যাংকসমূহের সার্বিক উন্নয়নই আমাদের লক্ষ্য।

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