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The Daily Star

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A quarter trying to create panic among HSC examinees: Govt

The government has urged all concerned to remain alert against those who are trying to create panic among the HSC examinees and their guardians, reports BSS.

An official handout yesterday said, the government is observing with grave concern that a particular quarter is indulging in intrigues centring on the coming Higher Secondary Certificate examinations.

The quarter, it said, is attempting to create panic as a part of its conspiracies by printing false question papers throughout the country.

The Ministry of Education said that no question papers of the HSC examination leaked out.

The government had got some indications that an unscrupulous quarter may spread confusion by printing more questions papers, the handout said and called for resisting these anti-social elements.

Expressing grave concern, Education Minister A S H K Sadek yesterday urged all to See Page 12 Col 3

IMF team reviews monetary policy, BOP position

The seven-member International Monetary Fund team, now on a visit to Bangladesh to assess the macroeconomic situation of the country, yesterday held separate meetings with officials of the Bangladesh Bank (BB) and the Finance Ministry.

They discussed Bangladesh's balance of payment position and monetary policy, a BB official told The Daily Star.

The IMF team also met top officials of the Board of Investment, Export Promotion Bureau and the Pay Commission, official sources said.

The IMF team, headed by Margaret R Kelly will have a series of discussions with officials of the ministries of finance, commerce and industries, jute and textiles.

IMF Resident Representative Jane Bove talking to this correspondent yesterday said, "We hope the discussions will be fruitful."

According to another senior BB official, Bangladesh's foreign exchange reserves currently stood at about 1,800 million dollars, and its "depleting trend was a matter of concern."

138 associate profs promoted

The government has given promotion to 138 associate professors of the BCS (General Education) cadre, reports UNB.

Of them, 110 directly got professorship and 24 others obtained a PID handout last night.

The promoted officials have been asked to join their working place by May 11.

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VC's house ransacked: BDR deployed Shibir-police clash at RU : 20 injured

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Apr 26: At least 20 people were injured in a clash between activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) and police on the campus of Rajshahi University today. The injured persons included the OC of Boalia Police Station and two employees of the university. Of the injured, three hit by bullet, were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH).

The ICS activists badly ransacked the residences of acting Vice-Chancellor Prof. M Abdul Khaleque, two teachers and 2 offices of the University.

The clash ensued when police chased the ICS activists who were picketing in front of Agrani Bank. University branch, to resist distribution of application forms for admission test for first year Honours course.

Today was the first day of a 3-day strike called by ICS protesting the newly introduced admission system.

BDR was deployed on the campus, in addition to a huge contingent of police.

A tense situation is prevailing on the campus and examinee students were leaving the university halls.

BSS adds, According to witnesses, the violence erupted around 9 am when a group of Chhatra Shibir activists attacked the Agrani Bank branch of the Rajshahi University.

The violence which continued for about six hours spread on the whole campus, including the residence of the acting vice-chancellor, administrative building, staff quarters and teachers' residences.

According to the university authorities, the pro-strike activists disconnected the telephone lines at the residences of the Vice-Chancellor, teachers and officers. They also rendered all the 35 university buses inoperative by puncturing their tyres last night.

Witnesses said, the Shibir activists first attacked the staff of the bank and damaged the bank extensively. They also compelled bank staff to leave the premise and locked the doors of the bank.

Later, the pro-strike activists attacked the university See Page 12 Col 7

May 15 deadline to make Dhaka neat, clean

Government has initiated certain steps to ease traffic jam in the crowded Dhaka city as well as to free it from waterlogging and garbage, reports UNB.

To present the residents with a neat and clean capital city, the LGRD and Cooperatives Ministry has fixed a deadline and sought cooperation from all sections of people and relevant agencies to make the bid a success.

May 15 is the deadline set by a high-powered coordination committee meeting yesterday while urging the government and private organisations, hospitals, business establishments and house-owners to clean their respective premises.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman chaired the meeting held at the conference room of the ministry.

The meeting also called upon all to clean ponds, drains and marshy lands, to remove construction materials from the city roads and to keep the footpaths free for movement of pedestrians.

The meeting was attended, among others, by State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Syed Abul Hossain, Secretary of the Ministry A H M Abdul Hye, Chief Executive Officer of Dhaka City Corporation, Managing Director of WASA, Chief Engineer of Water Development Board, Chief Town Planner, and high officials of DMP, Titas Gas, BRTA, Traffic Police division, Environment Department and Social Welfare Department.

Several decisions were taken at the meeting for reducing traffic jam and removing waterlogging in the city. The decisions include programmes to increase public awareness about traffic rules, intensifying the construction works of underpass and box culverts, to construct more overbridges including one between Ramna Park and Suhrawardy Udyan and link roads on both sides of the railroads passing through Dhaka city.

The meeting was informed that steps would be taken so See Page 12 Col 8

PM's directive to frame new fisheries policy

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the ministry concerned to introduce a modern fisheries policy and update the existing livestock policy for rapid development of the potential sectors, reports UNB.

She asked the officials to frame new policies and place those before the Cabinet for immediate consideration.

The Prime Minister gave the directives and some important suggestions during a briefing session on the activities of the Fisheries and Livestock Ministry at the Secretariat.

"We want to undertake dynamic plans and programmes on the basis of specific policies and want to implement those for achieving desired goals; we do not want to run the country on ad-hoc basis," she told the meeting.

She said it is the duty of the ministries to implement the plans and programmes of the government.

She suggested the production of unconventional items like crabs, snails, pearls and tortoise, which have demands abroad, to increase the export earnings.

Hasina said her government is trying to solve a village-oriented development system to stop the rural migration to urban areas.

Village will be the centre of development, she said suggesting the use of fallow lands and chitling ponds for pisciculture and poultry farming.

Regretting the absence of government officials at thana stations, the Prime Minister said countrymen were not getting the service of the administration properly which hampers development.

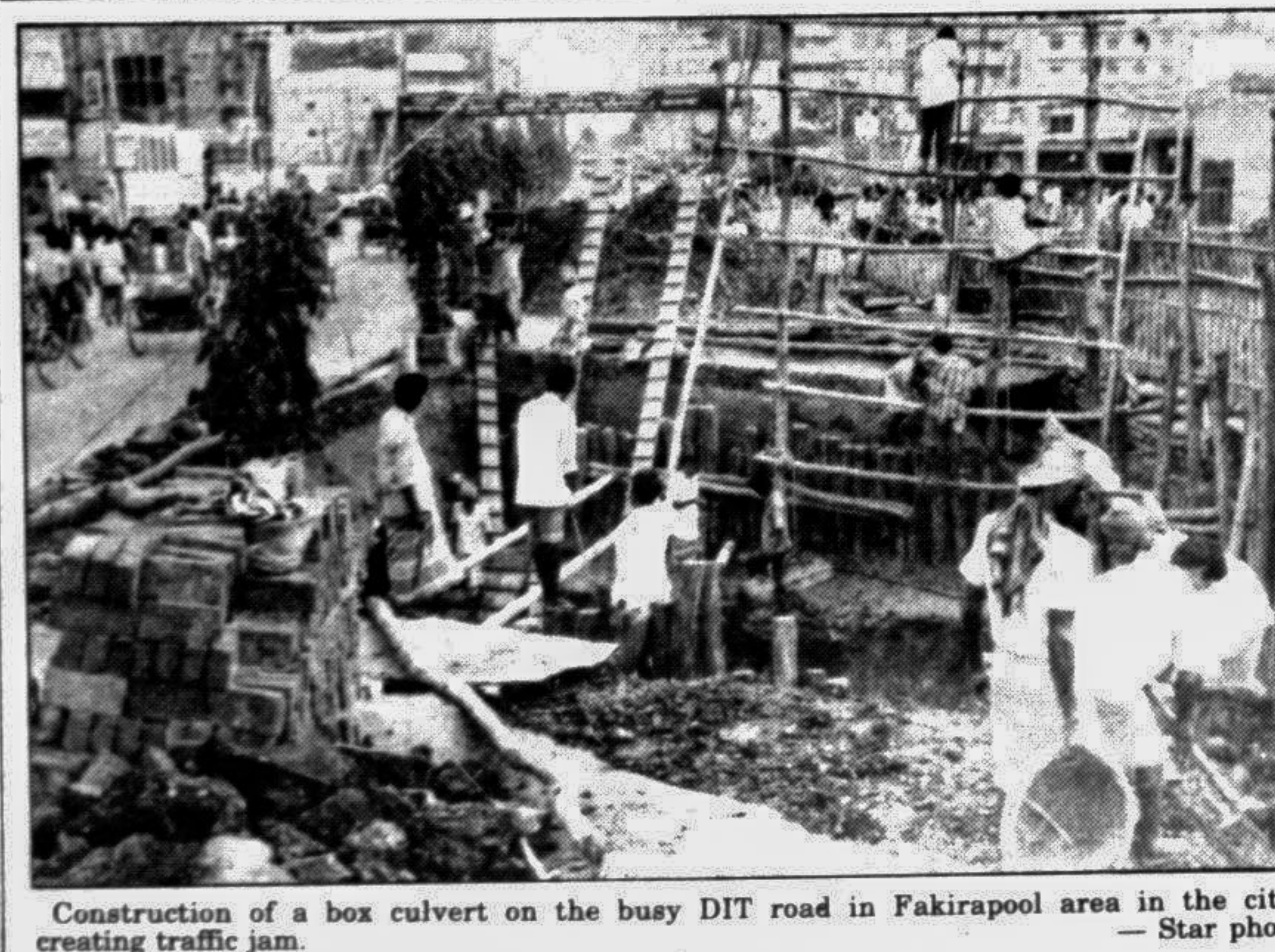
She said the government would also consider the recommendations of the ministry for removing the problems of the fisheries and livestock sectors.

The meeting was informed that scarcity of livestock feed is one of the major problems of this sector. In this regard, she suggested that cattle feeds should be produced in the country to reduce dependence on import.

The Prime Minister also directed the officials to motivate shrimp fishermen of the coastal areas to drop the fish fry of other species into the sea instead of dropping those on the sands.

Hasina also stressed the need for imparting training on hatchery and pisciculture to the unemployed youths.

The Prime Minister said the government would consider the proposal for establishing a See Page 12 Col 8



Construction of a box culvert on the busy DIT road in Fakirapool area in the city, creating traffic jam. — Star photo

Khaleda at AmCham meet We don't believe in politics of vengeance

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia has said the government has failed to attract foreign investment because of its past record of causing economic disruptions by hartal programmes while in the opposition and for messing up the economy since it has taken over the administration.

"The foreign investors were systematically rejected by them. How can the same investors have confidence in the call for investment by the same people who are now in the government?" she asked.

Addressing as a guest of honour the monthly luncheon meeting of the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham) yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad and former prime minister said that during the tenure of her government the national economy was extremely favourable for foreign direct investment (FDI), but the then opposition had disrupted the political environment.

"We have not done anything to destabilise the political and social environment, but the government has so messed up the economy, including the money market, that no genuine foreign investor has really started any investment yet," she said.

Since 1991 the BNP government had taken the initiative to attract foreign investment but the political and economic disruptions caused by the then opposition obstructed the process, she said. They had called 'hartals' on the opening day of the 'Euro-Money Conference' of foreign investors convened in Dhaka as well as on the day of inaugural work of the Jamuna Bridge Project, she recalled.

Begum Zia also referred to the 'phase of nationalisation' immediately after the Liberation War. During that "phase of socialism, all major industries were nationalised. I am still afraid of the torch bearers and sycophants of a political party. The economy of the country is bleeding till today as a result of just one bad decision," she noted.

Reiterating her party's policy of disinvestment, the former premier blamed the then opposition for obstructing the process by trade union agitations.

Begum Zia said that her party did not make any move to disrupt the normal economic process in the country and spoke against politics of vengeance.

"History has taught us that vengeance does not lead any See Page 12 Col 4



BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia speaking at a luncheon meeting of American Chamber of Commerce at a city hotel yesterday. US Ambassador in Bangladesh David N Merrill (L) and President of American Chamber of Commerce Forriste Cookson (R) are also seen. — Star photo

JP constitution empowers chairman to expel anyone

By Staff Correspondent

The constitution of Jatiya Party empowers the chairman to expel any person or cancel any committee. Nazim Rahman Manju, additional secretary general of the party said in a statement yesterday.

"If Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and Shah Moazzam Hossain express their confidence in the leadership of party chief HM Ershad then they would be restored with honour in their previous positions," the statement said.

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Kazi Zafar Ahmed and Shah Moazzam Hossain in a joint statement issued Friday, HM Ershad, of grossly undermining the party constitution by his actions and statements.

Nazim Rahman said, "Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury during his tenure as acting chairman of the JP, by the same powers given under the party constitution, had dropped Shah Moazzam Hossain from the post of secretary general and appointed Khaledur Rahman Tito in that post. Many others were made presidium members and appointed in other posts."

In his statement Nazim Rahman also appealed to Mizanur Rahman and Moazzam Hossain to "bury all misunderstandings and strengthen the party under the leadership of Ershad."

JP rebels to announce council session date in 3 days

By Staff Correspondent

The three 'rebel' leaders of Jatiya Party will announce within three days the date for convening a council session of the party, Kazi Zafar Ahmed, one of the three leaders said at a press conference at his residence in the city yesterday.

"I called this press conference only to clear the misgivings from public mind created by the allegations brought against me by party chairman H M Ershad," explained Zafar who was expelled from the party by Ershad recently.

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and Shah Moazzam Hossain, the two other 'rebel' leaders of the JP, also talked to journalists informally over tea after the press conference.

Zafar said at the press conference that all the allegations brought against him by Ershad were 'untrue'. "I challenge Ershad to prove those before any forum," he said.

Zafar said the allegations brought against him were that he desired to become secretary general of the party using the influence of Begum Roushan Ershad, 'manoeuvred' to make Roushan co-chairperson of the JP and dislodge Ershad and met BNP secretary general Mannan Bhuiyan at a house in Uttara.

Zafar refuted all the allegations and said, "Ershad had written letters to me asking me to make Begum Roushan Ershad co-chairperson of the party and also of its Parliamentary Party. He also showed to journalists some photocopies of Ershad's letters."

Denying the allegation of his meeting with Mannan Bhuiyan, Zafar said: "No such meeting ever took place. I have no desire to join the BNP and that is why I had left the cabinet of Ziaur Rahman 18 years ago."

He also claimed that the four-point demand put forward in the April 10 joint statement of the three 'rebel' leaders were based on resolutions taken at the extended meeting of the party.

The four-point demands are: resignation of JP Secretary General Anwar Hossain Manju from his cabinet post in the Awami League government, a genuinely opposition role by the party, an end to scandals centring the party chairman and democratisation of the party.

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, talking to journalists See Page 12 Col 7

Report on Human Development in SA released S Asian states should invest in people, not in arms

By Staff Correspondent

South Asian countries should compete with each other in their investment in people, not in their investment in arms, says a UNDP assisted report called Human Development in South Asia 1997, released yesterday.

The report has been prepared by noted economist and former finance minister of Pakistan, Dr Mahbub ul Haq. It was officially launched yesterday at a local hotel where Finance Minister S A M S Kibria was the chief guest.

The report focuses on widespread human deprivation in South Asia and identifies concrete steps to realise the full development potential of this region in the 21st century. It presents a blueprint for investment in the human resource of the region including Bangladesh for basic social services over the next 15 years.

"If such a plan is implemented by all SAARC nations, then they will be able to provide universal primary education, basic health care for all, safe drinking water for the entire population, adequate nutrition for malnourished children, family planning services for all, 80 per cent of the married couples and new credit institutions for the poor to create self-employment opportunities," the report says.

"Such a package of measures is expected to cost an average of \$8.6 billion a year during the next 15 years, or an additional 1.6 per cent of the combined GNP of South Asia, assuming that GNP grows by five per cent a year. While this is a significant cost, it is certainly not unrealistic. If military spending is cut, for instance, by five per cent a year in real terms, it can generate a peace dividend of around \$ 8 billion a year and can finance most of the basic social services package," it says.

The greatest asset of Bangladesh, the report says, is the vitality of its civil society and the country can make fairly rapid progress if it invests liberally in its human capital.

"Bangladesh does not face the same problems in increasing the pace of its human advancement as its neighbours, such as See Page 12 Col 1

BGM EA appoints Solarz as lobbyist in US

By Govinda Shil

The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has appointed former US Congressman Stefan Solarz as a lobbyist to represent the interest of Bangladesh ready-made garments sector in the US.

The appointment letter was issued yesterday. BGMEA president Mostafa Golam Quddus said while talking to The Daily Star. Solarz's salary will be fixed at 60,000 USD a year with an additional 1.5 per cent commission.

"We badly need a lobbyist in the US where we have been exporting for the last 20 years," Quddus said. Solarz will try to increase Bangladesh's quota of garment exports to the US to 30 per cent, Quddus said.

Bangladesh's total garment exports to US, EU and other countries amounted to more than 2.2 billion dollars in the last financial year. The projection for the current fiscal (1996-97) is 2.8 billion dollars, according to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB). Exports to the US constitute about 50 per cent. See Page 12 Col 7

BNP reception to ICC Trophy winners today

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will accord a reception to ICC Trophy winner Bangladesh cricket team today at 29 Minto Road in the city, reports UNB.

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia will be the chief guest at the reception to be held at 4 pm.

Former state minister for youth and sports and Convenor of the reception committee Sadek Hossain Khoka MP, Joint Convenor Maj (retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed and member-secretary Mosaddek Ali in a joint statement yesterday requested all to attend the function and make it a success.

BNP sources said the reception committee has invited all former and present players, coach, assistant coach, umpires, physicians, groundsman, cricket clubs and people involved in cricket.

Leaders of different political parties, professional organisations, institutions and federations, have also been invited at the reception.

AL leaders deny receiving BNP invitation

By Nazmul Ashraf

The BNP has invited State Minister for Sports Obaidul Kader, Mayor of Dhaka Mohammad Hanif and the BCCB President Saber Hossain Chowdhury, MP, to attend its reception to the members of Bangladesh Cricket team, Sadek Hossain Khoka, MP, who is heading the party's 45-member reception committee, said yesterday.

Talking to The Daily Star last night, Khoka, also a former state minister for sports, said BNP has invited leaders of all the major political parties, professional groups and all concerned in the field of cricket to See Page 12 Col 7

Dhaka ratifies chemical weapons ban treaty

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 26: The United States and China were among seven countries that deposited with the United Nations on Friday their instruments of ratification of the chemical weapons convention, reports Reuter.

The others were Bangladesh, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Togo and Zimbabwe.

This brings to 81 the number of countries that have so far ratified the treaty designed to outlaw the production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons worldwide.

The convention, which has been signed by 164 countries, enters into force on next Tuesday.

American UN envoy Bill Richardson deposited the US ratification less than 24 hours after the US Senate approved See Page 12 Col 5

4 more Manipuris interrogated

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Apr 26: Interrogation of four more Indian Manipuris have been going on.

With this, interrogation of 18 would be completed, an official source said tonight.

The rest of the 36 Manipuris who were caught by the BDR from Ballaghat border on April 20, would be interrogated soon.

All of them are now on police remand. BDR arrested them on charge of unauthorised entry into Bangladesh territory. Two Bangladeshis were also arrested with them.

BDR said, they are suspected to be linked with some outlawed groups in the Indian state of Manipur. They, however, denied this.