



JS discussion
on President's
address may
begin today

By Staff Correspondent

General discussion on the
presidential address in the
Jatiya Sangsads is likely to begin

President Shahabuddin Ahmed addressed the inaugural sitting of this year's first session on January 14.

As the Sangsads session resumed yesterday after a four-day recess, Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah moved a motion of thanks on the presidential address. The motion was seconded by another Treasury Bench Whip, Md Abdus Shahid.

Yesterday's sitting was the third of the eighth session of the Seventh Jatiya Sangsads.

Lawmakers belonging to the major opposition party BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami continued

See Page 12 Col 5

PCP member
found dead
in Rangamati

By Special Correspondent

Police recovered the body of one Ashwini Kumar Chakma, said to be an activist of the PCPSS backed Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP), a Kutubchhari under Nanchar thana of Rangamati on Sunday night, correspondents in the district said yesterday quoting police.

They said Ashwini was beaten by a group of tribemen, said to be activists of a faction of PCP led by Prasit Khisa when he went to Kutubchhari bazar on Saturday.

Tension was brewing at the bazar since the other faction

See Page 12 Col 6

438 tribunals
set up to
settle UP
polls disputes

By Staff Correspondent

The Election Commission (EC) has set up 438 election tribunals to settle the complaints, disputes and cases relating to Union Parishad (UP) elections held across the country last month.

Senior Assistant Judges and Assistant Judges of each district will settle the disputes and cases concerning UP elections in the areas under their respective jurisdiction, an EC press release said yesterday.

Additional District Magistrates, however, will look into the complaints concerning UP

See Page 12 Col 7

Young man shot
dead in city

By Staff Correspondent

A young man was gunned down by a gang of assailants at South Goran under Shahibagh thana in the city yesterday.

Police identified the dead as Kamruzzaman alias Wahed, 25. The motive behind the killing could not be known immedi-

See Page 12 Col 5

Inside Today

Article

Bureaucracy:
Why it Worked,
Why it Didn't

Column: Window on
Asia

by Shahid Latif

Page 4

Focus

Quality assurance in
higher education

Page 5

International

Constitutional debate
begins in Nepali SC .

Page 8

Business

One-stop cell of BOI
opens

6-point rise in DSE
index

Pages 6,7

Sehri, Iftar timings

20 20 5-20 5-39

21 21 5-20 5-40

22 22 5-20 5-41

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Over 25pc employees of NCBs don't work

By Inam Ahmed

More than a quarter of the employees of the country's four nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) do not work because of their links with trade unions, a task force investigation has revealed.

The Task Force on Combined Bargaining Agents (CBAs) formed last year has also found that the trade unions and CBAs of the four NCBs illegally occupy some 94,000 square feet of office space.

The union leaders in Dhaka and Chittagong use between 50

to 60 cars for their personal work everyday without any lawful authority.

The Task Force is likely to submit its findings and recommendations to the government next month. It was formed as a result of the World Bank's drive to exorcise the banks of illegal activities of trade unions.

Even in the central bank, 22 per cent of the employees do not have any work and the unions occupy 62,177 square feet of office space. There are some 600 employees linked with the CBA, of

whom 375 do not work.

Sonali Bank, the country's largest NCB, has the highest number of employees who do not have any work. Of its total workforce, 47.46 per cent or 6,881 employees do not work but take salary. Its CBA has 5,736 members.

Some 7,500 square feet of office space of the bank in Dhaka is occupied by its CBA. Besides, another 27,500 square feet are occupied by the unions in the GM office and regional offices. The trade unions have three to

five offices in the regional offices.

Rupali Bank has the next highest percentage of workforce who do not work but take salary. Of the 14,25 members of its CBA, 650 do not have to work, who constitute 25 per cent of the total number of employees. The trade unions also occupy 6,000 square feet of office space of the bank.

Janata Bank has 1,800 employees not working, who are 24 per cent of the total number of employees. Its CBA has 1,142

members and occupy 15,000 square feet of office space.

In Agrani Bank, 800 workers or 12 per cent of the total number of employees do not work. Its CBA has 1,421 members and occupy 20,000 square feet of office space.

Pubali Bank has over 200 non-working employees — over 10 per cent of the total. The CBA consisting of 700 members has about 5,000 square feet of office space under its occupation.

Uttara Bank has 90 employees who do not have anything to

do during office hours. Its CBA has 596 members and 3,500 square feet of office space at its disposal. Besides, the trade unions of the bank also occupy some office space in three regions.

Bangladesh Shilpa Bank has a 16-member CBA, occupying 6,300 square feet of office space.

Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha has the smallest CBA with only 10 members.

Besides, Bangladesh Krishibank (BKB) has a small CBA workforce — 150. But 30 per cent of its employees do not work. The CBA, though small, occupy 10,000 square feet of office space of the bank.

Gunmen stab driver, kidnap businessman in Chittagong

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 19: Unidentified gunmen has abducted a businessman from in front of his residence at Debananjipukur in the heart of the city, along with his car last night, police said.

Chapal Banik, 51, owner of a jeweller house in the city, was abducted as he returned from his shop at about 9:30 pm.

The gunmen stabbed and forced out the driver of the victim's car and took him away along with the vehicle after exploding some cocktails.

Police later recovered the car from Changdga area but the victim was yet to be rescued. Four persons were arrested in this connection.

Police said the jeweller was abducted for ransom.

Meanwhile, President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry Kamal Uddin Ahmed, in a press statement, expressed concern over abduction of businessmen and deterioration of law and order in the city. He urged the home minister to take immediate steps in this regard.

Tribute to Ziaur Rahman

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) paid tributes to the party's founder and late president Ziaur Rahman on his 62nd birth anniversary yesterday.

The party marked the day by placing wreaths at Zia's mazar in the city and holding discussions and mild mahfils in the city and other parts of the country. Party flag was hoisted atop the BNP central office at Naya Paltan in the capital. Party units across the country also observed the day in a befitting manner.

BNP chief and widow of the late president Begum Khaleda Zia along with party central leaders visited Zia's mazar in the morning, placed wreaths and offered *jatrafa*.

Leaders of BNP's front organisations, hundreds of party workers and supporters also

See Page 12 Col 4

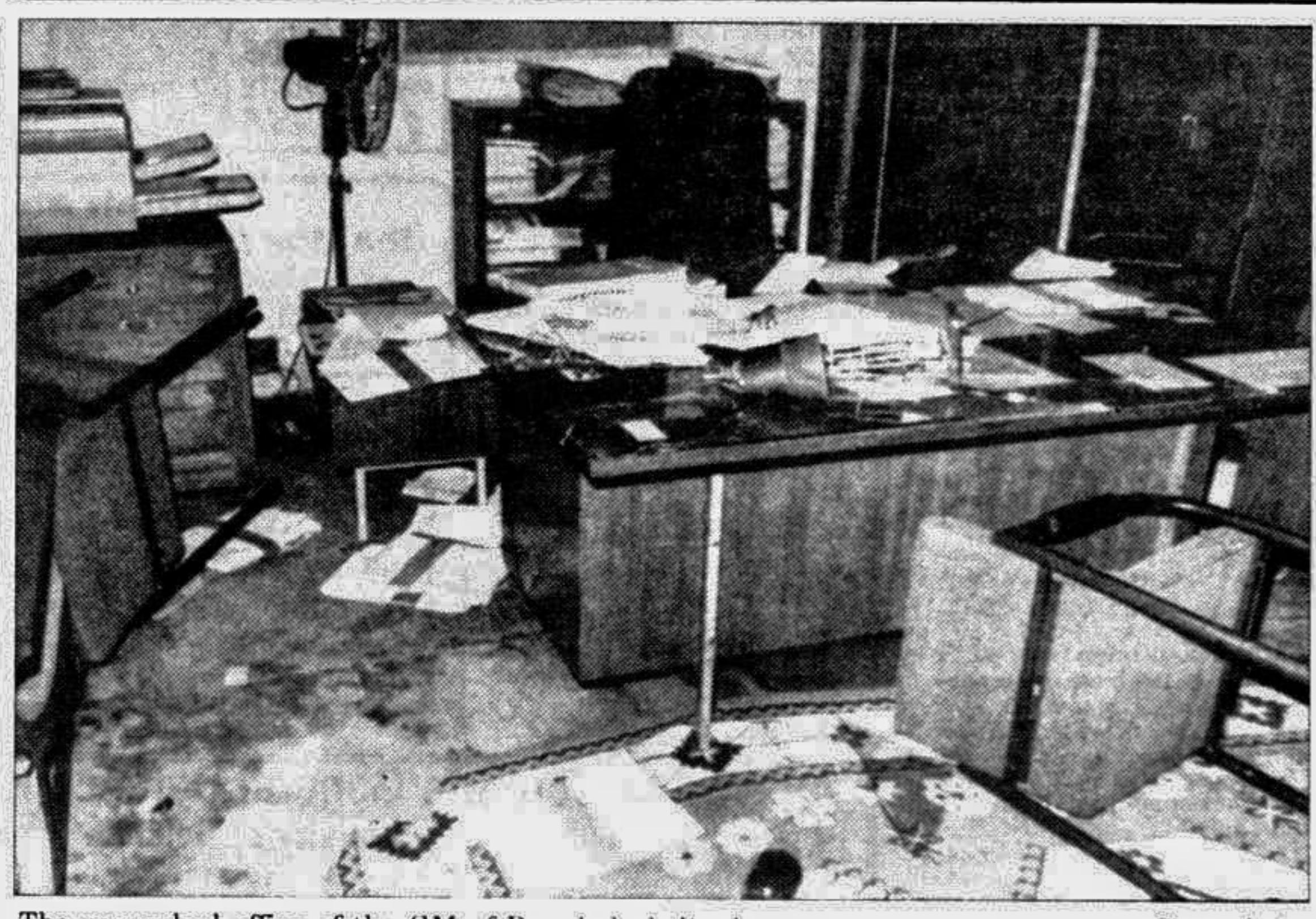
Cases filed against 200 JU students

By JU Correspondent

Savar police has filed cases against about 200 students of Jahangirnagar University (JU) for their alleged involvement in "damaging vehicles and putting up barricades on roads" during December 11-17 last year.

Officer-in-Charge of Savar thana Nabi Hossain told this correspondent yesterday that five cases have been lodged against the students.

Investigation is going on and charges are yet to be framed, he added. He however declined to disclose the name of the students.



The ransacked office of the GM of Bangladesh Bank.

—Star photo

Canada imposes restrictions on Bangladeshi fish products

By Shehab Ahmed and Govinda Shil

Canada has imposed restrictions on import of Bangladeshi fish products, following the European Union (EU), putting further strain on the beleaguered 350 million US dollar frozen food industry, exporters said.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has put Bangladeshi shipments on an "import alert list". Joining the EU and Kuwait to shun Bangladeshi fish, they said.

Yakub Sheikh, a Bangladeshi exporter, received a message on Thursday from CFIA official Rick Flory confirming the "listing of all fish products imported from Bangladesh on our import alert list".

The Canadian action will further jeopardise the jobs of thousands of people in shrimp farms and in the business. Mohammad Golam Mostafa, president of Bangladesh Frozen Food Exporters Association told The Daily Star yesterday.

Mostafa said unless the EU ban is lifted the Bangladeshi shrimp industry will face a bleak future. A Commerce Ministry official declined to make any comment. He said he was waiting reports from Ottawa and Brussels.

Since the EU inspection, the government has helped the shrimp processors with additional restrictions last year.

Trouble began when EU sent

an inspection team to Bangladesh to identify likely health hazards from Bangladeshi frozen food.

It was followed by an import ban. India and Madagascar also faced similar restrictions.

In December, EU inspectors returned to Bangladesh to examine six processing plants selected for inspection.

The ban persists despite efforts by Bangladesh to lift it. The EU Standing Committee on Veterinary Affairs was likely to take up the issue yesterday.

Mostafa said unless the EU ban is lifted the Bangladeshi shrimp industry will face a bleak future. A Commerce Ministry official declined to make any comment. He said he was waiting reports from Ottawa and Brussels.

During the January 2-10 cold wave the lowest temperature was 6.2 degrees Celsius in the Rajshahi Division. The cold wave claimed lives of around 200 people across the country.

The information indicated that conditions for handling ice in these plants were not acceptable and that fish may be subject to contamination," Flory said.

The import alert will be lifted when there is sufficient data to indicate that fish from Bangladesh will meet Canadian requirements. Any plant that has its product rejected will remain on the import alert list as a mandatory alert in accordance with the Fish Inspection Regulations, Flory noted.

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The PW-45 further said he asked CGS Brig Khaled Mosharraf to verify what had occurred at Dhanmondi 32 house of Bangabandhu. "I don't know whom he sent."

On security measures of the then Army Headquarters from where he was taken to radio station at gun point, the former chief said it can't be called well-guarded.

Shafullah said: "I also called deputy chief of Army Staff Major General Ziaur Rahman and CGS Brig Khaled Mosharraf earlier talking to Bangabandhu and they came to my residence.

"Till then, no armed guard was there (AHQ)." Shafullah said informing that his residence, "Senabhaban", was, however, well-protected.

Major Noor was an ADC of

See Page 12 Col 1

Maj Gen Shafullah tells court

The order was made through

Director, Military Intelligence (D MI) Col Salahuddin who, earlier at dawn, informed Shafullah about tanks and force movement from the camp to the town.

"Later, I made direct order to rush troops to Bangabandhu's house," Shafullah said. But he didn't elaborate as to why the force could not reach the Dhanmondi residence of Bangabandhu.