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## Air Force plane carries cargo for Biman in domestic route

By Shehab Ahmed

A transport plane of Bangladesh Air Force ferried five tonnes of cargo for the first time for the Bangladesh Biman yesterday.

An Antonov-32 plane made a sortie to Sylhet airport, carrying the baggage of transit passengers who arrived from London.

It will make similar trips to Chittagong, carrying baggage of passengers from Dubai today, Biman sources said.

The military transport plane will be flown by Air Force crew. Biman will provide the fuel. The Air Force will not charge the Biman for landing.

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## 558 candidates of 17th BCS appointed

The government has given appointment to 558 candidates in the posts of different cadres under Bangladesh Civil Service on the basis of the results of the 17th BCS examination conducted by Public Service Commission, reports UNB.

The appointment letters have already been sent to the selected candidates by mail, said an official handout.

The selected candidates have been requested to join their work places directed by the cadre controlling ministries or departments on February 22.

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## Tomorrow



In a broader sense, Eid is the biggest cultural event for Bangladeshis. It brings families together — the mass exodus from the cities to the country-side is ample proof of this. For these people, Eid is a time to be with their loved ones — husbands, wives, children and parents are reunited after months of painful separation. It is a time to celebrate. Read Star Weekend Magazine's cover story this week on Eid, *What Eid Means to Us*.

## Announcement

We are happy to announce that we have received overwhelming response to our advertisement for the posts of "Reporters & Sub-Editors". Presently we are going through the process of preliminary selection. Short-listed candidates will be informed by the end of February '98.

The Management thanks the applicants for their interest in working for The Daily Star.

**Management**  
**The Daily Star**

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Three-nation business summit

### A Right but Ambitious Step Forward

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## Major steps to prop up share prices Govt banks asked to operate in market

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi and M Shamsur Rahman

The government yesterday took several major steps to prop up share prices, raising the credit limit for brokers, asking state-owned financial institutions to be more active in the market and quickening the process of giving licences to 10 merchant banks.

Stock brokers and dealers will now get loans to the extent of 60 per cent against the average price of shares held by them. The average is calculated on the basis of prices of a particular scrip in the previous six months.

The current limit is 50 per

cent. The DSE councillors also insist on a reduction in the interest rate, now 16 per cent.

Four nationalised commercial banks (NCBs), two development financing institutions and the lone state-owned investment bank have also been "advised" to support the market revival effort "within their resources".

"The banks have been advised to operate in the market," said Banking Division Secretary Syed Amir-ul-Mulk after a high-level meeting attended by Finance Minister S A M S Kibria, Dhaka Stock Exchange

members, the SEC Chairman, the Finance Secretary and chief executives of NCBs, BSB, BSRS and ICB.

Amir-ul-Mulk said BSB and BSRS, also members of Dhaka Stock Exchange, would now be active as brokers "to create an additional demand".

"The NCBs will work out ways to channel more funds into the market," a DSE source said of the meeting's outcome.

The government is also thinking of allowing the companies to buy back if the share

See page 12 col 1

## 5 muggers beaten to death in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 21: Five alleged muggers were beaten to death by a mob this morning at Baluchhara area under Pan-chlaish thana while the others in the 12-member gang took away Tk five lakh from some businessmen at gunpoint, police said.

Four of them died on the spot while another, identified as Md Belal, a student of MES College in the city, succumbed to his injuries at a hospital.

Several thousand people gathered the armed gang which put up a barricade on Chittagong-Hathazari road at Baluchhara point at about 9:30 am to snatch money from businessmen coming to the city from Raozan and Fakirhat in a truck. The gang exploded cock-tails and opened fire while attacking the businessmen, who raised a hue and cry drawing the mob.

The mob surrounded the snatchers and beat four of them to death. Another, fatally injured, was handed over to police

and he later died in a hospital.

Before his expiry police interrogated him and collected some important clues.

Police recovered Tk 28,000 and a gun from his possession.

The others managed to escape along with the money.

Earlier this month, several hundred people foiled an alleged attempt to abduct a businessman and beat four armed kidnappers to death at Dalar-mukh area under Raozan thana.

The mob torched the auto-rickshaw in which the abductors were travelling after kidnapping brickfield owner Abu Taher at gunpoint. Police recovered one rifle, one double-barrel gun, one revolver and seven rounds of ammunition from the possession of the alleged kidnappers.

Local sources said the kidnappers were members of "Iskander Bahini", reportedly backed by a "political Godfather" having influence in the administration.

## Govt has borrowed Tk 1045.51cr by selling treasury bills: Kibria

Government has borrowed Tk 1,045.51 crore by selling treasury bills to commercial banks from July 1 to December 28 last year, reports UNB.

Arrangements are there to borrow a total of Tk 2,500 crore from the banks during the current 1997-98 fiscal year, Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria informed Parliament yesterday.

Replying to a question of Abdul Latif Mirza (AL-Sirajganj), he said Tk 559.21 crore of the borrowed money were spent to repay the accumulated liabilities of the government to Bangladesh Bank.

The remaining Tk 486.30 crore were sent for repaying the liabilities of different commercial banks against bonds and bills, he added.

On a supplementary question from Mirza, the finance minister made it clear that the government, at present, has not debt to Bangladesh Bank.

He mentioned that the government savings in the commercial banks increased by Tk 285.89 crore during the period July 1-December 28.

## Rupali Bank CBA factions clash in city: 2 hurt

Two factions of Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA) of Rupali Bank clashed in the city's Motijheel area yesterday, leaving two people injured, reports UNB.

One of the injured was identified as Humayun Kabir, a CBA worker.

Police said the clash began at about 12 noon between the two groups, one led by the CBA President Tofazzal Hossain and another by General Secretary Mohammad Hossain.

They chased each other at the bank's head office disrupting normal activities for about one hour.

Police said the CBA President and the General Secretary recently formed separate committees, excluding each other.

Both the groups filed separate cases.

## Deep resentment prevails in Bangladesh Bank

Star Report

A deep resentment is prevailing in the Bangladesh Bank (BB) following Monday's incident in which some employees tried to manhandle a high official of the Bank.

The arrest of some employees has further heightened the tension because none of them were accused in the police case filed by the BB. Instead, police took action upon another case filed by the employees who had threatened the General Manager of the Bank.

It is now widely speculated that the faction of employees who had attacked the BB official have the blessing of people in authority and because of their political connection they

are roaming free.

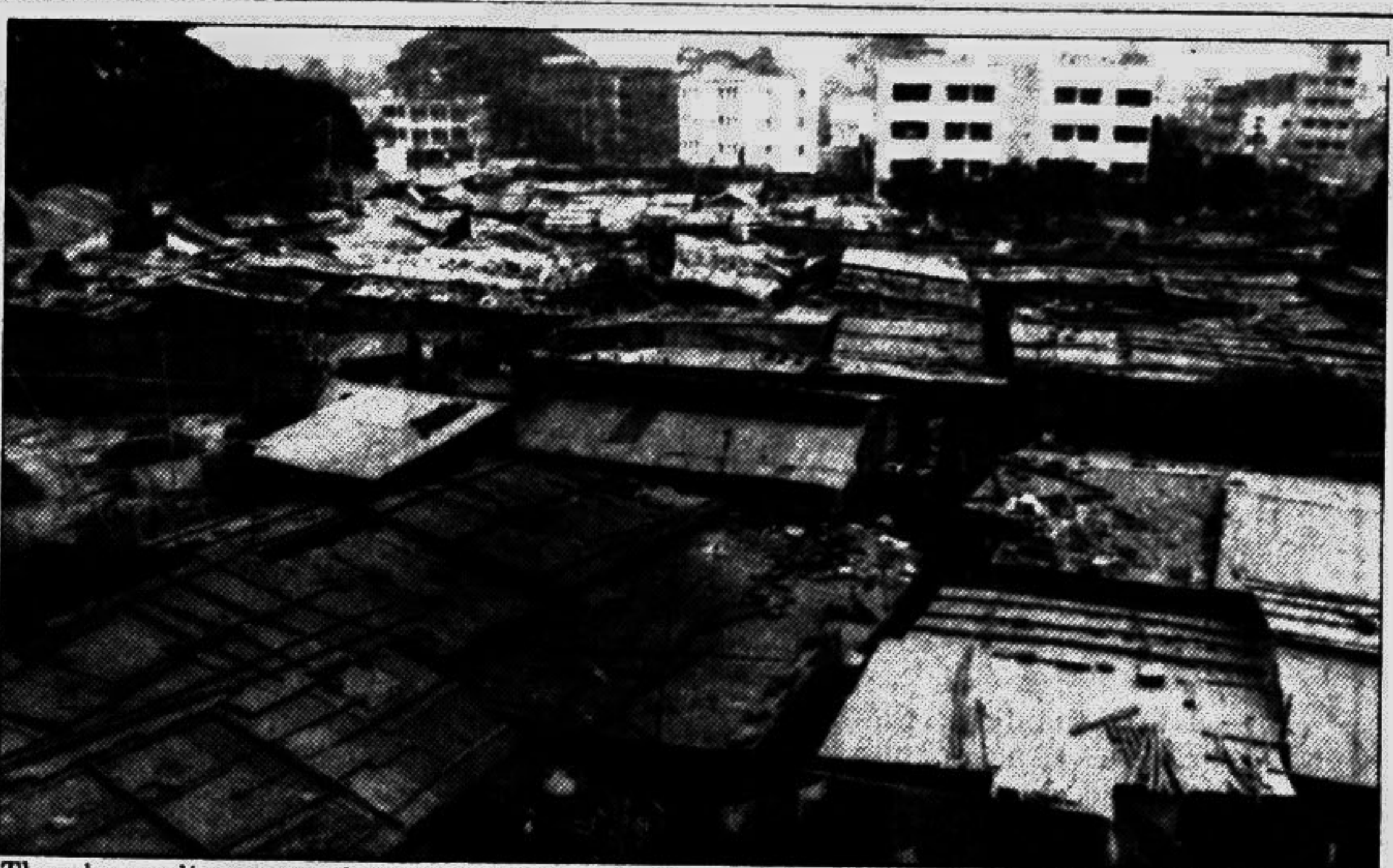
It is also now said that the Monday's violence was instigated by a section of loan defaulters against whom the BB had made investigations and found severe irregularities.

The action was directed to ward embarrassing the Governor of the BB who since taking over the office had cracked on banking irregularities.

These employees had staged rowdy demonstration inside the Bank even yesterday chanting different slogans like "Joy Bangla", disrupting normal works.

The security officer of the BB had complained to the police on

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The slum adjacent to the DMCH is reportedly used by the criminals to carry out pilferage at the hospital.

## Pilferage rampant at DMCH

By Naimul Haq

Frequent pilferage of medicines, spares of medical equipment, bed sheets, blankets, water pipes, window grills and other things is affecting normal work at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

A gang of "invaders" has been regularly committing theft without any resistance from any quarter for a pretty long time, doctors alleged.

"A group of class four and class three employees have fallen victim to the 'invaders,' a doctor said requesting anonymity.

"Some employees are in-

involved in lifting goods from the hospital. In return they get handsome gifts," he added. This correspondent talked with the director and some doctors of the hospital who made similar allegations.

A senior doctor heading one of the 38 departments of the hospital said, "valuable spares of medical equipment and even ordinary tools like stethoscopes and blood pressure machines are frequently stolen. Lifting of bed sheets, pillow covers, blankets have become rampant," he added.

"We know who are committing the organised crime but it's

too risky to identify them," another doctor said.

Asked why it is risky to identify the employees, the doctor, giving a reference to a previous incident said, "You see they have support of a gang which commit theft here regularly. They are very powerful and no one dares to identify them".

When contacted, Badrul Munir, director of the hospital acknowledged having been harassed by, what he said, "invaders". "Since my joining I have received numerous complaints of theft committed by

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Rain disrupted normal life in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

## Major violation of rules by all pvt universities detected

By Staff Correspondent

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has detected major violation of government rules and regulations and poor standard of education in the 16 private universities in the country.

It has also sought constitutional authority to supervise and monitor the standard of education and administrative and financial discipline in these universities.

A UGC evaluation report on the functioning of the private universities also mentioned slow progress in the formulation of statutes to guide such universities and suggested that the government further clarify the Private University Act, 1992, through amendment.

The evaluation report, prepared by an inspection team, formed by the Education Ministry, was contained in the UGC annual report, 1996, placed in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

The report found the following lapses in the running of the private universities:

Almost all the private uni-

versities are housed in rented houses and have failed to build infrastructures on their own land. Most of the universities have not yet deposited the reserve funds of Tk one crore with the nationalised banks as required by law, set up administration as per rule and introduced proper academic activities.

There is disparity in tuition

## Justice Amin given charge of LC chairman

Law Commission member Justice Amin-ur-Rahman has been given the administrative charge of the chairman of the commission until the appointment of a new chairman, said an official handout last night.

Earlier, chairman of the commission Justice Dr F K M A Munim was relieved of his responsibility with effect from December 31, 1997 following his resignation.

fees of the students and in the salary structures of the teachers and officials. Full-time teachers have been outnumbered by part-timers, and officials are not appointed as per rule. The private universities are not maintaining their accounts in a uniform way or through the UGC-prescribed forms. In almost all cases, libraries, laboratories and facilities for practical education are absent. Moreover, standard of education is not being maintained in all fields at some of the universities.

Under the circumstances, the UGC has recommended necessary steps to ensure that the standard of education at the private universities is similar to that in the government-run universities or those in other parts of the world. It also suggested formation of a monitoring team that will visit the private universities, at least once a year, and supervise the standard of education and financial discipline there.

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## Severe cold wave from Friday

By Staff Correspondent

The sky will remain overcast with cloud and the sun will not be visible till Friday afternoon, the Meteorological department said yesterday.

There may be less rainfall today in the country, it said.

The sky is expected to be clear by Friday afternoon, leading to a sharp fall in the night temperature. A severe cold wave will sweep Rajshahi division and Kushtia, Jessore, Chuadanga, Sakthira and Srimangal districts from Friday night. The temperature in these areas may drop to 6 degrees Celsius or below, the Met office said.

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## BNPPP for return to JS if congenial atmosphere is created

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP parliamentary party's five-day discussions on the issue of the major opposition party's boycott of parliament session ended yesterday, with a decision that it would go back to the House only after the government creates a congenial atmosphere for this.

"We're willing to return to the House. For this, there must be a favourable atmosphere which the government has not yet created," said BNP chief and Leader of the opposition Begun Khaleda Zia on conclusion of a nearly three-hour discussion in the BNPPP meeting at 10:30 pm.

Also in yesterday's meet, almost all the speakers viewed that BNP should return to the House if the government fulfills its basic demands like the party's proportionate representation in parliamentary standing committees, withdrawal of cases against MPs and other leaders of the party, more scope for the opposition lawmakers to speak in the House and rein-

See Page 12 Col 7

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