

## BNP's letter to Speaker for action against Hasibur

By Nazmul Ashraf

BNP has requested the Speaker to take necessary measures for publication of gazette notification, vacating the Jatiya Sangsad seat held by Hasibur Rahman Swapan, the newly-appointed Deputy Minister for Industries, for violating Article 70 of the Constitution.

Chief Whip of the Opposition, Khandakar Delwar Hossain made the request to Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury in a letter sent yesterday afternoon. The Daily Star obtained a copy of the one-page letter last night.

As per Article 70, the Sangsad seat of an MP will fall vacant if he resigns from or

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## NCBs enter secondary stock market

By M Shamsur Rahman

For the first time, the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) have started operating to enter in the secondary stock market as part of government strategy to prop up the ailing capital market.

The move comes after a government advice on January 22 to the four NCBs, two development financing institutions and the lone state-owned investment bank, to support the market "within their resources."

Agrani Bank has created a fund of Tk one crore to invest in the secondary market through Investment Commercial Bank (ICB) and Bangladesh Shilpa Bank (BSB).

Agrani Bank has started

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## Murder case filed against OC, ASI for death in custody

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Feb 12: A murder case has been recorded in the CMM's court, Khulna against OC Abdul Jabbar, ASI Moshabur Rahman of Rupsha thana and Moinuddin Ahmed, medical officer of Khulna District Jail.

The complainant, A Jabbar of village Moishaguni, stated in his petition that his son Harun, 30, arrested by police on February 4 from Anandagar, was severely injured in beating during interrogation by the OC and the ASI.

The court on February 6 rejected prayer for his remand

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## Uzbek FM due today

Uzbekistan's Foreign Minister Abdul Aziz Kamilov arrives in the city today on a two-day visit to Bangladesh with a mission to boost trade and economic cooperation between the two countries, reports UNB.

Kamilov will lead a four-member delegation during the visit. He will hold official talks with Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad tomorrow.

A trade agreement will be signed during the visit to expand economic relations between Dhaka and Tashkent.

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63 receive export trophies

## Earn confidence of importers : PM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has sought exporters' cooperation in expediting industrialisation of the country and broadening its export market.

The government could create a congenial environment for investment and trading but actual production and expansion of export depend on you, she told the well-performing exporters while awarding them the "National Export Trophy" yesterday at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city.

"We need swift industrialisation and expansion of trade, she said, urging the private en-

trepreneurs to use their intelligence, creativity and competence to travel along an obstructed way for the country's economic development.

The function was also addressed by Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed, Commerce Secretary Saeed Alamgir Farruk Chowdhury, Export Promotion Bureau Vice Chairman Faisal Ahmed Chowdhury and FBCCI President Yussuf Abdullah Harun.

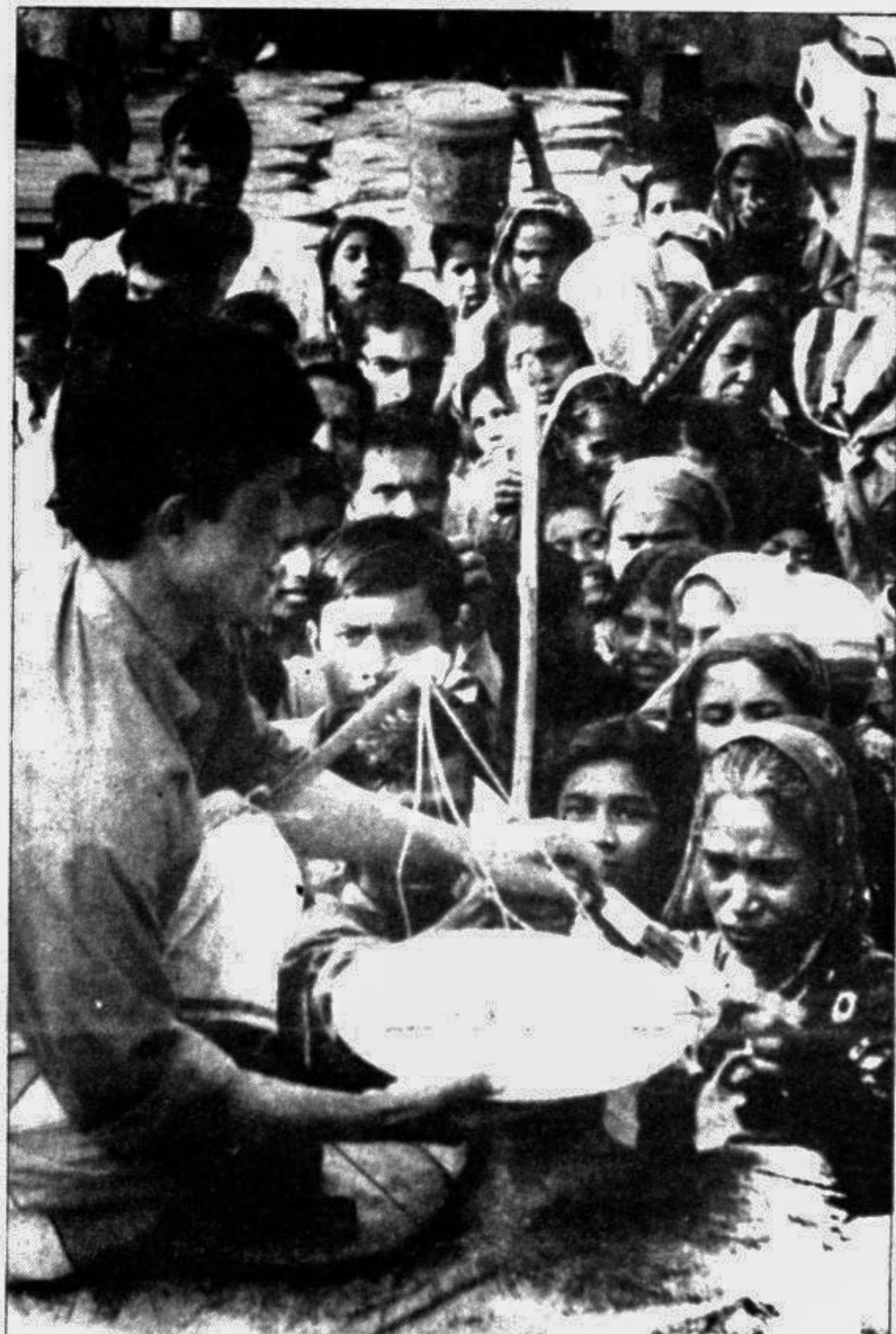
A total of 63 exporters received the trophies in recognition of their significant contribution to the country's export

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presenting National Export Trophy to an exporter at a ceremony at the Osmani Memorial Hall in the city yesterday.

— PID photo



People queuing for purchasing OMS rice at Dayaganj in the city yesterday.

## Rice prices fall further

From Inam Ahmed and Reaz Ahmad

DINAJPUR, Feb 12: Rice price marked further fall in the markets in the northern region today.

The government's offering of OMS rice at a lower price and gradual decrease in demand for rice from other parts of the country contributed to this fall, traders said.

A 50 paisa cut in OMS price from Tk 12.50 to Tk 12 came into effect today in the northern most parts of the country.

Rice sellers in different markets in Rangpur, Dinajpur and Joypurhat said that the mad rush of rice traders from Dhaka and other parts of the country is no more there. As a result, prices of rice dropped today.

As rice price is decreasing, big traders and hoarders are disposing of their stocks.

Fakhrul Islam, District Food Controller of Rangpur, told The Daily Star that some traders, who normally do not trade in rice, sensing a food shortage, hoarded rice. It is one of the reasons that prices had gone up, he said.

But falling price is now forcing them to dispose of their stocks at the earliest.

Meanwhile, more rice is being imported from across the Bangladesh-India border in the northern region. At the Bangabandhu border point, Indian trucks were unloading rice.

Sadrul Islam, Customs Inspector at Bangla-Hilli, said that on an average 2000 metric tons of rice were being imported daily.

Alina Khan, a lawyer of the See Page 12 Col 3



## Proper medication for Chetia in jail ordered

By Staff Correspondent

A magistrate's court yesterday ordered the jail authorities to ensure proper medication for Anup Chetia and asked them to allow a meeting between the detainee and his lawyer.

Chetia, secretary general of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), was arrested along with two others identified as Lakhhi Prasad Goswami and Babul Sharma from a flat in Mohammadpur in the city on December 21, 1997.

The Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) yesterday moved a petition in the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka praying for adequate treatment for Chetia and seeking permission from the court to allow a defence lawyer to meet Chetia.

He termed the ceremony of arms surrender by the Shantibahini insurgents as an arranged drama costing Tk 10 crore where the Jana Sanghati Samity through its people raised the demand for full autonomy displaying banners and placards.

He warned the government earlier that the accord will encourage the misguided tribals to demand autonomy and finally independence, said General Shawkat who was the first brigade commander in the hill tracts after Independence.

He said the security personnel were assaulted when they tried to remove the anti-state

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## Govt encouraging separatists : BNP

Main opposition BNP yesterday blamed the government for, what it said, encouraging separatist movement among various tribes in the country by signing the accord with the "terorist" Shantibahini, reports UNB.

The perspective of the accord has already encouraged Garos and other tribal groups towards separatist moves, said the party's special committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts, giving its reaction on the February 10 arms surrender by the tribal insurgents.

Addressing a press conference at the central BNP office in the evening, committee convenor Lt Gen (rtd) Mir Shawkat Ali said people of the plains are also demanding local government councils following the "anti-constitutional" CHT agreement.

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banners and placards. "But till now no government action was seen against them," he regretted.

Quoting anonymous intelligence report, the retired General gave a total picture of number of arms and ammunition used in guerrilla warfare in last 24 years by the Shantibahini insurgents and said the deposited arms were only an insignificant part of those.

According to him, the Shantibahini's arms and ammunition are SLR, 303 rifle and AK-47 rifle-2,000, Indian SMG-400, Indian and Czech LMG-200, grenade-10,000, ammunition-4,00,000, rocket launcher-12, explosive (P-3) —

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## All Shantibahini members leave transit camp

By Special Correspondent

All the 739 members of Shantibahini, who surrendered their arms on Tuesday, have gone back to their respective homes in different parts of Chittagong Hill Tracts.

District administration sources told our Kaghachhari correspondent that 257 former guerrillas headed for their homes yesterday from the Perachara transit camp.

Earlier on Wednesday, 424 See Page 12 Col 7

## Advani's desire sparks protest in Sangsad

A Treasury Bench member yesterday demanded of the government to lodge immediate protest against the Indian BJP leader's desire for reunification of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Abdul Latif Mirza (Al-Sirajgan) drew attention of the Speaker towards a newspaper report, which quoted BJP leader, Lal Krishna Advani as saying he would be happy to see the reunification of these three countries.

Mirza, on a point of order told the Jatiya Sangsad that he was strongly protesting the statement of the Indian BJP leader made at a New Delhi press conference on Friday last.

Latif Mirza referred to the historic War of Liberation led by the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1971 and said 30 lakh Bangalees had embraced martyrdom to achieve the long cherished independence for the country.

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## Mosque-based programme to disburse small loan

MYMENSINGH, Feb 12: The fund of Tk 50 crore has decided to take a massive mosque-based interest-free small loan disbursement programme for eradicating poverty in rural area, reports UNB.

A fund of Tk 50 crore has already been formed at the initial stage. The welfare programme will be launched very soon.

LGRD and Cooperative Minister Zillur Rahman disclosed this while addressing the concluding session of a grand Islamic conference at Islampur Jamia-Gafuria Madrasa ground in the district today.

Some five lakh devotees from different parts of the country attended the conference.

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## Ship carrying rice detained at Ctg Port

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 12: The ship, owned by a Bangladeshi and registered in Cyprus, which brought a large consignment of rice without having any importer in Bangladesh, has been detained at the outer anchorage of Chittagong Port.

Port sources said the detention came following a case filed in the admiralty court by the supplier of the rice carried by the ship.

The court issued order for detaining the ship, port sources added.

A Singapore based organisation Erex Ltd was the supplier of 12,000 tons of rice loaded in the ship from Kabinada port of India.

The rice carried by the ship 'MV Rafiq' was scheduled to be supplied to Russia, but the

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## Security guard killed in city garments factory fire

By Staff Correspondent

A security guard of a garments factory was burnt alive when a fire broke out in the factory building at Mogaibazar in the city early yesterday.

The victim was identified as Abdul Wahab Mollah, 60. He was allegedly trapped in the five-storey building as he could not unlock a collapsible gate.

Fire brigade officials said an electrical short circuit on the second floor reportedly sparked off the blaze that damaged four garments factories in the building.

The fire that started at around 3:45 am continued for about one hour. However, the extent of damage could not be ascertained immediately. Five fire fighting units from three stations rushed to the spot and brought the blaze under control.

The affected factories are Jesis Apparels Ltd, Western Dresses Ltd, VIP Garments Ltd and Up-to-date Fashions Ltd.

Young man stabbed to death in city

By Staff Correspondent

A young man was stabbed to death at a slum in Mirpur city yesterday evening.

Police identified the dead as Sohel, 20. The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Some local people found the blood soaked body of the young man at about 8 pm. It was lying under a bamboo structure on which several makeshift houses of Sarengbari slum were located.

Mirpur police could not trace the killers of Sohel and find out the reason behind the murder till last night.

Police were yet to confirm whether the boy was killed near the slum or was dumped there after being killed somewhere else.



Visitors at a stall in the US Trade Show that began at Sheraton Hotel in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

## Concerted efforts needed to tackle arsenic pollution