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CARE-Bangladesh yesterday accorded a reception to the 'crew' members of its Rural Maintenance Programme who contested the last Union Parishad elections. The function was held at the BISS auditorium in the city. — Star photo

Ershad's detention order declared illegal

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday declared that the detention order of former president Hossain Mohammad Ershad under the Special Powers Act is illegal, reports BSS.

The verdict was pronounced by Chief Justice ATM Afzal. The other judges were Justice Latiur Rahman, Justice Abdur Rouf and Justice Bimalendu Bikash Roy Chowdhury.

Earlier, two-thirds majority of the High Court division of the Supreme Court had declared that the detention order of Ershad is legal.

In 1991, a High Court division bench had passed split judgement wherein Justice Abdul Jalil had declared that the detention order of HM Ershad is illegal while Justice Kazi

Eight vehicles damaged near Press Club

By Staff Correspondent

A group of young men, reportedly activists of Jatityatabadi Chhatra Dal, damaged at least six motor vehicles near the National Press Club yesterday noon.

Witnesses said the group arrived in front of the Press Club in a procession at about 12 pm. They were preparing to hold a rally there. As police tried to resist them, the processionists hurled brick bats at police.

Police and the group members chased each other for about 15 minutes. Later, they damaged the vehicles while leaving the spot.

However, none was arrested or no case was lodged with police in this regard.

Muggers kill one, take away money in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 1: Alleged muggers shot dead one person and injured another and took 80,000 from their possession this morning at Sholahshahar under Panchlaish thana.

Police said the muggers opened fire on Shafiqullah, manager of a bakery, at the time of snatching the cash being taken to the bank at 11 am today for depositing.

Shafiqullah received bullet wounds and another staff of the bakery, Alamgir, accompanying him received stab injuries during the attack by the muggers.

Later, on way to hospital, Shafiqullah succumbed to his injuries.

Onion, salt prices up

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The price is fluctuating so frequently that we are afraid of having a stock," said a retailer. Consumers were also waiting for a possible price fall, he added.

Our Staff Correspondent from Chittagong adds: Onion is being sold in retail shops here between Tk 45 to Tk 50 per kg today (Sunday) which sold at between Tk 26 to Tk 30 per kg just one week ago.

Traders attributed the sudden rise in onion price to poor supply in the city markets.

Salt price

The price of salt increased suddenly in the city markets yesterday following rumours of short supply.

Two Daily Star correspondents witnessed Tk 8 increase in price of the item in 45 minutes, from Tk 12 per kg to Tk 20 per kg in the New Supermarket last night.

At 9 pm, one kilogram of iodized salt was selling at Tk 12 but it jumped to Tk 20 at 9:45 pm.

A good number of retailers rushed to Nurani Enterprise, the salt wholesaler in New Supermarket, and asked for more bags despite of normal supply.

Some 50 bags were sold in front of The Daily-Star correspondents. "Had we a stock of 1,000 bags, we could have sold them all," said Sharif Uddin, the owner of Nurani.

He said traders began to make enquiry about the supply situation early in the morning. Many placed advance orders. The normal sale of Nurani is 60 to 70 bags a day. Each bag contains 25 kg of salt and is sold at Tk 210 to 240 depending on its brand. Sharif sold 150 bags yesterday.

"I have talked to different salt producing companies in Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Narayanjanj who have assured

Once destitute

From Page 1

ected a member of Khoksha Sadar Union Parishad in Kustia, told The Daily Star that she could bear the expenses of her election campaign from earnings of a biscuit factory she owned. "My savings as an RMP crew member enabled me to set up the factory," said she.

Speaking at the reception as chief guest, Agriculture and Food Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury lauded the efforts by the NGOs and 'development partners' in poverty alleviation and women empowerment. She described the RMP crew members as 'Village Leaders'. She advised them not to fall prey to cheats while giving services for rural development and to rescue women from being victimised.

"Through your work you have successfully registered protests against *fatwabazi* (religious decrees) and I expect you to build resistance against cheats who take kickbacks in the name of issuing VGD cards and giving jobs under RMP," said Matia.

She acknowledged that in many cases UP chairmen did not provide matching funds for RMP and used to ask women working under RMP to manage the money themselves. "As a result, I came to know that, sometimes you have to borrow money even to save your jobs", the minister said.

She said that the historic step taken by Sheikh Hasina's government for direct election to three seats of woman members in each union has given the disadvantaged women a chance to change their life. "In the past, it was a general practice that relations of UP chairmen became UP members in seats reserved for women."

"I have many rewarding experiences since my arrival in Bangladesh 18 months back but, today it is really special", said Nicholas Etheridge, High Commissioner of Canada in Bangladesh.

Congratulating the newly elected women UP members, Etheridge said, within a few days' time he will go to Canada for three weeks and assured that he will project the 'success story' during his talks with the Canadian government and funding agencies there.

With LGED and Cooperatives Secretary AHM Abdul Hye in the chair, the function was also addressed by Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelley, Chairman of the Centre for Development Research, Bangladesh (CDRB), Abu Taher Khan, Project Director-RMP of LGED, Douglas Steinberg and Steve Hollingworth, Acting Country Director and Assistant Country Director respectively of CARE-Bangladesh and a number of RMP crew members.

Eight jute godowns gutted in Rajbari

From Staff Correspondent

RAJBARI, Mar 1: Ten jute godowns and an oil mill were gutted in a fire at Bahpur Bazar in Bahakandi thana of the district on Saturday night, reports UNB.

Jatra pandal

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ablaze at around 10:30 am during a 'hartal' called by an organisation named Babri Masjid Smiti Sangsad protesting the jatra show at the fair, witnesses said.

Later, the mob went to the nearby village and set five houses afire. They also went on a rampage in the village and looted valuables from some houses.

Arriving late, police fired around 25 shots to bring the situation under control. They also arrested four persons for their alleged involvement in the incident.

The three persons, seriously injured, were rushed to Maheshkhali Thana Health Complex.

Ershad

From Page 1

onion for which the party may go for movement against the government," he said.

Ershad, however, dismissed the idea of a joint movement with BNP. "We will wage movement alone, if necessary. We will not go for alliance with BNP."

DUTA brings out silent procession protesting Shaheed Minar incident

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) yesterday brought out a silent procession on the Dhaka University campus protesting the desecration of Shaheed Minar on February 21.

The procession, led by DUTA president Prof AFM Yousuf Haider and general secretary Prof Hossain Monsoor, started from Aparajevo Bangla at 11 am and ended at the Shaheed Minar.

Addressing a rally at the Shaheed Minar, Prof Haider demanded judicial probe into the incident.

PSC report

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astonishment to hear that during the last 10 years no recruitment was made to the Judicial Service through PSC.

The Chairman apprised the President about the main features of the report and said that certain measures have been proposed in it to streamline the BCS examination system.

He also apprised the President of certain problems of the Chairman and Members of the PSC as regards retirement age and other fringe benefits, and requested him to look into the matter.

DSE index declines further

By M Shamsur Rahman

The share price indicator of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) declined to a 45-month-low yesterday prompting bourse leaders to renew their call for government intervention to salvage the ailing stock market.

The DSE All Share Price Index dipped to 678.76 points yesterday beating 679.43 points on May 7, 1994 when the number of listed companies were only 154 and the market capitalisation stood at Tk 3090.95 crore.

And for the second time in 34 months, the index plunged below the 700-point mark.

DSE Chairman Md Rakibur Rahman said, the government should come forward to help reactivate the capital market.

"The insurance funds and part of government pension funds should be made available in the market," he said.

Attributing the fall in the price indicator to the 'netting system of settlement' and 'circuit breaker' imposed earlier, he said, "the SEC should immediately lift the circuit breaker and revert to the old rolling settlement system of trading."

Khaleda starts tour of three N-districts tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia will leave Dhaka tomorrow on an organisational tour of Gaibandha, Naogaon and Rajshahi.

She will address a public meeting at Banpara High School ground in Baraigram thana of Natore at 2 pm.

In the evening, she will address the 42nd annual conference of the Engineers Institution at Rajshahi.

JCD factions clash at DU

By DU Correspondent

Gunshots rocked the Dhaka University campus yesterday as two factions of Jatityatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) clashed for about an hour.

Witnesses said the clash followed trading of abusive words between the mainstream JCD and Zakir group at about 1:30 am.

Activists of the mainstream JCD, staying at Jasimuddin and Bangabandhu halls, and those of Zahir group, controlling Zia Hall, exchanged at least 60 shots, creating panic among the resident students and others.

A number of cocktails were also exploded.

None was, however, injured.

Ershad

From Page 1

onion for which the party may go for movement against the government," he said.

Ershad, however, dismissed the idea of a joint movement with BNP. "We will wage movement alone, if necessary. We will not go for alliance with BNP."

JS: Ctg airport

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The minister said that the proposed international airport would be named after M A Hannan, a former president of AL's Chittagong unit, who had announced the declaration of independence from Kalur Ghat radio station in 1971. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to lay the foundation stone this month.

He further said that the government would build a five star hotel at the Zia International Airport.

UP legislator Mohammad Golem Iqbal alleged that the government had consistently been harassing the poor peasants for failing to repay small amounts of bank loans, while it was not taking the big defaulters in the city to task.

He demanded that an effective legislation be made to punish the big defaulters, and harassment of the poor be stopped.

The others who took part in the deliberation included Abdul Latif Mirza, Ms Mahmuda Sawgat and Kazi Sekandar Ali of the ruling party.

Earlier, the House witnessed the usual one-hour question-answer session. It also sent three bills to the JS standing committees concerned for scrutiny.

Deputy Speaker Abdul Hamid, who presided over yesterday's sitting, adjourned the session at 2:05 pm for resumption at 10:00 this morning.

'Parties should reserve one-third of nominations for women in JS polls'

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a dialogue yesterday observed that the political parties in the country should reserve one-third of party candidature in parliamentary elections for women for empowerment and development of the womenfolk.

The dialogue on Legislating Electoral Reform in India For bringing Women into Parliament: Lessons for Bangladesh' was organized by the Centre For Policy Dialogue (CFD) at its conference room.

Chairperson of the Indian National Commission on Women, Mohini Giri, was the key speaker at the dialogue, chaired by Hameeda Hossain. Representatives of a number of women organisations in the country took part in the discussion.

Mohini Giri described NCW's ten years' experience in the campaign for passing a bill to reserve 33 per cent seats for women in state assemblies and in the national parliament.

Experience showed that interests of women were not served by male parliamentarians and that the womenfolk needed to be represented by women members, she said giving statistics.

She also described the obstacles the NCW faced in its campaign for placing the bill in parliament. All the political parties, when contacted earlier, had pledged to support the bill but they kept mum or spoke against the bill in the parliament, she said.

Mohini, however, hoped that the bill would be passed before the next general elections.

The participants included Prof Rehman Sobhan, Maleka Begum, Tasmina Hossain, Salma Sobhan, Farah Kabir, Rasheda K Choudhury, Suraiya Begum, Shireen Huq, Elma Fatema and Sigma Huda.

Witnesses said the clash took place at Monirampur Bazar when the supporters of Swapan, reportedly led by Helal and Nasir, attacked a BNP rally at about 11:30 am.

BNP organised the rally in support of its Tuesday's dawn-to-dusk hartal in Shahjapur thana to protest the planned visit of Swapan to Shahjapur on the day.

During the clash, the warring groups ransacked the local BNP office, a shop of the thana BNP general secretary and two shops of the thana Awami League president.

Attack on BNP rally at Sirajganj: 25 injured

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 1: A clash between the supporters of BNP and newly appointed State Minister Hasibur Rahman Swapan in Shahjapur thana today left 25 people injured, reports UNB.

Of the injured, Dr Iman Ali, 45, physician of local Shishu Hospital, BNP activist Wares, 28, and Jubo Dal activist Kalam, 25, and Jewel, 26, were admitted to the thana health complex and the Shishu Hospital.

Hajj pilgrims won't be allowed to use gas cylinder in KSA

The Hajj pilgrims will not be allowed in any circumstance to use gas cylinder for cooking food during their stay in Saudi Arabia, reports UNB.

The Saudi authorities have taken the decision to ensure safety of the pilgrims, said an official handout yesterday.

SSB meet ends without any decision

By Special Correspondent

A meeting of the Superior Selection Board (SSB) here ended without any decision on the promotion of a number of government officials yesterday.

According to sources concerned, there was no decision as some of its members could not attend the meeting.

The SSB, headed by the cabinet secretary, includes some senior officials.

The next date of the meeting will be decided today, source said.

Earlier last month, the SSB promoted 154 officials out of a list of more than 250 to fill up vacant posts of deputy secretary, joint secretary, additional secretary and Secretary.

The promotions evoked sharp protests from different cadres, which accused the SSB that it was partisan to administrative cadres only.

Reception to freedom fighters Mar 7

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will accord a national reception to the valiant freedom fighters at north plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban on March 7, reports UNB.

On the occasion, the freedom fighters who have received different gallantry awards will be given certificates and honorarium, said an official handout yesterday.

Hasina

From Page 1

of living."

She said the only objective of the present government is to "serve the people and build up a poverty and hunger-free nation."

The Prime Minister also inaugurated the construction work of Naogaon town bypass project to be completed at a cost of Tk eight crore.



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