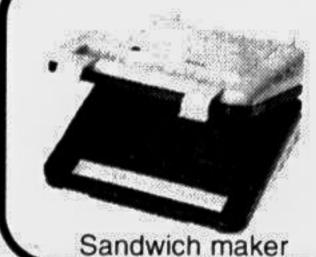
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PHILIPS

Remaining 21000 Rohingyas

Repatriation talks to resume this month

By Reaz Ahmad

or her country of origin against

triation process stalled fast

year after the return of over two

lakh Rohingyas to Myanmar.

Against this backdrop, the UN-

HCR official feared that "fund

available for catering services

to refugees is not enough for

this year." Unless the repatria-

tion process resumes soon, UN-

HCR would have to seek contri-

butions from donor countries

Commenting on a recent re-port of over 25,000 more Ro-

hingyas entering into Bang-

ladesh during the last one and a

half years, Hovel said, "there is

NBR chief

From Page 1

from vested quarters, is found

for the job, the revenue collec-

tion would remain on the wane,

the sources told The Daily Star

tion in the first half of the cur-

rent fiscal remained short of

the target, making attainment

of the annual target of Tk

enue shortfall persisted, it

might rise to Tk 1,000 crore, af-

fecting the financing of devel-

They feared that if the rev-

The steps include building

Shwadinata Stambha, Mujib-

nagar Cultural Complex,

Ekushey Bhaban, Bangabandhu

Smriti Angan, projection of the

true history of the liberation

war through academic curric-

ula, distribution of certificates

among freedom fighters and

UNB adds: The prime minis-

quota in jobs for wards of free-

ter said tax holiday for 5-7

years has been introduced for

foreign investors outside export

processing zones and up to 10

plant will enjoy tax holiday for

15 years, she said responding to

a question from Nurul Islam

Nahid of Awami League. No im-

port duty is needed for import-

ing machinery for export-based

mum 75 thousand US dollars

will be given permission to

stay permanently in Bangla-

desh while those investing

minimum five lakh US dollars

will be given citizenship, she

Foreigners investing mini-

industries, she added.

The investors in the power

years for those in the EPZs.

dom fighters.

15,000 crore an uphill task.

They said revenue collec-

vesterday.

PM's question-hour

no reliable data in our hand.

once again, he added.

Beginning in 1992, the repa-

UNHCR Representative in Bangladesh W Van Hovell has expressed the hope that talks would reopen later this month on resumption of repatriation of the remaining 21,000 Rohingya refugees to Myanmar.

Talking to The Daily Star Monday, Hovell said, "we hope resumption of repatriation completely on voluntary basis following an expected talks between the governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar during the visit of the latter's Foreign Minister at the end of March.

The repatriation process stalled in July last year following violent protests by a section of refugees unwilling to go back home and later a deadline set by Myanmar for taking her nationals back expired in mid-August 1997.

Sensing an immediate resumption of the process, some militant Rohingyas living in Kutupalong camp, one of the two refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, began anti-repatriation demonstrations since Thursday

Hovel, however, made it a point that as far as UNHCR is concerned repatriation, no matter when it resumes, must be carried out on voluntary basis and none could be sent back from host country to his

From Page 1

of various initiatives taken to

attract foreign investment in

the country. These include tax-

holiday, exemption of import

duty and double-taxation and

like installation of a 'Welcome

Centre' at the airport and 'one-

ment to remove obstacles to

industrial production and ex-

port have increased and av-

enues of new employment

opened up as a result of these

tion, the Prime Minister said,

the Cabinet has approved set-

ting up an 'Employment Bank'

in private sector and budgetary

allocation for this will be grad-

ually enhanced to Tk 300 crore

Answering another ques-tion, Sheikh Hasina detailed

various steps taken by her gov-

ernment to preserve the memo-

ries of the Liberation War.

Responding to another ques-

Hasina told the House that

stop-Cell' by Board of Invest-

foreign investment.

initiatives.

from Tk 50 crore.

She referred to various steps

provision for profit transfer.

Hasibur visits Shahzadpur amid hartal

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 3: Escorted by a heavy contingent of police. Deputy Minister for Commerce and Industries Hasibur Rahman Swapan came to his Shahzadpur constituency today where BNP observed a dawn-todusk hartal, reports UNB.

BNP called the hartal to protest the presence of Hasibur Rahman who has joined the Awami League government last month. Hasib was elected to parliament on BNP ticket.

The hartal in Shahzadpur thana town was observed peacefully. Shops remained closed and vehicles were off the roads. Some rickshaws, however, were seen on the roads.

The deputy minister drove to Baghabari Ghat at about noon from where he was escorted to Shahzadpur by a heavy contingent of police and his supporters, said witnesses.

Briefly addressing a meeting at 5 pm at Shahzadpur govt college ground. Hasib said he joined the government to ensure development of the area. He assured his supporters that the terrorists, irrespective of their party affiliation, will be punished.

City AL extended meet today

An emergency extended meeting of the Dhaka city Awami League will be held at its office at 6 pm today, reports

Khaleda

From Page 1 Hill Tracts to the tribal insur-

She called upon people to join the movement for realising their demands and to free the nation from the grave situa-

Begum Zia also addressed a number of roadside meetings at Kashinathpur, Ataikhola, Potia, Baneshwar and Bireldar Mazar before she reached Raishahi in the evening

While passing through the bank of the Ganges, Begum Zia enquired from the people if they are getting water after signing the treaty by this government They replied in the negative.

She will stay overnight in Rajshahi after addressing the 42nd anniversary of the local Institute of Engineers.

She will address a public meeting at 3 pm at Gaibandha Islamia High School ground on the second day of her four-day tour. She will also exchange views with the party's district leaders and workers and its front organisations.

BNP to join JS

From Page 1 2 for selection of any of the two city streets - Manik Mia Avenue and Panthapath - for holding public rallies.

Ruling party sources said that the government was considering Manik Mia Avenue for rallies.

Dhaka City Mayor Mohammad Hanif will be consulted for this, they said.

The BNP Parliamentary Party is likely to meet before March 8 to discuss issues to be raised in the House.

The JS session is expected to be a stormy one as the main opposition party is likely to castigate the government on various socio-economic and political issue. "We'll raise pressing is-sues like price-hike of essentials, power crisis, economic stagnation and law and order situation", Mannan Bhuiyan

Asked if the party lawmakers would meet before going back to the House, he said party chief Begum Khaleda Zia will decide on the matter on her return to the capital from the northern districts on March 6.

Dhaka, Tehran From Page 1

The signing ceremony was held at the JEC concluding ses-

sion in the afternoon. As per the MOU, Iran will provide Bangladesh the transit facilities for exporting goods through Iran to the third country, particularly the CIS ones.

Other areas of economic cooperation include setting up of a tea industry in Bangladesh. avoidance of double taxation and investment protection.

Bangladesh and Iran agreed to expand bilateral cooperation in agriculture, fisheries and livestock, technical and cultural sectors. The two countries also

agreed to sign the bilateral shipping agreement, which has already been finalised, on a mutually agreed date and venue.

The signing ceremony was followed by a joint press conterence. Addressing the conference,

Kibria said the third JEC ses-

sion was completed successfully. "The session was very intensive and both the sides have done a very good job. Kibria said the outcome of the session will further bolster the trade relations between the

two countries and strengthen the future cooperation. The Iranian Minister invited a Bangladesh delegation to visit Iran after six months to review the progress of the deci-

sions taken in the third JEC session. The next session of the Bangladesh-Iran Joint Economic Commission (JEC) will be held in Tehran.

"From now on", said the BNP leader, "We'll agitate against the government in and outside the parliament."

To another question, he said, his party did not own Dr Alauddin and Hasibur Rahman Swapan, the two BNP lawmakers who recently joined the government and were expelled from the party.

The AL-BNP agreement provides that BNP's 113 MPs would be inducted the parliamentary standing committees. "It means we'll be given 113 seats in the parliamentary bodies, Mannan Bhuiyan said.

Indian polls

From Page 1 and Maharashtra where Congress swept an overwhelming majority of the seats. In Bihar, the initial surge of BJP and its ally Samata Party led by George Fernandes was stopped by Rashtriya Janata Dal of Laloo Prasad Yadav and the two sides went neck and neck with 23 and 26 seats respectively.

In West Bengal, Congress took a severe beating managing only one seat through veteran leader A B A Ghani Khan Choudhury in Malda. The Congress debacle in the state prompted its state unit president Somen Mitra to resign The ruling Left Front predictably was way ahead with 32 seats while Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress captured seven seats

In Assam, Chief Minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta's party was routed having failed to win a single of the 14 seats in the state. The Congress gained lion's share of the seats while BJP opened its account in the

DU hall

From Page 1

front of Opposition BNP. Meanwhile, JCD brought out a procession on the campus and held a rally in front of the Registrar's Building yesterday.

Speakers at the rally demanded withdrawal of the case filed by the Registrar of the university against some JCD leaders for alleged desecration of the Shaheed Minar.

Shantibahini

From Page 1 alias Shantu Larma, Chairman of the PCJSS, is expected to leave his hideout at Dudukchhara and move to Khagrachhari town, where a government villa has been readied as his resi-

The government will provide tight security for the PCJSS

He is also expected to announce shortly his future plans and role of PCJSS, likely to emerge as a regional political party, the sources said.

6 pick-pockets held at DITF By Staff Correspondent

Detective police arrested six persons including three women on charges of pick-pocketing at the International Trade Fair grounds in the city Monday. Police said last night that

the arrested were Maloti Begum, 30, Jamila Khatun 28, Akhlima Begum, 18, Milon 22, Alam 20, and Arun 20.

Ershad

From Page 1 Manju, however, did not make any comment as to whether he was making his own group in

the JP parliamentary party.
When asked if he had any regrets of being removed from the party post, Manju, said, "Let's see who regrets"

It is learnt that Naziur Rahman held an exclusive meeting with Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury last evening. The outcome of the meeting, however, was

not immediately known. UNB adds: Jatiya Party has called two meetings, one of its secretaries and another of the district organisers, in the sec-

ond week of the current month. The meeting of the party secretaries will be held on March 13 at the premises of Asiatic Printers while that of the district organisers will be held at the same venue the following

Party Chairman H M Ershad will attend the meetings, said a press release yesterday.

Envoy to Canada From Page 1

Hossain, who voluntarily opted out. Later, A M Anisuzzaman, a retired CSP officer, was nominated but resistance from other retired civil servants who also vied for the position forced the government to reconsider the decision, the sources said.

The government is likely to appoint A M Anisuzzaman as an adviser on Food and Agriculture to the Prime Minister. The position will hold the rank and status of a Cabinet minister. Anisuzzaman served as an Adviser on Agriculture and Land

ernment headed by Justice Shahbuddin Ahmed. Aminul Islam previously served as ambassador to Libya and Bhutan.

Reforms in the caretaker gov-

Meanwhile, the Superior Selection Board (SSB) has recommended the promotion of Kazi Anwar Masud, ambassador to Germany, to the rank of Secretary. It has also recommended Dr Toufiq Ali, former ambassador to Netherlands, and Mahbubul Alam, ambassador to Turkey, for promotion to the rank of Additional Foreign Secretary, the sources said.

Body to make preparations for D-8 summit

A committee has been formed with Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad as its head to make preparations for holding D-8 Summit scheduled to be held in Dhaka by the end of this year, reports BSS.

The committee was formed at a meeting with the foreign minister in the chair at the Foreign Ministry yesterday.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Foreign Secretary Mustafizur Rahman and senior officers of the ministry were present in the

meeting. Allowances for disabled FFs enhanced

The 59th meeting of the board of trustees of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust was held at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday with Trustee Chairman Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair, reports BSS.

Noujan Sramik Fed threatens strike

Bangladesh Noujan Sramik Federation yesterday threatened to stop movement of all river vessels if its arrested leader M Shah Alam is not released within 24 hours, reports

Stabbed to death

From Page 1

(60) of Bhairab, who was injured in a clash over a land dispute on Monday, succumbed to his injuries yesterday.

In another incident, Fatema (35), wife of Chan Mia of Babupara staff quarters was admit-ted to the hospital in a critical condition yesterday. She was allegedly beaten up by her husband. Her maid-servant brought her to the DMCH.

Besides, Abdul Quader, 22, a resident of Dhaka University Zahurul Haq Hall, suffered injuries in his head when a group of angry spectators threw brickbat at the National Stadium during a cricket match between Abahani and Brothers Union.

He was admitted to the DMCH in an unconscious state.

Religious conversion From Page 1

ended for the greater national interest," said the Home Ministry letter.

Although the letter did not refer to any source of information for holding the voluntary organisations/churches responsible for religious conversion, a ministry official said they made such appraisal on the basis of various agency re-

The letter added that there was, in fact, no established law in Bangladesh to control religious conversion. However, referring to a magazine, it mentioned that steps were being taken in a neighbouring country with regard to such law.

Giving various data on the Christian population in Bangladesh since 1838, the letter said the current rate of population growth of the community was three times that of the previous years. According to the letter. Christian population was 704 in 1838, 20,000 in 1972 and 3,34,365 in 1991.

The letter added, "It is not being possible to control the activities opposed to the interests of the state, society, religion and morality with the existing laws in conformity with the expansion of activities of the NGOs and the missionaries. Specially, there is no clause about the do's and don'ts of the religious voluntary organisations or the missionary churches. On top of all, there is no code of conduct for NGOs through

which their religious activities could be controlled legally."

The Home Ministry letter also put five recommendations for consideration in the formu-

lation of a law to control reli-

gious conversion. The recommendations are: NGOs must give an undertaking that religious conversion is not on their agenda.

They should not do anything to hurt the sentiments of other religious communities. Christian missionaries

should abide by the national policy of propagating the concept of two children and adoption of family planning. They should not use their

premises or involve in any political activities during election campaign. They should also not harass

other religious communities in the regions where they are a majority. Meanwhile, a senior official

of the NGO Affairs Bureau said they were preparing a set of suggestions on the basis of the Home Ministry letter and it would be sent to the Prime Minister's Office soon.

Bangabandhu

From Page 1

Scheduled night parade on that day which was favourable for them to organise the troops and move them. 2) It was rainy season, a tough time for possible counter action by the Indian

Army. See Page 2

