

## Gandhi Ashram under threat from land grabbers

From Masud Hasan Khan

NOAKHALI: Nov 19: The Gandhi Ashram, a charitable organisation initiated in 1947 at Joyaj in Begunjan during a visit by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, is now being encroached upon. Ashram officials said.

They alleged that a section of local influential people was trying to grab the land of the Ashram, dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi during his Shanti Yatra (peace march) in Noakhali following the 1946 communal riot.

Gandhi Ashram operates several human development projects including education, health and economic development and runs the Devendra Madan Mohan Junior High School.

Besides, there is a museum where some personal belongings of Mahatma Gandhi and his ashes have been put on display.

Talking to The Daily Star, Jharnadhara Chowdhury, secretary of the Gandhi Ashram

Trust, said that some officials of the neighbouring bazaar committee were trying to encroach upon the Ashram land by raising an unauthorised structure.

She alleged that the bazaar committee had refused an earlier instruction by the Deputy Commissioner of Noakhali district not to raise any structure on the land.

Chowdhury said that since its establishment in March 1949, the 2000-acre Gandhi Ashram had been reduced to only 24 acres because of the policy of the then East Pakistan government, mismanagement and encroachment by the local people.

However, an official of the bazaar committee Abul Kalam Azad denied the allegation of having raised any structure on the Ashram land.

Rather, some land of the market had been eroded by a large pond of the Ashram, that stands beside the bazaar, he pointed out.

The management commit-

tee of the market wanted to get back the lost land, Azad added.

Gandhi arrived at Joyaj in Noakhali from Laxmipur as part of the peace march across the riot-torn Noakhali district.

He arrived by steamer at Chandpur on November 7, 1946, and started his march to appease the fighting Muslims and Hindus.

Gandhiji trekked through all the unions and thanas including Laxmipur, Choumohani and Laksham.

Mahatma spent the night of January 29, 1947 at the residence of Barrister Hemanta Ghosh at Joyaj. The following day, Barrister Ghosh announced that he would donate his property to a charitable fund to honour Gandhi's ideals.

During his stay, Gandhi himself inaugurated a school for the underprivileged children of the locality. And the charity establishment became known as Gandhi Ashram.



Prime Minister and Defence Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing senior officers and heads of departments during her visit to the Ministry of Defence at the Old High Court Building yesterday. Story on Page 1

### Former JP MP held along with 'prostitute'

By Staff Correspondent

A former Jatiya Party MP, Khayeruzzaman, was arrested along with a woman from Sangsad Bhaban area Wednesday, according to police.

Both the former MP and the woman named Ayesha who was described by police as a prostitute, were detained in the Tejgaon Police Station and they might be produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court today (Friday), said police.

Tejgaon police said that Khayeruzzaman and Ayesha were arrested at around 11 am yesterday while they were passing by the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban in a car.

### AJM workers demand Rehan's release by Nov 21

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Nov 19: The pro-Awami League workers of Adamjee Jute Mills (AJM) today threatened to court arrest en masse if their leader Rehanuddin Rehan was not freed by November 21.

The warning was sounded at a joint meeting of the AL-backed Adamjee Paltan Srani Karmochari Union (the Collective Bargaining Agent of the mills) and the Jatiya Party-supported AJM Srani Union in the compound of the mills this morning.

The AL-backed CBA president of the AJM, Rehan was arrested Tuesday from his Maghbazar residence in the capital in connection with five cases, filed against him during the Ershad regime.

Production in the mills remained suspended for an hour from 10.30 pm due to holding of the meeting.

CBA vice-president and AL leader Abdul Rahim presided over the meeting which was also addressed by Siddiq Sardar of JP, Mojibur Rahman and Delwar Hossain.

Meanwhile, the Narayanganj district unit of AL also held a rally in the town demanding release of Rehan.

### Three accused

From Page 1 Col 8

While police after nabbing the three accused were looking for their other accomplices, a group of armed men attacked the police van exploding crackers and firing gunshots and took away the three arrested persons at around noon, said the source.

Witnesses said that during the incident over 20 bomb blasts and four gunshots were heard.

Tejgaon police said that Fazlu was snatched from the custody of a police team led by Sub-Inspector Abul Kalam and a case was registered with them in this connection.

Police said last night, the three accused were still absconding.

### Clinton talks with Bush in White House

WASHINGTON, Nov 19: President-elect Bill Clinton paid his first post-election visit to the White House yesterday and the man he defeated, President George Bush, mustered a smile of welcome, reports Reuter.

The Arkansas Governor emerged from his black limousine to a hand-shake from Bush on the south lawn walkway leading to the Oval office, and Bush, smiling, escorted him to the porch overlooking the Rose Garden.

Once there, the two men did not take reporters' questions as photographers snapped away.

"We just decided there'll be no questions here," Bush said. "He's (Clinton) going to be available to the press, I am sure, before he leaves Washington. So we didn't want to get into a full-scale press conference."

Then they went inside the Oval office for about an hour of talks while Clinton transition chiefs Vernon Jordan and Warren Christopher met with Bush transition aid Andrew Card.

### JP observes hartal in Rangpur

RANGPUR, Nov 19: A half-day hartal called by Jatiya Party to protest filing of "false" cases against its activists was observed here today, reports UNB.

It alleged that a "false" case had been filed against the party members, including the district secretary, under the Anti-terrorism Act.

## Seven killed in road accidents

By Staff Correspondent

Seven persons were killed and 16 others injured in three separate road accidents in Bogra, Rangpur and Kushtia on Thursday, reports UNB.

At least 3 persons were killed and 6 injured in two separate road accidents in Bogra yesterday.

Bishu (30) and Mustakim (35) died on the spot when a Jessore-bound minibus from Rangpur fell into a roadside ditch near Mokantola on Bogra-Dhaka highway as the driver lost control on steering, witnesses and police said.

Of the injured, Amarendra was lying in critical condition in Mohammad Ali Hospital while his wife Shikha and son Sumon were also admitted into the hospital.

In another accident, a six-year old boy fell from a loaded push cart and went under its wheel.

Three passengers were killed when they fell from the roof of a running minibus in Rangpur on Rangpur-Dinajpur highway near Taraganj Post Office Thursday, police said.

One of the victims was identified as Azizul Islam (30)

while the identity of others were not known immediately.

The passengers were travelling on the roof of Dinajpur-bound minibus (Rangpur Ja: 4435) and met the tragic end of their lives when the vehicle dashed with a roadside tree, police added.

Local people held the driver and the minibus soon after the accident and handed over to police.

A case has been filed with the local police.

A man was killed and ten others were injured yesterday when a truck laden with jute lost control and rammed onto a roadside shop in Kushtia.

Police and witnesses said the Khulna-bound truck coming from Pabna met with the accident at Trimohoni, three miles from Kushtia town. It occurred at about 5 pm.

The dead man was identified as Astruddin. Among those injured, four people were admitted into hospital with critical wounds while others were discharged after first aid.

Police said they had detained the driver and seized the killer truck.

### Power transfer formula

From Page 1 Col 7

ment the present government's development programmes.

Begum Zia said the PR men had a great responsibility now to build a bridge between the government and the people.

She sought their cooperation in creating public opinion on important national issues by disseminating correct information.

A message from the President of International Public Relations Association, Jim Pritchett, was also read out in the inaugural session.

Nazmul Huda said the BSEHR had spelt out constitutional means in its formula as to how Ershad would go and transfer power to the then Acting Chief Justice Badrul Haider Choudhury.

He said the formula had also identified the necessary constitutional provision under which an impartial election commission would be formed on the basis of national consensus to hold a free and fair election after dissolving the then parliament.

That formula ultimately found reflection in the declaration of the three alliances two years back on November 19, 1990, the Information Minister said.

The Information Minister said the PR men could convey these truths in the greater interest of the nation through their writings and dissemination of correct information.

### 2 cultural programmes

From Page 1 Col 8

Shahadat Hosain Khan will play the sitar and the sarod respectively. Alauddin Ali will act as the music director.

The song that the late General Ziaur Rahman was so fond of is likely to mark the beginning of the Bangabhaban ceremony: Pratham Bangladesh Amar Shesh Bangladesh.

At the Osmany Hall programme, Abida Sultana and Baby Naznin will lead a team of 30 singers for the Nazrul Geeti chorus: Mora Jhanjar Moto Uddam... The Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts will present the famous dance drama by Jasmuddin, *Nakshi Kanthar Math*.

Taka five lakh has been approved for the Bangabhaban occasion while the Osmany Hall programme will cost Taka 3.60 lakh.

## The Midnight File

### Egypt warns Arabs not to pull out of ME talks

CAIRO, Nov 19: Egypt, trying to keep the Middle East peace process alive, warned Arabs today not to pull out of the talks and said negotiations were the only way forward. "Our withdrawal from negotiations (would be) a sign of lack of self-control and I don't think any of our brothers in the Arab states is thinking of withdrawal. In fact they are determined to negotiate before world public opinion," President Hosni Mubarak told reporters as he left on a trip to France, reports Reuter.

### Richard Riley Jr held

GREENVILLE (South Carolina), Nov 19: The 33-year-old son of former South Carolina governor Dick Riley, the man President-elect Bill Clinton chose to oversee the hiring of top level members of his administration, has been arrested on drug charges, authorities said. Richard Riley Jr. was taken into custody here Wednesday along with 17 other people, charged and released on a surety bond, the federal bureau of investigation said in a statement. Riley was charged with conspiracy to unlawfully possess with the intent to distribute Cocaine and Marijuana, the statement added, reports AFP.

### Lanka's slain navy chief cremated

COLOMBO, Nov 19: Sri Lanka's slain navy chief Clancey Fernando was cremated here today according to Buddhist funeral rites amid tight security by hundreds of heavily armed troops and police, witnesses said. Saffron-robed Buddhist monks chanted stanzas to invoke blessings on Fernando who was assassinated by a suspected Tamil Tiger suicide bomber who rammed his explosive-laden motorcycle into the commander's car here Monday, reports AFP.

## Sea level rise

From Page 1 Col 7

Admiral (Retd) M H Khan and its chairman Professor Dipak Kanti Das.

The task team report warned that even a modest sea level rise would submerge the low-lying coastal areas in the region, threaten storm barriers and salinate reservoirs and water treatment plants in estuaries.

At the UNCED conference at Rio this year, the report noted, it was pointed out that a one metre rise in the sea level would displace more than 10 million people in Bangladesh

submerging 10 to 17 per cent of the country's landmass.

The action plan for Bangladesh also urged to take necessary steps to develop a national data base system immediately and suggested maintaining close liaison with IOC and UNEP and initiate regulations and methods of implementing results of the findings.

The task team report observed that in Bangladesh, several dams and embankments had been constructed along rivers that may cause decrease in sedimentation.

The natural sedimentation can play an important role in minimising the effect of a rise in the sea level, the report noted.

The report emphasised the need for regional cooperation to study the impact of global warming and to take precautionary measures against consequential effects.

It also stressed the need for giving priority to socio-economic development in the countries of the region.

### Food aid

From Page 1 Col 7

would also bring about savings in the absence of the existing huge handling costs, wastage and pilferage.

A recent World Bank report also recommended for increase monetization of food aid.

"More food aid should be monetized to provide more efficient, cash-based income transfer, redress the imbalance between food and financial resources and reduce the operational costs of handling foodgrains," the bank report said.

However, the report went on to note that acceptance by donors on increased monetization of food aid would depend on improved financial accountability of the resources.

"Donor acceptance of increased monetization of food aid will depend critically on the government's commitment to a reliable and transparent mechanism for monetization and transfer of counterpart funds as well as to improved financial accountability for food resources," the WB report added.

The bank was also critical about the quality of the projects implemented under the Food for Work Programme.

The report noted that the rural roads and culverts constructed under the programme were "poorly constructed, inadequately maintained roads of little or no economic value" and does not take into account the negative environmental effects.

The bank went on to recommend that "in the long run all Food for Work Programmes should be diversified."

According to the ministry source, presently only a small quantity of the total food aid reaching the country is monetized.

The total amount of food aid received during 1991-92 was about 14.13 lakh tons including 39,300 tons of rice and 13,74,000 tons of wheat.

The largest donors during that period were the United States with 5.3 lakh tons of wheat, WFP with 4.02 lakh tons, Canada with 1.26 lakh tons and the European Community with 1.25 lakh tons.

Food aid commitment for 1992-93 stands at about 10.85 lakh tons. Both the United States and WFP have cut down on their commitments this year compared with last year, with a commitment of 3.2 lakh tons and 2.9 lakh tons respectively.



Destitute being fed at the Gandhi Ashram. — Star photo

### Mariana Babar harassed by Pak police

ISLAMABAD, Nov 19: A Pakistani journalist accused police of harassing her today outside an opposition leader's residence, saying she had been pushed and insulted, reports AFP.

"Four policemen dragged me out of a car, pushed me around and insulted and abused me," Mariana Babar told reporters at the home of retired Air Marshal Asghar Khan, a leader of the People's Democratic Alliance (PDA).

"I have been receiving threats by phone from anonymous callers who said they have read my reports about PDA agitation," said Babar who works for the local English newspaper The News.

Babar said between sobs that when she shouted that she was a journalist and was going to the PDA leader's residence to attend a press conference, the policemen asked her whether she was a Muslim.

### Bhutto

From Page 1 Col 6

district of Rawalpindi.

An earlier Karachi report says: "Pakistan opposition leader Benazir Bhutto said today she had only a one-point agenda for any talks with the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif — the holding of fresh elections."

"The talks can only be held as equals and not as masters and slaves," the former premier said at her first news conference since the government expelled her from Islamabad and Rawalpindi after the opposition were prevented from mounting a mass march on the capital on Wednesday.

She also said she would only agree to a dialogue if the government disbanded special tribunals, stopped "witch hunts" against the opposition, released all political activists and agreed to the setting up of a government of national consensus.

"Only then can we sit at the negotiating table," Bhutto said, adding that there should be "only a one-point agenda — of holding fair and impartial elections."

But, she said, any final decision regarding the holding of talks with the government rested with the joint leadership of the opposition.

### One killed, 11 injured

From Page 1 Col 5

Royal Book House and then came back after a few hours to return the pen.

An altercation followed as the shopkeeper refused the student.

"Then he brought with him some musclemen," a shopkeeper said, "and started harassing the shopkeeper."

"At one stage," another shopkeeper added, "one of them snatched the scarf of a lady customer. The shopkeepers protested their act and the terrorists left the place angrily."

"On Wednesday," they said, "the students and the leaders of New Market Shopowners Association settled the issue and we thought nothing was going to happen!"

At 10.30 am yesterday, witnesses and shopkeepers said, some 60 students armed with cut rifles and crackers, came to the south gate of the New Market.

### Press Note

From Page 1 Col 5

of some shops in New Market at noon on November 16. Centering on this incident a group of 40 to 45 youths, said to be students of Dhaka College, raided and damaged some shops in New Market yesterday. They also roughed up several shopkeepers, it said.

Protesting against the attack, shopkeepers of New Market and its adjoining areas assembled and proceeded toward Dhaka College in a procession. During the time there were chase and counter-chase and exchange of brickbats between the two groups.

The police took to lathi charge and fired tear-gas shells to disperse the two warring groups. At one stage, there was gunfire from inside the Dhaka College and as a result one person named Anwar Hossain, 30, received bullet injury. The doctors on duty declared him dead when he was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, the Press Note added.

Two more persons who received bullet wounds, were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment.

A case has been filed with the Dhanmondi police in this connection, it added.

### JP observes hartal in Rangpur

RANGPUR, Nov 19: A half-day hartal called by Jatiya Party to protest filing of "false" cases against its activists was observed here today, reports UNB.

It alleged that a "false" case had been filed against the party members, including the district secretary, under the Anti-terrorism Act.

"Only then can we sit at the negotiating table," Bhutto said, adding that there should be "only a one-point agenda — of holding fair and impartial elections."

But, she said, any final decision regarding the holding of talks with the government rested with the joint leadership of the opposition.

"Only then can we sit at the negotiating table," Bhutto said, adding that there should be "only a one-point agenda — of holding fair and impartial elections."

But, she said, any final decision regarding the holding of talks with the government rested with the joint leadership of the opposition.

"Only then can we sit at the negotiating table," Bhutto said, adding that there should be "only a one-point agenda — of holding fair and impartial elections."

But, she said, any final decision regarding the holding of talks with the government rested with the joint leadership of the opposition.

"Only then can we sit at the negotiating table," Bhutto said, adding that there should be "only a one-point agenda — of holding fair and impartial elections."

But, she said, any final decision regarding the holding of talks with the government rested with the joint leadership of the opposition.

"Only then can we sit at the negotiating table," Bhutto said, adding that there should be "only a one-point agenda — of holding fair and impartial elections."

But, she said, any final decision regarding the holding of talks with the government rested with the joint leadership of the opposition.