

Come to CHITTAGONG Come to BANGKOK THAI RESTAURANT The only place for ORIGINAL THAI FOOD SEA FOOD in CHITTAGONG. NO BRANCH. Please try us and you will love BANGKOK THAI RESTAURANT more than ever before.

The Daily Star

NIRMAN TILES
Broken Marble Tiles
In More Shades
Than The Rainbow
Tel: 605957, 861985

VOL. IV NO. 59 REGD. NO. DA 781 CHAITRA 4, 1400 BS, DHAKA FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 1994 SHAWAL 5, 1414 HIJRI 12 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 4.00

Inside Today
Article

A plea for Restoration of Sovereignty of the People in Bangladesh
by Oli Ahad
Page 4

International
US proposal to deliver F-16 planes to Pakistan worries India
66th Annual Academy Awards to be announced Monday
Page 5

Business
Demand and supply position of petroleum all over the country is satisfactory
The Clinton administration is asking Congress for \$ 112m USAID programme in Bangladesh
Pages 6, 7

Weekend Magazine
Screen test for Prime Minister Rabin; Turning on Nepal's TV; Cinema hall: It must not turn into an inferno; The fake Swami Seasons of the heart and The British Council Language Matters
Pages 9, 10 & 11

Metropolitan
Dhaka Day by Day
When the City Suddenly Becomes Beautiful
Page 3

NOTICE
Due to unavoidable circumstances, our regular column 'Weekend Musings' is being held over for three weeks.

NEWS BRIEFS
PhD degree holders to be enlisted
By Staff Correspondent
The government has decided to enlist all Bangladeshi doctorate degree holders. According to a PID handout, the PhD degree holders, staying both at home and abroad, have been requested to send their doctoral thesis details to the Research Officer of the Economic Relation Division by March 31.

Cases against 3408 vehicle owners
The traffic division of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police has filed cases against the owners of 3408 vehicles and fined Taka 1.59 245 for violating traffic rules during the last one week. According to a police press release in Dhaka yesterday, the total amount of fine, Taka 33370 were realised on the spot, reports UNB.

Hartal observed at Satkhira
SATKHIRA, Mar 17: A half day hartal was observed here on Wednesday in protest against the killing of a local businessman at Assurini thana of the district. Called by local unit of all political parties, the hartal was observed protesting the killing of Jugal by some terrorists, owner of a fish enclosure, reports UNB.

Govt to off-load Tk 100cr shares of gas, oil cos

The government has decided to off-load the shares of Titas Gas, Bangladesh gas and oil marketing companies worth Taka 100 crore within the next one year to further activate the share market, reports BSS.

This was decided at an inter-ministerial meeting yesterday with Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman in the chair. Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam and Industries Minister AM Zahiruddin Khan attended the meeting.

Besides, the Governor of the Bangladesh Bank, secretaries, concerned Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Chairman of the Board of Investment, managing directors of the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs), financial institutions and the ICB were present. The meeting decided that the Ministry of Industries would dispose of considerable number of shares of the profit making public limited companies, they are holding. The Industries Ministry would also off-load the shares of public enterprises like fertiliser factories in near future.

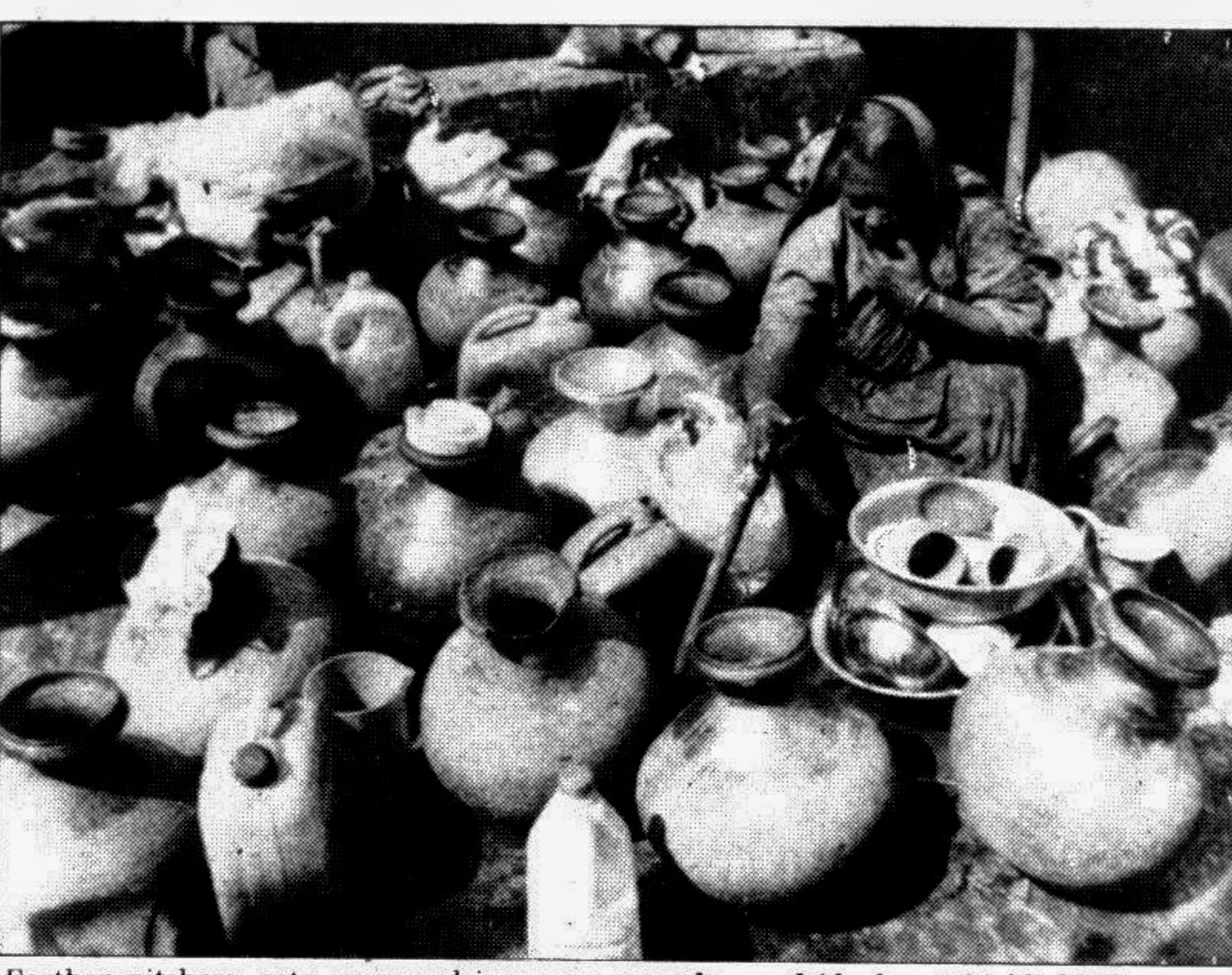
The Ministry of Commerce would also take up necessary steps to off-load the shares of profitable public limited companies, they are holding, in phases.

Speaking on the occasion, the finance minister urged the ministries concerned, agencies and the banks to take all necessary steps to off-load profitable share in phases within the next three months. He pointed out that by off-loading shares, the agencies concerned would make huge profit as well as tremendously activate the stock market.

The Finance Minister suggested that the agencies concerned holding profitable shares would off-load shares and if necessary buy them back from the market. Such a practice, the Finance Minister said, would increase day-to-day trading and help create proper atmosphere for healthy competition in the share market.

Rahman said the insurance companies have tremendous potentialities and they must off-load shares in order to activate the share market immediately.

Referring to the on-going reform policies, the Finance Minister said, the painful part of the reform policies was over. Now we shall enter into the beneficial phase of the on-going reform policies, he said adding that there was no way to retreat from the reform policies.



Earthen pitchers, pots, pans and jerrycans around a roadside faucet highlight the acute shortage of water in the Chawkbazar area of older Dhaka. — Star photo

BOI staffed by 'control-minded' bureaucrats, says US report

By Staff Correspondent

American businessmen are looking for investment opportunities in South Asia and Bangladesh can also attract US investments if the existing regulatory and fiscal anomalies are removed, observed a visiting US official yesterday.

There are a number of things Bangladesh should address to attract US investment," said David E. O'Hanian, the visiting representative of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), a US government agency engaged in promoting American private investment in developing countries. He was addressing a meeting with the Economic Reporters' Forum at the USIS auditorium.

A report on the prevailing investment climate in Bangladesh, circulated at the meeting, identified bureaucratic bottlenecks as the primary reason for the "scant" foreign investment attracted by Bangladesh, despite having a liberal investment policy in place.

Prepared by the US Embassy, the report said that the Board of Investment (BOI) lacks the stature to be a 'one-stop' centre and is staffed by 'control-minded' civil servants.

"Continued unhelpful treatment of foreign and domestic investors — not just by BOI, but by several entities under the Finance Ministry, including the Customs service — coupled with other negatives in the investment climate have made the industrial policy and its investment incentives largely irrelevant," the report added.

O'Hanian added that US businessmen are also reluctant to invest in Bangladesh perhaps because of the portrayal of the country as 'disaster-prone' and 'unstable' in the international media.

The government, he said, should make efforts to build a positive image of the country. "You need success stories, because success breeds success."

Replying to a question, he noted that Bangladesh also needs to further reduce tariffs to attract foreign investment, in comparison with other countries in the region.

The bureaucracy, the existing regulatory system and corruption, O'Hanian said, might be the other reasons investors are staying away from Bangladesh.

US investors are, however, encouraged by the progress made in bringing about macro-economic stability in Bangladesh and the direction the country was moving towards after the transition to democracy, he noted.

But the US Embassy report said: See Page 12 Col 4

Agrani Bank introduces auto teller tomorrow

Star Report

The Agrani Bank, a leading NCB has taken an initiative to introduce electronic banking in the country.

In the first phase, the Press Club Branch of the Bank would install automatic teller machines which would help the customers to withdraw a certain amount of money any time during the day or night or on holidays.

See Page 12 Col 3

Campaigning in Magura ends tonight

By Staff Correspondent

Campaigning in the Magura-2 parliamentary constituency ceases at mid-night tonight, 48 hours ahead of the by-elections due March 20.

Top leaders of the ruling BNP and the opposition Awami League, the Jatiya Party and others are now in Magura to seek support for their nominees.

The Jatiya Sangsad seat fell vacant following the death of Asaduzzaman of the AL.

Five candidates, including Kazi Salimul Haque Kamal of the BNP, Shafiquzzaman Bachchu of the AL and Nital Ray Choudhury of the JP are contesting the seat comprising Mohammadpur and Shalikhah.

Prime Minister and BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia, accompanied by some cabinet colleagues, paid her second trip to Magura yesterday to drum up support for her party nominee. Earlier, she visited the area on March 7.

The AL chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina has also visited Magura twice — first on March 2 and again last Wednesday.

See Page 12 Col 6

Complaint lodged with EC BNP violating election rules in Magura: AL

The Awami League yesterday lodged a complaint with the Election Commission alleging gross violation of election rules by ruling BNP ahead of the parliamentary by-election in Magura-2 constituency, reports UNB.

The allegations include intimidation, temptation, transfer and appointment of officials and developmental commitments by the Prime Minister and her cabinet colleagues during the election campaign.

A two-member delegation headed by S A M S Kibria, a member of the party's Advisory Council, submitted the written complaint to the Secretary of the Election Commission.

In the six-point complaint, AL said the members of Ansar and VDP were ordered to campaign and vote for BNP candidate, Officer-in-Charge (OCs) were transferred and new ones appointed on the eve of the election and three UP chairmen were threatened with arrest under Special Powers Act if they do not work for 'Sheaf of Paddy'.

It also alleged that BNP used armed men in the campaign and asked minorities not to go to the voting centres.

Awami League also pointed out the Prime Minister's reported pledges for development of temples and mosques, roads and bridges, schools and colleges and power supply to Magura if BNP nominee is voted in the March 20 by-polls. The PM made the promise during her campaign on March 7.

After filing the complaint, S A M S Kibria told the agency that the Secretary of Election Commission had assured him of bringing the matter to the attention of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice Mohammad Abdur Rouf.

Former Foreign Secretary Kibria quoted rule 77 (e) which says that a person is guilty of undue influence if he uses any official influence or governmental patronage.

Leaders of the government party and its candidate are taking advantage of their official position in violation of the election rules, he said.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Mughni said: See Page 12 Col 6

Speculations rife about a cabinet reshuffle

By Special Correspondent

Speculations about a reshuffle in the cabinet and reorganisation of the ruling party's central committee are now rife among the rank and file of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

"Who will be the new Secretary-General of the BNP? Who are going to be dropped from the cabinet? Will there be any major changes in allocation of portfolios?" — These are the questions being asked by the leaders, workers and supporters of the party which has been ruling the country for the last three years.

With the party workers and supporters feeling the need for strengthening the BNP, the issues of reorganising the central committee and reshuffling the cabinet have come up as focal points of discussion inside the party. After its debacle

See Page 12 Col 7

Tributes paid to Bangabandhu

By Staff Correspondent

Rich tributes were paid to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman throughout the country on his 74th birth anniversary yesterday.

Awami League, its front organisations and various socio-cultural organisations observed the day by garlanding the portrait of Bangabandhu, laying wreaths at his mazar in Tungipara, Gopalganj and organising discussion meetings.

National and party flags were also hoisted atop the Bangabandhu Bhaban and the Awami League office.

Hundreds of people visited the Bangabandhu Bhaban yesterday morning to pay respect to the memory of the late leader and placed wreaths there on the occasion.

Those who garlanded the portrait of Bangabandhu include Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Abdus Samad Azad, chairman of Bangabandhu Parishad Begum Sofia Kamal, Awami League presidium member Abdul Mannan, Mohiuddin Ahmed, adviser Abdul Momin Talukder, Prof Abu Sayeed, Rahman Ali MP, Ivy Rahman, Abul Hasan Chowdhury MP, Barrister Shawkat Ali and dozens of others.

See Page 12 Col 1

Vested quarters orchestrating propaganda against BNP: PM

MAGURA, Mar 17: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today alleged that vested quarters were orchestrating propaganda against her government to tarnish its image, reports UNB.

"The BNP government is fulfilling all its election pledges one by one, but vested quarters are trying to mislead the people," she said.

Begum Zia, also chairperson of the ruling BNP, was addressing a huge public meeting organised at the Mohammadpur High School ground this evening as part of the election campaign for the March 20 by-election in the Magura-2 constituency.

The JS seat fell vacant with the death of Awami League MP Advocate Asaduzzaman.

Presided over by thana BNP president Zafar Sadeq, the meeting was also addressed by LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukder, State Minister for Education Prof Eunus Khan and State Minister for Science and Technology Prof Abdul Mannan and some other BNP leaders.

Begum Zia asserted that a two-day campaign for her party nominee Kazi Salimul Haque Kamal in the run-up to the March 20 by-election by addressing a number of way-side meetings. She addressed gatherings at Simkhalhi, Chanra, Chatrabari, Shablat, Singra, Nagosha, Talkuri, Gunagati, Chundia, Pulun, Shurshuna, Aokdia, Vinodhpur, Dhunail, Kalutia and Bethulia.

Addressing the meeting at the Mohammadpur High School ground, the Prime Minister said "Some political parties are dishonouring our canards because they know the BNP candidate would win."

She listed the development programmes in agriculture, education, communication, power, health, employment generation, women's uplift and other sectors aimed at ensuring welfare of the people.

Begum Zia asserted that the village was the focal point of all development programmes initiated by her government. "The government is working relentlessly to improve the lot of commonman."

Addressing wayside meetings at different places, the BNP chief urged all to work for the economic emancipation of Bangladesh as against only seven a year ago.

AIDS was detected among a dozen low-salaried expatriates deported from the Middle East and a couple of soldiers who returned from Cambodia.

Some seven positive cases have been found, but not yet confirmed by the IEDCR, during surveys conducted in the last few months in different brothels and other target groups.

"Though the prevalence rate of AIDS cases is low at the present stage considering the huge population there is no scope of being unconcerned," an expert told PROBE on condition of anonymity.

He pointed out that the characteristic of this disease is that AIDS becomes apparent after about 6-10 years of being infected with HIV and the infected person during the incubation period can lead a normal life without showing any signs.

Latest surveys by experts at the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) revealed that there are more than 21 positive cases of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) in Bangladesh as against only seven a year ago.

See Page 12 Col 7

Bangabandhu dead is more powerful than Bangabandhu alive: Hasina

From Our Correspondent

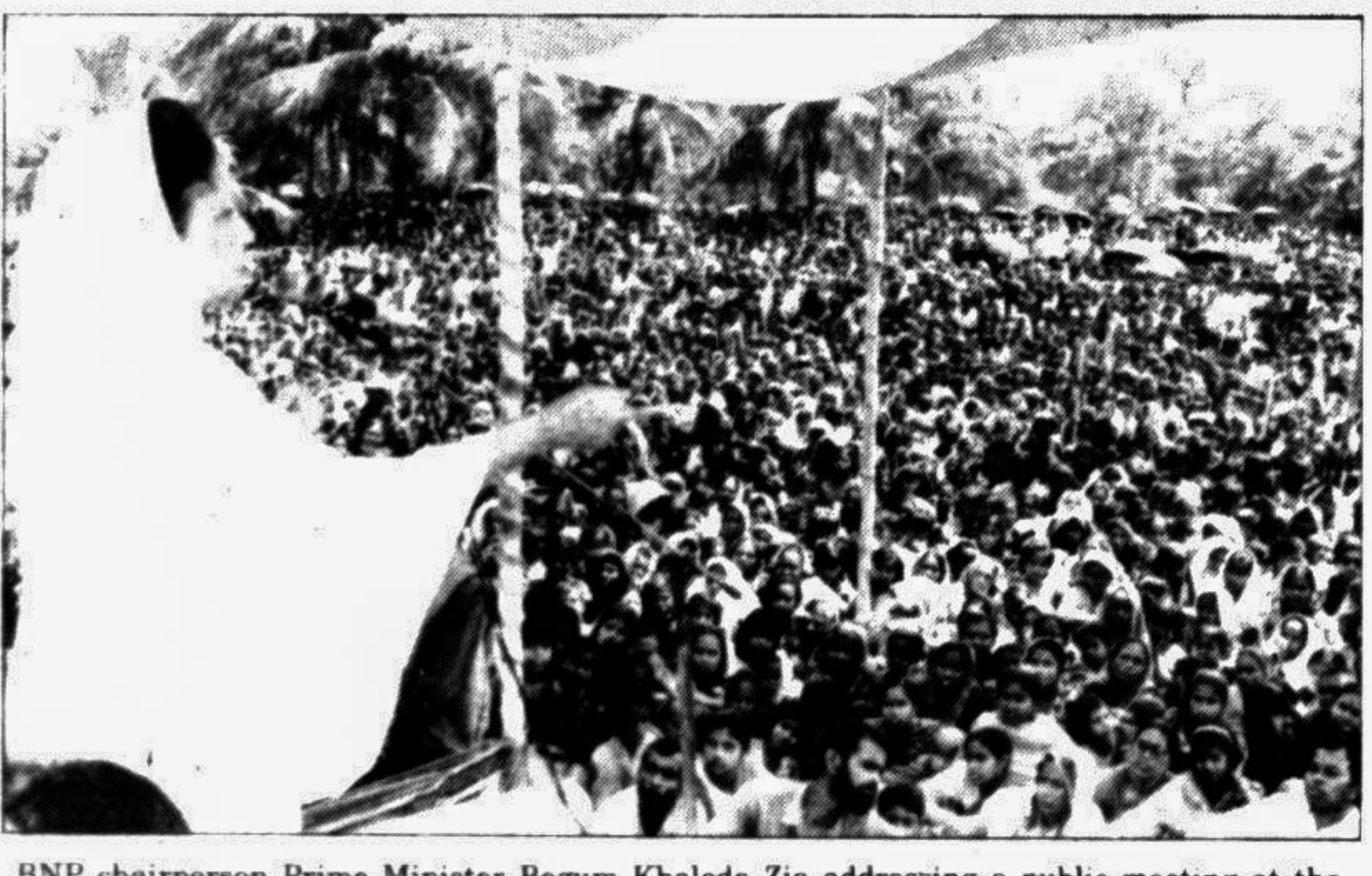
TUNGIPARA, Mar 17: Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina said today that who opposed the Liberation War were not engaged in eliminating the pro-liberation forces.

"These forces were also involved in the killing of Bangabandhu. They do not know that Bangabandhu dead is more powerful than Bangabandhu alive."

Sheikh Hasina was addressing a discussion meeting on the 74th birthday of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman organised by the Bengali 1400 Celebration Council at the Tungipara G T Govt. High School Maidan.

The AL leader called upon the party workers to work for the economic emancipation of Bangladesh.

See Page 12 Col 8



BNP chairperson Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a public meeting at the Shalikhah High School ground in Magura yesterday. — PID photo

DUCSU polls campaign to heat up with opening of DU tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

With the reopening of Dhaka University tomorrow, campaigning for the DU Central Students' Union (DUCSU) polls is expected to gather momentum.

Electioneering has already taken a triangular shape with the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) (M-I) and the Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) preparing for the polls.

Attempts to form a single panel by the Awami League backed BCL (M-I) and the alliance of eight Left-leaning student bodies GCO have failed.

According to campus sources, however, the contest for the DUCSU polls scheduled for April 12, will mainly be confined between the JCD and the BCL(M-I).

The ruling BNP and the main opposition Awami League have taken the DUCSU polls as a prestigious fight, specially after the results of the last city corporation elections.

The parent organisation of the JCD has given special emphasis on the elections. BNP Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukder has already been asked to nominate the candidates according to sources. The JCD swept the last DUCSU and hall union elections in 1990.

The upcoming Magura by-election next week, however, has pre-occupied the BNP leadership and delayed the announcement of the JCD panel for DUCSU.

Party insiders said that any two from among Nazimuddin Alam, Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anney and Shahjahan Hoidalder Shujan are likely to be the vice-president and general secretary candidates of the JCD.

Manzurul Haq Laviu, Afzal Hossain, Shubhash Singha, Mahbubul Haq Panu are the names being discussed in the BCL(M-I) camp for the VP/GS posts.

The GCO panel is likely to be headed by Aslam Khan, Abdullah Mahmud Khan, Rokunuzzaman Rokon and Obaidur Rahman.

The panels are expected to be finalised shortly.

Meanwhile, campaigning was continuing in full swing at the Dhaka University dormitories.

Campus sources observed an upsurge of the JCD in the dormitories.

Their rivals BCL(M-I) has already lodged a complaint with the DU authorities alleging that they did not have any access to three of the DU hostels.

The Vice-Chancellor of the university Prof Emajuddin Ahmed, responding to the BCL(M-I) complaint, had asked them to provide a list of allegedly ousted residential students.

In a statement on March 2 he has assured to provide security to all valid residential students for a free and fair holding of the DUCSU elections.

Sagir to be produced in court today

By Staff Correspondent

A prime-suspect in the police sergeant murder — Sagir Ahmed alias Liton — is likely to be produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate today after a week's police remand.

Sagir was arrested from the city's Dhanmondi area on March 10 and detained at the Detective Branch office at Minto Road for interrogation in connection with the murder of Abu Nasim Mohammad Hasanul Farhad, a sergeant of the Kotwali Police Station.

Hasanul Farhad was killed while on duty, in a cross-fire between two rival student factions in the Jagannath University College on March 5.

A police source said that during the interrogation Sagir denied his involvement in the murder.

Meanwhile, another suspect, Kazi Noor Qayyum, who was arrested from a village union in Chittagong, is being produced in court today.

See Page 12 Col 4

AIDS directorate to be set up soon

The government is planning to set up a separate directorate for STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) and AIDS to check an alarming increase of their prevalence in Bangladesh.

Experts told PROBE News Agency that significant increase of the fatal AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) cases in neighbouring countries has increased the threat in Bangladesh.

An estimated 14 million people are infected with AIDS virus world-wide. In India, their number is 1.1 million, the highest rates of infection being in the States of Tripura and Manipur bordering Bangladesh, and Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

Latest surveys by experts at the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) revealed that there are more than 21 positive cases of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) in Bangladesh as against only seven a year ago.

See Page 12 Col 7

India to resume political process in Kashmir soon

NEW DELHI, Mar 17: India will soon resume the political process in strife-torn Kashmir, which has been administered directly by New Delhi since January 1990, Home Minister Shankarrao Chavan said today, reports AFP.

But Chavan told the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency that the government would not disclose a date for the restoration of the process, saying it would then be sabotaged by the state's Muslim separatists.

"Whenever an earlier occasion we talked of political process, Pakistan asked the Muslim terrorists in Kashmir to create violence," Chavan said in an interview marking the 1,000 days in office of Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao.

The Indian government has repeatedly toyed with the idea of holding elections in Kashmir to give the Muslim-majority state a local government and politically isolate the militants.