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ANNOUNCEMENT
 We are happy to announce the launching of a new column on Page 4 "Making Government Work" by "Analyst," dedicated to suggesting practical solutions to administrative problems, based on first-hand experience. We hope this new column, to be published every Sunday, will add to the current debate on administrative reforms.
 — Editor

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STOCK MARKET

DSE Index	753.71 (+0.07%)
Market capitalisation Tk	41.70 billion
Turnover in volume	68549
Turnover in value Tk	2457 million

Travel & Tourism

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NEWS BRIEFS

NWD system restored
 The nation-wide dialing (NWD) system between the capital and 17 northern districts was restored yesterday. T & T officials said the NWD system that collapsed at 2 am on Friday due to a mechanical fault in the Bogra exchange, was restored at 5:20 pm yesterday, reports UNB.

JCD-BCL clash
 PAUNA, May 6: Twelve students were injured in a post-election clash at the Vocational Training Institute in the district this evening. Witnesses said supporters of the ruling BNP-backed Chhatra Dal and the Awami League-backed Chhatra League attacked each other during the counting of the votes in the student union polls, reports UNB.

JCD activists clash
 From Staff Correspondent
 SYLHET, May 6: At least five people were injured in a clash between two factions of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) at the Beanibazar thana headquarters today. The condition of Shajahan Kawser, who was stabbed, was stated to be critical. The clash took place when one group attacked the procession brought out by the rival group.

Mild quake rocks whole country

By Staff Correspondent
 Dhaka the tremor lasted between five and seven seconds. According to reports reaching the Dhaka Met Office, shock waves were also felt at Chittagong, Khulna, Sylhet, Noakhali, Barisal, Patuakhali, Comilla, Rangamati, Madaripur, Bhola, Borguna and Hatiya.

Our correspondents and other sources reported that panic-stricken residents in several places of the country came out from their houses during the tremor. However, there were conflicting reports regarding the duration of the tremor in each of the zones where it was felt.

An earthquake of moderate intensity hit different parts of the country, including the capital, yesterday morning. Met Office sources said the first tremors of the mild-to-moderate quake were felt at eight seconds past eight. Intermittent tremors lasting only a few seconds were felt in different parts of the country, the last at 57 seconds past eight.

There were no reports of any damage or casualties. The epicentre of the earthquake was estimated at 490 kilometres from the port city of Chittagong. The Met Office said in

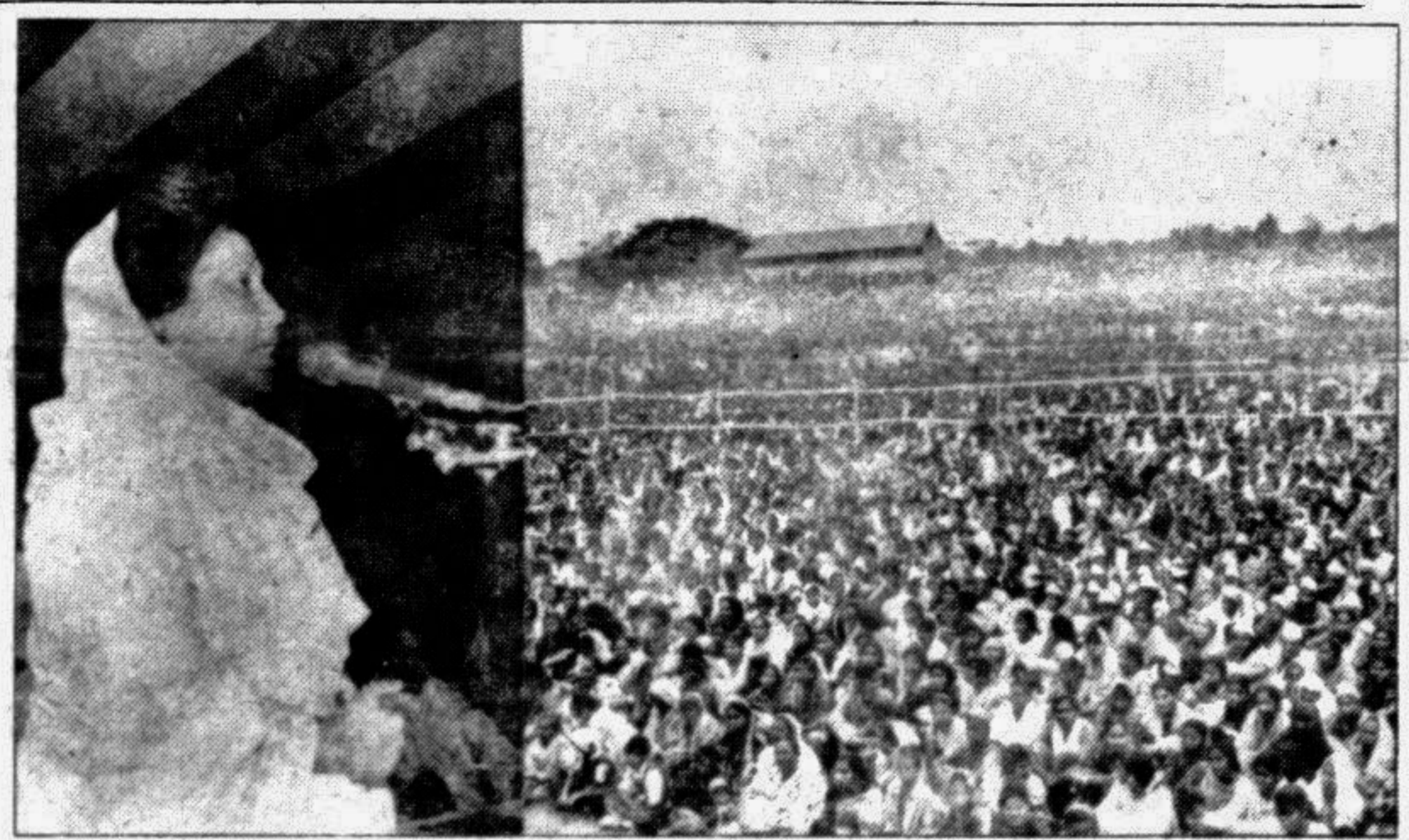
51.6m absolute poor, says report

Star Report
 At least 51.6 million people are living below the 'absolute' poverty line of whom 30.4 million have been identified as 'hardcore' poor in the country, according to the results of a government survey released recently.

Conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics during 1991-92, findings of the Household Expenditure Survey was released in a report last month. Meanwhile, BBS officials

Director of the Household Expenditure Survey 1995-96 is going to be launched in July next, incorporating an upgraded module to gather more details, and a computerised data collection and processing system so that the results can be processed within six months.

The BBS defined absolute poverty as people who consume 2,122 kilo calories or lower per day and hard-core poverty as those whose daily



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a huge public meeting at Tangail stadium yesterday. — PID photo

PM accuses Opposition of acting irresponsibly

TANGAIL, May 6: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today accused the Opposition of acting irresponsibly hampering welfare of the commonman only to fulfil their political end, reports UNB.

"They (opposition) have never performed their duties towards the people," she told a big public meeting at the Tangail Stadium in the afternoon.

In an oblique reference to the Awami League, Begum Zia said since independence, the party had never shouldered the responsibilities of the people, instead increased their sufferings.

Reminding the misuse of the party, the Prime Minister said if again voted to power, they (AL) would restore the one-party BAKSAL rule, close newspapers and repress the people by raising variegated forces.

Without mentioning Awami League President Sheikh Hasina's recent speeches, Begum Zia said the leader, of late, had expressed her desire to reintroduce the governor system in the country. "In fact, she hinted at reimposing the BAKSAL rule on the people."

But, Begum Zia expressed her full confidence that people would never give the party a chance to revert to the horror days of immediately post-liberation period.

Begum Zia said the people cannot support the party which destroys public and private property, impedes development, causes their sufferings and attempts to jeopardise democracy.

She said the opposition parties were busy orchestrating

Fear still haunts Narsingdi

By Morshed Ali Khan back from Narsingdi
 With tension prevailing in the Narsingdi town following the bloody incidents on April 29, top district officials fear further violence may erupt any moment.

"We are sitting on a time-bomb," said an official, requesting anonymity. "Armed gangs are waiting out there and any moment fighting may start again," he added.

Masud Ahmed, son of ruling party MP Shamsuddin Ahmed, was killed reportedly as a result of a feud between his father and another BNP MP Abdul Ali Mridha.

Following the killing of Masud, hundreds of supporters of Shamsuddin went on a rampage with automatic weapons in the town and set fire to seven houses belonging to Mridha and his supporters. Witnesses said, as the mob

attacked Mridha's house seven members of his family, including his aged mother, wife, son, nephew, driver and two servants hid inside a 7x10 store room.

The 300-strong mob, unable to trace the occupants, poured petrol all over the house and set it on fire before leaving.

Fortunately, the family escaped almost certain death (see box story) as the local people and police rescued them by breaking the window from outside.

Fifteen policemen were also injured in the incidents and a rickshawpuller, who had received bullet injuries, died in hospital next day.

Seven days after the violent incidents, no arrest has been made in connection with the murder of Masud or the burn-

Ramos may visit Dhaka in Sept

By Staff Correspondent
 Fidel Ramos, President of The Philippines, is expected to visit Dhaka in September. It was learnt yesterday.

The visit would be in response to an official invitation to the Filipino President extended by the government.

This would be the first visit by a Filipino head of state or government.

His entourage is expected to comprise several ministers, high officials and businessmen. The Philippine-Bangladesh Association in Dhaka is learnt to be making extensive preparations for holding meetings between the visiting business leaders with the local chamber bodies.

Rain, relief forecast

The sultry hot spell over the country is likely to cease with the advent of rain by next week, a meteorologist said yesterday.

Sazedur Rahman, Deputy Director at the Met Office, told UNB that rainfall may increase and more areas will come under rain by next week. There would be continuation of rain and dry spell till the monsoon, due in the first week of next month.

Already there have been showers in Chittagong and Barisal divisions and parts of Dhaka division while the remaining parts of the country may experience rainfall by next week with a corresponding fall in temperature.

A pail of water costs Tk 4 in city

Water sells at Tk 3-4 a pitcher in the city's East Rampura area in the wake of an acute shortage of water supply, residents said, reports UNB.

The crisis is severe particularly in the Mollahbari Police Fari area where 'bua's (maids) are engaged by residents to bring water from distance places in exchange of Tk 3 to 4 per pitcher, they said.

The WASA's supply lines remain choked most of the time at some places of East Rampura while at others there is a flow. Some landlords, suffering severe water crisis, have reportedly been forced to lower the pipes linking their reservoirs to the WASA lines to somehow meet part of the needs.

Local leaders said they were facing water problems despite having two WASA pumps in

A nightmare he can't forget

By Staff Correspondent
 A signboard outside the well protected residence of Abdul Ali Mridha MP reads "Sudha Bhavan." The traces of the carnage of April 29 are all around.

Amid charred furniture, broken bird cages and the burnt out walls, a boy of 13 — Ibrahim — a servant at Mridha's house since he was 10 still remembers the day.

"Around one o'clock in the afternoon, I heard a lot of people shouting near the house. The main gate was locked. They started hammering on it. We were seven inside the house," he said.

"The people started to come inside the house from everywhere. They were firing and shouting kill them, kill them," Ibrahim recalled.



This camel purchased from across the border at Hili in Dinajpur district was brought to the city's Gabtali cattle market as a sacrificial animal for Eid-ul-Azha. Its owner was demanding exorbitant price of Tk 2.60 lakh. — Star photo

Voters' database and ID cards EC to float tender by month end

By Krishna P Roy
 The Election Commission (EC) will float a tender within this month to select computer companies for preparation of identity (ID) cards and a databased electoral management system, official sources said.

Newly-appointed Chief Election Commissioner Justice AKM Sadeque has also ordered that the technical committee for appraisal of the tender bids, comprising leading computer experts, be broadened. This committee will also determine the eligibility of the companies which have applied for pre-qualification.

Some 80 computer firms and software traders from home and abroad have applied for enlistment with the EC for the work involving issuance of ID cards to some 60 million voters and their proper registration.

The names of the pre-qualified firms are expected to be announced within a week, said Justice Sadeque.

"I have ordered that as many experts as possible be included in the committee so that there is no question about the final selection of the computer firms," said the Chief Election Commissioner.

Experts from the Dhaka University's Physics and Computer Science departments and the Computer Engineering Department of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) would be

Indian press lauds summit outcome

NEW DELHI, May 6: The Indian press has broadly welcomed the outcome of the just-concluded Eighth SAARC Summit here, expressing the hope the member countries will eventually be able to turn the seven-nation regional grouping into a more viable forum, reports BSS.

Most dailies carried editorials today on the summit which concluded here last Thursday and comments suggest that the newspapers are near unanimous that the summit went off well although some editorials cautioned the leaders of the problems that can plague the SAARC in the future.

"Fruitful summit" was the

Biswas arrives in London

LONDON, May 6: President Abdur Rahman Biswas arrived here this morning to attend the Victory in Europe (VE) day programmes marking the end of the World War II, reports BSS.

He is accompanied by Begum Hosne Ara Rahman. On arrival at the Heathrow airport, President Biswas was greeted by Baroness Miller, a representative of Queen Elizabeth II.

President Biswas and Begum Rahman will join other heads of state and government at a reception and banquet to be given by British Prime Minister John Major at Guildhall, seat of the Corporation of London.

The President will exchange views with other heads of state during the reception. Meanwhile, heads of state and government from about 60 countries are already in London to attend the 50th anniversary celebrations.

Special police force for Eid

By Staff Correspondent
 The Dhaka Metropolitan Police has deployed special police force to check crime in the city until the Eid-ul-Azha.

Some 2487 policemen have been posted in different markets, bus terminals, railway station, launch terminals, sacrificial animal markets and other important spots in the metropolis yesterday, detective police said.

Besides, traffic police has also been reinforced in different parts of the city.

The extra police force will be active in separate groups. Of them, 112 groups will remain on duty in strategic points while 270 groups will be involved in patrolling.

Besides, 10 groups of plainclothes police will also be active in the special arrangement on the occasion of the Eid.

Maid murder : 2 in police remand

By Court Correspondent
 Two accused in the case regarding the mysterious death of a maid in the city in the early hours of Friday were placed in a two-day police remand yesterday.

Monowara Begum, 35, a maid in a flat at a multi-storied building in Bangla Motor area, was found dead after falling from the fifth floor.

Roksana Chowdhury, Monowara's mistress, and her daughter Sharmin Chowdhury were produced in the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) yesterday.

SAARC chamber approves budget

The SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) in its Extra Ordinary Executive Committee meeting that ended last week approved its 1995-96 budget designed to help pave the way for a strong private-sector led regional economic cooperation, reports UNB.

The meeting that closed on Wednesday in the Indian capital of New Delhi, coinciding with the Eighth Summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, pledged to make the forum into an effective trade block on a minimum time-frame.

The SCCI meeting also discussed launching of the SAPTA by December 1995 as approved by the SAARC Summit and role of the private sector

3 killed in road accident

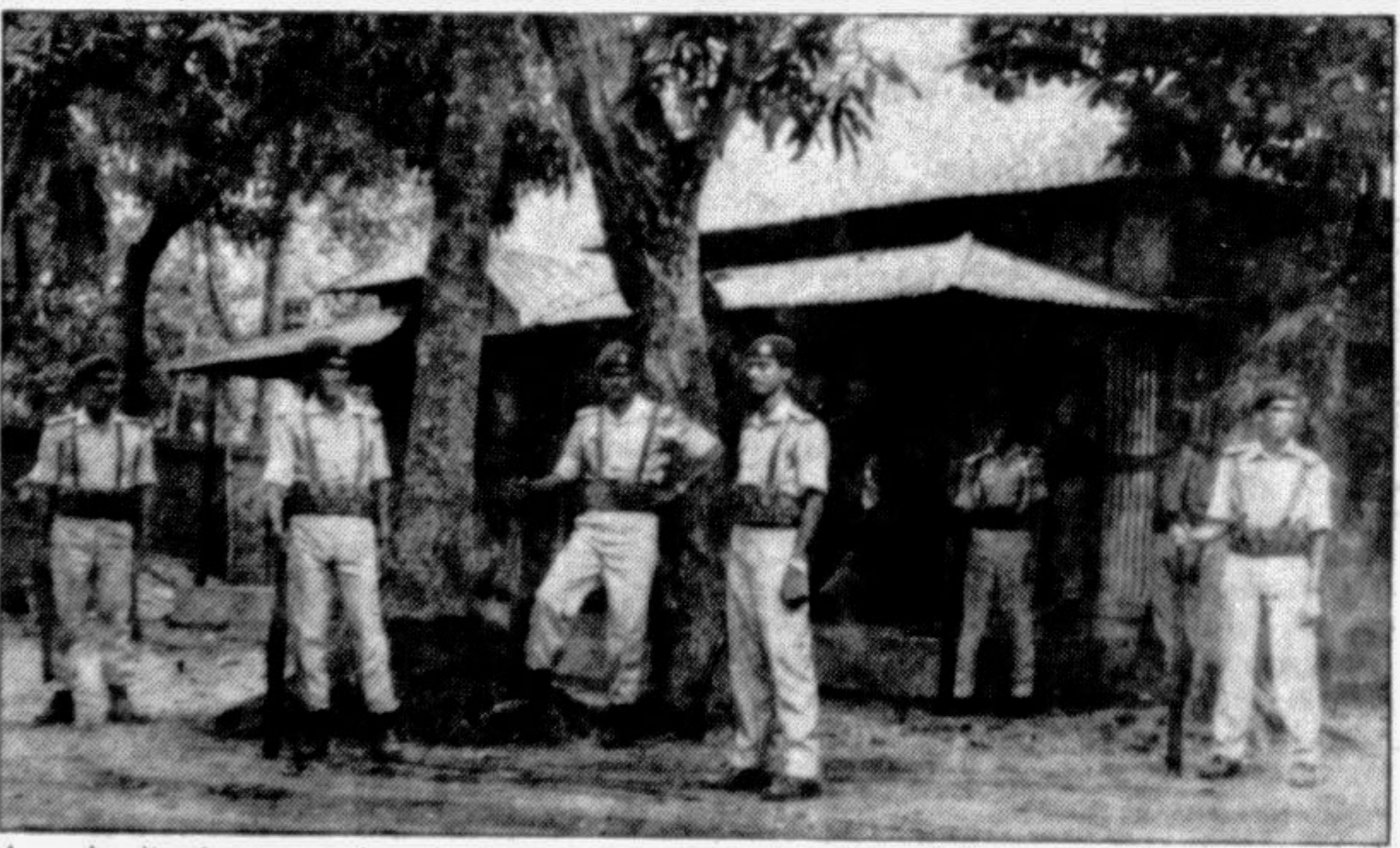
From Our Correspondent
 NARAYANGANJ, May 6: An eight-year-old girl and her grand mothers were killed and her grand father was seriously injured when they were run over by a truck at Isdar on the Dhaka-Narayanganj highway this morning.

Police and witnesses said the Narayanganj-bound truck then skidded off the road and fell into a ditch.

The dead were identified as Beauty, 8, her maternal grand mother Kholesha Begum, 45, and paternal grand mother Saleha Begum, 50. Beauty's maternal grand father, Saded Ali, 55, was admitted to Narayanganj Hospital.

Beauty and Saleha died on the spot while Kholesha expired on way to hospital.

The girl, who was suffering from jaundice, was on way to Dhaka to visit a doctor, her relatives said.



Armed police keep a vigil at the home of Abdul Ali Mridha, MP, in Birpur village of Narsingdi district. The supporters of Mridha's rival, fellow BNP MP Shamsuddin Ahmed, set the house on fire April 29 following the death of Shamsuddin's son at the hands of Mridha's men. — Star photo