

Cox's Bazar attracts less tourists

By Krishna P Roy, back from Cox's Bazar

Miles of golden coloured sands, towering cliffs, surfing waves, rare conch shells, colourful pagodas, Buddhist temples and tribes, delightful sea food — this is how the Parjatan Corporation, the national tourism organisation, describes Cox's Bazar.

Despite having the world's longest (120 km) beach, sloping gently down the blue waters of the Bay of Bengal, Cox's Bazar, 152 km south of Chittagong, has lost her glamour and attraction due to negligence by the authorities to lure tourists.

One would wonder after entering the district town of Cox's Bazar. Roads are dirty and pitted. Traffic jam is a perennial problem. Most of the 3 km main road of the town is in a deplorable condition.

"It is the one of the dirtiest towns in the country. Nobody cares about it. The roads go under water with the slightest rains," said

Mahbubur Rahman, editor of a local daily, the Daily Saikat.

"Burmese markets", ornaments made of sea shells in tastefully decorated stalls on both sides of the road attract tourists. But the sewerage system along the load has collapsed, Rahman said.

"There is always a tussle between the Roads and Highways department and the Pourashava".

According to an official of Parjatan's local office, the number of foreign tourists has been declining since there are no adequate facilities to attract the foreigners, he said.

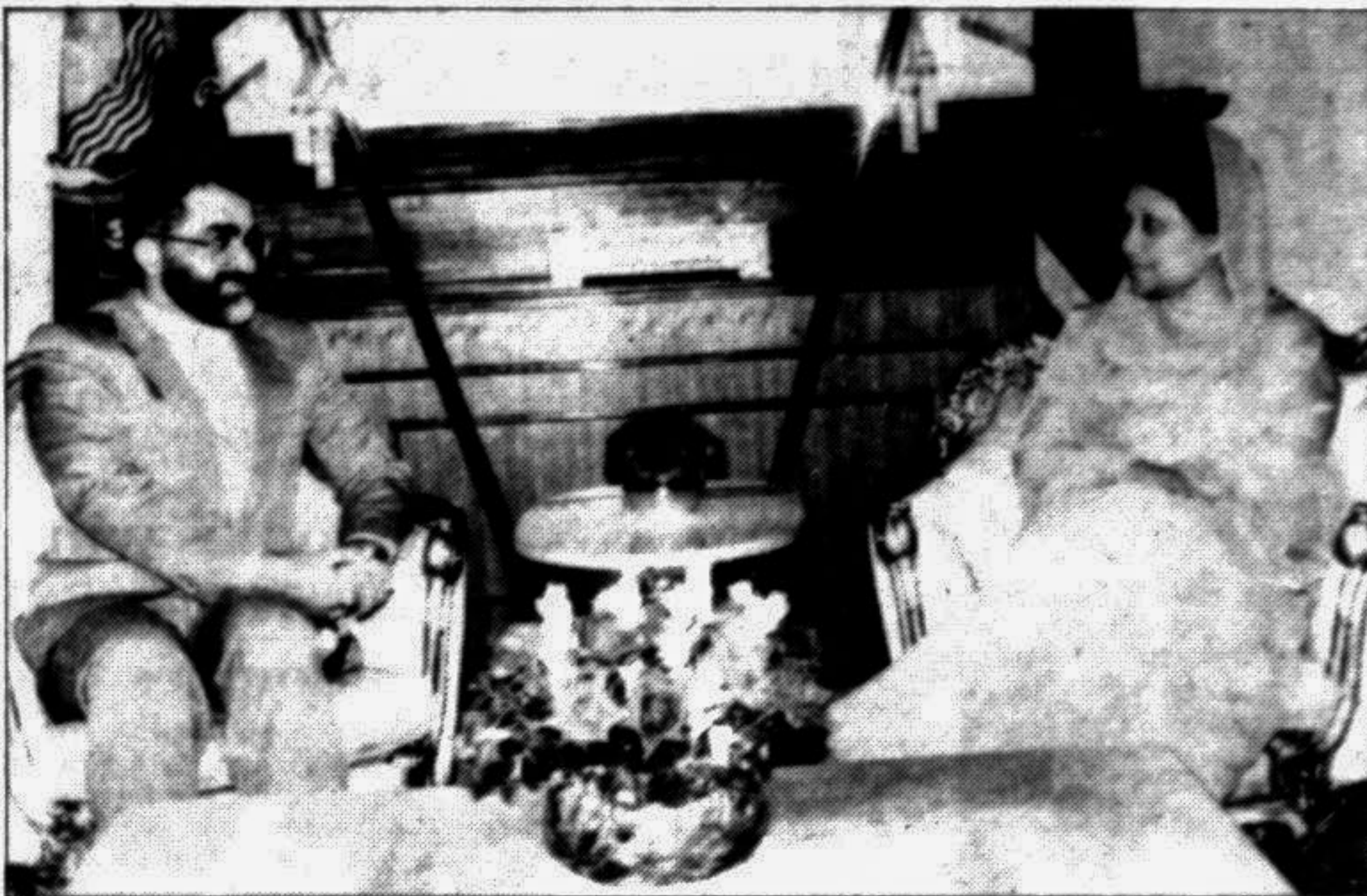
During a visit, this correspondent found the sea beach virtually left without attention of the authorities. The beach is not clean and even a number of makeshift huts are there. Tourists, particularly the foreigners suffer from insecurity as there are no guards in the beach, said MA

Hamid, who owns a shells shop just near to the beach. Local people said that at least two persons drown in the sea every year as there is no safety net and tourists are not adequately briefed when to swim in the sea.

But what is needed, according to a Parjatan official, is some special facilities in the beach — such as small shops for drinks, mobile restaurants and an exclusive area for the tourists. "Many foreigners told us that your beach is so beautiful, but you can not maintain it," he said.

To pass time at night is a problem Parjatan used to arrange cultural programmes by tribal people. But it is no more.

There is no package tour facility. Parjatan also cannot give adequate transports to tourists. It, however, offers tennis courts, golf field, swimming pool, open air showering, restaurant and bar to the tourists.



Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Alauddin Brujerdi called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday. — PID photo

The Midnight File

21 die in Colombian plane crash

BOGOTA, Sept 9: An airplane crashed in bad weather in the jungles of southern Colombia today, killing all 21 people on board, the civil aviation authority said. The plane was owned by the state airline Satena, and was flying from Villavicencio, 45 miles (70 kilometers) south of the capital Bogota, to La Macarena, 130 miles (210 kilometers) south of Villavicencio, reports AP.

NATO expands airstrikes against Serbs

NAPLES, Italy, Sept 9: NATO has expanded its zone of airstrikes against the Bosnian Serbs, taking aim at air defence installations across Bosnia, a senior NATO military official said today, reports Reuters.

Group captain Trevor Murray, chief of air operations for NATO's southern command, said that bad weather had forced the alliance to call off several strike missions. Murray said airstrikes were gradually being expanded to include not only ammunition dumps, command and control centres and communications

lines. But also targets like bridges.

The warplanes were also re-visiting the Bosnian Serb integrated air defence system, which includes tracking and targeting radar and surface-to-air missiles.

"Last night we expanded those attacks against other elements of that system and visited other areas outside the zone of action which we have been operating in up to now," Murray said a news briefing.

WP calls hartal in S dists tomorrow

Workers Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon yesterday called for taking stern action against the terrorist groups to safeguard democracy and the electoral process, reports UNB.

"Free and fair elections can never be possible if effective steps are not taken against the terrorists," he told a press conference at the party office in the evening.

Workers Party has called a six-hour hartal in 10 southern districts on September 11 to protest terrorism and killings by the outlawed groups. The districts are: Kushtia, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Jhenidah, Magura, Jessore, Narail, Khulna, Satkhira and Bagerhat.

2 JCD leaders assaulted

PANCHAGARH, Sept 9: Two local leaders of Jatiyat-Abadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) were roughed up in the town today allegedly by activists of Jatiya Party, reports UNB.

District JCD President S M Saleh Liton came under attack on the Cinema Hall road at about 1:30 pm when he was going to meet Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz at the local Circuit House, party sources said.

Witnesses said the attackers numbering about 10 to 12 beat up Liton and left him critically injured. He was first rushed to Sadar Hospital and then shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

Another JCD leader, Kawsar Alam, was also beaten up allegedly by JP supporters in front of Brothers Union Club in the same area at about 1 pm. He was admitted to Sadar Hospital.

Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz, who is now in his home town, condemned the attack on Liton and Alam. Local leaders of BNP and Jatiyat-Abadi Sramik Dal also condemned the attack.

Ershad

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K Z Islam had gone to London as per instruction of Ershad and opened an account in his own name at the suggestions of BCCI President Aga Hassan Abedi and Saleh Naqvi. He received two million dollars of five and eight million dollars, totalling 13 million dollars, from Kuwait International Finance Corporation (KIFCO) in which BCCI had a 40 per cent share, the press release said.

American government securities worth 10 million US dollars were purchased by withdrawing the same amount from the 14 million dollar account of Ershad with the ACIC Bank of Cayman Island, a subsidiary of BCCI, as collateral securities for the two loans and the loans were considered as paid after the securities were liquidated after one year.

It said K Z Islam transferred 10 million dollars out of this loan to Mariam Mumtaz and according to her desire the amount was deposited in her account in the Hong Kong-based Mercantile Bank.

Bank rate

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tain the inflationary pressure," said the official.

On the rationale of increasing interest rate, he said the government wanted that the interest rates match the inflation rate.

Inflation, which drew down to 1.2 per cent at one stage last year, shot up to 5.22 per cent at the end of 1994-95 and the rate keeps on increasing due to rising food price and the lending surge.

Dhaka, Tehran to bolster ties

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Visiting Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Alauddin Brujerdi and Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan led the teams of their respective countries at both rounds of the talks.

The two sides also reviewed Tehran's request for routing Bangladesh's trade with the Central Asian re-

Prime Minister

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Justice for holding the next polls and demanded resignation of the present government 90 days before the polls.

Some top BNP leaders who, in their instant reactions, said Hasina's proposal was nothing new.

Some other party leaders, however, said that the matter would be discussed in party forum.

The BNP leaders, sources said, would continue their discussions on the formation of the interim government.

Meanwhile, US Assistant Secretary of State Robin Raphel, who has just concluded a visit to Bangladesh, Thursday underlined the need for compromise and understanding among the political parties for resolving the present political impasse.

Beijing Conference

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rights or equal rights or the human rights of women," said US delegate Felice Gaer, director of the Jacob Blaustein Institute for Human Rights of the American Jewish Committee.

Some delegates are concerned that words such as "human dignity" and "inherent dignity" are being used to imply that women are special, that they're "on a pedestal and don't have the same human rights as men," she said.

The United States would like an affirmation of religion in the platform, Gaer said, "but our concern is... that religion or extremism not be used to hurt women—to violate their rights."

The dispute was dramatically illustrated when Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls and Britain's Monsignor Peter J Elliott walked into the conference press room to deliver their statement and were confronted by former US congressman and feminist activist Bella Abzug.

"The Holy See has a right to make a statement, but I tell you it's a statement of desperation and more significantly, it's a statement ignoring the will of a large, large consensus which exists," said Abzug, who heads the Women's Environment and Development Organization.

Elliott countered, saying: "It is most dishonest to depict us as anti-women." One of the key concepts of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights is "human dignity," he said, describing this as a woman's innate worth, "a distinct value of femininity."

With delegates working toward a Wednesday night deadline to finish drafting the platform, small committees met into the night discussing contentious issues.

These include sexual rights, parental rights over adolescent sex education, financial resources and sexual orientation, generally used to refer to gays and lesbians.

The Vatican and some Catholic and Islamic countries are expected to object

Quota, sale centres of rice under OMS increased

The government will increase daily quota and number of sale centres of rice under the OMS system from today, reports UNB.

A Food Ministry announcement said yesterday the allotment of rice would be raised from 5 to 6 metric tons in the thanas comprising 21 or more unions and from 6 to 8 mt in the 20 old district headquarters.

Besides, the government will increase sale centres in the six divisional towns. The number of OMS-centres has been increased to 100 from 60 in Dhaka, in Chittagong and Khulna each 25 centres from 20, Rajshahi 20 centres from 10 and Sylhet and Barisal each 15 centres from 10.

As per the decision, each OMS (open market sale) centre will sell one ton of rice daily.

The government measure came as the market price of food continued to maintain high rates.

The students decided to stage a demonstration in front of the Jatiya Press Club tomorrow.

4 die in city

By DMCH Correspondent

Two persons were killed in separate accidents while two others reportedly committed suicide in the city yesterday.

Abdul Karim, 22, a fish monger, who was earlier injured in a road accident at Dhanmondi area, succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) around 5:30 pm yesterday.

Karim, son of one Belayet Howlader of 126, Rayerbazar, was injured when a tempo rammed a rickshaw in which he was travelling at Road No 2 Dhanmondi Saturday morning.

In another incident, a construction worker, Nurunnabi, 23, was electrocuted while he accidentally touched an electric wire at an under-construction building at Siddeswari area around 10 am.

Meanwhile, Liton, 24, son of Abdul Khaleque Talukder of 114 North Goran, reportedly committed suicide by taking poison following a family dispute early yesterday.

In another incident, Mohiuddin, 35, a resident of Uttara, allegedly committed suicide by taking poison yesterday afternoon following a reported family dispute.

AL council

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ing the special council session at the Engineers' Institution auditorium. The session will begin at 10 am with Sheikh Hasina in the chair. Secretary General Zillur Rahman is due to submit a report on the party's political and organisational activities during the last three years.

Some 2800 councilors from AL's 71 organisational districts are expected to attend the council session being held after three years. The last session was held in September 1992.

Housewife

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Eti had been living with her husband Shafiqul Alam Khan Lincoln and their nine-month-old baby girl at her in-law's house since their marriage in January, 1993.

Eti's relatives told a press conference at the national press club that she had been continuously subjected to torture by her in-laws for a dowry of Tk 3 lakh from her father.

Her father, a retired engineer alleged that two days had passed before anyone of Eti's family was informed about the incident.

8 killed

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UNB adds: The drivers of a bus and a truck were killed when their vehicles collided head-on at Kaichuki in Chouddagram thana in Feni district Friday night.

One passenger of the bus was also killed and 15 others were injured in the accident on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway at about 9:30 pm.

Names of the dead and the wounded were not known.

According to police, a Chowmuhunt-bound bus of Jatri Seba Transport company crashed with a truck coming from opposite direction, killing the three instantly.

Seven of the 15 injured were admitted to Feni Sadar Hospital and six others with serious wound sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

In Chittagong, an old man was killed when two buses collided head-on at Trial in Sitakunda thana on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway yesterday.

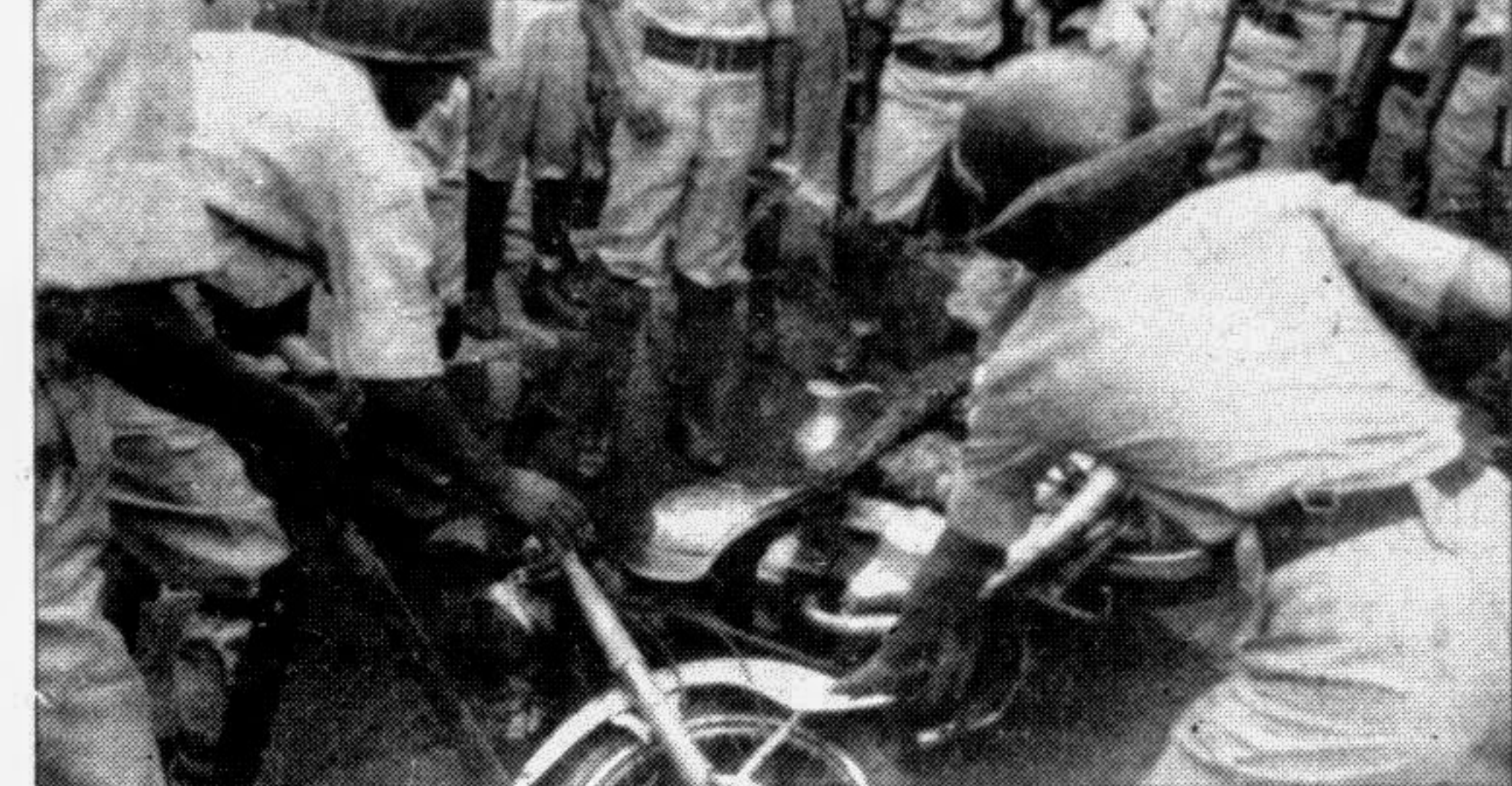
The victim, identified as Deen Mohammad, 65, was a passenger of a bus.

Students protest

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The students decided to stage a demonstration in front of the Jatiya Press Club tomorrow.

Police was posted in the college area.



Students protesting the new admission system set fire to a police sergeant's motor cycle near Dhaka College in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Congestion at Ctg port to persist

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Commission's vetting.

"The TAPP approval will take about three months followed by six months to appoint consultants. At least they will work for one-year and take another year to design. So the actual construction will not start earlier than 1998 and the container terminal with two berths including back-up facilities can be commissioned by the year 2002," said the officials of the CPA.

Responding to a query on the recent congestion crisis in berthing, loading and unloading of ships in Chittagong port, the chairman attributed it to the priority given to unloading of ships carrying foodgrains, which is prolonging the vessel turn around period abnormally, and inordinate delay caused by the Customs authorities.

"It is easy to blame. I think it is the joint inefficiency of the Customs and the Port authorities," said acting commissioner of the Chittagong Customs House, Dr Azizur Rahman.

The holding capacity of the CPA is 8,500 containers but presently the CPA has an inventory of 11,250, which jumped to a level of 14,000 during May, causing severe congestion.

During the last fiscal, the multipurpose berth (MPB) at the handled 1.75 lakh twenty equivalent unit (TEU) of containers compared to a level of 75 thousand in 1993-'94 indicating a growth rate of 30 per cent while the MPB

Businessman

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snatched the money kept in a handbag.

Bhuiyan along with his Marketing Manager Shah Alam was going to his factory from Islampur by an autorickshaw, police added.

The muggers attacked them when the driver parked the autorickshaw in the Ali Bohor area due to some technical problem of his vehicle.

Bhuiyan was carrying Taka 2.5 lakh in cash and Taka 1.17 lakh in cheque, police added.

A case has been filed with the Demra thana. However, none was arrested.

Spiritual leader gets life-term

PIROJPIUR, Sept 9: A self-styled spiritual leader was awarded life-term in jail today for murdering a co-villager in Mathbaria thana two years ago, reports UNB.

Bijoy Dhopee was also fined to pay Tk 500 or in default suffer another six-month imprisonment, according to a verdict given by district and sessions judge Abdur Razzaque.

Dhopee killed his neighbour Upendranath Sheel in an orgy of oracle in his temple on March 9 in 1993.

Dhaka-Tehran ties excellent: Khaleda

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday described the bilateral ties between Bangladesh and Iran as an excellent one and expressed her optimism that Tehran would seize the investment opportunities in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister hoped that Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's forthcoming visit to Bangladesh would help further foster the bilateral ties widening the areas of trade and economic cooperation.

Visiting Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Alauddin Brujerdi called on Begum Zia at her office here in the afternoon.

Brujerdi said Bangladesh-iran ties have been progressing quite fast and his (President) planned visit would cement and widen the ties.

The Iranian minister described Begum Zia's initiative to hold an emergency summit of OIC on Bosnia as a very timely one.

Welcoming the Iranian deputy minister, the Prime Minister said that a Bangladesh delegation led by Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khondker Mo-sharraf Hossain would visit Iran soon to explore the areas of cooperation in the energy sector.

is designed to handle only 1.2 lakh TEU, said the CPA officials.

"As a result, some of us have been forced not to accept in-bound containers originating from the Far East ports to Bangladesh as the ships are facing detention at Singapore," noted a shipping agent.

Some shipping lines have also started charging congestion surcharge at the rate of 50 US dollars per tonne, putting additional burden on our exports, said some exporters.

A local Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) official alleged: "Our members are facing serious cancellation of export orders in large numbers as the delayed release of raw materials have been jeopardising the export schedule. To cover the delay in delivery of raw materials, they have been compelled to send their finished products by air, thus incurring a huge extra expenditure in air freight."

Listing the procurement schedule, the acting chairman of the CPA said they had opened up several letters of credit (L/C) to procure four straddle carriers, two 32-tonne fork-lifts, 12 terminal tractors and 12 container semi-trailers. The CPA authorities said the equipment would arrive at Chittagong port by November.

When his attention was drawn to the 5291 empty containers stocked at the