## Sharp increase in prices of rice

Morshed Ali Khan

Babubazar.

tation cost.

he added.

lent picketing.

been hampered.

Shahidullah, a trader at

bazar Rice Merchants' Assoc-

iation office, traders said that

the current price hike was also

due to other factors, such as

sudden increase in transpor-

cost us Tk 3,000 to bring a

truckload of 77 sacks (about

173 maunds and 10 seers) of

rice from Dinajpur," said Ismail Siddique, Joint Secre-

tary of the Association. But now

Some truck drivers, who

it costs more than Tk 8,000.

had just arrived there from

northern districts, told this

correspondent that due to re-

polling in different areas on

the way to Dhaka they ran

great risks as the opposition

activists put up barricades on

the way and also took to vio-

import rice, alleged that due

to serious congestions across

the border and restrictions

imposed on lorries carrying

rice there, inflow of rice has

getting adequate supply of im-

These days we are not

Other rice merchants, who

"Only a week ago it would

At the Badamtali and Babu-

Panic buying due to the Opposition's scheduled indefinite non-cooperation movement, sudden rise in transportation cost, congestion on the other side of the border and hoarding in the country have all contributed to the sharp rise in rice prices.

Within the last one week. prices of some varieties of rice rose by nearly Tk 100 per maund at the wholesale level. and it is feared that the prices would rise further, traders in the country's largest rice wholesale markets in the city's Badamatali and Babubazar areas, said.

in the wholesale markets. the price of Kataribhog has risen to Tk 24.11 per kg from Tk 21.43, that of Paijam (good quality) to Tk 16.34 per kg from 14.46, Aman to Tk 13.26 from Tk 11.65 and the price of a kg of Moam Palish, the highest selling imported rice has risen to Tk 14.73 from Tk 13.12. according to wholesalers at Badamtali and Babubazar.

The retailers in different markets of the city charge Tk 1 to Tk 3 per kg orr top of the wholesale price, traders said. With the non-cooperation

movement scheduled to begin tomorrow, many people panicked and started to stockpile the staple food in their houses. traders said.

"It is exactly like the situation before Ramadan when people keep buying for the whole month. This time they have been buying a lot of rice which has contributed to the current price hike," said Md

#### ported rice as there is a congestion on the other side of the border at different points. said Ismail. Moreover, the merchants

also alleged that hoarders in Bogra, Jaipurhat, Phulhat in Dinajpur. Naogaon, Thakurgaon and in Nilphamari. unlike in other years, did not release their stock this season for unknown reasons.

#### One killed in bus-train collision

RAJBARI, Mar 7: A man was killed and 30 others were injured, 17 seriously, when a bus collided with a train at Goalanda rail crossing on Khulna-Faridpur highway early today reports UNB.

Railway police said Dhakabound night coach with some 50 passengers from Gopalgani collided with Raibari-Daulaidia local train at 1:40 am

Witnesses said the mishap occurred while bus driver tried to cross the line overtaking two vehicles by breaking the bamboo barricade.

Railway police identified the dead as Ratan, peon of Ramdia College in Kashiani thana of Gopalgani district. Ratan and other injured people were the bus passengers.

#### Strike observed at RU

From RU Correspondent RAJSHAHI, Mar 7: A daylong strike called by the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal was observed at Rajshahi University (RU) today protesting the killing of a student.

Amanullah Aman. general secretary of the Jatiyatabadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha, university unit, was chopped to death yesterday on the

No classes and examinations were held and the administrative building was closed during the strike.

# take oath

MPs of the Sixth Parliament took oath at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban here yesterday, reports

administered the oath to the new MPs at a simple function. Earlier on March 4, some 200 MPs had taken oaths.

Babu.

Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni was also present. said a press release.

## From Page 1

foil the rally.

Some street urchins at the meeting venue collected a shell of point 32 S & W Long revolver bullet from near the dais, which was shown to this

of Lalbagh area attending the injured person in the hospital told The Daily Star that they

Attending doctor at DMCH at 9:30 pm was seen busy diagnosing whether the bullet was stuck in his head or not.

Minister Begum Sarwari Rah-

man and Eimi Watanabe,

Coordinator, UN Systems in

Bangladesh, will attend the

meeting as chief and special

The National Forum of

Organisations Working with

discussion meeting on

"problems and prospects of

women with disabilities in the

socio-economic context of

Bangladesh", at the auditorium

of the Society for the Care and

Education of the Mentally

Retarded, 4/A. Eskaton Gar-

ment, an NGO, has organised a

discussion meeting and a film

show at the WVA Auditorium.

House 20. Road 27 (old).

be decorated with banners and

festoons and posters and sou-

venirs will be published on the

served at district and thana

levels under the Women's

Affairs Directorate and private

processions, rallies, discussion

meetings and cultural func-

tions today in Mymensingh,

Sariakandi, Jessore, Tangail,

Bogra. Jamalpur, Ghatail.

Rajshahi, Netrakona, Cox's

Rallies and meetings will be

Meanwhile, on the eve of

Bazar, Sirajganj and Kurigram.

organised tomorrow (March 9)

in Syedpur. Khulna and

the Women's Day, the IWDOC

brought out a torch procession

in the city yesterday evening.

demanding equal rights for

women and security and free

movement of women in soci-

organisations.

Chittagong.

Important road islands will

The day will also be ob-

The IWDOC will organise

Dhanmondi, at 4:00 pm.

Steps Towards Develop-

the Disabled has organised a

guests respectively.

# 7 more MPs

Seven more newly elected

Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali

The MPs who took oath yesterday are: Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Barrister M Raliqui Islam Mia. Lt Gen (reid) Mir Shawkat Ali, Major (Retd) Monjur Kader, Shamsuzzaman Khan, M Mojahar Hossain and Sultan Mahfuz

### Attack on rally

seven shots, injuring one per son in the head. He alleged that the attack was made to

correspondent.

The bullet hit man, aged about 40, whose identity could not be known, was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in a critical condition. Some party workers were yet to ascertain his iden-

### Int'l Women's Day orial Hall, at 4 pm. State

From Page 1

women should make every effort to establish their right to stand on their own feet and live with dignity. "The main demands of women are peace. prosperity and coexistence in society with equality," she said. To mark the day, various organisations have drawn up

elaborate programmes, including rallies and discussion The International Women's

Day Observance Committee (IWDOC), an apex body of 28 leading women's organisations and development agencies. will bring out a Women's Day procession at 8:45 am from the Bangla Motor in the city. It will end at the Ramna Botomul with a cultural function.

Another rally, organised by the Sammilita Nari Samaj with the slogan "Our protest, our resistance: Against repression of women, fundamentalism. communalism and oppression", will start at 8:30 am from the Central Shaheed Minar in the city. It will end in front of the National Museum, Shahbag, with the reading of a declaration, to be followed by a cultural function.

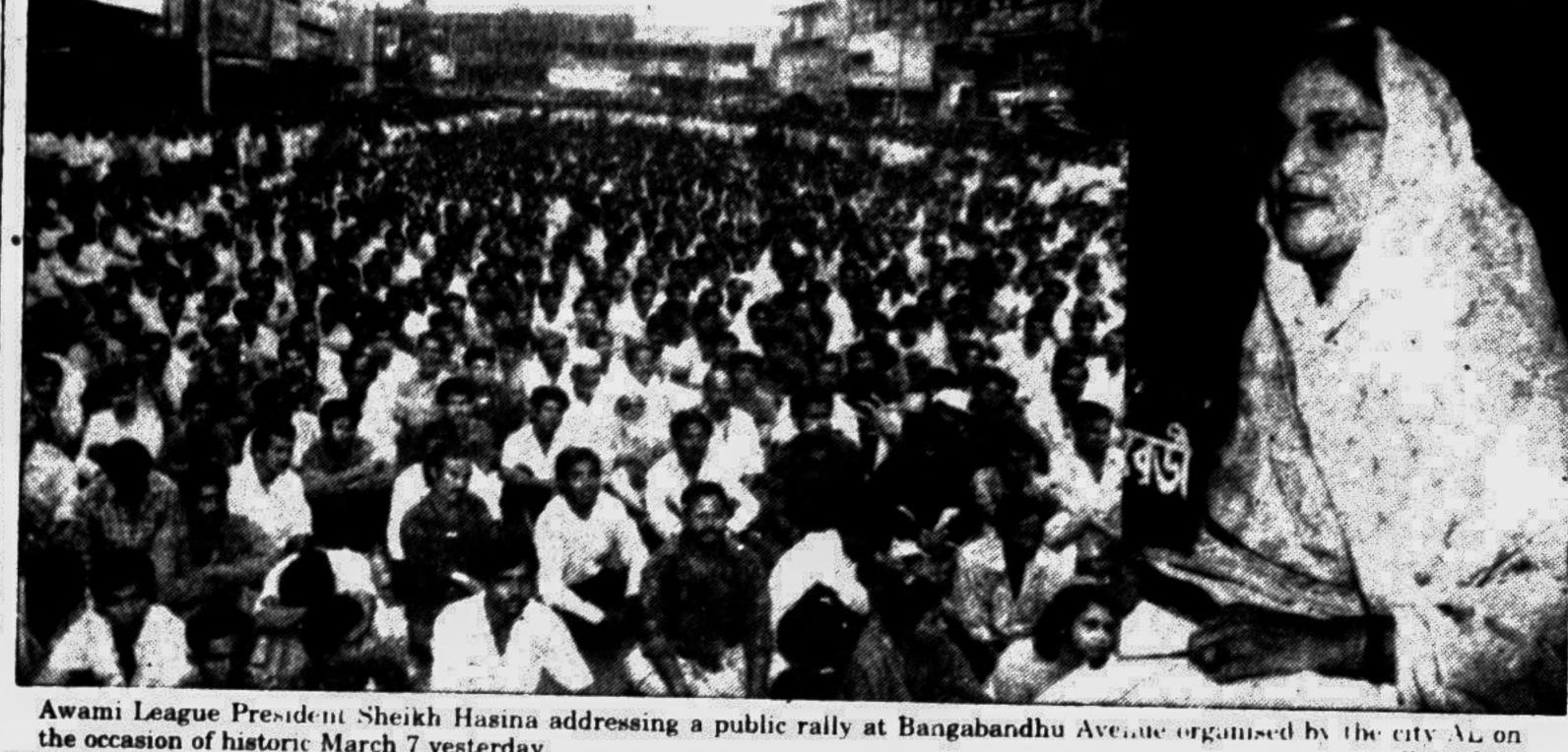
The United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) will hold a seminar at the Bangladesh Scouts auditorium, Kakrail in the city at 10 am. Eminent researcher on women's rights, Raushan Jahan.

will be the main speaker. The Jatiya Mahila Sangstha will bring out a procession, to be led by the State Minister for Women and Children Affairs, Begum Sarwari Rahman, from the National Museum in the city, at 3 pm.

Later a discussion meeting. organised by the Women and Children Affairs Ministry, will be held at the Osmani Mem-

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The Baily Star

the occasion of historic March 7 yesterday

#### Int'l workshop on jute opens in Calcutta

By Staff Correspondent A three-day international

workshop on improving the physico-chemical properties of jute for development of value added and diversified jute products began yesterday in the Indian city of Calcutta, according to a message received here. In this concluding work-

shop, jointly organised by International Jute Organisation and the Indian Jute Industries Research Association, three national project leaders representing Bangladesh. China and India would present draft "consolidated report" of the project and draft product manuals for review and subsequent approval

Three institutes - Bangladesh Jute Research Institute (BJRI). China Zhejiang Jute Research Institute (CZJRI) and the Indian Jute Research Industries Association (IJIRA) - are participating in the project which is being implemented by the International Jute Organisation (IJO) since

#### 10 vehicles damaged

By DU Correspondent

The activists of Awami League-backed Chhatra League (BCL) damaged some 10 vehicles yesterday evening around TSC of the Dhaka University. Some ten rounds of gun-

shots were also heard from the area during the incident. Sources said that the BCL activists went on rampage protesting the attack on Awami League public meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday.

#### Conversion of 1000 analog phone sets into digital

begins in city The conversion of one thousand analog telephone sets (numbering .310000 to 310999) belonging to "31" group of the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Exchange into digital system began yesterday after-

noon, reports BSS. The conversion was technically and ceremonially inaugurated through telephonic conversation between Post and Telecommunications Minister Tariqui Islam and T and T Board Chairman M H

Chowdhury. During the brief conversation the T and T minister expressed his satisfaction saying that with the conversion into digital system the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Exchange would move one step forward in the development of telecommuni-

Later talking to some subscribers during conversion of their respective analog sets the T and T Board chairman informed them that every subscribers would be given digital telephone sets free of cost. But the existing subscribers have to return back their analog telephone sets to the T and T authorities. Besides, one leaflet containing the rules for using the digital phone would be supplied to each subscribers for their benefits.

#### Hartals

From Page 1 and police firing' in Khulna during the Prime Minister's election tour there.

Besides, another half-day hartal was observed in the city on February 3 by the Opposition, condemning police attack' on students of Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University on January 31, a day before the Prime Minister opened Ekushey Book Fair.

In their bid to resist the February 15 elections, the opposition parties had gone for a countrywide rail-road-waterways barricade programme on February 13.

From the next day, they went for a 48-hour shutdown. covering the poll day. After the elections, they

went ahead with a four and half-day non-cooperation programme from February 24 to 28 throughout the country, demanding cancellation of the February 15 'farcical' polls.

The Opposition then called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in Dhaka and five adjoining districts on Wednesday, after rescheduling it twice. A BNP public rally was also held in the city on the day.

## Violence following mayor's arrest

### Tk 20 cr property damaged, 25 cases filed in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 7: At least 25 cases and general diaries (GD) were recorded with the different police stations of Chittagong Metropolitan Police in connection with incidents of violence which ripped through the port city following the arrest of CCC Mayor Mohiuddin Chowdhury on February

Of those, 15 cases and general diaries were recorded with Doublemooring thana as maximum number of incidents of arson, looting and damaging of banks and business houses occurred at Agrabad commercial area, police sources said.

The estimated loss of property might reach Taka 20 crore including the extent of damage caused to the vehicles most of which were torched by the agitators, the sources Sources at the Chittagong

chamber of Commerce and Industries also estimated the loss of property in the violence, at between Taka 20 crore to Taka 25 crore. Chittagong chamber itself

suffered a loss of property worth about taka 2 lakh. sources added. The severest loss was sustained by Biman office here to the amount of Taka 8 crore.

chamber and Biman sources

#### C'Nawabganj AL leader succumbs to injuries

From Our Correspondent RAJSHAHI, Mar 7: The general secretary of Awami League Chapai Nawabgani sadar thana unit succumbed to his injuries at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital this evening.

Fazlur Rahman, along with 10 other partymen, was injured during a clash with policemen in the Chapai Nawabganj court premises yes-

The clash started when the Awami League activists damaged two vehicles of the district administration. The Awami League brought out a procession to protest the alleged attack of BNP supporters on an Awami League procession at Rahanpur the previous

Meanwhile five leaders and workers of the Awami League arrested during the clash were released on bail today.

At Agrabad Commercial area. James Finlay Ltd. a British-owned company, suffered a loss of about Taka 2 crore as the Finlay House was severely damaged when the agitators set it on fire on that day, company sources said.

Besides, City Bank branch, American Express Bank at Agrabad and Rangs Ltd office at Muradpur were among other commercial organisations which were affected, police sources and fire brigade sources said.

However, many other incidents of damage remained unrecorded with police.

Meanwhile, police sources said investigation into those cases would be started soon to go for legal action against the law breakers.

#### Expelled BNP candidate defeats rival in Rangunia

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 7: Dissident candidate Nurul Alam, expelled earlier from the BNP for defying the party nomination, was unofficially declared elected from Rangunia constituency in the repolling held today. According to the district

election control room, Nurul Alam, who contested as an independent candidate failing to obtain BNP nomination, bagged a total of 53,021 votes while his nearest rival BNP nominee Adil Hossain secured 20,785 votes.

In Rangunia constituency repolling was held in 40 centres today amid tight security and polling in 28 other centres were held on February 15.

Repolling was also held in Mirersharai constituency where BNP candidate Obaidul Hug Khondakar was unofficially declared elected. He bagged 30.229 votes and his nearest rival M Monjur Alam, an independent candidate, got only 3.016 votes, election control room sources here said.

At least 10 people were injured at Mirersharai from bomb blasts during repolling today while 13 presiding officers were kidnapped last night



The Sammilita Nari Samaj brought out a torch procession in the city yesterday on the occasion of the International Women's Day today. - Star photo

#### - Star photo Hasina

From Page 1 not complete his movement for economic emancipation of the people as he was assassi-

nated in 1975, she told the

meeting. Hasina said post-75 regimes started the game of stealing people's vote to stick to power and amassed money. Begum Zia's government also followed the same policy, she said.

"This government has stolen people's votes in the name of protecting Constitution, but the Prime Minister herself violated Article 71 of the Constitution by taking oath before completion of her election in Feni-2 seat."

Accusing the government and the Election Commission of holding farce in the name of vote and causing bloodshed. she said at least 60 people had so far been killed by government forces. "The Prime Minister, the

Chief Election Commissioner and the EC Secretary will be held responsible for the killings and stealing votes. Hasina warned.

The rally, marred by bomb blasts, gunshots and teargasing, was also addressed by Zil lur Rahman. Amir Hossain Amu. Mayor Mohammad Hanii Obaidul Kader. Momtaz Hossain and Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya.

#### AL leaders meet CEC

By Staff Correspondent

Senior Awami League leaders yesterday called on Chief Election Commissioner (CEC Justice AKM Sadeque seeking cancellation of the February 15 elections as well as the repollings. According to a party press

release, the AL leaders questioned the legitimacy of the polls held amid widespread rigging and vote fraud. They also pointed out that the failure to hold a free and

fair elections had resulted into violation of the Constitution. AL leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Abdul Mannan, Amir Hossain Amu. Tofael Ahmed Abdur Razzak, Abdul Jalil were

present, among others, at the meeting. The opposition leaders urged Justice Sadeque to advise to the President to hold fresh elections to a fully-contested Sixth Jatiya Sangsad. the press release said.

### One stabbed to death in city

By Staff Correspondent A driver of Bangladesh

Television was stabbed to death reportedly by his cousin in Debari area under Uttara thana in the city Wednesday afternoon. Bazlur Rahman who used to live at Rampura, was found

hanging from a tree with fatal stab injuries in his body, police said. They recovered the body Wednesday night and sent it to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy Meanwhile, police have ar-

rested one Kader in this connection. They were interrogating him till last night. .

#### Rush at banks

From Page 1

debit in advance." he added. One private service holder

while drawing his savings from the AB Bank in Motijheel said "I will have to have the whole month's expenses in my hand and have to buy essentials needed for the rest of the month by tomorrow. Bankers expressed their

deep concern about the fate of business in the country which. they say, was on the verge of collapse. They said that those who have taken credit against im-

port of essential commodities have sought extension of their facilities from the banks since they are unable to sell their commodities in their present situation of the country. "The most affected busi nessmen belong to Chittagong

- which we consider as the commercial hub of the country Because of the grave situation in the country, their projects are becoming sick. Therefore, their loans with the banks will become bad debt," a senior official of a private bank pointed

Because of the existing economic stagnation, the amount of bank commission is decreasing and banks are now unable to open fresh LCs or loans, he added

# The Midnight Kile

30 feared dead in Bombay building collapse

BOMBAY. Mar 7: At least 30 people are feared dead after the collapse of a five-storey building in the commercial district of central Bombay late today, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said. Police said at least 50 people were trapped inside the Navre apartments at Sion Circle. A fire brigade spokesman said there could be many casualties, reports AFP.

## DCCI for fundamental change in govt stance

The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) has called for a 'fundamental change" in the government stance to bring the opposition in fresh polls under a caretaker government within a specific time, reports "Piecemeal concessions

prolonging the crisis," Ali Hossain, president of the DCCI, said in a press statement yes-Hossain viewed that a greater share of the responsi-

given to the other side is only

bility for resolving the national crisis lay with the government than with the opposition. "The party which assumes power must also assume responsibil-"To show its sincerity in

finding a solution and save the nation from further hardship and costs, the government

must come forthwith fundamental changes in its stance." the statement said.

The change should "ensure participatory role of the combined opposition in drawing out the blueprint for holding fresh elections under a neutral caretaker government within a specific date", the chamber leader said.

He reminded that as businessmen they were not taking sides in the public arena. "But as taxpayers, businessmen will hold the government accountable for further delays in resolving the crisis.

Hossain also warned that the country was sliding into a situation of "total breakdown" in every sphere. "It is the government's responsibility to prevent this from happening. And if that means having to concede, the government must

#### BDR firing kills one Rangpur-3 (Sadar)

From Page 1 Kishoreganj-2 (Katiadi). Kishoreganj-4 (Karimganj-Tarail) and Kishoreganj-7 (Bhairab-Kuliarchar).

Sirajganj A dawn-to-dusk hartal was

observed in Sirajganj today. The opposition called the hartal protesting Wednesday's killings at Bhuyangati centre in Raviganj thana during repolling in the constituency. Witnesses said shops and

mained closed, and all sorts of vehicles staved off the streets during the hartal hours. Meanwhile. BNP candidates Shahidullah Khan and Ansar Ali Siddiqi were elected members

educational institutions re-

of parliament from Sirajganj-5 and Sirajganj-6 constituencies. According to unofficial results, Shahidullah Khan bagged 11,498 votes while Ansar Ali

polled 18,372. Our Correspondent adds: Ullapara BNP office was set on fire today by anti-election activists a day ahead of repolling

Sirajganj-4 (Ollapara) constituencies. Kangpur

in Sirajganj-1 (Kazipur) and

Our Correspondent from Rangpur says, a huge mob today gheraoed the Kotwali thana and forced the polling officials out from thana premises leaving behind ballot boxes and papers there.

The officials earlier went there to collect those for tomorrow's repoiling in

### Jubo Dal worker shot dead in city

By DMCH Correspondent dashimuddin Sagar, a Jubo Dal activist shot at by unidentified gunmen, succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) last night

Sagar, son of Nawab Miah of 165. Free School Street, was a dealer of garments jute (waste clothes), said his relatives. At least five rounds of bullets were fired at him.

According to his relatives and witnesses, armed gangsters riding two autorickshaws came and opened fire at Sagar near his Green Road residence at around 8:30 pm.

#### One killed From Page 1

Hospital for autopsy. The victims travelling in a hired microbus were returning to Comilla after seeing off one of their relatives. Abdul Goni at Zia International Airport, po-

lice said. The wife and sister-in-law of Goni. were injured in the accident that occurred at around 5:30 am . railway police

There were also reports of anti-election agitations in Rangpur-2 (Badarganj-Tara-

chhara). The officials could not carry ballot boxes and papers to the polling centres there. Narayanganj Our Correspondent from Narayanganj says: Re-polling in 34 centres out of total 73 in

ganj) and Rangpur-1 (Ganga-

The main opposition political parties have called a 'mass curlew' tomorrow to resist the re-polling.

Narayanganj-5 constituency is

scheduled to be held tomor-

Meanwhile, at least 20 people were injured, three of them seriously, when unidentifled groups attacked a procession brought out this evening by Awami League in support of their anti-election programme.

#### 177 DU teachers concerned

By Staff Correspondent Some 177 teachers of the Dhaka. University have expressed deep concern over the political crisis in the country which had affected the economy as well as the education system and urged the government and the Opposition to reach a settlement through

negotiation. In a joint statement on Wednesday they said that there was no alternative to dialogues and understanding in resolving the crisis.

The statement was signed. among others, by Dr Mustafizur Rahman, Abdus Sattar, Dr ZN Tahmida Begum, Dr Yusuf Haider, Dr Abul Kalam Manzur, M Shajahan Mia and Mohammad Asaduzzaman.

#### BNP ready

From Page

But we need her (Hasina's cooperation for this." Another BNP source told this correspondent last night that they had no problem in sitting for a dialogue with the Opposition under the initiative of the President. But, he hastened to add, the ruling party could not accept the proposal for cancellation of the

talks. The ruling party would respond to the AL suggestions after further discussing those in the party forum and receiving Hasina's reply to Begum Zia's letter, sources said. The party was also contemplating going ahead with steps to implement the PM's proposals for future polls under nonparty government along with its attempts to reach a consensus on the issue, they added.

February 15 elections for such

## Matiya's detention

filed on behalf of Matiya Chowdhury. Even the prosecution was prepared with video cassette. TV set and videoplayer to display the activities of Matiya Chowdhury during the non-cooperation programme of the Opposition.

Barrister Amir-ul Islam. chief counsel for Matiya Chowdhury, submitted that there is no nexus between the initial order of detention and the grounds of detention and as such, the detention is ille-

The defence lawyer also submitted that the grounds were served upon the detenu after 13 days of her arrest which is violative of the mandatory provisions of Article 33 of the Constitution and section 8 of the Special Pow ers Act, 1974

He further submitted that the grounds did not specify the time, place, manner of the occurrence and the involvement of the detenu The grounds neither specified as to whither any meeting or assembly were declared illegal or banned.

Even the affidavit in opposition did not say how the detenu prevented the police from performing their official duties," the defence counsel argued.

"To criticise the government or to organise a democratic movement is the fundamental and constitutional right of the detenu," Barrister Islam submitted.

He also submitted that the order of detention was not issued with the satisfaction of the Deputy Commissioner and as such, the same is ultravires. illegal and without lawful au thority.

Earlier on February 28

Justice Mohammad Abdul Mannan of the division bench of the HC presided over by Justice Bimalendu Bikash Roy Chowdhury felt embarrassment to entertain the case of Mativa Chowdhury. The case was sent to the Chief Justice who referred the case to the present bench for disposal of the same

Begum Matiya Chowdhury was arrested on February 24 from in front of the National Press Club, Dhaka during the non-cooperation programme of the Opposition and subsequently was given 30 days de tention under the Special

Powers Act