

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Children's Parks of Dhaka

by Samia Islam

Going past the children's play area in Ramna Park, one has to wonder what happened to the amusement park equipment. Only a twisted metal bar is left as a twisted metal bar. The force to bring about such devastation to metal bar as far as I know Dhaka hasn't come in the path of a tornado of such magnitude in recent years. There is, of course, the possibility of an alien landing or the existence of an energy vortex, but those things happen only in the developed world. So if it wasn't nature or the little green men, then it must be the only other potent force of nature that has the sheer muscle power to cause such destruction — the human phenomenon.

Leave it to us the denizen of Dhaka, to devise ways of using public property in our homes or as a means of earning a livelihood and we take the cake in coming up with new, ever-baffling ideas. I mean who'd have thought about selling man-hole lids for profit? Or melting one taka coins to make spoons? Or, taking down publicity banners on the roads to make tea stall awnings? You name it. We can always come up with a plan to surreptitiously take something that does not belong to us and use it to our advantage. The more taboo an object, the greater the thrill and craving for it. So it is only natural that when we see wide open spaces with metallic objects shining in the sun (admit it, we do have a soft spot for metal, they rake in big profits), we feel obliged to yield to our in-built urge to take it down, root it out, saw it in half — whatever it takes, because the pleasure of destruction is so high that no vandalism junkie can ever pass it up.

In Shyamoli, there is a children's play ground-cum-park that the erstwhile government of H. M. Ershad had built for the amusement of the children of the area. But the number of kids who got to enjoy the swings, monkey ladders and see-saws is a matter of conjecture because not much of the original equipment remain today.

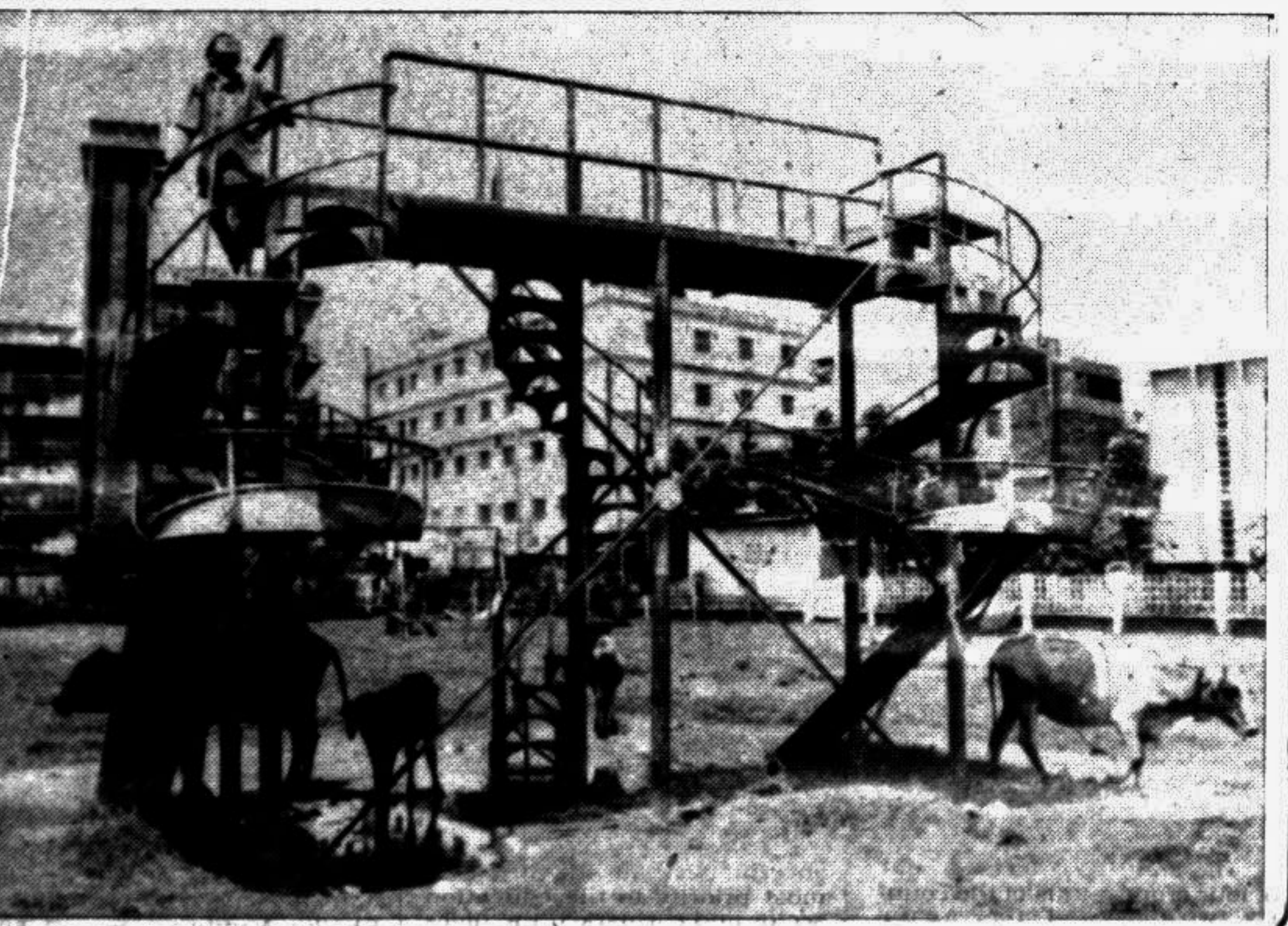
The so-called children's park hardly has an

equipment intact. Swings do not have seats or the chains are broken in half. The monkey ladders lie flat on their sides. It seems that the bases have been sawed off. The structure as a whole is so gangly that creative as these professionals are in rampant destruction and money-making schemes, even they couldn't think up an imaginative way to use the grid monstrosities. The same goes for the Ramna Park enclave for kids. Here the swings don't have seats but the arches swing on them anyway holding on to the chains dangling from one side.

The slides are rusty and chunks are missing in places. Most of all the place is so notorious that it's totally unsafe for children who are not street-wise.

However, blaming the dilapidation of these parks solely on the recycling businessmen (!) is not altogether fair. This sort of senseless but systematic destruction does not only come about from the need to earn a living in the city. It's also due to the lack of proper or no maintenance or supervision of these grounds. There are no gatekeepers or security personnels present in the vicinity of the parks. The gates are wide open (sometimes missing altogether). At times, stray animals can be found grazing inside. Cow dung and even human faces litter the places.

One government makes Dhaka picture-perfect on some whimsical impulse and the next government is busy ignoring any effort ever made by its predecessors. This cycle of denial goes on, draining the country financially because all said and done these are costly imported equipment. They don't belong to any regime but rather to the public. If the authorities don't have the time or patience to oversee the upkeep of these parks, then why waste money on them in the first place? For the children? Children are at risk when they use the damaged, rickety and dilapidated facilities.



### One allegedly commits suicide in city

A youth allegedly committed suicide at his residence in north Badda in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

Police said Abdullah Al Mamun, 24, son of Siddiqur Rahman, 509 Maghbazar Noyatofa, killed himself by hanging from the ceiling of his north Badda residence in between 10 to 11 am.

He was living at the rented house with his newly married wife. The cause behind the suicide could not be known.

Being informed, Gulshan police recovered the body and sent it to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

### Wrong time!

The BANSDOC information centre's LCD display public clock at Science Laboratory crossing in the city is 11 minutes faster than the country's time, reports Probe news agency.

At 8 pm Thursday night, the watch was displaying 8:11 pm.

"We know science is always advanced. It is therefore not surprising that the clock of the Science Laboratory is running 11 minutes ahead," a humorous rickshaw passenger quipped.

### Islamic varsity classes resume today

Classes of Islamic University in Kushtia resume today after 17 days of closure due to a teachers' strike, reports UNB.

Islamic University Teachers' Association (IUTA) enforced the strike August 20 to press for introducing rotation system in selecting chairpersons of various departments.

The strike was called off at an emergency meeting of IUTA Sept 3 after a fruitful discussion with Education Minister A S M K Sadek on Sept 1.

### Mahmuda Begum dead

Mosammat Mahmuda Begum, wife of Afsaruddin Ahmed and niece of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, died at the Combined Military Hospital in the city last night. She was suffering from cancer, reports BSS.

Her namaz-e-janaza will be held today after Zohar prayers at the Baitul Mokarram National Mosque.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at the death of Mahmuda Begum. In a condolence message, she prayed for the peace of the departed soul and expressed heartfelt sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

### Workshop for editing assistants opens in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Sept 6: A seven-day workshop on language and cultural awareness for the editing assistants of local newspapers began here today, reports BSS.

The workshop, organised by Chittagong Press Club in collaboration with Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts (BITA), was inaugurated by chairman of the journalism department of Chittagong University Prof Maniruzzaman.

The inaugural session, held at Chittagong Press Club, was presided over by club president Mohammad Idress and addressed by chief executive of BITA Shishir Datta. Prof Mahbubul Haq, general secretary of the Chittagong Union of Journalists Shahidul Alam and press club secretary Helaluddin Chowdhury.

Prof Maniruzzaman, in his opening remarks, said the use of language in journalism is the direct system of communication in society. He urged the journalists to be more attentive in using language while editing.

Some eighteen editing assistants of local Bengali dailies are taking part in the workshop, in which, Prof Hayat Mahmood of Jahangirnagar University, assistant editor of the Daily Star Wahedul Haque, resident editor of the Bhorer Kagal Abul Momen and Prof Mahbubul Haq will be the resource persons.

### Speaker condoles death of Salman

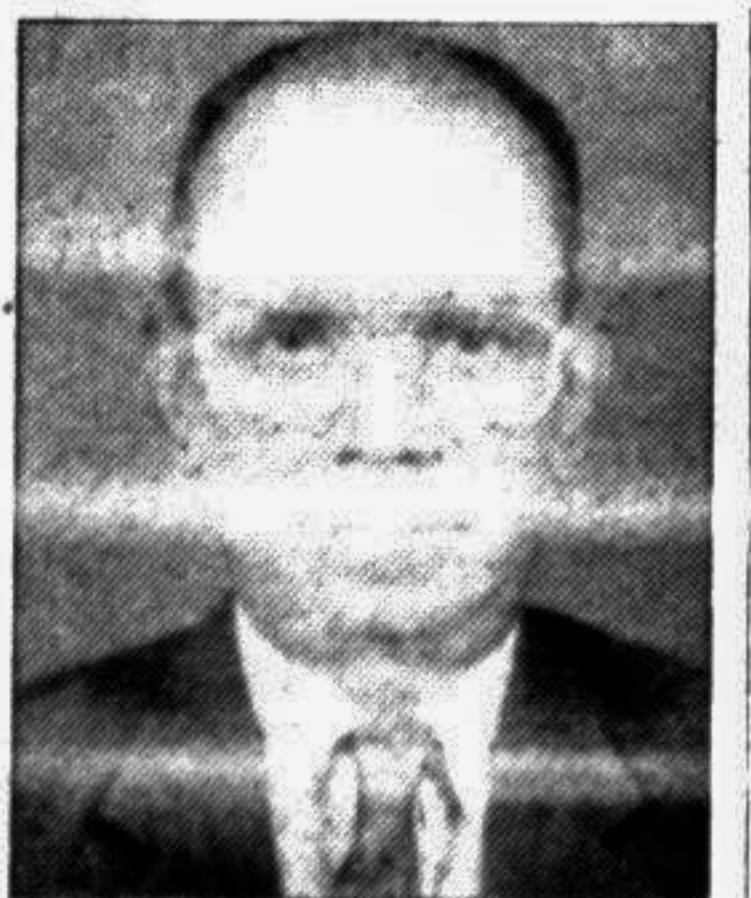
Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Humayun Rashid Chowdhury has expressed his deep shock at the death of rising film star Salman Shah, reports BSS.

In a condolence message yesterday, the Speaker said in his death the country had lost a promising film artist of the country.

The Speaker conveyed his deep sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for the peace of the departed soul.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Kader yesterday condoled the death of the young rising film hero Salman Shah.

In a message he observed that Salman had opened up a new horizon in the film and it would be difficult to fulfill the vacuum created in his death.



### Prof Noman dead

Professor Muhammad Noman, a former Vice Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University and Principal of Dhaka College, died of kidney failure yesterday morning at a city clinic, reports BSS.

Prof Noman, 72, was well respected by a large number of students.

His namaz-e-janaza was held yesterday at Baitul Mannur Mosque at Elephant Road after Juma prayers. Later, he was buried at the Azimpur New Graveyard.

A recipient of Ekushey Padak in 1994 for his outstanding contribution in education, Prof Noman also received the President's Award as best teacher in 1970.

He has left behind his wife, three daughters, one son and a host of relations and admirers to mourn his death.

The qulhwani of Prof Noman will be held Monday after Asr prayers at his residence at 147D Green Road.

### President condoles

President Abdur Rahman Biswas has expressed his deep shock at the death of Prof Muhammad Noman, reports UNB.

In a condolence message yesterday, President Biswas said a dedicated educationist Prof Noman was a perfect gentleman and a real humanist.

President Biswas recalled his personal friendship with late Noman and said the country has lost a dedicated teacher and a soul who always worked for the well-being of his students.

### PM condoles

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of former Vice Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University Prof Muhammad Noman, reports BSS.

In a condolence message the Prime Minister said Prof Noman has devoted his entire career for the promotion of education in the country.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking as the chief guest at a memorial meet on former National Professor Dr Md Ibrahim, organised by the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh commemorating his 7th death anniversary yesterday at the BIRDEM auditorium in the city. — PID photo

### PM meets NAP leaders

## Cooperation of all sought in restoring discipline

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought cooperation of all in restoring discipline in all spheres to ensure overall development of the country, reports UNB.

Improvement of law and order is a must for rapid development of the country, she said while exchanging views with the National Awami Party (NAP) leadership at Ganobhaban in the morning.

"Awami League is back in power after 21 years," she said, adding, "Our aim is to build up the country and bring smiles on the face of common people."

Hasina said Bangabandhu had brought independence of the country, but he was killed when he began implementing his economic programmes.

"Those who came to power after the killing of Bangabandhu had taken the country in the opposite direction," she observed. "We have struggled for the last 21 years to bring the country back onto the right track," she said.

"Our aim is to bring changes in the lot of common people by taking timely and appropriate steps," the Prime Minister said and sought cooperation of all in fulfilling the objective.

In this context, she referred to the change in Awami League's economic policy. "We'll have to adapt ourselves with the global change, but we'll not change our aims and objectives. Our main objective is to fulfill the basic needs of people."

Referring to the budgetary provision of agri-subsidy, Hasina said there was pressure from the World Bank and other

donor agencies for not providing subsidy in the agriculture sector.

Her government would do everything possible to support the farmers, she said, recalling that some 18 farmers were killed during the tenure of BNP government. "The farmers, who sacrificed their blood, cannot be ignored."

The Prime Minister said she has directed the Industries Ministry to look for alternative employment for the workers who will lose their jobs in case of denationalisation.

"The country just cannot bear the mounting liabilities of the non-profit making mills and factories," she said, but assured that the government would not do anything before finding alternative jobs for the workers.

Hasina, however, said the workers will be given the opportunity, if they want, to run such mills or factories with the money they will be getting prior to denationalisation.

The government, she added, will also provide allot support to the workers if they want to invest their money in other productive activities.

About the ensuing Aid Club meeting in Paris, the prime minister said Bangladesh will commit only what can be done, and, "not make any lofty promises like the previous government that cannot be implemented."

Responding to a suggestion of the NAP leaders to be more strict in dealing with terrorism, Hasina alleged that a certain quarter has resorted to terror-

ism "as we have spoken about wiping out terrorism."

She pointed out that tender is the root cause of campus terrorism. The tender system will be changed, she added.

The prime minister said appointment of the Dhaka University vice-chancellor would be governed by the existing system.

Emphasising on national consensus, Hasina said Justice Shahabuddin was chosen as the President to bring back confidence among the people as he was supported by all in 1990.

Hopes and aspiration of the anti-autocratic movement had been destroyed by BNP during its five years rule, she added.

Referring to Thursday's election, the Prime Minister said she did not go for campaigning following a request from the Election Commission. "We don't want to revive the Magura incident."

During the meeting, NAP leader Amena Ahmed suggested revival of the 1972 Constitution and to implement the spirit of the Liberation War.

The NAP leaders assured the Prime Minister of their all-out cooperation in building a "Sonar Bangla" (Golden Bengal) as dreamt by Bangabandhu.

The NAP leaders present at the meeting included Advocate Nurul Alam, Syed Ashraf Chowdhury Khurshid Alam, Principal Abul Hasan Khorshed, Abdul Gani, Advocate MA Wahab, Abul Hasan, Advocate Amatul Islam, Advocate Shaiful Rahman, Khandaker Ataul Huq and Syed Mansurul Haq.

### Upazila system to be reintroduced soon: Zillur

NARAYANGANJ, Sept 6: LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman today said the upazila system, abolished by the previous BNP government, would be reintroduced soon for activating the rural economy as well as fulfilling the aspirations of the people, reports BSS.

The past government had made the rural economic activities stagnant by abolishing the upazila system without adopting any alternative local government system," he said while addressing a public meeting at Bandar thana area here.

Rahman said the government was taking initiatives for more decentralisation and democratisation of union parishad to ensure the representation of all rural people.

S M Akram MP, Emdadul Haq Bhuiyan MP, Shamim Osman MP, Awami League leaders Mostafa Sarwar, M A Karim, and president and general secretary of district unit of the party, Ansar Ali and Mafizur Rahman, among others, spoke on the occasion.

The minister said the government was pledge-bound to eradicate poverty, hunger, unemployment and terrorism from society and sought cooperation of the people of all walks of life to supplement the government efforts.

He said the present government had made "new history" by running the country through national consensus.

Earlier, the minister released fish fry at a pond at Madanpur thana of the district, on the occasion of the ongoing Fish Fortnight '96.

### What's on today....

**Discussion on Bangabandhu:** Muktiyuddah Smriti Rakha Parishad has organised a discussion on Bangabandhu in observance of the 21st anniversary of death of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Chief guest: Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak. Venue: National Sports Council auditorium. Time: 5 pm.

**Nazrul song:** Eminent vocalist Khalid Hossain will render Nazrul songs at a function organised by Narigrantha Prabartana in observance of the anniversary of death of national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam. Venue: Narigrantha Prabartana, 2/8 Sir Syed Road, Mohammadpur. Time: 4 pm.

**Gono Forum founding anniversary:** A discussion meeting will be held in observance of the third founding anniversary of Gono Forum. Dr Kamal Hossain will preside. Venue: Engineers' Institution auditorium. Time: 4 pm.

**Rotary Club of Dhaka Capital:** The weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Officers Club, Baily Road. Time: 5:30 pm.

**Rotaract Club of Notre Dame College:** The 6th installation ceremony of the club will be held. Venue: Notre Dame College auditorium. Time: 5:30 pm.



LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman speaking at a public meeting at Bandar thana of Narayanganj yesterday. — PID photo

### Setting up of English medium schools in Ctg stressed

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 6: Speakers at a seminar here stressed the need for setting up English medium schools for helping the children in the pursuit of standard education to cope with the global advancements of knowledge.

Besides, it would help to curb the trend of sending children abroad for standard education, they felt.

The speakers also hailed the move for establishing Chittagong Institute for Development of Education and Research (CIDER) which would facilitate teaching in English medium schools here.

The seminar, organised in connection with the setting up

of CIDER, was held at the seminar hall of Paharoli Eye Infirmary Hospital this afternoon. It was chaired by Prof Dr Rabiul Hossain. Among others, who took part in the discussion and presented papers, were Commodore AZ Mizan, Sultana Nizam, Dr Iftekhar Uddin Chowdhury, Salauddin Kasem Khan, Col (rtd) Ziauddin Ahmed, Major (rtd) Solaiman, Dr Mahbub Kamal, Moulana Habibur Rahman, Editor of The Daily Star, Mahfuz Anam.

The speakers urged the government to assist in establishing English medium school in Chittagong which is widely felt as an absolute necessity.

## Communal harmony must for democracy: Speaker

Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Humayun Rashid Chowdhury said yesterday that communal harmony was a prerequisite for giving firm roots to democracy, reports BSS.

where minorities would be assured of equal rights and privileges.

Mosharraf called upon the minority communities to assert their rights against any injustice as a citizen by birth. Otherwise, he said, "you will fail to play the role of a responsible citizen."

The minister said the present government would take every steps to reform or repeal laws which were discriminatory to the minority.

Addressing a discussion organised to mark the birth anniversary of Lord Sri Krishna by Mahanagar Sarbajamin Puja Committee and Janmastami Utsav Committee at Dhakeswari Mandir in the city, the speaker said economic development could not be attained through strengthening democratic system unless all kinds of regionalism and communalism were shunned.

Chowdhury said there should be solution to the problems of minorities.

The speaker said that he would give opportunities in the Jatiya Sangsad to implement any effort to bring about reform aimed at solving the problem of the minorities.

State Minister for Land Rashed Mosharraf also spoke on the occasion as the special guest. He said, "We have to create a congenial atmosphere

Justice Debesh Chandra Bhattacharya, Chitra Bhattacharya MP, Dr Lalit Mohan Nag, Komal Bhushan Roy Chowdhury and Nirmal Kumar Deay took part in the discussion.

The speakers urged the government to solve the existing problem being faced by the Hindu community. They demanded repeal of Enemy Property Act establishment of Hindu Foundation after dissolving existing welfare trust and separate allocation in the budget for the minority community.

### Weather

## Light rain forecast

Light rain is likely at one or two places over Chittagong, Barisal, Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met. Office says weather may remain mainly dry elsewhere across the country with partly cloudy sky.

Day temperature is likely to rise by 1-2 degree Celsius during the period throughout the country.

Meantime, Sylhet experienced the highest rain 28 mm in the last 24 hours till 6 am yesterday. Dinajpur had 12 mm rain during the period.

Country's highest temperature 33.6 degree Celsius was recorded at Srirampal and the lowest 23.8 degrees at Sylhet.

The sun sets today at 06:11 pm and rises tomorrow at 05:43 am. Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns were:

City/Town Temperature in Celsius Humidity in percentage

max min morning evening

Dhaka 32.2 26.0 82 78

Chittagong 32.0 25.3 79 76

Rajshahi 32.0 25.8 86 92

Khulna 32.0 25.6 82 87

Barisal 31.6 25.2 82 85

Sylhet 30.0 23.8 92 73

Cox's Bazar 31.0 25.4 87 84

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Mr. A.F.M. Nizamuddin Haider, former lawyer of Pakistan and Bangladesh Supreme Court, a firm believer of above concept and a dedicated worker in establishing the Justice died on September 07, 1993.

May we request you to please keep him in your prayers of today and the tomorrows.

### RELIANCE INSURANCE LIMITED

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### NOTICE

### DISTRIBUTION OF DIVIDEND WARRANTS

The Dividend Warrants for the year 1995 of the Company are ready for distribution. Our valued shareholders are requested to collect their Dividend Warrants from the Registered Office of the Company during office hours from 08.09.96 to 22.09.96 after which the same will be despatched by post/courier at the risk of the shareholders.

By order of the Board

(Fakhmuddin Ahmed, M. Com., ACMA, FCA)

Secretary

September 5, 1996

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