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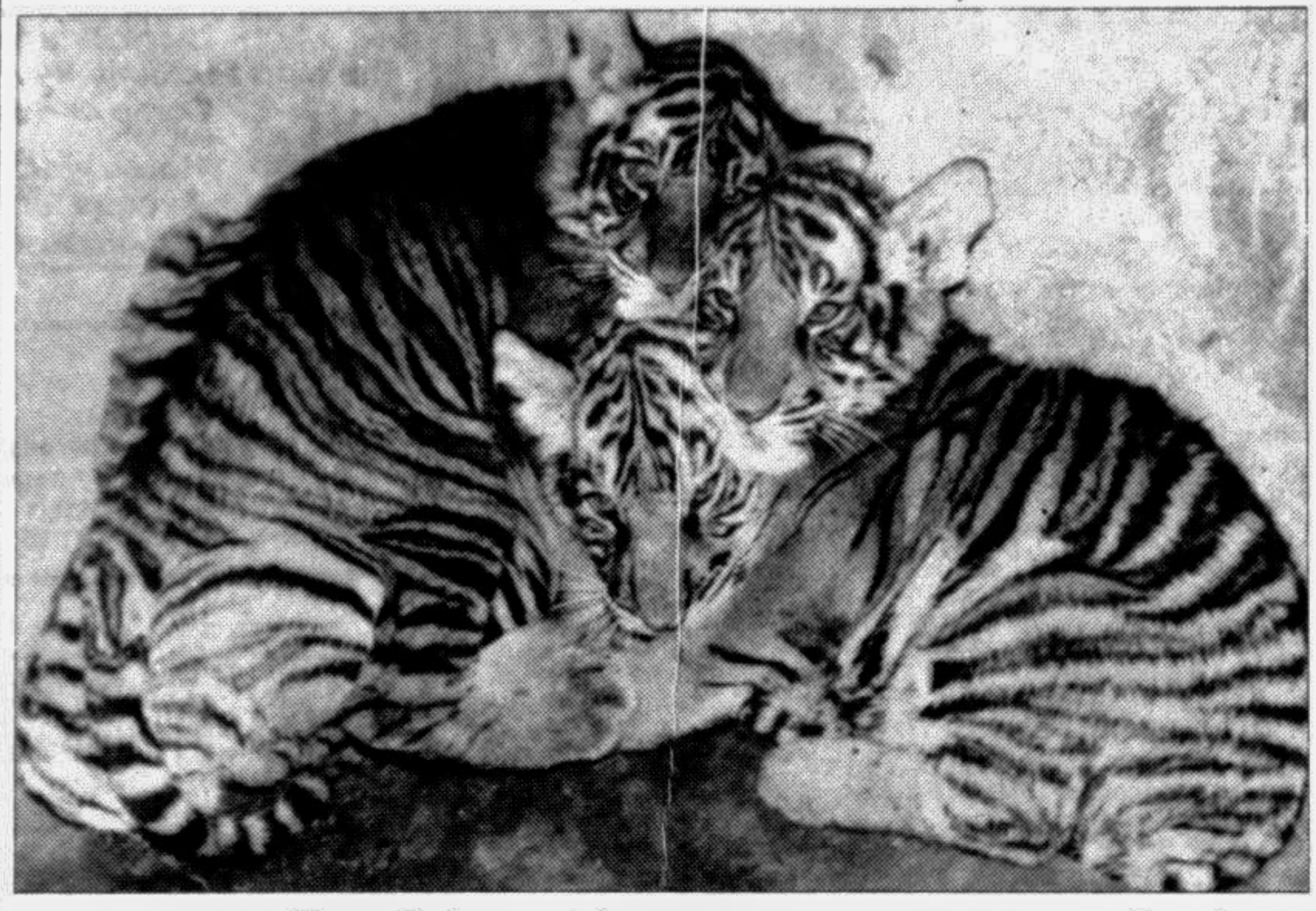
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Another tiger dies, five more sick



Three more cubs of Mirpur Zoo became sick. — Star photo

By Staff Correspondent

One of the four cubs of the Royal Bengal Tiger that died on Saturday under 'mysterious' circumstances, expired at the Dhaka Zoo on Wednesday while the three other cubs and two adult tigers are now 'very sick' and refusing food. Zoo officials said yesterday.

With the death of the cub, the total number of casualties rose to four in five days. Sources at the zoo feared that more deaths may occur.

At around 12:30 pm yesterday (Wednesday) I was told that the cubs were shivering in their cage, a little later one of them died," said the Zoo's Veterinary Officer adding that the three cubs had now been placed in quarantine.

When asked about the sex of the dead cub, the veterinary officer said that he was not aware of it. The cub was three months old.

Three tigers suddenly died at the Dhaka Zoo on Saturday and on Monday last while the cub died on Wednesday. The veterinary officer and others in the zoo suspected that the felines died of poisoning.

Sources at the zoo said that on the day before the incident, See Page 12 Col 4

Joint statement Dhaka, Delhi for 'fair & equitable' share of Ganges water

Bangladesh and India yesterday reiterated their intention of arriving at an agreement on a 'fair and equitable' sharing of the Ganges waters before the onset of the next dry season, according to a message received from New Delhi, reports BSS.

A joint statement issued in New Delhi at the end of Foreign Minister Abdus Samad's visit said that the two sides agreed that a further meeting of the joint committee of experts would be held in the very near future.

The foreign ministers of the two countries noted that the forthcoming meeting between the prime ministers of Bangladesh and India in the UN World Food Summit now being held in Rome would be very helpful in furthering the spirit of friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

On economic cooperation between the two countries, it was agreed that the Bangladesh-India Joint Economic Commission would meet as early as possible.

The two sides discussed ways and means for promoting Indo-Bangladesh trade with particular reference to the question of narrowing the trade gap.

Reference was made to the announcement given by the Indian External Affairs Minister during his visit to Bangladesh in September last that the Indian government would grant 14 categories of exports from Bangladesh 50 per cent tariff concessions across the board and the waiver of all quantitative restrictions in respect to those items.

The statement said that the Indian side reiterated its intention to complete all administrative formalities to make the decision operational by January 1, 1997.

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President assents to Indemnity (Repeal) Bill '96

President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday assented to the Indemnity (Repeal) Bill 1996 passed by parliament on Tuesday, reports UNB.

The President's assent to the Bill made it into a law removing all barriers to the trial of the August 15 killings of 1975.

The law scrapped the infamous Indemnity Ordinance which indemnified those who killed Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with his sons and toppled his government in a bloody coup on August 15, 1975.

The ordinance was promulgated on September 26, 1975 by the then president Khandaker Mushtaque Ahmed and later incorporated in the Constitution by the 5th Amendment on April 7, 1979.

The Indemnity (Repeal) Bill, 1996 was passed unanimously in Parliament by a simple majority on Tuesday night with 'Yes' votes from the ruling Awami League and Jatiya Party and JSD (Rob) members. Main opposition BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami were absent.

State Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Matin Khasru piloted the Bill on the same day for consideration of the House.

Dialogue: BNP sets 3 pre-conditions

By Nazmul Ashraf and Reaz Ahmad

BNP has set three pre-conditions — release of its leaders and workers detained at different jails of the country, starting implementation of the party's 10-point demand and creating a congenial atmosphere — for sitting for the dialogue offered by the government.

BNP, the major opposition party in the Jatiya Sangsad, is unlikely to return to the current session of parliament expected to be prorogued on November 21. The ongoing session is scheduled to resume on November 19.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition and BNP vice-chairman A Q M Badruddoza Choudhury communicated the pre-conditions to Parliamentary Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister Suranjit Sengupta, MP, yesterday morning, top leaders of both the parties told The Daily Star last night.

Suranjit telephoned B Choudhury at around 10 am to enquire about the fate of the ruling party's offer for a dialogue to resolve the crisis resulting from the BNP's continued abstention from the House since Monday last.

Reached by telephone, Suranjit told The Daily Star from the Habiganj circuit house late last night, "They've set pre-conditions when we've agreed to an unconditional dialogue. Now they should explain as to how to create the atmosphere they want."

Reacting to the pre-condition of releasing the political detainees, the AL leader said, "Let them come up with a list of the detainees belonging to the BNP."

He, however, denied the existence of any political detainees in the jails at the moment. He claimed that majority of the terrorists arrested since the AL government came to power had warrants of arrests against them issued during the BNP regime.

The AL negotiator said that he told B Choudhury, "We need to sit across the table at least for the sake of discussing your demands and evolving ways to implement those."

He added that "the AL is prepared to face any consequence if the BNP continued to decline to resolve the crisis, aggravating the situation."

When contacted last night, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP, confirmed his party's pre-conditions conveyed by B Choudhury. However, Choudhury was not available for comment.

Mannan Bhuiyan also said that his party does not find it a suitable atmosphere to join the proposed dialogue unless the government stopped repression on the Opposition political activists and free those detained at various jails on false charges.

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PM in Rome, addresses Food Summit tomorrow

ROME, Nov 14: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina arrived here this morning to lead the Bangladesh delegation at the World Food Summit sponsored by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), reports UNB.

A Biman flight carrying the Prime Minister landed at the Fiumicino airport in the Italian capital at 9:20 am (local time).

At the airport, Hasina was received by a cabinet level representative of the Italian government, FAO Assistant Director General AZM Obaiddullah Khan and Bangladesh Ambassador to Italy Khurshid Ahmed. Some Bangladeshi people living in Rome were present.

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Air Force needs to be modernised: President

President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed has stressed the need for modernising Air Force towards protecting the country's freedom and sovereignty, and keeping its image high in the international arena, reports UNB.

Addressing the officials of various ranks of the Bangladesh Air Force at the Air Force Headquarters yesterday morning, the President said, "We can not keep ourselves away from the stream of continuous advancement of science and technology of contemporary world."

President Shahabuddin, who is also the Supreme Commander of Armed Forces, observed that the members of the Air Force had shown high sense of responsibility, duty and discipline in the past.

"You are to take a lead in making it more effective and competitive," he added.

The President referred to the personal initiative of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for collecting Mig-21 Jet fighter and helicopters from the then Soviet Union and said that the country's Air Force started functioning following the formation of a squadron with those planes.

Paying rich tributes to the pride of the nation's Bir Mattur Rahman and other members of the Force, who laid their lives for the Liberation of the country, President Shahabuddin said the nation will gratefully remember their contribution for ever.

He stressed much on hard work and dedication.

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Aug 15, Nov 3 killing Chargesheets likely this month

Star Report

The chargesheets of both the cases of killing on August 15 and November 3, 1975 are likely to be submitted separately by the end of this month at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, according to official sources.

Following the passage of the Indemnity (Repeal) Act 1996 by the Jatiya Sangsad Tuesday last, there remains no legal bar for the trial of those responsible for killings.

Within a week of submission of chargesheets, the cases are likely to be transferred to the Sessions Court, the sources said.

The case in connection with the August 15 killing was lodged on October 2 with the Dhannandi thana by Mahiful Islam, the then Resident Personal Secretary to the founder President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with his family and some of his cabinet members and their families were killed on that night.

The case in connection with the jail killing in which four Awami League stalwarts were murdered inside the Dhaka Central Jail was lodged by the then DIG Prisons Abdul Awal on November 4, 1975, the day after the murder.

The CID officially took over the case after a lapse of almost 21 years, following the return of Awami League to the power.

DSE MARKET

DSE price index 3567.27
Market capital Tk 25416.26 cr
Transactions in volume 639776
Transactions in value Tk 48.66 cr

CSE MARKET

CSE price index 1655.88
Market capital Tk 18762.34 cr
Transactions in volume 167440
Transactions in value Tk 10.98 cr

NEWS BRIEFS

BNP executive body meets tomorrow

A meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will be held at the party's central office at 10 am tomorrow.

BNP Chairperson and leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia will preside over the meeting, said a party press release, reports UNB.

Int'l drama festival in Jan

A 10-day international drama festival will be held at the auditorium of Bangladesh Shilpakala from January 1, 1997. Renowned cultural troupes from home and abroad will take part in the festival titled "Let's Make a Friendly Relation through Festivity", said a press release yesterday. Nagarik Nattyanag will organise the festival, reports UNB.

BOU convocation next month

Bangladesh Open University (BOU) will hold a convocation for its BEd degree holders in next month, said an official announcement yesterday. The students, who came out successful in the BEd examinations held under BOU in June last year, will be awarded certificates at the function, reports UNB.

India to buy Sukhoi fighters from Russia

NEW DELHI, Nov 14: The Indian cabinet has approved the purchase of Sukhoi-30 warplanes from Russia, officials said Thursday. A cabinet meeting Wednesday "authorised the Defence Ministry to pursue further negotiations," said spokesman Swaghat Ghosh. Other officials said the Cabinet cleared the last of the political hurdles, but the details of the purchase remained to be worked out, reports AP.

Bus-truck collision kills 46 in China

BEIJING, Nov 14: A bus and a truck plunged into a river in Shanghai after crashing into each other, killing and injuring 46 people, an official newspaper said Thursday. The Liberation Daily did not give a breakdown on casualties in Wednesday's accident. Shanghai city leaders visited the injured in hospital and organised rescue work, it said, reports AP.

Keynote speech at WTO meet in Geneva Dhaka proposes zero tariff for LDCs, removal of import quota

By Staff Correspondent

Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed has reaffirmed Bangladesh's commitment to a fair, equitable and transparent world trade regime and called for an early implementation of the promises made in various accords and instruments of the Uruguay Round Agreement (URA).

He was presenting a keynote speech at the meeting of ministers from the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) at the World Trade Organisation (WTO). He was one of the three keynote speakers of the three-day ministerial meeting of the LDCs sponsored by the WTO at Geneva yesterday.

The other two keynote speakers were Alec Erwin, Minister for Trade and Industry of South Africa, and Karl Nordheim-Larsen, Minister for Development Cooperation of Norway, according to a message received in Dhaka.

In his speech on "International Trade and Growth: Challenges for LDCs," Tofael Ahmed called for a proper assessment of the gains and losses arising out of the URA. He said Bangladesh believes that the proposal put forward by the LDCs during the mid-term review to set up a safety net to meet the negative effects of these agreements merits consideration.

The minister observed that economic benefits will only arise through a fairer, more equitable and transparent trade regime, permitting free flow of goods and services and labour and technology in a new world cutting across the ethnic, religious and cultural barriers.

He pleaded for exploring the possibilities of enhancing market access for LDCs. He said this could include zero tariffs for exports from LDCs, removal of import quota, promotion of their exports within the framework of regional trading arrangements and special trading arrangements between the developing and developed countries.

Tofael Ahmed also pleaded for simplification of the notification procedure under URA to enable the LDCs to fulfil their obligations. "I would recommend supportive treatment to LDCs in all future negotiations conducted in terms of the URA in order to ensure that the obligations arising from these agreements are consistent with their level of development as well as economic and trading condition," he said.

He said technical assistance to LDCs should be in keeping with their needs, which would be in the form of consultancy services and training facilities for improving their capacities to fulfil their obligations in accordance with the URA.

He added that the LDCs need to expand and widen their export base and to diversify the export market.

"Special measures are required to alleviate the problems of LDCs arising out of their landlockedness," he said.

In this context, he said that those were only a few suggestions. "The ministers attending the meeting should take into account the needs of the LDCs and take appropriate steps to address them," he said.

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Relatives meet Farooq at Dhaka jail

Close relatives of detained Col (ret'd) Syed Farooq Rahman were allowed for the first time to meet him at the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday, official and family sources said, reports UNB.

Earlier, Mehnaz Rashid, the eldest daughter of Col (ret'd) Khandker Abdul Rashid, also met her detained mother Zobaida Rashid at the jail, the sources added.

"Farooq did not look sick, but he became thin," his mother Mahmuda Rahman told UNB after the jail visit yesterday afternoon.

Mahmuda Rahman was accompanied by her daughter Mehnaz Rashid.

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11 killed, 31 injured in road accidents

By Staff Correspondent

Eleven people were killed and thirty-one injured in road accidents in Dhaka, Tangail and Jhilmalah yesterday.

Our DMC correspondent reports: Three persons died when a truck went off the road and struck them on a pavement near the Mirpur Police Station in the city yesterday evening, according to police and hospital sources.

The victims who were standing on the pavement could not be identified immediately.

According to police, the accident occurred as the driver lost control over the vehicle.

The truck was seized by the police but the driver escaped.

The bodies were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Meanwhile, the driver of an autorickshaw was killed when two autorickshaws heading towards the airport collided with each other at Kawla under Cantonment Thana yesterday evening, police and hospital sources said.

Fazal, 27, who was seriously injured in the accident died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). His vehicle hit the other from behind on the airport road at around 6 pm.

Mannan, 40, the other driver, was admitted to the DMCH.

Our Tangail correspondent says: Four people, including a woman, died and 15 others were injured in a road mishap at Malaur under Madhupur thana in Tangail district yesterday morning.

Police said, the accident occurred when a Dhaka-bound minibus with passengers on board collided with a truck at 6:45 am. Two persons died on the spot.

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Patients leaving RMCH as strike continues

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Nov 14: Internee doctors and class four employees of the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) continued their strike for the third day today. They are on strike after clashes on Tuesday.

All offices of the hospital were kept under lock and key by the class four employees.

Only the nurses were found on duty but they could do very little as the stores remained closed and senior doctors also did not attend offices apprehending attacks by the striking employees.

A Rajshahi University student was severely beaten at the emergency ward allegedly by some class four employees who suspected him to be a medical student. The employees are not allowing the internee doctors and medical students to enter the hospital.

Some patients left the hospital today.

Meanwhile, the Internee Doctors Association at a press conference this evening demanded removal of the Director of the RMCH Col Nazmul Huda for his alleged corruption and partisan role against the doctors and students.

Pak anti-corruption bill to prosecute all but president

ISLAMABAD, Nov 14: Pakistan's caretaker cabinet approved today a draft bill aimed at cracking down on corruption in high places, a senior government official said, reports Reuters.

The proposed law would allow the federal ombudsman to start proceedings against politicians, bureaucrats and some members of the police and Armed Forces — but not the President — on corruption complaints submitted by the public.

"If a prima facie case is found, the ombudsman will refer the case to a High Court," said the official, who asked not to be named.

The bill excludes the President, who has constitutional protection from criminal proceedings while in office.

The official said the bill would also expose military officers in civilian jobs to possible prosecution, but not all military officers, as proposed in the original draft.

He said the draft bill would be implemented by a Presidential Ordinance within three days.

He said the original draft had been amended to spare those who repaid money they had embezzled, from going to jail.

Benazir Bhutto's ousted government and the main opposition Pakistan Muslim League placed separate anti-corruption bills before the National Assembly (lower house) before President Farooq Leghari dissolved it on November 5.

Bhutto's bill had included the president among those against whom corruption charges could be pursued.

Meanwhile, the husband of sacked Pakistani premier has been detained to prevent him inciting people against the caretaker government, a court was told in Lahore today.

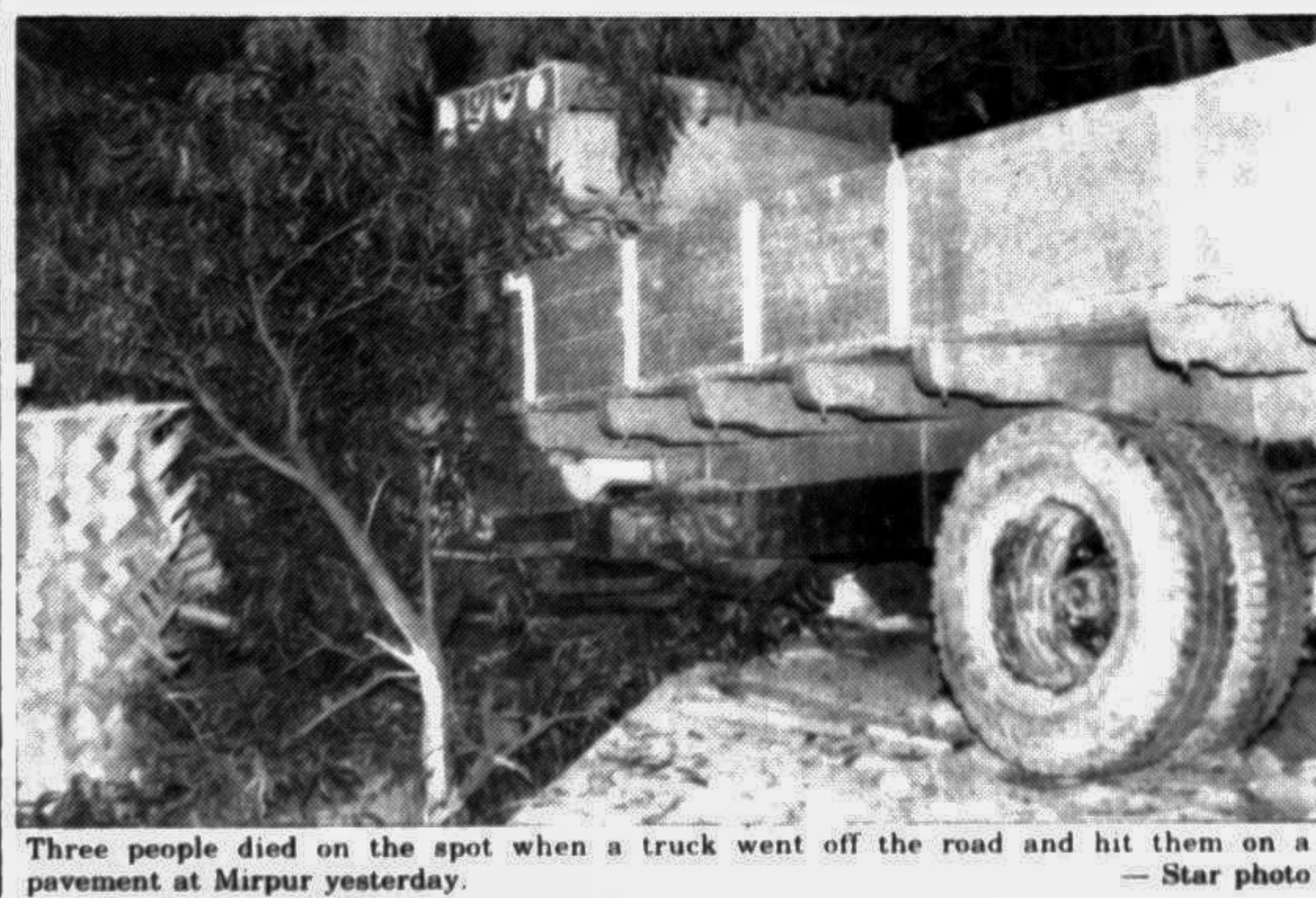
Asif Ali Zardari is in custody at a police guest house near Islamabad under a Punjab province law allowing detention of suspects considered a threat to public peace.

The action was taken after a police intelligence report that Zardari was "instigating" people against the interim government, according to the official record submitted to the Lahore High Court by a magistrate.

Zardari's lawyer termed the allegation baseless, saying his client was detained before the installation of the caretaker government.

The provincial government's action was taken after a police intelligence report that Zardari was "instigating" people against the interim government, according to the official record submitted to the Lahore High Court by a magistrate.

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Three people died on the spot when a truck went off the road and hit them on a pavement at Mirpur yesterday. — Star photo

Jatrabari bus fire: 2 more arrested

Star Report

Another two persons involved in the Jatrabari bus fire case were arrested by police yesterday, said a police press release.

Adil and Hedayetullah suspected toll collectors at the Sayedabad bus terminal were arrested from Kutubkhali under Demra thana, police said adding they went into hiding soon after the bus fire incident late last year.

Police have so far arrested Mehammed Ozuiluh, Nasir, Shoukat, Liaquat Sentu and Abed, said to be known criminals and notorious toll collectors for their complicity in the case.

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