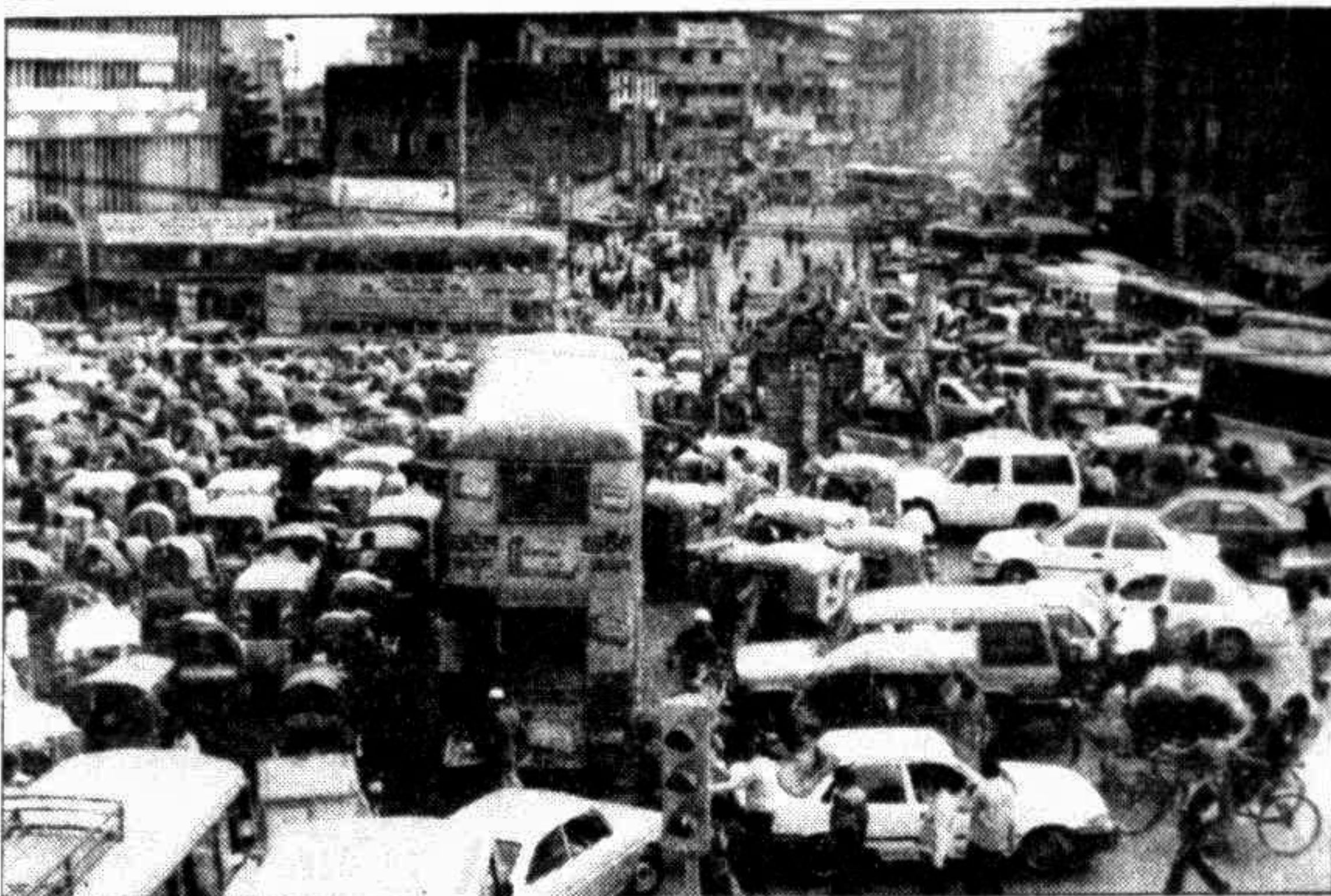


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Heavy traffic jam in and around the city's Zero Point area yesterday. — Star photo

Short film festival

From Page 1

its literature, culture and state of education. But for the last 21 years, education, culture and literature were subjected to distortion of history, she added.

"Liberation War is the most glorious chapter in our history. But, whenever our artists and literateurs tried to draw the subject for their creative work from liberation, they were instantly and very harshly resisted by military and autocratic governments."

Earlier, the international short film festival was inaugurated amid fanfare with the release of balloons and pigeon and lighting the lamps.

The Prime Minister inaugurated the festival by releasing balloons carrying a festoon inscribed with the slogan of the festival — Celebrating 100 years of cinema and 25 years of independence of Bangladesh.

She also hoisted the national flag while the National anthem was played.

Festival flag was hoisted by renowned film artist Abul Khair, pigeons were released by litterateur Shawkat Osman and educationist Dr Nileema Ibrahim lit the festival lamps.

Some 20 filmmakers and a number of delegates from different countries, including France, Mauritius, Austria and India, arrived in the city. Internationally reputed filmmaker Mrinal Sen also came here to join the festival.

About 100 films of 27 countries, including host Bangladesh, will be screened in the nine-day film festival at the Public Library auditorium.

Addressing the function, the Prime Minister said a new vista has been started in the cultural arena in line with the spirit of liberation which initiated the movement of short film in the country.

Today's advancement is the continuation of that beginning; short films have played a significant role in upholding the spirit of the war of our liberation among the new generation, she said.

Bangladesh Short Film Forum has taken steps to collect celluloid footage on the war of our liberation from different corners of the world as well as from various parts of the country. "There will be no dearth of cooperation in our part for this noble initiative," Hasina said.

Indian filmmaker Mrinal Sen, Dhaka City Mayor Mohammad Hanif, State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed, festival director short film maker Morshedul Islam and short film forum president Tanveer Mokammel also spoke on the occasion.

Noted journalist and Festival Committee Chairman Obaidul Huq presided.

Police Week '97 from tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The Police Week, 1997, will begin through the annual ceremonial parade at the Razbargh Police Lines in the city tomorrow morning.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will take salute in the parade and inaugurate the six-day long programme of the week. She will also distribute awards — Bangladesh Police Medals and President's Police Medals — to 45 members of the Bangladesh Police, including five posthumously, for their outstanding performance, said a press release issued from the Police Headquarters last night.

The Prime Minister will also address the members of the police force.

Later, Home Minister Rafiqul Islam, BU, will address the Deputy Inspectors General (DIGs) and the Superintendents of Police (SPs) at the Razbargh Police auditorium.

Shanties

From Page 1

Two children received injuries in the incident.

State Minister for Labour and Manpower M. A. Mannan and Chittagong City Corporation Mayor Alhaj A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury visited the devastated slums and assured the affected people of relief and succour.

KL considering Dhaka's request

From Page 1

Kuala Lumpur is considering Dhaka's request for legalising illegal Bangladeshi workers staying in Malaysia from a positive angle, an official of the Malaysian High Commission in the city said yesterday, reports UNB.

"Our Prime Minister is considering Bangladesh's request to legalise its illegal workers," said second secretary of the mission Dzulkifey Bin Abdullah.

The official particularly mentioned Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad's meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammed in New Delhi last month when the Bangladesh leader took up the issue.

Malaysia

From Page 1

available jobs in the plantation and construction industries and service sector.

The 150,000 foreign maids are paid between \$140 and \$240 a month, while construction and factory workers receive as much as \$20 to \$30 a day depending on their skills.

The amnesty and crackdown resulted in part from complaints by Malaysians that illegal workers were fighting with local youths, marrying local women and trying to stay permanently. They also have been suspected of molesting or disturbing local women and engaging in crime.

"If we are too lenient, illegal settlements will mushroom and there will be a rise in squatter problems, contagious diseases, criminal activities and other social ills," Ong said.

Father-in-law of Benazir arrested

From Staff Correspondent

KARACHI, Jan 2: Pakistan police have detained Hakim Ali Zardari, father-in-law of deposed Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, as part of a corruption inquiry, officials said Thursday, reports AFP.

The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) detained Hakim Zardari, 69, late Wednesday at his seaside residence in Karachi. Officials said Zardari faced corruption charges.

Bhutto's husband Asif Ali Zardari has already been arrested in connection with the murder of Murtaza Bhutto, brother of Benazir Bhutto.

Fishing trawler hijacked in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Jan 2: A gang of pirates hijacked a fishing trawler and threw two fishermen into the river at the Beltala ferry near the Barisal town last night.

Witnesses said, armed pirates numbering ten to twelve swooped on the trawler 'FB Dolphin' and the fishermen on board in the Kirtan Khola river. They beat the fishermen mercilessly and threw two of them — Jalil and Rahman — into the river.

They took the trawler with them including fish, fishing nets and about Tk one lakh.

— AFP/UNB photo

Deposed Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's husband Asif Ali Zardari (R) was taken away from the court in Karachi yesterday by paramilitary Rangers and police personnel in bullet-proof jackets. The security intensified after a rumour spread that Zardari's life was in danger in jail.

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The Daily Star

United efforts must to fight poverty: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon all irrespective of party affiliation and opinion to unitedly fight against poverty and hunger, reports UNB.

United efforts of all are needed to establish a long-cherished society free from poverty and hunger, she said at a grand conference of the representatives of social organisations and social workers at Agargaon in the morning.

The Prime Minister said if the vast majority of the people are denied of rights and privileges, the society and the country would also lag far behind.

"There is no alternative to people's spontaneous support and cooperation in taking steps towards national development. So, to create Sonar Bangladesh, the dream of Bangabandhu, we shall forge greater unity."

On the question of development of the country, she said, "we do not make discrimination. We believe, despite differences in respect of ideas, faith and views, we belong to all and all belong to us."

The Prime Minister urged the affluent society to come forward to help the poor.

"If the poorer section is deprived of their just right, this society will not be able to protect the affluent section. You (rich people) will have to help the neglected in your own interest," said the Prime Minister.

She said the government wants to ensure proper distribution of wealth among all to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor which, she said, was widened sharply in last 21 years.

Despite various handicaps, multifarious demands and limitation of resources, the government is striving hard to improve the lot of the distressed people, she said.

Appreciating the contribution of voluntary organisations and social workers to overall development activities, the Prime Minister called for combined efforts of the government, voluntary organisations and social workers to lay a foundation for a happy and prosperous country.

She stressed the need for giving proper emphasis on policies and planning to offset problems and bottlenecks.

Earlier, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the Social Welfare Complex near the national parade square at Agargaon.

At the conference, she distributed 'Samaj Seba Padak' among seven social workers in recognition of their social welfare activities.

The recipients are Prof Abdus Samad from Dhaka Division, Fazle Karim Dara from Rajshahi division, late Abu Taleb Md Emdadul Islam from Khulna division, Dr Jobaida Hannan from Chittagong division, Abdus Salam Talukder from Barisal Division, Dr Shah Nurul Islam from Sylhet Division and Alhaj Prof Shamim Misir from Dhaka Metropolitan city.

Later, the Prime Minister opened an exhibition of social welfare activities.

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