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HC order for status quo on building box culvert stayed

By SC Correspondent
The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday ordered stay of the High Court order for maintaining status quo over the construction work of the box culvert project through the Purana Palan Line-Motijheel area in the city for six weeks.

The High Court on February 2 made the order upon an urgent petition of the Dhaka WASA.

Earlier on January 28, the HC upon a civil revision petition filed by Rahima Aktar and others passed the order of status quo.

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Lailatul Qadr tonight

By Staff Correspondent
The holy Lailatul Qadr, the night which is better than a thousand months, will be observed tonight throughout the country with due religious fervor.

On this night, the holy Quran had started being revealed to Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (SM).

The Muslim devotees will say night-long prayers seeking divine blessings for peace, prosperity and welfare of the mankind.

On the eve of Lailatul Qadr, President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday greeted the countrymen.

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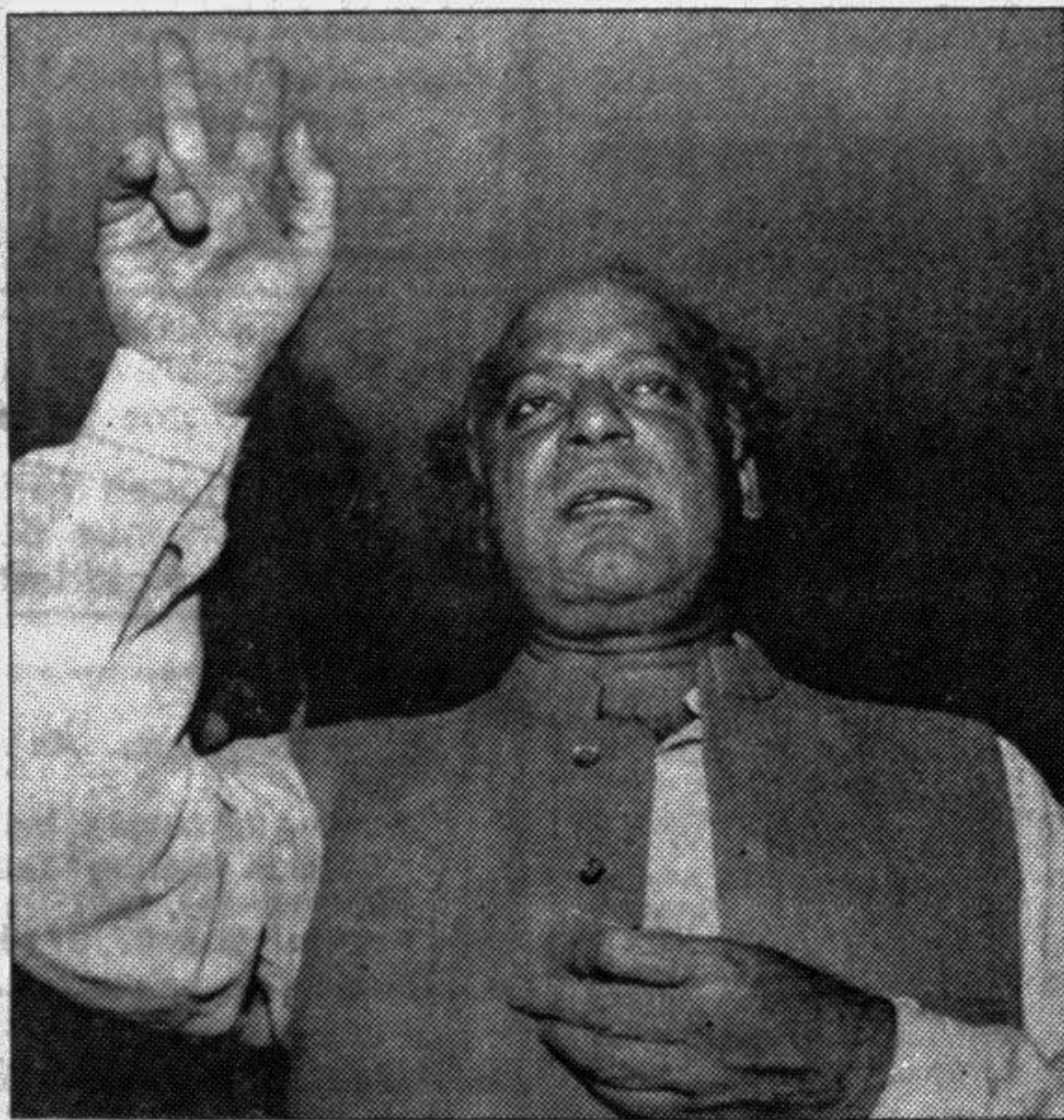
Business

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Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Feb	Sehri	Iftar
26	05	—	5:51
27	06	5:16	5:52
28	07	5:15	5:52

Humiliating defeat for Benazir in Pak polls



Nawaz Sharif flashes a 'V' sign before a crowd of supporters at his residence in Lahore late Monday. —AFP/UNB photo

ISLAMABAD, Feb 4: Former premier Nawaz Sharif today clinched a clear parliamentary majority in Pakistan's general election, inflicting a humiliating defeat on his bitter rival Benazir Bhutto, reports AFP.

His Pakistan Muslim League (PML) won at least 134 seats in the 217-member National Assembly, while Benazir's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had only secured a dismal 17 seats as counting continued.

In a dramatic political comeback, Sharif, 48, will become the country's prime minister for the second time after

being ousted amid corruption charges in 1993.

Sharif said he had been confident of a majority but added, "Frankly this is more than I had expected." The stock market rose on the result.

Supporters danced in the streets and let off fireworks in his stronghold, the Punjab provincial capital Lahore, where he won a seat.

Former Prime Minister Benazir said that the election had been rigged, but a team of European Union observers said they found no evidence of widespread fraud.

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being ousted amid corruption charges in 1993.

asked about the price of an Indian saree displayed over a pile. He said the price of the sarees ranged from Tk 90 to Tk six hundred.

The rush of shoppers outside the market was greater as pavements and the main road were occupied by the vendors. A few yards away, inside the Ramna Bhavan, another shopping center, the rush of shoppers was surprisingly low. "You see those illegal traders, they are taking away our business," complained a shopkeeper in the market.

said Amit Pal when

See Page 12 Col 3

Mad rush for buying in markets

By Staff Correspondent

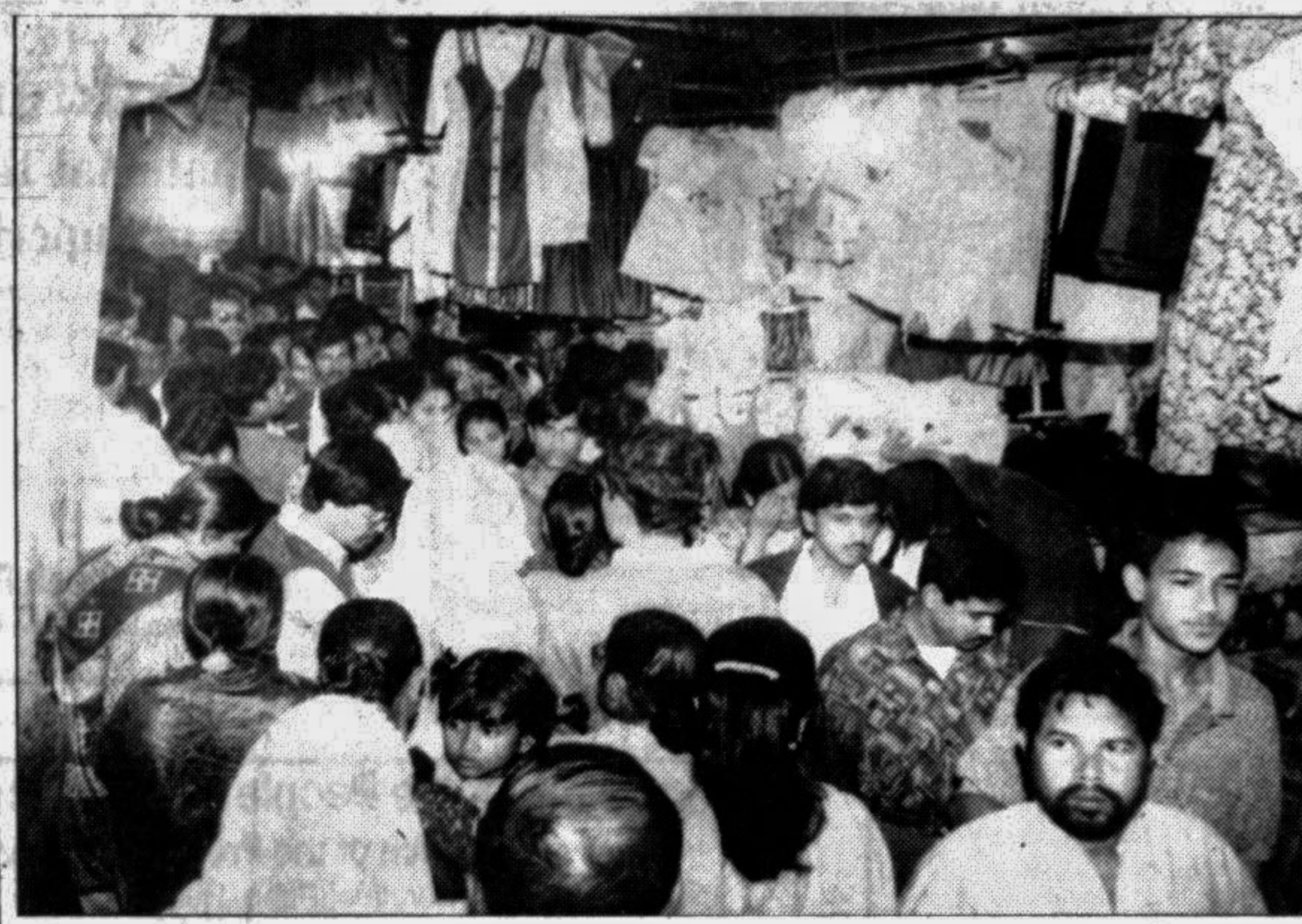
With the Eid-ul-Fitr less than a week away, the city's shopping centers and the streets, lanes and by-lanes surrounding them are being swarmed with shoppers every day.

Gulistan, Bangabazar, Mouchak, Elephant Road, New Market and Chandni Chowk, some major shopping areas, were found crowded with thousands of shoppers from the early hours of the day. Stick-wielding traffic policemen, apparently frustrated by the sea of vehicles before them, often resorted to shouting and beating

the aluminum rear of the rickshaws which generated frightful bangs for other road users.

Inside the Railway Shopping Center near the Gulistan Cinema Hall, shoppers, mostly from the low income groups, crowded at every stall selling clothes.

Indian and local sarees, pajama, panjabi, shoes all sorts of clothes were available in the market. "If you wait here for five minutes you will realise that there is no business of fixed price here. Asking price will vary from customer to customer," said Amit Pal when



Rush of Eid shoppers in a city market yesterday. — Star photo

Imran bowled out by voters

ISLAMABAD, Feb 4: Former cricket hero Imran Khan was today bowled out by the voters in his first innings as a politician, failing to break into the tight-knit but rough and tumble world of Pakistani politics, reports Reuter.

Teammates, who have witnessed his 22-year cricketing career, had wished him luck in Monday's general elections and said he had the leadership qualities but added politics was a different ball game.

The 44-year-old former Pakistan cricket captain suffered a stinging defeat in the race for a seat in the capital Islamabad.

He captured just 5,866 votes compared with 67,498 for Syed Zafar Ali Shah, the nominee of former premier Nawaz Sharif.

Khan's movement for justice failed to win a single seat.

He admitted his party had failed to capture popular support but said it had succeeded in laying a base for its future growth.

9 killed in Sylhet road accident

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Feb 4: Nine persons were killed, six of them on the spot, and 55 others injured in a road accident at Gazia on the Dhaka-Sylhet highway this afternoon.

Thirty-four of the injured were admitted to the Sylhet M A G Osmany Medical College Hospital. The rest were released after first aid.

Witnesses said the accident happened at about 12-40 PM when a Dhaka-bound minibus from Sylhet — Mitali Paribahan — collided head-on with a Sylhet-bound coach coming from Habiganj. Both the vehicles were badly damaged. As the minibus ramed the coach from the opposite direction.

Of the deceased, five were identified. They are: A PDB employee, Fanihusan Dutta, 50, Sonamiah, 60, Iqbal Hossain, 40, Abdul Mussabbir, 80, and Ayub Ali, 40, driver of the coach. The bodies have been kept in the hospital for autopsy.

The injured now under treatment in hospital are: Islamuddin, 30, Rino Miah, 50, Abdur Rahman, 25, Rashed Khan, 45, Chand Ali, 35, Gous Uddin, 45, Abu Hossain, 35, Abdul Baten, 38, Albab Hossain, 30, Ajab Ali, 45, Amit, 7, Lipi, 15, Abdus Salam, 42, Siddique Begum, 40, Maman Miah, 25, Gous Uddin, 40, Sirajul Islam, 40, Ruhel, 8, Mukul Roy, 45, Monwara Begum, 35, Moshammath Karim Miah, 45, and Sundar Khan, 50.

Double murder in city

By Staff Correspondent

Two young men were brutally murdered by an unidentified gang at Sutrapur in the old part of the city yesterday afternoon, police said.

Police recovered the bodies of the unidentified youths aged between 20 and 23 from a rickshaw garage at Gobinda Dutta Lane near Suhrawardy College under Sutrapur thana at about 4pm.

Both the victims were in trousers and shirts. One of the bodies bore a mark of bullet injury in the head. The other had multiple stab injuries in the body, with the two wrists chopped, the face wrapped with a cloth and legs tied. Sutrapur thana police said.

Police suspected that the murders were pre-planned.

Police recovered some pieces of paper bearing an address of North Shajahanpur and a telephone number.

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Witness identifies policemen 'Yasmin was forcibly picked up in van'

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Feb 4: Six witnesses submitted depositions as trial of the nine accused under Section 201/34 in the Yasmin murder case that resumed in the District and Sessions Judge's Court today.

The accused are: Former Dinajpur police super Abdul Mutalib, former Kotwali thana officer-in-charge Md. Mahtab, former Kotwali thana S I Swapon Kumar Chakravarty, former ASI Jahangir Alam, and Moinul Haque, former officer-in-charge DSB Matiar Rahman, former constable Abdus Sattar,

former police line driver Amrita Lal Barman and medical officer Dr Md Mohsin.

They are facing charges of negligence to duty, concealing facts, trying to destroy alimat and diverting the case.

The witnesses are Ahmed Ali Bhehu, a Union Parishad Dafadar who first informed Dinajpur Kotwali thana about the incident, Jayanta Kumar Chakravarty, a co-passenger of Yasmin in the night coach, Javed Ali, betel leaf shop owner at Dosh Mile bus stoppage at

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Govt to provide all support to garments sector: Kibria

Finance Minister Shah A S M Kibria yesterday said the government would provide all supports to the export-oriented readymade garment industry but spoke firmly against subsidy to any new sector, reports UNB.

"Subsidy is like a national haemorrhage... it will not be correct to bring subsidy in trade and commerce," he told the manufacturers of garments who were demanding subsidy for export in European markets un-

til the reintroduction of GSP. Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed also described the achievement of his recent trip to Brussels, the European Union headquarters, where he went to lobby for continuation of the duty exemption facility.

Bangladeshi garment and knitwear exporters enjoy a 12.5 per cent duty exemption in exporting to the EU countries which detected a huge 'fake' GSP certificates and asked the

authorities in Bangladesh to cancel those.

The exporters have demanded that the government provide as subsidy half of the 12.5 per cent duty to be paid at European ports until the GSP facility for knitwear reintroduced, hopefully by April.

Referring to the development of the industry, the finance minister said the government would mobilise Tk 500 crore as soon as possible to set up back-

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Clinton praises efforts to consolidate democracy



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina met US President Bill Clinton at the White House Monday. —AFP/UNB photo

WASHINGTON, Jan 4: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had 20 minutes of exclusive talks with US President Bill Clinton at the Oval Office of White House on Monday, reports UNB.

A Bangladesh spokesman described the talks as very significant and fruitful where two leaders exchanged views on many important issues of mutual, regional and international concern.

"The meeting was marked by cordiality and an atmosphere of friendliness," said the spokesman adding the meeting took place at the invitation of Bill Clinton.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, now attending the first ever Global Microcredit Summit, attended an iftar party hosted by US First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton prior to her meeting with President Clinton Monday evening.

The spokesman said that President Clinton highly praised the efforts of Sheikh Hasina's government for consolidating democracy in the country.

Clinton also lauded the initiatives of Hasina for economic uplift of Bangladesh and assured the US government's cooperation in this regard.

Giving a brief resume of the steps taken by her 7-month-old government, Hasina said

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Declaration of Support Campaign for microcredit to 100m poor by 2005

WASHINGTON, Feb 4: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Monday received the Microcredit Summit Declaration of Support signed by the attending delegates on the second day of the summit, reports BSS.

She received the declaration as a co-chairperson of the three-day first-ever summit on microcredit.

The declaration reads: "Our purpose as an assembly is to launch a global campaign to reach 100 million of the world's poorest families, especially the women of these families, with credit for self-employment and other financial and business services by the year 2005."

The delegates attending the summit including the heads of state and government also iterated their commitments to the development of sustainable institutions which assist very poor women and their families to work their way out of poverty with dignity.

The Declaration called for building institutional capacity to reach very poor people in developing countries by strength-

ening existing microcredit, savings and business development institutions through networking and exchange of experience, preparing new practitioners through programme of training for social entrepreneurs and microcredit managers and promoting appropriate policy, legal and regulatory changes.

The summit estimated that up to 21.6 billion dollars will be required to meet the needs. The allocation of these funds being highly conditional on the absorptive and expansion capacity of the microfinance institutions to use the funds.

The resources needed to achieve this goal will come from multilateral and bilateral donors, government agencies, grant-making organisations, the general public, banks, financial markets and other commercial sources and the savings, interest payments and service charges of the microcredit clients and others in their communities.

The Summit Declaration envisaged building institu-

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Ekushey '97

Bangalees fought invaders for nat'l identity

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a lecture session on Bengali literature at the Bangla Academy yesterday observed that the Language Movement of 1952 laid the foundation of independent Bangladesh.

Eminent litterateur Shaukat Ali was the main speaker in the session on the fourth day yesterday of the fortnight-long lecture series on "Amar Shohitaya Shadhanar Pachish Bachar: Shadhinata Uttarkal" organised by the Academy as part of its Amar Ekushey programmes, 1997. The speakers included Prof Shafiqul Alam and Dr Masuduzzaman.

Shaukat Ali said that the Bangalees, over the centuries, fought invaders and defended their national identity.

The Language Movement was one such fight which eventually turned into the struggle for independence he said.

Prof Wakil Ahmed said that the true history of the Bangalees is yet to be written.

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রাজধানী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ
রাজউক ভবন, ঢাকা।

জরুরী বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সংশোধিত ইমারত নির্মাণ বিধিমালা, ১৯৯৬ অনুসরণে রাজউক ইহার আওতাধীন এলাকায় ইমারতের নক্সা অনুমোদন করিয়া থাকে। অতি সম্প্রতি লক্ষ্য করা যাইতেছে যে, রাজউকের আওতাধীন এলাকায় অধিকাংশ জমি/ভবন মালিক উক্ত বিধিমালা/রাজউক কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত নক্সা অনুসরণ না করিয়া স্বল্প উচ্চতা এবং বহুল ইমারত নির্মাণ করিয়া থাকেন। অনুমোদিত নক্সার ব্যত্যয় ঘটাইয়া ইমারত নির্মাণের ফলে নির্মিত ইমারত বৃদ্ধি পূর্ণ হইয়া দাঁড়ায় ফলে জানমালের ক্ষতির আশংকা দেখা দেয়। অনুমোদিত নক্সা অনুসরণ/অনুমোদিতভাবে নির্মাণ কার্য করার ফলে অতি সম্প্রতি ঢাকা শহরের শান্তিনগর, কল্যাণপুর, মোহাম্মদপুর, মুগুনা, কলাবাগান এবং মীরপুর এলাকায় বেশ কয়েকটি ভবন ধসিয়া পড়িয়াছে।

রাজউকের নক্সা অনুমোদন শাখায় জনস্বল্প কম থাকায় রাজউক এই জনগুরুত্বপূর্ণ বিষয়টি সর্বোচ্চ অগ্রাধিকার প্রদান করার লক্ষ্যে অনুমোদিত/বৃদ্ধি পূর্ণ বাড়ী বা ইমারতসমূহ চিহ্নিত করার জন্য সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে অভিজ্ঞ, খ্যাতনামা স্থপতি প্রকৌশলী প্রতিষ্ঠানদের তালিকাভুক্ত করণের সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করিয়াছে, তাহারা অতিশীঘ্রই কাজ আরম্ভ করিবে।

ইতাবসরে ঢাকা শহরের বিভিন্ন এলাকায় এই ধরনের স্থাপত্য প্রকৌশলীদের নাম ভাঙাইয়া কতিপয় অসং ব্যক্তি স্বীয় স্বার্থ চরিতার্থ করার জন্য বেশ কিছু ভবনের মালিকগণের নিকট হইতে ভয়-ভীতি দেখাইয়া অর্থ আদায় করিতেছে।

সর্বসাধারণের জ্ঞাতার্থে জানানো যাইতেছে যে, রাজউক এখন পর্যন্ত এধরনের কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানকে তালিকাভুক্ত করে নাই। ভবিষ্যতে যাহাদের তালিকাভুক্ত করা হইবে তাহারা তাহাদের মেধা, প্রজ্ঞা এবং যোগ্যতার মাপকাঠিতে বৃদ্ধি পূর্ণ ইমারতসমূহ চিহ্নিত করিবেন। এই ক্ষেত্রে তাহারা কাহারো নিকট হইতে কোন ধরনের অর্থ দাবী করিতে পারিবেন না এবং তাহাদের কোন আর্থিক সহায়তা প্রদান না করার জন্য সম্মানিত নগরবাসীকে রাজউক অনুরোধ জানাইতেছে।

ইতিমধ্যে রাজউকের কথিত স্থাপত্য প্রকৌশলী দাবী করিয়া যে সকল অসং ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান শহরের বিভিন্ন এলাকায় নক্সা পরীক্ষা/বৃদ্ধি পূর্ণ ভবন চিহ্নিতকরণের নামে চাঁদা আদায় করিয়া রাজউকের সুনাম ক্ষুণ্ণ করিতেছে তাহাদেরকে আইনশৃঙ্খলা রক্ষাবাহিনীর নিকট সোপর্দ এবং রাজউকের সদস্য (পরিচয়না) টেলিফোন নং-৯৫৬১১৩৭) - কে অবহিত করার জন্য সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলকে অনুরোধ করা যাইতেছে।

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চেয়ারম্যান
রাজধানী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ, ঢাকা।

WE MOURN

We are deeply grieved at the sudden death of Dr. A. R. Mallick, a renowned Economist, veteran Educationist and the first Finance Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Dr. Mallick was the founder Chairman of National Bank Limited. From 1983 to 1993 he served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of NBL. During this period by his farsightedness, devotion, sincerity and varied experience he built NBL as the leading private sector bank of Bangladesh. On his sad demise we remember his achievements with deepest respect.

We express our heartfelt sympathy to the members of his bereaved family.

National Bank Limited