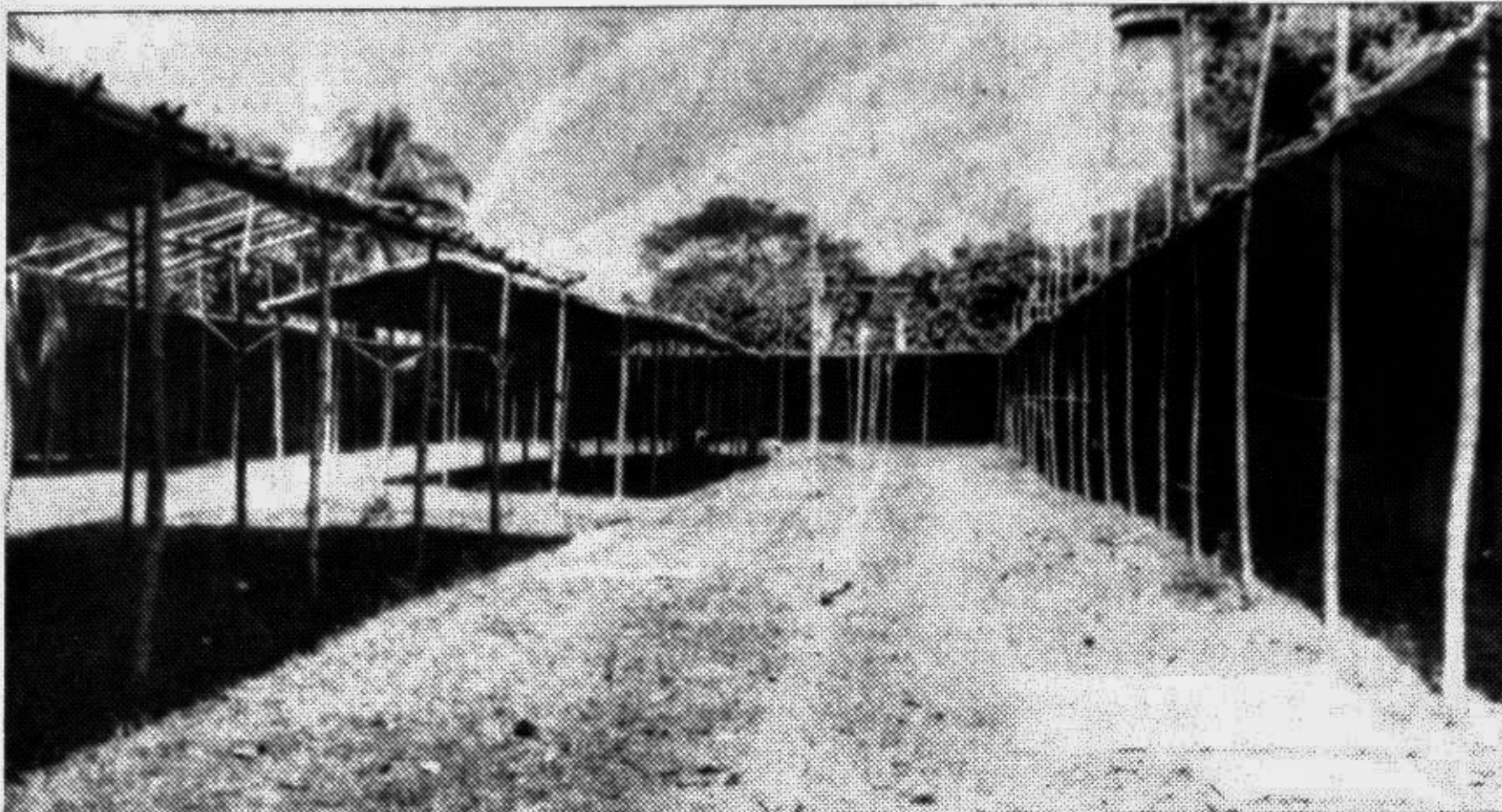


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Makeshift stalls at the Bangla Academy premises for Ekushey book fair beginning Wednesday. — Star photo

## Language Movement

From Page 1

Sanskritik Jote Remendu Majumder presided over the function while Salahuddin Badal read out its declaration.

Justice Habibur Rahman along with the leaders of the Sammilita Sangskritik Jote placed wreaths at the altar of the Shaheed Minar to show respect to the language martyrs.

Justice Rahman, who had directly participated in the 1952 Language Movement, said the struggle for Bangla had helped the people of this country of protest against each and every aggression on our culture.

He said Ekushey February was not only the movement for Bangla language but also the movement for all mother tongues.

The former Chief Advisor regretted that Bangla was not still introduced in the higher courts of the country and called for an end to this.

Justice Rahman also urged all to become true to their work than be vocal in words.

In his speech Prof Anisuzzaman said the great Ekushey February had glorified the Bangla literature and established Bangla as our state language.

Referring to the influence of Ekushey on every branch of Bangla literature including short story, drama, novel and essays Prof Anisuzzaman said the incident of Ekushey had inspired the Bengalee writers.

Prof Kabir Chowdhury said the Ekushey February had a great influence on the cultural arena and added the spirit of Ekushey had been flourishing gradually in different ways.

He called for strengthening the literacy movement and the library movement.

Prof Chowdhury also underlined the need for translating the works of Bangla literature in other languages and vice versa.

Wahidul Huq said the victory in the election of last June was in fact the victory of the nation as well as the Liberation War.

He also urged the people to become music-lovers for awakening the spirit of the War of Liberation.

### Ekushey '97

From Page 1

nitude like the Liberation War.

He said the young writers have come forward. They are sincere in understanding the realities of our society and this was the sign of melting of the ice in the field.

"Great art centring the theme of the Liberation War was possible only when our writers will have the spirit of liberation in their conscience, Prof Hasan said.

Dr Bhismodev Chowdhury said our short stories have been divided in two streams after the War of Liberation. One stream opted for popularity amongst the readers while another one tried to create aesthetic and innovative ideas.

Helena Khan said the Liberation War got many dimensions in our writings. These stories depicted the freedom fighters as well as the besieged Bangladesh in 1971.

## Repatriation

From Page 1

"Malaysian authorities have appreciated our views and they have tremendous goodwill and friendly feeling for Bangladesh."

Ministry sources explained that not necessarily all those migrants now being identified as illegal, had sneaked into Malaysia without valid papers. Rather, there were many cases of expiry of job tenure, "job hopping" and loss of passports.

In another development, the four-member delegation that returned home on February 8 also explored the prospect of manpower export to Singapore. The Manpower Secretary, however, told this correspondent that there is demand for skilled workers in Singapore and Bangladesh sought special attention from big private firms there to consider import of Bangladeshi workers.

### Girl raped

From Page 1

areas. The local ward commissioner was informed of the incident.

The ward commissioner caught Sufian today and handed over him and the victim to Doublimooring thana, police said.

### Nujoma

From Page 1

Indian External Affairs Minister I K Gujral also called on Sheikh Hasina at her suit of Hotel Taj Palace this evening.

During the meeting they exchanged views on bilateral, regional and sub-regional issues.

## Judicial probe body

From Page 1

action against those responsible for the murder.

The organisation will hold a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club on February 18, protesting the killing of Shima. Demanding total separation of the judiciary from the administration, the Nari Samaj leaders observed that the so called 'safe custody' of police is a misleading term because there was no legal basis of it.

Expressing concern over the fate of girls who have been kept in the 'safe custody' of police all over the country, they said that the death of Shima only proved how much unsafe could be police custody for the girls.

### Feb 15

From Page 1

has planned to observe the day as a day of holding 'farical elections'.

In observance of the day, the city unit of Awami League will hold a public rally at 3 pm today at the Bangabandhu Avenue. Jatiya Party will also hold a discussion meeting at its Kalabagan central office at 4 pm.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in a statement yesterday said that people of the country consider January 25 during the rule of previous AL regime and March 24 during Ershad's rule as days of 'killing democracy' and February 15 as the day of 'consolidating democracy and maintaining the constitutional continuity'.

Mannan Bhuiyan said that he was astounded after reading newspaper reports that AL general secretary Zillur Rahman called for observing the day as 'Democracy Killing Day'. He recalled that the parliament formed through the February 15, 1996 elections had passed the caretaker government bill and that AL went to power through polls held under that caretaker government.

### Khaleda

From Page 1

Asked about BNP's planned post-Eid agitation, Mannan Bhuiyan said, "We're already in an agitation and fresh programmes in this regard have not yet been decided. We'll meet soon to discuss the issue."

Replying to another question, he said, "The nature of fresh agitation programmes totally depend on how the government behaves with us and how much it implements the four-point agreement on running the parliament and ending repression on our activists."

The BNP Secretary General confirmed Begum Zia's February 26 Feni trip and said the schedule of her visit to other areas would be finalised soon. "She may go for 'outside-Dhaka tour' even before February 26," he told this correspondent.

Mannan Bhuiyan, however, dismissed a press report that his party might boycott the current parliament session, resuming on February 16, and hoped the Speaker and the Treasury Bench would go by the four-point accord to make the JS session 'effective and lively'.

They also emphasised amendment to the laws concerning abuse of women and children as those 'lacked' sufficient provisions for ensuring justice.

Sammilito Nari Samaj also demanded detailed discussion on the matter in the Jatiya Sangsad after placing a bill in the next session.

Six human rights groups in a joint statement earlier also condemned the rape and death of Shima in custody.

They demanded immediate enquiry into the incident and action against those responsible for the gang-rape in police custody. They said that placing women in 'safecustody' in prison was violation of the fundamental right to personal liberty and equality. Shima's death was a reminder of the deep malaise afflicting the entire prison system in the country, they said.

"Women who are victims of crimes are doubly victimised by the legal system itself 'the statement said."

"While in 'safe custody', that is in judicial custody, women are vulnerable to further violations of their rights."

"Women and girls who are not even accused of any criminal offence are routinely kept imprisoned in the name of safe custody while men are never placed in this situation," it added.

The human rights groups are Ain-o-Salish Kendra, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Service Trust, Bangladesh Mohila Ainjibi Shamiti, Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights, Jatiya Ainjibi Parishad and Odhikar.

### PM: IPU confce

From Page 1

Minister for Primary and Mass Communications, Prof Jinnatunnesa Talukder, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr S A Samad, Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan and Mahila Awami League president Mrs Ivy Rahman.

During her 3-day stay in Delhi Sheikh Hasina will have meetings with Indian President Shankar Dayal Sharma and Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda and other important leaders and personalities.

She is expected to return home on February 16.

### Shima's death

From Page 1

on Sunday after postmortem at Avoymitra crematorium when her mother refused to take the body due to financial hardships.

The death of Shima, eight days after submission of chargesheet by CID police on her alleged rape by four police personnel, raised suspicion among the people here.

The four police personnel including a sub-inspector allegedly gangraped Shima at Raazan thana on the night of October 9.

The accused police personnel were arrested later and sent to Chittagong jail.

A team from a human rights organisation arrived here today to investigate into the death of Shima.



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PHILIPS

## IPU conference opens

From Page 1

ment, they are almost completely absent from ministries of finance, trade and economic planning," said United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan in a message to the conference.

Women are rarely found in ministries of defense or foreign affairs and their participation in diplomacy and conflict resolution continues to be "extremely limited," Annan said.

"The problem with politics in the world today is that there are far too many men in it," said Purno Sangma, the man who is the speaker of India's parliament.

Pierre Cornillon, Secretary-General of the IPU, earlier said the percentage of female deputies had fallen to a global average of 11.7 per cent in 1997, from a record high of 14.8 per cent in 1988.

"Politics is still made in most countries without women. We are far from the ideal figures," he said, adding the IPU believes women should hold 50 per cent of parliamentary seats.

A 1997 IPU study of global parliaments said the biggest increase in women deputies since 1995 had occurred in the

### BTV to telecast live PM's speech

NEW DELHI, Feb 14: Door-darshan, the national TV channel of India, will telecast live the speech of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the plenary session of the IPU Conference tomorrow morning, reports UNB.

Bangladesh Television (BTV) will also telecast live the programme of Door-darshan from New Delhi.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina now on a 3-day visit to the Indian capital, will address the plenary session of the conference at 10:35 am Bangladesh time.

### Police-terrorists gunfight in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Feb 14: One police personnel was injured in a gunfight with a group of armed terrorists during a raid in Moghultia area of the city this evening.

Injured Hasan Ali was admitted to police hospital.

Police arrested one alleged terrorist, Khurshid, and recovered a foreign-made pistol and some ammunition from his possession during the raid.

Caribbean island of St Kitts and Nevis (13.3 per cent), followed by Lithuania (10.4 per cent) and Azerbaijan (10 per cent).

The survey revealed only 7.7 per cent of parliamentary group leaders and nine per cent of party spokesmen were female.

The lowest proportion were in Arab countries (two per cent), followed by Asia-Pacific (below 10 per cent) and Africa (about 10 per cent). It was highest in the five Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden at an average of 40 per cent.

The summit, organised by the 135-nation IPU and the Indian government, will include representatives from 77 countries and be addressed by Namibian president Sam Nujoma and two leading women politicians, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed and outgoing Iceland president Vigdis Finnbogadottir.

Worldwide, only four of 124 single-chamber parliaments in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden — have more than 30 per cent of women as elected members.

India's 545-seat Lower House of Parliament has 39 women deputies, although it had one of the world's first female leaders in Indira Gandhi, a contemporary of Israel's Golda Meir and Sirimavo Bandarnaike of Sri Lanka.

### Nat'l policy

From Page 1

In residential buildings. Several senior teachers involved in the running of English medium schools blamed the government for 'failing' to act on time. "Running an English medium school is a highly profitable business. In the absence of proper government policy the business has grown haphazardly over the years," alleged a senior teacher. She did not want to be named.

An expert in the field, requesting anonymity, said there are 11,700 registered Secondary schools (Bengali medium, following national curriculum) in the country, out of which 317 are owned by the government.

All these non-government schools are registered with the education ministry because the moment they are registered, 80 per cent of their staff salaries is ensured by the ministry," he said, expressing his ignorance as to how the government would bring the private English medium schools under its control. "These schools offer foreign education such as O and A level, thus they have nothing to do with the ministry," he claimed.

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