

Fresh river erosion in southern dists leaves thousands shelterless

From Aroop Talukdar



BARISAL: Erosion of the river Tulatali in Bakerganj is going on unabated.

BARISAL, Apr 27: Erosion of different river banks in the southern districts is going on unabated for a longtime. Several hundred business establishments, educational institutions, shops and bazzars, dwelling houses including several thousand acres of cropland have already been engulfed and devoured in these rivers in different districts of southern region.

Thousands of shelterless people who took refuge at the riverside or roadside embankments, slums in charlands near the town areas are helpless as they have already become almost beggars.

Almost throughout the year, erosion continues in the rivers of Meghna, Tetulia, Sugandhya, Sandhya, Paira, Bishkhali, Ilisha, Kirtonkhola, Kacha,

Baleswar, Arial Khan and some other smaller rivers in this southern region.

People who live by riverside areas are becoming tense with the advent of the next rainy season fearing more havoc due to erosion river banks.

For that reason, meanwhile, many families are shifting to their homesteads and dwelling house somewhere else to save their lives and movable properties. Many of them who are living nearer to the erosion prone areas are passing sleepless nights having previous experiences.

It is gathered that Sreepur Bandar, Kazirchar, Alimabad, Lata, Kaliganj, Andhar Manik, Bhangra, Mallickpur and Dewanbari under Mehendiganj thana, Memania, Badartuni,

Hizla Bandar, Aliganj of Hizla thana, Muladi Bandar, Safipur, Patarchar, Khaserhat of Muladi thana, Doarika ferryhat, Mirganj, Rahimganj of Babuganj thana, Shikarpur Bandar Dasherhat of Uzirpur and Banaripara thana area of Barisal district are threatened by erosion as Arial Khan, Sandhya, Sugandhya and Meghna continue to erode huge areas.

Besides, different areas are threatened by the continuous erosion of Tulatali river at Bakerganj thana area of Bhola district, Nalchity, Kathalia and the sadar thana area of Jhalakathi district, sadar thana, Lebukhali, Mirzaganj, Dashmina, Baufal, Dumki of Patuakhali district, Betagi, Barguna sadar, Taitali, Bamna, Patharghata thana areas of Barguna district, Swarupkathi,

Nazirpur, Kankhali, Bhandaria thana areas of Pirojpur district are also on the continuous threat of erosion of Sandhya, Sugandhya, Bishkhali, Baleswar, Andhar Manik, Ilisha, Kacha and Meghna rivers. In Barisal, people of Charkana areas are badly affected by the erosion of Kirtonkhola river.

More than five hundred shops and houses including three industrial units are threatened by the continuous erosion of Tulatali river at Bakerganj thana area of Bhola district. At any time huge area along the riverside may be devoured in the river along with all these establishments, local people said.

It may be recalled that erosion of this Tulatali river is continuing for years.



BARISAL: Continuous river erosion in Sreepur Bandar area of Mehendiganj thana in the district rendering thousands of people homeless.

Clash between rival groups leaves 100 wounded

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 27: A two-hour clash between two rival groups of Dhopapara and Rajapur villages left in sadar thana about a hundred people injured, 25 seriously and standing IRRU-Boro crops of 20 bigha of land destroyed Saturday, reports UNB.

The clash ensued as a sequel to Friday's beating of Akbar Ali of Dhopapara when he went to Rajapur for realising the money, he lent to a village elder.

At the news of beating, the villagers of Dhopapara got furious and clashed with the villagers of Rajapur. Both the groups equipped with lethal weapons engaged in fierce clash.

The seriously injured were admitted to Sirajganj General Hospital and another victim Halim, 27, with head injury was sent to Dhaka for treatment in a critical condition.

Two separate cases were filed by the conflicting groups with the police.

Thunderbolt kills old man

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Apr 27: One person was killed when a thunderbolt struck him at village Durgapur under Sadullapur thana in the district on 23.

On the day it was drizzling when the victim, Monsur Ali, 65, was working in his paddy field adjacent to his dwelling house. Suddenly a thunderbolt fell upon him, resulting in instantaneous death.

Poor progress in Natore town development project

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Apr 27: Work of the Middle Class Town Infrastructure Development Project-2 (Model Town Project) of Natore pourashava is progressing at a snail's pace due to fund shortage.

The project was taken up at a cost of Taka 12 crore under 5 year plan in 1995 for development and extension of main streets, water and electric supply & sewerage and drainage system in 11 square kilometres area of Natore pourashava with the financial assistance of Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The Natore pourashava authority so far has received only Taka 45.42 lakh of the total amount, official sources said.

A competent source in Natore pourashava office told the Daily Star that due to procedural complexity of LGED and Co-operative Ministry, the pourashava did not get the large amount of fund of the project so far.

On the other hand, LGED, Natore has started development and extension works of different important roads of the town with the allocated fund.

These include extension of road from Kotwali, Mosque to Maharaja JN High School at a cost of Taka 12.86,800, road from kuntcha bazar to Rajshahi-Dhaka highway via Sonali Bank main branch at a cost of Taka 4.24,100, road from Upar Bazar to Pilkhana crossing at a cost of Taka 6,12,800, road from Boro-Harishpur to Mithupara mosque at a cost of Taka 13,77,700, road

from Mallikhati primary school to Liaquat Bridge at a cost of Taka 4,10,540, road from Bargacha to railway station at a cost of Taka 1,76,700.

The works are, however, progressing very slowly causing immense sufferings to poura dwellers and impeding vehicular movement.

The Local Government Engineering Department, Natore is also constructing and repairing a number of pucca drains of the town under this project at a cost of Taka 2,50,500.

Paura dwellers alleged, the works are substandard and much below the expectation.

Young man's body found hanging in hostel room

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Apr 27: Kotwali police recovered body of a young boy identified as named Dipu, 22, from New Bengal hotel on Tuesday. Ten yards of white cloth, meant for wrapping the body before burial, a letter and some money were also found beside his body.

Police said he rented room No-18 of the hotel on April 20. On Tuesday morning the hotel authority broke open the doors and found him hanging from the ceiling fan.

Police later sent the dead body to morgue. None has so far claimed the body.

Clash over lease of river ghat leaves 30 hurt

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Apr 27: At least 30 persons sustained injuries in a clash between two rival groups over taking lease of a ferry ghat across the river Karotoa at village Chalkhala under Palashbari thana on April 20.

According to eyewitnesses, local Kishoregari Union Parishad (UP) chairman called a tender for public lease of the said ferry ghat. One Abdul Momin of the same village was given lease of the said ghat showing highest bid. This has been challenged by another contestant Karimuddin of village Tekani under Palashbari thana. He filed an allegation with the Deputy Commissioner (DC), Gaibandha. The DC reviewed the matter and asked the concerned UP chairman to arrange a fresh tender for the said ghat. Meanwhile, the chairman concerned issued a lease order in favour of Abdul Momin ignoring the order of the DC.

On the day of the incident when the lease holder Abdul Momin started collection of tolls at the ghat it was resisted by the supporters of Karimuddin. Soon after there ensued a clash following exchange of hot words. Deadly weapons were used by both the sides in the clash. As a result 30 persons sustained injuries, 18 of them were admitted in the local health complex with multiple injuries. The rest were given first aid treatment.

Two counter cases were filed by both the groups with Palashbari Police Station in this connection.

Stone quarry closed 20,000 labourers jobless at Ballaghat

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Apr 27: About 20 thousand labourers of the Ballaghat Stone Quarry have become jobless due to the suspension of stone collection for the last 15 days following a clash between the transport workers and labourers of a stone crushing mill near the quarry.

The clash took place on April 13 over some trifling matter which resulted in immediate stoppage of transportation of stones by the truck labourers from the quarry. Everyday huge quantity of stones are collected from Ballaghat Quarry and transported to Sylhet and other places of the country.

The programme was meant for 12-year-old children from five countries — Bangladesh, Australia, Croatia, Ghana and Japan — with an aim to create an understanding among the boys and girls of these countries and facilitate them to know each others' culture, environment, social, political and

Clash leaves 10 injured in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Apr 27: At least 10 persons including a woman were injured in two separate clashes in Saikupa thana on Eid day (Friday), according to local people.

Eye-witnesses said, following a trivial matter two rival groups at village Dhaurah faced each other with lethal weapons. Atleast eight people were injured. Of the injured six were rushed to Saikupa thana health complex and Jhenidah sadar hospital. During the clash at least seven houses were allegedly damaged by the rivals.

In another clash at village Dautia in Saikupa thana two persons were injured in a clash that lasted for several hours. They were rushed to hospital, police said. But the reason behind the clash could not be known.

No case was recorded till filing of this report.

Four killed in separate road accidents

RANGPUR, Apr 27: Four people were killed and another 35 injured in separate road accidents in the district on Thursday and Friday, reports UNB.

Police said two people were killed and 35 others injured when a Thakurgaon bound night coach left to roadside ditch near Peerganj bus stand on Rangpur-Bogra road on Thursday.

The dead were identified as Mostafizur Rahman, 35, and Badal, 25.

The injured were admitted to Peerganj Thana Health Complex, from where 17 were shifted to the Rangpur Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

In another incident, two elderly people were crushed under the wheels of a private car at Channmari in Badarganj thana on Friday.

Amulya, 75, and Majful Haque, 60, were run over at about 11 am when they were sitting under a tree.

The driver managed to escape, but police seized the vehicle. Separate cases have been lodged with the police.

Faulty water plant

BANDARBAN, Apr 27: The water supply plant at the district headquarters set up at a cost of Tk 4 crore has been meeting only 15 per cent of the requirement of the 40,000 town dwellers, reports UNB.

Official sources said faulty planning and lapses in the project implementation had been responsible for the not yet been possible to pump treated water up to the hill top reservoir constructed at a cost of Tk 40 lakh at Kychin Ghatta, about two-km from the plant.

The Superintending Engineer of the Chittagong Public Health Engineering Department told newsmen that an advisory committee would be formed soon to identify the faults and irregularities. Steps will be taken to improve the water supply situation on the basis of their report and recommendations.

They are also exploring the possibility drawing clean water from the springs and other natural sources, he added.

Ruma thana fire victims to get relief

BANDARBAN, Apr 27: Bandarban district local government parishad and district administration have distributed relief goods worth about Taka two lakh and some cash among the fire affected families of Ruma bazar on Monday, an official source said, reports BSS.

District Local Government Chairman Mong Keya Ching Chowdhury said, relief goods worth about Taka one lakh and fifty thousand were distributed among the fire affected families.

The additional deputy commissioner (Rev) said, the district administration has distributed 1250 kg of rice among the fire affected people. He said, about four metric tons of rice, 100 pieces of sarees, hundred pieces of lungi and Taka 25,000 in cash have already been allocated by the government for distribution among the fire affected families of the Ruma bazar.

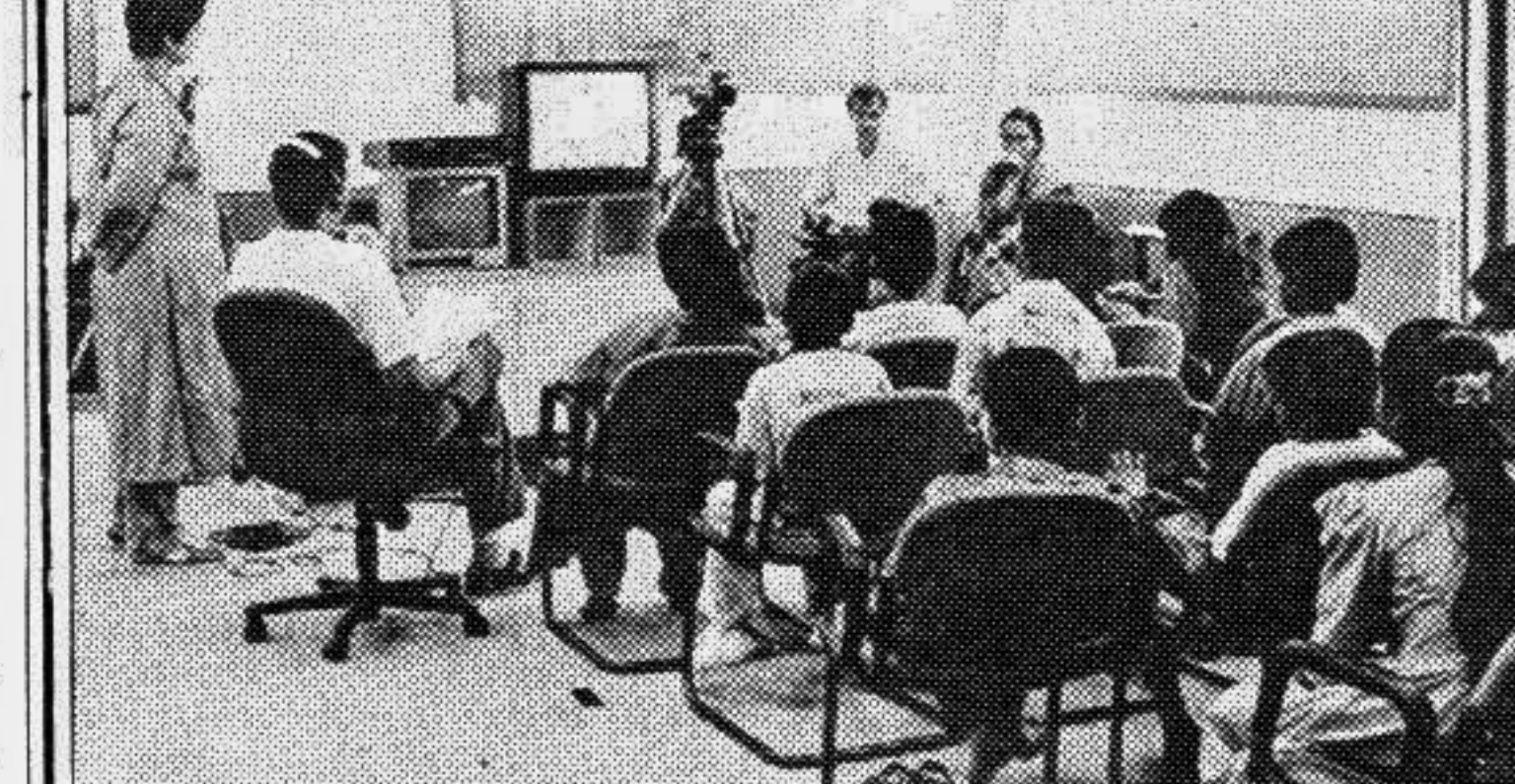
Metropolitan

It's a rare opportunity for them

A group of poor Bangladeshi children yesterday had a rare opportunity to talk live with children in Japan, Australia, Ghana and Croatia simultaneously through VTR programme, sponsored by Japan Television, NHK, in cooperation with UNICEF, reports UNB.

The twelve-year-old boys and girls who are studying in Algi Kandipara and Madhabdi schools in Narsingdi district, joined the international telephone meeting, first of its kind, at the UNICEF office in the city yesterday.

The programme was meant for 12-year-old children from five countries — Bangladesh, Australia, Croatia, Ghana and Japan — with an aim to create an understanding among the boys and girls of these countries and facilitate them to know each others' culture, environment, social, political and



NHK Satellite broadcast with children of five countries including Japan, Bangladesh, Australia, Croatia and Ghana was held at UNICEF local office in the city yesterday. The programme entitled "Network for Twelve Year Olds Around the World," is the first of its kind in Bangladesh. Twenty 12 year old school children from Madhabdi, Narsingdi took part in the broadcast.

The nearly four-hour programme titled "Discovery Treasures" of each one was Video recorded from all the five countries at the same time.

Some 15 children from Algi Kandipara sat in front of a TV monitor at the UNICEF office and started exchanging information and discussed various events and things of their cultural heritage and national pride with their age-mates in four other countries.

Earlier, they drew several pictures of Bangladesh's national flag, Central Shaheed Minar and flower "Shapla" which were shown to children in other four countries through VTR. Children from Japan, Australia, Ghana and Croatia

also drew pictures of their national heritage by pencil, brush and colour which were shown to Bangladeshi children.

They also exchanged greetings and information about yesterday's weather over video phone during the programme. They sometimes enjoyed various quizzes through their interpreters.

Yesterday's videotaped programme will be broadcast in Japan on May 5 on the occasion of Children Day.

"I am very very happy knowing the lifestyle of our friends in these countries. Earlier, I did not even hear the names of these countries. Today I have learnt many things about them," said smiling Moyna, a student of class six of Madhabdi High School.

Ujjal, a student of class five of Algi Kandipara School, was very happy by participating in

Bank holiday Thursday

Bangladesh Bank and all its scheduled banks will remain closed on May 1 (Thursday) on the occasion of May Day, said a BB press release yesterday, reports UNB.

Death anniversary

The fourth death anniversary of Begum Khurshida Kabir, a noted social worker and mother of office secretary of Bangladesh Krishak League MA Karim, will be observed on May 1, family sources said, reports BSS.

A milad mahfil and Qurankhawani will be held on the occasion at the village home of late Khurshida Kabir at Baranagar village of Nasiranga thana under Brahmanbaria district.

Seminar on curse of drug held

A seminar on the "Curse of drug and future generation" was held at BIRDEM auditorium in the city on Saturday, reports UNB.

Eminent psychiatrist Prof Hedayetul Islam presented the keynote paper at the seminar jointly organised by Inner Wheel Club of Dhaka North, Dhamondi, Greater Dhaka and Motijheel.

2nd phase reorganisation plan of PSC completed

The second phase reorganisation plan of the Bangladesh Public Service Commission has been completed by an international management consultant based in London, reports UNB.

A press release of the management consultants, Brettonwood Partnership Limited, said here that the report was related to the institutional improvement of the BPSC and the project was funded by the World Bank and the government of Bangladesh over a 26 month period.

The second phase work was divided into four sections: Evaluation of BCS examination system and curricula; Evaluation of Senior Scale Promotion Examination Systems and curricula; Evaluation of the present practice for non-cadre recruitment and reforms and preparation of interview manual/guide/handbook for PSC viva boards.

The management consultant has produced the report along with recommendations which include a Manual for Interview Boards and a plan of action about the next steps, the press release added.

Commenting on the report, the consultants said they believe "Foundation has been laid for PSC to become a centre of excellence."

Sher-e-Bangla was pioneer of Bangalee nationalism: Samad

Foreign Minister Abus Samad Azad said yesterday Sher-e-Bangla was the pioneer of Bangalee nationalism, reports UNB.

Speaking as the chief at a discussion at the mazar of the great leader, the Foreign Minister said that the father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Hossain Shahid Suhrawardy were his followers.

The discussion on the life and works of the late leader, organised on the occasion of his 35th death anniversary, preceded qurankhawani, milad mahfil and placing of wreaths at the mazar. It was jointly organised by Sher-e-Bangla Jatiya Gabeshana Parishad, Bangladesh Jatiya Bakittita Gabeshana Kendra and Bangladesh Sahitya Sangskriti Sangsad.

State Minister for Jute and Textiles AK Faezul Haque, son of the late leader, also attended the function as the special guest. It was also attended by AL joint secretary MA Jaiil, Prof Dr Mazharul Islam, Dr Ashraf Siddiqui, Sher-e-Bangla Jatiya Gabeshana Parishad president Abdul Khaleque, Dr Khaleida Salahuddin and poet Syed Azizul Haque.

The Foreign Minister distributed the Naba Barsha awards among the following personalities in recognition of their outstanding contribution in different fields:

Prof Dr Mazharul Islam (literature and education), Ragib Ali (industrialisation and social work), Amanullah Khan, chairman, UNB (education and social work), poet Sheikh Wahidur Rahman (mystic song), Prof Dr Modasser Ali (medical service and column writing), prof Dr Khaleida Salahuddin (literature and research), Nurul Haque Sharif (engineering and social work), Ln Nazrul Islam (education and social work), Khondaker Ruhul Amin (social work), Begum Hasina Zafar (social work), Sadia Chowdhury Parag (rhymes) and Nakul Kumer Biswas (music).

Justice Kemaluddin Hossain, in his presidential speech, said late AK Fazul Haque declared the 'Pahela Baishakh' as public holiday and gave directive to establish Bangla Academy in 1954 when he headed the then Jukta Front government.

Nat'l child, juvenile theatre festival begins

A nine-day national child and juvenile theatre festival began at Shilpakala Academy in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

Post and Telecommunications and Housing and Public Works Minister Mohammad Nasim opened the festival aimed at inspiring the children in practising drama.

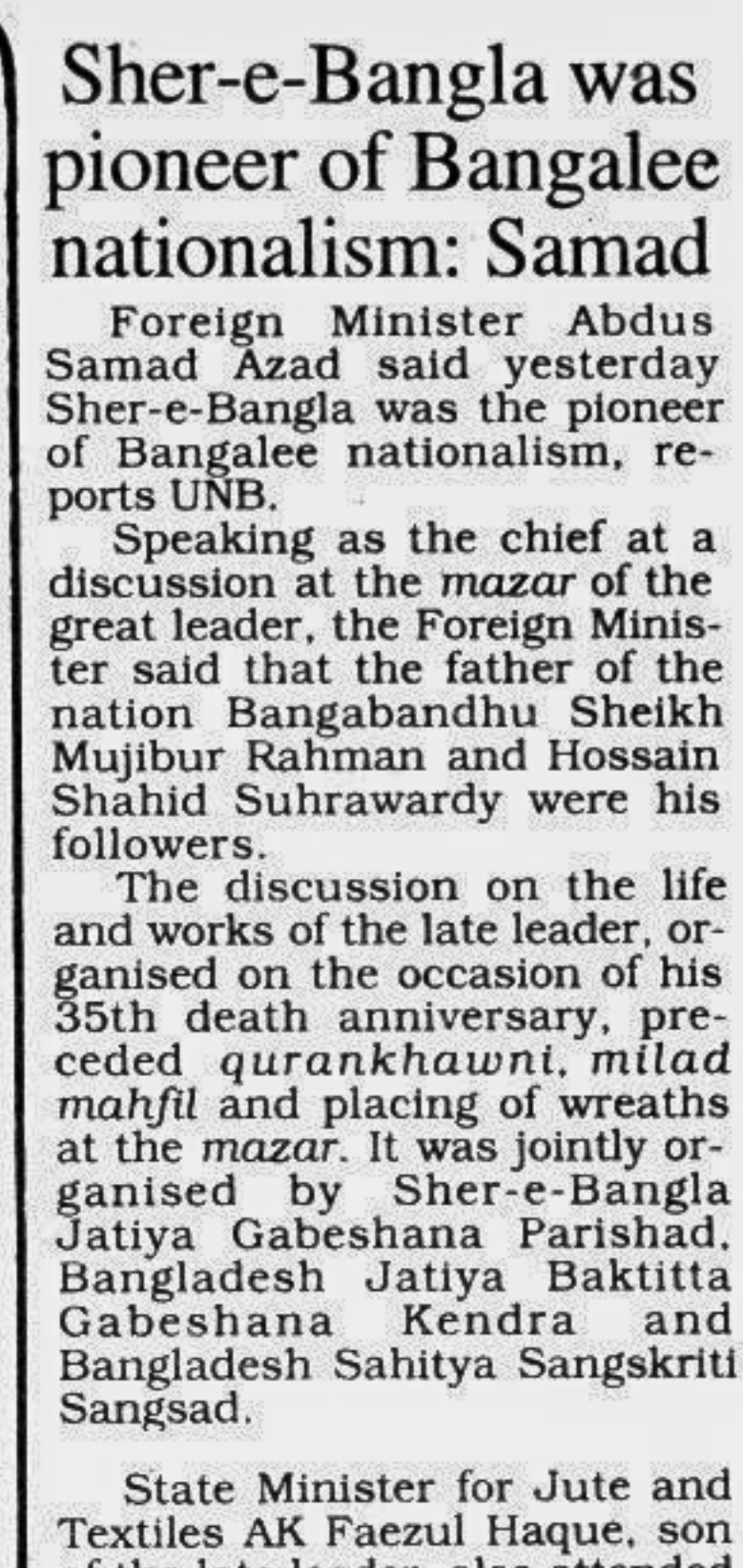
Twenty-five theatre groups from across the country are taking party in the festival organised by the Academy in collaboration with the People's Theatre Association.

State Minister for Youth and Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader, renowned child organiser Rukonuzzaman Khan (Dada Bhai), acting Cultural Secretary Syed Yusuf Hossain, Shilpakala Academy Director General Shamsuzzaman Khan and People's Theatre Association Secretary General Liaqat Ali Khan also addressed the function.

Inaugurating the function, Mohammad Nasim said children of the present generation would be built up as the country's competent future citizens flourishing their artistic bent of mind through drama, music and fine arts.

He said the present government is pledge-bound to build up the children to be better fitted for the 21st century, keeping in mind the message that "the children first."

The minister assured of all-out government assistance and cooperation to move forward the child theatre movement.



A colourful rally organised by the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy was brought out in the city yesterday to mark the Child-Juvenile Theatre festival '97.

— Star photo