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# The Daily Star

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## Chidambaram may be back into cabinet as TMC rejoins govt

NEW DELHI, Apr 29: An important southern Indian regional party that left India's ruling coalition announced today that it would rejoin the government, a news agency reported, says AP.

The move by the Tamil Maanila Congress (TMC) to rejoin the United Front coalition will strengthen Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral's government that is less than one-week-old.

The group left the coalition, but promising support in Parliament, after its leader, GK Moopanar, lost to Gujral in the race to become prime minister.

The decision to rejoin the coalition was announced on Tuesday. See Page 12 Col 8

## Plan to set up waste treatment plants for Hazaribagh tanneries

By Staff Correspondent

Plans are underway for setting up waste treatment plants for tanneries at Hazaribagh in the city, according to officials of the Department of Environment (DOE).

The DOE's claim contradicts a previous proposal to shift the tanneries, numbering about 30, to Savar or Kanchpur on the outskirts of the capital. A task force on leather industry had earlier explored the possibility of shifting the tanneries.

"Shifting of the tanneries to another place will not solve the problem. It will only spread the pollution to new areas," a DOE official said.

A World Bank survey team has already visited the tannery area and showed interest to provide fund for setting up waste treatment plants, another DOE official said.

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## DSE price index marks rise: Demonstration continues

By Staff Correspondent

With the kerb market operators continuing their demonstration in front of the Dhaka Stock Exchange yesterday, the DSE All Share Price Index rose considerably over the day.

Meanwhile, out-market traders under the banner of the Bangladesh Small Investors Federation (BSIF) held a rally at noon protesting the alleged manipulation in the market and demanding the resignation of all DSE councillors especially those accused of being involved in last year's share market scam.

BSIF president Moniruzzaman presided over the rally. Morshed Kamal, Nazrul Islam. See Page 12 Col 4

## Announcement

As there will be no issue of The Daily Star on Friday 2 May 1997, the Star Magazine, a Cricket Special, will be published on Thursday 1 May 1997. Ask your hawk for your copy. — Editor

## Inside Today

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Today's issue of The Daily Star contains a special supplement on the 'National Day of the Netherlands' Pages 13-16

## \$50m project underway Dredging of Gorai likely to begin in Sept

By Mizan Ali

An estimated 50 million US dollar dredging project for the river Gorai, the only sweet water carrying channel in the southern region, is underway, according to highly placed officials here.

Officials in the Ministry of Water Resources told The Daily Star that the government had also received positive assurance of assistance for the project from some of the bilateral donors.

Dredging of the river is likely to begin in September this year. The government had already initiated re-excavation of the Gorai under the Food for Work Programme last month, they said.

Some private sector entrepreneurs have already made representations to the ministry, expressing their willingness to participate in the proposed dredging project, officials said without elaborating.

About the stretch of the river that required dredging, officials said it could be between 14 and 20 km in length. Gorai, the main channel of the Padma in the region, remains choked up from December till the advent of monsoon.

An official of the ministry said 'morphologists in the early 90s had predicted that the river might permanently get cut off, unless some intervention was made with immediate effect,

however expensive that could be.'

According to him 'only dredging of Gorai would not serve the purpose. It would also require some ancillary structures' to induce flow of water into the river, he said. Besides, it would also require annual maintenance dredging, he added.

To a question whether it was an expensive solution to a poor country like Bangladesh, the official said, 'Gorai is the only sweet water carrying channel for the southern region of the country, which is the second industrial base of the nation. Eventually when the Ganges

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## 6 more killed in N'ganj, Faridpur 6 killed, 50 hurt in road accident near Bhaluka

At least 12 people, six of them near Bhaluka, were killed in three road accidents in three districts yesterday, reports UNB.

Seventy-three others were injured in the accidents that occurred in Mymensingh, Narayanganj and Faridpur.

Six people were killed and 50 injured, 45 critically, in a road accident at Bharadoba near Bhaluka on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway.

A speeding truck rammed a passenger bus coming from the opposite direction at Bharadoba in the afternoon, resulting in the casualties, police said.

Two people, including the truck driver, died on the spot, while four others died on way to the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

One of the victims was identified as Abdul Wahab, 50, while the identity of the others could not be known immediately.

Some 45 people were admitted to the MMCH in critical condition, including Idrish Ali, 40, Sohrab, 20, Abdul Halim, 10, Liton, 28, Sabed Ali, 50, Jalal, 30, Babul, 20, Selim, 20, Shafig, 22, Motahar Hossain, Laxmi, 20.

The bus was crumpled in the violent collision with a bang, witnesses said.

At Rugganj, Narayanganj, three people, including a middle aged woman and her daughter, were killed and three others injured when a microbus collided with a bus on Dhaka-Sylhet highway.

The dead were identified as Fatema Rokhana, 44, wife of Enayet Ali, a project director of BCIC at Polash, her daughter Sharmin Sultana, 14, and their microbus driver Kashem, 35.

Fatema and her daughter died on the spot while the microbus driver succumbed to his injuries on way to the Dhaka

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## Partial strike 3 RU officials replaced

From Our Correspondent RAJSHAHI, Apr 29: The strike called by the Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) in Rajshahi University protesting the new admission system was observed partially today.

Some offices on the campus were open and the ongoing examinations were held as scheduled. But the distribution of application forms for admission remained suspended for fourth day today as the Agrani Bank branch did not function.

A heavy contingent of police was patrolling the campus.

Except the explosion of a cocktail, no untoward incident was reported during the hartal. Most of the students, except ICS supporters, returned to the campus.

Meanwhile, 40 students, out of 125 arrested on Sunday night, were released from the Rajshahi Central Jail on bail today.

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BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a public meeting at Garuhata field at Gafargaon in Mymensingh yesterday. — Star photo

## Syndicate decision Student bodies hail, JCD terms it motivated

By DU Correspondent

All student organisations, excepting the BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) have hailed the DU Syndicate decision to dissolve the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) committee and the hall unions.

The JCD held a rally on the campus yesterday protesting the decision of the Syndicate.

Speaking at the rally, JCD leaders said, the Syndicate has no authority to take such a major decision.

They demanded immediate election to the DUCSU and hall unions. The present DUCSU leaders would then hand over the charge to the newly elected committees, they said.

JCD leaders claimed that 'professional killers' were residing in the BCL-dominated DU halls and JCD activists were not being allowed to carry out

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## Party supporters attacked Hartal programme may be inevitable: Khaleda

By Nazmul Ashraf, back from Mymensingh

BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia has said her party does not believe in politics of hartal but added that going for such programmes may be "inevitable" to resist the government "atrocities" and its "design to turn the country into a vassal state."

Begum Zia, also the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, was addressing a public meeting at the Garuhata field in Gafargaon thana in Mymensingh district yesterday afternoon.

Dozens of people including six local correspondents of different national dailies were injured in sporadic attacks on a train and a number of buses carrying party supporters and people to the meeting. The attacks were made at different places earlier on the day.

Besides, many others were also obstructed on their way to the meeting venue and threat-

ened not to attend the meeting. However, Begum Zia's motorcade of some 50 vehicles did not face any obstruction on way to Gafargaon from the city and on the return journey.

Two police vehicles guarded Begum Zia's motorcade during the journey. BDR and police were also deployed at the meeting venue and surrounding places.

Seriously injured persons included Nazmul Haq president of Gafargaon thana unit of Juba Dal (BNP's youth front), Helal, an activist of the organisation and Babul Hossain local correspondent of the daily Janakantha.

The journalists were injured when the microbus carrying them and some local BNP leaders was attacked at Bhaluka, one of the injured correspond-

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## Police - Nasir group gunfight in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Apr 29: A large contingent of police had a half-an-hour gunfight with the alleged terrorists of 'Nasir Bahini' at the city's Parade Ground last night.

Police said, the gunfight began at 10 pm last night when the Parade Ground was raided.

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to nab Nasir and his group members. Nasir and other group members fled at one stage of the fighting by opening brush fire from sten guns, police sources said.

Police also made counter attacks but no casualty was reported. Police organised the raid on a tip off while Nasir was staying along with his followers at the Parade Ground near Chawkbazara area.

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## Expulsion of Kazi Zafar withdrawn

By Staff Correspondent

The expulsion order on Kazi Zafar Ahmed, a senior president member of the Jatiya Party, was withdrawn yesterday, according to a party press release last night.

Zafar was expelled from the JP for the second time on April 10.

Shah Moazzem Hossain a senior JP leader talking to The Daily Star yesterday confirmed he had received a letter withdrawing the expulsion order of Zafar.

Naziur Rahman Manju, the additional secretary general of the party, also said Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Shah Moazzem Hossain and Kazi Zafar have been invited for discussion with the party chairman H M Ershad today.

Shah Moazzem also confirmed this.

On the solidarity of the party the expulsion of Kazi Zafar Ahmed has been withdrawn, Shah Moazzem quoted.

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## 90 killed, 300 hurt in Chinese train crash

BEIJING, Apr 29: A cross-country passenger train crashed into a local train waiting at a station in southern China today, killing 90 people and injuring more than 300, the state-run Xinhua News Agency reported, says AP.

More than 1,100 police and emergency medical personnel were rushed to Rongjiawan Station in Hunan province after the morning accident, Xinhua said. Ninety injured passengers were being given emergency care, it added.

Witnesses saw one train, on its way from Kunming in the southwest to Zhengzhou in the north, smash into the rear of the other train, the news agency said. The accident occurred about 1,200 kilometers south of Beijing.

## Muggers snatch Tk 1 lakh at Tejgaon

By Staff Correspondent

A group of muggers snatched Tk 1.5 lakh from a man on Tongi Diversion Road under Ramna thana in the city yesterday afternoon.

Taherul Islam was attacked by three muggers as he was returning to his Banani office from Motijheel in an auto-rickshaw. Police said he was carrying the cash in a hand bag.

A young man got into the vehicle when it stopped at the Moghbazar crossing and sat beside the driver. When the signal changed, the driver drove off with the stranger still on board, said Ramna police.

Later, two unidentified persons intercepted the vehicle somewhere near the Tejgaon Sathmatha road crossing at about 12:30 pm. They assaulted Taherul and then fled the scene, snatching the bag.

On duty police rushed to the spot and arrested the auto-rickshaw driver, identified as Jamal. A case has been filed with Ramna thana in connection with the incident, police added.

## Nor'wester lashes Pirojpur town: One killed

PIROJPUR, Apr 29: Four power towers in the town were collapsed during a nor'wester that also left a middle-aged man dead today, reports UNB.

Officials said power supply to the areas, which are under Rural Electrification Board, remained cut off following the collapse of the towers.

Witnesses said Amzed Ali, 42, was killed when a streak of lightning struck him at Bhandaria thana during the storm.

## Britain goes to polls tomorrow Tories 22pts behind Labour

LONDON, Apr 29: With two days' campaigning left and omens worsening for Conservative Prime Minister John Major, party leaders today fanned out into key districts which will decide Britain's national election, reports AP.

The respected business daily, the Financial Times, came out for Tony Blair's Labour Party, snubbing the Conservatives, the traditional party of big business, because of divisions over Europe.

The latest Gallup poll, in line with other soundings, put the Conservatives 22 points behind Labour, a record deficit for election week.

Newspapers, quoting unidentified government officials, said Blair, 43, has already drawn up plans to move his young family into the prime minister's official residence. It would be the first time children have lived at 10 Downing St in nearly 50 years.

"This country is sleepwalking into the sort of disastrous policies Labour in power have always been responsible for," Major's deputy, Michael Heseltine, told reporters.

Blair, whose restyled 'new Labour' has moved into much of the Conservatives' political territory, told a leftist questioner on a BBC radio phone-in he had not sold out, just modernized.

"I think this country has been crying out for a sensible, moderate alternative to the Conservative Party for a generation and now they have finally got one," said Blair.

"I refuse to believe that the Labour Party should either face a choice of being electable and unprincipled or principled but unelectable."

Major went to Brighton, a faded resort on the south England coast that rates among the top 50 Conservative districts

that Labour hopes to snatch to win power. Blair campaigned in narrowly Tory districts in Gloucestershire county, west of London.

The support of the Financial Times was a coup for Blair, who has courted big business.

The newspaper cited splits in the Conservatives over closer relations with the rest of the European Union and, in particular, whether to join a single European currency in 1999.

Labour has already been endorsed by the Sun and News of the World-mass circulation tabloids which are part of Rupert Murdoch's international media empire — and which previously supported the Conservatives.

During the campaign, Blair announced that Labour would not stop Murdoch and others from owning both newspapers and TV stations in Britain.

See Page 12 Col 3

## Writ on trial venue: Verdict today

The hearing of the writ petition challenging the notification for holding the trial of Bangabandhu murder case in a house in the two-storied building opposite to the main gate of Dhaka Central Jail instead of in the usual court building at Johnson Road, ended yesterday before a High Court division bench, reports BSS.

The bench comprising Justice Mohammad Mozammel Huq and Justice Mohammad Hasan Amin, after the hearing, fixed the date for judgement today.

Advocate Khan Saifur Rahman moved the petition for the accused petitioner Syed Farook Rahman.

Additional Attorney General Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan and Deputy Attorney General Kaiser Uddin Ahmed opposed the petition for the state.

## Bangabandhu murder Court adjourns trial till May 6

By Staff Correspondent

The proceedings of the Bangabandhu murder case in the court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka was adjourned yesterday till May 6.

The District and Sessions Judge, Kazi Golam Rasul, announced the adjournment after the defence stated that two separate writ petitions challenging the continuation of the trial court proceedings were pending before the High Court.

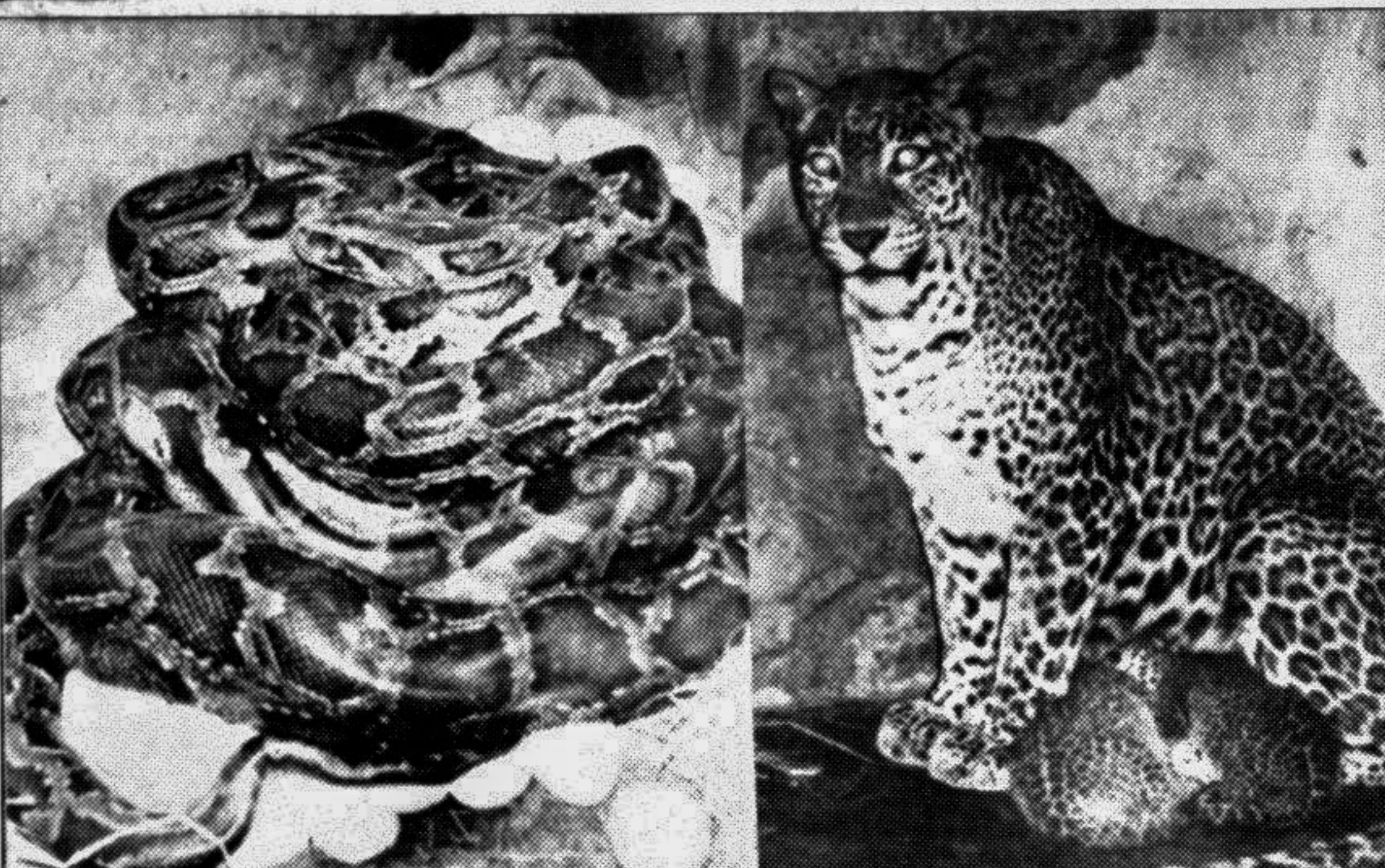
The examination of prosecution witnesses scheduled for April 21 was earlier adjourned till April 29, following a defence petition expressing apprehension about fair and impartial trial for his client.

During the day's proceedings yesterday that began at around 11:15 am, the defence counsel for Zobaidda Rashid moved a petition seeking transfer of the case to any other competent court for trial.

Serajul Huq, the Special Public Prosecutor, opposed the prayer and noted that earlier an adjournment was taken by the counsel for Zobaidda Rashid on the ground that they will prefer an application under Section 526 of the CrPc before the High Court Division.

Huq reminded that the court had earlier granted eight days' time for them to prefer the application.

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Two pythons coiled together, incubating eggs (L) and a Cheetah feeding two cubs (R) in the Dhaka Zoo at Mirpur in the city. — Star photo by Sk Enamul Haq

## Cheetah now has two cubs, python lays sixty eggs

By Morshed Ali Khan

The only female cheetah in the Dhaka Zoo has given birth to three cubs, while the python population is set to explode as two of the huge reptiles are now incubating at least sixty eggs.

One of the three cheetah cubs, which were born two months ago, died on Saturday. Its mother had pounced on a "careless" zoo caretaker the day before, inflicting serious injury on him. The unnamed cheetah seized the man by the head as he entered the enclosure to feed it a chunk of meat. The enraged mother dragged the man outside where dozens of people gathered, eventually driving her off.

"She was sitting on the man for about four minutes, injuring him on his skull, hand and chest before we managed to free

died due to heat soon after their births. There are more than sixty eggs here under incubation and pythons usually take two months to hatch," Noorjahan said.

Inside the pen, two pythons lay coiled, one on the other, covering the eggs. During the two months of incubation the reptiles are likely to stay in this position.

The two pythons laid the eggs on April 20 and 25. The hatching is expected in late June. Noorjahan said they would make special arrangements for the young ones. "The babies would be about a foot in length when they are hatched," she said. Pythons can grow up to thirty feet in length and can devour a cow.

Dhaka Zoo story

him," said a caretaker of the zoo, adding that the cheetah then went round the place and returned to its cubs inside the enclosure. The man is now undergoing treatment at a Mahakhali hospital.

The father of the three cubs, now shifted to a separate pen, was presented to the zoo by former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia after it was captured in Sylhet.

Zoo Officer Dr Begum Noorjahan said it was a very special time for the Zoo because pythons rarely breed in captivity. In 1995, 28 pythons were successfully hatched but all

## Region's water resources can widen scope for mutual cooperation

By Staff correspondent

Speakers at a regional conference which began in the city yesterday, stressed that the water resources in the region could provide the frame work for sustainable development and regional cooperation.

The two-day conference on Harnessing the Eastern Himalayan Rivers and regional Cooperation under the auspices of Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad was inaugurated by Dr S A Malek, political advisor to the Prime Minister.

During the day long conference, presentations were made

by the Pierre Landell-Mills, Chief of Mission, World Bank and Bhanuphol Horayangura, Resident Representative of the Asian Development Bank, while two roundtable sessions were held among the participants from India, Nepal and Bangladesh.

In his inaugural speech, Dr Malek lauded the BUP for identifying transboundary opportunities of development and cooperation in the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) region that covers the territories of Bangladesh, India,

Bhutan, Nepal and China.

A growing interest is now being shown by the international community to facilitate and support the process of cooperation and development in the GBM region, he added.

Pierre Landell-Mills said that the South Asia Development Triangle covering the region under GBM offered immense potential provided the region was taken as a whole.

The vast resources of the region had tremendous potential for the growth of hydro-electricity, trade and commerce

among themselves if they open up, he said. The scope of development in the countries of the region could be used to its full potential only if effort was made taking into consideration the whole area, but if the countries tried on their own they would not be able to make the optimum use of their resources.

Horayangura in his deliberation said that cooperation on the regional basis has proved to be fruitful in other parts of the world. In this regard he mentioned that there has been cooperation on a sub-regional

level among ASEAN member states.

Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP), Centre for Policy Research (CPR) of India and Institute of Integrated Development Studies (IIDS) of Nepal are jointly organising the conference.

The inaugural session was also addressed, among others, by Ramshwami R Iyer of CPR and Daman Nath Dhungana of IIDS. Dr Khaleda Salahuddin, Vice Chairperson of BUP, gave the welcome address.

Dr Qazi Khalequzzaman

Ahmad, presiding over the inaugural session, said that three institutions had helped build friendship among the three countries by working together since 1990 on water and water related issues to uphold the interest of the people of the GBM region.

Dr Ahmad stressed the need for political good will among all in the GBM region as regional cooperation is a positive effort to help in the integrated development of the countries in this region.

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