

Few Apartments
With Loan/Installment facilities at different locations

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT LTD.
THE NAME MOST TRUSTED
12 RK MISSION ROAD, DHAKA
FAX: 880-2-668416 PHONE: 880-2-668412-3

VOL. VII NO. 278 REGD. NO. DA 781

The Daily Star

KARTIK 17 1404 BS. DHAKA SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1997 JAMADIUS SANI 29 1418 HIJRI

MARBLE MARBLE MARBLE
WE HAVE HUGE READY STOCK OF ITALIAN CARRARA, PERLATO SICILIA, BOTTICINO, INDIAN KESSWARI GREEN, MALAYSIAN AND PAKISTANI MARBLE OF DIFFERENT TYPES.

NIRMAN INTERNATIONAL LTD.
199, TEJGAON I/A, DHAKA
TEL: 805957, 807363 SHOW ROOM: 805965

12 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 6.00

BNP won't join Speaker's luncheon

By Staff Correspondent
BNP has decided not to join today's luncheon to be hosted by Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury.

The Speaker on Thursday invited some leaders of the ruling Awami League and opposition BNP for a luncheon today to forge a negotiation between the parties.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said that they would not join the launch as most of the party lawmakers at its parliamentary party meeting on Thursday expressed the view that the Speaker-hosted launch would produce nothing in meeting the party's 14-point charter of demands.

BNP has been abstaining from participating in the proceedings of the parliament since August 30, the inaugural day of the last session of the Jatiya Sangsad.

Its 14-point demand include

JSD factions reunite

By Staff Correspondent
Two factions of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) led by Shipping Minister ASM Abdur Rob and Hasanul Huq Inu got reunited yesterday after 13 years.

The announcement of the merger was made at a press conference held at the Ramina Restaurant in the city yesterday evening. Several thousand JSD activists were present on the occasion.

See Page 12 Col 6

Chairman murder: 2 held in Natore

From Our Correspondent
NATORE, Oct 31: Police today arrested two persons in connection with the murder of Zahid Hossain Mukul, chairman of No 5 Bipra Belgharia Union Parishad.

The arrested persons are Md Aminul Islam Siddiq, joint secretary of the Sadar thana unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Md Rafiqur Rahman, an Awami League activist, police said.

Meanwhile Md Ruhul Amin Biplop, president of the Sadar thana BCL and its general secretary Sohanur Rahman Sohel in a joint statement claimed that the arrested persons were not involved in the murder. They demanded unconditional release of the two persons.

UP chairman murder news not correct

By Staff Correspondent
The news item headlined 'UP chairman murdered in Rajshahi' on the front page of The Daily Star yesterday was not based on facts. Our Natore correspondent filed the report without getting it confirmed by Rajshahi police.

But our Rajshahi correspondent quoting the SP of Rajshahi and the chairman of Baneswar Union Parishad in Puthia thana (not Charghat thana as reported), Sultan Ahmed, said the report was unfounded.

The wrong information is being taken against the correspondent concerned.

The Daily Star
on the internet
<http://www.dailystarnews.com>

Inside Today Article

Soros' Sorrows
Column: Beneath the Surface
by Abdul Bayes
Page 4

Star Literature

Goutam's homage to our Liberation War; A journey with stringed instruments; and Fiction—The Advisory
Pages 6 & 7

International

Jiang promises to broaden democracy in China
Page 5

Supplement

One-page supplement on National Youth Festival '97
Page 9

Disclosure of draft CHT treaty may create complications: PM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said disclosure of the contents of the expected peace treaty on Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) might create "complications."

"Usually, in this type of treaty, if we really mean business, everything can't be disclosed. It may create complications. Wait and see," Hasina told newsmen at a press conference held at her official residence, Gonabhaban, last night.

The press conference followed the Prime Minister's return home yesterday after attending the 54-nation Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Edinburgh, UK.

The Prime Minister replied

to a volley of questions, giving an elaborate resume of her eight-day visit.

She also renewed her call to the major opposition party, BNP, to attend the Jatiya Sangsad session that begins tomorrow and expressed the hope that parliamentary standing committees would be formed in the coming session.

On the much talked about peace treaty between the National Committee on CHT (NCCHT) and the Parbaty Chhagram Janasanghati Samity (PCJSS), the Prime Minister said, "After signing of the treaty, we will place it on the floor of the parliament for discussion but, not before the signing."

She was critical of the major opposition party for, what she said, its propaganda that if the treaty was signed, the territory from CHT to Feni would become part of India. "I don't understand why she is not naming BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia," she said. "Doesn't she want peace? What does she want? Does she want our people to continue to languish as refugees on foreign land?"

Reaffirming that members of the armed forces would not be withdrawn from the CHT, the Prime Minister said, "A peace treaty may create problems for those who used to trade on arms but, I don't know what loss she would incur."

See Page 12 Col 1



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina being received by Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad at Zia International Airport on her return from the UK yesterday. —PID photo

Parliament belongs to the people, not to ruling party BNP should return to Sangsad regardless of what govt does

By Mahfuz Anam

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), the biggest opposition party ever in our parliamentary history, has been boycotting the sessions of the parliament since August 20, '97. Indications are that it will boycott the current session too. Our considered position is that, regardless of what the ruling party does BNP should return to the House and use it to air its grievances not only for this session but for the full duration of its term. The reasons are simple and straightforward.

First, the parliament DOES NOT BELONG TO THE RULING PARTY BUT TO THE PEOPLE. Boycotting the parliament amounts to boycotting the people who have elected the BNP MPs. Second, getting elected is as much a responsibility as it is a TRUST. Voters get a chance to vote only once every five years. And if after going through the trouble of getting one's chosen representative elected, if he or she does not represent the voters in the parliament, then it clearly amounts to BREAKING THAT TRUST. Third, when seeking vote, a candidate enters into a SACRED COVENANT with the voters that for the term of the office for which vote is being sought, the candidate will always stand by those who are voting for him or her. Boycotting the parliament is in effect abandoning his or her voters and as such the MPs concerned are BREAKING THAT

SACRED COVENANT. The most fundamental fact about our elected and sovereign parliament that our opposition parties appear to miss is that the House does not belong to the ruling party, but to the PEOPLE as represented by all the MPs who have been elected. AL missed this point when it was in the opposition and now the BNP is doing the same.

If for the sake of argument we accept every single accusation of BNP against AL to be true then also the question remains how and why should all that affect BNP's attitude towards the parliament? The ruling

Commentary

ing party may have committed the most grievous of errors but why should the parliament be boycotted as a consequence? In fact the reverse should be the case. The worse a government, the stronger should be the role of the opposition in the parliament. That is precisely why we have sent them to the parliament in the first place. Here lies the most devastating confusion in the minds of our present day politicians.

Let us face it: the parliamentary tradition in our country exists more in exception than in substance. This grand experiment got distorted from the very start, in the hands of Muslim League right after the 1947 partition. With Ayub

Khan's martial law, it died in 1958 never to recover in its full magnificence till the first parliament of independent Bangladesh. That got destroyed with the introduction of one-party system in '75 and never got restored for the next decade and a half. So our real and sustained beginning with parliamentary system of government began after the '91 election when, to the credit of Awami League that it was able to push for and bring about — with the majority BNP acquiescing to it later — the necessary amendments to the Constitution to restore parliamentary democracy in our country. So those who are in the parliament today do not really understand either the significance or the moral and ethical superiority of the parliament compared to every other institution in the country including — and especially — the government. The parliament is far above the government and it is meant to 'govern', so to speak, the government itself.

By boycotting the House the opposition is equating the government — which is made up of only a part, albeit the majority part — with the parliament which comprises all the members and is far bigger. In fact by boycotting the House BNP is boycotting the Master, which is the parliament, for the crime of the servant, which is the govt.

See Page 4

'Tokais want to live with dignity'

By Special Correspondent

The 'tokais, the ubiquitous rag pickers in the city, do not like to be addressed as such. They want to live with dignity and make a living without pity, a survey carried out by some street children says.

Presenting the findings of the survey, eleven children aged between 12-15 told newsmen at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday that they did not like their present occupation and living rough on the streets, haunted by mastalaks and police and 'bhadraloks' who are contemptuous of them. "We do not want your pity. Treat us with dignity and as humans not as garbage," one of them said.

Their occupations include rag picking, begging, working as domestic hands. Rag picking is a common but arduous task.

taking the whole day, rummaging the rubbish bins, but the return is small: some Tk 4/5 that too is often not paid by 'mahajans' and 'mastans', the survey said.

The survey was carried out with the help of Save the Children (UK) and the Chinnamul Shishu-Kishore Sangstha. The survey among street children noted that people treat them as thieves and often beat them. Most street children want to work at shops and restaurants. They do not get any job because no body would vouch for them as guardians.

Their future is uncertain. Sleeping rough on the streets is a difficult task, especially for the girls, who are swept off regularly by mastalaks and police.

See Page 12 Col 3

Mongla port deadlock ends

KHULNA, Oct 31: The normal activities of the Mongla Port resumed today after a four-day stalemate, reports BSS.

The deadlock ended following a fruitful discussion between the port authority, local administration, coordination committee of the port users and workers associations here last night. Deputy Minister for Shipping Dhirendra Debnath Shambhu presided.

The port activities including loading and unloading remained stopped since October 26.

A committee has also been constituted comprising the representatives of the port authority, local administration, port users and workers associations to remove various problems.

The committee, headed by a Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Shipping, will submit its report within 90 days.

JS goes into session tomorrow

The seventh session of the Seventh Jatiya Sangsad begins tomorrow at 4 pm, reports BSS. All preparations for smooth conducting of the session have been completed, sources said, indicating that it would be a brief one.

So far, 1400 questions, 65 call attention notices, 254 adjournment motions, 41 privilege motions, 12 notices for short discussions have been submitted to the Secretariat by the legislators belonging to both the ruling and the Opposition parties.

A total of five bills are expected to be placed before the House. The bills are: Securities and Exchange Commission (second amendment) Bill, 1997, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker (remuneration and privileges) (amendment) Bill, 1997, the Bangladesh (whips) (amendment) Bill, 1997, the Administrative Tribunals (amendment) Bill, 1997, and the Code of Civil Procedure (amendment) Bill, 1997.

See Page 12 Col 7

Normalcy yet to return in Sylhet border areas

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Oct 31: Normalcy is yet to return in Sripur and Tamabil border areas though both the BDR and the BSF have withdrawn their additional troops today.

Import through the Tamabil land customs station remained suspended for the second day today as the drivers of Indian trucks which carry coal to Bangladesh are still panicky, said an official. However, the official hoped that the border trade would resume tomorrow.

Plying of minibuses and other vehicles Sylhet-Tamabil road were normal today. Collection of stones from the Sripur quarry also began today, but at a slow pace, the official said.

Meanwhile, the namaj-e-janaja of the BDR Havildar, Hatem Ali Patwari, who was shot dead by BSF firing yesterday morning at Sripur stone quarry, was held at the BDR Sector Headquarter in Sylhet.

See Page 12 Col 3

Times-Bangla Trust newsmen, employees stage sit-in

By Staff Correspondent
Journalists, employees and other employees of The Dailyin Bangla, The Bangladesh Times, Bichitra and Ananda Bichitra, publications of the Time-Bangla Trust, are staging a sit-in on the premises of the newspaper after majority of them refused to resign voluntarily by Thursday as directed by the government.

Out of 281 journalists and employees of The Dailyin Bangla, only 27 journalists resigned. They included 20 who were recruited in March this year. Dailyin Bangla journalists said. Only the editors of the Dailyin Bangla, Times and Bichitra resigned on Thursday.

The journalists and others of the two newspapers continue

See Page 12 Col 5

IU students, outsiders clash: 8 hurt

KUSHTIA, Oct 31: At least eight people were wounded in a clash between some students of Islamic University and outsiders on the campus Thursday night, reports UNB.

The clash began when a group of 15-20 outsiders halted a campus-bound bus at the university gate at 8 pm, beat some of the students and reportedly snatched away about Taka 1000 from them at gun point.

Campus sources said the outsiders made the attack as they had failed to get any coupon for the annual dinner at a hall of the university. Pro-Awami League Chhatra League and Chhatra Shibir blamed each other for the clash.

Tense situation is prevailing on the campus as rival student organisations have taken positions at different points of the university. A huge number of armed police was deployed on the campus.

Students block Dhaka-Tangail highway

From Our Correspondent

TANGAIL, Oct 31: Traffic on Dhaka-Tangail highway remained suspended since 9 am today after angry students of Sadat College blocked the road at Karatia and Pakulia.

Witnesses said, the angry students put up barricades on the road to protest canceling of the Degree Examination Centre at Sadat College by the National University on Thursday last. They also attacked the principal's residence at Noon.

Govt to seek \$2.1b in fresh aid commitment

By Inam Ahmed

The government sits with the donor community on Tuesday at the aid group meet in the capital for an estimated fresh aid commitment of 2.173 billion US dollars.

The estimate was made assuming substantial increase in overall commitment, particularly in project aid commitment, the official document on the aid group meet says.

This year the government goes to the meet, to be held in Dhaka for the first time, with a much smaller opening aid pipeline — only 4.71 billion dollars as against FY97 pipeline of 5.421 billion dollars.

The estimate of higher commitment is based on certain normative assumptions: 20 per cent of opening pipeline and at least five per cent of new commitments of project aid, the entire amount of new commit-

ments of food aid and commodity aid and implementation of the conditionalities of policy-based lendings for release of tranches.

To ensure this higher commitment, it would now require a better coordination between the government and development partners, the official document underlined.

The disbursement of aid for FY98 is estimated at 1.467 billion dollars which includes 63 million dollars as food aid, 144 million dollars as commodity aid and 1260 million dollars as project aid.

The total disbursement for FY98 is at about the same level as the previous fiscal.

Making its case of a better management of the economy, the government has stated that the recovery experienced in overall balances in FY97 is

likely to continue in FY98 and is expected to result in a turnaround in the overall balance from a deficit of 127 million dollars in FY 97 to a surplus of 216 million dollars in FY 98.

The estimated trade deficit of 3015 million dollars is expected to be partly offset by a projected increase of private transfers — mainly workers' remittances — by 14.9 per cent from 1770 million dollars in FY97 to 2033 million dollars in FY98.

The document has banked heavily on the energy sector to highlight the foreseeable increase in private foreign investment. But it has remained silent on the prospect of FDI in other sectors.

Claiming 'a substantial improvement' in last year's macroeconomic performance,

See Page 12 Col 6

Khaleda tells US envoy BNP to return to JS if govt improves atmosphere

BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said her party is ready to return to parliament if the government removes the 'polluted atmosphere', reports UNB.

"The government has polluted the whole atmosphere, including parliament. If the House is not freed from pollution, it will be difficult for us to join its session," a party spokesman quoted her as saying during a meeting with the US Ambassador in Dhaka.

US Ambassador John C. Holzman called on the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament at her 29 Minto Road official residence in the evening and wanted to know if BNP would attend the parliament session beginning November 2.

The meeting that lasted for 95 minutes was attended by BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, M. Morshed

Khan MP and party's advisory committee member M M Rezaul Karim.

Briefing newsmen after the meeting, Rezaul Karim said the US envoy apprised Begum Zia of the US policy on Bangladesh and said that its policy is to support smooth running of democratic process and parliamentary system. "He also wanted to know BNP's views on the US policy."

Begum Zia told the US envoy that BNP, which believes in democracy, had introduced multi-party democracy and restored parliamentary system in the country.

She said the BNP is working to strengthen democracy in the country and continue the democratic process. "We worked for democracy in the past. We're continuing our efforts and will continue to fight for democracy."

See Page 12 Col 4

Contractor shot dead in city

A young contractor was shot dead at Sher Shah Shuri Road under Mohammadpur thana in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

Police said some business partners of Kamal alias Foreign Kamal shot at him at one stage of altercation in front of Hotel Fahd at 10 am.

Kamal, father of a one-year-old daughter sustained bullet injury in chest and thigh. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

The body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy. A case has been filed with Mohammadpur police.

Some changes in ambassadorial positions in offing

By Staff Correspondent

A number of changes in ambassadorial positions is leant to be on the anvil, according to official sources.

Aminul Islam, Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is tipped to become the country's high commissioner to Canada. The post is vacant since the recall of M R Osman.

Additional Foreign Secretary and Chief of Protocol AKM Farooq is tipped to become ambassador to China. He would be succeeding Mustafizur Rahman who has taken over as the Foreign Secretary.

Meanwhile, Dr Toufik Ali, envoy to the Netherlands has been called back to headquarters.

Shafi Sami, high commissioner to India, is due for promotion to Secretary level shortly, according to the sources. He is due to be brought back to headquarters to fill up Secretary level vacancies which would arise due to the overseas posting of Aminul Islam and the recent retirement of Waliur Rahman, the sources added.

Nat'l Youth Festival '97 begins today

The National Youth Festival '97 begins in the city today, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the week-long festival at 11 am at Paltan Maidan and later distribute the National Youth Awards to 11 persons.

Nearly 15,000 delegates from home and abroad will attend the festival organized by the Department of Youth Development under the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Fifteen delegates from Sri Lanka, India, the Philippines and Korea are already in the capital to participate in the festival.

The festival will be featured by a cultural function, a youth rally, a jubo mela and a seminar at different city venues.

The youth rally, to be led by

See Page 12 Col 8

3000 join Terry Fox Run in city

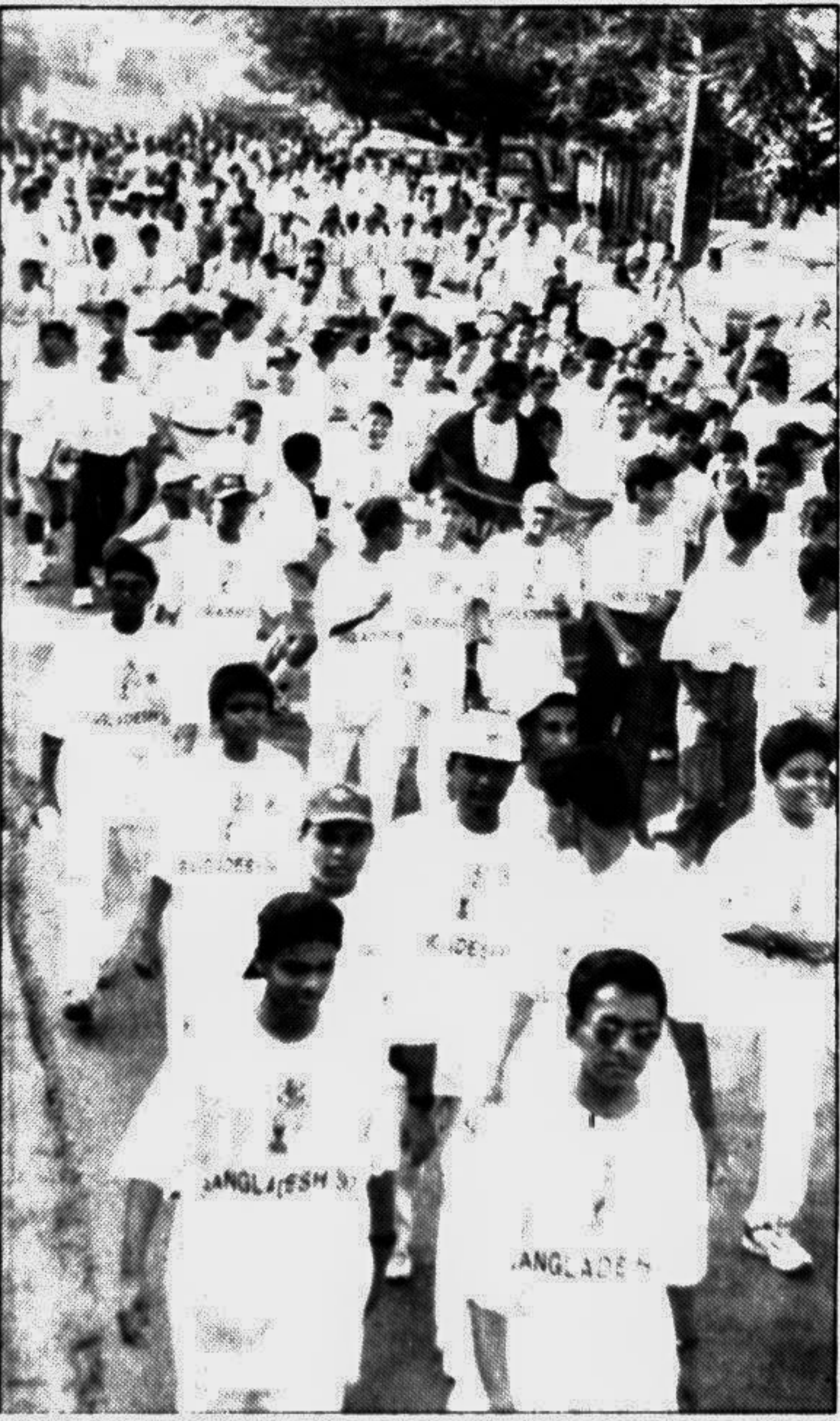
Boys and girls from different city schools and adults joined the Terry Fox Run in the capital yesterday to take part in the globally popular cancer fundraising event, reports UNB.

About 3,000 boys and girls from five and above, wearing special T-shirts for the Run, gathered in front of the Canadian Club at Gulshan Avenue at 7:30 am.

Later, they ran through different roads of the city holding banners and festoons showing support to the prevention of cancer.

Some adults and the members of Canadian community in Dhaka, also took part in the run, being organised worldwide to commemorate the idea of

See Page 12 Col 1



Participants in the Terry Fox Run, held in the city yesterday. —Star photo