

**Few Apartments**  
Ready - Nearing completion

**With Loan / Instalment facilities at different locations**

**PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT LTD**  
12 RK MISSION ROAD, DHAKA  
FAX: 880-2-9669416 PHONE: 8631117, 8631126, 8669412-3

# The Daily Star

**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: 605957, 607363 SHOW ROOM: 861965

VOL. VIII NO. 27 REGD. NO. DA 781 MAGH 30 1404 BS. DHAKA THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1998 SHAWAL 14, 1418 HIJRI 20 PAGES PLUS RISING STARS: PRICE TAKA 9.00

## Boy burnt alive, 200 shanties gutted in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Feb 11: A seven-year-old boy was burnt alive and about 200 shanties and 10 small shops were gutted in a devastating fire that broke out in Burma Colony here this morning, reports BSS.

Ten other people were also injured in the blaze that started at around 9:40 am and continued for more than two hours.

Fire brigade sources said an oven in a shop-cum-house sparked off the fire. It soon spread to the adjacent houses and shops as the roadside high-powered main electric cable line also caught fire.

Eight fire units from different fire stations including firemen from Navy and Air Force rushed to the spot and after the fire under control after two hours.

The boy who died in the fire was identified as Saddam Hossain. However, the extent of loss could not be ascertained immediately.

Later, Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Engineer Mosharrar Hossain visited the area and assured the fire-affected people of proper assistance and rehabilitation.

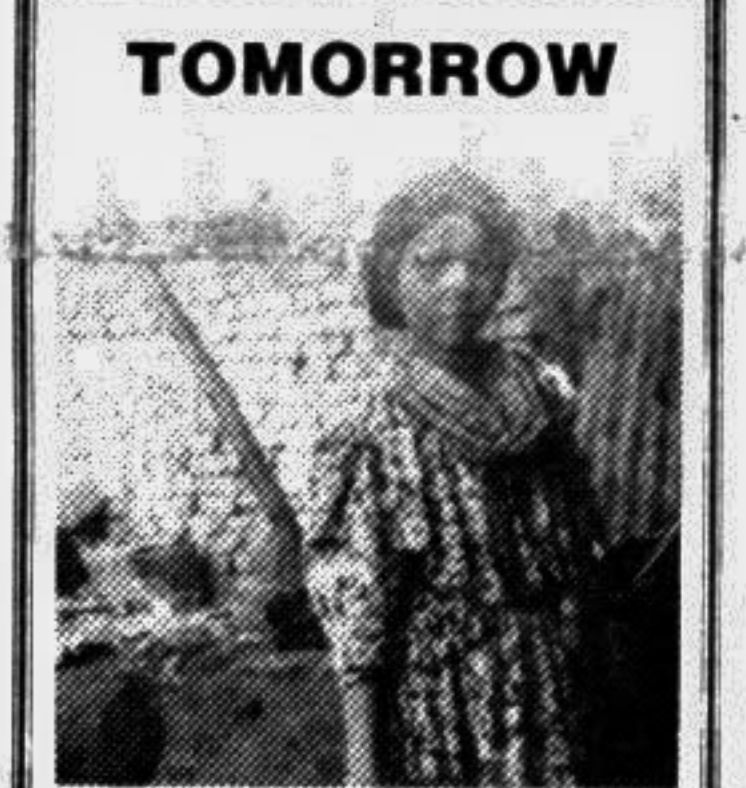
## Transport workers set fire to bazar, slum at Comilla: 50 injured

COMILLA, Feb 11: Fifty people, including a fireman and a policeman, were injured as an angry transport workers set fire to a bazar near Tomcham Bridge here today, reports UNB.

Police said over a thousand transport workers aided by a section of local people set the bazar on fire at about 11 am.

Police suspected that the incident was a sequel to the killing of a bus owner, Kalu Mia, by a group of miscreants on Tuesday.

Later, the unruly workers torched a slum at Asadpur and looted some dwelling houses. At least 50 shops and dwelling



**TOMORROW**

The objectives of the Global March are initially to raise awareness and concern about child labour among the public. The organisers hope that the six month march, with its aim of being the largest single social movement in history in support of the estimated 250 million children worldwide who are forced to work for their survival, will create an impact on society. Read the Star Weekend Magazines cover story this week on Global March against Child Labour.

## Inside Today Article

US records of HR violation in Bangladesh  
A Sordid Tale of Crimes and a Futile Attempt to Cover-up

Column: Currents and Crosscurrents, by M M Rezaul Karim Page 4

## Business

Fu-Wang will refund money if investors want: Swadesh apologises publicly  
DSE index falls by 4 points Pages 6, 7

## Supplements

Today's 20-page issue of The Daily Star contains a 6-page supplement on 'US Trade Show' on Pages 13-18 and one page supplement on 'Bangladesh Zaker Party' on Page 20

# Food deficit 25 lakh MT this yr: Matia

By Staff Correspondent

Food deficit in the current financial year is estimated at 25 lakh metric tons (MT), Food and Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

Arrangements have been made to meet the deficit with donations and assistance from donors and imports by the government and private sector importers, the minister said during the question-answer session.

The government has already imported one lakh MT of foodgrains, approved import of another three lakh MT, and is making preparations to import another two lakh MT under the budgetary allocation, she said.

Letters of Credit were also opened by private importers for import of foodgrains, said the food minister without mentioning the quantity.

At present, the government has a reserve of 7.35 lakh MT of foodgrains (as of February 3, 1998), Matia said.

On production of rice, the minister said, a 'hidden drought' in October affected the crop but hoped the coming aman and boro harvest will be satisfactory. The recent cold wave also affected the rabi crop, she said adding, they were consulting experts on possible measures if similar weather exists next year.

Open market sale (OMS) of rice began in some areas from February 9 and the programme will cover all the thanas very soon, the food minister told the parliament. The price of rice under the OMS programme has been reduced to Tk 12 per kg from Tk 12.50, she added.

Replying to supplementaries, Matia assured the House that

## Price of coarse rice in N-dists comes down

From Reaz Ahmad and Inam Ahmed

RANGPUR, Feb 11: Price of coarse rice has come down slightly in the northern districts in the last couple of days and stabilised at a lower level after some recent import from India.

Despite shortage of supply, Bangladeshi importers are bringing rice, mostly coarse variety, at high prices from as far away places as Punjab, India.

Prices of coarse varieties of rice have fallen by 25 to 50 poisha per kilogram in local markets over the last two days, traders at Rangpur Paura Market said today.

Amar Pal, a rice seller, said, "As rice imported slowly from India is being transported towards Dhaka and other major cities, pressure on local produce lessened." Md Abdul Baten, another seller, nodded his head in agreement.

In local markets, no imported rice was seen on sale.

# Shantibahinimen returning home

By Special Correspondent

After laying down their guns on Tuesday, Shantibahini guerrillas have started trekking back to their homes in search of a new beginning as civilians, ending their life in bush camps.

Some 424 guerrillas out of 739 who formally surrendered arms at an impressive ceremony at Khagrachhari were now on their way home in different parts of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

Our Correspondent reported from Khagrachhari that 125 guerrillas, left transit camp yesterday for their homes in Mahalchhari thana, 85 for their homes in Khagrachhari thana, 107 for Dighinala, 18 for Matiranga, 81 for Panchhari and 35 for their homes in Bagaichari thana.

Earlier, they encashed cheques for Tk 50,000 each which they received after the surrender ceremony for resettlement in civilian life.

Others are expected to follow the suit soon, district administration sources said.

The next batches of Shantibahini are scheduled to surrender arms on February 16, 22 and 28.

The total number of Shantibahini armed cadres and militias, surrendering under the peace deal signed on December 2 last, is 1933.

Meanwhile, the Parbatyia Chattagram Pahari Gano Parishad, CHT people's council leaders, in a statement in Dhaka yesterday, said police arrested three persons including Sachib Chakma, a leader of the Parishad and General Secretary of its Rangamati unit from Naniachar in Rangamati district yesterday.

The others arrested with Sachib Chakma are Jyotimoy Chakma and Tapan Jyoti Chakma. Both are said to be activists of Pahari Chhatra Parishad (Dipti) faction.

## Australia to provide aid for CHT development

By Staff Correspondent

Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said his country would provide financial support for taking up development activities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts following an end to hostilities there.

The assistance, he said, would be provided as a 'peace dividend' for the government's 'excellent' initiative in ending the long-drawn conflict.

The Australian foreign minister was addressing a press conference at the Zia International Airport yesterday afternoon at the end of his 2-day official visit to Bangladesh.

Commending the government's efforts in ending the long-drawn bush war in the hills, Downer termed the CHT accord as something 'unprecedented'.

Signing the CHT accord with the third-party participation or involvement was indeed laudable, he said. However, added that despite its uniqueness, there has been precedents of concluding such accords with insurgents groups.

Downer said he assured the Bangladesh government that his country would provide a financial assistance for development activities in the CHT, but said the quantum of support

# A union in Galachipa thana 2000 families almost starving every day

From Arup Talukdar

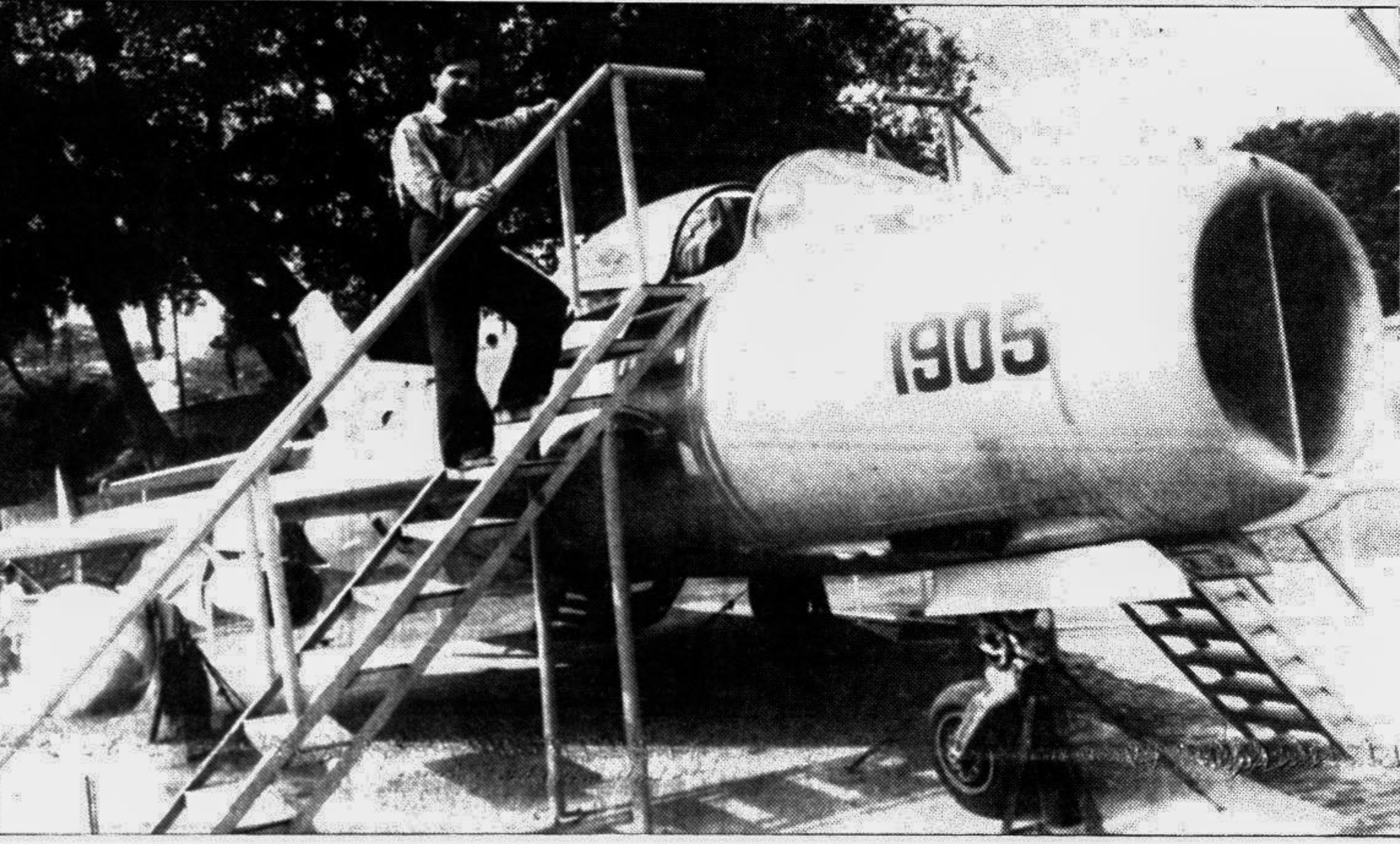
BARISAL, Feb 11: About ninety per cent out of the six thousand families in Char Mantaj Union under Galachipa thana in Patuakhali district do not have sufficient food for survival. At least two thousand of those families are taking food once a day, MA Matin, chairman of the Union Parishad said.

People of the thana said that they were selling household articles and belongings to buy rice.

In some markets, very poor quality rice, mixed with stone chips, is being sold at Tk 10 per kg. A little better quality rice, if available, is being sold at Tk 18 to 19 per kg, sources added.

Patuakhali district administration officials said that they had sent a proposal for appointment of two OMS dealers in each union of Galachipa thana and three at the thana headquarters on emergency basis.

During a visit to Galachipa one M Yousuf told this corre-



An out-of-use BAF plane has been placed in the Shishu Park in the city for amusement of children. — Star photo

## Hasibur may not lose his JS membership

By Nazmul Ashraf

The newly-appointed Deputy Minister for Industries Hasibur Rahman Swapan may not lose his membership of the Jatiya Sangsad, according to constitutional experts.

Swapan was elected a member of the seventh Jatiya Sangsad as a nominee of the BNP. He was expelled from the party on charge of anti-organizational activities on the eve of his taking oath as a deputy minister Monday evening.

Some of the experts said Article 70 of the Constitution can't be applied in the case of Swapan while others spoke of the "spirit of the article," keeping mum on the fate of JS membership of Swapan.

Article 70(1) reads: A person elected as a member of parliament at an election at which he was nominated as a candidate by a political party shall vacate his seat if he resigns from that party or votes in parliament against that party.

Dr Ershadul Bari, Dean of the Faculty of Law, Dhaka University, said Article 70 is not applicable in the case of Swapan who has already been expelled from his party, BNP.

## Akhteruzzaman brings 25 charges against judicial, police officials

By Staff Correspondent

Maj (ret'd) Akhteruzzaman, a BNP lawmaker, requested the Speaker to use his good offices so that the government would give exemplary punishment to those administrative officials who were responsible for his arrest.

The Speaker, as the guardian of the House may also raise question as to why he was not informed prior to the arrest and why the whole information regarding the incident was not brought to his notice, said Akhteruzzaman while thanking the Speaker and the law minister for their sympathy for him.

During a press conference held at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, the BNP lawmaker also circulated a written paper in which he brought 11 charges against the judicial officers of the lower court and another 14 charges against the police official, which he said were the result of his experience of the past two years.

Akhteruzzaman was awarded three months' simple imprisonment on February 8

# Export trophies to be distributed today Govt unhappy over bureaucrats' performance in attracting FDI

By Govinda Shil

How do you assess the Awami League government's "economic diplomacy" when the leading exporters are to receive their best accomplishment trophies three years after those were due?

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will distribute the "National Export Trophy" today among 63 well-performing traders from 15 different sectors. She will also deliver a speech, encourage the exporters and will speak of her government's "economic successes."

The government is now judging critically the efforts of bureaucrats involved in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) and raising exports, the major components of an economy and a government's economic diplomacy as well, according to official sources.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury had expressed his dissatisfaction over some bureaucrats' performance at home and abroad as regards attracting FDI.

"I have to say with some degree of regret that the implementation of reforms to attract investment is not up to expectation," Abul Hasan said at a recent meeting which was evaluating the government's economic diplomacy.

During July-December of 1997, the Board of Investment had received 753 million US dollar or Tk 3,388.20 crore proposal for joint venture projects including FDI. Last month, it received 10 project proposals costing Tk 320 crore.

But whatever might be the proposed amount of investment, the fact was that the projects were not being properly implemented, BOI sources said.

## Jubo League activist shot dead in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 11: One person was shot dead allegedly by his rivals this morning at north Nalapara under Double-mooring thana, police said.

The victim was identified as Shahidul Islam Kawsar, 36, a supporter of ruling party youth front Jubo League, police said.

Kawsar received bullet wounds when his rivals fired on him near his residence at north Nalapara at about 11 am today, police said.

He succumbed to his injuries on way to hospital.

None was arrested in this connection till filing of this report.

## 3 Bangladeshis injured in BSF firing

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Feb 11: Three Bangladeshis farmers were injured in a firing allegedly by Indian Border Security Forces (BSF) near Kharchaka Border Outpost (BOP) under Godagari thana of the district yesterday afternoon.

BDR sources said, when some farmers were working in their paddy field near 'No Man's Land' about one and a half kilometres from the Kharchaka BOP, some Indian nationals attacked them claiming possession of the land.

The Bangladeshis farmers with the help of other villagers chased them across the border.

After a short while, the Indian nationals allegedly backed by BSF personnel launched a fresh firing.

BSF personnel fired several rounds of bullets, injuring three Bangladeshis.

# TU denies allegations, terms lock out illegal Officials were forced to accept illegal demands: SMC MD

By Staff Correspondent

In a tangle between the management and the trade union, one of the world's largest private sector social marketing companies, SMC, has been shut off since Sunday.

The Social Marketing Company (SMC) which meets 65 per cent of the country's demand for condoms, 20 per cent of contraceptive pills and sells 55 million packets of Orsoline at subsidised prices, will remain closed for an indefinite period.

Top officials of SMC said they had to close down all its offices because "certain unruly trade union members had abducted, assaulted, verbally abused and threatened to kill by strangulation three of its top men on February 5."

"We will only consider re-opening our offices when those responsible are punished according to the law of the land," said Waliur Rahman SMC's Managing Director, while talking to some journalists at the Dhaka Club yesterday.

He said that following the incident a general diary was filed with the city's Uttara thana naming five of the "culprits". But no action was taken.

Rahman said since the company was only selling items nationally donated by overseas agencies, they had 70 drivers and 30 female packers working at its Uttara head office.

"This year, the unionists demanded that 17 part-time employees be regularised on which we got a court stay order. But on February 5, they suddenly grabbed us one by one as we arrived at the office and confined us inside a small room in the cellar," he said.

"There was no prior charter of demand whatsoever and in captivity we were forced to sign an illegal five-point demand document produced by the mob," he said.

Meanwhile, the Sramik O Karmachari Union of the SMC flatly denied any such occurrence on February 5. General Secretary of the union, Md Abdul Gafur, in a written statement accused SMC's General Manager, Administration and Logistics of "illegally imposing

# PSC with Occidental to be extended

By Sharier Khan and Toufique Imrose Khalidi

The government has decided to extend the production sharing contract (PSC) with Occidental for blocks 13 and 14 despite a legal adviser's warning that such a step might threaten national interests.

At a meeting Monday, the Energy Ministry decided that the government would extend the PSC following some amendments to contract terms, sources said.

Another meeting chaired by the Energy Minister yesterday decided to ask Petrobangla to look into possible amendments to the contracts.

According to the sources, the US oil explorer, retreating from its earlier plea to make the cost of the Magurchara blow-out recoverable, has meanwhile said that it is now willing to bear the expenses of the losses.

However, the government is unlikely to ask the company to compensate for the damages to the Magurchara gas field, which, according to Petrobangla's seismic data, would be worth 500 million US dollars.

Compensation issues will come up for discussion today when senior Occidental executives and representatives of its insurer meet with government officials and representatives of various parties affected by the Magurchara blow out, the sources said.

Two legal advisers had earlier given their opinions to the government regarding the PSC, supposed to have been terminated automatically on January 11 after Occidental's failure to fulfill its minimum work commitment for these two blocks.

On September 29 last year, Occidental had applied for a one-year extension of the contracts and then, on January 6 this year, for three years.

Sources said that one of the legal advisers, a leading lawyer of the country, suggested the PSC be extended in order to "uphold the image of the government". He, however, did not

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Office of the Commissioner, Duty, Excise & VAT  
Dhaka (South), Segunbagicha, Dhaka

**Urgent Notice on Payment of VAT in Printing Works**

It is hereby notified for information of all concerned that, vide National Board of Revenue's General Order No. 6/VAT/96, dated 19.09.96, provision has been made for realising, deducting applicable VAT from bill payable for services received from printing press against local or international tender by govt, semi-govt or autonomous organisations and depositing under head "14-A VAT" through treasury challan.

In accordance with the above general order, such organisations as are getting/got done printing of their calendar, diary & any other printing work (except text-book, periodical, newspaper) are requested to deduct the applicable VAT from bill prior to payment and deposit the amount to govt. treasury and send the copy of challan to the respective area Duty, Excise & VAT Circle Office.

**A K M Fazlul Huq**  
Commissioner  
Duty, Excise & VAT  
DFP-2355-4/2 Dhaka (South), Segunbagicha G-230