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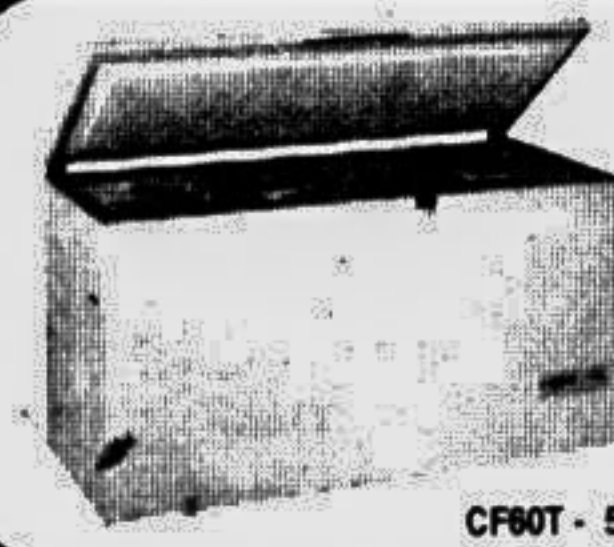
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Down to Earth City's Dwindling Greenery

By A S M Nurunnabi

Dhaka city is at present under a serious threat of depletion of its greenery. As a result, the need for saving the city from worsening environmental situation has become very urgent. In the process of rapid unplanned growth of the city, we have already lost many spots and traces of greenery. With a feeling of nostalgia, it is often said that the city once prided itself on its large green open spaces, particularly in the Ramna area.

As most of the city's green landscape is in the process of rapid depletion, the need for a greater expanse of verdure is being increasingly felt. The city's geographic location itself has been a great helpful factor in this regard. On its south and east flows the river Buriganga and on the other two sides, we have the Turag and Lakhya rivers. Though much of the patches of green within the city areas have gone out of reach of the citizenry, the remaining patches of verdure need to be protected from further onslaughts for the sake of relief from a barren outlook, marked with the growing phenomenon of air pollutions from various agents.

The need for having a green belt in the vicinity of the city has been felt since the sixties. But the idea has not made much headway, for one reason or the other. It is now felt that it is not yet too late to look for some places around the city where a green belt can be developed.

There is already a notable example in this regard in the establishment of the large horticultural garden at Kasimpur near Tongi. Similar projects in the private sector can play a significant role in creating a green belt for the city.

Nevertheless, the overriding necessity of examining the issue at the expert level as to where more of such green belts can be set up hardly requires any emphasis.

Another dimension to the issue has lately been highlighted in some quarters. It has been reported that on account of scarcity of trees and greenery in big city like ours, birds and animals find less opportunities for roosting. According to expert opinion, the more roosting places a city provides for the birds, the better their physical environment will be. It is said that part of the answer to our city's environmental deterioration lies in creating more artificial forests and parks which are likely to provide abodes and sanctuaries for the species under the threat of extinction. Besides helping to enhance the city's natural beauty, these measures may play a positive role in saving the rare species of birds and animals.

In some big cities of the world, there is charming existence of green belts around them with many gardens and large stretches of greenery. In our soil, trees grow up even without much care and help. In this situation, if we make planned and coordinated efforts, achieving the objective of creating a green belt with carefully tended tree plantation programmes may not be a difficult proposition.

In this connection, observers believe that efforts of the different agencies involved may not be sufficient. What is also needed in the annual ritual of tree plantation programmes is greater ecological awareness, so that the plantation drive may be turned into a mass movement for maintaining ecological balance and environmental upgradation not only of the city, but also of the entire country.



Jamaican midfielder Theodore Whitmore scoring the first goal of his team against Japan at the Gerland stadium in Lyon during the Soccer World Cup Group H match yesterday. —AFP photo

Knock-out round From Page 1

follows: (group champion/runners-up):
Group A: Brazil and Norway.
Group B: Italy and Chile.
Group C: France and Denmark.
Group D: Nigeria and Paraguay.
Group E: Holland and Mexico.
Group F: Germany and Yugoslavia.
Group G: Romania qualified.
Group H: Argentina and Croatia.
Italy will meet Norway in the first match of the second round (tonight while world champions Brazil will take on Chile in the other. Winners to move to the quarter-finals.

Prices of rice From Page 1

has increased by Tk 50 to Tk 70 per maund and is selling at Tk 820 to Tk 830 a maund against its previous price of Tk 750 to Tk 780.
At retail markets, one kg of IRRI rice was selling at Tk 12.50 to Tk 13.00, Swarna Tk 14.50 to Tk 15.00, and Nazirshail at Tk 18 to Tk 20.
Wholesalers said rice price may increase further as plantation of paddy saplings was being hampered due to insufficient rain. One wholesaler said rice price increased due to government purchase of rice and paddy that begun recently.

FBCCI discussion on budget today By Staff Correspondent

The discussion meeting of Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) with Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed on budget for 1998-99 fiscal year will be held at 9:30 am today instead of 11 am at hotel Sonargaon, says a press release by FBCCI.

Transit From Page 1

is examining every aspect of relations with its neighbours, the official added.
Asked if there has been a shift from the "Gujral doctrine" which emphasised improving India's ties with neighbours, a senior foreign ministry official said, "So far as Bangladesh is concerned, we are yet to discern any change. But the Indian prime minister is very much in control of his country's foreign policy as he himself holds the vital portfolio."
Mustafizur Rahman said that the talks would review all aspects of bilateral relations. The secretary-level talks would pay a critical role as the "basic plan" of all key policy decisions between the two countries ever since the United Front government of Prime Minister Deve Gowda and I K Gujral took office, an official noted. Later Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her former Indian counterpart Deve Gowda, during the latter's official visit to Dhaka in January, 1997, agreed in principle to revive the moribund JRC, JWG and JEC, which are the policy formulating bodies on key issues between the two countries.

9 killed From Page 1

Two people were killed and another was injured in two separate road accidents here early yesterday.
Police sources said a Parshuram-bound mini bus hit a rickshaw in front of Feni B Ed College leaving rickshaw passenger Sirajul Islam, 30, dead on the spot.
Rickshawpuller Manu Mia, 28, was critically injured.
The injured was rushed to Feni Hospital. Police seized the bus, but its driver managed to flee the scene.
In an another accident Ezab Uddin, 45, a pedestrian, was run over by a speeding bus on Feni bypass road at 11 pm.

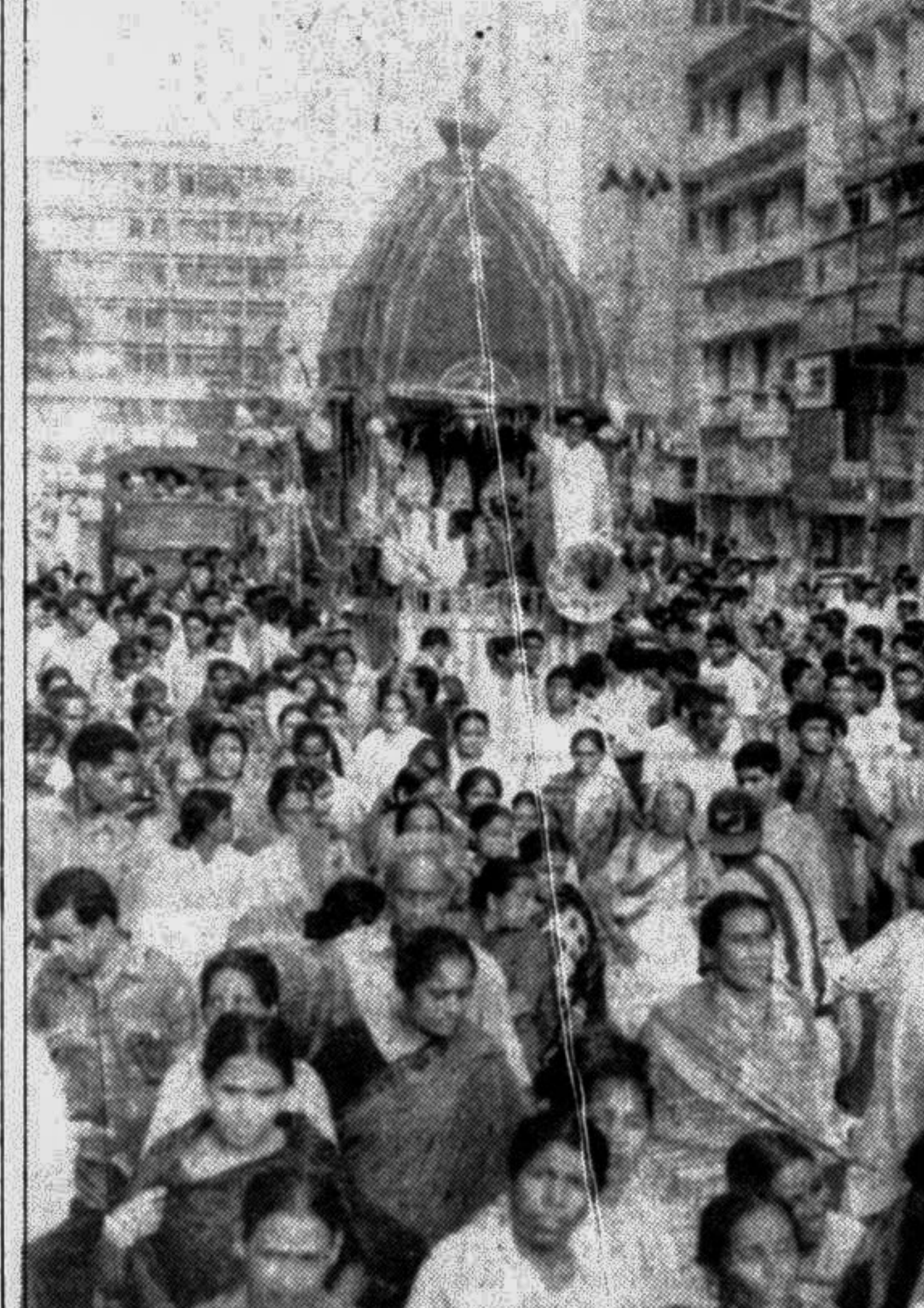
UNHCR runs out of funds

From Page 1
and UNHCR — were working for immediate resumption of Rohingya repatriation. "We're anxiously waiting for a date because, you know, fund constraint may not allow us to run the camps till end of the year."
The World Food Programme (WFP) has approved a concluding phase of relief operation to provide food aid to Rohingya refugees. WFP will supply 2,965 MT of food items since 1992. WFP provided food items worth 51 million US dollars to the refugees.
The UNHCR had sought fund from the international community in December, 1997 but the response was very poor.

Confce on woman, child trafficking begins

By Special Correspondent

A four-day regional conference on 'organising against sexual exploitation regionally and globally' began in the city yesterday, underlining the need for combating trafficking of women and children and their exploitation.
Organised by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW)—Bangladesh, the conference has been sponsored by the Royal Danish Embassy in Dhaka.
Thirty-two participants from abroad, including delegates from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan, China, UK, US and Canada, are attending the conference.
Prof Amirul Islam Chowdhury, Vice Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University, was the chief guest at the inaugural function.
The participants were welcomed by Advocate Sigma Huda, Convener of CATW, Bangladesh. Ms Aurora Javate De Dios President of CATW-international, Finn Thilsted, Charge d'Affaires of the Royal Danish Embassy, Dr Janice G. Raymond, co-executive director of CATW-international and Advocate Shaheen Akhter Munir of CATW-Bangladesh spoke on the occasion.
At the working session, discussions took place on a paper presented by Jean d' Cunha of the Philippines CATW-Asia Pacific, and Yim Po Director of the Cambodian Centre for the Protection of Children, on the "Effects of Sexual Exploitation on Women and Children, Physical and Psychological." It was chaired by Prof Ishrat Shamim. Later, presentations on group reports on health took place.
The conference aims at setting up of a regional centre for coordinating action against trafficking of women and children, their physical exploitation, better liaison between the NGOs and governments, networking among the NGOs in SAARC countries rescue and rehabilitation of victims trafficking and their proper treatment including psychological counselling, Shaheen Akhter Munir said.
A participant from India, Manabendra Mondal, executive director of Socio-Legal Aid Research and Training Centre in Calcutta told The Daily Star that public awareness must be created so that school children are 'taught not to be enticed by traffickers.'



A Rathajatra procession of the Hindu community in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Jamaica win From Page 1

Kawaguchi.
Whitmore added his second when the Japanese defence gave him space to take Fitzroy Simpson's pass down the right wing. The midfielder spun defender Noria Omura around and nailed a left-footed drive from 15 meters.
Japan hit the post and forced goalkeeper Aaron Lawrence to make several solid saves in the second half, and finally broke through when Naoki Soma's long ball was headed by Wagner Lopes to Nakayama, whose one-timer from 8 meters easily beat Lawrence.
Jamaica was content to play a long-ball strategy in the early minutes, then stepped up the attack when the Japanese grew frustrated. Whitmore's second goal came immediately after a missed Japan scoring opportunity, and its deflated defenders were caught off guard.
Jamaica also had a goal disallowed in the 15th minute when Ian Goodison, who headed in a well-laid corner kick from Simpson, was apparently whistled for pushing by Austrian referee Gunter Benko.
The spirited blue-clad Japanese fans overwhelmed the black, green and gold contingent from Jamaica on another rainy day at the Stade de Gerland. Japan wanted a win to help justify its role as co-host of the 2002 World Cup.

Argentina From Page 1

body check on Ortega and it will suspend him for the second-round game. It almost led to the second goal, when Gallardo took the freekick.
Immediately after halftime, captain Zvonimir Boban got another yellow for a late tackle on midfielder Juan Veron. And in the 59th minute, Robert Jarni got yet another for protesting a referee's decision.
Both teams were already assured a place in the second round so the battle centered on who would take first place in Group H.
Croatia was boosted by the return of Boban, who sat out the Japan game with a pulled leg muscle. Veteran defender Igor Stimac, suffering from blistered feet, was the only regular starter missing but came on as a substitute.
After routing Jamaica 5-0 and defeating Japan 1-0, the South Americans only needed a draw to finish atop the group and set up a second-round game with the Group G runner-up — most likely England or Colombia.

Uzbek business team arrives tomorrow

A high-level Uzbek business delegation arrives in the city tomorrow from Tashkent in connection with the inaugural flight of Uzbek Airways, sources at the Foreign Ministry said, reports BSS.
The 32-member delegation will be led by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan Ergashev Ismatulla. The visit will establish business relations between Bangladesh and the Central Asian Republic.
The restrictions were followed till about 10:30 am," said an official working at the site. "People then gathered in hundreds, chanted slogans and moved towards the bridge," he added.

India refuses Japanese aid for cyclone victims

NEW DELHI, June 26: India refused tents, blankets and other Japanese emergency aid for cyclone victims because Tokyo had imposed anti-nuclear sanctions, a Japanese embassy official said today, reports AP.
The official, who refused to be named, confirmed a report in the Times of India today that called India's decision a 'diplomatic protest.'

The officials said Japan had offered the tents, blankets, generators and other goods worth 40 million to 50 million yen (about 282,000 dollar to 354,000 dollars) after a cyclone devastated the western coast state of Gujarat on June 9.

Japan cut off new loans and grants to India as punishment for its nuclear weapons tests in May. Japan is India's largest donor, extending about 133 billion yen (1 billion dollars) in loans annually since 1992.

23 Bangladeshis detained in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, June 26: Malaysian police and immigration officials detained 365 illegal immigrants including 23 Bangladeshis, in a series of raids in two states, a news report said today, according to AP.
Agents swept through construction sites in the northern state of Perak, capturing 271 illegal immigrants, including five women. Bernama national news agency said.
The immigrants did not have proper travel documents or work permit requirements, the report said.

Production of Prithvi begins

NEW DELHI, June 26: Serial production of army version of formidable surface-to-surface 'Prithvi' missile has begun, the latest annual report of the defence ministry has disclosed, reports PTI.
The missile 'Prithvi' (PI), having a strike range of 150 kms, is in its production phase, the 1997-98 report said.

Microcredit Summit From Page 1

The message was read out by Ambassador Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN, who also represented the government in the Council Meeting. This is the first meeting following up the Microcredit Summit.
It said positive support had since been secured, at the initiative of Bangladesh, in various summit level meetings including SAARC, Organisation of African Union, Commonwealth Summit, OIC, and also the G-7 summit of last year.
Bangladesh will propose to declare the year 2005 as the UN International Year of Microcredit.

Annan's envoy

thinking and her visit to India and Pakistan to reduce tension in the region figured in prominently.
Talking to the news agency after the meeting, the envoy said he has come here to deliver a personal message from UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.
The message, Alvaro de Soto said, is related to the tension that arose in the region following the nuclear test conducted by India and Pakistan.
The envoy, who will go to Pakistan this evening and hand over Kofi Annan's message to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, did not clearly say whether he will also go to New Delhi on his current trip.

Leaflet

den. Movement of rickshaws, tempos and cycle is not allowed. All concerned are urged to cooperate with the police, army and security personnel at the site for maintenance of safety and security.
"The restrictions were followed till about 10:30 am," said an official working at the site. "People then gathered in hundreds, chanted slogans and moved towards the bridge," he added.

BNP out to mislead people: Hasina

GOPALGANJ, June 26: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today accused the main opposition BNP of hatching conspiracy by creating issues out of nothing, reports UNB.
"They don't want peace and stability... they are out only to mislead people," she told a huge gathering at TT High School ground at Vangarhat in Kotlilpara thana.
Referring to BNP's negative attitude to the CHT peace accord, Hasina said they do not want peace in the CHT for the interest of drug and arms smugglers, who are hit hard following signing of the accord.
Without mentioning the name of the BNP chief, Hasina said, "Why has she led the long-march towards the CHT and demanded resignation of the government?"
She said people have ousted the 'vote thieves' as they tried to cling to power through the February 15 voterless elections.
Hasina also blamed the previous BNP government for killing 140 people in their bid to stay in power.
The Prime Minister said her government is striving hard for overall development of the country.

Zia's brother dies in London

Mizanur Rahman, younger brother of late President Ziaur Rahman, died of heart attack in London yesterday, says a press release issued by BNP.
Rahman was working as country manager at London Branch of the Arab-Bangladesh Bank. His body will be flown to Dhaka, the release added.
BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia has expressed deep shock at the death of Mizanur Rahman.
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BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia has expressed deep shock at the death of Mizanur Rahman.
Hasina listed various steps undertaken by her government, including measures to activate the rural economy by providing small credit for setting up of poultry, dairy, fisheries, cottage industries.
Mentioning introduction of allowance for elderly citizens and shelter for the destitute, the Prime Minister said her government is striving hard for overall development of the country.

Clinton-Jiang summit

From Page 1
detaining political dissidents. This is not China at its best, and not China looking forward, but looking backward," he said. Clinton's national security adviser, Sandy Berger, used even stronger language. "I think China's human rights record is terrible," Berger said.
Clinton, in his meeting with Jiang, was expected to urge Chinese authorities to release political prisoners — and not simply exile them as China did with Wang Dan and Wei Jingsheng, both now living in America. Berger, however, cautioned not to expect early results.
The President also will urge China to talk directly with Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, on autonomy for the region.
China, on the other hand, sees Taiwan's future as its No. 1 priority and Jiang will urge Clinton to reiterate that the United States doesn't want to see an independent Taipei government, which has been the US position since President Nixon made his historic 1972 visit to China. Beijing sees Taiwan as a renegade province. The United States provides military aid to Taiwan and urges talks for a peaceful settlement.
Putting aside differences, the two Presidents will focus on how the United States and China can work together to ensure stability in the region rocked by nuclear tests from India and Pakistan and an Asian financial crisis. For decades, Beijing helped Islamabad's nuclear programme, but in just the past couple years has agreed to stop, including halting delivery of missiles to Pakistan. China also has halted cooperation with Iran.
Now, the Clinton administration wants China to stop exporting all missile-related technology and know-how to Pakistan and Iran as well by agreeing to adhere to all aspects of the Missile Technology Control regime.
Improved Chinese export controls on chemical and biological materials to prevent their use as weapons also are on the agenda.
Negotiations continued through the eleventh hour, said Stanley Roth, assistant secretary of state for the region.
"The whole agenda is aimed at strategic cooperation," Roth said.

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