

No iron-rich diet for patients with coronary heart disease

Those suffering from high cholesterol related coronary heart disease should avoid the iron-rich diet.

This was revealed in a research conducted by Prof Mohammad Suhrah Ali, Chairman of Biochemistry department at the Bangladesh Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), reports UNB.

Prof Ali along with his associates carried out a year-long research work at BSMMU to evaluate the relationship between body iron status and lipid profile in Acute Myocardial Infarction (AMI) patients.

The research result showed that high serum (liquid part of blood after clotting) iron may worsen high cholesterol related coronary heart disease.

Earlier, a concept was prevalent that iron may worsen high cholesterol related coronary heart disease.

The study was conducted upon 80 people. Of them, 40 were healthy while 40 were AMI patients.

Blood samples were collected from healthy people while blood samples from AMI patients were collected within 24 hours of the attack of acute myocardial infarction.

Body iron status was measured in terms of three variables — serum total iron, Total Iron Binding Capacity (TIBC) and Transferrin (carrier form of protein and iron).

The lipid profile variables estimated were total cholesterol, LDL-cholesterol (low den-

sity lipoprotein), HDL-cholesterol (high density lipoprotein) and Triglyceride.

The research showed Transferrin saturation maintained strong positive correlation with total cholesterol while TIBC maintained strong negative correlation with total cholesterol.

High level of transferrin saturation and low level of TIBC indicate high body iron store.

Prof Ali who is also the Dean of Faculty of Post Graduate Medical Sciences and Research, Dhaka University, presented the research findings at an Annual National Conference of Association of Clinical Biochemists, India held at Pune in India from December 18 to 20.

Canadian investor praises quality of garments

George Heller, President of Zellers, the biggest chain-shop in Canada, yesterday said that the quality of Bangladeshi garments is very high and suggested that the people of his country be informed about it through massive publicity, reports BSS.

"Bangladesh has been able to maintain high quality of its readymade garments and its price is comparatively low than those of the others countries," Heller said.

George Heller who is now on a visit to Bangladesh said this when he called on Mostafa Gollam Qudus, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) at the latter's office in the city.

He underscored the need for arranging visits of the foreign entrepreneurs to encourage them buying Bangladeshi garments. Heller also advised the BGMEA to open a special 'service desk' at the Dhaka International Airport for foreign buyers. The BGMEA president invited Heller to come forward and invest in the garments sector here.

Steven Tseng, executive manager, Linmark International and Enamul Kabir, Merchandise Manager, Linmark, Bangladesh were present during the meeting.

Chehlum of Begum Syed Mustafa Ali tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

Chehlum of Begum Syed Mustafa Ali, mother of eminent journalist late S M Ali, founder-editor of *The Daily Star*, will be held on Friday at 3 pm at her son's residence at 14/15 Iqbal Road, Mohammadpur, says a press release.

A *milad mahfil* will be held on the occasion.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the *milad* and pray for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

PM, FM greet Turkish counterparts

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has congratulated Bulent Ecevit for his appointment as Turkish Prime Minister, reports UNB.

In a message yesterday, the Prime Minister said Bangladesh and Turkey have excellent relations, which have developed over the years in depth and dimension.

"I hope that the existing fraternal relations between our two countries will be even further strengthened and consolidated in the coming years," she said.

The Prime Minister also wished good health, success and happiness of the new Turkish Prime Minister and continued peace, progress and prosperity for the friendly people of that country.

Foreign Minister Abdul Samad Azad has greeted Ismail Cem for his appointment as Foreign Minister of Turkey.

The Foreign Minister, in a felicitation message yesterday, wished him every success in his high office.

He hoped that the close bonds of friendship and cooperation, which characterise the relations between the two countries, will continue to grow in future.

Ekushey February programmes

The government has taken up elaborate programmes to observe the Ekushey February across the country in a befitting manner, reports UNB.

A high-level meeting of the Cultural Ministry yesterday chalked out the programmes State Minister Obaidul Quader was in the chair.

The meeting discussed various aspects of ensuring peace and security in and around the Central Shaheed Minar.

The day will be a government holiday.

National flags will be hoisted half-mast atop all schools, colleges, universities, and government, semi-government, autonomous and non-government buildings.

Different road islands of the city will be decorated with festoons inscribed with Bengali alphabets.

Fateha will be offered at the Azampur graveyard and special prayers will be held.

Special prayers will also be held at all mosques, temples, churches and other places of worship.

Bangla Academy will organise a month-long book fair where National Book Centre, Nazrul Institute, Bangladesh

Shilpakala Academy and Islamic Foundation will participate along with other organisations.

To pay tribute to the language martyrs, discussion meetings, seminars, cultural functions, recitation programmes and Bengali handwriting competition will be arranged.

The meeting decided that the law enforcing authority would take necessary steps to strengthen the security measures in and around the Central Shaheed Minar premises to ensure law and order.

Bangladesh missions abroad will also take up programmes to observe the day.

Concerned ministry and Dhaka University authorities will take necessary measures to ensure the visit of Shaheed Minar by the foreign diplomats here.

The meeting sought cooperation from all quarters to observe the day properly and peacefully.

Cultural Secretary Dr S Zaman Majumdar and representatives from various ministries, organisations and offices, and Directors of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and Bangla Academy were present.

People deprived of medicare in Panchagarh

PANCHAGARH, Jan 13: People are deprived of medicare due to shortage of doctors, life-saving medicines and medical equipment in the Sadar Hospital and five rural health complexes, reports APB.

Civil Surgeon Dr A Jalil Sheikh told APB that only 27 medical officers are now working in these hospitals against 67 sanctioned posts.

The problem has been further aggravated as many of the medical officers devote most of their time to private practice. It is a common allegation that patients usually find no doctors at these health centres.

Five posts of dental surgeons have been vacant here for a long time. There are no senior consultants or gynaecologists in the Sadar Hospital. There is

also a critical shortage of trained nurses and other medical personnel in all these centres.

Shortage of medical equipment is another serious problem. The health centres at Tetulia and Atwari thanas have no X-ray machines and the one in Boda thana health centre is out of order for a long time. Most of the patients have to go to Thakurgaon or Rangpur for X-rays.

Medicines are seldom found at the health centres. Patients have to buy medicines from outside.

The Panchagarh Sadar Hospital has only 31 seats. The prime minister had given an assurance that the number of beds would be raised to 100 but nothing has been done so far.

Gunther IV wants his paws on Stallone's house

MIAMI, Jan 13: The richest dog in the world — according to the Guinness Book of World Records — wants to get his paws on Sylvester Stallone's Miami mansion, reports AFP.

"It's unclear how the dog indicated he wanted to buy the house," El Nuevo Herald reported Tuesday.

But spokesmen for the potential buyer confirmed that "Gunther IV" — a German shepherd who inherited a fortune from his father, Gunther III, who used to bark in a music band in Europe — was indeed looking for a place to lay his bones.

The Gunthers are descended from a line of German shepherds long enough to halt traffic, El Nuevo Herald said.

German Countess Karlotha Liebenstein liked Gunther III so much that upon her death in 1992 she left him a 65 million dollars. Since then the fortune has mounted to 200 million dollars reports say.

Gunther already owns luxury mansions in Italy and The

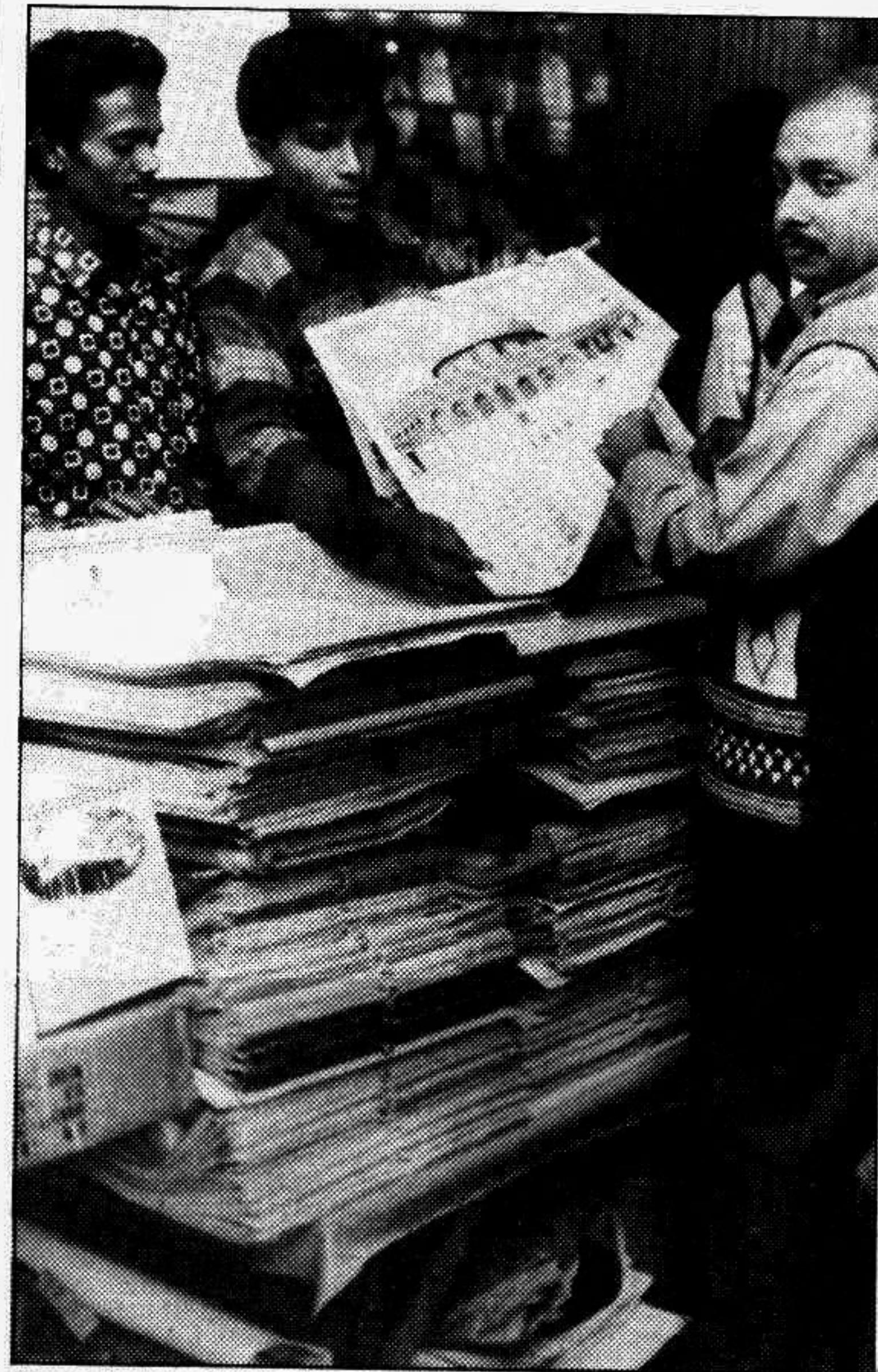
Bahamas. Maurizio Mian, a lawyer for the trustees of the canine's trust, told the daily that Stallone's mansion was attractive not just for its elegance but because it is near The Bahamas, where the trustees discharge their duties.

Stallone — who left to live in California — wants 27.5 million for the house.

The Orient Express Hotel chain is also sniffing around the mansion, but the city would have to change the zoning, a move neighbours oppose.

The dog's spokesman will make an offer under 27.5 million dollars, according to the El Nuevo Herald report.

The president of the neighbourhood Association of Luxurious Cliff Hammocks, Alan Grajewski, told the paper she wouldn't mind if Gunther IV were to buy Casa Doggone (and rename it Casa Doggone) because she owns a female German Shepherd herself and 'she's available.'



The Gregorian New Year is a time when many government or semi-government bodies publish diaries and calendars. It is usually justified as a part of client service. While crores of taka worth of public money is spent on such public relations exercises, corrupt officials channel these calendars and diaries to the open market for sale for a share of the earnings. A stroll in the Baitul Mukarram shopping area will probably get any visitor a number of calendars and diaries of government, semi-government and autonomous bodies, including those of the nationalised commercial banks and Bangladesh Biman.

The two photos, snapped by our chief photographer AKM Mohsin yesterday at 3:30 pm, show a huge stock of such calendars and diaries.

GCO-submits memorandum to JU VC

By JU Correspondent

Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO), Jahangirnagar University unit, has submitted a memorandum to the vice chancellor yesterday, expressing grave concern over 'the authorities' active role in allowing the students who were involved in the rape incidents on the campus to take part in the examinations.

The memorandum was submitted to the VC while the JU syndicate was in session at the administrative building yesterday evening.

"The authorities not only failed to take action against some of the rapists, but also allowed them to appear in their examinations under special arrangements," the memorandum said.

The GCO also demanded exemplary punishment to the culprits and urged the authorities not to allow them in examination halls.

One Anis of English Department, who was found guilty by the authorities' completed his second year examination (Referred) last month.

Nabul Haq Roni, a student of Government and Politics, who was 'suspended for one year' has already completed procedures to appear in the examination beginning next month, according to sources.

Tk 3 lakh for construction of Surya Sen complex at Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Jan 13: The district administration, Chittagong will donate Taka three lakh for construction of first phase of Masterda Surya Sen complex at Noapara, Rawzan, the birth place of the anti-British revolutionary, reports BSS.

Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong Mohammad Hasan said this while addressing a memorial meeting organised by Masterda Surya Sen Smriti Committee in observance of the 65th death anniversary of the leader at Noapara yesterday.

Presided over by Masterda's co-fighter Benode Behari Chowdhury the memorial meeting was addressed, among others, by general secretary of the Smriti Committee Abdullah Al-Hamun Chowdhury, Advocate A K M Emdadul Islam and Prof Nurul Haq.

Death anniversary of Bedaruddin

The first death anniversary of Bedaruddin Ahmed, former principal of Bulbul Lalitkala Academy (BABA) and a noted artist, will be observed tomorrow, reports BSS.

In this connection a *milad mahfil* will be held at his residence 'Shilpi Kutir' 9/18, Iqbal Road, Block-A, Mohammadpur after Asr prayers.

Late Bedaruddin Ahmed was awarded the Ekushe Padak for his excellent performance in music.

Qulkhwani

By Staff Correspondent

The qulkhwan of Said-ur-Rahman, member of Anjuman Mufidul Islam, will be held on Friday at Hossainpur Eidag maidan after the Juma prayers.

A *milad mahfil* and discussion meeting will be held, says a press release.

Rahman died on January 10 at Surawhardy Hospital. He was 54. He was member of various social welfare oriented organisations, including Hossainpur Degree College, Fazlul Haq Mohila College, Dhaka, Dholaipar Social Welfare Sangstha and Taherpur Islamia Senior Madrassa.

Rise in attacks on Christians in India Int'l community starting to voice concern

NEW DELHI, Jan 13: The international community is starting to voice concern over the rise in attacks by Hindu militants on India's tiny Christian community, diplomats said today, reports AFP.

The recent surge in anti-Christian violence, including half-a-dozen Christmas arson attacks on churches in the western state of Gujarat, is damaging India's standing overseas just as it is emerging from diplomatic isolation imposed after nuclear tests last May, they said.

Visiting Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker became the first foreign head of government openly to address the violence. He told reporters Tuesday that the "size and volume" of the attacks had prompted him to raise the issue in his talks with Indian leaders.

Pope John Paul II may also have had India partly in mind when he spoke to foreign ambassadors to the Vatican on Monday about the "episodes of violence" that have caused "tragic suffering to be Catholic community in Asia."

Numerous countries, especially European states, have so

far used closed diplomatic channels to voice their concerns to New Delhi over the attacks.

In an interview published today in the Indian Express newspaper, German Ambassador Heinrich-Dietrich Dieckmann said the violence was "an internal Indian affair with international implications."

"Hinduism is tolerant religion but this (the attacks) is not an expression of tolerance," Dieckmann said.

Germany holds the rotating presidency of the European union, which, diplomats say, is considering making more public representations if the private contacts fail to make headway.

Juncker, however, told reporters Tuesday he opposed any formal EU resolution censuring the Indian government. "My advice to all these countries is to stay away from lecturing other parts of the world," Juncker said.

India's Christians, who represent a mere 2.5 per cent of the overwhelmingly Hindu 975 million population, say they have never felt so threatened since independence from Bri-

tain in 1947.

They also say the number of attacks has risen sharply since the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) came to power at the head of multi-party coalition in March last year.

Hindu militants say the Christian community's world in education and poverty alleviation is merely a cover for a covert agenda of mass conversion.

They also insist that the number of conversions has risen steadily since Italian-born Sonia Gandhi — a lapsed Roman Catholic — became president of the main opposition Congress Party last year.

According to a report in *The Times of India*, the president of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP, World Hindu Forum) — widely blamed for inciting the anti-Christian violence — met US Ambassador Richard Celeste on Tuesday and said the reports of attacks were exaggerated.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, whose BJP party has close links with the VHP and other militant outfits involved in the violence, has pledged to end the attacks.

Britain likely to handover power to N Ireland in mid-March

BELFAST, Jan 13: The British government has set mid-March as its target for handing power back to Northern Ireland leaders, local politicians revealed Tuesday, reports AP.

Britain's governor for Northern Ireland, Mo Mowlam, declined to comment on what she told five separate delegations of politicians during day-long talks at Stormont, the British government complex in east Belfast.

But Sean Nesoon, leader of a small party called Alliance that represents Northern Ireland's most moderate Protestants and Catholics, said Mowlam had presented March 10 as the goal for the British government to put control of government departments back into local hands for the first time since 1974.

"We have a clear timetable laid out," Nesoon said.

March 10 will come 11 months to the day after eight local parties struck the Good Friday peace accord. It outlined plans for a coalition government of Protestants and Catholics that would cooperate formally with the Irish government.

The date also will come a week before St. Patrick's Day, when in recent years politicians have deserted Northern Ireland for the United States, where both sides lobby influential Irish-Americans and attend US President Bill Clinton's White House festivities.

After months of tense behind-closed-doors haggling, both sides agreed last month that the new Northern Ireland administration — to be called the executive — should have 10 departments, four more than the current British government regime.

The parties also agreed on forming six joint policy-making committees with the Irish Republic, a goal sought by Catholic politicians seeking to promote Ireland's eventual unification. These too are supposed to be formed by March 10.

But bitter argument over the future of the outlawed Irish Republican Army — 18 months

into a truce but determined to hold onto its weaponry — continues to place the Executive and cross-border structures in doubt.

The would-be leader of the Executive, Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble, reiterated Tuesday that his Protestant supporters would not allow the IRA's allied Sinn Féin party to take part unless the IRA started destroying weaponry under international supervision, as the Good Friday accord envisioned.

Trimble said a deadline of mid-March could be realised regardless of what the IRA does, since other parties could form a government without Sinn Féin, which gets 17 per cent of the Northern Irish vote. Other parties dismissed this as unrealistic.

"The Ulster Unionists have to grow up," said Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness, a reputed former IRA commander and a leading candidate to take an Executive seat.

McGuinness said Trimble and his negotiators tried during the 1997 negotiations to link IRA disarmament with Sinn Féin's eligibility for office, "and they lost that issue."

Link with 'appeal to PM' denied

By Staff Correspondent

Referring to an appeal to the Prime Minister published on Monday in the Bangla daily, 'Janakantha', the Department of Public Health Engineering Workers' Union (Reg No B-1967) in a press statement yesterday denied its link with the appeal printed on the back page.

The statement was issued following a meeting of the executive committee of the union Tuesday evening.

The press statement, signed by its President Md Nasiruddin and General Secretary Md Zahurul Haq Rinku, also said that the union would welcome any decision of the government regarding the DPHE Chief Engineer in the greater interest of the Republic.

New committee of Islamia Eye Hospital

A 15-member managing committee has been formed to run the Islamia Eye Hospital for the current year, reports BSS.

The new managing committee was formed at the Annual General Meeting of the Islamia Eye Hospital society held here recently. Minister for Health and Family Welfare Salahuddin Yusuf took the initiative in forming the managing committee.

M A Behruz Ispahani, Sheikh Kabir Hossain and Brigadier Dr Kharshid Uddin were elected chairman, vice chairman and treasurer respectively.

The other members of the committee are: M M Ispahani, Prof. A Matin Patwari, Prof. Abu Ahmed Chowdhury, Major General Mukhlisur Rahman (Retd), Prof M Mustafizur Rahman, Prof A Q M Haroon, Prof Syed Modasser Ali, Prof Saushan Ara Rahman, Dr M A Majid Khan, Dr K C Chakma, Dr M M Chisti and a joint secretary to be nominated by the minister of health and family welfare.

Arafat greets Sheikh Hasina

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat has greeted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on the occasion of the forthcoming Eid-ul-Fitr, reports BSS.

In a message Arafat said, "As our Islamic ummah celebrates Eid-ul-Fitr, I have the great pleasure to convey to you and through you to your brotherly people and your esteemed government on behalf of the people of Palestine and on my own behalf, heartfelt congratulations."

The Palestinian president wished good health and happiness of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on the occasion.

Arafat renewed his deep appreciation for the "prince of brotherly and supportive stand" of Sheikh Hasina for realising the just causes of the Palestinian people in different stages of their struggle including establishment of the independent state of Palestine with Al-Quds as its capital.

The Palestinian president expressed firm hope that Bangladesh's support and brotherly stand for the Palestinian people would further grow and continue. He wished progress and prosperity of the people of Bangladesh.

Iraq to prefer balanced talks to solve impasse with US, Britain

BAGHDAD, Jan 13: Iraq, in an apparent shift of policy, said it would prefer a balanced dialogue to solve its impasse with the United States and Britain following their military confrontation, reports Reuters.

"Iraq sees a need for a balanced dialogue based on good intentions under the umbrella of the Arab nation to find practical solutions to the situations, a spokesman said after President Saddam Hussein met top aides late on Tuesday.

"If solutions are desired in a serious manner that serve the Arab nation's interest, they should be based on Pan-Arab security," the spokesman was quoted as saying by the official Iraqi newspapers today.

The statement appeared to tone down some of the rhetoric against some Arab states, although the spokesman still called for Arabs to condemn supporters of the US and British strikes.

He said the right solution to the crisis should "consider any aggression from a foreign faction upon any Arab country as an aggression on the Arab nation as a whole."

The spokesman did not specify Saudi Arabia and Kuwait as backers of the US-led strikes although Iraqi media and officials have earlier campaigned against the two Gulf states.

Eight-week-old gets artificial skin

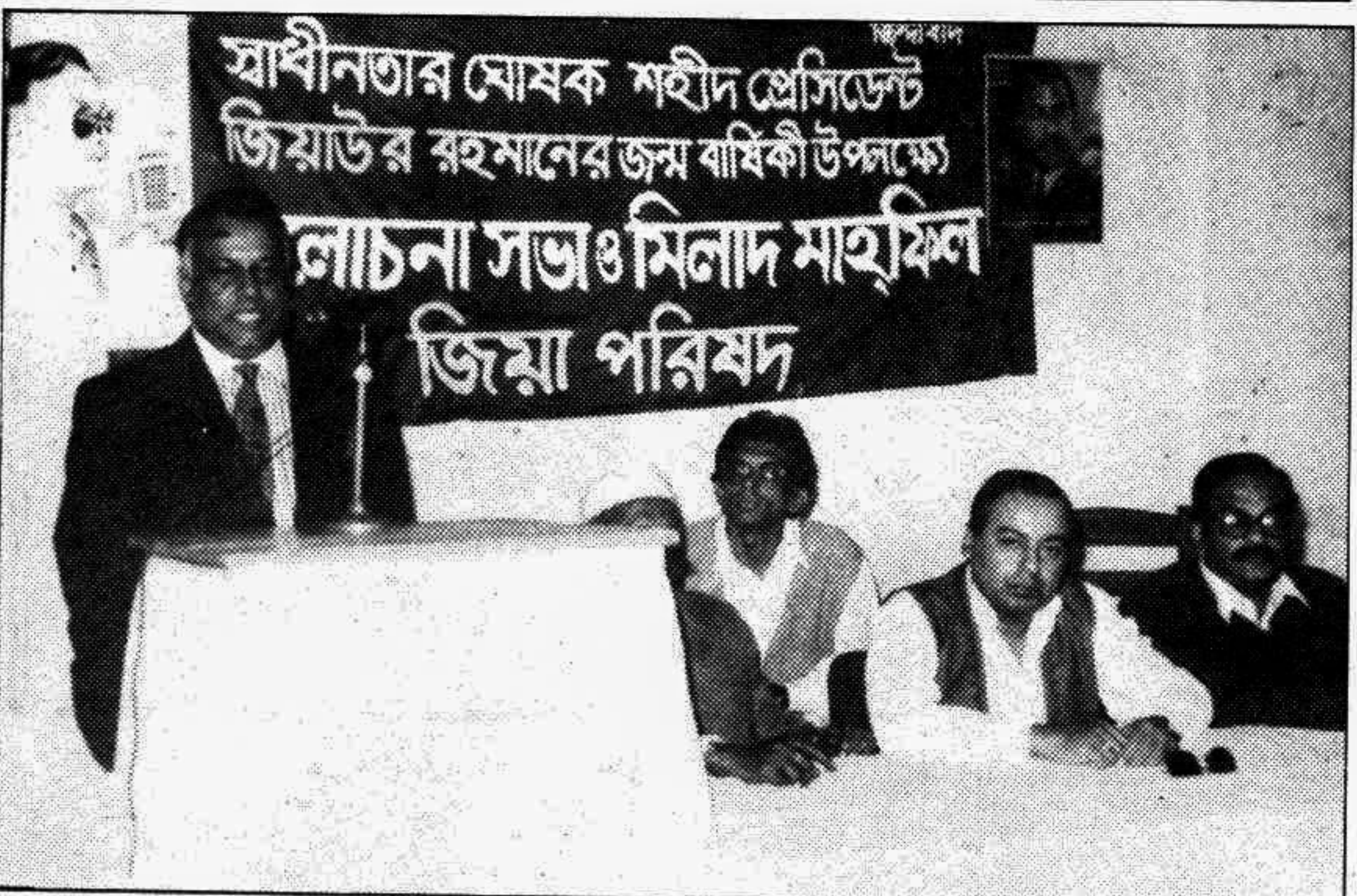
MIAMI, Jan 13: An eight-week-old baby received a graft of artificial skin in the first operation of its kind, a spokesman of Miami's Jackson Memorial Hospital said, reports AFP.

Tori Cameron, of Boca Raton, Florida, was born on November 12 with a genetic disease affecting some 100,000 US children. Epidermolysis bullosa leaves the skin so sensitive that the slightest touch can raise blisters like a second-degree burn, so Tori's parents have never been able to touch her.

She received the graft of *apilgraf* "skin" made by Novartis, a New Jersey pharmaceutical company. *Apilgraf* is made from a sample of human skin cells grown to 200,000 their original size in cow collagen, a protein derived from teeth, bones and other hard tissues.

The original cells came from the foreskins of newborns who were circumcised, a common practice in US hospitals.

Forty per cent of the skin on Tori's body has already been replaced with *apilgraf*, which was applied in square, almost transparent, patches 2.5 centimetres a side.



Zia Parishad organised a discussion meeting at the Bangladesh Photojournalists' Association auditorium in the city yesterday to mark the birth anniversary of late President Ziaur Rahman.

— Star photo