



# The Daily Star

Pioneer HI-FI RANGS GROUP

VOL. IX NO. 16 REGD. NO. DA 781

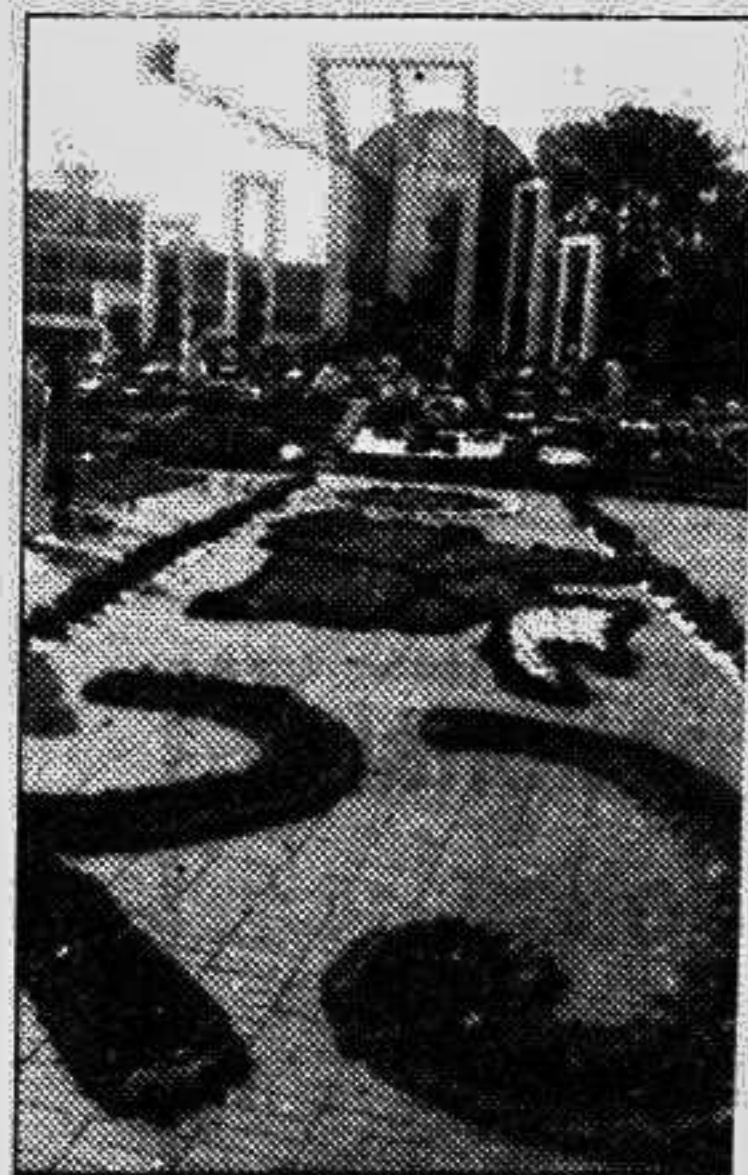
INTERNET: http://www.dailystarnews.com

MAGH 20 1405 BS

DHAKA TUESDAY FEBRUARY 2, 1999

SHAWAL 15, 1419 HIJRI

16 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 6.00



## Stalls allotted for Ekushey Book Fair

By Staff Correspondent  
The Ekushey Book Fair, commemorating the martyrs of the Language Movement, begins on the Bangla Academy premises on Friday. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the book fair as chief guest in the morning. Eminent educationists and literatures including Prof Kabir Chowdhury and Poet Shamsur Rahman will also attend the inaugural function.  
The Bangla Academy yesterday allotted stalls to 200 publishers through lottery. Academy sources said.  
See page 11

## Rival group condemns move Petition filed to try PM for contempt

Supreme Court Bar Association President Habibul Islam Bhuiyan yesterday filed a petition before the Chief Justice to draw contempt charges against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her alleged remarks concerning granting of bail to 1200 accused in various cases by the High Court on August 25-26.  
"Wherefore I pray that your Lordship may be pleased to direct Sheikh Hasina Wazed, the honourable Prime Minister of Bangladesh, residing at Ganabhaban, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka to appear before the Hon'ble Court in person and to show cause as to why appropriate proceedings for committing contempt of Court of highest de-

By Special Correspondent

gree shall not be drawn against her and why she shall not be punished adequately in accordance with law", the petition said.  
Describing the alleged remarks as an attack on the judiciary, Bhuiyan told a news conference at his Bar Association office that he moved the petition after informing the CJ on Sunday and urged the journalists to help uphold the independence of the judiciary, rule of law and human rights.  
On the two days of August 25-26 preceding the vacation, he said, 367 persons received bail after disposal of 155 petitions. Bhuiyan also urged the journalists to become more respon-

sible in reporting such matters. The prime minister's statements on January 29 came after press reports that had said 1200 persons were granted bail on the two days.  
Bhuiyan said he did not make the journalists party to it. "Rather we waited that they (those who reported it) would apologise. But they did not even after statements on the contrary by the law minister and parliamentary adviser (Sumanjit Sengupta) that the figures were not correct as mentioned by some newspapers. Nor the PM did so."  
But the SC Bar president came in for criticism from  
See Page 12 Col 7

## No plan to ban madrassah edn, JS told

By Staff Correspondent  
Education Minister ASHK Sadique yesterday said at the Jatiya Sangsad that the government had no plan to ban madrassah education in the country.  
"This government is taking no action against madrassah teachers and students. If found linked with any terrorist activities, the accused will be nabbed irrespective of their student or non-student identities", the minister said while giving a statement in Parliament.  
Allaying misunderstanding among certain quarters, the minister said, "There is no point in banning madrassah education. Rather, the government has already taken various projects for development of religious education".  
Sadique regretted that certain quarters were spreading untrue and motivated statements even in mosques during Juma prayers. "Just because persons with arms in posses-



Devotees in their thousands on board the train and outside join the Akheri Munajat on the concluding day of the three-day Biswa Ijtema at Tongi yesterday. — Star photo

## Plan to lease out unused gasfields

Petrobangla is thinking of inviting foreign oil and gas companies to develop the "unused or suspended gasfields" in collaboration with BAPEX, the country's lone exploration organisation, official sources said.  
Some two dozens gasfields discovered by Petrobangla or BAPEX in the country remain "unused" due to lack of investment.  
These gasfields were excluded from the Second Round Block Bidding by "ring fencing" the respective areas. These gasfields include those in Begumganj, Feni, Kamta, Fenchuganj, Chhatak, Bakhrabad.  
Last week, Petrobangla high officials in a meeting discussed prospects for "leasing out" these gasfields to foreign companies who would work as "partners" of BAPEX, the sources said.

Earlier, Nico Resources, an oil company which was disqualified in the Second Round Block Bidding, submitted a proposal to the government for developing these gasfields. Although the proposal was "not very lucrative", the idea of developing these gasfields got moving.  
"The investment risk in these gasfields is lower as these have already shown evidence of recoverable gas reserves," said a source.  
Petrobangla had extracted gas from some of these gasfields partially. But it never made any proper assessment of the gas reserves in these fields, sources said. This led it to follow a wrong gas extraction policy.  
"The consequences of the wrong assessment and policy are evident in different gasfields including the Bakhrabad Gasfield," said a source.

The Chhatak gasfield was shut down after extracting 2.3 per cent of its projected gas reserve. Feni gas field after 25 per cent and Kamta field after 11 per cent extraction. Bakhrabad Gasfield started giving sand instead of gas after 46 per cent extraction. Bakhrabad had a reserve of around 1.5 TCF of gas.  
Some gasfields in the Surma basin have also started showing signs of trouble.  
"It is clear that due to resource constraint, Petrobangla did not invest in these fields properly. So it had no exact data about the gas reserve and could not properly plan gas extraction," the source pointed out.  
Petrobangla would be able to properly assess the gasfields and optimise gas production by undertaking joint ventures, they said. "It would be done in a very cost effective way as

BAPEX would be involved. If gasfields are given to a foreign developer solely, the investment usually goes higher," he said.  
This new idea is particularly appealing because of the government's "go-slow" policy with foreign companies in the Second Round Block Bidding. The government is following a "go slow" policy as gas exploration under PSCs usually puts pressure on the country's poor foreign exchange reserve.  
"But it is a fact that we would be needing more gas soon. Right now, we are consuming 800 million cubic feet of gas. This demand will practically rise by 400 mcmfd within years when large scale gas-based power plants will begin operation. We must prepare ourselves to meet that situation," the source pointed out.

## Lakhs of devotees seek divine blessings

By Staff Correspondent  
The three-day Biswa Ijtema of Tablig Jamaat at Tongi concluded yesterday with Akheri Munajat seeking divine blessings for continued peace, progress and prosperity of the Muslim Ummah.  
Lakhs of Muslims from home and abroad gathered on the bank of the river Turag and joined the munajat.  
The Ijtema venue and the adjoining areas virtually turned into a human sea as lakhs of Muslim devotees joined the munajat even sitting on the streets, pavements and roof tops of the adjacent buildings.  
A senior member of World

## War of words on as crisis in JP deepens

By Staff Correspondent  
With the Jatiya Party heading for a formal split, war of words and statements and counter-statements by senior leaders of the party have further compounded the crisis.  
The JP leaders, in their statements over the last five days, strongly criticised each other for their political and personal roles.  
Senior vice-chairman of JP Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury led the way when he issued a statement on Friday (Jan 30) after JP Chairman HM Ershad called him (Mizan Chowdhury) "bankrupt" at a function on Wednesday.  
Chowdhury, without naming Ershad, had said that some "dishonest" people who joined  
See Page 12 Col 7

### Inside Today

#### Article

#### Between Dirigisme and unfettered free markets

Column : Lest We Forget...  
by Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad  
Page 4

#### Focus

Is Afghan syndrome here?; and Clinton's plight may end in delight  
Page 5

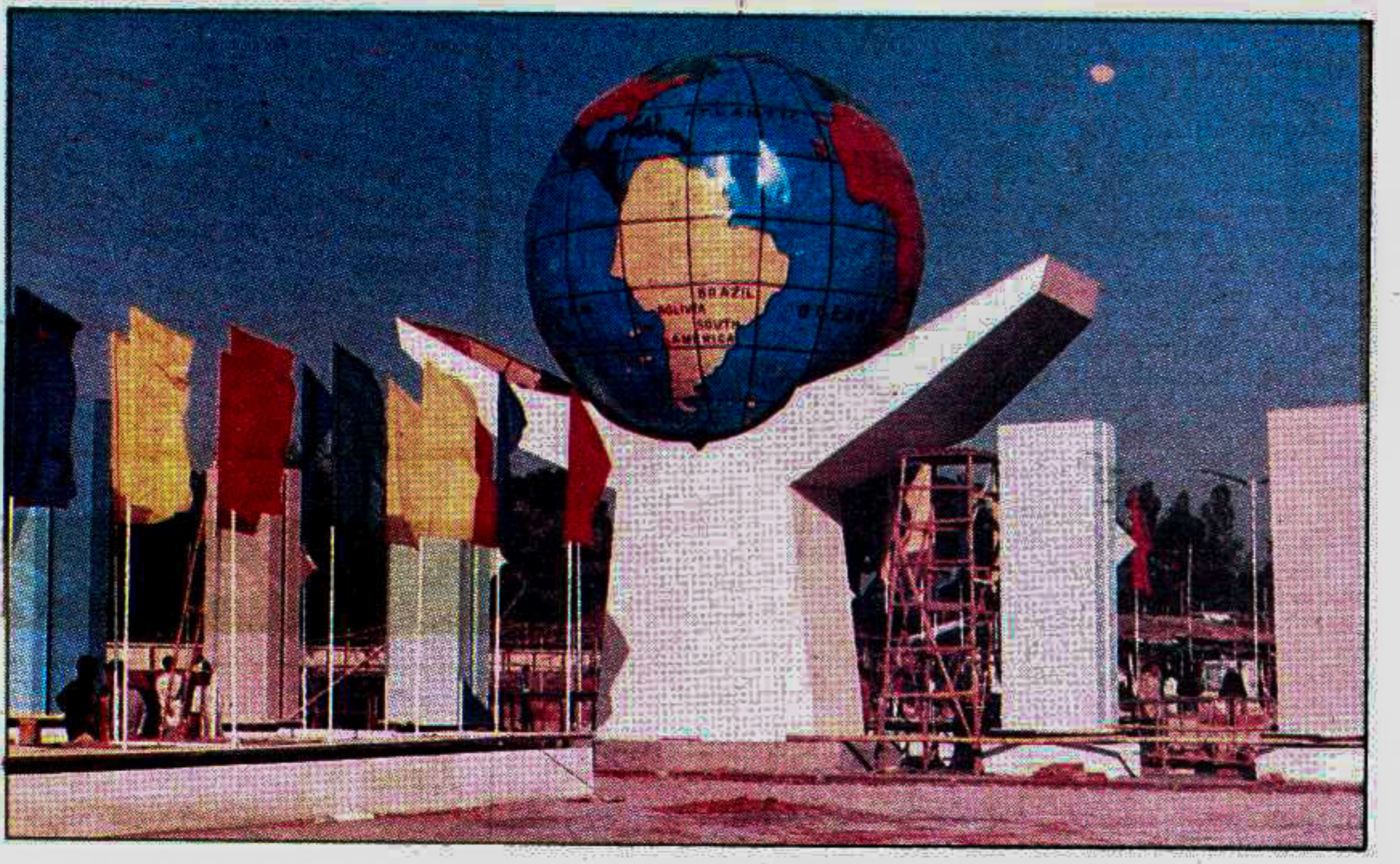
#### Supplement

One page supplement on 'Dhaka International Trade Fair '99'  
Page 10

#### Prayer Timings

February 2		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-24	5-28
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-10	4-20
Maghrib	5-42	5-45
Esha	7-10	7-20

Source: Islamic Foundation



It's all set for this year's Dhaka International Trade Fair. As many as 30 countries are participating in the fair opening today. — Star photo

## Int'l Trade Fair opens today

By Staff Correspondent  
The fifth Dhaka International Trade Fair (DITF) '99 begins today at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city with entries from as many as 30 countries.  
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the fair as the chief guest.  
Bangladesh is hosting the exposition with a view to introducing foreign machinery and local exportable to prospective buyers.  
Bangladesh is going to put its full range of exportable on display. Jute goods, jute yarn and twine jute carpets, apparels, textiles, towels and garment accessories, leather and leather goods including footwear and jackets will be displayed at the fair.  
The fair will help foreign buyers or their agents to make  
See Page 12 Col 8

## Fire at Nagar Bhaban: Polio vaccines damaged

By Staff Correspondent  
A fire damaged an unspecified amount of polio vaccines on the 11th floor of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) building yesterday evening.  
The fire, lasting half an hour from about 5:30pm, burnt two deep fridges containing the vaccines, one carton of bleaching powder, furniture, files and documents kept inside a room used by Urban Health Care Project (UHCPC) under the DCC, our correspondents who visited the spot said.  
DCC officials said that the damage would not affect the immunisation programme, scheduled for today. The officials claimed polio vaccines had already been distributed to most city immunisation centres.  
The damaged vaccines were to be used today in case of emergency.  
Mayor Mohammad Hanif is scheduled to inaugurate the immunisation programme at his city corporation office at around 12 pm today.  
"Only emergency vaccines for (DCC) Zone-2 were destroyed in the fire," said Rashidul Alam, DCC chief executive officer.  
Alam said DCC would buy more vaccines to complete the programme.  
No human casualties, however, were reported. Neither police nor fire officials could confirm the origin of the fire till filing of this report last night.  
But Solaiman, a security guard stationed on the 12th floor of the building, said he saw smoke coming from the 11th floor room and called police.  
Solaiman said he believed  
See Page 12 Col 6

## BGMEA battle Sikder joins anti-Quddus panel

By Staff Correspondent  
A breakaway faction of the ruling BGMEA group joined hands with rivals to challenge the incumbent president Mostafa Golum Quddus, a late night press release said yesterday.  
They agreed to contest the February 25 elections under the leadership of Forum president Anisur Rahman Sinha, according to the statement signed by Sinha and Engineer Nurul Huq Sikder of Sammilito Parishad.  
Sikder's departure from Quddus-led faction follows a breach of contract by the latter, sources in the grouping said. Quddus had reportedly promised that Sikder would run for BGMEA president as the Sammilito Parishad candidate. The two failed to agree on the issue, sources said.  
Case against 7 for publishing book by Laden  
By Staff Correspondent  
Motiheel Thana police yesterday lodged a case accusing seven persons of publishing a book written by Osama Bin Laden.  
Police also arrested one Abdur Rashid Farayez in connection with the case.  
It was alleged that the accused also translated the book on Islamic revolution titled "America and the Third World War".  
The accused are: Maulana  
See Page 12 Col 3

ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশন  
নগর ভবন, ঢাকা

আপনার পরিবেশ সুন্দর ও পরিচ্ছন্ন রাখুন  
আপনার শিশুকে টিকা দিন

৫ম জাতীয় টিকা দিবস ২ ফেব্রুয়ারি '৯৯ইং  
(২য় পর্ব)

প্রিয় নগরবাসী,  
আসসালামু আলাইকুম।  
আপনারা জানেন যে, পোলিও একটি মারাত্মক সংক্রামক ব্যাধি। এই মারাত্মক ব্যাধির কারণে শিশুদের পঙ্গুত্বের অভিশাপ থেকে রীচাতে ৫ (পাঁচ) বৎসরের কম বয়সী সকল শিশুকে আজ ২ ফেব্রুয়ারি '৯৯ইং ৫ম জাতীয় টিকা দিবসের ২য় পর্বে "পোলিও টিকা" খাওয়ানোর উদ্যোগ গ্রহণ করা হয়েছে।  
২ ফেব্রুয়ারি '৯৯ইং মঙ্গলবার আপনার ৫ (পাঁচ) বৎসরের কম বয়সী সকল শিশুকে ২ ফোটা "পোলিও টিকা" খাওয়াতে টিকাদান কেন্দ্রে আনার জন্য অনুরোধ জানাচ্ছি।  
সম্মানিত ওয়ার্ড কমিশনারের দপ্তর, সিটি করপোরেশনের সকল আঞ্চলিক দপ্তর, সরকারী/বেসরকারী সকল ডিসপেনসারী, স্বৈচ্ছাসেবী/বেসরকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানে এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট ওয়ার্ডের কমিউনিটি সেন্টারে আপনার এলাকার টিকাদান কেন্দ্রে তালিকা পাওয়া যাবে।  
মোহাম্মদ হানিফ  
মেয়র  
ডিসি/পিআরডি/১৯৮/৯৮-৯৯  
জিডি-৫৯  
ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশন, ঢাকা।

## Starr accused of violating secrecy laws

WASHINGTON, Feb 1: As House prosecutors prepared to question Monica Lewinsky under oath in President Bill Clinton's impeachment case, White House lawyers headed for court today to accuse the independent Counsel of violating Grand Jury secrecy laws, reports AP.  
Kenneth Starr's office has engaged in illegal, partisan leaking of secret information, Clinton's lawyer, David Kendall, told reporters. He apparently referred to a weekend story in The New York Times saying Starr has concluded that Clinton can be indicted while in office.  
"We are filing today in US District Court for the District of Columbia a motion to show cause why... Starr and members of his staff should not be held in contempt for improper violations of Grand Jury secrecy," Kendall said.  
The story, coming at the time the Senate is trying to find a way to end Clinton's impeachment trial, drew criticism from senators from both parties.  
"I thought that the timing was extremely unfortunate and that it was inappropriate to come out while the Senate is concluding the president's trial," said Republican Sen. Susan Collins.  
Starr spokesman Charles Bakaly denied Starr's office was the source of the story. "We have no interest in interposing ourselves in the Senate's business," he said today on ABC's "Good Morning America."  
APF adds: Monica Lewinsky began her 23rd round of questioning today at a hotel here, where President Clinton's prosecutors hope her new testimony will support their impeachment drive.  
A Republican House prosecutor and three White House lawyers will each have four hours, but Clinton's defence team has indicated it does not intend to ask many questions.  
Lewinsky is the first of three witnesses this week to be deposited before a final vote in the President's impeachment trial on February 12.  
Republican representative Edward Bryant said his questions will not focus on sexual encounters but will seek to clarify discrepancies in the accounts from Clinton and Lewinsky related to the charge of obstruction of justice.  
Prosecutors want to link Lewinsky's sworn denial of her affair with Clinton to his help in getting her a job, and to discover whether the President asked her to return gifts that could be used as evidence.

## The rickshaw mystery

By Morshed Ali Khan  
Strange it may sound, nearly half of the city rickshaws are believed to be lying idle in their garages.  
Owners say it is now too difficult to find drivers because they are now busy working in the paddy fields -- harvesting.  
Many feel that this has contributed to the improvement of the city's overall traffic situation since the Eid-time traffic mayhem.  
Garage owners in the city said many rickshawpullers did not return to the city after the Eid holidays. Many city rickshawpullers were now busy in the rural areas harvesting  
aman paddy, they said.  
Just before the Eid holidays, Dhaka's traffic department estimated that more than six lakh illegal rickshaws were plying the city streets. At the same time, hundreds of autorickshaws from the city's peripheral townships had come to the city only to make the traffic situation worse.  
Mujibbor Garage at Agar-gaan which houses more than 150 rickshaws and a dormitory for 50 rickshawpullers yesterday rented out only 50 rickshaws. Mujibbor said more than half of his fleet remained un-

POCKET THE BENEFITS!  
LOCALLY MANUFACTURED  
WORLD CLASS  
DENIM  
HAS ARRIVED.

Bengal Indigo Limited, now offers you the finest quality Denim in all weights, here in Bangladesh. Save on cost, time and transportation of imported material, with additional benefits of GSP. An ideal choice for local and foreign buyers. Please call us.

**Bengal Indigo Ltd.**  
9-G Motiheel Commercial Area (2nd Floor), Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh.  
Phone : 956-4734, 956-7358, 955-4238, Fax : 880-2-956-4745  
Factory : 892321, 892613, Fax : 880-2-891785