

## News

## Weather

## Light rain forecast

Light rain is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi division and the regions of Dhaka, Mymensingh, Tangail and Sylhet, reports AFP.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, Met Office forecast.

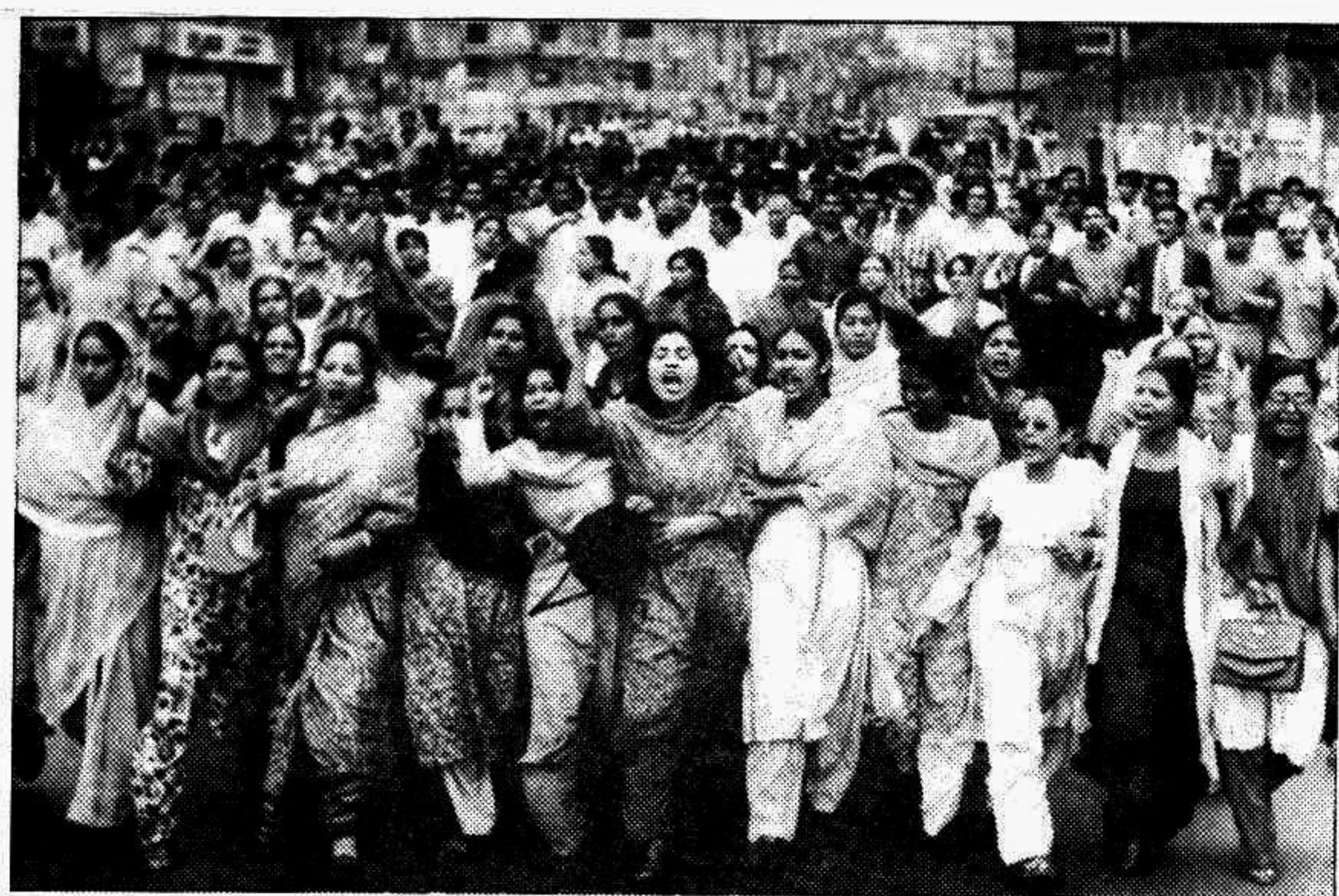
Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged during the period across the country.

The country's lowest temperature 12.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Barisal and the highest 33.2 degrees at Sitakunda.

The sun sets today at 5:50 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:35 am.

Maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage		
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	17.0	30.5	68	65
Chittagong	32.3	16.8	77	57
Rajshahi	15.8	28.8	74	76
Khulna	15.0	28.2	80	77
Barisal	12.0	30.0	94	77
Sylhet	17.3	32.7	57	48
Cox's Bazar	18.0	31.5	69	53



Activists of BNP shout anti-government slogans in a procession during hartal hours yesterday. —Star photo



Dhaka City Awami League brought out an anti-hartal procession yesterday. —Star photo

## Lead poisoning

## 18m children suffer brain damage

BANGALORE, India, Feb 9: Health experts urged developing countries today to take urgent steps against lead pollution and halt its cruel toll on generations of children, reports Reuter.

The experts in India for a three-day International Conference on Lead Poisoning said the problem had left millions of children in developing countries with permanent brain damage.

"The problem is very serious," said Herbert L Needleman, professor of Psychiatry and Paediatrics at the University of Pittsburgh.

"Blood lead levels are terribly high in India, Bangladesh, China has a serious problem and so does Russia," he said.

The presence of lead in blood especially in children, leads to permanent brain damage, lead levels of 10 micrograms per decilitre of blood are associated with disturbances in early physical and mental growth and in later intellectual func-

## JS body discusses promotion, transfer of judicial officials

A meeting of the sub-committee number-2 of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry stressed on formulating a *proper and complete* guideline for appointing GP, AGP, PP and APP, reports UNB.

Issues of transfer, promotion and disciplinary action against judicial officials also came up for discussion, held at the Sangsad Bhaban with sub-committee president Rahmat Ali in the chair.

Besides, it discussed necessary steps for quick disposal of pending cases aimed at bringing dynamism in the judicial activities.

Committee member Sheikh M Nurul Haq and other concerned high officials were present.

## 8-year-old girl raped at Chandpur

CHANDPUR, Feb 9: A minor girl was raped allegedly by a union parishad chairman in the town today, reports UNB.

Police said Mizanur Rahman, chairman of Rupsha Union Parishad, took an 8-year-old daughter of a fourth-class employee to a garage at Mission Road and raped her.

When the girl cried out for help, local people rushed to the spot and rescued her.

But the chairman, also accused in several other rape cases, fled the scene sensing the arrival of local people.

A case was filed with the local thana in this connection.

## Pak Shi'ite leader accuses govt of supporting Kashmiri, Afghan militants

MULTAN, Feb 9: A Shi'ite Muslim leader accused the government today of supporting extremist Islamic groups fighting in neighbouring Afghanistan and in Indian-ruled Kashmir, reports AP.

Addressing a news conference after burying five Shi'ite Muslims slain a day earlier, Alama Sajid Naqvi blamed their deaths on radical Sunni Muslims, who also fight with the Taliban religious army in Afghanistan.

He said they also fight in India's only Muslim-dominated state of Kashmir.

"Until Pakistan stops supporting (Pakistani) militants to fight in Afghanistan and Kashmir, law and order will not improve here," said Naqvi, who heads the Tehrik-e-Jafria Pakistan, a Shi'ite Muslim group calling for Shi'ite Muslim law in Pakistan, a majority Sunni Muslim country.

Earlier today police arrested 24 activists of the Sunni group, Sipah-e-Sahabah (Guardians of the Friends of the Prophet), in connection with the killing Monday of Naqvi's followers.

The slain men, all from the Multan district, some 240 kilometers south of the Punjab provincial capital of Lahore, were killed in separate incidents.

Three men were killed, some 35 kilometers east of Multan, where there bullet-riddled bodies were found in an abandoned car.

The other two men were killed near their home in Multan.

A case was filed with the local thana in this connection.

## Viqarunnisa function postponed

The annual sports of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College scheduled for February 11 has been postponed. A new date will be announced later.

The annual prize giving ceremony of the school, which was planned for February 13, has been deferred to February 14.

Education Minister A.S.H.K. Sadique will be the chief guest in the function starting at 9:30 a.m.

## Narcotics Control

deptt tests Feb 19

The written test for the posts of deputy inspector of the Department of Narcotics Control will be held on February 19, reports BSS.

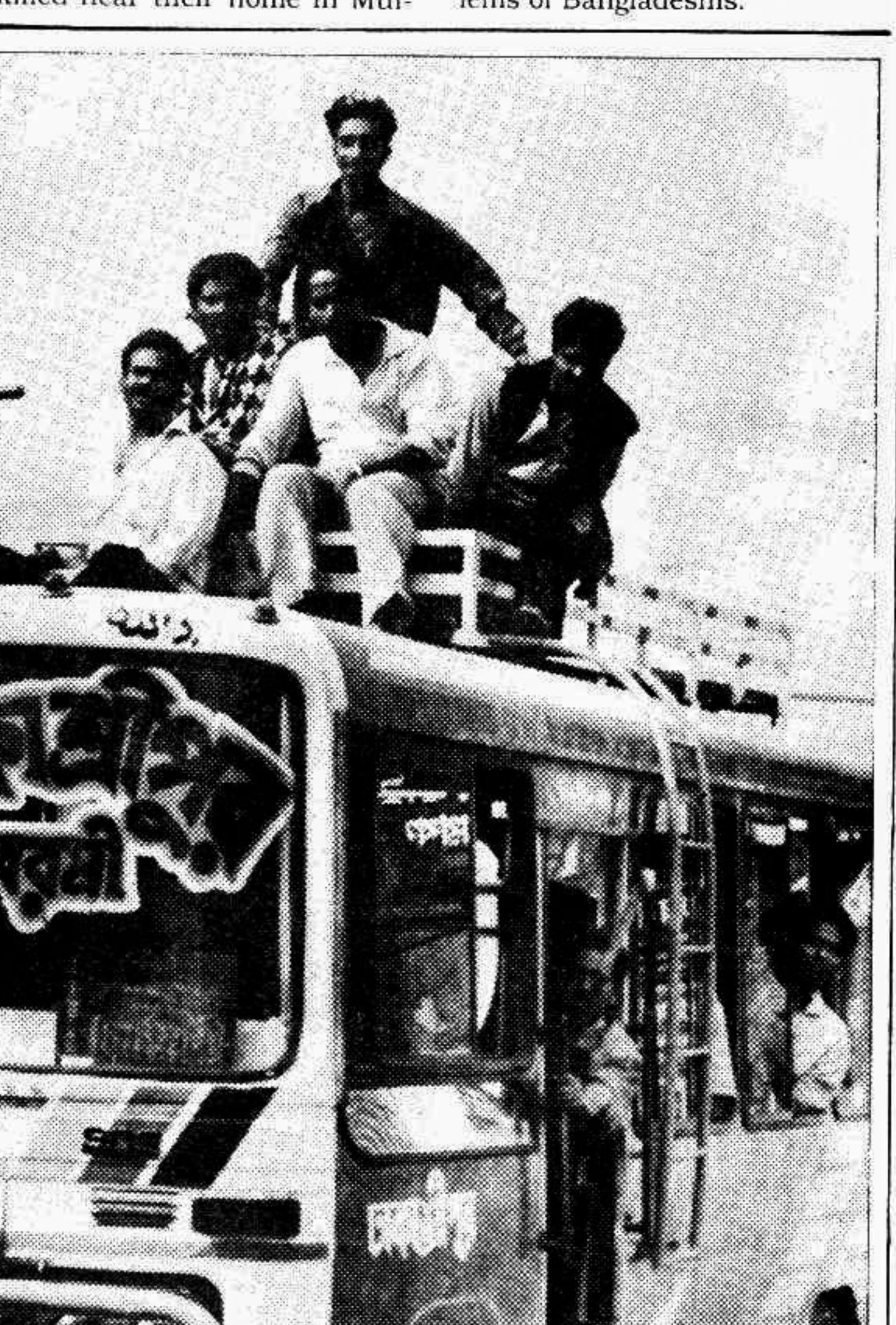
Candidates from Dhaka division will have to sit for the test in Dhaka while candidates from Rajshahi division at the divisional headquarters.

The test for the candidates of Khulna and Barisal divisions will be held at the Khulna divisional headquarters while for candidates from Sylhet and Chittagong divisions at the Chittagong divisional headquarters.

Admit cards for the tests have already been mailed to the candidates' respective permanent addresses. Candidates, who have not yet got the admit cards, have been asked to contact the headquarters of the Department of Narcotics Control.

Armed with hockey sticks, a group of anti-hartal activists are seen in a bus during the shutdown yesterday.

—Star photo



—Star photo

## Barisal Division headquarters bldg

## 50 per cent work of construction completes

BARISAL, Feb 9: About fifty per cent work on construction of office blocks and residential facilities for the newly set up divisional headquarters here has been completed, reports APB.

These, together with some other development projects, are being implemented by the Public Works Department at a cost of Tk 16.50 crore, sources said.

Construction of the office of the divisional commissioner at a cost of Tk 6 crore is going on at Ichhakati.

The residence of the divisional commissioner has been completed and that of the DIG of the Barisal Range is expected to be started soon, according to sources in the PWD.

Construction of two Police

## Ekushey observance body formed

A central committee has been formed at the Dhaka University for observing the historic Ekushey February in a befitting manner, reports APB.

It was formed at a meeting held at the administrative office on Sunday with Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, the DU Vice-Chancellor, in the chair.

The meeting was also attended by the Pro-VC, the treasurer, deans of various faculties, provosts of halls, chairmen of various departments, directors of different institutes, representatives of the senate and the syndicate, representatives of the teachers' association and students' organisations, heads of offices and representatives of officers' and employees' associations.

Dr ASR Yusuf Haider, the President of the teachers' association was made the coordinator while Dr Mesbahuddin Ahmed, the Vice President of the Association, and Mohammad Ferdous Hossain, the general secretary of the association were made joint-convenors of the central committee.

Prof AKM Nur-un-Nabi, Proctor of the university, will act as the member-secretary of the committee. Besides, a number of sub-committees were also formed at the meeting.

The following resolutions were passed at the meeting:

— All programmes in observance of the 'Ekushey' will commence at 12:01 on the night

of February 20 and will continue without break till 2 in the afternoon of February 21. The national flag will fly at half-mast and black flags will remain hoisted on the day.

— No organisation should hang any picture or portrait on the Central Shaheed Minar, or hold any rally or meeting on the Shaheed Minar premises from 7 pm of February 20. No organisation should hold any meeting in the Shaheed Minar area (Doyer Chattar in the east, Passey square in the west, Chankha Pool in the South and TSC in the North).

— The President will be the first to place wreaths at the Shaheed Minar at 12:01 past midnight, to be followed by the Prime Minister, Cabinet ministers, Vice Chancellor and members of the Syndicate of the Dhaka University and the veterans of the language movement.

The Ekushey observation committee will fix the programme of Leader of the Opposition in Parliament for placing her wreath at the minar.

— Heads of various diplomatic missions in Dhaka will lay their wreaths at the Shaheed Minar at 10 am on February 21.

The committee has requested the television authorities to telecast live the programmes at the Shaheed Minar from 11 pm of February 20 to 12 noon of Feb 21 without any break.

They discussed problems and welfare of Bangladeshi workers in Malaysia, according to a message received here.

The Human Resources Minister of Malaysia spoke highly about Bangladeshi workers and assured that his departments would look into their problems.

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