

Municipal polls Opposition blasts media 'for misreporting'

By Staff Correspondent

Opposition parties boycotting the municipal polls yesterday reiterated their claim that the turnout of voters in last two days didn't exceed 10 per cent and asked the government to immediately cancel the polls and accept their 4-point demand.

"Cancel the elections for the greater interest of the democracy, development and free the country from the conflicting situation that is currently prevalent," said BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan while addressing a press briefing at 29 Minto Road yesterday evening.

Leaders of the opposition alliance — Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islamic Oikya Jote also spoke at the press briefing. Mannan Bhuiyan said the local newspaper media as well as some local newspapers broadcast and pub-

See Page 12 Col 2

D-8 summit: 2 heads of state due Sunday

By Staff Correspondent

Three heads of state and government scheduled to attend the D-8 Summit in Dhaka will start arriving here from February 28, according to diplomatic sources.

The first to arrive would be Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad, heading a big delegation. He will arrive in the afternoon of February 28 and leave Dhaka on March 3. Turkish President Suleyman Demirel will also arrive on February 28 with a 60-member team. He would leave on March 3.

Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is due in the morning of March 1. He will also leave on March 3.

Foreign ministers of most of the eight-nation organisation are expected to arrive on February 26 and 27. They would participate in the Council of Ministers' conference of D-8 on February 27.

The two-day Summit begins on March 1.

Meeting of D-8 officials begins today

A two-day meeting of the senior officials of Developing Eight (D-8) countries begins in Dhaka today, reports APB.

Sources at the Foreign Office told the news agency that they would discuss and draft the agenda of the two-day second summit of the new economic block that is scheduled to be held in Dhaka March 1-2.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the summit at Hotel Sheraton's Winter Garden Conference Centre.

Additional Foreign Secre-

See Page 12 Col 4

NOTICE

Alternatives will be published on Saturday (February 27)

Inside Today

Article

Kazi Aref's Killing: A Pointer to Law and Order Situation

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

Business

Nepal willing to expand business with Bangladesh
Page 6

Supplement

A 3-page supplement on the 'National Day of the State of Kuwait' on
Pages 7, 8 & 9

Prayer Timings

February 25

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:29	5:34
Zohr	12:15	1:15
Asr	4:30	4:35
Maghrib	6:00	6:03
Esha	7:25	7:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Voting 'peaceful' on second day

On the second day of three-day municipal elections yesterday polling took place by and large peacefully in 30 Pourohasavas in 22 districts, officials said, reports UNB.

"Alike Tuesday, casting of votes began in time at 8 am in all 398 centres, but the authorities had to cross the 4 pm deadline due to overcrowding of voters," Election Commissioner Abdur Rahman told newsmen at a briefing at the EC office yesterday evening.

Voting in 18 centres of five municipalities was postponed following poll violence on Tuesday.

Rahman said Chief Election Commissioner Abu Hena would visit different polling centres today along with journalists. Six joint secretary-level officials also would visit election centres in six divisions to take stock of the overall situation.

A report from Sherpur says, activists of rival candidates went on fighting and looting yesterday in a string of poll violence that disrupted municipal election there.

In protest, the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry called an indefinite general strike in the district headquarters yesterday as a meeting between them and the administration at noon ended in failure.

At least 15 people were injured in the post-election sporadic clashes between the supporters of apparently defeated and winning candidates. Two shops and some 20 homes were also ransacked by the marauders, police and locals said.

They said the fighting between the supporters of Shahidur Rahman and Zuhazuddin at Chakpathak and Sherpara in the town left 15 injured, six critically.

Zulhazuddin, Tozi, Mizan, Razu, Mofazzal and Afzal were admitted to hospital.

Local people said sporadic clashes between the supporters of the candidates scattered over different areas of the town panicking the townsmen.

Another report says, angry supporters of a chairman candidate of Matlab pourasava yesterday confined the local TNO in his office for five hours demanding fair elections in two centres of the municipality where voting was postponed Tuesday.

Witnesses said several hundred supporters of Dr Shamsur Rahman, one of the chairman candidates of the pourasava, gheraoed the TNO office this noon accusing the authorities of playing ducks and drakes with the election results.

Election results

Following are the names of unofficially elected chairman of different pourashavas, according to Election Commission, reports UNB.

Rangpur (Rangpur) — Kazi Mohammad Zinnun (32,031 votes); Panchagarh — Najim Uddin Ahmed (8,383 votes); Thakurgaon — Mohammad Akbar Hossain (4,857 votes); Dinajpur — Syed Mosaddeq Hossain Labu (20,301 votes); Nababganj — Mohammad Moynuddin Mandal (14,401 votes); Godagari (Rajshahi) — Mohammad Abdur Razzak (6,611 votes); Tanor (Rajshahi) — Mohammad Erman Ali Mollah (3,102 votes); Bera (Pabna) — Abdul Batn (9,396 votes); Kotchandpur — A K M Sirazul Haque (5,996 votes); Madhupur (Tangail) — Mohammad Shahidul Islam Shaheed (10,601 votes); Ghatail (Tangail) — Mohammad Hasan Ali (unopposed); Dhanbari (Tangail) — Badiul Alam (8,154 votes); Iswarganj (Mymensingh) — Mohammad Habibur Rahman (3,342 votes); Nandail (Mymensingh) — Mohammad Rafiq Uddin Bhuiyan (3,522 votes); Kalkini — Mohammad Taufiquzzaman (4,510 votes); Gopalganj — Mohammad Ali Khan (9,023 votes); Naria — Haidar Ali (unopposed); Sunamganj — Dewan Mumtaz Moijuddin (9,919 votes); Sayeshiganj — Mohammad Abdur Razzak (1,903 votes);

See Page 12 Col 5

One killed in Rajshahi on second day of hartal



By Staff Correspondent

One person was killed and over 50 including six newsmen were injured yesterday, the second day of the Opposition-sponsored three-day country-wide hartal.

Reports from across the country said the hartal, unlike previous occasions, failed to make much impact on public life in many districts. Even the local elections, the main target, were largely unaffected by the opposition-called shutdown.

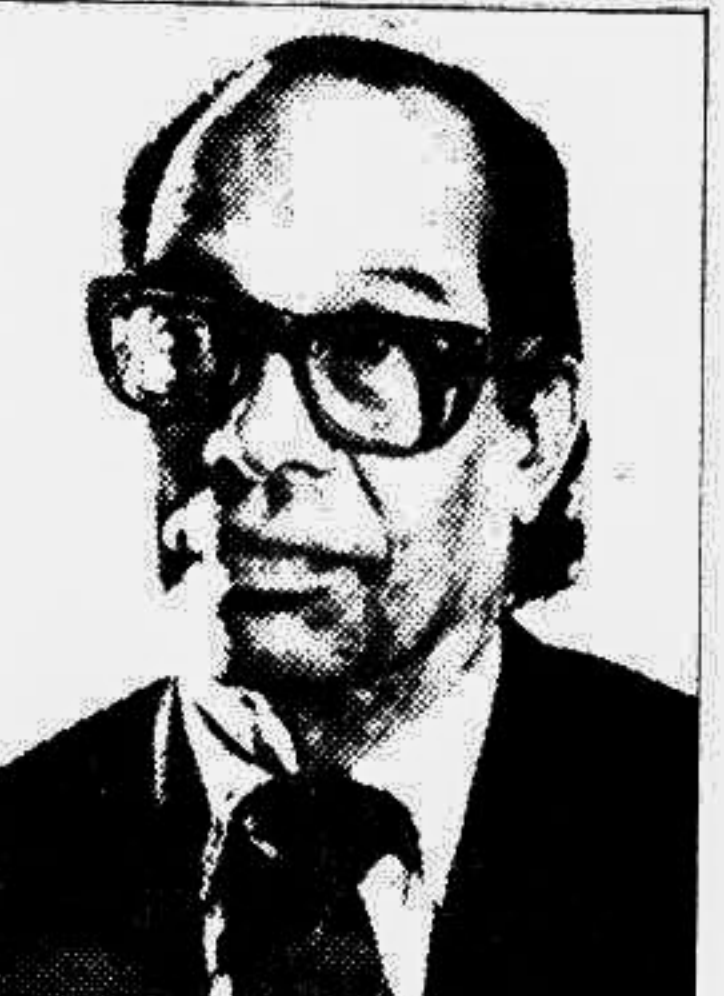
The dead was identified as Masud, a local Jubo Dal leader in Rajshahi, said our correspondent. While the family of Masud blamed miscreants for his death, police said Masud succumbed to injuries received from bombs he was making at Pathanpara area in the northern city.

Otherwise, hartal was peaceful yesterday barring some stray incidents of violence in Dhaka and at few other places in the country.

In Pabna, according to our correspondent, some 12 people belonging to Awami League and BNP received injuries in separate incidents of bomb explosions occurred during their production process.

In some other districts in-

See Page 12 Col 5



Ahmed Sharif passes away

By Staff Correspondent

A young septuagenarian, Dr. Ahmed Sharif has died.

The colourful scholarly life of Sharif, a retired professor of Bangla at Dhaka University, came to an end as he breathed his last on 'his way to Suhrawardi Hospital at 1: 40 am Wednesday.

A massive heart attack brought the end to the life begun on February 13 1921.

A consummate rational humanist, Sharif has left behind a legacy for those still fighting fascist ideas, autocratic views, communalism and superstitions.

However, one of the few specialists in the field of media-

See Page 12 Col 1

One killed in Feni gunfight

FENI, Feb 24: A gunfight between two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) left a press worker dead and six others injured in Daganbhuiyan thana today, reports UNB.

The deceased was identified as Alamgir Hossain Harun, 28, son of Abus Sobhan of Edilpur in Senbag thana of Noakhali district and a compositor of Mamun Press at Daganbhuiyan Bazar.

Police said both the factions clashed over collection of stipend forms from Iqbal Memorial College at about 1 pm.

Seven people, including Harun, were critically injured. Harun received bullet wounds during gunfight and succumbed to his injuries at the Sadar Hospital.

Five others were admitted to Daganbhuiyan Thana Health Complex where the condition of Bachehu Mia, a hotel owner, is stated to be critical.

Police rushed to the spot and

See Page 12 Col 8

One killed in Kushtia gunbattle

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Feb 24: Manwar Hossain, 28, a JSD activist, was killed in a gunbattle allegedly between armed cadres of Purbangar Communist Party and JSD Gonobahini at Jhodia under Sadar thana of the district town today.

Eye witnesses said that gunbattle took place between 11 am and 2 pm. Three others injured during the incident are missing, local people said.

Alamdanga police however claimed that Manwar was killed in a gunbattle with police. His body was taken to Alamdanga police station.

Police said they also arrested 5 persons immediately after the incident. They were identified as Monzil, Shahidul, Ezhar, Milon and Arzoo.

Foreign nationals denied entry, returned back from ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

'Security measures' for D-8 summit

Dozens of foreign nationals were refused on-arrival visa at the Zia International Airport since Tuesday night and were returned by first available flights as the government enforced 'security measures' for the forthcoming D-8 Summit.

Foreign nationals having no prior Bangladesh visa will not be given visa or entry permit at the airport till March 4, two-day after the D-8 Summit ends, immigration officials said yesterday.

The foreigners denied entry till 9 pm yesterday were from several countries including Italy, the Netherlands, Australia, Taiwan, US, Korea and Nepal.

Six passengers, five of them from Indonesia and one from Malaysia, were returned in the same flight after they landed at

have to collect their return passage money later, he said.

Three passengers, two of them Koreans and one Nepalese, were denied entry and were staying at the lounge last night as they were refused visas after they arrived by a Biman flight from Kathmandu.

Two foreigners who arrived by a British Airways flight were allowed entry after officials from the British High Commission went to the airport and pleaded with immigration officials.

Sources at the Airport Immigration said that they had an order from the Home Ministry to stop issuing landing permit or visa to all foreigners coming with no prior visa.

The order was issued on February 18 but was implemented

See Page 12 Col 6

Hajj flights: Biman lands in trouble

By Special Correspondent

Bangladesh Biman has landed in trouble over carrying Hajj pilgrims due to failure of 'Air Chartered World', a US-based unlisted company, to provide the national airline two Boeing-777 aircraft.

Biman inaugurated Hajj flight with a DC-10 carrying 301 pilgrims, cancelling its regular flight to New York on Tuesday, jettisoning 79 other

pilgrims scheduled to travel to Jeddah by that flight.

It enraged the enlisted passengers as they were unceremoniously abandoned from the first flight and the second flight yesterday.

Biman had provided them the schedule but non-availability of the two wide-bodied Boeing-777 forced it to drop the 79 people and place them on other flights.

Based on the calculation that the two wide-bodied aircraft will carry 380 passengers per flight, Biman had made arrangements for 7224 ballottee pilgrims and 14,000 non-ballottee pilgrims.

But this put Biman into trouble to keep its schedule for 24 international destinations with four DC-10 and two Airbus A-310 aircraft.

Faced with the problem, Biman contacted Sky Jet, a Brussels-based company, to charter two DC-10 aircraft. The company was the second lowest bidder in an open tender for providing chartered wide-bodied aircraft for Hajj flights, which it did last year.

But the company's efforts to provide the aircraft remained uncertain till yesterday.

Aviation sources said unless

See Page 12 Col 8

Conspiracy to snatch voting rights foiled, says Zillur

Awami League general secretary Zillur Rahman has said people have foiled opposition leader Khaleda Zia's conspiracy to kill democracy and snatch voting rights by taking part in the municipal elections, reports UNB.

Zillur in a press statement yesterday criticised Khaleda's remarks about turnout of voters in the election.

He termed opposition leader's remarks as misleading and fabricated as independent monitoring agencies, newspapers and press claimed that people went to the polling centres to cast vote defying opposition boycott and hartal.

On the first day of the election, he said candidates of various political parties, including BNP, Jatiya Party and Jamaat, were elected chairmen and commissioners.

Claiming that election was peaceful, he said polling at only 18 centres out of 983 in 56 municipalities was postponed.

He said defying the hartal, huge voters, including a large number of women, exercised their franchise in 965 centres on Tuesday registering the turnout over 70 per cent on an average.

See Page 12 Col 4

Ctg port operations come to a halt

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Feb 24: The country's main seaport here has reached a near-collapse situation with about seven lakh tons of stuck-up import cargo and 83 stranded vessels due to hartal, port sources said.

Of the stuck-up import cargo, five lakh tons are in ships and two lakh tons are stockpiled at jetty sheds and yards due to

Polls in rest 50 municipalities today

By Staff Correspondent

On the third and final day today, election will be held in rest 50 municipalities under six administrative divisions of the country.

Polling will start at 8 am and close at 5 pm.

Polling will be held today at Pirganj, Setabganj, Parbatipur, Syedpur, Haragach, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Panchbibi, Shantahar, Naogaon, Rohonpur, Charghat, Gurudaspur, Ullapara and Paban of Rajshahi division.

Kumarkhali, Jiban Nagar, Meherpur, Kaliganj, Moniram-

See Page 12 Col 4

Garment quota for US, Canada goes up by 10pc

By Rafiq Hasan

Bangladesh will be allowed to export more than 3.5 crore dozen pieces of apparel products to the US and Canada this year under various quota categories, marking a 10 per cent increase over the previous year's figure, according to sources.

The Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) has already finalised the list of local garments manufacturers and exporters that are due to receive the different categories of quota orders.

"We have finalised the list for giving quota allotment to the garment exporters this year about two months earlier than the previous year's date," said Abdur Razzak, an EPB director general for textile.

He said the quota committee held a meeting last week and finalised the list for the allotment. "The main objective of quick allotment is to help the

manufacturers to increase export from the country," he noted.

The government wants to increase the garments export from the country as much as possible because it is the only sector which can generate huge employment for the young people and bring in large amounts of foreign currency," said Abdur Razzak.

In the past, the final quota allotments were given during the months of March-April, causing tremendous difficulties for the manufacturers and exporters in fulfilling their production requirements.

But this year the EPB started distributing the allotments earlier, from the months of November and December.

"Around 75 per cent of allotment was given in advance during the month of November and

See Page 12 Col 5

Surprising snipers leave a gory trail of unaware victims

By Nazmul Ashraf

Rickshawpuller Shukkur Ali was desperate for help after a cracker fell on his right hand and shattered it. Hand bleeding, he begged the police, newsmen and others present for help. But none came to his aid.

Finally, he was another rickshawpuller who carried the maimed Shukkur Ali to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. On the way, the story took another morbid turn. A BTV reporter stopped Shukkur and interviewed him, further delaying the treatment that was so urgently required.

Doctors at the DMCH had to amputate Ali's right hand, virtually exterminating his chances of living a normal life.

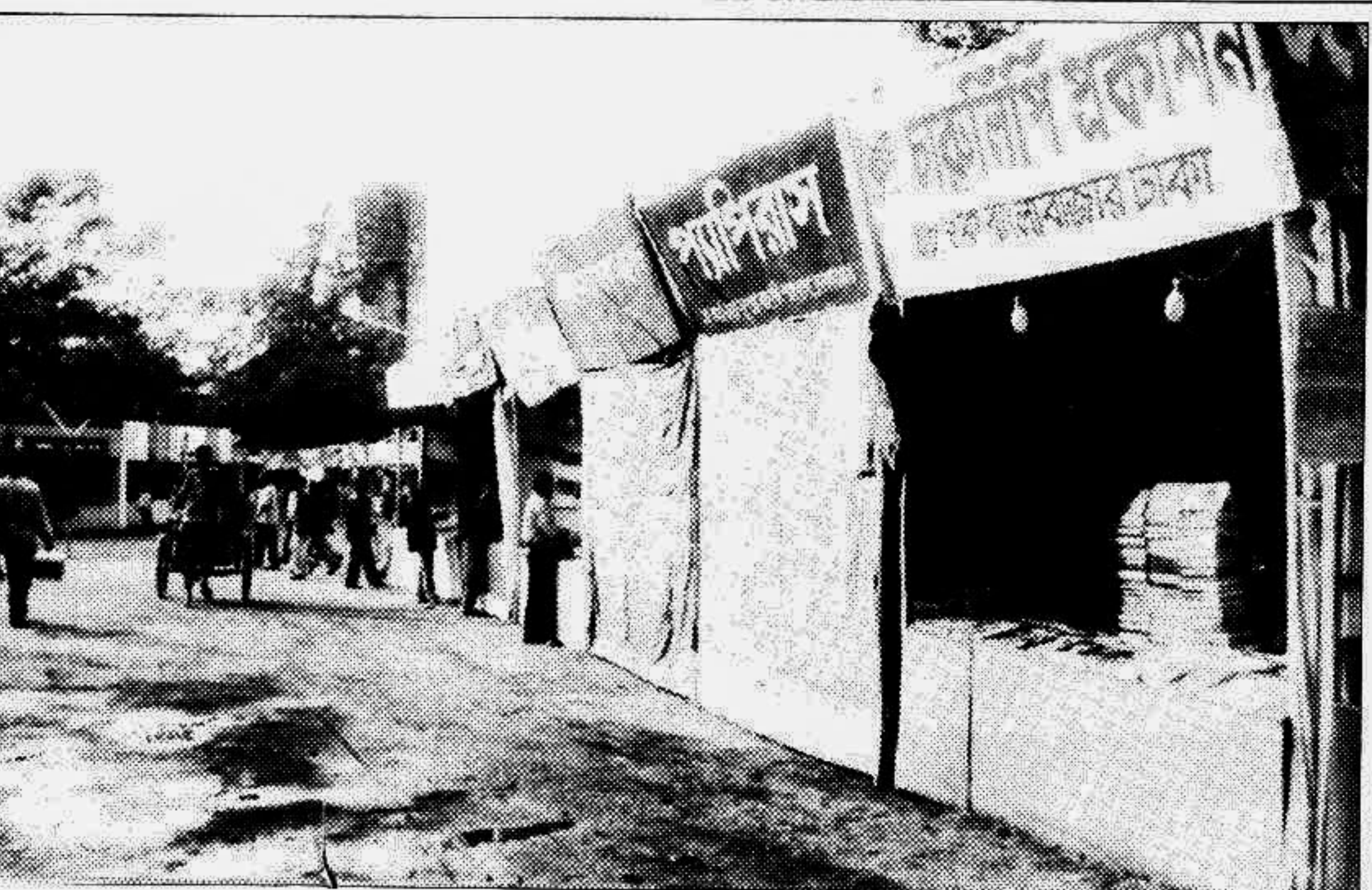
See Page 12 Col 8



দি একমি ল্যাবরেটরিজ লিমিটেডের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা - চেয়ারম্যান মরহুম হামিদুর রহমান সিন্হা-র আজ পঞ্চম মৃত্যু বার্ষিকী। বিদেশী আত্মার মাগফেরাতের জন্য আগামী ২৬শে ফেব্রুয়ারি শুক্রবার বাদ আছর তাঁর নিজ গ্রাম ডহুরী, কলমা ইউনিয়ন, লৌহজং থানা, মুন্সীগঞ্জে এবং একই সময়ে কোম্পানির প্রধান কার্যালয় ৫৫, সাত-মসজিদ রোড, ধানমন্ডি, ঢাকায় মিলাদ মাহফিলের আয়োজন করা হয়েছে। মরহুমের সকল আত্মীয়-স্বজন ও শুভানুধ্যায়ীকে মিলাদে অংশ গ্রহণ করতে অনুরোধ করা হচ্ছে।

একমি পরিবারের সদস্যবৃন্দ

দি একমি গ্রুপ অব কোম্পানিজ



Ekushey Book Fair on the Bangla Academy premises wears a deserted look during hartal yesterday.

—Star photo