



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inspecting a Guard of Honour at BDR headquarters in the city during the annual BDR parade yesterday.

— PID photo

Gas cylinder burst kills one

By Staff Correspondent
An employee of an ice factory was killed and three others were injured when a gas cylinder exploded at Champatal lane under Lalbagh thana in the city yesterday evening.

The dead was identified as Altaf Hossain, 27, and injured were Hannan, Oli and Ashraf, workers of Madina Ice Factory.

According to the police, the accident took place at a Madina Ice Factory of 6/3/B Champatal of Suyaritola at about 3:30 pm, leaving Altaf Hossain dead.

Benson & Hedges concert Mar 12

Benson & Hedges is back with another grand concert to be held at Gulshan Park behind Wonderland on March 12, says a press release.

This time it will be the biggest ever musical spectacle in the country. In addition to the topnotch local bands, Feelings and LRB, there will be international stars Mehnaz, Merlin, Rahul and VJ Laila (famous for hosting "Close Up Close Encounter") performing at the show.

The concert is jointly organised by Sandhani National Eye Donation Society and Theatre School and sponsored by British American Tobacco Bangladesh.

Benson & Hedges introduced their series of concerts to Bangladesh with "Golden Tones - Dhaka Dhamo Dharakka" in March '97 at Sonargaon, followed by "Golden Tones Extravaganza" concert in December '97 at Sheraton Winter Garden.

From South Africa to Dubai, Benson & Hedges is known for supporting music across the world with their spectacular concerts and now they also aim to bring a different kind of music to the lives of those who require Sandhani's assistance as well as the Theatre School's endeavour to groom drama talent for the country.

The entire proceeds from ticket sales will go to Sandhani National Eye Donation Society and Theatre School funds.

At a simple ceremony on Thursday at the Head Office of British American Tobacco Bangladesh, the tickets were officially handed over to the two organisations. The ceremony was attended by officials from British American Tobacco Bangladesh, Sandhani National Eye Donation Society and Theatre School.

Two killed in road accidents

By Staff Correspondent
Two people were killed and ten others injured in separate road accidents in the city yesterday.

The dead were identified as Adam Ali Bapari, 50, and Amena Begum, wife of Kalu Mia.

Of the injured, seven were identified as Rahim, 38, Bilkis, 13, Abdul Aziz, 20, Liton, 25, Babu, 35, Abdus Salam, 40, and Hasina, 60.

Adam Ali and ten others were injured when a minibus turned over after a speeding truck hit it from behind near the Science Laboratory Crossing at about 6 am.

In a fatally injured condition, Adam was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he died soon after admission, hospital sources said.

In another incident, Amena Begum, a day labourer, was hit by a truck while she was crossing a road at city's Badda area at about 7:30 am. Amena died on the spot.

Seminar on neonatal care

A seminar on "Improving Neonatal Care in Bangladesh" was held at the auditorium of Dhaka Shishu Hospital yesterday. It was organised by Dhaka Shishu Hospital and Bangladesh Institute of Child Health, says a press release.

The seminar was chaired by Prof M S Akbar, Member of Parliament and president, governing body, BICHI. Keynote speaker was presented by Dr M A K Azad Chowdhury while the introductory speech on "Status of neonatal health in Bangladesh" was delivered by Prof Manzoor Hussain, Director of the hospital.

Prof Manzoor Hussain pointed out that neonatal death rate in Bangladesh is still alarmingly high comparing to other developing countries but because of the success of EPI in current years there is sharp decline of newborn death rate.

Dr M Mizanur Rahman, Dr Md Mahbubul Hoque and Dr Abdul Qader presented scientific papers in the seminar. Eminent paediatricians Prof M R Khan, Prof M N Islam and Prof Nazmunn Nahar were among the expert panel discussant. Chairperson Prof M S Akbar, MP stressed the immediate need of establishing neonatal service centre at district level hospital.

CCHRB report Municipal polls fair and peaceful

By Staff Correspondent
Coordination Council for Human Rights in Bangladesh (CCHRB) in a report released on Tuesday said election to the paurashabas was by and large fair and peaceful.

The report disapproved of the Opposition's demand for cancellation of results of the municipal poll, saying it would be nothing but a total disregard for the people's verdict and democratic norms.

It also urged the government to initiate a dialogue with the Opposition immediately to resolve the current political situation so that the major opposition parties could participate in the upcoming elections to the local government bodies (city corporations and upazilas).

The report praised the role of journalists and the media, saying that the reports on municipal elections published in newspapers was objective and consistent with the CCHRB monitoring reports.

The election results showed that party affiliation was not a factor in local government elections, the report said.

Generally no complaints were received regarding false voting, rigging and faulty voter lists, it added.

CCHRB teams monitored the polling in 130 municipalities out of 136.

IBne Sina medal distribution ceremony today

IBne Sina medal distribution and IBne Sina Medical Imaging Centre's inaugural ceremony will be held at its Medical Centre premises in the city's Dhammoli area today, reports UNB.

Dr R J Gurust, National Professor Dr M R Khan, Major Gen (retired) M R Chowdhury TQA and Dr M Nabi Alam Khan have been selected for the medals for their special contributions to medical science.

Admission

Little Theatre School, the first ever training school of performing art for children, has invited applications for admission to its second batch, reports UNB.

A viva voce for the intending candidates, aged between 8 and 15, will be held at Bangladesh Shishu Academy at 4 pm today.

Hasina addresses annual BDR parade Remain vigilant to foil push-in attempts

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the BDR personnel to remain vigilant to foil any push-in efforts through the borders, reports UNB.

"We don't believe that any Bangladeshi citizens are illegally staying in India and you have to remain alert so that no push-in attempt can be made through the borders," she said addressing the BDR sector commanders at Pilkhana last morning.

The push-in problem was created during the previous government and it was created through signing of a joint communiqué, she said asking the border forces to remain active in checking cross-border smuggling.

Describing trafficking of woman and child as a serious crime, she directed the officials to take special measures in this regard. One step has already been taken to tackle the problem through joint efforts of the SAARC member countries.

Identifying cross-border smuggling as the root cause of recession and financial instability and debacle, the Prime Minister asked the paramilitary force, Bangladesh Rifles, to check the illegal trade with more sincerity and dedication.

She said this while address-

ing the annual BDR parade at the parade ground of the BDR headquarters earlier on the day.

"You should be more active and dedicated in carrying out the responsibility," the Prime Minister told all rank and files of BDR personnel.

Hasina said, "Checking cross-border smuggling and maintenance of internal peace are vital for any developing country. Smuggling from Pilkhana was disseminated from March 26, in 1971 through wireless set."

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Hasina also lauded the role of BDR in helping the distressed people during the natural disasters, particularly the last year's flooding. She also praised their role in controlling traffic in the city.

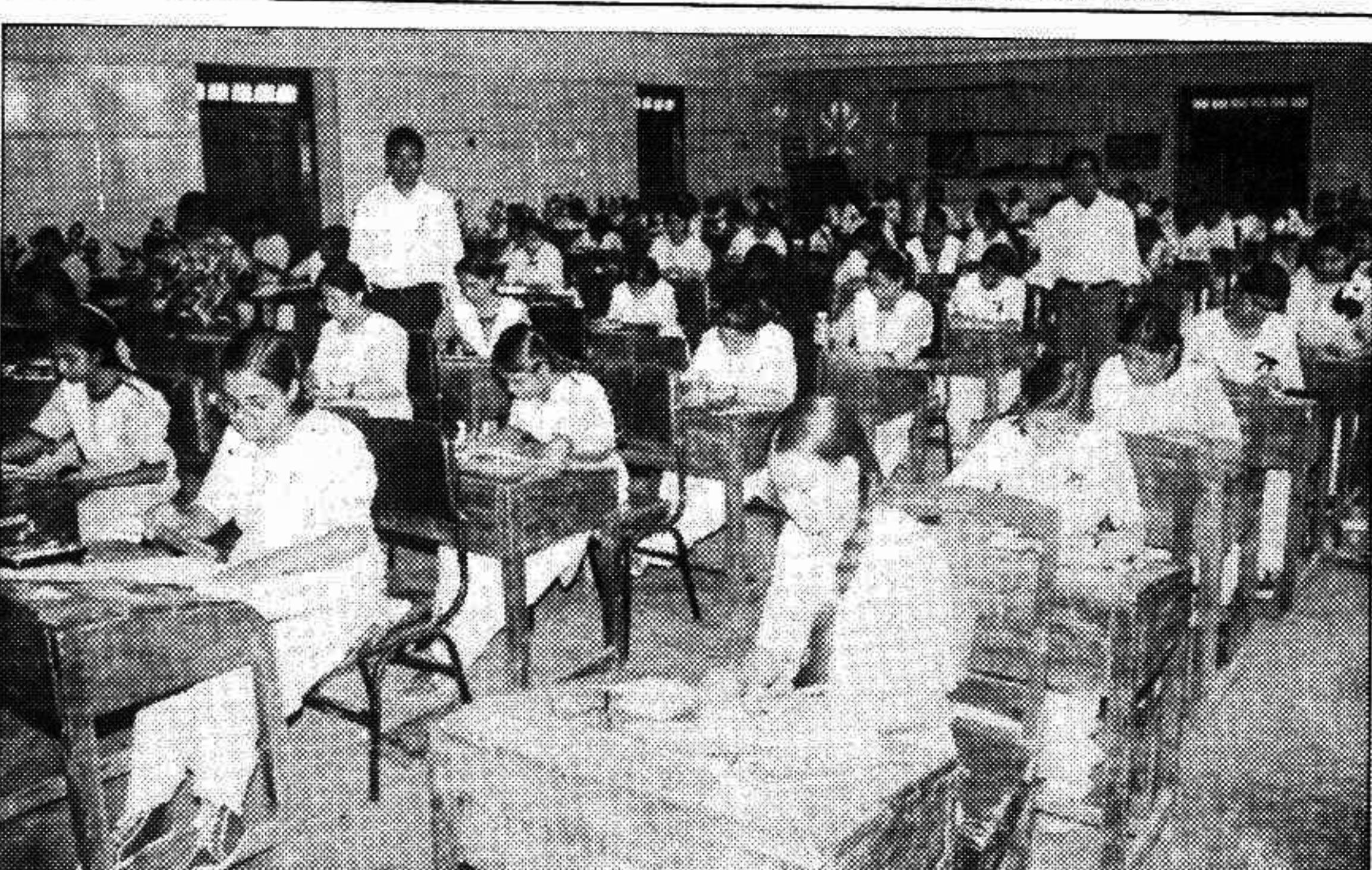
Recalling the role of their predecessors, the EPR men, who fought for the independence at the call of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, she said the declaration of independence by Bangabandhu was disseminated from Pilkhana in the early hours of March 26, in 1971 through wireless set."

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Students appear in the SSC examinations at a city centre. The exams under five education boards began yesterday.

— Star photo

Incidents of murder on rise in city

By Shaikh Nazrul Islam

Incidents of murder have marked a sharp rise in the city, but the total number of murders across the country has marginally declined during the month of February, according to police and newspaper reports.

During the period, 28 people were killed in Dhaka city, up from 24 in January, while the country saw a total of 190 murders including 30 women victims. The total number of murders in the previous month was 193.

There were 143 murders in December, 164 in November, 187 in October and 189 in September last, the reports showed.

According to a survey by Bangladesh Women Lawyer's Association (BNWLA), the incidents of violence against women took an upward turn in the first two months of the year - 43 women were killed and 54 were raped in January while 46 women were raped and 30 were murdered in February.

The Institute of Democratic Rights has reported 48 cases relating to violence against women, including eight murders for dowry in February against nine murders in the previous month. The number of dowry-related deaths was eight in December, 12 each in October and November and 15 in September.

Five women also suffered acid burns in February. The number was 21 in January, nine in December, 21 in November, 17 in October and 10 in September, the organisation said.

In February, at least 45 people allegedly committed suicide, down from 50 in January. The

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succumbed to his injuries at hospital on February 11. He received injuries when a cracker was thrown from a building at Ray Shaheb Bazar in the city on February 9 during the opposition-called hartal.

The most sensational murder was that of Kazi Aref Ahmed, who was gunned down along with his five partymen at Kaldaspur primary school of Daulatpur under Mirpur thana of Kushtia on February 16.

The most talked-about murder in the city was the killing of Sajal Chowdhury, a graduate student, who was killed at Science Laboratory intersection on February 9 during the hartal allegedly by gunmen who descended from a ruling-party anti-hartal convoy.

Rafiq, a police informer, was killed by unidentified gunmen in front of sweeper colony under Lalbagh thana on February 1. Police recovered two bodies from Hazaribagh and Ramna area on the same day.

Unidentified gang hurled crackers at the Ramna police compound on February 2. An armed kidnapper, Charlie Liton was killed while four others, including three policemen, were injured the same day.

Afsana Akther, 18, was stabbed to death just a day before her marriage reception at their house at Agakhan lane in the city's Kotwali area. A young man, Mamun was shot dead allegedly by police in the Kabi Nazrul Islam College in the old part of the city. Both the incidents took place during hartal on February 10.

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● What's on today . . .

Convention: A 4-day 43rd Convention of the Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh will begin. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the convention as chief guest. Venue: IEB Headquarters, Ramna. Time: 10 am.

Japanese film show: Akira Kurosawa's two films 'Doomed' and 'Sanjuro' will be screened as part of the Japanese Film Festival. Venue: Multipurpose Hall, Cultural Section, Embassy of Japan, Plot No: 587, Dutabash Road, Baridhara. Time: 3:30 & 6:30 pm respectively.

Tagore Song Festival: Different organisations will present Tagore songs, recitation and dance as part of the 10th National Rabindra Sangeet Utshab. Organiser: Bangladesh Rabindra Sangit Shilpi Sangstha. Venue: Bangladesh Shishu Academy auditorium. Time: 10 am and 7 pm.

Rally: International Women's Day Celebration Committee has organised a women's rally and a procession to mark the day. The rally will be held at Marik Mia Avenue at 8:30 am. A cultural programme and an exhibition will also be held.

Prize giving ceremony: The prize giving ceremony of the National Drawing Competition for Children '99 will be held. Venue: Gandaria Kisholoy Kachi-Kanchar Mela premises, 15, Debanath Sen Road. Time: 4 pm. A child procession will begin from the Kendrapara Kachi-Kanchar Mela at 9 am and will be concluded at the Shishu Academy.

Installation ceremony: The installation ceremony of the newly-elected executive council of Mirersarai Youth Forum will be held. Venue: Banquet Hall of Hotel Rajmoni Isha Khan. Time: 3:15 pm.

Film show: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka will screen three films — 'Raining Stones,' 'Quai des Orfevres' and 'Richard III.' Venue: Alliance Francaise auditorium, 26 Mirpur Road, Dharmundi. Time: 10:30 am, 4 pm and 6 pm respectively.

Drama: 'Tale Durna Dum Dum,' 'Mukta Bihanga' and 'Rup Bodoler Roopkatha' will be staged as part of Jatiya Shishu-Kishore Naatyaotsab '99. Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in cooperation with People's Theatre Association. Venue: Central Public Library auditorium. Time: 4 pm, 6 pm and 7:30 pm respectively.

Discussion: Shaheed Abdur Rob Serniabat Smriti Parishad has organised a memorial meeting on Prof Ahmed Sharif, its founder convenor and former president. Venue: Shaheed Dr Milon Chattar, TSC Road Island, DU. Time: 4 pm.

Award giving ceremony: The Shilu Abed Handicrafts Awards giving ceremony '99 will be held. Venue: BRAC Centre, Mohakhali. Time: 4 pm.

Discussion: Bangladesh Private Medical Practitioners Association has organised a discussion meeting on the occasion of the Independence Day. Chief guest: Awami League president member Amir Hossain Amu. Venue: BPMPA conference room, 215/A Baro Maghbazar. Time: 9 am.

Reunion: A reunion of Ex-Students' Association of Adamjee Cantonment College (EXSACC) will be held. Chief guest: Air Vice Marshal Jamaluddin Ahmed. Venue: College auditorium. Time:

Weather

Dry weather forecast

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged across the country during the period, Met Office said.