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Khaleda

From Page 1
shid Jahan Haq MP also addressed the rally.

Begum Zia claimed that Sajal's killer, a ruling party MP, chaired a recent meeting which was addressed by the Prime Minister as chief guest.

The former prime minister expressed grave concern at the law and order situation and said there is no security of life of people. She mentioned the bomb explosions at the recent Uddihi function at Jessore that left eight people killed and many injured, killing of JSD leader Kazi Aref Ahmed and others at a public meeting in Kushtia, attack on a JCD procession at Dhaka University and incidents of rape at Jagannagar University.

She alleged that the government had failed to ensure security of life and honour of women and called for launching an all-out resistance against this "autocratic" government.

She also decried that a leader of Chhatra League, Awami League's student front, allegedly celebrated his century of rape incidents at Jagannagar University.

A colourful procession was brought out after the rally. The procession was terminated in front of BNP central office after parading different streets.

Meanwhile, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan at function at 29 Minto Road in the evening said, Sajal's killer has destroyed the good image of Dhannondi, a posh area, because he resides there.

The function was arranged marking the joining of about 500 leaders and workers of Jatiya Party and JSD of Khokhsha thana in Kushtia to BNP, party sources said.

The function was also addressed by among others Syed Mehdai Ahmed Rumi, Asahan Haq Mollah MP, Prof Shahidul Islam MP, Abdul Khaled Chantu MP, Principal Shohrabuddin and Kazi Mosharrif Hossain.

City developers

From Page 1
bazar, within 200 metres of the SAARC fountain.

In an unprecedented move, the DoE recently asked all city service organisations including land and works ministries, Rajuk, WASA, DESA, Titas Gas and Dhaka City Corporation not to issue certificates, approve plans or provide new connections to buildings that do not have environmental clearance. The DoE also had served notices on 39 developers who did not obtain the clearance.

The Environment Conservation Act 1995 and Environment Conservation Rules 1997 require almost all developers to apply to the DoE for environmental clearance prior to construction. The DoE issues the clearance certificate after reviewing the Initial Environmental Report (IER) which has to be submitted by the developer. The developer is also required, at one stage, to submit Environment Management Plan to the DoE.

DoE officials had earlier said that in the process of issuing the certificate, they would see whether the building has a proper installation of gas, sewerage, electricity and water lines as prescribed by the department. It would also look into various aspects of environmental impact arising out of the construction.

Power tower

From Page 1
source at 9.45 pm.

PDB engineers located the collapsed tower at around 2 am yesterday. At 9.25 am yesterday, the alternate source of power was shut down and PDB started restoration works there. During the time, PDB again arranged another alternate power source and supplied 13 MW power to Narayanganj town.

PDB chairman Nuruddin Mahmud Kamal along with other PDB high officials went to see the collapsed tower and instructed officials concerned to restore normal power supply to the affected area as soon as possible.

The Design Department of PDB has taken emergency measures to identify a new location to re-erect the collapsed tower. The PDB lodged an FIR with Police in this connection.

Lankan team

From Page 1
The ACC officials will stay in the city till the final of the Asian Test final ends on March 16.

The following cricketers and officials of the Pakistan team arrived yesterday: Wasim Akram (captain), Moin Khan, Saeed Anwar, Wajahatullah Wasti, Ijaz Ahmed, Imran Nazir, Shahid Nazir, Shoaib Akther, Yousef Youhana, Arshad Khan, Shahid Afridi, Azhar Mahmood, Saqlain Mushtaq and Inzamamul Haq.

Officials: Miah Mohammad Munir (manager), Javed Miandad (coach) and Dr. Dan Kelsel (physio).

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurated the Mahila Dal rally marking the International Women's Day by releasing balloons at Siddeswari Balurmath in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

Accord on Ekushey TV

From Page 1

sent on the occasion said: "There will be no interference from the government in running the private channel but the operators will have to follow the existing censorship laws and the guidelines."

It is a transparent order and the organisers will do all that is necessary regarding transmission with their investment, he added.

The State Minister, however, said the government would monitor the ETV programmes every month to review possibilities for giving permission to more private TV channels.

The entire project will earn its revenue from advertisements which would not be for more than five minutes per hour and they will not get any government subsidy or fees from the viewers, he added.

Receiving technical support from the BBC, the private TV channel will be extended all cooperation by the National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMCO).

ETV's broadcasting facilities and transmission network is being installed by experts from the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

The Prime Minister okayed the proposal to operate private TV channel in the country and approved the guidelines of the private TV networks in November last year.

According to the agreement, the

operator will have to start broadcasting services within a year and 41.6 per cent of the transmission time would be for entertainment, 37.5 per cent for news and current affairs and 20.9 per cent for educational and informative features.

ETV will also broadcast one BTV news bulletin daily, apart from the government handouts and the guidelines."

The channel has been allowed to use BTV towers for setting up its antennas without disturbing the BTV broadcasts.

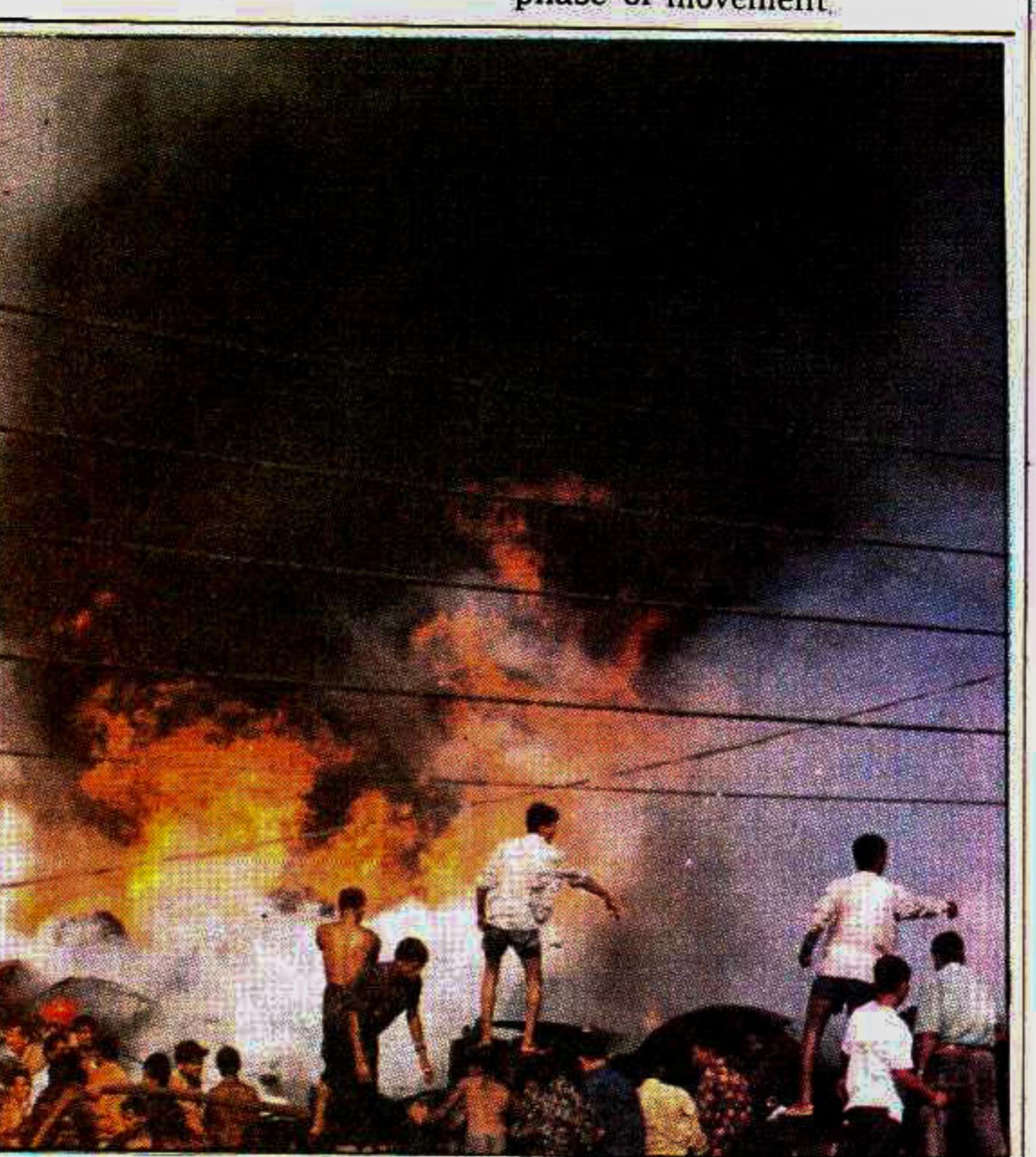
ETV will have to pay Tk 25,000 per year as license fee and deposit Tk one crore as security money which is non-refundable.

Joint secretary of Information Ministry Khondokar Faizur Rahman, and Chairman of Ekushey Television Ltd AS Mahmud signed the agreement while Information Secretary Akmal Hossain, Managing Director of ETV Simon Dring and other government officials were present.

Liaison body meets today

A meeting of the liaison committee of BNP-led opposition alliance will be held at 29 Minto Road this afternoon.

BNP vice-chairman Shamsul Islam MP told UNB that they would discuss the current political situation and programmes to start off a second phase of movement.



Firefighters, with the help of local people, trying to extinguish the flames at the warehouse of Bangladesh Rural Telecom Authority at Gulshan in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

Ombudsman by June: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina informed parliament yesterday that an Ombudsman is likely to be appointed by June this year, reports UNB.

Replies to Ali Reza Raju (Al-Jessore), the Prime Minister said the government hopes to appoint a celebrity, accepted by everybody, as early as possible.

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The World on Time

PM asks police officials

Take stern action against terrorists

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the police officials to control terrorism maintaining strict neutrality and come down hard on the troublemakers, reports UNB.

Asking the police officials to take effective steps for improvement of law and order, she said: "Terrorists have no party ... whoever they may be, take stern action no matter which party they belong to."

Addressing the senior police officials at the International Conference Centre, the Prime Minister said peace and stability are the prerequisites for economic progress.

"Ensure peace for the sake of development," she told the law enforcers.

Hasina advised them to hold talks with the political and community leaders in respective locality which she said, would help contain violence and terrorism.

You should remain extra vigilant in the vulnerable areas and take preemptive measure so that law and order may not deteriorate."

"You'll also have to create awareness among the people so that they come forward to resist the anti-social activities and help you to curb crime," the Prime Minister said, calling upon the police to earn faith and confidence of the people.

She said it is the responsibility of all citizens to abide by law. The formation of community policing unit can also be a helpful device for ensuring peace and security in public life.

Hasina asked the police to arrest the identified terrorists and take legal action against them to restore peace and stability. Expedite investigations and dispose of the cases quickly to ensure justice to the people.

She told the senior police officials to take special care about the cases of repression and torture on women and children.

She announced that if any police person dies on duty would be given Tk two lakh as compensation instead of present Tk one lakh.

Sheikh Hasina said from now on, a female police officer

PM: Politics of killing

From Page 1

mount pressure for their release," warned the premier.

Coming down heavily on recent opposition activities, Hasina said, "We've to consider the link between Jessoro bombing and provocative writings in a BNP-run newspaper."

When BNP MP Mohammad Ali referred to the Jessoro bombings and wanted to know whether the home minister was sleeping, Hasina retorted, "We're not in sleep, rather we're observing with deep concern how some people carry out killings and bombings just to create instability in the country."

She recalled that late president Ziaur Rahman freed killers from jails to float his party. "Till today, those killers are active in various parties which are associated with BNP's current movement. There is no issue for movement, they're doing it just to save killers."

Hasina also said that the BNP government postponed probing of Zia Murder Case on June 16, 1981, and "that remained postponed until my government took over". In the meantime, although another BNP government ruled the country from 1991 to 1996, it never revived the murder case the prime minister added.

She again urged the opposition to stop toying with the

lives of people and politics of killing. Otherwise, she said, foreign investors would not come in Bangladesh.

Replies to queries about leasing of gas blocks, Hasina said, "We're finalising negotiations with foreign companies after floating open tenders. Earlier BNP had silently leased out some gasfields without tenders, keeping people in dark."

About the latest position of 26 cases lodged against former president HM Ershad, the prime minister informed the House that a murder case against him was under trial in a sessions court in Dhaka while one case was withdrawn during BNP's rule and Ershad's name was dropped from the charge sheet of one case and he was relieved from another.

Besides, nine under-trial cases remained suspended following orders by the Supreme Court, two others are under trial, one awaits verdict, hearing on appeals against verdicts in two other cases are in progress while final reports against Ershad have been deposited in eight other cases, Hasina told the House.

The prime minister also replied to questions on issues including the Vested Property Act, promotion of local products in world market and post-flood relief operations.

passed youth from Jhenidah failed to escape. They were suspected to have been gathering.

Meanwhile, six of the injured were shifted to the General Hospital today from different clinics in the town. They are Munna, 20, Sandhya Biswas 22, Babul, 30, Kankar Chandra Pal, 28, Birbal, 20 and Swapan Chandra 26.

But the investigators were still unable to break the puzzle whether those were triggered by remote control or timing devices or were simply hurled from behind the dais, a police source told The Daily Star.

In a separate raid as part of a crackdown on suspected terrorists and extremists a young man, Shamim Ahmed, 20, an alleged cadre of an underground extremist Group Sramajibi Mukti Andolan and its self-styled Peoples Liberation Army, was arrested yesterday from Mirzapur village under Chowgachha thana, about 15 miles from Jessoro.

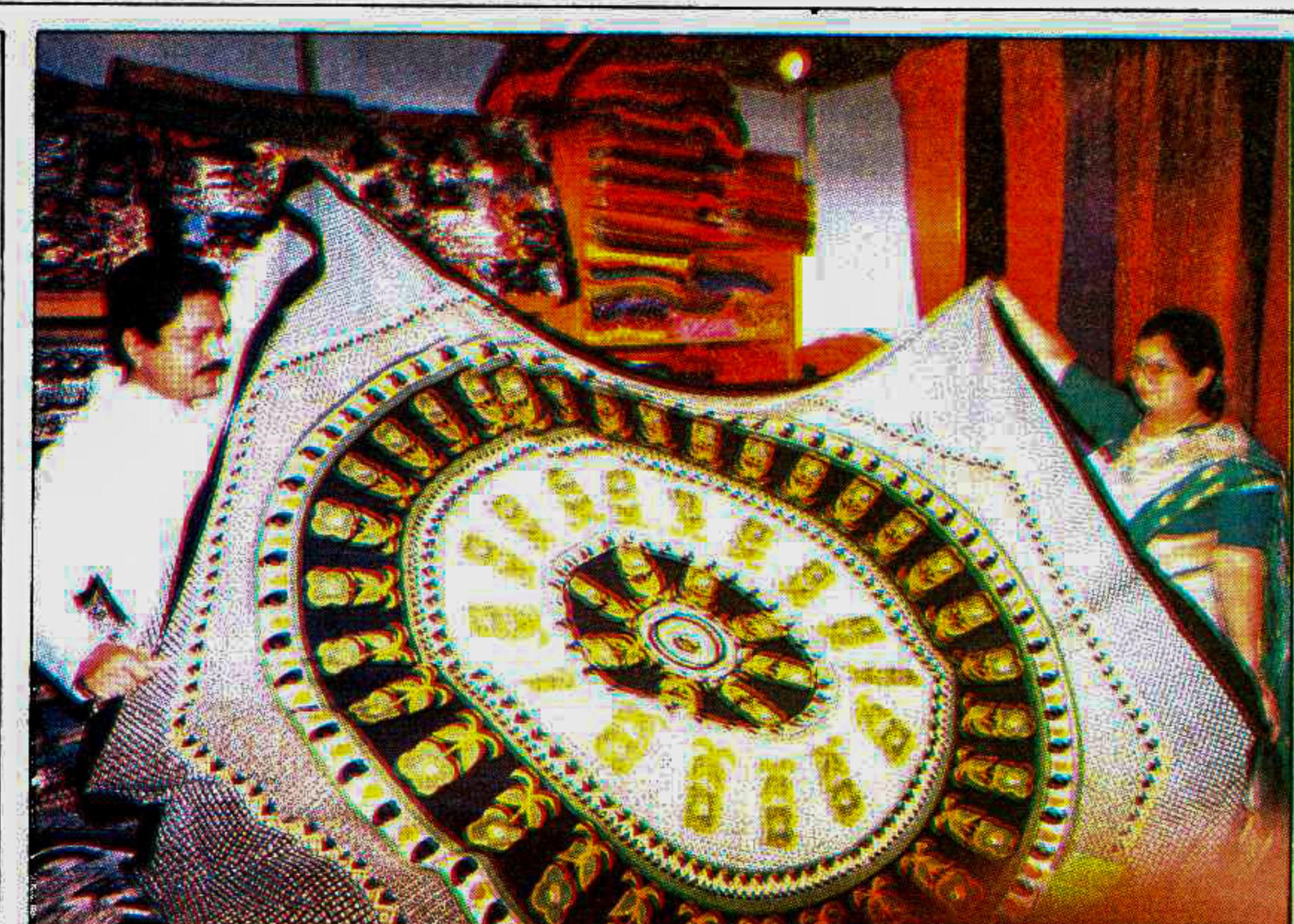
A cache of assorted weapons, including a bolt-action .303 rifle, two double barreled and two single barreled shot guns, one home-made gun and a revolver with 18 rounds of ammunition were also recovered.

Of the injured, condition of Nipun, 22, a first year student of Central Welfare Department, and also a resident of Ziaur Rahman Hall, was stated to be critical.

Eight others fled seeing police but Shamim, an HSC

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Products on display at the Indian Trade Fair at Osmani Auditorium in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

Boro procurement

From Page 1

lakh tonne more than the initial projection which was at four lakh tonne. And another three lakh tonne is needed to offset Aman crop loss estimated at 20 lakh tonne, they said.

Under private sector initiatives, 26 lakh tonnes of rice have already been imported in first eight months of the current fiscal year.

Food and agriculture minister Motia Chowdhury is cautious about the prospect of a good Boro yield due to the fact that the acreage has been up by over three lakh hectares this year.

A prolonged dry spell for almost three months coupled with problems in irrigation due to frequent power failures, diesel price hike and fear of hailstorms prior to Boro harvest kept farmers guessing whether their efforts and huge investment would finally pay off.

In February alone, farmers have used 60,000 tonnes of fertiliser more than they had done last year. "They (growers) invested a lot to recoup loss in Aman and now, as market is flooded with imported rice, I fear a price crash," said a concerned rice trader at Mohammadpur Krishipur Market.

Jote leaders will exchange views with leaders of different political parties at the Jatiya Press Club after the hunger strike.

All including poets, artists, litterateurs and cultural activists have been requested to join the token hunger strike to make it a success.

Food secretary Mahbub Kabir has got the answer. "We'll offer attractive price to farmers and go for an early procurement drive." The government has already had an all-time high stock of 13 lakh tonnes of food. It would buy as much as possible to see growers happy, the secretary said.

If so happens, market players hoped, the government's price would set the tone for ensuring Boro season and that would definitely have a positive impact in the flood-ravaged rural economy.

Motia Chowdhury would not subscribe to the general fear

Tofail

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"Zero tariff market access is the only solution to narrow the gap and expand the intra-SAARC trade," he said, requesting the Indian government to implement decisions on tariff readjustments taken at the Colombo meeting of SAARC leaders.

"We reduced our tariff unilaterally. Now we expect some concessions in reciprocal."

Tofail invited Indian investors to come to Bangladesh to explore the opportunities of setting up gas-based industries, including backward linkages to feed the Bangladesh's garment sector.