

Int'l seminar on planning methods begins

An 11-day-long international seminar on Planning Methods for Integrated Local Community Development began at the CIRADP auditorium in the city yesterday, reports APB.

The seminar is being jointly organised by National Productivity Organisation (NPO), Asian Productivity Organisation (APO) and Centre for Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP).

The objectives of the seminar, among others, are to encourage the practice of the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Project Cycle Management approach for rural poverty alleviation.

Ejazul Haq stressed that the information system, along with helping the globalisation process, has placed tremendous demands on the developing countries to quickly adopt sophisticated and expensive technology to be able to be a part of the process.

He also underscored that increasing efficiency in resource utilisation is essential, particularly in public projects for social and human resources development.

As these goals are closely linked to poverty alleviation, government intervention will continue to play an important role in mitigating the problems of rural economies.

80th birth anniversary of Syed Ali Ahsan observed

By Staff Correspondent

Glowing tributes were paid to national professor Syed Ali Ahsan at a function held in the city on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

Organised by the PEN Bangladesh Centre, the function was addressed by renowned writer Shahed Ali, Prof. Enajuddin Ahmed, Prof. Neaz Zaman, Dr. Muniruzzaman, Poet Al-Mahmud, Poet Al-Mojahidi, Dr. Abul Kalam Manzur Murshed, Poet Jahannara Arjo, and former PIO Abdur Rahim.

The speakers lauded the role of Syed Ali Ahsan in the field of Bengali literature and culture. Poet Abdul Hai Sikdar recited a poem of Syed Ali Ahsan.

Speaking on the occasion Syed Ali Ahsan said that he would continue to contribute more to the treasure of Bengali literature and culture.

People will give befitting reply to Hanif in mayoral polls: Khoka

City BNP convenor Sadek Hossain Khoka yesterday said Dhaka city dwellers will give a befitting reply to Mayor Mohammad Hanif through ballots in the next mayoral election, reports UNB.

"Mayor Hanif, instead of performing his responsibility in resolving the sufferings of the city dwellers, is defending the government's failure," he said while talking to a group of BNP workers of Mirpur, who met him at his residence.

Khoka, who was named BNP mayor candidate for the next election, said mayor and some ministers were not seen on the street of the capital during Sunday's shutdown despite their threat to resist the hartal.

BNP city convenor also criticised Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for keeping busy with her newly born granddaughter when people across the country have been suffering a lot due to frequent power failure and acute water shortage.

Importance of intellectual property rights highlighted

Scientists at a function yesterday observed that Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) would play a crucial role in commercialisation of research and development (R and D) results in the next century, reports BSS.

They were speaking at a two-day international workshop on "Commercialisation of R and D and technology development" in the seminar room of ECSIR.

Scientists from Zambia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and host Bangladesh are participating in the workshop.

The Non-aligned countries (NAM) Science and Technology Centre, Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT), Science Ministry of Bangladesh and National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) of India jointly organised the workshop.

Journalist dead

Akhtaruzzaman Bhuiyan, a Senior Editorial Assistant of the Daily Ittefaq, died of heart attack Sunday night at his Kadamtala residence here. He was 65, reports BSS.

The deceased left behind his wife, one son, two daughters and a number of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

Bhuiyan was associated with the Ittefaq since its inception. He was buried at his family graveyard yesterday morning at Narsingdi after the namaz-e-janaza held at three different places.

Among others, Executive Director of the Ittefaq Barrister Moinul Husein, General Manager Khondoker Shahadat Hussain, News Editor Golam Sarwar and BNP lawmaker Dr Moyeen Khan attended the janaza at the Ittefaq office.

Empowerment of rural landless, urban poor emphasised

State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Satish Chandra Roy yesterday underscored the need for empowerment of rural landless and urban poor women by providing them with access to and use of technology through functional and non-formal education, reports BSS.

He was addressing a workshop on "Human Resource Development Initiative: Empowerment of Rural Landless and Urban Poor Women" organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat and Primary and Mass Education Division of the Ministry of Education at a hotel here.

The State Minister emphasised the human resource development in the context of national development of each of the nine participating countries for empowering the womenfolk and said Bangladesh is committed to empowering the women.

He said, the major objectives of the Bangladesh government to be achieved by the year 2002 are human resource development, poverty alleviation and women's participation in development.

Satish Roy said, by expand-

ing the non-formal education programme countrywide, the government can turn the rural landless and urban poor women into a truly developed human resource.

He said, in Bangladesh, human resource development concept is getting due importance at micro and macro level plans and programmes for national development like other countries.

Human resource development, he said, focuses on the acquisition of appropriate knowledge, skills and techniques in order to optimize the productivity of human resources in a given situation and environment.

The State Minister said the country needs a good and balanced human resource development plan both at national and sectoral levels.

He said the government is committed to freeing the country from the curse of illiteracy by the year 2006 and to reach the target, programmes have already been undertaken, including non-formal education for the out-of-school children, adolescents and adults and for the hard-to-reach and post-literacy

education for the neo-literates.

The programmes, he said, are being implemented through three models, including centre-based NGO programmes, area-based Total Literacy Movement by district administration involving the people from all walks of life and centres run by philanthropic or voluntary organisations.

The State Minister assured that after the successful completion of the projects undertaken, a total of 34 million illiterate people will be made literate raising the adult literacy rate to 84 per cent by the end of year 2002 in the country.

Addressing the session, Secretary of Primary and Mass Education Division Dr Saadat Hussain said education plays a very vital role in human resource development and women can raise skills through education which will make them capable of doing their jobs efficiently.

Ms Selina Mohsin of the Commonwealth Secretariat in her presentation said with practical knowledge women can reduce gender segmentation of the labour market and equalise access to wage and self-employment opportunities.



National professor Syed Ali Ahsan (with walking stick) at the reception organised by the Bangladesh PEN Centre on the occasion of his 80th birthday in Dhaka recently. — PEN photo

Nirmul body urges unity against communal forces

By DU Correspondent

The two-day fifth National Council of Ghatak Dal Nirmul Committee began in the city yesterday with a pledge to eliminate religious fanaticism from the country.

Meherunnesa Mira and Halima Khatun, two rural women who actively participated in the Liberation War, were accorded a reception at the inaugural session.

National Professor Kabir Chowdhury and Poet Shamsur Rahman jointly inaugurated the conference at the TSC of Dhaka University while Dr Anwar Syed Haq delivered the welcome speech.

Calling upon all pro-liberation forces to be united against the anti-liberation communal forces, they urged the government to ban the fascist and communal politics in the country.

They also demanded trial of all war criminals including Golam Azam under special tribunal.

Expressing concern over "deep-rooted conspiracy being hatched by the anti-liberation forces" of the country and its march towards progress will be at stake if we do not build a united resistance against them immediately.

Among others, KM Sobhan, Barrister Shawkat Ali Khan, Kalim Sharafi, Borhan Uddin Khan Jahangir, Advocate Gaztill Haq, Kamal Lohani, Maulana Abdul Awal, Prof. Abdul Mannan Chowdhury and Shamsul Arefeen addressed the programme.

Veteran freedom fighters of the country were also honoured in the session.

Earlier, the committee brought out a peace procession against communalism and fanaticism that paraded through city streets, Justice KM Sobhan, Prof. Abdul Mannan, Poet

Meherpur-1 by polls CEC seeks cooperation

Chief Election Commissioner Abu Hena yesterday sought cooperation from all irrespective of party affiliations for creating a congenial atmosphere to hold the coming by-election in Meherpur-1 constituency of the Jatiya Sangsad, an official press release said, reports BSS.

"There is no alternative to free, fair and impartial elections to build a healthy and dynamic society, consolidating the country's democratic structure," he said while discussing the overall preparations for the Meherpur-by-election with leaders of Bangladesh Awami League at his office here.

Awami League Joint Secretary Mozaffar Hussain Paltu and Office Secretary Advocate Abdul Mannan Khan took part in the discussion, also attended by Election Commissioners Abdur Rahman and Mostaque Ahmed Chowdhury.

Secretary of the election commission secretariat Abdullah Harun Pasha and Additional Secretary Aziz Ahmed Chowdhury were also present.

The chief election commissioner said the election commission has undertaken all possible measures to ensure security in the polling centres so that the voters could exercise their franchise freely.

"It is the duty and responsibility of all political parties to follow the election rules and cooperate with the members of law enforcing agencies to maintain peaceful atmosphere during the elections," he said.

Pabna transport strike runs into 5th day

PABNA, Apr 19: The district passed the fourth consecutive day today without any motorised vehicle following the transport strike called by bus owners and workers, reports UNB.

Movement of all kinds of motorised vehicles remained suspended in the district since Friday as North Bengal Bus Owners' and Workers' Representative Council enforced the strike protesting what they said playing of unregistered vehicles and toll collection by the members of law enforcing agency.

Meanwhile, District Administration called a meeting with the council tomorrow.

Qulqhwani of Motia Begum will be held today after Magrib prayers at 16/1/B Talabagh in Sobhanbagh, reports BSS.

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Motia Begum, mother of Bangladesh ambassador to China AKM Farooq, passed away on Saturday.

Strike from today JU employees demand separate admission rules

By JU Correspondent

Officers and employees of Jahangirnagar University will observe a 72-hour strike from today demanding separate and more liberal rules for their wards willing to get admitted into the university. The strike coincides with the distribution of admission forms which begins today.

The strike came after a recent decision of JU authorities to raise pass marks in the admission tests for the wards of officers and employees to 35 from 33. The new provision for pass marks require seven out of the 20-mark compulsory section and 28 out of the rest 80-mark optional section. Earlier, the pass marks were six and 27 for the two sections respectively.

Officers and employees are also protesting allocation of three seats in each of the 24 departments for the wards which will be decided according to merit. Earlier, there was no such fixed allocated seats in the departments and any number of wards of teachers, officers and employees could be enrolled by fulfilling a much liberal conditions for the admission tests.

Meanwhile, student leaders of all organisations have expressed concern and resentment at such demands. All the five student bodies have demanded abolishing the special facilities for the wards of teachers, officers and employees of the university.

"That a general student cannot get admission after securing over 65 marks in the admission tests while wards of teachers, officers and employees are being enrolled by securing only 35 marks is a mockery of examination", a student leader said while talking to The Daily Star.

But officers and employees argue that they should be given these facilities, because "they serve the university".

Workshop on digital imaging and colour management

DRIK organised a training workshop on "Digital Imaging and Colour Management" at its gallery yesterday, says a press release.

Consultant to India's Mid-Day Publications and digital imaging specialist Patrick Anderson made a presentation explaining the technical aspects of colour management.

The workshop covered topics ranging from basic colour perception to software and hardware applications relating to colour reproduction.

Anderson, who is also a photographer, is now in Bangladesh as a visiting Lecturer of Pathshala, The South Asian Institute of Photography.

This day-long workshop was designed specifically for professionals. Twenty-two participants from different newspaper advertising firms, NGOs, and printing presses participated in the workshop.

Indian scholar for participation of minorities in political process

Visiting Indian scholar on International Studies Prof. Zafar Imam yesterday advocated for participation of the minority in the mainstream political process to achieve their rights and privileges, reports BSS.

"By involving in the mainstream political and social process, the minority groups can also manoeuvre major policies and programmes in different levels," he said.

Dr Imam, a professor and former dean of the School of International Studies at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), India, was delivering a special discourse titled "Islam in contemporary India" on the Dhaka University campus.

Centre for Advanced Research in the Humanities organised the discourse, which was presided over by Prof. Parveen Hasan of the department of Islamic History and Culture, Dhaka University, Director of the Centre Prof. Narayan Chandra Biswas conducted the programme held at the Lecture Theatre of the university.

Referring to the glory and tradition of Islam in India, Prof. Imam said Muslims' role in the then united India was far better than their contributions after the partition of the country.

JP rally in London

By Staff Correspondent

United Kingdom chapter of the Jatiya Party (JP) held a rally and cultural programme at the Altat Ali Park Shaheed Minar premises in London recently on the occasion of the 28th anniversary of independence of Bangladesh, says a JP (UK) press release.

Presided over by JP (UK) president Farid Hasan, the rally was attended by a huge number of Bangladeshis in London.

Among others, Mostafa Mia, Sazadur Rahman, Jubayer Ahmed Hamza, Shahidur Rahman, Ramzan Ali, Suhel Ahmed, Shahjahan Mia, Fazul Haq and Maznu Mia addressed the rally, the press release said.

The cultural function which followed the rally was attended among others by vocalist Moly Chowdhury, the release said.

Make gherao programme a success: BNP

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has instructed the leaders and activists of the party and its front organisations to take appropriate steps to make Thursday's countrywide electricity office gherao programme a success.

The BNP-led opposition alliance announced the programme on Sunday to protest the government's 'failure' to resolve power crisis and press the demand for adequate supply of electricity to meet the requirement of the people.

In a statement yesterday, Mannan Bhuiyan asked the leaders and workers of all city, district and thana units of BNP and its fronts to properly implement the programme.

He blamed the ruling Awami League for the current power crisis across the country that has paralysed normal life and disrupted industrial production. The power crisis is an outcome of this government's incompetence, mismanagement, wrong policy, corrupt practices and politicisation, he said.

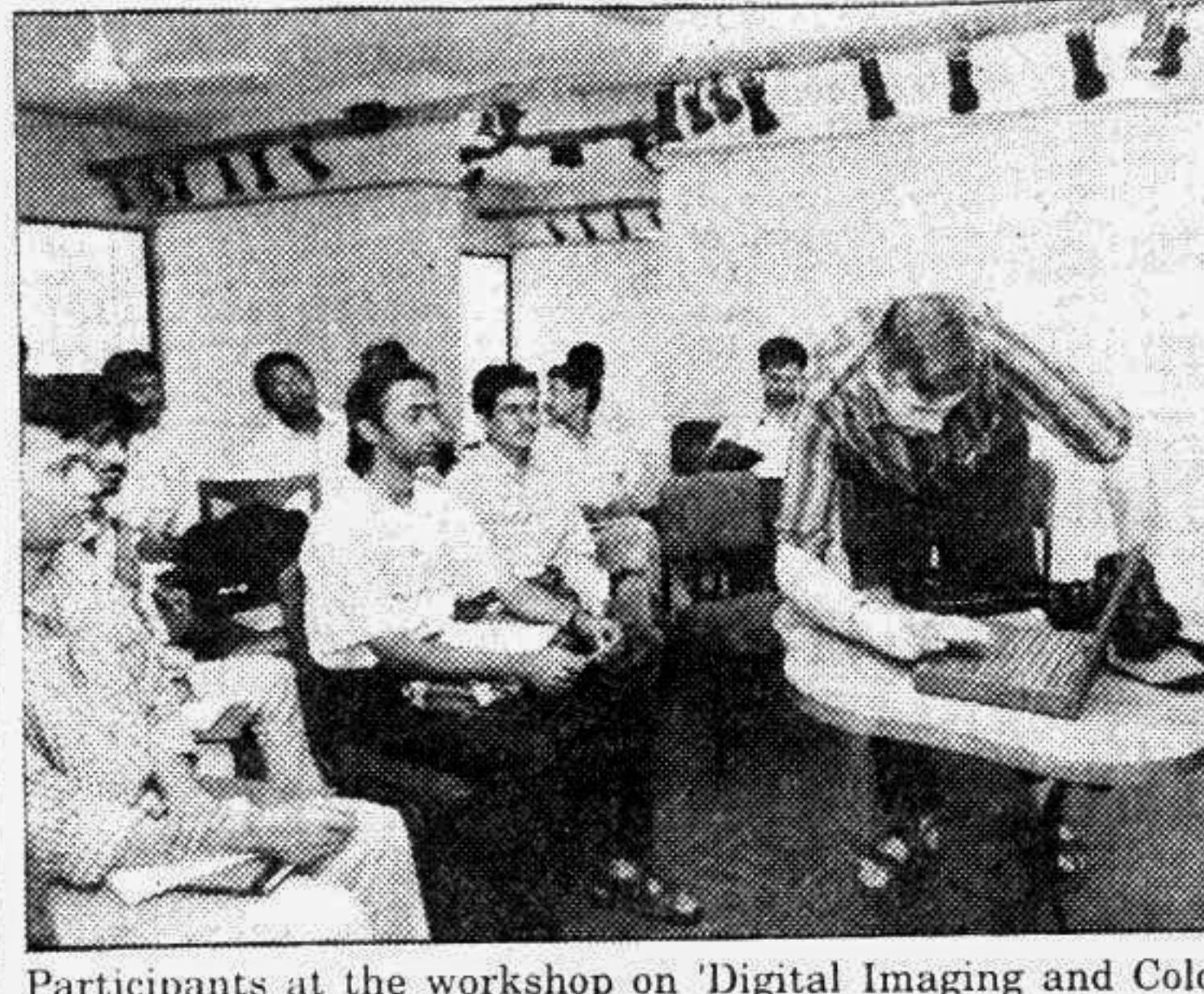
"They (govt) have destroyed the power sector in last three years to prepare the ground for importing electricity from India,"

Rupsha AL worker killed in blast

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Apr 19: A Rupsha thana Awami League activist was killed in an explosion while he was allegedly making bombs at Rahimnagar Colony here last night, police said.

Police recovered the body of Shadhan Das, 30, from a thatched house at Rahimnagar Colony. Shadhan was associated with the outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party. He was arrested in a dacoity case and released on bail recently, police said.



Participants at the workshop on 'Digital Imaging and Colour Management' held at Drik Gallery in the city yesterday.

PM lauds role of Indian press during Liberation War

A goodwill delegation from Calcutta Press Club (CPC), led by its president Sunil Das, called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official Ganobhaban residence yesterday, reports BSS.

The CPC team arrived here on a four-day visit.

The Prime Minister, in response to different queries of the visiting journalists, said that her government took a number of steps in the social sector like poverty alleviation, employment generation and mass education to improve the standard of the living of the people.

The delegation members lauded the contributions of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in innovating the concept of caretaker government for the successful functioning of democracy.

Reciprocating the feelings expressed by the delegation, Hasina said peace and stability are prerequisites for progress of the region.

The Prime Minister recalled with gratitude the contribution of the Indian press for creating opinion in favour of Bangladesh during the Liberation War in 1971.

Hasina also expressed unanimity with the members of the delegation that there should be more exchange of press delegation between the two countries.

General secretary of Jatiya Press Club (JPC) Swapan Kumar Shaha and executive committee member Shaiful Karim Sabu accompanied the visiting journalists.

Mayor tells PIB press confce Anti-terrorism body to be formed at every thana

Anti-terrorism committees will soon be formed at every thana in the capital, says the officer-in-charge of the concerned police station as his chief to maintain peace, reports UNB.

Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Mohammad Hanif disclosed this yesterday. He said for legal problems the committees would be headed by respective OCs while DCC ward commissioners would act as advisers on the 15 to 20-member bodies.

The other members of the committees will be drawn from distinguished people of the respective localities, he said.

Hanif presented the law-and-order plans for the city while addressing a training press conference organised by the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) in cooperation with Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) for reporters. The reporting workshop on "press conference and interview" was held in PIB conference room.

The first elected Mayor of Dhaka admitted some of his failures, but said he had successfully been running the DCC for last five years.

Overburdened population is the root cause, he said of all the problems facing the city-dwellers. He said when he joined the DCC, the population of the capital was 50 lakh and within five years that his almost doubled.

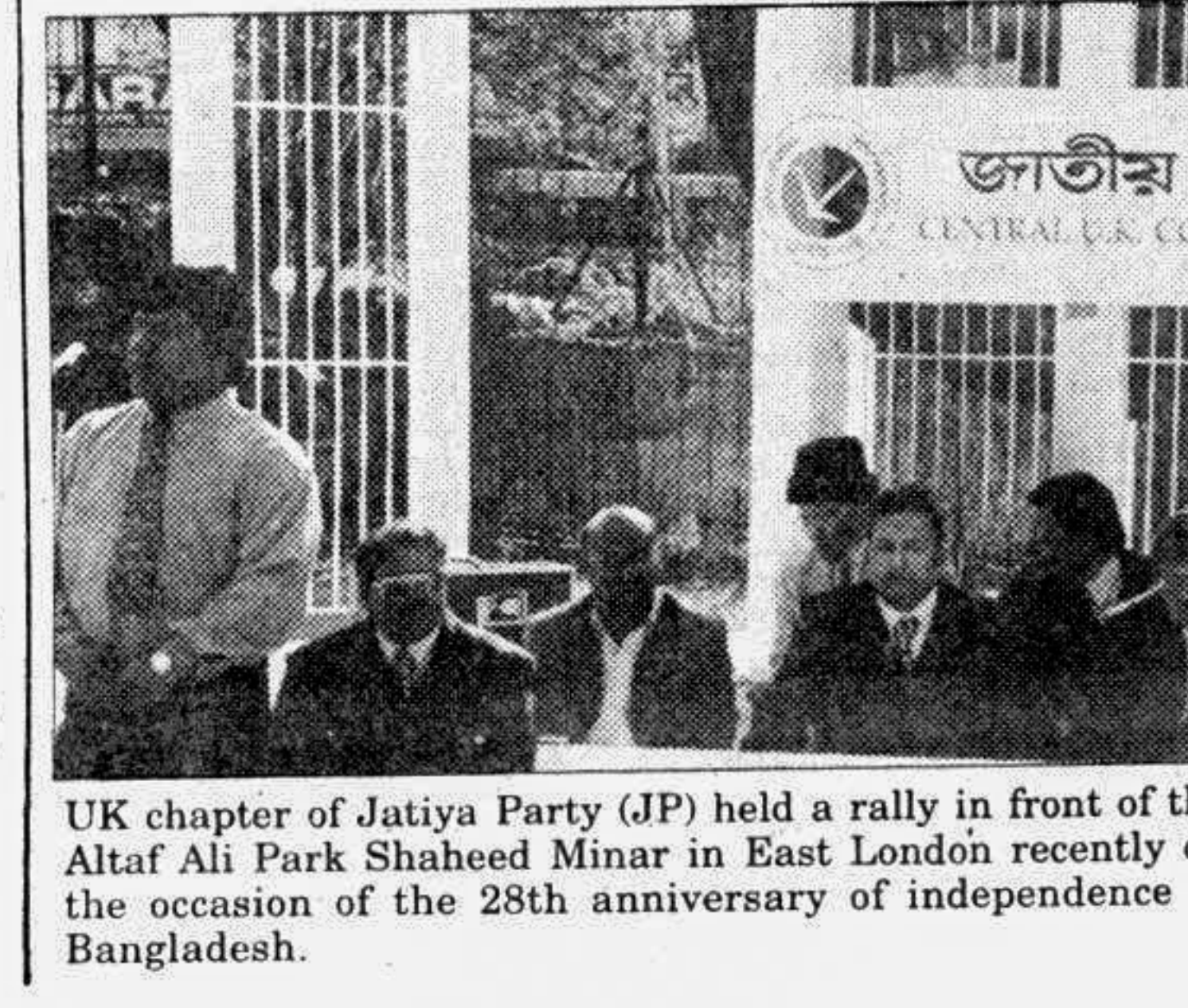
Floating masses contributed greatly to this population explosion. He said there are 2007 slums in the city area, of which 679 are on public lands.

The government has already planned to give slum dwellers a financial assistance if they agree to go back to their village homes. Besides, government is also looking for appropriate vacant lands outside the city for rehabilitation with some job opportunities by setting up small and cottage industries, he said.

The mayor said he had decided not to allow hawkers on the roads and decision had been taken to pull out three to three and a half lakh illegal rickshaws from the city thoroughfares. The government has a plan to provide the rickshaw-pullers alternative work in buses and other public transport.

Stretching his five-year tenure in the office of mayor, the mayor said that for a period of time he got less cooperation from the government, which he said overruled his plans and programmes.

On mosquito menace, the mayor said it is not possible to present a mosquito-free city, but it can be controlled.



UK chapter of Jatiya Party (JP) held a rally in front of the Altat Ali Park Shaheed Minar in East London recently on the occasion of the 28th anniversary of independence of Bangladesh.

Dhaka reiterates support for Kosovo refugees

Bangladesh wants Kosovo refugees to be returned to their homes as quickly as possible with due honour and that the problems that developed there be resolved soon, reports BSS.

Reiterating Bangladesh's total support to the cause of the Kosovans with Albanian origin, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury said, "we want immediate and unconditional halt of the atrocities perpetrated on them by the Serbs."

Chowdhury was speaking as the chief guest at a discussion meeting on the "Refugee crisis in Kosovo" in the city yesterday. The discussion meeting was organised by Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILLA) in cooperation with UNHCR, Dhaka.

Chaired by Justice KM Sobhan, the discussion meeting had Francis Founat, Director for Asia, UNHCR Geneva as the guest speaker who made a presentation on the refugee situation in Kosovo. Academics, government officials and diplomats attended the meeting held at BILLA office. It was conducted by its director Wallur Rahman.

The State Minister, who expressed the nation's solidarity with the people of Kosovo, said Bangladesh will not "flinch to risk our soldiers in any place in Yugoslavia" for maintaining peace in this connection. Chowdhury mentioned that Bangladesh which stands second in UN Peace Keeping Force had dispatched troops to Bosnia to maintain peace.

While giving a vivid account of atrocities perpetrated by the Serbs resulting in the flight of thousands from their homes in Kosovo, Founat said the outflow of people represents the largest exodus since the war in Bosnia Herzegovina. He estimated that till now 6,50,000 Kosovans with Albanian origin who have been deported from their homes have taken refuge in neighbouring Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania.

15 injured in Narsingdi

NARSINGDI, Apr 19: At least 15 people were injured as police charged batons and lobbed gas shells to disperse two separate militant gatherings at Nikuthi in Raipura thana here today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said people of adjacent villages took position at Sarbad of Belabo thana after the opponent group of Raipura thana gathered at Nikuthi at 9 am with a motive to attack each other in a sequel to Sunday's clashes.

On information, police rushed to the spot and dispersed the crowd gathered on both sides of the Dhaka-Sylhet highway at 11 am by resorting to baton charge and lobbing tear gas canisters.

The injured were taken treatment in different private clinics.

A series of clashes took place among the villagers of two neighbouring thanas on Sunday over holding of gambling at a Baishakhi melo at Narayanpur Bazar in Belabo thana.

Sayed condemns attack on journalists

State Minister for Information Prof. Abu Sayeed yesterday condemned the harassment of newsmen and burning of newspaper vehicles by opposition activists during hartal hours, reports BSS.

"Though they declare that newsmen and their vehicles are out of the purview of hartal, the BNP hooligans snatch away cameras, burn vehicles and attacked newspaper offices during hartal hours," Prof. Sayeed said in a statement.

Pro-liberation newspapers are the target of the terrorists, he observed.

Prof. Sayeed also condemned the planned attack on newspaper hawkers and burning of thousands of copies of Ittefaq, Janakantha, Sangbad, Bhorer Kagoj, Aker Kagoj, Bangla Bazar Patrika, Prothom Alo, Manabzamin and other newspapers by BNP student wing Chhatra Dal activists during hartal hours on Sunday in Brahmanbaria.

Injured SSC examinee dies in hospital

Anu Chowdhury, 16, son of Dr Qasem Chowdhury, Executive Director of Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK), succumbed to head injuries at Bangabandhu Medical University Hospital in city Saturday last, reports BSS.

Anu, popularly known as Babu, received severe head injuries on Pahela Baishakh (April 14) near Nirbil area at Savar when a speeding truck knocked his rickshaw from the rear.

He was admitted to Gonoshasthaya Hospital and later shifted to intensive care unit (ICU) of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (former IPGMR) where he struggled long 71 hours for survival.

Anu (Babu), a great fan of cricket, was a brilliant student of Savar Cantonment Public School and College. He appeared in the SSC examination this year.

His first Namaz-e-Janaza was held at the GK-Savar Antala premises and second one at Siddeswari Jama-Mosque before he was buried at the Banani graveyard.

The Qulqhwani of Anu Chowdhury will be held today after Asr prayers at Siddeswari Jama-e-Mosque, family sources said.

Traders at the Kaptan Bazar market brought out a procession in the city yesterday protesting the alleged conspiracy to evict them from the market. —Star photo