



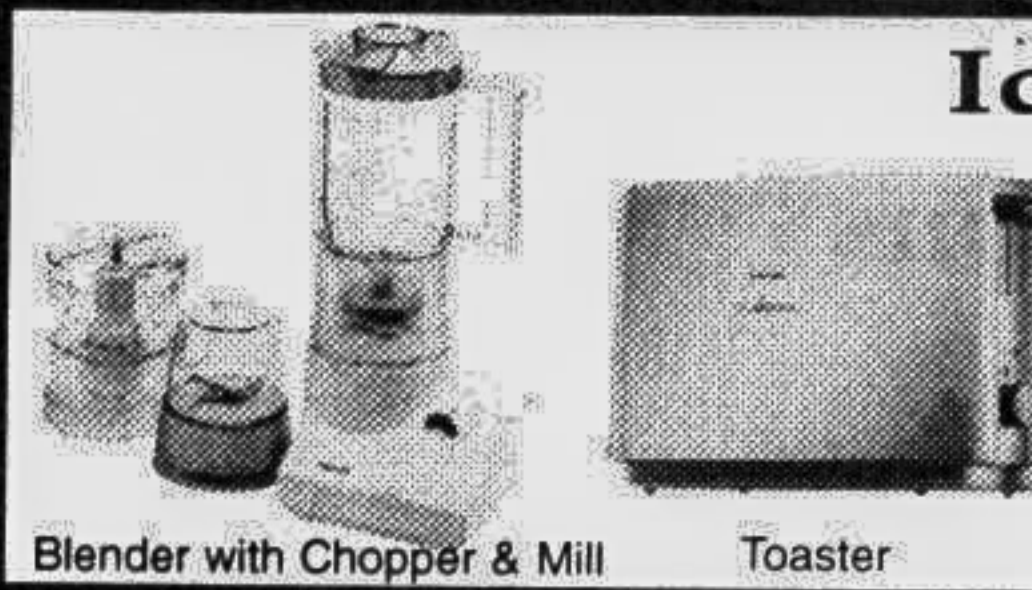
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SC judge puts HC order on langol on hold

A judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday stayed the High Court order that directed the Election Commission to allot the election symbol 'Langol' (plough) to Motassim Billa, candidate for Meherpur by-election, reports UNB.

The stay order came on a petition by Maidul Islam that was heard by Justice Bimalendu Bikash Roy Chowdhury at his residence at 1 pm. The stay was granted till May 2 when the petition will be taken up for full dress hearing.

Mizan-Manju group of Jatiya Party has put up Motassim Billa for the May 4 Meherpur by-election.

Petitioner Maidul Islam of Jatiya Party (Ershad) had filed nomination papers but later withdrew from the race following the party decision to boycott the polls.

The Returning Officer for the by-election had allotted the symbol 'Projapati' (butterfly) to Billa against which he filed a writ petition to the High Court.



Reaping the toils

Farmers hard at work in harvesting the bumper boro crop.

Star Photo: AKM. Mohsin

BUET teachers hit back

Faculty leaders point fingers at coterie of students

By DU Correspondent

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology Teachers' Association (BUETTA) yesterday accused a section of students for the violent incidents on the campus that led to closing of the university for an indefinite period.

A section of students instigated some other students to launch the violent attacks on the university campus on Sunday and Monday only to fulfil their petty personal interest," the faculty leaders claimed.

BUET was closed sine die on Tuesday noon following a series of violent incidents and massive vandalism triggered by the expulsion of a student on grounds of impersonation in an examination.

A group of students damaged different buildings of BUET, including academic buildings and teacher and student dormitories. The incidents were a con-

tinuation of students' agitation aimed to cancel the temporary expulsion of a second year student of Civil Engineering department, Salimullah Dipu. Dipu was caught red handed while giving proxy in a class test for his female classmate.

BUETTA leaders were speaking at a press conference at the National Press Club yesterday morning. BUETTA organised the press conference to discuss the recent violent incidents on the BUET campus.

BUETTA leaders termed the attacks pre-planned. They said the students unleashed such "heinous" incidents with a view to reschedule their examinations.

They claimed that the expelled student was satisfied with the penalty for his misdeed in examinations but a section of students took it as the opportunity to enact vandalism on the campus.

"Only 10 per cent students of

the university, who failed to prepare themselves for the forthcoming term final examinations, are responsible for the incidents." The examination is scheduled to begin from the first week of May.

Admitting that the incidents like giving proxy in examinations have taken place at the university in the past, the faculty leaders said authorities had not previously taken action against the responsible for the sake of congenial atmosphere at the university. "But we can not allow such incidents any more," they concluded.

When asked, they said that the female student for whom the expelled student was taking the exam, was given a warning as she was aware about the illegal activity.

BUETTA demanded steps to boost up security measures for teachers and students and stern action against the students involved in the incidents.

The BUETTA leaders particularly mentioned the four students arrested by police and caught by teachers while attacking teachers' residences on Monday.

BUETTA also demanded a judicial probe into the "mysterious and inactive" role of police during the vandalism and untoward incidents.

BUETTA also met with the Home Minister Mohammad Nasim and urged him to take punitive measure so that such incidents would not occur in future.

They, however, urged all those concerned to co-operate in bringing back peace and restoring a congenial academic atmosphere in the university.

BUETTA president Dr M Hossain Ali, general secretary Dr Habib Mohammad Ahsan, Prof Almgir Mujibul Haque, Dr Habibur Rahman and Dr Rezwan Khan were present at the press conference...

Young doctors speak out

Cry for better education, career opportunity

By Staff Correspondent

Young doctors at a conference yesterday felt urgent need for a concrete policy on medical education and clear guidelines for career opportunity for them.

They demanded initiatives from the policy makers to formulate guideline for graduates and urged upon them to create opportunities for a better future.

The conference on Career Opportunity and Challenges in the Medical Profession, "Young Doctors Speak Out", was organised by Young Entrepreneur and Professional Forum in collaboration with The British Council and The Daily Star and held at the British Council auditorium.

The participants said that career opportunity is really limited and there is little sharing of technology in the medical sector.

They pointed out that the country lacks a specific plan on developing career for the young doctors. There is no platform for the young doctors to relay their problems to the government or the civil society, for the latter to listen and resolve any predicaments that may arise.

Dr Milton of Dhaka Community Hospital, said, "We don't need specialists, we need community based training to enable ourselves to serve at the grassroots level. I have virtually learnt nothing during my seven years graduation course at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. But two years training at Vellore of India has changed my ideas and values and that's what matters most."

Another speaker, Dr Shakil, said, "Prior to postings at government, institutions' new recruits are not given orientation training on how to deal with the community, which puts many of us in ridiculous situations."

Other speakers spoke of discrepancy in medical service, under utilisation of skilled manpower and inappropriate placement of doctors.

Many of the young doctors demanded that the draft National Health Policy, which determines fates of new doctors,

should be made available for public discussion and review.

The Director General of Health Services, Prof A K M Nurul Anwar one of the guest speakers said, "We haven't been able to create academicians devoted to teaching and research and this has badly hampered output of quality doctors in the country. The medical education particularly the internship is unstructured and we haven't been able to develop a system of evaluating the course."

He said, "There is hardly any scope for young doctors for training, which is quite sad, but we are doing our best to change the picture by introducing mod-

ern technology in the academic system and through reviving the curriculum."

Dr Nazmun Nahar, head of Pediatrics of Dhaka Medical College, said, "Method of teaching needs to be improved and at the same time the time span of MBBS courses should be reduced to four and a half years for the sake of career opportunity of the graduates."

Director of Centre for Medical Education, Prof Mazherul Haq, said, "A drastic change in medical education curriculum has to come first. The Medical education should be evidence based besides being need based. The health directorate should

also be given more authority on policy decision."

Other guest speakers who spoke on the occasion were Bangladesh Medical Association President Prof Rashid-E-Mahbub, Professor Naila Zaman Khan of Bangladesh Institute of Child Health, Prof Mirza M Islam, President of Bangladesh Private Medical Practitioners Association, Brigadier (retd) K Shajahan Hafiz, National Programme Officer, WHO.

Quazi Mahmud, of North South University moderated the conference.

Approximately eighty young doctors participated in the conference.



Young doctors' conference in progress.

—Star photo

Nari Samaj decries water, power crises

By Staff Correspondent

Sammilita Nari Samaj, a platform of various women's organisations, held street rallies at important points in the city yesterday protesting acute power and water crises.

It also demanded improvement of law and order in the country and immediate solution to those problems.

Leaders and activists of the Nari Samaj boarding a truck started from Asad Gate area. They stopped at various points and addressed people protesting prolonged power and water cri-

sis in the capital and throughout the country.

The street rallies were held near Asad Gate, Farm Gate, New Market, Press Club and Noor Hossain Square.

The speakers blamed the government for its 'failure' to provide basic amenities to the citizens.

They also held the government responsible for deteriorating law and order. The personnel entrusted with the task of maintaining law and order are now 'involved in criminal activities', they alleged.

IT Task Force planned

Bangladesh Computer Council will form an IT Emergency Task Force (ITETF) to face computer virus epidemic, reports UNB.

The task force will be constituted with computer experts from different parts of the country, said a BCC press release.

Meanwhile, in a bid to restore data lost in a virus epidemic on Monday, BCC has taken up a joint venture programme with Bangladesh Computer Samity.

BCC urged the affected owners to seek advice or service at its Dhanmondi 31/A Road-6 office round the clock. Its contact numbers are: 864224, 507418, 505422, 863476 and 504163.

Our Staff Corre-

spondent adds: Computer experts said they have found a 'complete solution' to the problems created by CIH, the virus which affected a large number of computers across the country.

"We have already received total solution software from abroad and will distribute the same free of cost among the computer users," secretary of Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS) Ahmed Hossain Jewel said yesterday.

Mainul Ahsan, a hardware manager working in a computer firm told 'The Daily Star' that the CIH virus created three kinds of problems: Hard disc access inability, Data inactivity and Damage to BIOS chip.

A place where you get lost

By Morshed Ali Khan

If someone is looking for a riddle to get into, what could be a better place to do so than Nagar Bhaban, headquarters of Dhaka City Corporation.

Hundreds of visitors get constantly puzzled trying to locate different departments as the authorities are yet to put up any chart for direction at the entrance even after six years of establishing the 15-storey office.

And their suffering at the Mayor's monumental Nagar Bhaban is mounted further with the authorities even failing to assign a receptionist at the entrance to help visitors in the absence of any written direction. The DCC telephone operators at the main entrance to the building said the visitors constantly ask them for direction and it hampers their work.

The DCC moved into Nagar Bhaban from its Laxmibazar premises in 1993 and since then all initiative to put up a sign board has failed. Officials said the departments have haphazardly set up their offices on different floors and that is why the problem. Move to allocate office space for each of the departments and bring a uniformity to the set-up has failed as "every one refused to move", they added.

When the shifting took place in 1993 there was chaos. DCC sources said. It was like first-come-first-serve without any planning whatsoever and every one rushed to have his room at his own convenience. This unplanned set up was a disaster as far as office planning is concerned. For instance, a visitor coming to Health Department is forced to climb from floor to floor to get his work done as its branches are scattered all over the fifteen floors of the massive structure. The same applies to engineering, local government, revenue, conservancy, estate, social welfare and other sections.

An official at the Engineering Department of DCC who is responsible for the office planning and the building said there are instances where DCC employees occupy larger rooms than the officials do. An Allotment Committee with the secretary as convener has recently been formed to solve the problem, the official added.

Mirza Rafiq, a visitor at the Nagar Bhaban from Mirpur area, said he came at the Corporation head office to obtain a birth certificate for his son. "I had to ask at least five times on different floors to know where I should go to get the certificate and still I don't know where it is. How can they manage a city when their own home is in such a disorder?" Rafiq asked.

Perhaps, it's time the authorities have an answer.

Vajpayee wants a decisive vote

Punish those who had parliament dissolved

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, Apr 29: Voicing concern over growing trend of fractured verdict in successive general elections over the years, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee has appealed to the voters for a decisive mandate at the coming hustings.

Exercising the privilege of an outgoing head of government, Vajpayee, in an address to the nation last night, exhorted the electorate to "punish" those who brought about the dissolution of parliament and forced mid-term general elections and suggested changes in the constitution which would ensure stability.

He made no secret of displeasure of his government being vulnerable to the push and pull of smaller parties with two or three members in Lok Sabha, lower house of parliament, a situation forced by the fractured electorate that emerged in the previous elections in 1998.

The speech was the most content-sounding during Vajpayee's tenure for 13 months as the head of a fragile coalition that collapsed when AIADMK led by Jayalalitha, one of its key constituents, withdrew support to his government.

It also came very close to Vajpayee's election speech. True, Vajpayee used the occasion to attack the opposition parties which he said pulled down his government for no rhyme or reason and without an issue of

"any gravity". But his focus was on the two decade-old trend of the electorate returning a fractured verdict.

Admitting that his government was outmanoeuvred in the delicately-poised number game in the dissolved parliament, the Prime Minister said the problem was a basic one: Fractured electorate giving a fractured verdict.

"This gave rise to a situation in which whichever government would have been put in place it would have been vulnerable to the push and pull of twos and threes," Vajpayee said alluding to how his government was often brought to brink by threats of small allies with the threat of withdrawal of support.

"This is the central problem that confronts us today," he said, and sent out an appeal to the people "rise above caste, rise above sectarianism and parochialism and rise above the advantage to your immediate group and vote in the interest of our beloved country."

It is in the context of unyielding the BJP's main plank of stability, which was the party's theme-song in the 1998 poll also, that Vajpayee suggested changing the Indian constitution as per the German model to do away with government's instability.

He cited the German system of government formation and said that to remove the head of

government (chancellor) in that country parliament has to vote confidence in his successor. Vajpayee wanted the jurists and people to deliberate on measures which would insulate India from political buffeting.

Even though Vajpayee's unequivocal message to the electorate was for a decisive and not a fractured mandate, the Chief Election Commissioner Dr M S Gill felt that no political party would secure majority on its own in the coming poll.

"Today, the idea of a single party sweeping everything does not look to be a possibility," Gill told captains of Indian industry yesterday.

Despite the hiccups of coalition governance, both the BJP and the main opposition Congress are looking for allies in the perspective of political alignments thrown up by the pattern of voting in the confidence motion moved by Vajpayee and the inability of the opposition to form an alternative.

The Congress is seeking alliance with regional parties like Laloo Prasad Yadav's Rashtriya Janata Dal ruling Bihar, AIADMK in Tamil Nadu and Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh which sends the highest number (85) of elected deputies to Lok Sabha.

The BJP, on the other hand, has indicated that it is ready once again to firm up alliances with its present allies for one more term.

Meherpur bypolls

BNP, allies to enforce hartal in Khulna Div on May 4

The BNP-led opposition alliance decided to enforce a dawn-to-dusk hartal on May 4, the day of Meherpur by-election, in Khulna Division, reports UNB.

Sources said the decision was taken at a liaison committee meeting of the alliance, in the city yesterday.

The liaison committee would sit again on May 2 to chalk out fresh programmes that would be declared from mass processions on May 3.

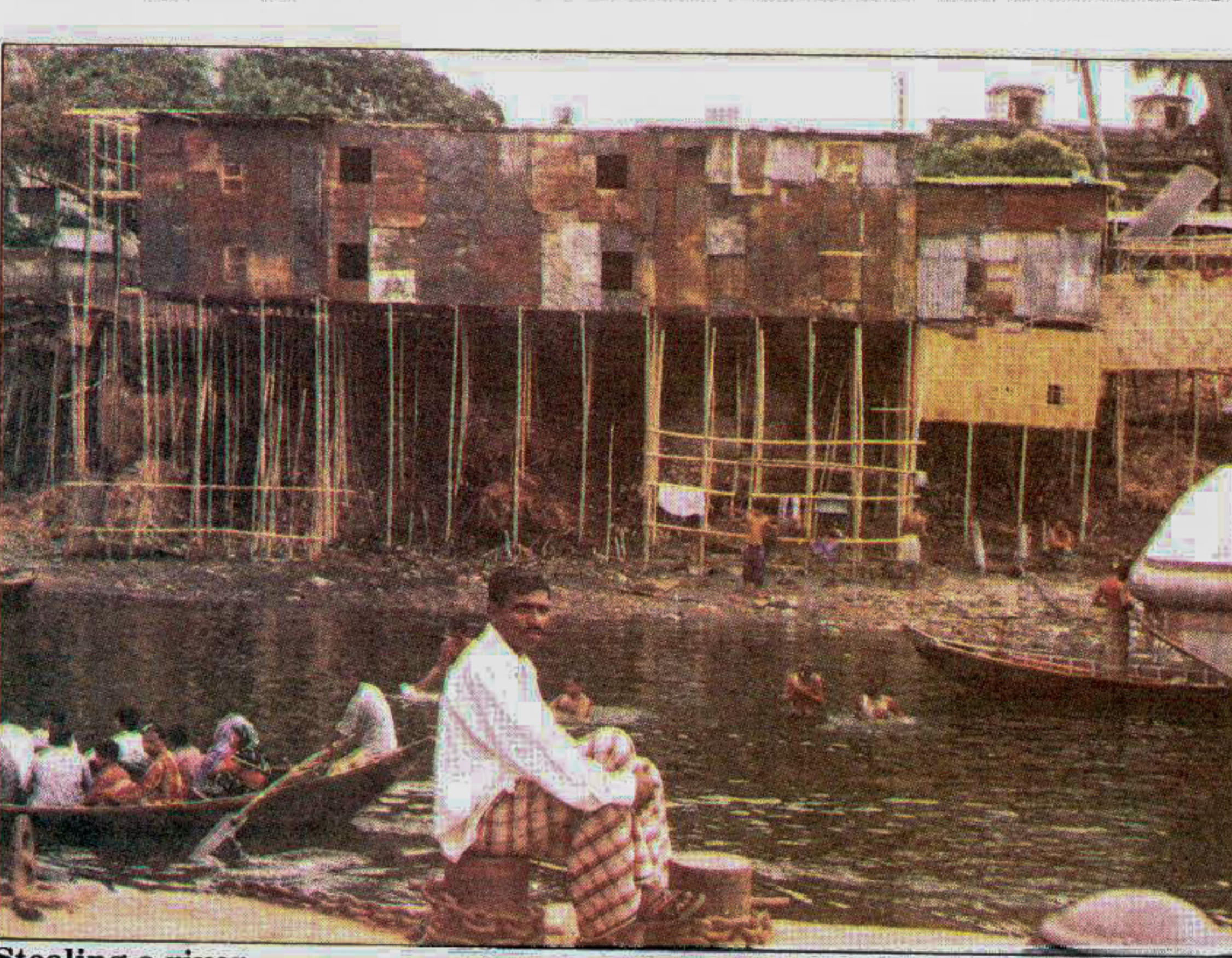
In yesterday's meeting at 29 Minto Road, the leaders of the component parties blamed BNP for the parleys of its four lawmakers with Home Minister Mohammad Nasim.

Sources said a hot debate took place in the meeting when Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote leaders raised question on the dialogue without informing the partner parties.

Prayer Timings		
April 30		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:30	4:35
Jumma	12:45	1:20
Asr	4:45	4:55
Maghrib	6:30	6:33
Esha	7:45	8:00

Source: Islamic Foundation

Buriganga encroachers refuse to retreat



Stealing a river

Encroachers solidify their position on Buckland Bund at the Sadarghat terminal.

Star Photo: AKM. Mohsin

From Page 1

tanneries at Hazaribagh.

The living organisms in the river from Mirpur to Friendship Bridge are dead, another DoE survey had found.

Despite formation of a na-

tional committee headed by the minister for environment and forests, preparations for an action plan to evict the encroachers came to a halt for reasons best known to the authorities.

Last week Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak told reporters that encroachers would be evicted however powerful they may be even if they include Hajj Selim, the Labbagh MP.

According to sources, the Divisional Commissioner of Dhaka had been given the responsibility to evict the illegal encroachers. RAJUK has been given the task of beautification

of the riverbank.

But the planned action had remained in a limbo for the past two months. There has been mounting pressure from the encroachers not to disturb the 'status quo', not until the city corporation polls and construction of a road on the embankment, which itself had become a sheet anchor for the encroachers.

No one knows it for certain when the road would be built and even if it is built whether the authorities would be able to evict the encroachers.