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Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, addressing a discussion meeting at the Engineers Institution yesterday commemorating the 18th death anniversary of late president Ziaur Rahman. — Star photo

**'Govt determined to expand health services'**

MONOHARDI (Narsingdi), May 29: Science and Technology Minister Lt General (Retd) Mohammad Noor Uddin Khan has said the government is determined to reach health services to the doorsteps of rural people and measures have already been taken to meet the goal, reports BSS.  
 General Khan was addressing recipients of health services rendered by Dhaka-based Monohardi Maitree Sangstha at its day-long Medicare Camp at Monohardi Thana Sagardi Girls Highschool here yesterday.  
 Dhaka-based 14 doctors of the thana saw about 3,000 poor patients of the area yesterday at the Camp and gave prescription and medicines.

**Zia's role in transition to democracy acclaimed**

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a discussion meeting yesterday acclaimed the role played by Shaheed Ziaur Rahman in transition to democracy from one-party rule and martial law. They said that it is Zia who in 1979 gave general elections to put an end to one-party and military rule for transition to democracy, and all political parties were given the chance to run and they all participated in the ballot.  
 Main opposition BNP organised the discussion at Engineers' Institute marking the 18th death anniversary of late President Ziaur Rahman. BNP's 12-day programme on the occasion began through this discussion meeting.

Presided over by Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, it was addressed, among others, by BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Democratic League president Oli Ahad, former Dhaka University VC Prof M Maniruzzaman Miah, ex BUET VC Prof M Shahjahan, DU teachers Prof Aftab Ahmed, Ferdous Ahmed, journalist Reazuddin Ahmed and dramatist Ariful Haq.

BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia and top leaders attended the programme as listener and did not address the function.  
 The discussion strongly claimed that Ziaur Rahman never imposed martial law and didn't dissolve the parliament instead, he restored multi-party democracy, freedom of press, sovereignty of the Supreme Court and revive fundamental rights of people.

They said today's Awami League is not 1948's AL as it was born during the period of Shaheed Ziaur Rahman. Sheikh Mujib had politicised the Army and involved the armed forces in politics, but it is Zia who freed the politics from Army, they added.  
 Referring to proclamation of independence of Bangladesh,

they said there was none to give guideline to the nation when the Pakistani occupation forces launched attack on the unarmed people of the country. It is Zia, who held the helm of the nation and proclaimed independence of Bangladesh, they said.

The praiseworthy role of Shaheed Ziaur Rahman in the country's Independence War is an inseparable part of history, speakers said.

Speakers recalled the contribution of Zia in resorting multi-party democracy, building friendly relations with Islamic world, consolidating hard-earned national independence and sovereignty and his role in regional and global peace moves.

They recalled that Zia, the proclaimer of independence, had held the helm of the nation through the sepy-people uprising which foiled the conspiracy against the independence and sovereignty of Bangladesh four years after its birth.

Speakers said Zia was given the charge of the state when conspiracies at home and abroad against the nascent nation in a string of plots and counter plots since the August 15, 1975 political change over climaxed in the first week of November 1975.

Due to some revolutionary steps of Zia, the speakers said, Bangladesh marched towards rapid development and self-reliance. He played the country in a dignified position in the world comity by removing the "basket case" blame.

They said Ziaur Rahman was the pioneer of the concept of seven-nation SAARC and play key-role in halting Iraq-Iran war, and in OIC.

**Bullet injured truck driver dies at DMCH**

By Staff Correspondent

A truck driver, who received bullet injuries in his head in the city's Bangla Motor area on Friday died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday morning.

The dead was Motaleb Hossain, 30, son of Nurul Huda Patwari, a resident of Dholakhal area, police said.

He was shot by a group of four young men after the truck, that he was driving, hit the micro bus the men were travelling in causing minor damage to the micro, according to police.

Subsequently the micro bus overtook the truck and made Motaleb stop his truck at Bangla Motor area at about 2 pm. Four youths got down from the micro and locked in an altercation with Motaleb. At one stage, one of the four shot Motaleb in his head with a revolver. Critically injured Motaleb was rushed to DMCH where he succumbed to his injuries at about 6 am yesterday, police added.

None was arrested in connection with the killing till last night. The body was handed over to the family of the victim after its autopsy at the DMCH morgue.

A murder case was lodged with Tejgaon thana in this regard yesterday accusing unidentified killers.

**South Asian youths adopt Dhaka Declaration**

South Asian Youths yesterday demanded punishment of all the killings including that of the father of the nation and the jail killing in 1975, reports BSS.

The two-day meet of the South Asian Youths and Students which ended in the city yesterday evening condemned the killing of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Sheikh Fazlul Haq Moini, President of Awami Juba League. They also demanded justice, a press release said.

The organisers held a press conference this evening to announce the outcome of the two-day deliberations of the "First South-Asian Democratic and Progressive Youths and Students Meet". They spoke of the "Dhaka Declaration" which urged all to resolve any conflicts through discussions.

They also congratulated Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for the peaceful solution of the Chittagong Hill Tracts problem. The "Dhaka declaration" called for uniting the youths and students against fundamentalism and communalism and also against any arms race.

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