

# The Daily Star

## on Friday

VOL. IX NO. 163 REGD. NO. DA 781

INTERNET: <http://www.dailystarnews.com>

ASHAR 25, 1406 BS

DHAKA FRIDAY JULY 9, 1999

RABIUL AWAL 24, 1420 HIJRI

20 PAGES PLUS MAGAZINE: PRICE TAKA 9.00

Your 20-page  
weekend  
paper

### INSIDE TODAY

#### COMMENT

Khurshid Hamid on  
Bangladesh's increasing  
strategic importance

Page 6

#### FOCUS

Extracts from  
JN Dixit's  
Liberation and Beyond

Page 7

#### PEOPLE

Sanjida Khatun  
face to face  
with Navine Murshid  
Sumita Devi  
talks about her  
teenage life to  
A Maher

Page 9



## Hasina, Blair for strong ties

LONDON, July 8: Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her British counterpart Tony Blair Wednesday agreed to further consolidate relations between the two friendly countries, reports UNB.

Hasina was received by Blair at his official residence, 10 Downing Street, where they held talks in the evening and discussed entire spectrum of the bilateral relations.

The two leaders held discussion for about 30 minutes in an atmosphere of cordiality and discussed matters of mutual interest and bilateral relations. Press secretary to the Prime Minister Jawadul Karim told newsmen after the talks.

The British Prime Minister congratulated Sheikh Hasina on her tackling the devastating floods that swamped Bangladesh last year. "Whatever you have done in this regard was unique," he told her.

See page 11 Col 5



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina (L) meets with British premier Tony Blair at 10 Downing Street in London on Wednesday. —AFP photo

## Death of constable Two cases filed against 150 BNP leaders, activists

Police yesterday lodged two cases against more than 150 BNP leaders and activists in connection with the death of constable Farhad Khan in a bomb blast on Wednesday, reports BSS.

Police said former minister MK Anwar MP, Sadek Hossain Khan MP and Aman Ullah Khan MP were among the 150 persons who were charged for the killing and explosion.

A namaj-e-janaza of constable Farhad was held at Rajbari police lines yesterday noon. Home Minister Mohammad Nasim, Inspector General of Police AYBI Siddique, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner AK Shamsuddin and other senior police officials attended the janaza.

Earlier, his autopsy was conducted at the morgue of Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The body of Farhad was sent to his village home in Faridpur under police escort.

## Rickshawpuller killed in crossfire

By Staff Correspondent  
A rickshawpuller was shot dead and two others were injured during a gunfight between two rival groups of miscreants in the city's Mahakhali area yesterday evening.

The dead was identified as Abdur Rahman, 25, while the injured are Mahbub Ali, 55, a peon of directorate of health and Tawhidul Islam, 25, a member of a rival group.

According to police, the rival groups Imam and Bari groups — were locked in a clash at Hazari Bari over establishing supremacy in the area at around 5 pm. Both the groups exchanged several shots during the clash that lasted half an hour.

Rickshawpuller Rahman who was peddling his vehicle received a bullet in his left chest and died on the spot.

The body of Rahman was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) morgue for autopsy. Tawhid and Mahbub were also admitted to DMCH.

A case was lodged with Gulshan thana in connection with the incident, but none was arrested till filing of this report last night.

## 3 teenage girls raped in city

By Staff Correspondent  
Three teenage girls were raped at the city's DIT plot in Merul Badda at early hours of yesterday.

Police said that the incident took place at about 3:10 am yesterday when the three were going to a house belonging to one of them at Madhya Badda.

When the girls came out of the house, four young men dragged them to an under-construction building and violated them, police added.

The miscreants were identified as Akash, Tulshi Chandra Das, Ripon and Barun Das.

Akash, Tulshi and Ripon were arrested for their alleged involvement in the incident after one of the victims lodged a case with Badda thana. Barun was still absconding.

However, the girls could not give reasons why they were moving so late at night without being escorted.

## PM tells British investors

# Gas export only after meeting internal needs

LONDON, July 8: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today told investors that her government would proceed very cautiously regarding gas export, because meeting the country's needs is the first priority, reports UNB.

Her observations came in reply to queries from her business audience at the investment seminar "Bangladesh: A New Era for Growth and Investment", held at the office of the Confederation of British Industry.

"We are not closed-minded, we are opening up the gas sector for private investment," she said.

She told them that there was good demand for gas in the country as the government had plans to set up more gas-based power plants and industries.

Responding to concerns aired by the business leaders

about the power situation, the prime minister said the government was taking massive steps to increase electricity output.

The government has also opened up the power-generation sector to private investment. Requesting the Bangladeshi expatriates to invest in their motherland, she assured of all

See also page 17

necessary steps to ease the rules and regulations for facilitating more foreign investment.

Speaking at the seminar, British minister Dr Kim Howells encouraged the business leaders of UK to invest in Bangladesh.

However, the minister stressed the need for a stable political environment and easier

See page 12 Col 8

## Bangladesh Festival opens

From Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan

LONDON, July 8: The Arts Worldwide Bangladesh Festival was inaugurated at Durbar Court Conference room of the Foreign and Commonwealth office here yesterday afternoon.

Patrons-in-Chief of the festival prime ministers Sheikh Hasina and Tony Blair jointly inaugurated the function.

Sheikh Hasina in her inaugural speech said the festival will project extensively Bangladesh's culture and heritage to the people of Britain. "All that I will say at this auspicious moment is that Bangladesh comes to London with its glorious past and present," she added.

Bangladeshi living in Britain, business leaders and a cross-section of people from Britain and Bangladesh attended the function.

"We are determined to make our journey to the impending 21st century a success by virtue of our tradition, creativity, courage and skill. Bangladesh will certainly earn a prestigious

See page 11 Col 7

## Uneasy calm at 2 N'ganj brothels

# They starve, fear eviction

From Ehasnul Haque

NARAYANGANJ, July 8: The clients are all gone. So is the earning of 4,000 or so sex workers at the brothel for the last seven years, living in a building owned by one Khoka.

An uneasy calm is still prevailing in the Tanbazar and Nimali red-light areas in the town following the murder of a sex-worker, Jesmin, on July 1 and police raid.

Before the killing, a local committee had announced that it would chalk out plans to rehabilitate the sex workers but rumour spread that they would be evicted. Fearing eviction, the sex workers started agitation and protested the "rehabilitation plan", initiated by local MP Shamim Osman.

breast-feed her baby as she is starving. Morium has been an inmate of the brothel for the last seven years, living in a building owned by one Khoka.

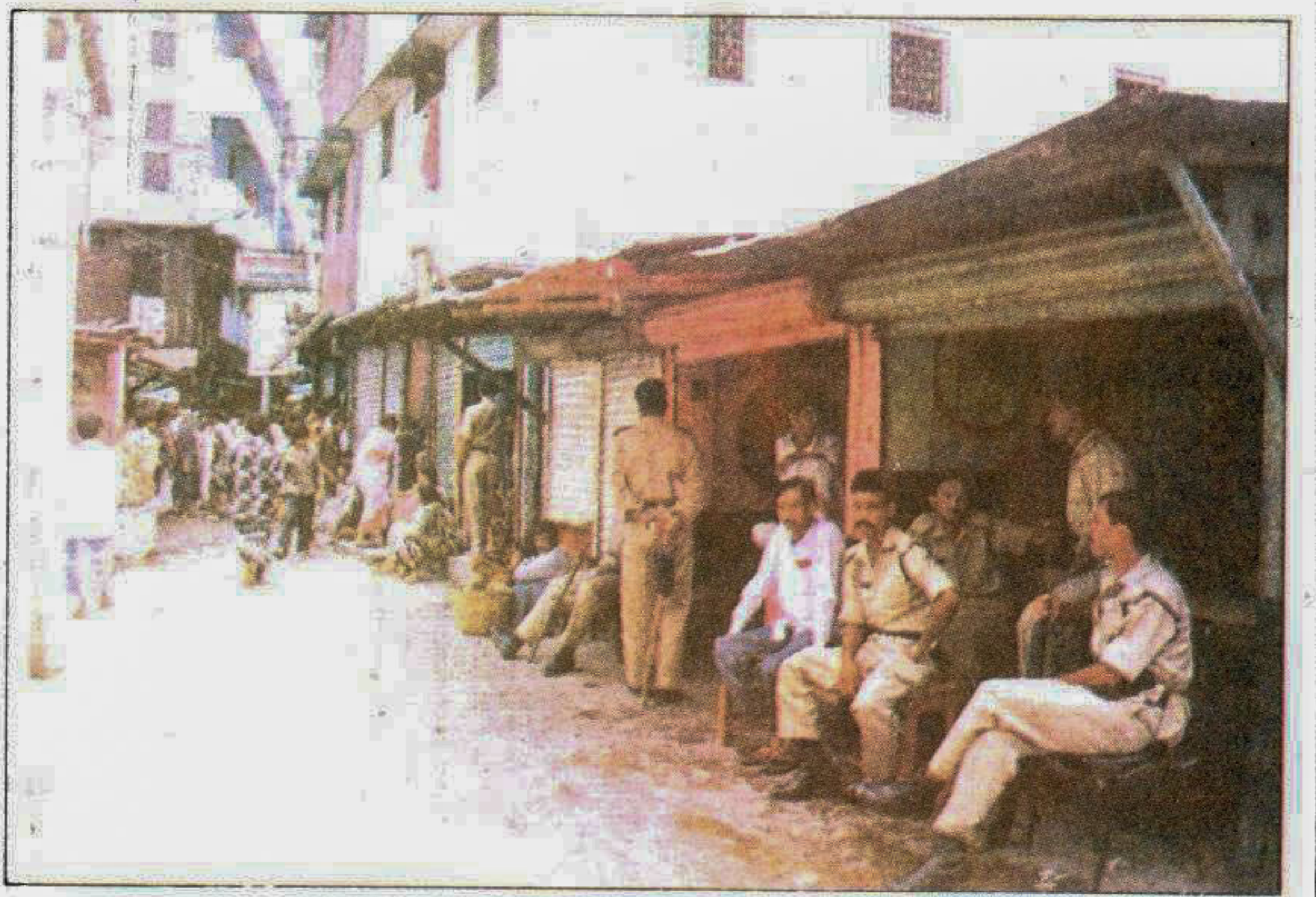
An uneasy calm is still prevailing in the Tanbazar and Nimali red-light areas in the town following the murder of a sex-worker, Jesmin, on July 1 and police raid.

Before the killing, a local committee had announced that it would chalk out plans to rehabilitate the sex workers but rumour spread that they would be evicted. Fearing eviction, the sex workers started agitation and protested the "rehabilitation plan", initiated by local MP Shamim Osman.

Clients are now hardly seen in the brothels, which were visited by thousands everyday earlier. Arrest of 16 clients and 10 pimps and deployment of a large contingent of police inside the brothel has turned it into a ghostly area, leaving the poor and socially outcast women in total uncertainty.

The sex workers have been apprehending eviction although some of them who left the brothel have started coming back. Most of the shops inside the brothels are closed. Police also sealed all the 55 "illegal" grocery shops. The shops were licensed for selling fruits but were trading in liquor openly.

See page 11 Col 7



Tanbazar brothel wears a deserted look as police guard the passage and liquor shops there for the last few days. — Star photo

# Dalals allure patients to clinics

## A decade-long mischief at Pangu Hospital

By Naimul Haq

The Rehabilitation Institute and Hospital for Disabled (RIHD) popularly known as Pangu Hospital in the city is facing a major problem as 'brokers' moving in the hospital allure patients to some private clinics nearby.

"We are paid by the owners of those clinics for taking away patients from here. We make a living by doing this," said one of the brokers, better known as dalals.

Normal activities at the 500-bed RIHD are being badly affected as at least four dozen

brokers are engaged in the mischief at the hospital, the only of its kind in public sector in the country. They do not even hesitate to show muscle power and extend threats to hospital staff if asked to stop their misdeed. "It is an old practice, continuing for about a decade", a staff member said.

One source said that a section of hospital employees had 'links' with the brokers.

The hospital authorities alleged that police maintained 'mysterious silence' despite being repeatedly asked to take ac-

tion against the brokers. But police denied the allegation, saying that they had not received any specific allegation against any person.

A committee was formed in this regard at the directive of the health minister but no effective steps were taken by it as yet.

Most of the brokers live in a slum near the hospital.

This correspondent came to know all this during a spot investigation recently.

At least seven identified brokers were seen stopping

motor vehicles and rickshaws near the main entrance of the hospital, trying to convince patients to seek treatment at nearby clinics.

Three other alleged brokers were seen inside one of the emergency operation theatres on the ground floor. They were negotiating with patients' attendants for 'package deal' for admission to one of those clinics.

Brokers were also found inside the Out Patients Department, advising patients not to

See page 12 Col 5

## Death of policeman

# BNP blames AL, demands judicial probe

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of the BNP-led opposition alliance have blamed the ruling Awami League for Wednesday's bomb explosion in the city in which a policeman was killed and many others were injured, and demanded immediate formation of a judicial inquiry commission to probe the incident.

The incident was part of a deep-rooted conspiracy by the government to create a situation of confrontation between the Opposition and the law enforcers and anarchy to "fish in troubled water", they alleged.

The alliance leaders were addressing a post-hartal press briefing at the official residence of the leader of the Opposition in Parliament in the city yesterday evening.

They said there was no procession in the area where the bomb exploded. All Opposition processions were terminated much before the incident.

The opposition leaders also demanded adequate compensation for the victims and their proper treatment.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said his party's main torch procession was brought out from Nawab Yusuf Market in the evening and was terminated peacefully in front of the T&T building at Gulistan. No untoward incident occurred in the area for quite some time after the procession was terminated, he

See page 11 Col 6

## Nasim holds Khaleda responsible

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim yesterday held opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia responsible for the killing of a police constable and called for united efforts to resist politics of killing, reports BSS.

Addressing a rally in protest of hartal at Paltan maidan, the minister said there are no valid reasons to call hartal but the BNP-led alliance resorted to it just to destabilise the country's law and order and victimise the teeming millions.

"I have made a phone call to BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan to withdraw the hartal considering the suffering of the people. But they didn't listen to me and killed people by calling hartal," Nasim said.

Nasim warned that the dream of Khaleda Zia would never come true if she wanted to grab the power through the politics of killing. "The government of Awami League will never

See page 11 Col 8

## Mirpur police barracks tense

By Staff Correspondent

Tension was prevailing at Mirpur Riot Police Barrack following a rumour that two police constables, injured in a bomb blast in the city on Wednesday night, succumbed to injuries yesterday.

No untoward incident, however, was reported at Mirpur Riot Police Barrack yesterday.

Senior officials of Dhaka Metropolitan Police and Riot Police Division, however, denied the death reports last night. Rather, they told The Daily Star that the condition of the injured was improving.

Farhad, a police constable of Riot Police Division, was killed while eight other policemen were injured when some unidentified miscreants hurled bombs at a contingent of riot police near the Zero Point Wednesday evening.

Three critically injured policemen, naik Delwar and con-

See page 11 Col 6

# Cracker blasts mark hartal

## Commuter hit by brickbat dies at hospital

By Staff Correspondent

One person was killed and a few others injured in the city during yesterday's countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal. It was called by the BNP-led opposition alliance to protest imposition of "huge" new taxes in the national budget.

An unidentified man in his 60s was killed when a brickbat hit his head near College Gate area at around 11 a.m. The old man was traveling by minibus on the Gabtali-Gulistan route. He was taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital immediately after the incident and died at 12 noon.

Hospital sources quoting people who brought the victim

said that an unknown man threw a brick that hit his head after splintering the vehicle's glass window.

Police could not trace the precise spot nor identify the culprit. Police searched Asad gate and College gate areas extensively but failed to find any clue.

Two youngmen, who received bomb injuries were admitted to DMCH. Barring these incidents, sporadic violence and explosion of hundreds of hand-made bombs, no other incidents were reported.

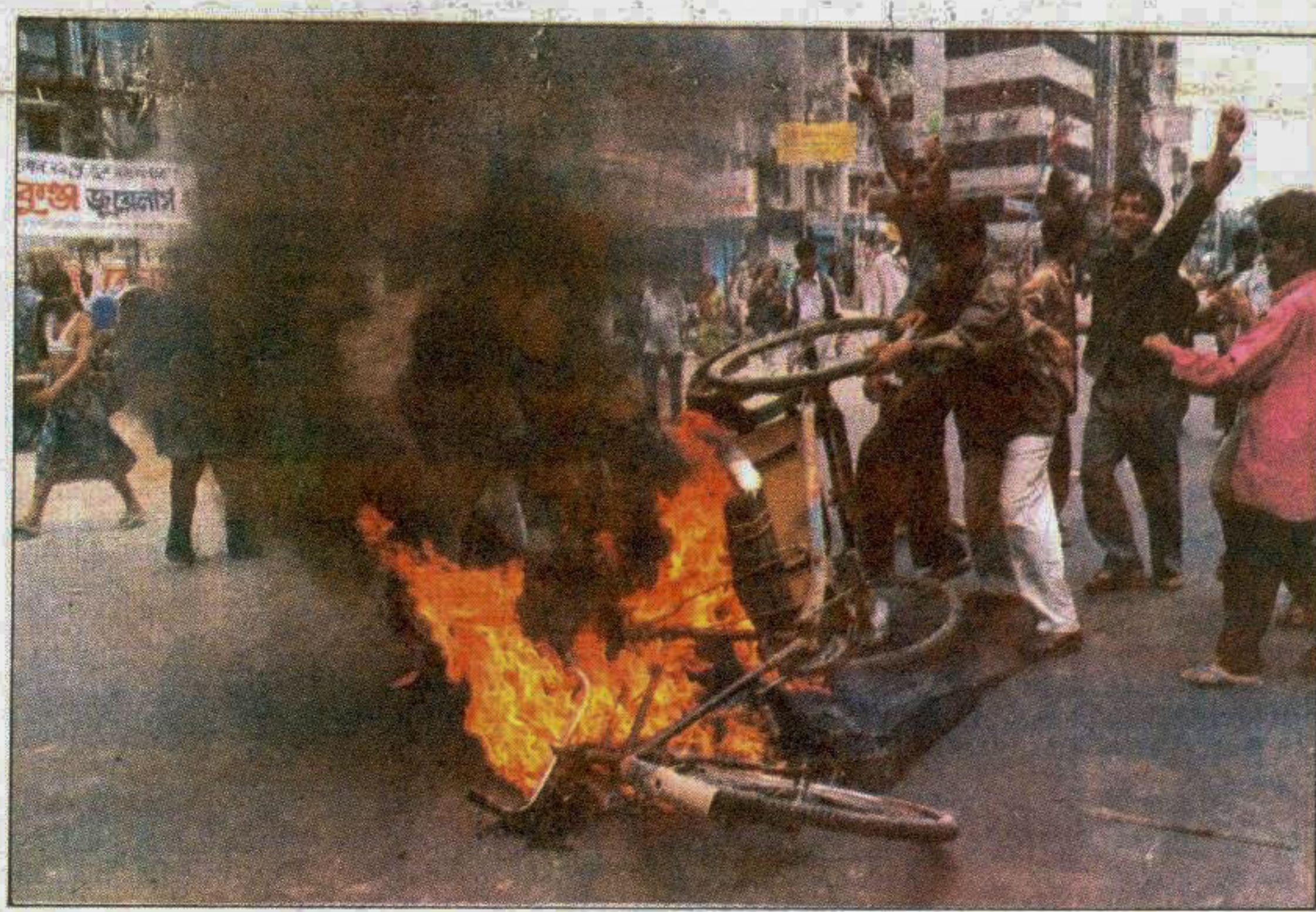
Akash, 29, a vendor, received injury when a crude bomb exploded near the Central

Jail at about 10:50 a.m. Another rickshawpuller Milon, 32, received serious burn injury caused by a bomb explosion at South Badda at 12:45 p.m. DMCH sources said.

Police claimed that they have arrested eight people from different parts of the city on charge of exploding bombs. They said police arrested a picket at Nilkhet after opposition activists threw a series of cocktails at police at about 11:30 am.

Police and other sources said several hundreds of bombs were exploded in different parts of the city, particularly at Jatra-

See page 12 Col 2



Pickets set fire to a rickshaw in front of BNP office at Nayapaltan in the city during hartal hours yesterday. — Star photo

# JS budget session prorogued

By Staff Correspondent

The budget session of the Jatiya Sangsad that began on June 6 was prorogued yesterday with the Opposition Bench empty.

Immediately before reading out the presidential order for prorogation of the session, Deputy Speaker Abdul Hamid told the House that the unparliamentary words used by members during the session created an 'adverse impact' among the people.

The Chair hoped that the members would show restraint in future, 'considering the dignity of the Jatiya Sangsad'.

Earlier, leading members of the ruling Awami League and the Communications minister-led faction of Jatiya Party castigated the opposition BNP for 'enforcing' a hartal, instead of attending the concluding sitting of the budget session.

The BNP led four-party alliance called the countrywide

dawn to dusk hartal protesting what it called an anti-people budget passed by the ruling party on June 30 by its sheer majority in the Sangsad.

Top ruling party lawmakers, however, found enforcing such hartals as anti-people activities. They sensed "a deep-rooted conspiracy in BNP's politics of hartal and vandalism."

They condemned the killing of police constable Farhad in

See page 12 Col 1



## New Telephone Numbers of Cairn Energy PLC, Dhaka.

Please note that with effect from 8th July 1999 the telephone and fax numbers of Cairn Energy PLC have changed to those indicated below :

### New Tel Nos.

889 845  
600 670  
600 680  
601 904

### New Fax No.

882592



Cairn also confirms that it will retain its office at 28, Park Road, Baridhara, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh.