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# Down to Earth

## The urban nucleus families

By A S M Nurunnabi

By nucleus families, we mean the small family units comprising husband, wife and their children. A nucleus family emerges mainly from the break-up of a joint family which had a long tradition of existence in our society but which has been gradually disintegrating, particularly in urban areas owing to various socio-economic factors.

From the earliest times, family has been the basic unit which has given protective cover to man to conduct his life, with all the beneficial implications inherent in ensuring security of life and living. Nowadays the institution of family is faced with multifarious problems. Particularly in urban areas where nucleus families have been increasingly confronting problems of civic insecurity, terrorism, road accidents, etc. which have assumed alarming proportions. Besides, in Dhaka city, under the pressure of mounting population, the housing problem has been steadily becoming acute, putting other ancillary facilities like recreational outlets, public transport, public utilities under severe strain.

Against this background, a research institute recently conducted a sample survey covering about 150 families in the city to get ideas about the reasons for their growth, their socio-economic and psychological problems and their total impact on the overall social ethos. The survey yielded some interesting aspects of our social life. The more important aspects of the result are outlined below.

It was revealed that in majority of cases, the compulsions of professions and occupations were cited as an important factor in their opting for their life and living in a nucleus family, breaking away from the joint family system. The growth of individualism among the members in a joint family is also a causative factor in the emergence of nucleus families.

The survey has showed that the husbands and wives are mostly educated. Though the percentage of educated women among them is high, their participation in economic activities is comparatively less pronounced. A majority of them are found to be housewives. In the matter of family income, all the surveyed families are comparatively in an easy financial position with some exceptions of cases suffering from the stress of rising prices. There are, however, some high income groups with a monthly income of Tk 50,000 and above.

Most of the nucleus families are found to live in rented houses, whereas 25 per cent of them have their own houses. The number of families who live in houses provided by government or their appointing authorities is relatively small. Most of such families are found to suffer from fear of social insecurity. The insecurity mainly relates to apprehend thefts or burglary, hijacking on roads and safety of their children while going to and coming from school.

The parents of nucleus families experience problems when they together plan outing for purposes like visiting friends and relatives, attending marriage receptions, etc. On such occasions, a large part of them take their children with them, while a smaller part leave their children with their relatives or servants. Most of such families are found to be deprived of institutional recreation facilities. A large part of them depend on TV and radio as means of their recreation, while a smaller proportion find recreation in visiting friends and relatives.

Since the majority of such families previously used to live with their fathers and mothers in joint family, some heads of nucleus families continue to share some part of the financial burden of their parents on regular or non-regular basis. As for the benefits accruing from living in a nucleus family, the majority of such families cite individual freedom for the members, financial adequacy, and proper care and attention for their children. Among the disadvantages, the majority mention lack of proper security for their homes and children in their absence, while a smaller number indicate problems in

taking proper care of their children.

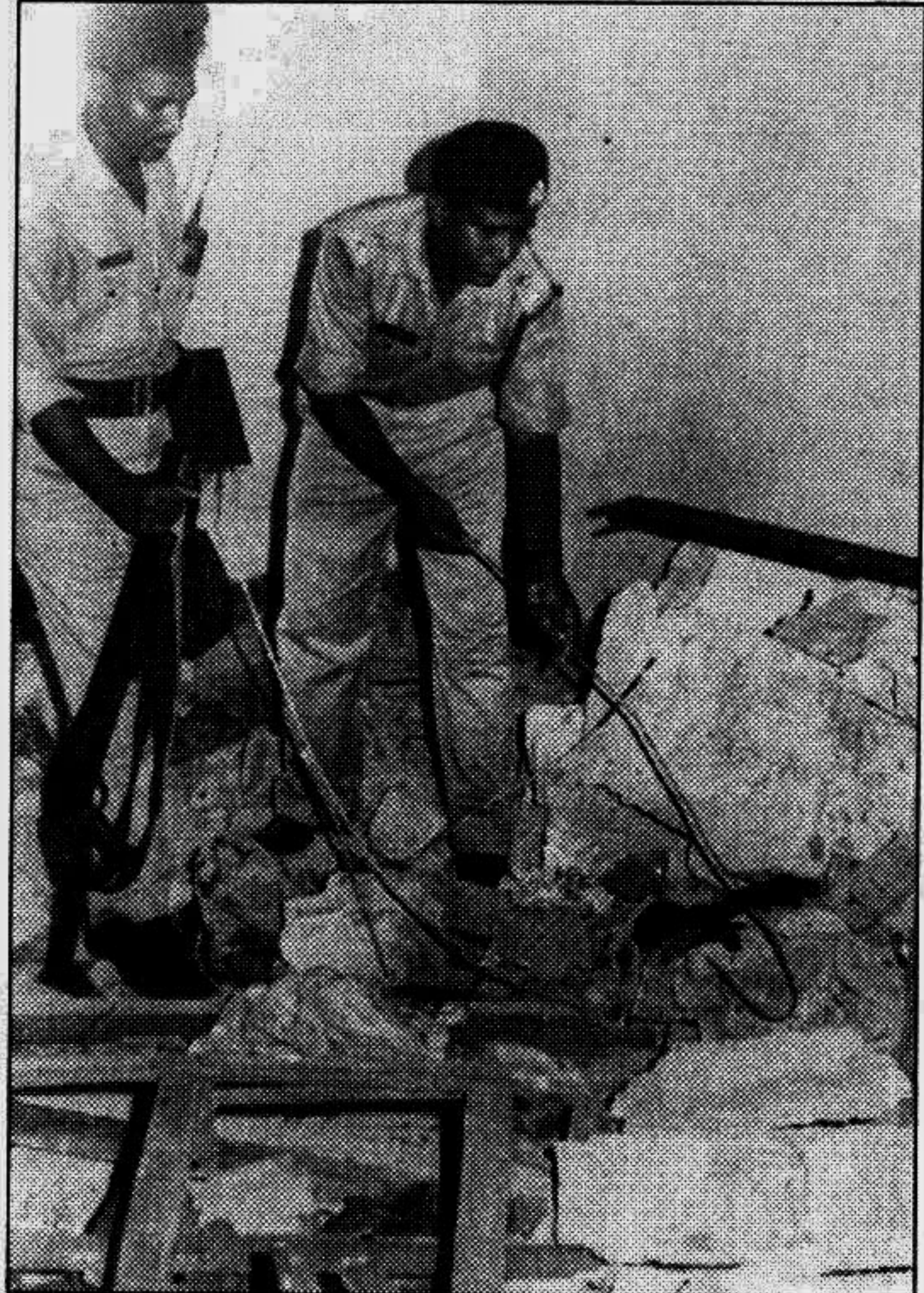
It is not possible to lose sight of the fact the emergence of nucleus families mainly in urban areas is an inexorable phenomenon of social evolution in modern times. As such it seems necessary to focus our attention on those aspects which may ensure security and fruitful life pattern for a nucleus family.

Keeping these considerations in view, sociologists make suggestions which include the following. The housing problem poses a serious cause for worry for most of the city's nucleus families. To mitigate this problem, as far as possible, measures may be taken both at government and non-government levels to make provisions for housing at affordable prices.

Since such families suffer widely from feelings of insecurity, it is felt necessary that effective steps be taken to improve the law and order situation in order to create proper security image for all citizens.

The problems faced in taking care of the children when both the parents of a nucleus family need to remain outside for their occupations or other business may be tackled if more day-care centres for children of satisfactory standards are set up in different localities of the city. The parents of such families may not grudge reasonable expenditure for taking advantage of the services of the day-care centres if such centres are able to offer proper standard of care for their children.

The sample study of city's nucleus families reveals some basic trends in our present socio-economic scenarios. This trend seems inevitable in the fast growing urbanisation of life which requires suitable adjustments in our life style. The examples in other modern societies both in western and eastern countries may serve as our guide in coping with the problems faced in such societies. In emulating their examples, the important point to remember is that we follow the positive aspects of those societies keeping intact our own old good values which have stood the test of time.



Police searching the damaged room of the Dental College hostel after bomb explosion yesterday. — Star photo

## Computer software dev park opens Sept 11

Star Report

The country is going to have its first Computer Software Development Park by next week, an official of the Bangladesh Computer Society (BCS) has said.

"The park and the BCS Annual Computer Exhibition will be inaugurated at the IDB Bhaban at Agargaon in the city on September 11," Aftab-ul-Islam, President of BCS, told The Daily Star.

"We have set up the 15,000 square feet park in a hired building on temporary basis," Islam said. It will be shifted to the proposed Information Technology Village for which the government has allocated 19 acres of land, he said.

The slogan of this year's exhibition is "computer for all". The Exhibition at the IDB Bhaban will continue till September 25. BCS organised its annual exhibition at the same building last year also where computer vendors got Tk 3 crore orders.

Computer software is now being exported to the United

States, Britain, Sweden and Saudi Arabia. Earnings from export of computer software during the current financial year may reach 100 million US dollars, he said.

"We are hopeful that if everything goes well, computer software and data processing will be the main source of foreign exchange earning for the country in early next century. There is good scope for export at attractive prices because of good demand abroad and lower production cost," Islam said.

"We are ignored by big American and European firms due to lack of infrastructure. The problems will be overcome as Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board has agreed to install a high-speed data transmission line of 192 kbps (kilo-bytes per second). We have manpower for the business," he said.

Some 800 companies including 10 joint ventures are in computer business in the country.

## President of BCL RMC unit shot

From Our Correspondent RAUSHAH, Sept 3: Bangladesh Chhatra League Rajshahi Medical College (RMC) unit president, S M Asjad Hasan Ashraf was shot by some unidentified miscreants on the college campus in the early hours today.

RMC sources said, a group of miscreants equipped with firearms knocked the door of his room in Teachers' Building No-6 at about 4 am.

When Ashraf came out of the room, the miscreants fired at him and fled the scene, leaving him injured.

He was operated upon at the surgical unit in RMCH. His condition was stated to be critical. The motive behind the attack could not be known. Meanwhile, RMC sources said, the attack was a sequel to the ongoing intra-party feud on formation of a new committee.

A tense situation is prevailing on the RMC campus. No case was filed in this connection till filing of this report at 9:15 pm.

## Angling

From page 1

was never polluted. Water was contaminated due to drains and Hazaribagh tannery waste," Mukul said brushing aside DC-CK's claim.

Vice president of the association Mohammad Kala Mia said Ramna and DND lakes have also been closed to the more than 5,000 anglers in the city. Except Gulshan lake, anglers have nowhere to go in the city, he said.

"We have held talks with the Mayor and the LGED Minister, and they have assured that angling in the lake would be allowed," said Kala Mia.

Officials concerned mentioned that the original lake development project proposal contained provision for angling. "The part of lake from Road-2 up to the first island near Road-5 was originally earmarked for angling, which was the traditional site for it. But DCC officials excluded the provision," said a project official.

## Bomb blast in Dental college hostel room

By Staff Correspondent

A bomb was exploded inside a room of dental college dormitory at Sobhanbaga in Mohammadpur thana area in the city yesterday afternoon.

According to police none was hurt in the explosion which damaged the walls on the fourth floor of the dormitory at about 1:30 pm.

Police seized a revolver and ten bullets from the room (number 509) after the explosion.

Locals alleged that a gang of local miscreants under the shelter of a local political leader used that room. The gang used to take shelter inside it after committing crimes in the area.

Police said that room no 509 was not allocated to any one. But several people used the room regularly.

A case was lodged with Mohammadpur thana in this connection, but police were yet to arrest anyone till filing of this report last night.

## Mannan Bhuiyan

From page 1

Janakantha office and the case was filed after his visit. The cases filed against BNP leaders including Anwar Zahid and Sadek Hossain Khoka clearly proved that the attacks were pre-planned and conspiratorial, he added.

Bhuiyan said it was clear that Juba League 'terrorists' who attacked BNP procession and fired at Begum Zia's car attacked the Janakantha office.

He demanded immediate release of Anwar Zahid and withdrawal of 'false cases' against BNP leaders and activists.

Presided over by city BNP Convenor Sadek Hossain Khoka, the meeting was also addressed by, among others, Tariqul Islam, Mirza Abbas, Nazrul Islam Khan, Fazlur Rahman Patal, Abdus Salam, Jamal Sharif Huru and Takdir Hossain Jashim.

Sadek Hossain Khoka said BNP believes in democratic and constitutional movement and it never allows any attack on newspaper office. He alleged that hired goons of the ruling party attacked the BNP procession at the Janakantha office.

Later, a procession was brought out from the rally venue. Participated by leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations, the procession terminated in front of the party central office at Nayapal-tan.

## Pabna Juba Dal leader stabbed to death

PABNA, Sept 3: A local leader of Juba Dal was stabbed to death by unidentified assailants near Sweeper Colony at Ramchandrapur in Sadar thana tonight, reports UNB.

Police said the miscreants numbering 8-10 attacked Reazul Biswas, 27, convenor of Sadar thana Juba Dal, at about 9:30 pm and stabbed him indiscriminately. He died on way to Pabna General Hospital.

In protest, supporters of Reazul set fire to a number of houses of their opponents at Ramchandrapur. Fire Brigade sources said.

## Transport workers, students clash at Hathazari: 10 hurt

From Our Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Sept 3: At least 10 people were injured in a clash between transport workers and madrasah students at Hathazari today.

The clash was a sequel of yesterday's incident in which a student of Hathazari Madrasah was assaulted allegedly by some transport workers in the city.

Protesting the incident, the students of Hathazari Madrasah today put up barricade on the road near the madrasah and damaged several buses resulting in the clash at around 4 pm today.

## CU liaison body to sit with BCL today

From CU Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Sept 3: The Liaison Committee formed to discuss with different student organisations for immediate reopening of Chittagong University, will hold talks with the CU unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) here tomorrow.

On the eve of the meeting the BCL university unit today put forward eight point demands.

The demands include immediate reopening of the university, resumption of bus service for the students, formation of a committee comprising teachers and students for the overall development of the university.

Presided over by Shahjahan Chowdhury, CU BCL president, the meeting was held at CUCSU auditorium. The meeting urged the varsity authorities to accept the demands.

## First phase of Indian polls from tomorrow

NEW DELHI, Sept 3: India goes to its first phase of staggered Lok Sabha polls on Sunday to elect 145 members spread over 16 states and union territories as campaign ended this evening, reports BSS.

Election to 343 constituencies of the state legislature will also be held simultaneously on Sunday in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Prominent candidates who are fighting in the first phase of election include Congress president Ms Sonia Gandhi, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) heavyweight Ms Sushma Swaraj (both from Bellary in Karnataka), Union Home Minister L K Advani of BJP and former Chief Election Commissioner T N Seshan (both from Gandhi Nagar in Gujarat), union ministers Ananth Kumar (Bangalore South), Surjit Singh Barna (Samadpur in Punjab), Sukhbir Singh Badal (Faridkot-Punjab), former Finance Minister P Chidambaram (Sivaganga-Andhra) and Dr Monmohan Singh (South Delhi).

Balloting on Sunday will be held for 13 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh, two in Goa, 26 in Gujarat, 10 in Haryana, two in Jammu and Kashmir, 15 in Karnataka, 24 in Maharashtra, 19 in Punjab, 10 in Rajasthan, 19 in Tamil Nadu, seven in Delhi, one seat each in Andaman Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu and Pondichery.

AP adds: An opinion poll published today predicts Sonia Gandhi will lose her first bid for public office.

If Sonia loses from the Bellary parliamentary constituency in the southern state of Karnataka, it would be the Congress party's worst ever election in the district since India's independence five decades ago.

Sonia is the president of the Congress Party and its most likely choice for prime minister.

Reuters from Srinagar adds:

Indian police placed senior leaders of Kashmir's main separatist alliance under house arrest today as a precautionary measure ahead of parliamentary polls.

For precautionary measures, most of the Hurriyat leaders — including Syed Ali Shah Gekilani, Umar Farooq, Maulana Abbas Ansari and Shabir Ahmad Shah — have been put under house arrest, "a police official said.

## 30 drowned in boat capsized Flood situation in Bihar grim

PATNA, Sept 3: With 30 more deaths reported due to drowning in flood-hit Muzaffarpur district, the death toll in the current spell of floods rose to 280 as the overall situation in Bihar remained unchanged with major rivers in spate, reports PTI.

Official sources said 30 people were feared drowned when a countryboat capsized in a tributary of river Burhi Gandak near Kolu-Pagambarpur village under Kanti block in Muzaffarpur district yesterday.

Twelve bodies have so far been recovered while an intense search continued to locate the remaining missing people, the sources said.

State water resource department sources said Gandak breached its Saran embankment between 82 and 83 miles submerging vast countryside areas in Gopalganj and Saran districts.

Swirling waters of Ganga washed away the flanks of the

Bhagalpur-Sahebganj road in a stretch of two kilometres near Trimohan village under Kahaigal sub-division in Bhagalpur district.

Ganga was flowing 24 cm above the danger mark at Kahaigal and was still maintaining rising trend posing fresh threat to vast areas in Bhagalpur and Kathiar, the sources said.

Other major rivers like Gandak, Burhi Gandak, Kosi, Mahananda, Bagmati and Adhwa group of rivers maintained tremendous pressure on their embankments, they said claiming that flood-fighting operations continued on a war-footing to prevent breach and check erosions.

Nearly five million people continue to reel under the impact of floods in more than 3200 villages spread over 21 districts in north and central Bihar. Standing crops and other property, worth over Rs 60 crore, have so far been destroyed in the current spell of floods.

## Police asked to shoot 'trouble makers' in Karachi

KARACHI, Sept 3: Thousands of police and paramilitary Rangers sealed off a neighbourhood in the heart of Pakistan's southern port city of Karachi today to stop an ethnic-based party from staging an anti-government rally, reports AP.

They used water tankers, buses and trucks to cordon off a three kilometre area. Eyewitnesses said the Burns Road neighborhood, a congested middle-class and business district, appeared to be under siege.

Policemen were deployed on the doorstep of apartment buildings and business establishments to force people to stay in doors and prevent people from gathering in the area to stage their rally.

Police said they have orders to shoot "trouble makers".

There were reports that the police fired bullets into the air after several activists shouting anti-government slogans gathered nearby the police barricades.

The police siege was to prevent the Muttahida Qami Movement from holding a rally to demand the resignation of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Earlier today police shot and killed two MQM activists.

The two neighbourhoods of Karachi, home to 14 million people, the majority of whom are considered to be supporters of the MQM.

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## Result today East Timor braces for more violence

DILI (EAST TIMOR) Sept 3: East Timor braced for more violence with the announcement tomorrow of the result of a ballot on independence, an option fiercely opposed by pro-Jakarta militiamen who now control much of the territory, report agencies.

The result is expected to show overwhelming support for independence, but pro-Jakarta militiamen have been waging a campaign of terror against East Timorese who want to sever links with Indonesia.

Anti-independence militiamen occupied towns and villages across East Timor today and police evacuated dozens of UN staff workers from one of the many areas that were under siege by the marauding gangs.

"They are burning everything. They don't respect anything. They are out of control. They are crazy," said one of the 54 United Nations workers who returned to Dili, the territorial capital, from the town of Maliana, southwest of the capital. He spoke on condition of anonymity, saying he feared reprisals.

"Indonesian police are doing nothing to stop the violence," said another evacuated UN worker, American David Peace. Forty of the evacuated staffers were foreigners acting as liaison officers or civilian police. The rest were East Timorese.

Earlier story on page 5

## Israel says peace deal near, Arafat denies any accord

JERUSALEM, Sept 3: Israel said today it was set to sign an elusive peace deal with the Palestinians after resolving a bitter dispute over prisoner releases, but PLO leader Yasser Arafat denied there was any agreement, reports AFP.

"We are very close to reaching a final agreement with the two sides for the betterment of the peace process and there is no doubt about the implementation of Wye from Israel's point of view," Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy said.

"It could be that we will conclude it today," Levy said at press conference with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, but he said the signing would likely be delayed until after the Jewish Sabbath tomorrow evening.

Prime Minister Ehud Barak's office said later that a deal would "probably" be signed tomorrow, with both Israeli and Egyptian officials saying the ceremony would likely take place in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.

It would be the first firm agreement reached with the Palestinians since Barak took office in July pledging to forge peace with the Jewish state's Arab neighbours.

The apparent breakthrough

came after three weeks of fraught on-again off-again negotiations which were deadlocked over the issue of Palestinian prisoner releases and the timetable for talks on a final peace deal.

But Arafat later sparked confusion when he went back on a statement that an agreement on a revised Wye River accord would be signed in the Egyptian Red Sea resort tomorrow.

**GAZA CITY, Sept 3: Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat fired his chief negotiator with Israel, Saeb Erakat today, a senior Palestinian official said.**

"Until this point there are no agreements. This is an attempt to escape from the agreements as signed," he told journalists on his return to Gaza from Alexandria, where he held talks with Albright and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

"There are still many differences," he said, without elaborating. Earlier, MENA quoting Arafat said, an agreement was reached on all points, according to AP.

## No compromise with illegal occupants of land: Nasim

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim yesterday said the government would rescue the capital from the grips of terrorists and illegal drug dealers by gradually removing slums, reports UNB.

"Dhaka city and its inhabitants cannot be kept hostage in the hands of a few terrorists, extortionists and phensidai dealers," he said.

**Hyundai**  
From page 1

About 20 people were injured when police clubbed the marauding agitators. All the injured were treated in Sirajganj Sadar Hospital.

Six people were arrested. Police said some looted property was recovered. A case was filed. A tense situation was prevailing in the area till writing of this report last night. Police and BWDB security guards were patrolling the area.

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## Kibria

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Finance Minister, ICC president KK Bangur and BCCI president Dr Bhaskar Banerjee emphasised the need for development of regional framework for promoting cooperation among the countries of this region, including Bangladesh.

They underlined the need for more cooperation in areas of tourism, transfer of information technology and joint ventures in various fields, specially agro-based industry.

Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Mustafa Faruque Mohammed, BCCI vice-president BD Bose and ICC secretary general Nazeeb Arif were among others who also spoke on the occasion, according to a message received here.

Earlier in the day the Finance Minister visited the Calcutta branch of Sonali Bank where he called upon its officials to uphold the image of the bank in the West Bengal capital.

## Major rivers

From page 1

were flowing above their danger levels at 13 points while 29 points recorded fall, nine rise and two points remained steady.

Meanwhile, a significant rainfall of 36 mm was recorded at Sheola, 27 mm at Habiganj, 13 mm at Sakhira and 10 mm at Bhairab Bazar during the last 24 hours till 9 am yesterday.

## Koreans expose 'Brazilians'

Sports Reporter

South Korea U-18 team taught Rio de Janeiro Soccer Federation, a sub standard team from Brazil, a good lesson on how to play soccer when they handed them a 0-2 defeat in their last group B match played at the floodlit Bangabandhu National Stadium last evening.

The young lads from South Korea, with their second win in a row, became the last team to book a berth in tomorrow's semi-finals. They will take on arch rivals Japan in the second semi-final scheduled for a 6 pm start.

The winners led the first half 1-0. Striker Lee Chun Sun, who scored four goals including a hat trick in his team's 7-2 drubbing of Thailand in the first match, put the youthful Koreans ahead in the 44th minute following a brilliant solo run. The tall forward dodged past two Rio defenders before placing the ball home (1-0).

Lee, the talented attacker, then went on to score his sixth goal of the tournament in the 66th minute to slam the door on the poor Brazilians.

It was a trip gone amiss for the Rio side who proved incapable of producing any of the known brilliance of South American soccer in their two matches. It was learnt that the BFF has served a show cause notice on the Rio manager asking for an explanation for their poor performance, particularly because they have been paid appearance and match fee.

The BFF paid 8000 USD to the 'poor' Brazil side as appearance fee and also paid an additional 4000 USD as match fee for the two matches.

Although Rio managed a solitary-goal win over Thailand in their opening match and later blamed poor ground condition, yesterday they were equally pathetic on dry soil on which the Korean kids almost toyed with their inadequacy.

The Koreans are participating in the tournament as part of their preparation for the next World under-19 championship.