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# The Daily Star

Today's issue  
20 pages

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## The poet's last wishes

Ordinary burial, no stately rites

Begum Sufia Kamal will be buried on Wednesday at Azimpur Graveyard according to her last wish, reports UNB.

Her family members said she desired to avoid state honours during her last rituals as she lived like an ordinary person and wanted to remain the same.

She asked her family and close associates not to buy any piece of land for her grave and opted for Azimpur Graveyard.

While paying respect to the late poet at her Dhanmondi residence, President Shahabuddin Ahmed inquired about the place of her burial. He offered Mirpur Intellectuals Graveyard for her eternal rest. Her family members then informed him about her last desire.



## Our 'lady of light' passes away

Thousands throng *Shanjer Maya* at Dhanmondi to pay last respects

By Staff Correspondent

Poet Begum Sufia Kamal has passed away.

The end came at the age of 88 after a life lived with those who fought for freedom, democracy and human rights.

She died yesterday morning of cardiac arrest at 8:55 am at the Intensive Care Unit of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMUH).

"Our lady of light", as The Daily Star called her while awarding her the 1996 person of the year, left a nation grieving with the President Shahabuddin Ahmed leading the mourners.

"All her life, she led the Muslim women to the path of progress," said the President in a condolence message.

She was hospitalised on Thursday for renal failure. She was also suffering from old age complications, hospital sources

said.

She was removed to the ICU on Friday at about 7pm as her condition deteriorated. She was under the supervision of two senior doctors - Dr K M Iqbal and Dr Harun-ur-Rashid.

She left behind three daughters and two sons. Her eldest son Shahid Kamal, a journalist and daughter Amina Kahar

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were staying with her at her Dhanmondi residence. Her eldest son Sajit Kamal will arrive from US before her burial on Wednesday. Family sources said. Her two other daughters are Sultana Kamal, a lawyer and Syeda Kamal, an artist.

A pall of gloom descended on the capital as the news of her death spread.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina rushed to the BSMMUH on hearing the sad news.

The body was brought to 'Shajer Maya', the poet's Dhanmondi residence (House 15) on Road 11 (new), at about 11 in the morning.

The President, Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia, ministers, political leaders, journalists, writers, cultural activists and human rights activists paid their last respects to the 'beacon of democracy' at the Dhanmondi residence.

Streams of mourners in their hundreds continued to flock there till the body was taken to BIRDEM hospital at about 3pm after the first *namaz-e-janaza* at the Dhanmondi residence.

A condolence book was opened at the residence.

Several senior ministers accompanied the Prime Minister to the hospital.

A 1001-member National Committee, with Prof Kabir

Choudhury as convenor, will hold a condolence meeting at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city on November 26 at 3pm.

The poet's body will be kept at BIRDEM mortuary till Wednesday morning for arrival of her son from US.

On that day the body will be taken to Bangladesh Mahila Parishad office at 2pm and kept there for half an hour.

Then the body will be taken to Bangla Academy and kept there for some time before taking it to the Central Shaheed Minar where it will be kept till 5pm to enable people to pay their last respect.

Her *namaz-e-janaza* will be held at the Jatiya Eidgah Maidan after Maghreb prayers. She will be buried at the Azimpur graveyard as per last wish.

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## The 'never lose hope' woman is no more!

By Staff Correspondent

In an interview with the Editor of this daily, published on January 1, 1996, Begum Sufia Kamal had expressed her anxiety and disappointment over the present situation, and her faith in the younger generation.

She had also expressed her concern over the lack of respect for women by men.

She had also expressed her worries about rising unemployment and dependence on foreign assistance. She entrusted all never to lose hope.

Poet Sufia Kamal or 'Lady of light', was named The Daily Star Woman of the Year in 1996.

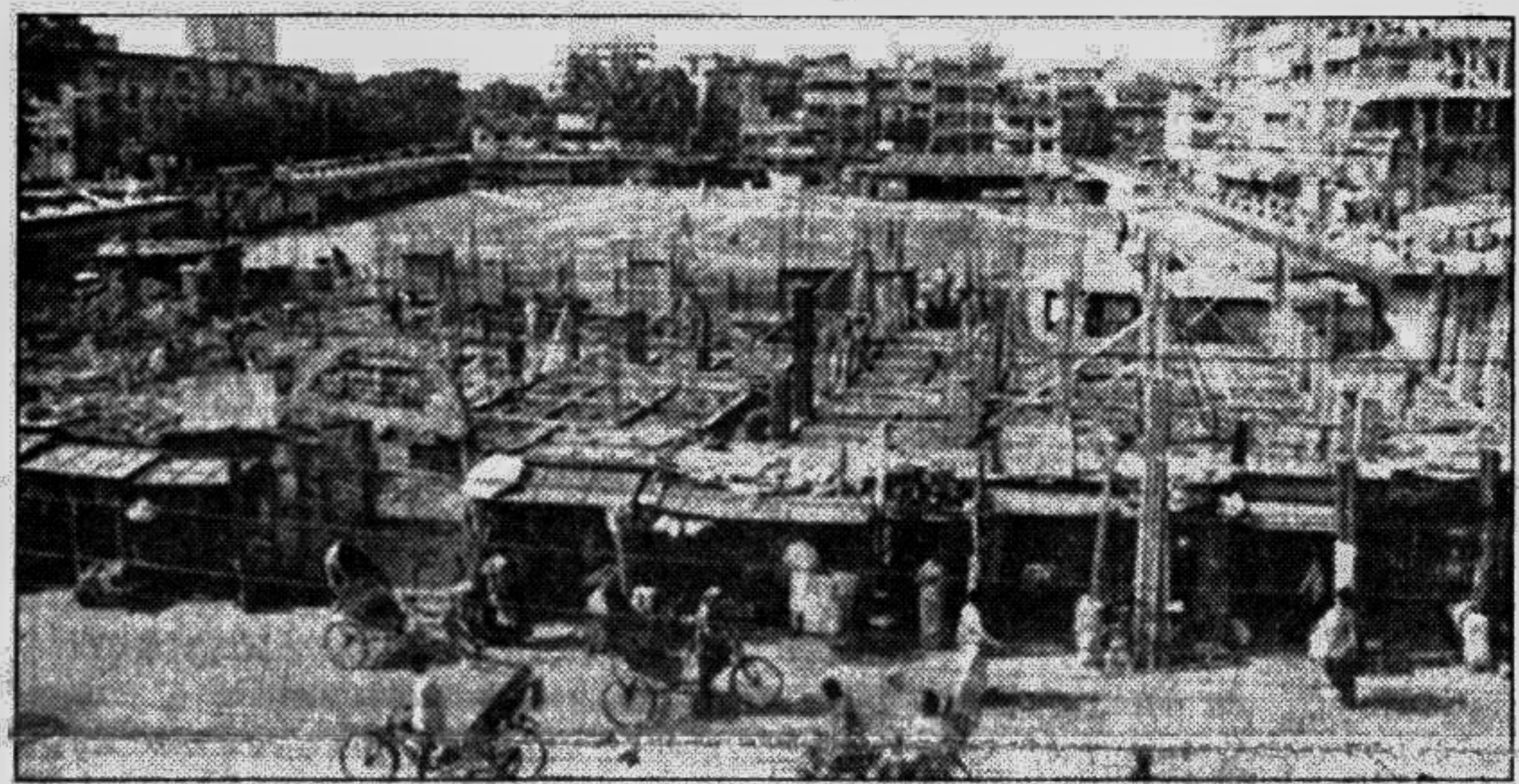
Begum Sufia Kamal, a distinguished cultural personality, well known for her contributions for women's emancipation, was born on June 20, 1911 in Shaishabad, Barisal.

She started social work at

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## City fathers watch parks vanish

45 public parks are on the verge of extinction



A shopping centre, courtesy of the Dhaka City Corporation, fortifies Shaheed Park in the city's Mohammadpur against local children who are running out of places to play.

—Star photo by Sk Enamul Haq

By Morshed Ali Khan

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has miserably failed to look after any of its 45 public parks and open spaces in the city though it spends Tk one crore annually and has more than 100 people for their maintenance.

Be it at Jatrabari, Bangsal, Hazaribagh or Dhanmondi, the DCC parks are either in a pitifully neglected condition, or have been 'taken over' by unscrupulous section of the people.

Others have been left to the 'care of the street urchins', floating sex workers, drug addicts, fuel wood collectors, club houses and offices of the political parties.

In many cases, DCC officials have taken initiative to convert the parks into shopping centres, community centres or complexes comprising mosques and shops.

At Shikkatuli in the old town, the mayor himself has al-

legedly turned a part of the local children's park into his 'family car parking lot'. The entire area is devoid of greenery and it displays lack of care and maintenance. All the installations and equipment meant for children to play have disappeared rather mysteriously from here.

At Mohammadpur, the famous Shaheed Park is on the verge of extinction. Mayor Mohammad Hanif has allotted almost half of the field for construction of a mosque-cum-shopping complex. It was after reports appeared in The Daily Star last year, that the Prime Minister's office put an embargo on the construction. But most recently, 'deals were made with the DCC' to restart the work. Only difference this time is that the developers have taken over about twenty feet of additional land for the project.

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## Sharif pleads for 'fair' trial

KARACHI, Nov 20: Former Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif and four others jointly accused in a murder conspiracy case appeared before a judicial magistrate here today, witnesses said, report agencies.

They were brought to the court of magistrate Anwar Qazi in armoured cars under strict security to hear witness statements recorded, police said.

Sharif pleaded for an 'open, free and fair trial' - 'accusing the army, that overthrew him, of 'cooking up' the hijacking accusation against him.

In a note to a lawyer of a codefendant Sharif wrote: 'I only ask for an open, free and fair trial and their cooked up story will expose itself and the world will judge the holowness of the accusation of hijacking.'

Sharif wrote the note to Mian Atab Farukh at a court appearance to hear the testimony of witnesses in the case.

The army has accused Sharif and several others of hijacking and treason, two charges that carry the death penalty or life

in prison. The ex-premier also faces accusations of conspiracy to murder and physical endangerment, which carry lesser prison terms.

On Friday a special anti-terrorist court ordered Sharif to remain in police custody until charges are formally filed on November 26.

The court appearance on Saturday was attended by Sharif and four codefendants to hear the witnesses. They included Wing Commander Tariq Sheikh, who provides security at the Karachi airport, as well as Nadim Akbar, a control tower official who was working on October 12 - the day Sharif allegedly refused permission for a plane carrying army leader Gen Pervez Musharraf to land in Karachi.

Sharif waved to journalists and a small group of people standing at a distance from the magistrate's office. Police and paramilitary rangers kept reporters away from the closed-door proceedings and manhandled the journalists.

The magistrate adjourned the proceedings until Monday

after recording statements of two officials from the civil aviation department and Pakistan International Airlines and a senior police official. More witnesses will appear at the next hearing.

Lawyers of the accused cross-examined the witnesses.

Witnesses said Sharif read newspapers carrying his pictures and reports on his first appearance at a public tribunal on Friday since his ouster by army chief General Pervez Musharraf in a military coup on October 12.

He also talked to the other accused.

A small group of supporters in the vicinity of the magistrate's court shouted 'prime minister, prime minister' as Sharif was taken back in an armoured vehicle to an army base after the hearing.

They carried Sharif's portraits and made victory signs. 'We have come here to tell Sharif that people are still with him,' one of the supporters said.

Sharif's counsel, Iqbal Radh,

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## Armed Forces Day today

Armed Forces day will be observed today, reports UNB.

On this day during the War of Liberation in 1971, members of Army, Navy and Air forces began a combined attack against the Pakistani occupation forces.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave separate messages on the occasion.

The day's programme will begin with offering of munajat (special prayers) after Fajr prayers in all mosques at army garrisons, naval ships and air force bases across the country.

President Shahabuddin, also Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, will place wreaths at Shikha Anirban (Eternal Flame) in the morning to pay homage to those who had embraced martyrdom in the

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## Inside Today

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**Restoring JU's Tarnished Image**

Column: Beneath the Surface  
by Abdul Bayes  
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### Business

**Huge duty evasion unearthed in Ctg**  
France faced with EC sanctions on 3 fronts  
DSE, CSE price quotations  
Pages 6, 7 & 8

### Supplement

Today's 20-page issue of The Daily Star contains a 4-page supplement on 'Armed Forces Day' on pages 17 to 20

## Prayer Timings

November 21

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:10	5:40
Johr	12:45	1:15
Asr	3:42	4:00
Maghrib	5:20	5:25
Esha	7:15	7:45

Source: Islamic Foundation

## WTO agenda discussed

Dhaka should seek review of Uruguay Round before another

Star Report

Speakers at a seminar yesterday unanimously agreed that Bangladesh should oppose any new round of trade negotiations unless commitments made so far by the WTO members in the Uruguay Round Agreement and the subsequent WTO ministerial meetings are implemented.

They said during the Uruguay Round, most of the developing countries were unaware of the consequences of the negotiations and at the end of the day signed agreements 'as mere spectators'.

The seminar, 'GATT, Liberalisation and Bangladesh Trade' was organised by Integrated Community and Industrial Development (INCIDIN) Bangladesh, a research and advocacy agency, at the CIRDAP auditorium in the city. Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed, Secretary General of Workers Party Rashed Khan Menon and former finance minister Abdul Mal Abdul Muhit were among others who

spoke at the seminar, chaired by Professor Rehman Sobhan.

The developed countries highlighted differences that existed among them and finally approached the LDCs who were not allowed to hammer on their demands, said Professor Rehman Sobhan.

He suggested Bangladesh, being a member of SAARC, come forward with a group of actions within the framework of SAARC.

'This is because it involves issues which effect a large number of people, future of industries and industrialisation in the country.'

He said Bangladesh was not prepared for the first round of negotiations and therefore failed to take advantages which were there.

It opened up the economy too fast when there were no pressure to dismantle the tariff barrier. 'But we could have taken much advantage had we gone through negotiations. India did

not do it at the same pace and could take much more advantage.'

'Bangladesh could not undo the past but will be responsible for what happens in future,' said the eminent economist.

Tofail Ahmed said most of the LDCs were frequently shifting their positions as they were busy trying to negotiate their own interest.

He said ahead of the Millennium Round in Seattle on November 30, the G-77 met in Beirut where there were a consensus on opposing second round of negotiations without assessing the commitments of the Uruguay Round.

'But later we found many had shifted from their positions as everyone is trying to take advantage of the Millennium Round.'

Tofail said that a day before the ministerial meeting he was trying to organise a meeting of the LDCs to discuss their prob-

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## Power, fertiliser factories can best use local gas

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a roundtable on Bangladesh gas utilisation yesterday said that the country's gas resources should be utilised mainly to generate power and produce fertiliser with the goal of poverty alleviation.

The participants at the roundtable, including public representatives, bureaucrats as well as oil company executives and diplomats, unanimously emphasised maximum value addition to gas in the process of its utilisation.

The roundtable entitled 'Gas Strategy in Bangladesh' was organised by APEC-Bangladesh Society and Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs at Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies.

Speakers also agreed that the question of gas export should be considered when the nation had an indisputable quantum of gas reserve. At the same time, they stressed that investment for export-oriented power and fertiliser would ensure value addition to the country's gas.

Speaker of Jatiya Sangsad Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury,

inaugurated the roundtable as the chief guest, which was addressed by State Minister for Energy Prof Rafiqul Islam MP, Honorary Minister and Board Of Investment Chairman M Mokammel Haq, Former finance minister M Saifur Rahman, MP, chaired the concluding session of the roundtable.

Two other sessions of the roundtable were chaired by former energy minister Dr Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, MP, and Justice Tofazzal Hossain.

Participants agreed that it was very hard to determine the country's total recoverable gas reserve and various parties were quoting contradictory figures ranging from 26 TCF to 100 TCF. They urged Petrobangla to undertake its own study and assessment to remove all confusion in order to help policy makers take pragmatic decisions.

They also emphasised the setting up of an independent regulatory body to look in to gas-related affairs.

Saifur Rahman said, 'there's a hide and seek game going on regarding the gas ex-

port option, chiefly because of its political implications. However, it is also difficult to agree to gas export before you know how much gas you have and how do you want to use it.'

'For now, the export option should be ruled out. We have tremendous prospect in fertiliser and power sectors. Everyone is demanding increased power supply nowadays, and we cannot supply it,' he added. Referring to the oil companies he said, 'its not disappointing that we would not export gas. We can start with making more power and fertiliser plants, meet domestic demands and earn foreign currency by exports.'

He also spoke in favour of partial subsidisation of gas prices-- a concept rejected by foreign experts and oil companies.

Chairman of Power Development Board (PDB) Quamrul Islam Siddique argued that although the donors tried to say that the rural poor could not afford power, the experience of Grameen Bank showed that the rate of loan repayment by the poor people was highest in

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একুশ শতকের শুরুতে নিয়ে এলো

**বসুন্ধরা**

আবার সেই সুবর্ণ সুযোগ

বাবিধারা ডিপ্লোমেটিক জোন সংলগ্ন  
রাজক অনুমোদিত বসুন্ধরা প্রকল্পে  
সীমিত সংখ্যক প্লট এর জন্য  
"আগে আসলে আগে পাবেন"  
ভিত্তিতে চলতি বাজার মূল্যের  
প্রায় তিন ভাগের এক ভাগ মূল্যে  
প্লট বরাদ্দ চলছে।

**মাত্র ১লক্ষ টাকা**  
জমা দিয়ে ২৭ মাসের সহজ কিস্তিতে একবিশ  
শতাব্দীর ঠিকানা গড়তে বসুন্ধরার জমি কিনুন এবং  
এই অভিজাত আবাসিক এলাকায় স্থায়ী নিবাস  
এবং সঠিক বিনিয়োগের সুযোগ নিন।

এ সুযোগ ১২ই ডিসেম্বর ১৯৯৯ ইং  
থেকে ৩১শে জানুয়ারী ২০০০ ইং পর্যন্ত

বিতারিত তথ্যের জন্য যোগাযোগ করুনঃ

**ইষ্ট ওয়েস্ট প্রপার্টি ডেভেলপমেন্ট (প্রাইভেট) লিমিটেড**  
(বসুন্ধরা প্রকল্পের একটি প্রতিষ্ঠান)

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