

**BUY NOW... PAY LATER**

**Whirlpool**  
HOME APPLIANCES USA

Refrigerator

Transcom Electronics Limited

Authorized distributor in Bangladesh for Whirlpool Appliances, USA

# The Daily Star

**LEASE FINANCING**  
Are You Looking For Financial Assistance In

- Capital Machinery
- Heavy Construction Equipment
- Medical Equipment
- Marine Transport
- Generator & Boiler
- Vehicle Hire Leasing Buses, Microbuses, Trucks, Tractors
- Cargo Carriers, Pick-Up Cars
- Life/Elevators
- Air Conditioning Plants

**PHOENIX LEASING COMPANY LTD.**  
Shadhinata Shaban (1st fl) 88, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka  
Phone: 9569007 (Auto Hunting) Fax: 9567787  
Agrabad Branch, R.M. House, 31 Agrabad C/A, Ctg. Ph: 710086, Fax: 710086

VOL. IX NO. 304 REGD. NO. DA 781

www.dailystarnews.com

DHAKA MONDAY NOVEMBER 29, 1999

32 days to the  
3rd Millennium

AGRAHAYAN 15, 1406 BS

SABAN 20, 1420 HIJRI

16 PAGES PRICE: TAKA 6.00

## 13 power units didn't operate yesterday

By Staff Correspondent

Thirteen power generation units out of 58 in the 19 power plants in the country could not operate yesterday, causing a loadshedding of 164 MW.

PDB sources attributed this to technical reasons. "Many of the power units are old and cannot operate continuously. We have to maintain a scheduled shutdown of those units," one source explained.

The units which remained shut yesterday are Ashuganj gas turbine-2, Fenchuganj gas turbine-1 and 2, Shiddhirganj-4, Haripur gas turbine-2, Khulna barge mounted-1, Shajibazar-1, Ghorashal-6, Kapitai-1, Ashuganj-CCPP and Ashuganj-5, Shikhabah and Baghabari unit.

Loadshedding on the day was 73 MW in DESA area, 24 MW in Chittagong region, 23 MW in Khulna region, 22 MW in Rajshahi region, 10 MW in Comilla, six MW in Mymensingh and six MW in Sylhet regions, the sources said.

In the capital, many areas under Dhanmondi experienced frequent power disruption because of a leakage in an underground cable line. Repair of the cable line, closed since Friday morning, was going on, DESA sources said.

Paribagh, Rajabazar, Purana Paltan and some parts of old Dhaka also experienced severe loadshedding.

The worst victims of frequent power disruption were students appearing at the Degree examinations and annual examinations in schools, colleges and other educational institutions.

## Nasu Mian murder Pre-planned act to put blame on BNP, says Bhuiyan

By Staff Correspondent

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday said the government has continued filing "false" cases against party men and harassment on them in a bid to tarnish image of the leaders and activists and destroy BNP.

He said the Awami League government since assuming office has filed unspecified number of "false" cases against leaders and activists of BNP and its different front organisations apart from killing over 300 activists.

Addressing a press conference at BNP central office yesterday afternoon, he said the government again filed a "false" case against 28 leaders including party's joint secretary general and Juba Dal president Mirza Abbas on charge of setting ablaze a truck and burning its driver Nasu Mian alive and injuring two helpers during hartal hours on November 25 at Shahjahanpur.

Another victim of the fire burn succumbed to his injuries today.

Bhuiyan said the case is aimed at destroying the image of BNP and harass its leaders.

"I categorically want to say that no BNP activist was involved in the incident as no BNP leader or activist was present on the spot. It was a pre-planned act of the government and the ruling party to put the blame on BNP."

The BNP secretary general said the party had withdrawn its pickets on that day and was

See Page 11 Col 4

## Inside Today

### Article

## Russia's Spectres of Disintegration

Column: Perspectives by Brig (Rtd) M Abdul Hafiz

### Page 4

### Business

DSE set to carry out mock Y2K trading in mid-Dec

ASEAN free market targets one-fifth of planet

DSE, CSE price quotations Pages 6, 7 & 8

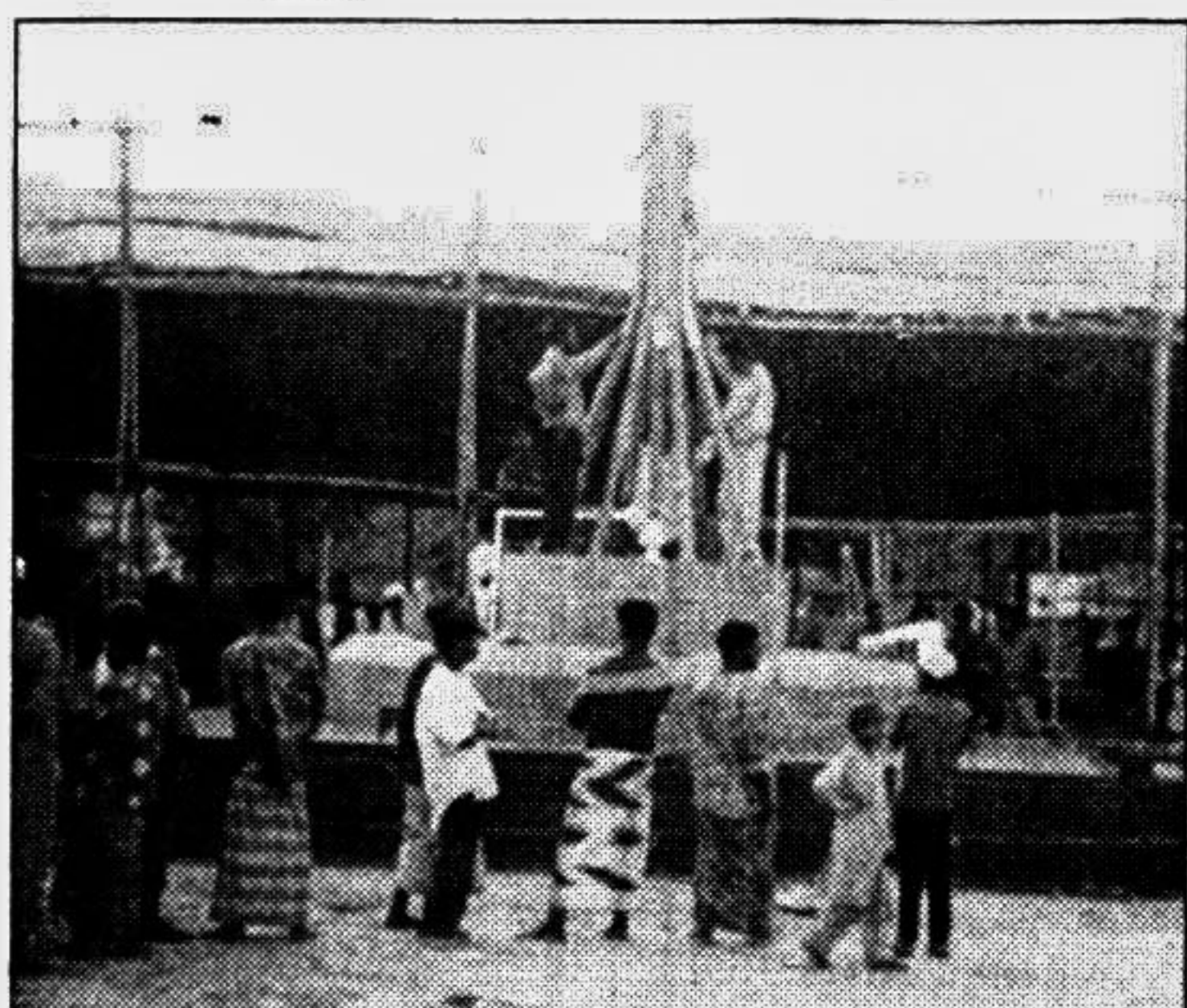
## Prayer Timings

November 29

|         | Azan  | Jamaat |
|---------|-------|--------|
| Fajr    | 5-15  | 5-45   |
| Zohr    | 12-45 | 1-15   |
| Asr     | 3-42  | 4-00   |
| Maghrib | 5-20  | 5-25   |
| Esha    | 7-00  | 7-30   |

Source: Islamic Foundation

# Gas supply to western region starts tomorrow



The 20-feet-high 'Shikha Projolon' erected on the Sirajganj town protection embankment to mark gas supply to the western region. — Star photo

Star Report

Supply of natural gas to the country's western region starts tomorrow, opening up a new horizon of economic activities in the area.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the gas supply at a function at Sirajganj.

Gas will be supplied through the 217 crore taka newly installed 55 km gas pipeline, starting from Elenaga in Tangail and crossing the Bangabandhu Bridge. The system includes a 24-inch diameter pipeline from Elenaga to Bangabandhu bridge, a 30-inch pipeline from Bangabandhu bridge to Nalka and a 20 inch pipeline from Nalka to Baghabari.

With supply of gas, a new company, Western Region Gas Company Ltd (WESGAS) will also start functioning formally, official sources said.

Due to lack of standby demand for domestic and industrial consumption and absence of other infrastructure in the

region, a maximum of 50 million cubic feet of gas per day (mmcf) would be transmitted through this system within a year or so, the sources said.

But the demand is likely to increase to 200 mmcf within a few years, they said. Total gas consumption in the country is about 900 mmcf now.

The government has plans and proposals for setting up of large scale power plants in Kushtia-Iswardi region to export power. Therefore, the demand will rise drastically in future, they added.

In Baghabari, there are two power plants, which are run with imported fuel now. Gas supply to that area will give these plants an option to use cheaper local natural gas and save valuable foreign currency.

One of those, a 71 MW plant owned by the Power Development Board (PDB), will be converted into a gas-based one, the sources said.

See Page 12 Col 7

## Writ filed by Kader Siddique Showcause on govt, CEC: Probe by new body restrained

By SC Correspondent

The High Court yesterday directed the government and the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) to show cause within one week why the probe committee formed by the Law Ministry replacing the one formed by the CEC to inquire into alleged irregularities in Tangail-8 by-polls should not be declared to have been formed without lawful authority.

The HC also restrained the new probe committee from conducting any inquiry pending hearing of the rule.

The court passed the order upon a writ petition filed by Bangabir Kader Siddique, an independent candidate in the Tangail by-election.

The seat fell vacant after resignation of Siddique following his expulsion from the ruling Awami League.

It was stated in the petition that the Election Commission in order to enquire into the allegations of rigging, irregularities, invasion and influence formed a committee comprising AR Masud, Additional District Judge, Shahidullah Bakul, Subordinate Judge and Reza Ali, Senior Assistant Judge of Tangail and Mohammad Zakaria, Deputy Secretary, EC.

The committee was announced on November 17 and it was published in the daily newspapers including The Daily Ittefaq.

On November 17 the committee was sent to the Ministry of Law for necessary action after consultation with the Supreme Court, the petition stated.

See Page 11 Col 6

## Probe into corruption charge JS body to ask DCC chief engineer to show cause

By Reaz Ahmad

A parliamentary sub-committee investigating corruption and fraud in an environmental project will ask DCC's chief engineer to explain his 'mysterious' absence from Sunday's crucial meeting.

Shamsul Haque Bhuiyan's absence irked all five members of the sub-committee, which was formed on September 28. It should have submitted its final report on the Tk 146 crore project to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Estimate a month ago.

"We'll serve him (the DCC official) with show cause notice. We're surprised he would remain absent from Sunday's meeting," said MP ASM Feroj, the sub-committee's chairman.

Other members attending the sub-committee meeting yesterday expressed deep anguish over the unexpected absence of Bhuiyan, former pro-

ject director of the DCC's World Bank funded Environment Development Project.

It's not the first time DCC officials haven't co-operated with the investigation. In spite of repeated letters from the sub-committee asking for all relevant files and documents of the project, sources said the DCC has submitted only a few of those papers.

After reviewing those handful papers, the committee detected a number of errors in the project's bill payments. However, "the project management authorities did not take any administrative actions when they detected the various gross flaws in project works," said the source.

The sub-committee warned officials to submit all papers and files related to the project by Dec. 11 at the latest.

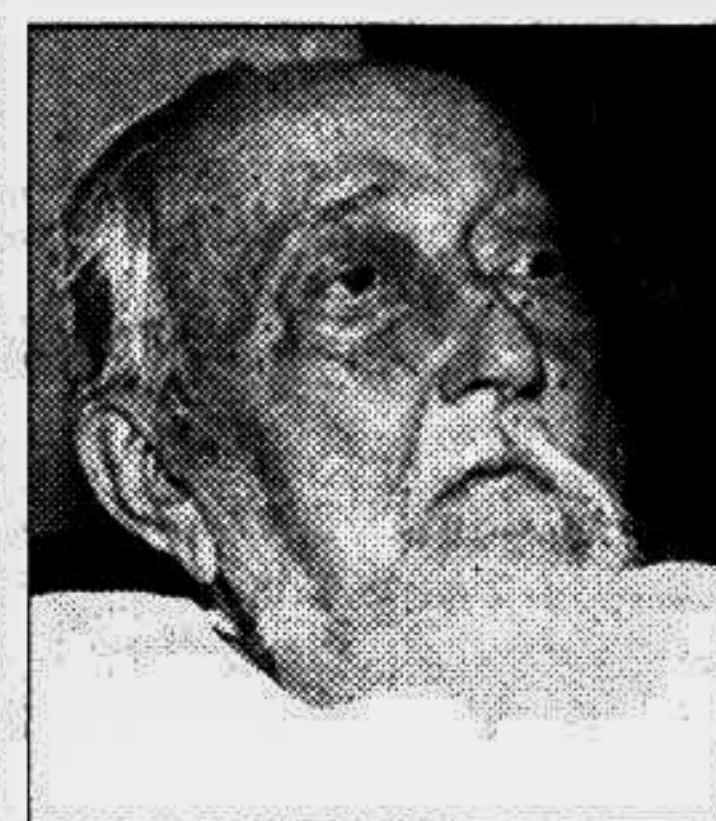
"We'll visit all the project

sites in December and try to submit our report as soon as possible", said one sub-committee member. "In addition to parliamentarians, there will be people from BUET, LGRD and ministry concerned in our team to inspect the sites."

The other members of the parliamentary sub-committee are Prof. MA Kuddus and Sultan Md Mansur Ahmed of Awami League, Md Shahjahan of BNP and Dr ATM Fazle Rabbi of Jatiya Party.

Started in 1988, the environmental project's goals included the development of Islambagh, Shaheednagar, Rasulpur and Dholaikhal. The project also wanted to purchase garbage trucks for the DCC and repair its central workshop. The government borrowed money for the project at 12.5 per cent interest.

See Page 11 Col 5



## Prof Razzak passes away

By staff correspondent

National Professor Abdul Razzak passed away yesterday afternoon at the Ibrahim Memorial Hospital (BIRDEM). He was 86.

Doctors said Prof Razzak died of respiratory failure. He was on artificial respiration at the intensive care unit since hospitalisation on October 13.

His body was taken to the hospital mortuary at 2pm. With severe respiratory problem Prof Razzak was first admitted to a city clinic on October 11. He was later shifted to

See Page 11 Col 7

## Raushan gets party stick

By Staff Correspondent

Raushan Ershad, MP, presidium member of Jatiya Party (Ershad), has been barred from taking part in party activity for three months "for making statements contrary to the party policy," a JP press release said last night.

The faxed press release, received at 11:30 pm, was signed by her husband and JP chief HM Ershad and secretary general Nazimul Rahman Manzur.

She had made the statements at the National Press Club on Saturday which caused a stir in the alliance. She had called for a change in the trend of the opposition politics which she termed "politics of vengeance and animosity".

Sources said the "suspension" came after a row at the liaison committee of the four-party alliance which was holding a meeting late last night at the Baridhara residence-cum-office of Ershad.

The committee was discussing a draft of a joint declaration that the alliance leaders

planned to announce after a proposed summit of four party chiefs shortly.

An earlier story says: The remarks made by Jatiya Party leader Roushan Ershad MP about the current anti-government movement have evoked sharp reaction in the rank and file of the party and increased suspicion about it in the three other parties in the opposition alliance.

JP sources said majority of the party leaders and activists are "very much annoyed" at the statement and expressed the view that either the government or JP Chairman H M Ershad is involved in the "game of vengeance and animosity".

The remarks also drew similar reaction from the leaders and activists of BNP. Many of them believe that Ershad might again side with the government and quit the four-party alliance, party sources said.

A close aide of BNP

See Page 11 Col 2

## 4 parties to hold rallies, bring out processions today

By Staff Correspondent

The four opposition parties will organise separate rallies and processions today as part of their country-wide programme to protest killing of an opposition activist at Sathkhira during strike on November 25, filing of false case against leaders and activists including BNP Joint Secretary General Mirza Abbas.

BNP will hold a protest rally today at 3.00 pm at Muktangan. Leaders and activists of BNP will also bring out a procession at the end of the rally.

Jatiya Party, Dhaka City unit will hold its protest rally and bring out procession at the party office at 2, Kalabagan in the city.

Jamaat-e-Islami will hold its rally at the north gate of the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque at 4.00 pm.

Meanwhile, liaison Committee of four opposition political parties BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islamic Okiya Jote yesterday demanded withdrawal of the case filed against 28 opposition leaders and activists including former

See Page 11 Col 8

## There was no written statement: Raushan

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Party leader Raushan Ershad MP in a statement yesterday said the news published in different newspapers about her 'conversation' with journalists at the Jatiya Press Club on Opposition's current anti-government movement "was not based on my written statement".

"Since there was no written statement, I think journalists of different newspapers published my opinion in different ways. In certain newspapers, the opinion was not correctly reflected. Therefore, I am urging journalists to publish news objectively and neutrally."

Raushan said, "My party is playing the major role in the anti-government movement. There is no scope for confusion about the unity of the four opposition parties in the one-point movement".

About her visit to the press club, she said she had informal talks with press club President Khandaker Manirul Alam, who welcomed her at his office.

See Page 11 Col 6

## 'National security linked more to internal factors'

Unplanned defence investment decried

By Staff Correspondent

Political and social instability threaten national security more than external factors, but without a well-defined national defence policy, the country can't combat either, speakers concluded at a seminar Sunday.

Organised by the Centre for Strategic and Peace Studies, "The National Security of Bangladesh and its Armed Forces" seminar attracted politicians, army officials, retired civil and military bureaucrats, journalist, academics and businessmen eager to discuss a topic once considered taboo.

Matiur Rahman, editor of the daily Prothom Alo, presented a paper titled "A Citizen's Thoughts on the Armed Forces and Defence Policy of

Bangladesh."

Rahman argued successive governments have tried to use the army for their selfish ends, since it was still the most organised force in the country. However, these governments also spent huge sums to modernise and strengthen the armed forces without a concrete plan.

In "The National Security of Bangladesh and its Armed Forces," Brigadier M Abdul Hafiz (ret'd), argued the threats facing Bangladesh could be multidimensional, originating from within and beyond the nation's borders.

Maj. Gen. K M Shafullah (ret'd), chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on defence, said aggression

from foreign nations was always a national security issue, but questioned how Bangladesh should confront future threats.

"It's true that we cannot protect the national security without a strong armed force. But a policy is needed to determine what kind of defence we require..." said Shafullah.

"We could win the War of Liberation due to people's participation in it but we must resolve conflicts among ourselves.

"India helped us to win the war... but in the India-Pakistan power game, nobody is our friend now."

Shafullah, the first army chief in an independent Bangladesh, regretted the armed forces were still being

See Page 11 Col 5

## 70 pc patients do not get drugs at NICVD

By Naimul Haq

About 70 per cent patients do not get drugs required for heart surgeries and investigations at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) in the city.

"With the supply of drugs we get from the government, the requirement of only 30 per cent of the patients can be met. The supply lasts hardly three months of a year," said Prof M A Zaman, Director of the NICVD, popularly known as Suhrawardy Hospital.

"If we are to provide drugs free of cost only to patients undergoing open-heart surgeries alone, we require at least Tk 2.5 crore annually. But we don't get enough supply (from central medical store depot - CMSD)."

He told this correspondent, "We wrote to the health ministry to increase the allocation of drugs to meet the increasing requirement, but it is yet to be

done." A cardiologist pointed out that this is the only hospital in the country where heart cardiac investigations are done.

But, he said, compared to the needs of drugs here, the supply is too insignificant.

About 500 heart surgeries and over 3000 cardiac investigations were done at the hospital last year and the number is rising every year, official statistics showed.

In an investigation by The Daily Star, it was found that almost 80 per cent of the patients could not afford the costly drugs. On an average, a patient undergoing open-heart surgery requires drugs worth at least Tk 14,000.

Treatment of patients at the NICVD includes catheterisation, coronary angiogram, ballooning, stent implantation and balloon valvuloplasty.

Drugs required for each of these cost Tk 1000 to 5000.

In cardiac surgery, NICVD offers coronary bypass, open heart and close heart surgeries, valve replacement and congenital heart disease operations. The cost of drugs required for each of these range from Tk 8,000 to 16,000.

Resident surgeon of the 160-bed hospital Golam Kabir said, "Drug shortage is a major problem. Many patients have to wait until they can manage drugs on their own."

Even life saving drugs needed in coronary care unit and intensive care units are also in short supply, hospital sources said.

Prof Zaman said the hospital gives preference to providing life saving drugs to patients. "For this, we have set up a Patient Welfare Fund to buy emergency drugs."

## Malaysia goes to polls today

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 28: Malaysia's ruling coalition put on a confident face on the eve of elections today as Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad blasted a key Islamic opposition party near the end of what has been described as the "dirty" campaign in the country's history, reports AFP.

Mahathir's 14-party National Front coalition and an opposition alliance, whose candidate for prime minister is jailed deputy premier Anwar Ibrahim, wound up their eight-day campaign before polls Monday.

Some 9.5 million people are eligible to vote in Malaysia's 10th general elections, which will choose legislators to parliament and 11 state legislative assemblies.

At the National Front headquarters in Kuala Lumpur Sunday, a top official was up-bellied about the coalition's prospects and announced plans for Mahathir to hold a press conference when it retained its two-thirds majority.

"When the National Front achieves two-thirds majority,

the Prime Minister will hold a press conference and there will be some celebrations, a thanksgiving ceremony and cutting of the cake," Yaakub Mohamed, the Front's executive secretary, told reporters.

For the first time the National Front is facing direct challenges in nearly all constituencies from a united opposition alliance, the Alternative Front.

The opposition Alternative Front alliance wants to break the two-thirds majority enjoyed by the National Front for three decades.

Lim Kit Siang, leader of the Democratic Action Party (DAP), a key component of the Alternative Front, charged that Mahathir's coalition had used "fear and scare" advertising on the largely state-controlled media to gain votes and urged police to probe the funding of the campaign which he said ran into millions of dollars.

Lim called this general election the "dirtiest" in the nation's 42-year history and accused Mahathir's coalition of planning all along to make it so

to save its two-third majority in parliament.

The opposition also claimed the National Front misused government machinery and adopted money politics to sway votes.

Mahathir has brushed off the allegations and said the opposition was preparing excuses for its defeat.

Fighting a persistent cold and coughing occasionally, the 73-year-old Prime Minister spent the last day of the campaign at his Kedah home state blasting the fundamentalist Parti Islam SeMalaysia (PAS).

PAS, which rules the only opposition-held state in Kelantan, has vowed to gain control of Kedah and other Moslem-majority states of Terengganu and Perlis in Malaysia's Malay heartland.

PAS has become the National Front's biggest threat in the elections as it gains support from both rural and middle-class Malays, who form the majority in Malaysia's 22 million population.

Mahathir accused the

See Page 11 Col 6



Children walk past posters of prime minister Mahathir Mohamad yesterday at Pekan Tanah Merah, in Mahathir's home state of Kedah, Malaysia goes to general elections today. —AFP photo

## Hartal victim Zakir succumbs to injuries

By Staff Correspondent

Zakir, heli of truck driver Nasu Mian who was killed when a petro-bomb was hurled on their vehicle during Thursday's hartal, succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College hospital yesterday.

Unidentified people hurled petrol bomb on the truck while it was crossing a Shajahanpur area at about 5 pm.

Driver of the truck, Nasu Mian and helpers — Zakir and Babul — were injured. They were rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where Nasu was declared dead. Babul, however, is still under treatment at the DMCH.

The body of Zakir was sent to the morgue for autopsy. Earlier, Motijheel police filed a case against Mirza Abbas and 90 others for their alleged involvement in the attack.