

What's on today....

Meeting: A meeting of the Executive Board of Mirsaral Youth Forum will be held. Chief guest: Engineer Musharrif Hossain, Minister for Civil Aviation and Public Works. Venue: DCI conference room, 65-66 Motijheel. Time: 2:00 pm.

Jewellery exhibition: Abrarur Rahman's jewellery exhibition is going on. Venue: Outside stage of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Dress exhibition: Exhibitions of ready-to-wear garments by Kay Kraft, Henry's Heritage, Rakha's Creation and Daman is going on. Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Fashion exhibition: The concluding day of an exhibition of fashion apparels by Avalon will be held. Venue: Cafeteria of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Meeting: The 24th general meeting of Asiatic Society of Bangladesh will be held. Venue: Seminar room of the society at 5 Old Secretariat Road, Ramna. Time: 4:00 pm.

..... and tomorrow

Roundtable: Dhaka MBA Association will hold a roundtable conference on "Management of Education in Bangladesh". Chief guest: A S H K Sadeque, Minister for Education. Venue: Hotel Purbani International. Time: 2:30 pm.

Weather

Night temperature may fall

The weather is likely to remain mainly dry over the country with partly cloudy sky over Chittagong division during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Light or moderate fog may occur along river basin of the country during early morning while night temperature may fall by one or two degree Celsius across the country, according to Met Office.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 27.3 degree Celsius at Chuadanga and the lowest 9.0 degree at Srirangal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5.18 pm and rises tomorrow at 6.39 am.

Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	25.0	13.2	84	65
Chittagong	27.2	16.3	89	74
Rajshahi	26.5	13.5	85	76
Khulna	27.0	14.4	80	76
Barisal	26.8	12.6	87	86
Sylhet	25.5	15.1	80	67
Cox's Bazar	25.2	17.2	90	87

HERE and THERE

DRU condemns attack on newsmen

By Staff Correspondent

The president and general secretary of the Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) in a joint statement yesterday expressed their concern over attack on newsmen while covering the convention for launching Kader Siddique's political party.

Anwarul Haq and Monwarul Islam, president and secretary respectively of the DRU in a joint statement demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment to those responsible for the incident.

Siddik Islam, treasurer of DRU, Amir Lal Dutt, Rafiqul Islam Sabuj, Mamun-ur Rashid, members of the organisation and many other journalists were injured during the armed attack on the convention, the release added.

BRCS

A workshop on "women in development" was held at the national headquarters of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BRCS) in Dhaka on Thursday, reports BSS.

About 50 persons including 16 women took part in the workshop.

One killed in rival clash at Bagerhat

BAGERHAT, Dec 24: A middle-aged woman was killed and six people were injured in a clash between two rival groups over harvesting crops from a disputed land at Shaparkhal village in Morolganj thana today, reports UNB.

The killed was identified as Shapia Begum, 35, wife of Abul Khan of the village. The injured identified as Bacchu Ali Khan, Idrish Khan, Renu Begum, Anwar Ali, Shah Alam Khan and Khokon were admitted to Bagerhat Sadar Hospital.

Police said the clash ensued in the morning when Asmat Ali Akon along with 30-35 hired lathials went to harvest the crops of the disputed land while Abul Khan and his supporters went to prevent them.

People of Asmat allegedly attacked on Abul Khan and his supporters with lethal weapons during their effort to refrain them (Asmat and his men) from harvesting the crops of the land.

10 injured as two groups clash at Jhenidah

JHENIDAH, Dec 24: At least 10 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups in Harinakunda thana here today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the supporters of Moju and Shamsul of village Singa locked into the clash over a dispute on damaging Majnu's crop by a cow of Shamsul.

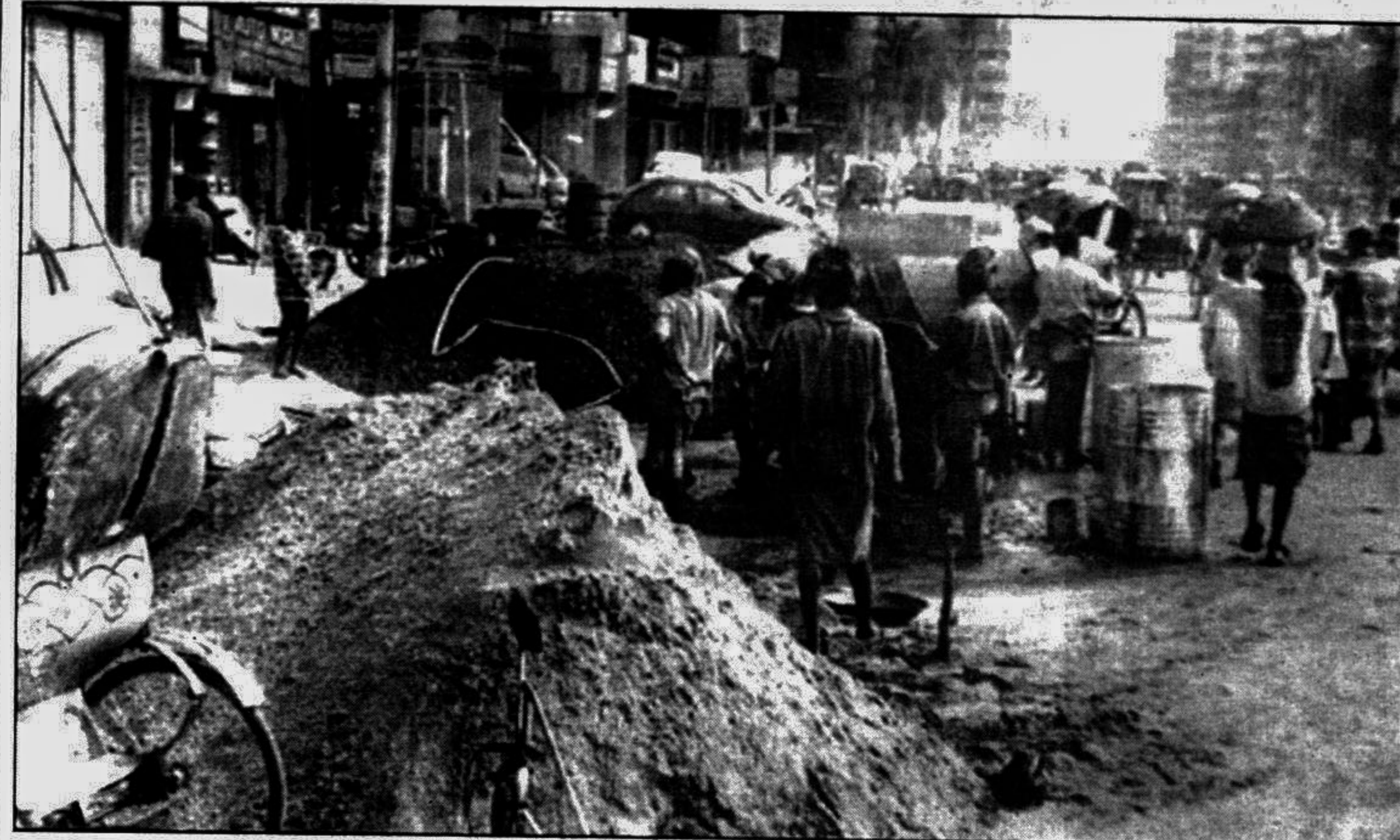
During the clash both the groups used lethal weapons and sticks injuring 10 persons and damaging property about Tk one lakh.

Six of the injured - Shahidul, 27, Razzak, 25, Tozazzel, 26, Mantu, 29, Azizul, 27, and Liakat, 30, - were admitted to local thana health complex.

Chchlum

The chchlum of Prof Dr Md Mizanur Rahman, former dean, faculty of Mechanical Engineering of BUET will be held today at his residence at 22/4, BUET Teachers Quarter, says a press release.

Family members have requested friends, colleagues and well wishers to attend the chchlum.



Public highways have turned into the storage grounds for construction materials in the nook and cranny of the city. This photograph was taken from city's Naya Paltan area. —Star photo

New millennium: Observation by country's young scholars

As euphoric millions around the earth brace themselves with preparations to welcome the new millennium, that comes with promises and challenges, scholars fresh from the Dhaka University campus are full of various suggestions about the nation's tasks, reports UNB.

Some of them are optimistic that the new millennium would bring good changes while others said that the start of a new millennium was nothing exceptional, but a "Western phenomenon".

The students who were interviewed by UNB, are the top of the cream of the university.

Atanu Rabbani who obtained First Class First in BSS (Hons) from the Dept of Economics, was asked what he expected, in the forthcoming new millennium.

He raised questions as to what the human civilisation had attained in the passing century and millennium. "We have acquired a lot but achieved not that much. The earth has become hotter. Inequalities have risen. We had two World Wars within a span of 30 years."

Atanu admitted that he was not all too pessimistic. He said

persons like Newton, Feynmann, Marx or Friedman and Debussi or Dylan had been born in this millennium. "Their achievements have made this world a lot more pleasant and this planet worth living in."

Ashraf Akhter Sylvi who obtained First Class First in MSC from the Dept of Statistics, expressed high hopes that Bangladesh would emerge as a developed country in the next millennium. "But for that we will have to ensure education and employment for all."

"Doors of prosperity will open up before us within next five years for our skill in the IT field," she said.

Turning to the question of the country's politics, she said, "I feel embarrassed to comment on politics due to 'demoralised' outlook of the political leaders."

She however hoped that women will lead Bangladesh in the upcoming century.

Zahidul Arefin Chowdhury Sagar, a First Class First in Honours, Dept of Political Science, opined that he does not think that start of the new millennium deserves much importance.

"It is nothing but a matter of time moving on and January 1st coming after Dec 31st."

Samia Rahman, First Class Communication and Journalism, questioned whether anyone in the lot here has the right preparations for stepping into the next millennium.

"I am not pessimistic and not even affected by frustration. But as part of global village, how equal are we with that of the other countries? Had there been visa system, I think, we would not have obtained permission to enter into the new century, let alone the millennium," she said with a note of sarcasm.

"We are still dependent on money and pitiful of other countries."

Sheikh Rafiqul Hasan (Utthan), First Class First in Honours, Dept of Geography and Environment, said the entire face of the world in the upcoming millennium would radically change and the change would touch natural environment, socio-cultural arena and economic activities. Technological advancement will be unthinkable.

Human race, he thinks, will fall into a great disaster of water resources for want of drinkable and pollution-free water. "The scarcity of pure drinking water will be alarming in the next millennium. Power and energy will not be any problem as technological advancement will cover the power thirst."

"I hope the first decade of the upcoming millennium will make Bangladesh 'harta-free' and it will bring changes in our national politics," Utthan added. According to him achievement of Bangladesh in the last century of this millennium is our Independence and declaration of 21st February as International Mother Language Day.

Inrana Yasmin, First Class First in BCom (Hons) from Dept of Marketing, opined that all the epoch-making inventions of the twentieth century, along with all the associate glory, foretell about yet far vaster inventions in the forthcoming thousand years.

"I think technology will expand with all its power and communications technology will change the entire face of the world that we now see only in science fiction."

Phensidyl seized at Jhenidah

JHENIDAH, Dec 24: Officials of local Narcotics Control Department aided by a magistrate and police seized 285 bottles of phensidyl from a house at Kaliganj thana here Thursday, reports UNB.

Official sources said they seized the drug raiding the house of Abdul Malek at village Khamar Mundia.

CMA exams results

The Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Bangladesh has published the results of the CMA September, 1999 Examinations held at Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna and Comilla centres, says a press release.

Following are the roll numbers of the students who have completed different Levels in the examination:

Level-V (Final): 1018, 1084, 1125, 1177, 1228, 1283, 1287, 1292, 1293, 1332, 1506, 1581, 1627, 1655, 2343, 2355, 2775, 2785, 3001, 3002.

Level-IV (Final): 1010, 1016, 1018, 1039, 1064, 1067, 1085, 1092, 1109, 1114, 1145, 1154, 1170, 1177, 1195, 1207, 1269, 1283, 1287, 1292, 1293, 1297, 1300, 1306, 1307, 1324, 1332, 1353, 1385, 1458, 1581, 1615, 1616, 1627, 1655, 1746, 1838, 2245, 2343, 2355, 2727, 2730, 2731, 2744, 2747, 2785, 2806, 2834, 3001, 3011.

Level-III (Intermediate): 1040, 1069, 1131, 1139, 1262, 1280, 1282, 1329, 1348, 1371, 1461, 1521, 1523, 1549, 1565, 1593, 1633, 1639, 1717, 1724, 1740, 1741, 1759, 1773, 1785, 1808, 1811, 1824, 1906, 2016, 2021, 2240, 2566, 2723, 2728, 2737, 2744, 2769, 2771, 2942, 2945, 2960.

Level-II (Intermediate): 1040, 1262, 1272, 1280, 1471, 1585, 1646, 1674, 1683, 1807, 1888, 1933, 1941, 1947, 1952, 1973, 1976, 1985, 2046, 2137, 2335, 2351.

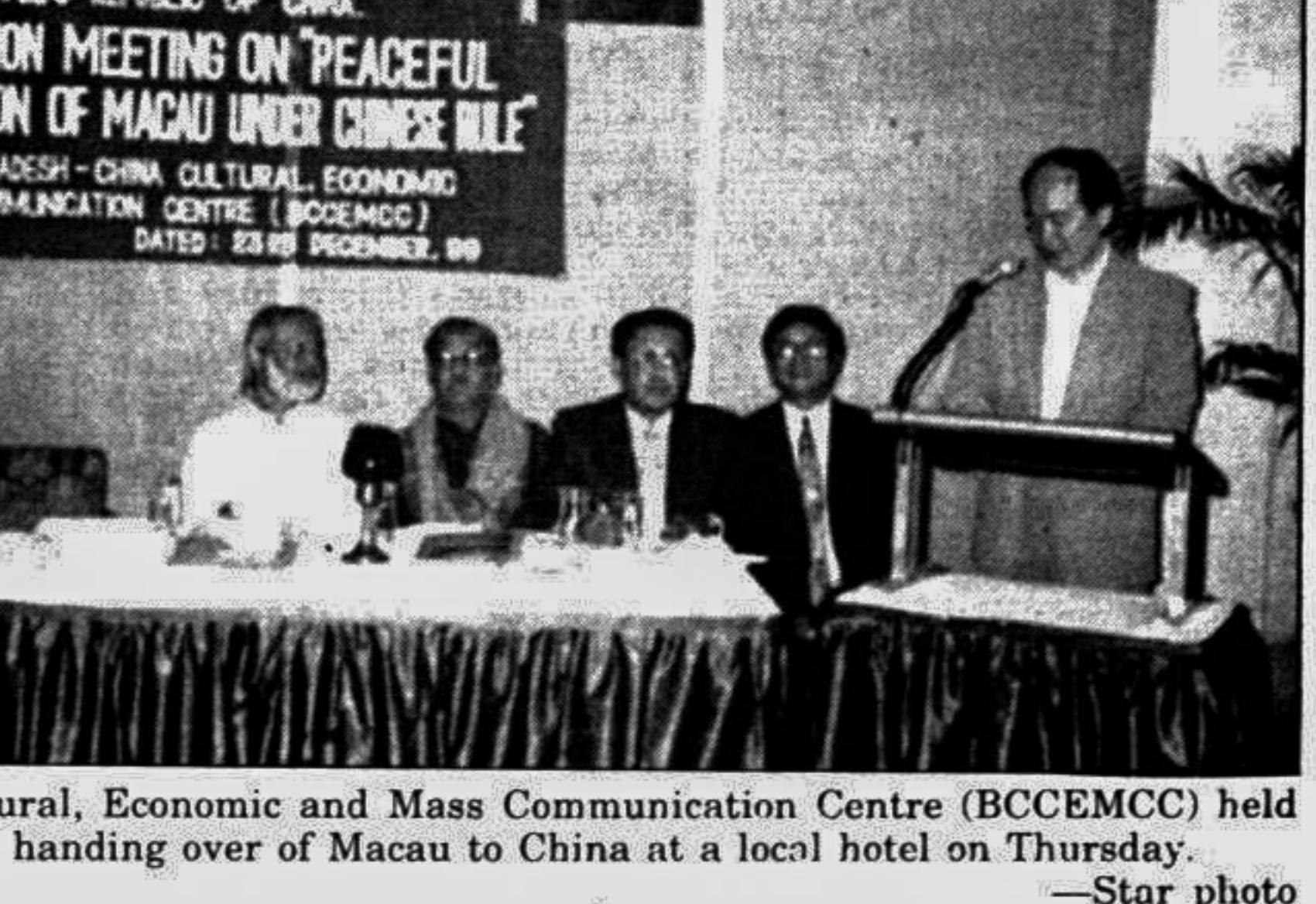
Level-I (Intermediate): 1239, 1341, 1377, 1421, 1431, 1432, 1471, 1484, 1497, 1502, 1532, 1550, 1551, 1552, 1556, 1566, 1569, 1575, 1580, 1582, 1587, 1588, 1596, 1597, 1598, 1601, 1605, 1610, 1641, 1645, 1646, 1649, 1653, 1656, 1670, 1674, 1675, 1683, 1684, 1690, 1692, 1697, 1716, 1726, 1730, 1736, 1745, 1752, 1757, 1760, 1762, 1768, 1772, 1780, 1781, 1792, 1802, 1810, 1816, 1817, 1825, 1854, 1857, 1858, 1865, 1873, 1876, 1882, 1889, 1900, 1910, 1922, 1924, 1928, 1930, 1946, 1947, 1950, 1956, 1961, 1967, 1974, 1993, 2006, 2020, 2022, 2045, 2046, 2048, 2058, 2071, 2073, 2090, 2095, 2097, 2109, 2117, 2118, 2139, 2140, 2150, 2166, 2170, 2257, 2264, 2270, 2277, 2283, 2291, 2292, 2320, 2367, 2380, 2392, 2396, 2397, 2403, 2406, 2408, 2411, 2413, 2416, 2418, 2419, 2421, 2446, 2454, 2464, 2539, 2550, 2551, 2553, 2610, 2645, 2682, 2685, 2686, 2790, 2836, 2889, 2986, 2993.



Supporters of Bangabir Kader Siddiqui go on rampage yesterday damaging buses and other vehicles in front of Engineers Institution after the news of attack on his convention spread far and wide. —Star photo



The secretary general of BNP Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan was received by party leaders and activists at the Zia International Airport yesterday on his arrival from China. —Star photo



Bangladesh-China Cultural, Economic and Mass Communication Centre (BCEMCC) held a discussion meeting on handing over of Macao to China at a local hotel on Thursday. —Star photo

Christian community leaders exchange greetings with Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of the Bangladesh Christian Community yesterday exchanged X-Mas greetings with BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, Khaleda Zia.

A delegation led by Albert D. Costa called on Khaleda Zia at her 29 Minto Road official residence and presented her a bouquet on the eve of the X-Mas Day.

The BNP Chairperson cut a cake to mark the celebration of the X-Mas day and wished prosperity of the country's Christian Community.

Association leaders Albert D. Costa, Daniel Goralya, Chitta Francis Rozario and Aloy Siraj Milton Khan briefly spoke on the occasion.

The Christian leaders said that the minority communities in Bangladesh were safe and secure, enjoyed religious freedom and were treated as equal citizens and 'lived with dignity' during the BNP regimes and expressed their gratitude for all that.

They hoped that the BNP and Khaleda Zia would continue to support the cause of the Christian community in the days to come.

The leader of the opposition said the objective of her party was to establish peace, harmony, friendship and brotherhood between the majority and minority people of the country.

Khaleda Zia said the rights of all communities had been established by Shaheed Ziaur Rahman through the introduction of Bangladeshi nationalism.

Turning to the country's prevailing situation, she said the present government was pushing politics, economy and the entire social ambience towards ruination. Now there was not even the minimum security for any people of the country, she added.

The BNP Chairperson briefly spoke about the current one-point movement and sought co-operation from all communities of people in the struggle for reaching the final goal of the current movement.

She hoped that the Christian community would be able to celebrate next X-Mas under a more peaceful and stable condition.

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Camouflage

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"However, if he is sincere, let him resign in the first place, then we will see what can be done. But we can't rely on him and on the other hand, we don't endorse his reelection."

Nasir said the alliance has taken all preparations to resist the January 3 elections to Chittagong City Corporation.

Continuous hartal will be enforced in the port city on January 2 and 3 to disrupt the voting, he said adding that a mass procession would be brought out from Laldighi Maidan in the city on January 1.

Besides, anti-polls agitation will be staged in every ward of the port city tomorrow.

Some BNP leaders from Dhaka will be here to attend the anti-polls agitation, Nasir said.

ZIA asked

From page 1

route to New Delhi was hijacked after it took off from Kathmandu.

However, ZIA was not yet approached for allowing the hijacked plane with 178 passengers on board to land in. Four passengers were already shot dead, reports said.

"We were not approached," said Group Captain Iqbal Hossain, the Chairman of Civil Aviation Authority, Bangladesh.

Officials at ZIA said they were asked to follow the latest development of the hijacking through radio communication and take extra measures to restrict its landing if any such attempt is made.

The control tower alone could bar landing of any aircraft as it controls the entire lighting and signal system at the airport.

A hijacked Japanese aircraft was flown into Dhaka in 1977.

BNP iftar parties

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organisations.

It was announced in the mikes of Patwarbari Jame Mosque that Nuria Hafeza Madrasah Mosque that police along with BCL activists had attacked the iftar-party.

The BCL activists and police then entered the mosques and charged batons on the people, leaving 10 of them injured.

As the news of attack by police and BCL activists spread in the town, activists of BNP and its front organisations came out on the roads. They exploded several bombs and damaged vehicles in protest against the attacks.

Police then arrested 22 people from Rampur area.

Indonesian army did not order Timor killings: Wiranto

JAKARTA, Dec 24: Former Indonesian armed forces chief General Wiranto on Friday told a human rights commission there had been no plan or policy for either a genocide or crimes against humanity in East Timor, reports AFP.

"There was no planning process or policy to do things that can be classified as genocide or crimes against humanity," Wiranto told journalists after answering questions from the state-backed Commission of Human Rights Abuses in East Timor (KPP HAM).

Wiranto said the institution of the Indonesian armed forces "has never issued the order, even more so to encourage, the burning of cities, the killing of people or to force evacuations."

KPP HAM has summoned Wiranto, as well as five other generals and several top Indonesian militia leaders to answer questions over their "knowledge and involvement" in the September mayhem that followed the announcement of the pro-independence ballot in East Timor.

The militias, which the United Nations, the KPP HAM and other observers have said were backed by elements of the Indonesian army, devastated the territory and forced hundreds of thousands to flee.

Wiranto was accompanied by three lawyers and former justice minister Mufadi, who coordinates the defence team for the armed forces over East Timor.

"This is not an arena where a suspect is interrogated," he said of the nearly three hours of questioning.

"This is a process of giving information to the KPP HAM, to deflect accusations by several sides that there were war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide in East Timor."

Wiranto, coordinating minister for security and political affairs in the cabinet of President Abdurrahman Wahid, was military commander during the violence in East Timor.

He was questioned by KPP HAM members Todung Mulya Lubis, Nursyahbani Kaca-sungkan, Munir and Asmara Nababan, commission chairman Albert Hasibuan said.

Nababan said the information obtained from Wiranto "has answered our questions."

But he added the general's statements would be cross-checked with those from other military officers.

KPP HAM member Kusparmono Irsan said the commission's questioning of military officers has so far yielded little.

"Our investigation is stagnating, we are not moving forward or backward," Irsan said after questioning a former intelligence head of a district military command in East Timor earlier Friday.

The body also questioned a former military commander before Wiranto.

Sylhet tense

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Ex-MCA Ashraf Ali, Central Ganatantri Party secretary Barrister Arshad Ali, District JSD president Professor Mohammad Shafique and secretary Lokman Ahmed, Samyabadi Dal district president Dharen Singh, CPB president Badar Kar and journalist Al-Azad and Ahmed Noor.

They said the spirit of the Liberation War should be upheld at any cost.

We would not allow the anti-liberation forces to create any unwanted incident in the town, they said.

They called upon the people to join the rally at Registry Maidan tomorrow.

Christmas

From page 1

ample of communal harmony and hoped that the X-mas day would further strengthen the existing inter-religious harmony in the country.

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia also greeted the

Christian community on the occasion of the X-mas.

On the eve of the day, elaborate programmes were taken up to observe the biggest religious festival of the Christians amid fun and festivity.

Christmas trees were tastefully decorated and illuminated with colourful lights at the homes of the members of the Christian community throughout the country.

Special prayers would be held at the churches, while devotees will sing the Christmas carols. Christians would cut cakes and exchange gifts.

Santa Claus, with all his gifts for the tiny tots happens to be the traditional welcome guest at every Christian household.

Meeting friends and neighbours at churches, visiting each other's house and arranging family feasts comprise the other functions of the day.

Death anniversary

By Staff Correspondent

The fourth anniversary of the death of cultural organiser Zahid Hossain Chunnu will be observed today, says a press release.

Late Chunnu was cultural affairs secretary of BNP and convener of Jatiyatibadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha (JASAS).

In observance of the death anniversary, Zahid Hossain Chunnu Memorial Foundation will place wreath and offer *fateha* at the Banani grave of Chunnu at 10 this morning, the release adds.