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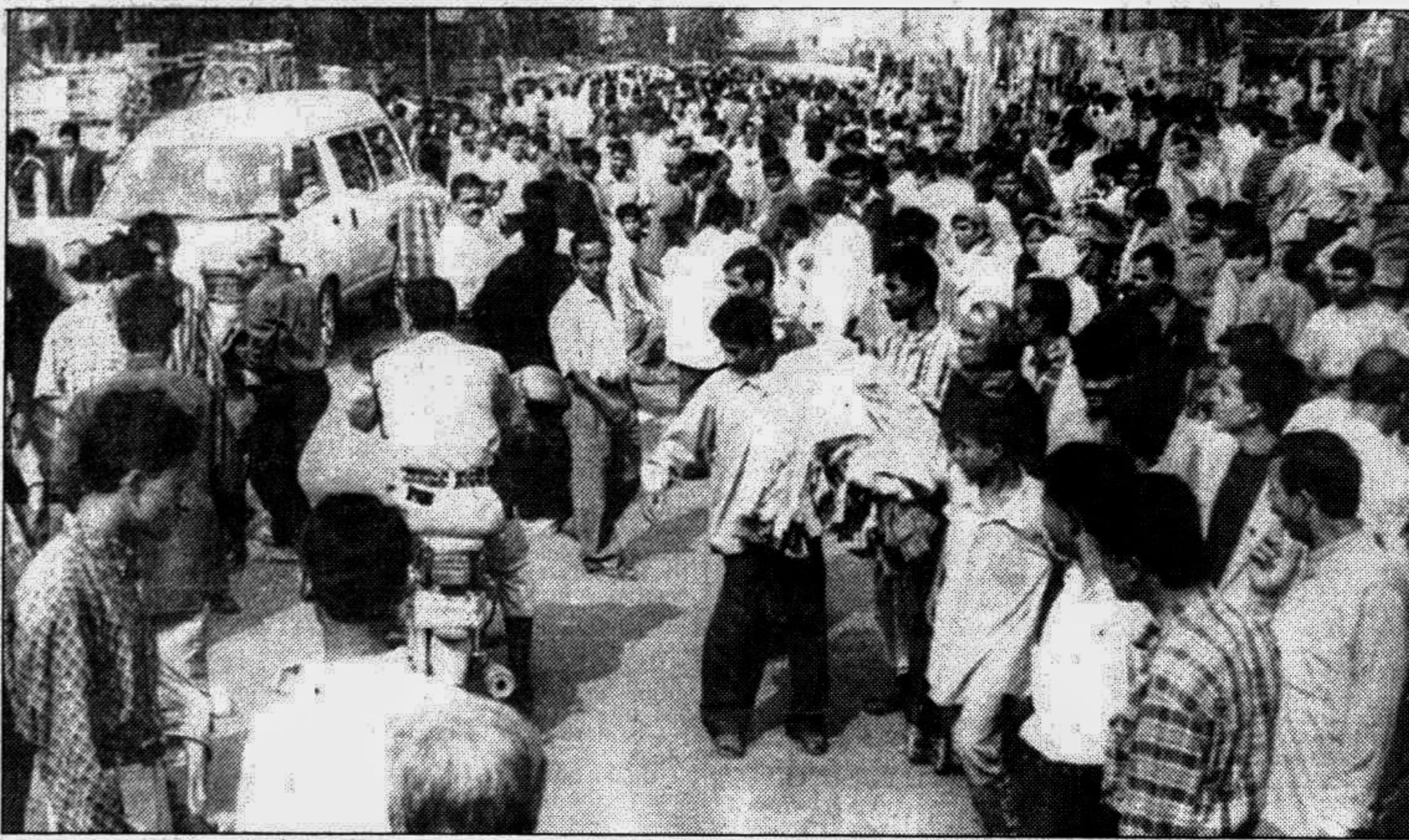
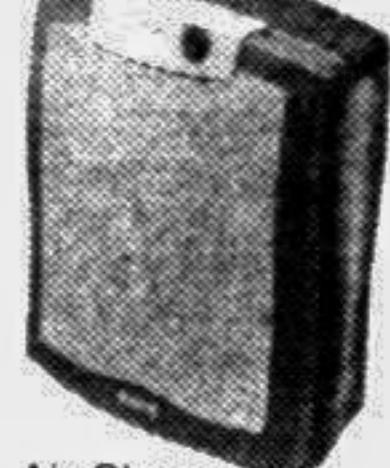
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Having failed to clear the roads and pedestrians' pavements around the GPO area, a desperate police sergeant drives his motorbike right through the makeshift hawkers' market yesterday. — Star photo

'Bring Ruma's killers to book'

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a press conference organised by Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday demanded arrest and trial of the person responsible for killing housewife Kamrun Nahar Ruma.

They alleged that the victim Kamrun Nahar Ruma was provoked to commit suicide by her husband Major Md Ashraful Haider through torture.

Ruma was found dead at her residence at Banani Army Staff Quarters on December 6.

They urged the authorities concerned to hand over Maj Haider to police.

Speakers blamed the army administration for not handing over Maj Haider to police.

The press conference was addressed, among others, by Secretary General of BSEHR Advocate Sema Huda, Advocate Elia Khan and victim's brother Md Moniruzzaman.

AL extended meet tomorrow

A special extended meeting of the executive committee of Bangladesh Awami League will be held at Ganabhaban at 11 am tomorrow, reports BSS.

Party president and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will preside over the meeting.

Birth records can curb trafficking in women, children

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a discussion meeting in the city yesterday stressed the need for birth registration to help curb repression on women and children and their trafficking.

They were speaking on "Birth Registration: Law and Analysis of Social Situation", organised by Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) at the office of the Voluntary Women Association (VWA).

Prof. M. S. Akbar MP, Chairperson of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Women and Children Affairs Ministry, speaking as chief guest suggested recognition to EPI card as birth registration card. This will also help prevent age lifting, a common practice in our society, he said.

Advocate Sema Huda, who addressed the function as special guest, said birth registration will help protect rights of children. It should be made compulsory with legal provision for punishment for violators, and treated as identity card, she suggested.

Birth registration will also help rescue of children from brothels and determine the age of rape victims, she observed.

A survey should be conducted to evaluate the success of birth registration, introduced in the

Nirmul body to observe 'hatred day' today

Ekatturer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee will observe 'hatred day' to denounce re-emergence of an anti-liberation figure in independent Bangladesh's political arena, reports UNB.

On this day in 1991, Ghulam Azam was made ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami. Since then, the Nirmul Committee has been observing the day as 'ghrina dibas' every year.

On the occasion, the Nirmul Committee will hold a rally at Central Shaheed Minar at 2 pm today.

Govt plans major changes in public exam system

The government decided to bring about major changes in public examination system, with new styles of question papers, from next secondary and higher secondary examinations.

Advocate Salma Ali said birth registration started in some countries in 1886. Trafficking of women and children could be reduced through birth registration, she said.

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Health Officer Sanjida Islam, Advocate Subrata Chowdhury, DCC ward Commissioner Rokeya Sahabuddin and Tapoti Bhoumik, a human rights activist from Calcutta also took part in the discussion, presided over by BNWL President Fouzia Karim Feroz.

MUHURIGHAT CHECK-POST, Tripura (India), Dec. 28: A flag meeting between BDR and BSF today reached a consensus to allow Bangladeshi farmers to work in their lands in the disputed Muhurirchar along the Bangladesh-Indian frontier in Feni.

"We have agreed to make a working boundary in the 1.6 km border area," MM Khandewal, DIG, BSF, Tripura told newsmen emerging from the eight-hour long meeting with his Bangladesh counterpart Col Showkat Hussain.

The decisions were taken in a high-level meeting of the Education Ministry with Education Minister ASHK Sadique in the chair.

"No questions would be made as it is in notebooks or guide-books available on the market," the meeting decided as a means of preventing unfair means at exams, which, of late, found an alarming spurt.

For better evaluation broad-type questions will be split into parts like Ka, Kha, Ga as of the subjects in Science for students of both Humanities and Commerce groups.

Figures of sums will be changed from the textbooks in making question papers of Mathematics.

It was also decided that the Public Examinations Act would be followed strictly from the next examinations and legal actions coupled with other measures would be taken to curb offences and negligence regarding examination affairs.

The meeting was told that Lesson Plan to be introduced for quality education and preventing unfair means at exams is at the final stage.

Secretary and Joint Secretaries of the Education Ministry, Directors-General of different departments and chairmen of education boards and Director of BANBAIS were present in the meeting.

Siddique yet to get permission for holding meeting at Paltan

By Staff Correspondent

The National Sports Council (NSC) is yet to give permission to Kader Siddique for holding a public meeting at Paltan Maidan (ground) on December 30, party sources said.

It is not possible to give permission for Siddique's meeting for paucity of time, said Obaidul Kader, State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs and also chairman of NSC when contacted by The Daily Star yesterday.

It takes at least two days for police clearance of the venue in the name of person, the minister said, adding Siddique's petition for holding a meeting at the Maidan reached the NSC yesterday. He said the petition should have reached the NSC at least one week earlier.

Siddique called the meeting at Paltan protesting vandalism at his convention at the Institution of Engineers Bangladesh where he floated the Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Janata League (BKSJL) on Friday.

Leaders of BKSJL yesterday told The Daily Star that the director of the NSC told them they would have to discuss the issue with Council's president before giving permission.

Meanwhile, activists of the Bangladesh Chhatra League allegedly beat up a BKSJL worker when he was passing through the Carzon Hall in a rickshaw with a loudspeaker announcing Siddique's meeting on December 30, a party press release added.

The BCL activists also took away the microphone and the rickshaw, the release added.

Extortionists slip through legal loopholes

By Chaitanya Chandra Halder

Punishment in extortion-related cases have been reduced due to legal procedure and changes in the law, said legal experts and officials of judiciary talking to The Daily Star recently.

Cases related to extortion and rape were covered under same provisions of the law in the Special Powers Act (SPA) of 1974 and these were tried by a judge of the rank of an additional district and sessions judge at the least.

The law also provided for maximum 14 years of rigorous imprisonment for extortion-related cases.

The Metropolitan Sessions Court recently transferred the extortion-related cases to the Magistrates' Court, which does not have the power to award punishment exceeding 10 years of imprisonment, sources said.

When Women and Children Repression Act 1995 was passed, rape-related law of the SPA was incorporated in the new Special Act of 1995 without

passing any provision for trial of extortion-related cases.

Cases related to extortion, however, were tried by the courts of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka, till January last.

Soon after creation of the Court of Metropolitan Sessions Judge, extortion related cases were transferred to those new courts which refused to entertain them.

The Metropolitan sessions Judge observed law did not allow trial of those cases in these courts. The Judge also ordered transfer of these cases to the court of the Metropolitan Magistrate.

About 1400 such cases were transferred to the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Dhaka in four phases, sources said.

A circular issued by the Metropolitan Sessions Judge, Dhaka recently said, cases under section 385 of the penal code will now be tried by the lower courts, since the schedule 2 of criminal procedure code had

not yet been amended.

Following the passage of the Women and children repression prevention act in 1995 cases related to rape were passed on to the new special courts.

Neither any new court was created for extortion-related cases nor the ordinance 4 (c) was amended before it was abolished from the SPA.

Since inception of the special courts for women and children, cases related to extortion have been kept outside the purview of the special tribunal courts, sources said.

The schedule 2 of the criminal procedure (Cr PC) deals with penalty of different crimes including that of extortion and rape.

A special tribunal court headed by a judge of the rank no less than that of the additional district and sessions judge was supposed to try the cases related to rape and extortion under the Special Powers Act of 1974, schedule 1, Ordinance 4 (c).

Nasaka, BDR trade fire on Teknaf border

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Dec 28: Border guards of Myanmar and Bangladesh exchanged fire at Tumbru point of Teknaf border last night, but no casualty was reported, BDR sources said.

The shootout began at 11-15 pm when Myanmar border guard Nasaka fired mortar shells targeting the Tumbru border outpost of BDR, the source added.

BDR immediately started firing in retaliation.

Nasaka fired 100 shells while BDR fired 86 bullets in the shootout that continued for five minutes, BDR source said.

After the exchange of fire, more BDR personnel were deployed at all BOPs along the 271 km border that separated the two neighbouring countries.

Cop-criminal collusion

By Staff Correspondent

One person, beaten up by a gang at New Market in the city, sought help from patrol police but police told him that they were helpless and advised him to come to a settlement with the gang.

Police also advised him not to go to police station.

Mizanur Rahman, owner of a leather goods factory, went to a phone booth at New Market yesterday evening to make a call. Some card phone sellers approached him to buy card phones from them. Rahman refused, saying he had some card phones.

All of a sudden they dragged him out of the booth and started beating. Rahman told this correspondent.

Lefit by the gang after the beating, Rahman approached patrol police for help. They told him that they were from Dhammandi thana, which did not cover the area. The policemen also suggested him to wait for Lalbagh police who would visit the area shortly.

Rahman telephoned Lalbagh police who advised him to wait there. But no policeman came from Lalbagh thana even after two hours. Rahman alleged.

The victim then contacted traffic police, who advised him to come to a settlement with the gang.

Muhurirchar dispute: Border officials agree to draw line

From Shaikh Nazrul Islam

be sent to the respective governments for their approval.

The two sides will sit again at Majumderghat BOP, on the Bangladesh side on January 12, 2000, with an aim to sign the agreement, the officials said following today's meeting, hosted by the Indians.

Bangladeshi farmers were stopped from cultivating 53 acres of land at Muhurirchar from 1974. The two countries fought 59 times in nine phases during more than the last two decades in which at least five people were killed.

Bangladeshi farmers were stopped from cultivating 52 acres of disputed land near the disputed land while Bangladesh possess 2.5 acres. But 52 acres of land were described 'disputed' since 1974.

Locals in the area said Indians with the help of BSF had cut major trees in the bordering areas, which could have been marked as the bank of the river.

India is now in possession of about 22.5 acres of land near the disputed land while Bangladesh possess 2.5 acres.

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Locals in the area said Indians with the help of BSF had cut major trees in the bordering areas, which could have been marked as the bank of the river.

This is for the first time that the survey teams of the two countries visited the site.

The decision of fixing the 'working boundary' was taken as per the last DC level meeting between BDR and BSF held in Dhaka in October, sources said.

Incidents of border killing, kidnapping and snatching away of harvested crop mainly

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সমানিত হজ-যাত্রীদের জন্য

বিমান বাংলাদেশ এয়ারলাইন্স

ঢাকা-জেলা-ঢাকা

রাট্টে, নতুন প্রজন্মের সুপরিসর

দুটি বোয়িং-৭৭৭ এর

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