

What's on today....

Cultural programme: Kendriya Kanchi Kanchar Mela will hold a cultural programme to mark the 7th birth anniversary of Rokunuzzaman Khan Dadabhai. Venue: Mela premises at 37/A Segunbagicha. Time: 4:30 pm.

Seminar: A seminar on "Grassroots Mass Organisation versus Fundamentalism: Brahmanbaria Perspective. Venue: Sufia Kamal auditorium of National Museum. Time: 5:00 pm.

ICSBA seminar: The 18th seminar of the International Centre for Study of Bengal Art (ICSBA) will be held. Venue: Library hall of centre, House No 32E, Road 17A, Banani. Time: 5:00 pm.

Seminar: Cyber College of Bangladesh will hold a seminar on "Java — the Programming Language of the Future." Venue: College premises, House No 38/1, Rd No 6 (New), Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Discussion: ADAB and Proshika will hold a discussion on "The Continuing Relevance of Gandhi's Ideas for Social Action in South Asia." Chief guest: Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi. Venue: CIRDP auditorium, Topkhana Road. Time: 1:00 pm.

Seminar: Centre for Advanced Research in Social Sciences (CARSS) will hold a seminar on "Life and Works of S M Imamuddin (1924-98)." Venue: Lecture Theatre, Room No 401, Dhaka University.

..... and tomorrow

Prize-giving ceremony: The prize giving ceremony of children's art competition dedicated to the Independence Day will be held. Orator: Serov Academy of Fine Arts. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre in Dhaka. Time: 5:30 pm.

Weather

Dry weather likely

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely over the regions of Sylhet in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country during the period. Met Office said.

The country's highest temperature 38.8 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and the lowest 23.2 degree Celsius at Rangamati and Dinajpur.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6.18 pm and rises on Monday at 5.42 am.

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

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	35.0	26.2
Chittagong	32.0	24.0
Rajshahi	38.8	25.7
Khulna	36.2	26.0
Barisal	34.6	25.0
Sylhet	32.5	23.5
Cox's Bazar	32.8	24.8

HERE and THERE

JU

By JU Correspondent

Historian and social scientist Rajmohan Gandhi said that nations of the sub-continent must come forward spontaneously for the sake of establishing peace in the region.

He was speaking at a seminar on "Revenge and Reconciliation: Understanding South Asian History" organised by Dept of International Relations of Jahangirnagar University yesterday.

Vice-Chancellor of the University Prof Abdul Bayes, Pro VC Prof Tajul Islam, Treasurer Prof Shariff Enamul Kabir, deans of faculties and directors and a number of teachers were present at the seminar.

Prof Bayes addressed the seminar after the speech of Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi.

A number of teachers and students took part in the question-answer session where the existing political tension of this region was discussed.

BILS

A five-day long seminar on "Leadership Development in Trade Union" begun last morning at BIAM in the city under the auspices of Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies — BILS/LO-FTF Project, says a press release.

Project Manager Hans Kas-trup Andersen inaugurated the seminar. A total of 16 participants nominated by National Trade Union Federations are attending the seminar. The

seminar will be concluded on April 12.

BASF

The annual general meeting of Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) was held yesterday at the Dhaka Ahsania Mission auditorium, says a press release.

The new 11-member executive committee (2000-2001) was elected at the meeting.

Rokhsana Khandakar of Khan Foundation was elected as the Chairperson. Sultan Md Razzak of FCHD the vice-chairperson and Md Inuranul Haq Chowdhury of Uddipani the Treasurer.

Other members of the committee elected are Md Abdul Hakim, Shahidul Alam Sacchu, Mizanur Rahman, Shaheen Akhter Dolly, Fakir Abdul Jabbar, Shamsun Nahar Rahman, Kazi Shamsul Alam and Ehsanur Rahman.

Rotary Club of Uttara

On the occasion of the World Health Day-2000, a blood donation programme was held at Amir Complex, Uttara on Friday by the Rotary Club of Uttara in collaboration with the Innerwheel Club of Uttara, Innerwheel Club of Ramna, Rotaract Club of Uttara and Rotaract Club of Uttara.

The presidents and other members of these clubs were present on the occasion.

Dhaka Rotary Club and Bangladesh Red Crescent Society extended valuable support in making the programme a success.

'Certain quarters indulged in misleading propaganda against govt'

SYLHET, Apr 8: Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury said here today that certain quarters being envious of the government's development efforts, were indulged in misleading propaganda against it (government), report BSS.

He was speaking as the chief guest at a function in connection with opening of a newly constructed bhaban of Mugal-gaon Government Primary School-cum flood shelter centre under sadar thana.

The speaker pointed out that the present government has worked a lot than any other governments in the past. It would not be possible to foil the development efforts of the government through misleading propaganda, he added.

Chowdhury strongly pleaded for the expansion of education facilities to improve the rate of literacy. In this connection he referred to various programmes taken by the government including launching a revolution to free the country from the curse of illiteracy.

Presided over by the chairman of the school managing committee, Badruzzaman, the function was addressed among others, by organising secretary of the US branch of the Awami League, Shafiqur Rahman Chowdhury, district AL Education and Cultural Secretary, Advocate Misbah Uddin Siraj and former up chairman Haji Jamshed Ali.

Jubo Dal leader arrested in Sherpur

SHERPUR, Apr 8: A Jubo Dal leader was arrested from Bat-tala in the town Friday night for creating riots in the town in 1996, reports UNB.

Police said Uzzal Sarkar, General Secretary of district Jubo Dal was arrested. He was earlier granted bails in six other cases.

District BNP blamed police for intentionally harassing their leaders and workers and said there were many cases against the leaders and workers of ruling Awami League but none was being arrested.

BNP has chalked out a three-day programme, including protest meeting and demonstration to protest the arrest.

Jubo Union stages sit-in demonstration

RAJBARI, Apr 8: The local unit of Jubo Union today staged a 3-hour sit-in demonstration in front of the Sadar Hospital demanding upgrading the hospital and solution of its health-care problems, reports UNB.

Upgrading the 50-bed hospital into a 100-bed one and appointment of adequate doctors and nurses were among the main demands.

Comrade Abul Kalam Azad, Barun Chakraborty, Shahadat Hossain, Altaf Mahmood, Advocate Liakat Ali and Principal Manjurul Alam were among others took part in the sit-in demonstration from 11 am to 2 pm.

Later, they submitted a memorandum to the Civil Surgeon.

New organisation floated

A students welfare foundation of Duptara Central Corporation High School, Araihazar, Narayanganj was launched recently under the auspices of its former students and the local social leaders, reports BSS.

Former students and residents of the area have been invited to join the organisation as members in three categories — life, donor and general.

Intending persons are requested to contact the school authorities or M Hafizur Rahman at 25/A DIT Road, Malibagh. Phone: 416736, 418154 and 9335498.

Humayun Zahir's death anniversary observed

The 7th death anniversary of Humayun Zahir, former Chief Legal Adviser of Janata Insurance Company Ltd was observed yesterday at Janata Insurance Company Ltd Head Office, 125 Motijheel C/A with due religious fervour, says a press release.

A *milad mahfil* was held at 11:00 am there to commemorate the death anniversary. Md Jainul Abedin, Managing Director, Mohd Rashed Ali, EVP & Company Secretary Fazlul Haque Khan, EVP (Accounts), family members of late Humayun Zahir, senior executives, branch managers of Dhaka city, officers and staff of the company were present.

Chittagong, Khulna and Bogra Zonal Offices of JIC also organised *milad mahfil* on the occasion.

Humayun Zahir was the Chief Legal Adviser of Janata Insurance Company Ltd, Chairman of United Commercial Bank Ltd (UCBL) and District Governor of Lion's Club International. He was the founder of Dhaka Mahila College at Dhanmondi.

Humayun Zahir was assassinated in front of his Dhanmondi residence on April 8, 1993.



Rotary International has taken up an arsenic mitigation project in Manikganj thana in collaboration with UNICEF. Four Rotary clubs have donated US \$50,000 and UNICEF US \$34,000 for the project which involves community members (seen above) in choosing implementing and maintaining alternate sources of safe drinking water.

Land allotted for establishing technological village: Nooruddin

CHITTAGONG, Apr 8: Science and Technology Minister Noor Uddin Khan today said that the government was firmly committed to the promotion of science and technology for which various steps for research and infrastructural development have been taken in private and public sectors, reports BSS.

The Minister said, the government has introduced a ten-year Bangabandhu Fellowship for the students of PhD on technological research. Forty acres of land has been allotted for the establishment of Technological Village at Mahakhali in Dhaka

in addition to setting up of a Technological Park on 264 acres of land at Talibabad, General Noor Uddin said.

"Prosperity of developed nations is based on science and technology which they have attained through relentless research and studies," he said while speaking at the inaugural function of the fourth Chittagong Conference on Biotechnology, Bio-physics and Bio-statistics which began at the Research Centre for Mathematical and Physical Sciences (RCMPS) of Chittagong University here today.

The minister assured all out cooperation of the government in opening Computer Science Department at Chittagong University.

Presided over by the Director of RCMPS Prof Jamal Nazrul Islam, the function was addressed, among others, by former minister Dr Moyeen Khan MP, Vice-Chancellor of CU Prof Abdul Mannan and pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof Abu Yusuf.

About 100 scientists and researchers have been participating in the three-day conference. Fifteen key-note papers will be presented by experts.

Ramsagar Dighi to be beautified for tourists

DINAJPUR, Apr 8: Forest and Environment Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury has said the "Ramsagar Dighi" will be beautified for attracting the domestic and foreign tourists, reports BSS.

"The historic Ramsagar is not only the heritage of Dinajpur but also a rare national property of the country," he said while inaugurating the "Ramsagar Forest Rest House" here yesterday.

She said that saplings of different trees would be planted on the bank of Ramsagar. The forest minister also released different species of animals and birds including deer in the Ramsagar area making it more

attractive.

Local Forest Department has constructed the two-story rest house at a cost of taka 35 lakh. The department is also constructing its boundary wall, roads, repairing cafeteria and setting up tube well at a cost of taka 1 crore 82 lakh. The department has also taken two more projects, titled "Ramsagar Park Development Project" and "Bird-Forest Project" for developing it as a tourist spot.

Local MP Bharati Nandi Sarkar, president of District Awami League Anwar Hossain, Awami League leader Abdur Rahim and Chief Conservator of Forest Mohammad Golam Habib were present.

Pvt jetties at Ctg port become safe haven for smugglers

CHITTAGONG, Apr 8: Private jetties set up on vast tract of land at Chittagong Port have become the safe haven of unloading smuggled goods, depriving the authorities of an estimated revenue of Tk 10 crore per annum, reports UNB.

According to a competent source, there are 2,287 acres of land stretching on a 30 km area from Halderchar to the confluence of the river Karnaphuli under the Chittagong Port Authority.

A section of influential people set up 53 jetties occupying some 311 acres of lands, which had gone into the gorge of the Karnaphuli from jetty number-1 to Halderchar.

These jetties are being used for unloading goods from big ships. The illegal occupiers as well as the importers don't pay any revenue for unloading commodities at the jetties.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police sources said the private jetties have become safe dens of smuggling. The traffickers in connivance with the jetty-owners are carrying out the smuggling of various goods into the country.

According to statistics of Chittagong Customs House, huge quantities worth about Tk 100 crore have been smuggled into the domestic markets of

the country per year through sea routes.

Several attempts of the port authorities to evict the illegal occupiers and recover the land have been failed as the owners of the jetties have robust links with the government high officials since long.

Heart camp concludes in Faridpur

FARIDPUR, April 8: A two-day long heart camp organised by the National Heart Foundation of Bangladesh, Faridpur Branch, concluded here this morning at the branch's premises, reports BSS.

Leading cardiologists of the country including Brig (Rtd) Prof Abdul Malik, Prof R K Khondoker, Prof S R Khan and Prof K M H S Sirajul Haque attended the camp. About 150 patients with various ailments were examined and were given necessary treatments. The visiting physicians attended the camp to raise funds for Faridpur Branch as well as to render special treatment for the poor patients.

A seminar was also held last evening at the Faridpur Medical College auditorium.



A *milad mahfil* was held at Janata Insurance Company Ltd head office yesterday in observance of the 7th death anniversary of Humayun Zahir, former chief legal advisor of Janata Insurance.

Thousands stage anti-govt rally in Kathmandu

KATHMANDU, April 8: Thousands of demonstrators took to the streets of Kathmandu Saturday to protest against corruption and price increases by the Nepali Congress (NC) government, witnesses said, reports AFP.

Supporters of the Nepal Communist Party-United Marxist and Leninist (NCP-UML) marched round Kathmandu chanting "punish the corrupt ministers and officials," "bring down price hiking" and "maintain law and order" before converging for an open air meeting.

The demonstration was part of a month-long protest against

price rises. NCP-UML secretary general Madhav Kumar Nepal denounced the government's failure to control civil service corruption and to maintain law and order.

The NCP-UML held the rally to mark the 10th anniversary of the restoration of multi-party parliamentary system in Nepal in 1990.

On April 8, 1990, the 30-year-old partyless "panchayat" system was abolished. The monarch ruled Nepal under the panchayat system for 30 years between 1960 and 1990 April by banning all political parties and suspending many rights.

Risk of violence in N Ireland again, warns Sinn Fein

DUBLIN, April 8: The leader of IRA's political wing, Sinn Fein, warned delegates to the party's annual conference Saturday that Northern Ireland risked sliding back into violence if the political deadlock was not broken, reports FAP.

"There is a vacuum, there is the possibility that the good work of recent years could be frittered away," Gerry Adams told about a thousand delegates at the congress in Dublin.

"Worse still, there could be a slide back to the conflict," he added. "This has to be prevented."

The conference began almost two years to the day that the Good Friday peace accord was signed, setting up an assembly in which Sinn Fein's Republicans shared power for the first time with moderate Irish nationalists and pro-British Unionists.

But Peter Mandelson, Britain's Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, suspended the assembly and its power-sharing executive in February.

Mandelson made his decision following Unionist threats to pull out of the body in protest at the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) failure to start destroying or handing over in their weapons.

The peace process has been at an impasse ever since, raising fears of a return to sectarian violence.

While, Sinn Fein insists the assembly must return before any IRA arms are decommissioned, David Trimble's Ulster Unionist Party, the largest force in the assembly, says some disarmament must occur before they retake their seats.

Adams' speech, however, stressed that the key was to get the autonomous Northern Irish administration to work again.

Mandelson, meanwhile, insisted on Saturday that the future of the peace process depended largely on the IRA.

"Only the IRA can create that confidence by making their intentions clear. An unmistakable signal of their peaceful intentions would be worth a lot more than a one-off gesture of token decommissioning," he said.

But Adams stressed there was only so much he could do as head of Sinn Fein.

"We will continue to do our best but if a British Government, with all of its military fire-power and muscle, could not get an IRA surrender in 30 years of war, then unionist leaders or British ministers cannot expect a Sinn Fein leadership to do it for them."

He added: "It is not too late to save the Good Friday Agreement."

Sinn Fein has always insisted it does not control the IRA, which they say has its own, separate leadership.



A model wears a gown by Spanish designer Francis Montesinos in a fashion show on Friday in the Pasarela del Carmen in Valencia. — AFP photo

Syria warns unilateral Israeli withdrawal could fail to bring peace

CAIRO, April 8: Syria's foreign minister warned on Saturday that a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon would fail to bring about peace if the problem of Palestinian refugees remains unsolved, reports AFP.

"Syria is against tension and for peace but Israel must accept responsibility for any move it makes," Faruq al-Shara said here following talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Shara stressed that Damascus, which is the main power broker in Lebanon, "understands Lebanon's call for a solution to the problem of the Palestinian refugees."

Lebanese President Emile Lahoud on Wednesday filed a memorandum with the United Nations questioning the ability of an international force to deal with raids on Israel by Palestinian refugees after an Israeli pullout.

Shara said a total Israeli withdrawal from the section of southern Lebanon it has occupied for 22 years, along with a solution to the refugee problem, would leave Syria "satisfied."

But Syria expects "an official, written Israeli position of

which we must be informed through the UN secretary general," he said after a second meeting with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mousa.

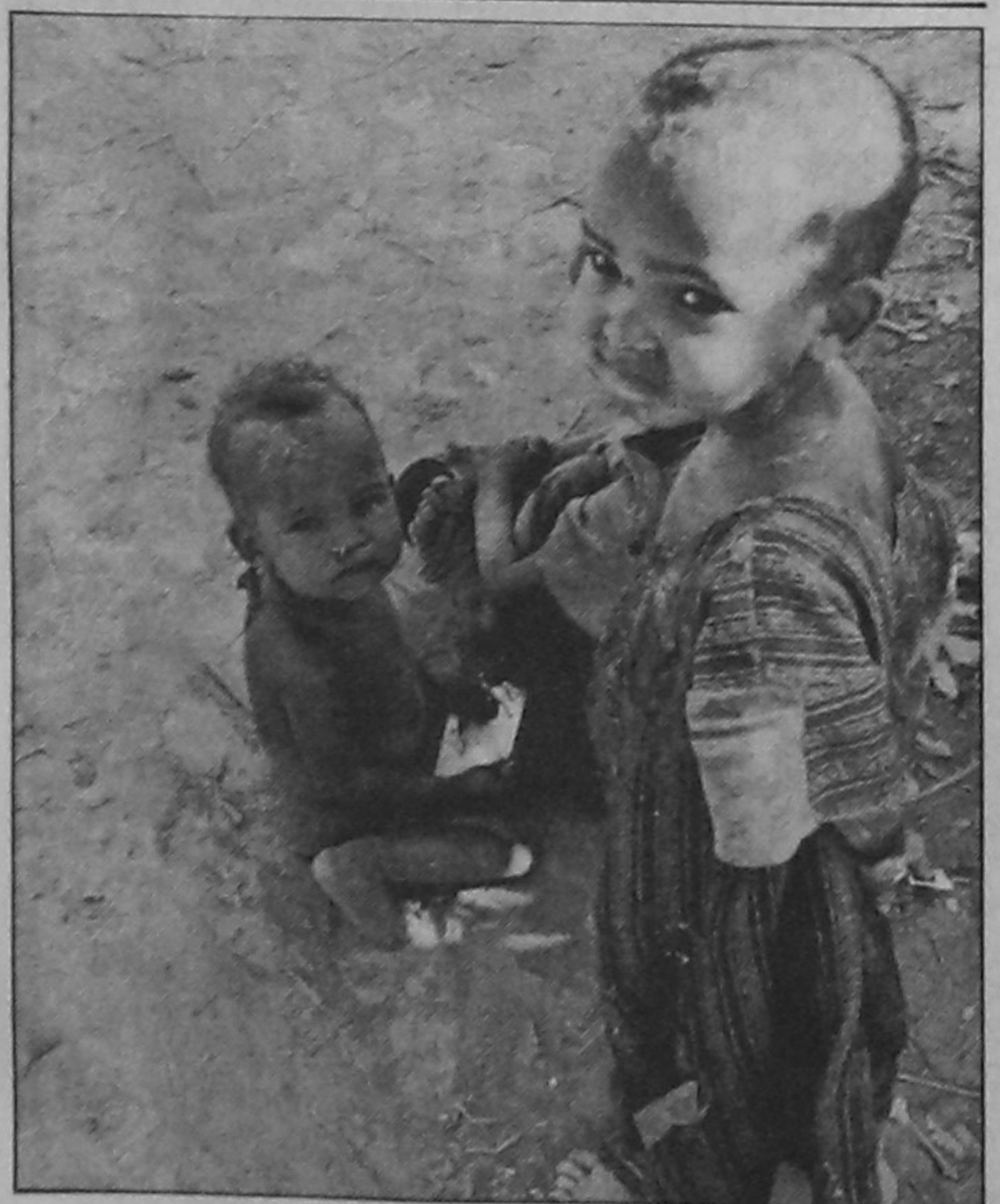
"Without such a commitment in writing, we can't consider Israel serious," he added.

Israel has vowed to pull its troops out by late July, even in the absence of a peace deal with Damascus, and suggested that a UN force foreseen under UN Resolution 425 from 1978 would be sufficient to oversee a peaceful withdrawal.

But Shara rejected that idea on Saturday. "Who can believe that Israel now wants to apply a Security Council resolution when hundreds of UN resolutions have not been implemented over the last 20 years?" he said.

"It is strange that the Jewish state calls on the United Nations to play a role when it has always refused intervention by the international organisation."

The Syrian foreign minister accused Israel of "treating the international community with contempt by claiming it wanted to pull out of southern Lebanon without pre-conditions."



Children stand in the feeding camp in Gode, southeast of Addis Ababa on Friday. Some 700 women and children have made it to the camp in the past few days. Nearly a million tonnes of food is needed in drought-stricken Ethiopia as western governments began mobilizing emergency aid. — AFP photo