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Pakistan safe haven for terrorists: US report

WASHINGTON, June 6: A US commission yesterday accused Pakistan of supporting and offering a safe haven for international terrorists, in a report which urged President Bill Clinton to ensure the Islamabad government, reports AFP.

The National Commission on Terrorism, set up by Congress two years ago after bombings at US embassies in East Africa, found Pakistan had "cooperated on counter-terrorism at times, but not consistently."

"Pakistan provides safe haven, transit, and moral, political and diplomatic support to several groups engaged in terrorism," said the report.

The Clinton administration should consider designating Pakistan, along with Greece, as "not cooperating fully" in the fight against terrorism, it added.

"The US government should vigorously use the 'not cooperating fully' category, naming countries, even friends and allies — whose behaviour is objectionable but does not justify designation as state sponsor of terrorism," said the report.

Nations which fall into this 'not cooperating fully' category face a US embargo on arms sales.

The report named the Islamic Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HUM) as a terrorist operation. The group, which has been blamed for kidnapping western tourists, is believed by officials here to be based in Pakistan and Afghanistan and is active mostly in Indian-controlled Kashmir.

The HUM "operates openly and with the apparent support of the Pakistan government — at least it hasn't been closed down," commission chairman

L. Paul Bremer said as he presented the report at a news conference Monday.

Pakistan, a traditional friend of the US, "should take account of these recommendations," if it wants to avoid censure, Bremer said.

Despite its criticisms, the commission praised Pakistan for arresting and extraditing Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, who masterminded the New York World Trade Centre bombing in 1993.

Islamabad's cooperation was also "vital" in heading off terrorist attacks planned last year for the turn of the millennium, according to the report.

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright reacted to leaked copies of the report on Sunday, saying that the administration was "not considering sanctions" against Pakistan and Greece but wanted them to take more action against terrorism.



The crumpled remains of a dwelling in the town of Cubuk, north of Ankara, yesterday following an earthquake which registered 5.9 on the Richter scale. At least two people died and 26 people were injured.

Preparatory meeting told NAM confce centre to be ready before schedule

More than 60 heads of state and government are expected to attend the 13th Non-aligned Movement (NAM) Summit scheduled to be held here in September next year, a preparatory meeting of the Summit was told yesterday, reports BSS.

The second meeting of the high-powered Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee formed for the preparations of the Summit was informed that the Bangladesh Conference Centre, the venue of the Summit, now being constructed at Agargaon with Chinese financial and technical assistance will be ready before schedule.

The work of the Centre is going on in full swing. The meeting chaired by Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad which lasted more than an hour reviewed the progress of work since the last meeting held in February.

Besides the Conference Centre, work of the apartment complex and the NAM village for the accommodation of the delegations are also progressing

fast. The meeting was also told that the authorities have taken up plan for beautification of the city in connection with the NAM Summit.

Some road side islands will be redesigned and decorated and sculptures are likely to be placed for beautification. Foreign Minister Azad, while expressing his satisfaction at the pace of work, asked all concerned to carry on with their job on "war footing."

Meeting sources said Hotel Sheraton where most of heads of delegation will stay is being widely expanded with additional facilities. About 250 rooms and 10 VIP suites will be added through the expansion. There will be underground parking facility for 250 cars in the hotel, the meeting was told.

It was further informed that the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism is going to build a five-star hotel at Zia International Airport and that 150 rooms of the hotel will be ready before the NAM Summit.

US panel suggests close monitoring of foreign students

BOSTON, June 6: A US government panel's suggestion that foreign students in the United States be more closely monitored for ties to terrorism drew worried reaction from university officials on Monday and a cautious response from students, reports Reuters.

Most scholars and administrators agreed that US efforts to combat terrorism would be better directed elsewhere and that any heavy-handed measures could tarnish the US image abroad.

"Obviously I'm not happy about this," said Gail Szenes, director of New York University's office for international students and scholars.

"To suggest that this group represents a particular threat when there is absolutely no evidence to support this... this is strictly politically motivated," she said, adding that the idea hurts the US image abroad and sends a "very chauvinistic and isolationist" message.

The report contended a "small minority" of foreign students might exploit their visas to support terrorists, and noted that one of the bombers identified in the 1993 attack on New York's World Trade Centre entered the United States on a student visa and later dropped out.

John Pearson, head of the Bechtel International Centre at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, said he agreed there was no proof foreign students posed a major threat and said the latest proposal seemed superfluous, given existing tracking systems.

There are ways that the INS is already developing that will help institutions and the government better understand the

student population in the United States," he said.

Students, who are tracked by the Immigration and Naturalisation Service through a paper-based, non-centralised system, were mostly unaware of the report and when it was described, reacted with guarded neutrality.

"If it is something done officially by the university and if it is done responsibly and it helps fight terrorism, then there is no problem," said Eduardo Almeida, 38, of Rio de Janeiro, who will receive a master's degree from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government this week.

But in a reaction echoed by other students, he said Washington could put its resources to better use elsewhere.

Each year some 250,000 foreign students enter the United States or change universities, the INS said. Universities are required to report annually whether each foreign student is still enrolled and meeting programme requirements, their address and whether they have committed any crimes.

Under a new system being piloted by 21 universities in the Southeast that was mandated by Congress in 1996, a computer database called the Co-ordinated Interagency Programme for Regulating International Students (CIPRIS), would centralize that information, an INS spokeswoman said.

She said implementation of the system stalled when universities refused to collect the needed fees. Pending action in the US Senate would allow the INS to collect a \$95 fee and allow CIPRIS to go national, she said.

CHT: Eight more army camps to be withdrawn

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, June 6: Eight more army camps will be withdrawn from two hill districts — Rangamati and Khagrachhari — within one month, security sources said.

Earlier, 62 army camps were withdrawn from CHT in phases following signing of peace accord in December, 1997 between the government and the then Shantibahini.

Earlier, president of Parbatyia Chattagram Jana Sanghat Samity (PCJSS) Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Shantu Larma blamed the government for delay in pulling troops out of Chittagong Hill Tracts as per peace agreement.

About 2,000 Shantibahini rebels laid down their arms ending over two decades of insurgency to return to normal life.

Fiji suspended from C'wealth councils

LONDON, June 6: Commonwealth foreign ministers suspended Fiji from the grouping's decision-making councils today over the coup in the South Pacific nation but decided against imposing economic sanctions, reports Reuters.

"Fiji should be suspended from the councils of the Commonwealth pending the restoration of democracy and the rule of law," Botswana's Foreign Minister Mompoti Merafhe, chair of the CMAG ministerial group, told reporters.

CMAG called for a timetable to be set for the restoration of constitutional rule and demanded the release of Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhury, other government ministers and all others who are being held hostage in Suva.

Khaleda protests seizure of Ershad's passport

Opposition leader Khaleda Zia has protested and condemned impounding of the passport of JP Chairman H M Ershad at the time of his departure for London on Monday, reports UNB.

She also protested the government restriction on Ershad's going abroad.

In a statement yesterday Khaleda Zia said Ershad is chief of a political party and leader of parliamentary party of JP.

Impounding his passport and restricting him from going abroad are clear violation of human rights. The action manifested fascist character of the government, she said.

She said the passport of Ershad was earlier taken away by the government but returned on order from the court. Taking his passport again also violated the court order. The government has no respect for the rule of law, she added.

Begum Zia said the Constitution and fundamental rights of the people are not safe in the hands of this government.

"We are protesting such repressive, motivated, anti-democratic action of the government," she said.

The central liaison committee of the 4-party opposition alliance also protested and condemned debaring Ershad from going abroad for medical checkup.

4 bills placed in JS

Four bills were introduced in the house yesterday and later sent to the respective parliamentary standing committees for scrutiny and report back to the Sangsad within the specified time, reports BSS.

The bills are: The government Primary School Teachers Welfare Trust (Amendment) Bill, 2000; The Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (Amendment) Bill, 2000; Ex-cadre First and Second Class Gazetted Officers (Customs, Excise and Vat) Appointment and Service Condition Bill, 2000 and The Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2000.

Sadipur Bridge

Sylhet JP demands removal of Monju

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET, June 6: Sylhet city unit of Jatiya Party has demanded immediate removal of Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Monju.

Babul Hossain Babul, ex-chairman of Sylhet Pourashava and Sadar Upazila Parishad and convener of the city unit of JP held a press conference at Sylhet Press Club this evening.

He alleged that the prime minister had refused to formally inaugurate the Sadipur Bridge on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway on June 3 last as she herself saw major faults in the bridge. She also ordered immediate repair of the faults, he said.

Defying the order the bridge was opened for light vehicular traffic risking the lives of people, he alleged.

The minister took no action against the officials concerned even after repeated complaints about the technical faults in the bridge during and after its completion, it was alleged at the press conference.

They demanded high level probe into the irregularity. The speakers also condemned the seizure of the passport of JP chief H M Ershad.

The city JP leaders gave a one-month ultimatum for fulfilling their demands, failing which they would launch an agitation programme, it was warned at the press conference.

Dialogue on sub-regional cooperation Confidence building measures needed to create atmosphere

By Special Correspondent

Speakers at a dialogue here yesterday said there is scope and need for integrated efforts to develop sub-regional cooperation but emphasised confidence building measures to create an atmosphere of trust for undertaking such endeavours.

Prof B. G. Verghese, an eminent Indian scholar was the main speaker at the dialogue on "Bangladesh and the Indian North East", organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). Prof Rehman Sobhan, Chairman of CPD presided over the dialogue, held at its office.

Other participants included former foreign secretary Farooq Sobhan, MCCI President Latifur Rahman, Morshed Khan, MP, Dr Iftekhar Zaman, Dr Abdur Rab, Economist Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, Dr Rezaul Karim, Dr Meghna Guha and The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam.

Verghese said there is tremendous prospect for harnessing the resources of the region

Such cooperation is possible among Bangladesh, North Indian states, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan.

The professor who was once editor of a leading daily in his country said it is a welcome sign that the Asian Highway is taking a more concrete shape in this part of South Asia. He mentioned that the Yangon-Sittoung road has been built, providing a greater scope for surface connection. Trade is also taking place through Teknaf in Bangladesh and Maungdaw in Myanmar. These stretches can be expanded for more sub-regional cooperation.

He said despite apprehensions by ethnic or minority groups, such links through improved communication could benefit the people of Bangladesh, North Eastern states of India, Myanmar, Bhutan and Nepal.

Responding to questions that India as the biggest country in the region wanted to deal bi-

laterally with neighbours, and whether it would hinder multi-lateral cooperation, Verghese said, "The answer definitely is yes. India should move away from bilateralism. The process should be started. It would happen."

Canadian High Commissioner in Bangladesh David Preston felt that it was important to develop linkages among Bangladesh and its neighbours for greater benefit of all. He pointed out that the genesis of NAFTA was trilateral cooperation among Canada, United States and Mexico and emphasised multi-lateral cooperation among neighbours for development.

Former diplomat and BNP leader Rezaul Karim said Assam and Bengal acted as a hinterland for Calcutta for a long time in the past and stressed the need for development of Chittagong port to spur regional cooperation.

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The world is after money

NEW YORK, June 6: When people are given a choice between having more money and more time, most of the world wants the money, according to a survey released yesterday, reports Reuters.

The study by leading New York-based marketing research firm Roper Starch Worldwide found that Eastern Europeans, followed by North Americans and Western Europeans lead the desire for more money than time. Latin America was next.

Developing Asia, which includes relatively poor countries such as India, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, was the only region where people want more time than money by 52 per cent to 43 per cent, the study revealed.

"They are working all the time to get ahead and at the same time, however, there is something about the pace of change in those societies that has been so rapid," Tom Miller, the study's director, said of those Asian countries. "Perhaps there is a kind of nostalgia for the days when people were less affluent but had more time to enjoy themselves."

Russia was the country where money was the most

dominant choice by 73 per cent against 13 per cent for time. In India, 66 per cent of respondents said they wanted more money while 31 per cent opted for more time.

The survey was based on 30,000 in-person interviews conducted between November 1999 and February 2000 with 1,000 consumers aged 13 to 65 in each of 29 countries and Hong Kong in China. The sampling error was plus or minus 4 percentage points for each country and Roper said the study was projectable to represent 1.39 billion people.

Miller said that across the board, there was no difference between the choices of men and women with 52 per cent of each gender choosing money over time.

Teenagers said they wanted more time and older people chose the money, said Roper, which will distribute the information and its analysis to clients seeking to shape communications strategies and evaluate personal preferences in marketing their products.

In the United States, where complaints about lack of time appear to be common, nearly six in 10 (57 per cent) want more

money, compared with the almost four in 10 (37 per cent) who prefer more time, according to the survey.

Countries where money as the choice dominated began with Russia (71 per cent vs. 13 per cent for time); France (63 per cent vs. 22 per cent) and Poland (63 per cent vs. 24 per cent) tied for second.

Argentina (62 per cent vs. 34 per cent) ranks fourth, followed in fifth place by Canada (61 per cent vs. 32 per cent). Britain and Taiwan were tied for sixth (both at 60 per cent vs. 29 per cent).

"More money often gives us more choices and may ultimately buy us more time or more freedom in how we use our time," Miller said. "At the same time, whether you're rich or poor has surprisingly little bearing on whether you want more money or more time in life."

Those interviewed were asked one question: If you could choose one or the other but not both, would you have more time or more money? Three per cent said they wanted neither more money nor more time and four per cent said they were undecided.

13 reporters file writ against threat, police harassment

Thirteen reporters of different national dailies yesterday filed a writ in the High Court against police harassment and threatening them to implicate in false case, reports UNB.

The court will hear the petition today.

The Home Secretary, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, DMP Commissioner and Officer-in-Charge of Ramna police station have been made respondents in the writ petition.

Advocate Sigma Huda moved the writ on behalf of the journalists before a HC division bench comprising Justice Mainur Reza Chowdhury and Justice Mohammad Mozammel Hossain.

Barrister Moudud Ahmed and Advocate Elna Khan were also present.

The writ petition stated that Ramna police filed two GDs on May 29 against 60/70 journalists naming 13 of them after the arrest of journalist Aminur Rahman Taj without any warrant.

It said police from the same day started threatening the journalists of implicating them in case under the Public Safety Act.

The petitioners sought justice from the court against such harassment and threat.

The 13 journalists are: Parvez Khan, Shankar Kumar Dey, Fakrul Alam Kanchan, Shamsus Salehin, Shah Monwar Jahang, Sheikh Nazrul Islam, Mohsinul Karim Lebu, Abu Saleh Akon, Harun-ur Rashid, Murtaza Haider Liton, Azad Hossain Sumon, Mahmudur Rahman and Mesbah Ahmed.

3 to die for acid throwing

PIROJPUR, June 6: A court here today sentenced three people, including two brothers, to death for throwing acid on a girl, reports UNB.

Additional District and Sessions Judge pronounced the verdict against Mizanur Rahman, 26, his brother Masud Uddin Badal, 39, and Shahin Farazi.

Judge Ainul Huq, however, acquitted three others — Moiduddin Nilu, Mashiur Rahman Milton and Noor Mohammad, as they were not proved guilty.

Of the convicts, Shahin Farazi is absconding. According to the prosecution, the convicts threw acid on Monira Begum Khushi, 20, of village Bekutia in Kaokhali upazila in 1994.

24 Nepalese politicians have links with ISI

NEW DELHI, June 6: A secret intelligence report about Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) activities quoted by a weekly here has alleged that 24 Nepalese politicians had links with the Pakistani agency, reports PTI.

The intelligence report, obtained by 'India Today', claimed that the hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane from Kathmandu last December was masterminded by the ISI and carried out by the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, the Magazine said in a release here.

It quoted the report as claiming that there was reliable information that gold smuggling syndicates in Nepal offered up to Rs 15 crore a month to Nepalese politicians, bureaucrats and police officers as consideration.

The release said the report reveals the names of 24 (Nepalese) politicians from different parties who have links with the ISI.

Passport seizure violation of HR: Ershad

Jatiya Party Chairman H M Ershad yesterday described as inhuman and violation of human right the government action in debaring him to go abroad for medical checkup, reports UNB.

"It is beyond imagination that a political leader will behave with another cruelly trampling human values," the former president told a press conference at his party office.

The passport of Ershad was impounded at Zia airport on Monday when he was about to leave for London.

Heart specialists of King Faisal Institute in Saudi Arabia advised me for medical check up every three or six months but I could not do it because the government impounded my passport last November also when I was going to China," said Ershad.

He said his passport was returned on order from the court and termed Monday's impounding of his passport as violation of the court order.

Replying to a question JP Chairman said, "I am opposed to the government. This may be the only reason of government action."

Ershad told a correspondent that he would again go to the court to get back his passport.

UN cargo plane skids off runway at Ctg airport

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, June 6: A UN chartered Russian cargo plane which came here last night to carry army logistics to Sierra Leone skidded off the runway at the time of landing at Chittagong airport, airport sources said.

The cargo plane, Antonov, escaped a major accident at 10-30 pm and entered the under-construction site of the airport beside the main runway, airport source added.

The cargo plane that came here from Bahrain was scheduled to leave Chittagong airport for Sierra Leone at 8 pm tonight. However, it was tied back to the tarmac of Chittagong airport at 2-30 pm.

Later, army logistics including vehicles were loaded but the plane's journey was delayed till tomorrow morning, airport sources informed.

Young man beaten to death

By Staff Correspondent
Some unidentified persons beat a young man to death at North Goran under Sabujbagh thana in the city yesterday.

The dead was identified as Abul Kashem Liton, 20, son of Abdu Sattar, a resident of South Mugda Bazar.

Hospital sources said the unidentified persons took Liton to North Goran area, beat him fatally and left him there.

Police rescued him and sent him to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead. The body was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

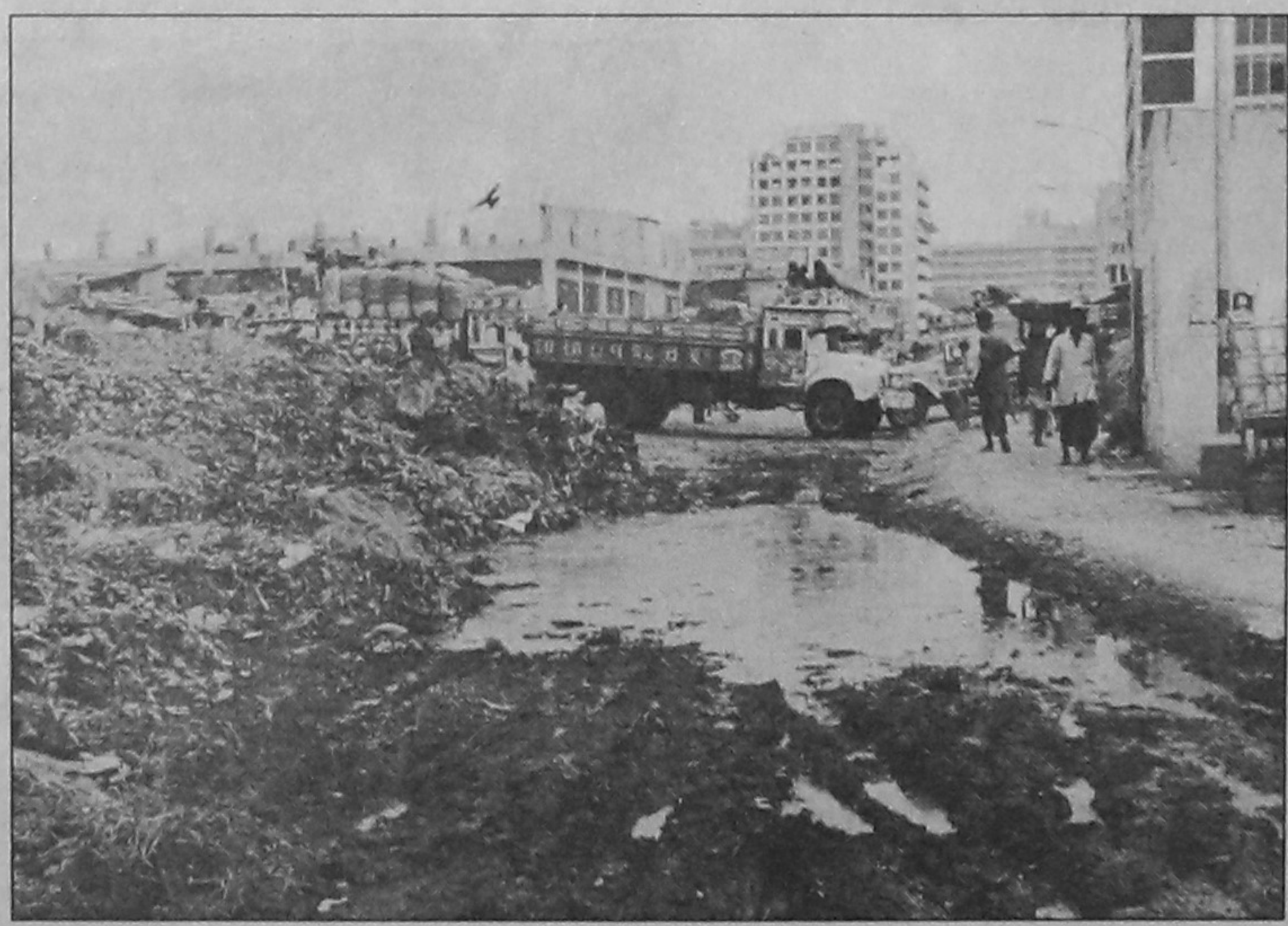
Father of the victim filed a case with Sabujbagh thana. Police said they were yet to arrest any one in connection with the killing.

Garments factory worker raped

By Staff Correspondent

A thirteen-year-old garments factory worker was raped in a room at Azimpur colony in the city yesterday morning.

Hospital sources said an unidentified man dragged her inside the room and raped her. She was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, police said.



Potholes, rotting rubbish and stinking water make Karwan Bazar one hell of a place to be in.

— Star photo

Chickenpox

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