

The Daily Star

○ DHAKA SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 2001

3rd Millennium

Quake kills 1500 in India, Pakistan

Met office fails to feel tremor

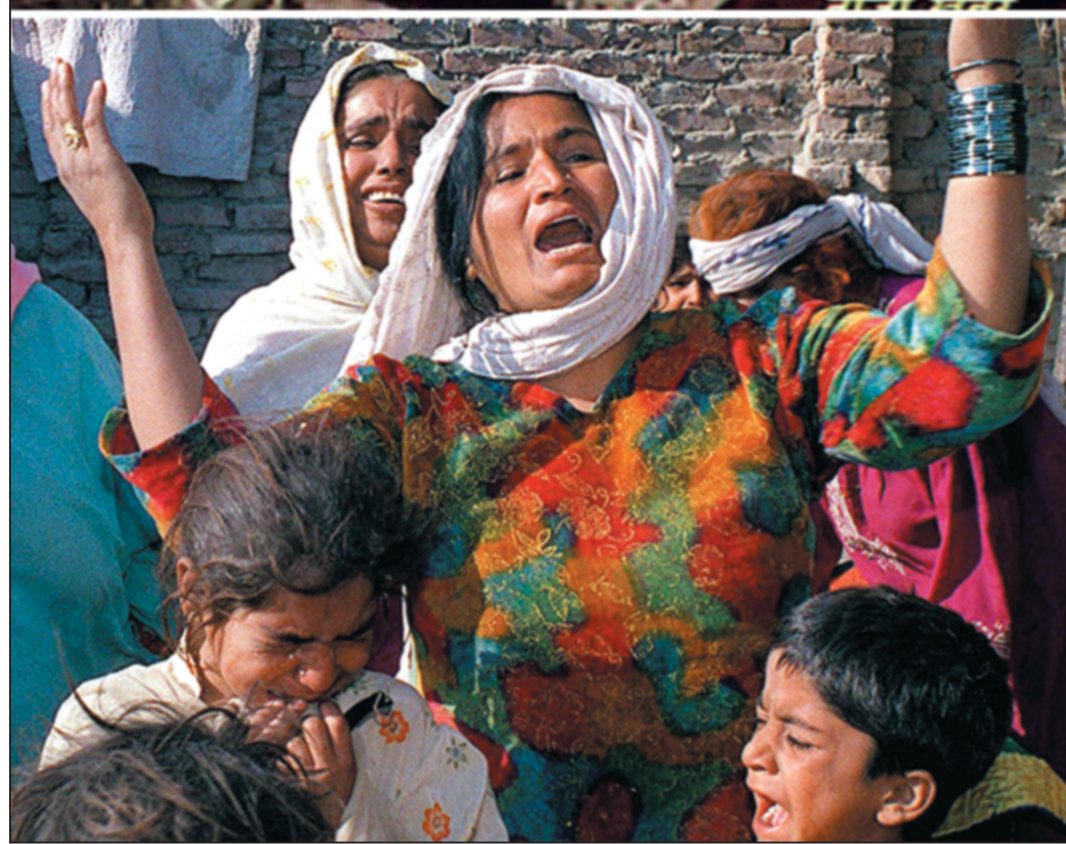
By Staff Correspondent

A devastating earthquake that jolted the Indian subcontinent yesterday morning killing several hundred people, did not hit Bangladesh, a met office report said in Dhaka last night.

"Country's lone seismograph station in Chittagong showed no sign of a tremor hitting anywhere in Bangladesh," Shontosh Chandra Mathar, a meteorologist at the Dhaka met office told The Daily Star yesterday.

However, local and international news agencies reported that certain parts of the country had experienced an aftershock of the quake.

A UNB report from Shariatpur said, an aftershock of the devastating earthquake See page 11 col 3



A collapsed building in Ahmedabad after an earthquake measuring 7.9 struck north western India yesterday (top). Women and children cry after losing their houses and belongings in the southern Pakistani city of Hyderabad. — AFP photo

*Death toll may climb *Gujarat worst-hit *Aftershock felt also in Nepal, Bangladesh

NEW DELHI, Jan 26: A powerful earthquake rocked the Indian subcontinent today killing over 1500 people as it toppled buildings and houses in India and Pakistan. The 7.9 magnitude quake was also felt in Nepal and Bangladesh, report AP/PTI.

The epicenter was near Bhuj, a desert town of 150,000 people in western Gujarat state, close to the border between India and Pakistan, where police said 1000 people died.

A hundred buildings had toppled in Gujarat, and desperate relatives begged authorities to dig their family members from under the rubble.

The overall Indian death toll was 1500 and expected to climb, said police officer P. Kanpuri in the emergency control room at Gandhinagar, the capital of Gujarat state.

Ten people died in southern Pakistan when their houses collapsed.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee called on "all people to rally together at this time of national calamity." He made no appeal for international aid, saying the needs were still being assessed.

Cabinet minister Pramod Mahajan said the government was flying 10,000 tents, 10,000 tons of grain, 20 doctors and surgeons, communications and seismology experts to Gujarat.

Vajpayee sent federal Home Minister Lal Advani to Gujarat, where he said the death figure "could be 1,000 or more."

Mahajan said 90 per cent of the houses in Bhuj had been damaged. See page 11 col 4



The epicentre was near Bhuj, Gujarat. Source: Internet

Equip yourselves with modern edn, President urges womenfolk

President Shahabuddin Ahmed called upon the womenfolk to equip themselves with progressive education for "empowerment of women" that is now recognised all over the world as a basic concern of society, reports UNB.

"I feel that there is no better way of standing on your own except arming yourselves with modern and liberal education," he said addressing the 40th founding anniversary of Dhaka Business and Professional Women's Club (DBPWC) at a hotel yesterday.

He told the function that the government is making massive See page 11 col

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Prayer Timings

January 27

	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	5-30	6-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-05	4-20
Maghrib	5-40	5-45
Esha	7-15	7-35

Kotalipara bomb Mufti Hannan, 16 others chargesheeted

CID police yesterday submitted a charge sheet against 17 people, including Mufti Hannan, the main accused in Kotalipara Bomb Planting Case, reports BSS.

ASP Munshi Atiqur Rahman, Investigation Officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet to Gopalganj District Court after investigating the case for nearly four months.

A total of 42 people were shown as prosecution witnesses in the case while the investigators mentioned 190 evidences in the charge sheet. See page 11 col 3

Sutrapur double murder

Main accused Sumon nabbed at Comilla

By Staff Correspondent

The principal accused in the sensational Sutrapur double murder case, Rabid Hasan Sumon, was arrested at Comilla in the early hours of yesterday. Comilla police arrested him from a residential hotel in the town at about 3 am.

Sumon is charged with killing two teenaged boys at a Rifle Club in Sutrapur area of the capital on September 15 last year. Mutilated bodies of the victims Saem, 19, and Mohsin, 18, were recovered from a manhole at nearby Loharpool on the next day.

He is the son of Nasibun Ahmed, President of Dhaka City Mahila Awami League and a ward commissioner of Dhaka City Corporation. He was absconding since the killings.

Detective Branch (DB) police in the city said they came to know that Sumon was hiding in Comilla. A DB team then conducted search at several places in the district, including the house of a Union Parishad See page 11 col 7



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing a press conference in the city yesterday. — Starphoto

'We now must complete term to see Opposition's mass upsurge'

Meeting with lawyers after minister returns: PM

By Staff Correspondent

Against the backdrop of an Opposition threat for a mass upsurge, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government has to complete its term to see if it can be ousted in such a way.

"We had a plan for election in the lean season. But now we have to wait till the last day as the Opposition has threatened a mass upsurge against us," she told a press conference at her official residence Gano Bhaban.

Hasina predicted a "zero outcome" of the plan for a mass upsurge by "the three defeated forces" (BNP, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami). See page 11 col 4

She said it is natural that a government would plan to complete its term. "But we once offered early election in 2000, which was rejected by the Opposition. Now we prefer the election to be held on schedule. We've already started preparing the next national budget. Let's see what can be done after the budget."

Asked about a report in a daily that President Shahabuddin Ahmed could resign following the controversy over appointment of two judges in the Supreme Court, the Prime Minister said it depends See page 11 col 4

Announcement

A 100-page four-colour special supplement on 10th Anniversary of **The Daily Star** at Taka 6 only
Coming out on 30 Jan.2001 Book your copy now. **don't miss it!**



Rabid Hasan Sumon

Euro Parliament urges Opposition to join JS sessions

The European Parliament has called on the opposition to attend the parliamentary sessions and refrain from extra-parliamentary activities, including hartal, reports UNB.

A message received here yesterday said the call was made in a resolution by European Parliament on Bangladesh on January 18.

In the resolution the Euro parliamentarians also expressed concern about the existence of various pressures aimed at undermining the country's longstanding secular tradition.

They also called on the Bangladesh government to ensure that organisations and individuals undertaking efforts to protect the country's secular culture could work without fear or repression.

The European Parliament supported, "in line with the resolution of April 21, 1994, the effort See page 11 col

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