

## Two set themselves on fire to protest Taiwan N-plant

AFP, Taipei

Two men were in hospital yesterday after setting themselves on fire to protest a nuclear power plant project that is to be debated by Taiwan's parliament today.

One of the men, identified as 50-year-old Huang Ting-fang, unexpectedly doused petrol on himself Monday outside the parliament building and set himself alight, police said.

"At around 02:30 pm (1230 BST) the man dashed toward the protest group and set himself on fire," police bureau chief Wei Ti-kun told reporters.

Wei said it was not clear what prompted the horrific act, but added Huang had distributed a five-page will outlining his strong opposition to the project by the state-run Taiwan

Power Company's (Taipower) to build a fourth nuclear power plant.

Huang was in stable condition after he was rushed to a nearby hospital for emergency treatment, but the event shocked dozens of environmental activists staging a 30-hour sit-in outside the Legislative Yuan, Taiwan's parliament.

"I don't know why this happened," said Cheng Hsien-you, professor of Chinese Culture University, and leader of the protest group, adding he opposed such violence which blurred the focus of the protest.

Separately, 21-year-old Li Wen-ta also set fire to himself in southern Taiwan on Sunday to protest the nuclear plant, state television said.

## Magurchhara case

FROM PAGE 1 the investigation report on the blow-out and the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) with Occidental, a US oil company responsible for the explosion.

But officials, showing various reasons, submit no documents to the committee, they alleged.

In its last meeting, the sub-committee was surprised to see a note from Energy and Mineral Resources Secretary Akmal Hossain that the Prime Minister had suggested not to bring Unocal (previously Occidental) officials before the committee.

Petrobangla was asked to bring the oil company officials before the committee for recording their statement regarding compensation. But, they were not brought to the committee meeting.

Another member of the committee termed activities of Petrobangla and the ministry as "fishy". "Most of the officials in the ministry and the Petrobangla might have been linked with the wrongdoing of the US oil company," he said.

Earlier, Unocal puzzled the sub-committee members as well as Petrobangla by claiming in an official document in early October that the company paid Tk 332.32 crore to different authorities follow-

ing the Magurchhara blow-out.

This followed arguments between Unocal and Petrobangla.

The sub-committee observed that it was still not clear about the actual situation.

Occidental's PSC for blocks 13 and 14 expired on January 10, 1998 due to its failure to fulfil the minimum work it had committed, which included drilling of one exploratory well. The Supplemental Agreement was signed with an understanding that Occidental would gradually pay compensation to all.

One of the investigators of Magurchhara blow-out told a sub-committee meeting in November that the disaster happened due to negligence of Occidental.

The committee repeatedly asked energy ministry officials to submit the probe report on the blow-out, which is still missing after its preparation in June 1997.

The parliamentary committee also expressed dissatisfaction over activities of the ministry and the Petrobangla, saying that after three years of the incident, government officials could not find the cause and get compensation. Rather, the company was "rewarded", it had said.

## Teenagers

FROM PAGE 1

Asked if his department would go for a special drive against drug smugglers and traders, he said such operation is always on and the contraband is being seized regularly.

Dr Qoreshi, who runs a 100-bed addiction hospital in the city, said, "It is very difficult to identify the addicts initially. However, if the family members are cautious, they can detect the addicts and arrange proper

## Bombs hurled on policemen: One killed

UNB, Rajbari

Armed miscreants hurled bombs at a police patrol team on Gualanda-Faridpur road in Mukubler Dokan area yesterday, leaving a constable killed and two others injured.

A group of about 25 attacked the policemen in an attempt to snatch their arms, leaving three critically injured, police said.

The injured policemen were rushed to the local upazila health complex, where Nurul Islam succumbed to his injuries.

## The dog story

FROM PAGE 1

dogs in the city. But the Chief Health Officer claimed that at times more than 100 dogs were killed a day.

Ashraf Uddin said every time DCC's two-man team with a vehicle goes out on such a drive, two 'professional dogcatchers' are hired. They are paid Tk 15 for catching a dog with 'tongs.' When a dog is caught, it is killed with a lethal injection-- potassium sulphide - pushed by a DCC veterinary doctor.

In 1998, DCC had bought 2,000 potassium cyanide tablets for killing dogs but use of those on streets was found too dangerous and the practice was stopped.

"We cannot ensure a steady drive due to lack of manpower," said Ashraf Uddin.

Asked how they keep an estimate of the dogs killed, he said the veterinary doctor has to certify the number before payment is made to the dogcatchers. DCC has only one such doctor for the last 10 years.

## Nephew

FROM PAGE 12

printed thousands of coloured posters and put them up all around the city, including the Nagar Bhaban after being "nominated the best commissioner of Dhaka" by an unknown association. After the nomination, Sadek went on a campaign to raise money from every business house of his locality and build dozens of overhead arches. In every arch, banners read "heartiest felicitations to Sadek Khan for being nominated the best Ward Commissioner of Dhaka by a journalists' association".

A spokesman of the so-called journalists' association said that last year they first nominated Sadek as the best commissioner. But when another ward commissioner of the city warned the association of legal action, they had to nominate both as the best commissioners in the city.

The so-called journalists' association is known to have been composed of the "underworld press" of the country.



PHOTO: STAR

Shikkhak Karmachari Oikya Jote formed a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday in support of their nine-point demand.

## Editor's Letter to the Readers

FROM PAGE 1

forward in the post-Second World War period did so by building national unity within and regional co-operation outside. We vigorously wrote against the divisive and acrimonious politics of the day. We counseled our politicians that no single leader or party can be the repository of all wisdom and that there was a fundamental difference between political rivalry and personal enmity. We pleaded with our leaders to shun violence, prejudice and the path of destruction. We urged patience on our two big parties to allow the other side to fulfil the Constitutional mandate that the people gave them. Endlessly we urged all sides not to abandon the parliament but to treat it like the 'House of the People' that it is and not the house of the government that it was never meant to be.

**Ours was ten years of journalism with commitment.** Commitment to nation building, to uphold the Fundamental Rights enshrined in the Constitution and to establish a society based on the rule of law. We never missed a chance to underscore that education lay at the root of prosperity in the Information Age and that without a pro-people healthcare system no sustainable growth can be achieved. Throughout our decade-long existence we underscored the importance of economic development as the number one priority for the government. **It was for this purpose that we raised the loudest and the most consistent voice against hartals. We opposed it every time it was called and it is our vow to do so in the future.**

Through our write ups, interview stories and analytical pieces we focused on the doers rather than the talkers", on those who built industries and created employment opportunities for our youth. **One of our strongest stand was against the bank defaulters who drained our banks dry and deprived the genuine borrowers from vital credit and crippled our entrepreneurs.** We held innumerable roundtables to discuss problems of national importance to derive some sort of policy direction from them. We joined forces with Think Tanks, selected NGOs, the Scouts, BUET and many activist groups to push

forward urgent development priorities.

**Ours was ten years of journalism of passion.** Our readers call us "The paper with a conscience", and we are proud to say that our conscience lies with the poor, the disadvantaged and the oppressed. Our hearts went out to the victims of acid throwing, of fatwa against women, and to the victims of exploitation. We said what we felt, and tried to feel what concerned the people. We never shied away from taking strong positions on issues of national importance and vigorously raised our voice against corruption, abuse of power and partisanship. We wrote as much from dispassionate analysis of facts as from heart-felt reaction to events.

**Ours was tens years of professional and ethical journalism.** We will never claim that we did not go wrong but we will certainly claim that there was never any malice or prejudice in what we wrote. It was an article of faith with us never to denigrate or defame a person or an institution and whatever negative was written was fully backed by hard proof, cross-checked from multiple sources. It was our habit to err on the side of caution even at the expense of missing a news. We never chose expediency over hard work and our stories always contained a constructive thread even in the gloomiest of circumstances.

**And finally, ours was journalism in pursuit of a dream the dream of being a global partner with dignity.** We constantly underscored the need for self-respect to replace the habit of self-denigration on the one side and self-praise on the other. The absence of work ethics in the government and proliferation of corruption in every aspect of our life vitiated the growth of a strong national character that historically formed the core of a nation's growth. A people that waged a Liberation War to gain independence found itself in the grip of criminalised politics and self-serving bureaucracy that destroyed our self-confidence and crushed our hope for the future. However none of this could lessen our enthusiastic dream for a future Bangladesh of strengthened democracy, miracle performing farmers, stunning IT sector and steady economic growth.

## Quake rocks Karnataka

FROM PAGE 12

The open courtyard of Ahmedabad's biggest hospital resembles a war zone.

The hospital's wards are overflowing, but the hospital is not turning away any patients. The wounded lie in the courtyard on stretchers or just on the ground, shaded by a few trees.

Anxious relatives, doctors and volunteers step around the patients. Bottles of intravenous fluid hang from bushes. Moans of the injured and orders shouted out by medical workers mingle in the frosty morning air.

In the three days since the earthquake, the hospital has registered 470 dead and 780 wounded, said Dr. M. H. Makwana, the hospital's director.

Inside, the scene is even worse. Security guards try vainly to clear out the groups of relatives that accompany each patient. Harried doctors, some of whom have been working nonstop for 36 hours, move from bed to bed.

The nursing staff are trying to maintain bed charts, but it's a losing battle, said Marykutty Joseph, a nurse, her weary face contrasting with her crisp uniform.

Outside, a jeep careers into the driveway on one side of the courtyard. All heads turn toward the sudden movement. Young men rush toward the rear of the vehicle to pull out a wounded old man, his face covered with blood.

Rameshwar Jain, a grain merchant has been pulled out of the ruins of his shop, in a commercial block that collapsed in the Satellite precinct of west Ahmedabad. He is bleeding from a cut on his forehead.

"Three days in the rubble, it's a miracle that he's alive," said Sanjeev Jain, his son, his young face wet with tears of relief. Sanjeev has lost this brother, who was also in the shop. "I don't know how to tell him," he sobs, as hospital workers wheel his father into the surgery.

Rescue workers have been using jeeps, cars, three-wheeled rickshaws, any mode of transport to ferry the wounded and the dead to the hospital.

## Textbooks

FROM PAGE 12

Three concerns of the Group were awarded the job of printing around eight core textbooks for secondary and higher secondary levels.

Speakers at the rally resented that the Beximco trio--Pustaka, Shuktara and Free Press-- have failed to print and distribute books timely. The trio was supposed to print and deposit those by November 30 last year and the time limit was extended twice, they pointed out.

The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) had awarded the job to those Beximco concerns ignoring many experienced printers and publishers, the speakers alleged.

Pustaka has so far printed and distributed only 14 categories of textbooks out of 60 for the secondary level.

The books are full of errors, the students said.

Meanwhile, the Education Week 2001 is being observed in the country amidst the textbook crisis. It began yesterday.

Our story will not be completed if we do not add that ours was also ten years of journalism that had its share of mistakes, flaws, distortions, oversights and downright sloppy work. There were important stories that were missed, significant developments that were not followed up and fundamental issues not hammered strongly enough. But throughout it all we continued to learn. We spared no effort to serve our readers better and with each mistake our effort was redoubled and our determination recharged to make *The Daily Star* a better newspaper. Our learning shall never end. But we are pledge bound that our shortcomings will.

We take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to our Board of Directors. Their total commitment to editorial freedom and deep respect for the profession of journalism has made *The Daily Star* a journalist's dream paper to work for. At the same time their strict adherence to the highest standards of financial accountability and managerial discipline made this paper economically viable at the shortest possible time.

**Dear Readers,** on this auspicious occasion of our 10th Anniversary we conclude by expressing our most sincere gratitude and our deepest respect to you but for whose continued support and ever expanding base *The Daily Star* could not have served you as it did. We pledge our sincere efforts to serve you even better in the coming years. As our first step we begin by presenting you with a completely new format and layout from today's issue. We promise to come before you with some more interesting changes geared to serving you better. Please let us know how you like our new look and what other changes you would like to see. Once again, please accept our grateful thanks for your generous support. We are humbled by your confidence in us.

Mehfuz Anam  
Editor and Publisher

(For our future plans please see Editorial)

## Nine sued in Ctg

FROM PAGE 12

Ali led the agitators in the rally demanding withdrawal of expulsion on JCD's organising secretary Yasin Chowdhury Liton, party insiders said.

The rally ended in pandemonium amid chase and counter chase between the two factions, police and party insiders said.

JCD city unit president Nazimur Rahman led the rival faction of Ali.

Sunday's clash and filing of the case under PSA, triggered sharp split in Chittagong JCD. BNP leaders were reportedly trying to tame both the factions, sources said.

Meanwhile, BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia is expected to address some wayside rallies in the port city's Dewanhat, Airport, and Bahaddarhat today on her way to Bandarban to attend a grand rally of All Party Action Council, party sources said.

Special security measures were taken by the police authorities in this regard.

## Young man shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A young man was shot at East Kadamtali Slum in the city's Shyampur area yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Noor Islam, 31, son of Janu Sharif of Kadamtali, Shyampur.

Islam was admitted to DMCH. Victim's elder brother Azahar filed a case.

## Snatcher beaten up in Narayanganj

UNB, Narayanganj

A snatcher was caught and beaten up at DIT Market area of the town on Sunday. Police said local people caught a snatcher Ponir, 20, along with Tk 40,000 and beat him mercilessly when he along with his four accomplices snatched Tk 2.50 lakh from Salahuddin and Farooque, cashier and peon of Jamal Soap Company of the town at gunpoint.

They were returning with money to the head office of the company at Bangabandhu Road in the town by a rickshaw from the company's Nitaiganj sale center.

The other snatchers, however, managed to flee the scene. A case was filed.

In another incident, three snatchers Mojibor, 28, Masum Miah, 21, and Shahidullah, 19, were caught with a sharp weapon at port terminal Kheya Ghat on the same day when

they were fleeing after snatching money. They were handed over to the police after a good beating.

On Saturday, local people caught two robbers Wasim and Selim while they along with other accomplices were fleeing after committing a robbery at the house of Mosharraf Hossain of Pagla in Fatullah upazila.

Later, they were handed over to the police after beating.

On the same day, dacoits looted Tk 12,000 in cash, six tolas gold and valuables worth Tk 60,000 from the house of Tota Miah keeping hostage his eight-day old baby at Brahmandi village in Araihaazar upazila.

They also injured Tota Miah, 50, and other inmates of the house Sufia Begum, 35, Mumtaz Begum, 30, f Moksuda Begum, 25, and Lipi, 18.

Separate cases were filed.

## Joint inspection team

FROM PAGE 1

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, BDR, and Bangladesh Army. Water and survey specialists, and district administration officials will also be on the team.

A senior government official is expected to lead the Myanmar side.

The joint inspection team is expected to visit both sides of the Naf river at Ulabania and Palangkhahi, nearly 45 kilometres off Cox's Bazar. They are expected to meet at 1:00pm on February 1 on Kyi, an islet inside the Myanmar territory created by branching of the river.

Sources believe that an amicable settlement of the dispute as per the maritime border agreement signed between the two countries in 1966 and renewed in 1980 would defuse the tension.

Clause 5 of the agreement on the Naf river says, "The contracting

parties agree that neither party shall conduct river training, river training work or utilise the flow of the Naf river or its waters on its own side of the international boundary for industrial purpose, drainage, water conservancy, irrigation, generation of hydroelectric power and the like to such an extent as to prejudice the interest of the other party."

Bangladesh Rifles and Nasaka, Myanmar's border forces, traded fire for several hours on January 8 as the latter tried to proceed with construction of an embankment on their side of the Naf.

Although work on the embankment remains abandoned ever since, tension has intensified in the area following massing of nearly 20,000 Myanmar troops close to Bangladesh's south-eastern border.

## Bomb attack on CPB rally

FROM PAGE 1

Nurul Huda were present in the meeting.

Hasina made a frank confession that although her government made tangible success in vital national sectors laying a strong base for development, they were to savour criticism for law and order problems.

She said it is the responsibility of the police department to improve law and order and assured government's cooperation in improving their skill by providing logistic supports and meeting their reasonable demands.

Attributing absence of democracy and accountability to the deadly crimes in society, she said peace and security are essential ingredients for economic development.

Hasina said although her party came to power after 21 years, she wanted to rebuild the country with a strong economy through united efforts and invited the main opposition to share the government. A neutral personality like Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed was made President, but BNP neither supported him nor joined her cabinet. Rather they started oust-government movement.

Criticising past misrule, she told the meeting that they inherited a chaotic situation in all vital sectors.

The economy was in a shambles, people did not repay bank loans and the country was having a food deficit. There were no specific policies for any sector as the country was ruled on ad-hoc basis.

"None can question about efficiency or decision of the govern-

ment. We only hear criticisms about law and order," Hasina told the police officers, seeking decisive actions in this field.

She offered to consider setting up more police investigation centres, increase in the manpower of police, deployment of more highway police, special training and enhancing the honour and privilege of senior police officers.

She said ration and financial allowances of police constables were already increased and assured that she would look into the demands by police officers relating to their promotion, warrant of precedence and flying police flag by senior officers.

## Truck-coach collision kills six

UNB, Cox's Bazar

At least 6 people were killed and 45 injured when a passenger coach and a truck collided head-on in a deadly accident on the Chittagong-Cox's Bazar highway yesterday.

The driver of the truck was identified as Sifat, 28. The others three are coach passengers Ismail, 42, Azad, 41, and Mamun, 30.

Police and witnesses said a Cox's Bazar-bound coach of Saudia Paribahan collided with a goods-laden truck which was coming from opposite direction at Jahallardala in Lohagara upazila.

## Mujib-Indira

FROM PAGE 12

Signed on May 16, 1974, the Mujib-Indira agreement envisaged that Angorpotia and Dahagram enclaves in northern Kurigram district would be included in the Bangladesh territory.

Article 1.14 of the agreement said: "India will lease in perpetuity to Bangladesh an area of 178x85 cm near Tin Bigha to connect Dahagram with Panbari Mouza (PS Patgram) of Bangladesh."

Although the treaty was ratified by the Bangladesh government in November 1974, India resorted to dilly-dally tactics on different pretexts, including legal complications.

On October 7, 1982, the two countries reached an agreement on "terms of lease in perpetuity" regarding the two enclaves and the Tin Bigha corridor in the light of the Mujib-Indira agreement.

On June 26, 1992, Bangladesh and India completed exchange of letters on the use of Tin Bigha corridor under which Bangladesh nationals are allowed to move through the corridor every alternate hour during daytime.

"This arrangement is not consistent with the 1974 agreement," the Foreign Minister informed parliament.

Azad said he raised the matter at a meeting with his Indian counterpart last month and the Indian External Affairs Minister reassured him of immediately resolving the issue.

DHAKA  
TODAY

### Seminar

Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) in association with Unnayan Samannay will hold a seminar on social development situation. Venue: Women's Voluntary Association auditorium, House No. 20, Rd No. 16 (new), 27 (old), Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 9:00 am.

### Lecture

Advanced Social Science Research Centre of Dhaka University will hold a lecture on "Thai Concepts of Regional Identity in Southeast Asia. Keynote speaker: Dr Duncan Macargo Senior Lecturer of Institute of Politics and International Studies of Leeds University, UK. Venue: Room No 401, Lecture Theatre, DU campus, Time: 12:00 noon.

DHAKA  
TOMORROW

### Seminar

The Russian Cultural Centre will hold a seminar on "Bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Russia: History and Perspectives" to mark the 29th anniversary of establishing relations between Bangladesh and Russia. Chief guest: Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre, House No 510, Road No 7, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 4:30 pm.

### Poetry reading session

British Council will hold a poetry reading session with poet Sudeep Sen. Venue: British Council, 5 Fuller Road.

## Bid to snatch taxi cab in city

" STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Miscreants beat up taxi cab driver and tried to snatch away his car at gunpoint in the city's Banani area Sunday night.

The victim was identified as Abdul Mannan, driver of Cosmo cab (Dhaka Metro-Pa-14-0576).

Three young men hired the taxi cab and asked its driver to go to Banani Road Number 11. They took the taxi cab to an alley and asked the driver to leave his car at gunpoint. The driver came out of the car and started running. He entered a house but the guard forced him to leave it.

Mannan again started running but the gang caught him. They asked the driver to give the key of the car. As he refused to oblige the gang started beating him.

Mannan managed to flee scene and went to Banani police camp. Police went there and found that the gang took away blue book, driving licence, route permit and other necessary papers.

A general diary was filed with Gulshan thana in this regard.

## BNP

FROM PAGE 1

throughout the country to cover up its failures and misdeeds ahead of the election.

In this context, he said the Prime Minister's recent statement about the President provoking him to resign at the flag end of her government's tenure is definitely implicative.

The leader said that the AL fears that President Shahabuddin Ahmed might not favour any party during the interim period and thus they want to replace him by appointing by a party man.

He said the opposition parties have requested the President not to resign at the provocation of AL because the nation expects a lot from him.

Meanwhile, BNP is planning to resign en masse from parliament in order to mount pressure on the government. Preparations to submit the resignations of opposition lawmakers are already on and would be finalised at a point when AL will have no time to hold by-elections.

## Agargaon slum

FROM PAGE 12

slum, inhabited by over 35,000 people and built on lands owned by the Public Workers Department.

Sources in the Department of Narcotics Control however put the amount at more than Tk 10 lakh.

Influential groups led by Noor Mohammad, Hanna, Amir and Picchi Jamal collect toll from the drug traders. These rival groups are also often locked in clashes, using sophisticated firearms.

Some government offices including those of Bangladesh Betar, LGED, Passport Department, Department of Environment, Islamic Foundation and Technical Education Board divide the slum east to west.

Drug trade started in the slum in 1990, giving rise to terrorist activities in and around the area.