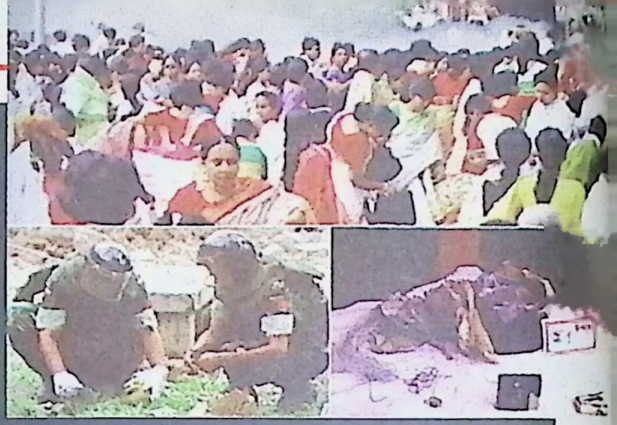
6 The Rise of Militancy *(April 14, 2001)*

For the first time, Bangladeshis experienced the terror of militant activities in their homeland. Suicide bombing at a cultural programme of Pahela Baishakh (Bengali New Year) in Ramna Batamul shocked the country as people all over the country saw the explosions live through Bangladesh Television. Ten people including the attacker died on the spot. Another such attack took place during a cultural programme of *Udichi*. It was the first suicide bombing in Bangladesh, signalling the rise of militancy in a country traditionally known for its religious harmony.



The complied photos taken on April 14, 2001 show panic-stricken people running for cover (top) after the huge explosion while law enforcement and intelligence agencies collected clues and samples.

7 The Lost Glory of the Golden Fibre *(June 25, 2002)*

Bangladesh was the biggest producer and exporter of jute fibres and products and also boasted of having the largest jute mill in the world, Adamjee Jute Mills. Due to mismanagement and negligence, this huge factory began to incur losses amounting to TK 1,200 crore. In the 2000-2001 fiscal year, the amount was Tk 190 crores. Showing these huge losses as a valid reason, the then government closed this huge industry amid severe protests from the local policy makers and political opponents. 18,519 skilled workers became unemployed and a large amount of valuable resources of this gigantic establishment were left unused. Due to this reckless step Bangladesh lost a key source of its foreign currency.

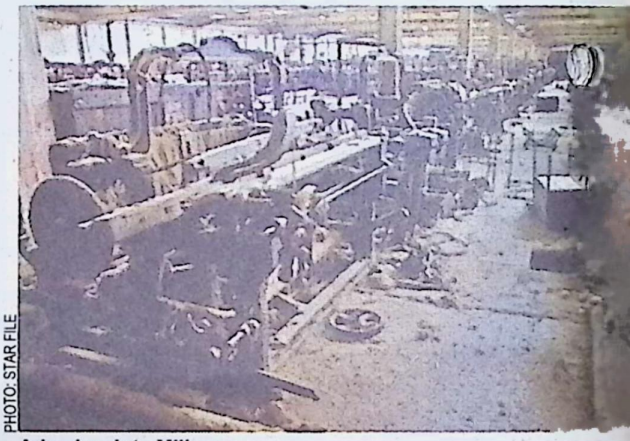


PHOTO: STAR FILE

Adamjee Jute Mills.

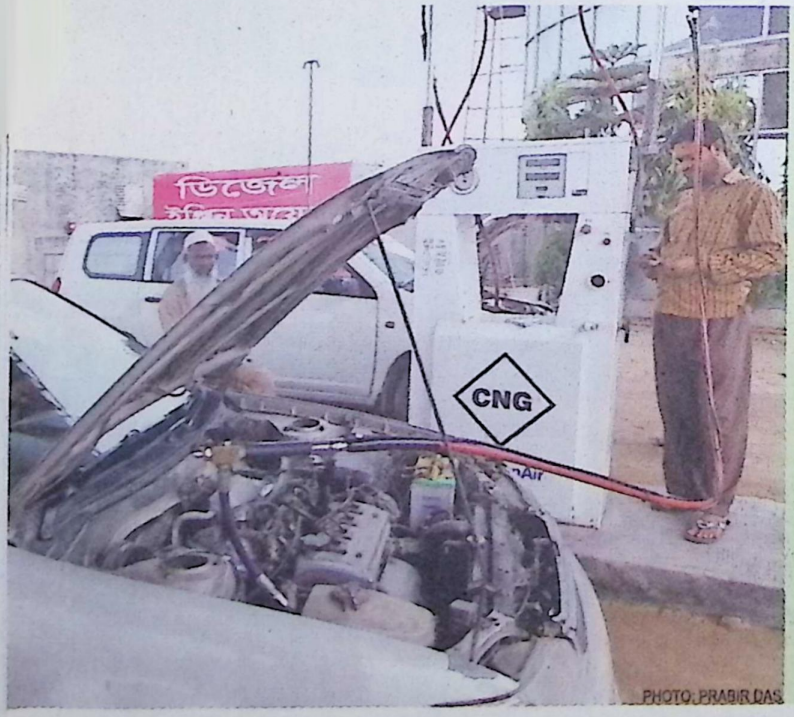


PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

8 For a Breath of Fresh Air (January 1, 2003)

To control excessive air pollution in Dhaka, the government had been thinking of converting all petrol or diesel run vehicles into CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) run vehicles in major metropolitan areas. From January 1, 2003, the then government banned all vehicles in Dhaka other then CNG run ones, and this is still in effect. CNG run vehicles produce the lowest carbon emission than any other motor fuel and the resource is also available in Bangladesh. Due to low price of this fuel, a large number of people managed to buy private vehicles and Dhaka's vehicle concentration increased many times than before. This step significantly reduced air pollution though it put some adverse pressure on the country's gas supply.