

Leaders shocked

From Page 1 Col. 8

Indian Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar, the Prime Minister said the late Congress (I) President was "a brave leader and an uncompromising advocate of democratic values".

"We in Bangladesh are indebted to him for his sincere efforts to strengthen Bangladesh-India relations."

She said the Indian leader's outstanding contribution to his nation and to the cause of regional and international peace and amity will long be remembered.

Begum Zia also conveyed heart-felt sympathy and condolence and said "at this hour of grief, the people of Bangladesh join you in mourning his death."

In a separate message to Smta Gandhi, wife of late Rajiv Gandhi Begum Zia expressed shock and outrage at the killing of the illustrious Indian leader.

Begum Zia recalled his "consistent efforts" in strengthening relations between the two countries and said that in Bangladesh, the Indian leader "will long be remembered as a sincere friend."

Expressing heart-felt sympathy, Begum Zia wished Sonia Gandhi and members of her family courage and fortitude to bear the irreparable loss.

Hasina

Sheikh Hasina expressed her profound shock and grief at the brutal killing of Rajiv Gandhi.

The Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League chief described the assassination as a "political killing."

This is a severe blow to democracy of India and a threat to Indian politics, she said, adding "political killing does not bring positive results for any country."

Hasina said Rajiv was assassinated the same way his mother Indira Gandhi had been killed in 1984.

She feared that the demise of Gandhi might pose a threat to parliamentary democracy in

APSU

From Page 1 Col. 5

from Ganatantrik Chhatra Front joined pro-BNP Chhatra Dal while some JCD students joined pro-Awami League Chhatra League.

JCD in a statement expressed its surprise at the welcome of a group of students by Chhatra League, who are it said associated with the Obhi group and organised resistance against the popular students movement against Ershad.

According to available information, some of the students, who have recently joined Chhatra League were involved in Dr. Milon's killing. At least five of them are wanted by police in connection with Dr. Milon's murder case.

DUCSU VP Amanullah Aman announced that the students who identified themselves as leaders of JCD were expelled much earlier for their alleged association with Ershad's cronies like Obhi-Niru. He requested all the democratic organisations not to accept them in their organisations.

The APSU leaders were meeting on Wednesday till writing this report at 9-30 pm to discuss the issue and take action against the cronies of Ershad.

Saifur

From Page 1 Col. 7

trial units which were damaged in the cyclone. He noted with satisfaction that some affected industries after repair had already resumed production.

Saifur Rahman emphasised for bringing back discipline in the financial sector and said the interest of local industry would be protected at any cost.

The Finance Minister said the government was working for creating a proper environment so that foreign investors feel safe and encouraged to come here and make investment.

He assured the BCI members that procedural hazards would be removed and simplified.

Referring to the Board of Investment (BOI) created by the past government, the minister said instead of promotion, BOI was a hindrance to industrial growth. He said the present government would re-cast BOI in a manner so that it truly functioned like a promotional organisation.

The minister appreciated the suggestions put forward by BCI members for solving the problems faced by them. He said the government was in favour of ensuring national development through a democratic process, but cautioned that in such a process all parties could not be satisfied.

Anwar

From Page 1 Col. 2

Justice M. Abdul Jalil and Justice M. Badruzzaman delivered the judgement on the writ petition of Anwar Hossain challenging his detention.

Hossain was arrested on April 29, the day after he was sworn-in as a member of the Jatiya Sangsad. He was detained under Special Powers Act, 1974.

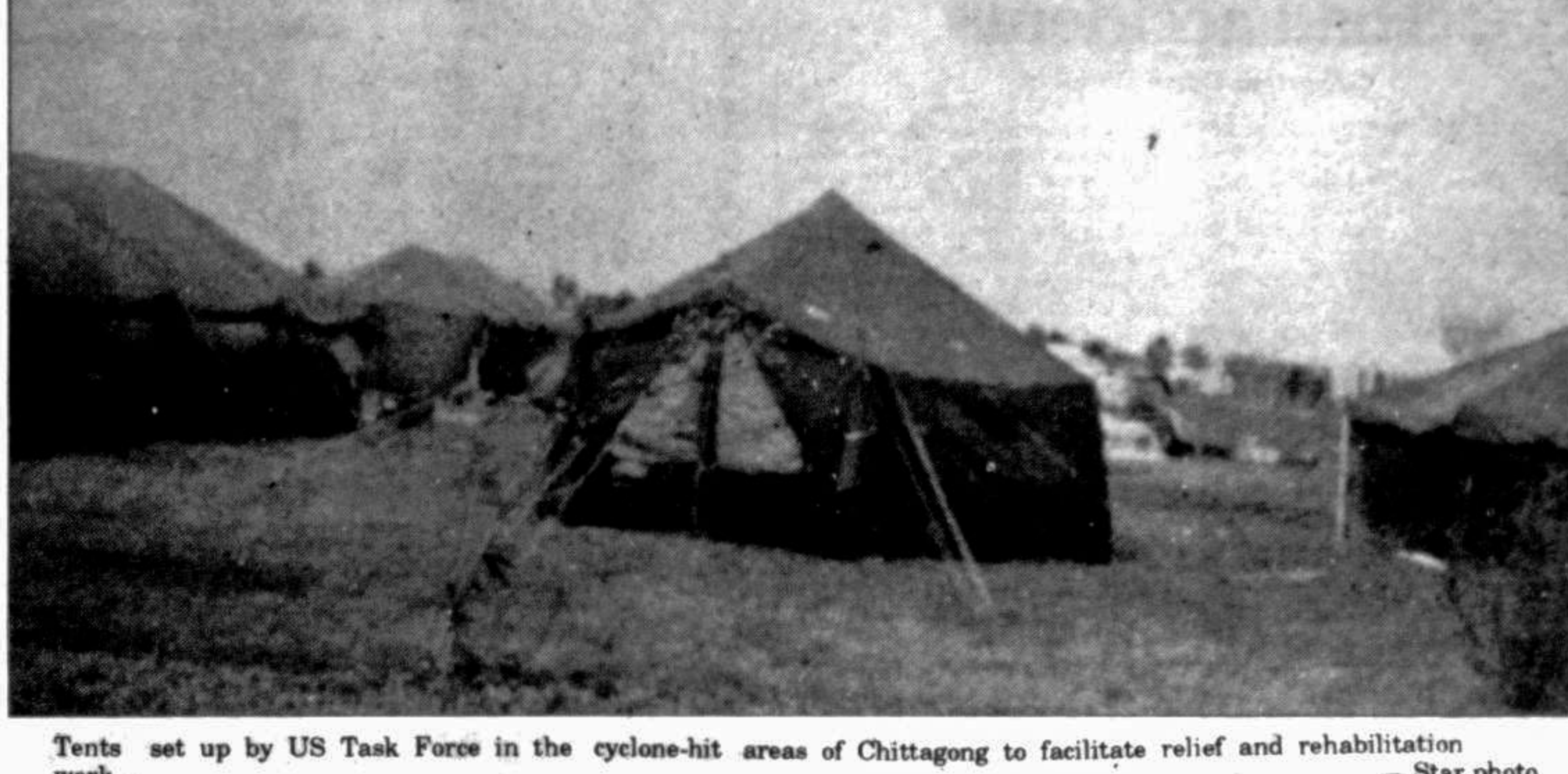
Rafiqul Hoque and Khondaker Mahbob Hossain appeared for Anwar Hossain, while J R Modesser Hossain, Deputy Attorney General and Obaidur Rahman Mostafa, Assistant Attorney-General, appeared for the state.

The judge in his judgement said that the state had failed to establish that Hossain was a member of a banned organisation. He said Hossain was not a member of any of the banned organisations and that he was a student leader.

The judge also said that the state had failed to establish that Hossain was a member of a banned organisation. He said Hossain was not a member of any of the banned organisations and that he was a student leader.

Editor : S. M. Ali

Published by the Editor on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel, C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at Offset Printing Dialogue Publications Ltd., 19 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: 28/1, Toynebe Circular Road, Dhaka-1000. Tel: Editorial & News: 863036. Commercial: 863035. PABX-246023-4. GPO Box No. 3257 GRAM: DAILY STAR, DHAKA.



Tents set up by US Task Force in the cyclone-hit areas of Chittagong to facilitate relief and rehabilitation — Star photo

Mourners turn violent

From Page 1 Col. 5

An anonymous caller to a local newspaper claimed responsibility Wednesday for the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, an editor said.

The caller said the action, code named Operation FV for Final Vengeance, was to exact revenge for minority groups in India and Sri Lanka, seeking their own homelands, the editor said.

The caller said the assassination was to avenge "all injustices done to Tamilians, Sikhs, Kashmiris and northeasterners," the editor said.

Police said investigators would not dismiss the call.

He said the police are keeping a close watch on flights leaving for Sri Lanka.

India has declared week of mourning for the slain Congress leader, who was Prime Minister until 1989. His body was brought to New Delhi Wednesday and taken to the home of his late grandfather, now the Nehru family museum.

The body of Rajiv Gandhi will be cremated with full state honours on Friday at 1600 hrs, an official spokesman announced here today, reports PTI.

The funeral procession will start from Teen Murti House at 1400 hrs and reach Shakti Sthal via India Gate.

Flags are flying at half mast. The government has announced a week-long mourning as a mark of respect for Gandhi who was killed near Madras last night in a bomb explosion.

All schools and colleges, central and state government offices and public sector undertakings remained closed today.

Soon after his return from Orissa in the early hours, Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar, met President, R Venkataraman for about an hour.

They were later joined in discussions by the Chief Election Commissioner TN Seshan.

This was followed by an emergency cabinet meeting which adopted a resolution recording its deep sense of grief at the tragic death of Rajiv Gandhi.

The funeral will be attended, among others, by the US Vice President Dan Quayle, Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd.

Police believe Gandhi was killed by a suicide woman assassin who strapped explosives onto her body and detonated the bomb when she approached him with a garland of flowers, Press Trust of India reported.

A senior police source confirmed one unidentified female victim appeared to have wires attached to her corpse.

Gandhi's body was flown to this stunned capital Wednesday.

His widow, Sonia, wept uncontrollably and hugged the couple's daughter Priyanka as the women stepped down from the Air Force Boeing 737 that had flown them to Madras to bring Gandhi's body home.

The teak coffin, draped in the orange, green and white flag of the Congress Party, was brought past surging crowds straining at police barriers outside 'Teen Murti House', now a museum honouring Nehru.

Gandhi's Italian-born wife Sonia and their daughter Priyanka, both dressed in mourning white, accompanied the body. The Gandhis' son, Rahul, is on his way back to India from the United States, where he is studying.

Police fired tear gas shells and charged with canes to hold back mourners. "Rajiv Gandhi is immortal," shouted scores of people who had managed to break into the museum.

"We'll kill his assassins," shouted others.

"Keep cool, keep cool." So-

Sonia

From Page 1 Col. 5

ister, report agencies.

Party spokesman Pranab Mukherjee said the Congress leaders unanimously elected the Italian-born Sonia Gandhi at an hour-long meeting while her husband's body lay in state.

The announcement was made before Mrs Gandhi was informed of the decision, party leaders said. Her response was not immediately known.

The choice, which would put the politically inexperienced Mrs Gandhi in a leading position to become prime minister, would perpetuate the dynasty that has ruled India for 37 of its 43 years as an independent nation.

"It is a crucial moment in the history of the Congress," said senior party leader, a close friend of the Gandhi family. "We have taken a decision and we will abide by it," he said.

The 42-year-old Italian-born widow had the support of younger members of the Congress inner-circle.

Mukherjee said the decision of the 18-member Congress Working Committee, the party's supreme decision-making body, was binding on Mrs Gandhi. "The question of acceptance does not arise," he said.

The appointment appeared to be an appeal for a sympathy vote in the national election, which has been postponed until mid-June.

But it was not clear how long Mrs Gandhi would remain party leader after the election. The working committee can replace her by calling a party election.

Congress has turned to the Gandhi family in similar circumstances twice before. In 1966, Indira Gandhi was elected party president and prime minister after the death in office of Lal Bahadur Shastri. Party leaders thought Mrs Gandhi, the quiet daughter of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, would be a compliant puppet. She wasn't.

When Mrs Gandhi was assassinated in 1984, the party again turned to the new head of the dynasty, her son Rajiv Gandhi, then still new to politics.

Flood

From Page 1 Col. 4

still living in makeshift shelters as their house were yet to be repaired. A total of 17,338 houses were damaged fully and 32,844 partly in the district, according to the available reports.

Habiganj

The Khowai at Habiganj swelled but was flowing 40 cm below the danger level keeping the situation unchanged.

The control room sources said the river swelled by 10 cm in three hours from 5 pm on Wednesday.

Except Chunarughat upazila, adjoining the Tripura Hills, the other seven upazilas of the district are affected. About 4,000 people of the district are reportedly affected by waterborne diseases, the sources said adding that the number of women and children were high among the affected people.

Fresh supplies of ORS have been sent to the district, the control room said.

Relief operation was still inadequate. About 5,000 acres of land with IRR1 and Boro crops were under flood water.

BJP posters torn

The posters of BJP leader LK Advani were set on fire by some persons after the news of Gandhi's killing spread like a wild fire in the city of Ahmedabad.

Probe

The government today decided to set up a high-powered probe headed by a Supreme Court Judge to investigate into the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Official sources said the probe would be assisted by a special investigating group.

LTTE accused

A Sri Lankan Tamil party accused rival Tamil Tiger guerrillas of assassinating Gandhi and said the killing was aimed at destabilising the entire South Asian region.

The Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) said it had "no doubt" that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was responsible for the bomb attack which killed the former Indian leader in south India.

Another Tamil group, the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) said it could not rule out the involvement of the Tigers in Gandhi's assassination.

Anis's bail prayer rejected

The bail prayer of former Foreign Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud against his detention was rejected Wednesday by the Second Additional Judge, Ismail Mian, reports BSS.

The counsel of Islam then filed a petition for adjournment of the hearing. The judge adjourned the hearing till June 8.

Doordarshan

The funeral of the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi will be telecast live by Doordarshan on Friday afternoon.

The Midnight File

300 held for coup plot in Tunisia

TUNIS, May 22: At least 300 people, including 100 soldiers, have been arrested in an Islamic fundamentalist plot to overthrow President Zine Abidine Ben Ali. Interior Minister Abdallah Kallel announced Wednesday Kallel said at a news conference that the outlawed An-Nahda fundamentalist group hoped to install an Islamic state. The announcement came after a pro-government newspaper reported Saturday that a plot by An-Nahda to overthrow Ben Ali in October had been uncovered and 100 people arrested, reports AP.

Byelorussian workers on strike

MOSCOW, May 22: Thousands of workers in the Byelorussian capital of Minsk and several other cities went on strike Wednesday after the republic's parliament refused to consider demands for political reform, opposition leaders said. Zenon Posnyak, chairman of the Popular Front opposition said thousands of workers at more than a dozen enterprises in Minsk, Soligorsk, and Orsha had put down their tools to protest the government's inaction, reports AP.

Assassination historical inevitability: Sikhs

LONDON, May 22: Sikh separatists in London said Tuesday the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was a "historical inevitability" because "he had violated the sacred temple" at Amritsar, reports AFP.

"Everybody has to be sad when a man is killed but for Gandhi, as for Indira Gandhi before him, it was a historical inevitability. All those who violate the sacred temple, die," said Jagjit Singh Chohan, a spokesman for the Sikh's Khalistan organisation.

"I don't believe in bullets," Chohan said, adding that he did not know who was responsible for the assassination.

"But I believe that prayers are a force and (the death of Mr. Gandhi) is a response to our prayers," he said.

"I am afraid that there will be much more violence in the region. Thousands more will be killed," he said.

Marilyn Quayle

From Page 1 Col. 8

Mayor Advocate Mir Nasiruddin and other dignitaries.

At Chawktali union relief centre in Sandvip she visited food storage facilities and shelters being built there by members of the JTF. She talked to the US soldiers and praised them for carrying on humanitarian works there.

They said army and civil medical teams working almost round the clock had checked spread of diarrhoea in the area. At Sarikali union Mrs. Quayle visited some medical centres where saline water is being prepared and distributed among the people. She talked to a group of children gathered there and wished them happiness. The children greeted her

and expressed their gratitude to her for going over there.

Mrs. Quayle then visited Sandvip hospital at Harishpur. She went round different sections of the hospital and talked to the doctors. She donated some medicines to the hospital.

She distributed relief materials at Mustafizur Rahman College relief camp among a large number of women affected by the cyclone and tidal surge. She also visited CARE relief camp there.

Mrs. Quayle will stay on board Tawara tonight and leave for Matarbari in Moheshkhali tomorrow morning. She holds a press conference tomorrow morning at the JTF headquarters here.

Ershad's trial

From Page 1 Col. 5

that the Judge was biased, the court observed.

In the petition on behalf of the accused Ershad his lawyers brought seven allegations against the tribunal which included: (a) The Judge of the Special Tribunal had rejected a petition under Section 526 to transfer the case to any other court; (b) One 30.06 rifle, claimed by the accused to have been deposited at the Army museum, was not brought to the Tribunal even after repeated request by the Defence; (c) The Judge himself had made some observations in the Court which were manifestations of his bias towards the Prosecution; (d) The Judge of the Tribunal had once, in an act of prejudice made a comment that the accused will have to bear the responsibility for possessing bullets of a 30.06 rifle as the bullets could be fitted in any rifle of that particular bore; (e) The informant of the case who was declared 'gained over' by the Prosecution side was made the Court Witness No 1 and given the opportunity to be cross-examined by both the Prosecution and the Defence and; (f) Both the Judge and the Prosecution are hostile to the Defence and sometimes supply answers to the Prosecution Witnesses during the proceedings of the Court and that the Court has made up its mind to convict the accused.

All these allegations had been strongly intercepted by the Attorney General during the hearing.

In the judgement the High Court Division Bench clearly elaborated all points and said that under Section 165 of the 'Evidence Act' the Judge can ask any question to anyone for the ends of justice.

According to the law the Judge can ask any relevant or irrelevant question to any witness for which he can't be termed as biased, the judgement observed.

The judgement further added that if any side of the case did not avail the first chance under Section 526 and come to the High Court during the second chance, the High Court generally did not entertain the petition.

Besides any petition under 526 should be intimated to the court and the Prosecution at a proper time but in this particular case that procedure had not been followed by the Defence.

The judgement which was delivered by Justice Anwarul Haque Chowdhury also said that cartridges of one weapon can be used in a weapon of the same calibre. So here the Judge had rather cautioned the accused that he would have to prove that he had proper license for the cartridges in his possession. So the allegation of the Court's bias about the comment "You will have to bear the responsibility of these cartridges" can't be accepted, the judgement observed.

The judgement added that the grounds produced by the Defence in favour of the allegations did not suffice the evidence reasonably.

Referring to the newspaper clippings of the 'Daily Star' and the 'Morning Sun' produced by the Attorney General as evidence against the allegations Justice Anwarul Haque Chowdhury said that the reports were written methodically and diligently covering the proceedings of the case.

He also referred to a judgement on such a case of one Gulzar Hossain. The case was brought to the then East Pakistan High Court in 1967 and subsequently to the Bangladesh Supreme Court in 1973 but everytime the case was rejected and observations were made that a judge cannot be biased because the Judge of any Court cannot deliver his judgement beyond evidence and laws.

Justice Kazi Anwarul Haque Chowdhury clearly said that in this case the Judge did not exceed the permissible limit within the ambit of the law and as such the rule is discharged.

The High Court also directed the Court below (Special Tribunal) to continue the proceedings of the case in conformity with the law.

Concurring the judgement delivered by Justice Anwarul Haque Chowdhury, the other Judge of the High Court Division Bench Justice Habibur Rahman Khan also clarified some points.

He said that under Sub-Section 9 of the Cr-PC the petitions should be intimated to the trial court and the Prosecution before taking advantage of section 526 of the Cr-PC.

The Attorney General Aminul Haque who appeared for the state in the Court was assisted by Additional Attorney General Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, Deputy Attorney General Hasan Arif, Shamsul Alam Amirul Kabir Chowdhury, Assistant Attorney General Gazi Abdul Hannan, and Mostafa, Public Prosecutors, A. Mannan Bhuiyan, Farid Ahmed, Bashir Ahmed, and Azizul Islam Khan Baccu.

The defence was represented by Advocate Strajul Haque, Barrister Kazi Shahdat Hossain, Advocate Sharif Ahmed, Advocate Mufizur Rahman Muzumdar and Advocate Yusuf Humayun.

The defence may seek verdict of the Appellate Division on this case.

The Special Tribunal will resume the trial May 26.