

Erosion serious at Sirajganj 200 more families rendered homeless

SIRAJGANJ, July 27: Some 200 families in four upazilas of the district — Kazipur, Shahzadpur, Belkuchi and Sadar — were rendered homeless by erosion in 24 hours till Saturday evening, reports UNB.

Erosion of rivers passing through the district has increased with water level receding in last few days, official and local sources said.

About 1000 families were rendered homeless in the district in last five days due to erosion, they said.

Meanwhile, the Jamuna at Sirajganj was flowing 73 cm below danger mark this evening.

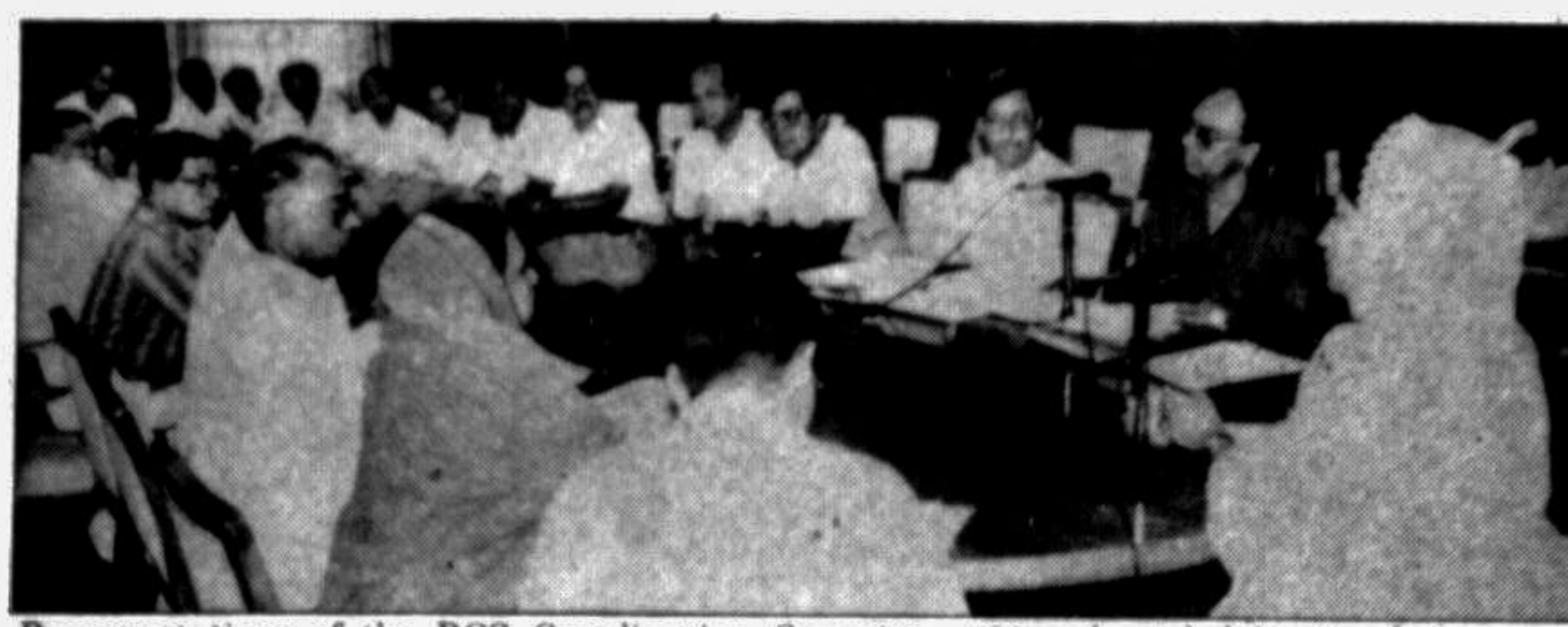
The erosion of river Korotoa has threatened the Mazar of Hazrat Shahuddin Makhdoom (R) at Shahzadpur.

About 150 ft area in front of the mazar was grabbed by the river today.

A bridge on the Nagarbari-Bogra Highway between Nukali and Shahzadpur sagged from the impact of strong currents hitting the side of the bridge. It might collapse at any moment, Shahzadpur Upazila Chairman said today.

The death toll in the district rose to 24 with three more deaths reported today. One minor child drowned in Kazipur and two people died of diarrhoea in Sadar upazila, local sources said. Officials, however, put the flood-related death figure at 16.

BSS adds: The overall flood situation continued to improve with the fall of water level in all the major rivers in the country.



Representatives of the BCS Coordination Committee (23 cadres) led by its chairman Muhammad Abu Hena met Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her Secretariat office on Saturday. — PID photo



Agitated transport workers set fire to a bus Saturday at Hathkholia in the city. Story on Page 1. — Star photo

Khabar newsmen attacked: BFUJ demands apology

A joint rally of journalists, employees and workers of the newspaper industry on Saturday strongly condemned an attack Friday on newsmen of Daily Khabar by hired goons of the paper's management, reports UNB.

The rally took a number of resolutions which included a demand for immediate removal of the officer in-charge of Tejaon Police Station for his alleged collaboration with the attackers.

The demands also include: arrest of the attackers and withdrawal of false cases against journalists and workers of the Daily Khabar.

It also demanded unconditional apology by the Khabar management for the incident of attack on the journalists and employees on Friday.

Presided over by BFUJ President Rezauddin Ahmed, the rally was addressed by DUJ Secretary Zahur Haq, General Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi, Press Workers' Federation President Mosharaf Hossain and Vice President Fazle Imam, Employees' Federation President Jahangir Kabir and Secretary General Mir Mozammel Hossain, and Mohammad Quamruzzaman, Chief Photographer of Dainik Bangla.

A BFUJ press release said a

group of hoodlums, allegedly hired by the Khabar management had attacked the union leaders of paper on Friday when they were holding a meeting.

The hoodlums, joined by a police force from Tejaon police station, allegedly beat up and seriously injured Press Employees Union President of Khabar Sharif Abdullah Al-Mahmud Azam and Vice President Nurul Islam.

Police also arrested the union leaders including journalist Hasan Mahmud, Jakir Hasan Selim and computer operator Nasir Ahmed.

The meeting further drew the attention to the Home Ministry and pointed out that in the past, cases had been filed by the unions against Maydeul Islam, Anwarul Islam and Taheruddin Thakur of Dainik Desh for hoodlums on the workers, but they had not yet been brought to book.

As part of the movement, a joint rally of the journalists and workers will be held at Ittefaq building tomorrow (Monday) at 11 am and after the rally a protest march will proceed towards Daily Khabar.

A three-hour work abstention from 11 am to 2 pm will be also observed Monday in all newspapers and agencies.

Uneasy calm on DU campus

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof M Montuzzaman Miah has convened a meeting of the DU Educational Atmosphere Council (DUEAC) tomorrow (Monday) at 12 noon as an uneasy calm prevailed on the campus Saturday.

The Vice-Chancellor also urged the student bodies not to hold rallies and processions until the meeting was over to avoid clashes between the rival groups of students on the campus.

Fearing eruption of clashes between the rival student groups, the VC appealed to the leaders of the pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Awami League-backed Chhatra League (S-A) Friday night for calm and also informed them of the schedule of the DUEAC meeting.

No procession or rally was held on the DU campus Saturday. There was an uneasy calm on the campus with 14 platoons of police and BDR posted there. The security personnel moved around the campus area the whole day.

Witnesses reported that despite all these measures by the authorities to check fresh trouble, armed gangs belonging to both JCD and BCL (S-A) were still staying at the residential halls. Some of them even moved to the Arts Faculty building area in the morning. No untoward incident was reported on the campus on the day.

The DUEAC meeting has been convened to discuss the fresh date for the DUCSU and hall union elections and for the examinations postponed earlier due to the elections and the demand by various student bodies of special admission of the student leaders.

Earlier, the authorities postponed the August 5 schedule of the polls following terrorist activities on the campus on Monday.

Since then, the campus residents are fearing fierce gun-battle between the rival student organisations.

PM

From Page 1 Col. 2

trade and industry discussed in the meeting some disconcerting developments in the light of the statements made by some government functionaries from time to time on the issue of bank credits. The VAT system and its impact on trade and industry were also reviewed.

The meeting noted that the members of the business community were willing to extend all cooperation to the government to help promote sustained economic development, but it is also important that the government should uphold the dignity of the business community and its genuine interests and operational secrecy in all deserving cases, the meeting stressed.

JCD leader

From Page 1 Col. 8

Meanwhile, residents left the BIT halls following the clashes. There were only ten students still staying there, BIT sources said.

The institute was not closed despite the clashes that took place there.

Besides, an administrative crisis has gripped the institute since its Director Waltuzzaman resigned in the face of protests by the students on April 24 last. None has been appointed to the post.

A BIT teacher Dr Khairul Islam told The Daily Star that they were unable to hold classes because of the crisis prevailing there.

Meanwhile, JCD leader Rizvi Ahmed in a statement demanded immediate removal of the RU Vice-Chancellor Prof Amanullah Ahmed terming him an associate of deposed President Ershad.

RU Teachers Association General Secretary Sajedul Islam in a statement said that the university was now hostage to some identified mastaans. He also demanded reopening of the institution without further delay.

RUCSU General Secretary Ruhul Kuddus Babu of the pro-JSD(inu) Chhatra League (N-S) accused the JCD members for the attack on the students leaving the campus.

Bills to be placed today

From Page 1 Col. 5
The Select Committee told the Daily Star, "I am very happy. We have produced a historic document after 18 days of hectic work in a friendly and cordial atmosphere."

"Initially," he continued, "we had some differences." "Gradually the differences disappeared as all the members of the committee had the urge to work unitedly and expedite to the process of changing the presidential system after sixteen years."

Resolutions
The Committee came to a consensus that the proposal made in the 12 Amendment Bill to disqualify a member, vacating his seat on the charge of floor crossing, from contesting in parliamentary elections for five years will go.

Similarly the proposal that an MP will vacate his seat if he is expelled from his party will also be deleted.

The proposed provision against formation of groups within a party, in the Parliament has been rewritten. The Select Committee has suggested that if any such group was formed, the matter should be brought to the notice of the speaker who would decide which leader commanded support of the majority of MPs of the party. After the majority is proved MPs in the minority groups would be asked to accept the leadership of the majority leader. MPs failing to do so would be held responsible individually and they would lose memberships.

The existing provision against floor crossing made between 1972 and 1975 will remain.

The members of the committee agreed that ten per cent of the ministers could be appointed from amongst non-MPs with a view to helping take the services of technocrats for efficient running of the government.

The government side has accepted the opposition de-

mand that the election of the President under the amended constitution will be conducted by the Chief Election Commissioner. The amendment bill, however, remained silent as to whether elections will be held in a secret or an open ballot. An ordinary law will be passed subsequently detailing on the election of the President by the members of the Parliament.

The Committee has agreed that the 12th Amendment Bill will seek to protect only the Preamble (containing bismillah), and Article 8 (containing the basic principles of state policy as they stand now after the Fifth Amendment), by a guarantee clause requiring that amendment to those should have to be okayed by referendum. The government bill had earlier sought to put two more Articles — 80 and 92A — under this guarantee clause. These two Articles empower the President to return a Bill passed by the Parliament for reconsideration, and to withdraw money from the consolidated fund of the republic for 120 days if the Parliament fails to make grants.

AL members in the Committee were, in keeping with the proposal made in their bill, in favour of deleting the guarantee clause altogether. Subsequently, however, some other opposition members in the Committee felt that such a clause might be needed even to protect the parliamentary system the Bills seek to establish.

The Committee has accepted a proposal made in one of the four Bills introduced by Rashed Khan Menon that foreign treaties connected with national security should be laid in a secret session of the Parliament. Article 145A of the existing Constitution provides for laying of all treaties with foreign countries before the Parliament. But the President can withhold the laying of any treaty which he considers against the national interest to do so.

Finally, the report proposes to insert a provision made in the AL bill, that the Acting President shall be eligible to resume the duties and responsibilities of the Chief Justice of Bangladesh after the election of a new President and the latter's entering upon the office. The 11th Amendment Bill of the ruling party had originally proposed that the Acting President would be eligible to go back to the Supreme Court Bench after the commencement of the 11th Amendment Act which is not subject to a referendum to become operational.

Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz said he will submit the report to the House today. Discussions on the bills will start tomorrow.

The adjustments proposed by the Select Committee will come to the House in form of Amendments to the 11th and 12th Amendment Bills.

All the 15 Select Committee members signed the report after a meeting at the Sangsad Bhavan on Friday. The report contained in seven pages of typed full-scape paper was immediately sent for printing on the day.

VCs, UGC members meet PM

Vice-Chancellors of different universities and the members of University Grants Commission called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on Saturday night and discussed various problems in the country's education system, reports UNB.

Problems confronting the whole education system from primary to higher level as well as various aspects of curricula came up for discussion in the meeting at the PM's Sugandha office.

The VCs and the UGC members thanked the Prime Minister for holding the grand conference of political parties to work out plans to curb campus violence.

They said the teachers would play their due role in stamping terrorism in country's educational institutions.

Gigantic old lava flows on Venus detected

PASADENA (Calif), July 27: A new picture by the Magellan spacecraft shows solidified lava that once flowed almost 500 miles (800 kilometers) from the base of a volcano on Venus, reports AP.

The lava flows stretch northward from the 2,300-foot (700-meter) high volcano, the northern flank of which also is visible in the new picture, one of three NASA released Friday.

The flows are located on the Lavinia Plains in Venus southern hemisphere. They measure nearly 500 miles (800 kilometers) from north to south and about 240 miles from east to west.

Magellan hasn't yet discovered an active volcano on Venus, but "it is very likely that somewhere on the planet a volcano is erupting at any given time. The problem is to find it," said Steve Saunders, Magellan project scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Magellan was launched by space shuttle Atlantis on May 4, 1989, and started orbiting Venus last Aug 10. The spacecraft uses radar to peer through Venus thick clouds and make pictures of the planet's rugged landscape, which has been shaped by tens of thousands of volcanoes and extensive movements of the planet's crust.

By the end of July, Magellan will have circled Venus 2,351 times, traveling 75 million miles (121 million kilometers), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration said.

Magellan has made radar pictures of almost 90 per cent of Venus surface. It has collected twice as much picture data as all other US spacecraft combined, but not yet twice as many actual pictures, Saunders said.

Strike Tuesday

From Page 1 Col. 7

Terminal on Friday. They held an "interested group" inside the Government responsible for the "heinous attack and said that there was no alternative to work-stoppage after the incident.

The Action Committee leaders urged the government to meet the 5-point demands by Monday and said that the transport workers and owners would be compelled to go for an indefinite strike all over the country from Tuesday morning to realise the demands.

The Action Committee handed over a memorandum containing the 5-point demands to the Prime Minister Friday.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) appealed to all concerned to maintain peace and discipline for smooth plying of buses and minibuses on all the routes of the country.

In a Press release issued Saturday, the BRTA said that some people took control of Saidabad bus terminal by force on Friday morning. But BRTA, with the help of law enforcing agencies, drove out those people from the terminal. BRTA claimed the situation became normal in the Saidabad terminal Saturday.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) has in the meantime condemned Friday's incident and called upon the people to resist such terrorist activities for establishing democracy in the country.

Transport strike

From Page 1 Col. 8

tion Minister Col (ret'd) Oli Ahmed in his residence Saturday evening.

The meeting discussed the Saidabad incident and the situation arising out of the strike but failed to reach any agreement to resolve it as the leaders were reportedly sticking to their five-point demands.

Their demands include arrest and punishment of the culprits involved in the Saidabad incident, implementation of all the previous agreements with the transport workers and owners and release of transport union leaders.

According to the latest report, the armed group that occupied the terminal on Friday deserted it and the members of the law enforcing agencies took control of it.

MR Chowdhury's appointment as National Prof criticised

By SSMCH Correspondent

The Federation of Bangladesh Medical Teachers Associations on Saturday protested the appointment of Dr MR Chowdhury as National Professor.

In a statement the president of the federation, Prof Anwarul Azim, and Secretary General Dr Gazi Abdul Haque, demanded immediate cancellation of the appointment as he was the chairman of the anti-people national health policy.

"We are also surprised that he has been made a National Professor without being a professor himself," the statement said.

The Midnight File

Export, tea policies today

Commerce Minister M Keramat Ali will announce the Export Policy 1991-93 and the Tea Policy 1991-93 today. The speech of the Commerce Minister will be simultaneously broadcast and telecast by radio and television at 7 pm. reports BSS.

Censorship in Kuwait to stay

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Media censorship imposed in Kuwait five years ago will not be reversed soon, Information Minister Badr Jassem said in an interview published today by the Daily Al Watan. "We don't foresee the lifting of censorship imposed on the media," Jassem said, adding legislation regarding the print media would soon be submitted to the cabinet for debate, reports AFP.

Hezbollah opposes US plan

BEIRUT, July 27: Lebanon's most influential Shiite cleric has said he rejects the US initiated Arab-Israeli peace plan, and claimed it would strip Arabs of their rights and realise Israel's strategic interests. "America wants Israel to be the superpower in the region at the expense of Arab and Islamic rights," Sheik Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, the spiritual guide of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah said in his Friday sermon at the Imam Reza mosque in South Beirut.

Costeau's call for 'Green Police'

PARIS, July 27: French environmentalist Jacques Costeau called today for the creation of a United Nations "Green Police" force to protect the world's environment. Since the revitalisation of the United Nations as an institution during the Gulf war, it should draw up an environmental charter supported by all its members, and create an organisation to apply the charter. The Green Police, wrote Costeau in his organisation's publication Calypso Log, reports AFP.

Nine killed in Manila floods

MANILA, July 27: Floods brought by monsoon rains have killed at least nine people in Manila and central Luzon and forced the evacuation of about 20,000 people, officials said Saturday.

The Philippine Red Cross said the latest figures brought to more than 30,000 the number of people in evacuation centres in the area since Mount Pinatubo began erupting on June 9, reports AP.

No global effect from oil well fires

MOUNTAIN VIEW (California), July 27: Scientists at the US space agency said on Friday they do not expect any global atmospheric changes to result from the smoke pouring out of Kuwait's burning oil wells. Researchers at the Ames Research Centre, a division of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration said their data showed that climatic effects from the smoke will be limited to the Gulf Region. "No global effects are foreseen," NASA said in a prepared statement, reports Reuter.

No extravagance in PM's tours inside country

The government has adopted austerity measures to avoid extravagance in functions during Prime Minister's official tours inside the country.

A 10-point directive was issued Saturday from the Prime Minister's Secretariat to the officials in different tiers of the administration asking them to strictly follow it to prevent "ceremonial excesses and wastage of time and money."

The directives are: No arches welcoming the Prime Minister should be erected by any government, semi-government and autonomous body or private organisation. But if the local people spontaneously come to welcome the Prime Minister, they cannot be barred.

No formal address of honour can be offered to the Prime Minister on any occasion. Local problems and people's grievances can, however, be placed in writing.

No gift or presentation can be given to the Prime Minister. No wreath or garland can be offered to her, nor flowers or petals showered. But a single flower can be presented in compliment.

The functions the Prime Minister will attend should be brief. All briefings should also be short and objective.

The regular functioning of any educational institution cannot be disrupted on the occasion of Prime Minister's visit.

The concerned administration should be informed beforehand by the Prime Minister's Secretariat in case the Premier has to have breakfast, lunch or dinner. The menu should be simple.

No officials or employees should be present unnecessarily during the arrival and departure of the Prime Minister.

Service of only a minimum number of vehicles is desirable for the Prime Minister and the members of her entourage.

All sorts of austerity should be maintained and ceremonial excesses avoided.

Lawyers refuse to defend

From Page 1 Col. 5

Hossain Humayun, Mosharrar Hossain Kazal, Barrister AR Mollah, Rezaul Karim, Mofzur Rahman Majumdar, Sharif Ahmed and Sudhir Kumar Hazra.

They all withdrew from the case.

Prosecution Counsel Attorney General Aminul Haque, who had said recently that he was under pressure to expedite the case said that he would allow the accused to negotiate with the lawyers and if the accused wished he could talk for one or two hours to Adv Sirajul Haque to come to an agreement over the question of conducting the case.

The Attorney General asked Ershad whether he had confidence in Sirajul Haque.

Ershad promptly replied he had all confidence in Sirajul Haque but he said it would take several days to negotiate everything with the defence lawyers.

Later Ershad and Sirajul Haque went to the rest room together to talk.

Sirajul Haque reportedly told Ershad to withdraw all other lawyers besides three namely himself, Yousuf Hossain Humayun and Mosharrar Hossain Kazal.

He also said that one of the defence lawyers is playing a mischievous role in conducting the case. He asked Ershad to withdraw that lawyer from the case also.

Earlier Ershad told the Attorney General that he had failed to convince Advocate Sirajul Haque and others to continue the case.

Advocate Haque said he is being questioned by police and men of the Special Branch. He also said that his family members are worried about his security after the arrest of

Advocate Jinnat Ali, now in central jail.

Mosharrar Hossain Kazal junior to Advocate Sirajul Haque told the Daily Star that only three lawyers were conducting the case. And they did not know about the function of the other lawyers except their attending the court during the trial. He said that it would not be possible for them to continue the case in such a situation.

The court resumed yesterday with the cross-examination of Prosecution Witness, PWD Engineer Mukitpur Rahman. Later the Prosecution also produced Major Mohammad Saiful Islam as a witness. Islam was a member of the Inventory Committee and represented the armed forces headquarters.

Major Islam, now posted in Bogra cantonment, deposing before the court said that Mrs Mostafizur Rahman known as Mary used to come to the Sena Bhavan between December 6 and 12 when he was posted there with the responsibility of providing Ershad's security.

He said that Mrs Mostafizur was surprised when she heard about the amount of the money (Tk 1,90,81,565) recovered from the Sena Bhavan.

Mrs Mostafizur was quoted by him to have said, "So much money has been recovered — this will totally damage our prestige."

She also sought the help of Major Islam to keep the matter secret from the press. But Major Islam said that he had nothing to do in this regard.

He however said that he reported the matter to Magistrate, Ismail member of the Inventory Committee.

Earlier during the cross-examination by Sirajul Haque prosecution witness Mukitpur

Rahman replied to a lot of questions.

Following are the excerpts: Sirajul Haque (Defence Lawyer—DL): Can we say that all expenditures of the Bangabhaban and the MES would be borne by the PWD?

Mukitpur Rahman (MR): Yes. DL: Do you know that (showing a paper) this organization mentioned the facilities provided to the wife of late President Ziaur Rahman. She was given the facility of having 11 staff including a cook and bearers.

MR: I am not aware of it. (At this stage the Attorney General objected and said not to ask such irrelevant questions.)

DL: You have mentioned about the law of remuneration. Do you know who gets what facilities under this law?

MR: The amount of the remuneration for prime minister, ministers and deputy ministers is written in the law. He denied that the Committee had ever discussed anything concerning the case. He further said that the committee did not ask deposed president Ershad about the articles found in the Sena Bhavan as it was not mentioned in the terms of reference of the Committee.

Another prosecution witness Abdul Motaleb Khan, record keeper in Dhaka Treasury briefly deposed in the Court.

He identified signatures relating to the receiving of money at the Treasury.

The prosecution led by the Attorney General consisted of Deputy Attorney Generals Hasan Arif, Amirul Kabir Chowdhury, Abdur Razzak Khan and Special PP, Farid Uddin Ahmed.