

The martyrdom that sparked the mass upheaval

By Farid Ahmed

This day a year ago, a young physician, Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon, embraced martyrdom that fuelled the on-going anti-autocracy movement and brought the fall of Ershad regime within ten days.

News of his death from the then pro-government activist's bullet in the morning spread in the city like wild fire that whipped frenzied demonstrations on the streets and resignation of doctors of all medical colleges. The autocratic regime responded with clamping indefinite curfew in the city and declaring state of emergency and restriction on political activities and imposing press censorship. Journalists declared an indefinite strike protesting press censorship and state of emergency. All these happened the same day.

An armed group of terrorists allegedly supported by the then government were involved in a chase and counter chase with the All Party Students Unity (APSU) activists on the Dhaka University campus. The terrorists were attempting to come towards the Teachers Students Centre (TSC) square from their stronghold near the 'Doel' square and Suhrawardy Uddyan.

At one stage, when Dr. Milon along with Dr. Mostafa Jalal Mohtuddin came near the

Dhaka University library while going towards the PG hospital to attend a meeting of the Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) on a rickshaw, a bullet from the direction of the Suhrawardy Uddyan hit Dr. Milon. He died on the spot.

His body was immediately rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he had joined as a lecturer in 1989. Doctors declared him dead.

Recalling the incidents of the fateful day, Dr. Mostafa Jalal Mohtuddin, Secretary General of BMA told The Daily Star on Tuesday that he was on his way to join a BMA meeting at the Institute of Post Graduate Medicine and Research (IPOMR) at Shahbag. He found Dr. Milon on another rickshaw near TSC and asked him to come along on his rickshaw.

Dr. Jalal said that as soon as they were near the DU library, a bullet from the direction of the Suhrawardy Uddyan struck Dr. Milon. "He only murmured 'what happened Jalal Bhai' and then stopped for ever", Dr. Jalal recalled.

Born in Dhaka in 1957, Shamsul Alam Khan Milon was actively involved in politics since his student days at Notordame College and Dhaka Medical College.



People in hundreds came down the streets and gathered in front of National Press Club immediately after the killing of Dr. Shamsul Alam Milon (inset) on November 27 last year. — Photo by Mohsin

Hasina

From Page 1 Col. 5

took the initiative to introduce parliamentary democracy but the government did not provide autonomy to the Radio and the Television as yet as per declaration of the three alliances.

Sheikh Hasina said the government had failed to restore democratic norms in the society. She said that issues like the Indemnity Ordinance, campus terrorism had not yet been solved.

She said that the party in power had failed to give an economic programme to provide minimum benefits to the poor and check the price hike of the essentials.

Bush

From Page 1 Col. 7

opment. In his statement, ambassador Abul Ahsan said Bangladesh and the United States are bound together by shared commitment to international peace and cooperation. For Bangladesh, this commitment led to the initiation of the idea of regional cooperation in South Asia by shahed president Ziaur Rahman, he added.

Thanking the US President for the most generous assistance in the aftermath of the devastating cyclone, the ambassador paid rich tributes to the remarkable service of the US Task Force, which was despatched under the personal directives of President Bush.

Rajuk drive

From Page 1 Col. 4

that it was not yet decided. About the future plan of Dhaka, the Chairman said: "We shall build no more Gulshan or Banani", adding, "areas will be developed for middle class people in future."

The Chairman said, from now Rajuk would allot 85 per cent of three katha plot and other 15 per cent of five katha.

BSS adds: The programme follows expiry of the November 25 ultimatum to this effect. Chairman of Rajuk said. He said the demolition programme would be taken up as the Rajuk had exhausted all legal process in this regard.

The Rajuk was entrusted with the task to create a proper urban condition in the city, the Rajuk Chairman said. He attributed problem like traffic jam to the unplanned and unauthorised construction in utter disregard to the rules governing construction and expressed the hope that all sections of people would "extend cooperation to the programme."

Replying to questions, the Chairman admitted that certain violations had taken place earlier by the Rajuk itself in giving plots and construction orders but added that such things would no longer occur.

"We are making every effort to turn the Rajuk into a really service-oriented organisation by improving its performance," Mr Alam said.

He told another questioner that plans were being conceived how to accommodate the slum-dwellers in a rational manner and the Prime Minister herself was keen about that.

Milon Day

From Page 1 Col. 7

day at 4 pm. The federation of Bangladesh Medical Associations will organise a discussion meeting on 'Mass upsurge: Shaheed Dr Milon Day' at the PG Hospital auditorium at 11 am.

Deputy leader of the Jatiya Sangsad Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, BMA president Prof M A Majed, eminent lawyer Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed, JSD leader Hasanul Haq Inu, educationist Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, Prof T A Chowdhury, Prof Syed Modasser Ali and Selina Akhtar will participate in the discussion.

Dr Milon Death Anniversary Committee has taken up a programme which will be held at the Dhaka Medical College (DMC). The committee comprises DMC Teachers Association, Doctors Association, Internee Doctors Association, DMC Students Union and Sandhani.

Fresh hearing

From Page 1 Col. 5

reports BSS. The court comprised Justice Muhammad Abdul Jalil and Justice Syed Fazle Ahmad.

The hearing will be held today afresh because one of the Judges, Syed Fazle Ahmad, is sitting in another bench and Justice Naimuddin Ahmad, who is the judge of the writ bench, would hold with Justice M. Abdul Jalil.

Fresh barricade programme

From Page 1 Col. 4

The barricade programme was comparatively peaceful and no untoward incident was reported from anywhere Tuesday.

Abul Bashar, convener of the Jute and Textile Workers and Employees Action Council, announced the fresh programme at a press conference in the city last evening. He alleged that 150 workers were arrested during the programme and demanded their release.

Jute and textile workers have been agitating to force the government stop its denationalisation programme and to enhance workers' wages. Their 48-hour action programme was supported by the SKOP (Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad).

Barricade from the Dhaka-Aricha Highway was removed from near the Kohinur Textile Mills at Savar allowing the partial resumption of road communication with the southern and northern parts of the country.

Ten BRTC day-coaches left Dhaka for Dinajpur, Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Bogra, Khulna, Meherpur, Gopalganj and Barisal on Tuesday. A number of buses also arrived from these areas at the capital. Eight night-coaches left for northern and southern districts Tuesday, according to BRTC officials.

Private passenger bus services were also partially restored in these routes, according to Road Transport Owners Association sources.

Train services in the western zone remained almost normal during the siege pro-

DUEAC ultimatum for resumption of classes

By DU Correspondent

Dhaka University Education Action Committee (DUEAC) at a rally on Tuesday threatened to lock up the University administrative building on December 1 if classes were not resumed by that time.

The DUEAC also announced a programme to press its demand for a violence-free campus.

Romanian envoy

From Page 1 Col. 8

The Romanian Charge d'Affaires in India was kidnapped by armed Sikh militants as he drove to work on October 9. He was acting ambassador at the time.

"They showed me a gun and said come with us," Radu said, speaking to reporters in the garden of his bungalow.

Responsibility for the kidnapping was claimed by four of the two dozen Sikh militants fighting a decade-long war for independence in Punjab. They demanded the release of three jailed militants.

Home (Interior) Minister S B Chawan said in parliament after Radu's release that he was freed unconditionally and no one had been released in exchange. "There is nothing under the carpet," Chawan said.

Prove merit

From Page 1 Col. 4

Major Ghani and General M A G Osmany, the Commander-in-Chief of the Liberation War Forces, she also remembered Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman who was a member of this regiment.

Begum Zia also paid tributes to the martyrs of the regiment who had made supreme sacrifice for independence including the Birshrestha Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Kamal and Birshrestha Sepoy Mohammad Hamidur Rahman.

Begum Zia said the East Bengal Regiment had a glorious tradition in safeguarding the spirit of nationalism which was awakened with its establishment. The regiment is the symbol of our national identity, she said.

Earlier, she reviewed the parade and took salute at the impressive march past. On her arrival at the drill square, the Prime Minister was received by Chief of Army Staff Lt General Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan, the Chittagong Area Commander Major General Mahmudul Hassan and the EBRC Commandant Brigadier A K M Shahjahan.

The Prime Minister also presented gallantry awards — 'Bir Bikram' to three Army personnel and 'Bir Pratik' to eight persons.

Among others jute workers leaders Lutfar Rahman, S M Rumi, Rehanuddin, Siddiq

Washington talks on ME peace 3 key parties hold back as deadline passes

WASHINGTON, Nov 26: The deadline for agreeing to resume peace talks in Washington on December 4 has passed with the three key parties: Israel, Syria and Palestinian Arabs — still withholding their acceptance, reports AP.

But the Bush administration has continued its contacts with the parties, offering what US officials called "suggestions" on how to deal with the tough issues if and when the talks resume.

Those issues are Palestinian self-rule on Israeli-held land, the Arabs' refusal to recognize Israel and Israel's retention of land captured in the 1967 Six-Day War.

In exchanges over the last few days, American diplomats have urged all sides to "tone down their rhetoric as a way of addressing the issues," said an official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. He declined to provide any details.

Another official said the ideas include advising Israel and the Palestinians to work out a detailed system of Palestinian self-rule while sidetracking for the time being permanent arrangements for the territories.

The parties were also notified that the United States would not hesitate to recom-

mend solutions to problems if they could not be resolved in the face-to-face bargaining, the official said.

Israel has sought to minimise outside intervention, even from the United States, on the theory the Arabs would hold back in the hope that pressure would be brought to bear against Israel's positions.

One official said Syria and the Palestinians had replied "Yes, with questions" to the invitations, and that the State Department is trying to get them to accept without the qualification.

Related story on Page 5

Obhi summoned

From Page 1 Col. 5

for in connection with the Dr Milon murder case filed in November last year.

Police have filed charge-sheet against the seven accused under Sections 147, 148, 149 and Section 302 of the Criminal Penal Code, they said.

Their trial in absentia will start after passing of the stipulated 10 days, the court advertisement notified.

The absconders are: Sanaul Haq alias Niru of Narsingdi, Golam Faruk alias Obhi of Barisal, Kamrul Ahsan alias Sajal of Barisal, Khan A Mirza Masud alias Jewel of Satkhira, Liakat Hossain alias Liakat of Madaripur, Ashfaq alias Khandaker Abu Ashfaq of Nawabganj, Dhaka and Sagr Ahmed alias Liton of Sutrapur, Dhaka.

The Midnight File

Croats, Serbs blame each other for truce violations

BELGRADE, Nov 26: Croatian forces and Serbian guerrillas blamed each other for ceasefire violations today as international efforts to restore peace in the breakaway Yugoslav republic gathered pace, reports Reuter.

Thai govt seizes Chatichai assets

BANGKOK, Nov 26: The government has seized nearly 24 million in assets from ousted Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan and an aide, the head of a panel investigating suspected corruption said Tuesday night, reports AP.

SAARC summit

From Page 1 Col. 7
who was dispatched by his President and current SAARC Chairman President Mamoos Abdul Gayoom to the capitals of Nepal, India and Bhutan, has returned to Maldives to report to President Gayoom about the outcome of the mission. These three countries, whose leaders did not travel to Colombo after the summit was postponed at the last moment, were consulted on convening the postponed summit within this year as required by the SAARC Charter.

Leaders of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Maldives did not alter their scheduled visit to Colombo and discussed the fate of the summit with host country's President Premadasa although their visit was officially described as bilateral. While the four leaders in Sri Lankan capital agreed to see to it that the summit takes place within 1991, the SAARC Chairman was entrusted with the responsibility to consult three other member-states on their participation in the conference and the likely dates for it.

Jameel has gone back to his country with "positive results" and the sixth summit now looks certain to be staged within this year barring unforeseen development like one that marred the conference early this month.

A key element for the postponement of the summit was cited as the inability of King Jigme Wangchuk to attend because of "domestic reasons". The King was keen to send his representative but India objected, saying holding of the summit requires attendance of all the leaders. Others pointed out that in the past it so happened that a head of the government could not partici-

pate but someone else did attend on his behalf and the summit went ahead. India did not budge and consequently, the event collapsed at the last moment.

Now, the King has confirmed his participants to the Maldives Foreign Minister, who earlier received clear assurance in Kathmandu and New Delhi that prime ministers of Nepal and India will participate this time. Only dates are to be worked out but all agreed that summit should be held before the year passes out. December 20 was discussed as a probable date but Maldives had its own problem as its budget would be announced that day. December 28 was considered but once again Nepal has problem as it coincides with the birthday of the King. Other probable dates being considered are December 22 and 26 or any other day between December 20 to 31 that suits all members. It will not be difficult to find out a date convenient for all since the summit will now be held for a day instead of usual three days.

Undoubtedly, the nascent SAARC received a jolt at the postponement of the sixth summit early this month and hopefully, the holding of the event next month and meeting of the leaders would largely help evaporate whatever misgivings had cropped up by the calling off the event.

CHT projects reviewed

CHITTAGONG, Nov 26: A high-level meeting was held here today to review the various development projects of the Chittagong Hill Tracts with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair, reports BSS.

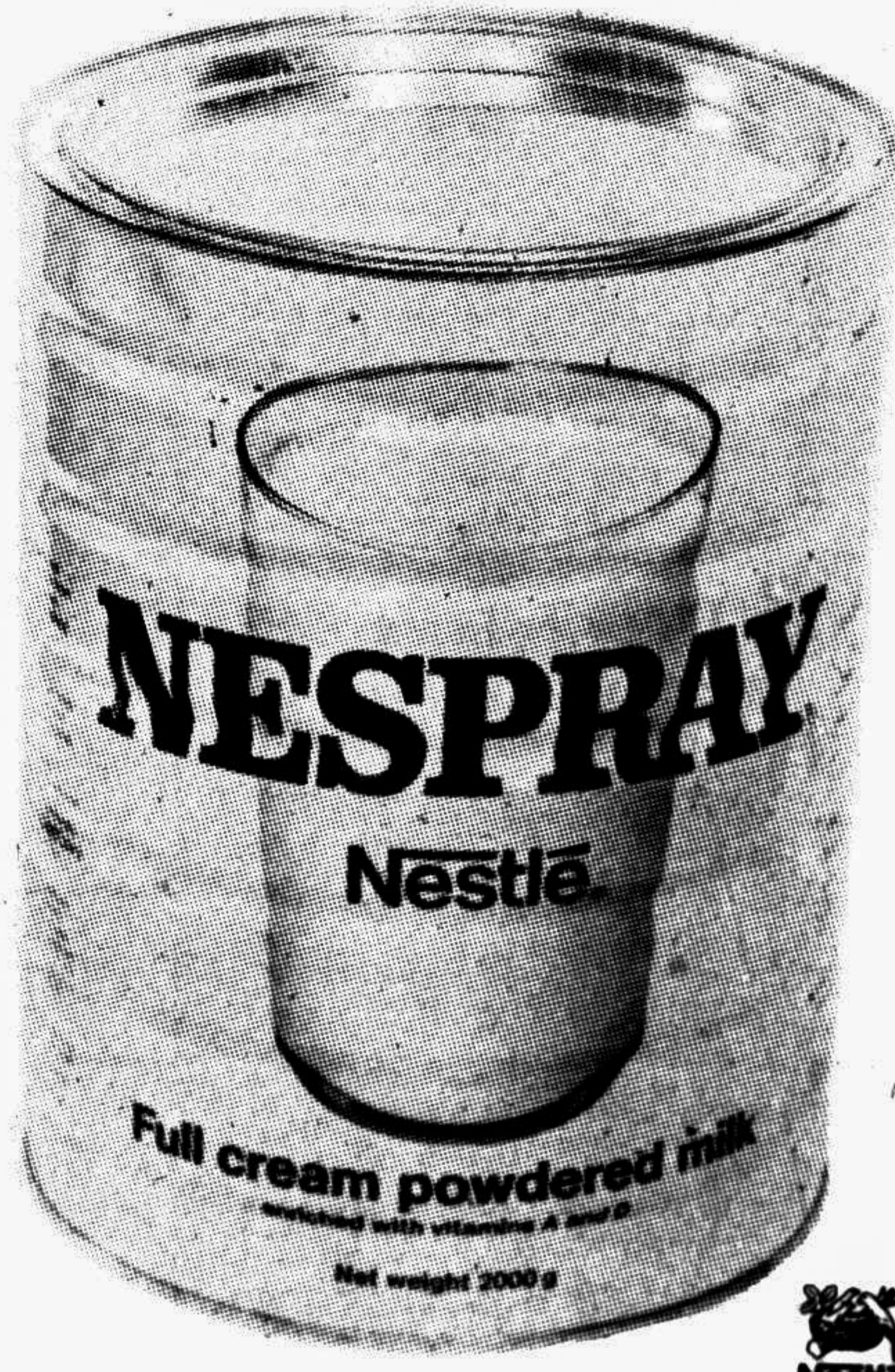
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Editor: S. M. Ali