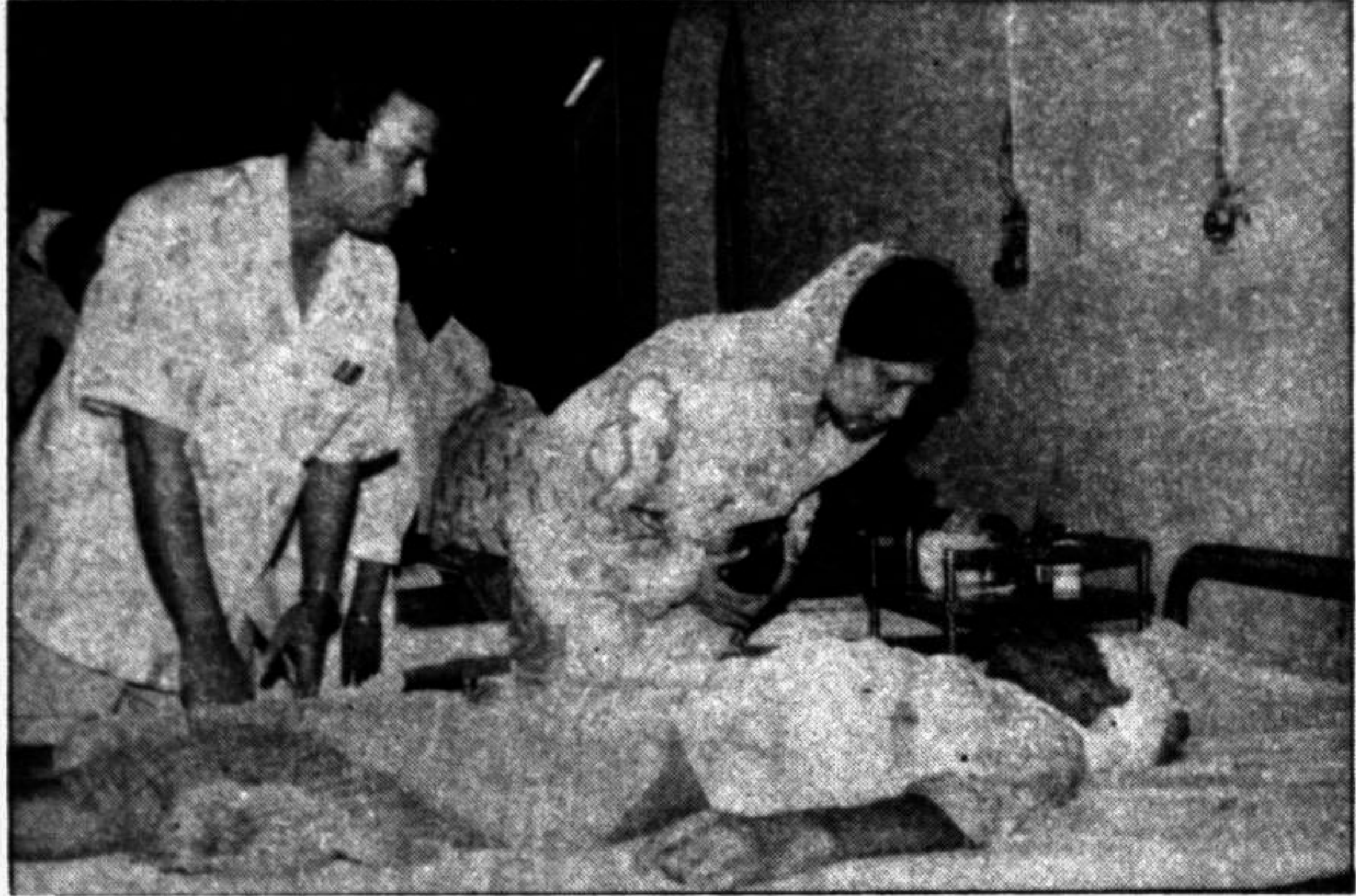




TRUCKLOAD OF BODIES: Some of the dead in Monday's bus accident on Dhaka-Aricha highway being removed from the spot. — Star photo



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited the injured in the bus accident on Dhaka-Aricha highway at DMCH Monday. — PID photo

Shahabuddin shocked

The Acting President, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, Monday expressed his deep sorrow at the unfortunate bus accident near Dhamrat in which many people have been killed and injured, reports BSS.

In a message, the Acting President prayed for the peace of the departed souls and extended his sympathy to the members of the bereaved families.

Justice Shahabuddin also gave directives to the concerned authorities to take prompt and effective measures for the treatment of the injured persons admitted to the different hospitals.

Khaleda

UNB adds: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia expressed deep sorrow at the tragic death of bus passengers in a road mishap near Manikganj Monday morning.

At least 51 passengers were killed and more than one hundred injured when a heavily overloaded Dhaka-bound bus from Aricha plunged into a dry canal at Shuchitpara in Dhamrat upazila, about 18 kilometres from Manikganj.

Begum Zia, in a statement, expressed sympathy to the members of the bereaved families and prayed for the salvation of the departed souls.

She also directed the concerned officials to ensure proper treatment of the injured.

Police jeep falls into ditch: Seven injured

SAVAR, Apr 22: Seven policemen coming from Sutpara, the scene of today's tragic bus accident which claimed 51 lives, were seriously injured when their jeep skidded off the road and fell into a road-side ditch, reports UNB.

Police said the accident occurred at about 5 PM near Dhamrat upazila headquarters this afternoon when the police team was returning to Savar after visiting the scene of the road mishap.

The injured include ASP of Savar circle Jahangir Hossain and Officer in Charge of Savar PS Ataur Rahman. The other five are constables.

They were brought to nearby Ganashasthya Hospital in unconscious state but later snifed to hospital in Dhaka.

Witnesses said the police jeep plunged into the 15-foot deep ditch when the driver apparently lost control. The vehicle got twisted.

Water requirement

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(Shariatpur) in the Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) on Sunday.

The minister told the House that efforts are being geared up to streamline the water supply and its distribution system.

Dhaka WASA can supply 12 crore gallons of water a day against the demand for 24 crore gallons. Chittagong WASA can meet the total demand of three crore gallons daily at present.

By-elections

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The dates for scrutiny of nomination papers by the Returning Officer and withdrawal of candidature are May 19 and May 26 respectively.

The by-election is necessitated following the vacating of seats by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia (four seats — Bogra-7, Dhaka-5, Dhaka-9 and Chittagong-8), former President HM Ershad (four seats — Rangpur-1, Rangpur-2, Rangpur-5 and Rangpur-6), one seat each by Tofael Ahmed (Bhola-2) and Abdur Razzak (Madaripur-2).

Hartal in Rangpur, rally in Jessore JP supporters attack train, shops

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Apr 22: A dawn to dusk hartal called by the Jatiya Sramik Party was observed on Monday in Rangpur in demand for release of ousted president Ershad.

All shops, industries and commercial banks, remained closed and all types of vehicles went off the streets during hartal. The attendance in offices was thin.

UNB adds: At least ten people, including a train driver, were injured when Jatiya Party picketers attacked a passenger train during hartal hours, witnesses said.

They said the stone-throwing picketers had attacked a Lalmonirhat-bound local train at the Lalbagh crossing at about 10 AM.

The demonstrators damaged the engine room and window glasses of the train, but police rushed to the scene and brought the situation under control.

Railway control room sources said some demonstrators also tried to halt an inter-city express train between Rangpur and Kaunia stations.

Police picked up four picketers from the Lalbagh and

Shapia square during the hartal hours, police said.

In Dhaka the Jatiya Party held a rally yesterday protesting transfer of Ershad to Central Jail and the arrest of party leader Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury.

The meeting at the party's Gulshan office was presided over by Moudud Ahmed MP and addressed, among others, by Shah Moazzem Hossain, Syeda Razia Faiz and Amena Bari.

Jessore

Our Jessore correspondent says: Some unruly processionists of Jatiya Party looted and damaged about 50 shops, wounded many persons and further damaged about 20 vehicles including a BAF troop carrier and an ambulance this evening. Earlier a meeting of the Jatiya Party was held at Daratana Square to protest the arrest of former President Ershad and sending him into Dhaka Central Jail. The meeting was addressed, among others, by the Former State Minister Khaledur Rahman Tito.

Informant of Ershad's arms case gained over

From Page 1 Col. 4

the Ballistics of Police Expert Saleh Mohammad was again cross-examined by the Defence Lawyer.

The caretaker of the Toshakhana at Bangabhaban also produced the pistol which was claimed by the Defence Lawyer on Sunday to be one of those recovered from the residence of Ershad.

It was almost certain that the pistol listed in the register of the Toshakhana was not the same pistol recovered from the Sena Bhavan.

However the Defence Lawyer said that he would examine the matter later.

Witness Abdul Hamid Chowdhury of the Home Ministry in his statement before the Tribunal said that as the Inventory Committee had mentioned eight unlicensed weapons in its report, he instructed the Deputy Police Commissioner (North) to lodge the case under the existing law.

The instruction was given in consultation with the Home Secretary, he added.

The Defence Lawyer on his part emphasised that the whole prosecution was misconceived, mala fide and taken in undue haste without giving the accused a due opportunity to defend himself.

It was done to condemn him unheard, the Defence Lawyer added.

The witnesses however denied that the assertion of the Defence Lawyer was based on facts.

As on the previous day Ershad was taken to the Tribunal early in the morning for security reasons.

He looked grim, gloomy and depressed as he sat in the dock.

Till yesterday a total of 14 witnesses were produced before the Tribunal, which was adjourned yesterday (till 10 AM tomorrow (Wednesday)).

Following are the excerpts from the cross-examination of the Joint Secretary of the Home Ministry Abdul Hamid Chowdhury.

Defence lawyer (Sirajul Haque): Did you ask any member of the Inventory Committee to find out whether any of the recovered items was a gift?

Abdul Hamid Chowdhury (AHC): No.

DL: Did you see the FIR?

AHC: Yes, I saw the FIR.

DL: Did you see that it was mentioned in the FIR that Mustafizur Rahman presented four out of eight unlicensed arms before the Inventory Committee?

AHC: I read the report but I can't remember it.

DL: The case was so long that he could not remember. Then pointing to Attorney General he said 'as you have interfered he gave that answer.'

Attorney General: What interference?

DL: You prompt the witnesses as to what they should say and what they should not. (Then he questioned the witness) Before directing the lodging of the FIR did you consult the Military Secretary or anybody about the case?

AHC: No.

DL: Did you consult Brigadier Ilyas?

AHC: No I did not.

DL: You acted solely on the report?

AHC: Yes.

DL: Was there any recommendation from the Inventory Committee for lodging the case?

AHC: There was no recommendation for starting a case from the Inventory Committee.

DL: Did you give any direc-

tive to anyone to consult Ershad about the arms?

AHC: No.

DL: You have condemned this man unheard without giving him (Ershad) an opportunity to defend himself.

AHC: This is not a fact. I asked to start the case to prove whether those arms belonged to him.

DL: Did he (Ershad) write any letter to allow his wife to remain present during the inventory?

AHC: Yes.

Judge: Did he write?

AHC: Yes. Probably on the 17th and the 23rd of December, 1990.

DL: He has admitted that the accused wrote letters.

DL: Have you seen the chargesheet which was produced after investigation by the CID?

AHC: Yes.

DL: Do you know that the FIR had mentioned that four weapons were submitted by Mustafizur Rahman in a box?

AHC: I saw that in the FIR.

DL: Was there any telephone communication between the Home Ministry and the residence where Ershad was detained?

AHC: That is not in my knowledge.

DL: (Showing a copy of circular from the Home Ministry) Have you seen that the circular issued by the Home did not mention that the illegal arms should be deposited to the nearest thana within December 26, 1990? (DL mentioned that the circular was issued as a radio message).

AHC: It was not mentioned in the circular.

Judge: You are giving a circular to the whole nation but you do not mention that the illegal arms should be deposited to the nearest thana in the message.

AHC: This circular had been addressed to the DC and the SD and not for public information. The mass media including radio, television and newspapers gave publicity to the effect that the arms should be surrendered to the nearest thana and proper receipt should be obtained for the deposited arms from the thana authorities. The circular was issued on the 15th while the press release for radio broadcast was issued on December 12. The circular was issued to the DC and the SP to instruct them to inform the public about the depositing of illegal arms. The circular in no way for public consumption.

DL: Did you mention in your circular about the arms which were surrendered at places other than the thanas?

Judge: (Clarifying the question) Had they not been deposited in the thanas, did you keep any alternative arrangement for surrendering of the illegal arms at any other place?

AHC: It is clear in the circular that the arms should be surrendered at the nearest thana.

DL: (Giving a suggestion): The circular did not mention anything about the arms which were deposited before high officials of the administration.

AHC: I have nothing to say beyond the instruction given in the circular.

DL: The chargesheet mentioned that four arms were 'presented' before the Inventory Committee. Did you mark it?

AHC: No I don't know.

DL: The chargesheet mentioned that four arms were 'presented' while in the circular it was mentioned that the arms should be 'deposited'. What is the difference between 'present' and 'deposition'?

Judge: (With anger at the

The Midnight File

Kabul Scud kills 500

ISLAMABAD, Apr 22: More than 500 people were killed when the Kabul regime launched a Scud missile attack on the resistance-held eastern Afghan city of Asadabad, the official Pakistan television said today. The report showed footage of the destruction and two big craters apparently caused by the Scuds in the attack Saturday, and said at least 250 people were hospitalised in areas adjacent to the Afghan province of Kunar, reports AFP.

Hun Sen for treatment in Tokyo

TOKYO, Apr 22: Cambodian Premier Hun Sen entered a Tokyo hospital Monday for treatment, the Foreign Ministry said. A ministry official declined to discuss details of his illness or identify the hospital. He said the Japanese government has accepted the 38-year-old Hun Sen's visit to Japan from "a humanitarian point of view", reports AP.

Monitoring on Iraqi chemicals

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 22: Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar on Monday proposed a Special Commission to oversee destruction of Iraq's chemical, biological and other weapons, as mandated by the Gulf War ceasefire resolution. In a report to the Security Council, Perez de Cuellar gave no details of how the destruction and monitoring of Iraq's weapons systems would be carried out, reports AP.

Foreigners asked to quit Kashmir

JAMMU (India), Apr 22: Indian intelligence agencies have asked foreigners to leave Kashmir, citing security fears in the strife-torn northern state, where Muslim militants kidnapped two Swedish nationals last month. The federal agencies asked the foreigners, mostly tourists, to leave following Indian forces' failure to trace the two Swedish engineers, who were abducted in the valley by armed militants March 31, official said, reports AFP.

Diarrhoea

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The people of the areas feared further spread of the disease as Godagari upazila was affected afresh on Monday.

Nine temporary camps have been set up in the affected areas where 18 medical teams were working round the clock. The sources added.

Local people alleged scarcity of medicine and problem with transportation of the sick people to the camps.

But the Civil Surgeon of Rajshahi said that fresh supplies of necessary medicine have been sent to the areas.

One bill passed

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were enjoying enhanced benefits from 1982 and 1987. The present bill validates an ordinance promulgated on January 31 this year, he added.

BNP

From Page 1 Col. 8

are two clearly visible currents within the party leadership. One favours the continuation of the present presidential form of government by sharing some powers of the president with the Prime Minister and the Parliament while the other favours a reversion to a parliamentary form.

The opposition parties in Parliament except the Jatiya Party have been openly advocating a change to the parliamentary form. The BNP's ally in Parliament the Jamaat-e-Islami is also learnt to have made it clear that it would support the demand for a parliamentary form of government.

Meanwhile, as many as 14 notices have been submitted by opposition members for introduction of constitutional amendment bills in the current session of Parliament. They include one by the deputy leader of the opposition Abdus Samad Azad, and four by the lone Workers Party member Rashed Khan Menon.

A Parliament Secretariat source told The Daily Star that only the draft of bill submitted by Abdus Samad Azad is a comprehensive one; the remaining ones deal with a specific article or clause each.

The Awami League's draft calls for repeal of all but the first three constitutional amendments — a marked departure from the AL's previous stand. The deviation is obviously designed to attract others who do not support a return to the pre-August 1975 situation.

Editor: S. M. Ali