

Shashanka murder

Tajul, 3 others get life term

BRAHMANBARIA, Oct 23: Four people including the principal accused Tajul Islam have been sentenced to life imprisonment for the gruesome killing of Shashanka Devnath, reports UNB.

The Additional District and Sessions Judge Md Nurul Wadud in his judgement delivered today also fined them Tk 2,000 each, in default to undergo another six months rigorous imprisonment.

The accused awarded life imprisonment are: Tajul Islam, his brother-in-law Habibur Rahman, son-in-law Inu Miah and his neighbour Abdul Aziz. Of them Abdul Aziz is absconding.

Two accused Nazrul Islam, brother of the principal accused Tajul Islam and Abdul Aziz alias Ajit have been acquitted of the charges.

The Judge found Tajul and other accused guilty of committing murder relying on witnesses and confessional statements by the accused.

A total of 16 prosecution witnesses were examined by the court on the concluding day of the hearing on October 14.

The court room was jam-packed this morning when the judge was delivering the judgement in the sensational

case. A large number of people converged in the court premises to hear the judgement.

The Judge found that Tajul along with other accused killed the victim Shashanka Devnath to grab his 3.34 acres of landed property through forged deeds.

Birojabala, widow of Shashanka and her five children were also brutally killed by Tajul and his accomplices on September 5, 1989.

The principal accused Tajul and eight of his accomplices were sentenced to death and 27 others were awarded life imprisonment for killing Birojabala and her five children in a murder case.

According to the prosecution, the main accused Tajul and his accomplices kidnapped Shashanka Devnath on October 16, 1987 and confined him in Aziz's house at Niznagar under Madhabpur Upazila of Habiganj and killed him by strangulation.

Later the body was thrown into a pond at Chechuria of Tripura state in India.

Birojabala, widow of the deceased, filed a kidnapping case with local police which was later converted into a murder case through supplementary chargesheet.



Ganotantri Party leader Suranjit Sengupta speaking on the concluding day's discussion on "Democratisation and Autonomy to Radio and Television", organised by the Sammito Sangskritik Jote at the National Press Club on Wednesday.

Yugoslav artillery, gunboats shell Dubrovnik, Vukovar

ZAGREB, Oct 23: Federal artillery and gunboats shelled hotels and homes around the Adriatic resort of Dubrovnik overnight, killing one civilian and wounding two, Croatian defence officials said Wednesday, reports AP.

Air raid sirens also sounded Wednesday, but no bombing was reported. It was the first alert in Croatia's capital since last Thursday, when federal forces launched strong attacks on Dubrovnik and Croat strongholds in the eastern part of the secessionist republic.

The Croatian town of Vukovar in eastern Croatia, which has been under siege for two months by the federal army and Serb militants, was shelled again Wednesday, the Yugoslav state news agency Tanjug said. Three were no reports of casualties.

Elsewhere in Croatia, a ceasefire that went into effect Saturday appeared to be holding.

The continued fighting around Dubrovnik came after Serbia and its allies remaining on the collective federal presidency approved on Tuesday a call up of army reservists in regions that want to remain part of Yugoslavia.

That would comprise only Serbia, the federation's biggest republic, and Montenegro, but it seemed to signal an intention by the federal military to push on with the civil war despite the latest truce the 10th in four months.

Croatia declared independence along with Slovenia on June 25, but Croatia's ethnic Serb minority wants no part of an independent Croatia. The

federal army, with its Serb-dominated officer corps, has sided with the Serb rebels in Croatia and more than 1,000 people have died in the fighting.

Gunboats off Dubrovnik overnight shelled the Babin Kuk resort area just north of the medieval heart of the town and the small island of Lapad, killing one civilian and injuring two others, Croatian defence officials said.

They said several hotels were badly damaged and a hospital also was hit.

A naval blockade lifted to allow some ships in and out of Dubrovnik in recent days was reportedly again in force.

A federal military communiqué cited by Tanjug claimed that Croatian forces inside Dubrovnik were trying to provoke the army to attack. The report said the Croats were firing on federal troops from parks, tennis courts and gardens inside Dubrovnik, where more than 50,000 people are reportedly trapped.

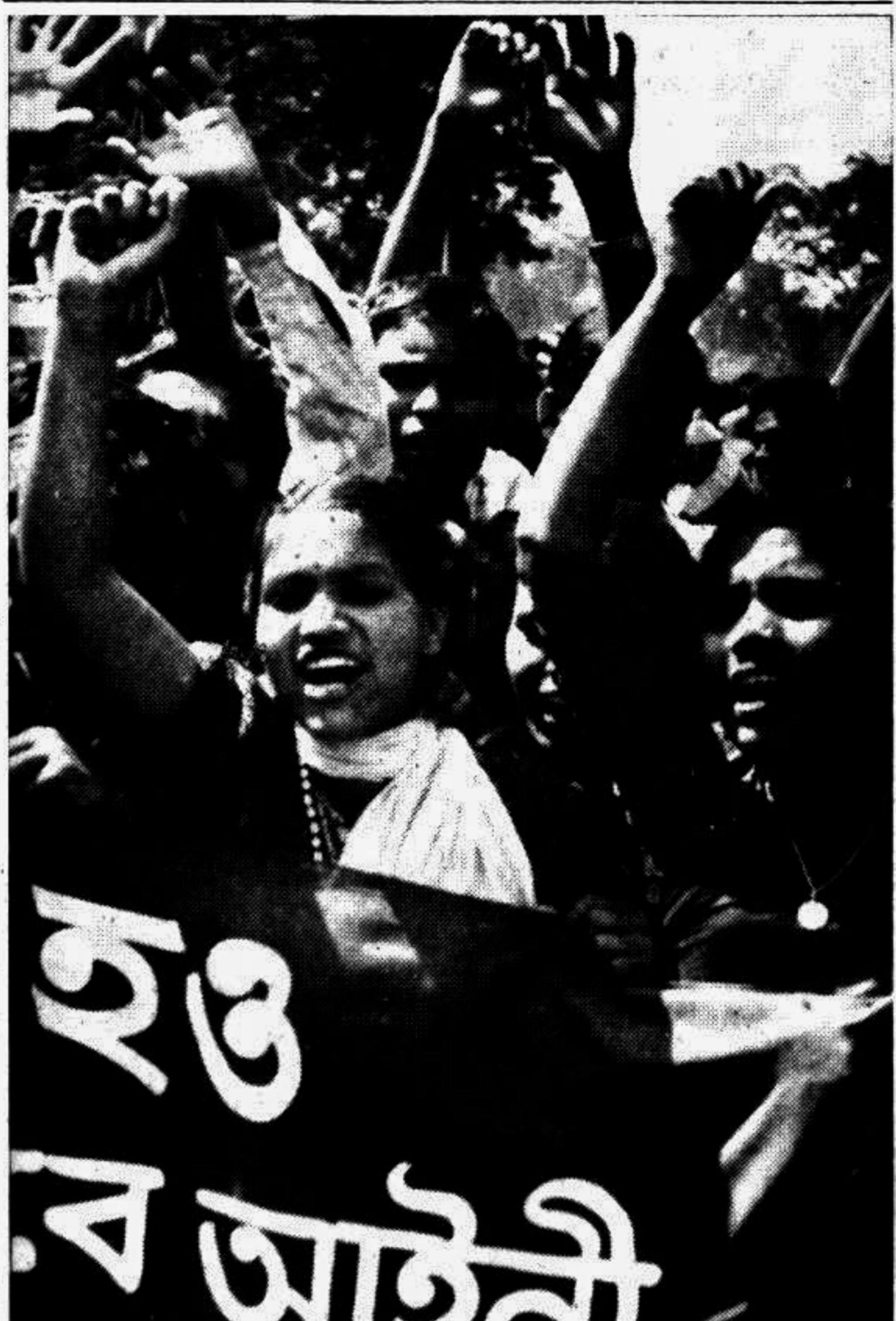
Federal government and army planned to meet with representatives from Serbia and Montenegro and from Serbian-controlled regions in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina on Wednesday in Belgrade, the federal and Serbian capital.

They were expected to discuss a Serbian plan for the future of Yugoslavia and coordinate future policies against the Croats.

In other developments, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), meeting in Prague, decided to send observers to Yugoslavia, the official Czechoslovak news agency CSTK reported.

The report said CSCE observer teams would operate in all six Yugoslav republics to monitor "human rights." It did not say how many observers would be dispatched and when.

Tanjug reported that there are now 123,678 Serbian refugees from Croatia. At least 250,000 Croats have also been forced to flee their homes in areas occupied by Serb militias and their federal army allies.



Garments workers brought out a procession in the city yesterday to press home their various demands.

Radio, Television

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writers Mamunur Rashid, Maleka Begum, President of Dhaka University Teachers Association Dr Anwarullah Chowdhury, Jote leader Nasiruddin Yousuf, Combined Professional Council leader Dr Sarwar Ali, Advocate Shamsul Huq Chowdhury, Prof Sirajul Islam Chowdhury of Dhaka University, JSD leader Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan, General Secretary Hasanul Huq Inu, NAP President Panjab Bhattacharya, and journalist Gias Kamal Chowdhury.

The Information Minister said that the present government was aware of its promises made during the mass movement.

"We must fulfil the commitment of the three-alliances but we should have to bear in mind that the autonomous institution would not be occupied by any terrorist group," he said.

The Minister said that it is unfortunate to compare the present government with the past one as there was some basic differences. He said that the BNP was voted to power by people and if it made mistake the people would withdraw their support but attempts to make the government unstable under different pleas were unfair. The opposition should show goodwill to good things, he said.

Tofael Ahmed recalled that people violated curfew and laid siege around the Radio and TV demanding autonomy during Ershad regime. How can we forget this immediate past history?

Suranjit Sengupta said that the Prime Minister herself spoke about the freedom of speech. So where is the problem to free the national media?

Shamsul Huq Chowdhury said that the people would not wait for five years to realise their demands if the ruling party failed to fulfil them now. Only the trial of Ershad was not the duty of the government, he added.

Sirajul Islam Chowdhury said that our independence was an outcome of the demands which started with the demand for autonomy for Radio and TV. So it is an important demand but we have to develop a 'democratic culture' to preserved autonomy and freedom.

Hasanul Huq Inu said that the advisers of the autocrat were still in their positions and were consolidating them. So we cannot expect anything better from this government. Those bureaucrats should be removed, he said. Foyez Ahmed said that the Jote would continue its campaign till the demand is not realised. It will soon organised another discussion where the common people of all walks will be the speakers, he added in his presidential address.

CU
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the Chittagong Medical College campus, ransacked the Principal's office, telephone exchange and the store room. Principal of the college Dr Nurunnabi said the armed men also opened several rounds of fire at around 2:30 am to 3 am but none was hurt. He, however, could not identify them. The authorities had closed the college for an indefinite period on October 15 following clashes between Chhatra League (S-A) and Jatyatabadi Chhatra Dal. 'Medical Chhatra Parishad', an organisation of general students of the college observed a token hunger strike Tuesday in front of the main building to press home the demand for reopening the college. The Academic Council has called a joint meeting of students and teachers on October 26 to consider reopening the college.

The Midnight File

Ukraine to seek part of Black Sea fleet

MOSCOW, Oct 23: The secessionist Ukrainian Parliament says it now controls Soviet troops in the republic, will form its own armed forces and wants part of the Soviet Navy's Black Sea fleet. But officials on Wednesday denied reports that the second most populous republic has claimed control over 176 strategic nuclear missiles on its territory, reiterating the Ukraine's goal of becoming a nuclear-free zone, reports AP.

Deaths, looting in Lubumbashi

KINSHASA, Oct 23: Looting and pillaging in the southern mining center of Lubumbashi has led into pitched battles between rival political factions that have left many people dead. One of the witnesses, Belgian Col. Eric Barbaix, said whole neighbourhood of the city were set ablaze Tuesday after unpaid soldiers began looting on Monday. Barbaix, a doctor who helped the evacuation, said many people had died in fighting. Zaire radio also reported many deaths, reports AP.

Kashmir militants kidnap minister's son

NEW DELHI, Oct 23: Kashmiri militants staged yet another kidnapping today, dragging the son of a former state minister off a college bus to bring the number of abductions in the past two months to at least seven. It said in a report from Srinagar that armed men hauled Shafi Sajad son of former state agriculture minister Mohammad Shafi and a medical college student, off a college bus in the city mid-morning today, reports AFP.

UN Day today

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The United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) will hold a commemorative function at 5 pm at Hotel Purbani. Finance Minister Saifur Rahman will attend the function as chief guest. State Minister for Women Affairs and Social Welfare Begum Sarwar Rahman will be special guest. Acting Foreign Secretary Ambassador Farooq Sobhan and UNDP Resident Representative Charles Larimont will attend as guest speakers. UNAB President Professor M Innas Ali will preside.

Earlier on the Day, Lions Club of Dhaka Central in cooperation with United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) will organise a discussion meeting at 9 am at UNIC auditorium at House 25, Road 11, Dhanmondi, Dhaka. Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) Sheikh Razzaque Ali will attend the function as chief guest. UNIDO Country Director GL Narasimhan and Lions District Governor Ln Jalal Ahmed will speak as special guests.

The day is also observed as World Development Information Day, which the General Assembly set up in 1972, to draw the attention of world opinion to development problems and the necessity of strengthening international co-operation for their solutions.

Appointment of doctors in vacant posts soon

The government plans to appoint doctors in vacant posts soon, reports UNB. Replying to Rahmat Ali of AL the Deputy Minister of Health and Social Welfare Serajul Haque told the House Wednesday that a number of posts remained vacant after physicians left the country. He said 924 government doctors left the country during the last 5 years since 1986.

1978 also called for the global observance of Disarmament Week from October 24 to October 30 to enable world community to consider seriously various issues of disarmament and its relationships with economic and social development.

The United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, whose term of office is drawing to a close, in a message said the 'United Nations has become the rallying point for the effort to establish a new order of peace and justice that would promote human rights and eradicate poverty.'

"At this moment, we stand at a delicate point in the search for such an order," he said and appealed to leaders of peoples to ensure the freedoms recently gained and energise newly-released are devoted to ends most conducive to human welfare.

William H. Draper III, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme, in a statement on the day outlined commitment to the UN Charter, particularly in "the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women, and of nations large and small."

"UNDP is committed to the inclusion of women in all our priority programmes on poverty alleviation and grassroots participation, environment and natural resources management, technological cooperation among developing countries, and transfer and adaptation of technology," he added.

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Basic studies

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growth. These centres will be founded around the region for helping development of the Third World countries. The Education Minister showed keen interest in it. He assured Prof Naseem that since Bangladesh is a disaster-prone land the government would consider the proposal carefully and do the needful.

Ground Water Act

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minimum distance of 2500 feet should be maintained between two DTWs, while the distance between a DTW and a STW should be 1750 feet. A distance of 800 feet was specified between two STWs. Since the rule of minimum distance was not followed or applied, its adverse effects on the underground water level were noticed at many places of the country where procurement of water through STWs and hand tubewells was becoming difficult.

The standing committee of the ministry of agriculture has formed a six-member sub-committee to look into the latest situation in the irrigation sector.

According to a reliable source, the sub-committee has already suggested reinforcing the said Act before the ensuing irrigation season that begins late November. The recommendation is under consideration of higher authorities who are likely to go for a negotiation with the donors for reviving the Act.

While describing the anarchic situation in irrigation system, a government official said that even shallow tubewells were freely installed in the command area of a deep tubewell, which created problems in water management.

He mentioned that the mismanagement often leads to wrangles among the owners of irrigation equipment. Moreover, there is a lack of

coordination among the organisations working for the supply and installation of deep and shallow tubewells which has aggravated the situation.

Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC), Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Bangladesh Bank, Bangladesh Rural Development Board, Water Board and some non-governmental organisations are involved in this irrigation equipment business. But there is no effective coordination, and even no regulation for such a coordination among these bodies exists, says an expert.

According to experts, the absence of any control on the irrigation system has led to the adverse effect on underground water level. A recent official study shows that about one-third area of Bangladesh has become unsuitable for installing more shallow tubewells. In areas of the northern region and other parts of the country, the underground water level has gone down as a result of uncontrolled water lifting.

The experts warn that if the existing mismanagement in ground water sector continues unabated, the whole country will have to face an alarming situation particularly in dry season when cultivation depends mainly on ground water irrigation.

At present, nearly 24,000 DTWs and over two lakh STWs are in operation all over the country.

Uproar in JS

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Workers Party member Rashed Khan Menon demanded discussion on the ground that despite the Speaker's ruling three leaders of the two benches had already started discussion on the situation.

When Chief Whip of the Opposition Mohammad Nasim tried to say something the Speaker told him that he had spoken on the same topic elaborately on October 15, and that there was no point in asking for discussion again.

At this point Sheikh Hasina took the floor. She expressed her indignation that it took some time for her to attract the attention of the Chair. She said that the statement of Fazlur Rahman Patal was not true. Mohammad Nasim had already visited the affected districts and that gruel kitchens were opened by the AL.

She said that information about famine was also suppressed during the British rule and the Ayub and the Zia regimes. She said that she had warned the government immediately after the flood that a silent famine was going on. Timely steps could have helped avert the present situation.

She sought to know why discussion could not be allowed when people were dying, and children were being sold only to get food. These stories have come out through newspapers she said even though she remarked 'It's not that newspapers do not publish false stories'.

Begum Zia emphatically said that there was no famine in the country. The government had undertaken a massive relief operation and even Opposition MPs like Shamsuddoha and Azhar Hossain had conceded it.

Begum Zia said that the Rangpur region faced a stress situation whenever there was a flood. The government was making all its efforts to mitigate the situation. However only relief operations would not be adequate. A permanent solution of the flood situation should be worked out unitedly, she emphasised.

She said that attempts to spread fabricated stories had been unearthed. The people of the affected areas were now saying that they were getting VGD foodgrains properly. In the past they were given less than the quantity they were supposed to get. She urged the Speaker to follow the orders of the day.

At this most of the AL MPs stood up and Tofael Ahmed tried to say something. Speaker Sheikh Razzaque Ali said the thing had ended since both the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition had made statements.

Some Opposition MPs pointed to the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina requesting the Speaker to give her the floor. The Speaker said she would definitely get the floor, but under what rules. He said that floor could not be taken by the use of force. At this point AL MPs joined by Suranjit Sengupta walked out. They were later joined by

members belonging to the CPB, Workers Party, and NDP. Members belonging to the Jatiya Party, Jamaat, and JSD (Siraj) remained in the House. Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, the Acting Chief of the JP, Moudud Ahmed of the JP, Moulana Matur Rahman Nizami of the Jamaat and Shahjahan Siraj of the JSD urged the Speaker to allow a discussion on the question.

The Speaker said he was awaiting a constructive suggestion from the Opposition, since he could not allow discussion on the day after giving a ruling.

The sought the opinion of the Treasury Bench about having a discussion on the question. Begum Khaleda Zia and Khandakar Delwar Hossain said that the government side had no objection to it, but that the House should be run according to the order of the day and the Rules of Procedure.

Later the Speaker said he would announce the time for discussion on the question after consulting all the parties represented in the House. He then adjourned the session till four pm today (Thursday).

Black money

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restore order in the society. A written statement read out by Bimal Biswas suggested neutral role of the administration in eliminating terrorism, arranging jobs for the students on completion of their studies and allocation of seats in residential halls on the basis of merit alone.

The alliance called for scrapping all black laws including the Special Powers Act which it alleged was being misused.

A healthy democratic process can not be built up unless the black laws are repealed, the statement said.

In reply to a question, Hasanul Haq Inu said the alliance leaders in a meeting with Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury Wednesday discussed the overall law and order situation, conviction by martial law tribunals and withdrawal of cases against political leaders and workers during the Ershad regime.

Inu said the Home Minister gave an assurance of taking necessary measures in this regard.

To a question Rashed Khan Menon said they do not demand resignation of the government right at this moment but the government must implement the joint declaration of the three alliances.

Alleged killer

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protested the arrest by holding a rally on the Dhaka University campus Wednesday morning.

The rally addressed by Quamruzzaman Ansari, General Secretary of BCL (S-A) Dhaka University unit, strongly condemned the recent arrests of BCL (S-A) workers and leaders and demanded their immediate release.

Editor : S. M. Ali

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