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# The Daily Star

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**HOLIDAY NOTICE**

The offices of The Daily Star will remain closed today on the occasion of the Ashura. Therefore, there will be no issue of the daily on Friday July 2.

**NEWS BRIEFS**

**PM attends Saifur's dinner**

Prime Minister and Leader of the House Begum Khaleda Zia last night attended a dinner hosted by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman at the Parliament Members' Club. Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, Deputy Leader of the House Prof A G M. Badruddoza Chowdhury, ministers, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad, members of Parliament and journalists attended the dinner, reports BSS.

**Hasina leaves for France today**

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and chief of the Awami League Sheikh Hasina leaves Dhaka today for France to attend the national convention of the French Socialist Party to be held from July 2 to 4 at Lyon. Sheikh Hasina is attending the convention at the invitation from the French Socialist Party, reports BSS.

**Dr Kamal off to Cyprus**

Democratic Forum Convener Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday left for Cyprus to attend a meeting of the Commonwealth Human Rights Advisory Commission. The meeting will finalise the commission's report for presentation to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, to be held in Cyprus in October this year. Dr Kamal Hossain is the chairman of the commission, reports UNB.

## JS passes budget

**By Staff Correspondent**

The amount approved by Parliament included revenue expenditure and the expenditure in implementing both the Annual Development Programme and non-ADP projects of the state.

The budget was placed in Parliament on June 10 and as many as 242 lawmakers from the treasury and opposition benches took part in the 10-day general discussions on it. Finance Minister Saifur Rahman delivered his winding up speech in the budget debate on June 27.

During the debate, the opposition members attacked the budget for lacking any specific sense of direction while the treasury bench members praised it as a progressive plan. The Finance Minister, however, told the House that the budget would help the nation reduce dependence on foreign aid by providing 33 per cent of the ADP fund from domestic resources.

The Finance Minister, however, accepted certain demands from both benches raised in course of the debate.

A proposed seven and a half per cent duty on books except fiction was withdrawn, a 15 per cent incentive was granted to the exporters of garments using local handloom fabrics, duty on powdered milk was increased by 15 per cent and a 30 per cent duty on imported silk levied.

Earlier, the opposition members tabled a few thousand cut motions against the 128 demands for grants to meet the public expenditure for the 1993-94 fiscal. The Speaker guillotined most of them.

Seven out of the 128 demands were approved.

## Tofael produces proof against Majid-ul Huq

**By Staff Correspondent**

Opposition allegations of corruption against the government took a new turn yesterday with Awami League (AL) legislator Tofael Ahmed producing in Parliament a 'document' supporting his charge of nepotism and irregularities against Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Minister M Majid-ul Huq.

Meanwhile, formation of an enquiry committee to investigate certain allegations of corruption against the Irrigation Ministry is pending before the House.

Tofael brought the charges in Parliament June 26 and Majid-ul Huq categorically denied the allegations immediately.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali on June 27 decided to form a parliamentary enquiry committee following demands from both the minister and his accuser Tofael.

Tofael yesterday produced a document, signed by the Irrigation Minister, which showed that the minister had recommended fourteen favourite candidates for appointment as teachers in the Magura Girls' School and the Magura Boys' School.

A photocopy of the minister's letter shows the minister regretting that "none of the persons appointed so far are our supporters."

In the letter, the minister added that "as the appointments are to be made on the basis of district quota, I request the first 14 of this list be appointed on a priority basis."

The list contained the names of 15 candidates who were recommended for appointment.

## Kiev tells Washington US action has complicated ratification of START

**By Staff Correspondent**

KIEV, June 30: Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoly Zlenko told the US ambassador today that the American missile attack on Baghdad had complicated attempts by the Kiev parliament to ratify two key nuclear disarmament treaties, reports Reuters.

Zlenko told ambassador Roman Popadiuk at a meeting attended by journalists that Ukrainian deputies were 'concerned and alarmed' at the weekend blitz.

Some deputies are linking the action against Iraq to Ukraine's nuclear status. There is more and more criticism of official Ukrainian policy on the nuclear issue, Zlenko told Popadiuk. The question of the rapid ratification of the START treaty has therefore become more complicated.

Zlenko said Russia had been informed an hour in advance about the attack on Baghdad and demanded to know why a similar courtesy had not been extended to Ukraine. Popadiuk promised to provide Ukraine with more information, but gave no other reply.

Washington has pressed Ukraine to ratify the START-1 and START-2 treaties, which would drastically cut the number of US and former Soviet nuclear weapons. Ukraine, still suspicious after being ruled by Moscow for 300 years, is increasingly chary about giving up its 176 long-range missiles.

Ukrainian deputies denounced the raid on Tuesday. Some said it showed Washington could not be trusted to provide security guarantees in exchange for ratifying arms treaties.

Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has accused the United States of using tactics reminiscent of the cold war, describing the US cruise missile attack on Iraq as 'unacceptable and dangerous.'

In an editorial published in the Italian daily La Stampa today, Gorbachev said the US attack on Baghdad early Sunday showed that Washington 'opted to ignore the prerogatives of the UN' and merely gave the allies a few hours warning, 'in a style reminiscent of the cold war.'

Gorbachev said the US action 'took us back several decades, to the time when the United States acted as an international policeman.'

Meanwhile, President Bill Clinton is trying to cool a new escalation in US-Iraqi relations, playing down an attack on an anti-aircraft battery in southern Iraq.

But the State Department risked fanning some panic in the United States by saying Americans should exercise caution while travelling, even in their own country.

A F-4G 'Wild Weasel' fighter fired a missile at an Iraqi anti-aircraft radar on Tuesday after the radar tracked one of two American warplanes in the area.

This has happened a number of times and I wouldn't base on the facts that I now see.

## News Analysis

### New questions raised about assault on Baghdad

**By A Special Correspondent**

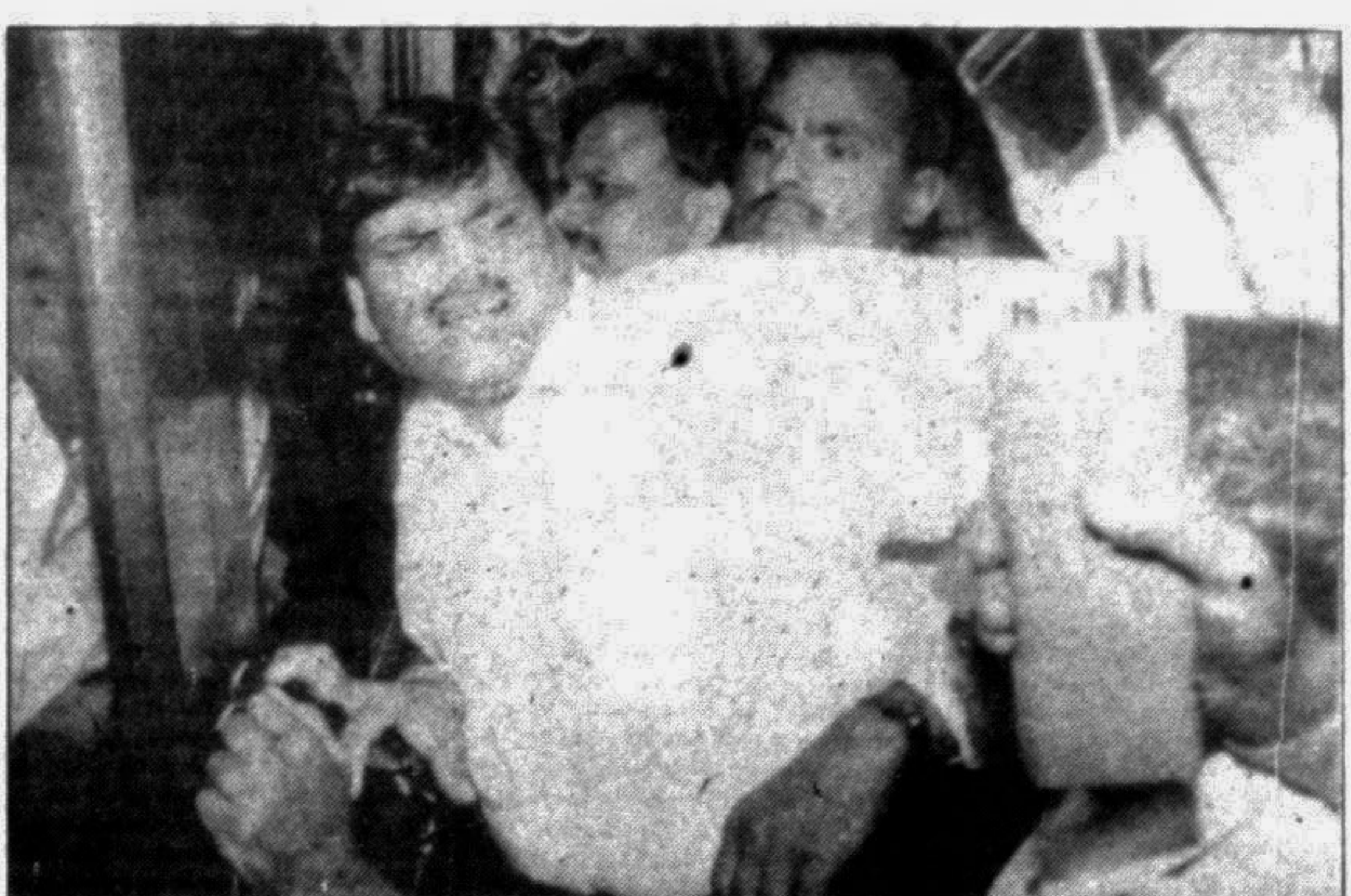
Within a matter of three days since the US missile attack on Iraqi intelligence headquarters in Baghdad, new questions are being raised about Washington's plans regarding Saddam Hussain's regime. Some of them overshadow the massive popular support at home for the action of President Bill Clinton and endorsement from some US allies abroad.

While domestic backing for the weekend raid undoubtedly remains strong, commentators have noted shifts in the US position in three, if not more, areas.

First, Clinton who, three days ago, had claimed that the raid had 'crippled' the Iraqi intelligence headquarters, has been now talking about 'damage' caused by the assault, thus downgrading the success of the operation.

Secondly, some US experts appear sceptical of the official US theory that the attempt on the life of former President George Bush was ordered at the highest level in Iraq, meaning Saddam Hussain himself. It is now argued that being concerned about wooing the Clinton Administration, the Iraqi leader would have refrained from embarking on such a course at that moment. Besides, killing a defeated president would have been a mindless act of revenge, without producing any political gain.

Thirdly, it is now confirmed that since the end of the Gulf War, Iraq has rebuilt some 80 per cent of its offensive-defensive capacity, including missile installations, despite constant surveillance maintained by the United States and the UN observer teams. A new confrontation between Washington and Baghdad may now prompt Saddam Hussain to redouble his efforts in raising the level of his country's military capability. On the face of it, this would worry Iraq, the arch enemy of Iraq. On the other hand, it would have been a



Harshad Mehta, the Bombay stockbroker who has claimed he made a pay off to Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao, grimaces as he is mobbed by journalists and security personnel in New Delhi yesterday.

## JPC grills Mehta

**By Staff Correspondent**

NEW DELHI, June 30: The Joint Parliamentary Committee probing the securities scam today grilled scamster Harshad Mehta on his allegation of Rs one crore pay-off to the Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao, reports PTI.

The Bombay broker was closely questioned by the members on his charge that he had met the Prime Minister at his Race Course Road residence on November 4, 1991.

The committee wanted to know what sort of evidence he has to back up his claim of meeting the Prime Minister.

The Mehta brothers came along with their lawyer Mahesh Jethmalani.

To a pointed question by waiting newsmen whether they are confident of proving their case, before the committee, Harshad's brother, Ashwin Mehta, showed victory sign and said 'yes.'

## Professionals seek publication of probe report

**By Staff Correspondent**

The Central Action Council of the Engineers, Agriculturists, Physicians and Civil Servants yesterday strongly demanded immediate publication of the report of the Justice Ansaruddin Commission.

The commission was formed by the interim government of Shahabuddin Ahmed to probe into acts of corruption, irregularities and misuse of power during the Ershad regime.

The council, at a meeting with its chiefs Dr M A Majid in the chair, observed that the publication of the commission report was essential to establish accountability and prove transparency of the democratically-elected government. Otherwise, the image of the government would be tarnished, it warned.

The meeting also reiterated the council's call for implementation of its 17-point charter of demands.

Dr Mushtaque Husein, Md Abu Hena, ANH Akhter Hossain, AK Khalil Ahmed, Hasan Jamal, Dr Gool Hossain, Ahsanul Haq and others attended the meeting.

## Ishaq asks Sharif to explain Punjab govt defies direct rule

**By Staff Correspondent**

LAHORE, June 30: The government of Pakistan's populous Punjab province today defied a declaration of emergency federal rule by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, reports Reuters.

"We are in full control of Punjab province and the entire administration is working smoothly under my lawful administration," rebellious provincial Chief Minister Manzoor Ahmad Watoo told a news conference.

He described the naming of a new ruler in Punjab as a 'civilian coup d'etat' and an encroachment on provincial autonomy.

"We will resist it with all means possible within the framework of the Constitution," he said.

Just hours after it was issued, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan demanded the government explain its proclamation of direct rule — further inflaming his bitter six-month-old power struggle with Sharif.

Opposition leader Benazir Bhutto and her allies sent a joint appeal to the President not to sign the proclamation, which they said violated Pakistan's Constitution.

The President has yet to sign into law the resolution for emergency rule in Pakistan's largest and most powerful province that was rammed through Parliament by Sharif on Tuesday, his spokesman said.

Law and Justice Minister Abdul Ghafoor said the President's signature was not required.

## SKOP calls 48-hour strike July 19-20

**By Staff Correspondent**

The SKOP and the workers' federations of four sectors have announced a nation-wide 48-hour labour strike and road blockade from July 19.

In separate press conferences yesterday, the two labour fronts said that the strike action was likely to be 'stronger' than the previous one as all industrial units and transports would be paralysed across the country.

The Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP), consisting of 18 national level labour federations, and the federations of the four sectors of jute, textiles, sugar and steel have been demanding implementation of agreements signed by the government regarding the workers' demands on Nov 27, 1992.

This will be the third action programme of the workers and employees demanding declaration of minimum wages, halting privatisation and retrenchment, and opening of all closed and laid-off mills and factories.

The first countrywide 48-hour road-rail blockade was enforced on February 14-15 and the second from March 15-16. The workers and employees observed a 72-hour blockade and strike from May 11-13, which was only partially successful.

The workers organisations yesterday called for a strike in all government and non-government offices, banks, mills and factories during the blockade beginning at 6 am July 19.

The SKOP press conference was addressed among others by its leaders—Pratapuddin Ahmed, Abdullah Sarkar, Shah Atul Islam, Makhlesur Rahman, Tipu Biswas, Yakub Ali Bhuiyan, Abdul Matin Master and others.

"The government and the owners, not the workers, are responsible for the deteriorating industrial situation," one labour leader told the journalists.

The SKOP leaders expressed their observation that to resist the labour movement, the government and the owners were threatening the labour leaders in different corporations and industrial sectors with transfers and dismissals.

## Ashura today

Ashura, the 10th of Muharram will be observed throughout the country today in commemoration of the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hossain (II), reports BSS.

On this day 1400 years ago, Hazrat Imam Hossain (II) along with his family members and followers embraced martyrdom at Karbala to uphold truth and justice against odds and evils.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia gave separate messages on the eve of the holy Ashura highlighting the significance of the day.

President Biswas said that the teachings of the great sacrifices of Karbala would inspire us to build a happy and prosperous country and a society based on the ideals of truth and justice.

## Koirala concedes to protesters' key demand

**By Staff Correspondent**

KATHMANDU, June 30: Nepal Prime Minister Girtija Prasad Koirala, faced with a communist agitation campaign to oust him, said today he was willing to concede to a key opposition demand.

Koirala told Reuters he was willing to hold a fresh inquiry into the death of communist leader Madan Bhandari, killed in a road accident on May 16.

The concession comes only three days after Koirala rejected demands for a fresh probe into the death.

## Raushan's bail delayed

**By Staff Correspondent**

Former first lady Raushan Ershad continued to be detained in prison as necessary court papers related to her release reached the jail authorities late Wednesday, according to sources. She was earlier expected to be released on bail yesterday.

Some 100 supporters of the Jatiya Party thronged the Dhaka Central Jail gate to welcome her but the order sheet reportedly reached the prison authorities around 7 pm when the main gate was already locked for the day.

A High Court bench earlier granted her bail, which was also upheld by the Appellate Division on June 27.

Raushan was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment along with her husband deposed president H M Ershad and 17 others for corruption and abuse of power in connection with the multi-storied Janata Tower at Kawran Bazar in the city.

Party sources said Raushan's lawyers would try for her release on Thursday, a holiday for Ashura.

## Govt fails to tackle Sylhet flood situation, says Hasina

**By Staff Correspondent**

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League (AL) chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government had completely failed to tackle the flood situation in Sylhet and it was ignoring the distressed people.

She addressed three meetings and 10 street rallies in different parts of greater Sylhet where she was visiting the flood affected areas.

Sec 144 in Shibhalaya

MANIKGANJ, June 30: Authorities today imposed Section 144 for an indefinite period in the entire Shibhalaya thana including Aricha ferry ghat apprehending a clash among rival workers' groups, reports UNB.

District administration announced Section 144 over microphone at 10 am banning rallies and processions in the entire Shibhalaya thana as BIWTC worker groups called for rallies at the same time and same venue near ferry ghat No-1.

A huge contingent of police has been posted at the Aricha ghat and its adjoining areas to fend off any trouble.

Sources said Jatiyatabadi

## Foreign policy clear: Mostafiz Subservient: Opposition

Opposition lawmakers in Parliament yesterday bitterly criticised the country's foreign policy, calling it 'weak, subservient and ambiguous' that has failed to protect national interest and enhance the image of Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Moving cut-motions on the expenditure in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the 1992-93 fiscal year, the Opposition MPs squarely blamed the Foreign Minister and his ministry for failing to initiate pragmatic approaches in resolving outstanding issues with India, Pakistan and Myanmar.

They were critical of the government's failure in taking a clear stand on recent developments in Iraq and Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as in promoting trade with foreign countries.

The Opposition members also blamed the Foreign Ministry for allowing excess expenditure in Bangladesh missions abroad on luxurious houses and cars, and appointment of non-diplomatic and inefficient persons in the foreign service.

In all, 102 cut-motions stood in the name of Opposition MPs on the demand for allocating Tk 101 crore 78 lakh 65 thousand to meet expenditure in the foreign affairs during 1993-94 financial year.

Nine members took part in the discussions in favour of their cut-motions. They were: Tofael Ahmed, Mohiuddin Ahmed and Sheikh Fazul Karim Selim of Awami League, Sheikh Ansar Ali and Enamul Haq of Jamaat-e-Islami, Rashid Khan Menon (Workers Party), Salauddin Quader Chowdhury (NDP) and Sham-suddoha of CPB.

Most of the speakers were critical of the government's failure in resolving the Ganges water-sharing issue and repatriation of Chakma refugees with India, send back the Rohingya refugees to Myanmar, settle the apportionment of assets with Pakistan and the repatriation of stranded Pakistanis.

They also strongly condemned the government's silence over last Sunday's US missile attack on Baghdad when, they said, the entire world, including the allies of the United States had condemned killing of civilians in Iraq.

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman, who moved the demand for budgetary allocation, refuted the Opposition charges in his usual