

JS debate on new judges

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relating to such appointments had been violated and said the controversy has almost come to an end following the Prime Minister's timely intervention.

Professor Chowdhury observed that the Speaker could suspend the discussion until Thursday (today).

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad then stood to express his disagreement with the views of the Deputy Leader of the House and demanded an immediate discussion.

Asad, referring to the Information Minister's statement in the House, made on Saturday, said the minister had attacked the Chief Justice's role and his colleagues in the Opposition had submitted notices for discussion on the said remarks.

Later, Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah stood to inform the House that a fresh list of nine persons has already been prepared, in consultation with the Chief Justice, for appointing them as additional judges and the Chief Justice is supposed to administer the oaths to them Thursday morning.

The works minister also reminded the House that it was a BNP government, headed by late President Ziaur Rahman, which had introduced the provision for consultation between the Chief Justice and the President in the latter's exercise of control over the persons employed in the judicial service, especially in the cases of their posting, promotion and discipline. On the other hand, it was the AL which had deleted the constitutional provision for making appointments of the judges after prior consultation with the Chief Justice.

Turning to the Jatiya Party (JP), the works minister said during the Ershad regime the Chief Justice was never consulted. "Rather, one Chief Justice had come to know about his own dismissal while he was in the court room," Rafiq pointed out.

JP leader Barrister Moudud Ahmed took the floor to protest the Works Minister's remarks, saying Chief Justice Kemaluddin Hossain had lost his job during the Martial Law regime of General Ershad. "The JP had nothing to do with his dismissal because the

party was yet to be born at the time," Moudud retorted.

Mohammad Nasim, Opposition Chief Whip, echoing Moudud's views, told the House that his party was now ready to restore the original Constitution (1972) of the country for ensuring an independent judiciary.

Saifuddin Kader Chowdhury of the NPD, referring to newspaper reports that the lawyers had asked the Chief Justice not to administer oaths to the newly-appointed judges, said the nation wanted "rule of law, not the rule of lawyers."

Earlier, Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda and Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar, while replying to the Opposition criticism that the BNP had appointed their own men as judges, said it was not important who had been appointed.

"What is important in this regard is whether the persons fulfil the qualifications, laid down in the Constitution, to be judges," the ministers argued.

Others who took part in the deliberations included Rashed Khan Menon, Suranjit Sengupta, Shahjahan Siraj, Sheikh Anser Ali, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim and Shudhangshu Shekhar Halder.

After the long discussion was over, the Speaker told the House that he needed the opinion of the JS Business Advisory Committee to decide whether a discussion on the matter was necessary.

The advisory committee meeting is scheduled for Friday.

However, the Chair adjourned the sitting, before taking up yesterday's order of the day, at 9 pm to resume again at 4:30 this afternoon.

45 pc living below poverty line

By Staff Correspondent

Some 45 per cent of the country's population were living below the poverty line according to a 1992 statistics. State Minister for Planning Abdul Moyeen Khan informed the House yesterday.

The percentage was 82.7 in 1974 and 72.9 in 1982, he said in reply to a question from Abdul Awal Miah of the Awami League.

Interview with Gujral

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the revenue earnings, if you extend this facility."

Gujral felt that transit facilities, if extended to India through river and rail routes, would help us get closer to you."

"Let Bangladesh calculate how much it can augment its income through giving port and transit facilities. You definitely can demand from us the rates that you want. However, you have every right to deny us the facilities, which you have done till now."

Gujral felt that efforts should be made by Bangladesh to reduce the trade imbalance with India by not only allowing port and transit facilities but also liberalising trade and allowing Indian venture capital in the country.

He asked: "If you can allow money from Washington and Tokyo, why not from Delhi and Dhaka?" He, however, quickly added: "Don't allow the goods to come which will harm your economy, and you must find more things that you can sell to India."

A member of the Rajya Sabha and chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce and Textiles, Gujral informed this correspondent when he was External Affairs minister he had made three suggestions related to utilisation of Bangladesh's natural gas for narrowing the trade deficit with his country.

The suggestions that he had made on behalf of the Indian

Saifur talks to donors

From Page 1 Col 7

has made the right moves, they are slow and few have actually been implemented. Lack of implementation of policy decisions for deregulation and liberalisation has raised questions in the minds of private entrepreneurs about the sincerity of the government's commitment to private sector development. Thus, in today's meeting, the Finance Minister is likely to be requested by the donors to spell out his plans to speed up reform. With the Bangladesh Aid Consortium meeting only months away on the one hand, and the domestic criticism of reforms by a section of people on the other, Saifur Rahman has a tight-rope walk to perform.

In an interview with The Daily Star, appearing elsewhere on this page, the Finance Minister has said that the current stagnancy in the economy is not due to his reform programmes but due to the inability of several line ministries to implement their respective development programmes.

A senior ERD official has said that today's meeting is part of the regular discussion between the government and Consortium Members. He denied a report that the World Bank's team to prepare the report for the next Consortium Meeting is visiting Dhaka and will attend the meeting.

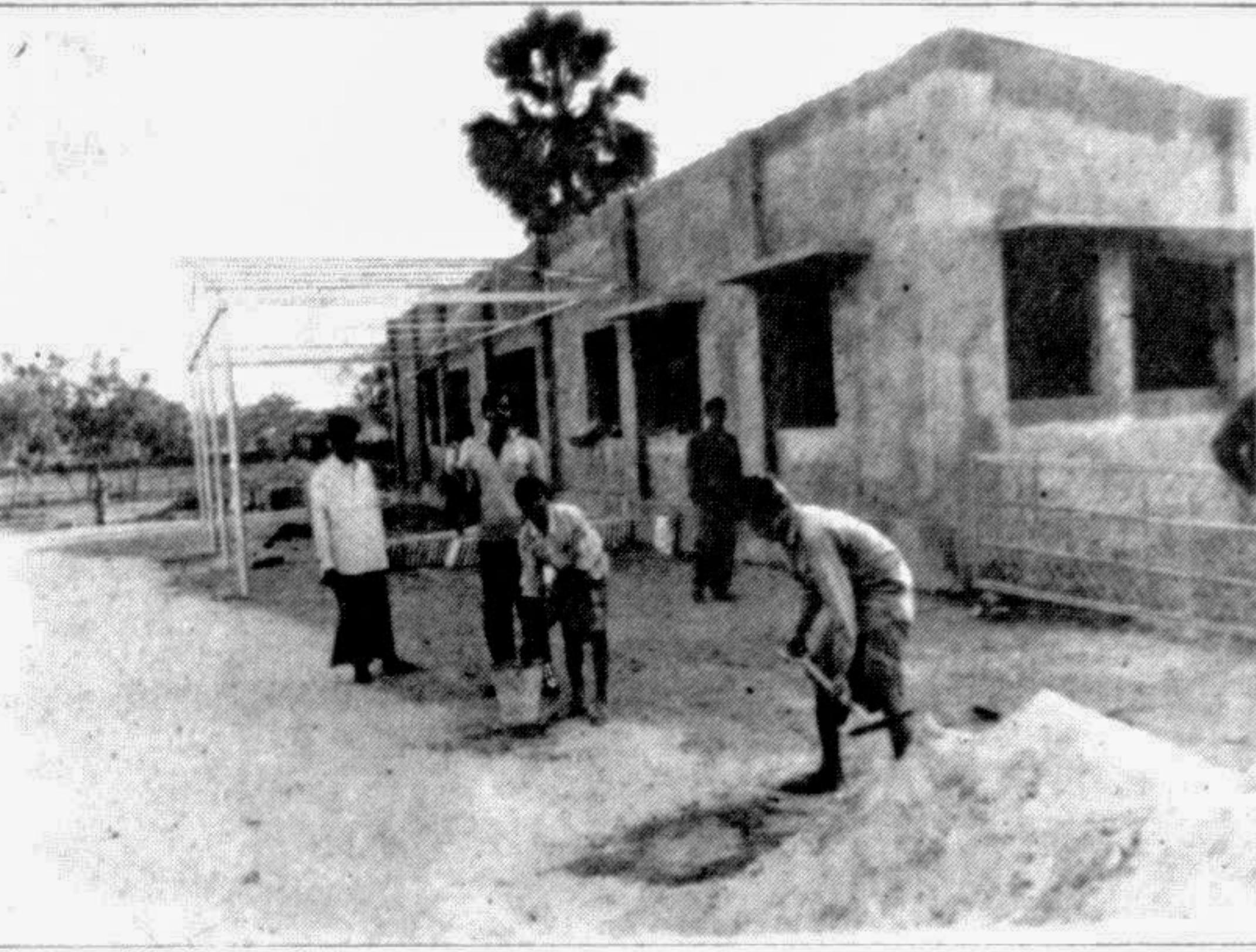
This extraordinary failure in implementation of the annual development programme has robbed the economy of much needed stimulus. Donor representatives fear that the current rivalry between different cadres of the civil service will cause the situation to deteriorate further.

Meanwhile, the JU Teachers' Association (JUTA) has decided to cooperate with the Acting VC temporarily suspending their earlier announced action programme in view of the situation on the campus.

The JUTA, at a meeting held with its president Dr Abu Saeed Khan in the chair, however, gave the Acting VC Prof Abul Hossain an ultimatum to solve the problem by this morning.

The Acting Vice-Chancellor has summoned an emergency meeting of the Syndicate at 4:30 this afternoon to discuss the prevailing situation.

Responding to criticisms that the retrenchment initia-



A terminal building is being constructed at the city's old Tejgaon Airport for the STOL service on domestic routes. The picture was taken yesterday.

— Star photo

STOL service

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to bring STOL aircraft to Dhaka.

But the companies have declined to bring any aircraft without completion of all the formalities for starting the operation.

"We can bring the aircraft at seven days' notice but the authorities must ensure all the facilities needed for the service," an executive of a licensed company told The Daily Star.

He said the company executives had checked all the proposed airstrips and noticed lack of necessary facilities.

"We are not planning to open a Dhaka-Chittagong bus service. It is a highly sophisticated sector of transport which needs special precautions," the executive said requesting anonymity.

The authorities initially opened Lammonirhat, Barisal, Samseer Nagar in Sylhet, Ishurdi, Comilla and Thakurgaon for STOL service.

The company executive said "We need all the facilities that Biman Bangladesh Airlines has been getting from the CAAB for its domestic operation."

The runway, the radio equipment, security of the aircraft, surveillance system for the passengers, rescue back-up for possible accidents, fire fighting facilities, cleaning of runways are the primary needs for an air service operation.

"We can not take any risk without adequate back-up facilities," he said.

The CAAB has, in the meantime, solved the fuel (jet A-1) problems and conveyed it to the companies.

The companies also questioned why the authorities had selected Tejgaon Airport for STOL services while Biman has been operating from the Kurmitola Airport where all the facilities exist.

"If a transit passenger wants to avail the STOL service he has to go to another airport," one official of another company said.

He said that the minister should intervene to resolve all the problems. He declined to give any tentative date of launching of the operations by saying "We will start soon after the CAAB ensures all the facilities."

No plan to set up ties with Taiwan

The government has no plan to establish diplomatic relation with Taiwan, the foreign minister told Parliament yesterday, reports UNB.

Replies to Prof Rafiqul Islam (AL), Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman said diplomatic link with Taiwan is not favourable for Bangladesh at this stage for political reasons.

JU campus

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At around 11 am yesterday, the 'local' faction of the JCD — comprising students of the Savar area — brought out a militant procession on the campus. According to witnesses, some 10 shots rang out and several crackers were exploded by the processionists in front of the police.

The rally created panic among the general residential students who were seen taking shelter on the dormitory roofs. Many students have already left the campus apprehending fresh violence.

Meanwhile, the JU Teachers' Association (JUTA) has decided to cooperate with the Acting VC temporarily suspending their earlier announced action programme in view of the situation on the campus.

This extraordinary failure in implementation of the annual development programme has robbed the economy of much needed stimulus. Donor representatives fear that the current rivalry between different cadres of the civil service will cause the situation to deteriorate further.

A senior ERD official has said that today's meeting is part of the regular discussion between the government and Consortium Members. He denied a report that the World Bank's team to prepare the report for the next Consortium Meeting is visiting Dhaka and will attend the meeting.

There are some people, he said, who have all along opposed the reform process because the rent-seeking elements are no longer there in the economy as a result of the reforms. Rahman added that a "concerted action by certain people who oppose the reforms" is on to slow down the process.

Responding to criticisms that the retrenchment initia-

Army Service Core to be modernised, says Khaleda

KHULNA, Feb 9: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said here today all efforts would be made to modernise the Army Service Core (ASC) and asked the members of the core to dedicate themselves to the service of the nation, reports BSS.

Addressing the commanders and senior officers of the ASC at the Jahanabad Cantonment here, she said each member of the army is pledge-bound to the nation and urged them to discharge their duties perfectly to build a beautiful country.

Earlier, the Prime Minister addressed the 'darbar' of the Army Service Core and said the main responsibility of the army is to safeguard the country's independence and sovereignty.

But the members of the army, she said, are also working shoulder to shoulder with the commonman and standing by their side in time of crisis and disasters.

Oaths to judges

From Page 1 Col 8
with the Chief Justice regarding the appointments and concerning the background of two of the nominees announced originally.

Two of the new promotions to the Bench in the fresh list are Hamidul Huq (District Judge, Barisal) and Ruhul Amin (District Judge, Jessor).

The seven other judges are: Mohammad Asaduzzaman, Barat-Law, Mohammad Nurul Islam, Solicitor (Joint Secretary), Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Kazl Almonwaruddin, Barat-Law, Mohammad Fazlul Haque, Barat-Law, M. Bazlur Rahman Talukdar, Advocate, Supreme Court, Syed Amirul Islam, Barat-Law, and Mohammad Tofazzal Islam, Barat-Law.

According to informed sources, the revised list of judges which was announced yesterday was earlier settled on Sunday last during a meeting between the Chief Justice and a cabinet minister and government emissary Justice T H Khan. On the basis of that settlement the meeting between the President and the Chief Justice took place on Monday. And this was followed by a Supreme Court Bar Association delegation calling on the President and the Prime Minister separately, paving the way for a resolution of the crisis.

The At MP alleged that the disposal of the cases under the Anti-Terrorism Act was being delayed.

Ansar and VDP

In a written answer to another question, the Home Minister said 11 retired army personnel were working in different capacities in the Directorate of Ansar and VDP.

Replies to a question from Niamatullah (Dhaka-12), Matin Chowdhury said, 177 accidents had occurred on the Dhaka-Aricha Highway from January

The Midnight File

Italy for diplomatic drive to end war in Somalia

ROME, Feb 9: Italy said on Tuesday the United Nations mission in Somalia faced collapse and called for a diplomatic drive before Western troops pull out at the end of March to prevent all-out clan war. Defence Minister Fabio Fabbri also said Italy was sending a naval task force to Somalia and putting warplanes on standby to cover the withdrawal of its own troops, reports Reuter.

Poll says Americans support air strikes against Serbs

WASHINGTON, Feb 9: A poll said Wednesday that most Americans would support allied air strikes against Serb forces attacking Sarajevo and nearly half would support sending ground troops to try to stop the fighting in former Yugoslavia. The ABC News poll was released before a UN commander in the embattled Bosnian capital said Serbs agreed to withdraw their heavy weapons from around the city and put them under UN monitoring, reports AP.

Anti-Terrorism Law

723 held in 6 months, Minister tells JS

By Staff Correspondent

1, 1993 to the first week of February 1994.

BR vs BSF

The Home Minister said that during the year 1993, Bangladesh Rifles, BDR, and the Indian border security forces, BSF, had clashed twelve times in different sectors of the frontier.

Every one is equal before law, Matin Chowdhury said in reply to a question from Abdul Kalam Azad of the Awami League. The new Act of Parliament has actually helped curb terrorist activities in the country, he said.

Out of the total number of cases filed under the Anti-Terrorism Law, investigations into 48 cases have been completed while six cases are now under investigation, the minister added. He also gave a district-wise break-up of the cases.

The At MP alleged that the disposal of the cases under the Anti-Terrorism Act was being delayed.

Police Recruitment

In reply to a question, the minister said that since January 1, 1991, some 598 Sub-Inspectors and 6,999 constables have been recruited in the Police Department.

Thirty-eight Assistant Police Superintendents were also recruited during the period.

Wine traders

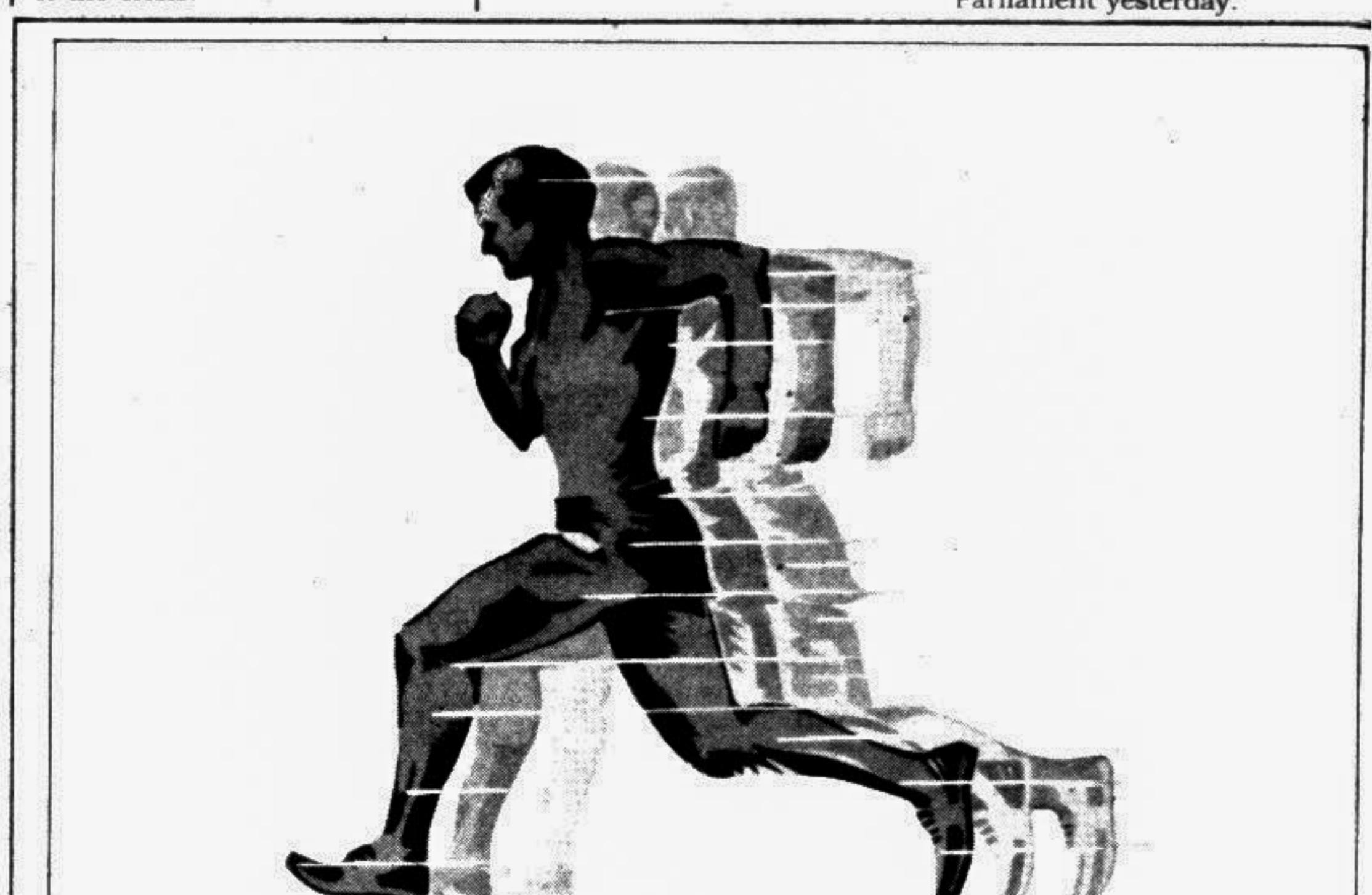
Abdul Matin Chowdhury said in reply to another question that there are 330 licensed wine shops in the country.

Minister tells JS

293 prostitutes held in '93

By Staff Correspondent

Some 2,938 floating prostitutes were arrested from in and around the Dhaka city during 1993, of which 2,913 were put on trial and punished. Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury informed Parliament yesterday.



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Its 53rd branch goes into operation from today, the 10th February 1994 at Chapai Nawabganj.

4 more branches will be opened soon at Islampur (Dhaka), Pahartali (Chittagong), Bhola and Jhalokathi.

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