

'Rise of fundamentalism threatens human rights'

By Staff Correspondent

Noted journalists, poets and writers at a seminar in the capital yesterday observed that the rise of fundamentalism was threatening human rights in the country and hindering national development.

The speakers said the activities of the fundamentalist and communal forces were jeopardising the national independence and sovereignty and urged the progressive, secular and pro-liberation people to foil their conspiracy.

Organised by 'Magnet', a social organisation, the seminar was held at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium.

Prof Shamsur Rahman presented the keynote paper on the topic of the seminar: "Development and Human Rights: What is the Objective of fundamentalism?", while Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui of the Jahangirnagar University, the editor of the daily Ajker Kagoj Kazi Shahid Ahmed, editor of the Janakantha Atiquzzaman Masud, Abed Khan of the Daily Ittefaq and writer Panna Kaiser spoke on the issue. Novelist Rashed Khan chaired the seminar.

In his keynote paper, Shamsur Rahman said he felt scared and concerned over the situation caused by the fundamentalists and *jatuvabz* who were about to destroy the fruits of the country's Liberation War. "These evil forces opposed the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971," he said, adding that the same forces are again active in the name of protecting Islam. "To them, Islam and Pakistan are synonymous," the renowned poet said, blaming the religion peddlers for still acting to revert Bangladesh into Pakistan.

Shamsur Rahman stressed the need for establishing a secular civil society which, he said, was a pre-condition for democracy. "Fundamentalism had taken roots in independent Bangladesh only after secularism was dropped from our constitution after the great leader of the Liberation War Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was killed," he added.

Late president Ziaur Rahman removed the secular character of the country and rehabilitated the killers and collaborators of '71 because he did not believe in democracy, the keynote paper said.

Shamsur Rahman underlined the need for uniting the majority population, who are sincerely minded, against the religion-peddlers and so-called *jatuvabz*.

DUTA concerned

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hadati Ali

Meanwhile, the Dhaka University Syndicate, in an emergency meeting yesterday afternoon, expressed deep concern over yesterday's violent incidents.

The Syndicate sought cooperation of all concerned to maintain congenial academic atmosphere on the campus.

The meeting was held at the VC's house with the Vice Chancellor Professor Ema-juddin Ahmed in the chair.

The Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association (FBUTA), in a statement yesterday, also condemned the terrorist activities and the attacks on the teachers. The federation observed that it was the moral responsibility of the government and the university administration to ensure the security of the teachers.

The FBUTA press release was signed by its secretary general Professor Md. Fasihul Alam.

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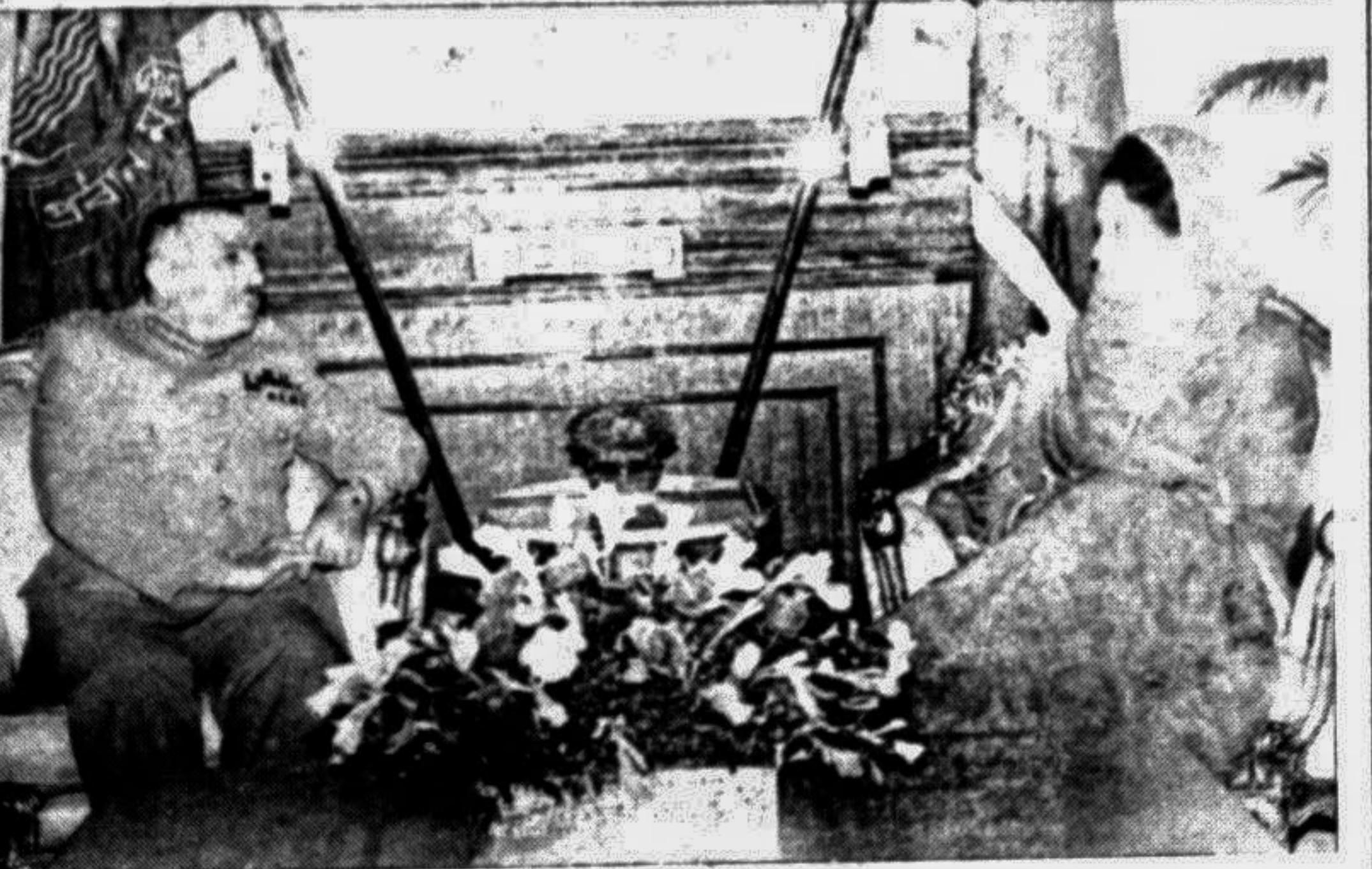
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The visiting Pakistani Chief of Army Staff General Abdul Waheed called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office in the city yesterday. — PID photo

JCD, BCL announce programmes

By DU Correspondent

The pro-Awami League Chhatra League (M-I) has called a day-long strike at the Dhaka University tomorrow (August 6) to protest yesterday's "terrorist activities of the Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal".

Meanwhile, blaming the BCL (M-I) for yesterday's violence, the JCD has also announced a demonstration programme in all educational institutions across the country tomorrow.

Both the BCL and JCD announced their programmes in separate press conferences held at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday afternoon.

Besides, the BCL announced a series of programmes to protest the attacks on teachers and terrorist activities on the DU campus.

The BCL programme includes country-wide demonstrations on August 7, a sit-in front of the Home Ministry on August 8 and a students rally at the Noor Hossain Square near the GPO on August 10.

The BCL leaders have called on the students, intellectuals, cultural activists and all others to politically resist Khaleda Zia's "autocracy" to save the country.

Yesterday's terrorist activities were "pre-planned" and the leaders said and alleged that the BNP was trying to jeopardise the trial of the persons involved in yesterday's violence.

Meanwhile, the JSD-backed Chhatra League (B-K) and Chhatra Oikya Forum have condemned the acts of violence on the Dhaka University campus.

The JCD demanded trial of the persons involved in yesterday's violence.

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