

# 'Security and foreign policy should be people-oriented'

By Staff Correspondent

The need for widening the perspective of security and foreign policy of Bangladesh from a traditional state-centric view to a people-oriented one was highlighted yesterday at a seminar titled: Bangladesh Facing the Twenty-first Century, held at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS).

"Problems of security and foreign policy appear to be treated as matters of exclusive elitist concern and tend to be focussed almost exclusively" said Dr Iftekharuzzaman, the chief speaker at the last working session of the two-day seminar.

"So long as the basic objective of foreign policy issues is the promotion of national interest, foreign policy issues cannot be placed in proper perspective without referring to the interest of the people... Any initiative that fails to recognise that the people are central to security and foreign policy agenda is bound to remain incomplete," said Dr Zaman, Research Director of BISS.

He called for involving scholars, professional, business

community and other non-state actors, to generate more people-to-people contact among neighbouring countries, and in decision-making on national and international levels with respect to matters of national security and foreign policy. Social, political and economic factors must be considered alongside military and defence in these matters, according to Dr Zaman. A constitutional body was also recommended to continuously review and analyse Bangladesh's security and foreign policy. Such a body would deal with matters of national security, and ensure more transparency.

"Economic diplomacy" is a key requirement of foreign policy in the face of changing global politics. Trade and business and cutting across cultural linguistic and other barriers are paramount to establishing good rapport with foreign nations.

Discussions also included Abul Ahsan and Dr Imtiaz Ahmed.

The two-day seminar was concluded with a speech given by former foreign minister M Shamsul Haq, who stressed the importance of effective leadership, democracy, development and creative rethinking of structural reforms for a "smooth transition into the twenty-first century." He pointed out the past resistances to reform a vested forces in society.

He stressed the relationship between national security and development saying, "an underdeveloped nation is highly vulnerable." The key strategies for development in Bangladesh as it faces the twenty-first century, according to Prof. Haq, include: more investment in people (as the topmost national priority), eradicating poverty by direct action, involving people (including women) in development, generating more employment and cooperating with like-minded nations globally and regionally in promoting sustainable growth and protecting the environment.

# Illegal arms factory unearthed in city

By Staff Correspondent

The detective police early in the morning yesterday unearthed an illegal fire arms manufacturing factory, arrested two persons, and recovered arms and ammunition in the city's Islambagh under Lalbagh police station area.

The two nabbed persons — Mohammad Arif Hossain, 25, and Mohammad Selim, 20 — were detained by DB for interrogation.

Police said, a detective team in a raid at 97/5 Islambagh unearthed the illegal factory and recovered three stenguns, three pistols, huge ammunition, knives and other materials.

# 9.32 lakh MTs of rice

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early season aus production this fiscal stands at 20 lakh MT while wheat output is expected at 11.58 lakh MT, compared to 18.5 lakh MT and 11.31 lakh MT respectively during the previous fiscal.

The ministry estimates that import of 9.32 lakh MT of rice would be needed to meet the projected shortfall: 5.72 lakh MT for production loss and 3.6 lakh MT for provision for the annual increase in the population.

With the population estimated at 114 million at an annual growth rate of 2.3 per cent, the population increases

by some 2.6 million people every year.

A steep rise in rice prices began late last year, at times even by more than 50 per cent, forcing the government to initiate open market sales (OMS) operations on January 16 in an effort to stabilise the market prices.

But the government has achieved only limited success in that effort, primarily due to a low level of foodgrain reserves in the CSD godowns.

"The unexpected fall in rice output caught the government off guard, explaining the absence of any intervention in the market until the rather delayed start of OMS. The unpreparedness, especially of the Food Ministry, has been underlined by the sudden changing of the minister concerned.

Late last year the government even allowed the private sector to import rice, for the first time, to meet the increased import requirement. The Bangladesh Bank has already issued import permits for procuring a sizeable quantity of the requirements through private sector traders.

Earlier in 1993, the private sector was allowed to import wheat for the first time and they accounted for 40 per cent of the total import of 14 lakh MT during the previous fiscal.

Meanwhile, the Food Minister informed Parliament last week that the government's total foodgrain reserves currently stand at 6.74 lakh MT, down by 18,000 MT from the 6.92 lakh MT during the corresponding period of last fiscal. In April last year the reserves reached their lowest level in recent years at 5.2 lakh MT.

# Mirza Hafiz

From Page 1 Col 8

Parliament without the ID cards. The Law Minister's proposed bill was aimed at giving legal cover to the ordinance.

As the new bill was not tabled, the ordinance would now be effective for only four by-elections and would not be in force after Parliament session is over.

On Sunday the treasury bench members demanded specifying the time needed to complete the issuance of ID cards.

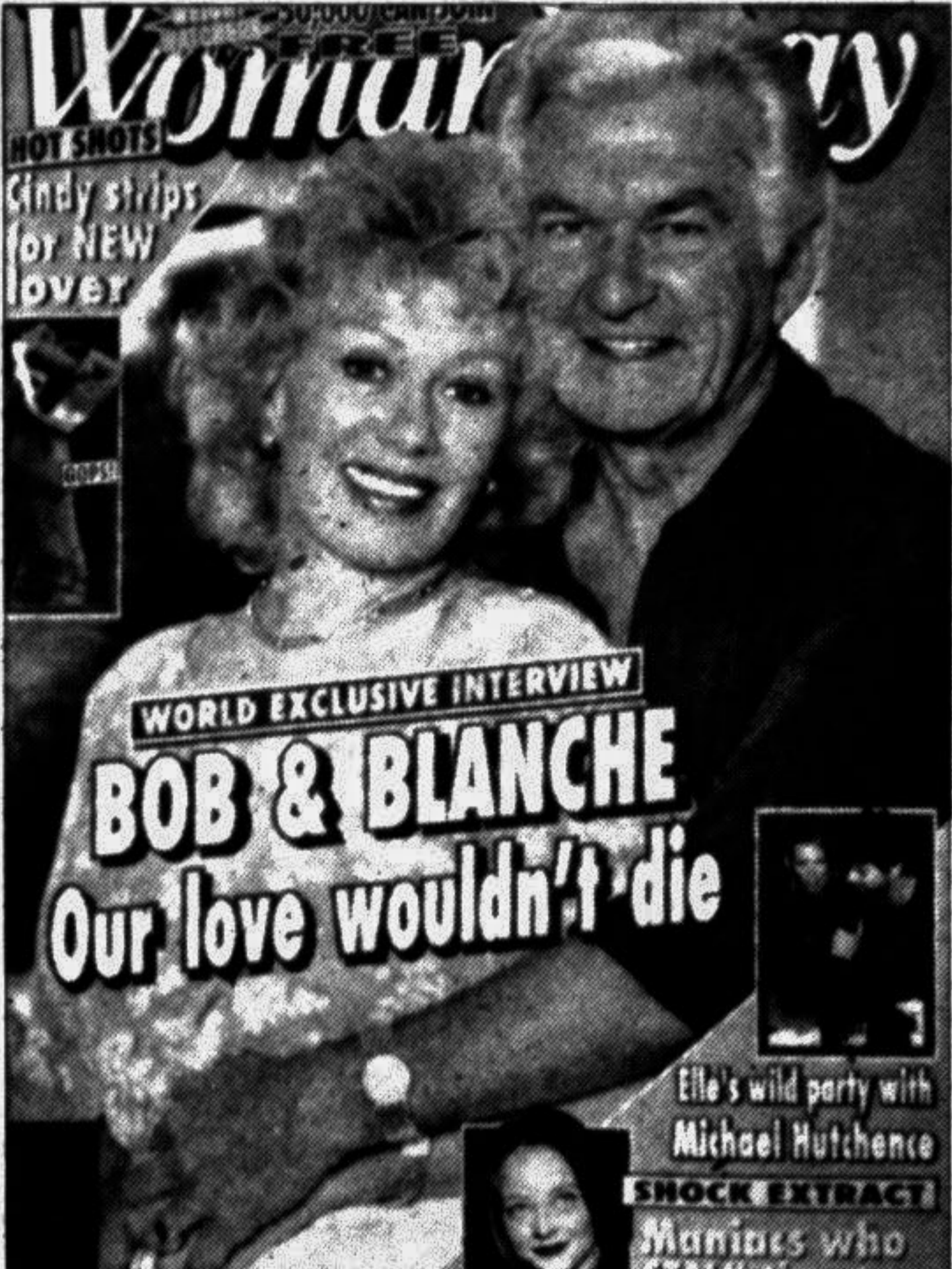
The process of issuing ID cards would now continue, according to the law enacted last year.

# Nurses' strike

From Page 1 Col 5

programme to improve the management and health care delivery system and introduced it in the Dhaka Medical College Hospital on January 15 on test.

However, emergency teams of the staff on strike worked yesterday attended serious patients.



Photograph showing the cover of the latest issue of Australian magazine 'Womans Day' featuring former Australian prime minister Bob Howke (R) who announced his wedding to his biographer Blanche d'Alpuget (L) in a women's magazine article in Sydney Monday.— AFP photo

# Investors' response encouraging

From Page 1 Col 4

the water issue to the UN by the Prime Minister, Osmany said Bangladesh being the sufferer, could logically take the issue to all possible fora in search of a solution and has succeeded in drawing international sympathy.

About the proposed revamping of the Foreign Ministry, now under review by a special committee, Osmany felt it was a very wise and timely decision.

He, however, felt strongly that the Foreign Office should be manned essentially by foreign service professionals.

"A cadre has its own strength. Trained cadres have experience, skill and expertise. Besides, there is no substitute to professionalism," he added.

Osmany, serving in the diplomatic corps for nearly two decades, maintained that there should be more investment in diplomacy both in material and personnel.

Repeating that diplomacy is the first line of a nation's defence, the 55-year-old Osmany said investment in the Foreign Ministry should be considered an investment in the defence of Bangladesh.

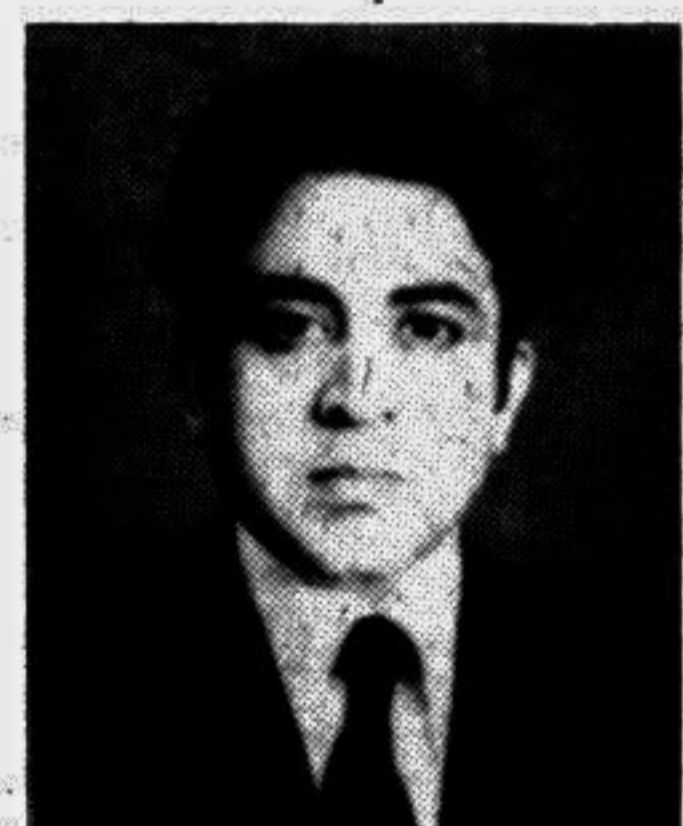
"If you want to achieve high professionalism and better productivity, more investments should be made in terms of training and manpower. The investments, in turn, would help project and promote Bangladesh in the world community."

A civil engineer, Osmany joined the then Civil Service of

Pakistan in 1964 and was later inducted into the foreign service.

Besides long stints as an envoy abroad he also served as Chairman, Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation, and Principal, Foreign Affairs Training Institute.

While agreeing on the need for increased emphasis on economics in the context of



M R Osmany

the present-day diplomacy, the High Commissioner-designate to Canada, however, said "Economic diplomacy is only one component of diplomacy. The core of diplomacy is always political diplomacy. All other forms of diplomacy are seen as complementary or supplementary activities."

Asked to comment about his tenure as Foreign Secretary, Osmany said, "It was very educative. One has to harmonise various interest groups. I, however, did not allow my

# Jute, textile

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scheduled from February 12. Demanding implementation

of the Wages Commission Awards in the private sector jute and textile mills the workers staged a violent 'road and rail blockade' programme from January 22-24.

The owners noted that the workers are demanding the awards 'despite the fact that this award is not applicable to the private sector as has been repeatedly clarified by the government.'

A joint statement, issued after the meeting, said the public sector corporations have been able to implement the Wages Commission Awards due to direct or indirect cash infusion by the government.

"Private sector enterprises, on the other hand, must meet all costs from their own revenues of else close down," said the statement signed by BJMA chairman Syed Mohsen Ali, BTMA chairman Mohammad Shahjahan and BJS chairman Shabbir Ibn Yusuf.

The three associations strongly believed that they do not have financial capability of implementing the award and there is no legal basis for such demands either. However, they were not opposed to increasing wages provided that was linked to improved productivity.

personal preferences on national issues to impinge on my role as a public servant.

"The opportunity to serve a democratic government was indeed a unique experience. Democracy has its own strengths and weaknesses and it is important that bureaucrats understand the need for strengthening democracy by maximising the positive agenda of a democratic government."

"Supporting democracy or building democracy is not the exclusive preserve of a politician. All of us have a role — as a voter and as a citizen. The people of Bangladesh have never made wrong judgements whenever given a free opportunity to express themselves."

Osmany remarked that for healthy functioning of democracy, a very competent and committed bureaucracy was essential. Japan, Great Britain, India and Sri Lanka had a committed bureaucracy which contributed to their democratic continuity, he pointed out.

Speaking about his new assignment, he said he would endeavour to explore and expand cooperation in all fields, including trade and investments.

Asked to narrate his most remarkable experience as Foreign Secretary, Osmany replied: "The most memorable event was serving democracy as Foreign Secretary. What more can a civil servant ask for?"

# Ferries with 12000 stranded due to fog

MANIKGANJ, Feb 6: Fifteen ferries with 184 night coaches carrying about 12,000 passengers were stranded at several ferryghats of the district for about 10 hours till 9 am today as visibility was lost due to thick fog, reports UNB.

BIWTC sources said of the ferries four were clogged in the mid stream while 11 at Aricha, Nagarbari and Dowladidia ferryghats from 11pm.

They said the ferries Shah Ali carrying 20 coaches, Khan Jahan Ali with 10 coaches and 10 trucks, Enayetpuri with 24 buses, Keramat Ali with 20 coaches had to anchor at Nagarbari while Bhashashaheed Barkat, Birshrestha Jahangir and Shah Paran with 2 coaches each and Ranikhet with 12 and Thobal with 13 were clogged at Dowladidia ferryghat.

# Police baton charge JCD, SAC rally in RU: 5 hurt

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Feb 6: At least five students were injured at the Rajshahi University today when police baton-charged a rally of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Chhatra Sangram Parishad (Students Action Committee — SAC).

The rally was organised to observe the second anniversary of the death of Newton, Tapan and Biswajeet who were allegedly killed by the pro-Jamaat-e-Islami Chhatra Shibir.

Meanwhile UNB adds: The JCD and the SAC have called for strikes in Rajshahi University for tomorrow and Wednesday respectively to protest today's police action on the campus.

# Hearing of writs

From Page 1 Col 4

like late last month. In his submission, Barrister Nabi stated that the petitioner, who challenged validity of the concerted resignations, was not an aggrieved party and hence there was no justification for him to file such a writ.

He said that the resignation by an MP was a matter that concerned the person who was resigning and the constituency he or she represented.

Nabi argued that the issue of resignation was a political one and a member of a political party had the right to act according to his party decision.

Sheikh Hasina's counsel further submitted that the resignation is a part of parliamentary procedure which cannot be questioned by any court of law.

"It is a parliamentary privilege and parliamentary immunity for a member provided by the rules of procedure for resignation. The Speaker has nothing to do with it," Barrister Nabi argued.

He further submitted that the writ was not enforceable by exercise of writ jurisdiction under Article 102 of the Constitution.

Barrister Nabi will continue his arguments on the maintainability of the writ today when the hearing resumes at 10:30 am.

Meanwhile, Barrister Ararul Hossain yesterday filed Vokalatnamas (power of attorney) on behalf of the Speaker in the second writ petition which challenges the pendency of the resignation letters before the Speaker.

# The Midnight File

## Sudanese pleads guilty in plot to blow up NYC building

NEW YORK, Feb 6: A Sudanese immigrant alleged to be the mastermind of a terrorist conspiracy by Muslim extremists to blow up New York City landmarks has pleaded guilty, the US attorney's office said Monday. Spokesman Marvin Smilgon said Siddiq Ibrahim Siddiq Ali pleaded guilty Monday morning to all the counts against him. He did not say whether prosecutors had made a deal with Siddiq Ali in exchange for the plea, reports AP.

## One more shot dead in Karachi

KARACHI, Feb 6: Snipers shot one person dead today raising the death toll from the violence gripping this port city to 41 in three days, as thousands flocked to the burial of 11 people gunned down in a mosque attack. Brokers said the Karachi Stock Exchange 100 index dipped by 9.14 points to 1,807.44. The daily share turnover, after reaching a record 22 million on Thursday, plummeted to 10 million, with 159 out of 313 companies sustaining losses, reports AFP.

# Speaker: Time will say

From Page 1 Col 5

He regretted that certain circles were now trying to blame him for the delay. "What have I done. I have done for the sake of the country and its nascent democracy. I have done everything under constitutional provisions," he said.

Razzak Ali brushed aside allegations that he took the decision to contest the writ in this regard in line with the fulling party stand. "I still believe that giving decision on the resignation letters is an exclusive constitutional jurisdiction of the Speaker. My lawyer will try to prove it in court," he said.

He said that he had decided to fight the matter in the High Court to avert a confrontation between the judiciary and the legislature. "I could have given my decision in the House."

The Speaker said, "if such a confrontation had taken place in these circumstances, democracy would be at stake. The people would not have forgiven me if such a situation had arisen."

In reply to a question how the negotiation failed on December 28, the Speaker said "I am also confused. It happened on the spur of the moment."

He declined to comment on whether the sovereignty of Parliament would be upheld in the court. The Speaker said he is aware of his oath and the sanctity of his Chair and he

## Janakantha case: HC issues rule on govt

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the government to show cause why the criminal case filed by the OC of Motijheel thana against the daily Janakantha should not be dismissed, reports UNB.

The complainant brought blasphemy charges against editor of the daily Atiqullah Khan Masud, its advisory editor Toab Khan, executive editor Borhan Ahmed and assistant editor ATM Shamsuddin for alleged misinterpretation of the holy Quran in a post-editorial.

A High Court bench comprising Justice Md Mozammel Haq and Justice Md Nurul Islam issued the rule after hearing of the petition and suspended all activities under the case till it was disposed of by the High Court.

Barrister Amirul Islam defended the editors of the daily.

## Shopkeeper stabbed

By DU Correspondent

A group of hoodlums stabbed a shopkeeper on the Dhaka University campus yesterday as he refused to sell cigarettes on credit.

Witnesses said that a group of three youngmen approached the shopkeeper Amir Hossain for cigarettes in the morning at his small shop on the road between Jastmuddin and Ziaur Rahman Halls of the University.

Being refused the youngmen became angry and seriously stabbed him on his back.

# AL: Speaker's statement

From Page 1 Col 2

Sunday's statement in Parliament is contradictory. He spoke of parliament's sovereignty on one hand and suspended his decision on the other. He has destroyed sovereignty, dignity and image of Parliament.

The resolution said the three organs of the State are complementary to each other. Any state of confrontation among them will only jeopardise democracy and constitutional rule.

The ALCWC accused the Speaker of not taking appropriate steps to uphold the

## Speaker

From Page 1 Col 5

edly faced such criticism in a meeting of the BNP high command held Saturday with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair at her Tejgaon office.

The Speaker on different occasions told reporters that he was requested by both the camps to give them a 'last chance' to patch-up the dispute amicably through a dialogue.

But the two sides have failed to reach a consensus, creating the present crisis.

"Where are they now who had requested the Speaker to delay the negotiation process?" another minister asked this reporter and said "They backed out keeping the Speaker in an awkward position."

The sources requested anonymity while the Speaker was unavailable for comment last night.

The BNP high command later decided that the court should decide the matter, sources said. Because of such decision they declined to discuss the notices submitted to determine the jurisdiction of the Speaker and Parliament.

The ruling party leaders felt if the matter lingered in the court it might bring some positive political outcome for the party.

# Arjun Singh replies to charge sheet

From Page 1 Col 8

sovereignty and dignity of Parliament. He has injected politics into the judiciary for petty partisan interest, the meeting said.

The present Parliament has no legality after the resignation of opposition MPs who represent 69 per cent of voters, the meeting said and demanded dissolution of Parliament 90 days ahead of fresh election under a caretaker government.

It said: "The government has unleashed repression, including arrest of opposition leaders and workers under false cases against them. The government being alienated from the people for its anti-people activities has chosen a hated conspiratorial path."

The meeting blamed the BNP government for deepening crises in society because of 'its inefficiency, corruption and failure.' It criticised the government for failing to control prices of essentials that have gone out of the reach of commonman.

## Kazi Zafar

From Page 1 Col 8

prime minister under Ershad. The judge had said that the CMM would look into the matter of Zafar's leaving the country.

In his order the CMM said, since Zafar was granted ad interim bail until the date of the next hearing, he would not be allowed to leave before that date.

The magistracy would look into the matter only after the orders issued by the trial judge on February 14, the CMM ruled.

The Bureau of Anti-Corruption filed a case against Kazi Zafar on November 11 last year for cheating and defalcation.

According to the persecution, the government suffered a loss of one crore taka because of an order issued by Kazi Zafar in violation of a government restriction when he was in office.

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