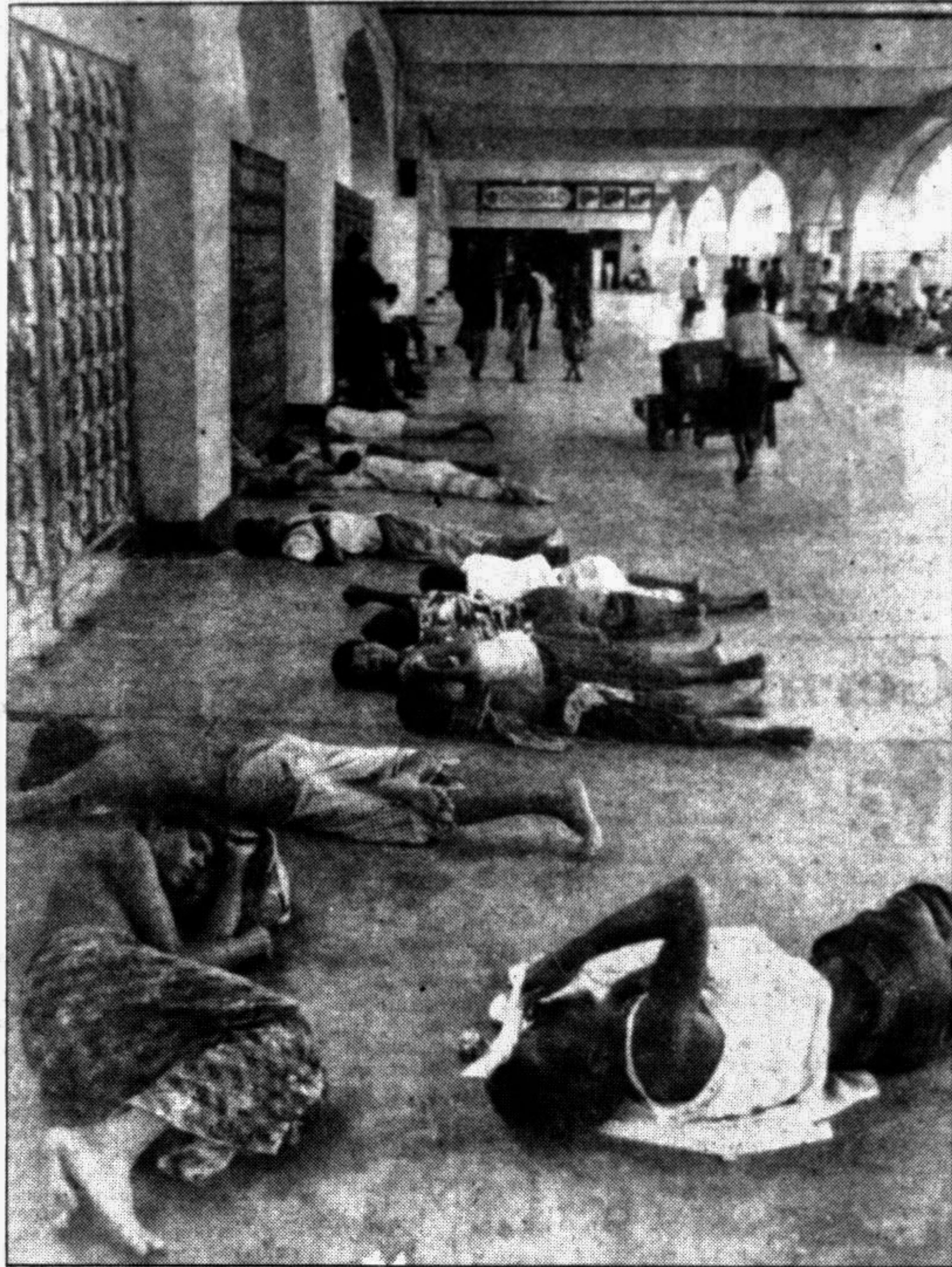


SAVE DHAKA



Of the several thousand young men who flock to the capital in search of employment, many spend their nights in open public places. Picture shows several young boys having a care-free nap in the corridor of Kamalapur Railway station while porters and passengers pass by.

Tribute paid to Sher-e-Bangla

Tribute was paid to Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq, one of the most beloved leaders of the masses and an illustrious political personality of the region, on the occasion of his 33rd death anniversary yesterday, reports BSS.

Awami League presidium member Abdus Samad Azad in a memorial meeting at the Mazar of Sher-e-Bangla said, Sher-e-Bangla had brought politics to the doorsteps of common people from the drawing rooms of zamindars.

Organised by the Sher-e-Bangla Jatiya Smriti Sangsad, the meeting was presided over by its chairman Justice Ruhul Islam.

Awami League presidium member Amir Hossain Amu, former education secretary Kazi Azhar Ali, AK Faizul Huq and poet Muhammad Abdul Khaleque also addressed the meeting.

The meeting was preceded by placing of wreaths at the mazar of late leader and holding a milad mahfil.

Islamic Foundation in its auditorium held a discussion which was participated by the editor of the Dinkal Sanaulah Noori and chairman of Jatiya Tarun Sangha Fazlul Huq. Muhammad Mufazzal Hussein Khan of the foundation was in the chair.

5 mine-sweepers of navy commissioned

CHITTAGONG, Apr 27: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia here today inaugurated the commissioning of five newly procured mine-sweepers of Bangladesh Navy saying that the inclusion of so many craft at a time to the fleet would strengthen the naval force and make it self-reliant, reports BSS.

The pledge I have made to continuously strengthen the naval force of the country is being largely fulfilled today. Inshallah we shall be able to attain the rest of the targets. In the context of our overall defence system and geographical location, our endeavour to modernise and expand the naval force will continue, she said after handing over the commissioning order and hoisting the commissioning pennant on the vessels here this morning.

Thanking the governments and the peoples of China and the United Kingdom for supplying these mine-sweepers, Begum Zia mentioned that mine-sweepers are essentially required to ensure the safe movement of own naval fleet.

Justice is done

Motijheel police at midnight on April 22 from her North Shahjahanpur residence and packed off to jail.

Her false arrest warrant, bearing the signature and seal of a non-existent judge in Rangpur, showed her as an absconder in a murder case. It also said she had been convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment and ordered to pay a fine of Taka 20,000.

Rangpur District and Sessions Judge Azizur Rahman, learning about the fraud, sent an urgent message to the CMM, Dhaka yesterday informing him that there was never any judge in Rangpur by that name and that the so-called warrant was absolutely false.

Thereupon, the CCM ordered the poor victim of the scandal released immediately.

Opposition

The AL leader who acted as the Chief Whip of the Opposition until submitting his resignation letter to the Speaker last December, said that his party will intensify agitation and campaign against the failures of the BNP government during the coming budget session of Parliament sometime in June.

The three opposition parties — the AL, the JP and the Jamaat — will observe a "Protest Day" on May 4 throughout the country. After the Eid festival, the parties will again go for simultaneous agitation programmes, which might include strikes and hartals, sources in the opposition camp said.

EC timetable

and Pirojpur on May 20; Tangail, Jamalpur, Sherpur, Mymensingh, Netrakona and Kishoreganj on May 21; Manikganj, Munshiganj, Dhaka, Gazipur and Narayanganj on May 22; Faridpur, Gopalganj, Madaripur and Shariatpur on May 24; Sunamganj, Sylhet, Moulvibazar and Habiganj on May 28; Brahmanbaria, Comilla, Chandpur, Noakhali and Laximpur on May 29; and Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Khagrachhari on May 30.

Those who have submitted their demands, objections, recommendations, and opinions, have been requested to be present at the Election Commission Secretariat at 10 am on the above mentioned dates.



Prime Minister Begum Zia addressed a large public meeting at the Hatiya Island Govt College ground in Noakhali yesterday. —PID photo

PM warns of stern action

curse of illiteracy, Begum Zia said her government had first taken massive education programmes to free the people from all kinds of exploitation. Due to the programmes of the government, enrolment increased and dropout rate decreased.

Educated and uneducated youths and women are being provided various training and loan facilities for their self-reliance, she said and called upon all to set up poultry and dairy farms and cottage industries.

As a result of the BNP government's programmes, the Prime Minister said, the lot of distressed people had changed and socio-economic condition of commonman improved in last four years. "We want to involve all people with work."

Begum Zia told the people of Hatiya that there was enough scope in the island to improve the lifestyle of the islanders and advised them to plant trees around every house.

Referring to development programmes implemented at Hatiya during the last four years, she said construction works of 70 cyclone shelters had already been completed and construction of another 60 centres would be completed soon.

Addressing the meeting, local leaders put forward various demands to the Prime Minister and requested her to fulfill the demands of the four lakh people of the island, 250-kilometre south-east of capital Dhaka.

Begum Zia assured that Hatiya protection embankment would be constructed soon. Hatiya be taken under the Char Development Project, BSc course be introduced at the Dwp Government College, the Hatiya Adarsha College be brought under development programmes, telephone and electricity system would be improved and more roads would be constructed.

The Prime Minister asked the people of Hatiya to elect a competent man in the next parliamentary elections to ensure development of the island.

Meeting over, Begum Zia distributed poultry and cattle among the poor women.



Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina addressed a public meeting at the Aburhat High School ground in Mirersharai thana of Chittagong yesterday. —AL photo

Hasina rejects CEC

Terrorism spread to the rural areas and there is no security of public life, she added.

"The government is claiming self-sufficiency in food, fertiliser and other essentials are beyond the reach of commonman?" she asked.

Hasina said if voted to power, her party would ensure economic emancipation of the people. The Awami League would build agro-based industries and take steps to generate employment by establishing cottage industries in the villages. All villages would be brought under rural electrification, she added.

Teachers entrusted with this work will visit every house in their respective localities and submit the reports to the Assistant Thana Education Officers who will forward those to the CPE Unit by May 19, the official said. The census is being conducted under the Primary Education (Compulsory) Act of 1990.

The targeted percentage of enrolment of boys in primary schools was 81 and that of girls was 70 in 1993. The average enrolment ratio was 76 per cent. The targeted percentage of boys' and girls' enrolment this year is 85 and 79 respectively and the average is 82 per cent.

CPE Unit sources said, 84.88 per cent enrolment in primary schools has already been achieved and the target 4 for the year 2000 is to achieve 96 per cent enrolment of boys and 94 per cent of girls.

The government made primary education compulsory for all eligible children from January 1992. In the first year, 68 thanas came under the CPE scheme and since 1993, the CPE programme has been extended to the whole country.

Major gas pipeline explodes in Russia

MOSCOW, Apr 27: A major gas pipeline exploded 1,000 kilometres (600 miles) north-east of Moscow today sending a giant fireball five miles (thousands of meters) high and scorching a large swath of thick forest, reports AP.

There were no deaths or injuries and the cause wasn't immediately known, officials said.

The Midnight File

Free bus travel for journalist in Bihar

PATNA, Apr 27: The Bihar government today announced free bus travel for accredited press correspondents in deluxe buses from June one. The Transport Minister, Inder Singh Namdhari, made the announcement at a press conference here. He said that such a facility could not be extended to the journalists earlier as the number of government deluxe buses in the state was small, reports PTI.

Minister denies use of child labour in garments sector

Labour and Manpower Minister Mir Shawkat Ali yesterday denied that child labour was being used in the country's garment factories.

Replying to questions in the Jatiya Sangsad, the minister said, "But I personally support the employment of (poor) children in the garment factories and other industrial units, provided they are given education."

A total of 7,20,000 workers are now employed in the country's garment factories and their wages vary from Taka 930 to Tk 4700 a month under seven grades, he said.

In reply to a question from ruling party MP Md Sirajul Islam, Shawkat Ali said the government has no plan to raise the salaries of workers.

Answering a question raised by Mohammad Niamat Ullah, Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam told the House that the country's earnings from the export of garments increased by 35.23 per cent in fiscal 1993-94 when 78.28 per cent of the target of Taka 6600 crore was achieved.

About restrictions on the import of child labour-made garments by the United States, the leading buyer of Bangladeshi garments, the Commerce Minister said, "The SAARC standing body meets."

NEW DELHI, Apr 27: The Standing Committee of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), made up by the Foreign Secretaries of the member states, began a three-day meeting here today discussing various programmes and proposals to transform the ten-year-old regional forum into a more effective and vibrant organisation, reports BSS.

The meeting of the Standing Committee is taking place as part of the line-up to the eighth SAARC Summit beginning here on May 2. The Foreign Secretaries are preparing the ground for their Foreign Ministers.

Paris meet

From Page 1

ment would be promoted by reforming the legal framework, continuing trade liberalisation, improving fiscal incentives and strengthening financial institutions. "Further steps will also be taken to prepare state owned enterprises for privatisation, and to improve the performance of public utilities."

It further said that better public services would be sought through public administration reform, including restructuring government institutions, reducing bureaucratic discretion, improving work incentives, expanding civil service training and strengthening accountability. "There was agreement that progress in this area needs to be intensified," it added.

Police station

From Page 1

one post for Additional Deputy Commissioner for Women in each district to inspect and monitor the cases relating to oppression of women and children.

The meeting was informed that the ministry concerned has approved the proposal of appointing police women in 21 greater districts. Amendment of recruitment rules of appointing female Sub-Inspectors, Assistant Sub-Inspectors and constables are now under process. Appointment of police women in each district was recommended at the previous meeting of the committee.

Farida Rahman MP, Khaleda Rabbani MP, Lutfunnesa Hossain MP and senior officials of ministries concerned attended the meeting.

Minister sees 3 reasons

formed the House that 31,25,000 metric tons (MT) of rice and wheat were being imported under government and private initiatives against the production deficit of 28,38,000 MT in the current financial year.

Treasury bench members Nizamuddin Khan and Begum Farida Rahman asked questions on the issue while Akbar Ali, Abu Yusuf Mohammad Khalilur Rahman, Shahidullah Khan, Mahbubul Alam Tara, Fazlul Haq, Mirza Muraduzzaman and ATM Alamgir also joined them.

The food minister said food

JP hartal

From Page 1

Investigation Department (CID) has been given the responsibility of investigating the murder of Abul Kashem. A case was filed with the Kotwali police Tuesday night.

Besides, the Officer-in-Charge of Kotwali thana has filed a case against JP workers for assaulting the DC of Metropolitan Police, Abdus Sattar Shah, and for attacking the residence of Speaker Shaikh Razaque Ali here yesterday.

JS session prorogued

From Page 1

Social Welfare Fazlur Rahman alleged that unruly Jatiya Party workers led by Kazi Zafar Ahmed had stormed and ransacked Razzak Ali's residence in Khulna.

The lives of the Speaker's family members were in danger during the attack. He added that the Speaker is not just a person, he is an institution. By the heinous attack, the hoodlums had spoiled the sanctity of the Speaker's chair, he said.

He said that it was significant that the attack came just a day after the resigning opposition MPs threatened a repetition of the "Shahed Ali incident" of 1958.

Shahed Ali, Deputy Speaker of the then East Pakistan provincial assembly succumbed to injuries suffered during clashes among legislators inside the House while presiding over the sitting.

Fazlur Rahman also criticised the recent incident at the Chittagong Circuit House where a group of unruly Awami League workers reportedly damaged the VVIP room because their party chief was not allotted the room during her visit to the port city.

Whip Ashraf Hossain said that Khulna JP leader Sheikh Abul Kashem was killed last Tuesday because of his dispute with AL leader Harun-ur-Rashid over a shrimp bed.

Nargis Ali denied Kashem's death was a political killing. She alleged a certain quarter had tried to brand the murder

Malaria claims 87 in Sunamganj, Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Apr 27: The death toll caused by malaria in different thanas of Sylhet and Sunamganj districts has now risen to 87.

The situation in Toakul union of Gowainghat is still serious where 35 people died, followed by 23 in Pashchim Jafflong and 12 in Rustampur Union. Besides, there were 21 deaths in Jaintapur and 7 in Companiganj thana.

Unofficial sources from Sunamganj reported 24 deaths in Sadar, Doarabazar and Tahripur Thana. However, official sources confirmed only nine deaths in Sunamganj.

Beijing CP chief resigns

BEIJING, Apr 27: The Communist Party chief of Beijing, Chen Xitong has submitted his resignation amid a string of corruption scandals in the municipal government, Chinese sources close to Beijing officials said today, reports Reuters.

of the Speaker and damaging a private car there.

Matin Chowdhury said Jatiya Party activists snapped the Speaker's telephone line, set fire to the local BNP office and looted several shops.

Police, he said, resorted to lathi-charge and later lobbed teargas shells to bring the situation under control.

Such acts were utterly condemnable, he said.

The Home Minister described as "unfortunate" the attempt by Kazi Zafar Ahmed to politicise the murder of Sheikh Kashem to gain political dividends.

He said there were a number of violent incidents centering shrimp cultivation in greater Khulna district and pointed out that only a day before his death, Kashem's men reportedly forcibly captured a fish farm in the district's Baltaghata region.

He said the opposition parties were out to foil democracy and that was why they were engaged in such destructive politics.

He said only a few days earlier, the opposition parties assembled in the Speaker's lobby inside the Sangsad Bhaban and behaved in a manner that violated parliamentary norms.

The Home Minister said the Opposition was envious of the successes achieved by the government of Begum Khaleda Zia in various fields.

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