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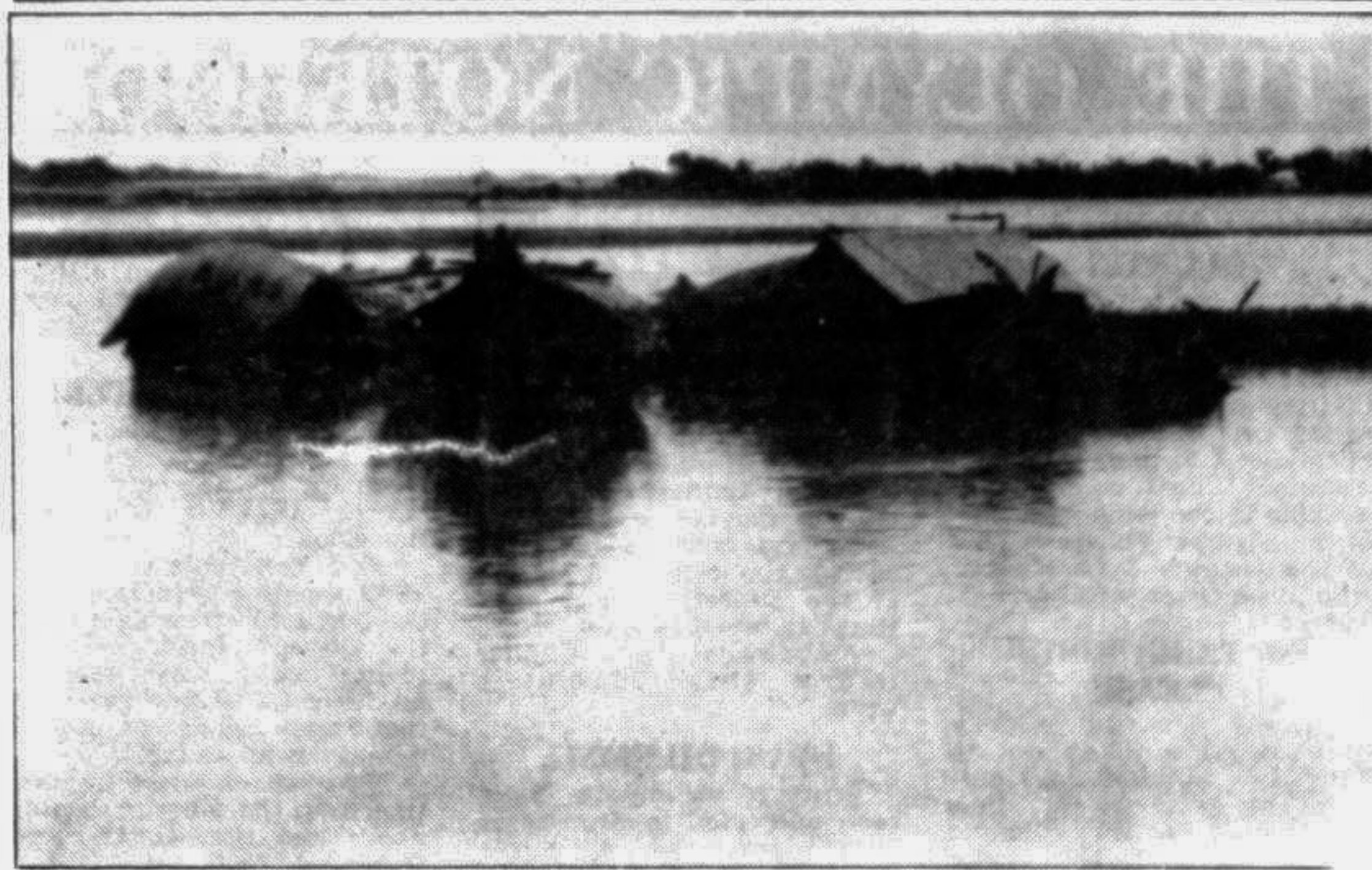
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The World On Time



A flood-hit village in Dhalachar union in Bera thana of Pabna. —Star photo by Ramesh Moitra

BNP, Jamaat walkout

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Journalism motions submitted to him.

As the home minister began to speak, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury drew the Speaker's attention that he was obliged to dispose of certain adjournment motions submitted by the Opposition members on the subject before allowing any minister to make any statement. But with the Speaker paying no heed to Prof. Chowdhury's contention, the BNP legislators came forward to back their leader by thumping the tables with files and shouting at the top of their voice.

At this stage, the House witnessed a pandemonium as the minister to continue his statement and the Opposition members to shout. Former minister in Khaleda Zia administration K (Retd) Akbar Hossain was seen tearing some papers including that on the order of the day. Prof. Chowdhury was drawing the attention of the Leader of the House on certain rules of the JS Rules of Procedure.

When the home minister finished his statement, the Speaker, however, allowed Prof. Chowdhury to make his point. Referring to Rule 64 of the Rules of Procedure, he told the Chair that the Rule could never permit him to allow the minister to make a statement on an issue before disposing of certain adjournment motions submitted on the same issue.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition read out the Rule concerned which says: "Leave to make a motion for adjournment shall be asked for immediately after questions and before the orders of the day are entered upon."

Then he accused the Speaker of violating the Rule and ignoring the rights of the Opposition MPs.

At this point, Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia took the floor to announce the walkout protesting "the

Speaker's behaviour". "We are now compelled to stage a walkout as you have violated a particular rule of the JS Rules of Procedure and failed to uphold the neutrality of a Speaker," Khaleda told the Chair, adding, "Your behaviour proves that you do not want the JS to function properly."

She then led the walkout by her party MPs.

Jamaat MPs immediately followed them. "We staged the walkout in protest against the Speaker's refusal to allow us to speak on the issue," a Jamaat member told the House after their return later.

Defending the Speaker, Sheikh Hasina told the House that the Speaker had made no mistake by allowing the minister to make the statement. She also accused the Opposition members of violating certain rules by disturbing the minister when he was making the statement.

In this connection, the Prime Minister referred to Rule 300 that reads: "A statement may be made by a minister on a matter of public importance with the consent of the Speaker but no question shall be asked at the time the statement is made."

She also called upon the Opposition to return to the House for effective functioning of parliament. The BNP legislators, however, did not return.

The Speaker, however, refused to accept the BNP allegations of both violating the Rule and compromising neutrality. He said: "None of the MPs had sought floor before I gave so to the minister. Besides, the question of violation of the Rule does not arise as I was yet to enter into the order of the day."

Yesterday's sitting, however, witnessed disposal of two resolutions, one moved by a Treasury bench member and the other by a Jamaat lawmaker. Three resolutions by the BNP legislators were not introduced in the House due to their absence.

The Speaker adjourned the session at 9:15 pm for resumption at 4:00 pm on Sunday.

Flood

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ge yesterday, villagers said. A total of 30 unions were flooded in the district affecting more than 40,000 dwelling houses. The worst hit are Gaddimari, Sindurna, Doubari, Bhotmari, Mohishkocha, Kuni-agacha and Kulaghat unions.

Road communications in Sadar thana were also disrupted as many roads, bridge and culverts went under flood water rushing from across the border.

In Sirajganj district, flood situation aggravated further for the rise of water level in the river Jamuna. Some 30 more villages were inundated in Kaziupur thana as the flood water entered through the breaches in flood-protection embankment.

With these a total of 367 villages were affected in flood hit areas of the districts in Kaziupur, Shahjapur, Raiganj and Sadar thanas, unofficial sources said.

Three children were reported drowned in the flood water in Raiganj thana. The victims were identified as Hena Khatun, 7, of Brahmagacha village in Raipur thana, Ayub, 8, and Shanema in Shahjapur thana.

In Jamalpur, flood situation further deteriorated due to the rise of water level in the river Jamuna and Brahmaputra.

Road link between Jamalpur and Sherpur was cut off last night as the ferryghats in Jamalpur and Sherpur districts were inundated. The district highway also went under flood water.

Biswas

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the greatest Bengali in several thousand years of our history. President Biswas said he was not only an outstanding son of this soil, but held a unique position in the sub-continent.

President Biswas said the late leader had fought not only for the Bengalees, but for the neglected and oppressed people of the whole world. As a believer, he was hopeful that Bangladesh will be granted jannatul ferdous, the best of the heavens, by the Almighty Allah for the good job, done to the people, the President said.

Earlier on arrival at the mazar premises, the President who was wearing a black suit took off his shoes and after wearing a cap recited several verses from the holy Koran. After offering his respect to Bangabandhu, the president walked a few yards within the mazar area to offer Fataha and pay respects to the parents of Bangabandhu, who were also buried there.

JS bodies: Rules to be amended

From Page 1

forming the bodies with non-ministers heading those", State Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Matin Khanshu told this correspondent.

A discussion on the issue will take place in the House before the Rules of Procedure are amended, the minister hinted. Any amendment to those can be adopted in the House by a simple majority of members present.

Rule 247 of the Rules of Procedure states, "The Minister or, if there be no Minister, the Minister of State in-charge of a subject relating to a Standing Committee shall be ex-officio Chairman of every such Standing Committee."

Defining generally the roles of the standing bodies on the ministries, Rule 246 says: The committees will "examine draft Bills and other legislative proposals, review the enforcement of laws and propose measures for such enforcement and examine any matter referred to them by Parliament" under certain article of the Constitution.

Rule 248 adds: "The functions of a Committee shall be to review the works relating to a Ministry which falls within its jurisdiction, to inquire into any activity or irregularity and serious complaint in respect of

Dhaka received \$240m WB loan in fiscal '96

By Staff Correspondent

The World Bank has provided over three billion US dollars in loans, credits, and guarantees to countries in South Asia including 240 million dollars soft loan to Bangladesh, during the 1996 fiscal year which ended on June 30.

According to a press release issued here yesterday, the Bank's continuing active lending programme to the region included 1.25 billion dollars in loans and guarantees from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and 1.8 billion dollars in credits from the International Development Association (IDA), the concessional lending arm of the Bank.

World Bank lending also generated 82 billion in additional co-financing for South Asia countries, the release added.

In FY '96, Bangladesh received a total of 240 million dollars all in IDA funding. India received a total of 2.08 billion dollars, comprised of 780 million dollars in IBRD loans and 1.3 billion dollars in IDA funding. Pakistan received a total of 540 million dollars, comprised of 390 million dollars in IBRD funding, 80 million dollars in IDA funding, and a 80 million dollar guarantee. Sri Lanka — a total of \$16 billion, all in IDA funding. No lending was provided to Afghanistan, Nepal,

Blutan, or the Maldives, the release said.

Lending to South Asia held steady, at an average of \$3 billion dollars per year over the past five years, although there have been substantial fluctuations between IBRD and IDA lending.

In FY '96, the Bank funded 22 projects in South Asia — compared to 19 in each of the two previous fiscal years. The lending supported economic and infrastructure development; the social sectors to keep pace with the economic growth, and other needs of each country in the region.

Significant projects included a State Health Reform project in India that will help provide better and more efficient health services; the District Primary Education II project in India to increase school enrollment — particularly among girls; the Ghazi Barotha and UCH power projects in Pakistan which were the first projects to use guarantees; the Orissa Power Sector loan to reform the state level electricity board; two projects in Bangladesh to assist in coastal embankment protection; and the India Coal Sector Environmental and Social Action.

In co-financing the Bank was able to attract 2 billion dollars — mostly in power and financial sector projects in Pakistan and India.

Insurgent killed

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nine magazines, 120 rounds of ammunition and two wireless sets were recovered, police said.

Meanwhile, some leaflets have been dropped from a helicopter in Rangamati district announcing Tk 50,000 as a reward for information leading to the rescue of Kalpana Chakma, a tribal girl who has been reportedly missing since June 11.

Witnesses said, the helicopter dropped the leaflets near and around the residence of Kalpana Chakma, a leader of the Hills Women Federation yesterday morning.

DMC principal

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of the DMC unit. The JCD alleged that the Prof. Hadi was replaced because he took the decision to reopen the college on July 20.

The DMC was closed since following a series of clashes between the JCD and pro-Awami League Chhatra League during the Golden Jubilee celebrations on the college campus on July 10.

The JCD also demanded reopening of the college by tomorrow and holding of the DMC students' union elections.

PM's directive

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come forward in aid of the distressed people.

Accompanied by Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak, Food and Agriculture Minister Begum Motia Chowdhury and Whip Mizanur Rahman Manu, Hasina visited the flood-hit areas under Dimla and Hathibandha thanas of Nilphamari and Lalmonirhat districts.

She also distributed relief materials among the flood-affected people in those places. Earlier, the Prime Minister was briefed by officials on the extent of damage wrought by the flood in the two thanas. She was told that flood had washed away 700 metres of Teesta barrage bypass, affecting 12,000 families in Dimla thana of Nilphamari district alone. A Sonali Bank branch, a madrasah, shops and several dwelling houses were washed away at Sadar Bazar.

Addressing a gathering there, she said her government would adopt proper planning to rehabilitate the flood-battered people in areas where they would not be affected by recurring floods.

Thumb-showing

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sending the issue to the Privilege Committee, the Speaker told the House last night that he did not see Rab showing his thumb on that day and Rab himself had claimed not have shown it.

Rab had said, the Speaker added, that he just corrected Faruque by raising seven of his fingers, to indicate seven cases were filed against Rab during BNP rule.

Speaker Chowdhury also gave examples of how the meaning of thumb showing changes in various countries and regions.

"If one shows a thumb in Great Britain, that will mean a sign for goodness while Americans take it for being really, really good," the Speaker noted.

In Brunai, showing of a thumb means he or she wants to point out something, he said, and cited the incident of a thumb up showing a life in ancient Rome.

Himself hailing from Sylhet, the Speaker pointed out that there always remains a threat on one's life if people in Sylhet raise both of his or her thumbs pointing to anyone.

The Speaker also laughingly noted that people of Noakhali take the meaning of 'thumb showing' as one telling the other that, "You will be able to do nothing to me."

Most AL MPs

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argument for not moving a thanks motion: Firstly, the President's not adequately honouring the nation's architect, Bangabandhu, in his speech and secondly, not honouring the 'script' delivered to him from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) during final drafting of the presidential speech.

The Daily Star on condition of anonymity that "at a certain stage the PMO gave up bargaining on the wordings of the presidential speech just to avert an eventual setting of a bad precedence of staging a walkout by ruling party MPs on the first day of the first session from the House."

In the ALPP meeting, party leaders also reviewed the performance of party MPs, specially those who got elected as MPs for the first time, in the opening session of the parliament.

Rules of Procedure Committee, according to the JS Rules of Procedure, to be headed by the Speaker. The Library Committee is to be headed by the Deputy Speaker.

The Public Accounts Committee, consisting of not more than fifteen MPs, enjoys the right to examine the accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by the House for the expenditure of the Government, the annual finance accounts of the Government and such other accounts laid before the House as the committee think fit.

According to Rule 233 of the JS Rules of Procedure, "Upon examination of irregularities and lapses of institutions, the Committee shall report to Parliament with recommendations of remedial measures."

The functions of the Public Undertaking Committee include, inter alia, "To examine the reports, if any, of the Comptroller and Auditor General on the public undertakings; to examine, in context of the autonomy, any deficiency of the public undertakings, whether the affairs of the public undertakings are being managed in accordance with sound business principles and prudent commercial practice."



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