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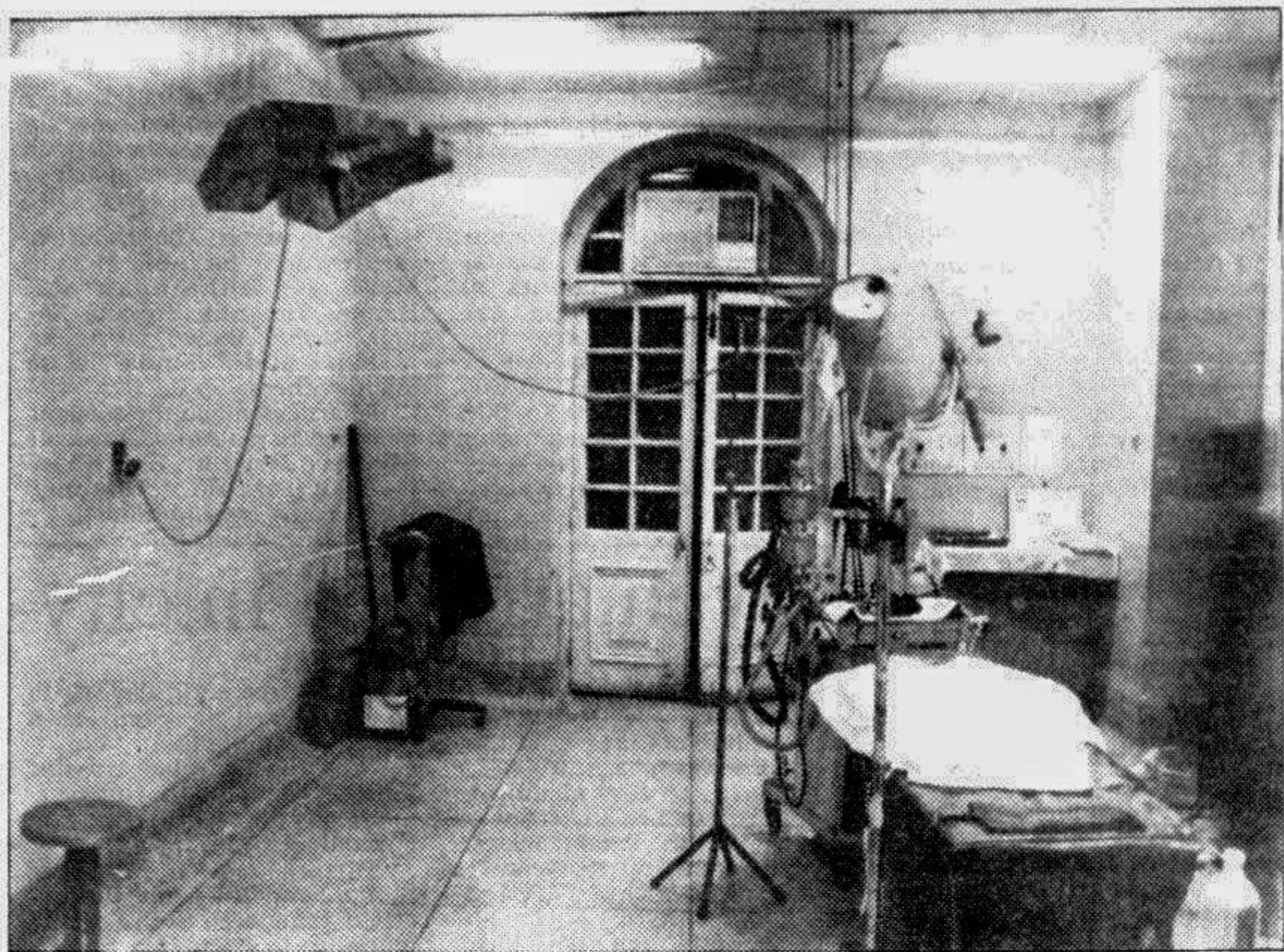
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PHILIPS

Emergency OT at DMCH

Lights out of order for four months, water supply scanty

By Naimul Haq



Operation theatres at the emergency department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital are in a miserable condition as the main overhead surgery lights are out of order and water supply is insufficient.

"We cannot perform operations properly for the last four months as the lights are not functioning. We are carrying out operations using spot light which is used for a general view of the spot," a doctor said.

"Due to lack of overhead lights we cannot focus on the 'deeper structure' of the body during surgery. It creates problem but there has been no mishap yet," said a senior surgeon at the emergency.

At least 14 operations including removal of diseased appendix, repair of perforated intestine and hernia are done at the emergency every day, they said.

Patients with bullet wound

and stab and bomb injuries, are also operated upon at the casualty wing of the emergency.

The old aircoolers at the OTs do not function properly. "We do not get the required temperature at the OT. As a result sweat containing millions of bacteria sometimes fall on the operation field," said another senior surgeon.

Water supply at the OTs is sometimes scanty, especially after evening. One of the three taps supplying water to the OTs was seen wrapped with cloth, apparently to prevent leakage.

Another surgeon said, "I have been witnessing irregular water supply for the past one and a half years but nothing has been done to repair the tap despite repeated complaints. We sometimes have to run elsewhere to wash hands prior to operation."

There is only one set of surgical equipment for each of the OTs, exposing the patients to

risk of infection. "We get sterilised surgical equipment only for the day's first operation. Since only one set of equipment is available, it is not possible to sterilise those in the time between operations. But we continue to perform operations with unsterilised equipment which is highly immoral. We are compelled to do so."

When contacted, Director of DMCH, Badrul Munir said, "I admit that the overhead surgery lights occasionally go out of order but it's not true that operations are hampered there."

He said, "I have asked the department concerned to repair the lights. Those will be operational soon."

Referring to water supply, he said, "We have sufficient water supply but the problem lies with unpredictable power supply. We cannot pump water in the overhead tanks to ensure smooth water supply in the OTs."

Interns threaten non-stop strike

By DMC Correspondent

Twelve hundred interns in eight government medical college hospitals ended their 72-hour work abstention yesterday but warned of a non-stop strike from December 13 if their demands were not met by the deadline.

"We are hopeful that the authorities will realise our problems and accept the demands," said Dr. Hayat Mahmud, General Secretary of the interns' group, Young Doctors' Movement Council (YDMC), which called the strike.

The young doctors have a six-point set of demands, which include doubling their pay.

During the 72 hours, the interns brought out processions in their respective colleges and submitted memorandums to the principals as patients suffered due to their absence.

In solidarity, the young doctors working at private clinics wore black badges.

The doctors are also demanding a guideline for employment of new graduates in private clinics, adequate supply of medicines and other goods in hospitals, an increase in jobs for doctors in government hospitals, accommodation to interns and introduction of referral system.

(In our Friday issue, under the same headline, we mistakenly printed the previous story owing to a computer error.)

Shab-e-Barat observed

Muslims across the country observed the holy Shab-e-Barat on Friday night, praying for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the nation, reports APB.

Special prayers were offered on the holy occasion for unity and solidarity of the Muslim Ummah.

The occasion was marked by the night-long prayers at all mosques, including the national mosque Baitul Mukarram where devotees in thousands assembled.

Visits to graves of relations and holy shrines were the other feature of the night.

Various social and religious organisations, including the Islamic Foundation, held Milad Mahfils and discussions on the occasion.

Sweets were distributed among the devotees.

Bangladesh Betar and the Bangladesh Television put up special programmes and the newspapers carried articles highlighting the significance of the night.

Khaleda visits Zia's mazar on the night of Shab-e-Barat

Leaders and workers of BNP led by party chief Begum Khaleda Zia visited the mazar of shaheed president Ziaur Rahman and offered *fateha* on the night of Shab-e-Barat.

Begum Zia along with her family members visited the mazar at 8 pm and offered *fateha*. BNP leaders, including Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Mirza Abbas, Sadek Hossain Khoka, Fazlur Rahman Patol, Shamsuzzaman Dudu and Nazibul Bashir Majibhandari were present.

Meanwhile, Jatiyatabadi Ulema Dal organised Quran Khwani, *zikir*, milad mahfil and special prayers at the mazar premises of Ziaur Rahman after Magreb prayers on Friday.

BNP also organised a milad mahfil at its central office at Nayapalton in the city after Asr prayers on Friday. Senior leaders and the activists of BNP and its front organisations attended the milad.

Hanif

From Page 1

plans to remove the garbage containers from main roads to side roads. He also said, DCC will soon start carpeting the flood-damaged city roads.

About DCC plans to build structures at parks, playgrounds and on natural canals, Hanif said these were stopped following an order from the Prime Minister's Office.

Asked why one should vote for him if he contests the next mayoral elections, he said if he contests he will tell the citizens what he has done over the last five years. "Compare my five years' work with that in the last 20 years. I have set up maternities, clinics, schools and overbridges."

Separate cases were lodged with different thanas of the city in this connection.

Earlier, police had prohibited blasting of crackers during the Shab-e-Barat in the city.

130 held in city for blasting crackers

By Staff Correspondent

Police on Friday arrested 130 persons for blasting crackers during the holy Shab-e-Barat in the city.

Police also recovered different types of crackers from their possessions.

Separate cases were lodged with different thanas of the city in this connection.

Earlier, police had prohibited blasting of crackers during the Shab-e-Barat in the city.

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Vajpayee expands cabinet Jaswant Indian FM

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, Dec 5: Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today expanded his cabinet for the first time since assuming office nearly nine months ago including Jaswant Singh as the External Affairs Minister and BJP General Secretary Pramod Mahajan as the Minister for Information and Broadcasting.

Former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir state Jagmohan, was drafted into the cabinet for the portfolio of Communication.

Vajpayee himself had held the charge of External Affairs Ministry right from the start. The slots of Information and Broadcasting and Communication fell vacant following the resignation of Sushma Swaraj when she was made the Chief Minister of Delhi in September in a desperate move by the BJP central leadership to refurbish the party's image ahead of the November 25 assembly elections in the National Capital Territory.

Jaswant Singh, at present Deputy Chairman of India's Planning Commission, is known for astute diplomatic skill in handling foreign affairs and has accompanied the Prime Minister to key international forums like the SAARC, non-aligned summit, United Nations General Assembly and meetings with Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

More importantly, Singh has been holding the 'strategic dialogues' with the United States on a wide range of issues following India's nuclear tests in May this year.

Pramod Mahajan, who gets the Information and Broadcasting portfolio, had been Vajpayee's political adviser and was the Defence Minister in the first

SAARC Secy Gen in city

Outgoing SAARC Secretary General Naem U Hasan arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a three-day visit, reports APB.

During his stay here, Hasan will call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

He will also call on Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad.

2 policemen held with forged notes

Two policemen were arrested from old part of the city on Friday night with forged bank notes, reports UNB.

The policemen, identified as ASI Shahidul Islam and constable Abdul Jalil, were arrested along with their two accomplices Yunus and Jamal.

Acting on a tip-off, Detective Branch of police arrested Constable Jalil from Tangal Hotel in Dhaka and according to his statement ASI Shahid and two others were arrested.



After night-long prayers marking the holy Shab-e-Barat, devotees at the national mosque Baitul Mukarram join the *akheri munajat* Saturday morning seeking divine blessings.

— Star photo

Pabna-2: 7 more govt officials

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ment official he did not violate any provision of Electoral Rules of 1996.

Meanwhile, rumours are rife that both Jamaat and the Jatiya Party have decided to back the BNP in the election.

Sources said, JP chief H M Ershad and his party leaders are not coming to campaign in favour of their nominee Sajjad Hossain Bachchu. The party got 2,451 votes in the June 1996 general elections.

Jamaat-e-Islami fielded no candidate in the by-election although their candidate had bagged 3,979 votes in the June '96 elections.

BNP was defeated that time by a margin of 1505 votes.

APB adds: Nasim today told an election projection meeting that BNP was raising allegation of rigging apprehending its defeat in the by-election.

Addressing a number of rallies at Bera and Sujanganar, Nasim said: "If we had the intention of rigging, we could fill the ballot boxes in the polling centre and need not move from

door to door for vote".

Nasim also dismissed BNP's allegation of violating election code by himself and Minister Abu Sayed or by any other government official.

On the other hand, BNP Joint-Secretary General Ashraf Hossain today alleged that two ministers and 35 officials including the DC and the SP of Pabna were campaigning in favour of the ruling party candidate.

He claimed that 45 BNP leaders and activists were arrested from the constituency ahead of the bypolls and another 600 had to flee the area fearing police harassment.

Ashraf was addressing several rallies in support of BNP candidate A K M Selim Reza Habib at Bera and Sujanganar.

UNB quoting BNP sources adds: The party has formed 14 teams with its central leaders, including standing committee members and lawmakers, for conducting the election campaign in 14 unions of Bera-Sujanganar Constituency.

BNP chairperson Begum

Khaleda Zia will start her two-day election campaign in Pabna-2 on Monday.

She will address a public meeting at Dhopakola Coronation High School ground at Bera at 3 pm on Monday, a wayside meeting at Sujanganar Dulai High School ground at 10 am and a public meeting at Nazirganj at 3 pm on Tuesday.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has issued letters to all the team members to remain in their assigned places till the result of the bypolls is declared.

He also urged them to be alert against any violation of the election code of conduct by the ruling party and asked them to inform the local Electoral Inquiry Committee immediately in case of any violation.

A reception camp has been opened at Kashinathpur to receive BNP leaders while Barrister Aminul Huq, MP, Fazlur Rahman Patal, MP, Rajshahi city Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu and Pabna Sadar MP Rafiqul Islam Bakul are monitoring the election campaign.

Five killed in city incidents

By Staff Correspondent

At least five people were killed and six others injured in separate incidents in the city yesterday and the day before.

Of the dead, four were identified as Mahinur, 18, Juman, 35, Jafar Khan, 18, and Shida, 30. The identity of the rest could not be known.

Police said the injured, identified as Nur Jahan, 45, Saheb Ali, Sahina Banu, 35, Abdur Rashid, 35, Esken Hawladar, 50, and Amina, 40, were admitted to different hospitals and clinics.

Mahinur, a housewife at Mirpur was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with critical injuries where she died yesterday afternoon. Hospital sources quoting her relatives said Mahinur's husband Babul kicked in her abdomen during an altercation. She fell unconscious and was taken to DMCH where she died after some hours.

In another incident under the same police station, one Juman, son of Korban Mollah of 26/1 Ahmedbagh, was beaten

up allegedly by the members of a cooperative society in front of Paikpara Ansar camp on Thursday night. He was admitted to a local clinic and was released after first aid. He died at his house in the early hours of Friday. The body was sent to DMCH for autopsy.

Jafar Khan, son of Elem Khan of West Ajratpara Razia slum received bullet wounds in his abdomen on Thursday noon when some unidentified assailants opened fire on him. He was admitted to DMCH in a critical condition and succumbed to his injuries on Friday. The body of the victim was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

An unidentified youth, 24, was crushed under the wheels of a speedy truck at Malibagh crossing on Friday morning.

At least six people were injured when a minibus knocked them at Palashi crossing on Friday evening. They were admitted to DMCH where Shahina, 30, succumbed to injuries.

PM: Power mongers

From Page 1

artillery fire from the back during the eye-catching exercise, the soldiers used tank and speed boats, and quickly built a pontoon bridge for the heavy vehicles, armed cars and tanks to cross a 'river'.

They earlier used a floating raft for carrying tank to give immediate support to the troops.

Sound of firing, smoke and the 'river' (actually a small artificial lake) inside the Cantonment gave an impression of real battle and kept the visitors spell bound for the entire duration of the brief exercise.

Later, the Prime Minister also crossed the 'river' in a car using the pontoon bridge to reach the land recovered from the 'enemy' and addressed the soldiers.

Addressing the gathering after witnessing the brief winter exercise, the Prime Minister lauded the army saying "I am happy to see the brilliant performance that you showed today through your exercise."

She said this is the month when the country earned its victory from the Pakistani rulers through a long struggle, led by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Bangabandhu built this armed forces and wanted to see a professional and efficient armed forces which, she said, proved their ability through the exercise today.

Hasina said the armed forces have earned a great reputation with their professional ability, discipline and dutifulness both at home and abroad.

She said that during natural calamity, members of the armed forces played a praiseworthy role. They were seen helping the distressed, unloading foodgrains from ships in the ports and taking part in different development and nation-building activities.

The Prime Minister said the government is determined to build a strong, well-equipped and efficient armed forces befitting an independent sovereign country.

She listed the steps taken by her government for the development and welfare of the armed forces.

These are: establishment of a composite brigade, a support battalion, a construction battalion, field ambulance, field workshop and other units; increase of salary through new pay-scale; and completion of all formalities to set up a medical college and an engineering college, where the children of army personnel would get opportunity to study.

Hasina particularly mentioned that a National Defence College (NDC) has been established for the higher training of officers. The NDC course will be introduced in the college from January next and the Army War course to be introduced from 2001.

Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Mustafizur Rahman described the objective and design of the exercise, and said they used a lake inside the cantonment instead of a river to keep the people undisturbed.

Brigade Commander of 88th Infantry Division Brigadier Mobin conducted the whole operation.

Chief of Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Jamal Uddin Ahmed, Chief of Naval Staff Nurul Islam, Defence Secretary Syed Yusuf Hossain and Area Commander Maj Gen Jamil Ahsan received the Prime Minister at the Cantonment.

Homage paid to Suhrawardy

By Staff Correspondent

The 35th death anniversary of Hussain Shahid Suhrawardy was observed yesterday throughout the country in a befitting manner.

On this day in 1963, the great leader of democracy died at a hotel in Beirut at the age of 71.

In observance of the day, different political parties and socio-cultural organisations chalked out elaborate programmes, including placing of wreaths, holding of milad mahfil and discussion meeting.

Suhrawardy was the former Chief Minister of the undivided Bengal and Prime Minister of Pakistan, was one of the founders of the Awami League.

The day's programmes began with placing of wreaths and offering of *fateha* at the mazar of the late leader.

Leaders and workers of ruling Awami League led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina placed wreaths and offered *fateha* at the mazar of Suhrawardy at 9:30 am yesterday.

AL leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Abdul Mannan MP, Zilur Rahman, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak, Motta Chowdhury and others were present at that time.

Later in the afternoon, the ruling party organised a discussion meeting at party's central office with Mayor Mohammad Hanif who was the chief guest. He was addressed, among others, by Mofazzel Hossain Paltu, Mofazzel Hossain Chowdhury Maya, advocate Abdul Mannan, and Mukul Bose.

Fake dollars

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But the detectives are sure that the gang has been at work across the country and created a network of local accomplices.

According to police, a number of people have alleged that they were caught napping to the point they sold out all their property to negotiate such deals. DB sources say some deals involved US\$ 20,000 in genuine bills in return for 2 million US dollars in fake notes.

Police have stepped up surveillance across the country to detect such cheats. The 14, already arrested, are still being questioned for more clues.

Central and city unit leaders of the party will take part in the discussion.