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Next date of Jail Killing Case hearing fixed Feb 15

The Metropolitan Sessions Court in the city yesterday fixed February 15 as the next date for hearing of the Jail Killing Case which came up for trial after long 23 years of the brutal incident, reports UNB.

Five out of the eight arrested accused were produced before the newly-constituted court in the afternoon. They are: Lt Col (ret) Syed Farook Rahman, Lt Col (ret) Sultan Shahriyar Rashid Khan, Major (ret) Khairuzzaman, Major (ret) Bazul Huda and former state minister for information Taheruddin Thakur.

Three others, who could not be produced before the court due to their sickness, are K M Obaidur Rahman MP, Shah Maazem Hossain and Nurul Islam Manzur. All three are undergoing treatment at the Bangabandhu Medical University (PG) Hospital.

See Page 12 Col 5

Presidium discusses opposition threats AL summons NEC to plan strategy

By Staff Correspondent

The ruling Awami League plans to hold a series of consultative meetings at different levels in the party to frame a strategy to face an all-opposition movement and the ensuing local government polls.

The policymaking party presidium yesterday convened a meeting of the National Executive Committee (NEC) on January 22 at Ganobhaban to chart a course of action. The following day, an extended meeting of the NEC would be held at 10 am at the same venue.

The party chief, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, chaired the meeting at her official residence Ganobhaban. Starting at

9:00pm, the meeting lasted for more than an hour, insiders said.

The 15-strong AL presidium sat in the wake of threats from major opposition parties — BNP, Jatiya Party and Jamaat — to launch an anti-government campaign after Eid-ul-Fitr. The opposition parties have already put forward a four-point charter of demands with a 30-day ultimatum.

They demand that the Chief Election Commissioner resign, the Election Commission be re-structured, voters be issued with identity cards prior to the ensuing local government polls and repression on opposition ac-

tivists be stopped.

As expected, these issues topped the meeting agenda, party sources said.

The AL leadership also discussed the threat of boycott of local government polls by the opposition and resolved that no major opposition party could "simply afford to abstain". The view was that local government bodies were the "power base" for political parties to face general elections, planned for 2000.

The AL presidium meeting also took note of the fact that 11 left-leaning political parties had already reached a consensus for contesting the municipal

Double-murder Two arrested in Ctg, placed on remand

CHITTAGONG, Jan 12: Police today arrested two alleged terrorists who are suspected to be involved in double-murder in city's Mehdiabagh area on Monday, reports UNB.

They are A K M Riaz Uddin and S M Waliullah of the same area. The accused were placed on police remand for interrogation.

Unidentified gunmen gunned down two young men, Pear Mohammad and Imam Hossain, sleeping in a room.

Police strongly believe that the killers went to murder Liton, but Pear Mohammad and Imam Hossain incidentally fell victims as they were sleeping in the room of Liton.

Police sources said Liton, a musician of the area was engaged in a quarrel with the arrested persons about six months ago over sharing of illegal toll money. Liton was fined Tk 10,000 when the dispute was settled locally.

Investigators suspect Monday's murder was a sequel to that incident.

Shazneen murder: Accused dies in custody

By Staff Correspondent

Humayun Kabir, one of the seven charged accused in the Shazneen murder case, died of cardiac arrest on way to Mitford Hospital on Monday.

Humayun complained of chest pain as he, along with six other accused in the case, were brought to the court in the morning as per the date for cross examination of Latifur Rahman. Shazneen's father and complainant in the case, Humayun was a security guard at Latifur Rahman's residence.

Shazneen Tasmin Rahman, 15, the youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, was murdered at their Gulshan residence on the night of April 23. Shazneen was a student of class IX at Scholastica School.

The cross-examination of See Page 12 Col 8

B Chy declines to liaise with JP

By Nazmul Ashraf and Reazul Karim

A top BNP leader has declined to carry out an assignment that party chief Khaleda Zia wanted him to do, sources said.

Prof AQM Badruddoza Choudhury, the second-in-command in BNP, has told party secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan that he was "not willing" to lead the party team to liaise with new partners in the opposition, sources close to Choudhury said.

Before leaving for Saudi Arabia on Thursday, the BNP chief, in consultation with party secretary general, said she would like to see Choudhury, Moudud Ahmed, Nazmul Huda and Anwar Zahid as the party representatives to keep contact with the new allies until she returned home, party

sources said.

Choudhury's sentiment has been explained by the party insiders as an expression of a section of BNP leaders' reservations against tying up with Jatiya Party in the anti-government agitation.

B Choudhury, senior vice-chairman of BNP and deputy Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad, remained absent from the first formal meeting of the negotiators in the newly-formed coalition of eight opposition parties on Monday. Other partners in the coalition are Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Oikya Jote, Jagpa, Democratic League, Progressive Nationalist Party and National Democratic Alliance.

Monday's meeting failed to See Page 12 Col 7

Sohel murder Residences of 3 more girls raided

By Staff Correspondent

Aziz Mohammad Bhai continued denying his involvement in the killing of film actor Sohel Chowdhury.

He was under the custody of DB police yesterday.

Meanwhile, DB police yesterday raided the residences of three more girls for interrogating them in connection with the Sohel killing. But none of them were at home, police sources said.

Sohel was gunned down in front of Club Tramps at Banani in the city in the early hours of December 18.

Aziz Mohammad Bhai was arrested by the Special Branch (SB) of police under Section 54 of the CrP from the city's Gulshan Ladies Park Wednesday evening. He was taken on DB See Page 12 Col 3

Chairman proposes, minister opposes

By Nurul Kabir

Less than a week after the announcement that he would welcome newsmen at all meetings of the parliamentary bodies he heads, Suranjit Sengupta had to face strong opposition yesterday from a minister who is a member of the committee he chairs.

The minister opposed Sengupta on two grounds — procedure as well as practical problems.

While giving a lecture on the need for transparency in parliamentary activities, Sengupta announced on January 7 last: "From now on, I welcome newsmen at all meetings of the parliamentary committees I head."

Sengupta is the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. The committee met yesterday afternoon. Some reporters did not fail to be present at the venue.

But contrary to Sengupta's public announcement, meeting of the JS body began only after the reporters had left the room at the request of the legislators concerned.

Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru argued that there was no scope for inviting newsmen at the committee meetings "unless certain provisions of the JS Rules of Procedure — the Bible for parliamentary prac-

tices — are changed".

He quoted a couple of rules — 199 and 201 — which do not support Sengupta's view.

Rule 199 of the JS Rules of Procedure says: The sittings of a Committee shall be held in private. Rule 201 says: All persons other than members of the Committee and officers of the Parliament Secretariat shall withdraw whenever the committee is deliberating.

Sengupta, however, tried to take refuge in Rule 213 (l) that says: A committee shall have power to regulate its own procedure.

Explaining, Sengupta said that the rule empowered a committee to independently decide as to how it would function. But the minister did not take time to interpret the rule in a different manner. Quoting the second part of the rule, the minister said that the rule actually empowered the committee to invite experts, not journalists.

Rule 213 (ll) says: "A committee may obtain cooperation and advice from any expert in its respective field, if deemed necessary."

The minister "welcomed" Sengupta's spirit of making the committee activities more transparent. But he said, "If the meetings are open to journalists, I am afraid, the present level of effectiveness of the See Page 12 Col 1



Jemima charged with smuggling antiques

By Staff Correspondent

LAHORE, Jan 12: Cricket star-turned politician Imran Khan accused the government of political victimisation today after customs officials charged his wife with smuggling of antiques tiles, reports AP.

British-born Jemima Khan, the daughter of the late British millionaire businessman James Goldsmith, was sending 397 tiles to her mother in London in December when the package was seized by the customs authorities.

The archeological department examined the tiles and said in a report that the tiles were of paramount archeological interest and belonged to the Islamic era.

Counter staff said that almost all tickets from January See Page 12 Col 8



Very attractive but prohibitive price! Eid shopping is at the pick now with only few days left for the festival. The photo was taken from a shop at New Market in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Ticket touts swoop on home-goers

By Staff Correspondent

With Eid approaching fast, touts have gone on rampage again as usual, forcing home-bound people in different city bus, launch and railway terminals to buy tickets at staggering prices.

A section of transport operators and railway employees have joined hands with the touts.

The nexus between the two was evident at Kamalapur railway station during a visit by a Star correspondent yesterday.

Some railway employees and middlemen are reaping the windfall out of Eid holiday, charging two to three times higher than the rates at official ticket windows.

The railway officials sell tickets to the touts at a "fixed price" in return for some "commission".

When people ask the railway employees at the counters for tickets, they simply say that no ticket is available. Pressed further, one is advised to look around. The railway employees often become generous enough to help passengers get tickets from the black market.

At the Kamalapur station, tickets for Chittagong-bound Suborno Express on January 18 were being sold for Tk 300 against its official price Tk 150.

Counter staff said that almost all tickets from January See Page 12 Col 1

High penalty triggers dirty tricks at DSE

By M Shamsur Rahman

A new drama is unfolding at Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) after the bourse policy making Council slapped a Tk 20 lakh fine on a broker which was found to have manipulated the market with Quasem Silk shares.

Market sources say the action was taken to save the broker from a maximum five-year jail term with Tk five lakh fine, a punishment for such an offense in the normal process of law.

The Council ignored recommendations of a committee which had suggested that the matter be referred to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) since the firm violated Section 17 of the Securities and Exchange Ordinance 1969.

Any violation of the section 17 of the ordinance calls for a fine of Tk five lakh or five years in jail or both.

The brokerage firm has already obtained a court order staying the execution of the Council punishment. On Monday, a Dhaka court granted SPM Ltd plea to postpone the effectiveness of the DSE decision.

Meanwhile, the sources said there have been allegations of attempts to trap those councillors who had backed the "tough" Council decision.

And there are also charges that the management of the See Page 12 Col 7

bourse is not being allowed to exercise its powers granted by the amended DSE articles of association. Sources said some councillors are trying to dictate terms in the day-to-day affairs.

Sources said a councillor who had lent strong support to taking action against the firm was being victimised in a shrewd manner. The councillor, also a broker, has already been made to default in depositing the sold shares to the DSE clearing house, the sources said.

They said some people came as clients to the councillor's brokerage firm and was engaged in selling Gulf Foods shares. They sold as many as 40,000 shares and the firm became a "shortseller" as the market had dried.

There were not as many shares in the market to buy back to maintain the balance, which meant some other broker stopped selling the shares, trapping the broker-councillor.

As an obvious result, the councillor defaulted in depositing over 40,000 shares to the clearing house of the DSE. The DSE is now buying those shares from auction and the same group of people who dried the market are selling at double the price to the DSE as the bourse would settle the buying firm by giving shares and secure the money from the defaulting bro-

Khulna Jubo League leader gunned down

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 12: Jubo League leader Shajahan Shaikh 30 was gunned down by unidentified assailants at around 8-30 tonight in front of city Awami League office.

Police said the assailants fired at him at point-blank. He was immediately rushed to the hospital where the attending doctors declared him dead.

Police and eyewitnesses said the alleged killers recently joined Awami League from Jatiya party under the leadership of S M A Rob. Rob has been nominated by the ruling party for contesting the upcoming KCC mayoral election.

The murder of Jubo League leader sparked violence as supporters of the deceased went on a rampage in sadar hospital. They ransacked emergency ward and all vehicles in and around the hospital.

The incident took place when a meeting was being held in the party office to condemn the murders of Srantik League leaders F M Siraj and Manik Mia of People's Jute Mills on Sunday last.

Death in wheel carriage: Action against two ZIA officials

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) yesterday suspended two more employees for their negligence of duty at Zia International Airport where a young man sneaked into the wheel carriage of a British Airways aircraft and was found dead in New Delhi airport on January 2, reports BSS.

The CAAB earlier suspended nine of its officers and employees for negligence of duty at the airport on that day. Another two senior officials — director of ZIA wing commander Amirur Rahman and chief security officer of the airport Major Mizanur Rahman — were closed to their respective headquarters.

CAAB chairman air commodore Zearat Ali told BSS that they suspended two more security operators yesterday after departmental investigation.

The suspended persons are Abdus Sobhan and Mohammad Boyan.

Ctg AL faction's mayor candidate

CHITTAGONG, Jan 12: An internal feud in the ruling party's city unit cropped up over candidacy for the upcoming mayoral polls, reports UNB.

The conflict came to surface when a faction of city Awami League today announced a separate candidate for the Mayor election under the banner of Conscious Citizens Committee.

They, in a meeting, announced the name of Layat Khan, a former joint secretary of city AL, as the candidate.

Sources said, influential AL leaders M Ishaq Mian, a former MP, Nurul Islam BSC and Abu Taleb Chowdhury were present in the meeting.

Intra-party rifts have been brewing up in the city AL for the last one year since its committee was formed.

The local Awami League unit continued its activities keeping in mind that high command of the party nominated incumbent Mayor Mohiuddin Chowdhury as its candidate.

Local govt polls 11 left-leaning parties to take part unitedly

By Staff Correspondent

Eleven left-leaning political parties have decided to participate in the ensuing local government elections unitedly.

The decision was taken at a meeting of leaders of the parties, held at Gano Forum office with Saifuddin Ahmed Manik in the chair, a press release said here yesterday.

The parties include Left Democratic Front, Gano Azadi League, Gano Forum, Ganotantary Party and Communist Kendra.

The meeting decided that the parties would jointly nominate candidates in the four city corporations, pourashavas and upazilas.

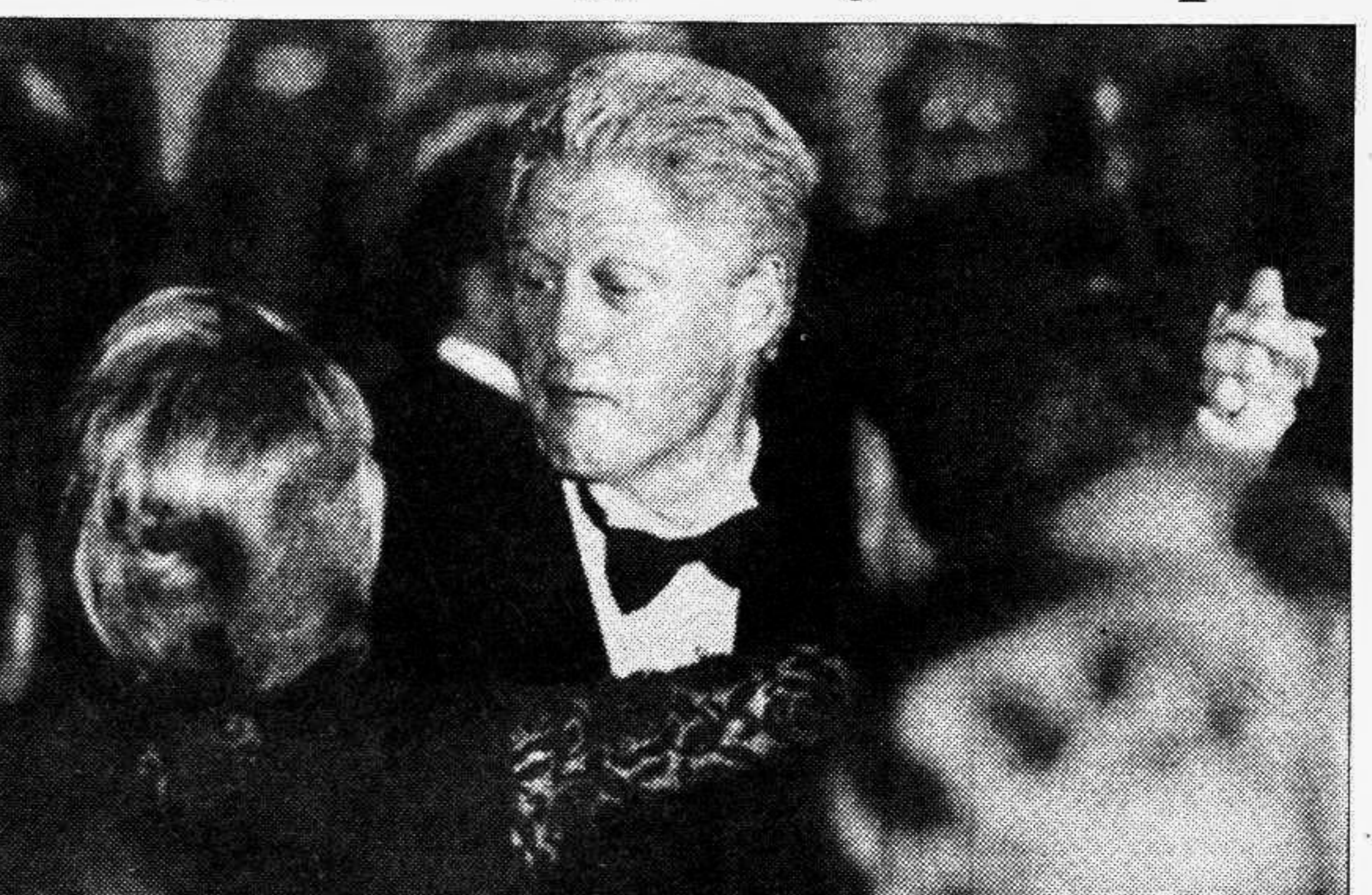
Local units of the 11 parties have been instructed to take decisions jointly.

The parties have also decided to build up a movement to free the electoral system from the influence of black money, terrorism, communalism and rigging, the press release said.

The meeting was attended by Mujahedul Islam Selim, Bimol Biswas, Saiful Haq, Azizul Islam, Iqbal Majumder, Haji Abdus Samad, Nurur Rahman Selim, Pankaj Bhattacharyya and Moulana Ahmedur Rahman Azmi.

See Page 12 Col 3

Stage being set for impeachment drama tomorrow



President Clinton dances the tango with Amanda de Fernandez, wife of Argentine Minister of Economics Roque Fernandez, at a state dinner for Argentine President Carlos Menem at the White House Monday. — AP/UNB photo

WASHINGTON, Jan 12: Charting a legal course for President Bill Clinton's trial and any presidential impeachments to come, House prosecutors and White House defenders are clashing over the evidence in a written preview of the drama soon to unfold in the Senate, reports AP.

The two sides filed briefs Monday that blended arguments over Clinton's guilt or innocence with momentous predictions of how the case would influence future judgments of presidential misconduct.

In a road map for oral arguments that begin with the House presentation Thursday on the Senate floor, prosecutors said that if Clinton is not convicted of the perjury and obstruction-of-justice charges, "the bar will be so high that only a convicted felon or a traitor will need to be concerned."

The House trial brief Monday rebutted White House arguments earlier in the day. Clinton's lawyers contended that his attempts to conceal an extramarital affair with former White House volunteer Monica Lewinsky "do not permit the conviction and removal ... of a duly elected president."

"The charges ... do not rise to the level of high crimes and misdemeanors" as contemplated by the founding fathers," the White House said.

Both sides Monday tried to hone their presentations, knowing that the openings will take on an even greater significance if the Senate does not allow witnesses later in the trial. Each side has 24 hours on the clock, with the White House to follow when the prosecutors are done.

Lead prosecutor Rep. Henry Hyde, a Republican, who plans to begin the prosecutors' opening presentation, said this was "not the time to get angry with the Senate" over its decision to delay his demand for witnesses.

Vice President Al Gore predicted Monday that the Senate would not muster the two-thirds vote to convict Clinton. "What the president did was wrong," Gore told The Associated Press in an interview. "He's acknowledged that, asked for forgiveness. But what he did falls far short" of misbehavior warranting removal from office.

The White House submission Monday was a 13-page answer to a Senate summons that sought a response to the two ar-

ticles of impeachment approved by the House. The House submission was a 105-page trial brief. The White House has until tomorrow to counter with its own trial brief rebuttal.

The president's filing denied guilt on the perjury and obstruction charges, "President Clinton denies that he made perjurious, false and misleading statements before the federal grand jury on August 17, 1998," the brief said. "President Clinton denies that he obstructed justice in either the (Paula) Jones case or the Lewinsky grand jury investigation."

The House called the trial "a defining moment for the presidency as an institution, because if the President is not convicted as a consequence of the conduct that has been portrayed, then no House of Representatives will ever be able to impeach again and no Senate will ever convict...."

"How far can the standard be lowered without completely compromising the credibility of the office for all time?"

Not surprisingly, the two sides had opposite interpretations of the same events: that consumed Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr for nine months

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Prayer Timings

January 13		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:20	5:26
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:00	4:15
Maghrib	5:35	5:38
Esha	7:00	7:15

Source: Islamic Foundation

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Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
24	13	—	5:35
25	14	5:20	5:35
26	15	5:20	5:36