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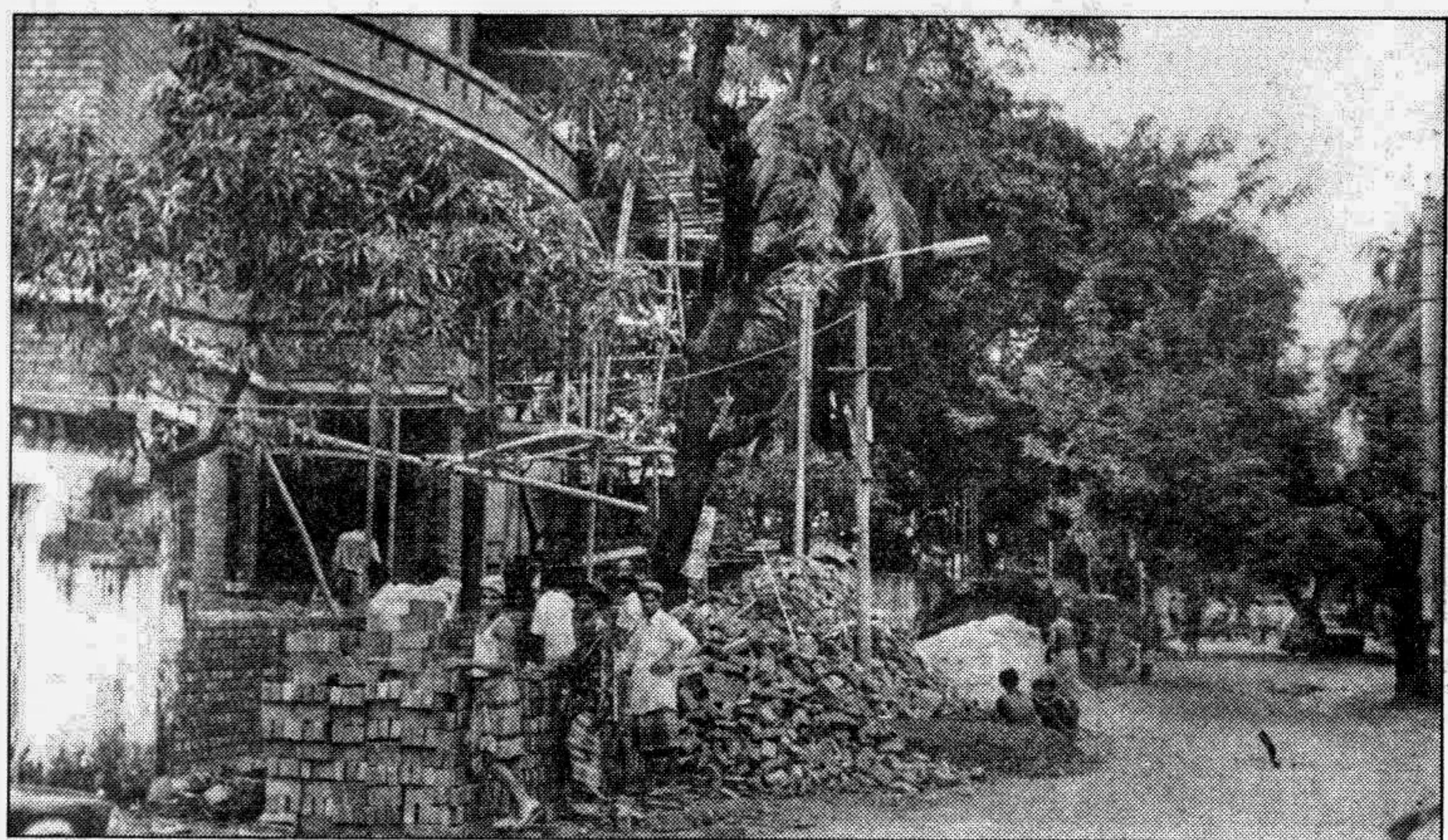


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Aggression

A Dhanmondi resident defies law and others' rights, occupying half of the 15-foot road with construction material. But

Star photo by Anisur Rahman

New taxes: Sharif faces series of protests

ISLAMABAD, Sept 1: Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif faces the first of a series of major protests today by traders angry at new taxes and opposition parties united in their determination to force him to step down, reports Reuters.

The demonstrations, which bring together hardline Islamic parties and traditional opposition groups, began in Sharif's home town of Lahore this evening and are planned as the biggest since he was elected in 1997.

Sharif has played down the significance of the demonstrations, saying protests cannot reverse the huge majority he won in February 1997 elections.

"They won't harm the government," he told a Tuesday rally.

But behind-the-scenes at-

tempts to defuse the protests reveal government concern that they could snowball as it administers tough economic medicine prescribed by the IMF despite pledges the "common man" will not be taxed further, political sources said.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar tried in vain on Tuesday to head off a traders protest set for September 4 across Pakistan that has support of major opposition political parties.

The Lahore protest today is the first of three demonstrations which culminate with a rally by the Jamaat-i-Islami, Islamic opposition group of Qazi Hussain Ahmad next Monday.

Opposition parties have rallied behind the protest to add weight to a "Sharif Out" campaign they have waged since he ordered fighters to leave Kash-

Showcause

From Page 1
trial bank notice. But the judges refused to hear the petition Monday citing time constraints. The court did not hear the case again yesterday.

Habibul Islam Bhuyian appearing for Babu said yesterday that his clients were challenging the same central bank notice which had been issued on the other petitioners (Zafar and others).

The court said it would take up the matter on Sunday next.

Babu seeks DMP's help

Meanwhile, Babu in a letter to Dhaka Metropolitan Police said Tuesday that the High Court order staying the central bank's notice did not declare Zafar Chowdhury as chairman of the bank. He sought DMP's help "to maintain law and order situation in the offices of UCBL and protection of the law-abiding board of directors of UCBL".

Babu, using the UCBL letter-head, wrote the letter Tuesday evening.

Babu told DMP that five directors including Zafar Chowdhury voluntarily resigned on Thursday last and that he and four others were elected directors of the bank. "I was also unanimously elected chairman of the bank in the said meeting.

He said the records would show that he and 10 others were lawful directors of the bank. Babu also claimed that Zafar Chowdhury brought false allegations against him that they had been forced to resign.

Babu said that Zafar and his men were trying to enter the head office and hold meetings which was illegal. He said the High Court had stayed the central bank order but "the High Court did not declare Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury and his group as chairman and members of the board of directors of the bank."

In a similar manner, Babu had also written to the UCBL managing director, asking him not to cooperate with the board by Zafar Chowdhury.

Lockwood

From Page 1
itself in such a way that its members will be able to use parliament better.

Appreciating then Jatiya Sangsad for organising the first ever conference of parliamentarians from Asian countries, Lockwood said it would enable dialogue on global issue of peace and cooperation and enhance the reputation of parliament as it grows out of the shadows of dictatorship and repression of the 1970s and 80s.

People won't accept poll victory using money: President

President Shahabuddin Ahmed has said the country needs dedicated patriots and personalities with moral character for democracy to flourish, reports UNB.

"It's easy to win election using manpower and money but the practice is not good for democracy as people don't accept such election," he said at a seminar marking the 81st birth anniversary of Bangabir MAG Osmany.

Bangabir Osmany Smriti Parishad organised the seminar on the "Leadership role in building national character and searching for economic emancipation" at Osmany auditorium in the city yesterday.

Parishad president Syed Abul Hossain presided.

Paying rich tributes to the memory of Osmany, the President recalled his life and works and said he (Osmany) believed that leadership with strong moral character is needed for establishing democracy.

Osmany believed that government's accountability to the people lies in parliamentary system, not in the presidential one, the President said.

He said Osmany demonstrated his belief by resigning from parliament when one-party rule bill was placed in the clash at Mukundarjee.

Food-aided programmes must produce lasting assets'

By Staff Correspondent

With dramatic change in global food aid portfolio, Bangladesh needs to utilise all its food-aided programmes for sustainable development of 30-million ultra poor in the country.

Dr Werner Kiene, country representative of the World Food Programme (WFP) to Bangladesh, said this while giving a talk on 'Food Security of Bangladesh and World Food Programme', at Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) in the

expenses on education, sell out their last remaining assets and even sell their labour in advance. Sometimes they are forced to lend money from informal sources with high interest rate, Kiene added.

Explaining the WFP's role in Bangladesh, Kiene said that food-aided programmes must produce lasting assets and develop skills among the economically vulnerable section of the people for the sake of food security in the long run.

Instead of mere availability of food in the country, Kiene laid more emphasis on ensuring access to nutritious food by the ultra poor.

He noted that ultra poor people are compelled to reduce their food intake, which is below 1800 kilo calorie per person a day. They also have to reduce

Indian FM says
Bangladesh not
encouraging ISI
activities

NEW DELHI, Sept 1: India's External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh yesterday gave a clean chit to Bangladesh, absolving it from the charge of abetting insurgency in northeastern region of India through the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan, reports BSS.

"Bangladesh is not encouraging ISI activities against India, such activities may be taking place clandestinely on the soil of Bangladesh," he told newsmen at a meeting with the press at Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) headquarters here.

Singh said New Delhi had effectively and timely taken up the issue with Dhaka.

The minister said China was also not extending any help to the insurgency groups and ISI activities in Assam.

Replies to a question, he said Sino-India talks at experts group level would take place in October this year, as agreed to during his visit to Beijing.

Singh hinted that he might meet Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz during the UN General Assembly session in New York, but insisted that an end to cross-border terrorism was an essential ingredient for meaningful talks with Islamabad.

Promod Mahajan does it again

NEW DELHI, Sept 1: Indian Information Minister Promod Mahajan has again courted controversy ahead of coming elections, comparing a political rival with the much-married Elizabeth Taylor, the Hindu daily said today, reports AFP.

Mahajan, who had to apologise for remarks likening opposition leader Sonia Gandhi with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky, has attacked Sharad Pawar, a leading politician from the western state of Maharashtra.

Pawar changed parties as often as Ms Taylor changed husbands," the newspaper quoted Mahajan as saying.

Pawar, a former stalwart in the main opposition Congress Party, floated his own party this year after raising the banner of revolt against the Italian-born Gandhi.

A spokesman for Mahajan's Hindu nationalist BJP Party Prakash Jawadekar told the Hindu that the minister's remarks were aimed at "educating the masses on the realities about political leaders."

69 killed

From Page 1
cer who was on the ground lost a leg, the news agency Diarios y Noticias reported.

The plane, which was headed to Cordoba, 650 kilometres (475 miles) northwest of the capital, lost contact with the air tower a minute into the flight, LAPA spokesman Ricardo Wilson said.

A High Court order Monday asked the central bank to submit inquiry report within two weeks.

Another investigation by CID into the case is also underway.

Meanwhile, UCBL activities appear to have returned to normal.

Cong alleges 'Sugargate' scam to pin down BJP-led alliance

From Pallab Bhattacharya

that country.

The main opposition party alleged the deal was clinched when there was a sugar glut in Indian market and that the Food Ministry's "objection" were overruled by the Prime Minister's office.

The Indian government, on the other hand, termed as "ridiculous" the Congress charge of loss of Rs 900 crore to the exchequer due to sugar import from Pakistan and brushed aside the allegation of involvement of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpeyi.

An official spokesman said the imports were made exclusively by private parties under Open General Licence enforced in 1994 and the government had no role in the imports.

The spokesman said in a statement that taking into consideration the fact that Indian sugar industry was "facing difficulty" in meeting the situation arising out of the sugar import, the present government levied import duty initially at five per

cent which was later increased to 20 per cent and 25 per cent.

Due to these steps, the domestic sugar industry was now "better equipped" to face competition from overseas.

Political observers here say the Congress, by raising the "Sugargate" issue, is seeking to break out of the BJP-led alliance's poll planks focusing on top opposition leader Sonia Gandhi's foreign origin issue and Vajpeyi government's "success" on the Kargil stand-off with Pakistan.

In fact, a day after Kapil Sibal broached the subject of sugar import deal with Pakistan, Congress chief, Sonia Gandhi, alleged at an election rally in the western state of Maharashtra that BJP-led government was "mired in corruption" and "serious charges" had been levelled against the Prime Minister's office.

Sonia Gandhi also said the Congress would continue to take up the issue of sugar import deal with Pakistan.

Clinton's visit not confirmed yet: Humphrey

By Staff Correspondent
US President Bill Clinton might come to Bangladesh sometime early next year.

Clinton Humphrey, US Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Energy, said this at a press briefing in the city yesterday.

Clinton's possible visit to Bangladesh will be part of his planned visit to South Asia in the first quarter of 2000, Humphrey told newsmen before his departure on conclusion of a four-day visit.

He, however, added the President's visit is not confirmed as yet.

Three Mongla Port officials charged with defalcation of Tk 1.25 cr

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, Sept 1: Sharif Atiqur Rahman, member, engineer of Mongla Port Authority (MPA) has been charged with defalcation of Tk 1.25 crore in the name of repairing a crane for which no tender was floated.

The sub-committee of the Parliament Standing Committee on the Ministry of Shipping has also charged Mosharraf Hossain, member, finance and Md Fazlul Huq, chief audit officer with the same offence and suggested suspension of the three officials.

A source in Mongla Port Authority said today that all the three officials are still in regular service despite suggestion by the sub-committee of the parliamentary standing committee comprising Mir Shakhat Ali Daru MP, Golam Faruque Ovi MP and Mrs Mahmuda Shawgat MP.

The sub-committee unearthed more defalcations in purchasing a microbus, constructing vessel berth jetty and pursuing about 100 cases in lower courts for which the MPA spent an amount of Tk 26,06,080 from 1980-81 fiscal to 1997-98 fiscal.

Khulna city AL leader held

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, Sept 1: Alhaj Monir Hossain, a top ranking leader of city Awami League, was arrested from his Khalishpur residence at midnight on Tuesday.

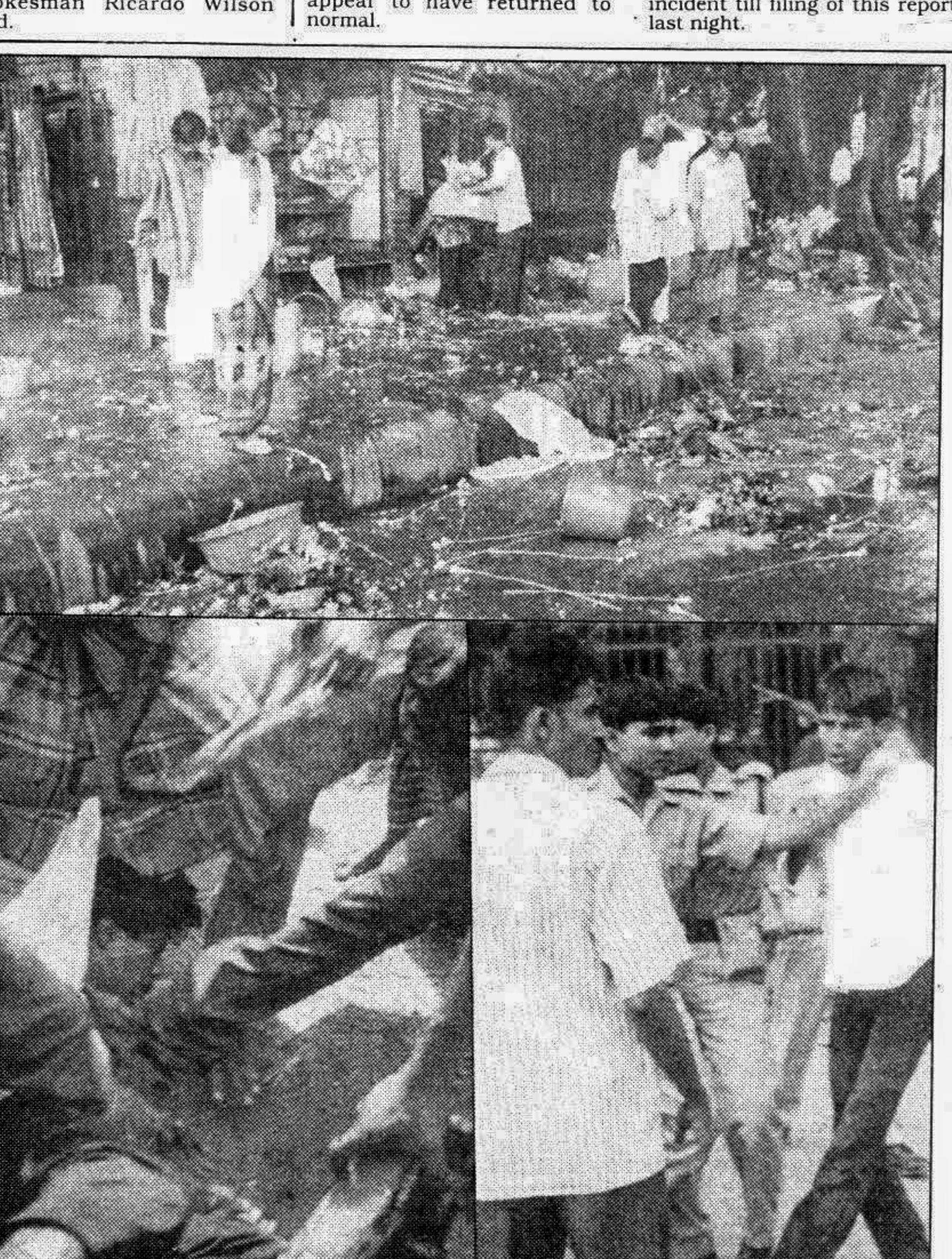
He was wanted in connection with two criminal cases, including embezzlement of fund of Mongla port authority. Alhaj Monir is also a suspect in two murder cases filed with Khalishpur thana last year, police said.

CU liaison body to begin talks with student bodies today

From CU Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Sept 1: The newly-formed four-member liaison committee will start talk with seven student organisations at the Chittagong University from tomorrow for immediate reopening of the university.

On the first day, the committee will sit with Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), on September 4 with Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), on September 5 with Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF) and Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS), on September 6 with Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU) and Islami Chhatra Sena (ICS) and on September 7 with Jatiya Chhatra Samaj (JCS).

Earlier, the university authorities had formed a four-member liaison committee headed by Prof. Imran Hossain, Dean of the Arts Faculty to discuss immediate reopening of the university with the student bodies.



Crime and punishment

(Top) Vandals spew venom in the flower shops at city's Shahbagh crossing, (above left) but were paid off in their own coin yesterday. Witnesses said a gang of eight appeared at 9am to demand money and, when refused, damaged 10 outlets. The flower traders responded angrily to the vandalism, beating up some of the culprits mercilessly. At least two of them were handed over to police (above right). But Ramna police later denied having detained anyone and said no body lodged any complaint.

Star photos by Sk Enamul Haq