

# Supreme Court incident Nazmul Huda refutes ministers' allegations

By Special Correspondent

Barrister Nazmul Huda, convenor of Sammlita Ainjibi Parishad, has refuted the allegations made by the Law Minister and Home Minister that he and other lawyers had created vandalism in the Supreme Court, demanded resignation of the Chief Justice and kicked the door of his office on Thursday.

"If the government file any case on the pretexts of such allegations against the 'Sangrami' (protesting) lawyers, it will have to bear the consequences," he told newsmen at a press conference at 1-30 pm yesterday in the Supreme Court Bar Association south hall.

His comments came in the wake of statements by ministers, including law minister in Parliament on Monday, demanding cases be filed against the lawyers including Huda. They said they staged unprecedented demonstration against appointment of two judges to the Appellate Division by indulging in vandalism, confining the judges and dis-

## Dubey pleads zero-tariff

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Commerce Minister Abdul Jalil and MCCI President Latifur Rahman also spoke on the occasion. Leading entrepreneurs of the country were present. Commerce Secretary Golam Rahman also attended.

On the problems and advantages Bangladesh may have after 2004, the terminal year for phasing out quota restriction on textile products, Dubey observed that Bangladesh would still be more competitive than many of its competitors including India.

"I think Bangladesh would be able to yield twice as much benefit than any other country in a quota-free world," said the former Indian high commissioner in Dhaka.

Dubey, however, said Bangladesh has to take concrete measures for structural adjustment in textile sector by phasing out old textile units and modernising the sector.

Giving a brief history of trade negotiations, GATT and WTO, he said in the last 20-30 years, duty on goods has been reduced mostly in the interest of rich nations.

Dubey said time has now come for the LDCs and developing countries to make their point for drastically bringing down the export subsidies provided by the developed countries.

## Hasina tells JS

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certain tasks in certain areas, the PM told the House.

To another question, Sheikh Hasina said that the service entry age for the offspring of freedom fighters has been increased from 30 to 32 to fill the 30 per cent quota reserved for the freedom fighters in government jobs.

The Public Service Commission has been asked to arrange a special BCS examination to fill more than 600 vacancies reserved under the freedom fighters' quota.

## Japanese team

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Jamuna bridge and other bridges.

Khaleda said if BNP goes to power, an EPZ will be set up exclusively for Japan. "We hope Japan will not set up industries only in the EPZ. It will also set up heavy industries for the benefit of both the countries," she told Nojima.

She requested the delegation to urge Japanese investors and businessmen to set up more industries in Bangladesh.

In reply, Koji Nojima said the main objective of their visit is to study investment prospects in Bangladesh. On return home, the team will submit a report and apprise Japanese investors of the prospects in Bangladesh.

Nojima said Japan always gives due importance to Bangladesh because of its location, linking South Asia and South East Asia.

Khaleda Zia also sought Japanese technical cooperation for

## Dhanmondi Lake Project

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comprehensive management policy for the lake. The government has formed two committees to run the business of the Dhanmondi Lake, informed the DCC official.

The five-member executive committee, headed by the CEO of DCC, comprises chief engineer of PWD, chief engineer of DCC, additional chief engineer of LGED and an advisory engineer of Bhatti Stapathi Brinda -- consultants of the project.

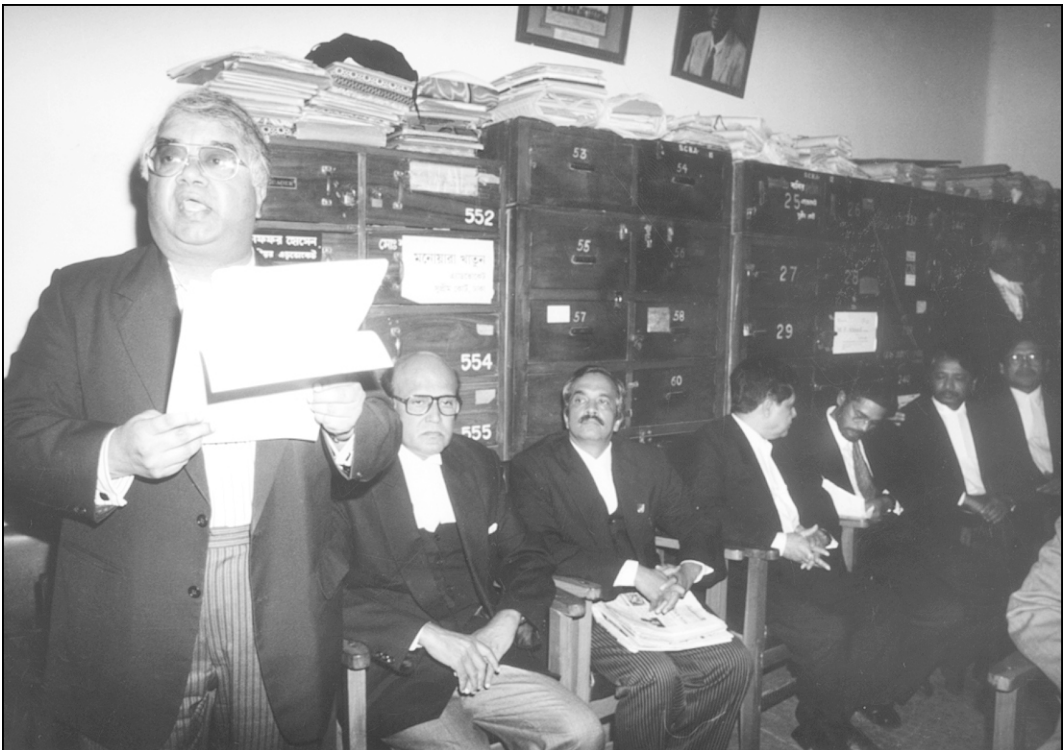
Huda added that responsibilities of the executive committee include leasing out 18 commercial components, operating the management, conducting monthly inspection of the area, solving problems with other service agencies and also publishing a project-highlighting brochure.

Huda also said that the ten-member advisory committee of

the lake includes secretary of Local Government Division, CEO of DCC, managing director of WASA, chief engineer of LGED and four local residents.

Sources informed that the three local residents of the Advisory Committee are Kafiluddin Mahmud, a retired bureaucrat, Kamrul Islam Siddiq, secretary of the works ministry and Secretary of Dhanmondi thana Awami League Fazlur Rahman Razu and Ainul Haque. Two other members of the advisory committee are a representative of the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum and that of the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Trust.

"We'll soon float a tender to lease out 18 components separately," said Huda. "We look forward to starting the commercial activities by February 21."



Barrister Nazmul Huda, convenor of Sammlito Ainjibi Parishad, speaking at a press conference at the Supreme Court Bar Association south hall yesterday. -Star photo

## ASP of CID cross-examined

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Moulavibazar district with Shazneen.

Shazneen along with her sisters and others went to their Marino Tea garden in Kulaura on April 3, 1998 and her parents went to India on April 2, he said.

Maids Minu and Parvin were at the Gulshan residence of Latifur Rahman when Shazneen went to the tea garden.

Latifur Rahman along his wife returned home on April, 18, 1998 and Shazneen along with her sisters and others came back on April 16.

Mojibur told the court that he investigated the murder case and scrutinised the inquest report. Sub-inspector Shamsul Haq prepared the inquest report at about 3.45 am on April 25, 1998, he said.

Minu came to the residence of Latifur Rahman two months before the murder took place.

Mojibur said he did not know Minu's salary.

He said Parvin was brought to the house seven days before the incident to assist the killers in the planned murder. Latifur Rahman's wife had no role in appointing the servants, he said.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, Chairman of Transcom Group, was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence on April 23, 1998.

Latifur Rahman filed a murder case with Gulshan thana on April 24, 1998, accusing Shahidul Islam alias Shahid, a domestic help at his house.

Mojibur had filed a rape case with Gulshan thana after six months' investigation into the murder case.

Shahidul Islam is the principal accused in the case while contractor Hasan is the alleged mastermind.

All the accused Shahid, Hasan, Badal, Shaniram, Minu and Parvin were present at the court during the cross-examination.

Special public prosecutors ABM Shafuddin Khan Mukul and Mahbub Ahmed appeared for the state while Advocates Mosarraf Hossain Kajol and M A Kamrul Hasan Khan Aslam appeared for the accused.

The murder case, pending with the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's court, Dhaka, was earlier stayed by an order of the Supreme Court. The order will remain valid till disposal of the rape case.

## Agri Commission report

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tion growth in the country.

The commission, headed by Prime Minister's Agriculture and Food Advisor AM Anisuzzaman, completed its report on May 14, 1999. However, the government extended its tenure till December 1999 on the pretext of holding several workshops on the report in different agro-ecological zones of the country to elicit view from experts and public.

The workshops were never held, nor was the report ever made public. The Daily Star, however, published a summary of the report on September 21, 1999.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury said that the government had earlier circulated copies of the commission report to all ministries concerned and incorporated many of their suggestions.

"In the last cabinet meeting, when we discussed the report, the prime minister herself set forth some suggestions," said Chowdhury. "The special committee that the cabinet has formed would now review the report and work out ways and means to implement the recommendations made by the Commission."

However, no specific timeframe was defined for the ministerial committee to complete its review, said official sources.

Finance minister, agriculture minister, industries minister, fisheries and livestock minister, and forest and environment minister and agriculture and food advisor to the prime minister are on the high-profile committee, sources added.

The Ministry of Agriculture claims that the government has already implemented the majority of recommendations on crop sector, while non-crop sectors have lagged behind.

But the experts who gave valuable inputs into the report considered that Bangladesh required a lot more to do for facing the future challenges in the agro-sector and achieving food-autarchy in a given year should leave no room for complacency.

In its report the Agriculture Commission noted that if enough pro-agricultural activities were not immediately undertaken and agro-based industries not developed in the countryside, migration of unemployed farmhands to urban areas would put additional pressure on the already overburdened utility service network.

The commission also observed with grave concern that money saved from subsidy-cuts in agriculture was diverted to other sectors, whereas reduction of subsidy on agricultural inputs was initiated in the 1980s to support different sub-sectors of agriculture. It strongly pleaded for redirecting money to agricultural research.

Budgetary allocation for agricultural research in the country is one of the lowest in the world and subsidy to agriculture constitutes one-third of the volume permissible under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules.

## FM opens D-8 Commission meet

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and said a strong and effective private sector partnership is vitally necessary.

He said the current decade would pose a greater challenge in politics and foreign policy than in science and economics.

"In international negotiations, whether in the field of environment, in genetically modified foods or in cultural affairs, science and economics now take a back seat to politics," he said.

Azad said that in this era of globalisation, plight and sufferings of the developing countries were mounting as they face increasing marginalisation in the world economy.

He express hope that under the umbrella of D-8, the member countries would share their diverse experience and expertise for production and meaningful cooperation.

The Bangladesh foreign minister stated that the sphere of cooperation has been gradually expanding under the D-8 and the private sector is being drawn into its fold.

The foreign minister appreciated the initiative of Egypt to convene the first business forum of the D-8 group prior to the 3rd summit in Cairo and welcomed the proposal of Iran for easing of visa restrictions among the member countries.

Commerce Minister Mohammad Abdul Jalil, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Foreign Secretary Shafi Sami and Executive Director of D-8, Ambassador Ayhan Kamel of Turkey, and Foreign Secretary (Multilateral) Dr Toufiq Ali also spoke on the occasion.

Commerce Minister M A Jalil in his speech expressed the hope that cooperative endeavour among the D-8 countries would help overcome the common concern in global trade, agriculture and poverty alleviation. He said the D-8 vision transcends trade and makes it a stepping-stone to improve the standard of living of the peoples of its member countries.

Welcoming the participants, Foreign Secretary Shafi Sami expressed the hope that development of the forum of the eight countries would cement the foundation of cooperation among them to improve the living standard of 800 million people who share common religion, culture, and social and economic issues.

Executive Director of D-8, Ayhan Kamel praised the role of Bangladesh in the forum activities and said Bangladesh has so far presided over 24 expert-level meetings out of 34.



Two girls were injured when an abandoned bomb exploded at a college ground in Keraniganj yesterday. They are now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. -Star photo

## Maj Gen (retd) Kabir joins BNP

Opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia asked her party men to take all-out preparations to resist any evil design of the ruling Awami League to return to power through terrorism, reports UNB.

Her call came while Maj Gen (retd) M Anwarul Kabir Talukdar of Sarishabari, Jamalpur, joined BNP yesterday.

Kabir is the nephew of former secretary general of BNP Abdus Salam Talukdar.

Scores of BNP leaders, workers and supporters from Sarishabari were present at the function at 29 Minto Road.

Branding Awami League as terrorist, Begum Zia cautioned her workers that they could indulge in any kind of terrorism. "Thwart their evil design. Our victory is certain, Inshallah."

She asked the party activists to work unitedly to achieve the goal of victory in the next general election.

## Cassette case

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On behalf of Ershad, his counsel Khandaker Mahbub Hossain, Barrister Mainul Hosen, President of Supreme Court Bar Association, for the Daily Ittefaq, Deputy Attorney General Bazlur Rahman Chhana and Barrister Shelly Rahman for daily Manob Jamin listened to the tape.

## Bangladesh booters

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tain Sasa Illic in the 18th and 34th minutes. Bangladesh fought hard to keep the marauding Yugoslavs at bay but eventually gave in during the dying minutes of the match. Both goals were scored in 78th and 87th minutes.

Bangladesh lost their opening match to Bosnia 2-0 on Friday.

## Split verdict

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two judges, of the Death Reference Bench, in his judgement acquitted five of the 15 accused.

The other judge, Justice ABM Khairul Huq, confirmed the death sentence of all the 15.

Four of them are in the death row at the Dhaka Central Jail. The others are absconding, most of them are believed to be out of the country.

The 15 were sentenced to death by a trial court on November 8, 1998 for murdering Bangabandhu and most of the members of his family on August 15, 1975.

## Quorum crisis

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Incidentally, the House saw the presence of exactly 60 lawmakers, the minimum required strength for a quorum, when the day's sitting ended at 12:40pm.

On the opening day, absence of quorum also marked the yearly address by the president.

The quorum crisis -- presence of less than 60 members in the 330-strong House -- is an old phenomenon in the present parliament, but the crisis worsened since the BNP-led opposition parties started boycotting the proceedings 18 months ago.

Nevertheless, the House continues to function these days, as the absence of quorum is not brought to the notice of the Speaker, a practice usually done by the opposition.

The Rules of Procedure allows the Chair to continue to run the House even without a quorum unless a member brings the issue to his notice.

## Rab murder

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Hitler named an industrialist and his younger brother, a former Mayor of KCC and some others as masterminds in the killing.

When asked, the complainant termed Hitler's statement a "cooked-up story full of lies to damage the case to saving the FIR-named persons".

When asked, former mayor Kazi Aminul Huq denied his involvement in the murder. He claimed that Hitler had demanded a huge mount of money from him in October last year and threatened him for non-compliance. "I field a General Diary (GD) with Khulna Sadar thana fearing attempt on my life by Hitler. For this, Hitler implicated me in his judicial confession," Huq said.

Complainant Mithu asserted, "None but the 13 persons named in the FIR is at all involved in the murder of my father."

## UK-based

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menting organisations, duplication of projects, inappropriate technology and expertise also came up in the discussion.

As a result, they said, people are suffering from confusion and are deprived of reliable result of project work as well actual scenario of arsenic problem.

The discussants demanded a national water policy and water standard specification under which guideline donor agencies and other organisations would do work.

They put forward some demands including improvement of donors' transparency and accountability, transparency in choosing consultants and culturally sensitising them before sending them to Bangladesh.

## PSA case against 17

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One of the accused advocate Humayn Kabir Bulbul told this correspondent over telephone last night that he went into hiding to escape arrest while another accused advocate Mahabubuddin Khokon said, "I am attending my chamber as I am not afraid of arrest."

Advocate Kazi Mohammad Izarul Haq Akhond, the complainant, in his FIR alleged that some lawyers led by Barrister Nazmul Huda created chaos in front of the court of the Chief Justice at about 9:30 am after the proceedings of the Appellate Division had started at about 9:00 am Thursday.

At one stage sitting in front of the chamber of the Chief Justice and judges' lounge, the lawyers chanted slogans and hurled abusive words to judges of Appellate Division and High Court Division. The lawyers kept all the judges of the Supreme Court, including the Chief Justice, for about three and a half hours, and kicked on the door of rooms of the judges.

alleged that he could recognise Moshed Khan among some outsider terrorists and musclemen at the court during the incident.

Meanwhile, the "pro-opposition" lawyers accused in the case last night met BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in the parliament Khaleda Zia at her 29 Minto Road official residence. Khandakar Mahabubuddin Ahmed led the team.

## DUTA to expel Prof Aftab

By DU Correspondent

Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA) has decided to expel Prof Aftab Uddin Ahmed of Political Science Department for his derogatory remarks about the national anthem.

DUTA executive committee took the decision at a meeting, chaired by its acting president Prof Ashraf Uddin Chowdhury at the DU club on Sunday, said a press release.

## Singaporean ship seized

CHITTAGONG, Jan 16: Police have seized MV Samara, owned by a Singaporean company, on charge of human trafficking, reports UNB.

Upon an order of the Metropolitan Magistrate Court here Monday, police seized the ship at the outer anchorage early today.

They earlier arrested the owner of Suny Marine Shipping Line, the local agent of the Singaporean company, Captain (retd) Abdul Malek and an employee. They are now in jail.

Some 18 Bangladeshis were rescued from the ship on January 2 while they were being taken abroad in the guise of Ukrainian sailors.

## Lawyers clash

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assistants equipped with sticks attacked the room of ADC, resulting in a violent clash.

Police resorted to indiscriminate baton charge to bring the situation under control, but failed.

During the two-hour clash, both the groups threw bricks, chased each other, leaving 50 people including pedestrians, injured.

The injured include an ASP and eight other policemen.

Later, riot police were called out and they fired about 10 warning shots and clubbed the agitating lawyers.

Twenty-nine of the injured were admitted to Sirajganj General Hospital and different clinics. Of them, condition of four lawyers and six employees was stated to be critical.

## Mufti Hannan

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used for making bombs and firearms, the petitioner added.

The factory was shifted to Gopalganj after few months renaming it as 'Sonar Bangla Soap Factory.'

The organised gang of Mufti Hannan also includes a woman named Dolly Begum. Dolly was employed by Mufti Hannan as a messenger and carrier of bombs and firearms in the cartoons of soap.

Molla has stated in his petition that one Rafi, 30, another member of Mufti Hannan's gang was killed by Yunus Chowdhury in 1998 for breach of trust. The charge against Rafi was that he had threatened Dolly not to get herself involved in carrying arms.

## Writs: PSA case

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lawyers is also likely to be filed today, seeking anticipatory bail.

Filing of the case against the lawyers and Khan had reportedly upset the efforts for resolving the crisis over appointment of two judges which led to the unprecedented demonstration at the Supreme Court on Thursday by anti-government lawyers.

Barrister Nazmul Huda, Convenor of the Sarbadoliyo Ainjibi Parishad which organised the demonstration also met Barrister Ishitiaeque Ahmed yesterday evening to discuss the latest situation arising out of the filing of the case against the lawyers including Huda.

Ishitiaeque is leading a delegation of five senior lawyers who are trying to resolve the crisis.

## Compromise formula

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tary standing committee was given the task of reviewing the definition and making its own proposal.

The new proposal of the committee will now be placed before the parliament as a report and the finance minister will place a bill for approval by the House.

The committee also proposed that a bank can still proceed with legal options to realise loans or advances which had been written off earlier.

"This amendment is proposed so that banks still have claims on loans which had been written off because of being bad," Finance Minister SAMS Kibria said in support of the proposed amendment.

The standing committee has also dealt with the controversy

## Unrestricted access

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also discussed.

"We discussed settlement of land, river and maritime boundaries. It is a good news that out of the 4000km common border, only 6 kms are yet to be demarcated. Enclave and migration issues were among others we discussed," Prof Rehman Sobhan said.

Prof. George Verghese, Research Professor of CPD, said, "During our discussion we made efforts to create wide constituencies so that these ideas don't die. Our discussions included human and social problems. The discussions were extremely helpful and the spirit among us was very high."

Others present at the press briefing were Dr Arjun Sengupta, Professor of Jawaharlal Nehru University and former member of Indian Planning Commission, Muchkund Dubey, President, Council for Social Development and former Indian foreign secretary and envoy to Bangladesh, Som Nath Chatterjee MP, Chairman of West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation, N Jha, Chairman of Foreign Policy Cell, Bharatiya Janata Party and former ambassador to Bangladesh, Debapriya Bhattacharya, Executive Director of CPD and Prof. Mustafizur Rahman, Research Director of CPD.