

Bangabandhu Murder Case

Expeditious trial demanded

UNB, Dhaka

Government leaders and ministers in Parliament yesterday demanded expeditious trial of the Bangabandhu murder case for the sake of strengthening democracy and rule of law in the country.

Participating in the thanksgiving motion on the President's new year speech, some of them were critical of the role of judiciary saying that the "entire nation was anxiously awaiting delivery of justice."

Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs Advisor Suranjit Sengupta said judiciary is part of democracy. "As the legislature is part of democracy, judiciary is also accountable to the people", he added.

He criticised the delay in the trial process and said: "The judiciary has no right to delay justice."

The lawyer cum legislator termed the delay and "embarrassment" of the court in hearing the Bangabandhu murder case "a mockery of justice". This, he said, was only possible for lack of a supreme judicial council.

He warned that the iron curtain of "contempt of court" would not stop the people from seeking justice.

Referring to the filing of case against the Public Safety Act, Sengupta pointed out that those senior lawyers did not speak or wage movement when the Anti-Terrorism Act was passed.

He disapproved of the appearance of the senior lawyers of behalf of industrialist M Morshed Khan "because the later had wealth and muscle power." He said Awami League does not act for influential people, rather it always works for

the commonman.

Shipping Minister A S M Abdur Rab also demanded quick disposal of the Bangabandhu murder case.

Rab, a JSD leader, also demanded trial of the killing of four national leaders inside the Dhaka Central Jail, of General Manzur, Colonel Taher and others, which, he said, the Prime Minister also demanded.

Referring to the absence of opposition from the House, he said democracy can't be effective without participation of all.

"We have to stay in the House and speak for the people. Absence of the elected members means showing disrespect to the verdict of the people," the Shipping Minister said.

"People are not concerned about who goes to power and who sits in the opposition. They want their representation for which they had voted," he added.

Rab warned that the opposition has to answer to the country's womenfolk because the parliament could not pass the bill relating to the extension of tenure of the reserved women seats that will expire early next month.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad in his deliberation accused the opposition BNP of joining hands with anti-liberation and autocratic forces.

Referring to the movement of the opposition, he said the present government would declare elections and form the caretaker administration in due time.

Chairman President Shahabuddin Ahmed for his new year's speech in parliament and

highlighting the achievements of the government, Education Minister A S H K Sadique said the country has marched ahead towards self-reliance under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina.

He mentioned the progress made in various sectors, particularly in education, health and infrastructural development.

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed said the Awami League has always worked for the socio-economic emancipation of the people.

Referring to BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia's "threat of a mass upsurge," he said it is only Sheikh Hasina who can initiate a mass upsurge.

Prof Abu Sayeed gave a brief description of what he called the luxurious lifestyle of Begum Zia.

Sheikh Hasina has time and again proved to be a leader of the commonman, he said.

Jatiya Party MP Advocate Fazle Rabbi lauded the dynamic leadership of Sheikh Hasina and said the country marked remarkable progress in all sectors, including infrastructure, during the last four-and-a-half year.

On the issue of the delay in the judgement of Bangabandhu murder case, he reminded the proverb, "justice delayed is justice denied" and demanded speedy progress of the trial for the sake of democracy.

Altaf Hossain Golondaz and Eakhi Rakhan also took part in the discussion on the President's speech.

ALPP meets today

A meeting of the Awami League Parliamentary Party (ALPP) will be held at 9 am today at the party's conference room in the Sangsab Bhaban, reports UNB.

Listing PLCs

FROM PAGE 12 Latifur Rahman told the meeting.

He said it is also not clear whether such offerings will come under the IPO guidelines.

"If not, the move will involve companies to list their securities and commence trading without going through the SEC and complying with IPO guidelines. The requirement will, thus, lead to conflicting systems of listing and IPO procedures which can be vulnerable and misused by unscrupulous market players and dishonest SEC personnel," Rahman said.

"In other words, there will be trading of stock without requisite disclosures and transparency as required under IPO. In all likelihood, it will damage the capital market.

"We strongly feel that the listing should be optional and if any company decides to list itself, then its offering should go through IPO guidelines.

"For this, the existing guidelines on premium on IPO offerings need to be clearly laid down," Rahman said.

President

FROM PAGE 12 means closing the possibility of economic progress," he said.

President Shahabuddin praised the role of Bangladesh's police in UN peacekeeping missions, who brightened the image of the country abroad.

Dispatching female police officials for the first time to work with the UN mission is a matter that merits special mention, he said adding that steps should be taken to send more women police for UN missions.

Five female police officials were sent for the UN in East Timor. At present, 196 police officials are working in four UN missions in the three continents of the world.

The President also appreciated the establishment of Police Staff College and also women police investigation centre in the capital to serve the repressed and helpless women.

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim, Home Secretary MM Reza, Secretary to the President Mohammad Ismail Hossain and Inspector General of Police M Nurul Huda were present during the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion

Columnist from India Kuldeep Nayar hoped that democracy would take deep root in this subcontinent where it would also be established that people have a right to know.

Nayar said that the people as

well as journalists would have to

sacrifice a lot to establish democracy. Journalists will have to struggle to establish people's right of knowledge because every ruler will try to prevent them from getting information, he commented.

Nancy Wong Ali, wife of late SM Ali, came all the way Australia to participate in the celebrations at the invitation of The Daily Star.

Renowned personalities who attended the function include Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Finance Minister SAMS Kibria, Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, State Minister for Sports and Culture Obaidul Quader, State Minister for LGRD Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Chief Whip of the Opposition Khandaker Delwar Hossain, former finance minister M Saifur Rahman MP, M Morshed Khan MP, Sadek Hossain Khoka MP, Barister Moudud Ahmed, Barister Nazmul Huda MP, Rashed Khan Menon, Mujahidul Islam Runa Lalai.

Among the editors present were

Bazur Rahman of the Sangbad, Golam Sarwar of the Jugantar,

Atikullah Khan Masud of the Janakantha, Motiur Rahman Chowdhury of the Manabjami,

Motiur Rahman of the Prothom Alo, and Chief Editor and Editor of the Financial Express Moazzem Hossain and Reazuddin Ahmed

respectively.

PM urges political parties

FROM PAGE 12 the culprits to book. The law enforcers are alert about it.

"We believe, it is possible to control the use of illegal arms if the people voluntarily extend help to the government and the law-enforcing agencies," Hasina said. "This problem could be tackled had there been cooperation from political parties."

She said the government has undertaken some specific steps to maintain law and order, to recover illegal arms to serve their political purposes.

The Prime Minister said her government took some specific steps to ensure rule of law by holding trial of Bangabandhu's killers and to discourage the use of illegal arms.

"Since use of illegal arms is an impediment to the rule of law, we are determined to stamp out illegal use of arms from society," she told Parliament.

She said it is the usual responsibility of the government to recover arms, dug out its sources and bring

patronising terrorism."

Turning on CHT peace agreement, Khaleda said rights of Bengalee people had been violated.

She told the rally that when Awami League first came to power in the post-liberation period, it gave birth to Shanti Bahini, "they (AL) are now hoodwinking the countrymen in the name of peace deal."

She said the ruling party is plundering state wealth in the name of development and purchases as well as smuggling out money abroad. "Terrorism, killing, rape have increased manifold," she said.

BNP leaders Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Oli Ahmed, Abdullah Al Noman, Salauddin Kader Chowdhury, Giasuddin Kader Chowdhury and Barkatulla Bulu and Shaiful Alam Prothan of Jagpa also addressed the meeting.

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"Legal actions are not being taken while a ruling party MP is openly

Sit-in around Sectt Feb 18

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"People are uniting under the banner of the four-party alliance," she told her audience in the hill districts.

She said Awami League government is plotting to foil the meetings of the opposition parties in various areas across the country, as they are afraid of public meetings.

"Conspiracy is going on to stop the opposition politics by applying the Public Safety Act," she said. The PSA is not being applied despite the ruling party terrorists are involved in the bomb explosion at Paltan Maidan on January 20, she added.

Referring to the attack on a journalist at Fenji she said, government is encouraging terrorism. "Legal actions are not being taken while a ruling party MP is openly

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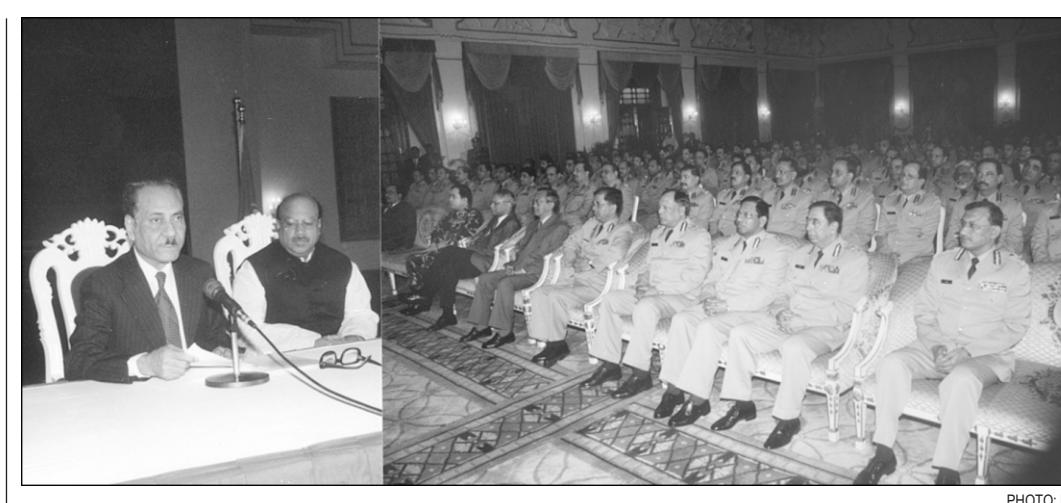


PHOTO: PID
President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed addressing a meeting of the high officials of police department at Bangabhaban yesterday.

Press reports anger JS Panel chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Angered by press reports on his action in the Jatiya Sangsad on Sunday, Panel Chairman Abdul Latif Siddiqui yesterday advised journalists to focus their attention to the absentee opposition lawmakers in stead of taunting the Chair.

Referring to the opposition boycott of the parliament, the member of the five-strong panel of chairmen suggested that the journalists should rather worry about those who are acting against rules. "Why don't you criticise those elected public representatives who are neglecting their sacred duties in the House and are conspiring to make the parliament as well as the government ineffective through unconstitutional means?"

On Sunday, Siddiqui allowed Education Minister ASH K Sadique to speak on a motion of thanks overruling Deputy Speaker Abdul Hamid's decision who had already closed the topic for discussion.

In a bid to justify his decision on Sunday, the panel chairman reiterated that his move was to correct a mistake through which the relevant minister was dropped from the list of discussants who thanked the prime minister for adopting the National Education Policy.

He also mentioned about Kaul that he said permits such corrective move.

The national dailies published reports on Sunday's unusual practice by the Chair referring to Rule 294 that states: "A member shall not speak on a question after the Speaker has collected the voices both of the Ayes and of the Noes on that question."

Home Ministry

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rallies so that in case of such incidents, the victims can be identified. Political parties must keep volunteers and first aid facilities.

The probe body during its investigation interviewed leftist leaders, witnesses, victims and officials from police, DGFI, NSI and SB.

Till yesterday, the CID could not make any headway in detecting the culprits responsible for the bomb explosions.

Red-tapism thwarts

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International BV, the only computer manufacturer in that country, is the project implementation agency. An inter-ministerial meeting approved the 'price offer' and the 'commercial contract' with the Dutch company.

But the education ministry at a meeting of the Cabinet Purchase Committee on December 20 last raised several questions in this regard and the meeting termed the offer 'unsolicited'. The committee then asked the Dutch authorities to float a tender in the Netherlands and make a fresh offer for computer procurement.

The Dutch Ambassador in Dhaka then sent a letter to the ERD Secretary saying, "The grant com-

ponent of ORET/MILIEV applications is provided from Dutch public funds. To ensure that these funds are not misused there are measures to prevent corruption and unfair practices."

The ERD in a letter to the education ministry on January 1 requested it to take a decision for procurement under the ORET regulations.

Officials of the Dutch Embassy at a meeting with ERD officials recently said the proposal was not unsolicited as stated by the Purchase Committee and that Tulip is the only Dutch manufacturer. "So there should be no question regarding the transparency of the Netherlands funds," the meeting was told.

DCC's mockery

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each ward commissioner for development work, conservancy and cleaning surface drains. But most of the surface drains have turned into canals of dirty stagnant water.

Moreover, each ward commissioner has under him 35 sweepers who are paid by DCC.

When asked about the increasing mosquito menace, DCC's Chief Health Officer Dr Mohammad Ashraf Uddin said, "I can not say that we have entirely controlled mosquito. But we have been able to control it to a large extent."

"Mosquito invasion may be more in a few areas, but the situation is at a tolerable level in the city," he claimed.

In the budget for 2000-2001 financial year, DCC allocated Tk 13 crore only for mosquito control. The budget was increased following the sudden out break of dengue and it will be revised again, DCC sources said.

DCC grants Tk 50 lakh a year to

Booksellers compel students

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Group -- Pustaka, Shuktara and Free Press -- were awarded the job of printing and distributing over eight crore board textbooks for the country's 2.5 crore students.

"Beximco has so far distributed just over 6.5 lakh books of secondary level. The Beximco trio did not ask for the sell order from the NCTB," the sources in printing and publication industry said.

There was no book at wholesale Banglabaazar as the Beximco concerns distributed only a few books through their pre-qualified dealers, which are all too inadequate for the demand.

"Beximco has monopolised the sales through receiving dealership since NCTB has solely awarded the gigantic job to one party," another source in printing and publication industry said.

Students have started attending new classes in new academic sessions without books as the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) has failed to provide books to the secondary students due to awarding the printing job to inexperienced printers.

"It is an irreparable loss to the

nation as we would not be able to compensate for the loss," one guardian said.

The NCTB authorities had earlier said the process of sending books to different districts was on.