

JS passes proposal to try war criminals

It's now a national demand, says PM moving resolution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parliament yesterday unanimously passed a resolution calling on the government to ensure immediate trial of the war criminals.

The historic motion came five days into inauguration of the ninth legislature.

It is meant to affirm the ruling Awami League's (AL) electoral pledge that if voted to power, it would put on trial those who had committed atrocious crimes against the nation during the Liberation War in 1971.

"Measures be taken immediately to try

the war criminals," reads the resolution adopted amid thunderous desk-thumping.

The proposal was piloted by Mahmudus-Samad Chowdhury, AL lawmaker from Sylhet-3.

Taking part in discussions on the motion, Prime Minister and Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina said her government is now gathering experts' opinions on the issue from across the globe. The foreign ministry is working on the matter.

Urging Speaker Abdul Hamid to take the resolution as a property of the House, she said "The war criminals will be

brought to justice, no matter what."

Following the discussions, State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Tajul Islam said the trial would be held in a credible and transparent manner so there arises no question over the proceedings.

"The war criminals will for sure be tried on the soil of Bangla," he added.

Planning Minister AK Khandaker, who was the deputy commander-in-chief of the Liberation War forces, thanked parliament for adopting the resolution.

He said, "People will sleep in peace tonight. For many, it's the beginning of

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Top Jamaat leaders talk trial issue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Top leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday discussed political issues including the government's move to try the war criminals and saving the party from the present severe crisis.

The two-day meeting of Majlish-e-Sura, the highest policy-making body of the party, began yesterday at the Al-Falah auditorium in the city's Moghbazar.

Sources said the Jamaat leaders at the meeting discussed the reasons for the party's debacle in the December 29 election and its next course of action.

Jamaat's highest policy-making body might come up

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Jamaat to take on war crime trial

Plans to say sorry for 1971 political stance, not war crime; sideline controversial leaders; accept trial under UN

RASHIDUL HASAN

Not from any conviction but to save its skin from the move to try war criminals, Jamaat-e-Islami plans to make a strategic apology not for its war crimes during the Liberation War but for its political stance in 1971.

Besides, the Islamist party is discussing some other measures like getting rid of a few "controversial" party leaders.

Majlish-e-Sura, the highest policymaking body of the religion-based political party, began a two-day meet yesterday to decide the

party's next course of action in the current situation.

"We are thinking of seeking formal apology for Jamaat's anti-Liberation War role to save the party from the present crisis," a top Jamaat leader said.

But this apology, if it ever comes, will be worded in such a way so that the party never acknowledges any war crime committed by Jamaat leaders during the war, sources said.

This Jamaat stance is reflected in the party's cobbling together a panel of lawyers to tackle

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Jalil tells of torture

Demands JS probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil yesterday alleged in parliament exorbitant torture on him by the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) after 1/11, and called for a parliamentary probe into the matter.

He demanded that those responsible be meted out exemplary punishment.

He also said operations of the intelligence agency be restricted to the armed forces so that people are not

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Opposition to get all facilities as per JS rules

Assures Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the opposition party would be provided with all facilities in parliament as per its Rules of Procedure.

"We give due importance to the role of opposition in parliament to make the House functional and strengthen the parliamentary system. The opposition will be given all facilities in line with the Rules of Procedure of parliament," she said while talking to a European Union delegation.

The eight-member EU delegation led by its Ambassador in

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Presidential polls in JS on Feb 16

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The presidential election will be held on February 16, the Election Commission (EC) announced yesterday.

It also announced schedule of the long due election to the country's top post following confirmation of the polling date by speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad.

Lawmakers constitute the electorate for the presidential polls to be held in parliament from 2:00pm to 5:00pm.

Earlier, the EC had sent a

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JS SEATING ARRANGEMENT

BNP skips session, wants 3 more front-row seats

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP-led opposition, who remained absent in the House proceedings since Wednesday, has demanded three more seats in the front row as a condition to return to parliament.

"If the Speaker doesn't meet the demand before resumption of the House proceedings on Sunday, we'll sit again to decide whether we'll join parliament or not," Opposition Chief Whip Joyal Abedin Faruk said yesterday.

Talking to reporters at his office, Speaker Abdul Hamid however said he doesn't have anything to do unless the treasury bench makes any concession to resolve the seating arrange-

mentrow.

A delegation of the opposition lawmakers led by MK Anwar yesterday met the Speaker at his office and placed the demand. The opposition sought three more seats in the front row, increasing the number of their seats to eight including one for the lone lawmaker of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

The opposition lawmakers waited inside the parliament building for the Speaker's response till the resumption of the House proceeding at 4:50pm.

As the Speaker did not inform them anything, they did not return to the House and held

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Gruesome murder in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday recovered 14 pieces of the body of a man brutally murdered by unknown criminals in the city.

The bare pieces of the body were recovered from a two square kilometre area of Lalbagh. However, the head and a hand, severed from the wrist, are still missing.

The victim has been identified as Md Asgar Ali, 32, owner of a payphone shop on RNG Road in Lalbagh who has been missing since Wednesday night.

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Govt should be more liberal

Says Akbar on deputy speaker, JS seat issues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government side should be more liberal in appointing a deputy speaker nominated by the opposition bench and distributing seats in Jatiya Sangsad, said former adviser to a caretaker government Akbar Ali Khan yesterday.

The new government should distribute seats among the opposition parties not based on their proportion of won seats but on generosity of the government as the Awami League has already won a large mandate, Khan said.

"You need an open mind if you really want to be broad," Khan said.

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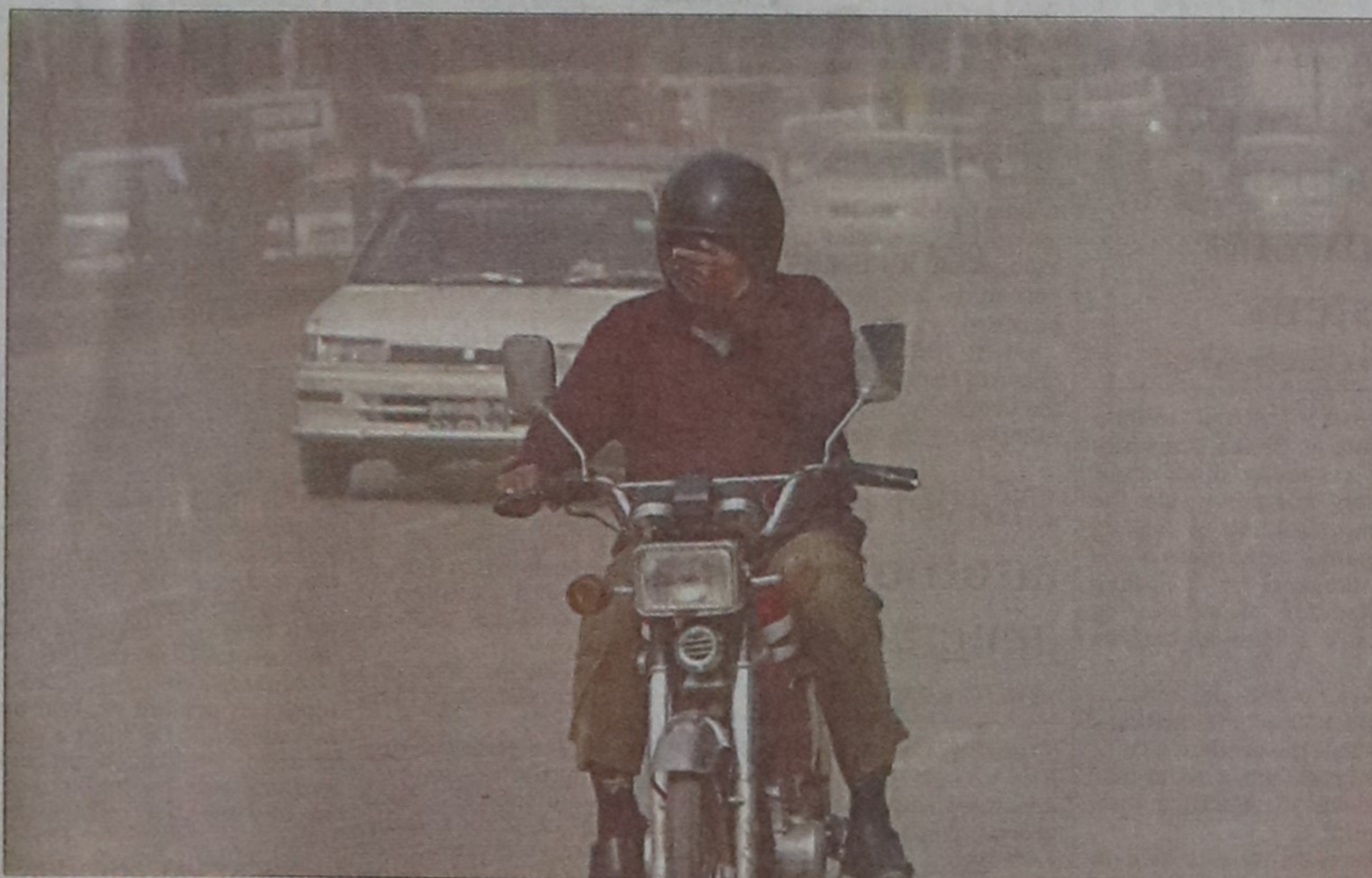


PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Heavy earth-moving trucks are used in the construction of a new road in Hatirjheel in Dhaka. The trucks often spread dirt on the busy Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue between Bangla Motor and Sonargaon intersections. A person on a motorbike is seen covering his face yesterday to avoid breathing in the cloud of dust.

2m to attend Biswa Ijtema

Devotees from 152 countries gather on the bank of Turag

KAILASH SARKAR

Biswa Ijtema, the second largest Muslim congregation after the hajj, begins today on the bank of river Turag with participation of devotees from 152 countries.

The three-day congregation is expected to witness around 20 lakh devotees including more than one lakh women from across the world, said the organisers.

Meanwhile, thousands of devotees reached the Ijtema venue and already joined the religious sermon that began after the Fajr prayers yesterday.

The Tablig-e-Jamaat has been organising the gargantuan gathering since 1976. Several thousands devotees volunteered to prepare the five-square kilometre ground to accommodate the devotees.

The government is also extending all-out supports and providing facilities for the smooth holding of the gathering.

As many as 44 special trains and a number of BRTC shuttle bus service have been arranged to ease the transportation. Eight deep tube-wells and an 11 kilometre long pipeline with the capacity of 50 lakh gallons of water everyday have been set up. A water tank with the capacity of storing one-lakh gallons of water has also been set up.

The authorities also placed around 50 medical teams for providing with treatment facilities to the devotees free of cost.

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We Deeply Mourn

The members of the Board of Directors, all executives and employees of Pubali Bank Limited are deeply shocked at the sad demise of

Mr. E.A. Chaudhury

Retired Inspector General of Police & Former Chairman of the Board of Directors of Pubali Bank Limited on 28 January 2009, Wednesday at 10.30 p.m. (Inna Lillaha ... Razeun). May Allah the Almighty bless his departed soul with eternal peace.

We always remember the invaluable services rendered by him as Former Chairman Board of Directors of Pubali Bank Limited.

We express our heart-felt condolence to the bereaved family and pray to the Almighty Allah to give strength to his family members to bear this irreparable loss.



পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড
PUBALI BANK LIMITED

WE DEEPLY MOURN



The Board of Directors and the employees of Green Delta Insurance Company Limited are deeply grieved at the sad demise of **Emaduddin Ahmad Choudhury (E A Choudhury)** a renowned former Inspector General of Police, former Chairman of Pubali Bank Limited and elder brother of Nasir A. Choudhury, Managing Director & CEO of Green Delta Insurance Company Ltd. on January 28, 2009 (Inna Lillahi.....Rajeun). He was 85 years old.

He was the father of Riaz A Choudhury, Manager, Corporate Banking of HSBC and Rumana Sharif, Director of Green Delta Insurance Company Limited, wife of Q.M. Shariful Ala, Managing Director of DBH.

We express our heart-felt condolence and convey sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and pray to the almighty Allah for the salvation of the departed soul.

Green Delta Insurance Co. Ltd
Head Office : 2 Dilkusha C/A Dhaka 1000