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# Govt bound to hold trial of war criminals

Speaker in his ruling tells JS of unanimous resolution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speaker Abdul Hamid in a ruling yesterday said the government must implement the resolution on holding trial of the war criminals, which was unanimously adopted by the House calling the executive to hold the trial.

"The government is bound to hold the trial of war criminals. It has no alternative since the resolution was passed unanimously. So, it must be executed," the speaker said replying to the lawmakers' demand for ruling condemning the visiting Pakistan president's special envoy's remark on the issue.

Pakistan envoy Zia Ispahani on Monday said his country has apologised

for the atrocities during the Liberation War. He added it is not the right time to initiate the war criminals' trial involving the Pakistan army, as there are many other issues of cooperation between the two countries.

As the lawmakers demanded statement of the foreign minister on the issue, Foreign Affairs Minister Dipu Moni said, "I want to say without any second meaning that the trial of war criminals must be held in the soil of Bangladesh."

On the Pakistan's envoy's remark, the foreign minister said she thinks the envoy's remarks were based on the war crimes committed by the Pakistan occupation army in 1971.

Taking floor on point of orders, the

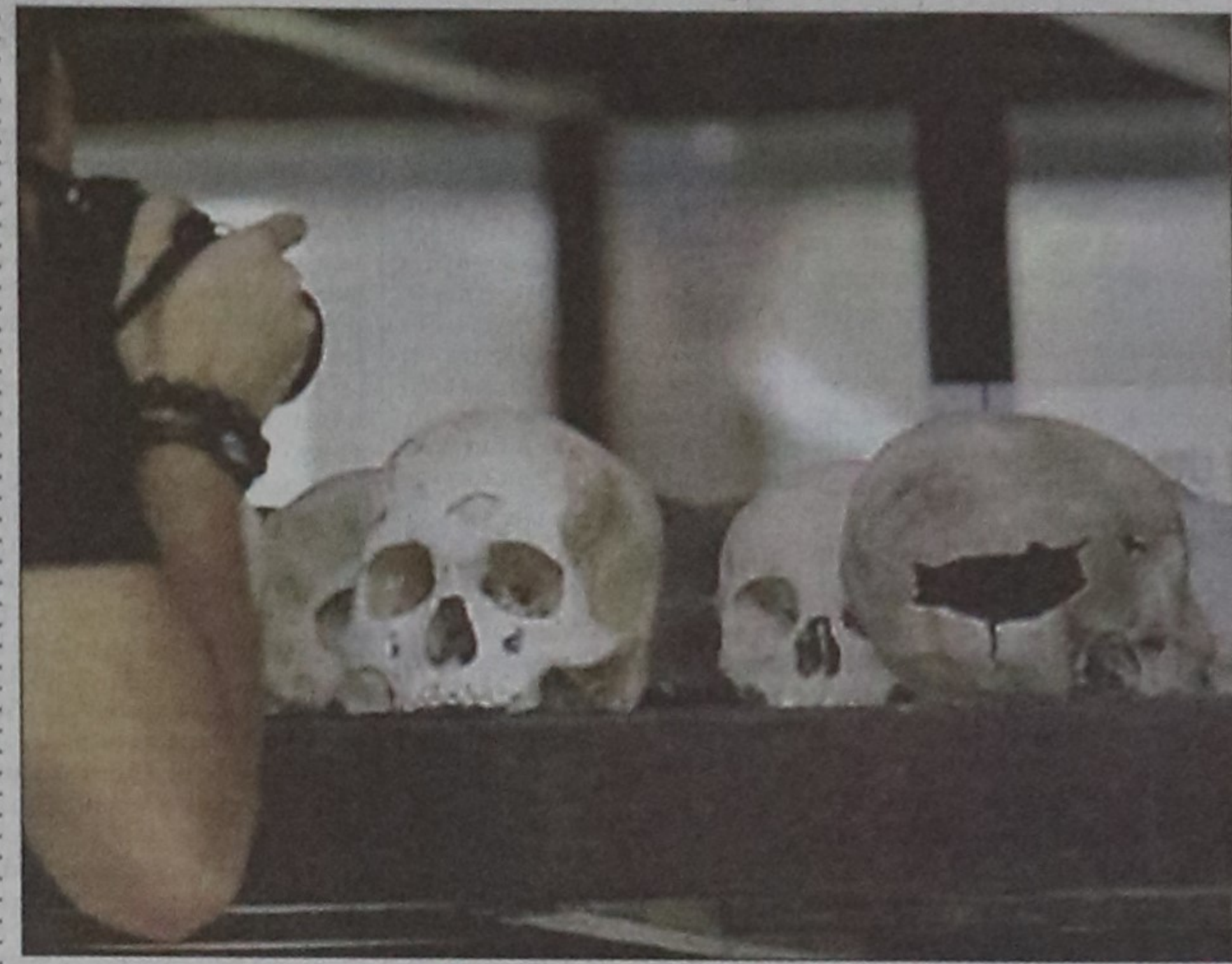
lawmakers also demanded that the Pakistan envoy seek apology for his remark.

Workers Party lawmaker Rashed Khan Menon raised the issue of Pakistan envoy saying his remark is tantamount to contempt of the House as it unanimously passed the resolution to hold the trial.

"His remark was unwarranted, Jamaat leader Abdur Razzak echoed the view of the Pakistan envoy and said they will challenge the trial if held under the International Crimes Tribunal Act," Menon said.

Maj (ret'd) Rafiqul Islam, a veteran war hero and a sector commander, also said

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A tourist takes picture of human skulls at Choeung Ek, one of the main killing fields of the Khmer Rouge regime in the outskirts of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. A UN-backed genocide tribunal began trial yesterday.

## Khmer Rouge genocide trial opens in Cambodia

AP, Phnom Penh

The boss of a prison where some 16,000 men, women and children were tortured and executed appeared before Cambodia's genocide tribunal yesterday in its first trial over the Khmer Rouge reign of terror more than three decades ago.

Kaing Guek Eav better known as Duch, who headed the S-21 prison in Phnom Penh for the Khmer Rouge regime is charged with crimes against humanity and is the first of five defendants scheduled for long-delayed trials by the UN-assisted court.

They were among a close-knit, ultra-communist clique

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Road communication between Dinajpur and Parbatipur was snapped Monday after this bridge on the Atrai River at Matharganj collapsed as a sand-laden truck was crossing the bridge.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

## ACC spending on lawyers to be probed: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said "rationality and righteousness" of the spending of a huge amount of money on hiring lawyers by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) will have to be investigated.

The prime minister expressed the view when a UN delegation led by Assistant

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## MONEY LAUNDERING Proshika chief surrenders; gets bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to Proshika Chairman Kazi Faruque Ahmed and four others after they surrendered to the court seeking bail in connection with \$24.69 lakh money laundering case.

The others granted bail are Proshika's Senior

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## 'Politically motivated' cases to be dropped

64 district committees formed to expedite process

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 10-member high-powered committee for reviewing 'politically motivated' cases filed during past governments, in its first meeting yesterday formed a central subcommittee and 64 district committees to expedite the process.

The central subcommittee has four members headed by State Minister for Law Quamrul Islam, while the six-member district committees are headed by district magistrates.

"The cases filed with political motives under different governments will be withdrawn after review," Law Minister Shafique Ahmed told reporters after the meeting in the home ministry's conference room.

The 10-member committee was formed earlier this month.

The law minister said the government will review politically motivated cases filed in a bid to harass innocent people since the independence of the country. "The cases will be withdrawn to establish the rule of law," he added.

Asked if apolitical people facing false cases may apply for the review, he said, "Any aggrieved person including political leaders and activists will be able to apply for review of

the cases against them."

According to the meeting's decision, the district committees will soon officially invite applications for review. "Forty-five days will be given to submit applications to the committees," said an official of the home ministry following yesterday's meeting.

He said the district committees will have another 45 days for scrutinising the applications, before sending those to the central subcommittee for further verification, which will then submit a final recommendation to the 10-member committee.

"The ten-member committee will decide how many cases and which ones will be withdrawn," said the official.

Sources in the home ministry said although the new government is saying that cases filed since independence will be reviewed, the focus of the review however will be on the cases filed during the BNP-Jamaat-led four-party regime and the immediate past caretaker government.

Ascending to power in 2001, the BNP-Jamaat alliance government took a similar initiative acquitting 72,000 persons indicted in 7,000 cases. A number of known criminals

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## Tigers killing civilians fleeing war zone: UN

World body fails in its duty to protect innocent people, say rebels

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels lashed out at the United Nations on Tuesday after it accused them of shooting civilians who try to escape the island's bloody ethnic conflict.

The UN said the Tigers have detained tens of thousands of non-combatants inside rebel-held territory and have "shot and sometimes killed" those crossing the battle lines to seek safety.

A front organisation for the rebels, who have

been cornered in the jungle by government troops, countered the allegations by saying the United Nations had failed in its duty to protect innocent people.

"The UN was "withdrawing even the remaining few local staff from the conflict zone (and) completely shedding its responsibility of caring for the civilians trapped here," said the Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO).

The statement, released on the pro-rebel website Tamilnet, came after the UN said that

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## Amr 21 একুশে

### Poetry books outnumber novel, fiction

RAKIB AHAMMED

Collection of poetry tops the number of newly arrived books at Amar Ekushey Bô Mela whereas novels and story collections rank second and third positions in the list in first 15 days.

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Prayer Timing		
February 18		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-20	5-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-03	6-07
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

## Ctg student lands in hospital with teacher's kicking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A student was seriously injured when a teacher kicked him at Little Jewels English Medium School yesterday.

The injured Syed Ali Ahmed, 15, a student of class VII, is undergoing treatment at the casualty ward of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

School authorities suspended teacher Ziaul Haque immediately after the incident.

The student's father Kamal Ahmed, a garment businessman, said he would take legal action against the teacher.

Sources said Ziaul slapped Ali during a chemistry class test reportedly for cheating. Then he took Ali to an adjoining room and kicked him. Right after that the student started vomiting blood, they added.

Being informed, mother of the student rushed to the school and raced her son to a nearby clinic. Later, the injured was transferred to CMCH.

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Traffic nightmare continues on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in the capital as all vehicles grind to a halt near Bangla Motor intersection yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## AL old guard to head JS bodies

15 standing committees formed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parliament yesterday formed 15 standing committees headed by the ruling alliance bigwigs who could not gain a berth in the council of ministers.

On approval of Prime Minister and Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina, Chief Whip Abdus Shahid proposed the names of lawmakers as chairs and members of the committees on 15 ministries.

The House passed the proposal unanimously.

According to Jatiya Sangsad's rules of procedure, the standing committees will scrutinise draft bills and oversee activities of the ministries to ensure the executive's accountability to the legislature.

Of the senior AL leaders picked as chairmen, former commerce minister Abdul Jaiil will lead the committee on commerce ministry, former industries minister Tofail Ahmed on industries, former water resource minister Abdur Razzak on water resources, former health minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim on health and AL advisory council member Rahmat Ali will front the committee on LGRD and cooperative ministry.

Around a week back, AL presidium members Suranjit Sengupta and Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir were made chairmen of the standing committees on law, justice and parliamentary affairs and public undertakings.

Interestingly, almost all ministers concerned are junior to the committee chiefs in terms of their positions in the party.

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