

PM returns home

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia returned home yesterday from Kuwait after offering formal condolences at the demise of Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

A special plane of Bangladesh Biman, carrying the Prime Minister, landed at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) at about 10:45am.

The Prime Minister went to Kuwait on Monday to offer condolences for the late Emir and to congratulate the new Emir Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah.

DEATH OF KUWAITI EMIR

Hasina signs condolence book

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday signed the condolence book that was opened at the death of Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah at the residence of Kuwaiti ambassador in Dhaka.

Expressing her profound shock at the death of the Emir, Hasina, also Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, remembered the cooperation of Kuwait in the development of Bangladesh with deep gratitude.

In the condolence book she wrote: The great contribution of Sheikh Sabah in building friendly relationship between the two countries would ever be remembered.

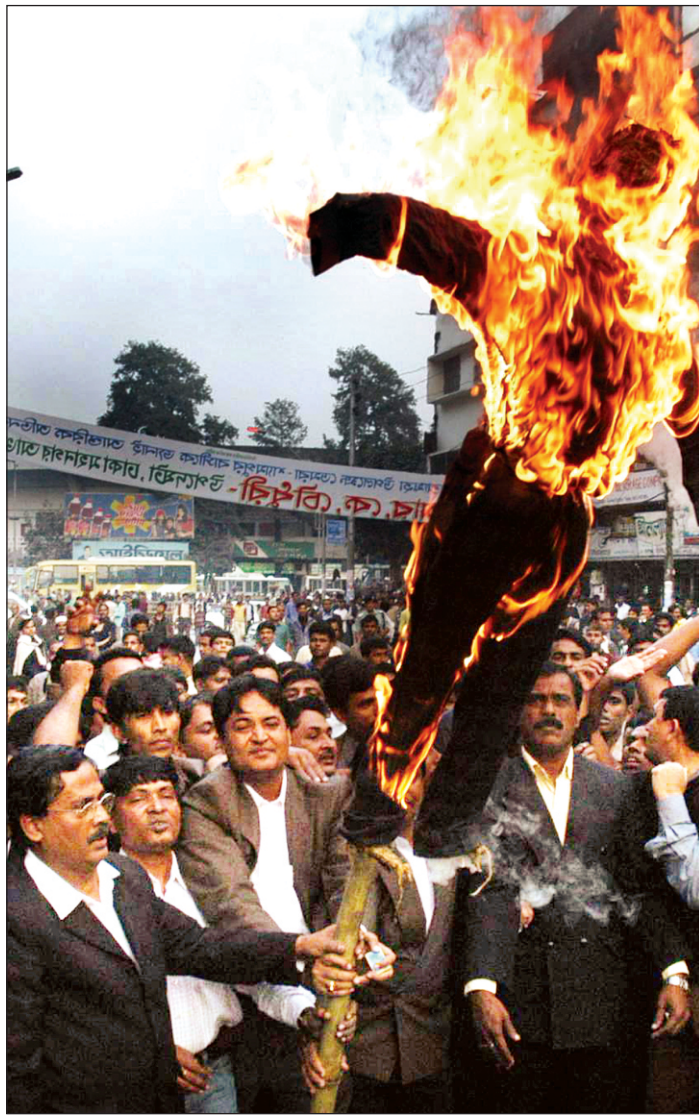


PHOTO: STAR

Awami Jubo League leaders and activists burn an effigy of chief election commissioner at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday.

Removal of CEC, two new commissioners demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Terming the Election Commission (EC) 'a committee of the ruling BNP', the main opposition Awami League's (AL) youth front Jubo League yesterday demanded immediate removal of the chief election commissioner (CEC) and the two newly appointed 'controversial' election commissioners from the EC.

Addressing a rally in front of its central office on Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital, the Jubo League leaders termed the new appointments 'politically motivated', and said the government knows very well that the people would not vote for them in the next election and for this they are trying to deny the people universal franchise through politicising the EC.

The Jubo League organised the rally protesting the appointments of the two 'controversial' election commissioners and the attempt to kill AL Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader. The Dhaka city unit AL expressed solidarity with the demonstration. The protesters marched through the city streets following the rally.

Later they also burnt an effigy of the CEC in front of Jubo League's central office.

Addressing the rally, Jubo League General Secretary Mirza Azam MP said, "The alliance government wants to defeat us through manipulating the voter list."

He said the government had appointed two 'controversial'

persons to the EC. He also said SM Zakaria is a close ally of the four-party alliance government and that he was the mastermind of the 'media-coup' in favour of the erstwhile 'autocrat' HM Ershad during the elections in 1986.

Regarding another newly appointed election commissioner, Justice Mahfuzur Rahman, he said the army had recovered firearms from his residence during Operation Clean Heart and had arrested one of his relatives in connection with the recovery.

Jubo League Chairman Jahangir Kabir Nanak said the new appointments are a part of the ruling alliance's conspiracy to manipulate the next poll. "This is unconstitutional and done with an ill political motive...we don't accept it. We reject the appointments," he said.

Nanak also said the alliance government wants to come back to power through 'rigging' the next elections to safeguard the money they have 'looted from the people' in the last four years. Nanak also accused the alliance government of fabricating artificial price hikes of essentials, patronising militants, and sponsoring bomb blasts across the country.

Demanding immediate removal of the CEC and the two new election commissioners, he said Jubo League would never allow the appointments to stand. Nanak urged the party activists to resist Islami Chhatra Shibir, Jubo Dal, and Chhatra Dal activists 'who are preparing the voter list'.

Dhaka City Unit AL General Secretary Mofazzel Hossain Chowdhury Maya said the alliance government has been damaging the democratic political environment in the country through politicising the EC. He said the city residents would never allow the 'extra-constitutional' appointments of the two 'controversial' persons to the EC.

He urged the people to make the dawn-to-dusk hartal (general strike) across the country on January 22, called by the 14-party opposition coalition, a success.

Presided over by the city (south) unit president, Mohiuddin Ahmed Mohi, the rally was also addressed by Jubo League leaders Harun-ur-Rashid Harun, Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, Farook Hossain, Ajoy Kor Khokon, Nurunnabi Chowdhury Shaon, Ismail Chowdhury Samrat and Anwar Iqbal Shantu.



PHOTO: STAR

Mamun, a boy, carries pitchers of water to a railway colony, located to the west of Osmani Udyan, where he sells water to earn a living. The residents of the colony have been suffering from water crisis due to lack of water supply.

Obituary



AKM Golam Quader, a valiant freedom fighter and chairman of Nishu Advertising Ltd, passed away at a Bangkok hospital yesterday at the age of 58, says a press release.

Quader, also a former senior official of Biman Bangladesh Airlines and owner of the Tokyo-based OCS Courier Service Dhaka, is the third son of late AKM Sirajul Islam of GM Hat in Feni.

He left behind his wife, three daughters, one son, five brothers and two sisters to mourn his death.