



Hasan 'unwilling' to be caretaker chief

Oath-taking not to be held today, Bangabhaban claims he is sick



PINAKI ROY
In a dramatic development late last night, former chief justice KM Hasan has indicated his reluctance to take oath as chief adviser to the caretaker government, a source close to Hasan said.
The former chief justice, who became the centre of controversy after the Awami League accused him of politically bias, informed his decision to the cabinet secretary when he rang up Hasan last night

for the oath-taking, the source confirmed.
Moklesur Rahman Chowdhury, press secretary of the president, also told The Daily Star last night that the cabinet secretary had contacted Hasan about the oath-taking ceremony.
"Hasan told the cabinet secretary that he is sick. Therefore, the oath-taking ceremony will not be held tomorrow," Mokles told the UNB. He, however, could not specify any later date.

Interestingly, an announcement on Hasan's sickness was made from the president's house shortly after Prime Minister Khaleda Zia met President Iajuddin Ahmed at the Bangabhaban for an hour following her address to the nation.
The Daily Star source, who had met Hasan last night as a friend, said the former chief justice is not sick at all. The source talked about the latest political developments

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US, UK urge political parties to exercise restraint

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

As crisis due to the deadlock deepened in Bangladesh's political arena over handing of power to a caretaker administration, the United States and the United Kingdom yesterday urged the political parties here to exercise restraint and resolve their differences through political processes peacefully.
Referring to a series of violent activities and attacks on houses of the leaders who joined the newly floated Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), a spokesman for the US Embassy in Dhaka told The Daily Star that they condemned all acts of violence.
"We support the right to assemble, organise and advocate the

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Violence flares up, houses of ministers, MPs attacked

2 alliance leaders, an activist killed, 500 injured

STAR REPORT
The country plunged into a chaos yesterday as Awami League (AL) and BNP activists were locked in battles over establishing supremacy in the localities of Dhaka and other places just hours before the end of the four-party alliance government's tenure.
The clashes left three ruling alliance leaders and activists killed, over 500 injured, and hundreds of houses and vehicles ransacked and torched. Two women also died in a road accident at Jatrabari during the rampage.
Even senior ministers and lawmakers of the four-party alliance were also not spared as their

houses and offices came under attacks during yesterday's rampage in Dhaka and in many other districts.
The dead are Advocate Habib Ullah, vice-president of Brahmanbaria district unit of BNP, Ruhul Amin, a Rokon of Gazipur district unit of Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, and Khoda Newaz Chowdhury, whose identity could not be ascertained.
Thousands of Awami League and 14-party coalition activists came out on the streets yesterday evening to gain pre-emptive control of their respective localities and to show off muscle immediately after the prime minister's address to the nation at 7:00pm.
Different parts of the capital were found literally burning into the chaos as armed activists of both the alliances indiscriminately blasted crackers and bombs, set tires on fire, ransacked vehicles and threw brickbats at rival processions.
The capital last night resembled the images of battle-prone streets of Palestine seen on TV screens with armed men prowling on empty streets which were marked with blazes eerily lighting up the night sky. A frightening calm engulfed the city which was punctuated by sounds of gunshots and battle cries of the operatives of two rival parliamentary parties that

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Eerie uncertainty grips nation as regime ends

STAR REPORT

As the curtain fell on the BNP-led alliance's five years in office last night, Bangladesh entered a phase of political uncertainty seldom seen before with the main two political parties -- AL and BNP -- set to establish their supremacy even at the cost of physical attacks on each other.
What the future will hold depends much on whether former chief justice KM Hasan, who has been opposed nail and tooth by the AL for his alleged political bias, will take oath as chief adviser to the caretaker government (see commentary in separate column).

But as soon as Prime Minister Khaleda Zia ended his address to the nation last night, violence erupted in many parts of the capital and elsewhere in the country with the AL and BNP supporters locked in street fights. By 8 in the night, the district vice-president of Brahmanbaria BNP Advocate Habibullah was killed in a bomb attack and a Jamaat activist died in a clash in Gazipur.
The capital now hunkers down in apprehension of escalation of violence today as the two political archrivals have vowed to rule the streets in a show of their power.
The way the BNP-led alliance ensured the berth of Hasan at the

helm of the caretaker government by extending the retirement age of Supreme Court judges, the collapse of the dialogue between the AL and BNP over the question of Hasan becoming the chief adviser and the AL's subsequent determination to resist any election under the former chief justice exposed the fragile democratic facade under which the political parties operate.
The BNP and its alliance have weakened much in the past five years because of unbridled corruption, mismanagement and mishandling of key issues including power situation and prices of essentials and the AL has come

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President's Guard Regiment personnel enter Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina's Dhanmondi residence, Shudha Sadan, as part of special security measures for her ahead of the government changeover yesterday.

PM calls for peace in her final speech

Highlights economy; regrets talk failure, negative politics by opposition

UNB, Dhaka
Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday appealed to the people for maintaining peace across the country in the run-up to the next general election, as her tenure ends amid a political standoff.
Text of speech on page 13
"We are going to hand over power to a caretaker government in accordance with the constitution. The general election will be held within 90 days under the caretaker government," she said in a tele-

vised address to the nation, marking the end of her five-year rule.
The outgoing prime minister regretted that the BNP-Awami League dialogue could not produce any expected result. She said the objective of the political dialogue was to ensure the holding of the general election peacefully as per the constitution.
"But there is nothing to be disappointed," she said, as the constitution is the protector of the peace-loving, courageous, struggling, conscious and responsible nation.

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BNP served a blow as rebels float new party

13 lawmakers among 102 prominent deserters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
In a major political development the ruling BNP experienced the largest break-up in its history as a large number of dissident leaders defected from the party just two days before the scheduled date for handover of power to a caretaker government.
The defection en masse came on Thursday protesting 'record corruption' and 'dynasty' in the party over the last five years.
About 102 leaders including 13 incumbent lawmakers with a state minister, a deputy minister and an adviser to the prime minister

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Rebel BNP leader Col (retd) Oli Ahmed, centre, and former president Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, right, hold winning fans (Kula), the election symbol of their newly floated party Liberal Democratic Party on Thursday.

The renegades
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Former president AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury and former minister Col (retd) Oli Ahmed, close aide to founder of BNP Ziaur Rahman, launched a new party with dissident BNP leaders on Thursday.
The leaders who resigned from BNP and joined the newly formed

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Commentary

Justice Hasan's final judgement?

AL's demand mustn't be his sole consideration

MAHFUZ ANAM
Seldom have the future political events of a nation rested solely on the personal decision of a single man, former chief justice KM Hasan, as they do today. Leaders of movements, political parties, or those occupying powerful posts may, though rarely, face such situations. But a private citizen, leading neither any party nor a cause, hardly ever faces such critical moments as Justice Hasan does today.
Within hours of publication of this piece, he will have decided, one way or the other. It is our hope that neither personal pride nor any sense of fear or arm-twisting should guide his decision. Only the best course for the people of Bangladesh and safeguarding democracy should be his concern in deciding what most likely is to be his biggest and most complicated decision of his entire life.
To be or not to be the next caretaker chief is the question that Justice Hasan must answer within

the next few hours. If he chooses to go ahead, he risks igniting violent political conflagration of a scale and magnitude unseen in the recent past. If, on the other hand, he declines to take the responsibility that the constitution obliges him to at the moment, he may be accused of having been cowed down by allegations of partisan allegiance, which to many, appear to be too old to be of any relevance today.
The former chief justice may, perhaps, have never imagined being in a position like this. Why, he may very well ask, is he the focus of the nation? By nature judges are loners and by professional requirement they maintain a very low-profile social life, hardly ever mixing with ordinary people. So for him to be suddenly the focus of attention and especially in such a confrontational atmosphere is not only new but perhaps totally alien. To make perhaps the biggest understatement of the moment, our venerable former chief justice

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Renegade BNP men under attack for joining LDP

STAR REPORT
As soon as the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was formed with breakaway BNP leaders and activists Thursday, enraged BNP men led a wave of attacks on the new party across the country much as a repeat show of what happened when former president Badruddoza Chowdhury formed his Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh.
The BNP men mainly targeted the residences of the leaders who left the BNP to join the LDP. Eight residences and seven vehicles of LDP leaders were torched and bombs were hurled on the residences.
In one incident in Dhamrai,

BNP men attacked a market in Balla Thursday in protest against BNP lawmaker Barrister Ziaur Rahman Khan's joining the LDP and sprayed bullets that killed a shopkeeper, Aslam Khan.
In most cases, police remained inactive or turned up late, alleged the victims.
The leaders whose residences came under attack are state ministers Redwan Ahmed and Alamgir Kabir, former speaker Shaikh Razzaq Ali, lawmakers Mohammad Ali Zinnah, Ziaur Rahman Khan, MA Karim Abbasi and Abdul Kader, and adviser to the prime minister Jahanara Begum.
Around 25 youths attacked the

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Hasan stays out of public eyes

Civil society urges him to decline job

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Former chief justice KM Hasan remained in an apparent seclusion out of public eyes over the last few days.
After his meeting with US Ambassador Patricia A Butenis on October 22, Justice Hasan, who is likely to take oath as the chief adviser to the caretaker government today, did not attend the Eid-ul-Fitr prayers, Juma prayers or meet any friend, well wisher or civil society member who went to his residence.
Although leaders of different organisations went to meet him to convey their concerns over the existing political situation, he did not meet them.
Different socio-cultural and


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Titular head now turns all powerful

SHAKHAWAT LITON
With the alliance government's tenure having expired yesterday, the titular head of state President Iajuddin Ahmed has become constitutionally important and the most powerful and all eyes are on him whether he initiates steps to end the ongoing political turmoil.
The president will now appoint the chief adviser to the next caretaker government. But the alliances led by BNP and Awami League are at loggerheads over Justice KM Hasan, who is supposed to be the interim government chief in accordance with the constitution.
Once the chief of caretaker

government is appointed, the president in consultation with him will appoint ten other advisers and administer their oath. The interim government will be collectively answerable to the president.
The caretaker government tasked with creating a level playing field for holding a free and fair election shall exercise all executive authorities of the republic while the president will deal with the defence forces that will also be deployed to maintain law and order during the polls.
During the period of the caretaker government, the constitutional provision requiring the president to act on the advice of

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Bangladesh Cricket Control Board Worldwide Marketing Agency Rights

Our client


Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) invites Tenders from reputed Marketing Agents of national/international standing to acquire the Worldwide Marketing Agency Rights (television, internet, etc) for the period 1 November 2006 to 31 March 2012. This advertisement is on behalf of BCCB.

1. A detailed Invitation To Tender (ITT) has been developed incorporating all necessary Tender/Bid details and documents, including the Marketing Agency Rights Agreement.
2. Interested parties need to obtain a copy of the ITT from us on payment of USD5,000/BDT335,000 (non-refundable). Such payment needs to be remitted to BCCB (Account no.: 01-7537131-01, Account name: Bangladesh Cricket Board, Bank: Standard Chartered Bank, Dhaka, Bangladesh, SWIFT: SCBLBDDX). Please send to us your request for ITT (soft or printed version) along with evidence of bank transfer / payment of above.
3. Only Marketing Agents with a Net Worth (paid up capital plus all reserves) of BDT 1 Billion (or equivalent USD, converted at BDT 67 for each USD) as on 31 December 2005, or latest audited annual turnover in excess of BDT 5 Billion (or equivalent USD, converted at BDT 67 for each USD) will be eligible to bid.

In addition, to qualify as eligible bidder, such marketing agents also need to have recent (last five years) experience in marketing similar rights of events in cricket or other sports which are recognized by the respective international sports governing body.

Interested parties must refer to BCCB website (www.tigercricket.com) for details on Marketing Agency Rights on offer and definition of Marketing Agent.

4. All Tenders/Bids (prepared in accordance with ITT) must be delivered to us as directed in the ITT between 10 am and 12 noon on 8 November 2006.
5. Potential bidders may contact us at the address below for details on obtaining ITT.



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