

President's takeover as CG chief condemned

UNB, Dhaka

Pro-liberation teachers of Dhaka University (DU) yesterday protested the takeover of President Iajuddin Ahmed as the chief of the caretaker government.

The teachers described the president's move as a "clear violation" of the country's constitution and said that October 29 will be written in history as a black day. "The president was the nation's last resort. He was supposed to uphold the country's constitution as its custodian. But he has taken oath as the caretaker chief violating the constitution. This is indecent," former President of Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) Prof Dr AAMS Arefin Siddiquetold UNB.

Prof Arefin said there were so many alternatives before the president in appointing a nonpartisan caretaker chief, but he did not make the proper use of the alternatives.

"As per the constitution, the president was supposed to appoint a caretaker chief on the basis of a consensus of the country's political parties. He didn't take the opinions of country's major political parties into consideration. He can't do so. This is unconstitutional," Prof Arefin said.

According to the constitution, Prof Arefin further said, the maximum age of a caretaker chief is supposed to be below 72, but the president is already 76.

Duta General Secretary Dr Akhtaruzzaman said this caretaker government would just be an extended body of the BNP-Jamaat alliance government.

"Such caretaker government is the outcome of BNP-Jamaat's long drawn conspiracy. People will never accept such a government. The evil forces will soon be brought to justice by the patriotic forces," he told UNB.

When contacted, some other senior teachers of the university, including former VC Prof AK Azad Chowdhury and Social Science Faculty Dean Prof Harun-or-Rashid also came up with such reaction.

Abducted youth rescued in Sirajganj

UNB, Sirajganj

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members rescued an abducted young man and also arrested two abductors from Paikganj village at Kamarkhanda in the district last Monday.

The rescued young man was identified as Shahidul Islam, 18, son of Roka Molla of Kalighati village at Chitolmari in Bagerhat district.

Rab sources said a gang numbering 5 to 6 abducted Shahidul from Gazipur on Oct 19. The miscreants later took Shahidul to the capital and kept him confined in a room of Dhaka College.

The gang later contacted Shahidul's family over cell phone and demanded Tk 50,000 from them as ransom. But as the family members refused to give the money, they took Shahidul to Paikganj village in Sirajganj district on Sunday night and confined him in the house of one Rubel Sarker of the village.

Acting on a tip-off, Rab members later raided the house at about 12:00 noon on Monday and rescued Shahidul. Rab also arrested Rubel and his accomplice Belal.



The swearing-in ceremony of President Iajuddin Ahmed as the chief adviser to the caretaker government was held at Bangabhaban in the city last night. Immediate past Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, Chief Justice Syed JR Mudassar Husain, former chief of a caretaker government Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman and Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad are seen among the participants at the swearing-in ceremony.



PHOTO: STAR

6 killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

A total of six people were killed in separate road accidents in Pabna and Sirajganj in the last two days.

Our correspondent from Pabna reports: Two people were killed and several others injured in a road accident at Patgram on Dhaka-Pabna highway under Bera upazila in the early morning of yesterday.

One dead was identified as Taslima Begum of Bonogram village while the identity of the other, a microbus driver, could not be known.

Sources said a passenger-loaded microbus left Bonogram for Bogra to join a bride party. As soon as the microbus reached Patgram, a speedy truck hit the microbus, killing two on the spot and wounding others.

The killer truck, however, managed to flee. UNB from Sirajganj adds: Four people were killed and 19 others injured in separate road accidents in the district yesterday and on Saturday.

Yesterday, two siblings were killed and 19 others injured when a

bus dashed a microbus at Baghabari on Bogra-Nagarbari highway yesterday morning.

The deceased were identified as Rubel, 20, and his sister Taslima, 15, of Khukni village in Shahjapur upazila.

Of the injured, seven were admitted to hospital.

On Saturday, a truck skidded off the Bogra-Nagarbari road at night, killing one Bimal, 20, on the spot.

Meanwhile, one Hasan was crushed under the wheels of a bus at Chalitabhangra on Kazipur-Dhunot road on Saturday night.

20 shops burn down at Karwan Bazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 20 cloth stores burned down in a fire at Karwan Bazar Tinshead Market in the city last night. The blaze broke out at about 10:30pm, but it could not be known what caused the fire.

Fire fighters rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control at around 11:45pm.

The shops were closed due to Eid vacation, but some shop owners hearing the news of fire rushed to the scene only to find their shops gutted. They estimated the loss at about Tk 50 lakh.

Bangladesh envoy presents credentials to Gyanendra

BSS, Dhaka

Imtiaz Ahmed, the newly appointed ambassador of Bangladesh to Nepal, presented his letter of credence recently to King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev at a simple ceremony at Narayanhity Royal Palace in Kathmandu.

He also conveyed warm greetings and felicitations on behalf of the president and prime minister of Bangladesh to the king. The king reciprocated the greetings.

Iajuddin seeks

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irrespective of party affiliation, in performing his new responsibility.

Referring to the disputes over the appointment of chief adviser to the non-party caretaker government, he said former chief justice KM Hasan expressed his unwillingness to take over in the face of opposition by some political parties and their agitation programme.

After expressing inability by Justice Hasan, he said, there is a constitutional provision to take over the charge by the next immediate-retired justice. But the second immediate retired chief justice already died.

As per constitution, Justice MA Aziz being the last-retired justice of the Appellate Division should have taken the charge. But Aziz being chief election commissioner cannot take the office of the chief adviser.

The next-retired Appellate Division judge, Hamidul Huq, expressed his inability to take the responsibility without consensus of the main political parties.

In view of this situation, the president said, he discussed the matter with the BNP secretary general and the Awami League general secretary.

The following day, he discussed with the delegations of four main political parties with a view to appointing an acceptable and eminent citizen of the country as chief adviser.

The president said he had hoped that the major political parties would reach a consensus on a particular eminent person for the job, "but, unfortunately, they could not agree".

As such, there was no alternative but to take additional responsibility of the caretaker chief under article 58(c) (5) of the constitution.

The president reminded that the democracy has been established at the cost of patriotic people of this country after overcoming all odds and obstacles.

"Our sacred duty is to uphold our independence and democratic dispensation," said the president, adding: "It is the responsibility of the government to establish peace in social life and remove hindrances to economic activities."

Islami Oikya Jote dissolved

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Founder Chairman of Islami Oikya Jote Shaikhul Hadith Azizul Huq formally dissolved the jote yesterday.

Speaking at a press conference in the city he said, "We formed an alliance with BNP and Jamaat before 2001 general election and our alliance ended with the expiry of the government."

"Now we are taking preparation for contesting the election separately," said Azizul Huq, also the Amir of Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish, in a written statement.

He, however, said ahead of 2007 general election his party can also form alliance with any party having similar ideology and political demands.

"If BNP regrets its past mistakes and pledges to work together in future we can also form an alliance with it in the upcoming general election," said Azizul Huq.

He alleged that the BNP-led alliance government ignored many opinions of Oikya Jote while taking

important political decisions in different occasions.

The Shaikhul Hadith also blamed the BNP for conspiring to break up the Islami Oikya Jote.

Nayeb-e-Amirs Shahidul Islam and Habibur Rahman, General Secretary Abdur Rab Eusufi and Organising Secretary Humayun Kabir also spoke at the press conference.

Charles, Camilla leave for Pakistan

AFP, London

Prince Charles and his wife Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, have left Britain for a politically sensitive trip to Pakistan amid controversy over the planned hanging of a British man.

A spokeswoman for Charles's household, Clarence House, confirmed that the couple had flown out of Britain on Sunday but said she could not give any more details for security reasons.

30,000 tourists still stranded in Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Cox's Bazar district administration took a step to help the 30 thousand stranded tourists, who went to Cox's Bazar on Eid holidays but could not get back home due to political violence and unrest.

Cox's Bazar Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mohammed Aminul Islam said he held a meeting with the representatives of District Hotel-Motel Owners' Association, District Restaurant Owners' Association and Bus Paribahan Owners' Association on DC office yesterday to address the crisis situation.

All parties agreed in the meeting that they would offer all stranded tourists concessions in hotel room rent, food cost and transport cost and would give the tourists an opportunity to pay due bill after they return home.

About 50 thousand visitors from home and abroad thronged Cox's Bazar sea beach to enjoy Eid vacation but about 30 thousand of them got stranded due to political violence.

Many became unable to pay hotel room rent and bear the food cost as hoteliers took the opportunity to make hefty sum by charging three to four times higher than the regular rent.

Eid gift for underprivileged children

INT'L TURKISH HOPE SCHOOL

arranged its 4th "Eid Gift Distribution" programme this Eid-ul-Fitr and distributed more than 2000 packets of clothes, toys, stationery, biscuits and candies to underprivileged children of villages Basail in Tangail and Noapara in Chittagong, says a press release.

Four years back the school management decided to help needy children in different villages in Bangladesh. Since then, during the Eid-ul-Fitr every year, the school has been arranging this benevolent programme.

After receiving the gifts the children and their families were very excited. Some of the parents from those villages said, "We are grateful to Int'l Turkish Hope School for arranging this nice distribution at our village. Our kids are so happy on the eve of Eid with the very nice gifts."

No climate action may spark economic crisis

REUTERS, London

Ignoring climate change could lead to economic upheaval on the scale of the 1930s Depression, underlining the need for urgent action to combat global warming, a report on the costs of climate change said.

The report by chief British government economist Nicholas Stern, a 27-page summary of which was obtained by Reuters, says the benefits of determined worldwide steps to tackle climate change would greatly outweigh the costs.

The 700-page report, to be published today, said that no matter what we do now the chance "is already almost out of reach" to keep greenhouse gases at a level which scientists say should avoid the worst effects of climate change.

It said the world does not have to choose between tackling climate change and economic growth, contradicting US President George W Bush who pulled out of the Kyoto Protocol against global warming in part because he said it would cost jobs.

"The evidence gathered by the review leads to a simple conclusion: the benefits of strong, early action considerably outweigh the costs," said the report, prepared for Prime Minister Tony Blair and Chancellor Gordon Brown.

"Our actions over the coming few decades could create risks of major disruption to economic and social activity, later in this century

and in the next, on a scale similar to those associated with the great wars and the economic depression of the first half of the 20th century," it said.

It precedes UN climate talks, starting in Nairobi on November 6, focussing on finding a successor to Kyoto which ends in 2012.

Blair is pushing for a post-Kyoto framework that would include the United States -- the world's biggest producer of greenhouse gases that cause climate change -- as well as major developing countries such as China and India.

Kyoto obliges 35 rich nations to cut emissions of greenhouse gases -- which come mainly from burning fossil fuels in power plants, factories and cars -- by some 5 percent from 1990 levels by 2008-12. Many Kyoto nations are above target.

POOR WILL SUFFER MOST
Stern said that, on current trends, average global temperatures will rise by 2-3 degrees centigrade within the next 50 years or so, compared with temperatures in 1750-1850.

If emissions continue to grow, the earth could warm by several more degrees, with severe consequences that would hit poor countries most, the former World Bank chief economist said.

Melting glaciers would initially increase flood risk and then reduce water supplies, eventually threatening one-sixth of the world's population, mainly in the Indian sub-continent, parts of China and the

South American Andes, he said.

Declining crop yields, especially in Africa, could leave hundreds of millions unable to produce or buy enough food, he said. Rising sea levels could result in tens to hundreds of millions more people flooded each year.

The report estimates stabilising greenhouse gases in the atmosphere will cost about 1 percent of annual global output by 2050. But if the world does nothing, it could cut global consumption per person by between five and 20 percent.

Stern called for a coordinated international approach to combat climate change, saying the effort must be shared fairly by rich and poor. He suggested rich nations take responsibility for emissions cuts of 60-80 percent from 1990 levels by 2050.

Countering global warming would bring new opportunities to industry, he said, estimating the market for low-carbon energy products could be worth at least 500 billion dollar (263 billion pounds) a year by 2050.

He advocated a doubling of worldwide public spending on research and development into low-carbon technologies and a sharp increase in incentives to encourage people to use them.

Stern said a global carbon price was needed, affixing a clear cost to pollution, and this could be created through tax, trading or regulation.



A dump truck of Dhaka City Corporation carries garbage during the daytime at Jatrabari in the city yesterday, violating rules.

PHOTO: STAR



PHOTO: STAR

Children form a human chain at Banasree, Rampura, in the city yesterday with a call to stop violent activities and ensure peaceful atmosphere. Nari Nunnay Shakti, a voluntary organisation, arranged the programme.

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