

## CEC's ouster

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not resign willingly," said Zafar, who led the JP team in the talks.

He said the advisers informed them that they are considering a number of alternatives for reconstituting the EC. The advisers, however, did not tell them anything about the much-talked-about issue of appointing more election commissioners as one of those alternatives, he said.

Leaders of JOF, which comprises Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Jatiya Oikya Mancha, and Bangladesh Tarikat Federation, echoed the same view.

"We told the advisers that the CEC along with other election commissioners must be removed," LDP Executive President Col (ret'd) Oli Ahmed, who led the JOF team, said at a press conference following the meeting.

"The caretaker government will have to ensure the CEC's exit," Oli said, adding, "The president and chief adviser has now unlimited power to exercise on behalf of the 14 crore people of Bangladesh.

"The environment for a free and fair election has not yet been ensured," Oli said, alleging that the caretaker government is yet to take any satisfactory step to

prove its neutrality for holding a free and fair election.

"Instead of taking any actions, the caretaker government is rather protecting the corrupt former ministers and lawmakers of BNP," said Oli, who left the BNP and formed the new party last October.

Apart from removal of the CEC and other election commissioners, the demands of the JP and JOF include cancellation of the controversial updated voter list, appointment of 300 upazila election officers and all contractual appointments, recovery of illegal arms, and arrest of corrupt ministers, militants and criminals.

The JP also demanded forming an advisory committee for "effective" reshuffle in the administration, and transfer of all deputy commissioners, superintendents of police, and thana and upazila officers.

The JOF demanded an inquiry into the allegation of carrying 400 suitcases to Saudi Arabia by the entourage of the immediate past prime minister, transfer of the partisan government officials or making them officers-on-special-duty (OSD), and action against the home secretary for his "misconduct".

## CG's positive decision

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three other controversial election commissioners, EC secretary and cancellation of 300 upazila election officers' appointment orders.

The AL chief is supposed to brief newsmen this evening over the latest political situation of the country and announce a relaxed blockade programme after the CG's decision, sources said.

At a press briefing at AL's Dhanmondi office, 14-party Coordinator Abdul Jalil alleged that the country itself, its democracy, sovereignty and peoples fate are under threat as the president assumed the charge of chief adviser (CA) to the CG violating the constitution.

Jalil, also the AL general secretary, reiterated the demand to President/Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed to appoint a non-partisan person as the CA in order to create a neutral atmosphere for a free and fair election.

If the president failed to do that, the very existence of the country and its democracy will be threatened, he said adding that the president has completely failed to take any effective measures to create a congenial atmosphere for elections.

He said the CA cannot run 15 ministries and the president has been doing his entire works without following any rules or regulations. Bitterly criticising the president's activities, Jalil alleged that his activities are forcing the country towards confrontation.

Saying that the home secretary issued an "unlawful" decision over the deployment of the army, keeping the CG in dark, the 14-party leader demanded judicial inquiry into the matter and removal of the "controversial" home secretary within the

next couple of days.

Jalil said the president has once again violated the constitution by promoting his press secretary to his adviser.

The AL leader reiterated the demand for immediate reconstitution of the EC, removal of CEC MA Aziz and corrections made in the voter lists before holding a free and fair election.

He also demanded immediate removal of those officials in civil service and police department who were loyal and beneficiaries of the previous regime. He said they should be replaced by those who were deprived of positions or placed as officer on special duty (OSD) by the previous regime.

The AL leader also demanded immediate cancellation of all the contractual appointments made by the BNP-Jamaat government.

Acknowledging that people have been suffering a lot due to the non-stop countrywide blockade programme, Jalil urged countrymen to bear the sufferings a few days more for the greater interests of the nation. He said sometimes sufferings have to be forgotten to achieve a larger goal.

Jalil conveyed a message from the AL chief that she was grateful that the countrymen observed the blockade peacefully. Jalil also thanked businessmen for their non-cooperation with CEC MA Aziz.

Among others, senior 14-party leaders Abdur Razzak, Toail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Sheikh Fazul Karim Selim, Motia Chowdhury, Obaidul Quader, Rashed Khan Menon, Hasanul Haque Inu, Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed, Bimal Biswas, Pankaj Bhattacharya, Nurul Islam and Dilip Barua were present at the press briefing.

## Kohinoor sent to CHT

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following Kohinoor's order to spray hot water on a peaceful demonstration of blockade supporters at Karwan Bazaar on Monday leading to a violent clash between police and the demonstrators. During the clash, a speedy police van drove through the demonstrators killing AL leader Wazullah and leaving two others critically injured.

Widely known for his close tie with Hawa Bhaban and special sympathy for BNP and Jamaat, Kohinoor allegedly tortured many opposition activists during the five-year rule of the immediate past four-party alliance government.

The caretaker government made him OSD recently, but he was asked to continue as the Deputy Commissioner of Tejgaon division of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP).

On March 12 this year, innocent bystander Advocate Shahin Sultana Shanta was left critically injured when police brutally beat her up at Dhanmondi 27 on Kohinoor's order while the senior AL leader and former home minister Mohammad Nasim came under merciless police attack recently at the directive of the same police officer.

Kohinoor came to spotlight during BNP rule on January 31, in 1994 when he raided Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University and mercilessly beat up students. Just a day later, he led a brutal police attack on students protesting inauguration of Book Fair by the then Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in front of the Bangla Academy causing mayhem.

In 2002, Kohinoor implicated many noted intellectuals and AL leaders in four-cinema hall blast case in Mymensingh and tortured inhumanely in remands.

Notable among the victims of the case are Shahrik Kabir, a freelance journalist and eminent writer well known for his anti-fundamentalists stance and his strong voice for trial of the killers of the War of Liberation, eminent historian and columnist Prof Muntasir Mamun, AL leader Saber Hossain Chowdhury and senior journalist Enamul Haq Chowdhury. The government later admitted that Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) militants were behind the blasts.

The same year freelance journalist Saleem Samad, NGO worker Prilla Raj and two foreign journalists, arrested on seditious charge, faced Kohinoor's brutality in remand. Saleem later told The Daily Star that at one point of torture, Kohinoor used his foot to gag Saleem.

Kohinoor also ordered to launch attack on the students demonstrating to protest against barbaric police raid in Shamsunnahar Hall of Dhaka University on June 23 in 2003.

On May 9, 2004 police fired on the innocent people during Nandail Municipality Election following his order, the then SP of Mymensingh, killing two. The on-duty magistrate later told the journalists that he did not give order to open fire. In the face growing public protest, the government transferred him to Dhaka with better posting.

## 2 outlaws killed

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the 'shootout' as he tried to flee police custody, claimed police.

Police recovered six bullets from the spot.

So far, a total of 123 alleged criminals, highest across the country, have been killed in Kushtia since June 2004.

In Jessore, a team of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) 6 raided Kagojpurpur village under Sarsha upazila in Jessore at around 2:00am after a tip-off that some members of the outlawed PBCP would be holding a secret meeting there.

After Rab cordoned off a house at Kagojpurpur and called on the outlaws to surrender, the outlaws ignored the Rab call and opened fire on them sparking off a half-hour long gunfight, said Rab.

Akram was found dead on the spot after the gunfight ended, while other outlaws fled the scene, claimed Rab.

Police recovered a 9mm pistol and six bullets from the spot.

According to Jessore police, Akram was an accused in several cases including four for murder filed with Sarsha and Abhaynagar police stations.

## Police protection

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into the matter if the commerce secretary fails to do that.

The prices of essentials are soaring as the trucks carrying goods from the districts, borders and ports cannot enter the capital due to the non-stop blockade enforced by the 14-party and supported by some other parties, including Liberal Democratic Party.

The export-import trade was disrupted severely in the last few days as operations in the country's premier seaport Chittagong Port were almost paralysed. The port operations however resumed partially yesterday.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) said that the export-oriented industry is incurring a loss of Tk 500 crore daily for the blockade.

## Shop owners

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public sufferings.

Saying that the country's economic health is deteriorating and their businesses are incurring loss due to the CEC's stubbornness, the desperate DMSOA leaders also urged MA Aziz's wife to convince her husband to resign immediately in order to save the commoners from further sufferings.

Asked whether this move for not selling any products or services to a person violates human rights or not, he said, "Our move is rather symbolic so that the CEC feels the pulse of the common people."

If he still continues as CEC, from November 18, the vegetable vendors, grocers, bread and biscuit manufacturers would stop selling any products to him, Helal said adding that even the restaurants and the tailors would stop providing their services to him or his family.

"If we find anybody else coming to us for his shopping, we would not offer our product or services to that person either," he said. The business community would also cease inviting him to any social programmes, he added.

Md Helal Uddin read out a written statement at the press conference while Secretary General of Bread and Biscuit Manufacturers' Association Iqbal Hossain Rana, President of Bangladesh Restaurant Owners' Association Ruhul Amin Khondakar, President of Food and Vegetable Products Exporters' Association Jahangir Hossain were present.

## Butenis

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and work with it to hold a free and fair election.

She welcomed the interim government's latest move for discussion with the major political parties. "We are particularly appreciative and hopeful at the initiatives that the president and the council of advisers are taking now to reach out to the parties and engage them in to resolve some of the outstanding issues like the Election Commission and other arrangements for free and fair election," she said.

"This is a very positive development and we applaud the president and his council of advisers, and we are encouraged that the advisers under the president are functioning as a team and moving the country forward to a free and fair election," she added.

Butenis hoped that the initiative will bring results. Referring to the previous talks between the AL and BNP leaders, she said despite all the hope that dialogue did not really result in anything specific.

Head of European Union delegation Ambassador Stephen Frowein also met Akbar Ali Khan yesterday and hoped that the current dialogue of advisers with the political parties will lead to a solution to the disputes over the next election.

## Home secy's transfer

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going to discipline Kohinoor Mia, the deputy police commissioner who had ordered for shooting high-pressure hot water on the demonstrators.

Jahurul asked the president not to liken him to Kohinoor and said he was ready to quit his job or comply with any transfer order, added the sources.

Later, the establishment secretary was asked to take the dossier on the embattled home secretary to the Bangabhaban, but soon the move stopped for a reason not yet known.

The 'unlawful and devious' decision [to deploy troops], which was eventually cancelled, had stunned the council of advisers, and some of them have requested the chief adviser (also in charge of the home ministry) to take disciplinary action against Jahurul Islam.

Signed by Jahurul, who has been widely known as a beneficiary of the immediate past alliance government, the circular directed the local administrations to prepare for deployment of the army across the country.

It said the army would be deployed to help the civil administration maintain law and order.

"We are waiting to see what steps are taken against him (home secretary)," Finance and Planning Adviser Akbar Ali Khan yesterday told journalists at his office.

Meanwhile, four advisers yesterday met President-cum-Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed at the Bangabhaban and discussed the issue of home secretary's circular on the army deployment.

The advisers urged the president to take immediate action against Jahurul.

After cancellation of the order, Akbar Ali Khan said the issuance of Sunday's circular was a clear violation of the service rules.

Adviser and former chief of the army Hasan Mashud Chowdhury said proper procedure was not followed in taking the step and such a terrible mistake is not acceptable especially when it is dealing with a sensitive matter.

Earlier on Monday, at a meeting of advisers with President Iajuddin

Ahmed in the chair, the home secretary failed to explain his actions. He tried to defend himself saying that he had issued the circular in consultation with the law secretary. But at the same meeting, the law secretary told the advisers that he did not have any discussion at all with the home secretary.

Sources in the civil service said Jahurul is one of the officials with obvious leanings towards the BNP and Jamaat. He has got to the top rung of his career ladder through quick promotions during the immediate past alliance rule, superseding others.

He was elevated to the post of secretary from deputy secretary in only four years while it usually takes a civil servant at least 10 years for such promotion.

Jahurul came in the spotlight when as the DC of Laxmipur he had former minister ASM Abdur Rab arrested on the eve of the 2001 election.

The president appointed him as the home secretary on October 30, a day after assuming the office of the chief adviser. Before the promotion, he was serving as an additional secretary for the same ministry.

He also served as the secretary of the local government division, which was under BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan (the then LRGD and cooperatives minister).

The political parties except the BNP-Jamaat-led alliance had opposed his appointment as the home secretary.

During his stint as an additional secretary, Jahurul is said to have been instrumental in reversing a home ministry initiative to transfer former Rajshahi superintendent of police Masud Mia who had been accused of backing the Islamist militants in Rajshahi and the neighbouring districts.

Sources said the home secretary had been denied the US visa twice by the US Embassy in Dhaka for his alleged patronage of militant activities.

and four-party activists.

In Mymensingh, at least 25 activists of the rival alliances were injured in a clash at Ram Babu Road in the town yesterday.

The clash ensued when a four-party procession from a BNP office came face to face with a 14-party procession at Ganginarpar area at 5:00pm.

They got locked in a clash which left 25 injured. Police fired 30 tear-gas shells to bring the situation under control. Fifteen of the injured were rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. Seven of them were admitted there.

In Pabna, the district administration yesterday imposed section 144 banning political gatherings in the district headquarters following announcement of political programmes at the same place by the rival alliances.

Apart from the tension arising from BNP's counter programmes, the blockaders were found to be in a festive mood.

They kept performing skits on the present CEC, sang folk songs and danced at intervals of speeches from makeshift stages on truck beds decorated colourfully with banners and placards.

Meanwhile, several crackers were blasted at an open space near North South Road yesterday evening close to a 14-party rally triggering tension among the rallyers.

The blockaders vandalised several vehicles at Badda yesterday morning.

Meanwhile, our correspondents roaming the capital yesterday reported that the number of blockaders increased yesterday at different points.

The numbers of rickshaws and auto-rickshaws were very low on the streets during the day hours which in the afternoon saw an increase.

The coalition leaders in their speeches yesterday protested the police killing of one of their men and police attacks on many others, and criticised President Iajuddin Ahmed for bringing his press secretary into the council of advisers despite allegations against him.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police yesterday imposed a ban on mass gatherings and processions all over the city leaving only a few spots out of the ban for demonstrations.

**THE COUNTRY**  
In Chittagong, several persons were injured in a clash between 14-party

## 100 vehicles

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pelling brickbats at each other. The fight continued until 6:30pm.

City Mayor and Awami League leader ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury has threatened of a hartal in the port city today if the attackers on the 14-party rally are not brought to book.

He accused the four-party activists of attacking the rally at Barik Building crossing in the afternoon. The mayor also accused a police officer of Double Mooring Police Station of backing the attackers.

Sources close to the mayor told the news agency that a senior police officer phoned the mayor, urging him to refrain from calling hartal with an assurance of action against the attackers.

## World Bank

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Yunus says he wants to use his enhanced visibility to expand microcredit projects after he grabbed global attention by winning the Nobel Peace Prize in mid-October.

He has been joined here by Queen Sofia of Spain and government ministers from Canada, Pakistan and Honduras, as well as by UN officials and bankers from Citigroup, ING and Deutsche Bank.

The summit is also being attended by Silicon Valley venture capitalists and some 2,000 microcredit organisers and specialists from around the world.

Campaigners announced a goal Sunday of extending microloans to 175 million people by 2015. They already claim to have extended such loans to some 82 million people since an initial summit in Washington in 1997.

They hope to chip away at the 1.0-1.2 billion of the world's people who struggle to live on under one dollar a day, primarily in Asia.

No senior World Bank official is attending the summit, although there are representatives from the Asian Development Bank and other multilateral lenders.

Yunus said that "not even one percent" of the World Bank's lending of over 20 billion dollars has gone towards microcredit initiatives.

"Their orientation is too different. If you build a bridge, who owns the bridge? Of course if the government take the loan, the government own the bridge," he said.

"I said that's a very old-fashioned formula, why can't the local poor people own the bridge?"

The Grameen Bank has extended microloans to 6.6 million people totalling 5.72 billion dollars, of which 5.07 billion has been repaid. It also offers loans for poor people to build or improve their own homes.

Yunus's new-found celebrity has come as some major corporations ramp up their partnerships with the sector.

French food giant Danone is launching a food company in Bangladesh with the Grameen Bank, and US banking behemoth Citigroup has started sponsoring microcredit institutions in India.

Underlining the new corporate interest, this year's summit in Canada is partly sponsored by US agribusiness giant Monsanto and the consumer products group Johnson and Johnson.

## 7 JMB militants

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Patnitala upazila of Naogaon, Abdul Berek alias Berek of Chakujal village in Mahadebpur upazila, and Mostafizur Rahman alias Mosta of Boirati village in Kaliganj upazila of Lalmonirhat.

According to the prosecution, a team of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab)-5, in separate raids, arrested the seven JMB men at Harirampur and Mahmudpur villages in Patnitala upazila on February 4 this year. They were later handed over to Patnitala police.

On their confessional statements, the law enforcers recovered a pistol, a shutter gun, four bombs, 12 bullets, four knives and some jihad books from a bamboo cluster at Harirampur village.

Two cases—one under Arms Act and the other under Explosive Substances Act—were filed with the police station concerned. Police pressed charges against the JMB militants.

After examining the prosecution witnesses and records, Judge Abu Ahmed Jamadar of Special Tribunal-2 delivered the judgment in a crowded court.

## GP to fund

**FROM PAGE 16**  
director of Oitithya Onneshwan signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organisations at a hotel in the capital.

This is for the first time that a private company has come forward to provide funds for excavating and preserving any archaeological site of the country.

Under the deal, both sides also agreed to work jointly to explore a sustainable solution to preserve this invaluable national heritage for the future generation.

Wari-Bateshwar was discovered in 1930s by a local schoolteacher Hanif Pathan. In 2000, a team of the Archaeological Department of Jahangirnagar University (JU) started scientific excavation of the site. The excavation was also funded by The Daily Star in 2002 and by The Asiatic Society in 2004.

It is believed that Wari-Bateshwar is the ancient city of 'Sounagora' referred to by Ptolemy, which had trade contact with the Roman Empire and further excavation would unearth considerable information of early history of the area, Prof Sufi Mostafizur Rahman of JU told the reporters at the ceremony.

"Understanding its corporate social responsibility (CSR), GP has undertaken different initiatives and this one is also a part of that," Kafil H S Mueydd said adding that GP also wishes to fund establishing a museum at the heritage site in the next.

The event was also attended by the trustee members of the Oitithya Onneshwan, GP officials and faculty members of JU among others.

## Focus on anti-terror panel as talks start

### Indo-Pak officials sit after a year

REUTERS, New Delhi

Top diplomats from archrivals India and Pakistan began talks for the first time in nearly a year in a bid to revive a peace process that was halted by deadly train bombings in Mumbai in July.

The two-day talks between the nuclear-armed neighbours are expected to set up a system to combat terrorism.

They came a few months after Indian and Pakistani leaders agreed to resume negotiations after meeting on the sidelines of a Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit in September.

"The primary focus will be on the joint mechanism on terrorism," a top Indian foreign ministry official said, referring to talks between Indian Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon and his Pakistani counterpart, Riaz Mohammad Khan.

"Let's see how Pakistan responds. We hope to be able to set up the joint mechanism, discuss its mandate, its composition and see how it goes," said the official, who declined to be named.

Pakistan's foreign secretary said he hoped to have "very constructive discussions" after arriving in New Delhi on Monday.

India suspended dialogue with Pakistan after blaming Pakistan's spy agency and an Islamist militant group based there for the Mumbai bombings that killed 186 people. Islamabad and the Lashkar-e-Taiba group have denied links to the blast.

Many Indian analysts have already written off the joint terrorism panel, saying they did not expect Pakistan to act against its own spy agency, which New Delhi has long blamed for subversive acts across the country.

India and Pakistan began peace talks in 2004 after coming close to what would have been their fourth war.

The talks have made slow progress, particularly over the key Kashmir dispute, and have been undermined by violent attacks by militants in Kashmir and across India.

In fresh violence in the revolted Himalayan region, two Indian soldiers and one Islamist militant were killed and three troops wounded in a gun-battle in the Jammu region late on Monday, authorities said.

"The militants had infiltrated into the area from the other side two days back and were waiting for their guide when we were tipped off about them," said Indian army spokesman Colonel DK Badola.

In a separate incident, an Indian soldier was killed in firing from across the frontier but it was not clear if he was shot at by militants or Pakistani troops, officials said.

The two armies have been observing a truce along the

Kashmir frontier since Nov. 2003 and it has largely held successfully.

New Delhi, however, says Islamabad has not done enough to curb anti-India militants based in Pakistan. Islamabad says separatist violence could only cease when the Kashmir dispute is settled.

The New Delhi talks are also expected to discuss ending a standoff over the Siachen glacier in Kashmir. But progress is unlikely as the Indian army is unwilling to withdraw troops from what is the world's highest battleground.

"If we vacate the glacier, it will weaken our position," Brigadier Om Prakash, the commander of an Indian army unit in Siachen, told the Press Trust of India news agency.

## 30 killed

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Mohammed Qassem highway in east Baghdad on Monday morning, which killed two soldiers and wounded two others.

On Sunday, a suicide bomber blew up a vehicle as a US patrol passed in the central Iraqi province of Salaheddin, killing two soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division and wounding two.

Insurgents have grown increasingly bold around Ramadi, which lies deep in the Sunni heartland west of Baghdad where tribal leaders were strong allies of deposed dictator Saddam Hussein.

US forces said they used air-launched weapons on Saturday to destroy a building in the city that had been booby-trapped to explode upon entry. The military said there were no reports of civilian casualties in that attack.

In other violence, assailants killed seven passengers aboard a minivan ambushed Tuesday near Mandali on the Iranian border, Diyala provincial police said.

Six people were killed in fighting overnight between Shia gunmen and American forces in Shula, northwest Baghdad, police spokesman Mohammed Khayoun said. Residents said US warplanes had fired rockets at homes in the area and put the death toll as high as nine. The US military has not commented on the reports.

Elsewhere in the capital, one person was killed when a car bomb detonated near a restaurant in west Baghdad, police Lt Mitham Abdul-Razzaq said.

Three insurgents were blown apart trying to plant a roadside bomb Monday night in the north-western city of Mosul, police Brig. Abdul-Karim Ahmed Khalaf said.

The US military, meanwhile, said an airstrike killed three insurgents suspected of being part of a bomb-making ring in Yousfiyah, 12 miles south of Baghdad.

## Ctg port operations

**FROM PAGE 16**  
The operations at Mongla Port and all land ports, however, remained suspended.

Import and export through Hill, Biral and Banglabandha land ports remained suspended due to continuous railway, road and port blockade programme of the 14-party alliance, according to Clearing & Forwarding agents and customs officials, our Dinajpur correspondent reports.

The three land ports in greater Dinajpur looked deserted while at least 200 trucks laden with perishable items were seen stranded on both sides of the port.