

Focus on election- '91

Upazila parishad can't be used to influence polls

The Government, in an announcement Wednesday said the office of the upazila parishad cannot be used to influence, patronise or support in favour of any candidates participating in the coming elections, reports BSS.

Drawing attention of the Upazila chairman to the Representation of People's Order, 1978, the government said violation of this is a punishable offence under Section 77 of the Order.

The government called upon all concerned to refrain from such activities in the interests of holding the coming elections in a smooth and neutral manner.

The official announcement said the government was determined to hold the February 27 elections free and fair. Maintenance of law and order in the country was a precondition for holding free and fair polls.

The Government also urged all upazila chairmen to keep close contact with the law-enforcing and peace-keeping authority and cooperate with them to foil the activities of

the law breakers and trouble-mongers in order to ensure the holding of polls in a peaceful atmosphere.

Another message add: The Acting President has promulgated a new ordinance entrusting union parishads and pourashavas with certain special responsibility for maintaining peace and discipline during the polling time in the interest of holding free and fair Jatiya Sangsad election.

Under the new ordinance titled 'Union Parishad and Pourashava (Special Responsibility) Ordinance, 1991, union parishads and pourashavas in the country will discharge special responsibility for the maintenance of peace and discipline in their specified areas during the polling time of the Jatiya Sangsad election. An official handout issued in Dhaka on Wednesday said.

The government can dissolve any Union Parishad or pourashava if it fails to discharge its responsibility in this respect, the handout added.

Under the new ordinance, union parishads and

pourashavas have been asked to perform special responsibilities for the maintenance of peace and discipline in their respective areas in connection with the Jatiya Sangsad elections.

These local bodies will perform their assigned responsibility from the last date of submission of nomination papers to the next several days after the completion of the Jatiya Sangsad elections.

The assigned responsibilities of these local bodies include maintenance of peace and discipline, maintenance of contact with the law enforcing authorities and officers and extending necessary cooperation to them, resistance to all activities disturbing peace and discipline and helping the law enforcing agencies informed of such activities, resisting all activities impeding free and fair holding of the election, keeping watch on peaceful holding election procession, meeting and handing over to the law enforcing agencies any such election activities to the law enforcing agencies.

Salam protests Hasina's remarks

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Secretary General Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder on Wednesday protested the statements of Awami League, chief Sheikh Hasina during her election meetings in some places of Dhaka and said the people would not be misguided by such 'mischievous propaganda'.

BNP leader said the presidential system of government was introduced during Sheikh Mujib's time and after liberation of the country, Sheikh Mujib introduced presidential form replacing the parliamentary one. Later on, through a parliamentary coup, Sheikh Mujib brought to the fore an one party government through the Fourth amendment, he added.

He said fundamental rights and press freedom was drastically curtailed during Mujib's time and thousands of political activists were killed through military corps introduced by the BKSAL government. In 1974, Special Powers Act was passed and thousands of politi-

cal workers were imprisoned, he added.

Barrister Salam said President Zia introduced multi-party democracy system after the autocratic BKSAL rule ended. Restriction on the newspapers were withdrawn and fundamental rights restored. Political detainees were released. Through free and fair elections, a true representative government was established.

But Awami League could not recognise the BNP government which came to power through people's mandate. General Ershad, through a coup in 1982, snatched the power and promulgated Martial Law. Awami League congratulated the Martial Law and gave support.

Barrister Salam said the governments of Zia and Ershad were not the same. The vacuum created by the autocratic one party rule of BKSAL in the political arena was filled up through re-establishment of multi-party democracy, he added.

The Midnight File

Zardari arraigned for murder

KARACHI, Jan 30: Police have arraigned former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's husband and 12 other partymen for the alleged murder of their political opponents soon after her ouster from Government in August, officials said Tuesday. The charges have been filed before a special judge, Nabisher Junejo, who normally conducts speedy trials of terrorism cases, reports AFP.

Sri Lanka turns away US ship

COLOMBO, Jan 30: Two US warships on route to the Gulf were refused berthing facilities in Sri Lanka and one of them docked in the Indian port of Bombay for five days, sources in both countries said Wednesday. The USS Ford, a guided missile frigate, and another unidentified ship, arrived at the Colombo port on January 20 but were turned away, shipping sources said in Colombo on condition of anonymity, reports AP.

Leaders' trial lawful: China

BEIJING, Jan 30: China said today that trials of the leaders of political unrest in 1989 were lawful and that foreign criticism was irresponsible. "China's judicial organs are acting according to law. It is inappropriate for foreigners to make irresponsible remarks," a Foreign Ministry official said, reports Reuter.

Requests to Pope for prayer

VATICAN CITY, Jan 30: Pope John Paul said today he is receiving large number of requests to pray for peace in the Gulf and renewed his appeal for a ceasefire. "I could not go without echoing the numerous messages which are continually coming to me," he said in his general audience, reports Reuter.

Joint call by ANC, Inkatha

DURBAN (South Africa), Jan 30: The first summit in 12 years between arch-rivals the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party ended Tuesday with a joint call to both organisations' members to "cease all attack on each other". The two sides also announced they would set up a mechanism to supervise any violation, reports AFP.

US warplanes for El Salvador

TILAPANOO (El Salvador), Jan 30: The United States on Tuesday delivered three A-37 jet fighter-bombers and six attack helicopters to the Salvadoran air force, which has suffered heavy losses to guerrilla attacks in recent months. The A-37s were inscribed with the names of the three U.S. servicemen killed when rebels shot down their US Army helicopter in eastern El Salvador, reports AP.

Colombia to extend truce

BOGOTA, Jan 30: The Colombian government said on Tuesday it would extend the period covered by its peace offer to drug lords, meeting a key demand of the traffickers. President Cesar Gaviria last September offered immunity from extradition to the United States and reduced sentences for drug traffickers who surrendered and confessed. The offer applied only to crimes committed before September 5, 1990 reports Reuter.

Agreement between churches

LONDON, Jan 30: A historic agreement between the church of England and the Protestant churches in Germany was ratified on Tuesday by the General Synod assembled in London. The Meissen declaration commits the church of an England and the evangelical churches of Germany to work in closer fellowship and towards the goal of Christian unity, reports AFP.

Concern over delay in Wage Board award

By Staff Correspondent

Dhaka Union of Journalist (DUJ) President Zahurul Haq and General Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi expressed concern and indignation over the unwarranted delay in announcing the Wage Board award. They said although the final recommendations of the Wage Board were submitted during the first quarter of this month, the government was yet to announce it.

In a statement on Wednesday, the leaders of the journalist community said it has become impossible to bear the daily expenditure on the wage structure constituted five years earlier. Essentials' price, treatment, education and transport costs and house rent have risen many times, they added.

Biman

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living in the war zone are desperately trying to send back their families home and our missions in those countries have requested Biman to resume the flights immediately.

Biman has been losing Taka 10 crore passenger revenue from these destinations a week. The destinations are Riyadh, Jeddah, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Doha and Muscat. Earlier Biman suspended its flights to Baghdad, Kuwait and Dahrhan. Lloyds Company does not give insurance coverage to any aircraft and passenger for these three places. Biman used to carry 2300 passengers weekly to these destinations.

The travel industry has been a casualty of the Gulf war. The world airlines business has been showing a downward trend since the war broke out on January 17. Air France traffic is down by 10 per cent. Lufthansa and Air France have curtailed advertising due to decline in business.

The flights to Arab countries by all airlines have become too risky due to war as well as threat of terrorist activities. Lloyds fixed 152000 US dollars as premium for every aircraft each flight to Riyadh from Frankfurt and 100 US dollars for each passenger. The insurance companies are charging up to 0.25 per cent of the total value of the aircraft as insurance premium which is too high. The airlines are passing on the incidence of premium on the passengers.

The Biman management is undecided about the resumption of flights to the Middle-eastern destinations. The normal return fare of a passenger to Abu Dhabi was Taka 17077. The present fare will be Taka 26000 for each passenger after adding the insurance premium. Biman is not sure whether passengers will buy tickets at a high price.

Biman authorities reviewed the situation on Wednesday and a proposal to resume flights is now awaiting the decision of the Civil Aviation Ministry. The Bangladeshi nationals are worried as the war is prolonging and both the sides are threatening to use deadly weapons. They are contacting Bangladesh missions in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Qatar, and Oman for repatriation of their families.

Eight killed

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The deceased were identified as: 1) Md. Abul Kasem (32), vegetable trader, son of Shamsuddin Miah of village Junarchar, Upazila Bancharampur, District Brahmanbaria, 2) Rokman Majee, vegetable trader, village Jeepur, Upazila Goshairhat, District Faridpur, 3) Nuru (35), rickshawpuller, son of late Zahiruddin of village Angarpoa, Upazila Sadar, District Barguna, 4) Lutu Mia (60), vegetable trader of village Marichakandi, District Brahmanbaria, 5) Fida Hossain (65), son of late Awlad Miah, P-56, Maddhya Badda, Dhaka, and 6) Abdul Mannan (25), rickshawpuller, son of Keramat Ali of village Char Shamantasar, Upazila Goshairhat, district Shariatpur.

Of the injured, 9 were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in critical condition, hospital sources said. Two others - Farooq (35) and Helal, both rickshawpullers, were released after first aid.

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Published by the Editor on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at Offset Printing Dialogue Publications Ltd., 19 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. Editorial, News & Commercial offices: 28/1, Toynebee Circular Road, Dhaka-1000. Tel: 246023-4 (PABX), 863035, 863036.



The killer truck seized by police.

Hasina

From Page 1 Col. 5 suffering during the last 15 years of autocratic rule. She said, both President Zia and President Ershad formed political parties while in uniform these two persons had ruined the country's economy, she said adding a child born today would bear a debt of 4000 U.S. dollars as the country was so much plundered during their tenure.

The Awami League chief said both the BNP and Jatiya Party owed their birth to one origin, both of them snatched away democracy from the people and plundered national resources.

Repatriates

From Page 1 Col. 3 from contribution from the repatriates.

The modalities of operation and functioning of the foundation will be decided at an inter-ministerial meeting soon.

A defining hour

From Page 1 Col. 7

Time will not be Saddam's salvation.

Shortly before Bush spoke, the United States and the Soviet Union issued a joint statement that said a cease-fire would be possible if Iraq made "an unequivocal commitment" to withdraw all its troops

from Kuwait and took "concrete steps" in that direction. It was the first indication the US might be willing to accept less than immediate, total withdrawal of Iraqi troops.

With Americans' attention focused on the almost half million allied troops risking their lives in the Gulf, Bush devoted the heart of his annual address

to the two week old battle to force Iraq out of Kuwait.

Harkening to the start of World War II, Bush said, "Almost 50 years ago we began a long struggle against aggressive totalitarianism. Now we face another defining hour for America and the world."

The world wonders, Bush said, what Saddam is thinking. "If he thinks that by targeting innocent civilians in Israel and Saudi Arabia, that he will gain advantage — he is dead wrong."

"If he thinks that he will advance his cause through tragic and despicable environmental terrorism—he is dead wrong."

"And if he thinks that by abusing the coalition POWs; he will benefit — he is dead wrong."

"We will succeed in the Gulf," Bush vowed.

To the chamber filled with Washington officialdom, Bush said, "I come to this house of the people to speak to you and all Americans, certain that we stand at a defining hour."

Bush also paid tribute to the democratic aspirations of the people of the Soviet Baltic states and said he remained "deeply concerned" about the Kremlin's bloody crackdown.

Ceasefire

From Page 1 Col. 7

tered repeatedly by the new Soviet Foreign Minister that the US-led assault on Iraq posed large dangers to civilians and to the Iraqi economy.

At the same time, it reiterated the Soviet commitment to UN Security Council resolutions demanding Iraq relinquish Kuwait and authorising the use of force to achieve that goal.

As Reuter reports: The US-Soviet statement, apparently going at least some way towards linking the Gulf war to settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, said stability in the Middle East would be a priority once fighting ended.

Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh and US Secretary of State James Baker said that in the aftermath of the war "mutual US-Soviet efforts to promote Arab-Israeli peace and regional stability, in consultation with other parties in the region, will be greatly facilitated and enhanced."

No democracy

From Page 1 Col. 6 and order in the country.

The people had died from starvation as there had been no politics of production in the country that time, she added.

Begum Zia urged all to rally under the leadership of BNP to establish democracy and rule of law in the country.

The country had democracy as well as freedom of press during the BNP rule only, Begum Zia said.

Menon

From Page 1 Col. 6 demanded immediate trial of the "killers of democracy and plunderers of national wealth."

He said voters were concerned at open display of arms in some areas. He held Jatiya Partymen responsible for killing of democracy.

Menon said the election campaign was not gaining momentum because on the Gulf war.

He urged the government to disassociate itself from the commitments of the previous government in respect of the Gulf crisis.



US troops in action.

— Star photo from CNN telecast.

Fighting around Khafji

From Page 1 Col. 5, and the Gulf state of Qatar fought alongside the Marines.

The joint Allied air-and-ground counter attack worked like clockwork. Marine Captain Bill Watmright told reporters at the scene, "It felt good, really good."

23 Iraqi POWs

Allied forces took 23 Iraqi prisoners, the dispatch said. There was no firm word of Iraqi casualties — described as heavy by the Pentagon.

In their first account of the fighting, U.S. military sources said Allied troops and aircraft drove the Iraqis back into Kuwait after five-and-a-half hours of fighting.

Baghdad said its forces pushed 20 km (12 miles) into Saudi Arabia. It said Iraqi missiles had set ablaze oil refineries around Khafji.

10 US troops killed

Reuter reports from Dahrhan say: Eight to 10 American soldiers were killed in fighting on the abandoned Saudi border town of Khafji.

According to reporters with the US troops at the front.

Military sources in Dahrhan said some Iraqi troops were still in Khafji surrounded by US Marines.

And in another development, an Iraqi warship took refuge in Iranian territorial waters today, the official Iranian News Agency IRNA reported. Three more Iraqi planes entered Iran, one crash-landing on a road and injuring the pilot.

It said the ship was ablaze after being hit by Allied warplanes during a battle earlier in the Persian Gulf, in which other Iraqi gunboats were involved.

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) termed the operation a great conquest which led to the collapse of the front of the infidels. The lightning incursion aims at teaching the infidels a lesson, it said.

Iraqi forces also fired missiles at oil refineries in Khafji, setting the targets ablaze, and shot down three more Allied warplanes, Baghdad radio said.

INA earlier reported two incursions into the northern Saudi region of Arar and another from Kuwait.

According to AP: Iraq

claimed Wednesday that it had advanced into Saudi Arabia after an overnight attack, but said it had no territorial ambitions in the kingdom.

"Oh Iraqis, Oh Arabs, Oh Muslims who believe in justice, your faithful and courageous ground forces have moved to teach the aggressors the lessons they deserve," said a military communique read by Iraqi radio.

Detention of Hasan

Govt asked to show cause

By Supreme Court Correspondent

A division bench comprising Mr Justice Abdul Jali and Mr Justice Kazi Shaifuddin of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court has issued a rule nisi upon the government to show cause within two weeks as to why the detention of Major General (re) Mahmudul Hasan, former home minister, should not be brought before the court so that it may satisfy itself that he is not being detained in an unlawful manner.

The division bench issued the rule on January 20 upon a writ petition filed by Rashid Hasan, Kazi Shahadat Hossain moved the writ petition.