

Focus on election- '91

BKSAL wants democratic clauses of Constitution restored

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Krishak-Sramik Awami League (BKSAL) on Monday announced its election manifesto with renewed

Hearing of Moudud's writ continues

The hearing of the Writ petition filed by Mr. Moudud Ahmed, a former vice president against his detention continued Monday before Mr. Justice Bimalendu Bikash Roy Chowdhury, a single judge bench of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court, reports BSS.

Earlier a two-judge division bench of the High Court Division heard a Writ petition by Mr. Moudud Ahmed and delivered the judgement on February 11. The judges differed in their opinion. Mr. Justice M Ismailuddin Sarker dismissed the plea finding the impugned order of detention as legal while Mr. Justice M. Badruzzaman made the rule absolute directing the respondents to release the detainee, if no other case was found against him. Justice Zaman declared the detention as illegal and without any lawful authority.

The judges referred the matter to the Acting Chief Justice to constitute another bench to hear it afresh. The Acting Chief Justice allocated a single bench for the disposal of the writ.

Mr. Moudud Ahmed was arrested from his hide-out at Baridhara on December 20 under the Special Powers Act 1974. Barrister Rafiqul Haq appeared for the petitioner and Mr. Aminul Haq, the Attorney General of Bangladesh for the state hearing resumes tomorrow.

pledge to establish parliamentary form of government and restore the democratic clauses of the '72 Constitution.

The manifesto was announced by party president member Syed Ahmed at a press conference at the party office. The manifesto, in its political objectives, said the party would repeal all including the Special Powers Act that are repugnant to basic rights.

Explaining the economic policy of the party, the manifesto said the party would encourage private entrepreneurship as regards small industries. But the major and big industries would remain in the public sector. BKSAL would encourage export oriented industries and provide soft loans and other facilities to small and cottage industries.

The manifesto pledged removal of bureaucratic complications, for flourishing of industry. It also pledged proper distribution of resources.

It said the tax and revenue policy will be restructured for more productivity of revenue sector.

Regarding agricultural policy, the manifesto said that the party would protect the interest of share croppers and would provide subsidy to the agri sector.

It pledges to waive agri-loan up to Taka 5000 and interest upto taka 10,000. Besides, the manifesto speaks for exempting taxes of farm land upto 25 bighas, fixing ceiling of farm land between 30 to 50 bighas depending on productivity.

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Huge arms were recovered from the rebellious prisoners of Dhaka Central Jail on Monday —Star photo

Arms recovered from Central Jail

By Staff Correspondent

The jail authorities recovered huge lethal weapons from the rebellious prisoners of Dhaka Central Jail on Monday, jail sources said.

"We recovered hand-made weapons, which can fill five push carts. The prisoners used these during the revolt," a jail official told The Daily Star.

The weapons include swords, knives, iron rods, pointed G.I pipes and sticks, the official said adding that possibility the prisoners were still possessing more weapons.

Complete normalcy was yet to restore in the jail. The prisoners did not return to their lock-ups till writing of his report on Monday night.

The jail authorities on Sunday night brought back Jashim, the leader of the mutinous

prisoners, from Mymensingh Jail as demanded by the inmates. He was sent to Mymensingh jail on February 14 as he requested the authorities, the official said.

The repairing of the damaged wards and cells was going on Monday and it will take some more days to be completed, the source said.

The prisoners caused leave damage to the jail during the two revolts. The first revolt took place on December 29, in which three prisoners were killed and at least 50 others injured in police firing.

The prisoners took the jailor and some wardens hostage during the second revolt on Friday demanding return of their leader Jashim from Mymensingh jail.

APSU outlines modalities of students' brigade

By DU Correspondent

The All Party Students Unity (APSU) in a press conference on Monday announced the modality of the students brigade which would cooperate with the Election Commission and the law enforcing agency to ensure free and fair election.

According to the modality, the central leaders of APSU will act as the central steering committee, which will coordinate all activities of the district-level students brigades.

The press conference was attended by Khairul Kabir Khokon, Shaif Ahmed, Nasirud-Doza, Fazlul Haque Milon and others.

The district-level leaders of APSU will coordinate the activities of the upazila-level students brigades.

The upazila-level APSU leaders will act as the upazila students brigade and they will co-operate with the upazila administration and other authorities.

The press conference was attended by Khairul Kabir Khokon, Shaif Ahmed, Nasirud-Doza, Fazlul Haque Milon and others.



Baghdad residents taking rain water from wayside low land as the supply of drinking water remains disrupted due to Allied bombings. —TV photo

Indefinite strike in newspapers threatened

Union leaders of the journalists, press workers and general employees in the newspaper industry said in Dhaka on Monday that there would be no alternative to taking stronger steps including continuous strike if the final award of the Wage Board was not announced, withdrawing the amendments to the 1974 Newspaper Employees (Condition of Service) Act, 1974, reports BSS.

In a joint statement, the leaders categorically said that the Government alone was responsible for the present situation in the newspaper industry.

They said a 24-hour token strike was observed on Sunday in all the newspapers and news agencies to protest the amendments and demand immediate announcement of the Wage Board Award.

During the strike period, the government in a Press Note said the three-member advisory committee was at present examining the issue of the recommendations of the Wage Board and its declaration of the award. But there was no specific declaration as to how many days it would take complete the examination and when the award be announced.

The leaders said that they had not observed any change in the situation obtaining in the newspaper industry following the Press Note.

Under such a situation, they said that they find no other alternative but to continue the programme of movement.

The leaders had decided to hold discussions with the leaders of political parties and professional groups on the Wage Board issue today (Tuesday) at 5 pm. "We hope that good sense would prevail upon the government before the situation in the newspaper industry further deteriorated," they said.

Press Note Wage Board award still being examined

The government has said it had no other alternative but to extend the time for publication of the Wage Board award from one month to three months as it did not find any time, whatsoever, earlier to peruse and examine it, a Press Note said in Dhaka, reports BSS.

Explaining the reasons for amending the Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) Act, 1974 by an ordinance recently, the Press Note issued on Sunday said the Wage Board award was still under consideration and examination of the government.

The Press Note said: Attention of the government has been drawn to a token strike observed on Sunday by the newspaper employees in protest of a recent amendment in Section 11(1) of the Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) Act 1974 as it stood amended by Ordinance No. 11 of 1977.

Section 11(1) of the Act reads thus, "The decision of the Board shall within a period of one month from the date of its receipt and examination by the government be published by notification in the official gazette with such modifications as may be deemed necessary."

By the recent amendment dated February 9, 1991, the words one month, have been substituted by the words three months. This extension of time from one month to three months became necessary for the government to examine the report. The government did not find any time whatsoever earlier to peruse and examine it.

The report of the Wage Board was received by the government on January 10, 1991. But it was produced for the first time before the Acting President who also holds the portfolio of the Ministry of Information on February 4, 1991. The matter was placed before the meeting of the Council of Advisers held the same day at 6.30 p.m.

Section 10 of The Act provides that the board shall have regard, among others, to the prevalent rates of wages of comparable employments in government, corporations and other private sectors.

In view of the circumstances, the meeting of the Council of Advisers thought it necessary to examine the report and, for the purpose, constituted a committee of three advisers to examine the matter and submit its report.

The government, therefore, has had no other alternative but to extend the period from one month to three months. The report of the Wage Board is still under consideration and examination.

The Midnight File

No sense in attacking Iraqi troops: Schwarzkopf

WASHINGTON, Feb 18: The commander of U.S. forces in the Gulf, General Norman Schwarzkopf said Sunday that it would not make sense to attack Iraqi troops if they began a largescale withdrawal from Kuwait. Interviewed on NBC television, Gen. Schwarzkopf said from Saudi Arabia that the start of such a pullout would constitute an entirely different set of circumstances, in which the U. N. resolutions on the Gulf crisis were being implemented, reports AFP.

No pause, no ceasefire: Baker

WASHINGTON, Feb 18: Secretary of State James Baker said Sunday that there would be "no pause, no ceasefire" in Allied attacks on Iraq and that the time for negotiation had long passed. Interviewed on the Cable News Network, Baker expressed skepticism about the outcome of upcoming negotiations in Moscow between Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev following Iraq's conditional offer to withdraw from Kuwait, reports AFP.

US plane flies via Bombay

NEW DELHI, Feb 18: A US Air Force plane transited via Bombay today en route from the Gulf war theatre, a day after Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar said US military aircraft would not refuel in India, reports AFP.

Death toll 171 in Thailand blast

BANGKOK, Feb 18: The death toll in the dynamite truck explosion in southern Thailand, with 171 confirmed dead so far, is expected to surpass 200, officials said today. They said that many of the nearly 100 people being treated in hospital were not expected to live. The disaster happened when a truck carrying 20 tonnes of dynamite and dynamite caps overturned while taking a sharp curve on a busy road through the village of Tung ma-Prao in Phangnga's Thay Muang district, reports AFP.

Ground attacks

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causes remain, namely Kuwait's occupation and the hostile military concentration on the Kingdom's borders," the King said.

His remarks were contained in a speech read on his behalf by Prince Sultan ibn Abdul Aziz, who is Deputy Prime Minister and Defence and Aviation Minister, and carried by the official Saudi Press Agency.

"The Iraqi leadership can avert... further tragedies and destruction if it takes the full decision to withdraw its army from Kuwait and the Kingdom's borders," he said.

US and Iraqi patrols clashed in at least seven border skirmishes Sunday as the United States insisted there was no date for a ground offensive in the Gulf war.

Travellers from Iraq, meanwhile, reported a violent anti-Saddam Hussein protest

in which they claimed no members of Iraq's ruling Baath Party were shot and killed.

The pre-dawn border-area battles were the widest-spread fighting since the war began a month ago. And, for the second time following ground combat, the U. S. command announced two U. S. troops had been killed by friendly fire.

In two of the skirmishes Sunday, 20 Iraqi troops whose positions were overwhelmed by U. S. firepower surrendered and walked into Saudi Arabia with Apache helicopters guarding them from overhead, Neal said.

In the seven clashes, Marine Brig. Gen Richard Neal said, U. S. tanks, two missiles, artillery pieces and helicopters destroyed three Iraqi tanks, two armored personnel carriers, one multiple-rocket launcher, two bankers and an ammunition depot.

Gorbachev plan

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Monday to a Gulf war peace plan that emerged from Soviet-Iraq talks, and said it would continue the war effort.

Spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said US officials had yet to hear from the Soviet Union on the results of talks Monday between Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz.

"I don't think we have enough information to respond," Fitzwater said, adding: "All of our hopes at this point are on the conflict in the air and on the ground in terms of pushing Iraq out of Kuwait."

Bush himself declined comment on the Soviet plan. "Can't talk about that," he said after a 65-minute walk on the beach at Kennebunkport, where he was spending a long holiday weekend. "Need to get a little more information."

Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said Monday there was "the bright prospect" of a solution to the Gulf war following an Iraqi response to his peace proposals.

Tehran radio quoted Rafsanjani as telling the visiting Burkina Faso Foreign Minister, Prosper Vokoumaa that Iraq has responded positively to the proposals to leave Kuwait.

"Iraq has expressed readiness to withdraw from Kuwait, and concentrated efforts should continue with the cooperation of the other Islamic countries until the forces fighting Iraq also show their good will," the radio quoted Rafsanjani as saying.

Rafsanjani has played a key role in efforts to end the war and sent peace proposals to Saddam Hussein.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz met his Iranian counterpart, Ali Akbar Velayati, in Tehran on Sunday on his way to Moscow for talks with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev seen as a last chance to avert a massive ground war in the Gulf.

Tariq Aziz will confer with Iranian officials on his way home from his crucial Gulf war talks Monday in Moscow, Iran's Foreign Minister said.

Some Arab diplomats in Moscow believe Baghdad may be looking to the Soviet Union and Iran for a face-saving deal after weeks of bombardment which US commanders say has already knocked out about 35 per cent of Iraqi armour and put the air force out of action.

US reaction

Meanwhile, the White House reacted cautiously

Mizan's call to respect code of conduct

CHANDPUR, Feb 18: Acting Chairman of Jatiya Party Mizan Chowdhury Monday called upon the opposition parties to stop mud flinging and respect the polls code and conduct, reports UNB.

Addressing a meeting at Akhanarhat under Sadar upazila Mizan said JP is the first political party which introduced Islam as state religion in the Constitution and declared Friday as weekly holiday which Muslim League or Jamaat did not in different meetings in Chittagong local JP leaders Monday claimed that it was their party which had launched a massive development programme to ensure a balanced development, a JP press release said.

They said no government gave attention to develop the lot of poor masses in the villages and workers in mills and factories as Jatiya Party did.

They said, 68,000 villages had got the touch of development activities launched during Jatiya Party government and the workers got maximum benefit in the form of salary, bonus and gratuity.

Mizan, Sekander

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payment of arrear interest and penal interest to the tune of Taka one crore twenty seven lakh of Bangladesh Shilpa Bank, report BSS.

A case has also been filed in this connection against the then Managing Director of the Shilpa Bank, M Sekander Ali, for allowing the exemption of this sum and thus causing loss to the Government by abusing his power for mutual financial gain. Mr Ali has been charged with allowing the exemption without assessing the acceptability and propriety of the prayer for exemption by the Pioneer Pharmaceutical Limited, according to an official handout issued Monday.

Sayed, Shamsul Alam to join World Bank, ADB

Star Report

Home Secretary M.A. Sayeed will replace Mustafizur Rahman as alternate director of World Bank. Kazi Shamsul Alam, Secretary, Planning Commission will take over as director of Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Kazi Azhar Ali, alternate director of ADB, is likely to take over the charge of Secretary, Home Ministry and Mustafizur Rahman the charge of Secretary of the Finance Ministry on return from Washington.

The fallen regime of Ershad nominated former Health Secretary Hasan Ahmed to World Bank and Shamim Ahsan to Asian Development Bank. The interim government changed the nominations.

Khurshid Alam, Principal Secretary (to the President), who is also holding the charge of Finance Secretary was aspirant to go to world bank. Traditionally, the Finance Secretary goes to World Bank as alternate director. The lone exception has been made this year by nominating M.A. Sayeed from the Home Ministry. According to informed sources, Khurshid Alam was not nominated as he will retire after one year.

Observers

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ready confirmed their arrival. Advance team members from different organisations have already arrived to take stock of the pre-poll situation.

Of the 76 observers, 20 including eight officials, are from Commonwealth Organisation; 30 from SAARC NGO groups sponsored by International Institute for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; four MPs of British parliament; seven MPs of Japanese parliament; six from National Democratic Institute (NDI) of the United States, one from European Parliament and eight from the different missions here.

Government will provide logistic supports and security for the foreign observers. However, all the observers are coming at their own cost and the expenditure for their stay in Bangladesh will be borne by their respective organisations. The Foreign Office will also provide local guide to the poll observers.

The source said the European Parliament and the Italian parliament may also send

Khaleda

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ident that her party would lead the country with the support of the people.

Begum Zia who returned to city on Monday morning from her election tour to northern districts addressed about twenty meetings including wayside gatherings on the day.

Thousands of curious people waited for hours at different points of the city to see Khaleda and hear her election speeches.

All the election meetings at Sutrapur, Kotwali, Dhulakhal, Malibagh, Khilgaon, Basabo, Motijheel and Fakirpool were crowded with enthusiastic people including women and children. Besides, the BNP leader was stopped at many places on her way where she had to address.

Trial stayed

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Sections 19-A and 19-F of the Arms Act of 1878. According to the provisions of the Act, the President can keep only pistols which are not powerful than the point 22 or point 32 ones.

Violation of the provisions carries a maximum punishment of life imprisonment, if convicted.

more poll observers, but they are yet to confirm their arrival. The total number of foreign observers will thus rise to 90, the source added.

The National Democratic Institute, which sent advance team last month had abandoned their plan to oversee the polls for security reasons due to the Gulf war. Now it has decided to send a team in the changed situation.

However, they will work on their own, probably with the local NGOs. In January, the NDI also imparted training to 45 NGO workers in Bangladesh on how to oversee the polls.

Besides, different foreign missions in Bangladesh have also made arrangements for monitoring the polls by their own staff. The US and the Norwegian embassies, the British and the Australian High Commissions have chalked out programmes to watch the situation on the election date.

The foreign missions have not sought any cooperation of the government. However, they have informed the government about their plans.

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