

BNP interview of women candidates on March 23, 24

By Staff Correspondent
Interview of the candidates seeking nominations from BNP to contest the April 4 polls to 30 reserved seats for women in parliament will be held on March 23 and 24.
BNP Parliamentary Board headed by Begum Khaleda Zia will interview the nomination seekers from 9 am to 4 pm at the party's central office at Dhanmondi.
Women from Rajshahi division seeking nomination will be interviewed in the morning while those from the Khulna division in the afternoon on March 23. Nomination seekers from Chittagong division have been called for interview in the morning and those from Dhaka division will be interviewed in the afternoon of March 24.
AKM Firoz Noon, Secretary of BNP central polls conducting committee, has urged all the members of the party's standing committee to attend the interview.



BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a public reception accorded to her in Feni on Saturday on her victory in February 27 polls.

NAP for transfer of power to parliament

By Staff Correspondent
An extended meeting of the national committee of National Awami Party (NAP) on Saturday demanded handover of power to a sovereign parliament on the basis of the joint declaration of the three political alliances. The meeting said the people participated in the elections to bring an end to autocracy and institutionalise democracy through formation of a sovereign parliament.
NAP president Prof Mozaffar Ahmed presided over the meeting. In a resolution the meeting said the Acting President held the parliament elections according to the outlines given by the three alliances.
The meeting also said a huge quantity of black money was spent in the elections despite the repeated warning by the government and the Election Commission.



Speaker of West Bengal Assembly Hashim Abdul Halim called on Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina at Bangabandhu Bhaban on Saturday.

Loss by corporations

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BSEC - Tk 209.06 crores, BSFC - Tk 86.21 crores and BCIC - Tk 60.73 crores. The situation in perennially loss incurring Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) a large public sector body, has not been covered by the Task Force in its report.
The report points out that the aggregate value of goods, now produced yearly, by the industrial units under four public sector corporations totals Tk. 2722.05 crores.
The break-down for specific corporations is: BCIC - Tk. 1320.42 crores, BSEC - Tk. 452.09 crores, BSFC - Tk. 552.00 crores and BTMC - Tk. 396.54.

The Task Force has suggested that BCIC, BSEC, BSFC and BTMC should be converted into holding corporations. The other recommendations include: effective delegation of responsibilities to the corporations and enterprises, involvement of key enterprise-level management personnel in decision-making process relating to production, distribution and sales, and formulation of appropriate pricing policies.

It has made a number of specific suggestions for delegation of effective responsibilities to both corporation and enterprise levels, research, design and development, maintenance of policy continuity and growth of professionalisation, improvement in capacity utilization, pricing policy, reduction of losses and raising levels of profitability, capital restructuring.

The Task Force has stressed that the public sector corporations should be properly compensated for any losses forced upon them because of faulty or delayed decisions in areas of pricing, import policy, customs and other duty structure, political intervention in matters of procurement or appointment of dealers or contractors.
It has called for making appropriate and effective amendments to existing industrial relations laws to curb any unlawful and unhealthy practices by labour unions.

The Task Force examined the problems of public sector industrial enterprises from various operational points. These include: status of effective autonomy at corporation and enterprise levels, institutional problems, system of accountability, management forms, excess and unutilized production capacity, financial operations (profits and losses), policy continuity and professional administration, research, design and development, policy formulation processes and labour unions.

It has recommended various specific measures to improve the operational practices of public sector corporations and enterprises under their control.

Brojen Das improves
The condition of Brojen Das who had a successful by-pass operation in Calcutta on March 14 improved further Saturday, a message received in Dhaka said, reports BSS.

High-powered team to be sent to Gulf

The government plans to send a high-powered political delegation to countries in the Gulf in quest of employment for Bangladeshis, reports UNB.
The composition of the proposed delegation and its tour schedule would be finalised after formation of a new Council of Ministers.
The delegation's visit to the Gulf region will help deepen bonds of friendship and create an opportunity for Bangladeshis to take part in the massive reconstruction and rehabilitation work in the war-ravaged region, particularly in the five-year reconstruction programme in liberated Kuwait.
Five Saudi construction companies have got 58 million US dollar worth of contracts and agreed to recruit about 5,000 skilled and semiskilled labourers from Bangladesh.
Bangladesh Development Corporation (BDC), having experience of construction works in Iraq and the United Arab Emirates earlier, is contacting sources including Bangladesh missions in the region to participate in rebuilding Kuwait, a BDC source said.
Kuwait Petroleum Company has empowered its office in London to recruit skilled and semi-skilled manpower, reports said.
Bangladesh missions in the Gulf region and elsewhere are in touch with all construction companies in a bid to employ Bangladeshis in large numbers in the Gulf states, Foreign Office sources said.

The Midnight File

Rajiv launches poll campaign

BHOPAL, Mar 16 : Former Premier Rajiv Gandhi launched his party's election campaign with an address at a rally here today where he said only his Congress (I) party was capable of bringing political stability to India. The Congress (I) alone is able to form a "strong and stable" government that could fulfill a normal full five-year term once elected, he said, reports AFP.

Juan Bosch quits politics

SANTO DOMINGO, Mar 16 : Former President Juan Bosch, 82, a grand old man of the Dominican Republic's politics and literature, quit his political party on Friday and said he was ending a career spanning half a century. Bosch was the founder and President of the centre-left Dominican Liberation Party (LPD). He was its presidential candidate last May, losing by only a few thousand votes to fellow octogenarian and his long political rival Joaquín Balaguer, reports Reuters.

Iraq to lease out planes

BAGHDAD, Mar 16 : Iraqi Airways is considering leasing its fleet of airplanes to Saudi Arab and foreign companies, Director General Nurreddin Sali Hammadi announced today. "Iraqi Airways is examining the possibility of leasing its planes and the services of their pilots to any company interested in them," Mr. Hammadi said in a statement published by the Defence Ministry's newspaper, Al-Qadisiyah, reports AFP.

Nine killed in plane crash

OTAY (California) Mar 16 : Nine people were killed today when their private aircraft crashed in a mountainous region close to the Mexican border, local officials said. The Hawkesley aircraft had taken off a few minutes earlier from a private airfield south of San Diego, reports AFP.

Bomb blasts in Ankara

ANKARA, Mar 16 : At least 10 bombs exploded Saturday in several offices with US links in three major Turkish cities, hours before the scheduled arrival of US Secretary of State James A. Baker to discuss the Gulf situation. Dev Sol (Revolutionary Left), an extreme leftist underground group, claimed responsibility for the attacks, which officials said caused damage but no injuries, reports AP.

AL-NDP workers clash in Ctg: seven injured

CHITTAGONG Mar 16 : Seven persons were injured in a clash between activists of National Democratic Party and Awami League at Gaschi Nayarhat under Rauzan upazila Saturday, afternoon, police said, reports BSS.
All Akbar, NDP worker was admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital with bullet injuries.
The clash ensued when the rival groups came face to face but there was no political programme there.
Both parties blamed each other for the clash in which fire arms and hand bombs were allegedly used.

Bangladeshis in Iraq safe

Bangladesh nationals living in Baghdad, Najf, Karbala, Kufa and Mousul are reported to have survived the Gulf war and current civil strife, according to the foreign Ministry official on Saturday, reports UNB.
He said Bangladesh Embassy in Baghdad has till now remained unaffected.

Khaleda

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plement Shaheed Zia's 19-point programme of production, Begum Zia said and asked the farmers to dedicate themselves in the farm and workers in the factory.
She lauded the uncompromising and courageous role of the students in the anti-autocracy movement and urged them to go back to their studies in the interest of building the future of the country.
Begum Zia stopped and talked to wayside crowds trying to have a glimpse of her charismatic leader.
The BNP chief, who arrived here on a day-long visit, offered fatcha at the mazar of Pajla Minah.

Ceasefire in Gulf

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cluded to other countries and thus creating new antagonisms while fueling the old ones."
The document also suggests making the Middle East a nuclear-free zone and returning foreign military presence to levels that existed before August 1, 1990. Iraq invaded Kuwait the following day, prompting a massive US-led multi-national effort to reverse the occupation.
The new Kremlin peace blueprint also calls for international economic cooperation in post-war reconstruction and use of the UN Military Staff Committee in crises. Finally, it proposes a new drive to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict to help reduce tensions in the Gulf.
The Security Council on March 2 adopted Resolution 686, putting a UN seal of approval on Allied conditions for a temporary cease-fire in the Gulf war. The new Resolution is to add several more conditions and spell out some of the earlier demands. A major problem, diplomats said was the return of Kuwaitis abducted by Iraqi forces, which - Kuwait insists number over 33,000.

Transfer of power

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Praised over by BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia the meeting expressed its concern over hasty promotions and transfers in the administration and expressed suspicions about the unwarranted haste in the granting of promotions.
The BNP meeting in a resolution called for hastening the trial of deposed President II. M. Ershad and his associates on charges of misuse of power, violation of the Constitution, misappropriation of public wealth, oppression, repression, corruption and killing.
In another resolution the meeting urged the Acting President to publish a white paper on the state of the economy, industry and education sectors, the administration and the law and order situation.

people for electing BNP candidates in the February 27 election.
The BNP extended meeting also congratulated the Acting President, the Election Commission and all others for holding a free and fair election as desired by the people.
In another resolution BNP pledged to keep the trust reposed in it by the people, and to fulfil all the commitments made to the people.
The meeting sought the co-operation of all quarters in establishing a corruption-free, honest government, and an exploitation-free, tolerant and democratic Bangladesh.

The meeting said publication of a white paper has become necessary because the next government will not like to take responsibility for the failure and corruption of the previous government which, it said, affected all sectors.
While alleging that certain quarters were conspiring to create indiscipline and demanding steps against them, the meeting also urged the business community to keep the prices of essentials within the buying capacity of the people.

The meeting in a resolution expressed its gratitude to the

The 13-hour meeting attended by a total of 1488 Party workers and leaders paid rich tributes to the martyrs of the Language Movement, the independence struggle and those who laid down their lives to save the country from the grip of autocracy, and the movement for restoration of democracy by overthrowing former President Ershad.

The meeting also recalled with gratitude the contributions of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman, the founder of BNP.

—A mechanism under which Iraq is forced to return immediately stolen Kuwaiti government property, such as gold, currency, aircraft, museum pieces and documents.

—Another mechanism for dealing with war damages or reparations, such as an international tribunal with binding arbitration. Diplomats said this might be tied to the lifting of most economic sanctions as Iraq would have to sell oil again to raise revenues.

—A removal of the Baghdad government's right to sue foreign companies unable to fulfil their contracts with Iraq because of the UN trade embargo imposed last August.

Row in JP

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ABM Gulam Mostafa, Mattur Rahman, Khaledur Rahman Tilo, ATM Fazle Rabbi, Major (ret) Manzurul Kader and Mostafa Jamal Haider.
Insiders told the Daily Star that the representatives who attended the extended meeting from different districts of the country bitterly criticised some of the former ministers for their anti-party activities. Among them, former minister Mostafa Jamal Haider and Major (ret) Manzurul Kader came under fire from the district level leaders of the party.
They alleged that these ministers had not helped the party cadres during Ershad's regime and did very little for the growth of the party. Moreover, they committed excesses while in power.

Bangabandhu

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leaders will participate in it. Besides, a milad mahfil will be held there at noon. The party flag will be hoisted at a top Bangabandhu Bhaban and the AL leaders including Sheikh Hasina will garland the portrait of Bangabandhu at 8 am. All the city units of AL will feed the destitutes in their respective areas.
Bangabandhu Parishad will hold an exhibition of children's paintings at Bangabandhu Bhaban. Chairperson of the Parishad Poet Begum Sufia Kamal will inaugurate the exhibition at 10 am. The Parishad will also hold a children's rally at the same spot at 4.30 pm. Sheikh Hasina will attend the rally as chief guest and distribute prizes among the best painters.
A Bangabandhu Shishu Kishore Meia will observe the day through a cultural function at the Jatiya Grantha Kendra (National Book Centre) in the afternoon. Former Justice Kamaluddin Hossain will be present at the function as chief guest.
The meeting also demanded the immediate release of Ershad and some of his former ministers as well as withdrawal of the warrants of arrest against other former JP ministers.
The meeting nominated Mizan Chowdhury to contest the bye-election from one of the constituencies of Rangpur which would be vacated by Ershad.

Ramzan

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function between 10 AM and 4 PM with a 15-minute break at 1.15 PM for Johar prayer.
The present office timing of 9 AM to 4 PM and 10 AM to 5 PM will again be effective after the Ramadan month.

The above timing is applicable to all government offices, organisations and establishments.

Office timing for Bangladesh Bank and other scheduled banks has been rest for the month of Ramadan.

The new timing for all scheduled banks will be from 9 AM to 3.30 PM from Saturday to Wednesday with a 15-minute break for Johar prayer. Office time for Thursday will be from 9 AM to 12 PM.

Iftar and Sehri timings

Table with 4 columns: Ramadan, Day, Sehri, Iftar. It lists timings for Monday and Tuesday.

Oath taking

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through a letter.
Parliament sources however could not confirm when Ershad will take oath. Jatiya Party sources said they did not know whether Ershad will at all take oath or not. Earlier Jatiya Party decided that they would not take oath unless their party chairman is released.

According to Rules of Procedure of parliament, the MPs-elect must take oath within 90 days of the first session of parliament.

Meanwhile, Baksal General Secretary Abdur Razzak has vacated his Madaripur-2 seat and retains Shariatpur-3, according to Election Commission sources.

Four MPs have been elected from more than one constituency. They will have to vacate all seats except one before taking oath.

Khaleda Zia and ex-President Ershad have won five seats each while Tofael Ahmed of Awami League two.

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