



Dr Ahmed Sharif dead

Dr. Ahmed Sharif, eye specialist and former director of National Institute of Ophthalmology died of infected Hepatitis B virus at PG Hospital in Dhaka on Wednesday afternoon. He was 57, reports BSS.

He left behind his wife and only son Dr. Ahmed Jamil Sharif. His Namaz-e-Janaza will be held at Bakshibazar Mosque at 11 am and at Lions Bhaban, Agargaon at 12 noon. The last Namaz-e-Janaza will be held at Baitul Mukarram mosque after Zohr prayer.

Dr. Ahmed Sharif, who retired from active service on January 1 this year, was a professor of Ophthalmology in Dhaka Medical College, Chittagong Medical College, Rajshahi Medical College, Sylhet Medical College, IPGMR and National Institute of Ophthalmology. He was actively involved with various national and international organisations.

Dr. Sharif was also the District Governor of Lions International District-315A.

Born in Maddham Sakpura village of Boalkhali upazila under Chittagong district in 1934. Dr Sharif had his MBBS from Dhaka Medical College in 1957. Joined government service in 1957 and had his FRCS degree from London in 1964.

Shahabuddin, Khaleda mourn death

Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, mourning the death recalled Dr. Sharif's selfless work as member of the Lions Club which operated a large number of eye camps in the country every year by which the poorest people were benefited.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia expressed her profound sorrow at the death of Dr. Ahmed Sharif.

Begum Zia said in the death of Dr. Sharif the nation has not only lost an able physician but also a dedicated social worker.

Diarrhoea

From Page 1 Col. 7. tion of the damaged installations Taka 10 crore more will be needed.

Relief operations in the affected areas have been geared up. A South Korean Buddhist organisation pledged 5,000 million US dollar. Kuwait is expected to provide two ambulances. Naval personnel of Pakistan decided to donate their one day's salary amounting to Rs 18,000 to PM's Relief Fund. EC Foreign Minister at a meeting in Brussels donated \$ 71m for cyclone victims.

Two Japanese parliamentarians on Wednesday handed over Tk 1.3 lakh to PM's Relief Fund. One aircraft each from US, Pakistan and China and two from India arrived Wednesday at the Zia International Airport carrying relief materials including rice, sugar and medicine.

Interministerial review body on relief

The Government has set up an interministerial review committee with the Cabinet Secretary as its head and secretaries of various ministries/divisions and heads of some departments and agencies immediately concerned with cyclone disaster relief and rehabilitation work, as its members. The committee may co-opt other members, as necessary, says an official source Wednesday.

The members are: Secretaries of ERD, Information, Food, Relief, Health, Local Government, Shipping and Foreign Ministries, PSO to Supreme Commander, Addl. Secretary-in-Charge of the Prime Minister's Secretariat, Coordinators, Prime Minister's Relief Coordination Cell in the President Secretariat and Principal Information Officer, Press Information Department.

Leftists, liberals

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Korala the most likely candidate for leadership of the Nepali Congress.

The Nepali Congress has to be left of centre because that's the only way you can make communists redundant, said outgoing Finance Minister Devendra Raj Pandey, one of Nepal's few Social Democrats who has not underestimated the appeal of Marxism.

I think it's moving to the right that would make the communist party so strong that (a Nepali Congress) government would be unable to deliver, Pandey said.

Pandey said he believed a communist victory now might be the best long-term outcome for Nepal, forcing Communist supporters to accept that the UML could not work miracles in redistributing the Kingdom's meagre resources.

UML representatives say the party has learnt from the mistakes of Eastern European communism and would pursue pragmatic democratic line if elected.

Many in the Nepal Congress leadership are deeply distrustful of the UML's commitment to democracy and there could be much tension between the two sides in the news assembly.

The more moderate of two rival monarchist parties, the National Democratic Party (Chand) had won just three seats by Wednesday morning.

The final picture was unlikely to emerge before the weekend, Bhattarai said.

Meanwhile, scattered violence on Sunday in which about 30 people were injured has forced a new vote in 125 constituencies.

That has added to delays caused by the laborious process of counting votes by hand and by Nepal's mountainous terrain many ballot boxes must be carried by porters down Himalayan slopes to counting centres.

Many Nepali Congress sympathisers are lamenting that the party, which won a landslide victory in the Kingdom's only other free election in 1959, was too complacent in the intervening three decades.

Flood-hit people

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also allocated 60,000 maunds of rice as gratuitous relief for the flood victims.

Besides, the Prime Minister ordered immediate distribution of 9000 pieces of baby garments, 5,000 pieces of old clothes, 2,000 pieces of lungis, 250 pieces of tents, 1,800 pieces of shirts, 100 cartons of biscuits and 2,000 pieces of water filters from the Prime Minister's Relief Godown for the affected people.

She also asked all concerned to gear up and further strengthen relief and rehabilitation work in the flood affected areas.

Finance Minister M. Saifur Rahman, Begum Khaleda Zia, MP, Brig. MSA Bhuiyan, Chief Coordinator of Relief Cell and Haris Chowdhury, central BNP leader, accompanied the Prime Minister.

Sylhet

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and nearly 20,000 houses were damaged in the district.

The embankment breached in about 50 places, while 625 tubewells and 170 educational institutions of the flood affected areas were damaged. The district authorities confirmed three deaths.

Communication with Rajnagar, Barakha and Kamalganj upazilas remained suspended.

Flood situation in Habiganj improved with the river Khowai flowing 87 cm below the red mark.

Sunamganj control room said, the overall flood situation in the district improved on Wednesday with the fall of water level which was 3 cm below the danger mark.

The situation in Netrakona also improved. Water receded from the dwelling areas but the people were facing problems in drying IRRI-Boro paddy just harvested.

According to the Flood Forecast and Warning Division in Dhaka.

The Surma at Sylhet and Sunamganj, the Kushiara at Sheela, and the Manu at Moulvibazar are likely to recede further during the next 24 hours.

Light to heavy rainfall had been recorded at all places over the Brahmaputra basin, heavy rainfall at one place over the Gangetic basin, light to moderate rainfall at many places over the Meghna basin during the last 24 hours.

The maximum rainfall was recorded 96.5 mm at Jamalpur and 80 mm at Kurigram.

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Chinese Communist Party General Secretary Jiang Zemin (L) greeted by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev at the Kremlin Wednesday, the first day of his five-day official visit to Moscow.

—AFP photo

Jiang in Moscow to sign border pact

MOSCOW, May 15: Chinese Communist Party leader Jiang Zemin was beginning a five-day official visit here today designed to cement the new relationship which has developed between the communist giants since President Mikhail Gorbachev's ground-breaking visit to Beijing two years ago, reports AFP.

Jiang is the first Chinese party leader to visit the Soviet Union since Mao Zedong in 1957, just ahead of an ideological rift between the two countries which boiled over in the early 1960's and 1970's into armed border clashes.

On Thursday, the Chinese and Soviet delegations will sign an agreement to settle the dispute along the eastern part of the 7,300 kilometre (4,400 mile) long border. Negotiations are still continuing regarding the western part of the border.

The objective of this visit is to further promote the development of the good neighbourly relations between the two countries, Jiang told a pre-departure press conference in Beijing.

Asked about possible concrete results from his talks, Jiang replied: "Our two countries share a long border. This time we may sign an agreement on the eastern part of the Sino-Soviet border."

China's top leaders, including President Yang Shangkun, Vice President Wang Zhen and Premier Li Peng were at the airport to see Jiang off.

Jiang, who is also scheduled to go to Leningrad, was accompanied by a large delegation including Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, Defence Minister Qian Qihui, Trade Minister Li Langqing and the head of the Communist Party Central Committee's International Liaison Department, Zhu Liang.

Jiang, who worked in the Stalin Automobile Plant in Moscow 35 years ago, said he considered himself an "old friend of the Soviet people" and was "very happy" to be returning to the Soviet Union.

Jiang and Gorbachev were to hold an initial round of talks at the Kremlin Wednesday afternoon after the official welcoming ceremony at the Kremlin's Saint Georges' Hall.

Massive relief

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government, for distribution of food, water, and relief supplies. It will also provide priority relief assessment teams to the stricken areas and technical expertise, where possible, in specific relief projects.

While the Joint Task Force may be able to help make preliminary assessments of required repairs of some damaged infrastructure, it does not have the capacity to make major repair or reconstruction.

The Joint Task Force spokesman Lt Col Jim Vance told UNB that the two C-130 transport aircraft on Wednesday flew three sorties each and carried people and goods to the coastal operational areas.

About 7,000-man Task Force, including some Gulf war veterans, was diverted from the Indian Ocean on their way home.

The specific mission of the Force was to provide helicopter and landing craft lift support for distribution of food, water and relief supplies.

It will also provide priority relief assessment teams to the stricken areas and technical expertise in specific relief projects, the release added.

BSS adds: The focus of the relief operations by the US Task Force in the cyclone affected areas would be on works like ferrying relief materials in the inaccessible areas and services to health sector, a Foreign Office spokesman said on Wednesday.

He said the Task Force was expected to stay for two weeks, during which it would provide emergency relief assistance to the lakhs of affected people.

Some members of the Task Force like the water purification units and the small helicopters would stay back to continue the relief operations, the spokesman said.

France gets 1st net Minister who becomes the first woman to head the French government, reports AP.

The announcement of the change, widely rumoured earlier, was made by Hubert Vedrine, spokesman for President Francois Mitterrand.

Vedrine gave no reason for the change and there was no immediate statement from Rocard, 62, who had policy differences with Mitterrand but was not entangled in any specific controversies.

Vedrine said Mitterrand would make a broadcast address to the nation Wednesday evening.

Cresson, 57, had been Minister of European Affairs until last October, when she resigned and took up a position with Schneider SA, a French electrical equipment manufacturer. She previously served as minister of agriculture, of foreign trade, and of tourism and industry.

JS resolution

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adds: The Election Commission has postponed the by-elections to eight vacant seats of Jatiya Sangsad which were scheduled to be held on June 11.

The eight constituencies are: Rangpur-1, Rangpur-2, Rangpur-5, Rangpur-6, Boga-7, Dhaka-5, Dhaka-9 and Madaripur-2.

The Election Commission earlier postponed by-elections to Bholat-2 and Chittagong-8 seats, a press release of the Election Commission said.

The Jatiya Sangsad adopted a resolution unanimously to postpone by-elections to the vacant seats of the Jatiya Sangsad due to recent cyclone and tidal surge in the coastal areas, loss of life and property, flood and tornado in different areas of the country including Sylhet.

The Election Commission will announce fresh schedule for the by-elections to these constituencies later at a proper time, the press release added.

JS seeks divine mercy for the storm dead

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The Jatiya Sangsad Wednesday unanimously adopted an obituary resolution seeking divine mercy for those killed in cyclonic storm since May 13 in different parts of the country including Pabna, Manikganj and Habiganj, reports UNB.

Her first job as premier will be to select a new cabinet that is widely expected to include most of the members of the outgoing government.

Rocard had survived 11 no-confidence motions introduced in the National Assembly by the conservative opposition, and his standing in popularity polls generally has been close to Mitterrand's.

As the first session of the post-autocracy parliament came to a close there was a tremendous sense of achievement among all the members for having brought about a truly

Sangsad prorogued

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Constitution. Thereafter all of us were somehow or the other responsible for its continuation," he said.

Moudud said that the activities of the Acting President need to be ratified. Otherwise there will be a constitutional vacuum.

Tofael Ahmed of AL said that the present Jatiya Sangsad came into being through a mass upsurge and the three alliances were committed to making it sovereign. He regretted that BNP had deviated from this commitment.

The AL member claimed that the people gave their mandate in favour of parliamentary system by casting 38 per cent votes in favour of AL in February 27 election, while BNP got 31 per cent.

Tofael proposed a referendum on the form of government under a neutral government headed by Acting President Justice Shahabuddin.

The AL leader mentioned the absence of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the House for six days and said that the Treasury Bench was not giving importance to his Parliament.

Tofael deplored the presence of US troops in Bangladesh. Md Nasim, the Chief Whip of the Opposition, congratulated Acting President for his inaugural address and said that most of the parties and members of this Parliament were in favour of parliamentary system.

Suranjit Sengupta of Gonatantrij Party stressed for consensus on the basic principles of democracy. He said that there was no scope to go beyond the Joint Declaration since Ershad transferred under the declaration. He cautioned that the movement would remain as the only option if the Joint Declaration was not implemented by introducing parliamentary system.

Rashed Khan Menon of Workers Party said that this Parliament was not sovereign at all. He opposed presidential system, but stressed on a consensus on the form of government.

Maulana Matur Rahman Ni-jami of Jamaat-e-Islami, called for establishing parliamentary democracy to fulfill the aspiration of the people.

Mohammadul Hossain of BKSAL said that the absence of the Leader of the House during the session was nothing but showing disregard to the House and the members.

Yugoslavia without leader

BELGRADE, May 15: Yugoslavia was without a head of state Wednesday when Croatian Stipe Mesic failed to win a majority of the eight votes in the country's collective presidency. Tanjug news agency reported.

Seen from the Gallery

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representative Parliament and see it functioning — however unsatisfactorily. It appeared to be in everybody's mind that the parliament itself was the most glorious symbol of the victory over autocracy and that this symbol — the House of the People — will have to be strengthened and protected in every way possible.

If nothing else, the 40-day session proved that we have some superb speakers in the House. They were eloquent, to the point and a treat to hear. Among others some were a bit too theatrical, some too emotional, and some others down right comical.

Too many speakers wasted their time. During yesterday's proceedings the most harassed person was the Honourable Speaker himself. He had to take over the microphone repeatedly to force speakers to respect the agreed time limit.

What, however, can be said of most of our parliamentarians is that they seem to be blissfully unaware that they have a very sensitive public address system at their disposal and that there was absolutely no need to strain their vocal cords as they did.

Not only are our parliamentarians irrepresable speakers, one Amanullah Chowdhury of Jatiya Party, turned out to be a singer of some talent.

After saying a few words in the Parliament yesterday he suddenly started singing. So well rehearsed did he sound, that I was convinced it was all planned and I started looking around for that talented MP who would suddenly take out his tabla (or dhol) from under his desk and start playing.

My eyes naturally fell on the ladies present and I half expected one to spring up and give us a dance performance.

I am all for music. But before Chowdhury and the likes of him turn our Parliament into an entertainment club, I think his friends should find a place for him to sing somewhere outside, and thereby spare the Parliament this sorry spectacle.

As the first session of the post-autocracy parliament came to a close there was a tremendous sense of achievement among all the members for having brought about a truly

The Midnight File

State of Emergency in Tskhinvali

MOSCOW, May 15: The Georgian legislature has declared a state of emergency and night-long curfew in the South Ossetian city of Tskhinvali to curb ethnic violence. Tass news agency, quoting the local news agency Sakinform, said the declaration was published Wednesday after being adopted by the Georgian Supreme Soviet Tuesday. The emergency was imposed for one month, and the curfew will be in effect from 5 pm to 7 am daily. Soviet Interior Ministry troops have been on patrol in Tskhinvali for the past six weeks following the outbreak of violence between Georgians and South Ossetians. At least 65 people have been killed in the battle, reports AP.

Racial riots in Brussels

BRUSSELS, May 15: Racial riots erupted overnight in two neighbourhoods of suburban Brussels, the fourth night of unrest by poor immigrants in five days, police reported Wednesday. Police said brief fighting took place Tuesday night in Molenbeek, week of the capital, and in Saint-Josse to the northeast. There were no arrests or injured reported and damage was described as minor. More serious disturbances occurred Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights in forest, an immigrant suburb southwest of Brussels where four people were arrested and about 20 injured, reports AP.

Pak couple to die by stoning

ISLAMABAD, May 15: A 34-year-old widow and her married neighbour were sentenced to death by stoning for committing adultery, the nation's largest Urdu-language newspaper said Wednesday. The woman, identified only as Aminah, and her lover, Muzur Ali, whose age was not given, were discovered making love in a graveyard in a remote village. They were sentenced Tuesday to death by stoning, an ancient Islamic punishment, the Daily Jung reported. The couple was charged under an Islamic law known as the Haddood ordinance, which outlaws sex outside of marriage. It is also the Muslim equivalent of a rape law, reports AP.

Ted Kennedy's ex-wife arrested

QUINCY (Massachusetts), May 15: Joan Kennedy, former wife of Sen Edward M. Kennedy, was freed on bail after being arrested on drunken driving charges for the second time in three years, police said. State Trooper Barbara Bennett said Mrs. Kennedy was spotted Tuesday evening swerving across three northbound lanes of the Southeast Expressway. "Traffic was backed up behind this vehicle," Bennett said. Mrs. Kennedy, 55, was arrested and posted 25 dollars bail soon afterward, Bennett said, reports AP.

Asians asked to return to Uganda

LONDON, May 15: Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has invited Asians expelled by dictator Idi Amin almost 20 years ago to return, the Daily Telegraph reported Wednesday. The newspaper quoted Museveni as promising in an interview that the homes and businesses of the 82,000 Asians expelled by Amin in 1972 would be returned if they come back. "They don't even have to live there — the only condition is they should start up their businesses as quickly as possible," Museveni was quoted saying, reports AP.

Voters favour no party

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The political analysts in India are surprised at the cool behaviour of the rural voters who usually set the wave in any elections.

This might be for two reasons, they say. First the backward class in the rural areas is silently waiting to vote for V P Singh to back up the Mandal Commission Report or the vast majority of them are quietly swinging towards Lal Krishna Advani's appeal for "a vote for Ram."

Indian politics seems to have entered a difficult phase in the tenth Lok Sabha elections due to the emergence of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

The party has built up an all India image, and its popular surge has seemingly changed the Indian political matrix.

Normally in triangular fight the Congress (I) benefits the most. But this time the same political equation is not working.

Political commentators in India said that the Congress traditionally polls 42 per cent of the votes and rest of the votes are against the Congress. If the fight is one to one the Congress loses.

But this time even in a multi-corner contest Congress cannot be sure of victory for the simple reason that the BJP is likely to take a chunk of the vote from the Congress vote bank.

Besides, the Hartjans and Muslims, traditionally Congress voters, may behave differently.

The gallup poll in India is yet to come but with any definite forecast of the election results. But the atmosphere reported in Indian newspapers of the Congress headquarters in Akbar Road in New Delhi indicates that the party is hoping to bag 300 seats. The party well wishers do not give it more than 220.

Congress will need 256 members to form the government now as elections will be held in 510 seats on May 20, 25 and 26.

The elections in 14 Punjab seats, 13 Assam seats and 6 Kashmir seats will be held later.

The prestigious statesman quotes the Congress well wishers as regards distribution of seats. The newspaper says "If Congress did very well in both the north and the south it means that Congress would secure at least 24 out of 42 seats in Andhra Pradesh, the same number out of 39 in Tamil Nadu, six out of eight in Karnataka, 17 out of 26 in Orissa, 10 out of 42 in West Bengal, 25 to 30 each in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, four out of seven in Delhi, five out of 10 in Haryana, 20 out of 40 in Madhya Pradesh, 30 out of 48 in Maharashtra, 3 out of 4 in Himachal, 12 out of 26 in Gujarat and 8 out of 19 in the north eastern states."

Janata Dal-left front combine is considered a formidable counter to the Congress even after the Dal was fragmented.

The Dal-left combine is also pinning its hopes on over 200 seats.

Political analysts give hardly 100 seats to the BJP. The potential of the Janata Dal led by V P Singh is backed by two strong regional parties — Telegu Desham in Andhra led by Nandamuri Rama Rao and the DMK led by Karunanidhi in Tamil Nadu.

These two regional parties may improve the Janata Dal-left combine strength giving it a chance to form the government. But all seem unanimous about Congress's emerging as the single largest party.

As things stand today it is very difficult to guess who will capture the south block in this month's polls.

The elections in Punjab and Assam in June may put the Congress in trouble.

In Punjab the Congress will lose all the seats while in Assam chances of its getting a majority of the Lok Sabha seats is a remote possibility.

Masud Khan's death condoled

Officers and employees of the Dhaka University Wednesday held a condolence meeting and Milad Mahfil in memory of Masud Khan, a former Controller of Examinations of the University, reports UNB.

Presided over by DU Controller of Examinations Shah Mohammad Habibur Rahman, the meeting was attended, among others, by Director of Accounts AKM Ruhul Amin Akand, Director (Planning and Development) Khandaker Shamsul Haq and Amanullah Khan, eldest son of late Masud Khan.

A renowned educationist, late Masud Khan served as Controller of Examinations of the Dhaka University from 1966 to June 1982.

Armed clash

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groups. According to witnesses, an SM Hall resident, Bobby, who earlier joined Chhatra League was slapped by Manik of JCD near the Teacher-Student Centre at around 6.15 pm.

Soon after, Bobby with the help of some 15 Chhatra League workers, mostly carrying arms and crackers, chased Manik and his group towards Surjans Hall where some armed JCD workers also took position.

The Chhatra League workers, fired at least 12 rounds and blasted about 30 crackers.

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