

Focus on election- '91

The Midnight File

Shahabuddin urged to be more vigilant

By DU Correspondent

Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury called upon the Acting President to be more vigilant and responsible in order to ensure a free and fair election.

He was addressing as chief guest a meeting organized by the Dhaka University Central Students Union (DUCSU) to congratulate the personalities, involved in the Language Movement.

The meeting held at the TSC auditorium was addressed, among others, by Dr Nurul Haque Bhuiyan, Mahub Anam and Shamsul Alam with Dr Wakil Ahmad in the chair. Mobasher Hossain read out the written speech of Principal Abul Kasem.

Justice Abdur Rahman stressed the need for exercising democratic tolerance in the personal life and said one might not implement democracy in national life without this.

Revealing the history of Language Movement Justice Chowdhury said the movement was not confined within the language only. It was the movement of the aspiration of our liberation.

Dr. Wakil Ahmad stressed the need for concluding the controversy over 'Bangladeshi' and 'Bangali' nationality and said we were Bangladeshi as a citizen of Bangladesh and Bangali as our language was Bengali.

Dr. Nurul Haque Bhuiyan said the total deprivation of the people of this land insisted the Language Movement.

Shamsul Alam deplored that the real history of the Language Movement were not still written. Immediate steps should be taken in this regard, he opined.

Principal Abul Kasem in his written speech revealed the incidents and perspectives of the Language Movement.

Arms Act amended again

The Acting President has promulgated an Ordinance titled 'Arms (Amendment) Ordinance 1991' for further amending the Arms Act of 1878 with a view to further ensuring peace and discipline during the coming Parliamentary elections, reports BSS.

Under this Ordinance a new section has been inserted after Section 17 on the Arms Act of 1878 empowering the Government to impose restriction on the movement of anyone with his licenced arms, according to a Press Note issued by the Home Ministry in Dhaka Wednesday.

If any person moves along with arms violating Sub-Section (1) of the Section '17 A' then any Magistrate or police officer or anybody empowered by name or by office by the government can disarm such person and can cancel or suspend his licence under Section 18.

Democracy

From Page 1 Col 7

party autocratic rule, snatched away people's democratic rights including freedom of speech by introducing black laws, she reminded her audience.

Commenting on the Ershad regime, she said it pushed the country on the brink of destruction by its illegal rule. 'It is only BNP government which ensured people of all basic rights, introduced the politics of development and started leading the country towards self-reliance through its development-oriented programmes. Begum Zia claimed and pledged to resume all the programmes if elected.

She reiterated that the nationalist forces have no alternative to protecting the country's sovereignty and restoring democracy.

Begum Zia termed the February 27 elections as very important because adding it was time to evaluate all the three post-liberation governments.

Two local BNP leaders Mo-

jammel Huq and Abu Jayed Khan also addressed the meeting.

Earlier in the morning the BNP chief conducted a mass-contact programme taking rounds in Dhannondi and Mohammadpur areas. She also addressed a number of wayside gatherings in both the places.

After the Bostia meeting Begum Zia also addressed another public meeting at Kamrangirchar.

When she arrived in Lalbag on her way to Kamrangirchar, Begum Zia got a rousing reception from people including housewives who gathered on narrow roads chanting slogans.

21 officials to conduct poll in enclaves

Authorities have assigned 21 officials to conduct polling in Dahagram and Angarpota enclaves, in addition to necessary security measures, reports UNB.

Hasina calls for announcing Wage Board award

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina Wednesday called upon the Government to announce the Wage Board award for the journalists, press workers and employees of newspapers and news agencies, reports BSS.

In a press statement, she said the latest amendment to the Newspapers Employees (Condition of Services) Act, 1974, was undesirable and unacceptable to the journalists and others affected by it. She called for announcing the award immediately.

She also stressed the need for increasing the public and private advertisements for helping the economy of newspapers and news agencies.

Sheikh Hasina said the Awami League Government of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had passed the Newspapers Employees (Condition of Services) Act in 1974 providing for the setting up of the Wage Board. Since then four wage boards were formed and three awards had been implemented, she added.

Let BSP surrender benefits given by Ershad

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of journalists, press workers and general employees of newspapers in a statement on Wednesday alleged that the Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Parishad (BSP) is conspiring to undo the Wage Board and create misgivings by resorting to lies.

They said the Wage Board was nobody's gift but formed under the Newspaper Employees (Condition of Services) Act, 1974. After the formation of the present Wage Board, BSP had sent its representatives and on the basis of a unanimous decision 25 per cent dearness allowance was given.

Due to reasons unknown BSP is now demanding dissolution of the Wage Board, the newspaper industry leaders said. They asked if the Wage Board is to be rejected because it was constituted by the autocratic ruler, would the members of BSP reject all facilities extended to them by the government of Ershad.

They called for immediate announcement of the final Wage Board Award, and withdrawal of the recent amendment of the Newspaper Employees (Condition of Services) Act, 1974. The present programme of movement will continue till the realisation of the demands, they said.

The newspaper industry leaders said BSP leaders want to deprive journalists, press workers and general employees of their legitimate dues, and spend income of the industry on luxuries and building of their own fortunes. They are owners and at the same time editors of newspapers. By using these identities they extracted benefits from the government of Ershad on different occasions.

They said it was due to black laws, threats from the government and unwanted interference by owner-editors that journalists could not disseminate news with objectivity and truthfulness for a long time. BSP had even opposed programmes taken up by journalists against closure of newspapers. Even during the mass upsurge of November when journalists, press workers and general employees stopped work, some BSP members tried to bring out newspapers, they complained.

The newspaper industry leaders said on more than one occasion in the past BSP members increased prices of newspaper, advertisement rates and enjoyed benefits of reduced prices of newspapers in the name of implementation of Wage Board Awards.

They said the president and the general secretary of BSP who are known as responsible people in the society issued false statement that they paid a lowest, minimum of Taka 500 as dearness allowance to journalists, press workers and other employees, even though the basic pay of many workers and employees is less than Taka 500 per month.

The signatories to the statement are: Reazuddin Ahmed, President and Amanullah Kabir, General Secretary of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, Zahurul Huq, President and Ruhul Amin Gazi, General Secretary of Dhaka Union of Journalists, Mosharruf Hossain, President and Bazul Rahman Milan, General Secretary of Newspaper Press Workers Federation, Jahir Kabir, President and Mir Mosharruf Hossain, General Secretary of Newspaper Employees Federation.



BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia speaking at a big public rally at Basila High School ground under Mohammadpur thana yesterday.

Zia, Ershad

From Page 1 Col 7 Wednesday, Sheikh Hasina said this was the time for restoring democracy by voting in favour of 'boat' in the parliamentary election.

At the village doctors convention she said that post-'75 governments had grabbed power through conspiracies and the use of guns.

Sheikh Hasina said that the two previous governments plundered Tk. 50,000 crore the country had received in foreign aid.

She said late President Zia made Ershad Chief of Army Staff. But later Ershad killed Zia due to a conflict arising out of the sharing of hoarded wealth.

Sheikh Hasina said that although there was an indication of parliamentary system in the joint declaration of the three alliances before the fall of Ershad another woman leader had forgotten her commitment to the declaration which amounted to a betrayal of the declaration.

Presided over by Dr. Abdus Sattar, President of the Association, the rally was addressed among others by special guest Mostafa Jalal Mohtuddin, and Ivy Rahaman.

She said that if voted to power her party would meet the demands of the village doctors. One of their main demands is registration.

Arms case

From Page 1 Col 8

there was a heated discussion but due to the timely intervention by the Attorney General the situation was controlled.

The hearing in a packed courtroom continued till 4.30 pm. A Division Bench comprising Justice Abdul Bari Sarker and Justice Habibur Rahman Khan is hearing the Rule.

Kazi Shahadat Hossain assisted by Sk Rezaul Karim appeared for the petitioner. Aminul Haque, Attorney General, Mr Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, Additional Attorney General AF Hasan Arif, Deputy Attorney General appeared for the government. The hearing will continue today (Thursday).



Awami League president Sheikh Hasina addressing a 'grand' convention of village doctors at Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday.

Investment treaties

From Page 1 Col 8 countries except Bangladesh and Nepal. The Japanese investors need to pay double tax on interest, dividend, remittances and shipping in the absence of this treaty. The Japanese investors, therefore, ignored Bangladesh and moved to comparatively profitable places in Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Hong Kong and Malaysia. Those countries also offer investment protection through a treaty.

The signing of the tax treaty will provide mutual exemption of tax for shipping and airlines, lower tax on interest dividend, remittances and tax holidays to foreign investment.

Bangladesh and Japan Business Federation in a joint communique a year before last called for signing the tax treaty and the investment protection treaty. The negotiations con-

cluded in November last year when it could not be signed due to political upsurge.

The Japanese Ambassador in Bangladesh Tokeo Iguchi who is going home on March 3 will sign the treaty before his departure.

Tokeo Iguchi told the Daily Star that the Japanese investors were expected to take growing interest to invest in Bangladesh after signing of the treaty. He also saw the possibility of bigger Japanese investment here after the political stability is restored.

Five pipe guns recovered in city

By Staff Correspondent

Muhammadpur police recovered five pipe guns and ammunition from an illegal arms manufacturing factory and arrested five persons

APSU to observe anti-Autocracy day

The All-Party Students Unity (APSU) will observe 'anti-Autocracy day' Thursday, reports BSS.

A student and public rally will be held at 3 p. m. at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque premises demanding immediate trial of former President H. M. Ershad, his shifting to Central Jail and arrest of his corrupt associates including Mizan Chowdhury, Kazi Zafar, Anwar Hossain, Nazim Rahman, Col (Retd) Gaffar and Major (Retd) Manzur Qader

Doctors call off strike

The physicians of Shaheed Suhrawardy Hospital resumed their duties from Wednesday by postponing their strike in public interest, said a press release, reports BSS.

Indo-Nepal close-door summit

KATHMANDU, Feb 13: Visiting Indian Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar had an hour long meeting behind closed doors with his Nepalese counterpart Krishna Prasad Bhattarai today. Mr. Shekhar told newsmen that both sides had discussed 'cooperation for the expansion of the railway service to the Nepalese border towns,' but did not specify in which area the railway was to be extended, reports AFP.

17 killed in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, Feb 13: Ten security force members and seven Tamil rebels were killed in clashes in Sri Lanka's north and east where separatists are fighting for their own homeland, military sources said on Wednesday. Five soldiers died when their vehicle struck a land mine in eastern Trincomalee district on Tuesday. Four policemen were killed and one wounded when gunmen ambushed a patrol in eastern Ampal district, reports Reuter.

Two injured in hotel blast

HONG KONG, Feb 13: Two people were badly injured in an explosion at a luxury Hong Kong hotel on Tuesday and a government spokesman said initial reports indicated a postal bomb was involved. The explosion happened in the lobby of the Holiday Inn Golden Mile in Nathan Road, the heart of Hong Kong's tourist area in Kowloon, reports Reuter.

18 police injured in Punjab

CHANDIGARH, Feb 13: Sikh militants blew the roof off a paramilitary police barracks near the Punjab state capital of Chandigarh in a bomb attack which injured at least 18 policemen, police said today, reports Reuter.

Witnesses fear to give evidence

JOHANNESBURG, Feb 13: Two witnesses at the kidnap and assault trial of Winnie Mandela refused to give evidence today, saying they were frightened. 'I fear for my life,' said Barend Mono. 'If I proceed to give evidence I don't know what will happen afterwards,' reports Reuter.

Grenade blast in Peshawar

PESHAWAR, Feb 13: Unknown assailants threw a grenade at the compound of an international aid group helping Afghan refugees on Tuesday night but it exploded harmlessly. The attack on Afghan aid in the northern city of Peshawar was the third against groups assisting Afghan refugees since the Gulf war began last month, reports Reuter.

Plane missing in Philippines

MANILA, Feb 13: A six-engine Cessna plane carrying five people, including the governor of Aurora province, and an army pay-roll is feared to have crashed into a mountain in the northern Philippines, the military said today. The plane has been missing since Tuesday after taking off from Nueva Ecija province, reports Reuter.

400 killed

From Page 1 Col 7 Allied movements is to probe on the ground.

Marines and Iraqi gunners exchanged artillery fire across the border between Saudi Arabia and occupied Kuwait on Tuesday.

Marine spokesman said the Americans were aiming at an Iraqi artillery site, two radar installations, a mechanised company position and a possible command unit. Huge explosions rocked Iranian border towns overnight as Allied aircraft stepped up their bombing of targets in eastern Iraq, the national Iranian news agency IRNA said today.

It said planes were in action against Iraqi border towns throughout the night, drawing anti-aircraft fire from ground defences.

The smoke of explosions which billowed into air at half an hour intervals during the night was visible in Iranian border cities," the agency said in a report from the province of Ilam bordering Iraq.

Iraq on Tuesday reiterated its threat to use non-conventional weapons in the fight with the anti-Iraq coalition.

The Iraqis have determined to fight the gathering of villains with faith, self-confidence and belief in the justice of their cause, not only with familiar conventional weapons, parliamentary speaker Saadi Mahdi Saleh said Monday in a radio address monitored by the BBC.

He added that the Iraqis were standing behind their President, Saddam Hussein, and that the coalition feared the Iraqi forces, which had long years of combat experience and "lethal, developed weapons."

GS of Zahurul Huq Hall relieved

The General Secretary of Sgt. Zahurul Huq Hall Student Union of Dhaka University was relieved from his responsibilities, says a press release Wednesday, reports UNB.

Md. Masum Ahmed, GS of the hall, applied to the Hall Provost on November 22 last year requesting relief from the post.

Provost Prof. Monsur Musa, who is also the President of the hall student union, relieved him with effect from February 11.

DUJ election today

The two-day 16th annual general conference of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) ended in Dhaka Wednesday with a call to realise the just demands of the journalist community including the announcement of the Wage Board Award immediately, reports BSS.

Presided over by Mr. Fazul Karim, a senior member of the union, the concluding session adopted the annual reports placed by General Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi and Treasurer Kalkobad Milan.

Earlier, 15 members took part in the discussion on the reports.

Prominent union leaders including BFUJ chief Reazuddin Ahmed, Secretary General Amanullah Kabir, Habibur Rahman Milan, Syed Zafar and Shahjahan Miah were present.

The annual general election of the DUJ will be held today. The polling will take place between 9 AM and 5 PM with a break of one hour from 1 PM to 2 PM.

JP second

From Page 1 Col 8 and democracy would be institutionalised.

Mr. Chowdhury reiterated that if a free and fair election was held his party would secure the second highest place. He, however, did not mention who would secure the top position.

The JP acting chairman expressed his optimism that the ousted president H.M. Ershad would return from all the five seats he was contesting.

Referring to the allegation of transfer of huge amount of money abroad by the former

Export

From Page 1 Col 7

tea 22.50 million Dollar, frozen foods 11.42 million Dollar and agricultural products 7 million Dollar.

Besides losing market in Iraq and Kuwait, demand constraints in the West and the United States, higher freight and insurance charges, lower import of raw material and internal inflation have been pointed out by officials as major causes of the estimate shortfall.

Since the war began on January 17, insurance charge on each 20-ft container has increased by about 300 US Dollar, the officials said. Demand in western markets is also on the decline, they added.

Also production cost of exportable items has gone up about 2 per cent owing to domestic inflation, causing difficulty in maintaining the export prices at competitive level, trading circles said.

Export earnings decreased by about 29 million US Dollar in the first half of the current fiscal (July-December, 90).

president, Mr. Chowdhury said 'send enquiry teams to those countries and prove the allegations against him.'

Continuing, he said, 'if he was found guilty of the crime he would lose his party membership. We will take this decision in our party meeting to suspend him', he added.

'If the former president is so hated a man why he is not allowed to face the people freely and openly', he asked.

Referring to the arms recovered from Ershad's residence, Mr. Chowdhury reiterated that a president could keep eight arms without licence but those were to be legalised within six months if he quit the post.

Mr. Chowdhury alleged that the present government was harassing the members of the Jatiya Party including its chairman. 'Our chairman is being humiliated by the government as number of cases are being framed one after another against him', he added.

Referring to the on-going campaign, the former prime minister said it was highly regrettable that opposition parties were engaged in mudslingings. These are against the norms of democratic practice, he said adding 'all parties have their failures and achievements when they were in power, but only the failures of the Jatiya Party were being pointed out.'

He said if this kind of activities continue then no political leadership would grow in the country. He urged all the political parties to forge unity, identify problems and try to solve them in the greater national interest.

Foreign Office

From Page 1 Col 7 Ministry at the behest of the highest authorities. The post was a personal one and was not created as per existing administrative setup of the ministry. But no action has yet been taken to abolish the post or redressing the irregularity in appointment.

After the changeover the Foreign Ministry also issued order to the Ambassador to Poland to come back on charge of irregularities in dealing with the matters related to mutual interests. But he did not respond to it.

Foreign Ministry source alleged that in many cases the Establishment Ministry was not forthcoming in implementing the decisions regarding withdrawal of irregular appointments from different ministries.

On the other hand, all irregular appointments by Education Ministry and Information Ministry abroad have been cancelled.

Recently the audit team has reportedly unearthed a huge bungling in the expenditure of Moscow mission of Bangladesh but no administrative action has so far been taken.

When asked recently whether any case has been instituted against the former regime about alleged mismanagement and corruption in the Foreign Office, Foreign Affairs Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed told this correspondent that the legal department of the

ministry was scrutinising the allegations before lodging any case.

At least over two dozens of appointments in the Foreign Ministry are reported to have been illegal and many were drawn from a particular privileged service. Sometimes many appointments in the Foreign Ministry had been given without discussing the matter even with the Foreign Secretary. Most of the appointments were given as a matter of personal benefit.

Jalaluddin Ahmed, a student leader, was given a job of second Secretary at Bangladesh mission in Sydney in 1987 without the consent of the then Foreign Secretary. The contract is to expire in a month or two. Meanwhile, a petition has been submitted to renew the contract. But the administrative branch of the Foreign Ministry has not yet taken any decision in this regard.

Indian held with arms

SATKHIRA, Feb 13: Three people including one Indian were arrested along with arms and ammunition from Tarali village under Kaliganj upazila here Tuesday night, reports UNB.

According to police, in a bid to commit dacoity they hurled bombs on the police and were ultimately arrested.