

Jamaat condemns arrest of workers at Cox's Bazar

By Staff Correspondent

Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh has strongly condemned the arrest of 25 leaders and workers of the party and its student wing Islam Chhatra Shibir at Cox's Bazar on Wednesday.

Jamaat Acting Ameer Abbas Ali Khan and Secretary General Maulana Matir Rahman Nizami in a statement Thursday alleged the arrests were made with heinous motive to foil their party's victory in the ensuing polls.

The Jamaat leaders also accused the local administration of playing biased role. It did not arrest the attackers rather took into custody the leaders of Jamaat and Shibir attacked by the miscreants. They demanded immediate release of the arrested persons.

Pact with India

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Faruq read out the Election Manifesto at a press conference held at the party's central office in Dhaka. Party leader Col. (retd.) Rashid also addressed the press conference.

If voted to power, it said, it would try to remove unemployment, repeal Special Powers Act, introduce an effective education system and ensure freedom of the press and judiciary.

The manifesto said the 25-year agreement between Bangladesh and India should be scrapped immediately.

It said after the successful revolution on August 15, 1975 leaders of the Freedom Party did not usurp the state power in the hope that a people-oriented government will be established to ensure multi-party politics, free economy and free press.

The tenure of the government that ruled the country between August 15 and November 3, 1975 was the 'golden era', it added.

It criticised both Awami League and BNP regimes saying those had resorted to misrule causing endless miseries to the people but urged the people to vote for BNP as a nationalist force in those places where Freedom Party did not field any candidate.

About the ousted regime of Jatiya Party, it said autocracy and corruption went on in the same breath during the rule of Ershad. It also blamed the deposed President for trying to prolong his rule by destroying the nationalist forces.

Freedom Party was also critical of the caretaker government for keeping in force the controversial Special Powers Act of 1974. It also questioned the legality and neutrality of the interim

Call

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was attended by Elections Commissioners Justice Syed Mesbahuddin Hussain and Justice Naimuddin Ahmed.

Describing the Parliamentary Election as most significant, the CEC asked the officials to make it smooth, free and impartial. He assured them of full co-operation of the Election Commission in resisting any obstacle and threat from any quarters.

Lankan forces

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ported seeing guerrillas taking away the bodies of four dead colleagues.

The current operations were among the biggest in recent months carried out against the LTTE, which is fighting to establish a separate state for the island's two million Tamil minority concen-

Financial sector

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Giving a gloomy picture of the situation prevailing in the financial sector, Prof. Sobhan said irregularities done in the past had rendered these institutions inefficient. The problem is more social than a financial one, he observed while noting that the donors would suspend aid if credit recovery rates did not improve.

Usual recycling of bank capital has virtually stopped now and the default in repayment of loans is sought to be justified by some circles at the cost of public exchequer, he retorted.

(Details on Business Page)

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Focus on election- '91

Cassette war rages on

By Staff Correspondent

Along with the war of words, the contending parties in the forthcoming general election are also engaged in a war of songs.

Hundreds of campaign camps set up in the city are the theatres from where this weird war is waged.

From morning till late at night megaphones blare out the songs, mostly in audio cassettes and compared in folk tradition, extolling parties and leaders. Campaigners also take time to hold microphones in praising their leaders and blasting the opponent.

Until recently Awami League and Bangladesh National Party were the rivals in the combat. Now Jamaat-e-Islami has also joined the race.

Their songs also follow folk

styles, but are devoid of instrumental music. The songs are interesting. One such song says 'I voted for so many symbols in the past but did not get peace'.

Says an Awami League source, he came across about nine audio cassettes eulogising Awami League, its founder Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Sheikh Hasina, and urging people to vote for 'boat'. None of the cassettes were launched by the party, but by pro-AL cultural organisations, he said.

A BNP source also gave a similar reply. He said the audio cassettes brought out by different cultural groups were definitely welcomed by BNP leaders. Otherwise they should not have been used in election

camps, he said.

A Jamaat source said the election cell of the party had produced a good number of such cassettes.

In the popular elections of the past commercially produced music cassettes or records were used to entertain voters and transmit party messages at intervals.

Meanwhile, with the election only 12 days away, the campaign in the city as elsewhere in the country has gained momentum. Campaign areas of contesting candidates have been erected at almost every important road junction.

Processions and miking campaigns are on at every mohalla of Dhaka city. House to house campaign is expected to begin next week.

Conspiracies against constitution on : Khaleda

From Page 1 Col 7

alert against such designs by the interested quarters.

Begum Zia also strongly criticised the eight and a half years of rule of Ershad. The ousted autocratic regime had left a huge burden of loans on the commonman by plundering foreign aid, she said.

Describing the contributions of late President Zia to the development of North Bengal, Khaleda said he had first established food silos in the region and also the first textile mills. A Cotton Board was also set up to ensure that farmers get a better price of their produce.

She said North Bengal has a lot of natural resources including hardrock, which need to be exploited for the economic progress of the country.

She pledged if elected, her party government would expedite development of north region. 'We have to change the face of the northern districts remaining backward for decades'.

Speaking about the stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh, Begum Zia said, if voted to power, her government would expedite the process of their repatriation. 'Those who will opt for staying here will be ensured equal rights like a normal citizen of Bangladesh,' she told the meeting.

Referring to the Jamuna Bridge project, the BNP chief said BNP had first floated the idea of building a bridge over the river Jamuna to link the northern and southern parts of Bangladesh. 'If voted to power, we shall, Insha Allah, construct the bridge with railway line as desired by the people of North Bengal' she said.

Begum Zia said the North Bengal would be turned into a 'rice bowl' by giving top priority to agriculture.

Video cassette

Earlier Begum Zia launched a video cassette entitled 'Jibon Bangladesh Amar Maran Bangladesh' at the party's Banani office on Wednesday.

Police foil hartal at Hathazari

CHITTAGONG, Feb 14 : Police Thursday foiled a hartal called by local unit of Jatiya Party at Hathazari Upazila headquarters and restored normal life by removing road barricades and opening shops, said, reports BSS.

Jatiya Party had called for a half-day hartal from 6 am demanding release of former President and Jatiya Party Chairman Ershad and withdrawal of warrant of arrest on former Foreign Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud.

Fuel oil spill in England

SLIMBRIDGE (England), Feb 14 : A 12-mile (19-kilometer)-long oil slick in the River Severn estuary, which threatens thousands of birds in this major wildlife preserve, is breaking up and moving out to sea, the National Rivers Authority said Thursday. But patches of the fuel oil slick, spilled from a British Steel Corp. plant at Lalarwern, Gwent, now could affect birds on the Somerset coast, south of the estuary, said Phil Hewitt of the NRA, reports AP.

Allied raids

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pummel Iraqi Republican Guard positions as well as Iraqi command and control facilities, and French Jaguar fighter-bombers hit Iraqi tank battalions in Kuwait.

Iraq said Thursday it would seek its revenge on the field of battle and warned that Arab leaders supporting the allies would be swept away by the 'anger boiling in the chests' of their own people.

We swear to the one and only God Almighty we pledge... to take the severest revenge, official Iraqi radio said, a day after scores of civilians were killed in an allied air raid on a Baghdad bomb shelter.

The US-led allies thin their air sorties over Iraq and Kuwait are effectively smashing the communications network Saddam Hussein needs centrally to direct the Gulf war, US military sources say.

But the allies admit the Iraqi army is most effective when it is not taking orders from the top.

The US sources said on Wednesday the sorties, which have topped 65,000 since the Gulf war began on January 17, were destroying Saddam Hussein's communications with his troops in Kuwait.

He was being forced to stitch together a patchwork of phone and radio links that may be useless when the time comes to fight a ground war.

Military sources said the same thing happened in the Iran-Iraq war but worked that time to Iraq's advantage.

Allied air power is systematically destroying Iraq's military power four weeks into the Gulf war, but significant gains can be made by further bombing before any ground attack is launched, US Defence Secretary Dick Cheney said on Wednesday.

British Defence Secretary Tom King said on Thursday there was no sign Saddam Hussein was planning to withdraw from Kuwait and that a land war was now very likely.

I think the way Saddam Hussein is behaving at the moment, that looks very unlikely and I fear that a land war now looks very probable, King told British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) radio.

Iraq fired two missiles at the northeastern Saudi Town of Hafr-Al-Baten Thursday, hitting a building at a hospital and an inhabited patch of desert, eyewitnesses said.

A worker at a local hotel, Hisham Taher said by telephone that one of the missiles demolished a workshop at King Khaled Hospital, 3 km (two miles) from the town centre, but no one was injured.

He said the second missile exploded harmlessly outside the town, the main base in Saudi Arabia of Arab forces in the US-led coalition against Iraq.

Meanwhile, the UN Security Council Wednesday night decided to hold a private meet-

The Midnight File

Anti-abortion rally in Manila

MANILA, Feb 14 : About 1,000 students marched around girls bars and massage parlours in the Philippine capital's tourist district in an anti-abortion campaign today. The protesters from a Roman Catholic University carried signs reading 'Don't be cruel to unborn babies', reports Reuter.

Flow of information barred

BRUSSELS, Feb 14 : The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) said on Wednesday the Allied pool system of Gulf war reporting restricted the free flow of information and discriminated against non-American and non-British journalists. The IFJ, representing more than 175,000 journalists around the world, added that it was seriously concerned over reporting restrictions imposed on journalists covering the Gulf conflict, reports Reuter.

Six killed in US ship fire

COLOMBO, Feb 14 : Six American crew members were killed in a fire aboard a US merchant ship off the southern Indian coast last week. US Embassy officials said Thursday. The ship, Stonewall Jackson, crippled by Saturday's fire in its engine room, was towed to Colombo Thursday by a salvage tug boat, the officials said, reports AP.

German stabbed in Amman

AMMAN, Feb 14 : A German man was stabbed and wounded Wednesday in the Jordanian capital, authoritative sources said. The assailant, who was arrested by police, was quoted as saying he wanted to 'avenge the Arab nation,' reports AP.

Iranian journalists in Iraq

NICOSIA, Feb 14 : A group of Iranian journalists has crossed into Iraq to report on the Gulf war. Iranian radio said another group was waiting at the Khosravi border post while formalities were dealt with, the British Broadcasting Corporation reported on Wednesday night, says Reuter.

Massive blast in Dutch factory

CULEMBORG (Netherlands), Feb 14 : A massive explosion wrecked a Dutch fireworks factory Thursday, causing dozens of injuries and widespread damage, police and eyewitnesses said. Two people were reported missing, and 30-40 suffered slight injuries from flying glass and rubble, according to Deputy Mayor Jan Koedijk, reports AP.

Fuel oil spill in England

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Jatiya Party had called for a half-day hartal from 6 am demanding release of former President and Jatiya Party Chairman Ershad and withdrawal of warrant of arrest on former Foreign Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud.

Meanwhile, Vice-Chairman of the Iraqi Revolutionary Council Saadoun Hammadi Wednesday declared that his country is ready to negotiate a peaceful solution to the war without preconditions.

At a press conference held in Rabat, the special envoy of Saddam Hussein said a resolution of nine to two with four abstentions, the Council adopted a British proposal that the meeting be held in private to facilitate exchange of views.

Of the five permanent members, China abstained while the other four -- Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the United States -- voted in favour.

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Sheikh Hasina addressing a campaign rally in the Tejagon Industrial Area on Thursday.

— Star Photo

Suit against Ershad

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had been fighting for parliamentary system to supplant Zia Ershad model adding 'we don't want any man in uniform to usurp power. Major (Retired) Abdul Mannan is the BNP candidate from the same constituency. Sheikh Hasina was campaigning in.

Sheikh Hasina said in a emotion choked voice: