

Final poll results published

The names of 294 MPs-elect of the 5th Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) were published in an official gazette Thursday, reports UNB.

They are now likely to be sworn-in on Sunday, official sources said. Results of 4 seats will be announced after repolling in 21 centres taking place on March 9, while elections in the remaining 29 constituencies in Munshiganj and Kushtia will be held on March 14 and March 28 respectively to complete elections to the 300-member House.

Party positions in the elections held on February 27 as stated by the Election Commission are as follows:

- 1. Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) 138
2. Awami League 85
3. Jatiya Party 35
4. Jamaat-e-Islami 18
5. BKSAL 5
6. Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) 5
7. National Awami Party (M) 1
8. JSD (Siraj) 1
9. Workers Party 1
10. Ganotantri Party 1
11. Islamic Oikya Jote 1
12. Independent 3
Total 294

NAP (M) wants transfer of power to parliament

By Staff Correspondent Leaders of the three political alliances, particularly majority party leader Begum Khaleda Zia, have been urged by National Awami Party (Mozaffar) to take effective steps to restore parliamentary democracy.

In a joint statement on Wednesday Prof. Mozaffar Ahmed and Pankaj Bhattacharya, President and General Secretary of NAP, said the joint declaration of 7-Party, 8-Party and 5-Party alliances called for holding of free and fair elections under a caretaker government and transfer of power to a Sovereign parliament.

It was on the basis of the declaration that people joined movement and overthrew the autocratic government of Ershad.

They said the Acting President held the February 27 elections in a free and fair manner in accordance with the joint declaration of the three alliances.

Expressing their concern over the post-election political situation the NAP leaders said implementation of the joint declaration would be complete only after transfer of power to a sovereign parliament.

Exodus from Albania Tirana declares main port military zone

VIENNA, Mar 7: Albania declared its main port a military zone today and banned mass gatherings in Tirana and three other towns following the exodus of thousands of people to Italy, reports Reuters.

In what amounted to a partial state of emergency, a government communique carried by the official ATA news agency said Durres, where most refugees embarked after storming aboard ships, was now a military zone.

It said the army would control access to the port and ensure that shipping operated normally.

Report from Brindisi, Italy says: Italy said it would send back most of the 12,000 Albanian refugees who commandeered a fleet of rushing ships to flee their impoverished country.

The decision followed a near-riot as thousands of starving Albanians fought for food after landing in Brindisi today after days at sea.

Tribunals

From Page 1 Col 7 ever, the District Judge and Sessions Judge of Chittagong district will discharge the responsibility of election tribunals of hill Khagrachhari and hill Rangamati districts besides constituencies under Chittagong district.

Likewise, the District and Sessions Judge of Cox's Bazar will act as election tribunals of hill Bandarban, besides Cox's Bazar district.

Two election tribunals have been constituted for constituencies of 132 Bakerganj-Pirojpur and 160 Mymensingh-Setrokona with the District and Sessions Judges of Barisal and Mymensingh respectively.

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A soldier from the 24th Infantry Division waves as he boards a C-141 transport plane to depart for Port Stewart in US on Thursday. —AFP photo

Arab-Israeli feud

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The time has come to put an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict," Bush declared during the speech to lawmakers who chanted his name and waved small American flags as he entered the usually formal House chamber.

Throughout the Gulf crisis Bush repeatedly rejected Iraq President Saddam Hussein's demand that the Palestinian issue be addressed before he withdrew from Kuwait.

Now that "Saddam walks amidst ruin" Bush said he would not turn his back on a region that has dominated his thinking since the August 2 invasion.

"We must work together to create shared security arrangements in the region," Bush said, noting that the heaviest burden would fall on "our friends and allies in the Middle East".

"But we want them to know that just as we stood with them to repel aggression so now America stands ready to work with them to secure the peace" he said.

Bush, who relied on the United Nations in the showdown with Baghdad, said already-adopted UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 should serve as the basis

for seeking peace. The resolutions say Israel should withdraw from occupied territories and be allowed by its Arab neighbours to live in peace -- positions that have been impossible to reach in the past.

"There is no single solution, no solely American answer," Bush said. "But we can make a difference. America will work tirelessly as a catalyst for positive change".

Bush said that "our vital national interests depend on a stable and secure Gulf," but told lawmakers he did not envision stationing US ground troops permanently in the region.

"A capable naval presence," will be maintained, he said, and air and ground forces will participate in joint exercises with countries in the region.

Bush also vowed to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, but did not go into specific detail on how to accomplish such a mission.

"We must act to control the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the missiles used to deliver them", Bush said.

One of Bush's primary goals in the war with Iraq was to destroy its chemical weapon

arsenal and prevent it from developing a nuclear arms capability.

American and Allied intelligence experts said massive round-the-clock air sorties against Iraqi targets accomplished the objectives.

He spent little time talking about Saddam, the Iraqi leader who was dominated by his thoughts since the August invasion, but served notice -- "Saddam and those around him are accountable," for alleged atrocities in Kuwait.

"We grieve for the people of Iraq -- a people who have never been our enemy," Bush said in voicing the hope Americans will "welcome them as friends" once a new leadership runs Baghdad.

Israel's reaction

AFP adds : As the 'Allied forces' interest turned to ways to achieve a more settled future in the region, Israel Thursday poured cold water on US President Bush's call for an exchange of "territory for peace" in an attempt to establish a lasting peace in the Middle East.

"We have differences with the United States over the principle of exchanging territory for peace," Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy said.

Mizan

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Constitution and would not choose ministers from a single party. "If a partisan Council of Ministers is formed the caretaker government will lose its neutrality," Mizan Chowdhury added.

UNB says the Acting JP Chairman threw a challenge asking the opponents of Ershad to prove his (Ershad's) corruption by disseminating true information.

The political leaders accusing Ershad of corruption for accumulating wealth abroad by plundering national economy should substantiate it with evidence, Mizan said.

He demanded release of JP Chairman Ershad and other detained party leaders before March 12, otherwise JP will go for vigorous agitation across the country.

Referring to criticism of Jatiya Party by some political leaders, Mizan said "one day I will say how many soldiers were killed by a regime to consolidate power. A crippled freedom fighter was also killed by those who are now talking about democracy."

Activities of those who were dubbing Ershad as an autocrat, Mizan said, had failed to prove that they are democrats.

Other speakers criticise those leaders and workers of Jatiya Party who worked for other political parties during the Feb 27 polls and demanded their expulsion.

The JP leaders asserted they would not allow anyone to form government, if Ershad and other JP leaders are not released.

Reazuddin Ahmed Bhola Mia, elected MP, said "this election was illegal and undemocratic". He criticised those who demanded a total ban on JP politics.

Remittances

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In the last fiscal year, in the eighties, overseas Bangladeshis sent home 5823.93 million dollars. Remittances were markedly higher, though at a lower growth rate, in the latter half of the eighties than in the first half. They totalled 3520.03 million dollars in 1985-86 compared with 2303.90 million dollars in 1980-85.

Bulk of the remittances from the UK, the Middle East and the USA were made by overseas Bangladeshis, the majority of whom are from the greater Sylhet area of the country.

In the latter half of the eighties, disbursements of external loans and grants to Bangladesh stood at 7937 million dollars in gross terms. Remittances in 3520.03 million dollars in the same period were about 44 per cent of total foreign aid disbursements.

Despite higher amount of remittances and external aid, flows, total investments in the economy did not register any appreciable improvement. Investments, as a proportion of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), rather declined from about 13 per cent in 1985-86 to around 11 per cent in 1989-90.

(A detailed report on remittances is on Business Page.)

5-party

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The election amounts to disregard for the hopes and aspirations of the democracy loving people.

The Five-party Alliance also called upon Awami League to accept the verdict of the majority party and urged BNP to come forward to implement the commitments of the three alliances made before the elections.

8 party partners

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The other alliance partners NAP, CPB, BAKSAL and Ganotantri Party -- who got 12 seats together in the just concluded parliament elections are now considering to form a separate parliamentary group to consolidate their independent position inside parliament. In the elections CPB and BAKSAL bagged five seats each while NAP and Ganotantri Party bagged one seat each.

NAP General Secretary Pankaj Bhattacharya, when contacted, said that the Eight-party components other than Awami League are considering to form a democratic parliamentary alliance to help the democratic process to continue. He said that there was no alternative to BNP to which the power could be transferred.

About the new AL condition the NAP leader said that there was no mention of it in the November 19 Joint Declaration.

Clause 3 of the joint declaration only mentioned about the accountable government, which Pankaj said could be achieved through parliamentary form of government.

The NAP leader said the Awami League wanted to re-activate the alliance according to their own condition. But the four parties have decided to make an assessment of the pre-election move by the Awami League. He said that there was no coordination among the components before the election, there was no

election manifesto of Eight-party alliance and the seat offer by the Awami League was unilateral. He said that it would not be wise for AL to tag its condition of repealing the Fifth Amendment to the demand for transition to parliamentary form of government.

When contacted Five-party alliance leader Rashed Khan Menon said that the crisis of this moment was to restore parliamentary form of government but not repeal of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution. He categorically said it was Sheikh Hasina, who was trying to block the process of going back to parliamentary form of government.

Workers Party leader Haider Akbar Khan Rono said if there was no consensus on the bill for transition to parliamentary form of government the BNP would have to go for presidential election.

The political circle of the country believe that the new AL condition would jeopardise the constitutional process to establish a democratic government. They said that their repeal of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution in no way would come within the per-view of the November 19 Declaration, which opted for a sovereign parliament to which the government would be accountable. They believe the new condition set by the Awami League would ultimately compel the BNP to stick to presidential form of government.

Dr Kamal absent from AL meeting

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League presidium member Dr Kamal Hossain did not attend the public meeting of his party at Panthapath Thursday to observe historic March 7. His presence at the meeting was expected as his name was among the list of speakers announced during the publicity of the meeting.

One killed in road mishap

By DMCH Correspondent

One person was killed and 26 others injured in an accident on Dhaka-Aricha road on Thursday at 7 a.m.

Monoranjan Shaha (60) died at Pangu Hospital at 8.30 a.m. His body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue. 26 other injured persons were also admitted to Pangu hospital.

A case has been registered with Tajgaon police.

The Midnight File

Bush selects Preston to head World Bank

WASHINGTON, Mar 7: President George Bush has selected Lewis T. Preston, the former chairman of J.P. Morgan and Co., as his choice to succeed Barber Conable as President of the World Bank, administration sources said Thursday. Preston, 64, retired as chairman of the board of J.P. Morgan in 1989. Like Conable, Preston is a longtime associate of Bush, reports AP.

Cholera spreads across South America

LIMA, Mar 7: Latin America's worst cholera epidemic in a century has revived in Peru and threatened Colombia on Wednesday as it spread across South America, feeding on poverty, Peruvian Health Minister Carlos Vidal Layseca told reporters the disease, which health authorities thought had slowed, re-ignited last week because people began eating fish from shoals in coastal waters and drinking unboiled water, reports Reuter.

JKSLF guerillas free hostage

NEW DELHI, Mar 7: Muslim guerillas in India's Kashmir state today freed the daughter of an MP they abducted a week ago to demand freedom for five jailed comrades. Nahida Imtiaz, 28, was released by the outlawed Jammu and Kashmir Students Liberation Front (JKSLF) in Kashmir's summer capital Srinagar, PTI said, reports AFP.

PPP leader held for murder

KARACHI, Mar 7: Police arrested Qaim Ali Shah a senior member of Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party today linking him to the killing of 29 people in Karachi in August. Benazir Bhutto's husband, Asif Ali Zardari and 13 other people including a senator, a former federal minister, a former Sindh provincial minister were charged earlier in connection with the killings, reports Reuter.

N Korea 'fabricated' incident

SEOUL, Mar 7: The US-led United Nations Command on Thursday filed a formal protest charging North Korea with fabricating a case in which South Korea allegedly firing rockets across the border. The Command, representing the United States and 15 other Western nations that fought off a North Korean invasion in the 1950-53 Korean War, sent the protest letter through the truce village of Panmunjom, reports AP.

Mig-21 engine explodes

NEW DELHI, Mar 7: A Mig-21 aircraft of the Indian Air Force crashed after its engine exploded in mid-air in the western state of Gujarat on Tuesday. The mishap occurred on the outskirts of Kanah village near Jamnagar. The pilot who jumped out of the plane escaped unhurt and landed safely with the help of a parachute, reports Xinhua.

Brazilian plane hijacked

RIO DE JANEIRO, Mar 7: Three gunmen hijacked a Brazilian commuter plane in the northwest Amazon on Wednesday, and flew it toward Colombia after releasing its four passengers and two crew members. Flight 835 of the local Taba Airlines was hijacked after it took-off at 1 p.m. (1800 GMT) from Sao Gabriel de Cachoeira en route to the jungle city of Manaus, said Globo TV, Brazil's biggest television network, reports AP.

Hasina's call

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She said that the February 27 elections were free but not fair. A silent coup was staged by interfering with the voters' list, she complained adding that new names submitted by AL candidates were not incorporated in the list.

Sajeda Chowdhury who is also an MP-elect complained that the autocratic Ershad regime had dropped many Awami League supporters from the voters' list prepared in 1986.

Criticising those who say that the independence of Bangladesh was declared by late Ziaur Rahman, she wanted to know who then had gone to unload weapons from the Pakistani vessel Swat.

AL presidium member Syeda Zohra Tajuddin cautioned against distorting history. She said that nine month long War of Liberation, through which Bangladesh became independent, had started following the March 7 historic speech of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Abdus Samad Azad, MP-elect and member of AL presidium criticised BNP leaders without naming them for not spelling out in clear terms their plans to settle constitutional issues.

He said that the people have restored their voting right through movement under the leadership of AL chief Sheikh Hasina and demanded transfer of power to the parliament and the establishment of an accountable government.

AL publicity secretary and MP-elect Mohammad Nasim said that the people of Bangladesh will not forgive those who plan to go to power counting on the support of 'Razakars and Al-Badr'. He said that AL also can go to power by obtaining support of others but Sheikh Hasina will not come to terms with 'Razakars'.

Begum Motia Chowdhury MP-elect and agricultural affairs secretary of AL said the people will keep an eye on BNP as to whether it fulfils the election pledges of waiving land tax of upto 25 bhas, writing off agricultural loans of upto Taka 5000 and interests on loans of upto Taka 10,000.

First phase

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foreign news organizations still have Iraqi employees who will continue to report from the country.

Iraqi officials had not set a time or location for the releases, the sources told CNN.