

## Opposition demands extra protection for Benazir

ISLAMABAD, June 19: The Pakistani opposition demanded extra police protection today for its leader, the former Premier Benazir Bhutto, following a wave of terrorist incidents in the country, reports AFP.

Farooq Leghari, the deputy opposition leader in parliament, called for the increased security a day after the murder of an anti-terrorist court Judge who was trying Ms Bhutto's husband, Asif Ali Zardari, and other Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leaders.

"The law and order situation in the country, particularly in southern Sindh province, is deteriorating day by day," Leghari said at a press conference.

A rash of political murders, kidnappings and train robberies in recent weeks "symbolise the utter failure of the government to provide security and protection to the citizens," he added.

The PPP written to the Governor of Sindh, the Interior Minister and the Speaker of the National Assembly requesting extra police protection for Ms Bhutto and other party leaders whose lives, the party said, are in danger.

Leghari said two cars recently "chased" Ms Bhutto's car to her residence in Karachi.

"A government which cannot protect the life and property of the citizens must resign," Leghari said, before calling for fresh elections.

He also said Sindh Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali has blamed the PPP for the increased violence in an effort to "cover up" his failure to maintain law and order in the province.

"Every crime in Sindh is automatically blamed on PPP," Leghari said, adding that Zardari and other defendants had nothing to gain from the murder in Karachi on Tuesday of Judge Nabi Sher Junejo, who gunned down in car along with his bodyguard and driver.

Zardari's lawyers were confident that Junejo would have given favourable verdicts in the conspiracy cases for which Ms Bhutto's husband is being tried here, Leghari said.

Leghari showed reporters copies of a Karachi evening newspaper which reported June 13 that terrorists had threatened to blow up special courts, saying the article proved the government was aware of the terrorist threats but had failed to act.

### Related story on Page 5 Ceremonial reception

BEIJING, June 19: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was accorded ceremonial reception at the Great Hall of the People by Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng here this morning, reports BSS.

As the motorcade arrived and Begum Zia alighted from the car at the western entrance of the Great Hall of the People, Li Peng warmly received her. She was escorted to the presentation line and introduced to the Chinese high officials.

Bangladesh Prime Minister was then took salute from a smartly turned-out contingent of the Chinese Armed Forces. She later inspected the Guard of Honour. The National anthems of the two countries were played and 19 gun salute boomed into the air to herald her official goodwill visit to China. **Related story on Page 5**

### Related story on Page 5 Begum Zia visits Great Wall

BEIJING, June 19: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today visited the Great Wall of China, reports BSS.

Begum Zia accompanied by the Chinese Minister in waiting, drove in a motorcade to the Mutianyu section of the Wall which is about 165 kms (100 miles) north of here. The section has been opened recently.

Begum Zia took the cable car ride and walked along the Wall.

### Khaleda: China

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in various international forums and helped each other.

"China attaches great importance to the development of its relations with Bangladesh," Li said, adding, "such relations will not be affected by any changes in the international situation."

### Taiwan

Referring to the Taiwan situation he said China did not accept Taiwan's contention of "One China One Taiwan" nor did it believe in the independence of Taiwan. He, however, said China would not object Taiwan carrying out trade and commerce with other countries.

Begum Zia expressed her gratitude for the warm hospitality shown to her and her entourage since she arrived here yesterday and expressed the confidence that this visit would contribute to the strengthening of relations between the two countries.

Begum Khaleda Zia invited Prime Minister Li and Madame Li to visit Bangladesh and said the people of Bangladesh were eagerly awaiting their visit. Li accepted the invitation.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister also invited Chinese Family Planning Minister and Machine Building Minister to be present during the forthcoming inauguration of the 200 MW thermal power station in Chittagong. She also welcomed Chinese participation in the development of Barapukuria coal project at Dinajpur.

Begum Zia attended a banquet hosted in her honour by Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng at the Fang Feiyuan Villa of Diaoyutai State Guest House. Prime Minister Begum Zia was received by Li and Madame Li when she arrived at the Villa.

Heads of diplomatic missions of SAARC countries and senior Chinese leaders and officials attended the banquet.

The member of the entourage of the Bangladesh Prime Minister including Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman, State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Dr K Mosharrar Hossain, Jahanara Begum MP, Amanullah Aman MP and Barkatullah MP, attended the banquet.



Acting Chairman of Jatiya Party Moudud Ahmed addressing a public meeting in front of Baitul Mukarram Mosque Wednesday. —Star photo

## Finance Bill discussed in parliament

# Opposition wants consensus on economic issues

By Staff Correspondent

Opposition Bench Members of Parliament on Wednesday called for a national consensus on basic economic issues with a view to building a self-reliant economy with the participation of all.

They criticised the government for the taxation measures proposed in the new national budget. The burden of new taxes will have to be borne by the poor, they said while taking part in the discussion on the Finance Bill, 91.

The State Minister for Finance Mujibur Rahman moved the Finance Bill after an hour-long debate as to whether the bill could be moved at a stage when the members of parliament could not end general discussions on the budget.

Awami League MP Sudhansu Sekhar Haldar raised a point as to what the MPs would discuss about if the Finance Bill — containing proposed fiscal measures — was passed. AL MPs Salahuddin Yusuf and Tofael Ahmed spoke in support of Haldar.

In reply Khondakar Delwar Hossain, Chief Whip, of the Treasury Bench, MK Anwar, Minister for Shipping, Mujibur Rahman, State Minister for Finance and Nazmul Huda, State Minister for Food said the bill would be passed at a later stage.

The bill had to be moved now to enable MPs to have enough time to discuss it, because after the Eid vacation the little time would be left for this.

The Deputy Speaker ruled that there was no legal bar on moving the bill at this stage. The bill was then moved by the State Minister for Finance.

Those who took part in the discussion on the bill were: Rashed Khan Menon, Suranjit Sengupta, Tofael Ahmed of the Awami League, Shahjahan Siraj of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Jamaat MPs Maulana Md Sakhawat Hossain and Shah

Md. Ruhul Quddus, AL MP Abul Kalam Azad and JP member Moqsum Ibne Aziz (Lama).

Rashed Khan Menon of Workers Party said that the taxation proposals made in the Finance Bill reflected an anti-party outlook of the government.

He alleged that the bill did not provide for ending the autocratic system of the last nine years. The people had fought not only to change an autocratic ruler but also to change the system, he said.

Menon criticised the government for not proposing measures to recover bank loans from defaulters.

He said that the Value Added Tax (VAT) would add to an already inflationary situation. Poor people would have to bear its burden indirectly.

He said new taxation proposals had already contributed to a rise in prices of edible oil and old garments at the cost of the poor.

Duty on dividend income would discourage savings which the Finance Minister proposed to increase, he said.

Suranjit Sengupta said that the Finance Minister in his speech criticised autocracy but did not propose any measure to end the autocratic system. He said that there could be no democracy if the economy remained dependent on foreign aid.

Sengupta alleged that taxation measures proposed in the budget were dictated by donors. The poor would have to bear its real burden.

The Finance Minister talked about free economy, but did not clarify how to encourage local industrial output, he said.

The Ganatantri Party leader called for a national consensus on economic issues to make the economy self-reliant.

Tofael Ahmed alleged that the new budget was based on prescriptions of the World

Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Subsidy on agriculture was reduced and new tax on gas and water proposed.

He said that under the budget prices of soyabean oil and ballpoint pen used by the common man were increased whereas price of white cement was lowered. The poor would face hardship, he said.

Tofael Ahmed urged the government to establish the supremacy of the political leadership over bureaucracy, and to end corruption.

He deplored that the government had failed to reduce the price of diesel used by farmers to pump water for irrigating land.

Shahjahan Siraj urged the government to arrive at a consensus on basic economic issues with a view to enlisting the participation of all to ensure rapid economic development. An atmosphere conducive to national consensus was now prevailing in the country, he said.

He said that even after 20 years of independence not a single budget was prepared with an independent outlook.

He said that the United States — the richest capitalist country in the world — subsidised agriculture whereas the Finance Minister had proposed to withdraw such subsidy.

Shahjahan Siraj said without improving the lot of the farmers and workers no economic development was possible.

He said that prices of most essentials increased following the announcement of the new budget and that the government had failed to control the market.

The budget did not tax those who could pay it. He criticised the government for proposing to reduce tax on white cement and air conditioner.

## Moudud

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shad government in December last year.

Moudud alleged that his party was not allowed to contest the February 29 parliament elections freely and that his party had been subjected to political harassment and repression. He termed Ershad's conviction and various cases against the former JP ministers and leaders as examples of injustice and oppression against his party men in the name of democracy.

"We were told that if we resigned, elections would be free and fair," the former Vice-President said, "but there was a hidden truth in it, which we would not know. We were not allowed to participate in the polls freely like other political parties," he said and added, "had we known the truth, we would not have resigned and would take alternative steps". But he did not elaborate.

Moudud said although Ershad was removed, nothing had changed. The same system was virtually continuing and instability was persisting. The JP leader criticised the Government for widespread violence in the educational campus and condemned the authorities for not taking actions against the terrorists.

Presided over by the JP Acting Chairman, the meeting was also addressed by, among others, JP Secretary General Shah Moazzem Hossain, central leader Syeda Razia Fayz, Jatiya Sramik Party president Shah Mohammad Abu Zafar, Jatiya Jubo Sanghati chief Saifur Rahman, JP city unit general secretary Abdus Salam, Jatiya Sechasebak Party general secretary Shah Mostan Billah, city Mahila Party leader Towfiqa Karim and Sangrami Chhatra Samaj convenor Iqbal Hossain Raju.

## Yeltsin

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being warned that continued military crackdown in the Baltics and a retreat from the reforms he started would lead to demands for his resignation, Gorbachev realigned himself with the reformers, Yeltsin said.

## Clash at DU

By DU Correspondent

Tension mounted further on the Dhaka University campus Wednesday afternoon following a clash between rival student groups backed by Awami League and JSD (Inu).

## Hasina

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alternative to parliamentary form of government for institutionalisation of democracy. Addressing the office-bearers of the students union of M. C. University College, Government College, Madanmohan College and Government Commerce College of Sylhet, she said the form of government should be determined according to the joint declaration of three alliances.

Sheikh Hasina said the ruling party breached pledges like waiving agricultural loan upto Taka ten thousand.

The government has turned the electronic media into a campaign instrument for the ruling party instead of making it an autonomous body, she alleged.

## The Midnight File

### Bush ready to lift sanctions on South Africa

WASHINGTON, June 19: President George Bush is prepared to lift US economic sanctions on South Africa next month in response to its dismantling of apartheid administration officials said today, reports Reuter.

### 12 killed in Karachi gunfight

KARACHI, June 19: At least 12 people were killed and more than 30 injured in gunbattles today between two factions of a political group in Pakistan's biggest city Karachi, doctors and police said, reports Reuter.

### New Jordanian cabinet sworn in

AMMAN, June 19: Jordan's King Hussein today swore in Prime Minister Taher al-Masri and his new cabinet, a Palace spokesman said, reports Reuter.

### 2 more suspects in Rajiv murder held

NEW DELHI, June 19: Indian investigators arrested two more suspects, including a Sri Lankan national, in connection with the murder of Rajiv Gandhi and claimed they had now established the involvement of Tamil militants. Robert Payas, a 25-year-old Sri Lankan, was arrested late Tuesday and G Perarivalan, 20, today in Madras. (PTI) said, reports AFP.

### G-7 Finance ministers meet Sunday

LONDON, June 19: Finance ministers and central bank governors of the Group of Seven leading industrial democracies will meet in London on Sunday, British officials said, reports Reuter.

### World Bank blocks agri-credit

# Farm loans upto Tk. 5000 waived

The government has waived all farm loans upto Tk 5,000 fulfilling ruling party's electoral pledge, despite donors' prohibitory action.

Bangladesh Bank has issued a circular this week to the concerned banks to identify the loanee farmers, who deserve the waiver benefit, and write off their agri-credit immediately.

Finance Ministry sources told UNB Wednesday the specified amount of farm loans taken till March 1 this year would be written off along with all interests.

Annoyed by the government decision, World Bank is learnt to have blocked approval of agricultural credit to Bangladesh.

The Ministry, however, decided not to waive loans taken by providing wrong information, fake name and by any fraudulent means.

If any loanee had repaid part of his loan, the balance will be written off.

Farmers having more than one loan will get the waiver facility if the aggregate of their principal amounts does not exceed Tk 5,000.

But, the sources pointed out, if the aggregate crosses the stipulated limit, none of the credits would be written off.

Certificate cases against the exempted farmers will be withdrawn, and they will further be considered as bonafide loanees for fresh credit, they said.

Credit programmes of Bangladesh Cooperative Bank and Bangladesh Rural Development Board will also come under the waiver.

According to sources, monetary involvement of the exemptions will be Tk 700 crore at the maximum.

## VAT

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facturing level for all items barring a few, is to be implemented from July 1, 1991 as announced by Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman in his budget speech.

The representatives of the operational multinationals and foreign-owned manufacturing and other units at Wednesday's meeting observed that the procedural arrangements like framing of rules, registration of companies, rebate and other provisions for the stock of raw materials and finished products for enforcement of VAT were yet to be completed.

It would be impossible to finalise arrangements about the same to prepare the ground for the operational go far VAT by June 31 because of public holidays for about a week on the occasion of the Eid-ul-Azha, they noted.

They said that the mere enactment of laws for introduction of VAT would not suffice for its operational go.

The laws provide for punitive measures for violation of VAT conditions but we are not still clear on many issues relating to VAT. How can penal provisions be then made operative from July 1?, they said.

The representatives of some multinationals pointed out that the English version of the VAT laws had not been made available to them.

Meanwhile, a FICCI delegation led by its President A Hasnat Khan will meet the Chairman of National Board of Revenue (NBR) today (Thursday) to apprise him of the critical difficulties which the business would face in the event of any 'hurried' moves for the enforcement of VAT.

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## Moral turpitude

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The Attorney General said, "The higher the offence the higher the responsibility." Deviation from such responsibility definitely construed an offence of moral turpitude he added and said, "the possession of illegal arms by ex-President H M Ershad is an act of gross irresponsibility."

He said, "In this context I am fairly firm in my conviction, that definitely such illegal possession of arms is an act of moral turpitude, though this view may not be acceptable to many and in the higher court."

On the other hand Defence Lawyer Advocate Strajul Haque categorically said that the case was not an act of moral turpitude and as such Ershad was not liable to cease being a member of Parliament.

Many legal experts opined that as there was no law to determine 'moral turpitude' the Parliament should make law to define it.

## Love for their Bangladeshi friends

BEIJING, June 19: Over 1,100 yuan was presented to visiting Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the Diaoyutai State Guest House here this afternoon, reports Xinhua.

This amount was collected by some 1,900 pupils of the China-Bangladesh Friendship School in Beijing when they pocket money.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, a little girl read that when they enjoyed International Children's Day on June 1 this year, "Her classmates could not help thinking about their little friends living in the cyclone-stricken areas of Bangladesh."

"In order to express their concern and friendship, every one of the pupils saved some of their pocket money to give to their friends", the girl said. She said that though the amount is small, it represents their feelings and love for their Bangladeshi friends.

Khaleda Zia shook hands with each of the seven representatives of the school, saying she hoped they would grow up quickly and healthily so as to make further contributions to promoting Bangladesh-China friendship.

## Power workers' strike ends

By Staff Correspondent

The 72-hour strike by the workers and employees of the Power Development Board (PDB) ended Wednesday morning. Different trade unions of PDB had called the strike to realise their five-point demands.

The strike caused widespread power disruptions in Dhaka city and elsewhere in the country and consumers had to suffer.

Some areas in the city remained without power for two days while production in the industrial areas was hampered due to power disruptions.

PDB sources said that power supply situation in the affected areas was brought back to normal yesterday.

## 30 hurt

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Rangpur Super Market when they were returning from DC office after submitting a memorandum demanding Ershad's release.

Before submitting the memorandum the JP held a rally at Shapia Chattar premises.

The groups blasted several crackers in Super Market areas and used lethal weapons. The JP workers allegedly brandished fire arms during the clash, witnesses said.

Police fired tear gas shells and rubber bullets to disperse the clashing groups.

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