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A conversation with Jyoti Basu by The Daily Star feature writer Rahat Fahmida in Calcutta

Najibullah yet to leave Kabul

Mujahideen fail to choose leader for takeover

KABUL, Apr 21: United Nations special envoy Benon Sevan said a Mujahideen government in Afghanistan was a possibility and he would leave Kabul today for peace talks outside the capital.

"The whole future of the people and the country is at stake", Sevan told reporters in his first public comments since he flew secretly to Kabul last Thursday after the attempted flight of deposed president Najibullah.

"If Afghans want to have a Mujahideen government this is their choice... there seems to be wide support for this idea", he said.

Mujahid factions Tuesday failed again to agree on a leader for an interim council to take over the government, but sources said they were considering a compromise candidate who might break the deadlock.

Afghanistan's acting President said today that his government was ready to transfer power to Mujahideen guerrillas surrounding Kabul.

Acting President Abdul Rahim Hatif told a news conference that the only problem was that the Mujahideen must unite and form a government to which power could be transferred.

"Our main objective is that a transfer of power should be peaceful," he said.

Hatif's news conference was his first since he was appointed following the overthrow of president Najibullah last Thursday.

Asked about a threat by hardline guerilla leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar to attack Kabul, Hatif said his government did not intend to hand over power to a single group within the fragmented Mujahideen.

Hekmatyar, an Islamic fundamentalist, is massing his forces, south of Kabul while his old enemy, Ahmad Masood, leads a powerful coalition of Mujahideen fighters and defecting government troops to the north.

Hekmatyar has threatened to attack Kabul on Sunday unless the government capitulates.

Hatif said the government had been forced to change its position because of the developing military and political situation.

"There is an overall proposal that an interim council of Mujahideen be formed," he said.

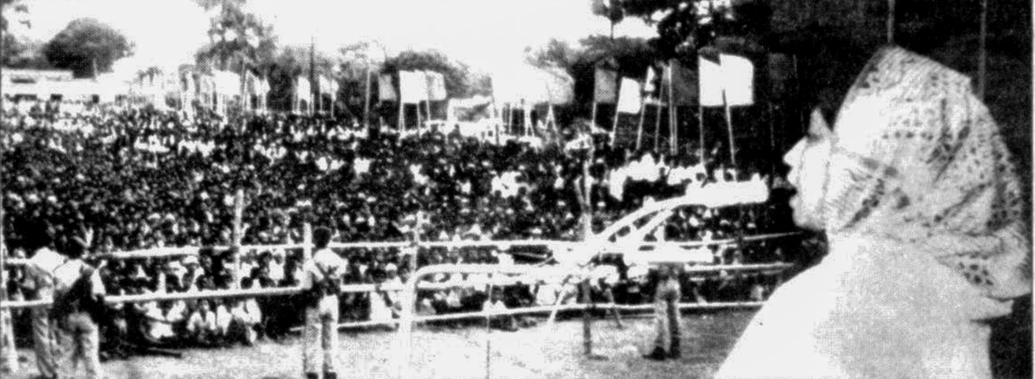
"In general our preference is that there be no confrontation, no bloodshed, that lives and property be secured," Hatif said, speaking in the presidential complex.

He said, he hoped the United Nations would continue to mediate.

Diplomats said Sevan's most urgent task was to make contact with Masood and avert a bloody confrontation with Hekmatyar's Hezb-Islami forces.

"Unfortunately the history of Afghanistan has been written in blood," Hatif said.

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Prime Minister Khaleda Zia addressing a public meeting Tuesday at Shaheed Manzur Stadium at Arahajar, Narayanganj. —PID photo

Certain quarter out to mislead nation: PM

ARAIHAZAR (Narayanganj), Apr 21: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said here today that a certain quarter which was conspiring to foil democracy at the instigation of its foreign masters could never be a friend of the people, reports BSS.

She said the vested quarter was trying to confuse the people and frustrate the ongoing development process on the basis of untenable issue to pull back the nation from becoming self-reliant.

The Prime Minister was addressing a big public meeting at the local Shaheed Manzur Stadium, Presided over by local BNP president Badruzzaman Khasru the meeting was addressed, among others, by Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Mirza Abbas, State Minister for Cultural Affairs Jahanara Begum, State Minister for Finance Mujibur Rahman, Dr Moin Khan MP, Abul Kalam MP, Ataur Rahman Khan MP and student leaders Fazlul Huq Milon and Shereen Akhtar.

Begum Zia said the people had to remain vigilant against the quarter which wanted to go to power in the past by joining hands with the autocrats in the 1986 elections.

The Prime Minister said the people had given mandate to them in the post liberation period and the quarter had created a history of misrule and oppression so the people later had rejected them.

Begum Zia said at the dictation of its foreign masters the quarter wanted to disrupt the process of self-reliance initiated by her government, because she said, in that event its politics would end in Bangladesh.

The Prime Minister said at present a congenial atmosphere has been created for making the country's economy stronger.

The foreign investors are also showing keen interest in investing capital in Bangladesh which would immensely help in rapid industrialisation of the country.

Begum Zia said, "we need national unity and integrity to achieve the target of self-reliance through implementing various development programmes. But unfortunately, Begum Zia said, the vested quarter was trying to divide and mislead the nation."

The Prime Minister said they were trying to overthrow present people's government through evil designs. She expressed her firm determination that all the evil efforts of the quarter would go in vein as her government had come to power with people's mandate.

While detailing her government's uplift programmes, the Prime Minister said, we need time and cooperation of the people to realise the dream of achieving self-reliance in every sector."

Begum Zia said her government was determined to see that all its developmental programmes were successful despite all hindrances.

The Prime Minister said the nine years of autocratic rule had left behind a legacy of destruction and plundering of national assets. The nationalist force was determined to take the nation on the path of development through national consensus.

She said there was no alternative to nationalist force which could bring prosperity for the nation. She said inshaallah, the people would again give mandate to the nationalist force in the next election for its achievement.

Dwelling on the local problems the Prime Minister said, the government would nationalise local Safar Ali College.

Later, the Prime Minister formally let the water flow in the Ramchandradit-Kallayandi canal which had been re-excavated under the government's canal digging programme.

Jamaat launches programme to press for Azam's release

By Staff Correspondent

Acting Amir of Jamaat-Islami Abbas Ali Khan on Tuesday said the "failure" in ruling the country brought the government of Bangladesh Nationalist Party to the street.

"I did never see in my 50 years of political life a Head of the Government leading a street procession," Khan said at a rally attended by several thousand of his supporters near Baitul Mukarram Mosque.

He said that the government failed to take action against the organisers of "illegal" people's court but on the other hand arrested Jamaat leader Golam Azam.

"There is no allegation of war crime against Golam Azam," the Acting Amir said adding that "his election as Amir made many of the so-called great leaders afraid, so they brought the charges of war crimes against him."

Khan said that BNP government marked the day of Ershad's "coup" by arresting Golam Azam on March 24, the date Ershad had grabbed power in 1982.

He demanded "immediate and unconditional" release of Jamaat chief.

The acting chief announced a 25-day programme of procession, rally, and public mobilisation to press home the

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SSC examinations begin today

Star Report

The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations 1992 will begin today (Wednesday) at 528 centres of the country under Dhaka, Comilla, Rajshahi and Jessore boards.

A total of 5,39,999 candidates are likely to appear at the examinations. Of them 1,74,384 will sit for the exam from Dhaka Board, 1,25,049 from Rajshahi Board, 1,34,274 from Comilla Board and 1,06,292 from Jessore Board.

A new system of examination will be adopted in this year's SSC examination. The candidates will have to answer objective type questions in the new examination system besides broad type questions of the previous system in all the subjects excepting general mathematics and higher mathematics. The distribution of marks for both broad type questions and objective type questions will be equal.

The students will have to answer the objective type questions in separate answer-sheets, the answer-sheets of such questions will contain both questions and four alternative answers to the questions. The students will have to choose the right answers and put tick mark on them.

Meanwhile, adequate security measures have been taken by the Education Ministry, Board Authorities and the District and Upazila Administration, to ensure peaceful holding of the examinations.

Section 144 will be imposed within 200 yards of the examination centres and any person, not concerned with the examinations will not be allowed to enter into the centres.

A provision of highest two years imprisonment with fine has been made against the outsiders.

Strict legal and punitive measures will be taken against person or persons for showing laxity in the conduct of the examination. A provision of awarding four years imprisonment including fine has been made against any one found guilty of helping candidates to indulge in corrupt practices.

If corrupt practices take place in any centre for laxity in the conduct of the examination, that centre will be cancelled. If any invigilator neglects his responsibility and helps copying, various punitive measures including stopping his government grant will be taken.

Eating or drinking of anything other than water has been prohibited in the examination halls. A fine of Tk 50 will be imposed for the violation of this provision for the first time. Repetition of this provision by a candidate will result in the cancellation of the examination for the fixed date and time. Looking around and talking to others in the hall will invite the same punishment.

If any candidate resorts to impersonation, his examination for the year will be cancelled and he will not be permitted to appear in the examination for consecutive three years.

Various punitive measures have been made for offences like misbehaviour, attack, keeping of unauthorised papers, intimidation, etc.

Powerful vigilance teams have also been formed at district and upazila levels to check adoption of unfair means in the examinations.

Our correspondent from Jessore adds, the SSC examinations under Jessore Board will be held at 105 centres in 16 districts of the region.

Out of the total 1,06,292

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Myanmar FM arrives tomorrow

Myanmar Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaaw will arrive here on April 23 on a six-day official visit to discuss the repatriation of the Rohingya Muslim refugees, reports BSS.

Gyaaw who will lead a 14-member delegation, which includes Information Minister Brigadier General Myo Thant as alternate leader, will arrive here in response to the invitation of Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman.

Rahman will receive the Myanmar Foreign Minister at the 21a International Airport.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister had been to Yangon in November last year to discuss the refugee issue with his counterpart there.

Both the sides will meet for formal discussion of the issue on April 24 for the 'safe and dignified return of over 262,000 refugees,' according to an official source.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Office is learnt to have handed over lists of 122,123 Myanmar refugees to the Myanmar Embassy in Dhaka.

Additional lists of at least 45,000 refugees are expected to be handed over to the embassy today, the source said.

Azam's writ HC allows govt 2 weeks for reply

A High Court Division Bench Tuesday allowed two weeks time to the government for filing affidavit-in-opposition (reply) of Prof Golam Azam's writ petition challenging his detention, reports BSS.

The writ petition filed by Prof Golam Azam challenging the order of detention against him came up for hearing before a High Court Division Bench comprising Justice

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Nation won't tolerate action against trial body: Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief, Sheikh Hasina, condemned the government action against the organisers of the public trial of Golam Azam Tuesday, saying "it is one of the heinous events in the history of the nation."

Speaking at the publication ceremony of the "Bose Professor," Dr Abdul Matin Chowdhury, memorial book at the National Museum auditorium yesterday evening, she said, "The nation will not tolerate such injustice to the 24 respected citizens of the country."

Presided over by poet Begum Sufia Kamal, the function was also addressed by Prof Kabir Chowdhury, Justice K M Subhan, Dr Shamsul Huq, Dr Anisuzzaman, Syed Ahmed Hossain, Dr S A Malek, Abdul Matin and Nazma Chowdhury.

Hasina, the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, said that the government had failed to take any action against Golam Azam.

Instead, the present government had filed 'framed' cases against those who protested the war crimes of Azam, she said.

The time has come now to unitedly resist the anti-liberation forces in the country," she added.

Paying tributes to the memory of the late Bose Professor, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Hasina said his teachings would lead the country's people to achieve their desired goal.

Prof Kabir Chowdhury of Dhaka University said that the restoration of the lofty ideals of the War of Independence was not possible without 'political elimination' of the killers of the Liberation War.

The trial of Azam was possible within the framework of the International Crimes Tribunal Act. He said adding that conspiracies were being hatched in the country to consolidate autocracy in the country.

Justice K M Subhan, said the government should try Azam because the trial was demanded by the people of the country.

He resented the statements of some ruling party leaders supporting Golam Azam, and pointed out that the so-called Agartala Conspiracy Case brought about the fall of the then Pakistan regime.

Other speakers at the publication ceremony recalled the glorious role of Dr Abdul Matin Chowdhury in upholding the ideals of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

UNICEF executive director arrives Apr 29

By Sohail Manzur

Executive Director of UNICEF James P Grant is likely to arrive in Dhaka on April 29 on a three-day visit to Bangladesh, according to a Foreign Office source.

During the visit Grant will have separate meetings with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman and Education Minister Jamiruddin Strair.

The main focus of the discussions will be on universal primary education (UPE) programme that the government had launched from January, 1992, the source says.

The UNICEF chief will review the progress of the projects in Bangladesh and will also look into the prospects of some new projects related to education, primary health care and nutrition and rights of children and women, the source adds.

He will also visit some of the UNICEF-funded projects during his stay. He is scheduled to leave the country on May 2.

Bangladesh is the second largest recipient of the UNICEF funds and the organisation has initiated diversified programmes in the country.

According to the UNICEF Annual Report, 1991, there is an investment of 65 million

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Next round Mideast talks in Rome

WASHINGTON, Apr 21: The sixth round of Middle East peace talks will be held in Rome, the State Department said in a statement today.

Washington was in contact with its co-sponsor of the peace talks, Moscow, to set a date for the Rome meeting, the statement added.

Secretary of State James Baker had agreed with his Italian counterpart Gianni de Michelis today that the sixth session would be held in Rome, a site the State Department said was acceptable to all sides.

AFP says: Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa has said peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours cannot be fully achieved without the creation of a Palestinian state.

Moussa, in an interview with the United Arab Emirates daily Al-Wahda appearing today, also urged Arabs to avoid confrontation with a vastly-changed international order dominated by the United States.

"A comprehensive peace could not be realised in the absence of a just solution to the Palestinian problem," he said.

"Such a solution must be based on international legitimacy, represented in United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, including self-determination for Palestinians and the establishment of a state on their national soil."

Israel adamantly objects to a Palestinian state, seeing it as a threat to its security, and has instead offered limited autonomy on its two occupied territories, the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Moussa, currently on a Gulf tour, urged the 21 members of the Arab League to patch up their differences to face the 'new world order.'

"I can say that Arab consensus is the only way to deal with the new world order," he said, 'safeguarding Arab interests requires dealing with this order according to the new concepts and practices prevailing today instead of entering into confrontation with it.'

Meanwhile, is Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has been officially nominated for the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize by the Speaker of parliament in Jerusalem.

Doy Shilansky told correspondents today that he had submitted Shamir's name after receiving an application from the prize committee in Oslo.

"I immediately thought of the Prime Minister because he is among those who have contributed most to peace over the past few years through his ideas, his initiatives, his courage and his determination."

Shilansky said his suggestion had been accepted by the committee and that Shamir 'now figures officially among the 130 candidates for the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize, which will be announced in October.'

Related story on Page 5.

BSC'S dilemma over worn-out tanker on

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Apr 21: The Bahama flag carrying oil tanker T T Energy carrying about one lakh ton of crude oil for the Chittagong Eastern Refinery from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is mysteriously lying in anchor in the Bay of Bengal beyond the territorial waters of Bangladesh instead of heading for the Chittagong Port, sources said.

As a result, the drama centering this worn-out tanker chartered by the Bangladesh Shipping Corporation has not yet ended even two months after its scheduled arrival making the 60 crore taka crude consignment uncertain.

When contacted the General Manager (Chartering) of the Bangladesh Shipping Corporation said that the tanker was in the Bay instead of entering Chittagong Port following a dispute over freight payment.

The owner of the tanker is demanding advance payment for the freight fearing a deduction in compensation for the tanker's delay from the freight bill by the charterer, the General Manager added.

The tanker's journey to Chittagong Port was stopped by the owner at outer anchorage in a bid to obtain a guarantee of full freight payment without any claim of compensation.

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US team due today

A two-member US delegation will arrive in Dhaka today on a four-day visit to observe the situation of Rohingya refugees, says a Foreign Office source, reports BSS.

Led by Eric Schwartz, Staff Consultant to the Asia and Pacific Sub-Committee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the delegation is expected to call on Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman on April 23.

James McCormick, Staff Consultant, Sub-Committee Minority Staff, is the other member of the team.

They will also call on Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury.

The delegation members will visit refugee camps in Cox's Bazar on April 23 and return to Dhaka on April 24, the source said. The delegation will leave Dhaka on April 25.

Lions Club Eid Reunion today

Lions Club of Dhaka Progot has arranged an "Eid Reunion" at 7 pm today at the Dhaka Club premises, reports UNB.

Lenin's birthday observed

The 122nd birth anniversary of V I Lenin, the founder of socialism in the erstwhile Soviet Union, was observed here Tuesday through a discussion with various speakers commenting that the prospects of communism were not bleak even after its fall in Eastern Europe, reports BSS.

Krishak Dal meet tomorrow

An emergency meeting of the president and members of the secretariat of the central committee of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Krishak Dal will be held on April 23 at 5 pm at the central office of BNP, said a press release yesterday, reports BSS.

IJO session begins Apr 25

The 17th session of the International Jute Organisation Committee on Projects will begin here from Saturday next. The three-day session will be followed by a meeting of the International Jute Council (IJO), a press release said here Tuesday, reports UNB.

NEWS BRIEFS