

Sirajganj Nirmul body ultimatum to govt

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 22 - Ghatak-Dalal Nirmul Committee in a protest meeting today urged the authorities to release the 28 detainees on an October 28 deadline for release of its 10 leaders detained on charge of murdering a Jamaat leader, reports UNB.

Speakers at the meeting at the Railway Bazar square this evening urged the committee would launch a vigorous agitation, including rallies, meetings, demonstrations at the DC office and hartal, if their demand is not met by October 28.

The Nirmul Committee leaders alleged that many among the detainees were not present on the spot of the clash where Kashem was killed.

CPB general secretary Ismail Hossain was with Binupada Halder, Executive Engineer of the Water Development Board, while BSD convenor Siraj Bhutyan was in Tangail attending a function on May 13, the day of clash, they said.

Tangail college poll row

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The Opposition MP in his adjournment motion alleged that the minister presided over the violent activities after Wednesday's student union elections of the Saadat University College at Tangail.

He charged that the minister "provoked and instigated" violence marked by cracker blasts till 2 am early Thursday and used his authority to withhold the announcement of results.

The Awami League's student front won the elections.

The AL MP said that it was not really desirable that the MPs and the ministers should intervene in affairs like students' union elections of a college.

The minister, while denying the allegations, refuted the AL leader's contention saying: "I'm a member of a political party... I've got every right to move around anywhere... and do and say whatever sensible".

Khan claimed that he rather helped bring the situation under control by asking the DC and SP to intervene.

As Chowdhury was accusing the minister of abusing his father, the late Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury, a former president and chief justice, the Deputy Speaker tried to soothe agitated MP: "Bring it as a notice and I assure you it will come up for discussions in the House."

Bhola by-election

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Mymensingh-3 by-election was a little different from the Rajbari poll. Here, the number of candidates came down to 4 from 9 of last year, but the turn out of voters increased to 91,805 from 85,814 in the previous poll.

AL could retain this seat with the victory of its candidate Rawshanara Begum, the widow of late MP Nazrul Islam. Awami League had to face hurdles to win since the ruling party threw all its strength to snatch the seat.

Rawshanara got 33,368 which was only 5 thousand more than the votes polled by her husband last year. The AL candidate got 36.34 per cent of the total votes while the percentage was 32.73 last year.

BNP's Nazmul Huda, who contested again this year for Mymensingh seat, improved his position a lot. His votes increased to 31,303 from 18,127 in last election. The BNP candidate bagged 34.09 per cent of the votes this year while it was only 21.12 per cent last time.

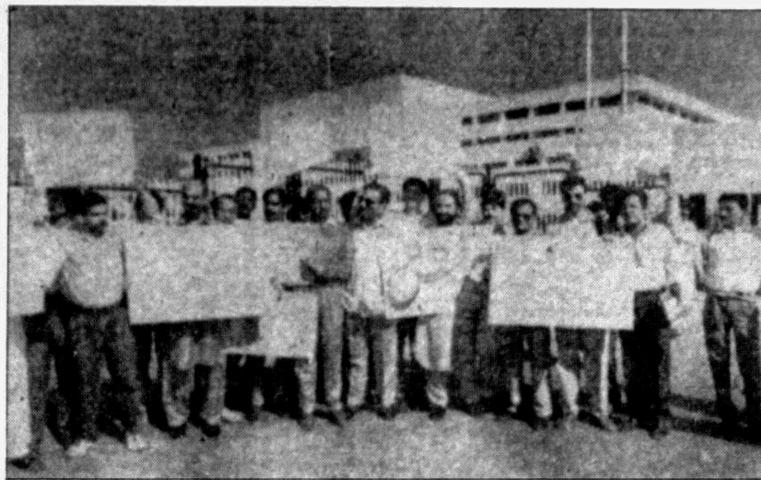
Jatiya Party's Nurul Amin Khan Pathan also did well in the by-election getting 26,791 votes, two thousand more than he got in general election.

Now, after the announcement of by-election schedule for Bhola-4, the leaderships of both AL and BNP are taking the poll seriously. Retaining Bhola-4 seat is a prestige issue for AL, while, for the ruling party, winning it would mean increasing the party's strength in Parliament and the BNP would spare no chance to clinch it. Both the parties have started looking for the best candidates for the by-election for which nominations will be filed on 9 November.

In 1991 general election, AL's Principal Nazrul Islam was elected from Bhola-4 securing 32,719 votes. His nearest rival was Jatiya Party's Nazim Rahman who got 21,638. BNP's Amirul Ekram stood third with only 9,110 votes.

After the last general elections, 14 by-elections have been held so far. In these by-elections, BNP could retain 4 seats vacated by Begum Khaleda Zia and one by Abdur Rahman Biswas and won Bhola-2 vacated by Awami League's Tofael Ahmed. Awami League and Jatiya Party could retain four each.

With the results of two recent by-elections and joining of two Independent MPs to BNP, the strength of parties in the 330-seat Parliament stands at: BNP-172, AL-91, JP-35, Jamaat-20, CPB-5, NAP-1, Ganatantri Party-1, JSD-1, Workers Party-1, NDP-1, IOJ-1.



Press photographers and journalists carrying placards demonstrate in front of Parliament House Thursday to protest against the Islamabad police for allegedly beating up some press photographers last week. — AFP photo

FM reschedules visits to SAARC states

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman has rescheduled his visits to four SAARC countries because of his preoccupation in the Jatiya Sangsad.

"The visits will take place shortly," the Foreign Minister told BSS.

It was learnt that the itinerary of the Foreign Minister's visits to Pakistan, India, Nepal and Bhutan is being rescheduled.

The visits were meant to hand over the letters of invitation from Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia to heads of state or government of those countries for attending the next SAARC Summit in Dhaka in December next.

Nazrul Islam to join Ghana poll observer team

The Commonwealth Secretary General has invited former Foreign Secretary and Ambassador of Bangladesh Nazrul Islam to join the observer group for monitoring the election schedule to be held in Ghana on November 3, official sources in Dhaka yesterday said, reports BSS.

The composition of the observer group led by Sir Ellis Clarke, OCMG, Chairman, former President of Trinidad and Tobago is Clive Griffiths, Deputy Chairman, Chairman of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and member of the legislative assembly, western Australia, Demetris Eliades, member of parliament, Cyprus, Hon Anthony Friedlander, former Cabinet Minister, New Zealand, Dr Dinath Gajadhar, Deputy Chief Election Commissioner, Trinidad and Tobago, A K Nazrul Islam, former Foreign Secretary, Bangladesh, M M Maturae, member of parliament, Zimbabwe, Bennie Mwitima, member of parliament, Zambia, Terry Patchett, member of parliament, Britain, Mrs Nahau Ronney, member of parliament and former Attorney General, Papua New Guinea, Hon Keerte Coomarr Rubeck, Minister for Civil Service Affairs and Employment, Mauritius, K Natwar Singh, former Minister of State for External Affairs, India, Josefs Tubanuku, member of parliament and Leader of the Opposition Solomon Islands.

The Commonwealth Secretary General will brief the observer group in London on October 24 and thereafter they will leave for Ghana.

Polytechnic teachers call off strike

The leaders of Bangladesh Polytechnic Teachers Association have withdrawn their strike programme following a fruitful discussion with Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar here yesterday, reports BSS.

The leaders of the association apprised the minister of various problems of the polytechnic teachers. They were informed that the government has already promoted about one hundred junior instructors to the post of instructors and finalised the recruitment rules for BCS (Education, Technical) cadre.

It was also pointed out that steps will be taken soon for promotion of some teachers to the posts of chief instructors and regularisation of ad hoc teachers and payment of honorarium for double shifts in the polytechnic institutes.

The Education Minister directed the concerned officials to pay stipends to the students without further delay.

Four resolutions

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A good reputation and had been recommended by the district administration officials.

A total of 10 amendment motions on the resolution was moved seeking nationalisation of all high schools and colleges in the country within the next three to five years.

The amendment motions moved by the AL, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami members all supported the resolution and urged for its passage in the House.

Outlining the government's education policy, Minister for Education Jamiruddin Sircar said plans were already underway to nationalise one high school and a college in every thana of the country.

He said that nationalisation of the schools were likely to be completed this year while the colleges would be completed by next year.

He told the opposition member that if the proposed school and college fell in that category and met all criteria they would be nationalised.

When the Deputy Speaker asked the member if he would like to withdraw the resolution, he said he would be willing to do so if the minister gave him a personal assurance.

The minister repeated his earlier statement but the member refused to withdraw his resolution.

WB-prescribed reforms

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known as believers of free economy, expressed scepticism about capability of the private sector to take over the economy from the government control.

The only representative of private sector, Mohammad Yunus, President of the Dhaka Chamber, appeared embarrassed to hear Prof Muzaffar Ahmed, late President Zia's Adviser, saying he had sacked a leading entrepreneur, now a minister, from the post of executive director of a nationalised mill on charge of defaulting about Tk 3 crore in 1976.

Managing Director of the Bangladesh Shilpa Bank (BSB) Abdul Karim echoed Muzaffar, saying "the same undeserving entrepreneurs" are again coming for loan because of the latest softer stance of the government about the defaulters.

"Credit cannot alone make the economy strong efficiency and honest entrepreneurship count more," he said.

Participants, including Finance Minister Saifur Rahman who chaired a session on Industrial Deregulation, were almost of the common view that economy is hardly responding to series of radical policy reforms.

"There is no shortage of capital whatsoever... even we assured them the government will give you credit, if not banks, but there is hardly any response as yet from entrepreneurs. Hundreds of sick industry walls are sitting idle with the hope the government will bail them out," said the Finance Minister.

Prof Rehman Sobhan said private investment had declined in real terms throughout the 1980s, "the golden era of privatisation."

He cautioned industrial deformity in the country's industrial sector was emerging as the government almost stopped investment in big ventures hoping that the private sector would do the job, but the later had desperately failed.

Scepticism was aired off and on by the economists and bureaucrats about the economic feasibility of government's all-out drive towards privatisation.

Dr Binayak Sen of BIDS disclosed a survey findings that out of 400 disinvested industrial units during the first and second rounds of privatisation in Bangladesh, about one-third were found non-existent and only a quarter running with modest profit.

The aggregate repayment performance of private sector borrowers of the DFIs was dismally poor — less than 10 per cent — in 1990-91, he said.

Given the poor track record of privatisation, Dr Sen questioned the logic behind further privatisation of potentially profitable state-owned enterprises like Kohinoor Chemicals, National Tubes and Osmania Glass Factory.

Saifur Rahman defended: the dismal scenario is not because of the concept of denationalisation but of the manner the privatisation was done earlier.

The Finance Minister also agreed with a number of speakers that frequent exchange rate depreciation is not helping increase export and rather creating various problems in the economy, such as loan default.

World Bank Resident Mission Chief Christopher Willoughby made an effort to rationalise the public impression about the Bank in Bangladesh. "The World Bank is perceived as too influential or even dictatorial. But I need to hardly remind that the bank is a cooperative, owned and directed by its member countries including Bangladesh."

Dhaka's call to strengthen UN

NEW YORK, Oct 22: Ambassador Humayun Kabir, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, has called for strengthening the role of the world organisation, reports BSS.

Addressing the UN current General Assembly session yesterday Kabir said that forty-seven years ago the UN emerged from the ashes of the World War II to strive for a world based on peace and security for all nations.

To achieve its objectives of world-wide peace and security the United Nations needs to undertake new initiatives and find innovative remedies, Kabir said and observed that a wind of freedom and democracy was at present sweeping across the world and the opportunity should not be allowed to fade in oblivion.

Kabir further said that the composition of the Security Council should reflect the present-day realities in the aftermath of the fast-paced changes in recent years and serious consideration be applied to review the concept of actual enlargement of the Security Council with an objective to make it more effective and responsive to the new challenges and realities. Towards this end we may ponder, he maintained.

The ways and means of balancing in a realistic way should be there to ensure the dictates of veto power make Security Council actions more transparent, he held.

Kabir lauded the Secretary General's report on 'An Agenda for Peace' on the work of the organization and termed it as a timely document.

He also welcomed the Secretary General's views on regional organisations' role in securing and maintaining peace and security.

Quinine

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The malignant type of malaria. The malignant type of malaria is found especially in the north-east, eastern and south-eastern border areas (Chittagong Hill Tracts) of Bangladesh, the WHO representative revealed.

Quinine is not the only medicine for the treatment of malaria.

The treatment: Aloysundere said, for the malignant type of malaria is with a combination of four aminoquinolines and eight aminoquinolones. The treatment for adults is with Chloroquine and Primaquine over a period of five days, he said.

But, if the malignant malaria species is sensitive, it is treated with a combination of Chloroquine and Primaquine for three days.

However, special tests carried out in Bangladesh have mapped out areas of malignant malaria resistant pockets to some of the known drugs, the WHO representative said.

The epidemiological data received from January to May 1992 revealed that out of five lakh 96,335 blood tests only 18,463 persons were found to have malarial germs.

Among them, 10,014 malignant malarial patients. The percentage of such patients was 54.24, mostly from Chittagong Division; which is considered a high risk area for malaria.

However the tribal people in the hill tracts or the people living here for a long period develop resistance to malarial germs, Dr Aloysundere said, this resistance develops with repeated attacks of malaria. As soon as the malaria resistant person goes to a malaria-free zone, the resistance level begins to drop, he said.

Kashmir

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any challenge although we are not expecting much trouble' added Hafiz Akhter, another police official in charge of the troubled Kashmir valley.

In New Delhi, chief government spokesman S Narendra called the proposed march 'an avoidable escalation of tension' between India and Pakistan, but said New Delhi did not anticipate a conflict between the two armies Saturday.

"But it depends on what the other side does," he added.

Indian authorities gave no details about troops movements on the LAC, but police sources here said New Delhi had considerably beefed up security all over the winding, mountainous border.

Meanwhile a policy-making panel of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's Indian cabinet met today to review the situation on the Kashmir border.

National television said the cabinet committee on political affairs, chaired by Rao, discussed steps taken by authorities to guard the Line of Actual Control (LAC), against the march scheduled for Saturday.

The television, however, did not provide further details.

The Midnight File

Liquidation settlement for BCCI creditors

LUXEMBOURG, Oct 22: Luxembourg's District Court on Thursday approved a liquidation settlement for creditors of the failed Bank of Credit and Commerce International, ending more than a year of negotiations, court hearings and fears of some 250,000 creditors in 40 countries. "The tribunal approves the contribution agreement," Presiding Judge Maysee Welter told the court. Under the agreement, the bank's major shareholders in Abu Dhabi must pitch in 1.7 billion to reimburse BCCI depositors and creditors between 30 cents and 40 cents on the dollar, reports AP.

Togolese troops storm parliament

LOME, Oct 22: Togolese troops today stormed into the Lome Congress Building where the transitional parliament was in session and took some 50 hostages, including three government ministers, reports AP.

Para 11 of joint communique encouraged 'push back': JP

Jatiya Party leader Barrister Moudud Ahmed yesterday said the government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia did a mistake by including Article 11 in the joint communique signed by Bangladesh and India on May 18, reports UNB.

"This had paved the way for India's launching the 'Push Back' drive," he said while addressing a rally of Jatiya Juba Sanghati at Tongi Board Bazar Thursday afternoon.

The rally was organised demanding release of party chairman H M Ershad.

Moudud said the BNP government had pushed the country towards a dangerous position by signing the communique that included Article 11 and urged all to be vigilant against the push in of Indian citizens to Bangladesh.

5.5 lakh cases pending

Some 5,42,660 cases are pending in different courts of the country, State Minister for Law and Justice Barrister Aminul Haq told parliament yesterday, reports UNB.

Of the total, 1,18,401 cases are pending in magistrate courts, 1,46,077 in sub-judge courts, 2,29,443 in judge courts, 48,149 in the High Court division and 660 in the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

One killed, 15 hurt in bus collision at Tongi

From Our Correspondent

GAZIPUR, Oct 22: Two buses collided at Tongi Bazar Bus Stand here this morning killing a cyclist on the spot and injuring 15 passengers of the buses.

Abdul Aleem, a guard of Janata Bank Tongi Branch, died instantly when a staff bus of Bangladesh Shilpa Bank hit a Bhuapur-bound bus from between. Aleem was trapped in between the buses.

Travel Agents

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drawal of VAT on their commission earnings from the airlines.

The press conference was addressed by ATAB President Dr. H B M Iqbal, among others, acting general secretary Abul Khair, vice-president M N Islam, cultural secretary Yunus Chowdhury were present.

The ATAB leaders mentioned that the national carrier Bangladesh Biman would be affected if the travel agents' strike continues. They claimed that the agents provide 99 per cent business to Biman and more than 80 per cent manpower recruitment are handled by travel agents.

'দি ডেইলী স্টার' পত্রিকার সম্মানিত এজেন্টদের প্রতি আবেদন

আমরা অত্যন্ত দুঃখের সঙ্গে লক্ষ্য করছি যে, উপস্থাপিত তাগাদা দেয়ার পরও আমাদের কোন কোন সম্মানিত এজেন্ট অদ্যাবধি বকেয়া বিল পরিশোধ করেননি।

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— কর্তৃপক্ষ
দি ডেইলী স্টার

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