

## Badruddoza for making best use of JS time

Deputy Leader of the House Professor A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury last night pleaded for formulation of a very distinct system for raising point of order to make the best use of the precious time of session, reports BSS.

Prof Chowdhury referred to the very frequent overflooding of points of order in the House and suggested formulation of a very clear-cut method of raising point of order so that no one could waste the valuable time of session.

The Deputy Leader of the House took the floor when the proceedings of the House were blocked by the flood of points of order mostly raised by the opposition members on the very first day of the autumn session. Professor Chowdhury also suggested that the chair must formulate such a system for smooth functioning of the House.

Professor Chowdhury drew the attention of the Chair to the relevant rule for raising point of order as per rules of procedure saying a point of order shall relate to the interpretation or enforcement of these rules or such articles of the Constitution to regulate the business of the House and may be raised in relation to the business before the House at the moment.

But he regretted that the rules were not followed rather some members were found making long statements without formulating the point. Such a practice was misleading the members on the application of the point of order.

The Acting Leader of the

Opposition Abdus Samad Azad supported the contention of Chowdhury. However, Azad wanted to know the fate of the committee which was formed two years ago to deal with terrorism on the campus.

Earlier Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman said that frequent and irrelevant points of order, being raised by certain members, were interrupting the scheduled agenda of the House. Moreover, he said it was unbearable that certain members would make hour long statements in the name of points of order forcing the members to listen to them. "The Jatiya Sangsad is run at the cost of public money." We must make the best use of the Sangsad as well as the public fund.

Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mian referred to the application and practice of points of order in different parliaments and said the House must adopt a specific rule to deal with points of order.

Awami League member Tofael Ahmed in reply to the Works Minister defended that points of order were being practised by different parliaments all over the world.

Ahmed, raising on a point of order, supported the contention of fellow AL member K M Jahangir and wanted to know the fate of the committee to remove terrorism from the campus. He said the government had constituted the committee with the Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz as the chairman.

## Tofael irks Speaker

By Staff Correspondent

Parliament yesterday witnessed a short but heated exchange between Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali and Awami League MP Tofael Ahmed on the fate of the investigation into the alleged corruption in the Irrigation and Flood Control Ministry.

The debate began when Tofael Ahmed, who brought allegations of malpractice against the ministry and the minister concerned, yesterday expressed apprehension about the fate of the parliamentary probe into the charges.

During the exchange, the Speaker informed the House that the probe body will meet on Tuesday and continue meeting every day until it finalises the terms of reference for the investigation.

The 15-member body, headed by the Speaker himself, was formed during the budget session and the committee has so far met four times to discuss its terms.

Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali at first tried to prevent Tofael from making any comment on the issue, arguing that the mat-

ter was under consideration of the committee concerned and it would not be proper on the part of Tofael to express any apprehension.

Explaining the delay, the Speaker said he had been sick and needed surgery abroad. The Speaker then assured the AL legislator that the committee would resume functioning very soon.

But Tofael, apparently unconvinced by the Speaker's assurances, insisted on accusing the ruling party representatives in the committee for the delay. He also said the people had already been confused about the fate of the investigation and had started questioning the silence of the committee members.

At this stage a visibly annoyed Speaker told Tofael that there should be no doubt about the seriousness of the committee.

He also said, "You know very well I did not want to be the chairman of the committee because of my illness and now you are accusing me for the delay."

## Palestinian autonomy

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tended by hundreds of dignitaries.

Christopher said it was of tremendous symbolic value that Rabin and Arafat be present at the signing of the document.

"It's very important that both (Arafat and Rabin) are going to be here. With respect to Mr Arafat it really puts him on the line. He's out there before the entire world, committing to this agreement," Christopher added.

As he left North Africa, Arafat's moderate Fatah group was under severe criticism from hardline Arab groups of every stripe, but he defended the accord as a step on the road to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Lebanon's pro-Iranian Hizbollah, the group that held dozens of Americans hostage, demanded Palestinians wreck the pact, warning that by selling out Palestine it was robbing militants of the heart of their cause.

A representative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-OC) told a rally in Tyre, in southern Lebanon, that Arafat was a traitor and Jewish spy.

But Arafat was confident of his position as he stepped into a Boeing 707 for the flight to Washington, a city he has never visited.

"It is a historical, very important moment and it is a step on the right road leading to a Palestinian state," he said. "We hope to achieve very soon real peace and just peace in the land of peace."

Rabin tried to assure his critics, who were alarmed last week when Arafat said a Palestinian flag would someday fly over Jerusalem.

"I assure chairman Arafat

that the Palestinian flag will not be over Jerusalem. Jerusalem will remain always united under Israel's sovereignty and our capital forever. The capital of Israel. He can forget about it."

But Arafat remarked that 'Jerusalem ... God willing' would become the capital of an independent Palestine.

Earlier, Israel's Cabinet on Sunday unanimously approved Rabin's recognition of the PLO, hours before Rabin was to leave for Washington.

### Hasina hails PLO, Israel

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her 'great satisfaction' over the mutual recognition by PLO and Israel and expressed the hope that this would lead to self-determination of the Palestinian people, reports BSS.

In a statement issued to the press yesterday, Sheikh Hasina said the signing of the accord on mutual recognition 'marks a historic first step which will no doubt pave the way for the achievement of the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people.'

She congratulated the PLO Chairman, Yasser Arafat, for achieving a 'significant breakthrough in untangling this long standing and complex problem'. The Awami League chief, however, opined that durable peace and stability could return to the region only on the basis of a comprehensive settlement which is yet to be achieved.

Referring to Bangladesh's close association with the Palestinian people, Sheikh Hasina said that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had expressed solidarity with the Palestinian people.

Editor: S. M. Ali  
Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz addressing the Jatiya Sangsad session yesterday. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and some of her cabinet colleagues are also seen. — PID photo

## JS: Opposition slates delay

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took the floor to seek a fresh deadline of thirty days to decide on the bill seeking separation of the judiciary from the administration. Halder, sought time on behalf of AL legislator Salaudun Yousuf who moved the bill in the House in 1991.

Yousuf was not present in the House yesterday.

The Law Minister, while giving his consent to the appeal for a fresh deadline, told the chair that he actually wanted to resolve the problem within the next 15 days. "Although the Opposition members frequently blame me for the delay, the committee members representing the Opposition usually do not attend the meetings," Hafiz said.

Suranjit Sengupta, of the Ganatantri Party, who is also a member of the concerned committee, took the floor at this point to protest the Law Minister's version.

Sengupta told the House that it was not true that the absence of a quorum that had delayed preparation of a report; rather it was the lack of political will of the government, especially that of the Law Minister, which had virtually rendered the committee ineffective.

In a bid to substantiate his accusations, Sengupta said there was no legal or technical difficulty in placing the Indemnity Ordinance (Repeal)

Bill in the House. It was a question of political decision, whether the ruling BNP wanted the bill to be passed or not. And the BNP is yet to take a decision on the issue, he said.

The Ganatantri Party MP, referring to the Parliament secretariat bill, also said that the Privilege Committee, comprising members of both benches, had unanimously approved the proposed law but the Law Minister was yet to release the bill for consideration by the House.

Rashed Khan Menon of the Workers' Party and Shajahan Siraj, MP, also criticised Mirza Hafiz and felt that the bills should now be placed in the House, without any committee decision, for consideration. "There should be no more delay. Let the House decide the fate of the unresolved bills," they told the chair.

Sheikh Ansar Ali of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh also supported the views of the WP and GP MPs and further accused the Law Minister of reluctance to release the Jamaat-sponsored bill relating to national-level elections under a caretaker government.

The minister, while replying to the Opposition charges, said, he was yet to introduce the Parliament secretariat bill due to the objection of Finance Minister Saifur Rahman and Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah. Explaining the

situation he said, the implementation of the Parliament secretariat bill involved a lot of money from the public exchequer and hence the Finance Minister's reservations about the passage of the bill.

On the question of the Jamaat-sponsored bill, the Law Minister informed the House that he had nothing to do with the delay of releasing the bill. "It was a finance bill which requires approval of the President before being placed in the House for consideration," the minister said, adding, the bill was awaiting the President's approval.

Mirza Hafiz did not make any comment on the Indemnity Ordinance (Repeal) Bill.

Sheikh Fazul Karim Selim and Tofael Ahmed of the Awami League clearly expressed their lack of confidence in the Law Minister and sought intervention of the Speaker and the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister and Leader of the House Begum Khaleda Zia was present in the House during the debate but abstained from making any comment on the issue.

Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali allowed a fresh deadline of one month for the parliamentary committee on the bill for separation of the judiciary.

The House was adjourned at 8:35 last night to resume again at 4:30 this afternoon.

## Kurdish rebels

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The latest hostages were taken Saturday from a bus at Buglan Pass some 625 miles (1,000 kilometres) east of Ankara, an official said in Diyarbakir, regional capital of the southeast.

The Kurdish group kidnapped two Germans, two Italians, two Swiss and a New Zealander on Mount Ararat last month.

## BSC incurs Tk 154.24 cr loss in 20 years

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) has incurred a loss of Tk 154.24 crore from 1971-72 till June 30 last year, State Minister for Shipping Harun Al-Rashid informed Parliament yesterday.

Replying to a question from Abdul Awal Miah of the Awami League, the minister said inconsistency in loan and equity, increased expenditure, a wrong decision in purchasing four ships during the past government, and abnormal fluctuation in foreign exchange rates are the major causes for the loss.

In reply to another question, the minister said the state-owned BSC had become a losing concern since 1985-86 and had failed to provide debenture to its shareholders.

Abdul Awal Miah said that some 25 lakh shareholders who have invested more than nine crore taka in the BSC are being deprived of benefits because of the huge losses.

The minister said the present government has taken stern action against some of the corrupt officials and employees and the situation has improved with the rise of the share price from Tk 30 to Tk 60 for every 100 taka share in the last two years.

## AL woos support for scrapping anti-terrorism law

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League yesterday opened dialogue with other opposition parties for a combined move inside the Jatiya Sangsad to demand scrapping of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

Some top leaders of the AL met with Jatiya Party, Workers' Party and Ganatantri Party, members of Parliament at the office of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The meeting was attended by Abdus Samad Azad, Mohammad Nasim, Tofael Ahmed and Munirul Haque Chowdhury of the JP, Rashed Khan Menon of the Workers' Party and Suranjit Sengupta of the Ganatantri Party.

Discussions centred around common strategies of the parliamentary Opposition to back up the Anti-Terrorism Act (Repeal) Bill, submitted to the Parliament secretariat by K M Jahangir of the AL recently.

They decided to hold further talks with other opposition parties, including the Jamaat

## Varsity teachers' token hunger strike today

By DU Correspondent

The teachers of the country's seven universities will observe token hunger strike at the Dhaka University Club today from 10 am to 5 pm.

The Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Associations (FBUTA) called the strike as part of its 11-day action programme demanding arrest and trial of the persons involved in the violence at the Jahangirnagar University on July 29 and in Islamic University on July 5.

## Sheikh Selim, Maruf granted bail

Banglar Bani Editor Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, MP, and Managing Editor Fazlur Rahman Maruf were granted bail yesterday by the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court in a defamation suit, reports UNB.

The Bengali news daily sources said Judge Nazrul Islam granted the bail when Selim and Maruf appeared before the court.

## SAARC Council of Ministers' meet in Dec

The SAARC Council of Ministers, in a meeting here in December, will review progress in the forum's activities and finalise the date of its 8th summit, reports UNB.

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman, current Chairman of the SAARC Council of Ministers, is expected to preside over the meeting.

India will host the next summit of the seven-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), according to the decision of the 7th summit held April 10-11 in Dhaka.

Reaz said the SAARC was planning to participate in the UN conference on population and the UN conference on women, to be held in 1994.

Responding to a question, he said the SAARC had been exchanging information with the ASEAN and EEC with a hope to establish links with them.

About repatriation of the Chakma refugees, the Foreign Secretary told a questioner that the two governments had been cooperating with each other to settle the problem.

An advance refugee team from Tripura in India will visit the Hill Tracts shortly to observe the arrangements made for repatriation of the tribals, he said.

The Foreign Secretary told another questioner that Dhaka and New Delhi were working on a date for holding the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) meeting.

## 4 ordinances placed

Four ordinances were laid before the House yesterday, reports BSS.

The ordinances are: The Supreme Court Judges (Leave, Pension and Privileges) (Amendment) Ordinance, 1993, The Financial Institutions Ordinance, 1993, The Bangladesh Jute Corporation (Repeal) Ordinance, 1993 and the Acquisition and Requisition of Immovable Property (Amendment) Ordinance, 1993.

Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Mirza Golam Hafiz placed the ordinances before the House which were promulgated by the President after the last budget session.

## Hawkers submit memo to Speaker

By Staff Correspondent

Street hawkers of the city yesterday sent a memorandum to the Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad demanding their rehabilitation.

Following a sit-in demonstration and rally in front of the Shishu Park last evening, the leaders of the hawkers evicted by police recently, handed over the petition to Rashed Khan Menon, MP, who assured them that the hawkers' issue would be raised in the current session of Parliament.

## Grim statistics

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was shut for six days in April because of political rivalry between different student groups, the minister added.

Kamal Yousuf said the Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College has been closed since August 3 and the Chittagong Medical College since August 8 because of campus violence.

## Ratan Sen

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In his judgement, the honourable judge said none of the witnesses could convincingly prove the charges brought against the 17 accused by the CID police who investigated into the murder.

Earlier, the court examined 26 witnesses including four police officers, one doctor and a magistrate during the hearing of the case from June 12 to August 24 this year.

The veteran politician Ratan Sen was murdered in the morning of July 31 last year while he was travelling by a rickshaw in front of the Khulna Collectorate building. The CID police submitted the chargesheet accusing 15 persons for the killing.

The accused included a local BNP leader, who is an Associate Professor of the Khulna Azam Khan Commerce College, Jahangir, Abu Bakar Siddique, Nurul Islam, Golam Rahman, Mahbubur Rahman, Shahidul Islam, Nasir, Abul Hussain, Sharuzzaman, Mortuza, Arif, Sagar, Murad, Farid, Ayub, and Zakir.

A huge crowd gathered at the court premises to hear the judgement in the case which made headlines. Two platoons of riot police were deployed around the court building. Police forces were also posted in front of the local CPB office and some other places in the city.

The prosecution was conducted by Assistant Public Prosecutors Hamdul Haque, Ali Hossain and Hemayetul Islam while the defence was led by SM Arjad Hossain, SA Wadud, Hemayet Kabir and Mansur Ahmed.

## The Midnight File

### Tudjman orders ceasefire

ZAGREB, Sept 12: Croatian President Franjo Tudjman has ordered his armed forces to ceasefire unilaterally for 24 hours in order to reach a truce with Serb independenceists, the official agency Hina reported today. Tudjman made the announcement while addressing the national defence and security council meeting in Zagreb to examine the military and political situation in the light of "increased aggression on Croatian towns," reports AFP.

### Blast near Israeli 'security zone' in South Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (Lebanon), Sept 12: A roadside bomb exploded Sunday close to an Israeli army unit patrolling on foot in Israel's self-styled "Security zone" in south Lebanon, security sources in south Lebanon said. The sources said there were believed to be casualties, but had no details. A spokesman for the Israeli army, however, denied there had been any incident Sunday in Lebanon, reports AP.

### EC may lift ban on South Africa in Oct

ALDEN BIESEN (Belgium), Sept 12: The European Community may be only weeks away from lifting its remaining sanctions against South Africa, officials said Sunday. They said the 12-nation EC could remove a ban on investments and other remaining sanctions at a meeting of foreign ministers October 5-6 in Luxembourg, reports AP.

## SEC to protect

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private sector," Khan says. "There should be no adversarial relationship between the SEC and the private sector."

The commission's relationship with the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), he adds, should be one of cooperation and the SEC's role should be "highly supportive" to the smooth functioning of its activities.

The commission is preparing a two-year action plan to streamline its activities and an advisory committee would also be set up soon with representatives from the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, Investment Corporation of Bangladesh, the DSE, Board of Investment, Privatisation Board and different chamber bodies.

The commission would also involve itself in stock market surveillance and promotional activities, including forming investors' forum, holding seminars and other confidence building measures, to increase public awareness about the securities market, notes the SEC Chairman.

As per the act, the commission would be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General, whose report is to be placed before Parliament. The SEC is also required to submit a report on its activities, within sixty days after closing of the financial year, to the government which is to be subsequently placed before Parliament.

The SEC has also been accorded immunity for actions taken in good faith while the act lays down that no court other than the Court of Sessions shall

## City corpn polls

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no ward should have a population more than one-and-a-half times in excess of another.

In a bid to distribute the total population proportionately with the number of wards under a city for the smooth holding of the polls, the EC announced rough lists on fresh delimitation of wards under the four city corporation on August 1.

The EC asked the people to lodge their complaints with the judges, appointed by the commission at their respective cities, by August 16. The judges were scheduled to settle the disputes by August 31, after which fresh boundaries of the 177 wards were to have been announced on September 5 followed by gazetting on September 7.

However, the EC had to postpone publication of the gazettes on schedule because BNP and Awami League leaders from the older parts of Dhaka city seriously objected to the reduction of the number of wards following the new arrangements.

"We are discussing the matter with the ministry and seeking its suggestion on the issue," AZM Shamsul Alam, Secretary of the EC, told The Daily Star.

Replying to a question, he said, the ministry could remove the deadlock by increasing the number of wards. "It's up to the ministry whether it would create any new ward because we don't have the authority to name any fresh ward."

The EC secretary felt that the problems relating to the fresh designation of wards were caused by the growth of the population in the city.

be competent to take cognizance of and try an offence punishable under the act.

Observers point out that one particular clause of the act provides sweeping powers to the government and the Finance Ministry to meddle in the affairs of the SEC.

The clauses provides the government to issue directives to the commission as and when needed without being specific. This, they add, leaves ample scope for the government to abuse it and interfere in the affairs of the commission.

The SEC Act was modelled after that of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), observers note, and the Indian act specifies that the government will provide directives only on policy issues.

Some capital market experts also observe that the SEC would need to be more stern with the 'reform-resistant' DSE in order to streamline its activities and revitalise the stock market.

In a report based on a study last year, two South Korean consultants described the DSE as a 'closed club,' where a vast majority of its 195 members remain inactive.

## NBR : SRO

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the bank guarantees and pointed out that any bank guarantee is a cumbersome and time-consuming process. Besides, such guarantees have to be renewed quarterly, they pointed out.

They also added that production is often delayed because of various fiscal or policy complications of the government which may often result in the forfeiture of the total money guarantee, including the 2.5 per cent in cash.

The businessmen, instead, offered to provide personal guarantees from the various chambers, in lieu of bank or cash guarantees and suggested that the full duty rebate could be enacted by prioritising the different sectors.

But the BNR officials said personal guarantees are legally hard to enforce and added such guarantees had, in the past, resulted in huge accumulation of long unpaid taxes.

The NBR also pointed out that if new export oriented industries are exempted, of the duty, similar industries set up in the previous years would also demand the facility. The NBR viewed that this would lead to further complication of the issue. Besides, there are chances of machinery being smuggled to neighbouring countries, they pointed out.

## NDP supporter shot dead in Rauzan

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 12: One person was shot dead and seven others were injured in a gunbattle between the supporters of the National Democratic Party (NDP) and the Chhatra League this morning at Haladia union under Rauzan thana, 30 miles off the city.

The victim, Jamal Pasha, an activist of the NDP, was killed on the spot during an hour-long gunfight beginning at 7 am when a group of 40 pro-Awami League Chhatra League workers allegedly confronted some NDP activists at Yasin Nagar village of Haladia union, police said.

The injured, also NDP workers, were admitted to the local health complex.

Both the groups reportedly used firearms freely creating panic among the villagers.

Police rushed to the spot but the warring groups disappeared. They recovered the body of Jamal Pasha and sent it for postmortem.

None was arrested till the time of filing this report.