

Demolition of Babri Mosque Advani, Joshi, Thackeray face criminal charges

NEW DELHI, Oct 5: India's main investigating agency filed criminal charges in court today against three top Hindu politicians, blaming them for the December 6 demolition of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya.

Advani and Joshi were present in Ayodhya when hordes of Hindu militants stormed and tore down the 16th century mosque. The demolition sparked a wave of Hindu-Muslim rioting across the country which left some 2,000 people dead.

Thackeray, whose party was blamed for the violence that swept Bombay in the wake of the mosque's demolition, praised the act of destruction. The Shiv Sena commands considerable influence in Bombay, India's financial capital.

Bangladeshis in Moscow safe

All Bangladeshi nationals living in Moscow are safe, according to a message received here from Bangladesh mission in the Russian capital, reports UNB.

About 500 people were reported killed in clashes, between troops loyal to Russian President Boris Yeltsin and hardliners in Moscow Monday.



Women supporters of Nawaz Sharif carrying his portraits and chanting slogans at an election rally in Rawalpindi, some 15 kilometers from Islamabad Monday. Pakistan goes to polls today. — AFP photo

Pak elections

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Frontier Province and Baluchistan, more than 3,700 candidates are running in those races.

The main parties and their policies:

Pakistan Muslim League (PML) — The party's campaign has focused on the economic liberalisation, privatisation and industrialisation programme pursued by its chief Nawaz Sharif, 43, who resigned as premier in July. PM has pledged to promote Islamic values, electoral symbol: Tiger.

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) — Its leader, Benazir Bhutto, 40, Pakistan's first woman premier from 1985 to 1990 has promised basic structural reforms, private-public sector partnership and financial discipline to cut the budget deficit. The PPP espouses enlightened religious philosophy compatible with demands of modern age. Electoral symbol: Arrow.

Pakistan Islamic Front (PIF) — The fundamentalist PIF offers voters an alternative to what it calls the past mismanagement and corruption of PML and PPP. Electoral Symbol: Car.

Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) — Strong in urban parts of Sindh, MQM has boycotted the polls for alleged restrictions on its activities. Its founder Altaf Hussain is in self-exile in London. Electoral symbol: Kite.

PPP candidate dies in sleep

ISLAMABAD, Oct 5: Chaudhry Nazir Ahmed, an influential politician and a nominee of former premier Benazir Bhutto died of heart failure today, raising the number of constituencies where elections have been postponed to five, reports AFP.

The official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) said Ahmed, who belonged to the industrial city of Faisalabad in populous Punjab province had addressed a meeting in his home constituency and returned home past midnight.

However, when his wife went to wake him at dawn she found him dead, APP said.

AL to announce anti-govt plans on Oct 10

The Awami League is planning to announce a series of programmes on October 10 to whip up public sentiment against the 'failure' of the government in resolving major economic, political and social issues, reports UNB.

The programmes may include observance of several days throughout the country to press the ruling party to settle the problems in agricultural and industrial sectors, stop corruption, terrorism, communalism and scrap 'black laws' like the Indemnity Ordinance and the Anti-terrorism Act.

Awami League sources said different proposals were moved in yesterday's presidium meeting of the party to beef up the current anti-government agitation, but it did not finalise the action plans.

UNDP chief lauds Dhaka's programmes

NEW YORK, Oct 5: The UNDP Administrator James Gustavo Speth called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her suite in UN Plaza yesterday, reports BSS.

The UNDP administrator discussed with the Prime Minister the UNDP's plan to provide increased support and assistance to Bangladesh's development programmes. He appreciated the policies and programmes taken by Begum Zia's government in the fields of nature and environment protection, education, women's development and a regional approach towards development.

The Prime Minister praised the support of the UNDP in Bangladesh's development programmes.

She elaborated the progress attained in programmes like poverty alleviation, primary education, improvement of the status of women and food-for-education and other uplift projects.

Nephew kills uncle in city

An angry young man reportedly shot and killed his uncle following an altercation at Mirpur's Prierbagh in the city yesterday morning.

Witnesses said, nephew Shahidur fired at his uncle Tofael Ahmed Khokon, 38, from close range near a grocery shop just 400 yards from his house.

Critically injured Tofael, an iron-grill dealer, died after admission at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Family sources said Tofael's remarks about his nephew's companions yesterday morning had enraged the accused.

Immediately after the shooting police nabbed four persons from the scene, including the main accused Shahidur. The others held are: Alamgir, Shahid and Swapan.

This was the fourth murder in the Mirpur area in the last 72 hours.

Earlier, on Sunday two persons were killed while another was stabbed to death at Kalyanpur Monday evening.

AL slates PM's remarks

A resolution of the Awami League presidium meeting said the historic joint declaration was not only a formula for the anti-Ershad movement, it also envisaged constitutional provisions for the resignation of Ershad, election under a caretaker government, restoration of the spirit and values of the Liberation War, an end to the politics of killing and coups, autonomy to state-owned radio and television and establishment of a sovereign parliament.

How could Begum Zia assume the office of Prime Minister if parliamentary democracy had not been restored as per the joint declaration? the meeting observed.

It said the people had great expectations that the commitments made in the historic declaration would be implemented with the establishment of a democratic government. But they were surprised at the flagrant violation of the declaration.

Rutskoi, Khasbulatov

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be difficult to see how Yeltsin could impose his will if he resisted.

Yeltsin, clearly inspired by his forces' swift but bloody victory, moved to tighten his grip on the government. He fired two provincial administrators who had backed parliament leaders in their defiance of Yeltsin's decree dissolving the legislature and calling early elections.

In a decree today he dismissed Novosibirsk regional head Vitaly Mukha and Amur Governor A Surat.

In a sign of confidence, Yeltsin's office said he would depart next Monday on a scheduled visit to Japan. Soldiers today hunted for snipers and other hardliners still resisting despite the defeat.

of Yeltsin's opponents when government forces stormed parliament.

Several snipers were killed or arrested, the Interfax news agency reported. Up to 200 gunmen escaped from the parliament before it was taken by government forces. Russian news reports said. Smoke was still rising early Tuesday from the charred building, known as the White House, as the capital emerged from its first night under military curfew.

At least 300 people were killed in two days of fighting, Russian news reports said. Officials would only confirm 149 people had been killed and 526 wounded since fighting began Sunday when hard-line supporters overwhelmed riot police and reinforced the parliament.

Train-car crash victims buried

By Staff Correspondent
Three members of a family who died in a tragic train-car crash in the capital Monday night were buried at their village home in Tongibari, Munshiganj, yesterday.

A Fire Service team, along with railway police, recovered the three charred bodies from the badly crushed car from near a level-crossing at Kamalapur around 1:30 am yesterday and sent them to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) morgue for autopsy.

After the post-mortem examinations, all the three bodies were handed over to their relatives yesterday morning.

Railway police said they could not find the body of the driver of the ill-fated car, who was also thought to have died.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Railway has formed a four-member body headed by a divisional engineer to probe into the incident while the Director General of the Fire Service and Civil Defence ordered another inquiry yesterday.

Thana Agriculture Officer of Keraniganj, Begum Ali, his wife Bilkis Begum and their five-year-old daughter Moutushi died in the accident Monday evening.

BNP reception for Khaleda at ZIA tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent
The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will accord a mass reception to its chairperson Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the Zia International Airport on her return from the United Nations via London tomorrow, Thursday.

All the front organisations of the party have been asked to mobilise supporters and attend the reception at 12 noon, party sources said.

A meeting in this regard was held yesterday at the party office with Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdus Salam Talukdar in the chair. Law Minister Mirza Golam Haif, Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah, Energy Minister Mosharrar Hossain, Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Mirza Abbas and leaders of the front organisations attended.

Meeting sources said some 450 vehicles might be requisitioned for a motorcade on the day. BNP members from Keraniganj, Narayanganj and Munshiganj will also attend the reception.

Govt college teachers' strike today

Teachers of the government colleges will observe a countywide token strike today protesting terrorist activities in the educational institutions and assaulting teachers, including a recent attack on the principal of the Rajbari Government College, reports UNB.

The decision was taken in an emergency meeting of the BCS General Education Association yesterday, said a press release.

Khaleda's UNGA speech gets wide coverage in Pak dailies

ISLAMABAD, Oct 5: The Farakka issue raised before the United Nations General Assembly by the Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia got wide coverage by most leading national dailies of Pakistan yesterday, reports BSS.

National newspapers covered the news crediting international news agencies and Associated Press of Pakistan with such headline as "Farakka, Question of Life and Death for Bangladesh: Khaleda."

The Pakistani dailies also carried the photograph of Begum Khaleda Zia addressing the current UN General Assembly session and quoted her as giving detailed account on the 'adverse effects' on the Bangladesh economy at Farakka point by India.

Her speech was widely quoted with her appeal to the world community in the interest of establishing human rights, protecting the right to natural resources and ensuring development in Bangladesh where a process of desertification was evident throughout the northern and western parts.

The Pakistani press quoted her as saying that India could have played an important role in strengthening mutual trust between the two countries on the question of water sharing during the dry season and the rainy season.

PM: London

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During the visit, Begum Zia had meetings separately with Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohammad, Nicaraguan President Violeta Barrios Chamorro, President of Guyana Cheddi Jagan, United Nations Secretary General Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Commonwealth Secretary General, UNICEF Executive Director James Grant, Assistant Secretary (South Asia) of US State Department Robin Lynn Raphael, Congressman Gary L. Ackerman, UNFPA Executive Director Dr Nafis Sadik and UNDP Administrator James Gustavo Speth.

The Midnight File

Arafat in Cairo to meet Rabin

CAIRO, Oct 5: PLO leader Yasser Arafat arrived in Cairo today for his first working meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Palestinian self-rule. The two men met for the first time on September 13 when they sealed a historic declaration of principles on self-rule with a handshake on the White House lawn. But they held no working meetings in Washington. Arafat was due to meet Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak later in the evening. Rabin was due to arrive on Wednesday morning, reports Reuter.

Gayoom pledges constitutional reforms

COLOMBO, Oct 5: Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, re-elected for the fourth time, has said he will change the constitution to allow more than one person to contest the presidential polls. "There is a need to provide for more than one presidential candidate," Gayoom told Parliament Tuesday. Maldivian law bans political parties and dissent. Parliament elects a single political candidate, reports AP.

3 killed in city and suburbs

By DMCH Correspondent
One college student was reportedly murdered and two others died in separate incidents in and around the city yesterday.

At Gazipur, Sharim Ahmed Muntadir, 16, was stabbed to death in front of the Sripur High School mosque at about 10:15 am.

In another incident one Mohammad Shah Jalal, 28, was electrocuted at Badda in the city yesterday morning.

Son of Gias Ali Shah Jalal was seriously injured and rushed to the DMCH where he died after admission.

An unidentified pedestrian, 40, was killed when a speeding vehicle ran over him in front of the Municipal Super Market in the city yesterday morning.

Police sent all the bodies to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Pak apology

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settle the issue of compensation.

"Pakistan should make an apology for the mass killing, looting and oppression by its soldiers in 1971. They should also provide compensation to the affected families," said BNP Joint Secretary General and Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah.

The crackdown by about 95,000 Pakistani soldiers in 1971 took a terrible toll: three million people died; ten million were made refugees; and untold thousands became homeless, hungry and sick.

Barrister Miah referred to Japan's recent apology for war crimes against China and described the role of Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa as an "epoch-making step in human civilisation."

"Islamabad should follow that example," he said.

Awami League Organising Secretary and opposition chief whip in Parliament Mohammad Nasim also demanded Pakistan's apology for the heinous crimes it had committed against the innocent people of Bangladesh.

He hoped that the next democratic government of that country would take steps to this end to establish a normal relationship with Bangladesh.

Citing the example of the Japanese government, Nasim said a new generation government had sought apology for the crimes committed during World War II and thereby ended an era of cold relations with China.

The AL leader also suggested that Islamabad settle the unresolved problems with Dhaka, including the division of assets and repatriation of stranded Pakistanis.

Former Prime Minister and Jatiya Party leader Kazi Zafar Ahmed said the Pakistan government should apologise to Bangladesh for its misdeeds in 1971.

"This will help forge new unity between Dhaka and Islamabad. It would prove to be a politically farsighted move on the part of Pakistan."

Chinese N-test

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testing in the wake of China's detonation of an atomic test.

"The United States deeply regrets this action. We urge China to refrain from further nuclear tests and to join the other nuclear powers in a global moratorium," said a statement issued by the White House.

Clinton suspended US testing for 15 months starting on July 3.

Mubarak elected for third term

CAIRO, Oct 5: President Hosni Mubarak won a third six-year term Tuesday in a vote that was all but certain. He was the only candidate, reports AP.

UNSC extends mandate of troops in ex-Y'slavia

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 5: The Security Council Monday extended the peacekeeping mandate of UN forces in the former Yugoslavia for another six months, reports AFP.

Outlawed parties clash in Jhenidah

JHENIDAH, Oct 5: Activists of two rival outlawed parties traded gunfire at Ghoopara in sadar thana today for establishing respective powerbase in the area, reports UNB.

Police said workers of the Purba Banglar Communist Party and Biplobi Communist Party (Bhuj) engaged in about an hour-long gunbattle at 11 am.

An activist was reportedly killed and another injured, but police could not recover the body.

Eight Shibirmen hurt in Tongi

From Our Correspondent
GAZIPUR, Oct 5: Eight activists of the pro-Jamaat Islam Chhatra Shibir were injured at the Tongi Government College when the All-Party Students Unity (APSU) activists of the college attacked them this afternoon.

The APSU was formed last week to press the demand for a ban on Shibir activities on the college premises.

Witnesses said the Shibir supporters came under attack when they were negotiating the admission of some of their fellow activists with the Principal of the college in his office room.

Eight injured Shibir activists were rushed to the local hospital from where six were released after first-aid.

Meanwhile, the Shibir has lodged a case with the Tongi police accusing the Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) for the attack.

Doctors observe strike in Sylhet

From Our Correspondent
SYLHET, Oct 5: The physicians in all the hospitals and private clinics of the district observed a two-hour strike today in protest against the attack on Dr D E Reza on Saturday last.

It was the first day of a four-day programme called by the Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) protesting the assault on Dr Reza.

Doctors in the town have been wearing black badge since Sunday.

Meanwhile, different organisations including district units of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Jamaat-e-Islam, the Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League have demanded punishment of the persons responsible.

Flood Project

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government's decision to award the contract for the purpose to a firm which was ranked second by the government-appointed evaluation committee in May 1992. The ADB opposed this decision and clearly advised that the contract must be negotiated with the first-ranked firm.

The relevant officials, when contacted, confirmed that the government has decided to award the contract according to the recommendation of the evaluation committee. The officials expressed the hope that the ADB would upgrade the project again to category 'A'.

According to the ADB's categorisation rules, downgradation of a project to 'B' implies that it has 'serious problems' which should be resolved immediately. With further degradation to category 'C', a project loses eligibility to receive funds from the Bank.

The DIFPP is an integrated project with four components — flood control, drainage, environmental improvement and implementation assistance. The Bangladesh Water Development Board, Dhaka WASA and the Dhaka City Corporation are among the agencies entrusted to implement various segments of the project.

DSE needs reforms

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ment's privatisation drive and the thrust towards developing the capital market. It is also failing to capitalise on the recent surge of interest shown by investors, both local and foreign, in the stock market.

In a mid-term report last year on the USAID-funded project, Badul Alam Majumdar, a Bangladesh national and a professor of the business administration at the Central Washington University, noted: "One major deficiency (of the project) is the inability or unwillingness of the DSE members to initiate concrete steps for the implementation of the reform proposals put forward by the foreign experts."

Majumdar recommended withholding of the second instalment in the Tk 64 lakh project till the progress on implementation was reviewed.

At present the DSE is primarily run by the members without any operational inputs by outside experts and professionals. The members annually elect a 9-member governing council, which selects a chairman and a vice chairman. Incidentally, the annual election at the DSE was held yesterday.

However, last year the DSE expanded the governing council to 12 members with three officials members nominated by the government. But the Finance Ministry has so far nominated only two members to the DSE board.

This move was prompted by recommendations of the two reports mentioned earlier, but fell short of the suggested changes. Both the reports called for including, in the DSE governing council, government officials

A motley crowd

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building in Motijheel from where they conduct their other business activities.

"We got the distinct impression that the councillors of the DSE regard the exchange as a private club," observed two South Korean authors of the report.

Some (of the) inactive members hold their membership in anticipation of the time when the securities business would become highly profitable. "The DSE and its members do not seem to recognise the public characteristics of the exchange and how important it is in the national economy," the Korean experts added.

The existing 195 or so members of the DSE represent a varied array of professions outside the securities business. There are seven Members of Parliament, including two cabinet ministers, 11 members of a single family, a number of engineers, an architect, a principal of a government college, a journalist of a leading national vernacular daily, a government official and even a Bangladeshi broadcaster working for a foreign broadcasting house.

There are also some memberships held by individuals belonging to the same family, even a Bangladeshi-born top UN official held a membership, until recently, along with two of his brothers while another family has five members including a 'Burga-clad' housewife.

There is no code of conduct for the DSE members. Nor are there any substantive eligibility requirements to become a member of the stock exchange and no institutional certificates are required.

The memberships are easily transferable. The current market price of a DSE membership is around Tk four lakh, although these were handed over by the government, as abandoned property, after the DSE was reactivated in 1978 at around Tk 6000 per membership, informed sources said.

The capital adequacy requirement imposed on the DSE members under the securities exchange rules is not distinct at a paltry sum of Tk 25,000, while the annual membership fee of the DSE is only Tk 300.

and representatives from outside organisations like the chamber bodies, the Institute of Chartered Accountants and from the academia. The authors of the reports argued that this move would help boost the sagging public confidence in the stock market.

The DSE continues to function in the absence of an adequate disclosure requirement for listed companies while the listing rules are obsolete and it does not even have any internal and external auditing system in place. The existing listing rules at the stock exchange lack objective and detailed disclosure provisions for companies seeking to float public shares.

The DSE also does not have a mechanism to conduct market price monitoring to identify unusual trading activities, thus increasing the possibilities of unfair trading practices, market manipulation and insider trading activities, resulting in a decline in investor confidence in the securities market.

Majority of the members at the DSE hold separate vocations and thus remain largely inactive in the stock exchange. Details of the membership make-up are contained in a separate report on the same page.

Both experts and observers alike feel that the newly-formed Securities and Exchange Commission can play a crucial role in facilitating and, if needed, applying pressure, to modernise the DSE and to bring about discipline in the stock exchange. Otherwise, they cautioned, any attempt to activate the capital market would be futile.

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