

B Chowdhury tells Jubo Dal rally Polls under caretaker govt unconstitutional

Deputy Leader of the House Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday termed the Awami League demand for holding parliamentary elections under a neutral caretaker government as unconstitutional and said it did not conform with the democratic norms and practices, reports BSS.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the conference of Dhanmondi thana branch of the Dhaka City Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal at Dhanmondi ground here.

Prof Chowdhury said a demand for holding the election under a caretaker government could only take place if there were a military government in the helm of affairs or a government that came to power by toppling an elected one.

"Ours is a democratically elected government and it was voted to power by the people of this country," Prof Chowdhury said.

The Deputy Leader of the House was critical of the Awami League government and said they were doing politics on the shoulders of the Jatiya Party. He said how the Awami League and the Jatiya Party could put forward identical programmes.

He urged the Jatiya Party leaders to beg apology for their misdeeds during their nine years of rule. He wondered how could Jatiya Party demand release of their leader on the day when they killed Noor Hossain.

Presided over by Abu Sayeed Khan Khokon, convener of the Dhanmondi thana Jubo Dal, the function was also addressed, among others, by Mayor of Dhaka City

Corporation Mirza Abbas, MP, Barkat Ullah Buln, MP, Senior vice president of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, Abul Khair Bhuiyan, president, Dhaka City Chhatra Dal, Advocate Moazzam Hossain Alal, vice president Jubo Dal, and Jubo Dal leaders Kawshar Ahmed, Faizullah Fayed, Mizanur Rahman Mizan, Nasir Uddin Patwary and Alamgir Hossain Patwary.

Prof Chowdhury said the Awami League had plundered the national wealth, killed democracy, took away independence of the newspaper during their rule.

Chanpa murder No eyewitness, IO tells court

BARISAL, Nov 17: CID Inspector Bimal Kumar Das was cross-examined on the last day of the second-phase of trial in the sensational Chanpa murder case at the District and Sessions Judge's court today (Wednesday), reports UNB.

Bimal told the court that he had investigated the case from October 16, 1989 to May 24, 1990 and according to information from accused Kamal, it appeared that housewife Faujia Rahman Chanpa was killed by a group of people.

He had filed the chargesheet against the accused persons on May 24, 1990 under Sections 302, 307, 201 and 34, he said.

Replying to cross examination of Advocate Serajul Haq, Bimal informed the court that he did not get any eyewitness of the murder, but in the chargesheet said that the accused persons had entered the room of Chanpa by breaking the lock.



View of an under-construction private sector children's and amusement park near the Orthopaedics (Pangu) Hospital at Shyamoli in the city. — Star photo

3 JCD activists held from DU campus

By Staff Correspondent

Three Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists were held yesterday from the Dhaka University campus when they attempted to evade police arrest by firing at them.

Police also recovered a revolver and six rounds of ammunition from the possession of one of the arrested trios. They were identified as: Md Tarequzzaman Utpal, 24, Sarwar Ahmed Litu, 24 and AKM Solaiman Ami 25.

Campus sources said that the three arrested belonged to the Ilias group of the JCD and were students of the Dhaka University.

The trouble erupted following an assault on a TSC employee, Din Mohammad Dillu, yesterday afternoon, witnesses said. Students present at the scene instantly protested the at-

tack on Dillu, allegedly for a trivial matter. A heated exchange between the two groups followed, witnesses added.

Some students, reportedly belonging to the Bangladesh Chhatra League (M-I), beat up one of the attackers who was later handed over to the patrol police.

Two other comrades of Utpal tried to flee the scene through the Suhrawardy Uddyan, opposite the TSC, but were pursued by police.

A police handout said that the fleeing students shot at them twice but failed to avoid arrest since policemen from the nearby Police Control Room instantly cordoned off the whole area.

A case was lodged with the Ramna police and the trio was being interrogated, police said.

BGMEA demands action

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him as a reckless, drunk person, which simply tantamount to an assassination of his character."

CIP members of the BGMEA, about 16 in all, as a token of their protest, surrendered their cards to the government during the press conference. "This incident only proves these cards are not worth anything," one of them said.

The BGMEA president, placing his charter of demands, said there was a bad reputation of the Customs and many foreign buyers and investors were losing interest in Bangladesh after visiting the country and encountering such harassment.

He urged the government to ensure good and courteous behaviour by the Customs officials.

He also said that since exporters and other businessmen dealing with international clients had to make frequent foreign trips, a special channel on counter should be introduced at the airport. At least, there should be some provision for special handling of such travellers, Redwan said.

"We have taken this incident seriously. If the government fails to meet our demands by Saturday, the BGMEA would announce its next course of action Sunday evening."

Redwan also said he and his association members had also held discussions with the Home Minister and the State Minister for Civil Aviation and they both assured prompt action. A four-man probe has also been constituted, Redwan said.

More than fifty leading garments manufacturers and exporters were also present at the press conference.

Rules on use of dish antennae soon

A meeting chaired by Information Minister Nazmul Huda was held at the Ministry of Information, yesterday to frame necessary rules to bring discipline in use of dish antennae, reports BBS.

It was decided at the meeting to form a sub-committee led by Joint Secretary of the ministry M I Choudhury to frame necessary rules, rules on use of dish antennae.

The victim himself, Sikder had arrived at ZIA at around 1:00 pm on a Thai flight from Singapore. He was accompanied by two foreign buyers.

They said while passing through the green channel of the ZIA Customs, a Customs official indecently pulled the bag of one of the two foreign ladies accompanying Sikder on the pretext of checking it.

The lady, of Singapore nationality, was taken aback by the manners of the Customs man who, she said, had also brushed her breasts with his elbow. At this Sikder intervened, and an altercation ensued with some other Customs men.

At one stage, a Customs officer hit Sikder on his face and chest and other colleagues also joined the fray and kept assaulting Sikder. They also ignored his CIP card. An Assistant Collector held Sikder from behind while two Customs sepoy severely roughed him up.

Soon afterwards, a civil aviation security man, Zakir Hossain, unlawfully put handcuffs on Sikder, dragged him to a room and tied him to a chair. Sikder, who received bruises on different parts of his body, was also bleeding through his nose and mouth. Two of his teeth were also damaged.

Sikder's wife, who had gone to receive her husband, witnessed the whole incident from outside the glass doors. All her screaming protests went in vain. She wasn't allowed to see her husband inside the restricted enclosure until around 3:30 pm.

While she was begging the Customs officials to let her husband go," Redwan said, "they kept on laughing and making unkind remarks. They would not even allow him to go out and seek treatment for the bleeding."

Finally, Additional Collector of Customs Hafizul Kabir arrived and Sikder was allowed to go — but only after forcing Sikder to sign a blank paper, at around 4 pm. "They made him sign in the blank piece of paper so that they could make out a false statement for their own defence," Redwan added.

"I have known Sikder for quite a long time and I have never seen him drunk," Redwan told the journalists. "But the Customs men tried to portray

PM listens to problems of people

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia last night assured a housewife of taking necessary measures to relieve her of the mental torture and harassment caused by a forgery case, reports BBS.

Ambia Khatun of 56, Green Road, Dhaka, met the Prime Minister at her Sugandha office, describing how she became the victim of a fraud involving the House Building Finance Corporation (HBFC) and one Bulbul Ahmed of West Razabazar.

Ambia apprised the Prime Minister that she had applied for the loan to HBFC in 1981 to construct a house. After failing to get any loan from the HBFC, she borrowed some money and constructed a one-story building on her own.

But one morning in January 1982, some HBFC men came to Ambia and wanted to know why she did not construct her house as per the plan of the HBFC. The HBFC officials also told her that she had taken money from the corporation.

Later, it was found that one Bulbul Ahmed of West Razabazar had fraudulently withdrawn Taka one lakh 53 thousand sanctioned against Ambia's plot.

Bulbul Ahmed, after being caught, confessed his guilt and promised to the concerned authority that he would repay the money with interest.

Ambia said, in the meantime, the HBFC filed a case against her asking to repay the loan and the interest, which now stood at Taka three lakh 25

thousand. After hearing the whole story, the Prime Minister said directives would be given to the concerned authorities to withdraw the case against Ambia and settle the issue.

The Prime Minister was listening to Ambia at her 'Meet-the-People Day' programme, which is organised occasionally in the capital and other places of the country.

As many as 21 people of different professions and groups met the Prime Minister last night.

Teachers, retired government officers, house owners, retired members of the Army, engineers and the members of the martyrs' families were among others who met her.

Trade with NZ to increase, hopes PM

A foreign envoy who had the vision of "a poor Bangladesh" from outside said yesterday he found a totally different country after coming here, reports UNB.

The observation came from the newly-appointed High Commissioner of New Zealand to Bangladesh, Nicholas William Bridge, when he called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office in the afternoon.

Begum Zia told the High Commissioner that the development efforts of her government were aimed at alleviating poverty and mentioned the motivational campaign run by her and her party leaders.

The Prime Minister hoped that bilateral trade with New Zealand would increase in days ahead.

The envoy said the friendly relations between Bangladesh and his country would strengthen further.

"My concept has totally changed" on seeing the development activities of the government, he said, expressing his views after a three-day stay in Dhaka. "Bangladesh is truly going forward towards progress and prosperity."

One killed

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The Pahari Chhatra Parishad allegedly attacked the police and supporters of the Gana Parishad with stones and lethal weapons, sources added.

At one stage, police opened fire on the feuding mob to disperse them and to bring the situation under control, which left about 100 people injured, some with bullet wounds. One person, identified as a non-tribal, died later.

After the clash the agitating supporters of the Pahari Chhatra Parishad reportedly set on fire a number of shops at Naniarchar bazar in protest against the police action.

Tension remained high in the area following the incident and a large number of policemen were deployed at the trouble spot to prevent further violence.

No other details were available till filing this report late in the night.

Jt Declaration

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It also promised a reintroduction of the parliamentary form of government, restoration of the spirit of Liberation War, end to politics of coup, killings and conspiracy, scrapping all black laws and autonomy to the radio and television.

A mass universe was built on the basis of the declaration forcing Ershad to step down and paving the way for the establishment of democracy.

The Awami League has asked all its units to observe the day by organising rallies and demonstrations all over the country.

In observance of the day, the party will hold a public meeting at the Bangabandhu Avenue on November 20. Party Chief Sheikh Hasina is expected to address it.

A joint meeting of the Awami League, the Jubo League, the Chhatra League and the Krishak League was held at the party office yesterday evening to make the meeting a success.

Status of MPs

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Constitution and rules of procedure, also made it clear that the Speaker was not in a position to deem these members as independent legislators; that power lay only with the Election Commission.

Parliament sources also pointed out that as of now, official records still show the seven members — five CPB MPs, and two others — as still belonging to their original parties.

Two of the five CPB MPs — Nazir Hossain and Mozhahar Hossain — have joined the ruling BNP, while two others, Shamsuddin and Mohammad Yusuf, have become Gano Forum leaders. The remaining one, Dabirul Islam, is contemplating joining the Awami League.

Besides, Abdul Hafiz of the NAP also changed his allegiance in favour of the BNP and Shajahan Siraj of the JSD merged his faction with the Gano Forum.

The Midnight File

3 Swedish diplomats ordered to leave Iran

TEHRAN, Nov 17: Iran ordered three Swedish diplomats today to leave Iran by Sunday, a Western diplomat said. Iranian officials said the order was in retaliation for Stockholm expelling three Iranian diplomats for allegedly spying on Iranian refugees in Sweden, the diplomat told Reuters.

Y'slav war crimes tribunal opens

THE HAGUE, Nov 17: The Yugoslav war crimes tribunal opened Wednesday, and the UN's top lawyer promised the court had the full backing of the Security Council. Still, Carl-August Fleischhauer refused to specify how UN muscle could be applied in the conflict that has torn Bosnia apart. Serb leaders have already scoffed at the tribunal's authority and said they will not extradite suspects for trial, reports AP.

Contentious issues

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on the observations made by Deputy Leader of the House Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury who, during the last session, had said that the activities of the Jamaat deserved a close scrutiny, in the light of the constitutional provisions and laws of the land.

The Prime Minister's comments about the opposition MPs — that they made untruthful statement in the Sangsad — would definitely spark controversy on the opening day of the session, November 21.

Twenty-two privilege motions of the Opposition members, claiming the Prime Minister was guilty of a contempt of Parliament, have so far been submitted to the JS Secretariat. The Opposition may unilaterally stage a walkout in protest of the Prime Minister's comment, which she made at a city public rally on November 7 last.

On the other hand, the ruling party legislators would try to substantiate the Prime Minister's allegations against some Opposition members on the floor, a cabinet minister told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

The Opposition parties, especially the AL and the JP, are also likely to accuse the government of resorting to repression against its political opponents, sources said, adding that they will specifically draw attention to the police actions during the sit-in demonstration around the Secretariat on November 10 last. In this connection, the opposition is once again likely to demand the repeal of the controversial Anti-Terrorism Act.

Meanwhile, the major parties have already convened meetings of their parliamentary wings on Saturday to discuss their respective strategies during the winter session of Parliament.

Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali will hold a meeting of the JS business advisory committee on

harkals

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Led by president of the Commission Kazi Abdur Razzak, the survey was conducted by Kazi Nurul Islam, Advocate S N Goswami, Md Nazrul Islam and Rokeya Nurunnessa.

The team conducted the survey at Jatrabari, Narinda, Tikatuli, Arambag, Malibag, Banani, Azampur, Nawabpur, Lalbag Kalabagan, Dhanmondi, Farmgate, Shyamoli, Mirpur, Gulshan in Dhaka and Jamatala, Kali Bazar and some places in Rupganj under Narayanagar.

Out of 200 students, 185 were against harkals. One hundred and eighty five students were against student politics and 40 per cent of them supported banning student politics for ten years, the survey report revealed.

Japan convinced

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at firming up the co-financing of the Jamuna Bridge by Japan. Rahman told Azuma that Bangladesh was eagerly waiting for the implementation of this national project. The expectations of the people are very high, Rahman was quoted as having told the Japanese vice minister.

He also met Asian Development Bank (ADB) president-elect Mitsuo Sato Tuesday in Tokyo. Terming the Dhaka-ADB relationship 'excellent' Sato said that the ADB considered Bangladesh to be a very important partner in development and assured continued support to this country.

The ADB president-elect commended the economic successes of Bangladesh and congratulated the finance minister on his being elected chairman of the board of governors of the World Bank, IMF and affiliate bodies for fiscal 1993-94.

Rahman and members of his delegation also had 'fruitful' discussion with Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry chairman Kosaku Inaba and members of the chamber. Inaba said that the flow of investment from Japan to Bangladesh would increase in future. He however, requested Rahman to offer some special facilities to the Japanese investors.

Today Rahman is expected to meet the Japanese Vice Minister for International Economic Affairs and the Chairman of the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund in Tokyo.

the same day to decide the duration and the major issues to be discussed during the session.

However, the activities of the Parliament Secretariat indicate that the session would be a brief one. It has prepared a programme for the session spreading over two weeks only.

Swedish minister due tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

Alf Svensson, Swedish Minister for Economic Cooperation and Human Rights, will arrive here tomorrow on a four-day visit to Bangladesh.

The Swedish minister will hold discussions with Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman and also pay a courtesy call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

Svensson will also visit some Swedish-funded development projects in Bhola and Faridpur.

Sweden is involved in a number of health, family planning, education, rural development, agriculture and forestry projects. It is also committed to the Flood Action Plan.

Swedish assistance to Bangladesh to date in the form of loans and grants totals about US \$505 million dollar. Another commitment of 16 million dollars has been pledged for 1992-93.

The Swedish minister is the founder of the Bangladesh-Sweden Friendship Association. He will be accompanied by his wife Sonja.

Bangladesh admn

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Politics of bloodshed is not the way of democracy he said and observed that none in Britain, considered as the birth place of democracy, heard of street agitations to bring down an elected government before its term expires.

Rahman said the organisers of the strikes will suffer setbacks if the rules and conventions of parliamentary democracy are thrown to the wind. Consequently, he said, effectiveness of democracy will suffer due to loss of public confidence.

He observed that the success of democracy depends on the constructive and restrained conduct of the opposition. He said that the vow to develop democracy on one hand, and attempts to bring democracy on the streets on the other, are not only ridiculous but also self-contradictory.

Toxic fertilizer

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The corporation decided to stop further distribution only after detailed tests at the Atomic Energy Commission and in the US in April confirmed beyond doubt that the consignments contained excessively high levels of the toxic substances.

However, even after that a sack of the toxic fertilizer, in its original pecking, was purchased by a visiting US Greenpeace activist during a field investigation to Dinajpur late last year.

The probe body recommended legal actions against the Washington-based suppliers, MS Transcontinental Imex, and punitive actions against the officials involved in the import and subsequent distribution of the hazardous material.

It also suggested initiating a long-term study to look into the environmental health effects in areas where it was used.

On November 1 last, the US Federal Court in South Carolina fined Stoller Chemical Company, for processing the industrial wastes, and Southwire Corp for manufacturing the toxic fertilizer, according to US government sources, familiar with the proceedings, here. The case was filed by the EPA and was prosecuted by the Assistant US Attorney.

The judge ordered the two companies to pay a penalty of one million dollars, of which, six lakh dollars was set aside for the return, treatment and disposal of the toxic fertilizer.

Observers feel that immediate steps should be taken to implement the probe body recommendations and safety measures should be put in place so that such incidents do not recur in the future.

The government should also look into the option of suing the US companies in American courts seeking monetary damages, they added.

Fate of IWT-3 project

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restrained from approving the technical assistance and appointing the consultants since it considered the action plan as unacceptable.

The reasons for disagreement with the action plan, as stated by some concerned government officials, include the possibility of labour unrest due to retrenchment of 2200 workers of the BIWTC under the manpower rationalisation plan and the adverse effect of trimming down the fleet size and withdrawal of non-profitable river transport services provided in the fleet restructuring plan.

The officials also felt that the interest rate on the credit (11.5 per cent) is too high and would further burden the debt-ridden corporation.

On the contrary, the World Bank argues the reforms are imperative if the BIWTC is to attain financial viability. Regarding reduction of the fleet size, the WB believes, this would not materially affect the people at large since one of the main objectives of the project is to encourage development of the country's boat sector.

Regarding the objections concerning the rate of interest, the WB expressed its surprise, saying that it was not clear why the BIWTC's management deemed it more beneficial to borrow funds for its rehabilitation at an interest rate of 15 per cent from the commercial banks rather than from the govern-

ment at 11.5 per cent, as provided under the SLA (subsidiary loan agreement).

A concerned official observed that the action plan relating to organisational restructuring would affect the interests of some corrupt officials of the ministry and the corporation and that's why they were opposing the plans even at the cost of cancellation of the project itself.

However, the government, being insisted by the Ministry of Shipping, requested the WB to rationalise the action plans. The WB refused to go for any formal rationalisation saying that if needed it might be done during the course of implementation of the project.

The International Development Agency (IDA) credit for the project is about 45 million dollars while the Finnish International Development Agency (FINNIDA) and Japan agreed to provide 5 and 0.7 million dollars respectively as grants for the project. The government's own contribution was fixed at 13.5 million US dollar.

The project, IWT-3, was aimed at improving waterway safety and environmental controls, strengthening the inland water transport infrastructure, streamlining the financial and operational aspects of the BIWTC and BIWTA and encouraging development of the country's boat sector among other things.

Tributes to Bhashani

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video-show on the works of Bhashani at 4:00 pm today.

Maulana Bhashani's Death Anniversary Observance Parishad held a seminar on 'Maulana Bhashani and Non-communal Politics' and a cultural function at the National Press Club in the afternoon.

Central leaders of the Bangladesh Workers Party, led by Rashed Khan Menon, MP, went to Santosh and placed wreaths at the mazar of Maulana Bhashani. They also held a public meeting there.

Workers Party will organise another 'Anti-imperialism and anti-communism' meeting at the Diploma Engineers' Institute in the city at 3:00 pm on Friday.

Jatiya Party organised a mela mehfil and discussion at the Dhaka District Sports Association auditorium in the afternoon.

JAGPA leaders and activists also visited the mazar of the late leader and placed wreaths and offered fatha. Bangladesh National Awami Party (Bhashani) also placed wreaths and offered fatha at the mazar.

Bangladesh Janata Dal of K M Obaidur Rahman held a discussion meeting on the 17th anniversary of death of Bhashani at its Asad Gate central office in the evening.

Bangladesh Islamic Party, Farakka Resistance Action Committee, Deshapremik Smriti Sangsad, Bangladesh

ishak Sramik Mukti Andolan, National Revolutionary Party, Bangladesh Labour Party, Progressive Nationalist Party, Freedom Fighters' Farakka Resistance Command, Bangladesh Jukta Front, Bangladesh Protagisth Party, National Bhashani Political Foundation, Bangladesh National Democratic Party, Jatiya Awami Party, Protagisth Ganotantrik Dal also chanted out elaborate programmes in observance of the death anniversary of Bhashani.

'Specific law on privileges of MPs necessary'

Standing committee on privileges of the Jatiya Sangsad met at the Sangsad Bhaban here yesterday with the Speaker, Shaikh Razzak Ali in the chair, reports BSS.

During the meeting the members of the committee after detailed discussion on the privileges of the Jatiya Sangsad Members observed that a specific law would have to be enacted in this regard.

Besides, the meeting discussed the possibility of placing the bill on the Parliament Secretariat at the Jatiya Sangsad.

At the outset, the meeting approved proceedings of the last two meetings of the committee.

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