

## Nusrat screams at judges trying Murtaza

KARACHI, Jan 29: Nusrat Bhutto, mother of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, demanded bail for her jailed son and repeatedly screamed at a judge, who walked out of his courtroom Saturday in response to the outburst, reports AP.

"I am very tired and fed up with your conduct," Nusrat Bhutto shouted at Judge Ali Ahmed Junejo, who is presiding over the trial of her son Murtaza Bhutto. "You are not properly handling the case. I will take the matter to parliament. I am getting tired of coming here."

"You are threatening me. I cannot proceed this way," replied the judge, who then postponed the case until February 6 and promptly left the courtroom.

The episode illustrated the often arbitrary nature of the court system in Pakistan, where the rich and powerful are considered capable of influencing the legal process.

Nusrat Bhutto is not involved in the case against her son, who is accused of masterminding a 1992 attack against the Pakistan Navy that left seven dead.

Nonetheless, she appeared at defence table and unleashed her lengthy tirade against the judge shortly after the proceedings began.

Murtaza Bhutto, one of 14 accused in the case, was not present for the 9 am hearing. Police finally brought him to the court around noon, well after the case was adjourned. He was promptly returned to Karachi's Lamhi Jail.

Also, the state prosecutor was not present. He was attending a convention in India, but had not informed the court he would be absent.

The case is considered im-

portant because Benazir, the Prime Minister, is engaged in a bitter family feud with her mother and her brother that could threaten Benazir's government.

Benazir and Murtaza Bhutto are political rivals who both see themselves as the political successor to their father, former prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was ousted in a 1977 military coup and hanged two years later.

Nusrat Bhutto has sided



Nusrat Bhutto

with her son. Both of them have their own supporters and are capable of causing considerable political problems for Benazir.

Murtaza Bhutto has been jailed since he returned to Pakistan in November from 16 years in exile. In addition to the current trial, he also faces charges that he masterminded a 1981 airline hijacking.

In both cases, he could receive the death penalty if convicted, though most observers expect a lesser sentence.

## Indonesia to help Malaysia convene confce on Bosnia

JAKARTA, Jan 29: Indonesia, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Chairman, will cooperate with the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) member countries particularly Malaysia to convene an international conference on resolving the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict, Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said today, reports Bernama.

"We will work together with OIC especially Malaysia, as an OIC member, which is the prime mover for convening the conference all this while," he told reporters here on his return from a three-day visit to Yemen.

Alatas was asked to comment on president Suharto's support Friday to a proposal to organise the international conference, after Suharto held talks here with Bosnian President Dr Alija Izetbegovic on the Bosnian issue.

Izetbegovic, who is here on a two-day working visit, had told Suharto that he was prepared to attend the conference.

## Loan repayment dues

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amount was 504 million dollars. In 1986-87, 707 million, in 1987-88, 478 million, in 1988-89, 622 million and in 1989-90, 723 million dollars. The amount of commodity aid during the same period was 1516 million dollars.

The grace period of these loans — ten years from the time of receiving — will end by 1996-97 and the repayment amount will suddenly rise putting the government in a difficult situation to repay, the loans unless foreign exchange earnings increase.

Now, financial experts question the cost-effectiveness of these loans, the bulk of which went to the country's perennial loss making public enterprises. Twenty-nine public enterprises are set to make a loss of Tk 9250 crore this year. Last year, their losses ran as high as 13250 crore. The harmful effects of such wasteful foreign aid utilisation on the economy are likely to be more exposed in the coming years, they fear.

Against this backdrop, adequate steps are not being taken to promote the exports of the country. Last year, the country had to pay 13.7 per cent of its total foreign exchange earnings to repay the loans. The bulk of the earnings came from remittances by overseas workers and garments export.

Incidentally, none of these two sectors received any foreign aid. According to experts, the accountability and effectiveness of the loans should now be established to check wastages.

Unless a special thrust is now given on improving the

export performance and more investments are made, the country's economy would suffer a serious blow because of the debt burden. Already indications are there that the export target of 2900 million US dollars is likely to fall short of the mark once again and investments are still sluggish.

Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud, Chairman of the Economics Department, Dhaka University, expressing his opinions on the debt repayment issue said this can be a problem for the balance of payments and the government's budget as well as for the savings-investment balance in the economy.

"If the present trends continue, the repayment liabilities on accumulated debt will exceed annual borrowings in a few years' time," Prof Mahmud said. "This will result in a reverse flow of funds."

"Foreign aid can be justified only on the grounds that its productive use will generate income and savings," he observed.

"Unfortunately, the massive inflow of foreign aid had not helped generate income and savings," he said. "The government does not have a system of monitoring and evaluating aid-financed projects, so we do not even know what benefits, if any, have come out of these," Prof Mahmud said.

There is also a question of economic justice and equity because the benefits of foreign aid have only reached certain privileged classes in society while the entire nation has to bear the burden of debt repayment, he said.

## Prokrichi demands implementation of reform programme

By Staff Correspondent

The Prokrichi and BCS Central Action Committee yesterday called upon the government to implement the administrative reform programme neutrally.

Speakers at the meeting said the highups in the BCS Administration cadre were trying to influence the government decision on administration reform programme to serve the interest of their cadre. Such attempt would worsen the situation in the administration further, they warned.

They also demanded immediate implementation of the government order issued on January 8 this year and criticised the government for bowing to the administration cadre officials by delaying the implementation of the order.

## Aftershocks jolt LA

LOS ANGELES, Jan 29: Los Angeles woke up to strong earthquake aftershocks Saturday, and police arrested an alleged quake-relief con artist who peddled \$500 worth of food stamps, reports AP.

## Uneven coverage

By Staff Correspondent

The national steering committee for observing the city corporation elections, 1994, in a survey found that the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) had 58.30 minutes exposure in the eight o'clock BTV Bengali news in one week starting from January 20 while the Awami League had only one minutes coverage.

The survey was conducted to determine the degree of neutrality and objectivity of the BTV news.

During these nine days, the total time of the Bengali news was four hours 18 minutes.

## Police pick up election-agent

By Staff Correspondent

Dhanmondi police yesterday evening picked up one Emran Hossain, election-agent of an independent commissioner candidate for Ward No-48 for interrogation.

The police did not mention any specific charge against Emran.

## Pilot's contract

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espondent adds, Captain Rahman was remained in the city Detective Branch's (DB) custody yesterday for two days of interrogation.

Captain Rahman was produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate early yesterday.

Captain Rahman was being interrogated last night, said a senior DB official.



African National Congress (ANC) President Nelson Mandela waving at supporters during the launching of the ANC election manifesto which started with a train ride from Johannesburg station to Nasrec, near Soweto, in South Africa.

## SAARC Speakers' council adopts draft rules

The two-day first meeting of the Council of the SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians concluded here yesterday adopting the draft rules of the organisation and fixing Pakistan as the venue of its next meeting, reports BSS.

Announcing this at a press conference, Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali described the meeting as 'quite a success' and said, "We have approved the draft rules."

He said the next meeting of the council will be held in Pakistan at a time to be determined later.

Bhutanese Speaker Dasho Pasang Dorji, Speaker of Indian Lok Sabha Shivraj Patil, Speaker of Maldives Citizen Majlis Abdullah Hameed, Nepalese Speaker Daman Nath Dhungana, Speaker of Pakistan National Assembly Syed Yousaf Raza, and Speaker of Sri Lanka M H Mohamed were present at the press conference.

Shaikh Razzak Ali said the meeting decided to publish a quarterly journal on activities of parliaments of the SAARC countries.

Replying to a question, he said the meeting did not dis-

cuss matters relating to forming a SAARC parliament like that of Euro-Parliament. He, however, appreciated the idea of forming such of parliament where "we may go deep into the problems" and find solutions.

Answering another question, Shaikh Razzak Ali said chairmanship of the association would rotate like that of SAARC and the host country would bear the responsibility of publishing the journal.

Shaikh Razzak Ali said the idea of forming the association was mooted by the Speaker of Sri Lanka and the speakers of the SAARC countries discussed the aims and objectives of the organisation in Colombo in 1991.

Giving a background of the association, Sri Lankan Speaker M H Mohamed said in the inaugural meeting held in Colombo it was decided that "we shall have a charter and rules."

He said the charter was ratified at a meeting of the Speakers of South Asian countries held in Nepal and now the rules were ratified in Dhaka.



Firemen battle a raging blaze caused by rockets fired by factions opposing Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani crashed into the bazar opposite Kabul's famous Pul-i-Keshi Mosque yesterday.

## Turkish bombs kill 9 Iranians

NICOSIA (Cyprus), Jan 29: Turkish rocket and bomb attacks against Kurdish positions in northern Iraq landed on border villages in Iran, killing nine and injuring 19 Iranians, Tehran radio reported Saturday, reports AP.

The broadcast, monitored in Cyprus, said the attacks Friday were aimed at rebels of the Kurdistan Labour party, which set up an autonomous state in northern Iraq with Western help after the 1991 Gulf War.

Turkey also reported attacks on Kurdish positions in northern Iraq, saying it had information that there were 1,600 rebels fighters in a Kurdish camp targeted by warplanes.

Turkey gave no casualty figures, but said its planes inflicted heavy losses.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry lodged a "severe protest" with the Turkish government, Tehran radio said.

## Rebel jets raid Kabul

KABUL, Jan 29: Rebel jets raided Kabul twice this morning, but the frontlines were quiet and only a handful of long-range rockets were exchanged by factions fighting for and against Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, reports AFP.

The so-called "television-mountain" in the central city, which houses a lot of heavy artillery, was bombed twice by jets of former communist militia warlord Uzbek General Abdul Rashid Dostam.

However, anti-aircraft fire chased two Dostam jets from the northwest Kabul area of Kahir Khana, where a senior Afghan Defence Ministry official told AFP that the state was confident of victory against its rival forces.

"I assure you the state has the upper hand in the fighting. We have no doubt we will win," said General Yunus Qanooni, Political Chief of the Defence Ministry.

Qanooni said the "notorious

## No camps within 400 yds of centres

Any kind of election campaigning, exhibition of posters and setting up of camps within four hundred yards of polling stations in view of four city corporations elections are restricted as per rules, an Election Commission press release said last night, reports BSS.

The press release said that the contesting candidates, their agents or voters will not be allowed to move with vehicle within 400 yards of the polling centres in order to maintain peace and discipline there.

The members of the law enforcing agencies must effectively enforce these directives, the press release said.

## 23 observers

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the ruling party BNP's objection.

Besides, the commission failed to decide on the applications of political parties, including the BNP, the Awami League, the Jamaat and other organisations seeking permission to watch the polls, till the filing of this report at 10 last night.

## DCC polls diary



By Staff Correspondent

Innovation was one of the main concerns of the would be city mayors and ward commissioners. To draw the attention of the voters the candidates went on inventing new devices and novel plots.

Take a ward commissioner candidate of Shidheshwar, for instance. This genius independent candidate televised his electoral pledges. Surprised? Vive la cable TV and vive la white chords that crept inside almost every house of the area. What this candidate did was just make a campaign video and then transmit it through the local cable TV dealer.

Talking about genius. Another candidate tempted all the security guards of his area to resist the rival vote-criers from getting into the houses. All the guards had to do was collect the leaflets from the gates and then dispose those before they could reach the valued voters!

Ingenuity also saved the day at Faridabad in the older part of the city. On Friday evening Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was scheduled to address an election rally. But she did not turn up in due time. The man behind the microphone immediately announced that 'Madam' had to reschedule the meeting because of illar. And when the Prime Minister finally arrived late Friday night, after fasting the whole day, her voice could not reach the audience sitting in the rear. Well, somebody (a rival!) had already disconnected the microphone!

The BNP never failed to blame the opposition Awami League for having taken part in elections under the autocratic government in 1986. This was nothing new. But at Friday's rally, whenever the BNP speakers raised that issue the audience went on whispering, "Chhi chhi, chhi. Hasina tumi eto kharap?" ("Shame, shame, shame... Hasina... you are so bad?"). No doubt they were repeating a popular dialogue of a popular TV drama series.

## RUTA polls tomorrow

RAJSHAHI, Jan 29: Election to the Rajshahi University Teachers' Association (RUTA) will be held on the campus on Monday, reports UNB.

The contest will be confined to white and yellow panels for the 15-member executive committee of the RUTA for the next one year term, said an announcement today.

Prof Rashidul Alam and Nur Mohammad will contest for the posts of President and General Secretary from the white panels while Prof Anisur Rahman and Azizul Islam are nominated by the yellow panels for the posts respectively.

Assistant Prof M A Basar will conduct the election to be held from 8 am to 1 pm.

## The Midnight File

### Iran ends war games in Gulf

NICOSIA, Jan 29: Iran's armed forces have concluded six days of war games, the country's biggest ever in the northern Persian Gulf, news reports said Saturday. Maneuvers involving air, ground and naval forces ranged from amphibious operations to tactical missile deployment, said the Islamic Republic News Agency, monitored in Nicosia, says AP.

### Arafat in Switzerland for talks with Peres

ZURICH, Jan 29: PLO chairman Yasser Arafat arrived in Switzerland today for talks with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres over the implementation of a Palestinian self-Rule Deal. The two men planned to meet later today in the Swiss ski resort of Davos, where they are attending the annual world economic forum, reports Reuter.

### Robert Hue French CP chief

SAINT-OUEN, France, Jan 29: Robert Hue, 47, was elected head of France's Communist Party today succeeding veteran George Marchais who stood down after 22 years. Hue was elected national secretary in a closed-door vote by the party's national committee. Details of the vote were not immediately known, reports Reuter.

## Voters in four cities

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Rajshahi there are seven contestants for mayor and 257 others are running for the 30 positions of ward commissioners.

A total of 17,971 election officials will be engaged in manning the polling centres and will be headed by a presiding officer. The 1366 polling centres, including 737 in Dhaka, 335 in Chittagong, 208 in Khulna and 88 in Rajshahi, will consist of 5,535 polling booths.

Furthermore, 383 first class magistrates, including 205 in Dhaka, have been placed on election duty and empowered to order the arrest of any person on charges of violation of election rules, try him on the spot, fine him and sentence him to jail terms from two to seven years.

Under the special security arrangements 29,772 members of the law enforcing agencies, including police, ansars and the BDR will be deployed in the polling areas of the four city corporations, including 16,000 in Dhaka, 7,500 in the port city, 4,500 in Khulna and 1,900 in Rajshahi.

Eighteen members of five foreign missions — the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, Italy and the Netherlands — are expected to observe the city corporation elections. Several local organisations are also expected to monitor the polls.

Today's local body elections are being held after 20 days of hectic official campaigning, which came to an end at Friday midnight.

Intense door-to-door campaigning took place in all the four cities and in addition to political colleagues, relatives, friends and well wishers of the candidates also campaigned, actively.

Political analysts say that the city corporation polls are crucial and very significant in the current context of national politics.

All major parties have also attached high importance to the polls, which was reflected

## Hasina

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mation or where the centres are located.

The Awami League chief alleged that the President had asked the staff staying in Bangabhaban staff quarters to vote for the ruling party candidates.

Sheikh Hasina regretted that the ruling party had turned down the proposal, supported by most opposition parties, of setting up a national steering committee and an all-party observers' group to oversee the polls.

The AL chief also accused the ruling party of influencing the Election Commission to shift a number of polling centres "in deference to the BNP candidates."

She also said, "We have got information that from today (Saturday) police personnel are also being deployed considering the districts they come from. In this connection, she alleged that police personnel hailing from Gopalganj and Faridpur districts were not being deputed for election duties.

In another accusation, Hasina said that in Ward 75 of Dhaka, a list of 500 voters was found to be bogus."

The Awami League chief claimed that the decision to vote for the Awami League had already been displayed by the massive turnout of people at the AL rally in Dhaka on Friday. "People are with us."

She said the government has become panicky after the 'show of support at the public rally.'

She claimed the government was 'harassing and in some cases forcing the AL supporters to leave their homes with the support of the police.'

Sheikh Hasina said her party believes in institutionalising democracy and practising fairness in elections.

Party General Secretary Zillur Rahman and Awami League's mayoral Candidate for Dhaka, Mohammad Hanif, were present at the meeting.

in the fact that prominent national leaders actively campaigned for their respective candidates. The mainstream parties are taking the polls seriously as a way of showing their electoral strength before the next parliamentary elections due in 1996.

Campaigning during the run-up to the polls was held in an unprecedented peaceful atmosphere, without any major election-related violence being reported.

The Election Commission also went all out in its efforts to ensure a peaceful polling. The commission constantly tried to find innovative ways to keep the campaign atmosphere peaceful. It convened a meeting, for the first time, of all major political parties to agree on a code of conduct to be followed during the polls. The commission also launched a media drive to publicise the election rules and regulations.

The political parties to date have also shown considerable signs of maturity during the run-up to the elections while campaigning for their respective candidates.

Ballot counting is expected to start at the individual polling centres immediately after the closing at 3pm and the results will be directly faxed to the Election Commission. During polling hours the presiding officer will prepare a report on the voter turnout — every hour up to 1pm and after that, at every half-an-hour.

Bangladesh Television will continue its evening transmission until 2 am Monday morning.

## Shantibahini

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The list of 400 families will be returned to the Indian side after scrutiny on February 7 when the second list will be handed over.

In the talks, both teams decided to carry out the repatriation for three days in a week — particularly Saturday, Tuesday and Thursday through Ranghar, a border town of the Khagrachhari hill district.

The repatriation of Chakma refugees was scheduled for June 8, 1993, but it was stalled as the refugees declined to come back until their 13-point demands were met.

## PM

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the SAARC member countries are satisfactory, she observed.

The SAARC chairperson said the relationship among the member countries had strengthened under the aegis of the SAARC as a regional grouping and it was now helping solve various problems through dialogues and discussions.

Begum Zia underscored the need for a growing economic and investment relationship among the member countries and brought to the notice of the SAARC speakers that the South Asian Preferential Trade Arrangement (SAPTA) agreement was signed in the last SAARC summit held in Dhaka for the welfare of the people of the region. She also pointed out that a common programme of action to alleviate poverty had been adopted in the SAARC summit.

Referring to the parliamentary practice in the country, Prime Minister said that different parliamentary standing committees were now smoothly functioning in Bangladesh to help institutionalise democracy in the country.

Begum Zia informed the speakers that she, as the chairperson of the SAARC, would pay visits to the capitals of SAARC countries during the current calendar year.

The speakers apprised the SAARC chairperson of the outcome and deliberations of the Speakers' Council. Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, Speaker of Indian Lok Sabha Shivraj Patil, Speaker of Pakistan National Assembly Syed Yusuf Raza, Speaker of Nepalese Parliament, Daman Nath Dhungana, Speaker of Sri Lankan Parliament M H Mohamed, Speaker of the Citizens' Majlis of the Maldives Abdullah Hameed and Speaker of the National Assembly of Bhutan Dasho Pasang Dorji were present.

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