



Stalemate in JS

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Maudud Ahmed described BNP as a government without leadership and a government non-governance and said its activities and indecisions especially after BNP's debacle in the city elections demonstrate its ineptitude and inefficiency.

Referring to contradictory statements by BNP Ministers and MPs, Maudud asked to know whether Deputy Leader of the House Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury represents the government party in parliament.

The JP leader mentioned the Information Minister's interview with Ittefaq and said the "inner crisis of the government party will further deepen" if the matter is not solved immediately.

He said the Prime Minister has sanctioned whatever Huda said in the interview. The information minister has created new issues through his statement to divert people's eyes from the main issue. The Prime Minister should take an active role in resolving the crisis, he added.

Tofael Ahmed pointed out the conflict in the government party. "Nazmul Huda says question does not arise of his seeking apology when Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury tells the House that Huda has already regretted his utterances."

"This is nothing but a blueprint prepared by the

Huda for party decision

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very angry on me over my Tuesday's statement in Parliament, and in reply I said "no." She did not tell me anything."

"The statement was my personal feeling, it is in no way the opinion of the Prime Minister," he added.

"It is very unfair for the opposition to involve the Prime Minister in the issue," the Information Minister added.

In reply to a question on why he made several press statements which subsequently made the situation more complicated, Huda said "I wanted to clear my position to the nation. My speech was not clearly heard in the noisy House on that day."

Huda defending his position said that the opposition bench was always making issues one after another to disrupt the normal business of the House.

"Problems may be created in the House but it should be resolved in the House," he said adding that "we are learning the role of the opposition from the present opposition parties."

BSS adds: Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah yesterday expressed the hope that the opposition would return to the House by Sunday.

After emerging from a meeting with the combined opposition at the Sangsad Bhaban, the Works Minister,

PM asks partymen

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Huda were present at the meeting which began at 3:30 pm and continued until the evening.

The Prime Minister, while discussing the present crisis arising out of the opposition boycott of Parliament observed that there was lack of coordination among the treasury bench leaders in Parliament, a cabinet minister who attended the meeting told The Daily Star last night.

The BNP chief asked the leaders not to make any statement in the House which might create further controversies, meeting sources said.

She also advised her party colleagues to have consultations with the Deputy Leader of the House, Professor Badruddoza Chowdhury, in Super 301.

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that Clinton had indicated his desire to reinstitute Super 301 by executive order. The congressional source said the announcement could come as soon as today while the administration source said it was expected before the end of the week.

US Trade Representative Mickey Kantor left no doubt Wednesday that the administration clearly favoured reviving the expired Super 301 provisions. He noted that Clinton has repeatedly voiced his support for the campaign for the presidency.

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A fire gutted 20 shacks in a slum at Paikpara, Mirpur in the city Wednesday. — Star photo

Over 20 city shacks gutted

By Staff Correspondent

Over 20 shacks were gutted leaving some 100 people under the open sky at a slum at West Rampura in the city yesterday afternoon.

It was the second fire incident in the capital in two days. Another 20 thatched houses were gutted in a fire that broke out at Mirpur Paikpara Wednesday afternoon.

Yesterday's fire broke out around 3:15 pm and burned the huts into ashes within half an hour.

Witnesses said that local people doused the flame before the fire service personnel reached the scene.

A fire service spokesman in the headquarters said that their vehicles from Tejgaon and Khilgaon were trapped in a massive traffic jam at Malibagh which barred them from reaching the spot on time.

However, the cause of the fire and the extent of loss could not be estimated immediately.

No injury was reported in the incident, said Gulshan police.

Hasina

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has not been any development and welfare of the people. Those who came to power after '75 ruled the country aimlessly and made fortune through corruption, Hasina said.

The Opposition leader said after the fall of Ershad, the people had the expectation that democracy would function and demands of different classes be realised. "But in reality it was reverse. The BNP betrayed with its commitment made to the people in last three years."

Those who joined the party include Raipura thana Jatiya Party President and former upazila chairman Tozammel Hossain Chowdhury Dulal, CBA President of Noakhali Textile Mills Nasiruddin Patwary and General Secretary Abbasuddin Patwary, Raipura thana Jubo Sanghati Acting President Farhad Hossain Milon and Harun-ur-Rasid, Alamgir Hossain and Jasim Mahmud of the BNP.

BSS adds: Hasina yesterday called upon the party workers to consolidate the party's victory in the recently-held city corporation polls for bringing the welfare of the people.

In her brief speech at an iftar party organised by Mohanagari Awami League at a city community centre Sheikh Hasina said that the dream of Bangladesh was to build up an exploitation free Sonar Bangla. She urged upon the partymen, to be more dedicated and disciplined for reaching the cherished goal.

The mayor-elect of the Dhaka City Corporation and party's Mohanagari unit president Mohammad Hanif conveyed his "mubarakbad" on the occasion of the holy Ramadan to the party workers and the city dwellers.

JS discusses Hasina's letter to school authorities

The issue centering the letter to school authorities by the Leader of Opposition claiming her credit for development of educational institutions aided by the World Bank and the ADB came up for discussion once again in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, reports BSS.

The question hour over, Whip Abdul Karim, on a point of order wanted to know whether he represents his constituency or the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina.

Karim said the Leader of the Opposition had claimed that she was responsible for the development of the school in his area through a letter addressed to the headmaster of the institution.

Dhaka for early solution to Ganges problems

Bangladesh High Commissioner in India Farook Sobhan at a symposium in Calcutta called for early solution to problems regarding sharing of the Ganges water, reports UNB.

The Bangladesh Ambassador was addressing as guest of honour a three-day symposium on "South Asian Politics and Development: Bangladesh and India" began in Calcutta at the Great Eastern Hotel Tuesday, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

Organised by the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Calcutta, the symposium was inaugurated by Minister for Land and Reforms Benoy Krishna Chowdhury. KV Raghunatha Reddy, Governor of Indian State of West Bengal presided.

The Bangladesh Ambassador also called for evolving initiatives for ensuring success of SAARC to help reduce tension and expand areas of cooperation among the states of the region.

There is a misconception about insurgency in North Indian region linking Bangladesh, Farook Sobhan said adding that the Bangladesh

government categorically denied the charges published in Indian press. He urged the Indian press to be objective in this regard.

Eminent educationists, politicians and mediamen from Bangladesh are attending the three-day symposium.

Later in the afternoon, the High Commissioner also met Joyoti Basu, Chief Minister of West Bengal at his office at Writers' Building.

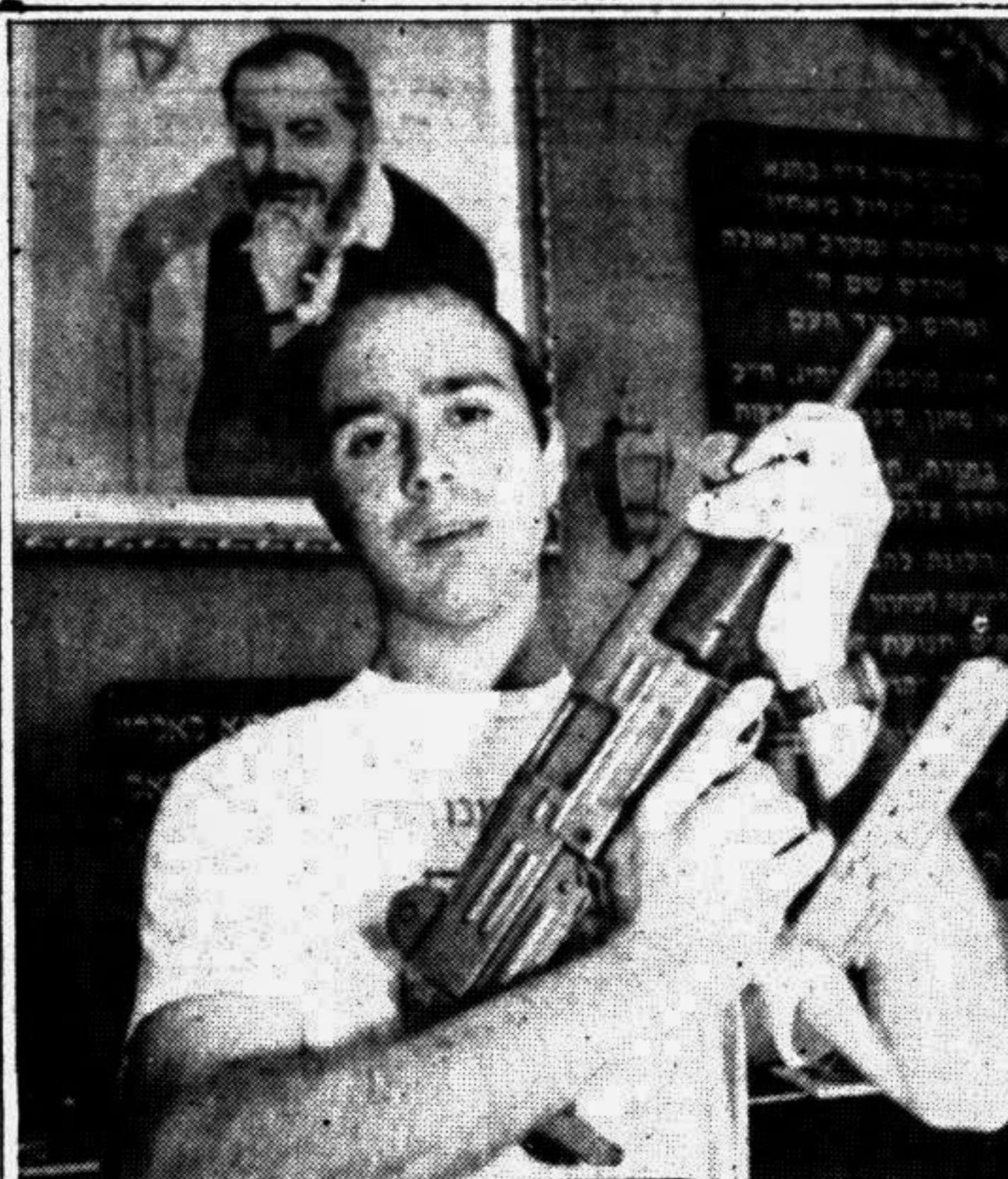
Kashmir

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to the ongoing attacks, the brutality by the Indian security forces against men, women and children in occupied Kashmir.

Conservative lawmaker Toby Jessel, however, took issue with Cox, accusing him and other Labour members of trying to wreck Britain's excellent relationships with the most friendly Commonwealth country.

He asked Major to "remind all the independent observers that terrorists are murderers, and that the most important human right is the right to stay alive."



Israeli Levy Nathan, member of the anti-Arab Kach movement proudly displays his weapon under a poster of its leader Meir Kahane in Jerusalem yesterday. Leaders and some members of this movement went underground as the police is launching a round up following the Hebron massacre. — AFP photo

BUET teachers express solidarity with Prokrichi

Teachers of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology have expressed their solidarity with the demands of the Engineers, Agriculturists, Doctors and BCS Coordination Council, reports UNB.

"We hoped that the steps taken by the government on January 8 for realising the demands will somewhat improve the administrative system," the Teachers' Association of BUET said in a statement yesterday.

WHO tuberculosis unit chief in city

Dr A Kochi, chief of the tuberculosis unit of the World Health Organisation (WHO), arrived here yesterday on a three-day visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

During his stay here, Dr Kochi will acquaint himself with the progress of integrated tuberculosis control programme run jointly by the government and the National Anti-tuberculosis Association of Bangladesh.

He will visit the Centre of Mycobacterial Diseases Control (MBDC) at Shaymali, Dhaka, and meet the high government officials and leaders of the NATAB.

Non-ballottee pilgrims advised to collect visa

Pilgrims willing to perform Hajj outside government management, with international passports, have been advised to manage Hajj visa from the Saudi Embassy in Bangladesh on their own initiative, reports UNB.

Provisions have been made in the Hajj Policy 1994 for performing Hajj outside government management, said an official handout yesterday.

Non-ballottee pilgrims, however, will have to follow some terms and conditions. They will have to carry an amount of 879 Saudi riyal payable on bank draft, as charge of Moallem and Transportation cost in Saudi Arabia.

The pilgrims must also endorse in their passport an amount equivalent to 600 US dollars as cost of their food and personal expenses there.

Each of the non-ballottee pilgrims must carry a return ticket (non-refundable) and their own passport with them. They should not have any other passport with them, the handout further said.

To ensure this, the airport custom checking authorities will check their luggage.

US aircraft leaves

CHITTAGONG, Mar 3: The visiting US navy maritime patrol aircraft left today ending its four-day visit to Bangladesh, an ISPR press release said, reports BSS.

During its stay, the aircraft took part in a joint maritime surveillance exercise with some of the Bangladesh Navy ships in the Bay of Bengal. Other programmes included static display of the aircraft at the Chittagong Airport to a limited number of visitors.

Senior naval officers and officials of the US embassy in Bangladesh were among those present at the airport to bid farewell.

Body recovered from charland in Sylhet

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Mar 3: A body of a businessman was recovered today from a charland on the Surma river near the thana headquarters of Kanaighat.

The Businessman, Paresh Chandra Chanda, 45, owner of a jewellery shop at Kanaighat thana headquarters, had been missing since 10 pm Tuesday while he was returning home from local market.

A number of injuries was seen on the body. The body was sent to the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital morgue.

Dhaka-Yangon 17th meeting in May

The 17th round of official level meeting between Bangladesh and Myanmar will be held in Bangladesh sometime in next May, reports UNB.

Officials in Dhaka said yesterday the date and venue will be announced in due course.

The 16th meeting, held in Sittwe, the capital of the western Rakhine (Arakan) state of Myanmar from February 26-28, decided to accelerate the ongoing repatriation of the Rohingyas from Bangladesh.

Of a quarter million Myanmar Muslims who had fled to Bangladesh in 1991 in the face of persecution, about 55,000 have so far returned to their homeland voluntarily under an agreement between Dhaka and Yangon.

DU Eid vacation begins

By DU Correspondent

A 13-day Eid-ul-Fitr vacation for the Dhaka University students began yesterday.

The administrative offices, libraries and department of offices will, however remain open until March 9.

Meanwhile, different student organisations were busy in campaigning on the campus yesterday for the elections of the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) scheduled to be held on April 12. The university authorities and the Election Commission for the DUCSU and hall union polls were also taking preparations for holding the polls successfully.

According to sources, the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, and the Chhatra League (M-I) will decide their panels for the elections before Eid.

Classes in the varsity will resume March 19.

Hamilton, Saifur discuss economic activities

The visiting Director of World Bank for South Asian countries Mrs Ann Hamilton had a meeting with Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman at his secretariat office here yesterday, reports BSS.

The discussions, which lasted over two hours, covered entire economic activities with particular emphasis on main topics, meeting sources said.

The topics included preparation of country economic memorandum being done by a World Bank mission now visiting Bangladesh, preparation of Bangladesh for Aid Group meeting to be held in Paris from April 19 to 20 and the World Bank projects in the country both ongoing and on the pipeline.

The World Bank Director emphasised the need for raising investment particularly in export-led manufacturing enterprises, further deregulating government policy to make private sector more effective and creating an enabling environment for domestic and overseas investors in infrastructures and utilities.

Saifur leaves for London today

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman leaves Dhaka today for London on way to Canada and the USA, reports BSS.

The Finance Minister is visiting Ottawa at the official invitation of his Canadian counterpart Paul Martin. Rahman is leading a two-member delegation.

The Midnight File

ANC agrees to infl mediation

JOHANNESBURG, Mar 3: The African National Congress (ANC) today agreed to international mediation on its constitutional dispute with South Africa's Conservative Freedom Alliance, an ANC spokesman said. The concession, approved this afternoon by the ANC's decision-making national working committee, paves the way for an all-inclusive political settlement in the country, reports AFP.

Police raid home of Sharif's aide

ISLAMABAD, Mar 3: Police raided the home of a key aide of Pakistani opposition leader Nawaz Sharif here today to arrest a free-lance journalist, the official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) said. They surrounded and entered the residence of Mushahid Hussain, information secretary of the main opposition Pakistan Muslim League (PML), APP said. The journalist, who works part-time at the PML's media centre in Islamabad, was wanted by the police for alleged involvement in a case of manhandling of an editor of a local daily, reports APP.

'Women should have right to abortion'

Women should have access to safe contraception and legal abortion under broader health care and their needs should be addressed on their own merits, reports UNB.

This was stated in the declaration of a symposium on people's perspective on population held in Comilla from December 12-15 last year, released at a day-long discussion meeting in Dhaka yesterday.

Participants from 23 countries had attended the symposium preparatory to a UNFPA sponsored conference on "World Population and Development" due to be held in Egypt next September.

The declaration opposed population policy and said in the name of Structural Adjustment Programmes, World Bank and IMF dictated prescriptions in which Third World countries have to sacrifice health and food subsidies.

Under the adjustment programme, it said, Third World countries' public health and welfare infrastructure is systematically dismantled and privatised. This reduced health delivery services.

The poor, particularly poor women, are the main victims.

ZIA

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found hidden in Nazmul's briefcase at the time of scanning at the security gate of the departure lounge.

Nazmul was sent to the Cantonment police custody and his passport (E-863307) was seized.

He is likely to be produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court today.

PM's Tokyo visit

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boost its image of democracy and political stability."

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's itinerary includes an audience with the Emperor and meetings with the Japanese Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister. The Japanese Emperor will host a lunch while Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa a banquet in honour of the Bangladesh Prime Minister and her delegation.

Japan is the largest donor to Bangladesh. Dhaka received an aid of nearly 300 million US dollars annually during the last few years. This figure is expected to double in the current year as Bangladesh is expecting a Japanese credit of over 700 million US dollars including a 200 million dollars credit for the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge project.

JS adjourned

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question, hour as opposition lawmakers continued to stay away from the House protesting certain 'derogatory' remarks of the Information Minister on Tuesday.

Attendance of treasury bench members was also poor. Only one resolution of BNP member Neyamatullah Sabu was introduced in the House yesterday while a private bill — The Muslim Family Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1993 — of another treasury bench member Begum Farida Rahman was deferred for consideration as the Law Minister was not present.

Telephone

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nance of rural telephones and special funds were allocated for any such work.

Some of the divisions have already run dry of their allocations for maintenance, sources said.

"The maintenance work has slowed down", a top BTB Engineer said. "Maintenance is a round-the-clock job and without overtime bills, the mechanics are reluctant to work."

When contacted, the Chairman of the BTB, Fazlur Rahman said, some divisions may face fund shortages because of a tight budget. "We had to study all sides for the city's maintenance budget and it was made accordingly," he maintained.

of this global policy every where," the declaration said adding, "We want planned family not population control which was virtually attributed."

The indigenous people are subjected to coercive methods of fertility control in order to appropriate their land, commons, resources, and culture. Their traditional family planning and health practices are described in favour of modern technology and practices that result in their extermination, the declaration said.

It expressed concern over the plight of people with disabilities who are often subjected to physical abuse and are being used for experimentation and implementation for contraceptive drugs and devices such as DepoProvera and NORPLANT.

"We say no to amniocentesis; no to sex predetermination; no to embryo biopsy and the in-vitro fertilisation technology that makes human embryos available for manipulation. We further oppose the industrialisation and commercialisation of reproduction in the surrogate mother, in vitro fertilisation and sex pre-determination clinics opened by new entrepreneurs."

3 mayors

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Ward Commissioners-elect of the four cities also on March 10 at the ICC auditorium. However, sources said, an official decision to this effect would be taken next Saturday, and accordingly, the commissioners-elect would be invited to join the ceremony.

The Election Commission yesterday scheduled March 5 for declaring the official results of the DCC elections. The Gazette Notification on the results would be made within the shortest possible time, an EC official informed this correspondent.

As per rule, the authorities are obliged to conduct the oath of offices of the elected mayors and commissioners within 30 days of the publication of the gazetted results. The results of Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi city corporation polls were published in the gazette on February 10 making it obligatory for the authorities to complete the swearing-in of the elected mayors and commissioners of these three cities by March 12 next.

The mayors of the four major cities have been elected through direct ballots for the first time this year whereas they were appointed by the government until the city corporation ordinance was amended late last year.

The appointed mayors were administered oaths by the President. And also this is for the first time that the Prime Minister is going to conduct the swearing-in of the mayors with the change in the form of government from the Presidential System to the Parliamentary System.

Hanif

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date Abdul Malek got 65 votes while A T M Azharul Islam of the Jamaat-e-Islami 107 and Manzurul Ahsan Khan of the Left parties 89.

According to final unofficial results available from the Election Commission, the number of total votes secured by Malek are 61,889, A T M Azhar-35,558 and Manzur-5292.

The results of the DCC elections would be published in the official gazette soon after the announcement of the results by the Returning Officer. The results of Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi city polls were gazetted on February 10 last.

Elections to the offices of mayors and commissioners of all the four city corporations were held simultaneously on January 30 this year.

This is for the first time the mayors of four major cities had been elected through direct voting. Previously, they were appointed by the government.