

Dhaka condemns Hebron massacre at UN council

Bangladesh Permanent Representative (PR) to the United Nations Reaz Rahman strongly condemned the Hebron massacre in the occupied Arab territories in the UN Security Council meeting on Wednesday, according to a message received here yesterday, reports BSS.

Rahman said "Bangladesh is party to and fully endorses the statements of OIC and NAM member countries respectively that has urged, inter alia, the immediate convening of the council meeting. We believe that its focus must be directed to two crucial elements — to fix responsibility and to take purposeful remedial measures."

While condemning the heinous incident, he said, "We express our deepest sympathy to the bereaved families of the innocent victims of this senseless tragedy."

He said whether this was an insane act of a lone religious fanatic or done in conspiracy and collusion with his co-settlers or others is not the question at issue. The responsibility for protecting the Palestinian population and for anticipating and preventing such acts lies squarely upon the occupying power under the Fourth Geneva Convention which extends to all occupied Palestinian territories and of which Al-Quds Al-Sharif, holy Jerusalem, is an integral part thereof, he said.

He further said in the volatile situation prevailing in the occupied territories and in the face of repeated outrages that such protection was absent and needed to be supplemented by an international

JS stalemate

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The Opposition leaders told the treasury bench delegation that they would communicate their decision later.

Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim, while briefing newsmen after the meeting, said the government proposal was not acceptable to them.

Reiterating their demand for the Information Minister's 'unqualified apology', Nasim, however, said they would meet again this morning to discuss the situation.

Meanwhile, the Opposition leaders have decided not to attend today's meeting of the JS business advisory committee. Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, chairman of the committee, convened the meeting to decide the duration of the current session of Parliament.

According to an understanding reached earlier, the session is scheduled to be prorogued on the 7th of this month. Opposition leaders say it is useless to attend the advisory committee meeting especially when they were boycotting the session.

During the parleys yesterday, Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah, Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and acting Chief Whip Mahbubul Alam Tara represented the treasury bench. The Opposition was represented by their Deputy Leader Abdus Samad Azad, Tofael Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim and Sajeda Chowdhury of the Awami League, Moudud Ahmed of the Jatiya Party, Sheikh Anser Ali of the Jamaat and Rashed Khan Menon of the Workers' Party.

Mayor-elect Hanif speaks

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Asked if he expected to get the cooperation and support of the ruling party for the development activities as an Opposition candidate, Hanif replied, "I definitely hope I will get the necessary support. If the government helps, the city's progress will also benefit them. It will also allow them to pick some bonus out of our good work. On the other hand if it does not, this will automatically be exposed to the public, who will not take it kindly."

"I will personally seek financial support from the donor agencies if I face problems of funds from the government," he said.

Giving his own evaluation of the election outcome, Hanif felt the corporation elections may not have fully reflected the political sentiments of the people since they were local body elections but said, definitely the results will influence the next elections.

Hanif said he would not increase holding taxes or any corporation fees for the next five years. He, however, said that taxes will be increased. He also assured that if there were any cases of higher tax assessment in the past the taxpayers could expect a downward readjustment.

Responding to a question as to how he hoped to carry out development work without increasing taxes, Hanif said he would cut down all unproductive expenditures.

The mayor-elect felt that the capital city badly required

presence. The horror in Al-Khalil represents yet another major lapse.

Ambassador Rahman said encroachment of militant settlers, indiscriminate arming of these settlers without any check and encouragement of their increased presence was an invitation to inevitable violence. He said remedial measures instituted by the government of Israel following this act appear merely to paper the cracks. The policy of repression against the Palestinians continues unabated as evidenced by subsequent deaths and numerous injured. The issue is tangible protection and the prevention of any recurrence of such atrocities. Any solution, must address the real issues and not merely return to the status quo ante.

Canadian official

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Dhaka is expected to propose withdrawal of quota system in garment export and increase in investment in Bangladesh in view of its open market policy.

The visit will also provide the two countries with an opportunity to review the bilateral trade.

Bangladesh exported commodities worth 44.38 million US dollars to Canada against the imports totalling 12.62 million US dollars in 1992-93.

Bangladesh mainly exports readymade garments, jute and jute goods, handicraft, rayon yarn and frozen fish and imports wheat, machinery, industrial commodities and chemicals from Canada.

Canada, the third largest donor for Bangladesh, has provided assistance totalling Tk 200 crore in agriculture, rural development, water resources, energy, transportation and population control sectors since independence.

Ershad

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members, he was not being allowed to attend the House. As a result, the petitioner and others who voted Ershad to Parliament remained unrepresented in the administration through elected representatives.

The notice quoted Article 11, 19 and 44 of the Constitution relating to guarantee to fundamental human rights and effective participation through elected representatives in administration at all levels.

Under the circumstances, the petitioner demanded justice either by allowing Ershad to represent him and the people of Rangpur-I in Parliament or cancelling his membership allowing the electorate of Gangachara and Rangpur Sadar thanas to elect their new representative to Parliament.

The lawyer, on behalf of the petitioner, gave the authorities 7 days to meet the demand. Otherwise, a writ petition will be filed in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court on expiry of the deadline.

Besides the Speaker, copies of the notice were served on the Secretary to the Prime Minister's Secretariat, the Secretary to the Law Ministry and the Secretary to the Home Ministry.

When contacted, advocate Hafiz Uddin Ahmed told UNB that the notice was mailed yesterday.

more civic facilities like public toilets, more educational institutions, parks, places for recreation and community centres. He assured that once he takes office he would take up programmes for extending the facilities as far as funds permitted.

What about implementing the AL's party programmes as mayor?

Hanif assured that he would not be a prisoner of the party so far running the Corporation is concerned. However he said when national programmes are taken, by the Awami League it would be his duty as the city chief of his party to see that those are implemented.

Asked if the number of hartals would be reduced since this would reflect upon his leadership, the soft-spoken Hanif replied wryly, "Hartal is sometimes a beneficial political weapon of protest and sometimes it is also a bane."

He, however, added, "I hope one does not have to resort to hartals." He also pointed out that his party had called a hartal, which was limited to Lalbagh only, and not the entire city in protest against the post-polls carnage.

Asked about the secret of his success, he responded with humility: "It is the will of the Almighty and the wishes of the people."

Asked again what was the most formidable challenge before him, Hanif smilingly replied: "To be able to retain and consolidate the victory."

Text of the interview will be published tomorrow.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia consoling the widow of police Sergeant Hasanul Farhad who was killed at the JN College in the city at the latter's Shahjahanpur residence

— PID photo

Chakmas settling down in familiar environment

Chakma returnees from the Indian camps are gradually settling down in the familiar environment of their villages in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Officials said 379 families, having 1845 people in all, who came back on four days, February 15, 17, 21 and 22, are getting rehabilitated fully or partially.

They said that with the help from the government as well as neighbouring India, the returnees were quickly getting back to the life they had been used to.

Of those who already have gone back to their villages, 173 families are back in Dighinala, 120 in Panchhara, 34 in Matiranga, 27 at Khagrachari, 14 at Manikchhari, seven at Ramgarh and two families at Mahalchhari.

With the assistance provided by the government in cash and kind and the zeal of the returnees, some have already rebuilt their houses while many more moving positively ahead.

The Chakmas crossed the

Thais: DEPZ

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Zone which was now at the planning stage.

Vannasin also informed the Prime Minister that Thai investors had also shown keen interest to set up joint venture modern hospitals in Bangladesh to help improve the healthcare facilities.

The Thai envoy thanked the government for extending extensive cooperation to him during his two and a half years stay in Dhaka.

Begum Zia thanked the Thai ambassador for playing his role in improving the bilateral relations and laid stress on strengthening further the trade, economic and diplomatic ties between the two friendly countries.

The Prime Minister also appreciated the Thai envoy's role in encouraging the Thai investors to invest in Bangladesh and hoped that the flow of Thai private investment into the country would be manifold in the days ahead.

Begum Zia also conveyed through the ambassador her felicitation to the Thai King and the Prime Minister.

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Chief White House lawyer resigns

WASHINGTON, Mar 5: Bernard Nussbaum, the chief White House lawyer, quit today, reports AFP.

His resignation follows recent revelations he received a private briefing from officials investigating a failed Arkansas bank with links to the Clintons.

President Bill Clinton, concerned that such meeting could give the appearance of a conflict of interest, made it clear earlier this week that he was upset the briefing had taken place.

Concern at fresh agitation by jute workers

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Jute Spinners Association (BJSAs) in a statement yesterday expressed concern over fresh agitations by the jute mills' workers.

The Patkai Sramik Karmachari Sangram Parishad yesterday began a two-day demonstration at the country's private sector jute mills demanding implementation of the government-announced wage award.

The BJSAs statement observed that the workers' agitation would disrupt production and destabilise the jute mills.

It reminded the agitating workers that the government-announced wages were applicable only to the public sector jute mills.

These watches were seized from the luggage of two incoming passengers from Hong Kong.

They are Abdul Huq of Patia under Tahirpur thana of Sunamganj district and Riazuddin of Golapganj thana in Sylhet district.

Commissioners

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all the 90 wards.

The city corporation polls in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna were held simultaneously on January 30 last.

Repoling in the centres where the election or results were cancelled on grounds of violence and irregularities was completed last Thursday.

The publication of the DCC results in the official gazette is expected within a couple of days.

The mayor and the commissioners of the DCC are likely to take their oaths on March 10 if the gazette is published.

During the current month, over 81,000 tons of wheat will arrive from abroad while in the months of April, May and June, over 1.75,000 tons, 1.57,000 tons and 54,000 tons respectively are scheduled to arrive in the country. In other words, Bangladesh will be receiving a total of 4.64,126 tons of wheat from outside.

With these arrivals, Bangladesh will have 12,38,126 tons of foodgrain in stock.

Bangladesh government has, therefore, adequate food reserve to meet any crisis, Shawkat noted with confidence.

The government has already fixed March 10 for oathing of the mayors and commissioners-elect of Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi.

Press Note

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arms and a huge quantity of ammunition from the spot.

The government with deep regret said that while attempting to bring the situation under control, police sergeant Mohammad Hashan Farhad received serious injuries on his chest when bullets from firearms of the clashing miscreants hit him. He was immediately rushed to the hospital. The doctors on duty in operation theatre declared him dead.

The government expressed deep sorrow at the death of sergeant Farhad and conveyed heartfelt sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

The Late Chowdhury survived his wife and three daughters. His eldest son-in-law is Prof Iqbal Mahmood, a former minister.

He was buried at the Zimpur graveyard. His qul khawat will be held on Monday after Asr prayers at his residence at 449, Greenway, Maghabazar.

The government expressed that the conscious section of the public would come forward along with the members of the law enforcing agencies to resist such malicious incident so that repetition of such incident could not be occurred in future.

The job in hand."

Relying to a question, she said the government's privatisation drive was "disappointingly slow. We would like to see it go faster and I have reasons to believe that it will pick up soon."

A successful privatisation drive would signal that the massive losses sustained in the public sector would be better used elsewhere and it would make more room for the private sector.

Shekhar Shah, when asked, noted that the "Real problem of the financial sector is structural." He added that although the financial loan courts have been set up to recover the bad debts, because of the question of jurisdiction it takes a long time to implement a verdict.

Willoughby also agreed that the steadily widening discussion on economic policies is "very desirable" for building a consensus, but reminded: "A government also has to govern and it has to move on".

World Bank Director Ms Hamilton further added that the right balance has to be struck between participation and paralysis because the prevailing opportunity is too important and Bangladesh must grab it now, it cannot wait.

"It is not the correct role of Parliament to debate every single issue," she said. "We cannot second guess the government; it has to get on with

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