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Saifur tells Parliament Opposition trying to jeopardise economy

By Staff Correspondent Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday accused the major opposition parties in Parliament of making deliberate attempts to jeopardise the process of economic development in the name of struggle for democracy.

"But the present Opposition in Parliament is out to disrupt the government initiatives for creating a congenial investment climate," Saifur Rahman said.

He told the House that in a parliamentary democracy, the Opposition was supposed to make constructive criticism of the ruling party to help the government implement programmes for socio-economic development in a healthy atmosphere.

Turning to the proposed budget, the finance minister said its main objective was poverty alleviation and human resource development.

Implementation of the proposed budget would definitely help lay the foundation of a dynamic economy in the country, he said.

The Speaker adjourned the session at 9:30 pm. It resumes at 3:00 this afternoon.

Salam questions neutrality

From Page 1 Col 5 "I don't find any neutrality" in their proposed caretaker government for conducting general elections, he told reporters at the Parliament lobby yesterday evening.

In reply to a question, the BNP Secretary General said the joint declaration of three alliances had spelt out the constitutional guidelines and accordingly a neutral government was set up on the basis of consensus.

To a question, he said the government was planning to introduce a bill in the current session seeking amendment of existing election rules and laws to enhance power of the Election Commission and ensure a fool-proof election system.

"Nowhere a government conducts election, it is the Election Commission," Talukder said, adding the Election Commission is an independent body and a fair election could be guaranteed by enhancing its power and amending certain laws and rules.

On the reported government move to bring a bill with a provision for the Prime Minister to retain her office while other ministers will resign before election, he said "No one can go beyond the jurisdiction of the Constitution" which is the locus standi of Parliament, government, opposition and the cabinet.

He, however, said there are many conventions in countries where parliamentary democracy is functioning over the years. "Without going beyond the sanctions of law, we can also think of creating convention."



Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina presiding over an emergency meeting of her party's working committee at her Minto Road residence in the city yesterday. — Star photo

AL programme

From Page 1 Col 4 conspiracy rebuffing people's demand for a non-partisan caretaker government. It also criticised the ruling BNP for ignoring the opposition deadline, June 26, for placing in Parliament a bill on caretaker government.

The meeting in a resolution alleged that the government made Parliament ineffective by blocking the path for the opposition to join Parliament and ignoring people's demand.

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Professionalism key to efficient management

A top management expert from India has cautioned that privatisation efforts might founder if the entrepreneurs fail to behave efficiently, reports UNB.

"Let us not assume that privatisation will be the key to development. It can be an opportunity or a calamity. The consequence depends on how efficient management an entrepreneur can ensure in his company," said Sharu S Rangnekar.

Rangnekar, rated as one of the top management consultants in the sub-continent, told a lecture session of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) that "people will certainly point fingers at you if you fail, as they did, at the crippling public sector."

He observed that development depends not on any particular ideology but on three factors — productivity, quality and innovation.

An intuitive manager can ensure those factors in a company, said Rangnekar, who served in senior management positions of a number of giant companies in India, including Union Carbide.

The consultant advised the local entrepreneurs to employ professional managers instead of depending on family members in achieving success. He cited examples from his own country where some famous companies, including the Birlas and Modis, are facing crises because of rivalries among the family members to capture the management positions.

To get the best out of the professional managers, the expert recommended three actions on the part of the owners — giving managers a sense of ownership, involving them in decision-making so that they feel themselves important, and training for managers.

DCCI President A Rob Chowdhury presided over the lecture programme.

DMC students observe token strike

The interne doctors of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) observed a three hour strike yesterday protesting Sunday's attack on the medical college by some outsiders.

They will also abstain from duties from 8 am to 2 pm today and will observe a day-long strike on July 2.

On Monday the authorities had closed the Dhaka Medical College for an indefinite period and asked the residential students to vacate their halls following violence over the death of a medical student in a road accident in Sylhet on Sunday.

Both the interne doctors and students are demanding punishment to the 'killers' and of those who attacked the college on Sunday. The students demanded resignation of the college principal, Dr Zahurul Mawla Chowdhury.

Meanwhile, the Academic Council of Dhaka Medical College met yesterday but the meeting ended after two hours without taking any decision on the issue, said a source. The council would meet again today (Wednesday), the source added.

The students also held a press conference at the Dhaka Medical College Students Union (Dhamecu) office yesterday.

Processionists clash with cops: 12 hurt

About a dozen people, including a police officer, were injured when processionists clashed with police near the Jatiya Press Club and in Purana Paltan areas in the city yesterday evening.

Police resorted to baton charge and lobbed several rounds of teargas shells to disperse the mob who hurled stones at police around 7 pm. Police picked up five people from the scene.

According to witnesses, the clashes ensued when police barricaded the processionists who were marching towards the Jatiya Press Club chanting slogans in favour of the June 30 hartal. Police intercepted them near Purana Paltan, they added.

Nirmul body

and its affiliated bodies would wear black badges and hoist black flags. The committee also supported tomorrow's hartal call by the Sampradayaikata Birodhi Chhatra Samaj in a bid to resist the activities of anti-progressive and anti-Liberation forces in the country.

The committee will hold condolence meetings and offer prayers for the peace of the departed soul.

It will receive the body of Jahana Imam at Zia International Airport on July 4 and observe July 6 as a "national mourning day."

The rally, presided over by Kazi Aref Ahmed, was addressed by Begum Sofia Kamal as chief guest, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Nurul Islam Nahid, Abdur Razzak MP, Nirmal Sen, Principal Ahad Chowdhury, General (ret'd) Saifulah, Bir Uttam.

Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury, the city AL secretary, conducted the rally.

"Follow the ideals of Jahana Imam. Free the country from the liars and the fanatics exploiting religion, and the killers of '71," Sofia Kamal urged the people.

The Midnight File AP photographer shot in Rwanda

KIGALI, Rwanda, June 28: An Associated Press photographer was shot and slightly wounded Tuesday in Kigali, where he was covering the Rwandan civil war. Nairobi-based photographer Ricardo Mazalan, 29, was hit by a stray bullet as he sat in his room at the capital's Meridien Hotel. Mazalan received a flesh wound in the right thigh, a United Nations spokesman said. The United Nations planned to evacuate him to Nairobi, Kenya, on Wednesday, reports AP.

ESAF successor

From Page 1 Col 3 worth of the country's imports. Until a policy framework paper is finalised with the IMF, Bangladesh would not be able to draw on the 392.5 million special drawing rights (SDR) or about 549.5 million dollars quota set aside for the country under the three-year new programme initiated this year. The ministry source, however, acknowledged that preliminary discussions with the IMF have already been initiated, but that nothing has been finalised yet.

A draft policy framework paper prepared by the Fund, was discussed when an IMF mission visited Dhaka last month. The future arrangements with the IMF would be further discussed during another visit by a mission from Washington in September.

Earlier in February this year, the executive board of the IMF decided to initiate operations under the enlarged and extended ESAF trust, making another six countries eligible, in addition to the present 72, for the concessional loans.

According to an IMF press release, the fund "support will be for a three-year comprehensive structural adjustment programme" outlined in a policy framework paper and within this framework, detailed yearly policy programmes are formulated and supported by ESAF arrangements, under which loan disbursements are made. The World Bank also provides concessional loans from the International Development Association (IDA) within this framework.

Under the extended ESAF programme greater attention would be given to setting up social safety nets for the vulnerable groups of the population, integrating contingency mechanisms to protect adjustment programmes against adverse external shocks and on well-targeted technical assistance programmes to address problems of administrative inefficiency which, the Fund said, remains a severe constraint in most countries.

A total of five billion SDR (seven billion dollars) has been targeted as lending capital under the extended facility with a subsidised interest rate of 0.5 per cent per annum and repayable within five to 10 years.

Bangladesh received concessional loans under both the structural adjustment facility (SAF), 201.25 million SDR, and the ESAF, 345 million SDR, programmes initiated in 1986 and 1987 respectively.

A recent IMF study indicates that the inflation rate dropped to 5.1 per cent in mid-1992 compared with 10.2 per cent during the post SAF period while export growth jumped from five per cent to 13.9 per cent and import volume declined from 5.9 per cent to 4.1 per cent during the same period.

On the other hand, the real GDP growth rate declined from 4.2 per cent in the post-SAF period to 3.2 per cent in 1992 while the investment to GDP ratio dropped from 12.2 per cent to 11.9 per cent and the domestic savings rate also declined from 4.8 per cent of the GDP to 4.3 per cent over the same period.

HC rule From Page 1 Col 4 Bangladesh in Parliament and in making legislations, as per provisions of Article 65 of the Constitution.

All opposition members of the Jatiya Sangsad have been boycotting the sessions demanding a constitutional provision for holding future elections under a non-partisan caretaker government. The absence of the opposition parties in parliament is a clear violation of the constitution, the petition contended.

It said that although the opposition members of Parliament have not been attending the sessions since March 1, they were illegally drawing their salaries, daily allowances and enjoying the housing and telephone facilities and other benefits, thereby causing financial loss to the exchequer.

Mohammad Ali, Bar-at-Law appeared on behalf of the petitioner.

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HBFC borrowers threaten agitation

The association of borrowers of the House Building Finance Corporation will go for an agitation soon if their demands for reducing loan instalments and simple interest are not accepted.

This was said by leaders of the association at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

The association leaders also called upon the government to allocate more funds for the housing sector and dispense with the system of realising lump sum interest during the period of construction of houses. Otherwise, they will start an agitation soon, they said.

The press conference was addressed by Sanaullah Noori, Barrister Rabeya Bhuiyan and Fazlul Huq, president and chairman of the advisory council and secretary general respectively of the association.

Sanaullah Noori said shelter is a fundamental right of the people and hence the borrowers of HBFC should not be subjected to any harassment and exploitation under the pretext of loan recovery.

Barrister Rabeya Bhuiyan called for giving due attention to the housing sector.

New Japanese PM likely today

TOKYO, June 28: Japan's ruling coalition parties agreed that a new Prime Minister should be appointed in parliament by the end of the current session which finishes tomorrow. Morihiro Hosokawa, leader of coalition member the Japan New Party, told reporters, reports Reuters.

He was speaking after emerging from a meeting of coalition party leaders on how to seek alliance with the Socialist Party.

BML backs hartal

The Bangladesh Muslim League has extended support to the dawn-to-dusk hartal on Thursday, called by the Committee for Resisting Anti-Islamic and Anti-State Activities, reports UNB.

Addressing a rally at the Paltan crossing last afternoon, party leader M A Matin called upon Islam loving forces to make the hartal call a success.

He also called on all Islamic forces to unite under a common banner for resisting blasphemy and conspiracies against Islam.

HBFC borrowers threaten agitation

Jubo League's torch procession today

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9 Nigerian World Cup stars seek asylum in US

Mexico, Ireland thru'

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