

JMB rehabilitation project okayed

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) yesterday approved various projects, including a new phase of EPI and revised Jamuna Bridge rehabilitation project, reports UNB.

The ECNEC in a meeting with Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman in the chair approved the third phase of the Extended Programme of Immunization (EPI-III) at a cost of Tk 168 crore that includes a foreign exchange component of Tk 78 crore.

4 killed in Pabna road accident

PABNA, June 29: Four people were killed and 30 injured when a night coach tumbled into a road side ditch in Bera thana on the Bogra-Nagarbari highway early today, reports UNB.

Survivors said the bus fell into the ditch while its driver tried to give passage to a truck at 5:30 am.

Hospital sources said Hanan Ali, 25, Moazzem Hossain, 42, died on the spot while Rayezuddin, 28, and Ekabbar Hossain succumbed to injuries on way to the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Of the injured 17 were admitted to the Bera Health Complex and four rushed to Dhaka Pangu Hospital with serious injuries.

Jamaat office

Police Station began the hour-and-a-half long raid at the 48/1 Purana Palan office of Jamaat at 5:30 am.

In a statement later in the day, city Amir of the party, A T M Azharul Islam, condemned the 'unwarranted' police action.

Police said they found 1026 gajari-wood sticks, 120 bamboo sticks, 65 empty zarda containers, usually used to make explosive devices and around five to seven maunds of boulder stones from the office premises.

According to police, most of the seized materials were found on the roof of the two-storied building while some boulders were found downstairs.

As the seized materials were not found in anybody's possession, police said, none was arrested.

The Jamaat city chief asserted that during the raid police seized placards, banners, festoons and poles used to carry party flags for use in today's hartal.

PM's call to Opposition

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"It is unconstitutional and sheer disrespect to people's verdict."

Begum Zia in her 25-minute speech noted that the new budget, the fourth under this government, since it assumed power in 1991, had earmarked Tk 11,000 crore for the Annual Development Programme and identified education, health, human development and communication sectors as priority areas.

She said when the fragile economy has been reformed, the per capita income has risen and employment opportunities increased, a some political parties were creating anarchy to disrupt the ongoing development programmes.

Begum Zia recalled that the people from all walks of life and professions had united to restore democracy after nine years of misrule. "After nine years of struggle, we were able to restore democracy now we are going to restructure electoral process," she added.

"Autocrats can never help institutionalise the democratic process," Begum Zia said.

The spirit of the historic 12th amendment to the Constitution was that Parliament would be the centre of all activities, she said.

The Prime Minister said that the opposition parties had a common role to make Par-

purpose Bridge rehabilitation project with involvement of Tk 163 crore was also approved by the ECNEC meeting. The amount includes Tk 95 crore to rehabilitate people who are affected by the Jamuna Bridge project.

The rest of the amount, Tk 68 crore, will be kept in the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) as collateral for granting credits to the affected persons.

The ECNEC also approved a Tk 275 crore revised coastal embankment construction and rehabilitation project. The project aimed at construction and repair of the infrastructure of the six polders (embankment) in coastal areas which were affected by the cyclone and tidal surge of April 29 in 1991.

Agriculture Minister Major General (ret'd) M Majid-ul-Haq, LGRD Minister Abdus Salam Taukder, Communications Minister Olf Ahmad, Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam, Religious Affairs Minister Muhammad Keramat Ali, State Minister for Planning Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan, concerned secretaries and members of the Planning Commission attended the meeting.

BSP rally today

The Bangladesh Sangbad-patra Parishad (BSP) will hold a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club at 11:00 am today to protest attack on some newspaper offices by the "anti-liberation fundamentalist forces" and their "undemocratic programmes," reports UNB.

Moudud

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cept it," he said.

About the formula for a caretaker government enunciated Monday by the Opposition, Moudud Ahmed said "It is a framework, not a bill. It can be changed through negotiations."

He said the government had shut the door to negotiations and the Opposition has no option other than street agitation.

About the government bill tabled yesterday, he said such bills cannot ensure the independence of the Election Commission.

He also said that mere strengthening of the EC cannot ensure fair elections if those are held under a party government.

UNB adds: On the High Court rule nisi served on three opposition leaders, including Moudud himself by boycotting Parliament, he said rights and privileges of a member of Parliament are enshrined in the Constitution.

"It is the fundamental right of an MP to walk out or boycott. We are accountable to our voters and not to anybody else. You cannot take away my rights," Moudud said. The case would be faced in the court, he said.

Regarding today's hartal, the JP leader urged the people to remain calm in the face of any provocation. He hoped that people would not be misled by any provocations by the government. He, however, said people should protest any aspersion on the holy Quran and Sunnah by any quarter.

liament ineffective.

"We believe in dialogue and elections. We think everything is possible through dialogue," she said.

The BNP chief said her party lost the mayoral election in cities like Dhaka and Chittagong. "How could the opposition parties win these elections if these were not fair," she asked.

The Prime Minister said that she had accepted a proposal for debate from the Leader of the Opposition and urged her to take part in it in Jatiya Sangsad. "But she (the Opposition leader) did not respond to my proposal," she added.

Begum Zia regretted that the opposition parties remained absent from such an important session of Parliament like the budget session. "They should have spoken on behalf of their people," she added.

"If the opposition colleagues want development of the country, they should join the Parliament proceedings," the leader of the House said.

Begum Zia said the opposition parties should keep in mind that a minority party cannot form the government. But their outline for a caretaker government suggested that the president will appoint an interim prime minister on the advice of minority parties, she added.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam



The Nirmul Samannaya Committee brought out a procession in the city yesterday to mourn the death of Jahanara Imam. — Star photo

Sangskritik Jote's special squad

By Staff Correspondent

Twelve squads of the Sammitto Sangskritik Jote will monitor today's dawn-to-dusk hartal in the city.

A lawyers' team will monitor the human rights violations, if any, during the hartal hours and will take steps for the release of people arrested by police.

An emergency medical team will be deployed near the Jatiya Press Club for giving first aid to anyone injured.

Charles escapes plane crash

ISLAY, Scotland, June 29: A royal aircraft piloted by Britain's heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles sited off the end of a runway when it landed on the remote Scottish island of Islay today, a palace spokeswoman said, reports Reuters.

Charles was travelling in the BAE 146 four-engined jet from the Queen's Flight for a scheduled visit when he took over the controls to land the plane. No one was injured in the incident.

"The Prince of Wales was landing it at the time," a Palace spokeswoman said.

Clashes over hartal

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war, 29. Asif Barman Biswas, 25, Shimul, 22, Belayet, 22, Aktar, 23, Selim, 22, Nirmal, 25, and Shambhu Kumar Das, 24, of the Nirmul Committee were injured in cracker blasts.

However, none of the Pro-tirodh Committee activists injured in the clash could be traced.

According to witnesses, the clash between the processionists occurred at the No Two Raigate and later spread to the DIT Market, Bangabandhu Sarak, Chamber Road and Ukilpara areas.

Shops and other business establishments of the troubled areas were shut and panic-stricken people ran for safety. The Samannaya Committee office was damaged during the clash. Earlier, two scooters, being used for canvassing support for the hartal, were damaged.

Police were guarding the area to check fresh violence.

Pabna

UNB adds: A series of hand-bomb explosions ended a public meeting of the Towheedi Jamaat, organised near the Chapa Masjid in the town today in support of Thursday's dawn

to dusk hartal. Witnesses said at least 10 people received minor injuries during the blasts of crackers hurled by unknown attackers.

The Towheedi Jamaat blamed the Chhatra Motree, student wing of the Workers Party, and ransacked its office nearby.

The Towheedi Jamaat organised the meeting demanding punishment of controversial writer Taslima Nasreen for alleged blasphemy.

The Nirmul Committee and Jamaat-Shibir activists clashed in the town this evening during campaigning for tomorrow's hartal, leaving about a dozen injured.

Police lathicharged and teargassed the rampaging pickets to disperse them. Police seized some country-made weapons, including Chinese axes and swords from the scene.

At one stage, about 25 cocktails were exploded during clashes and counter-charges. Police lathicharged the Nirmul Committee procession and teargassed the Jamaat-Shibir activists, witnesses said.



A Mexican soccer fan lies injured after a fight broke out among fans June 28 in Mexico City. Another fan lies dead (background) after being hit by exploding firecrackers. Some 150 people were reported injured and three dead during the celebrations after Mexico tied with Italy in the World Cup qualifying match to reach the second round — for the first time in 64 years. — AFP photo

Saudi Arabia shock Belgium

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The English defence in the 1986 quarterfinals. Owairan took the ball from midfielder past, Dirk Medved, sidestepped Michel De Wolf, turned Rudy Smidts around and got off a falling shot past Philippe Albert from about the 6-metre line that flew over goalkeeper Michel Preud'homme.

It was the first goal allowed by Belgium in the World Cup.

The Belgians had the majority of possession in the first half, but no scoring chances until coach Paul Van Himst replaced forward Marc Degryse with Luc Nilis in the 24th minute.

Saudi Arabia had led the Netherlands in their opening Group F game, but allowed two second-half goals, the final one with four minutes remaining to lose 2-1.

In Orlando, Florida Dennis Bergkamp's 43rd-minute goal gave the Netherlands a 1-0 halftime lead over Morocco in the steamy Citrus Bowl.

Bergkamp's goal capped a period of Dutch pressure after a slow start. He took a loose ball in the Moroccan penalty area, feinted two Moroccans with his right foot and nailed the ball into the far corner of the net with his left.

However, two minutes after resumption Hassan Nader proved Dutch celebrations short-lived when he fired home Morocco's equaliser upon a fine cross by substitute midfielder Mustapha Hadji.

Holland in the 78th minute, gratefully snapping up the chance provided by Bergkamp who had crossed from the left for the substitute to shoot home with his left foot.

Five Moroccan players were booked in the first half as their revamped team, showing five changes from their last starting line-up, fought to prevent a third successive World Cup loss after defeats by Belgium and Saudi Arabia.



Saeed Owairan ... Saudi hero.

Veteran Dutch midfielder Jan Waters will miss the clash with Ireland after receiving his second booking of the tournament for fouling Nader in the 30th minute.

Dutch captain Ronald Koeman was also shown the yellow card 11 minutes from the end but Peruvian referee Alberto Tejada Noriega reserved most of his bookings for the Moroccans.

For Belgium, it was a huge disappointment as their coach Paul van Himst had pinned his hopes on avoiding defeat to win the group and stay in Orlando. But they missed a series of well-created chances after dominating much of the

Repatriation body meets Chakma leaders today

KHAGRACHHARI, June 29: The Refugee Repatriation and Rehabilitation Committee meets tribal leaders tomorrow to thrash problems in resuming repatriation of Chakmas from India, reports UNB.

Rashed Khan Menon, MP, will lead the repatriation committee team while Upendra Lal Chakma, president of the Jumma Refugee Welfare Samity, will head the other side at the meeting at the Rangbar Circuit House.

1,845 refugees of 379 families returned home from the camps in Tripura, India in the first phase of repatriation which began on February 15.

Saudi diplomat to seek asylum in Britain

LONDON, June 29: A Saudi Arabian diplomat working in the United States is to seek political asylum in Britain, his lawyer said on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Solicitor Amjad Salfiti said Ahmed Al-Zahrany, a second secretary at the Saudi consulate in Houston, was in hiding in London and preparing his asylum application.

The 34-year-old diplomat decided to seek refuge in Britain after claiming he had been harassed by Saudi officials angry at a book on Saudi politics he had written but whose publication in the Kingdom had been banned some time ago, the lawyer said.

Bomb attack on Purnima: 2 hurt

Two employees of weekly Purnima, a sister publication of the Daily Inqilab, were seriously injured in a bomb attack on its office at Avoydas Lane at 11:30 last night.

Inqilab office informed UNB by telephone that Bacchu, a binder, was injured critically while security guard Karim received serious wounds. Both were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Tk 40.26 cr Barisal pourea budget

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, June 29: A budget of 40 crore 26 lakh and 66,098 for the Barisal Pouro-shabha for the year 1994-95 was announced by its administrator, Ahsan Habib Kamal this evening.

The revenue expenditure for the year has been estimated at Tk 7 crore 51 lakh while the revenue income is expected to be Tk 10 crore 10 lakh and 82,058.

The development expenditure has been estimated at Tk 23 crore 11 lakh and 65,000. No new tax has been proposed in the new budget.

Tofael

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staged boycott of National Assembly. In 1970s, the Opposition in the West Bengal State Assembly boycotted the House for over a year. Such walkout and boycott are regular phenomena in the Indian parliament.

"Walkout and boycott are inherent rights of members of parliament, recognised by parliamentary norms and practices," the Awami League Leader said.

Responding to a government bill providing identity card for voters and measures strengthening the Election Commission, Tofael said this bill would not guarantee free and fair voting keeping a political party in power.

When all the executive powers lie with the Prime Minister the Election Commission will not be able to function independently and enforce its powers, he said.

He referred to the Magura bye-election where the Chief Election Commissioner had just expressed his helplessness in ensuring fair voting and stressed that an impartial election is not possible under a party in power.

About the remarks of some government leaders that the majority party in Parliament has been ignored in the opposition's formula for the formation of caretaker government, he said, "if the government agrees in principle to accept our demand, we are ready to sit with them to work out a consensus modality."

"How can we consult someone who does not believe in the concept of caretaker government?"

In this context, the AL leader said, the caretaker government of Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed was formed without consulting former President Ershad. It was formed on the basis of consensus of the three alliances which had orchestrated the anti-autocracy movement.

Ershad handed over power to that government in the face of mass movement, he said and added, "we will compel the BNP government to concede to our demand through mass movement."

Both the rival groups brought out torch processions in the city, yesterday and the day before in support of their respective hartals. During demonstrations, the groups clashed at different places in the city.

Meanwhile, the government has taken adequate measures to maintain peace. Quoting official sources, the UNB reported that about 10,000 police, Ansars and BDR would be deployed in the city alone to ensure law and order.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police imposed a ban on carrying firearms, explosives, knives, lathis and other harmful materials in the city from Tuesday until further order. Licensed weapons will also come under the prohibition.

The Midnight File

12 more killed in Kashmir

NEW DELHI, June 29: Twelve more people died overnight in Kashmir, as protests today by rightwing Hindus demanding sweeping powers for Indian troops battling Muslim militancy in the state entered its seventh day. The Press Trust of India (PTI) said troops late Tuesday shot dead eight cross-border militants in Kupwara when the Muslim guerrillas entered the Indian zone of divided Kashmir from Pakistan, reports AFP.

UN food for Rwandans

KIGALI, June 29: The United Nations delivered food today to thousands of civilians trapped by fighting on the battered government side of the Rwandan capital Kigali. This is the first food to get access to the Rwandan government side for three weeks, said Rafael Loureiro of the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), reports Reuters.

Action programme for Sylhet Divn tomorrow

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, June 29: A fresh action programme will be launched from July 1 to press the demand for a new administrative division in Sylhet.

The programme includes boycott of Bangladesh Biman flights on domestic and international routes from July 1 to July 31 and stoppage of remittance by Sylhetis living abroad through the Sonali Bank and other nationalised commercial banks during the period.

All parties and organisations in greater Sylhet have extended their support to make the programme a success.

A large number of Sylhetis travelling by air have either changed their travel schedules or the airliner, according to ATAB officials.

Leaders of different front organisations have made vigorous campaigns in the UK, USA and the middle eastern countries to ensure stoppage of remittances during the period.

Meanwhile, a five-member committee formed by the government to explore the feasibility of creating a new administrative division comprising the four districts of greater

Japanese PM

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Outnumbered by Liberal Democrats in the new coalition, however, the Socialists are unlikely to make major changes in Japan's economic and foreign policies.

"The political situation in Japan will calm down for the moment," predicted leading political analyst Minoru Morita.

But he predicted that the Socialist-led Cabinet would be unpopular with a public that has long viewed the Socialists as a group more fit for the opposition than the government.

The initial public reaction to the new coalition was stunned surprise.

"I hear he is a nice person, but he doesn't really have the capacity to be prime minister," said Yoshitomi Hirozo, a 38-year-old company employee on his way home after a long day at the office.

"I can't really view this as a happy ending."

The Liberal Democrats normally would have backed their party president, Yohei Kono, for prime minister. But on Wednesday, LDP leaders offered to back Murayama for prime minister in a last-minute bid to lure the Socialists to their side and gain a parliamentary majority.

The Liberal Democrats are by far the largest party in the lower house, with 206 seats. The Socialists hold 74.

The manoeuvre worked, but it was a bittersweet victory for the conservative Liberal Democrats, who regained power after a year of exile to the opposition benches but now must share it with their longtime rivals.

Although the two groups have put aside their differences for now, since the 1947-48, nine-month term of Japan's last Socialist prime minister, Tetsu Katayama, the main business of the Socialists has been to oppose the conservative governments that ran Japan under the Liberal Democrats.

Now, they must make it their business to run the country together, even though the two parties disagree on most key issues facing Japan.

Hartal today

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Sylhet last April was expected to submit its report by the end of this month.

The committee, headed by Moshfiqur Rahman, Member, Planning Commission visited Sylhet and held a meeting with the four Deputy Commissioners of the region.

Khulna BNP calls hartal on Saturday

KHULNA, June 29: The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) of Khulna has called for a six-hour hartal from 6 am in the city on Saturday to protest the killing of an activist of its youth front, reports UNB.

Mahmud Hasan, 28, a Juba Dal worker, was kidnapped by an armed group from the Bangladesh Bank crossing in the city on Monday morning. Police recovered his body from Goolkhal area of Khalishpur, in the city at about 11 am today.

The body bearing the marks of multiple head injuries was sent to Khulna Sadar Hospital morgue. A case was filed with the local police.

The hartal call came from a protest rally in front of Khulna Press Club where the BNP leaders blamed Awami League and its student wing Chhatra League (M-I) for the killing. The rally was followed by a procession.

JS meets at 7:30 this evening

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad (JS) meets at 7:30 this evening. Parliament secretariat sources said, the usual schedule of the JS sitting has been changed due to the dawn-to-dusk hartal call of some political parties and organisations.

Budget passed

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Rahman introduced the bill after the House passed, by voice vote, the grants of Taka 23,192 crore 86 lakh 31 thousand from the consolidated fund to meet the expenditures of various ministries for the next financial year beginning tomorrow.

The cut motions on the demands for grants were not moved because the opposition parties which were supposed to move those were not present in the House.

BNP bill

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provision of the proposed law, the officials shall be transferred on request by the EC authorities 'in the interest of fair polls.' In that case, the EC will need to request the authorities concerned in writing that such transfer is necessary in the interest of fair elections.

According to the proposed law, the EC would appoint from amongst officers of the government and corporations controlled by such government and local authorities, a returning officer and as many assistant returning officers as necessary for conducting the polls. The Commission, according to the proposed law, would enjoy the authority to withdraw any official, including any public functionary or any law enforcing personnel involved in conducting polls if he or she is found to have done anything affecting holding of elections impartially.

The Commission would also enjoy the right to suggest disciplinary actions against any officer withdrawn from election duty on specific charges.

The much-talked about provision for resignation of cabinet members, except the prime minister, before filing of nomination papers for contesting elections was eventually excluded from the bill at the eleventh hour, it is learnt.

Explaining the reason, an influential leader of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party said, the provision would have affected a certain article of the country's Constitution which does not provide any scope for making provisions for the minister's resignation compulsory. According to the Constitution, the power of including someone in or excluding him from the cabinet lies with the prime minister, the ruling party leader said.