

## BNP standing body

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cess of the on-going negotiations aimed at resolving the long standing political stand-off. Meanwhile, UNB reported late last night that Sir Ninian Stephen, the emissary of the Commonwealth Secretary General Chief Emeka Anyaoku who is here to facilitate the government-Opposition talks, had reportedly faxed a message seeking Chief Emeka's advice following a certain development yesterday.

The private news agency, quoting "competent" sources, said that Sir Ninian had written to Emeka either to withdraw him from his present assignment or come here himself to facilitate the dialogue.

According to UNB, Sir

### Dialogue held

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had taken place in a very cordial atmosphere. The talks began at 7 pm and were adjourned at 11:30. The discussion will resume at 6 this evening.

Three BNP leaders — Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, State Minister for Cultural Affairs Jahanara Begum and Amir Khasru MP spoke yesterday. All of them maintained that the BNP sponsored Bill seeking strengthening of the Election Commission (EC) was a positive solution to any problems relating to holding of free and fair elections. They, however, urged their opposition counterparts to come forward with suggestions, if they have any, to improve the proposed legislation, sources in the ruling party said.

But the opposition leaders — Mohammad Nasim, AL general secretary Zillur Rahman and Anwar Hossain Monju — are learnt to have maintained that it was impossible to have fair elections with any political party in power.

According to some sources, at the beginning of the talks yesterday Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad, reacting to the Prime Minister's speech in Rajshahi Sunday and published yesterday, said it seemed the ruling party would not accept the Opposition demand for holding elections under a caretaker administration.

Samad Azad said such statements would destroy the spirit of the dialogue aimed at resolving the political crisis through a consensus.

The situation is learnt to have cooled down when the ruling party leaders argued that the BNP had the right to assert its original position until the leaders of both the camps reached an agreement on the contentious issues.

Referring to the recent speeches of Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina they said that she was also sticking to her original position on the issues.

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Ninian's reported move was prompted by the failure of Deputy Leader of the House and BNP chief negotiator AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury to keep a scheduled appointment with Sir Ninian yesterday afternoon at the state guest house Meghna.

The agency reported that though Opposition spokesman Abdus Samad Azad had met Sir Ninian as arranged, the BNP delegation did not turn up.

However, Works and Housing Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah, awakened from sleep by this correspondent at 2:00 am, told The Daily Star that because of the Standing Committee meeting the BNP delegation comprising Badruddoza Chowdhury and party Secretary General Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar could not make it to the Meghna for their meeting with Sir Ninian. He said Prof Chowdhury had called up the state guest house and rescheduled the meeting for later in the afternoon. But Rafiq said he did not know if Prof Chowdhury eventually went to the Meghna yesterday.

Quoting Salam Talukdar, whom he rang up after receiving the call from The Daily Star, Rafiq Miah said Prof Chowdhury is now scheduled to meet the Commonwealth emissary at ten this morning. Rafiq also denied any knowledge about Sir Ninian's reported fax message to Chief Emeka.

### Prokrichi's 2-day 'mass leave'

#### By Staff Correspondent

Members of the 26 Prokrichi BCS non-administrative cadres will go on a two-day mass leave from tomorrow to press home their 17-point demand.

### Isha murder

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After his judicial statement, Amjad was sent to the Dhaka Central Jail. Two of his associates — Zahidul Islam Prince and Habibur Rahman Habib were sent to the jail earlier.

Two more of the five teenagers charged with murdering Isha, a Class Ten student of Motijheel Central Government High School Zakir Hossain alias Biplob and Shafiqul Islam Babu, are still on police remand in the city's Detective Branch (DB) at Minto Road.

All four accused, excepting Prince, were taken on police remand for five days on Saturday.

Amjad, in his judicial statement under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) said, when four of his associates went upstairs at Isha's flat, he waited alone on the street outside. The four later came down with the loot and gave it to him for sale, and he did that accordingly, he added.

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