



Leader of the House and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia presiding over a meeting of the BNP Parliamentary Party at the Sangsad Bhavan yesterday. — PID photo

PM: military career

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Begum Zia said the Bangladesh Army have earned reputation not only at home but also in the international arena and brought rare honours for the nation through their competence.

She said the EBR has earned appreciation from all by playing a positive role in protecting the country's independence as well as their services in nation-building activities and at times of natural calamities.

Congratulating the members of the 15th and 16th East Bengal Regiments, the Prime Minister hoped that they would try their best in maintaining the people's confidence reposed on them and will always be ready for any sacrifice at times of national needs.

Begum Zia recalled the tradition of handing over of flags and said, "Flag is the symbol of self-identity and self-respect. It is the duty of all soldiers to protect its honour."

The Prime Minister recalled those who tirelessly worked for building the East Bengal Regiment, popularly known as the "Tigers".

She specially mentioned Major M A Gani, who formed the Regiment in 1948 and also remembered General M A G Osmany, Subedar Major Fateh Ali, Khurshid and Omar Mia and Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman for their contributions in building up the regiment.

Begum Zia also recalled the heroes of the regiment, including Birshrestha Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Kamal and Hamidur Rahman, who sacrificed their lives in the Liberation War.

The Prime Minister announced a grant of Tk five lakh for the EBR welfare fund for servicemen and retired personnel of the regiment and their families.

Earlier, the Prime Minister reviewed a smartly turned-out

parade and took salute at the impressive march past.

She also distributed gallantry awards among four members of the regiment, including one posthumously, for their heroic contributions in counter-insurgency operations in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Ministers, Chittagong City Mayor, MPs, diplomats, Chiefs of Staff of the Bangladesh Navy and Air Force and senior civil and military officials attended the function at the East Bengal Regimental Centre drill square.

On her arrival at the drill square, the Prime Minister was received by Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Abu Saleh Mohammad Nasim, Chittagong Area Commander Maj Gen Muhammad Azizur Rahman and EBRC Commandant Brigadier Abu Ahmed Zahurul Amin Khan.

Opens microwave tower

CHITTAGONG, Nov 9: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today inaugurated a high-powered microwave tower on Paradise Hill in the Nandan Kanan area of the port city, reports UNB.

The 99-meter-high tower, the country's tallest, is designed to stand wind velocity of up to 252 kilometers per hour.

It is one of two towers, financed by a Saudi grant, built after the 1991 cyclone had badly damaged the T&T tower here.

The other one is in the Agrabad area — were built at a cost of Tk 9.75 crore, including Tk 7.57 crore in foreign currency.

Begum Zia unveiled the plaque and went round the project area.

Post and Telecommunications Minister Tariqul Islam, Communications Minister Col (Retd) Oli Ahmed, Chittagong City Mayor A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury were present.

Export target revision

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Earnings from the miscellaneous category of items — specialised textiles, household linen, ceramic ware and others — which is being reduced from a target of 142 million dollars to 115 million.

On the other hand, the export targets for the frozen food sector is being revised upward from 230 million dollars to 240 million while the target for jute goods, which is surprisingly showing a good performance, is being re-set at 350 million dollars from the earlier 315 million dollars.

The export earning targets for both 1993-94 and 1994-95 were set in the government's export policy of 1993-95, which unveiled an ambitious export-led growth strategy.

According to EPB figures, the total export earnings in July and August of 1994-95 declined by 5.77 per cent to 432.57 million dollars as against 459.04 million dollars during the corresponding period of the previous fiscal. The value of exports during the two months was also 25.84 per cent lower than the projected target of 583.33 million dollars set for the period.

The most significant aspect of the current trend of decline is that the earnings from industrial commodities fell by 7.24 per cent while that for the primary commodities marked an increase by 2.53 per cent.

The sharp fall in export earnings, which accounts for nearly 60 per cent of the total, is most alarming. Earnings from the sector during the two months stood at 192.52 million dollars or 24.11 per cent lower than the earnings during the corresponding period of the last fiscal. The amount was 43.85 per cent lower than the 341.67 million dollar projected target for the period.

Raw jute exports earnings fell by 43.15 per cent as only 6.68 million dollars worth of

the product was exported during the two-months as against 11.75 million dollars over the same period of 1993-94.

Earnings from the tea sector marked a steeper decline falling by 57.78 per cent as only 3.01 million dollars worth of tea were exported during the first two months compared to 7.13 million dollars in July-August of 1993.

Only the frozen foods sector exceeded the target during the two months by 49.28 per cent at 57.22 million dollars. Jute goods by 4.02 per cent at 54.61 million dollars and although earnings from knitwear and hosiery exports increased by 28.44 per cent at 44.80 million dollars compared to July-August of last year, it also fell short of the target by 10.4 per cent.

Earnings from the leather sector also increased by 17.18 per cent to 29.33 million dollars during the two month period, but it was still short of the target of 35 million dollars.

The total export earnings of 2533.90 million dollars during 1993-94 was 6.34 per cent higher than in 1992-93, although the amount fell short of the annual target by 12.62 per cent.

Except for frozen food, knitwear and chemical goods, all other export sectors failed to meet the projected targets during the last fiscal. Of them, raw jute missed the mark by 28.73 per cent and the RMG sector by 21.72 per cent.

RMG exports declined by 109 million dollars to 545.42 million in the US market alone, the single largest buyer, instead of a projected growth of 25 per cent. The export volume of the sector also declined by 4.72 per cent during 1993-94.

Given this scenario, observers pointed out, even a revised target of 3,100 million dollars would be difficult to achieve during the remaining months of current fiscal year.

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Opposition's sit-in programme

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Moghbaraz to the Sonargaon Road.

Police used up over one hundred teargas canisters, and fired rubber bullets at Mohakhal to disperse mobs.

Awami League leaders Amir Hossain Amu, Abdul Jalil, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, and Salauddin Badal and Jatiya Party leader Barrister Maudud Ahmed were injured in the violence.

Maudud reportedly was hit by a rubber bullet on the right side of his back.

However, none of them needed hospitalisation.

The day's untoward incidents began around noon near Asad Gate when an AL procession under Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya tried to break the police cordon.

Over a dozen people were injured during intermittent clashes at the Manik Mia Avenue crossing near Asad Gate from around noon till almost four in the afternoon.

City AL leader Salauddin Badal was reportedly hit by a teargas shell in his chest while a photo journalist, Shamsul Hiaq Tenku, suffered a sprained ankle when running for cover during chases between the police and the agitators.

AL activists started pouring in to the area from 11 in the morning. They occupied the street from Sukrabad to the Manik Mia crossing, holding rallies and processions. They also burned tyres and damaged two or three passing vehicles.

Witnesses said, as a violent procession reached the police barricade, some people hurled crackers at the police and BDR personnel without any provocation.

Immediately the police retaliated by lobbing teargas shells, forcing the processionists to run for cover in the nearby alleys. The two groups kept chasing each other, the police lobbing teargas shells and the agitators exploding cocktails and crackers for hours on end.

A police source said, about 50 teargas shells were used to quell the mob in the area. But no arrests were made there, he added.

Holding a rally there, the AL-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League leaders blamed 'terrorists patronized by the government' for the cocktail attacks.

The AL gathering, participated by a large number of supporters was peaceful when the Leader of the Opposition

Noor Hossain Day

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cratic polity.

Students, workers, professionals as well as political parties had taken a renewed pledge to continue the struggle for democracy on November 10, 1987.

Noor Hossain, along with thousands of rebellious demonstrators, also took to the streets of the capital that day. In a gesture that epitomised the national aspirations for a democratic system of governance, he joined the anti-government procession with his bare chest and back: "Let autocracy go let democracy flourish," they screamed.

While numerous processions brought out by different socio-political organisations readily appreciated Noor Hossain's novel way of registering protest, the then under-democratic State-machinery was not amused. The police, whom Ershad used so ruthlessly to repress his opponents, shot Noor Hossain at point blank range, killing him instantly. They also made him a martyr who gave his life so that democracy may flourish in this country.

Many political and socio-cultural organisations have planned various programmes to pay befitting homage to this national hero.

Samad-Ninian

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the ruling BNP's arguments, enumerated in an eight-page formula handed over to Sir Ninian on November 7, against a non-partisan caretaker administration.

Samad Azad also told Sir Ninian that incumbent prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia could not be expected to behave neutrally at the time of elections.

According to the source, Samad Azad also told Ninian that Begum Zia, instead of going to Chittagong, could have stayed at her office yesterday during the Opposition sit-in, and sent some of her cabinet colleagues to invite the Leader of the Opposition, who was leading the sit-in, for talks.

Samad Azad informed the Commonwealth Emissary that the Opposition had been left with no option but to press for a non-partisan, caretaker government for holding general elections.

Beginning at 9:30 am, the meeting lasted nearly 90 minutes.

Sheikh Hasina arrived at the spot around 2 pm. She addressed the assembled people and announced that she would leave for Bijoy Sarani where thousands of others were waiting defying the government ordering prohibiting the assembly of four or more persons.

Immediately after the leader of the opposition was allowed to pass through the police cordon in her car around 3 pm, the cocktail attacks resumed and continued for the next one hour.

At Bijoy Sarani, a number of AL Parliament members including Tofael Ahmed, Abdur Ra-zzaq, AKM Yusuf and Suranjit Sengupta had gathered from around noon to defy

A police source said over 40 teargas shells and rubber bullets were needed to quell the mob. Police also arrested 11 people from area and detained them at the Tejgaon police station.

Over 50 people, including two police constables, were injured during the clashes at Mohakhal. The two policemen were admitted to the Rajarbagh Police Lines Hospital while three others, one who suffered a rubber bullet injury and two who suffered splinter wounds, were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The Jamaat-e-Islami men were debarred by police at the Sonargaon Road where they



Jatiya Party activists set fire to a UN relief car at Mahakhal in the city yesterday. — Star photo

section 144. Sheikh Hasina also addressed a rally there.

The workers of Bangladesh Chhatra League and Juba League went on a rampage at Sheorapara around 1:30 pm where they damaged several vehicles. Police also used teargas to disperse the mob.



Wounded JP leader Moudud Ahmed. Jatiya Party activists staged a demonstration at Mohakhal from around noon. Riot police detailed at the Mohakhal level-crossing prevented them from proceeding towards the PM's secretariat.

The JP demonstration was almost peaceful until a series of crackers were exploded there around 2 pm immediately after a rally addressed by JP leaders Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, 'Shah Moazzem Hossain, Barrister Maudud Ahmed and others.

Provoked, the police swung into action by firing rubber bullets and-teargas shells to disperse the agitators who became increasingly violent. Scores of crackers were hurled at the policemen. Unruly JP activists burnt a UN jeep in front of Ban Bhaban (forest department office) and damaged several other vehicles plying on the road.

Huda asked to explain

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said that a number of MPs including Abdur Rob Chowdhury, Amanulla Aman, Ziaul Huq Zia, Golam Rabbani, State Minister for Irrigation Mosharraf Hossain Shahjahan spoke in the meeting along with some senior ministers.

Salam Talukdar said a certain quarter is now active to push the BNP into disarray. The parliamentary party meeting resolved that the unity of the party would be maintained at any cost, he added.

There is no internal feud in the BNP, he asserted.

Talukdar said that yesterday's meeting was convened essentially to inform the MPs about the latest political situation and BNP's position vis-à-vis the commonwealth-brokered dialogue.

He said the Leader of the Opposition first accepted the Commonwealth Secretary General's proposal for the dialogue which the BNP later accepted with all good intentions to resolve the political impasse.

Talukdar said the parliamentary party endorsed the party stand and the role of the negotiators representing the party in the dialogue.

He said the ruling party proposed a certain formula of an interim government, sharing power with the Opposition, which the Constitution permits. Under the formula, which he said had already been reported in the newspapers, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia would head a nine-member

proceeded with a procession after holding a rally at the Maghbaraz crossing around 11:30 in the morning.

The Jamaat rally, presided by its city chief ATM Azharul Islam was also addressed by Maulana Abbas Ali Khan, Maulana Matiuur Rahman Nizami and Maulana Abdus Sobhan.

As a result of the Opposition's programme, traffic movement in the entire city went haywire, causing serious jams on most roads.

Inter-district buses and minibuses for Mymensingh, Tangail and Kishoreganj could not ply because of the sit-in programme.

At all points where the political workers staged demonstrations most of the shops and markets drew their shutters.

Ershad's trial

The cross-examination of AFM Sharfuddin, a prosecution witness (PW) in a corruption case against deposed President Ershad and two others, concluded yesterday in the court of Additional Sessions Judge and Special Judge, Dhaka, Zinat Ara, reports BSS.

Sharfuddin, the PW-5 in the Special Case No. 50 of 1993, better known as the Jatiya Party Office Case, was cross-examined by defence counsels of all three accused persons — Ershad, former Works minister Mostafa Jamal Haidar and former acting Works Secretary MA Rouf. November 29 has been set as the next date for hearing.

cabinet, four of whom would be drawn from the Opposition parties represented in Parliament.

Also, under the plan, members of the outgoing cabinet would not be allowed to enjoy any official facilities and he or she would not be allowed to take part in the election campaign for another candidate.

The interim cabinet would continue just the routine work necessary to run the country. Only the Prime Minister would be allowed to take part in the election campaign for her candidate throughout the country, just like the Leader of the Opposition. But the PM would not use any government facilities during the campaigning, according to the BNP formula.

Besides, reform of the Election Commission and a code of conduct for the political parties have also been suggested to hold a free and fair election in the country, Talukdar said.

In reply to a question whether his party was contemplating any new plan following the opposition's rejection of their latest 'alternative formula', Talukdar said they had not yet discussed any new suggestion.

"Our MPs said we should not go beyond the Constitution," he told reporters.

He declined to comment about the future of the stalled dialogue, saying at this moment that would be an inappropriate thing to do.

"We are keeping close contacts with Sir Ninian Stephen about the progress of the dialogue," he said.

The Midnight File

Saddam calls special session of parliament today

BAGHDAD, Nov 9: Iraqi president Saddam Hussein convened a special session of parliament Thursday, as Russia said Wednesday that Baghdad would formally recognise Kuwait. Baghdad radio announced that parliament would meet at 10 am but did not specify the agenda of the session. An aide to Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, who left Moscow for Baghdad today, said the Iraqi parliament would ratify Baghdad's decision to recognise Kuwaiti sovereignty, reports AFP.

4 Sikhs killed in foiled jailbreak

NEW DELHI, Nov 9: Indian police shot dead four Sikh extremists and injured 21 of their comrades when the group tried to escape from a north Indian jail, the United News of India (UNI) said today, reports Reuters.

8 killed, 50 hurt in road mishaps

By Staff Correspondent

At least eight people were killed and 50 others injured in separate road accidents in Mayura and Pabna yesterday.

UNB from Mayura reports, Six people were killed and 30 others injured in a road accident near Krishnapur here on Magura-Kamarkhal road yesterday.

Police said the accident occurred when a Dhaka-bound bus hit a microbus from behind at about 9:30 am. The bus fell into a roadside ditch after the collision.

Passengers of the microbus, Lutfar Rahman, Abdus Sattar and Idris Ali, its driver Sharif Ahmed, and two bus passengers — Selina Begum, 30 and her daughter Doll, 4, of Shimulia of Sadar thana — died on the spot.

Of the injured, seven bus passengers were admitted to Sadar Hospital in critical condition. They are: Anwarul Islam, 32, driver of the bus, Kalipad Shah, 60, Aslam Ali, 27 and Naimakumar Shah, 22, all are bus passengers, and Bakul, 35, Akram Hossain, 30 and Abdus Satter, 25.

Another report from Pabna adds, Two people were killed and 20 injured, four seriously.

65 pc votes cast in Lankan polls

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Nov 9: Sri Lanka's ruling party sought a mandate to resume peace talks with Tamil rebels in today's presidential election. As voting began, the rebels attacked a military base, killing three soldiers, reports AP.

Election officials said when the polls closed that the turnout was about 65 per cent, compared with 82 per cent in parliamentary elections three months ago.

Counting was to begin later today of votes cast at nearly 10,000 stations across the Indian Ocean island, except in the Tamil-dominated north and east.

The winner is not expected to be announced until Thursday.

Indo-Bangla border confce begins today

The Annual Border Coordination Conference between Bangladesh and India will begin today at Bangladesh Rifles headquarters in the capital, reports UNB.

Official sources said trans-border crimes like violation of border space, killing, dacoity, kidnapping, firing, cattle lifting, crops cutting, undecided land, violation of Border Pact, maintenance of border pillars, push-in, smuggling and related matters will be figured at the conference.

BCS (Judicial) body postpones strike

The BCS (Judicial) Association has postponed its two-day work stoppage programme scheduled to begin Saturday for two weeks to give the government "reasonable time" for removing anomalies in the salary scale of BCS judicial cadre, reports UNB.

JS Boycott Case

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Mohammad Ali, Bar at Law, on the other hand, opposed the adjournment prayer saying that although four and a half months had elapsed since a rule was issued, yet with the exception of Sheikh Hasina Wazed the other two respondents had not filed their replies so far.

He continued that the ground taken by Moudud Ahmed in his prayer for time cannot be a valid ground because the High Court is not subordinate to the Commonwealth Secretariat.

"We have come here as aggrieved citizens," he argued.

After hearing both sides, the court comprising Justice Kazi Shafiquddin and Justice Kazi A T Monwar Uddin fixed November 17 for hearing of the case.

Mohammad Ali, Bar at Law, Abu Baker Siddique and Humayun Kabir Bulbul appeared for the petitioner.

when a Dhaka-bound coach from Rajshahi over turned at Pushpopara in Sadar thana on Pabna-Nagarbari yesterday.

Police said the coach belonging to Kishan Enterprise met with the accident at about 9:30 am. Two bus passengers — Abdus Sobhan, 45 and an unidentified man aged about 30 — died on their way to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Four of the injured were admitted to Sadar Hospital. They are: Antaz Ali, 55, Rima Khatun, 15, Motaieb Hossain, 25 and Shariful Islam, 25.

3 killed as bus, train collide in Sitakundu

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Nov 9: At least three persons were killed and 10 others injured when a Dhaka-bound passenger bus from Chittagong collided with a Chittagong bound track at Sitakundu this morning.

Of the dead one was identified as Sultan Sheikh (75). The other two, aged 70 and 22, could not be identified.

JCD-BCL clash Bakerganj College closed sine die

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 9: The Government Bakerganj College was closed sine die following a clash between the BNP-backed Jatiyabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (S-P) this afternoon.

Five students from the two sides were reportedly injured during the clash which broke out after a meeting of the student leaders with the college authorities on the law and order situation on the campus.

Jatiya Party

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The people are fighting for establishing their rights and ensuring free and fair elections in the country.

Among others, Shamsur Rahman was also injured seriously. Advocate Shorab Uddin, Abul Basar, Mohammad Shahjahan, Shah Alam, Mohammad Kabir, Monzil, Emdadul Huq, Jakir Hossain, Shahidul Islam, Iqbal Hossain, Humayun Kabir were given first aid, the JP leader said.

JP leaders Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Shah Moazzem Hossain, Khaledur Rahman Tito, Abul Hasnat, Col (ret) Abdul Maleq, attended the press conference.

Hartals

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mand. Awami League chief and leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina announced her party's programme at a rally at Bijoy Sarani near the Sangsad Bhavan in the afternoon.

Fire brigade vehicles, newspaper offices, ambulances and food and medicine shops will be exempted from the strike, she said, adding that rickshaws will be allowed to ply in the city after 1 pm.

The AL will bring out a torch procession from Bangabandhu Avenue tomorrow evening to drum up supports for the two-day hartal, she said.

Acting chief of the Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury announced the JP's two-day hartal programme similar to the AL's at a gathering near the Mahkhal level-crossing while the programme of the Jamaat was announced at a press conference at the party central office.

LDF hartal

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leaders accused the BNP government of ignoring the people's demand for elections under a caretaker administration and resorting to repression on the opposition activists. They alleged that the present government was following the footsteps of the autocratic regime.