Hasina's last formula

From Page 1 Col 8 would be to conduct free and

fair elections. According to the formula. simultaneoush, announced by two other opposition parties the Jatiya Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami - from their separate rallies an the city on the day, the interim govern-Ment would be dissolved with the appointment of a new prime minister afte, the elections were held, uncler Article 65(3) of the Constitution. The new framework would be ratified by the next elected Parliament.

After announcing the formula. Hasina urged the . audience for their consent. Thousands raised their hands to say 'yes.'

She then declared, "After our resignation from Parliament we'll move for a single demand - the resignation of the government of Begum Khaleda Zia to ensure fair elections, under a nonparty caretaker administra-

At this stage, the Awami League chief asked her audience to raise the slogan "Ours is only demand: departure of Begum Zia" at the top of their voice. She also called for carrying forward the Opposition agitation including today's nationwide half-day hartal, tomorrow's demonstrations throughout the country and similar hartals on January 2.3 and 4 in the capital.

enough concessions and tried their best to reach a consensus

with the BNP government to resolve the persisting political impasse. But the Prime Minister's lust for power and her 'government's obstinacy had forced the Opposition MPs to resign on expiry of the

December 27 deadline. The AL leader said that the Opposition had changed its previous stand and agreed to the formula that the Prime Minister and her cabinet colleagues would resign with the announcement of the election schedule and the President would run the administration with the help of an advisory council only for the sake of peace and stability in the country.

She announced that her party would launch a one-point movement from today demanding ouster of the Khaleda government and for realising people's franchise and ensuring peace, progress and stability in the country.

Hasina also accused the BNP government of oppressing opposition political activists. denying people's fundamental rights, politicising the administration, running the country inefficiently, interfering into the judiciary, denying the right to seek justice and breaking all pledges including that for scrapping the Indemnity Ordinance, violating its accords with different groups and making the sovereign elected Parliament ineffective.

The rally was also addressed by party leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Zillur Rahman and Mohammad Nasim.

Unfolding drama

From Page 1 Col 2 A TV crew was called to the office and the PM's speech was even reportedly recorded. Deputy Director General of

also seen at the PM's office. On the other hand, the opposition leaders held a meeting with their leader Sheikh Hasina at her Dhanmondi resi-

other Opposition leaders entered the Parliament building around 4:45 pm where they finalised their draft framework for handing over power to a caretaker government.

Hasina left the Sangsad Bhaban at about 5:15 to address the party rally at Manik Mjah Avenue from where the Awami League leaders returned to the Parliament again to submit their resignation let-

At about 5:40 Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali left the Prime Minister's office for Parliament. The last and final phase of the abortive negotiations, which were to have concluded with the signing of a formal agreement between the two opposing camps.

The correspondence between the two sides was mainly carried out over cordless, cellular and, at times, red telephones.

At around 7:15pm Hasina, along with some other leaders. entered the Speaker's chamber to submit the resignations but the Speaker led them to his "call-on room" for another

phonic conversation, a threemember government team comprising Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, Abdus Salam Talukdar and Oli Ahmed came to the parliament, reportedly to sign the agreement with the

But the talks broke down in the very last minute and the ruling party leaders left the building around 9:10 pm. telling newsmen present that they would address a press conference immediately at the PM's Tejgaon office to explain their position.

submitted their resignations The respective party whips of the Awami League, the Jatiya Party and the Jamaat submitted the identically worded

JP : Agitation

taker government was "illegal".

tions by rigging," the JP leader

Parliament to ensure voting rights of the people.

Parliament was a great sacrifice on the part of the opposidemocracy and giving democ-

Moazzem Hossain said resig-

movement of the JP from now on would be to remove the "corrupt and inefficient" gov-

Malek, the rally was also addressed by, among others, party Secretary General Khaledur Rahman Tito, Abdus Salam, Saifur Rahman, Shah Mohammad Abu Zafar and party MPs Advocate Fazle Rabbi, Manirul Huq Chowdhury, Khurram Khan Chowdhury and Maksud Ibne Opposition agreed but backed out

From Page 1 Col 3

der Chowdhury. MP phoned us

at around 8:45 pm vesterday

that the opposition parties

were agreed on the govern-

Chowdhury, Col Oli Ahmad and

I went to the Parliament and

read out the proposal before

signing, the opposition leaders

rejected the proposal and

submitted their resignations,

Sheikh Hasina was present at

the meeting, held at the "Call-

On Room" of the Speaker.

of the Opposition action.

ing Parliament.

on, he added.

nation.

Leader of the Opposition

In reply to a question,

Talukdar said that the BNP will

follow the Constitution to

tackle the situation arising out

by-election to the vacant seats

or fresh election after dissolv-

The Constitution suggests

The ruling party would take

Talukdar, also the LGRD

a decision on the matter later

and Cooperatives Minister, de-

scribed the resignation of the

Opposition members from par

liament as 'unfortunate for the

prevent the opposition mem-

bers from resigning from

Parliament," he told the

ings of negotiations between

the Opposition and the gov-

ernment leaders at various

levels, the BNP Secretary

General referred to the latest

BNP proposal under which

Prime Minister and her cabi-

net shall resign 30 days before

of the five-year term provided

the opposition MPs do not re-

grammes like hartals and

posal beyond the constitutional

provision for the greater inter-

est of the nation and democ-

Mahmudul Hasan

From Page 1 Col 4

Mahmud's resignation letter to

the Speaker in the evening.

Mizan told UNB by phone with

a note of exclamation after

watching on television the

floorcrossing of Mahmudul

party had submitted their res-

ignation letters to him few

days ago on the JP presidium

decision to resign if the gov-

ernment did not accept the

Opposition demand for holding

elections under a neutral

"Moreover," Mizan said, '

have also verified Mahmudul

Hasan's signature along with

He said there is no such

provision as per the

Constitution that an individual

member would have to submit

his resignation to the Speaker.

Article 67 (2) of the

Constitution says "under his

signature", but not "by signa-

ture," Mizan pointed out when

asked about the procedure of

the other MPs before submit-

caretaker government.

ting it to the Speaker."

resignation.

He said all the MPs of his

"I myself have submitted

"The BNP made this pro-

sieges, he said.

Hasan.

Narrating the long proceed-

crowded press conference.

"We have tried our best to

"But when Prof Badruddoza

ment proposal

Talukdar said.

Badruddoza Chowdhury and Works Minister Rafigul Islam are also seen.

Barrister Talukdar pointed out that the Opposition had waged their struggle in the name of free and fair elections but in fact they do not want free and fair elections. Rather, they only wanted to destroy democracy and disrupt the economic development of the people. Replying to a question.

Talukdar said that the government would take all steps to ensure the safety of the lives and property of the people. To a questioner, the BNP

Secretary General said no administrative and legal crisis would be created after the resignation of the Opposition He said that the govern

ment would continue its activities and take steps as per the Constitution and the law of the land

He said two Bills had been passed in Parliament, strengthening the Election Commission and introducing the provision for identity cards for voters so that future national polls could be free and fair. He said even after such legislative steps, the Prime Minister and her cabinet agreed to the onesentence proposal of opposition leader Mohammad Nasim that the cabinet would resign a month before the day of holding of polls in the

greater national interest. Earlier, Communications Minister Col (retd) Oli Ahmed. Housing and Public Works Minister Barrister Rafigul Islam Mia and Bangladesh Red Crescent Society Chairman Shahidul Huq Jamal, MP narrated the entire process of negotiations at various levels between the ruling party and the opposition during the last few

During the press conference Deputy Leader of the House Prof. A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury. Education Minister Barrister Jamir Uddin Sircar, Food Minister Meer Shawkat Ali, Energy Minister Dr. Mosharraf Hossain and State Minister for Social Welfare Fazlur Rahman were among others present.

The Communications Minister dwelt at length on the entire process of negotiations with the Opposition, including telephone conversations with Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, Abdus Samad Azad, Mohammad Nasim, A S M Firoz, Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, Rafigul Islam and K M Jahangir.

Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia also narrated the talks with the Opposition, including those with Matiur Rahman Nizami of the Jamaat and Mohammad Nasim of the Awami League.

Shahidul Huq Jamal referred to his talks with Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina and others.

The BNP Secretary General said: "We had enacted the 12th constitutional amendment to establish an accountable and transparent parliamentary government. We wanted to strengthen democracy and constitutional rule in the coun-

He lamented that the Opposition's disruptive pro-

grammes were designed to make Parliament ineffective. He referred to the positive signs of economic development, including the vibrant activities of the stock ex change, the highest ever for-

eign exchange reserves, in

creased volume of exports and

said the BNP wanted peace.

- Star photo

discipline and economic development. Blasting the Opposition's shifting stances, the LGRD Minister said: "For the last three days we had tried to accommodate the Opposition's

various proposals. "The perspective and the language of the Opposition proposals changed every five minutes in the last hours before the resignation," he said, giving the details of the dia logue proceedings between the government and the Opposition since it started in June.

He also mentioned Commonwealth envoy Sir Ninian Stephen's efforts for an amicable settlement of the crisis which started with the Opposition boycott of Parliament since March last.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad, Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim, NDP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury and A S M Firoze, MP were among the leaders from the Opposition camp who came with different proposals at different times but declined to give anything in writing, the BNP leaders alleged.

Barrister Talukder regretted that in spite of agreeing to the draft of the proposal, the Opposition refused to sign it when the government leaders including himself, B Chowdhury and Oli Ahmed went to the Sangsad Bhaban just before

The BNP Secretary General expressed resentment over the Opposition's pressure for announcing the agreement on television before signing.

Jamaat From Page 1 Col 5

'some opportunities'

Urging all to prepare, for a movement to unseat the government after the submission of resignation by almost 150 parliamentarians, senior Naveb-e-Ameer Abbas Ali Khan termed the BNP a "betrayer". In 1991, BNP Secretary

General Abdus Salam Talukder had asked for our support in forming the present government saying that we would institutionalise democracy. But what has happened later? It could not ensure a single fair election, Abbas Ali said, Party Secretary General Matiur Rahman Nizami said "accepting this demand is not a defeat for the ruling party. During Ershad-rule, the BNP itself had demanded election under a caretaker' government." He said that the govern-

ment was totally indifferent to the demand and the agitation programmes of the Opposition. The government had taken our demand lightly, he said

The Midnight Bile

200 killed in Russian air raid, claims Chechnya

GROZNY. Dec 28: Russian warplanes resumed bombing Grozny and elsewhere in Chechnya and Chechen officials claimed at least 200 people were killed in raids. The Russian president's promise to stop bombing turned out to be a mere hypocrisy." Rusian Chimayev, Chechnya's deputy foreign minister, said in Moscow. An orphanage in the Chechen capital was also destroyed in one raid, reports AP.

US diplomat fails to release pilot held in North Korea

SEOUL. Dec 28: A US diplomat failed today to win the release of an American pilot held in North Korea, An angry President Clinton denied the pilot was on a spy mission and said the North had no reason to hold him. Army pilot Bobby half was captured after his US Army OH-58C helicopter went down December 17 in North Korean territory. Fellow Chief Warrant Officer David Hilemon died. His body was returned Thursday, reports AP.

Solution fizzles out

From Page 1 Col 4 tiators charged that the Opposition was going back on its commitment on the basis of which they had come to the parliament building.

The Opposition side contended that in exchange of accepting their demand for the Prime Minister not to continue in office after the expiry of her term and for the President to conduct the elections, the ruling party was demanding a guarantee that the Opposition would desist from calling any hartals or seige programmes during the rest of the current term of the Fifth Parliament. This the Opposition leaders considered tantamount to an infringement of their fundamental political and democratic right of mass

agitation and demonstration. As the last ditch efforts for a solution fizzled out, 147 MPs belonging to the major opposition parties in Parliament the Awami League, the Jatiya Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami - tendered their resignations to Shaikh Razzak Ali.at 9:13 pm, compounding the crisis.

Members of Parliament of the major opposition parties resigned vesterday after the last attempt of negotiations with the ruling party failed. One hundred and forty

seven MPs of the 330-member Parliament yesterday submitted their resignations to the Speaker at his Sangsad office. Awami League whip Azizur

Rahman submitted 93 resignation letters of the party MPs to Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali at 9:13 pm. Rahman was followed by the Jativa Party's Munirul Huq Chowdhury who submitted 34 similar letters to the Speaker. The Jamaat-e-Islami's Latifur Rahman submitted 19 letters while NDP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury personally handed in his resignation to the Speaker.

The resignation letter of JP chief, former president H M Ershad, who was convicted and is now in jail. was not submitted vesterday.

However, the Workers' Party's Rashed Khan Menon, Gano Forum's Shamsuddoha and the Islami Oikya Jote's Maulana Obaidul Hug did not resign nor were they present at the time of the mass resignation. In their similarly worded

letters, the Opposition MPs

Bite worth 1000 pounds

LONDON, Dec 28: A London man bit into a hamburger and found a diamond worth 1000 pounds, a British newspaper said today, reports Reuter.

Oskar Keysell, 31, found the diamond in a hamburger he bought at a McDonald's, The Sun newspaper reported.

With the diamond he found the gold stud of an earring.

mentioned that they were compelled to resign in the greater interest of the country because the BNP government had rendered Parliament inef-

They also said that the government had curbed the voting right of the people, as mentioned in the Constitution.

Article 67 (2) Constitution which provides that an MP can tender his or her resignation to the Speaker by writing in his or her own The opposition leaders said

that every resignation letter contained the signature of the individual MPs. The major opposition parties have been boycotting

Parliament and agitating to press home the demand for constituting a caretaker government to supervise the next general elections. Confirmation of the finality of the Opposition's resignation

from the Fifth Parliament was

not available immediately from

the Speaker's office. Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, however, said he was scrutinis

ing the letters to see whether those were valid under Article 67 (2). Besides, they also have to comply with Section 177 of the rules of procedure of Parliament. PM at BIT

From Page 1 Col 3 ple of maintaining a session-

jam and terrorism-free cam-Listing various government

programmes in the education sector, she said top priority was attached to and highest budgetary allocation made in this sector. Earlier, attired in blue robe,

Begum Zia led the convocation procession to the convocation

Heads of different departments placed their students before Chairman of the Board of Governors of BIT. Dhaka Avubur Rahman Chowdhury for the conferment of degree. He conferred B Sc engineering degree to 716 students of seven academic batches.

The Prime Minister distributed gold medals among 14 meritorious students who secured First Class First position in B Sc engineering examinations from Civil Engineering, Electrical and Electronic and Mechanical Engineering departments.

The function was also addressed by Chairman of the Council of BIT and Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar, Vice Chancellor of the BUET and Vice Chairman of the BIT Prof Mohammad Shahjahan and Director of the BITTE Dhaka, Prof Sekendar Alim and others. State Minister for Science

and Technology Prof M A Mannan addressed the function as the Convocation Speaker.



Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali (extreme left) talking to the opposition MPs prior to receiving their resignation letters at his - Star photo Sangsad Bhaban chamber last night.



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Hasina said they had given India lift trophy

From Page 1 Col 7 comprising three Test playing countries alongside ICC associate members Bangladesh. Pinned down by the Indian

new ball pair of Venkatesh Prasad and Salil Ankola who gave nothing away on a slow. low wicket, unsuitable for stroke play Bangladesh were never apace with the initial asking rate of 4.32 per over. And Amre the unanimous

man of the match rounded off a fine day's performance with two stinging sharp catches to stake his claim for a recall in the main Indian team. Although Akram Khan fi-

nally shone with the bat in a culmination of remarkably interesting pattern of skippers coming into their own with the willow in the last match with a gritty 90 ball 66 featured with five fours and a sixer Bangladesh were all out for 164 in 49.1 overs.

Rameez Raja who failed to guide favourites Pakistan to the final despite a one wicket victory over Sri Lanka Tuesday had notched a fine half century after a couple of abject failures.

For the second successive day a captain led from the front as Amre taking a cue from his Pakistani counterpart. took the attack by the scruff of the neck to dash the dream of Bangladesh who pipped Pakistan to the post for a place in the final on better run rate.

Bangladesh's resurgence be gotten upon a morale boosting thrilling defeat to Pakistan followed by victories over Test playing nations Sri Lanka and

From Page 1 Col 7

Minister would resign with the

announcement of the election

schedule and the President

would form an advisory council

with the non-partisan person-

alities in consultation with the

ruling and opposition parties

to conduct the polls." he said.

Then we started waiting

although our deadline was ex-

piring since we wanted a

peaceful solution. But senior

and responsible government

leaders like Prof A Q M

Badruddoza Choudhury, Abdus

Salam Talukder and Col (Rtd),

Oli Ahmad on their arrival

proposed that the government

would agree to the two pro-

posals if the Opposition gave

undertakings that it would give

up all sorts of agitation pro-

grammes including hartals,

sieges, barricades etc for the

leaders that there could be no

question of accepting such an

undemocratic, non-political

and absolutely unrealistic condition and shortly afterwards

our resignation letters were

submitted to the Speaker offi-

cially." Nasim told journalists

He mentioned that 147

Opposition MPs tendered their

resignation and said they con-

tacted Obaidul Haq of the IOJ

and Rashed Khan Menon of the

Workers Party who would fol-

gave concessions even at the

Nasim further said, "We

The news briefing was also

addressed by Deputy Leader of

the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad of the AL. Moudud Ahmed

of the JP and Matinir Rahman

the entire Opposition and the

majority of the puling party

Abdus Samad Azad said that

low them immediately.

hour of resignation."

Nizami of the Jamaat.

"We told the ruling party

next one year.

India, ended in anticlimactic disappointment. Nothing went right for

Bangladesh once skipper Akram won the toss and elected to field first.

Seamers failed to extract any help either from the atmosphere or the wicket as India with two changes - Saurav Ganguly replacing Bedade and leg spinner Bahutule returning at Arun Kumar's cost - went about the task of posting a good total slowly and surely.

Skipper Amre who walked in when India were comfortably placed at 81 for two in 27.2 overs gave momentum to the innings with a gem of an innings built around quick singles and occasional big hits. On wicket where the ball

hardly came on to the bat he repeatedly danced down the wicket to loft the bowlers particularly Enamul Hug. He took three of his four sixes off the left armer who tried to beat the nimble Indian in the air and was mainly in-

strumental for the sad end of a

campaign for a bowler who had

been so outstanding throughout the tourney. Besides Amre left handed Ganguly who opened the innings with Rathore made 39 and the consistent one drop

Dravid 37 Although Enam cut a sorry figure his fellow left armer Rafigue bowled splendidly under pressure and together

the most economical bowlers.

leaders of the BNP. Comme-

Opposition's press conference

with pacer Saiful finished as Amre won the Taka 10,000 man of the match award.

nting on the BNP's latest racy an institutional shape. position he said they had shifted from the position they had during the Commonwealth-brokered talks. About the government conditions for accepting the

Opposition demand, Samad Azad said: "They failed to show minimum courtesy to the Opposition. They ignored the demand of the Opposition MPs ernment from power. representing 69 per cent of Presided over by city JP

Moudud Ahmed said the opposition legislators' resignation aimed at realising people's voting rights was a noble task which would be a milestone in nation's history.

the voters."

"We, as part of our effort to save the nation from a confrontation, abstained from submitting resignation letters even after the deadline and shifted from our original position. But the government's disgraceful condition foiled our sincere effort," he said.

Matiur Rahman Nizami said the Opposition MPs' resignation was an expression of "noconfidence in the fifth Parliament and the BNP government and both had now lost their legitimacy."

He said the government had failed to realise the consequence of en masse resignation by the Opposition MPs.

Earthquake kills

two in Japan TOKYO. Dec 28: A major earthquake measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale hit northern Japan today killing at least two people and injuring scores. reports AFP.

leaders agreed to the demand for polls under interim gov-Roads were closed and ernment and the negotiations trains stopped, while several on the issues failed due to the small tidal waves hit the coast, obstinate attitude of a few reports said.

the negotiation process. BTV Mostafa Kamal Syed was

Sheikh Hasina and some

ters to the Speaker.

started at that time.

round of talks. After several rounds of tele-

opposition parties.

The Opposition MPs then

letters to Razzak Ali...

From Page 1 Col 5 party with the strength of its majority in the House. Regarding the ruling party's contention that the Opposition demand for a carethe JP leader said pointed out the date of elections at the end that the BNP itself came to power through polls under a sign and suspend all pro-

caretaker government. 'What was legal for BNP cannot be illegal for others. Caretaker government was now termed illegal because BNP wanted to win the elec-

JP parliamentary group leader Moudud Ahmed said their party had taken the decision of resigning from

He said resigning from tion members for establishing

Party central leader Shah nation by the opposition MPs would be an unprecedented incident in the history of the

country. Kazi Zafar Ahmed said the

President Col (Retd) Abdul

