



Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali administering oath of office to newly elected members of the Sixth Jatiya Sangsad at Sangsad Bhavan yesterday. PID photo

BNP candidate withdraws One killed in clash with police in Gopalganj

From Our Correspondent
GOPALGANJ, Mar 4: One person was killed in clashes between police and Opposition activists at Tilsara under Kasiani thana of the district today.

The Opposition activists also hurled bombs at the Gopalganj district election office.

According to reports, the polling officers were carrying the ballot papers and boxes from Kasiani thana headquarters to Ramdia with BDR and police escort.

The clash started when the opposition activists resisted them. Kalam, 22, a student of Ramdia Govt. College was shot dead on the spot by security forces.

The opposition political hartal to resist today's repolling in Sherpur.

From Our Correspondent
SHERPUR, Mar 4: Three mainstream opposition parties have called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the town tomorrow to protest the re-polling in three constituencies of the district.

Re-polling will be held tomorrow in 246 centres, out of 307, in Sherpur-1 (Sadar), Sherpur-2 (Nalbari-Nakhla) and Sherpur-3 (Jhenagali-Sribordi) constituencies from 8 am to 4 pm.

Police, BDR and Ansar personnel have been deployed at the centres to ensure security during the voting.

Rohingyas
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when Bangladesh now sends their names, it poses considerable problems.

The UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) which oversees and also the rehabilitation of the refugees has to go by the UN mandate which forbids forced repatriation and also separating any member from a family.

The UNHCR has a total of 104 projects in Myanmar to rehabilitate the repatriated Rohingya refugees.

When this correspondent tried to contact the UNHCR office at Cox's Bazar, an official said that authorisation had to be obtained from its headquarters for any kind of information.

In addition to UNHCR, World Food Programme (WFP) also provides food to the remaining stranded refugees.

Moreover, five international NGOs — OXFAM, CONCERN, Medecins Sans Frontier (MSF) of France, MSF Holland and IIRO — are at present involved in the welfare activities in the five remaining refugee camps.

Farmers barricade
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government has appointed some 2,000 dealers for the 16 districts in the country's northern part for adequate fertiliser supply to prevent price spiral which triggered violent peasant protest across the country last year.

But, according to the survey finding, most of the appointments, about 70 per cent, were given under political influence.

The dealers got their job by showing false documents and papers while some of them were patronised by upperhand politicians, alleged a veteran peasant leader, Abdul Matin.

He said they had planned countrywide demonstration under the auspices of left Democratic Front (LDF) against the 'fertiliser scandal'.

The LDF Sunday gheraoed Sirajganj Deputy Commissioner's office and staged demonstration demanding fertiliser as well as other agricultural inputs at fair prices.

The leaders demanded abolition of dealership system and stern actions against black-marketers who are selling fertilisers in the black markets.

A Sirajganj report says at least 50 per cent of such dealers have no godowns to store fertiliser. And as such they allegedly blackmarket total quotas of fertiliser after taking delivery from mill gates.

Some 136 'chosen' individuals, most of them not genuine

200 new MPs

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party MPs and Freedom Party leader Col (ret) Abdur Rashid Khan took oath.

Security was beefed up in and around the Sangsad Bhavan on the occasion.

Major opposition parties, including Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami, boycotted the February 15 election as it was not held under a caretaker government they have been demanding.

A number of student leaders who were elected MPs were among those who took oath. They are Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal president Fazlul Huq Miloni, general secretary Nazimuddin Alam, organising secretary Abul Khair Bhuiyan and former JCD general secretary Ilias Ali.

The remaining MPs-elect will be sworn in on March 7.

BNP, AL clash in Kishoreganj: 8 injured

KISHOREGANJ, Mar 4: At least eight people were injured in a clash between the supporters of ruling BNP and opposition Awami League at Pakundia in the district today, reports UNB.

Earlier, Pakundia thana BNP brought out a procession in support of their candidate A B M Zahidul Haq in the Wednesday's re-polling in Kishoreganj-1 (Pakundia-Hosainpur) constituency.

During the procession, some BNP activists allegedly attacked and ransacked the thana Awami League office at Pakundia that sparked off violent protest by the opposition activists.

The Awami League activists brought out a procession protesting the attack and were locked in a two-hour clash with the BNP workers from about 1 pm.

Five of the injured were identified as the activists of Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) while three others of Awami League backed Chhatra League.

Two JCD activists - Kamal Uddin and Nazrul Islam - were admitted to Pakundia thana health complex.

Ctg violence

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press for the release of city mayor A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury, a prominent Awami League leader.

Several hundred party activists, supporters and representatives of different socio-cultural organisations and ward commissioners took part in the day-long fast.

Among the hunger-strikers were AL presidium member Prof Pulin Dey, planning and finance secretary Ataur Rahman Khan Kaiser, city unit president M A Mannan and Chittagong Nagarik Committee leader Dr Abu Yusuf Alam.

Leaders of different political parties, including Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury and Jahangir Alam of Jatiya Party, Maulana Mohammad Abu Taber, Alhaj Afaruddin Chowdhury and former MP Shahjahan Chowdhury of Jamaat-e-Islami, and journalists Aktarunnabi and Syed Murtaza Ali visited the strikers and addressed them.

Later, eminent educationist Principal A A Rezaul Karim Khan offered fruit juice to the hunger strikers marking the end of the programme.

BNP rally

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its rally on Saturday while the three Opposition parties — the Awami League, Jatiya Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami — gave the hartal call after the Prime Minister's address to the nation on Sunday.

BNP chief and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is scheduled to address the rally, planned to project the party's latest stance to resolve the long-standing political impasse and to mobilise public opinion against the Opposition's 'destructive' programmes.

Mannan Bhuiyan regretted the Opposition's hartal call coinciding with his party's rally. 'Holding rallies and processions is everybody's democratic right and none should obstruct others in practising the right,' he said.

He also urged the Opposition parties to maintain peace on March 7, when the Awami League has also planned a public rally.

The BNP leader also requested the Opposition leaders to suspend their agitation programmes like hartal, blockade and non-cooperation considering the sufferings of the people caused by such programmes.

Khaleda re-elected Leader of the House

BNP parliamentary party at its first meeting yesterday elected BNP Chairperson and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Leader of the House unanimously, reports BSS.

Veteran parliamentarian and Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz proposed Begum Zia's name amid cheers and applause of the lawmakers who had just taken the oath at committee room one in the Jatiya Sangsad.

Former Deputy Leader of the House Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury was also elected the Deputy Leader of the House.

BNP Chairperson Begum Zia and Deputy Leader Prof Chowdhury made brief speeches at the parliamentary party meeting.

Emerging from the parliamentary party meeting, the newly elected Leader of the House smilingly told the awaiting newsmen that February 15 elections were held to maintain the continuity of the Constitution.

Responding to a question, she said with the oath taking a phase was completed yesterday.

Nilima Ibrahim gets bail

Nilima Ibrahim, against whom warrant of arrest was issued in a criminal case, was granted bail yesterday when she surrendered before the court, reports UNB.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Shahiduddin Ahmed granted the bail prayer of the 75-year-old educationist considering her age and old-age complications upon a Tk 25,000 security bond.

Dhanmondi police filed the case against her for 'seditious' article published in the Ajker Kagoj on February 26.

ADAB urges govt

'Hold polls under caretaker govt within 120 days'
By Staff Correspondent

The Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) has urged the government to cancel the February 15 polls and hold general elections within 120 days under a neutral caretaker government ensuring the participation of all political parties.

The ADAB put forward its demand at an urgent extended meeting in the city yesterday with the president of the executive council of ADAB Dr Kazi Faruque Ahmed in the chair.

The meeting resolved that the political detainees should be released to create a congenial atmosphere and the law and order enforcing authorities should stop 'repressive' immediately.

It said, the Opposition should reconsider their programme soon after the government stops 'repressive' steps.

Meanwhile, three members of Trinomul Janaasangathan Jatiya Samannal Parishad, a platform of grass-root level organizations, in a joint statement yesterday also demanded immediate annulment of February 15 elections and fresh polls under a caretaker government within 90 to 120 days.

The signatories to the joint statement are, Md Abul Husain, Rafiqul Islam and Sheikh Abdus Sattar.

Minor girl dies in truck mishap

From DMCH Correspondent
A minor girl was killed in an accident and a man stabbed by muggers in the city yesterday.

Yasmin, 9, daughter of one Lal Miah of Rayerbagh, Demra sustained fatal injuries when she was hit by a truck from behind while boarding a tempo at the Rayerbagh tempo stand at 8 am. She was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared her dead.

Ruhul Amin, 45, of 40/1 East Jurain, Demra, was attacked by 3-4 muggers who snatched Taka 100 from him at the Jatrahari Bus Stand at 6 am. The muggers stabbed him in the back and shot him in the leg before fleeing.

Akheri Munajat held

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Bangladesh and other Muslim countries delivered discourses in the three-day Ijtima.

The Biswa Ijtima is being organised each year in Tongi since 1966.

But this year was the first time that it was held on land donated by the government to the Tabligi Jamaat of Bangladesh which hosts the huge spiritual assembly.

An estimated 10 square kilometer area along the banks of river Turag virtually turned into human sea from early hours of the day.

Lakhs of people from all walks of life gathered along the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway from the Cherag Ali market in Tongi to the Zia International Airport and the rooftops of nearby houses and other buildings.

Forty-two marriages were also solemnised during the 3-day Ijtima.

At least 5 persons died in the various field hospitals at

Russia tries to revive arms links with India

NEW DELHI, Mar 4: Russian arms manufacturers came to India today hoping to tap one of the biggest markets for military aircraft and to revive ties that dried up after the collapse of the Soviet Union, reports AP.

Britain, France and Russia are vying to sell India some of the 400 combat aircraft its air force needs to replace an ageing fleet of Soviet-made planes.

Russia is keen to expand cooperation with India in all spheres of military production. That's why we have brought an impressive range of arms models," said Oleg Sidorenko, leading a 70-member Russian arms dealers.

The Russian display of scale models of air defence systems, antitank guided missiles, submarines, torpedoes and ammunition is part of a four-day exhibition of military hardware from several Western nations.

Last year, Russia sold the Indian air force 220 million dollars worth of Mig-29 jet fighters to modernise its fleet, which has not been modernised for a decade due to a cash crunch.

In the last 30 years, India has turned from being an ordinary partner to a very strategic one," said Sidorenko, the deputy director-general of the Rosvooroushenie State Corp, speaking at a news conference.

For decades, India depended on the Soviet Union for its military hardware. But the Soviet collapse led to strains in those ties, as Moscow insisted on hard-currency payments, India said it would prefer to settle the bills with exports of tea, handicrafts and light engineering goods.

The political upheaval in Russia also disrupted the supply of spares for Mig jet fighters, the workhorse of the Indian air fleet. Moscow agreed last year to coordinate with factories in the former Soviet republics to resume the flow of spares.

In late 1994, both nations signed a 7 billion dollars plan on military and technical cooperation. To persuade India to continue its partiality to Russia, Moscow sweetened the deal with a 400 million dollars credit for defence purchases.



RICHELIE TAKES THE REINS: The West Indies skipper Richie Richardson scored 93 not out to lead the beleaguered Caribbean to a much-needed victory against Australia in Jaipur, India, yesterday. (Story on page 10). Today, South Africa will take on minnows Holland at Karachi. BTV will telecast live.

6 Shibir activists injured while making bombs

MYMENSINGH, Mar 4: Six activists of the Jamaat-backed Islamic Chhatra Shibir were seriously injured in a bomb explosion at its office here today.

Police said the explosion rocked the office in 'Fatema Manjil' at Akua Chourangi crossing in the town at about 10:30 am when the Shibir activists were making bombs.

Meanwhile, Chhatra Shibir brought out a procession in the town blaming the ruling party's student wing Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal for the explosion, reports UNB.

Khulna Jubo Sanghati worker stabbed to death

From Our Correspondent
KHULNA, Mar 4: An activist of Jubo Sanghati succumbed to his injuries today. Jahangir Hossain Bachchu (22) was severely stabbed in the abdomen on Saturday evening by unidentified assailants at Khalishpur Housing Estate.

The body has been taken to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

The Jatiya Party has blamed JCD for the murder. But JCD has denied the charge.

15000 devotees of Biswa Ijtima stranded at ghats

MANIKGANJ, Mar 4: Traffic congestion at Aricha and Nagbari ferry ghats remained unchanged while the situation at Daulatdia ghat slightly improve today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said some 15,000 home-bound devotees of Biswa Ijtima were stranded at the ghats due to the congestion.

BIWTC sources said 1,657 vehicles, including trucks and coaches, were waiting in queues at the ghats to cross the Padma and Jamuna rivers.

They said a total of 2,772 vehicles were ferried through the ghats in last 24 hours till this noon.

The Midnight File

50 feared killed in bus accident

SHIMLA, Mar 4: At least 50 persons were feared killed when a private bus rolled several hundred feet down into a khud near village Ghand, about 75 kms from here this evening, according to a zilla parishad member, reports PTJ.

Low turnout, violence

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The BNP candidate, Advocate Abdul Sattar Bhuiyan, received 31,468 votes while his nearest rival, Independent candidate, Akhter Hossain, got 7734 votes.

In Bbaria-6, Shahjahan Howlader Shujon of BNP received 24342 votes, while his nearest rival, Shamim Ahmed (Independent) got 525 votes.

UNB adds from Comilla: Candidates of ruling BNP won the election in three constituencies of the district yesterday.

According to unofficial results, Lt Col (ret) Akbar Hossain was elected from Comilla-8 (Sadar). Dr Mohammad Kamruzzaman from Comilla-11 (Nangolkot) and ATM Alamgir from Comilla-10 (Laksam).

Officials said Akbar bagged 46,322 votes while his nearest rival Abdul Malek Chowdhury of Khelafat Andolon polled 984 only.

Dr Kamruzzaman polled 26,206 while his nearest rival CPI(M) demands Rao's resignation.

NEW DELHI, Mar 4: The Communist Party of India (Marxist) has demanded immediate resignation of Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao for allegedly bribing some parliament members to defeat a no-confidence motion against him in July, 1993 and the implications of several of his former cabinet colleagues in the multi-crore rupees hawala (illegal money transaction) case, reports BSS.

Hasina

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neutral caretaker government, and "I thank her for that".

The Awami League chief urged the Prime Minister not to try to give legitimacy to the "farical election rejected by the people."

Meanwhile, Awami League general secretary Zillur Rahman has strongly condemned the "attack on the jeep of party chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday by what he said an armed man who claimed himself as the "President's security".

In a statement, Zillur Rahman alleged that the jeep of Sheikh Hasina came under attack near Rabindra Sarani at Uttara on the Dhaka-Tongi highway when she was returning to the city after attending the Akheri Munajat of Biswa Ijtima.

An armed man wearing a safari suit came towards the jeep of Hasina when it slowed down in the area due to heavy rush of the devotees, the statement said.

It said he broke open the jeep's door-lock and tried to pull out the driver from the vehicle after hitting him repeatedly.

At one stage, the statement said, the armed man introduced himself as the "President's security" when the devotees had tried to resist him and left the scene.

The AL general secretary called for ensuring the safety and security of party chief Sheikh Hasina, and demanded immediate inquiry into the incident and punishment of the offender.

The meeting recalled that after eight months, the Opposition had gone for programmes for realising their demands and stressed that if the President took initiative, he would get their support.

Dialogue

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leadership as the Leader of the House. The three parties pointed out that the bill for a caretaker government was submitted in Parliament in 1991, but, they said, Begum Zia did not give any opportunity to move it.

They further said all opposition parties had submitted bills for caretaker government again in 1994 but the Leader of the House again brushed those aside.

The Prime Minister had totally disregarded the Opposition boycott of Parliament sessions as a bid to create pressure in favour of those bills, they said.

During the opposition boycott, the PM was repeatedly requested to take initiative for discussions on the issue. But she continued to decline even when the Opposition MPs resigned, the press release said.

On December 29, 1994, the Prime Minister had declared that she would resign 30 days before the next elections but it later proved to be totally false, the Opposition leaders alleged.

The meeting recalled that after eight months, the Opposition had gone for programmes for realising their demands and stressed that if the President took initiative, he would get their support.

Bangladesh Telegraph & Telephone Board

Notice regarding conversion of '31' group analog telephone numbers of two digital at Sher-e-Banglanagar Exchange

It is notified for information of the valued telephone subscribers that it has been decided to convert the analog telephone numbers of '31' Group into digital numbers of Sher-e-Banglanagar Exchange in phases.

In the first phase with effect from 7th March '96 at 3 pm, first one thousand numbers of '31' Group i.e. from '310000' to 310999 numbers will be converted into Digital numbers on trial run basis. The converted numbers will be of 7 Digits instead of present 6 Digits. As a result first two digits i.e. '31' Group will be replaced by '911' and subsequent four digits will remain unchanged.

For example present '31-0157' telephone number will be converted by '911-0157'.

Conversion to digital and supply of digital telephone sets will be free of cost.

In the light of the recent experience gained after conversion of analog telephone to digital in Motijheel commercial area and leading to inter-exchange call congestion, BTTB as a pre-cautionary measure, will convert initially one thousand numbers only. Further conversion will be made in phases, after evaluation of the performance of the first phase of conversion.

In this connection the valued subscribers are requested for co-operation. The subscribers are requested to contact at Phone -No. 817777 during office hours for any information and in case of any problem.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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