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## President's opening speech at JS session Amend Constitution for non-party govt

President Abdur Rahman Biswas said yesterday that the present Jatiya Sangsad, established to maintain democratic and constitutional continuity, has created an opportunity for another Jatiya Sangsad election on the basis of participation of all parties, reports BSS.

In his address at the inaugural session of the Sixth Jatiya Sangsad, the President said the February 15 elections were necessary for maintaining constitutional continuity. The present Sangsad is going to begin its activities with the expectation to solve the political problems by making necessary constitutional amendments for the formation of a non-party interim government," he added.

Chiefs of the three services, high civil and military officials and elite were present at the VIP gallery. The President said the present Sangsad has a historic role to play in the context of the country's present political situation. He expressed the hope that the members of the present Sangsad would give prominence to the national interest and party considerations for the sake of country's continuing peace and progress, maintaining democratic process and, above all, continuity of the constitution.

He regretted that the major Opposition political parties did not participate in the 6th Jatiya Sangsad election. Many impediments have developed centering the election, he said and reminded the members of the Sangsad that they had immense responsibility in preserving and consolidating democracy.

President Biswas said at the request of the Opposition leaders and Prime Minister

## Inside Jatiya Sangsad

**By Nazmul Ashraf**

An independent MP from Sirajganj, Shamsul Alam, demanded that the present Parliament complete its full term because the people had elected him for five years.

Supporting Alam, Mahtub Anam, a treasury bench first term MP from Mymensingh, said it was the desire of all the members, who backed up the independent MP's contention by thumping tables.

The new MPs were also seen very enthusiastic in the House and tried to meet Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and other ministers during breaks in the proceedings.

Col (ret'd) Khandakar Abdur Rashid, the National Democratic Alliance MP from Chandina, Comilla sat in the seat of the leader of the Opposition which caused a dislocation in the order of seats on the front row where the opposition benches usually sat.

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## 100 hurt during Opposition's bid to gherao JS

**By Staff Correspondent**

Pitched battles with police and widespread violence including torching of cars marked the Opposition's programme to gherao the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban in the city yesterday.

At least 100 people were injured, 35 with rubber bullets, during the clashes at Farmgate, Bangla Motor, Sonargaon, Link Road, Kalabagan and Dhanmondi that ensued when the police intercepted their processions towards the Sangsad Bhaban at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. The streets in these areas turned into battle-fields as the activists fought running battles exploding numerous bombs while police chased them firing tear gas shells and rubber bullets.

Angry activists attacked a few offices in Dhanmondi and set ablaze at least a dozen vehicles in different parts of the city till 10 pm, witnesses and police said.

Several hundred gunshots were fired and scores of bombs exploded as the acts of violence spilled over to Tejgaon, Shahbagh, Dhaka University campus, Moghbazar, Mohakhali, Hatirpool and in the adjoining areas.

Awami League, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami on Saturday last announced the programme to gherao the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban and observe "black day" yesterday to resist "legalisation of the bogus sixth parliament" and to realise their demands.

The session of the controversial parliament began yesterday.

Awami League processionists, marching towards the JS Bhaban after a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club were injured.

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## 253 Rohingyas cross into Bangladesh in a week

**COX'S BAZAR, Mar 19:** Some 253 Rohingya refugees crossed into Bangladesh through Nayapara and Sabrang border points during the last one week signalling a fresh refugee problem. UNHCR and local official sources said here today, reports BSS.

According to the sources, some Rohingya organisations had been tempting Rohingyas of Arakan in Myanmar to cross into Bangladesh saying they would be given abundant relief and other facilities.

In different camps of Teknaf, about 53,816 Rohingya refugees are awaiting repatriation to Myanmar.

Some 2,57,877 Rohingya Muslims entered Bangladesh in November 1991 and of them, over two lakh were repatriated through the good offices of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and efforts of Bangladesh government.

Sources said that the repatriated Rohingyas have been rehabilitated in the Arakan state of Myanmar and that they

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President Abdur Rahman Biswas administering the oath of office to Begum Khaleda Zia as Prime Minister at a simple ceremony at Bangabhaban yesterday. — PID photo



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina addressing a huge public meeting in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. — Star photo

## Gunshots fired at Hasina's residence: AL

**By Staff Correspondent**

Unidentified gunmen allegedly fired four shots at the Dhanmondi residence of AL chief Sheikh Hasina last evening, inmates of the house claimed.

They said the shots were fired from across the lake at around 7 pm and were aimed at the bedroom of Hasina which is at the back of the three-storied house.

They also said that a general diary has been filed with the Dhanmondi thana, but the duty officer of the thana, Shahadat Hossain, said no such GD was entered. He added that the officer-in-charge along with two members of a mobile team had visited the residence of the AL president when rumour reached the thana that shots had been fired at her residence.

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## NEWS BRIEFS

**JS session adjourned**  
The first session of the sixth Parliament that began yesterday afternoon was adjourned till 4 pm Thursday, reports UNB.

**Speaker Shaikh Rafiqul Ali announced the adjournment of the House at 8:40 pm after conclusion of the President's inaugural speech.**

**Shantibahini man shot dead**  
BANDARBAN, Mar 19: A Shantibahini man was shot dead by security personnel when a group of outlaws opened fire at a security patrol near Chungchung Para in Ruma thana early today. Officials said a gang of outlaws opened fire from a Jhumra house at the securitymen at about 1 am when they were in routine patrol in the area, 3 km off Chungchung Para. The security personnel fired back at the attackers killing one of them on the spot, reports UNB.

**RU exams postponed**  
From Our Correspondent  
RAJSHAHI, Mar 19: All examinations of the Rajshahi University have been postponed for unavoidable reasons. New schedule for the examinations will be announced later. The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of RU Academic Council with Vice-Chancellor Prof M Yusuf Ali in the chair this evening.

**Maid commits suicide**  
From Our Correspondent  
KISHOREGANJ, Mar 19: A maid servant committed suicide by taking poison in her master's house at village Chhaysut in Kuliarchar thana yesterday evening. Fatema Begum, 14, swallowed poison as the house owner rebuked her for a trivial matter.

**Govt offices ransacked**  
KISHOREGANJ, Mar 19: Opposition activists ransacked several government offices in Hosenpur thana protesting police action on the opposition activists in capital Dhaka today. Witnesses said the opposition activists broke into thana education, social welfare and TPO offices and set ablaze valuable documents. Earlier, they brought out a militant procession in the thana headquarters and chanted slogans against the BNP government, reports UNB.

## 14-member cabinet, 13 state ministers

**By Staff Correspondent**

A 14-member new cabinet headed by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was sworn in yesterday, by President Abdur Rahman Biswas, prior to the first session of the sixth parliament.

Thirteen state ministers were also administered oath of offices in a simple ceremony at the Bangabhaban.

Eight senior ministers in the earlier cabinet were dropped while one new member, Mirza Abbas, a former Mayor of Dhaka city, was inducted in the new cabinet.

The dropped ministers are Mirza Golam Hafiz, M Shamsul Islam, Akbar Hossain, Maj Gen Majidul Haq (rtd), ASM Hannan Shah, Lt Gen Mir Shaukat Ali, Keramat Ali and M K Anwar.

Four state ministers and two deputy ministers were also dropped while three new state ministers were inducted.

The state ministers who were dropped are: Mujibur Rahman, Mosharraf Hussain Shahjahan, Prof M A Mannan and Abdul Mannan. Deputy ministers Md Kabir Hussain and Md Sirajul Haque were also dropped.

The new state ministers are Redwan Ahmed, a garments owner, Amanullah Anam, Vice-president of DUCSU, and Maj

## Western diplomats abstain

**By Staff Correspondent**

Ambassadors and High Commissioners of all European Union countries, the US, Canada, Australia and Japan did not attend the opening ceremony of the sixth Jatiya Sangsad session here yesterday.

Envoys of these countries earlier in the day held consultations at the Italian embassy presided by the ambassador, who represents the current European Council's presidency, diplomatic sources said.

The diplomats at the meeting decided that they would

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## 19 ordinances placed in JS

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar tabled 19 ordinances in Parliament yesterday when the 6th parliament began its first session, reports UNB.

The ordinances are: The Representation of the People (Amendment) Ordinance 1995, Union Parishad and Municipality (Special Duty) Ordinance 1995, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council Ordinance 1995, the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute

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## People will never accept 'illegal' parliament: JP

The Jatiya Party yesterday reiterated its demand for annulment of 'illegal' parliament and fresh election under a non-party caretaker government, reports UNB.

Any Bill passed by this illegal parliament will be illegal, said JP Acting Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury while addressing a rally organised in observance of the 'black day' to protest the convening of the session of the sixth parliament.

Referring to Prime Minister's acceptance of the opposition demand for holding elections under a non-party caretaker government, Mizan questioned why then she (PM) accepted the demand after loss of so many lives and property, arrest and repression.

Mizan clearly said "people have rejected the February 15 polls and will never accept this illegal parliament convened on basis of that."

The JP leader said Prime Minister Begum Zia did not go out of Dhaka after February 15 polls as she did not want to face people for her misdeeds.

Barrister Moudud Ahmed clearly said that Opposition movement would continue till realisation of its demands.

He said Begum Zia had violated the Constitution and could not be the Prime Minister. Begum Zia has also lost her parliament membership, he

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## Disobey, unseat this illegal govt: Hasina

**By Staff Correspondent**

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the people not to obey the "illegal" BNP government and to launch a 'peoples movement' to unseat.

"Don't obey the directives of this illegal government," she told a huge public meeting in front of the Jatiya Press Club, prior to a march toward the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

"People don't recognise this parliament of vote thieves. Our movement will continue till people regain their right to franchise," she said.

The whole country will be on fire till the peoples' demands — scrapping of the February 15 polls and holding of elections for the sixth parliament under a neutral caretaker government — are met," said the AL president.

Her speech was repeatedly interrupted with full-throated anti-government slogans by the party activists and supporters. People from different walks of life joined this meeting.

Dhaka City Corporation Mayor and AL city unit president Mohammad Hanif hoed his leader's at the meeting.

"We will make the whole Dhaka City cooperative Beginning from today, the peoples' movement takes a new turn," he said.

Hasina justifying her call to the people to disobey the government's directive said, "She (Khaleda) violated the Constitution by taking oath as Prime Minister while not even being an MP. Begum Zia became Prime Minister today standing on the bodies of over a hundred people. People don't recognise her as Prime Minister."

"The cabinet that took oath today is illegal. They violated the Constitution, they insulted the people."

She expressed her disappointment saying, "We had hoped the President would scrap the sixth parliament constituted through a farcical poll and arrange fresh elections under a neutral caretaker government."

The AL chief said that peoples' lives were not at all secure in the hands of vote-thieves. With a note of warning to the law enforcing agencies Hasina said, "don't make yourself prey to peoples' frustrations and anguish by trying to safeguard the power of vote thieves."

"People will never tolerate the misuse of their hard earned money for buying arms to ensuring the security of the vote thieves," warned Hasina.

She charged the leaders of the ruling BNP with plunder.

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## One succumbs to bomb injuries

**By DMCH Correspondent**

A young man, who received serious burn injuries in a bomb attack during the non-cooperation programme Sunday morning, died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday.

Md Yusuf, 22, son of Yakub Ali of Link Road, Bangla Motor, was severely injured near Mohakhali level crossing when a person threw a petrol bomb at the tempo in which he was travelling, family and medical sources said.

Yusuf, an employee of a tyre shop at Bangla Motor, died at the DMCH at around 6:00 am yesterday.

## Non-cooperation: Further relaxation

**By Staff Correspondent**

The Opposition announced further relaxation for banks and shops for today as its indefinite non-cooperation programme entered the eleventh day yesterday.

An Awami League press release said banks would remain open from 1 pm to 3 pm today to benefit the people, particularly the intending Haj pilgrims till 3 pm.

Until further announcement, shops will remain open from 3 pm instead of 4 pm earlier.

Private sector export-oriented industries specially in the garments sector will operate for 13 hours from 4 pm till 5 am the following day, the press release said.

## Sylhet flood situation improves

**From Staff Correspondent**

SYLHET, Mar 19: The flash flood situation in the 5 thanas of Sylhet district improved today. There was no rain or onrush of waters from the across stream in the hilly areas across the Indian border for the last two days. The thanas are — Gowainghat, Jaintapur, Kanaihat, Jakiganj and Compaiganj.

Standing Boro and others crops on about 35 thousand acres in these thanas went under waters due to continuous rains and onrush of waters.

Meanwhile, the rivers in the district of Sunamganj marked a rise on the water-level. A number of breaches in the Baishuti embankment of Chaptir haor in the Deral thana has threatened standing Boro paddy on more than 14,000 acres while about 12,000 acres in the Barani haor is also threatened as a number of breaches have developed in the Noakhali sluice gate during the last two days.

## Deadlock at Chittagong Port continues AL activist stabbed to death, two succumb to injuries

**From Staff Correspondent**

CHITTAGONG, Mar 19: The deadlock at the Chittagong port continued today while tension mounted in the city following the killing of an Awami League activists last night.

According to port officials, cargo handling and delivery of goods could not be resumed at the port today. The situation remained tense around the port area, where the All Party Action Committee has imposed a "people's curfew."

Golam Nur, 25 identified as an activist of Awami League, was stabbed to death after being abducted last night by his rivals at Pathantoli police station.

Police recovered the body of Nur this morning from Daniaipara area near Pathantoli under Doublimooring thana.

Awami League blamed the activists of BNP for the abduction and killing of Nur.

Tension flared up in the entire Agrabad commercial area today following the killing of Nur and supporters of Awami League brought out processions in the city demanding the arrest of the killers of Nur.

Meanwhile one Shaful Islam, 45, and another Imam Hossain, 60, succumbed to their bullet injuries this morning at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital and both of them were identified as pedestrians.

Shaful received bullet wounds on March 8 during a gunfight between the activists of JFD and BCL at Jaatola near Morin road, police and hospital sources said.

Imam received bullet wounds at Alkaran area on March 16 during a gunfight there between the activists of BNP and Awami League, police and hospital sources added.

Both were under treatment at the hospital where they died this morning.

Sporadic bomb blasts marked the 11th day of non-cooperation programme launched by the Opposition in the port city today.

Bombs were blasted in front of the residence of CDA chairman at Badshah Miah Chowdhury road this evening, family sources said. Bombs were also blasted at Barik building crossing, Fakirhat near port jetty No 3, Agrabad.

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## BNP has destroyed sanctity of JS: Jamaat

Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday accused the BNP of destroying the sanctity of the Parliament by holding a session of an "illegal" parliament, reports UNB.

"BNP has created a black chapter in the history of democracy by holding this session of a fake parliament formed through a farcical election," Jamaat secretary general Matjur Rahman Nizami told a party rally here yesterday afternoon.

Jamaat organised the rally at the north gate of Baitul Mukarram Mosque in observance of "Black Day" protesting the sitting of an "illegal" parliament. The rally was followed by a big procession.

The procession returned from Farmgate point where it was intercepted by police barricade. The processionists later dispersed at Kawranbazar amidst a series of bomb blasts.

Terming Begum Zia as a "power monger Prime Minister," Nizami said she has betrayed the nation. He also

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## Non-cooperation in dists Over 150 injured in clashes

**By Staff Correspondent**

More than one hundred and fifty people were injured in clashes between the activists of the ruling party and the Opposition at different places yesterday, the 11th day of the opposition's non-cooperation programme.

Of the injured, at least 100 people were injured in Narayanganj, 30 in Khulna, 10 in Rangamati, 30 in Sirajganj and 10 in Peral.

**N'ganj**

Our Narayanganj Correspondent adds More than one hundred people were injured, nineteen of them seriously, in sporadic clashes between BNP and opposition activists here on the 11th day of the non-cooperation movement yesterday.

Shahed, 25, who received bullet injuries, was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in a critical condition. The BNP claimed that their 7 activists received bullet wounds. They are Rana, 14, Zillur Rahman, 20, Alamgir, 22, Rafiqul Islam, 45, Kabul, 25, Alamgir, 20 and Delwar, 25.

The opposition parties said their activists who received bullet injuries are: Zakirul Alam, GS of Government Tolaram College, Helal, 26, Foyez, 25, Babu, 25, Kanchon, 26, Shamim, 20, and Mamun, 24.

They were admitted to the Narayanganj Sadar Hospital and private clinics.

At least 1500 crackers and

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