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BNP violated JS norms, 4pt accord: PM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the BNP legislators to return to the Jatiya Sangsad and perform the responsibilities the people had entrusted to them.

"I request you (BNP legislators) to return to House and perform the responsibilities of the Opposition for which the people have voted you to Parliament," the Prime Minister said after the BNP lawmakers had gone out of the House for the second time yesterday.

The BNP MPs staged the first walkout protesting against an observation of Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury that it was the constitutional obligation for all to accept Sheikh

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Speaker vows to prove it

By Staff Correspondent

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury and a ruling party MP Abdul Kader Siddiki promised in the House yesterday they would resign if they failed to prove that the Constitution of Bangladesh still recognises Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as the Father of the Nation.

Taking part in a debate whether the Constitution still recognises Sheikh Mujib as the Father of the Nation, Kader

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Ruling over status of Bangabandhu BNP walks out of JS, stages demonstration

By Staff Correspondent

Opposition BNP lawmakers staged two walkouts from the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday protesting a ruling of the Speaker that said that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Rahman was still the constitutionally recognised Father of the Nation.

The second walkout, a stormy one, was also followed by a procession, brought out from the Opposition lobby. The processionists chanted slogans denouncing Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Rahman as Father of the Nation as well as the Prime Minister and the Speaker.

During the debate, the Treasury Bench MPs supported the view put forward by the Chair and criticised the BNP MPs for

their refusal to accept a ruling of the Chair. They argued that in a parliamentary democracy it was mandatory for all concerned to abide by the ruling of the Speaker.

Referring to the history of the country's struggle for democracy and independence, the Treasury Bench MPs also said that without Sheikh Mujib Rahman, the country would not have been liberated.

On the other hand, the opposition BNP legislators argued that the fourth amendment to the Constitution recognised Sheikh Mujib Rahman as 'Father of the Nation'. But with the repeal of the fourth amendment of the Constitution in 1979, it could not be claimed that the Constitution still up-

held Sheikh Mujib as the Father of the Nation. Referring to some of Mujib's political and legal actions during his governance, some of the BNP MPs refused to accept him as Father of the Nation.

The two-and-a-half-hours debate, marked with pandemonium, began soon after ruling party MP Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed rose on a point of order to protest the reported removal of Bangabandhu's portrait from a wall of the Bogra Circuit House in presence of Leader of the House and BNP Chief Begum Khaleda Zia on Monday.

He strongly condemned the incident and said it shocked the whole nation.

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Ekushey book fair opens Cultural complex to be set up: PM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday announced that her government would set up a "cultural circle" (Sanskriti Britta) soon to enable the next generation to know the country's cultural heritage.

The Prime Minister was inaugurating the month-long Ekushey Grantha Mela (book fair) 1997, organised by the Bangla Academy in its premises.

The two parks will be connected by hanging bridges for enabling the people to go round

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the proposed cultural complex, she added.

The PM further announced that a twenty-one storied building would be constructed in the Bangla Academy premises to commemorate the Amar Ekushey.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in her speech urged all

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3rd SAARC Cricket Tournament Hosts take on Pakistan A in opening tie today

Sports Reporter

The cricket carnival in the capital begins today with hosts Bangladesh taking on fancied Pakistan A in the inaugural match of the third SAARC cricket tournament at the Dhaka Stadium at 9:15 am.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed will declare the four-nation

See Page 12 Col 4

Spl facilities for RMG exporters

By Staff Correspondent

The authorities have decided to give the readymade garments manufacturers a number of facilities including rapid clearance of goods by customs to help the sector maintain its competitive edge in the world market.

The facilities will include covering of import of raw materials under a single bond declaration instead of separate

bonds for each consignment, introduction of green channel system to clear the imports, automatic renewal of special bond licence for readymade wares on payment of renewal fee.

"We have agreed in principle on the solution of most of the issues. We will implement those very quickly," Shah Abdul

Hannan, the new chairman of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) told The Daily Star yesterday.

On the 'green channel', he said this is a new concept. "We will examine it and give a quick decision to make it effective soon," the NBR chairman, who is also the secretary, internal

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IDB VACANCY



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Member Secretary

Mutawalli Committee IDB-BISEW & Joint Secretary (ME & Admin), Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka (Room-14, Block-16).

D-212



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina consoling a child (inset) during her visit to the Bhasantek slum in the city yesterday.

—Star photo

PM apologises to Bhasantek slum dwellers, assures rehabilitation

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina rushed to the evicted slum at Bhasantek in the city yesterday morning and assured the victims of proper compensation, rehabilitation and other possible help, reports UNB.

The Prime Minister, who sacked State Minister for Housing and Public Works Afsaruddin Ahmed Khan for evicting the hapless people without giving adequate time, apologised to the slum dwellers and said, "Even yesterday, I didn't know this slum would be evicted suddenly."

She requested the victims of Bhasantek Basti to stay in that area until the government rehabilitates them elsewhere.

"None will evict you until proper rehabilitation is arranged," she said.

The slum dwellers claimed that some 20,000 people were evicted from the Basti on Monday. Several thousand houses of the poor and rootless people

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Slum dwellers not evicted: Afsar Bhasantek land was allotted for Benarasi Palli

Star Report

State Minister for Works Afsaruddin Ahmed Khan was asked to resign and the resignation was accepted by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, BTV said yesterday evening, adding a 'byzantine twist of events' concerning the exit of Mr Khan from the council of minister over 40 acres of public land in Bhashantek, Mirpur.

At 1:15 a.m. Monday, a terse announcement by the official BSS news agency, quoting sources in the PM's office, said the state minister had been 'sacked' for evicting the inhabitants of the Bhashantek slum without giving them enough time.

But Tuesday's events saw the cabinet secretary handing over

a letter from PM asking him to resign which he complied, and the state-owned media reported it.

Similarly, the Secretary, Ministry of Works had been made an Officer-on-Special Duty, the order of which did not reach him until late in the afternoon. He attended office for sometime and got the information from his PS, he told The Daily Star.

But what had gone wrong in Bhashantek, a sprawling 40 acre area of prime land, stretching from Mirpur Section One to Section 17, occupied by 1,20,184 votes were cast and 1063 votes found invalid.

Earlier, official sources said polling was held in a peaceful atmosphere and no untoward incident occurred anywhere.

The main opposition BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami did not contest the by-election.

AL candidate elected from Thakurgaon-1

Ramesh Chandra Sen of Bangladesh Awami League was declared unofficially elected in the by-election held in the Thakurgaon-1 parliamentary constituency yesterday, reports BSS.

Ramesh received 78,208 votes while his nearest rival Md Z H Islam of Jatiya Party got 39,843 votes, the Election Commission said in a press release last night.

Krishna Mohammad Sadek of Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Mukti Andolan got only 1070 votes.

The percentage of vote cast was 50.98, the press release said.

Out of a total of 2,35,758 votes in the constituency covering a pourashava and 19 unions, 1,20,184 votes were cast and 1063 votes found invalid.

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19 th February, 1997.

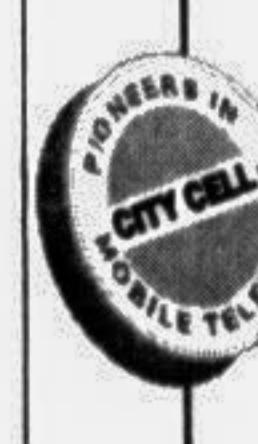
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