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Hasina tells Buddhist leaders

Certain quarters want war-like situation to continue in CHT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said there is no example in the world that anyone resorts to movement against peace and wants unrest instead, reports UNB.

"Those staging demonstration against the peace accord on Chittagong Hill Tracts do not want peace and stability," she told the delegation leaders of the Buddhist community who called on her at Ganobhaban.

"We want to establish peace in every sphere of life, we want peace everywhere," Hasina said, calling upon the Buddhist leaders to continue their struggle for establishing peace.

Leaders of Bangladesh Buddhist Federation, National Buddhist Youth Federation, Bangladesh Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha and Youngmen's Buddhist Federation met the Prime Minister on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.

The Buddhist leaders hailed the CHT peace accord and applauded the Prime Minister for their arduous effort for establishing peace.

The Prime Minister said cer-

tain quarters are demonstrating against the peace accord as they don't want peace. They want unrest; they want that a war-like situation continues in the hill region."

"It's a peculiar demand of the opposition that the peace agreement will have to be scrapped," she added.

Hasina said it was expected from the opposition that they will support the peace accord. And they could have pointed out any inconsistency for rectification.

She said that instead of cooperating with the government, the main opposition had served nearly 5,000 amendment notices, an unprecedented event in the parliamentary history of the world.

Nonetheless, the Prime Minister said, the Speaker worked out a plan to allow maximum number of opposition members to take part in the discussion.

"And we are ready to accept their amendment proposals if found acceptable," she said. "But they walked out of Parliament."

Hasina said peace has been

established in the hill tracts and now the development works will start in the region which remained neglected for long two decades.

She said Buddha throughout his life preached the message of peace and also worked to establish peace.

Buddhism is the religion of peace and amity, the Prime Minister said and called upon the Buddhist leaders to work united for peace.

She said, "The present government believes in non-communal politics... people of all faiths are getting equal treatment from this government."

Buddhist community leaders, including Dr Sukomol Barua, Md. Barua, DB Barua Chowdhury, Kishore Kumar Barua, Dr Pranab Kumar Barua, Srimat Dharmaarxit Mopathero, Bhikkhu Shilhabrada and Kalyan Mitra Barua also spoke on the occasion.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Minister Kalpa Ranjan Chakma and Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah were present.

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Clinton asks Albright to meet Netanyahu to explore next moves

WASHINGTON, May 11: Expressing regret over the collapse of plans for a Middle East peace summit, President Bill Clinton directed today Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington this week to explore the next moves, reports AP.

Clinton said the objective of the talks would be "to seek to overcome the remaining differences so that we can proceed immediately with accelerated, permanent status talks."

Netanyahu rejected US terms for a peace conference beginning today but will be in the United States this week on a speech-making trip. Clinton said Albright will report to him, after talking with Netanyahu, whether there is any basis for launching a peace conference in Washington.

Albright will make her own case to Netanyahu when they meet later this week. The date of their meeting was not announced.

Clinton issued his instructions to Albright after an Oval Office meeting with the secretary. Mideast envoy Dennis Ross and National Security Adviser Sandy Berger. Ross reported on his unsuccessful efforts to persuade Netanyahu to attend the planned meeting today.

Netanyahu refused to accept the US call for a 13 percent pullback in any of the several variations suggested by Ross in intensive talks with the prime minister in Jerusalem. Arafat was willing to settle for 13 percent on top of the 27 percent already relinquished by Israel, hoping later to gain virtually all of the West Bank for establishment of a state.

Jerusalem, however, may be given more time to consider a peace conference.

Acting on a tip-off, Mirpur police rescued the girl from the house Sunday and arrested Shahjahan, Afzal and Nasima.

Police yesterday produced the three arrested persons before the CMM's court praying for a 7-day remand.

In another incident, a 16-year-old girl was raped inside a furniture shop on Mazar Road in Mirpur on Saturday.

Nuru, a hoodlum of the locality, entered into her hut after breaking open its fence at the Badsha Mia slum at about 1 a.m.

Wielding knife, Nuru abducted her to a nearby furniture shop, police quoting the victim said.

Nuru also with one Sohel allegedly raped her inside the shop. Nuru and Sohel have been absconding since the incident, police added.

According to police, victims of both the incidents were taken into safe custody. They are likely to be sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for medical examination today.

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