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Khaleda urges police, govt officials Remain neutral during opposition's agitation

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 14: BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia today urged the government officials and police administration to remain "neutral" during the opposition's future agitation programmes, reports APB.

She assured them that "compensation" would be provided if they "suffer for maintaining neutrality during peaceful movement."

At a public meeting here, Begum Zia once again charged the Awami League government with "plotting to revert to one-party system in the country."

The leader of the opposition in parliament alleged that the ruling party was trying to stay in power "by means of repression and false cases" after having failed to run the country. "Although it's not possible, they do not seem willing to take any lesson from the past," she added.

Begum Zia accused the government of "allowing the opposition to speak in the House nor demonstrate on the streets."

"Those who are responsible for this state of affairs will be tried on this soil," she told the public rally at the Sirajganj University College ground.

She branded the ruling party as tyrants (*fatawa*) and said people were being united against them. Presided over by district BNP convenor TMA Mannan MP, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Amanullah Aman MP, Alamgir Haider MP, Rafiqul Islam Bakul MP, BNP

leader Iqbal Hassan, Sirajganj Fourasava Chairman Noor-e-Alam Helal and former MP Azizur Rahman Dalal.

Begum Zia alleged that the ruling party leaders did everything to change their lots. She claimed only BNP could resist the "misdeeds" of the AL government and "that's why the rulers have resorted to repression on BNP and its allies."

In this way, she said, they (government) foiled the Paltan Maidan meeting of BNP of November 7 so that "we could not announce any programme from a largely-attended gathering."

Referring to the CHT peace accord, the BNP leader mentioned that Shantu Larma himself was now critical of the government's behaviour and talking about an "unwritten" agreement.

About distribution of gas blocks, the opposition leader complained that the government was striking deals with foreign companies without any prior assessment. "Any conspiracy to hand over national resources to the aliens will be foiled," she declared.

Begum Zia further blamed the government for not holding the trial of the share market scandal and for "not taking any effective steps to protect the dignity of women."

The BNP leader said they (AL) were now claiming the credit of constructing the Jamuna Bridge, but "I and my finance minister managed funds for the bridge."

3-day BIMSTEC meet in Dhaka from Dec 17

A three-day meeting of the BIMSTEC, the new economic bloc of five South and South-east Asian countries, will begin in Dhaka on December 17, reports APB.

Foreign Office sources yesterday said that the ministerial level meeting on December 19 would be preceded by a two-day parley of senior officials of the member countries.

This will be the second meeting of the bloc which was due in Dhaka in September but had

Outlawed party activist hacked to death

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, Nov 14: A cadre of outlawed Biplobi Communist Party was hacked to death by the armed cadres of Purba Banglar Communist Party at Sholigati bazar under Dumuria thana in the early hours of Friday.

Police and witnesses said that the victim Ali Reza, 30, was dragged out of his house and hacked to death.

Reza was wanted in several murder cases, police said.

A case has been lodged with Dumuria thana.

UNB adds: Three members of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party were arrested today on charge of killing Ali Reza.

5th & 7th amendments

From Page 1
Quoting Article 7 of the Constitution, Kamal Hossain said all powers in the Republic are supposed to belong to the people. "But does it appear that the people are now in power?" he asked the audience. "No," the audience replied.

Dr. Hossain requested Suranjit Sengupta, Prime Minister's Adviser on Parliamentary Affairs who was present there, to take immediate steps to separate the judiciary from the executive wing of the state. Sengupta nodded his approval.

Barrister Ishiaque Ahmed said that the original constitution was a "document of beauty, grace and balance."

"But when the provision for promulgating emergency was incorporated in 1973, the beauty was gone," the barrister said. "Originally we did not keep the provision for emergency or preventive detention because we had seen that such provisions were means of the Pakistani rulers to take away the fundamental rights."

The balance between three wings of the state - Executive, Legislature and Judiciary - are there in the constitution. None of them is superior to any of the branches.

Terminating Article Seven 'the pole star' of the Constitution, Ishiaque Ahmed said it has limited the powers of government while ensuring unquestionable sovereignty of the people.

Earlier, Dr. M Zahir, a senior Supreme Court lawyer, gave an account of the contents of all the 13 amendments

been postponed due to the devastating flood in Bangladesh.

BIMSTEC (Bangladesh-India-Myanmar-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Cooperation) was launched in Bangkok in June 1997 at a meeting of the Ministers of the four Asian nations. Myanmar later joined the grouping in December.

Dhaka meeting will mainly discuss the organisational and structural matters of BIMSTEC, the sources said.

The areas of cooperation of the grouping include investment, trade, tourism, communication and human resources development.

Held in Bangkok in December 1997, the first meeting discussed proposals for introducing direct air services linking the capitals of the member countries and building a trans-Asian highway.

3 alleged muggers beaten up in city

Three alleged muggers were injured, one of them seriously, when they came under attack by a mob in front of Motijheel Ideal School and College in the city yesterday afternoon, reports UNB.

Police said the mob *gheraoed* the muggers when they tried to snatch a gold ornament from a woman who raised hue and cry at about 12:30 pm. They caught the muggers and beat up them.



WILL THEY DREAM AGAIN? Victims of their husbands' brutality back in Bangladesh, they are now in Valencia, Spain, to undergo plastic surgery. Benefiting from a pioneering project known as "DermaAesthetic Corporation for Bangladesh", they are to have the marks of acid burns and injuries on their faces repaired. Outside the Spanish hospital, they pose for photo Friday.

Anti-fatwa rally in Manikganj today

NGOs and the intelligentsia of the country will stage a mass protest today against bigoted acts of *'fatwa-mongers'* that led to the tragedy involving young couple in Manikganj, reports UNB.

The Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) will organise a rally at 11 am at Devendra College ground in Sauria thana of Manikganj district to protest the "killing" of Rashid and Kohinor.

They reportedly committed suicide to avoid a social stigma after being subjected to lashes following the *'fatwa'* (edict) given by local mullas recently.

Poet Shamsur Rahman, eminent writer Dr Muntasir Mamun, educationist Dr Shamsul Arefin, Tasmina Hossain MP, Women's leader Ayesha Khanam, Journalist Shamim Akhter and ADAB Vice-president Aroma Gunn, besides other litterateurs, intellectuals, newsmen and NGO leaders, will attend the rally.

Bid to fish in haor defying Sec 144 50 hurt in police action in Kishoreganj

KISHOREGANJ, Nov 14: At least 50 people, including four policemen, were injured today when more than 1,000 people tried to fish violating Section 144 imposed by the authorities in a haor of Kotiadi thana, reports UNB.

The mob also snatched a shotgun from the police. The injured policemen, including one Inspector, were admitted to the Sadar Hospital here.

Witnesses said the people injured when police resorted to baton charge, fired five rounds of rubber bullets and 10 tear gas shells to disperse the mob at about 10 am.

TNO Mushfiq Ahmed Shamim imposed Section 144 in Kutir Beel area of Jalalpur union banning fishing by outsiders there for 12 hours from 4 am today.

Officials said the five square mile waterbody was leased out

to Kutir Beel Matsyaji Samabaya Samity. They said Section 144 was imposed as people of the area tried to fish there in an organised effort after their earlier attempt on November 10 failed in the face of resistance by the members of the Samity.

Pabna-2 by-polls Interview of BNP candidates today

Interview of BNP candidates seeking nomination for by-election in Pabna-2 constituency will be held at 29 Minto Road at 3 pm today, reports UNB.

A parliamentary board comprising party's Standing Committee members will interview the nomination seekers, said a party press release.



Iraqi soldiers practise for a military show at the Saddam Stadium in Baghdad, Saturday, November 14, 1998. Soldiers and hundreds of Iraqis prepared a show for Baghdad Day, a local holiday, celebrated Sunday, November 15, 1998.

Iraq allows arms inspection

From Page 1
and close coordination with the allies to safeguard the security and stability of Kuwait against any foreign aggression." Colonel Ahmad Al-Rahmani told the official Kuwaiti news agency KUNA.

He said the Kuwaiti armed forces were ready to deal with any emergency but insisted Kuwait was not party to the dispute between Iraq and the United Nations and sought only security and stability in the region.

In Baghdad hundreds of Iraqis demonstrated today against the United States, burning US flags and chanting support for President Saddam Hussein.

sain, as Washington stepped up threats of military strikes against Iraq.

"The Iraqi workers stand by their people and their leader Saddam Hussein against the criminal arrogance of the United States," read one banner.

Others branded Richard Butler, chairman of the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) for Iraq disarmament, a "zionist spy."

The demonstration, organised by the Iraqi Workers Federation, began in the centre of the capital and wound its way down Rashid Road to the UN Development Programme's (UNDP) building.

Demonstrators stamped on and set fire to Israeli and American flags as the crowd chanted slogans glorifying the Iraqi president.

Two killed in Ctg incidents

CHITTAGONG, Nov 14: Two people were killed in separate incidents in the port city tonight, reports UNB.

Police said Solaiman, a betel leaf seller and a pedestrian, Muhammad Bashir Ali, were injured with bullet during a clash between two groups of *mastans* in Firingi Bazar area at about 10 pm.

Solaiman died on the way to hospital and Bashir was hospitalised in critical condition.

In another incident, Abu Taleb, an employee of a non-government organisation, was stabbed at Railway Colony at about 8 pm while he was returning home. He succumbed to his injuries in the hospital.

Appeal

From Page 1
November 8 is likely to appeal against the conviction through Advocate Hafizur Rahman.

The lawyer got Huda's signature from the Dhaka Central Jail on the *okalatnama*.

The government is also likely to appeal to the High Court seeking execution of the convicts by hanging. The lower court in its November 8 verdict ordered the execution by a firing squad in public.

BNP march

From Page 1
A committee was also formed with Ashraf Hossain as its convenor to observe the anniversary of death of veteran political leader Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani on November 17.

'Set deadline to try criminals'

By Aminul Islam

There should be a mandatory time limit for trial of criminal cases, a group of legal experts suggested.

They also suggested exclusive criminal courts at the Magistry and Sessions levels to improve dispensation of criminal justice.

The suggestions came from some legal experts in separate papers submitted to the Law Commission, sources said. They include 12 judges from Sessions courts, five magistrates, three defence lawyers, three public prosecutors and four police officers.

The workshop scheduled for November 17-19 is part of the LC's effort to frame recommendations for reforms in certain areas of public interest and capacity enhancement of the judiciary.

Absence of time limit for completion of trial and non-existence of exclusive criminal courts at Magistry and Ses-

sions levels were identified as two of the 10 causes hindering trial of criminal offences, they observed.

The legal experts suggested effective measures against corruption in courts, efficient administration of criminal trials and increased number of skilled prosecution cadres to come out of the existing sloppy system.

They further suggested the appointment of "Lawyer-Magistrates" as in the old system. The experts also suggested that written arguments be filed instead of oral arguments in trials.

Non-attendance of witnesses at trials was another factor identified as a barrier to the running of a trial. They also pointed to the non-payment of any TA or DA to the witnesses.

Businessman gunned down in city

By Staff Correspondent

A businessman was gunned down by a gang of unidentified assailants at Goran under Shaububgh thana in the city late Friday night.

Shahen Shah alias Saken, 38, a resident of Tilipara in Khilgaon, was shot from behind and hacked when he was entering his sister's residence at Goran, police said.

Fatally injured Saken was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors declared him dead. The body was handed over to relatives after autopsy at the DMCH morgue, hospital sources said.

A murder case was lodged with Shaububgh thana but none was arrested till last night.

Acid thrown on mother, 2 minor sons

MYMENSINGH, Nov 14: A mother and her two minor sons suffered serious burn injuries when miscreants threw acid on them at Behettari village in Iswarganj thana last night, reports APB.

The victims, Ambia Khatun, 30, and her children Shahi, 12, and Masud, 9, were admitted to the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. Of them, the condition of Ambia was stated to be critical as her face, forehead and breasts were badly bruised.

Police said the miscreants entered the house of the young woman at the dead of night and threw acid on the three victims while they were asleep.

Ambia Khatun, deserted by her husband two years back, alleged that one Motaleb and his accomplices committed the heinous act after she refused to marry him.

Police arrested two persons including Motaleb today for their alleged involvement in the incident.

Ambia Khatun lodged a case with Iswarganj police accusing six persons including Atharabi union parishad chairman Moni.

50 shops, BNP, JP ward offices on khas lands in city removed

By Staff Correspondent

More than 50 shops at Muk-tijoddh Market and ward offices of BNP and Jatiya Party on khas lands near Moham-madpur Town Hall were removed yesterday.

The Housing and Settlement Department removed those in presence of two magistrates and police.

Activists of BNP and Jatiya Party had alterations with police when they were asked to vacate the offices on illegally occupied khas lands, police officials said.

Mathbaria AL office ransacked

PIROJPUR, Nov 14: A group of young men ransacked the Awami League office at Mathbaria today, reports UNB.

The attack, allegedly by BNP activists triggered a clash that left five Awami League workers injured at about 7:30 pm.

Police and witnesses said, a group of about 30 BNP activists with sticks stormed into the Mathbaria AL office. They beat up Awami League workers indiscriminately, damaged furniture and burnt the portrait of Bangabandhu.

Of the injured, local BCL leader Nasiruddin was admitted to the Health Complex and then shifted to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital as his condition deteriorated.

Tension was prevailing in the thana town since pronouncement of judgement in the Bangabandhu Murder Case.

Additional police force was deployed in the town.

Biotechnology

From Page 1
ogy successfully to raise potato production. In Thailand, rural women increased production of orchids which accounted for about 60 per cent of Thai exports, she said.

In Bangladesh, orchids and ginger could be grown in the kitchen gardens along with gourds and string beans on raised platforms.

If the women are provided access to the technology, it would change their lifestyle and bring the country a rich dividend. The technology can also help conservation of nature, bio-diversity and help revive production of medicinal plants and herbs, Dr Ferdousi noted.

The biotechnology could also help waste disposal and produce bio-fertiliser.

But the technology could not be spread due to lack of government support. Despite submission of research projects to the Science and Technology Division for support under its Tk 12 crore fund, none bothered to pay any heed, she said adding, other government organisations like the BARC also remained impassive.

Even government research organisations, despite funds and manpower at their disposal, have done nothing significant to spread the technology, she pointed out.

A test-tube-grown banana plant costing Tk 5, for example, can substantially reduce cost of production and turn out a disease resistant breed that can yield better quality fruit, she said.

But high cost of a seaweed, Agar, that is required to help test-tube plants sustain, growth, chemicals and other equipment are standing as stumbling blocks to the spread of the technology, Dr Ferdousi said.

The government should exempt duties on the materials required for tissue culture and biotechnology, she added.

On DEBTEC, she said it is a non-profit voluntary organisation devoted to the spread of biotechnology. So far, it trained small groups of enthusiasts who have at least SSC education.



Syed Atiqullah dead

Syed Atiqullah, an eminent journalist and poet, died of lung cancer in New Jersey yesterday. He was 65, reports UNB.

A special Correspondent of Daily Sangbad, Syed Atiqullah was staying with his son after a checkup in the hospital. He was not operated upon because of heart ailment, and died at 7:15 am (US time), said a message received last night.

He left behind a son, a daughter, wife and a host of relatives, friends and admirers. Born in 1933 in Kaliahat, Tangail, Atiqullah served in various dailies, including the Bangladesh Observer, The Telegraph and Morning News.

His body is expected to be flown from New Jersey on Tuesday, according to family sources.

Syed Atiqullah received the Bangla Academy Award in 1974. Award to Anusud Ahmed Awarad, Padabali Award for his outstanding literary work.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed her deep shock at the death of Syed Atiqullah.

Leaders of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) also condoled his death.

The President and the General Secretary of the Press Club expressed deep shock at the sad demise of the noted journalist.

3 diplomats

From Page 1
foreign secretary to continue in the same post after extension. His immediate predecessor Farooq Sobhan was given contract service as Executive Chairman of Board of Investment. Mustafizur Rahman's several weeks earlier, well ahead of his retirement date, December 8.

It was learnt that the performance of Khairul Anam in Brussels came under serious criticism, particularly his handling of the GSP crisis and dealings with the EU on Bangladesh's export of textiles and shrimps.

There were suggestions that the services of Anwar Hashim who is senior among the existing diplomats could be better utilised as an ambassador, the sources said.

Performance of Shafi Sami was rated "very satisfactory." His continuation as envoy in Delhi is being considered "critical" in the context of the "intricate" relationship between the two countries which he has handled deftly.

Three other senior diplomats whose extension of service are being "actively considered" are Mustafa Muhammad Faruk ambassador to Moscow, Syed Mohammad Hossain ambassador to Morocco and Rashed Ahmed, envoy to Japan. Both Mustafa Muhammad Faruk and Syed Mohammad Hossain are enjoying the rank of secretary. Faruk is due to retire on March 21 and Mohammad Hossain on January 8. Rashed Ahmed, envoy to Japan is holding the rank of additional secretary and is due to retire on January 17.

Meanwhile two other senior diplomats who are on three-year contract service are also learnt to be lobbying for extensions. They are KM Shehabuddin ambassador to the US and Momin Chowdhury ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

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