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PHILIPS

Matia says Abu Hena was BNP's nominee

A senior cabinet minister yesterday disclosed in Parliament that incumbent Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena was a nominee of BNP which is now seeking his resignation, reports UNB.

"We had proposed the name (Justice) Naimuddin Saheb, but you (BNP) opposed it and proposed Abu Hena's name for the post of CEC," Food and Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury reminded the BNP lawmakers.

Taking part in the thanksgiving motion on President's address to the House, she said the Chief Election Commissioner is a constitutional post. "But BNP wants us to do the unconstitutional task. We will not be foolish to do it."

About the opposition's boycott of municipal elections, the minister said people have shown a great enthusiasm for the local body polls. They are more interested in this election

than the national election. Opposition should understand that the wind is blowing against them.

Pointing to frequent hartal calls by the opposition, the food minister reminded that while in power Khaleda Zia spoke against it 966 times, but now she is applying it without hesitation.

Matia was critical of BNP for forging unholy alliance with Ershad who always change his political stand. On one hand he is calling for moving anti-hartal bill in Parliament and on the other talk of enforcing hartal.

The minister said the business community opposed the hartal while newspaper editorials commented it would not help BNP. "Only the conspirators who are dreaming of capturing power in troubled waters are the beneficiaries of the hartals," Matia told the House.



Firefighters extinguishing the blaze in the BJC godown in Narayanganj yesterday.

—Star photo

Thousands mourn

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disembarked from the helicopter.

Apart from JSD leaders Noore Alam Ziku and Shirin Akhter, present at the helipad were ministers Abdus Samad Azad, Zillur Rahman, Sajeda Chowdhury, Mohammad Nasim, political adviser to the PM Dr S A Malek and Awami League leader Amir Hossain Amu.

A truck carried the coffin of Aref, who was a member of the nucleus formed in 1962 for independence of Bangladesh and second-in-command of Mujib Bahini during the Liberation War, to his Tikatuli residence for the last stay at home at 1:55 pm.

Home Minister Rafiqul Islam said at the house on Avoy Das Lane in old part of the capital at that time. As Aref's octogenarian mother lost her word to go to her penitence mind to her son's body, the minister assured her that all actions would be taken against the killers.

Kazi Aref's political disciple in Chhatra League in the early 60s and colleague in Mujib Bahini in the Liberation War, Tofail Ahmed, now Commerce and Industries Minister, and Deputy Minister Sabir Hossain Chowdhury were also present at the gloomy home.

The house premises as well as workers of the JSD as well as people from various areas gathered there to see the body of the politician, highly recognised for his honesty both in personal and political career.

BNP leaders Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Sadek Hossain Khoka and Salahuddin Ahmed visited the house when people started taking the body to JSD office. Being local MP, Khoka wanted a namaj-e-janaza there and local people took part in it.

After keeping the body at JSD office at Bangabandhu Avenue for a while, it was taken to Central Shaheed Minar in a mourning procession where Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina rushed to pay her last respect to the valiant freedom fighter.

The Prime Minister placed floral wreaths on the coffin and along with cabinet members stood in solemn silence and prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

Before Prime Minister's arrival at the Shaheed Minar, the metal detector set up there for security reasons was damaged under heavy pressure of crowd. After she left, people in long queues started paying floral tributes to the assassinated leader.

Leaders of political parties and other organisations, hundreds of individuals, once involved with JSD and many freedom fighters were in the tandem to pay their last respect.

The long list included Awami League leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Zillur Rahman, Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Dr S A Malek, Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury, Nurul Islam Nahid, Sabir Hossain Chowdhury and Shaif Ahmed.

Among the BNP leaders to pay respect to the politician of

Barricade

From Page 1

not aware of it. The relatives later took away the body from the spot. "The decision regarding filing case or future steps would be taken later, said one relative.

Some local people demanded a foot-over at the 'deadly crossing' where several people have been killed in road accident in the past few years.

They also said that a relative of the victim had faced similar fate few years back and high officials had promised them to construct a foot-over there. But the government did not keep their commitment, they alleged.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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Fire at BJC godown

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Feb 17: A huge quantity of jute was gutted in a devastating fire at godown No-6 of Bangladesh Jute Corporation (BJC) here today, police and fire brigade sources said.

According to witnesses, the fire broke out at about 1:45 pm. Fire fighters from Adamjee, Haliganj rushed to the spot and fought several hours to extinguish the blaze.

The cause of the fire could not be ascertained immediately.

Alleged snatcher beaten to death

CHITTAGONG, Feb 17: One alleged snatcher was killed in mob beating in Barepole area under Doublinooring thana here today, reports BSS.

Police said Zahid Hossain, 23, son of Syed Hossain of Hajpara was severely beaten up by local people on suspicion that he was a snatcher.

Hartal

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rent CEC. However they decided in Tuesday's meeting to shorten the duration of the hartal to 72 hours.

After Tuesday's liaison meeting, the representatives of the four parties discussed the plan to reduce the duration of the hartal from 96 hours to 72 hours with their respective party's policy makers. Sources said the liaison members, after discussion with their party leadership, finalised the 72-hour hartal.

Opposition sources said that the parties would meet after the hartal to discuss the next steps. The current hartal is in its third day.

"Tougher action programmes are expected to be announced within the first half of March," said a senior opposition leader.

The leader also hinted that the current parliament session might be the last session for the opposition parties as "the government has further intensified its repression on the opposition parties and has provoked them to resort to street protests."

He said the opposition parties will first go for boycott of the parliament and then resign en masse from the Sangsad. "We will take a tough stance against the government soon as we have almost reached a point of no return in the political scenario," he added.

Chief Justice ATM Aizal said, "Mr Habibul Islam Bhuiyan, though as the informant you have no right to get any copy of the statement, but for transparency I am giving you my copy to read it."

After going through the PM's statement Bhuiyan returned it to the Chief Justice.

Khandkar Mahbubuddin Ahmed, a senior advocate, said "On behalf of the Bar my humble submission to Your Lordships is to supply a copy of the statement to the press."

The court refused his submission. Then he again sought to know whether the President of the Bar is entitled to disclose the statement to the press.

The court said, "It is the discretion of the President of the Bar, but the order is reserved," and "the statement will be reflected in the order."

Neither the petitioner Habibul Islam Bhuiyan nor the Attorney General yesterday made any submission before the court.

In the petition it was alleged that the PM by her statement committed 'contempt of court of the highest degree'.

On February 3, 1999 the Attorney General submitted that the statement did not cast any aspersion on the judiciary and its independence.

Even the reports published in the newspapers did not carry any contemptuous elements, he said.

While talking to the press at the Zia Airport last week, he also said that the most important matter in any such deal was to ensure the national interest. He noted that one of the purposes of the USTDA technical assistance would be to ensure the safeguarding of Bangladesh's national interest.

The WRIP involves the development of Bangladesh's Shahbazpur gas field in Bhola, installation of 150 kilometres of pipeline from the gas field to the city of Khulna, and construction of several gas-fired power plants totalling 350 megawatts (MW). The power plants would be set up in Bhola, Barisal, Khulna and Gopalganj.

The Shahbazpur gas field, discovered in 1995 by BAPEX, is estimated to contain 400 billion cubic feet (bcf) of recoverable gas. Unocal believes that

Debate on law & order

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find ways to stop political killings.

Recalling Kazi Aref's contribution to the nation's struggle for independence, Razzak said that he was one of the very few who had started working for independence back in 1962. "But the terrorists have brutally killed him. We must find out those responsible for the killing and ensure exemplary punishment to the criminals."

The minister informed the House that he had already asked the DIG concerned to take all possible steps to arrest the killers. In this regard, he also sought cooperation of opposition MPs elected from the region.

The Treasury Bench leader, however, did not specifically say anything about the Opposition proposal for having a general discussion on law and order.

When a visibly disappointed Delwar drew attention of the Chair of the Treasury Benches' non-response to the Opposition proposal, Deputy Speaker Abdul Hamid said that the whips of two sides could fix a date through mutual discussion.

Khaleida

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to the leadership of Khaleida Zia.

She said the Home Minister had given "a ready-made statement in Parliament on Aref killing to hush up" the real incident.

Khaleida accused the government of resorting to killing and repression on the opponents in a bid to destroy opposition parties and establish one-party rule in the country.

"Once Awami League had introduced one-party rule by amending the Constitution at a single stroke. Now they have indulged in killing and terrorism for reestablishing that system," she said and warned the people would foil that "conspiracy" as the democracy was earned in a long struggle.

Another MQM member said the judgment reflected an independent judiciary.

"This decision shows that the superior judiciary is not under pressure from anyone," said Babar Gauri, an MQM spokesman. The decision has proven that the people of Pakistan can approach the superior judiciary to seek justice."

Last month the government announced it would establish similar military courts throughout the country.

Three people already have been executed in Sindh province after being convicted by the army-run courts. In January the Supreme Court ordered all death sentences suspended until it ruled on the legality of the courts.

The government argued before the Supreme Court that the courts discouraged crime and that the crime rate had dropped substantially since they began operating in Karachi, the Sindh provincial capital.

However in the military courts the lawyer for the defendant is appointed by the court and the lawyer is not allowed to call witnesses, although the prosecution lawyer may. The lawyer for the defendant also is required to put his defense in writing, not give it verbally.

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Clinton's legal troubles seem not over

LITTLE ROCK (Arkansas), Feb 17: US President Bill Clinton may be liable to a contempt of court citation for his testimony in the Paula Jones sexual harassment suit, a federal judge said yesterday, reports Reuters.

Federal judge Susan Webber Wright said it was time for the court to consider whether Clinton was in contempt for admitting to an affair with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky after denying sexual relations with her in a deposition in the Jones case.

Wright's statement in a public filing suggested that Clinton's legal troubles may not be over despite his acquittal on Friday by the US Senate on perjury and obstruction of justice charges and despite settling the Jones case last November.

Wright said she had raised the issue of possible contempt last September but decided at the time not to pursue it until the Jones suit was settled and until the impeachment proceedings against Clinton were finished.

"Accordingly, I believe that now is the time for the court to address the contempt issue," Wright said in an order issued after a hearing on another aspect of the Jones case.

Clinton has admitted having an improper, intimate relationship with Lewinsky, although he says he was "legally accurate" when he denied having sexual relations with her in a deposition he gave in the Jones case in January 1998.

Clinton agreed to pay Jones 850,000 dollar to settle her sexual harassment lawsuit, in which she accused him of crudely propositioning her in a Little Rock hotel room when he was Arkansas governor and she was a state employee. Clinton did not admit wrongdoing under the settlement.

Contempt of court citations can result in hefty fines or even jail term. Wright gave no indication of what the result of the citation against Clinton might be or when a ruling could be expected.

Wright may not even make the decision, due to a legal twist that could result in another judge handling the matter.

She said her law clerk had testified in the House impeachment proceedings against Clinton and that legal precedent suggested a judge should recuse in any matter where court staff had been a witness.

Wright said she will hold a hearing on Friday with both the Clinton and Jones legal teams on whether she should recuse, or withdraw and leave another judge to rule on the contempt question.

Wright's order emerged from a hearing on Tuesday on rival claims by several legal teams who had represented Paula Jones at different times to the 850,000 settlement she received.

Wright ordered the cheque deposited with the court within eight days for safekeeping pending a decision on how the money should be divided.

Mir Shawkat indicted in corruption case

The divisional special judge's court yesterday indicted former Food Minister Lt Gen (rtd) Mir Shawkat Ali and three other officials in a corruption case filed by the Bureau of Anti-corruption in 1997, reports UNB.

Gen Shawkat was accused of incurring loss of Tk 1,67,18,316 to the national exchequer by favouring contractors in construction of a silo in Chittagong and accruing personal benefit in the deal when he was minister during the BNP regime.

Tk 4 lakh mugged in Chittagong

CHITTAGONG, Feb 17: Armed terrorists took away Tk four lakhs from a vendor after abducting him from near the court building this afternoon, police said.

The terrorists waylaid the vendor in court building area while he was going to deposit the money with a bank nearby.

They forced the vendor to get into a microbus and took him to an unknown place.

Later, the terrorists released the vendor at Chatteshwari Road and decamped with a bag containing Tk four lakh, police said.

None was arrested so far in this connection.

Gold, dollar seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

Custom authority at Zia International Airport seized gold chains, gold bars and dollar worth about Tk 1.16 crore.

Custom surveillance team recovered 8 gold bars and US dollar 2422 which worth about Tk. 15.7 lakh from the luggage of one Shah Alam, who arrived from Singapore Tuesday.

The surveillance team recovered cash dollar, pound and 5000 grams of bronze worth about Tk. 20 lakh from one Sarwar Ahmed yesterday. The arrested person was leaving for Hong Kong by Thai Airways.

In another incident, gold chains weighing 9.577 grams and worth about 80 lakh were recovered from inside the shirt of one Kartick Hawlader at about 5:45 pm yesterday.

Kartick came from Singapore via Calcutta in a Singapore Airlines flight.

Three separate departmental cases were lodged in the connection of the crimes.

Who killed Aref?

From Page 1

to knowledgeable sources here.

Trying to capitalise on the visit, Kazi Aref Ahmed had reportedly asked his partymen to organise some public meetings. As a part of that programme, a meeting was held in Philpina Union on February 15 where Aref bitterly criticised the activities of the armed terrorists and urged people to eliminate them through a united effort.

The following day, the meeting was scheduled at Daulatpur where the dastardly killing took place.

Now the question is: Who were the killers?

They might belong to the dissident faction of their own party or members of Purbabangla Communist Party or Biplobi Communist Party. As the conflict had been raging for a long time, as a result of which 93 persons were killed during 1998. Killing of outlawed party members was going on unabated in 1999.

One source said that about 10 months back a top leader of JSD visited Kustia, after which some members of Purbabangla Communist Party and Biplobi Communist Party were killed. This was followed by large-scale murders of JSD members in the southwestern zone, particularly in Kustia, Chuadanga, Meherpur and Jhenidah districts.

Some say that many such murders of JSD activists were committed by their fellow partymen because of intra-party conflicts.

But police here are learnt to be suspecting Nantu Bahini of Chuadanga for Tuesday's murders of the JSD leaders. However, some say that those who

committed the murders were their own men who were engaged to ensure their security. This is the mystery confronting the administration.

Police sources say that Ranjit Roy Singha, president of Bheramara unit of JSD, was killed in his bedroom recently as a result of the intra-party conflict. The victim's sister said that the person who killed him used to visit their house frequently.

Most people said when the president and other top leaders of Kustia district unit of JSD moved from one place to other they used to keep armed guards with them.

They believe the command of armed men had shifted from the Kustia party president and general secretary to other leader or leaders prior to the latest murders. This explains why the gunmen killed both Kustia JSD president Lokman Hussain and general secretary Advocate Yakub Ali on Tuesday.

The CCF in his letter dated February 8, said that the news item was untrue and motivated. "In fact, to the knowledge of the Directorate of Forest no such deer was caught and there was never any initiative from the directorate to present the Prime Minister any deer," the letter said.

It also mentions that Forest Ranger MA Kashem did not give any such information to the reporters as mentioned in the report. "It is also not true that in the past ministers and higher officials were given deer as presents. Only foreign dignitaries were presented deer and other wild animals under a provision of the Wildlife Preservation Act 1974 and with a Certificate of Lawful Possession."

Our Reply: The deer story was based on the correspondent's own observations. The caged deer was discovered on top of a trowler in the evening of February 4 at Heron Point. As per common practice this correspondent asked the Forest Ranger MA Kashem for an explanation. Kashem's initial reaction was a request to not report the incident. Then he explained how the deer was caught and how the whole program was foiled.

The Criminal Investigations Department (CID) has already been given the charge to probe into the killing of valiant freedom fighter Kazi Aref Ahmed and his four party colleagues.

Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board

Bakshi Bazar, Dhaka-1211

No Exa/121/10,000/Da-99

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Notice

It is notified for information of all concerned that the Dakhil Examination of 1999 of Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board will be held from 11 March 1999, Thursday, as per the undermentioned timetable. The Board authority may change this date & time table, if required.

Time table of Dakhil Examination of 1999

Day & Date	Time	
	10 am to 1 PM	2 PM to 5 PM
11.03.99	Subject	Subject
Thursday	Quran Majid & Tajbid	Urd
13.03.99	General Mathematics	Tajbeed (Mujabbid group) Tajbeed (Hijful Quran group)
Saturday		
14.03.99	Fiqh & Usul-e-Fiqh	X
Sunday		
15.03.99	Bangla	X
Monday		
16.03.99	Arabic 1st paper	X
Tuesday		
18.03.99	General Science 1st paper (Theoretical)	Arabic 2nd paper
Thursday		
20.03.99	English	X
Saturday		
21.03.99	Hadith Sharif	Persian
Sunday		
22.03.99	General Science 2nd paper (theoretical)	Islamic History
Monday		
23.03.99	Geography & Economics	Agri study (Theoretical)
Tuesday		
24.03.99	Civics/Mantique/Higher Mathematics (Theoretical)	Home Economics (House Management & Family Life (Theoretical)
Wednesday		

NB: Practical, viva & basic trade examinations should be completed within 04.04.99 to 10.04.99.