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3rd Millennium

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No 'petty' politics please, pleads President

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday appealed to politicians and people to give up petty party or personal interest for the sake of the nation, reports UNB.

"We have created a unique history as a sacrificing nation for democracy. We will have to give priority to national interest above all to consolidate the foundations of democracy and bring about economic freedom," he said in his New Year's address to Parliament.

The President's call came as the main opposition parties stayed away from the House, demanding fresh elections. Members of Jatiya Party (Mizan-Manju) and JSD, however, were present.

In his speech, Shahabuddin did not touch upon the current political impasse, nor did he mention anything about the absence of the opposition lawmakers from the House.

He, however, said since the election of the seventh parliament, the present government has been trying to make the Parliament the nucleus of all

national activities.

The President said transparency and accountability of the government had been ensured by making MPs chairmen of parliamentary standing committees instead of ministers. These committees are playing more effective role than before, by regularly reviewing the activities of the ministries, when necessary, on matters of

public interest.

The President narrated government's performance in different national sectors in last three and a half years and its future policy and programmes.

As the President highlighted the success stories of the government, treasury bench members cheered him thumping desks. The chairs in the opposition desks remained empty.

A planned celebration of the new millennium by Parliament members was marred by the opposition abstention. However, desks in both treasury and opposition sides were bedecked with red roses. Many MPs of the ruling party entered the House with red roses stuck on their jackets or panjabis.

Foreign diplomats and high civil and military officials attended the opening of the New Year's session of Parliament. This is 16th session of the seventh Parliament.

Praising the diplomatic successes in the country's external affairs, the President observed the government was very active



Breathing hope President Shahabuddin Ahmed delivers his New Year Address in parliament yesterday.

—Star photo

Millennium hangover in House

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad went into session yesterday with a millennium fervor although the Speaker ferried special arrangements for a "millennium session" as the Opposition members continued their abstention.

A warm and rejoicing atmosphere prevailed in the House where exchange of millennium

See page 11 col 6

Fruitless, fratricidal, full of false claims

BNP defines today's politics

BNP has underscored the need for resolving political differences to save the country by evolving politics of self-respect, development, progress and modernism, reports UNB.

Addressing meeting to welcoming the New Millennium.

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said, "The past of all of us, irrespective of the parties, is featured with faults and mistakes. As a nation Bangladesh could advance much more if we committed no

See page 12 Col 1

Pre-polls violence rocks port city

48-hour 'curfew hartal' begins in Ctg today

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 1: At least 20 people including the OC of Port thana were injured as opposition political activists exploded bombs and clashed with police on the eve of their 48 hour "curfew hartal" in the city from 6 am tomorrow to resist Monday's Chittagong City Corporation polls.

A bus and an autorickshaw were torched by anti-polls agitators, police and witnesses said.

By about 10 pm, most of the city streets wore a deserted look with virtually no traffic as panicked people rushed home amid

bomb explosions that increased after the sunset. People abandoned Eid shopping and left city markets, witnesses said.

OC of Port thana Jafor Ullah was injured in the head when anti-polls demonstrators pelted

brick bats at police during a clash Nimitola at about 7 pm. He was rushed to hospital.

One Faruk Khaled, injured in a bomb explosion in front of Chittagong City Corporation

See Page 12 Col 4



Venting anger Frustrated and angry, the Greater Chittagong Shopowners Federation organised a "Hunger Procession" in the port city to protest what it said hartals and hartal-related terrorism.

—Star photo

Shopowners resent Jan 3 hartal

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Doka Malik (Shop-owners) Samity expressed grave concern over calling half-day countrywide hartal by four party alliance on Monday to protest against the Chittagong city corporation

See page 11 col 4

Midnight revellers go wild

50 hurt and nearly 100 detained in city

By Special Correspondent

Police used batons to discipline revellers bursting into wild celebrations to greet the new millennium in Dhaka Friday, which left at least 50 people hurt and nearly 100 others detained.

Fireworks and crackers heralded the New Year and the millennium with occasional bursting of guns in different parts of the city and elsewhere in the country as people went for celebrations.

Doctors at Dhaka Medical College Hospital said that 16 people were admitted with bomb, bullet and stab injuries sustained during the somewhat wild celebrations. The injured included a three-year old girl

EtU. She sustained injuries when some revellers exploded home-made bombs near a rickshaw in which her father was taking her to a doctor at Najrabazar at 12-45 a.m.

A young woman was nearly stripped and wounded by revellers before she was rescued by police at Dhaka University campus during the celebrations in the early hours.

The new year of the third millennium arrived without the much-feared Y2K glitch. The computers at utilities functioned without a hitch, said Bangladesh Computer Council.

The Biman, probed the matter after the mid-night on its equipment, computers and aircraft, which were grounded since 6 p.m. Friday.

The Managing Director of the Biman Air Commodore Rafiqul Islam personally led the probe at mid-night. Biman flights resumed yesterday morning.

As the people celebrated, others in utilities kept vigil on their computer-run equipment, spending the night with weary eyes locked to the screen. The transition, however, passed off without a hiccup. The power, water, gas and telephone services behaved without interruption.

Youngsters honking car horns and shouting 'welcome new year', danced on the streets in jubilation, ignoring the bit-

See page 12 Col 6

Into the new millennium, safely

World spent billions in fear of the bug; rightly or unnecessarily?

UNDATED, Jan 1: The world has seen itself at its best, reports AP.

As midnight arrived in country after country, there were no terrorist attacks, no Y2K meltdowns and no reports of mass suicides among doomsday cults. Instead, seven continents stepped joyously into the 21st Century.

Computers guiding air traf-

fic, electrical power grids and military operations slid smoothly into the year 2000. Billions of dollars spent on preventing computer bugs either paid off or were unnecessary.

As the morning wore on, there were reports of minor disturbances.

A fireworks celebration was briefly shut down and 20,000

people were evacuated from a section of downtown Anchorage, Alaska, late Friday after a bomb threat. Police found nothing.

In Los Angeles, an 11-year-old boy was wounded by a bullet apparently falling out of the sky as the new year arrived. The child, who wasn't immediately identified, was hospitalised with a head wound.

But the vast majority of the world's celebrations were peaceful.

In New York's Times Square, a 1,070-pound (481.5-kilogram) Waterford crystal ball dropped as more than a million revellers danced, kissed and sang "Auld Lange Syne."

Police officers watched over the crowd and linked arms.

See page 11 col 8



Shame An unidentified lady, accompanied by a man (on her right), came under assault from a group of millennium midnight revellers near TSC at Dhaka University campus. This picture, taken moments before the assault during which she was almost disrobed, shows the group that followed her. We publish this photo, with her face covered, to identify those some of whom were the possible culprits.

Inside Today

Article

The Third Millennium Has to be Better

Column: Connecting the Dots by A R Chowdhury Page 4

Business

Bangladesh smoothly rolls over to new millennium
Y2K bug stays away as globe greets 2000
DSE, CSE price quotations
Pages 6, 7 & 8

Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
24	02	—	5-27
25	03	5-17	5-28
26	04	5-17	5-28

Prayer Timings

January 2		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-17	5-25
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-42	4-00
Maghrib	5-27	5-32
Tarabi	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

'Opposition dishonoured president, parliament'

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday blasted the opposition for not attending Parliament session, reports UNB.

"Their only target is to capture state power and to that end they will not hesitate to kill democracy and democratic process," she said while addressing the leaders and workers of Awami League and its front organisations at Ganobhaban.

The party leaders and workers gathered at the green lawn of Ganobhaban to greet the Prime Minister on the occasion of the New Millennium.

Regretting the opposition's boycott of Parliament session that began yesterday, the Prime Minister said they were harming themselves politically.

"Today, in the millennium's first session of Parliament, President Shahabuddin Ahmed gave an important direction to the nation. The opposition could benefit from the speech of the honourable President."

See page 11 col 5

UNB stands by its Walker story

A news item released by a news agency quoting a Foreign Office spokesman regarding an interview with British High Commissioner in Dhaka David Walker drew the attention of UNB.

True to its repute, UNB ran the interview story maintaining absolute objectivity and fairness. In the interview the High Commissioner was not at all quoted as saying: "By dint of being a donor a country has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of another country."

Days after the interview was published, UNB received no rejoinder or clarification from the British High Commissioner that David Walker was misquoted in any part of the interview.

At one point of the interview, Walker said diplomats quite rightly are not supposed to get involved in internal affairs of any country. "But, I think, diplomats, particularly from donor countries and development partners of Bangladesh, have legitimate interest in the situation because so much of taxpayers money is being used in Bangladesh."

The United News of Bangladesh firmly stands by its report.

Election Commission Secretariat Voters' ID Card Project

Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka

No ECS/ID/Publicity/13/98/1187

Dated: 07 Poush 1406 21 December 1999

Subject : Preparation, Procurement and Preservation of Voters' Identity Cards

The Bangladesh Election Commission has been entrusted with the responsibility to give identity cards to every voters of the country under electoral law. The work of 2nd phase of preparation of voters identity cards is being conducted again since the last week of November '98 throughout the country, which will be completed within the duration of the project — December 1999 (the extension of the duration till June 2000 is under process). It is mentionable that the activities of 1st phase of preparation and distribution of voters' identity was in force from June 1995 to June 1996. Those who did not take photographs for voters' identity cards earlier, are requested to take their photographs in camps set up at their respective unions/pourashavas/municipal corporation/village/mahalla and wards. Each valued voter is requested to know the timetable of taking photographs in their respective areas. Besides, Thana Election Officer/Assistant Registration Officers have made necessary arrangements to inform about the location of the camp of your area and time-table through notice, mike, proclamation by beat of drum, handbill, poster, leaflet. Camps have been set up for a total of five days in each voter area. Concerned District Election Officer has made arrangements for publicity through newspaper, radio and TV in those areas where the facility of publicity through newspaper, radio, TV exists. Apart from that five-day camp, vendors have made arrangement to set up a permanent camp for taking photographs in thana headquarters of the constituency or special location so that those who have been dropped from taking photographs get the opportunity again for taking photographs.

It is not that a voter identity card will only be used only for casting vote, moreover, it will be used in 14 more purposes as for example: 1) Transfer of movable property 2) Mutation in case of property and exclusion 3) Settlement of land among landless 4) Giving compensation for acquisition of land 5) Marriage registration 6) In case of procurement of different licences and permits (firearms, driving, different trade, contractorship, radio, television etc) 7) Procurement of passport 8) Travel by air (in the interest of security specially inside the country) for issuing boarding card 9) In case of taking loan or transaction with the bank/money lending establishment 10) VGF/VGD 11) Receiving all kinds of relief 12) Identification of plaintiff, witness and accused in case in courts 13) Interview for job and 14) for taking any kind of government benefit, as the helpful document for identification will also be used. So the importance of voter identity is excessive. It is the responsibility of a voter to take their respective photographs in camps set up in village/mahalla/ward and encourage others to do so and to procure voter identity card and preserve it. For this, the valued voters are requested to take photographs in the camps set up at villages/mahalla/wards of their respective union/pourashava/poura corporation respectively. Please be aware of the timetable for taking photographs in your area from the offices of pourashava/union council chairman/ward commissioner/member and Assistant Registration Officer, Thana Election Officer or District Election Officer.

The procedure of distribution of prepared voters' identity cards is being conducted by the teachers of government/registered primary schools and in some cases by the field level employees of other government departments and organisations. In case you did not change the place later where you were a voter/became a voter in 95 or in different period afterwards and if your photograph was taken for identity card at that time, then in order to get the prepared identity card, if you changed your address later and to get the identity card in the changed address, and if your photograph was not taken by this time and to take photograph, then the Assistant Registration Officer, Thana Election Officer or District Election Officer will make arrangements for taking your photograph, to receive it and to give identity cards. It is mentionable that the size of the photograph is 30 mmx24mm and it will be either black and white or colour for any constituency. Every voter is requested to preserve it properly after getting it. If there is any error in your name or your father's/husband's name, address or any lapse in information or there is any error in photograph, then contact Assistant Registration Officer, Thana Election Officer or District Election Officer immediately for correction or replacement. These officials will make arrangements for correcting the errors and replacement of accurate identity cards, if necessary. All valued voters are requested to 'see' accurately if their signatures or the finger prints in the insert of the identity card at the time of taking photograph, and if there are lapses in the information of the voter in insert. This makes possible to give accurate identity cards and to correct the errors in comparatively less time. The Election Commission has instructed District Election Officer, Thana Election Officer and Assistant Registration Officers to keep the offices open to provide service regarding preparation of identity cards for voters on every Saturday from 10 AM to 2 PM apart from all working days.

Peoples representative, political activist, representative of local government, teacher, journalist, representative of club and voluntary organisation, head of educational institution, head of religious establishment, social worker, NGO, all government departments as well as all valued elite are particularly requested to extend their kind help and cooperation in preparation of voters' identity cards and its distribution.

Md Helal Uddin Khan

Additional Secretary and Project Director.

DFP-28804-23/12 G-2196

রশুনি উন্নয়ন ব্যুরো
১২২-১২৪, মতিঝিল বা/এ
ঢাকা
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা আন্তর্জাতিক বাণিজ্য মেলা ২০০০ উপলক্ষে নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজসমূহের জন্য আগামী ৬-১-২০০০ বেলা ১২টার মধ্যে ৯-৯ ক্ষেত্রে অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে পৃথকভাবে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাবেঃ

(ক) অনুষ্ঠিতব্য ঢাকা আন্তর্জাতিক বাণিজ্য মেলা ২০০০ এর মাঠে ব্যুরোর একটি বাণিজ্য তথ্য কেন্দ্র নির্মাণ ও সজ্জিতকরণ। এ ক্ষেত্রে খ্যাতনামা নির্মাণকারী ও অভ্যন্তরীণ সাজসজ্জাকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাবে। সিডিউলের মূল্য টাঃ ৪০০/- (চারশত) অফেরতযোগ্য। তথা কেন্দ্রের একটি মডেল দরপত্রের সাথে দাখিল করতে হবে।

(খ) ঢাকা আন্তর্জাতিক বাণিজ্য মেলা ২০০০ উপলক্ষে ২০০০ (দুই হাজার) কপি মেলা ডাইরেক্টরী মুদ্রণ। এ কাজের জন্য খ্যাতনামা অফসেট প্রিন্টিং প্রেস অথবা বিজ্ঞাপনী সংস্থার নিকট হতে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাবে। মেলা ডাইরেক্টরীতে ১০% স্ব-অর্থায়ন ভিত্তিতে মুদ্রণ করতে হবে। অর্থাৎ উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের অর্ধেক খরচ বিজ্ঞাপন সংস্থার মাধ্যমে সম্পূর্ণ করতে হবে। মুদ্রণকারীকে সম্পূর্ণ স্ব-উদ্যোগে বিজ্ঞাপন সংগ্রহ, বিল আদায়সহ যাবতীয় কাজ সম্পূর্ণ করতে হবে।

(গ) পরিসংখ্যান গ্রাফ/চার্ট, বিশ্বম্যাপ ইলেক্ট্রিক সংযোগসহ, প্রো-আপ পিকচার তৈরি ইত্যাদি কাজের জন্য দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাবে।

(ঘ) বাণিজ্য মেলায় তথ্য বৃথ থেকে বিনামূল্যে বিতরণের জন্য ১০,০০০ কপি "ফেয়ার গাইড" স্ব-অর্থায়নে মুদ্রণ করে সরবরাহ করার জন্য দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাবে।

২। দরপত্রের সিডিউল আগামী ০৪-০১-২০০০ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত প্.ডিডিন অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে ব্যুরোর কার্যালয়ে হিসাব শাখা হতে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। দরদাতাগণ ক, খ, গ ও ঘ প্রত্যেকটির সবগুলো অথবা যে কোন একটিতেও অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন এবং পৃথক পৃথক সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।

৩। বিস্তারিত জানার জন্য ব্যুরোর বাণিজ্য তথ্য কেন্দ্রে যোগাযোগ করা যেতে পারে।

মোঃ আব্দুল মজিদ ভূঁইয়া
পরিচালক (তথ্য)
রশুনি উন্নয়ন ব্যুরো
জিডি-০৪