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Talks end, enclave issue still unresolved

The Indo-Bangla Joint Working Group meeting ended yesterday without resolving the outstanding issue of enclaves, which Dhaka had pressed all through the talks, reports UNB. However, sources close to the meeting, which was held at State Guesthouse Padma, said the two sides finalised the list of enclaves that were supposed to be exchanged years ago. India said it would have to amend its constitution before it could ratify the 1974 Mujib-India Agreement.

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Pak CJ, 6 judges defy army chief's order for fresh oath

ISLAMABAD, Jan 26: The Chief Justice and six other judges of the Supreme Court refused to take a fresh oath of office today, defying an order issued by Pakistan's army ruler Gen Pervez Musharraf, reports AP.

The Army Chief ordered scores of judges to be sworn in again, this time under a provisional constitution that protects the military against legal action.

Seven of the 13 judges of Pakistan's Supreme Court re-

fused. Their refusal means automatic removal as judges, said lawyers.

Whatever has been done is in the best interest of the country and the nation," Musharraf told reporters following the swearing-in ceremony of the Supreme Court judges at the white marble presidency in the federal capital.

A new Supreme Court Chief Justice Ershad Hassan Khan was appointed, after the current Chief Justice Saeeduzzaman Siddiqi refused to take a fresh

oath, said a court official, who didn't want to be identified by name.

Asma Jehangir, a lawyer and special United Nations rapporteur on arbitrary, summary and extrajudicial killings, said that Siddiqi is under house arrest. There was no immediate confirmation.

The military rulers are doing their best to erode the independence of the judiciary," said Ms Jehangir, who also is the recipient of international human rights awards. "I salute those

judges who have refused to take the oath."

The refusal of the judges represents the biggest challenge to date to the military's rule in Pakistan, which began on Oct 12 when the army threw out the civilian government of Nawaz Sharif.

When Musharraf suspended Pakistan's constitution, he imposed a provisional constitution, which enshrined emergency rule in Pakistan.

According to the provisions

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Edn board's move to check unfair means Question styles to be changed, expelled students sued

Education board authorities are changing question styles and plan to sue students for adopting unfair means in line with government decision to rectify the rot in public examinations.

"We are planning to instruct schools and colleges to file cases against those who would be expelled for unfair means," ATM Sharif Ullah, chairman, Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education of Dhaka, told UNB yesterday.

With punishment of expulsion and cancellation of regis-

tration, the accused practitioners of unfair means would be subject to maximum 10 years imprisonment as per law.

The punishment of the guilty "shall not be less than three years who shall also be liable to fine," the Dhaka Board chief said quoting the Public Examination Act 1992.

The decisions would be implemented from this year's SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examinations beginning March 2. As per the schedules, the SSC examinations will take 15 days

to finish.

Approximately 936,000 examinees are sitting for the exams this year under the five education boards, officials said.

Of them, 263,000 are from Dhaka, 273,000 from Rajshahi, 166,000 from Jessore, 153,000 from Comilla and 76,000 from Chittagong education boards.

"There have been many laws, but we lack in using and implementing those laws appropriately," said a high official of education ministry talking about the tough steps being

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Inside Today

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Towards a Point of No-return

by Kazi Alauddin Ahmed Page 4

Supplements

Two-page supplement on 'US Trade Show 2000' on Pages 5 and 6 and one page supplement on 'Leather Fair 2000' on Page 7

Prayer Timings

January 27

	Azhan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-45	6-15
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	6-44	5-48
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



Teachers' plight
Non-government primary teachers observed a token hunger strike yesterday at Osmani Udyan in the city demanding regularisation of their jobs. —Star photo

Teachers start 36-hr hunger strike today

By Staff Correspondent

The non-government primary school teachers observed a day-long hunger strike yesterday, the fourth day of their sit-in demonstration at Osmani Udyan in the city demanding regularisation of their jobs.

They will start a 36-hour hunger strike today to realise their demand.

Editorial on page 4

At least 15 teachers fell sick during the token hunger strike and they were treated at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Several hundred non-government primary teachers started their agitation programme at Osmani Udyan in the city on Sunday.

The striking teachers yesterday reiterated their demand for resignation of the Education Minister.

They also expressed their firm determination to continue agitation programme until the government accepts their demand.

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BNP Chief reacts angrily, unwisely and destructively

By Mahfuz Anam

Khaleda Zia has allowed her anger to get the better of her judgement. What comes out clearly from her Paltan Maidan speech and from that to the business community the following day is that it is revenge that interests her more than political victory. For political victory can come both from mass agitation and from dialogue. But revenge can come only from the former. Thus she chooses it blindly.

She is more interested in paying Sheikh Hasina back in the same coin as paid to her in the 94-96 period. For the BNP chief it has to be street agitation and hartals all the way to the elections, just as it was when she was in power. We condemned Sheikh Hasina when she called hartals in the past. Today we condemn Khaleda Zia with more vehemence than before because this is the second

time around. Her guilt is greater because she knows the destruction to the economy that past hartals had caused. The AL chief did not have any experience of running an administration when she was being so destructive, which of course does not lessen her responsibility. But the BNP chief knows exactly what havoc her actions will cause. And yet she says, "I will not only call hartals, but continuous hartals..." Is this an expression for the concern for peoples' welfare?

A clever politician never shuts himself or herself into a closed position. By her categorical rejection of the PM's offer for talks she has, an experienced politician never appears averse to compromise. She has. A wise politician exhausts all peaceful options before deciding on the confrontational one. She appears to want to exhaust all

confrontational options before deciding on the peaceful one. Khaleda Zia could have exhibited political savvy by saying the "PM's talks offer is welcome. But we don't believe her. Let her prove her sincerity by releasing BNP leaders from jail, lift false cases against them, etc. and then we sit for talks." This would have put the ball in Sheikh Hasina's court. Instead she slams the door on dialogue leaving no option but confrontation before her, and before a dismayed NATION.

How is the public supposed to react to all this? What do we see in front of us? More hartals, more street agitation and more deaths of the innocent and shameful claiming and counter claiming of dead bodies and shedding crocodile tears in front of the members of the bereaved families. We see schools

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Ustad Bismillah Khan in city

Star Report

Shehnai wizard Ustad Bismillah Khan is set to spellbind the Dhaka audience with his recitals at Osmani Auditorium for three days starting today.

The octogenarian Ustad who has single-handedly revolutionised the style of playing shehnai is here to help AIDS Prevention Programme Implementation Committee (APPIC) raise funds to create awareness about the deadly disease.

The living legend of Hindustani classical music who has transformed the traditional folk instrument into a major instrument for concert music was born in March 21, 1916 in Bihar.

He has won the prestigious awards like Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri and Sangeet Natak Akademy Award for his outstanding contribution to the world of Indian music.

No response yet to EC proposal for polls expense observers

By Nurul Kabir

The Election Commission has proposed legal provisions for raising the ceiling of election expenses of candidates in parliamentary elections and appointing Election Expenses Observers.

The proposal said that the ceiling should be raised from Tk three lakh to Tk five lakh and EEOs should be appointed to strictly scrutinise the expenditures of candidates.

The expenditure ceiling fixed about a decade ago appears unrealistic in the present context. It may be considered appropriate to raise the ceiling from the present level of Tk three lakh to Tk five lakh", the

EC said in its proposal sent to the Ministry of Law in October last year.

The government is, however, yet to take any decision in this regard.

The ceiling of expenses was initially fixed at Tk 25,000. It was raised to Tk one lakh in 1985 and Tk three lakh in 1991.

The EC has also proposed raising of a candidate's security deposit to Tk 10,000 from Tk 5,000.

The deposit was initially fixed at Tk 1,000 and raised to Tk 2,000 in 1978. In 1984, the amount was raised to Tk 10,000 but it was brought down to Tk 5,000 in 1986.

"The amount of security money may now be justifiably restored to Tk 10,000", the EC proposal said.

The Commission believes that the increase would "discourage non-serious and frivolous persons" to take part in the elections.

The EC also proposed a provision under which security deposit would be forfeited, if a candidate fails to poll one-sixth of the votes cast in a constituency. Presently, deposit is forfeited if a candidate polls less than one-eighth of the votes cast.

Besides, the Commission

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Show Time/2000

Another hartal Jan 30 Violence marks Ctg hartal: 10 hurt

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 26: Sporadic bomb blasts and incidents of violence marked the dawn-to-dusk hartal in greater Chittagong today enforced by Shibir-led student alliance, police and witnesses said.

At least 10 people were injured in different parts of the city. Of them, a 40-year-old rickshawpuller received bomb injury in Pahartali area. He was admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

The student alliance backed by four opposition parties — BNP, JP, Jamaat and Islami — has called the hartal protesting arrest of its 54 leaders and activists from the dormitories of the Chittagong University during a pre-dawn

raid by police yesterday.

Police today arrested 20 pickets from the city during hartal hours.

Chase and counter chase between pickets and police took place at North Kattal under Pahartali thana at 10 am while series of cocktails exploded, witnesses said.

Pickets attacked a picnic party bus bound for Cox's Bazar in Keranihat area under Satkania at about 11 am.

Some rickshaws were damaged by pickets at Muradpur, Sirajudowla Road, Kazir Dewri and Bahaddarhat during hartal hours.

Hundreds of cocktails exploded at various points of the

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Bangladesh face SA in Plate final today

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh are likely to face the strongest challenge in defence of their Plate title of the World Youth Cricket Championship when they take on South Africa in the final at the Asgariya Stadium in Kandy, Sri Lanka, today.

Weather permitting, the final showdown between a high-flying Bangladesh and the mentally bruised South Africa will commence at 10 am (BST).

A victory for South Africa, an established force in the international cricket, will enable them to go home with some solace. On the other hand, a win for their unequal opponents will have a strong bearing on Bangladesh's claim for a Test status.

Incidentally, Rain God played an unfriendly role in getting both teams out of the Cup race. Rain however was particularly hostile to the Africans, who were demoted to the Plate League without being able to play a single match of their three first round outings.

The controversial Duckworth-Lewis method for a curtailed match also came in to play, determining Bangladesh's fate when the Lankan sky opened up for a while, only to

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CONGRATULATION ON ACHIEVEMENT OF NATIONAL EXPORT TROPHY

Our heartiest congratulation to **Mr. Md. Musa Meah (CIP), Chairman & Managing Director of KULIARCHAR GROUP**, on his being awarded national export trophy by Sheikh Hasina, Honourable Prime Minister, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for His outstanding performance in the export of frozen foods for the year 1997-98

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