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Boundary talks Dhaka presses Delhi to ratify Mujib-Indira agreement

From Pallab Bhattacharya
NEW DELHI, Apr 28: Bangladesh has impressed upon the need for an early ratification by India of the Mujib-Indira agreement on land boundary between the two countries. This was conveyed to India during the two-day Home Secretary-level talks which concluded here last night. Bangladesh delegation sources said here today.

The Bangladesh side, led by Home Secretary M M Reza, also called for expeditious completion of demarcation of the 6.5-km boundary between the two countries.

The sources said both sides agreed on the need to reduce incidents which trigger tension at the borders, an obvious reference to skirmishes between BSF and BDR, saying these were unnecessary irritants.

Bangladesh pleaded with India to ease the visa regime for its nationals.

The Bangladesh team at the talks included Janibul Haq, Joint Secretary in Home Ministry and Deputy Director General of BDR Brig Shah Mohammad Mohiuddin.

The Indian delegation was led by its Home Secretary Kamal Pandey and included India's outgoing High Commissioner to Bangladesh Deb Mukherjee.

Overloaded buses collide: 50 killed

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 28: In the worst road disaster in recent times, at least 50 people were killed and about 150 injured as two over-loaded buses collided at Konabari, 10 kms west of the Bangabandhu Bridge on the Dhaka-Bogra highway this afternoon.

Twenty-seven people died on the spot as the buses with passengers on rooftops crashed with a big bang and fell into a roadside ditch about eight kms from the town at 3:15 pm, police and survivors said.

Many of the bodies were mutilated beyond recognition as the Dhaka-bound bus from Lal-mourhat and the Pabna-bound bus from Dhaka got twisted.

The district administration made a public call for blood donation and sent messages to Rajshahi for doctors to treat the injured, 131 of whom were admitted to Sirajganj Sadar Hospital and Belkuchi Thana Health Complex. Fifteen of them were in critical condition, hospital sources said.

Some other injured passengers were admitted to clinics in the town. People are generously donating blood, they said.

But the Civil Surgeon and the two officials next to him were not found at the Sadar Hospital. Sources there said they have to go to Dhaka for lobbying in connection with a corruption case.

The district administration confirmed 26 deaths at 8 pm and said at least 80 people were injured.

Deputy Commissioner of Sirajganj A F M Saiful Islam told The Daily Star at 8 pm that he saw 26 bodies at the Sadar Hospital. He said the death toll may rise as there were critically injured persons at different hospitals and clinics.

"We have requested doctors and hospitals in Rajshahi to come with blood and medical equipment as the Sadar Hospital is not capable of handling so many injured people at a time. We also made public announcements for blood donation," he said.

Law Ministry for new law to try Jail Killing Case

By Staff Correspondent

New law has to be enacted to try the Jail Killing Case in a special tribunal.

This has been suggested by the Law Ministry in response to a study setting up of a special tribunal for expeditious trial of the Jail Killing Case, according to sources in the ministry.

However, under existing laws, an Additional Sessions Judge of the Metropolitan Court of Sessions may be assigned only to try the case, the ministry suggested.

The government on Monday asked the Law Ministry to find ways for speedy trial of the Jail Killing Case and such other serious criminal cases.

Earlier, the government in a special order directed holding of sitting of the Sessions Court, Dhaka on the premises of Dhaka Central Jail for disposal of the Bangabandhu murder case under Section 9 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Akbar comes up with two formulas Partners pressure BNP to settle polls seat sharing

By Rezaul Karim

The BNP-led opposition alliance is yet to work out a modality to share seats for the next parliamentary polls.

The partners are pressuring BNP to settle the seat sharing issue right now, but BNP favours a settlement after the "fall" of the Awami League government and formation of a caretaker administration.

The largest opposition party also suggested its partners to organise themselves for a vigorous movement at the year end to topple the government.

However, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote leaders argue that working out a formula on seat sharing is a "very complex task" that will take time and BNP should initiate discussion sooner rather than later to reach an understanding.

A top BNP leader, preferring anonymity, said the party is capable of nominating more than one candidate in the 300 constituencies. It is the alliance partners instead of BNP who will benefit most if there were an electoral alliance.

He said BNP will first ensure it has a single majority in the next polls and then go for sharing seats with the partners. He said it will have to contest in at least 220 seats to confirm a single majority. The alliance partners may be given the remaining 80 seats.

A JP presidium member, who also wanted not to be named, said there has to be a 50-50 formula for sharing seats. Elaborating his formula he said BNP will run in 150 seats while JP in a minimum of 120 seats, Jamaat 25, and IOJ five.

Influential BNP leader Akbar Hossain MP came up with yet another formula. Since the four parties bagged 153 out of the 300 seats in the last parliamentary election, BNP 116, JP 33, Jamaat three 3 and IOJ one they will nominate their candid

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The hunger-striking students of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology were given IV saline as their condition worsened at Shaheed Minar yesterday. Star photo

President says he will do everything possible to resolve SUST problem

President Shahaabuddin Ahmed yesterday assured that he would do everything possible to resolve the problem of the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, reports UNB.

The assurance came from the President, also Chancellor of the SUST, when a 9-member delegation of different political parties, led by Workers Party general secretary Rashed Khan Menon, called on him at Bangabhaban.

Members of the delegation apprised the President of the latest condition of the students of the university who have been on a hunger strike since Wednesday at the Centre Shaheed Minar demanding reopening of the university.

The delegation urged the President to take positive steps in resolving the problem of the university.

President assured them of doing "everything possible" in ending the crisis.

The deadlock arose amid violent protest by rightist groups against naming of different halls of the varsity after some prominent personalities, including Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Shaheed Janani Jahanara Inam.

President said he requires formal suggestion from the Prime Minister for reopening the varsity.

"I can ask the authorities to reopen the university just now. But I can't make the orders as I

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Chief Whip's son vacates house at Kalabagan

By Staff Correspondent

Sadik Abdullah, son of Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah, said yesterday he has already left the house at Lake Circus in Kalabagan in which he was living in.

Sadik told The Daily Star he will hand over the house to its caretaker soon.

Sadik was accused of forcibly occupying the sixth floor and the ground floor of the seven storied house.

He said he will hold a press conference on Sunday to clarify his position in the wake of press reports.

"I have been living independently for the last four years."

He paid the rent to the caretaker and the owner, Mahbubul Alam, never came to take the money during the last four years, he said when asked why he wanted to hand over the house to the caretaker.

NICVD recruitment Tests postponed amid chaos, violence

By Staff Correspondent

Written tests for recruitment of doctors and Class-1 officers against some 175 posts at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) were postponed amidst violence at Tejgaon College yesterday.

Some 5,200 young job seekers reached the College at 10 am yesterday to appear at the written tests but left the examination centre amidst a chaotic situation that followed the postponement of the written test by the authorities.

NICVD Director Prof MA Zaman later told The Daily Star that the authorities were absolutely helpless in the face of the chaotic situation created by a section of applicants. They tore off the question papers claiming issuance of faulty admission cards, said Prof Zaman adding, "we had no option left to postponement of the tests today."

It was alleged by a group of job seeking young doctors later that some BMA-supported doctors wanted the authorities to recruit people against the vacant posts by taking viva voce only instead of holding written tests and that group vandalized the tests yesterday.

Prof Zaman refrained from making any comment, but said, "I'm really, really disappointed today that we could not take the tests."

Of the 5,200 aspirants, 3,200 were to vie for 135 doctoral posts while the rest for different non-doctoral posts at the NICVD.

But, another group of job

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Khaleda's 'no' to move for hartal

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has vetoed a move to call a countrywide hartal in the first week of next month.

She declined to enforce hartal or any other tougher programme that may disrupt normal life at the moment.

The Central Liaison Committee of the BNP-led opposition alliance proposed a countrywide hartal to-dusk hartal either on May 4 or May 7 to protest the Awami League procession carrying sick demanding immediate execution of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Sources said a party chief and the CLC representatives sent Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Golam Azam to the alliance chief on Thursday night to have her approve the proposed hartal programme. They said BNP hardliners and the alliance

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April	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
29	-	6:26 pm
30	5:25 am	-

Prayer Timings

April 29		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:15	4:45
Zohr	12:45	1:30
Asr	5:00	5:15
Maghrib	6:25	6:30
Esha	8:00	8:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Many CU students give up studies due to session jam

Fast-onto-death from today for reopening

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Apr 28: Students of Chittagong University have lost three to four years from their academic life due to session jam caused by unscheduled closure.

The session jam due to political unrest and campus violence has frustrated most of the students, many of whom have left the university. Some students reportedly left for Dubai, America and other countries to seek fortune, sources said.

"I have lost four years from my life due to session jam," said a student, his voice irritated with anger and frustration.

"I was supposed to get Masters degree in 1996. But I have suffered a lot due to delay in holding of examinations," he said seeking anonymity.

Most of the examinations of Honours and Masters courses are either delayed or incomplete, sources said.

"I don't know how long we will have to bear the brunt of session jam," said Saiful Islam, a student of 1st Year Honours (old).

"I entered this university in 1997 and appeared at the 1st year Honours final examinations in November, 1999. I am in doubt whether I can appear at the 2nd year Honours final in 2001 as the campus may be influenced by national elections to be held in that year," Saiful said.

"We can not have concentration on studies as our academic life is frequently disturbed by unscheduled suspension of classes due to political unrest," Saiful said. "Campus politics should be totally stopped to help overcome the session jam."

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Chaktai canal needs immediate re-excavation

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Apr 28: Rapid siltation and illegal construction on both sides of Chaktai canal has extremely narrowed the canal.

It hinders passage of water from the sewers of the city, residents and officials said.

The port city suffers acute water logging during rainy season while low-lying areas remain inundated.

The Chittagong City Corporation officials said a survey was launched a week ago to determine the extent of siltation and illegal construction on Chaktai canal. They plan a re-excavation of the canal to ensure uninterrupted flow of water from the low-lying areas and sewers.

The survey is likely to be completed in the first week of next month, the officials said. However, they could not say whether the re-excavation work will start this year.

Residents fear severe water logging and inundation of low-lying areas of Chaktai, Khatunganj, Bakalia and Chawkbazar

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The Chaktai canal in Chittagong has become children's playground, thanks to heavy siltation and encroachment. —Star photo by A K M Mohsin

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