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US-Russia accord on plutonium disposal, early missile warning

MOSCOW, June 4: US President Bill Clinton and Russian President Vladimir Putin conceded differences over a proposed US missile defense programme today, but both declared they found common ground for resolving the issue at two days of summit talks, reports AP.

At the same time, the two leaders signed agreements committing their countries to dispose of 34 tons of weapons-grade plutonium each and to provide each other with early warning of missile and space launches.

Clinton and Putin issued a joint "statement of principles" on missile defense that Clinton described as "an attempt to bring our positions closer together."

Both described their first meeting since Putin was sworn in last month as a search for common ground.

Clinton said that, while they couldn't agree on everything, they at least spelled out their

differences with "clarity and candor. And I appreciate that."

Clinton said the joint statement "makes clear that there is an emerging ballistic missile threat which must be addressed, but we have not agreed on how best to do so."

"We have acknowledged that the ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile) treaty foresees the possibility of changes in the strategic environment that might require it to be updated."

The statement was issued in Russian, but an English-language version was not immediately available.

Clinton said US and Russian experts would work to try to narrow their difference on missile defense in the coming days.

Clinton also acknowledged that new global threats exist and said "there are a lot of problems" with the ABM treaty. He said the two leaders "have a commonality" in seeing the

threat, adding, "we're against having a cure which is worse than the disease."

Clinton is considering proceeding with a plan to develop a limited missile defense against attack from so-called rogue states such as North Korea and Iran. Russia objects, saying such a system violates the nearly 30-year-old ABM treaty and could escalate the arms race.

Clinton stressed that he had not yet made a decision on whether to move ahead with such a missile defense system — aside from whether it is prohibited by the ABM treaty — and won't do so until the fall.

Clinton described the plutonium and missile launch agreements as "major steps to reduce the nuclear danger."

Disposing of the plutonium would cost a total of 5.75 billion dollar — 4 billion dollar in the United States and 1.75 billion dollar in Russia. Other countries will be asked to contribute, said another US official.

Both spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Russian plutonium is to be converted for use in civilian nuclear power reactors. Some of the US material will be used for reactors, the rest will be buried.

The International Atomic Energy Agency will monitor the carrying out of the agreement, which could take 20 years, said the official, who briefed reporters under rules that withheld his name.

The 10-year agreement on early-warning cooperation calls for completion of a center in Moscow in the fall of 2001, to be manned around the clock. Within a minute of launch, the other side is to be notified in order to allow "uncertainties" about the intention of the launch.

Information about launches by other countries also will be provided, but only if the missile or spacecraft crosses the territory of the United States or Russia, a senior US official said.

Ensure quick implementation of policies & programmes

Prime Minister asks secretaries

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked the secretaries yesterday to bring more dynamism in the administration ensuring quick implementation of government policies and programmes to improve economic status of the people, reports UNB.

"Our government is run with taxpayers' money. So, we should take more care for ensuring services to the people to improve their lot," the Prime Minister told the top bureaucrats.

During nearly four-hour-long meeting at the ICC reviewing the activities and progress of work of different ministries, the Prime Minister issued a set of instructions to inject new impetus in the civil administration.

The instructions include ensuring attendance of officials and employees in government offices and institutions, starting from upazila to the secretariat, giving possible preference to women in new recruitment in government jobs, re-

plenishing the vacancies through proper coordination and establishing an effective inter-ministerial coordination.

Hasina said: "We did not form government to enjoy power. Our main objective is to improve economic condition of the masses in a disciplined and peaceful society and ensure overall economic development of the nation."

The Prime Minister said: "Despite resource constraints, we have succeeded to a great extent in implementing our commitment envisaged in our election manifesto and improving the condition of the people. I am sure we will be able to complete the task through our concerted endeavours."

After four years of relentless efforts, she said her government was able to make substantial progresses by implementing various projects in education, health and poverty alleviation.

The Prime Minister said it is a responsibility of secretaries of different ministries to im-

plement the policies and programmes of the government.

Responding to problems facing the administration officials she advised them to resolve those through mutual discussions. "We must work through effective coordination for better result and welfare of the people."

Focusing on the challenges of the new century, the prime minister said this is an era of competition, "and we can't lag behind." The government has already undertaken various reform programmes, she said, and thanked her for holding such high-level review meetings.

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr S A Samad and Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Jawadul Karim were present in the meeting.

Businessman murder: None arrested yet

By Staff Correspondent

None was arrested in connection with the killing of businessman Asaduzzaman Khan in front of a restaurant at Tophkana in the city on Saturday night.

Wife of the victim filed a case with Ramna police station yesterday, accusing eight people of their involvement in the killing.

Local sources said Asad was killed as a sequel to previous rivalry between Rejaul and Asad group, both backed by the ruling party, over toll collection in Tophkana area.

Asaduzzaman Khan, 35, business partner of Metro Hotel at Fakirpool and his friend Sabuj were shot in front of Cafe Jheel when they were coming out of the restaurant after taking meal at about 8:30 pm.

Shad Ershad appears before CMM's court

By Court Correspondent

Shad Ershad, son of former president H M Ershad, appeared before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court here yesterday.

Shad was accused of abducting a teenage girl. The next date for his appearance in the same court has been fixed on July 4.

Shad was arrested on March 4 on the basis of a case filed with Gulshan police by the victim's father.

After 10 days of confinement at the Cantonment police station, Shad was granted ad-interim bail by the Special Court for Women and Children Repression Prevention, Dhaka on March 14.

Earlier, the investigation officer sought time to complete his investigation into the case.

But the court did not give any decision on the prayer.

Hunger strike today demanding repeal of Vested Property Act

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad (BHBCOP) will observe a day-long hunger strike across the country today demanding repeal of the Vested Property Act.

Major General (Rtd) CR Dutt, president of BHBCOP announced it at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday afternoon.

Termining the Act as "black law," he threatened to launch a tougher action programme throughout the country if the law was not repealed in the budget session beginning today.

Dutt hoped that a bill would be placed in the budget session of the Jatiya Sangsad seeking repeal of the Act.

The BHBCOP's central unit will observe hunger strike at the central Shaheed Minar while its other units at district headquarters.

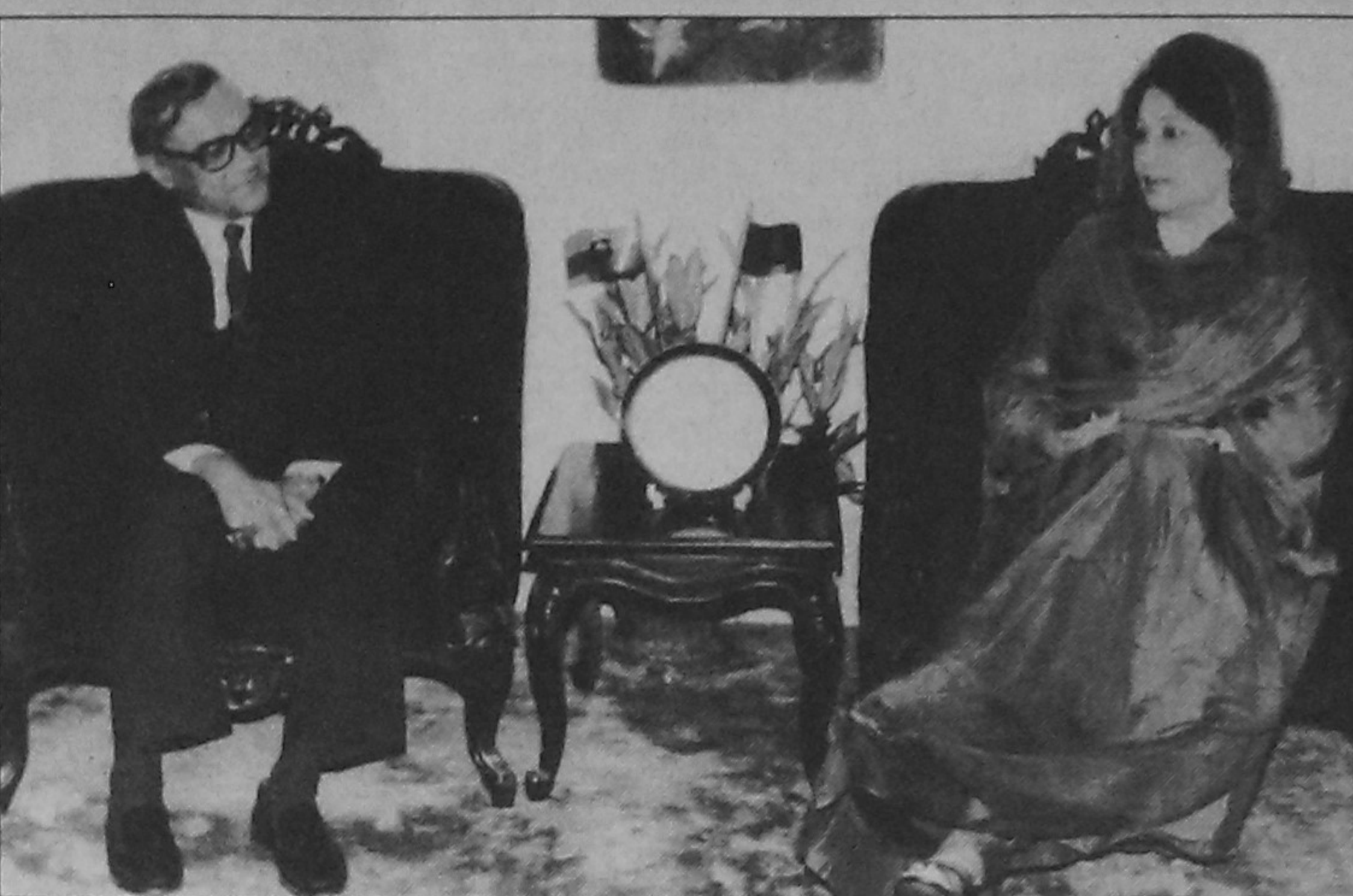
The press conference was also attended by Shudhananda Mohadev, Nim Chandra Bhoomik, Christopher Gomez, Hubert Gomez, Subrata Chowdhury, Basudev Dhar, Nirmal Chatterjee and Chandranath Poddar.

Sadipur Bridge opens to traffic

By Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, June 4: The Sadipur Bridge, constructed at a cost of Tk 13 crore, on Dhaka-Sylhet highway has been opened to traffic, reports UNB.

Under the project, Roads and Highways Department also constructed approach road on both sides of the bridge.



Indian High Commissioner Dev Mukherjee paid a farewell call on Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia at her official residence yesterday.

—Star photo

BNP to brief donors about latest situation today

By Staff Correspondent

BNP will brief the representatives of donor countries and agencies about country's latest political, economic and law and order situation today.

The briefing will be held at Hotel Sheraton at 4 pm, sources said.

At the meeting they will also brief the donors about opposition's current movement, boycott of parliament session, filing of cases against the opposition MPs, leaders and activists under the Public Safety Act and other issues, the sources added.

BNP leaders Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury, M Saifur Rahman, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, M Morshed Khan, M M Rezaul Karim and Reaz Rahman are expected to attend at the briefing.

Shell, Petrobangla open talks on blocks 5 & 10

By Staff Correspondent

Shell Oil began final negotiations with Petrobangla over blocks 5 and 10 yesterday.

Sources said that Shell has reverted to its original proposals regarding these blocks and is now ready to conduct seismic surveys and drill exploratory gas and oil wells in these two blocks. Till recently, Shell was pursuing a PSC without any commitment from its part.

Sources said if negotiations go in a positive direction under the new circumstance, Shell might be able to initial Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) for both block 5 and 10.

Petrobangla will also hold a negotiation meeting with Chevron-Texaco-Tullow over block 9 on June 8. It has also invited Maersk Olie and Pan-gaea to negotiate over blocks 19 and 20 and 8 respectively later this month.

Nobel laureate Miller dead

CHICAGO, June 4: Nobel Prize-winner for economics Merton Miller, praised as the "founder of modern finance" who helped corporate executives boost their firms' value for shareholders, died Saturday. He was 77, reports Reuters.

Miller earned the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences in 1990 for his theories on financial economics, according to a statement by the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, where he was a professor.

"Merton Miller is widely considered to be the founder of modern finance," Robert Hamada, the school's dean, said.

"He helped revolutionize corporate financial practice, changing it from a loose collection of rules to a sophisticated approach to maximizing shareholder value," the business school's statement also said.

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BCRA president files diary with Motijheel thana

By Staff Correspondent

President of Bangladesh Crime Reporters Association filed a general diary with the Motijheel thana yesterday for necessary investigation and action in connection with threats against himself and office-bearers of his organisation.

The Association is demanding removal of the DMP commissioner Mattur Rahman and withdrawal of case against organisation's vice president Aminur Rahman Taj.

Unidentified people are threatening the office-bearers and active members of the association to implicate them in cases under the Public Safety Act, the diary noted.

Khaleda tells Indian envoy No gas export before assessing reserve

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has categorically ruled out export of gas to India prior to proper assessment of its reserve, meeting domestic demand and preserving it for the next one generation's requirement.

"There will be no obstruction to export of value added products of gas if there is surplus after meeting the present and future demand for gas," she said when the outgoing Indian High Commissioner paid a farewell call on her yesterday evening.

The envoy, Dev Mukherjee, told the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament there is a huge demand for gas and electricity in India.

Held at the official residence of Khaleda, the meeting lasted about 65 minutes.

BNP Chairperson's Advisor MM Rezaul Karim briefed newsmen after the meeting.

Khaleda explained her party policy on gas and its export and peoples' views about export of gas to India.

The issue of border tension and recent incidents in different bordering areas also came up for discussion and the Oppo-

sition Leader expressed deep concern over these issues.

The High Commissioner apprised her of various steps taken to defuse tension.

Khaleda also referred to the trade imbalance between Bangladesh and India and said this can be reduced partially if industrialists and businessmen of the two countries make sincere efforts.

She emphasised Indian investment in Bangladesh and setting up of joint venture industries.

The Leader of the Opposition stressed enhanced cooperation among the SAARC countries.

In this context, she said Bangladesh, India and Nepal can unite to take up programmes for proper utilisation of the Ganges water. "We all can be benefited if we settle our common issues through discussion."

Khaleda hoped that Dev Mukherjee, now appointed Indian High Commissioner to Nepal, to take initiative about utilisation of the Ganges water.

She referred to the interim treaty between India and Bangladesh on Ganges water sharing during the rule of the then president Ziaur Rahman and said it had given emphasis on cooperation among Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

Mukherjee said it would be a vital task for him to take initiative in this regard.

Construction of embankment on the Brahmaputra also figured in the discussion.

Khaleda Zia conveyed her greetings to the Indian Prime Minister.

2 foreign ships collide at Ctg port

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, June 4: Two foreign vessels collided twice at the outer anchorage of Chittagong port early in the morning today, port sources said.

Greek flag carrying oil tanker Romania-G collided with Malta flag carrying vessel Norbal Pine loaded with clinker at the outer anchorage at 1:20 am last night and again at 5:20 am today, port sources said.

Both the vessels suffered damage due to collision, port sources added.

A survey will be launched to ascertain the damage and cause of collision.

Romania-G is waiting for scrapping after discharge of crude oil brought for Eastern Refinery here, port sources said.

EC office siege Ctg four-party alliance protests police action

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, June 4: The 4-party opposition alliance today held a rally and brought out procession in the port city.

The activists of the alliance led by its local leaders marched towards Election Commission office to lay siege to it at Jamal Khan Road at 12:30 pm. But they were intercepted by police.

Later, they brought out procession in the city protesting police action.

Earlier, the alliance held a rally in front of the local press club with alliance convenor and city BNP president Mir Md Nasir Uddin in the chair. Former minister Abdullah Al Noor, Dostagir Chowdhury, Moriana Abu Taher and Moinuddin Kaderi Shawkat addressed the rally.

Ctg mass killing Evidence of three police officers to be recorded today

CHITTAGONG, June 4: Evidence of three senior police officers will be recorded by first Additional Metropolitan Judge's Court here tomorrow in Chittagong Mass-Killing Case, Court sources said today, reports BSS.

Advocate of Chittagong Judge Court Shahidul Huda filed the case accusing eight people including former Chittagong Metropolitan Police Commissioner (CMP) Raquib Huda of killing more than 24 people without any provocation during an anti-government public meeting in the city on January 24, 1988.

The court, earlier, recorded evidence of only two lawyers out of about 50 witnesses.

The senior police officers, who will give evidence tomorrow, are DIG of police (CID) Kazi Nazrul, additional police commissioner of KMP Moklesur Rahman and additional police commissioner of DMP Khadaker Mozammel Hoq. They were working in Chittagong at that time.

Power disruption adds to people's miseries

By Staff Correspondent

The country suffered over 250 MW loadshedding yesterday against the requirement of about 2600 MW.

Massive power disruption in the capital yesterday coupled with hot and humid weather made people's life miserable.

Meteorological office said last night the sultry weather will continue for the next couple of days. The highest temperature in Dhaka yesterday was recorded 35.1 degree Celsius while the country's maximum was 36.8 in Dinajpur.

PDB yesterday generated about 2334 MW power against the country's requirement of more than 2600 MW.

PDB attributed this shortage of power supply to suspension of power generation in 15 out of country's 63 power generating units and increasing demand of power due to hot weather.

Loadshedding in DESA areas was 176 MW with 130 MW only in the metropolis, DESA control room said.

The 16 units which remained shut yesterday were Rajuan 2, Ashuganj 2, Ashuganj Gas Turbine 1, Ashuganj Steam, Ghorashal 3, Kaptai-3, Khulna 60 MW, Khulna 110 MW, Khulna Barge Mounted Power Plant, Baghabari Gas, Sylhet Gas, Shahjibazar 3, Haripur 3, Fenchuganj Gas Turbine 1 and 2 and Fenchuganj Steam.

Of the 16 Rajuan 2 and Ghorashal-3 have the capacity of generating about 210 MW of power.

Opposition halted on way

From page 1

near the Bangla Motor crossing while that of JP at Dhanmondi Road No. 27 and Jamaat at Eskaton Road.

BDR, Riot Police and Battalion Police, equipped with water canons, put up a barbed wire barricade at Bangla Motor and intercepted the BNP procession there at 12:20 pm.

The processionists did not try to break the barricade and held a peaceful demonstration. BNP leaders Abdul Matin Chowdhury, M Shamsul Islam MP, Sadek Hossain Khoka MP, Amanullah Alam MP, Abdus Salam and JCD President Habibunnabi Khan Sohail addressed the demonstrators there.

The opposition programme created a serious traffic jam in most areas of the city.

Participation of activists in yesterday's programme was less than in similar EC siege programmes on December 17, 1998 and September 30 last year.

Prior to the march, BNP's rally at Ramna Park was addressed by its Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, its city unit president Sadek Hossain Khoka and general secretary Abdus Salam.

Bhuiyan demanded immediate resignation of CEC MA Syed as well as the government and warned of "direful consequences" if any attempt is made to hold any local body election prior to the parliamentary election.

He said the government has prepared a blue-print to hold Upazila, City Corporation and District Council polls without opposition participation and the new CEC is out to implement it.

Mannan alleged irregularities in preparation of voter list. Instead of removing the irregularities, the new CEC is "conspiring" to hold Upazila elections, he alleged.

He urged the government and the authorities concerned not to push the country towards "a state of confrontation and conflict" by holding Upazila or District Council polls prior to parliamentary election. "We want to declare that no election could be held under this government and prior to the parliamentary polls."

He also urged the ruling Awami League not to get the District Council Bill passed in the Jatiya Sangsad hurriedly and to accommodate the opposition-proposed amendments to it to strengthening local government bodies.

The BNP procession was led by Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Tariqul Islam, Anwar Zahid, Mirza Abbas, Sadek Hossain Khoka, Shahjahan Siraj, Prof Shahidul Islam, Mashur Rahman, Zainal Abedin Faruq, Nazimuddin Alam, Rafiqul Islam, Bakul, Abdus Salam, Mofiqul Hasan Tripti, Shirin Sultana, Sirajul Islam Selim and Maj. (Rtd) Manjur Qader.

Jatiya Party leaders Mostafa

Jamal Haider, Shah Mohammad Abu Zafar, Saifur Rahman, Abu Hossain Babla led the party procession from its central office at Kalabagan and addressed the gathering when it was halted at Dhanmondi Road no. 27.

The Jamaat procession from Moghbazar was led by Makbul Hossain, Mujibur Rahman, Shaikh Ansar Ali, Abdul Qader Mollah, ATM Azharul Islam and Jashimuddin Sarkar. Police obstructed the procession twice. But the processionists broke the barricades but was finally halted near the daily Janakantha office where they staged a demonstration.

The IOJ activists staged a demonstration at Bangla Motor crossing when it was intercepted by police. The procession was led by party leaders ARM Abdul Matin and Abdur Rab Yusuf.

He also urged the ruling Awami League not to get the District Council Bill passed in the Jatiya Sangsad hurriedly and to accommodate the opposition-proposed amendments to it to strengthening local government bodies.

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Jatiya Party leaders Mostafa

Teachers from greater Dhaka, Comilla, Brahmanbaria, Tangail, Kishoreganj and Mymensingh will assemble at the Central Shaheed Minar at 10 am to take part in the procession towards the Jatiya Sangsad, BSS press release said yesterday.

Husband kills wife in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, June 4: A housewife was beaten to death allegedly by her husband in Water Works Road area under Shiddhirganj thana last night.

Police said, Shahida Begum alias Usha, 40, was killed by her husband Ali Hossain alias Sukka at 10 pm on Saturday. Ali had quarrel with his wife Usha following which he beat up mercilessly. Usha died on the spot. Ali fled after the incident.

A case was filed with Shiddhirganj thana in this connection.

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