

Armed forces kept above politics: PM

KUWAIT, Oct 31: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said here today that her government had kept the armed forces absolutely free from politics and maintained its prestige and chain of command, reports BSS.

The present government has kept the armed forces absolutely free from politics and upheld its prestige as an institution and maintained its chain of command, she said while addressing the Bangladesh soldiers stationed here as members of the United Nations Peace-Keeping Mission.

She said in the past the national institution like the armed forces was used for gaining political interest on many occasions.

The prime minister told the soldiers, "I hope that you will set an example to the nation and the country through discipline, principle, honesty and dedicated services."

She referred to the excellent services rendered by the Bangladesh Armed Forces members in different peace-keeping missions

of the United Nations across the globe.

Hasina said the role of Bangladesh peacekeepers in the UN peace missions has proved their worth through high skill, discipline and efficiency. "This has earned laurels for our armed forces in the UN peace-keeping missions," the prime minister said.

The prime minister noted with satisfaction that the members of the Air Force and the Navy have been performing duties reposed in them.

She thanked the Kuwaiti government for recruiting more soldiers in Kuwait.

Sheikh Hasina, who is also holding the charge of the Ministry of Defence, said the government had changed the names of the ranks of different soldiers including the officers to keep pace with the modern world.

She said the brigadiers would now be called Brigadier-General while a Sepoy will be called Salik. Lance Naik as Lance Corporal, Naik as Corporal, Havilder as Sergeant, Naib Subedar as Warrant Officer, Subedar as Senior Warrant Officer and Subedar Major as Master Warrant Officer.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina (R) called on Kuwait's Minister of Finance and Communication Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah al-Sabah (L) in Kuwait City yesterday. --AFP photo

One killed in Rajshahi clash

From Our Correspondent RAJSHAHI, Oct 31: One person was killed and 20 others were injured in a violent clash between two rival groups of villagers at Berpara village in Poba Upazila this noon.

The dead was identified as Jalep, 30, of Jangalpara village under the same thana.

Police and witnesses said the clash ensued as a sequel to a previous enmity over toll collection at a customs corridor in the same village. Both the warring groups used lethal weapons in the clash lasting for about three hours.

Boral murder

From page 1 accused Sayed and Bablu Kazl who were arrested along with 10 others within six hours of the killing of the Awami League leader.

The rest are Sikar, Shyamal and Khairuzzaman. A local leader of the ruling party, Kallidas Boral was killed in the town on August 20.

Ibrahim Khaled

From Page 1 "I am optimistic because Pabul Bank holds high prospects," said Khaled, who is respected for his moral and professional standards.

Khaled began his career with Habib Bank in 1963, and after the independence, he joined Agrani Bank. Before joining the central bank, he was the Managing Director of Sonali Bank.

Shamsi

From page 1 to record his statement. The statement was recorded in about three hours from 2:30 pm.

Zia said his father was not giving him enough money for personal expenses and so he was having difficulty in keeping relationship with his friends.

So, he along with three of his friends decided to abduct Shamsi, son of businessman Tawfiq Shamsi for ransom, Zia said.

Zia said they took him to the National Park at Gazipur on October 16. He, along with Salahuddin and Alamgir strangled Shamsi, Zia confessed.

When Shamsi died, the four left the body at the park and returned to the city.

Then they called Shamsi's father over phone and demanded ransom.

After recording the statement, the Magistrate sent Zia to Dhaka Central Jail.

After the murder Zia went to Chapat Nawabganj with a group of preachers. He was arrested there and brought to the city on October 27.

Earlier, the three other accused in confessional statements before the CMM's court also said that they abducted and killed Ammar, an O level examinee, only for ransom.

BPC Clarifies

From Page 1 The rejoinder said that due to oil price hike in the international market, traders and oil enterprises were not participating in BPC's tender as they did in the past.

This contributed to increase in premium involved in limited offers received in recent tenders. "But the proposition of going for spot tender in lieu of term tender in the present price hike can not be considered as an acceptable alternative," it said, citing example of a spot tender in January where the lowest bidder quoted a premium of US 2.6 dollar per barrel whereas the premium quoted by the lowest bidder in January-June, 2000 term tender was US 1.75 dollar and 1.13 for group A & B respectively per barrel.

It added that higher international oil price pushes the cost of freight and level of premium. "However, this higher premium does not necessarily mean that BPC will have to pay higher price for imported products, since cargo price mostly depend upon price prevailing on cargo arrival date at Chittagong."

2 fruit sellers shot in city

By Staff Correspondent Two fruit sellers received bullet wounds when miscreants fired shots at Kalapani in Mirpur section 12 in the city yesterday evening.

They victims were identified as Mohammad Iqbal, 14, son of late Sirajul Haq and Bhulu, 14, son of one All Aigar. Both of them sell fruit at the Kalapani area.

Iqbal received bullet wounds in his right thigh while Bhulu in both the thighs, DMCH source said. Witnesses said a gang of youths led by Ujjal, Ripon, Saleh, Kala and Musa started firing shots at about 7:30 pm leaving the two seriously injured.

Israeli gunships

From page 12 offices in the towns of Khan Yunis and Rafah.

Barak's chief police adviser, Danny Yatom, said the rocket attacks were intended as a warning to Fatah whose gunmen have taken the lead in shooting attacks on Israeli targets. "We are trying to signal the Palestinians that we know who is responsible," Yatom told Israeli army radio today.

Monday night's attack was one of the most intense in 34 days of fighting.

JCB clarification

Junior Chamber Bangladesh (JCB) in a clarification on a news headlined 'Fraudulent Practice for JCI Membership' published in The Daily Star on Tuesday, said that contrary to the news, JCB was affiliated with the US-based Junior Chamber International in November last year.

The clarification said, JCB was formed in 1998 with the objective of developing leadership skills for its members and for providing networking opportunity. The USA based organisation JCI, after satisfactory review of the activities of JCB has provided it with Potential Affiliation in November 1999.

Furthermore, JCI has given us full support in organising an international leadership course in September 2000, which was inaugurated by Finance Minister SAMS Kibria," it said.

Petrobangla

From page 1 Moulavibazar-2 gas field and the rest was paid to various third party contractors," it said.

Petrobangla also refused to accept Unocal's projected loss of Tk 134 crore, saying it was 'baseless'.

However, Unocal admitted that the 'compensation' actually meant 'business loss'.

JS body

From page 12 remove all sorts of malpractice in the TCB functioning.

According to the available statistics, there have been some 2,277 dealers, 1081 in Dhaka and 1196 in Chittagong, for distribution and supply throughout the country. In the period between June and July this year, the TCB distributed 24,300 tonnes of sugar from its stock and about 28,265 tonnes in August-September. The remainder would be distributed soon, the meeting was informed.

The meeting also discussed the state of revenue and expenditure, productions and export promotion of the Bangladesh Tea Board. The country earned a total of Tk 37 crore in the period between July and September this year.

The terms of reference, organogram and overall activities of the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) were also tabled for discussion in the meeting, sources said.

Presided over by committee chairman Razi Uddin Ahmed Rai, the meeting was attended by Mir Shakwahid Ali Daru, Mohammad Muhibur Rahman Manik and Biren Sikder of Awami League, and Akhter Hamid Siddique, Professor Shahidul Islam and Sarwar Jamal Nizam of BNP.

Commerce Minister Abdul Jalil attended the meeting on special invitation.

Kuwait ready to help

From page 12 Hasina separately at the Bayan Palace today.

During the meetings Sheikh Hasina requested the Kuwaiti ministers and chamber leaders to take advantage of incentives offered by her government for foreign investment in prospective power sector, agro-based industry, tourism and information technology.

"There are a lot of opportunities for Kuwaiti investors to invest in sectors like power generation and exploration of oil, gas and mineral resources," she told the Kuwaiti leaders.

She said another oil refinery would be set up in Bangladesh in cooperation with the Kuwaiti government.

In response to the prime minister's request, the Kuwaiti Oil Minister, Sheikh Suad Al-Sabah,

said, a delegation would visit Bangladesh in November this year to study feasibility of the proposed refinery.

He said another delegation would be visiting the country in the same month to assess the prospects for cooperation in the energy sector.

In the meeting with the visiting Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Finance Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah assured that necessary steps would be taken to expand volume of trade and commerce with Bangladesh.

Bangladesh exports to Kuwait were worth USD 2.41 million in 1999-2000 while imports from Kuwait cost USD 26.29 million.

The Minister said he would also request the Kuwaiti businessmen and investors to invest in agro-based industry and IT

sector to avail of the advantage given by the Bangladesh government.

He said Kuwait development assistance for Bangladesh would increase to 300 million US dollars from USD 265 million through Kuwait Development Fund.

Currently the Kuwaiti fund is giving financial assistance to 14 development projects in Bangladesh.

Kuwait Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah assured the Prime Minister that he would look into various problems faced by Bangladeshi workers, including getting Kuwaiti visa.

Bangladesh is the second-largest manpower-exporting country to Kuwait after Egypt. There are 2 lakh Bangladeshis working in Kuwait at present.

Kuwait: Accord

From page 1

"Recruitment and employment of manpower between the two countries shall be done according to the laws, systems and procedures enforced in both countries and after obtaining skill level measurement certificate of the workers from the concerned authorities in his country," said the accord.

The agreement provides that the employer may himself choose the manpower or attend the process of choosing or empower his representative to attend the selection process as per the applied rules and regulations.

The accord further said that the application forms for recruitment in the two countries should include the required conditions and specifications of the job seeker in addition to the contracting period, the job he is recruited for, specified wage and facilities or any other conditions.

BNP campaign

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public meeting, the meeting observed. To mobilise public support for the 'grand' rally, the city BNP will hold workers meetings in all the 21 thanas from today and rallies and processions on November 4-5, the sources said.

But BNP's three allies -- Jamaat-e-Islami, Jatiya Party and Islami Oikya Jote -- are yet to start preparations for public meeting. The leaderships of the parties have not yet given any instruction to their units and front organisations in this regard, sources said.

A senior leader of BNP yesterday said the central leadership of the party is yet to give any 'concrete instruction' to the city committee and its front organisations.

He said BNP units in Mymensingh, Narsingdi, Munsighan, Narayanganj, Savar, Manikganj and Keraniganj contacted the party central leadership and showed interest to join the programme. But the units are yet to get any 'specific instruction', he added.

But units in districts and thanas adjoining the capital have been asked to be prepared for the public meeting, he said.

Jamaat-Shibir

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opposition's processions in the city during hartal or other agitation programmes to spot the killers involved in Bahaddarhat incident.

Talking to this correspondent, convenor of Chittagong Unit of opposition alliance Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin said that Jamaat-Shibir activists are keeping a low profile due to vigorous police drives.

Meanwhile, 23 activists of Jamaat-Shibir were convicted in a case on October 24 by a special tribunal here under Public Safety Act (PSA) in connection with an armed attack on a police van at Satkania.

Police said the trouble took place at Satkania on March 17 this year after arrest of a Jamaat leader Shahjahan Chowdhury.

BNP rally

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ence and sovereignty. He also asked them to take fresh vow not to leave the street until the fall of the AL regime.

Several thousand Juba Dal activists with colourful placards and festoons paraded different city streets in a procession.

Juba Dal leaders Mirza Abbas, Gayeshwar Chandra Roy and Moazzem Hossain Alal also addressed the function, among others. BNP leaders Col (Retd) Oli Ahmed MP, Abdul Mattin Chowdhury, MM Rezaul Karim, Sadek Hossain Khoka, Nazrul Islam Khan and Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu.

Juba Dal's founding President Abul Kashem and general secretary Saifur Rahman were also present at the function. Both of them are now involved with Jatiya Party.

Student leaders

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students due to severe organisational problems pronounced by violent intra-party feuds. This, observers feel, may induce many JCD leaders into intense politicking for nomination for national polls.

In 1996, Amanullah Aman and Nazimuddin Alam of JCD, Sultan Mohammad Mansur and Akhteruzzaman of BCL, and Golam Faruque Ovi of Jatiya Chhatra Samaj (JCS) were elected to the parliament.

Akhteruzzaman edged out former JCD leader Fazul Haq Milan to be elected from a Kalganj constituency in 1996 while Amanullah Aman defeated Mostafa Mohsin Montu, a Juba League leader, both in 1991 and 1996 polls. Nazimuddin Alam was elected from a Bhola seat in 1996. All of them are expected to run in the coming polls.

BCL leaders seeking Awami League nomination this time around -- namely the organisation's former president Enamul Haque Shamim, general secretary Ishaq Ali Khan Panna, Shah Alam and AZM Nasir -- all stand a very good chance to win a place in the JS.

Shamim is expected to run from any of the Shariatpur constituencies while Shah Alam may

contest from Banari Para, Barisal. Panna could go for a Pirojpur constituency.

Former BCL president Moinduddin Hasan Chowdhury, who lost in 1996 elections, is taking all-out preparation to get elected from the Satkania-Louhagara constituency of Chittagong. He managed a third position in the last polls.

Incumbent BCL general secretary Ajay Kar Khokon is expected to contest from Nilkdi-Bazipur constituency. Vice-presidents Balram Poddar and Shahjahan Alam may run for the Babuganj-Ujirrup and Brahmanbaria constituencies respectively.

JCD president Habib-un-Nabi Sohel will be a strong candidate from a Rangpur constituency while general secretary Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu wants the Lalbagh constituency in the capital.

ABM Mosharrif Hossain may contest from a Patuakhali constituency while his fellow JCD leaders Anser Ali Khan Joy and Munshi Bazul Basit Anjum are also on the hunt for BNP nominations.

A few leaders from lesser student bodies also want to run for parliamentary seats but, according to sources, stand a very little chance.

DESA, Chinese co sign contract on power project

By Staff Correspondent

A contract for partial implementation of the fourth phase of Greater Dhaka Electricity Supply Project was signed between DESA and Guangzhou International Economic and Technical Cooperation Company of China in the city yesterday.

The 400 crore taka contract includes 66.37 million US dollars, of which the Chinese company will give 60 million US dollars as per the agreement. Bangladesh government will provide the rest amount, said a press release last night.

DESA Secretary Mujibur Rahman and President of the Chinese company signed the contract on behalf of their respective organisations.

State minister for Energy, Power and Mineral Resources Prof Rafiqul Islam, Power Secretary Arabunda Kar, Chinese Ambassador in Dhaka Hu Qianwen were among others present on the occasion.

Yesterday's contract was signed under a supplier's credit agreement signed on June 30 last year between Bangladesh Government and the Chinese company.

As per the agreement, a nine kilometre 132 KV power supply line, a nine kilometre 132 KV underground cable, a 17 kilometre 33 KV overhead line, a 33 kilometre 33 KV underground

cable, three 132/33 KV substations with capacity of 450 MVA will be installed, it said.

Besides, 266 switching stations (11KV), 62 panels (11KV), a 437.25 kilometre 11 KV underground and aerial cable with necessary accessories and 1500 pole mounted sub-stations will be installed.

The installation work will be completed by June 30, 2003.

Abduction: 10 get 24 yrs RI each in Barisal

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COURT here today awarded 24-year rigorous imprisonment (RI) to 10 people each under the Public Safety Act for abducting one Kabir Hossain for ransom, reports BSS.

The convicts were also fined Tk 50,000 each and in default to suffer another 5 years in jail.

Sessions Judge Abdus Samad pronounced the verdict after examining 15 witnesses in the case filed on April 25.

The case in brief, plaintiff Kabir Hossain was abducted by the convicts and confined him in an ice factory near the fish processing zone on the bank of the river Kritankhola.

Ershad

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Justice Bimalendu Bikash Roy Chowdhury of the Appellate Division retired today, we will hear the petitions after reconstitution of the Division next week.

Ershad was not present in the court when his lawyers appeared with the petitions.

Marubeni

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was negotiating with its partner Sithe to bring it back to the project.

The Cabinet Purchase Committee in September last year approved awarding the contract for the Phase-2 project to Marubeni-Sithe on condition that the joint venture would work as per terms agreed by AES.

Later PDB gave AES contract papers including the PPA, Gas Sales Agreement (GSA), Land Lease Agreement (LLA) and Implementation Agreement (IA) to Marubeni.

But after being notified about the award, Marubeni-Sithe stayed away from negotiations on different pleas including solution to the controversial issues regarding Kafco.

Marubeni is one of the leading stakeholders and main contractors of Kafco.

Obaidul Haq

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The Institute of Business Administration (IBA) said that Obaidul Haq's columns and other writings reflected his commitment to the society.

Professor Abul Kashem Fazlul Huq praised his "unique style of writing" which made even the most complicated of issues easily comprehensible for the readers.

"I was never a journalist but have become one today at the age of 90," said Obaidul Haq in an emotion-choked voice. "Your reception has made me a journalist."

He thanked everyone involved in organisation of the reception and said that it would be a priceless memory for rest of his life.

The ceremonial began with the veteran journalist cutting his birthday cake. Then, Zahiduzzaman Faruk, editor of the financial daily, read out a brief life-sketch of Obaidul Haq.

Santosh Gupta, Bazulur Rahman, editor of the Daily Sangbad, Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, editor of the Bangladesh Observer, Dr Munzir M a h u d, M o h a m m a d Salauddin, president of the Bangladesh Photojournalists' Association (BPAJA), Saleh Ahmed Chowdhury and Nelufar Banu were present among others.

Later, the noted columnist was presented with his portrait from the daily's staff.

2294 murders in 9 months

From page 1

32 were killed in rioting. In February this year, 243 people were killed across the country. Of the killings, 216 were non-political while 27 were killed in rioting. The number was 260 in the same period of the previous year with 231 non-political and six political killings while 23 people were killed in rioting.

A total of 285 people were killed across the country in March this year and of them 255 were non-political killings while 30 were killed in rioting. The number was 322 in the corresponding period of the previous year. Of them 289 were non-political killings, one was killed due to political reason while 32 died in rioting.

As many as 298 people were killed in April this year and of them 252 were non-political killings, one political while 45 were killed in rioting. The number of killing during the same period in the previous year was 342. Of them 291 were non-political, two were political and 49 in connection with rioting.

During the month of May this year, 288 killings took place and of them, 261 were non-political and 27 linked with rioting. The number was 339 in the previous year. Of them, 301 were murdered for non-political reasons,

one for political rivalry and 37 in rioting.

A total of 310 killings took place in June this year, of which 275 were non-political, two were political while 33 were killed in rioting. The number was 306 in the same month of the previous year with 278 non-political killings and 28 killings in rioting.

The number of murder was recorded at 315 in the month of July this year. Of them, 285 were killed for non-political reasons, two for political reasons and 28 in rioting. The number of killings was 279 in the same month of the previous year, of which 252 were non-political, two political and the rest lost their lives in rioting.

A total of 299 people were murdered in August this year, and of the killings, 274 were non-political and 25 linked with rioting. Of the total of 309 killings in the same month of the previous year 274 were non-political, two political and 29 were linked in rioting.

In September this year, the number of murder was recorded at 275 with 257 non-political and 18 in connection with rioting. The number was 331 in the same month of the previous year, with 303 political killings while 28 were killed in rioting.