

Demolition of Babri Mosque Uproar in Lok Sabha as opposition demands resignation of 3 ministers

NEW DELHI, Dec 5: India's parliament was adjourned today following an uproar by opposition deputies demanding the resignation of three ministers facing charges for the demolition of a 16th century mosque eight years ago, reports Reuters.

The parliament adjournment puts off India's response to Pakistan's offer of restraint in Kashmir, a week after New Delhi adopted a ceasefire in the disputed Himalayan region.

Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh was scheduled to deliver a detailed response in both houses of parliament today to Pakistan's decision at the weekend to observe restraint along a military line of control running through Kashmir.

The speaker of the lower house, Ganti M. Balayogi, adjourned the chamber till Wednesday after slogan-shouting opposition members trooped to the centre of the house.

Shortly after, the upper house of parliament too was adjourned after opposition deputies insisted that the government drop all business and take up the issue of those involved in destruction of the mosque.

"We want resignations, we want resignations ...," members of the Samajwadi Party said.

Interior Minister Lal Krishna Advani, Human Resource Development Minister Murli Manohar Joshi and Sports Minister Uma Bharti are among those charged for the 1992 destruction of the mosque in the northern town of Ayodhya.

Some 3,000 people died in religious riots across the country after Hindu fundamentalists brought down the mosque saying that it was the site of a temple to the Hindu god-king Rama.

Congress members raising the temple-mosque issue for a second day running said there could not be a fair trial until the three ministers resigned.

Earlier on Monday, Balayogi ordered the chamber to be suspended until Tuesday after lawmakers from the Congress party insisted that the three ministers step down until the courts had cleared them of involvement in the razings of the Babri Mosque.

The government has in the past turned down demands for the resignation of the ministers, saying that being charged was insufficient reason for seeking their removal.

Two shot dead

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Roksona Akhter Rita, wife of the victim, filed a murder case with Khilgaon thana.

Shamima Nasreen, wife of Faruk Hossain was found dead inside her residence at 57/5, East Kazipara at about 2:30 am yesterday.

Neighbours said they heard the woman crying at about 1:30 am and found her dead when they went to the house at about 2:30 am. There were marks of injuries on her body.

Police recovered the body and sent it to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Police filed a UD case with Kafrahan and said that they were waiting for the autopsy report. Her husband had gone into hiding soon after the incident.

Gunmen shot dead Mosharraf and injured two others at Mirpur yesterday morning.

Witnesses said a group of youths led by Ajmud fired at Mosharraf, supervisor of a building-construction firm of the area as he tried to save one Sohel Rana from their hands. The miscreants were trying to abduct Sohel.

Sohel, a grocer of the area, identified as Abul Kashem, received bullet injuries during the incident.

Mosharraf was rushed to the Pangu Hospital where the attending doctors declared him dead. His body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Sohel was admitted to the Pangu Hospital while Abul Kashem to the DMCH. Kashem received bullets in his left leg.

Mirpur police later arrested four persons Akhter, Manir, Rupin and Baten from the area for their alleged involvement in the murder.

Habibullah Khan, father of Mosharraf, filed a murder case with Mirpur thana in this connection.

Meanwhile, police recovered body of an unidentified young man from a lake at Khilgaon and his hands and legs from Biswa Road near Sabujmati Bhaban yesterday.

Hands and legs of the victim were recovered at 8:30 am while the body at 5 pm. The body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

A UD case was filed with Khilgaon police in the regard.

Khulna by-polls

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Affairs, Armed Forces Division, Bangladesh Rifles, district administrations and others concerned to ensure proper security in the area during the by-polls, EC sources said.

The CEC yesterday called upon all the political parties to maintain code of conduct and election laws.

Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, Abdul Mannan Khan and Abdul Mannan of Awami League, Munirul Haq Chowdhury of JP (M-M) and Krishak Mohammad Sadik participated in the discussions.

Meanwhile, an EC press release said there are five contestants in the by-election and three withdrew from the race on the last date of withdrawal of candidature.

The five contestants are: Advocate Badru Alam Badal, Krishak Mohammad Sadek, Gazi

and others.

The CEC expressed his "optimism" when Awami League publicity secretary Abdul Mannan asked him why they are not resolving the crisis for the sake of the nation and the institution.

Three other Election Commissioners Mushtaque Ahmed Chowdhury, Abidur Rahman and Sufiur Rahman were present, but they were not at ease with the CEC.

UNDP remains sour

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The disagreement on the SEMP came as the UNDP had accused the Secretary of amending certain basic conditions on it.

There was no explanation from the MOEF Secretary why he was withdrawing suspension on the SEMP being executed by 21

Test shows no excessive arsenic in green coconut

Examining water of the green-coconut NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation categorically said yesterday that there was no excessive arsenic in green-coconut water, reports UNB.

Following publication of a news item that excessive arsenic was found in the water of green coconut of a coconut tree in Jhikargacha of Jessor district, the Forum collected five green-coconuts of the same tree and examined the water in its laboratory.

"We did not find any arsenic in the water of those coconut in our modern laboratory," said Dr Abdul Hasnat Milton, chief of Arsenic cell of the NGO Forum.

According to the scientific information so far available there is no evidence that green-coconut water is contaminated with arsenic, he added.

The Forum urged all concerned to be more conscious and responsible in providing such "false" information that creates panic among the people, said a press release today.

organisations, sources said.

Ten of those are government and autonomous bodies, the others are NGOs and the World Bank and the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

The Secretary had accused some of the organisations of irregularities, mismanagement and corruption. The charges were denied by the organisations. The UNDP had said they were "unsustainable".

It also demanded that there should be charge sheets substantiating the allegations and those should be discussed at tri-partite meeting among the MOEF, the sub-implementing agencies (SIAs) and UNDP for necessary action.

The Secretary said he was in favour of withdrawal of the suspension in view of the Ramzan and the coming Eid so that people working in the SIAs could get their salaries, sources said.

Meanwhile, a group of NGOs working as SIAs yesterday informed the UNDP chief of their disapproval of withdrawal of the suspension without clearing the charges.

Some of them are contemplating suing the MOEF Secretary. Dr Kamal Hossain, on behalf of the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh which is one of the SIAs, have already served a legal notice on him.

It could not be known whether the Secretary replied to that within the stipulated time. Sunday.



Bangladesh National Coordinating Council (BNCC) of Textile, Garments and Leather Workers brought out a procession in the city yesterday. They demanded Tk 2 lakh compensation for families of each of the victims who died in a fire at Chowdhury Knitwear Garments in Narshingdi. - Star photo

Support for free access

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encouragement of German private investment in Bangladesh," she said, rating Germany as the second-largest trading partner of Bangladesh.

Since export-led growth has now become an integral element of economic development strategy of the LDCs, Hasina said it is essential that complete duty-and quota-free access of Bangladeshi goods to Germany and other European Union countries, is ensured.

Referring to EC's proposal initiated on September 20 for providing unrestricted market access to the EU countries for all products, except arms, from least developed countries, Hasina sought Germany's support to this initiative in the meeting of the European Council.

The talks of the two Premiers lasted half an hour where international issues also came up.

Both the Prime Minister and the Federal Chancellor discussed the need to strengthen the role of the United Nations. They noted Bangladesh and Germany's role in UN peacekeeping effort and felt the need for reforms of UN institutions.

Ferry ghats

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got frightened and started crying. I was left with little option but to please the criminals."

This correspondent spoke to a number of people both at the terminals and the ferry who claimed that they were Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) employees. The BIWTC is the official body that operates ferry services in the South Asian region.

Visiting Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, terming the meeting "very fruitful," thanked the German leader for offering Bangladesh support for allowing free access of Bangladeshi products to European market.

The talks of the two Premiers also came up.

The Prime Minister said she thanked the Federal Chancellor for identifying Bangladesh as one of the key partner countries in Germany's development-cooperation policy in Asia.

"I sought his support in further

Democracy Day today

From Page 1

ing politics of convenience, forming some sort of alliance with Eshad at one time or another.

AL will observe the Democracy Day today through holding a discussion at the party's central office in the city at three in the afternoon. Its student front, BCL, will hold a rally marking the day on Dhaka University campus at 11 am today.

BNP however prefers to forget the Democracy Day this year also like last year, thanks to its anti-government alliance with Eshad's Jatiya Party. This alliance took a firm shape following a formal summit meeting of Khaleda Zia, Ershad, Ghulam Azam and Azizul Haq on November 30 last year.

Ruling AL had also gone soft on the former dictator following his support in helping it form government after the June 12, 1996 polls. Now, however, its relation with the ex-military general has turned sour again.

Twenty-seven persons were awarded Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Gold Medal for their outstanding contribution to different sectors of society for the years of '96, '97 and '98, reports BSS.

Home, Post and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim yesterday handed over the medals to the recipients at a function in the city.

Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das Gabeshona Parishad provided the medals.

Speaking on the occasion Mohamad Nasim said Deshbandhu would remain ever respectful to all in this sub-continent for his patriotism. Of the prominent, who had sacrificed their lives for the well-being of the Bangladeshi nation, Chittaranjan is certainly one, Nasim added.

He said personalities like Chittaranjan had dreamt of the freedom of the people of the country which was ultimately materialised by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Nasim said that some vested quarters who opposed our independence have started conspiracies again. These anti-liberation elements, he said, have forged greater unity to belittle our national anthem, national flag, spirit of the Liberation War and the national heroes.

Justice Kamaluddin Hossain also spoke on the occasion chaired by president of the Parishad Hesham Uddin.

Advocate Md. Shahidul Islam, Deans of different faculties, director of the institutes, departmental chairmen and other high officials were present at the meeting.

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Thalassaemia Society sets up blood separation machine

Bangladesh Thalassaemia Society (BTS) set up recently a "Programme Control Refrigerated Blood Cell Separator" for separation of Platelets, and other blood components, reports BSS.

The most modern blood separator machine was set up at the BTS office at 290/1 Sonargaon Road in the city.

The blood separator machine was introduced, first of its kind in Bangladesh, by the BTS aimed at providing maximum support and facilities to the patients attacked by Dengue and other diseases including kidney, liver and burn.

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None from BNP, Jamaat or IOJ, however, demanded release of Eshad.

The rally over, leaders and activists of the alliance brought out a joint procession, which ended in front of BNP central office.

When the complainant asked them to show the necessary papers of the case, the policemen threatened him not to proceed and demanded Tk 1,00,000 as toll.

Later, Motiur Rahman filed an FIR against Forkan on November 8 with Kafrul thana. But no action was taken against the complainant.

Finding no other alternative,

the complainant filed a petition case against the accused seeking a judicial inquiry into the matter.

Advocate Humayun Kabir Monju appeared for the complainant.

DU Programme

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The programmes of Victory Day include hoisting of the National Flag at all the main buildings of the university at 6:30 am, gathering at the Aperajon Bangla at 6:45 am and teachers, students, officials and employees will start towards the National Mausoleum in Savar.

A special prayer will be offered at the central mosque, mosques and place of worship in all the dormitories after Asr prayers for the salvation of the departed soul as well as seeking prosperity and development of the country.

A meeting, chaired by Vice Chancellor Prof. AK Azad Chowdhury, fixed the programmes. Among others, Prof. VC Prof. Md. Shahidul Ali, Treasurer Prof. Abdul Hashem, Registrar Muhammad Selim, Deans of different faculties, director of the institutes, departmental chairmen and other high officials were present at the meeting.

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