

BJP slams opposition's spoiling tactics

NEW DELHI, Jan 4 : India's ruling Hindu nationalist BJP party kicked off its two-day national executive meeting here today with an attack on spoiling tactics being employed by opposition parties, reports AFP.

In his opening remarks to the meeting, BJP president Bangaru Laxman accused the opposition of trying to "throw spanners" into the workings of the BJP-dominated coalition government.

Opposition parties have in the past month sought to accentuate differences between the BJP and its more secular-minded allies by highlighting the former's links with a controversial campaign to build a temple on the site of a mosque razed by Hindu zealots in 1992.

In his speech, Laxman stressed the BJP was committed to carrying out the coalition's "national agenda of governance" which specifically avoids certain communal issues.

He also claimed that the BJP's recent initiative to woo Muslim voters was bearing fruit despite the "propaganda" put out by the opposition.

"Those who were unwilling to listen to us in the past are today prepared to enter into a dialogue with us," Laxman said.

DNC trio lets liquor

From Page 12 clubs and bars, the official informed. "This would give you a clear picture of the level of corruption in the department."

Each and every bar and illegal liquor supplier in the city and elsewhere in the country regularly pay their dues to the trio. Spirit shops, warehouses and over 100 hotels are also on their list. The list also includes legal and illegal rectified spirit manufacturing units. The manufacturers keep good relations with these officials so that they can sell more than the approved limit.

Tipu Sultan Road is another hot spot for illegal liquor traders, who sell their products in jerry cans whereas the government rules require that liquor be sold in bottles.

Junior DNC officers also complain that corrupt high officials have discouraged special drives to get rid of the illegal trade. While cases initiated remain shelved, the businesses go unchallenged," they said.

In April last year, DNC Inspector Abul Kashem filed a case against a shop at Tipu Sultan

"Thousands of people from these sections across the country have come closer to us."

Commenting on the situation in the troubled state of Kashmir, Laxman said Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's recent ceasefire initiative had "inaugurated a new era" in the region.

"The initiative has exposed the militant outfits that are perpetrating violence in the state and their sponsor, Pakistan," he said.

"The incidents of violence by these forces only betray their panic at the success of the initiative," he added.

India and Pakistan have fought two wars over Kashmir, where a Muslim insurgency against Indian rule has claimed 34,000 lives since 1989.

He also touched on other issues such as the alleged dumping of cheap Chinese goods in the Indian market and confronting the problems faced by the country's farmers.

The national executive meeting is expected to focus on formulating a strategy for coming elections in the politically crucial northern state of Uttar Pradesh, the eastern states West Bengal and Assam and the southern states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Cabinet discusses draft of President's New Year speech in JS

The Cabinet in a special meeting yesterday discussed the draft of the President's New Year speech to be delivered in Parliament when it goes into session on January 11, reports UNB.

The House will hold discussion on the President's speech.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presided over the meeting held at her office.

Cabinet members and state ministers of different ministries attended the meeting. Cabinet secretary, PM's principal secretary and concerned secretaries were present.

Iftekhar Chy appointed advisor to UNCTAD secy general

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has appointed Ambassador Iftekhar Chowdhury of Bangladesh as special advisor to Rubens Ricupero, Secretary General of UNCTAD, says a press release.

Dr Iftekhar Chowdhury will assist Ricupero in the latter's capacity as secretary general of the Third UN Conference on LDCs.

Dr Chowdhury joined the post on Tuesday on deputation from the government service.

Amassador Iftekhar Chowdhury has been serving as the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN in Geneva since 1996. He has been actively involved with all international agencies there.

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The CID also filed a case against the same shop. For "mysterious" reasons, there was no follow-up and the shop continues with its illegal business, they said.

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