

President, PM greet Bush

# Ties with US to grow further'

President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina congratulated George W. Bush yesterday on his assumption of office as the 43rd President of the United States of America, reports UNB.

In a message to his new American counterpart, Shahabuddin said Bangladesh values its friendship with the USA and appreciated its support for the development of Bangladesh.

He hoped that the existing mutual cooperation and partnership between the two countries would continue to flourish in the days ahead.

The President wished good health and happiness of the new US President and a very success-

ful term in his office.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a separate message to Bush expressed her eagerness to work with him in close concert to promote and achieve the common objectives of peace, stability and prosperity throughout the world.

She hoped that under the privileged background, rich experience and impeccable credentials of Bush, America would continue to enjoy unprecedented prosperity and provide leadership to the world, responding to the great challenges and opportunities in the new century.

Hasina wished the new US President success in his endeavours.

**EPI vaccination**  
Body to probe  
death of child  
in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

**KHULNA**, Jan 21: A four-member enquiry committee has been formed with the Deputy Civil Surgeon Dr Daud Ali Mir as its head to submit a report by Wednesday on the death of a child after being vaccinated under the EPI vaccination programme here last Wednesday.

Other members of the committee are Dr Alamgir, Dr Ataur Rahman and EPI supervisor Hafizur Rahman. The two-month old child Liton, son of day labourer Hossain Ali Shaikh and Hosne Ara died few hours after taking DPT vaccine.

The incident occurred at village Elaipur under Rupsha upazila.

The Whip of Jatiya Sangsad Mostafa Rashida Shujia, a representative of WHO and Health Officer of Rupsha Health Complex visited the house of Hossain.

Thirty children were given DPT vaccine on that day at the EPI camp at village Elaipur. Five of them fell sick after few hours. Of them, Liton died and four others identified as Ekhlas, 1, Boni, 10 months, Saiful, 11 months, and Tanjila, 4 months, were admitted to KMCH.

## Nasim blames Jamaat

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function in Jessor, attempt on the life of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Kotalpara in Gopalganj and killing of eight including six Chhatra League leaders in Chittagong. Nasim said the Paltan incident is a follow up of the bomb blast by the Opposition to create political instability in the country, he said.

He said many of those injured in Saturday's explosion at the rally were unknown to the CPB leaders. So, it is apparently clear that some intruders backed by a certain quarter is responsible for the blast."

"Since we fought the War of Independence together in 1971, CPB is our political friend and the fundamentalists unleashed such heinous attack to weaken the progressive force," he said adding they (the fundamentalists) are trying to tarnish the image of Awami League which is leading the country towards progress.

Referring to the incident of bomb explosion at an Uddihi

11-party

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economist Prof Anisur Rahman and poet Abu Bakr Siddiq also spoke at the rally.

Earlier on the day, leaders of different political parties and students' and workers' organisations visited the CPB central office at Purana Paltan and paid tributes to the party activists killed.

The leaders include those of Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee, Sammilita Nari Samaj, Pahari Chhatra Parishad, and Bangladesh Chhatra League.

CPB workers took the body of Abul Hashem, one of the four victims, to Demra in a truck yesterday afternoon. Hashem was a worker of Latif Bawani Jute Mills at Demra.

Two other coffins wrapped with red flags of CPB were seen in front of the party central office till evening. Party sources said those would be sent to Khulna at night (last night). The body of another victim was at Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue as autopsy was in progress, they said.

CPB workers from the city and outside gathered at the party central office and paid tributes to those killed. The road in front of the office was closed for traffic yesterday.

**Nasim blames Jamaat**

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function in Jessor, attempt on the life of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Kotalpara in Gopalganj and killing of eight including six Chhatra League leaders in Chittagong. Nasim said the Paltan incident is a follow up of the bomb blast by the Opposition to create political instability in the country, he said.

The Home Minister assured the House that the criminals as well as their godfathers would be brought to book immediately.

He said the Hawkers' union leaders met the Leader of the Opposition a few days back and it is possible for them to kill the people by exploding powerful bombs.

The Home Minister urged the opposition parties to shun the path of bloodshed.

Two high-powered committees one headed by a Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Home and the other by an Additional Inspector General of police have been formed to probe the incident, Nasim informed the parliament.

## Textbook scam

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before selling the books.

The NCTB has agreed to allow payment of royalty in six installments in violation of rules, the sources pointed out.

Three concerns of Beximco group Pustaka, Shuktara and Free Press -- were awarded the job of printing and distribution of over eight crore textbooks for primary and secondary levels.

The NCTB in a letter gave serial number of the textbooks and asked pustaka not to take it as 'sale order,' one source said.

As per the NCTB tender document, the printers should make arrangement for inspection of ready stock of books before distribution and after a satisfactory inspection by NCTB officials, the printers will go for distribution to avert any crisis due to inadequate number of books.

## Envoy: Fair election

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to the end of this month.

The team will exchange views with a broad section of the society to determine the monitoring needs for the polls and the type of assistance that could be provided by the EU countries. On its return the assessment team will submit its report to the Asian Working Group.

The envoy said at this point in time the number of poll monitors coming to the country representing the EU could not be predicted, but the number was highly likely to cross the 90-strong team it sent to Sri Lanka during the island nation's general elections.

"We are not interested in the outcome of the elections," said Schramm. "We only want peaceful democratic continuity."



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking with the Chairman of the Cambodian Senate Chea Sim (R) during a meeting at the Senate House yesterday in Phnom Penh.

-AFP photo

## Myanmar continues to mass troops

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forces of the two countries. The BDR has decided to nominate its Deputy Director General but the Myanmar side is yet to communicate its decision in this regard.

Reports from across the border said two Light Infantry Regiments of Myanmar Army have been deployed in forward positions, within some 500 yards of Bangladesh border. Besides, 15,000 regular troops have also been deployed within three km of Bangladesh border.

The two Regiments have moved out from the western command headquarters at Sittwe. Military Commander of Myanmar's western region Lt General Wan Tuwa officially visited the forward deployment positions of Myanmar troops twice in the last five days. Normally some 30,000 regular troops are at the direct disposal of Myanmar's western command.

Besides, the number of Naska forces in the area concerned is over 2500, reliable sources said. In that case also, prior information has to be provided to the

neighbouring country.

The two Light Infantry Regiments and other troop formations of Myanmar are equipped with recoilless rifles, mortars, heavy machine guns and even artillery guns.

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Foreign Secretary Shafiq Sami, when contacted, said the border tension with "our close neighbour will be defused shortly."

Asked about possible outbreak of a conflict, he said, "Let us not speculate now. We will cross the bridge when it comes."

learnt to have been deployed in Totardip area of Myanmar, bordering Bangladesh's Ulaban.

Sources noted that the JSC can settle the Bangladesh claim that Myanmar is constructing embankments along the Naf river in violation of the maritime boundary demarcation agreement signed between the two countries in 1966. Later in 1980, a land boundary demarcation agreement was signed by the two neighbours and it incorporated the 1966 agreement.

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## Hartal passes off peacefully

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from early morning and continued processions and rallies up to 2pm. Police cashed a Chhatra Union procession near the Matsha Bhaban at about 8am, but none was injured.

Witnesses said presence of leftist leaders and activists on streets during yesterday's hartal was more than that of BNP-led opposition alliance which enforced a good number of hartals earlier.

Movement of rickshaws was almost normal in the city. Some auto-rickshaws, auto-tempo, minibuses and BRTC buses plied some specific routes.

Private offices, business houses and shopping complexes remained closed during the

hartal hours. Attendance in government offices was thin. Banks operated with their collapsible gates closed.

All educational institutions in the city also remained closed.

During the hartal, the Left Alliance held a rally at Paltan crossing. It was addressed by, among others, Saiful Haq, Mahbub Alam, Anwarul Haq, Iqbal Majumder, Nur Ahmed Bakul, Abdur Razzak, Karim Shikder, Faizul Haq Lala, Sharifuzzaman Sharif, Abdul Halim Akand and Mosharraf Hossain.

They strongly criticised the ruling AL for bringing out procession against the hartal and demanded immediate resignation of the Home Minister to his

complete" failure to provide security to people.

Criticising the government's inaction, they said law enforcing agencies did not take any step to recover "alamats" (evidences) of the bomb explosion till 10pm on Saturday. This proves the government's connection with the killers. They demanded proper investigation into the incident and trial of the killers.

Workers' Party leader Saiful Haq urged the Home Minister to arrest ruling party "godfathers" of terrorists first.

CPB leader Mahbub Alam alleged that "conspirators" at home and abroad were involved in the bomb attack to make the country dependent on others.

## Hartal today

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Prior to bringing out the main torch procession, BNP held a brief rally in front of its central office at Nayapaltan. The rally was addressed by city BNP President Sadeque Hossain Khoka, MP and general Abdul Salam.

Dayta Party brought out a torch procession from its Kalabagan office. Jamaat and IOU took out separate processions from Paltan area.

Hartal Exemption: Hospital, ambulance, medicine shop, restaurant, newspaper offices and vehicles of emergency services and law enforcing agencies.

**JS : Teachers**

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get jobs and get promoted to senior positions then there is no reason why school teachers should not be listed in the MPO and get government benefits.

Sharif Khasruzzaman said the issue was discussed at a meeting of Awami League parliamentary party where the Prime Minister assured that she would consider the matter. "If the decision is not revised, it will have adverse

intelligence agencies are trying to ascertain the type of explosive and also the reason and purpose of the explosion. Speculations range from involvement of international politics to local terrorist to fundamentalist elements.

Feud between CPB and underground political parties in the country's southwest is also suspected.

Asked why the culprits selected CPB rally for the explosion when there had been so many rallies throughout the year, a senior official of Special Branch of Police said that the people, responsible for the explosion, were aware that a large number of people from outside Dhaka were going to attend the rally, which would make it easier for them to go with a bag containing explosives.

CPB rally became the target with an aim to intensify enmity in the political arena between BNP and Awami League.

Another official of a government agency concerned said while investigating they were putting emphasis on some specific points -- whether anyone inside the government or ruling party or opposition has any involvement.

"Let the teachers' associations sit and come up with their proposal. But at this stage, the government cannot do anything unilaterally," he said.

Sadique, however, assured that the government might consider the matter only if the teachers' associations want to do it and sign another agreement with the government.

The NCTB yesterday informed the Ministry of Education that royalty on books was not deposited although sale of those started.

According to information available from different sources, the bomb was neither thrown into the crowd nor was it planted beforehand. It is highly that someone carried the explosive.

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