

Chain of command in armed forces established: Hasina

COMILLA, Jan 24: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said her government has created an atmosphere where nobody could use the armed forces for political ambitions, reports UNB.

"Armed forces have been completely freed from politics and chain of command has been established," she said addressing a Darbar of army after witnessing a joint training and demonstration.

The demonstration of the 33rd infantry division was held at Lalmai in the district with members of the armed forces using paratroopers, fighter jets, tanks and cannons.

During the one-hour mock fight, they demonstrated attack and counter-attack amid sounds of firing and smoke creating a war-like situation.

The Prime Minister, wearing combat jacket and cap of the army, witnessed the mock war "death trap" conducted under the leadership of Brigadier General Iqbal Karim and Brig Gen Fakrudin Haider.

Earlier, Chief of Army Staff Lt

Gen Harunur Rashid and Comilla Area Commander Maj Gen Alauddin Mohammad Wadud received the Prime Minister at the demonstration area. Local MPs, chief of naval staff and chief of air staff and senior defence officials were also present.

Addressing the soldiers and officers of the area, Hasina said Bangladesh Army is now much more organised and stronger than any time in the past following the sincere efforts of her government.

She said members of the armed forces have brightened the image of the country by discharging their duties in the UN peacekeeping missions with utmost sincerity and efficiency.

Hasina said the army is also engaged in various nation-building activities at home, like Ashrayan. "As a result, the gap between people and army has been reduced greatly."

She said the success of army largely depends on people's support and cooperation. Without people's support, she said, the army cannot win any war.

Jail Killing Case

From Page 1

days. But the court fixed January 29 for further hearing on the basis of time prayer by the state.

Metropolitan PP Quamrul Islam did not oppose the petition for treatment of the accused but prayed for recording deposition of the complainant of the case.

After hearing both sides, the judge adjourned the proceedings for non-appearance of Nurul Islam Manzoor in the court and filing a criminal revision pending with the High Court Division of the Supreme Court.

However, Nesar Alam, the Deputy Jailor submitted the custody warrant of Nurul Islam Manzoor, mentioning that the accused was under treatment at the jail hospital. All attempts were made to produce him (accused) before the court but he showed apathy to appear before the court.

Seven of the accused Taheruddin Thakur, Shah

Moazzem Hossain, KM Obaidur Rahman, Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farookur Rahman, Lt Col (Retd) Sultan Sharif Rashid Khan, Major (Retd) Bazil Huda and Major (Retd) Khairuzzaman are now detained at the Dhaka Central Jail. They were produced in the court during the hearing.

Four national leaders Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, AHM Quamruzzaman and Captain Mansur Ali were brutally killed inside the Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975.

Then DIG (Prison) Kabi Abdul Awal filed the Jail Killing Case with Labagh thana on November 4, 1975.

Special PP Sirajul Haq and Metropolitan PP Quamrul Islam appeared for the state while Advocate Mahbubur Rahman, Abdul Majid Munshi, Hazi Nazrul Islam, ABM Sharfuddin Khan Mukul and SM Rafiqul Islam for the accused.

'Mosquitoes are of 11 categories'

By Staff Correspondent

A ruling party lawmaker has categorised mosquitoes into 11 different types such as rural, urban, local, alien, national, tribal and parliamentary mosquitoes.

"As their types are many, so are the results of their bites. A mosquito bite may make a person ill or even leave a person battling for life. A mosquito-bitten person may suffer from convulsion or be panicked," Haji Mohammad Selim said in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

In his notice on the urgent issues of public importance, Selim termed the mosquito species as a tiny flying insect that in his words has "stood the test of time."

"Mosquitoes are ubiquitous and have found their place in prose and poetry, in the story of Namrood and even in the holy Quraan. Cartoons are scripted on the use of cannons against mosquitoes. Aeroplanes were used to kill mosquitoes in the British-ruled India and the Zia-ruled Bangladesh. In recent times, mosquitoes have also made fogger machines roar to frighten people.

It is said that Africa is the source of Aedes mosquito now available in the jungles of Indian state of Assam. This kind of mosquito cannot see and does not bite at night. But the type now swarming in the parliament can see by day as well as at night that has resulted in a round-the-clock battle."

The ruling party MP also blamed the officials of the health ministry and of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) for shirking their responsibilities.

Truck kills 4 in Comilla

COMILLA, Jan 24 (UNB): A road accident in Debidar upazila on Dhaka-Chittagong highway left four people killed and two others injured today, reports UNB.

The deceased were identified as Idris Ali of Faridpur district, Khurshed Alam, 32, and his brother Amir Hossain Monu, 17, and Shahidul Islam, 25.

Police said the accident took place when a truck knocked them down in front of Sadat Jute Mill at 7.30 am. Idris, a van puller, was repairing his van while the other victims were standing beside him when the truck hit them.

The injured Nurul Alam and Shahidul were hospitalised.

Angry workers and local people barricaded the road after the accident, disrupting traffic for over three hours. A case was filed.

Hill students

From Page 12

They said that army had 13 PCP workers arrested including its vice president Milton Chakma from a peaceful rally at the Manikchhari on December 3, 2000.

They demanded immediate release of all the arrested leaders and workers and withdrawal of 'false cases' lodged against them by police and army.

They threatened to paralyse the administration through a greater agitation programme in the Chittagong Hill Tracts area if the arrested are not released immediately.

Among others, Champanan Chakma, Benjin Chakma, Meky Khisha and Dipanker Tripura addressed the rally.

Earlier, they brought out a procession from Madhu's canteen in Dhaka University and paraded through the campus.

Akhter's JS seat

From Page 1

The HC issued the rule after hearing the petitioners' counsel Dr Kamal Hossain and Attorney General Mahmudul Islam on constitutional aspects of the matter.

The EC declared Akhtaruzzaman's seat vacated on a reference by the Speaker following a letter from the Chief Whip of BNP. The Whip informed him that Akhtaruzzaman was expelled from BNP for attending Parliament session in violation of party decision and in this regard he cited articles 66 (4), 67 (1) (e) and 70 (1) of the Constitution.

The five voters from Katiadi thana of Kishoreganj in their writ petition said the EC gave the order in violation of their fundamental rights guaranteed by articles 27 and 31 of the Constitution and that their MP had attended parliament session legally. They further said the EC action negated their right to be represented in Parliament through their elected MP.

Dr Kamal Hossain argued that Akhtaruzzaman neither voted against BNP nor resigned from it, warranting his expulsion from the party for violation of articles 67 (1) and 70 of the Constitution. BNP had intentionally expelled him, he said.

The Constitution provides that if an MP votes against his party, he is liable to lose his membership. But there is no such evidence in this case, Dr Kamal Hossain said, adding that the EC's decision was contrary to constitutional provisions.

Attorney General Mahmudul Islam said that a member of parliament shall attend its proceedings as per constitutional mandate. No party can give directive to an MP not to attend the proceedings of parliament, he observed.

The AG further said that a term used in the Constitution has to be interpreted in the context of constitutional provisions and not otherwise.



Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) held a discussion meeting on "Free and Fair Election, 2001" at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

High security alert in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Jan 24: Police declared a high security alert in the capital today following intelligence agency reports that terrorist suicide squads could launch an attack before or during the country's Republic Day on Friday, reports AP.

The government says its security agencies have gathered specific information that India's Home Minister Lal Krishna Advani and Defense Minister George Fernandes, key members of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Cabinet, could be the likely targets of attack by Muslim militants.

Security forces have also issued a warning about a woman suicide bomber, who they fear would use the occasion of a Republic Day parade for a high profile terrorist mission.

India's top government and military officials, diplomats and foreign guests, attend the parade, which showcases military hardware such as the Agni-II ballistic missile and is punctuated by Air Force flyovers.

Bangabandhu murder

From Page 12

judges in a split verdict on the death reference by a Division Bench of the High Court on December 14. The other judge upheld the death sentence of all the 15.

The Chief Justice sent the split verdict on the five to a third judge and he has fixed February 14 for the hearing.

Khan Saifur Rahman said he has been instructed by his client to file a writ petition under Article 102 of the Constitution if the respondents fail to act within 15 days of receipt of the notice given on Tuesday.

The respondents are Home Secretary, Law Secretary, complainant in the case Mohitul Islam and the Sessions Judge of Dhaka.

Saifur Rahman cited the now repealed Indemnity Ordinance and Clause 6 of paragraph 3A of the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution, incorporated by the fifth amendment, indemnifying all actions on August 15, 1975 and afterwards under martial law, in force till April 6, 1979.

The Indemnity Ordinance was repealed by parliament on November 12, 1996, lifting immunity of the 15 accused against

legal proceedings. The repeal was upheld by the High Court in 1997 and the Supreme Court in 1998.

But Saifur argued in the notice, "Clause 6 of paragraph 3A of the fourth schedule of the Constitution stands with all its force, rendering the FIR in the case ineffective."

Some sources however said the notice is aimed at delaying the proceedings of the case.

President assents to 3 bills

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday gave assent to three bills passed in the current session of the Jatiya Sangsad, reports BSS.

The Bills are International Commercial Arbitration Bill, 2001, Preservation and Display of the Portrait of the Father of the Nation Bill, 2001 and The Registration of Private Schools (Amendment) Bill, 2001, a press release of the Jatiya Sangsad said.

The current session of the Sangsad began on January 11.

Bring radical changes: Temple

From Page 1

more to attract foreign investment than tax concessions or other incentives," he said.

He said that many critics here complain that the private sector doesn't perform well. "If this is true, perhaps it is because of the poor environment in which the private sector functions."

Earlier in his speech, Temple said that the level of corruption in the country is high and that the quality of the civil administration is low in Bangladesh. And as a consequence, private firms may concentrate on obtaining special favours, protection, subsidies and cheap credit from the government as a way of compensating for a lack of competitiveness.

He said that environment of

business needs to be improved by modernising the civil service and increasing the public sector accountability, which would reduce corruption. "The judicial system needs to be strengthened to administer justice more efficiently. The deterioration of law and order situation needs to be reversed so that businesses aren't subject to extortion and can operate free of harassment."

He also called for continuation of liberalising the trade regime, which has been stalled and been modestly reversed.

Temple concluded by saying that it is an important time in Bangladesh's political history. He said election campaigns are about to be launched in the country, which is increasingly open to vigorous public debate.

"This is the time to build constituencies for reform and to generate expectations that the next government will use the honeymoon period immediately after the election to launch a vigorous reform programme, so that the next economic tiger will be the Bengal tiger."

He also said that the business community should analyse the economic policies on the election manifestos of the political parties to identify points of agreement. These points of agreement should provide a good starting point for a broadly acceptable economic reform programme, no matter which party comes to power and which is in opposition, to help the country to achieve its economic potential.

Thousands homeless

From Page 1

gangs, equipped with firearms, crackers and sharp weapons, were locked in a clash near the slum.

The gangs exchanged gunshots, blasted crackers and damaged a number of roadside shops, creating panic in the area and disrupting traffic on Tongi Diversion Road for about two hours.

Kuddus, 35, a rickshawpuller and a resident of the slum, was injured critically in the clash. He was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with bullet injury in the abdomen.

The clash ended as police intervened. But none was arrested. Additional police force was deployed in the area after the clash.

When asked how crackers could be exploded at the slum in presence of police, a DMP official

said they did not get any such complaint. He, however, said police are investigating whether there is any link between the clash and the fire incident.

Eight fire fighting units extinguished the fire in about an hour.

Traffic movement on Tongi Diversion Road was disrupted again for about an hour as hundreds of people gathered there during the fire. At one stage, police charged batons to disperse the crowd.

Local people alleged that police were very much aware of illegal phensidyl trade at the slum but did not take any step to stop it for monetary gains.

Yesterday's clash followed abduction of two teenaged relatives of Sobhan by Kiran's men from the slum on Monday. Tejaon police rescued them the same day.

Former air chief

From Page 12

fulfil his political ambition.

Mohammad Akhtaruzzaman, officer of the Bureau of Anti-corruption, filed the case with Cantonment thana against Altaf Hossain Chowdhury on October 15, 1998.

In the second case, the accused was charged with misappropriating Tk 1,27,570 from non-public funds, for providing televisions and dish antenna to the people of his own village in 1994.

M Akhter Hamid Bhuiyan, officer of the Bureau of Anti-corruption filed the second case with Cantonment thana on October 15, 1998 against the former air chief.

Assistant PP Faridul Alam Talukder appeared for the state while Advocate Masud Ahmed Talukdur for the accused.

Split in CPI-M likely

Subhash Chakrabarty may declare new party in Kolkata today

By Sakyasen Mitra

KOLKATA, Jan 24: There is every possibility that the CPI-M party will split tomorrow with Transport and Sports Minister Subhas Chakrabarty announcing the formation of his new party at a workers' gathering at the Brigade parade ground here. A few other top leaders of the party are also expected to quit CPI-M to join his new party. Amongst them is Samir Patuundu, the man, who has been always clamouring for democracy.

The CPI-M state secretariat knows that tomorrow it will probably face its greatest crisis since leading the left revolution in West Bengal 25 years ago. The unity that they had been displaying for so long has every possibility of vanishing into thin air tomorrow.

Last ditch efforts are on to prevent the split. The former

Chief Minister of the state Jyoti Basu is himself leading the efforts.

Basu, today conducted a couple of meetings with the CPI-M state secretary, Anil Biswas to solve the present crisis. Tomorrow, he will meet all the members of the district committee of the North 24-Parganas to try and find out a solution to the internal fight that has been plaguing the party in that particular district.

Subhas Chakrabarty, in spite of being an important minister has not found a place on the district committee of the North 24-Parganas for the last two years. So as a first step to prevent his exist from the party, Basu has asked the district leaders to include Chakrabarty in the committee. The formal announcement will come tomorrow.

Basu has also called for a

meeting of all the members of the district committee of North 24-Parganas and Chakrabarty, however, one is not sure whether the latter will attend the meeting. Chakrabarty is scheduled to attend his own rally at the Brigade Parade Ground at the time.

When asked him about his decision on quitting the party Chakrabarty, today did not directly reply whether he would actually quit. But he reiterated his claim of not contesting the elections.

"I have repeatedly said that I will not contest the polls again. The party has the rule of not allowing a candidate to contest more than three times and I have already won on five successive occasions. So I should step down following the guideline that has been set up by the party," he said.

Textbook

From Page 1

Addressing the rally, SCF leaders said, the textbooks, printed using low quality paper, are full of errors.

Books printed for free distribution are being sold in shops, they alleged. The Pustaka has sold out allotment letters to five note book printers in the city to make profit, violating terms and conditions of the NCTB tender for the job, they alleged.

When contacted Dr. Tapan Kanti Chowdhury, Chairman of NCTB, declined to comment on the issue and said, "I'm doing my duty, that's all. . . . I shall not talk about this."

Blast at rally

From Page 12

information about the bomb blast but did not disclose its findings for the sake of the investigation.

The committee members will question the injured victims at the hospitals today.

CID Special Superintendent Lutfur Rahman said that two CID teams were sent to the Ibrahimpur area to arrest suspects.

Meanwhile, a person named Mostafiz was arrested on Monday night in connection with the second bomb explosion at Bangabandhu Avenue. Police said he is a cousin of Mashuri who was injured in the second bomb explosion. Mostafiz was produced before the court and placed on a three-day remand.

Nine other arrested in connection with the bomb explosion were sent to the Dhaka Central Jail after a two-day police remand.

Trade gap

From Page 1

The commerce ministry official said that he was not at all worried about the increasing trade deficit because import from India is much more cost efficient than that from any other country.

"We import some raw materials at a very cheap rate from India and export goods made out of these to other countries," the official said.

If India allow duty-free access to 25 categories of items from Bangladesh, the trade deficit would further come down, he observed.

India has committed duty-free access of 191 items under 25 categories to its markets last year. However, the arrangement is yet to take effect.

Industry Minister Tofail Ahmed at a recent seminar on South Asian Co-operation strongly criticised India for creating various tariff and non-tariff barriers to goods from Bangladesh. He also criticised India for not allowing duty-free access of goods from least developed nations in South Asia.

FEMA

From Page 12

monitor the next parliamentary election.

Senior journalists Reazuddin Ahmed, Enayetullah Khan, Manjural Hossain Bulbul, Rakibuddin and Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury also took part in the discussion.

FEMA officials Ataur Rahman, Munira Khan, Dr Shauqat Ara Hossain, Dr Nasir Uddin and Advocate Salma Ali were also present.

JUTA polls today

From Page 12

Abu Sayeed Khan and Jasimuddin Ahmed.

The two pro-Al groups have jointly nominated a 15-member panel, calling it 'pro-liberation war panel'. The two pro-BNP groups have also nominated another 15-member panel styled 'Jatiyatabadi Shikkhak Parishad'.

The candidates for the posts of JUTA president and secretary are Prof. Ajit Kumar Mojumder (Statistics) and Ahmed Reza (English) from the pro-Al group and Prof AFM Obaidur Rahman (Philosophy) and Kamrul Ahsan (Archaeology) from the pro-BNP group.

The pro-BNP teachers became divided when one group led by Prof Mustahidur Rahman made an alliance with the then VC Prof Alauddin Ahmed in 1998 and contested the next JUTA polls jointly with pro-Al teachers.

Another pro-BNP faction led by Prof Abu Sayeed Khan and Prof Jasimuddin Ahmed had joined the anti-VC group led by the then pro-VC Prof Abdul Bayes and contested the polls

jointly with the pro-Al group.

But the Bayes-Sayeed-Jasim group bagged almost all the posts in the election, held after Prof Alauddin Ahmed resigned as VC in November 1999.

Sources said, the reconciliation between the two pro-BNP groups was possible due to intervention by some BNP central leaders.

Five shot as terrorists clash in Ctg

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 24: At least five people were injured by bullet, in a gunfight between two groups of terrorists in front of Agrabad T&T Colony under Double Mooring thana this afternoon.

The clash erupted between the two rival groups over establishing supremacy in the area at around 3 pm.

One of the injured, identified as Saiful Islam, 25, was admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) while four others to local clinics.

JCD representatives

From Page 12

the new committee that has been frustrating the genuine and dedicated activists.

Another leader said some activists, who always maintains liaison with the central leaders, are being included in the central and local committees, while deserving activists fail to reach their cherished goal.

A JCD leader from Chittagong was forced to stop his speech after he strongly opposed forming alliance with pro-Jamaat Islami Chhatra Shibir. The student leader was compelled to finish his speech as the chair rang the bell.

Many JCD leaders observed that the newspaper criticism soon after the formation of the new central committee headed by Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu and

Shahabuddin Laltu seriously damaged the image of the BNP.

They said this may harm BNP in the next general elections. JCD insiders said most of the speakers are loyal to the Pintu-Laltu faction. Of them, about a dozen were allowed to speak in presence of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia. Khaleda Zia attended the meeting as chief guest in the evening.

JCD leaders alleged that Pintu and Laltu in prepared the list in away so that people who are loyal to can only speak in front of Khaleda and praise their leadership.

Before Pintu appeared, a number of central leaders sitting on the dais welcomed the reporters and made sitting arrangements by removing activists from the press corner.

Gano Forum tells rally

From Page 12

He criticised ruling Awami League for its efforts to cling to power and opposition BNP for its desire to go to power by any means. "This mindset led them to patronise armed cadres, mastaans and godfathers" and build alliance with loan defaulters, smugglers and those who amass black money through corruption."

Condemning the government for enacting the Public Safety Act (PSA), he said such a law will not make any real contribution to improvement of law and order. "Instead, it (PSA) would be abused. Many of the top godfathers remain above the law and their armed cadres are terrorising innocent people and students in educational institutions."

Dr Kamal also bitterly criticised the ruling party and the Opposition for making the Jatiya Sangsad ineffective. He also

criticised the government for evicting of slum dwellers without steps for their rehabilitation.

An autonomous Election Commission is a prerequisite for fair and free election, the internationally famed jurist said. "If necessary, the EC has to be reformed." BTV and Radio should also be autonomous.

Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, general secretary of the party, demanded a neutral investigation into the bomb attack. He said the Home Minister should resign for his failure to ensure security at the CPB rally.

Without naming the Prime Minister he said, "How can you run your government if you fail to ensure people's safety?"

The meeting was also addressed by, among others, party central leaders Pankaj Bhattachariya, Saidul Rahman Syed, Dr Abdul Hakim and Abdul Kashem Sagor.

Train services with India

From Page 1

severed.

After Bangladesh's independence, only goods train service was reintroduced in 1972 for a brief period of two years but was again closed due low volume of goods. In the intervening years movement of goods has increased in volume despite a troublesome transport system on this south-western route.

Railway sources said schedule for trains on the Benapole-Petrapole route would be decided after reviewing cargo movement over the next one month.

Goods train connecting Bangladesh and India are presently operating on four other routes -- Shahabpur-Mahishan, Rohanpur-Sinhabad, Birol-Radhikapur and Darsana-Gethe.

It was learnt that the opening of the Benapole-Petrapole link would divert traffic from the Darshana-Gethe route and facilitate movement to Dhaka.

Last year some seven lakh tonnes of cargo were transported between Bangladesh and India via Benapole.

A bulk of that volume would now be transported through the rail link, railway officials predict, adding that with the delay caused by transshipment, it would be both time and cost efficient.

Another possible railway connecting point used earlier is the Chirati-Haldighat point. There have been some discussions on launching of a railway route linking Akhaura with Agartala. This juncture could facilitate transportation of goods to India's eastern states. However, it would require more time, since there is no rail line there.

Most of the railway trains connecting India and Bangladesh carry fertiliser, food grains, boulder and cement. Both Nepal and Bhutan are also benefited by the Bangladesh Railway system.