

PM: Khaleda should quit JS seat

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would not be required for her to go to parliament for this.

When her reaction was sought on Khaleda's refusal, the Prime Minister told journalists at her office that Khaleda and her MPs came to parliament ending their boycott for a short-while only in order to retain their memberships, red passports, salaries and allowances being given from the public exchequer.

"Still her MPs are travelling to foreign countries as members of parliamentary delegations and attending committee meetings, then why would she not come to the House," she asked.

Questioning the efficacy of Khaleda's present movement, Hasina said: "I would like to know whether they (BNP) at all believe in democracy and constitutional rule. Do they have any trust in the people and democracy? Whose interest is she serving?"

About the general election, the Prime Minister said she had time and again stated that she would resign and hand over power to a nonparty caretaker government for fresh electoral mandate.

She said it will be five years in

June 2001 since the last general election held on June 12, 1996 while tenure of present parliament will complete five years on July 13, 2001.

"So we've only four months in hand, we will resign and transfer power to a caretaker government and there will be a fresh election. But why has the opposition leader embarked on a movement at a time when election is not far away," asked Hasina.

"This movement is nothing but a political stunt of Begum Zia to bluff the people that the government has resigned because of the movement," the PM said, adding: "People have understood her hypocrisy and they cannot be fooled all the time."

Hasina advised her political rival not to inflict pain on common people by staging the "movement drama" she started from the first sitting of present parliament in 1996 when she staged a walkout against her own elected Speaker and vowed to unseat the government within three months. But people did not respond to her call and rejected her movement in last four years and eight months.

Refuting Khaleda's comments made Saturday, Hasina said people

can tell who is the liar. "It is Begum Zia who had jeered at people's demand for a neutral nonparty caretaker government saying 'none but only a baby and a madman can be neutral'."

The PM said although Khaleda Zia came to power through election under a caretaker government in 1991, she had fiercely opposed the caretaker concept and publicly stated that "she does not understand it and will not accept it". But later on Khaleda Zia "perceived it and conceded to it in the face of mass movement."

She said Khaleda is now seeking election under a caretaker government, but people clearly understand who lied to the nation, who defrauded the people about the concept of caretaker government.

Refuting Khaleda's comment that the present government did not fulfil its pre-election commitments, Hasina said her government fulfilled almost all commitments enshrined in the 21-point election manifesto of Awami League.

Referring to the rule of Khaleda, she said people do not want to go back to those days of nightmare, indecision, terrorism and corruption.

India

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partnerships with Varma, Stuart Vinny and Mohsin Mishra to guide the sidehome.

Dhawan put on 48 runs for the second wicket with Varma (19) and 46 for the third wicket with Stuart Vinny (29).

Dhawan faced 73 balls for his match-winning knock which included eleven boundaries. Earlier, electing to bat, Malaysia were bundled out for 143 in 44.1 overs with middle-order batsman Vignes hammering highest 43.

Mohsin Mishra and Nikhil Rathod tore the heart out of the Malaysia batting line taking three wickets each.

Dhawan was later adjudged man-of-the-match.

In today's matches India take on Oman at the number one ground in BKSP while Malaysia will meet UAE at the Jagannath Hall ground. At the BKSP number two Bangladesh play Kuwait while Nepal face Singapore at the Jahangirnagar University ground.

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Jamaat leader Motiur Rahman Nizami addressing the sit-in programme organised by the four-party alliance at Purana Paltan in the city yesterday.

Dipu surrenders

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a primary stage. "It is a sensational murder case and the accused killed the victim brutally. The case is not bailable," he mentioned.

"The accused will obstruct investigation if they are granted bail," he further said and prayed for rejection of their bail petition.

After hearing both the sides, the court rejected the bail petition and ordered sending the accused to jail. The three were taken to jail at about 2:45pm, court sources said.

According to the FIR, Taraj Uddin, leader of a cooperative society, was shot dead by a gang of more than 20 at Narda, Dkkhinkhan, in Uttara thana of the city on the night of February 8. On instruction from Dipu, some of the gang members stormed into the office of the society and indiscriminately fired on Taraj, 50, killing him on the spot.

The victim's brother Nurul Islam filed a murder case with Uttara thana, accusing 23 people including Dipu Chowdhury.

Eight persons were arrested so far in connection with the case. Two of them, identified as Borhanuddin and Aminul Haq, were arrested with a loaded shotgun while they were escaping in a taxicab after the killing.

Uttara police also filed a General Diary on Friday accusing "some influential persons" who allegedly compelled the complainant in Taraj Murder case to give an undertaking that Dipu was not present during the killing.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a meeting of Awami League Central Working Committee (ALWC) on Wednesday reportedly ordered arrest of Dipu Chowdhury.

Cop murder at Uttara

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Abdus Salam and injuring two other policemen. They also recovered one pistol with 143 bullets from their possession.

Following interrogation, Tejgaon police yesterday arrested three more people - Shahin, Delwar and Zakir from Tejgunipara slum and recovered a revolver from their possession.

Selim alias Selu is accused in 17 cases including murder. He was also accused in sensational Geshu murder case.

Selim is the cashier of "Seven Star" groups, an underworld gang

comprising some notorious criminals engaged in trafficking drugs and firearms through Zia International Airport.

Uttara police said that they were investigating the killing of police constable Abdus Salam.

The namaj-e-janaza for Abdus Salam was held at Rajarbagh Police Lines after Asr prayers yesterday. The body was sent to his village Kapashia for burial.

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim and Inspector General of Police Nurul Huda attended the janaza, among others.

Vaclav Havel's condition worsens

AP, Prague

Ailing Czech President Vaclav Havel's condition has worsened and he must remain in the hospital, his doctors said yesterday.

The president developed fever overnight and the function of his right lung had deteriorated, Havel's personal physician Ilija Kotik said.

"We had to change the treatment during the night, and it seems that the new antibiotics are effective," Kotik said.

He ruled out that Havel would be released from hospital today as originally planned.

Havel, 64, was forced to cut short a visit to the Middle East and fly home Feb. 12 with developing pneumonia. He was admitted to Prague's military hospital and diagnosed with impaired function of the right lung and an emerging inflammation.

DU hall raided, none arrested

DU CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday raided Dhaka University's Mohsin Hall looking for terrorists but failed to arrest any.

During the 30-minute raid that began at around 3:45pm, police searched several rooms and recovered a machete and the cover of a revolver from room 207, sources said.

Vice Chancellor Prof. AK Azad Chowdhury and some top DU officials were present during the raid.

Some notorious terrorists of the city including Jahangir, Titan and Topu had been residing at the hall since the last Eid vacation, sources added preferring anonymity.

Tension was prevailing at the hall as Shafiqur Rahman, the BCL president of the hall unit, who was also expelled from the university for his involvement in different criminal activities, came back to the hall Saturday early morning.

Sources said Shafiq threatened some activists of his rival group, who are now dominating the hall.

Bangabandhu Murder Case

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Meanwhile, Shahida Mohiuddin, wife of Lt Col (ret) Mohiuddin Ahmed (Artillery), a convict acquitted by the two-judge bench, filed a writ petition with the High Court saying that the trial itself cannot take place as the FIR of the case was filed when the Indemnity Ordinance was in force.

The writ petition was filed with the bench comprising Justice Shah Abu Naim Mominur Rahman and Khademul Islam Chowdhury. Moving it the counsel for Lt Col Mohiuddin, Adv Khan Saifur Rahman, pointed out that the FIR was filed with Dhanmondi thana on Oct 2, 1996, but the Indemnity Ordinance was repealed on Dec 14, 1996.

The court fixed today (Monday) for hearing and directed the Attorney General to appear.

Meanwhile, the prosecution that continued reading of the paper book on judgement in the third-judge bench, which took up the hearing on the split verdict on February 12, said six convicts - Capt Kismat Hashem, Maj Ahmed Sharful Hasan, Capt Nazmul Hasan Ansar, Risalder Moselemuddin, Lt Col Mohiuddin Ahmed (Artillery) and Capt Abdul Majed - were present in the night parade and heard the briefing there.

Taking accounts of the witnesses Special Public Prosecutor Adv Serajul Huq said artillery cannons were brought near the Bangabandhu residence and commander of the Papa Battery was Lt Col Mohiuddin Ahmed.

So, without the conviction of the commander artillery cannons could not be brought.

The hearings will resume at 10:30 am today.

Chetia jailed

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January 5, 1998 in this connection. Sub-inspector Farid Ahmed, the investigation officer of the case, submitted a charge sheet against the three on March 12, 1998.

Both prosecution and defence sides completed hearing arguments in the case on January 29 this year. The court recorded statements of 8 out of 10 prosecution witnesses.

A second case filed against the three on charge of possessing a satellite telephone set is now pending with the First Assistant Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka.

Assistant PP Jahangir Hossain Selim appeared for the state while Advocate Mohammad Abdul Hasib Miah for the accused.

Meanwhile, Anup Chetia, Babul Sharma and Laxmi Prasad Goswami have been serving a six-year rigorous imprisonment each in two cases one for possessing forged passports and the other for illegal stay in Bangladesh, keeping secret their identity.

When contacted, Anup Chetia said he would file an appeal with the higher court against the verdict.

Two other accused did not pass any comment on the verdict.

Chickenpox spreading fast in city

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One may use acetaminophen (e.g., Paracetamol) for fever. If the dosage is in question, consult doctor and do not use aspirin (salicylic acid).

How to prevent spread

Exclude infected person from school at least for five days after the first vesicles appear. Practise good hand washing. The virus is spread through direct contact with the fluid in the blisters as well as infected secretions from nose and mouth.

Cover mouth when coughing and dispose of tissue promptly. Wash bed linens and recently worn clothes in hot, soapy water. Avoid exposing pregnant women, newborns and the elderly persons.

A person who has had chickenpox can develop zoster (shingles) years later. Shingles causes a painful skin rash.

Who should get vaccine?

Children between 12 and 18 months of age should be vaccinated. Most children in this age group should have one dose of chickenpox vac-

cine. (Available with the public health department of the government under the extended programme of immunisation (EPI).)

All children who have not had chickenpox nor received chickenpox vaccine should be vaccinated before their 13th birthday. Vaccine may be given any time between 19 months and 12 years.

Those aged 13 or more who have not had chickenpox or got the vaccine should get two doses of the vaccine 4 to 8 weeks apart.

About the vaccine. Chickenpox vaccine is the best way to prevent the disease. About 70-90 per cent of people who get the vaccine are protected from chickenpox infection.

If, however, vaccinated children do get chickenpox, it is usually very mild.

They have fewer spots, lower fever and recover more quickly.

Vaccinated children who get this milder form of chickenpox can still spread the disease to others who are not protected. The vaccine may be

given at the same time as other vaccines.

Most doctors recommend chickenpox vaccine for 'almost all children. But there are some cautions.

What are the risks from vaccine?

As with any medicine, there are very small risks. However, almost all people who use the vaccine have no problems. It has not been shown to cause any serious problems.

The disease is 'endemic' but sometimes becomes epidemic during the late winter and spring.

Incubation period.

Incubation period is 14 to 17 days. Chickenpox has no cure. Once infection occurs, the disease must run its course. However, various kinds of treatment can help patients feel more comfortable while they are recovering. For itchy skin eruptions, several therapies such as calamine lotion can help.

Report 'baseless'

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planting and service sectors. About allegations of job-hopping and running businesses without valid permits as reported in the news from Kuala Lumpur, the officials in Dhaka said that Bangladeshis were working under legal contracts.

They referred to an initiative taken by the Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina three years back when the Malaysian authorities granted legal status to many Bangladeshis working in that country without valid papers.

"But, now we're not aware of the presence of any undocumented Bangladeshi workers in Malaysia," claimed an official.

Allegations were brought against an unspecified number of Bangladeshis of forging documents and marrying Malay Muslim women in order to live in Malaysia.

Officials in Dhaka brushed aside the allegation of 'illegal stay' but acknowledged that some Bangladeshis did marry Malay women in the past. However, those marriages took place through

mutual understanding and Bangladesh government has no record of their numbers, the officials added.

In an earlier report, Malaysian Immigration Enforcement Director Nasir Ahmed was quoted as saying, "Last year, the immigration department repatriated 97,281 people, mostly Indonesians, and this year we are targeting 100,000 for deportation."

It may be mentioned that about one lakh 'undocumented' Bangladeshis were affected by a crackdown on foreign workers in 1998.

At that time, Malaysia had spent four million US dollars to set up 16 special squads in order to detect 'overstaying and undocumented foreign workers'. In the process, thousands of job vacancies were created for unemployed Malaysians against the backdrop of an Asian currency crisis.

Some three million Bangladeshi wage earners are working mainly in the countries of the Middle East, Gulf and Southeast Asia. They remit around Tk 9,000 crore a year.

Gold, Indian currency seized in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

One hundred and fifty tolas of gold worth Tk 9,15,000 and Indian currency equivalent to Tk 3,52,000 were seized by police from Jhondanga Bazar in sadar upazila early Saturday morning.

Four people allegedly carrying the gold and cash were arrested. The arrested are Akbar Ali alias Bulbul son of Shawkat Ali of Sonabaria village, Kamrul Islam S/o Habibur Rahman and Ziad Ali S/o Noor Ali of village Madra under Kalaroa upazila and Golam Rahman S/o Kadam Ali of Gobinda Katri Sadar upazila.

Police said, acting on a secret information a team led by ASI Habibur Rahman rounded up the smugglers when they reached Jhondanga Bazar from Dhaka by a night coach. The team recovered 10 Swiss made and 5 England made gold bars and the aforesaid Indian currency from their possession.

Two cases were filed with Satkhira PS.

Efforts underway to free abducted foreigners: Nasim

BSS, Dhaka

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim yesterday said that efforts are underway to rescue the three foreigners abducted in the CHT through peaceful means as Denmark and Britain have called for the rescue of their nationals unhurt.

"We too want them to return unhurt and are carrying out efforts towards that end," he said as Danish Ambassador in Dhaka Finn Thilsted and British Charge d'Affaires Stephen Turner called on him at his office here.

The minister said suspected anti-peace accord elements kidnapped the two Danish and a British consultants though nobody has, claimed the responsibility so far.

The envoys urged the minister to settle the issue without any confrontation using the good office of the tribal leadership.

Census in Assam

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soon unless urgent steps are taken," Samujjal Bhattacharyya, AASU advisor said.

However, census officials, AASU they could not ignore the migrant community in Assam.

"Census enumerators are only required to list the number of people living in Assam. Except foreigners, with a diplomatic status, we are supposed to list everyone," said NC Sen, deputy director of the census in Assam.

JRC team

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navigability of the Surma and stop the severe erosion in the Banks of the Kushiara.

In several JRC meetings in the past, it was noted that the Surma and the Kushiara were sharing the total discharge of the Borak during the monsoon (Surma 80% and Kushiara 20%) causing severe bank erosion in all concave banks from Amolshid to Gazutaka affecting both countries.

Police officer's wife

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Shahin had gone out with his girl friend.

Shahin did not talk to journalists who went to his 2, Kathalbagan residence following his wife's death. His relatives however said that Parveen was suffering from mental imbalance for more than eight years.

Dhanmondi police, CID and SB visited the house and collected evidence from the spot. Police also seized the pistol that the housewife killed herself with.

Hospital sources said that the bullet went through the middle of the chest and hit the backbone.

Parveen's brother Riad filed an Unnatural Death case with the Dhanmondi police station.

In another incident, a young lady was beaten to death allegedly by her husband in the city's Kallyanpur.

Shiuly, 18, a garment worker was admitted to the DMCH with multiple injuries in her head. She died there at about 3:15am yesterday.

The body of the victim was sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Tin Bigha corridor

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unfettered movement would be ensured soon.

The two sides discussed wide ranging issues including relaxation of visa regime, border-related matters and cross-border terrorism.

The Bangladesh side asked India to take all necessary measures to nab Bangabandhu's killer Risalder Moselemuddin, who reportedly had taken shelter in India, Haque said.

The two countries agreed in principle to relax the existing visa system with a view to making travel between India and Bangladesh easier, meeting sources said.

To begin with, the two sides concurred to have a visa-free regime for diplomatic passport holders, and also permit unrestricted entry valid up to one year for businessmen, students and research scholars.

The free-travel-related recommendations made by JWG and steps suggested by it to facilitate travel between the two countries for sight-seeing, medical treatment, studies and business trade, would come into effect after these were ratified by the respective governments.

CHT: 'Note' received

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any ransom. They have contacted the local leaders through the Headman, Karbari and UP chairman who are trying to contact the kidnapers to rescue the hostages unharmed.

About 600 troops from the Army's counter insurgency units split in 20 patrols have joined BDR and armed police groups, backed by Air Force helicopters, to search for the hostages and the kidnapers at Kalapahar in Betchhari at the border between Khagrachhari and Rangamati districts.

"We have sealed all entry and exit points to and from the area, a 35 km arc of dense forest in the hills and bordering Kaptai lake", an official said.

He said further the abductors would not be able to escape and would surrender. But the diplomats and families of the hostages are worried about them, urging restraint and a negotiated end to the problem.

Nikkelsen has a Filipino wife and two children who live in Dhaka. They came to Bangladesh on January 26 this year.

None has so far claimed responsibility for the abduction.

The area is infested with gangs of kidnapers. Besides, former Shantibahini insurgents and a breakaway militant faction are involved in bitter rivalry for domination in the area.

The militants broke away with the insurgents when they laid down their arms under the peace accord signed on December 2, 1997.

Both the militants and Jana Sanghati Samity, political wing of the former Shantibahini have denied any link with the abduction but blamed each other for the incident.

The government is now planning to form a task force to coordinate the search and rescue operation.

The cabinet is likely to take up the issue today at its meeting to review the overall law and order in the CHT since the peace accord was signed.

So far 68 people were killed in factional fights between Jana Sanghati Samity and the breakaway faction who formed United Peoples' Democratic Front.

Our Staff Correspondent in Chittagong adds: A high level meeting of the administration was held at Rangamati yesterday noon with Divisional Commissioner Moidul Islam in chair and attended by local officials and tribal leaders.

The meeting decided to conduct the rescue operation on the basis of negotiations, instead of using force. The officials later visited the spot from where the foreigners were kidnapped. They met a number of local leaders and urged them to help release of the hostages.

PSC for Block 22

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survey analysis, UMC detected some oil prospects in an area called Kasalong and sought approval from Petrobangla to start drilling an exploration well there.

Despite comparative high risk of striking any oil or gas reserves there and the fact that, even if UMC discovered an oil field it would have to install over 180 km of pipeline to take the oil for consumption, Petrobangla had approved the work programme last year.

But prior to that, UMC had already been suffering from severe financial crisis due to declining global oil price. At this stage, another oil company called Ocean Energy purchased UMC. However, it still did not fully resolve its financial condition.

As a result, UMC started looking for an investment partner to undertake its work programme, sources said. In the end, its initial operation period expired without actually undertaking any drilling programme.

When UMC applied for the PSC extension late last year, Petrobangla initially thought of not extending it and leaving Block 22 open for other oil companies in the future.

Petrobangla officials also said that the block would rather be kept away from exploration activities for another five years.

But UMC had argued that it had

already invested some 15 million dollars in Block 22, a proof that the company had actually been sincere about working there. The company further argued that since it was confident about undertaking a work programme, Petrobangla should give it a one-year extension rather than letting no company work there for at least another five years.

Besides, UMC referred to the cases of Occidental and Okland-Tulow.

Opposition

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completely failed to run the country. So it has no moral right to stay in power any more.

He said the opposition will observe a countrywide 'protest day' today in protest against prevention of their activists by ruling partmen at different points outside the city from joining yesterday's sit-in programme.

The alliance will bring out black flag processions on Feb 22 and torch processions on February 24 across the country.

Replying to a query about the reported resignation move by opposition MPs, Bhuiyan said they would resign in time.

Secretaries general of the opposition parties and members of the CLC were present at the briefing.

Sit-in around Secretariat staged peacefully

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four are also part of that conspiracy." Barbed