

Dengue vector surveillance, control programme needed

Speakers at dissemination workshop say

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday strongly recommended that a dengue vector surveillance programme be immediately started and that the City Corporation form a technical committee in Dengue vector control to advise about dengue fever control and its prevention.

They also suggested that mid-term and long term strategies be taken for emergency response against Aedes mosquito control and its eradication.

The recommendations came in view of a report on 'Aedes Larval Survey in Dhaka' presented at a dissemination workshop on 'Aedes Larvae Survey in Dhaka City' held at the Nagar Bhaban. The report carried out in August - October last year jointly by Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and the Centre for Health and Population Research (ICDDR),

DCC Mayor Mohammad Hanif,

Director of ICDDR Dr David Sack, Chief Executive Officer of DCC, K M Nurul Huda were present on the occasion.

The report revealed that both Aedes aegypti and Aedes albopictus, proven carriers of dengue viral infection, were found in all but five wards of the DCC area. The survey showed that the density of Aedes aegypti was much higher than that of Aedes albopictus.

It said that motor tyres have the highest positive rate (28.3 pc) of larvae or egg and 45 wards out of total 90 had density of Aedes mosquito more than the World Health Organisation's designated value of 20 (Bureau Index).

The density of Aedes larvae was high in particular types of jars as cemented tanks, gallon jars, clay pot, clay pitcher and jars, and buckets and drums. These types of containers account for 90 per cent of all the larvae found inside and outside of houses.

The survey also showed that about 50 pc of the city population

don't even not know that Aedes Aegypti breed in such containers.

A total of 9,462 houses, with average of 100 houses per ward, were investigated to observe and record larvae breeding. A total of 40,704 wet containers were collected and checked in laboratory.

The results indicate that a high Aedes density pose a serious threat to public health and more resources should be allocated to areas with high density of Aedes mosquito.

According to another study also presented at the workshop, out of 3000 species of mosquitoes in the world, 113 types exist in Bangladesh. All four types of vector, sources of deadly diseases like filaria, malaria, dengue and dengue haemorrhagic fever and Japanese Encephalitis exist in Dhaka city.

The study also showed that unplanned urbanisation, blocked surface drains, unplanned filling of low lands, embankment around the city cemented tanks are some of the factor affecting mosquito prevalence in the city.



Police intercepted a procession of the All Party Students Unity (APSU) at Dhanmondi Road no 27 yesterday. APSU activists were on their way to lay siege to the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban to press home their demand for resignation of the government.

PM: Armed forces

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army, navy and air force joined the darbar.

Chief of Army Staff Lt General Harunur Rashid, Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral Abu Taher and Chief of Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Jamal Uddin Ahmed were present at the dais with the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister praised the members of the three forces for their contribution to the nation. She mentioned their services during natural disasters like the devastating flood of 1998 and the flash flood in 2000.

For the modernisation of the army, navy and air force, the government has procured necessary military equipment and took steps for increasing educational and training facilities for them, said Hasina.

The government is going to establish a brigade at the strategically important Sylhet, collecting more military hardware for the three forces, she said adding that infrastructural facilities are also being increased for the army, navy and air force.

She said induction of female

members in the armed forces is an epoch-making decision of the government which, she said, would be followed by other countries as a step for women's development.

The Prime Minister said the role of the army in the UN peacekeeping missions was widely praised. Now Bangladesh armed forces are considered as a dependable force for maintaining world peace, she added.

She also praised their role in maintaining peace in Chittagong Hill Tracts and for their contribution to getting three foreigners released from the captivity of some tribal terrorists.

Later, the Prime Minister replied to various questions from the soldiers of army, navy and air force.

BSS adds: The Prime Minister said that the general elections would be held within the stipulated period this year.

She expressed her confidence that if the members of the armed forces are put to election duty, they would perform their responsibility and help maintain the current forward march of democracy in the country.

BNP to formally recognise

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ers not to join parliament session since the Speaker has noting to do with allocation of election symbol.

The BNP leader said the JP leaders and activists are now frustrated with Ershad due to his faltering policy and acts of betrayal. "Ershad has already been thrown in the garbage and will now be ejected from politics for good," he added.

Another senior BNP leader claimed that Nazim Rahman Manzur had command over most of the district committees of JP, and that different units of the party had already informed the BNP that they would not leave the alliance.

BNP sources said the party has taken up a plan to marginalise Ershad's clout by roping in some MPs from his party to BNP. They said several JP MPs have already met Khaleda Zia and other senior BNP leaders expressing their willingness to desert Ershad.

They said BNP has decided to take six JP MPs in its fold in the first phase.

They said although 20 MPs have joined the parliament session yesterday, many of them would not participate in the "division vote" if it

takes place.

BNP leaders said local units of the party have been instructed to take appropriate measures to marginalise Ershad's clout in each constituencies, districts and thanas.

They feel that Ershad's hobnobbing with the Awami League government may not affect the alliance or the BNP; instead it would reduce his political standing.

Laltu sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

General Secretary of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Shahabuddin Laltu was sent to the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday with one-month detention.

The plainclothes police arrested him under section 54 of the CrPC from Bijaynagar area in the city on Wednesday evening on suspicion that he might be involved in terrorist activities during the hartal called by the opposition parties.

Detective Branch (DB) police produced him before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka yesterday at about 4 pm with a prayer for one-month detention.

DB police also prayed that he be shown arrested in two separate cases including a case under Public Safety Act (PSA).

The court granted prayers for 'shown arrest' in two separate cases and sent him to jail.

Bangladeshi

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letter to his BSF counterpart in Nadia to hand over the body of Julu.

Violation of border and atrocity of Indian BSF took place at a time when leaders of border forces of the two countries are meeting in New Delhi in quest of border peace.

Bill on vested property

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330 days since the Act came to effect.

Two more bills introduced in the House provide for upgrading the Sylhet and Barisal municipalities into city corporations. The two districts have been upgraded to the rank of divisions.

All the nine bills were sent to the parliamentary standing committees on respective ministries for scrutiny.

The bill on the vested property provides that some listed property now vested on the government would be returned to the original owners or their Bangladeshi successors or the successors-in-interest of the original owners or their successors.

The bill, however, proposes that the occupant of vested property, be it the government or someone authorised by the government, would be allowed to remove any structure or movable assets from the vested land. In case of the government having acquired a vested property, its owner would be duly compensated.

According to the bill, the government would publish a district-wise list of the vested property selected for return to deserving persons within 180 days from the day the proposed law comes to force. Besides, public announcements would also be made through radio, television and other media asking the deserving persons to collect the list of vested property from the offices of the Deputy Commissioners.

An owner of vested property must submit his/her claim supported by documents to the tribunal in 90 days from the publication of the list, said the bill proposing that the tribunal must settle a claim within a maximum of 180 days.

Six other bills are Bangladesh Telecommunications Act, 2001 that seeks to update two age-old laws in this sector, Bangladesh Handicapped Welfare Act, 2001, Bangladesh Land Port Authority Act, 2001, the Dhaka Transportation Coordination Board Act, 2001 and Brick Kiln (Control) (Amendment) Act, 2001.

Plight of pilgrims

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agency in Makka, Madina, Meena and Arafat non-cooperated and misbehaved with them.

Many others alleged that molesters compelled them to stay in high-rise buildings with poor facilities in violation of commitments of the travel agencies.

"I along with five others had to manage accommodation, food and transport as the travel agency stopped providing these facilities after several days," said a government official who performed Hajj under the supervision of North-South Travel Agent. "Even our moalem asked us to vacate the house in which we were residing and said the travel agency did not give him the required money."

Abdul Kader, who was supposed return on Saturday, angrily said he could not come back that day due to mismanagement and corrupt practices by the travel agency.

Two hajis were seen discussing with their family members why and how they had to face these sufferings. "I was told by my travel agency that every six persons would be allotted one room but 12 persons had to stay in each room and these

was only one bathroom for four such rooms," one of the said.

Lack of proper management at Jeddah Airport added to sufferings of the pilgrims. Many of them remained stranded at the airport for three to seven days just because of mismanagement.

A number of hajis alleged that the airport authorities rescheduled their flights at least twice without any genuine ground.

They further alleged that several thousand Bangladeshi hajis had to stay in open place at Jeddah airport even during heavy rains. The authorities did not also arrange food for them. Hundreds were still staying there on their way home.

"I booked my ticket for Sunday but the authorities later cancelled it without any reasonable explanation," alleged Syed Hossain Ali from Patuakhali. "I stayed at the airport for three days only having dried rice and molasses."

Meanwhile, allegations of similar irregularities by travel agencies during Hajj were also reported in the past several years but there has been no improvement in the situation.

Four die

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Meanwhile, police in a move to tackle the situation arrested six persons in connection with selling the intoxicant and recovered 89 bottles of rectified spirits, 21 bottles of fermented liquor and 433 bottles of phenidyl from different places of Bogra and Rajshahi on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The arrested suspects are Bablu, Santosh, Shahjahan, Alam and Shamsul Huq from Bogra and Ashrafuzzaman Bipul from Rajshahi.

2 more generals

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pped to be appointed as the ambassador to Uzbekistan. Gen Rahman is a former Adjutant General and Area Commander of Chittagong and was Director General of BDR till gong on LPR.

With their appointment, the number of envoys from the armed forces will be six.

However, there are two other envoys, who served the army and were later inducted in the foreign services. They are Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury, Ambassador to Vietnam and Ashrafuddin, High Commissioner to Sri Lanka.

The other serving Major General is Anwar Hossain, who is now the ambassador to Morocco. Maj Gen (Rtd) Amin Ahmed Chowdhury, who went on LPR on January 1 this year while serving as the envoy to Oman, has been retained in that post on contract.

The number of ambassadors and diplomats in overseas missions from the armed forces is now the highest in last several years, sources said

BTTB

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ment with BUET," a high official of BTTB said seeking anonymity.

Once an agreement is reached with BUET or a company, it will take four to five weeks to start preparation of bills," he said.

Talking to this correspondent a subscriber said he went to a revenue office of BTTB to collect one month's manually prepared bill to avoid payment of two-three months' bills at a time. But he was denied. "BTTB has kept telephone subscribers virtually hostage as it is the sole telephone service provider and we can not say anything in absence of a strong consumer society in the country," he regretted.

Experts said if BTTB itself starts preparation of bills, it will need installation of sophisticated machinery and recruitment of manpower. But bills thus prepared will create confusion among subscribers as BTTB has a very low credibility as regards preparation of bills correctly, they said.

"This will open an opportunity for a section of unscrupulous employees of BTTB for doing irregularities in preparation of bills", one of the experts said.

Raushan leads pro-Ershad lawmakers

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bership of parliament stands valid. The Speaker noted that he could not give any view as the matter was still under trail at the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

"At this stage, I cannot say that his (Ershad's) membership is not there... We're waiting for the court verdict."

Given the floor to speak on the issue, Secretary General of the other faction of the JP Anwar Hossain Manju referred to an earlier High Court verdict nullifying Ershad's membership of parliament and declaring his seat vacant.

Earlier, Raushan sought a ruling from the Speaker enabling the Ershad-led JP faction to fetch plough. She reminded the Speaker of the June 23, 1996 meeting of the JP Parliament, JP, which had unanimously elected Ershad as its leader.

But, she regretted that when they met the Speaker on March 27 last, "The Speaker informed us that the Jatiya Sangsad has no records of the JPPP meeting electing Ershad as its leader."

"On March 27 last, we held a meeting of our parliamentary party and reaffirmed our loyalty to Ershad as our leader. So, I earnestly request you (Speaker) to give a ruling allowing us to have plough as our election symbol."

Output of IT sector not upto the mark, says minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Planning Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir yesterday emphasised the need for immediate increase of data transcription rate in Bangladesh.

While inaugurating the Institute of Global Technology (IGT), the minister said both government and private initiatives are needed to increase the data transmission speed to cope with the competitors India and Singapore.

In his speech as chief guest, the minister also said the output of IT sector is not up to the mark, compared with the government investment.

Three persons of the country were honoured for their contribution in the various fields of IT sector at the ceremony on the campus of the institute at Banani in the city.

Prof. Jamilur Reza Chowdhury was honoured for his contribution to formulating the IT policy of the government, Dr Mohammad Kaikobad for human resources development in IT and Dr Zafar Iqbal for popularising the IT in the

country.

The minister also said the government does not have any intention to interfere in the IT sector and IT educational institutions. Said the minister: "The government will play a supportive role in the accreditation and all other programmes of the training institutions."

He also said, "Still we have lack of efficient IT professionals, and more institutions have to come forward to produce programmes of international standard to meet both local and international demands."

"There will be no difference between the developed and the third world countries in the next 20 years due to massive changes in the data transcription sector."

Forrest E Cookson, chairman of American Chamber of Commerce, said the most important thing in the IT industry is education and training.

"There must not be any political interference in the training institutions and he stressed the need for accreditation of the institutions in order to maintain reputation and to earn appreciation in the global

market," said Cookson.

Presiding over the ceremony, Chairman of IGT Dr Salahuddin Ahmed said it is a different training centre compared to others "as the curriculum of the IGT has been formulated by the local IT experts from BUET, Dhaka University and some reputed private universities, and by the professors from Ireland, USA and India."

He informed that IGT is the only authorised Microsoft Office User Specialist (MOUS) in the country, and it is the only centre providing language courses to make its students ready to face the global challenges.

IGT, a local IT training and research firm, is offering various short and long courses including 18-month long Foundation Diploma equivalent to a four-year American degree.

He also said the institution would offer convenient packages for the poor and meritorious students.

The IGT also offered IT-oriented course for the journalists free of charge.

White panel bags 4 seats

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election, the Blue Panel got five seats and the White Panel got one.

The Blue Panel also bagged the lone seat in Finance Committee.

Prof Rafiqullah Khan, Joint Convener of the Blue Panel termed the result a big blow for his panel and said this was due to internal conflict.

White Panel candidate Prof. AFM Yusuf Haider was elected from the Provost Category with 540 votes. His Blue Panel rival Prof Sultana Shafi got 350 votes.

From Professor Category, Md. Asaduzzaman of White Panel was elected with 480 votes, defeating Dr Mezbah Uddin Ahmed of Blue Panel, who got 368 votes.

From Assistant Professor Category, White Panel candidate M Mohabbat Ali got 498 votes while his Blue Panel rival Dr Amran Kabir Chowdhury bagged 385 votes.

Blue Panel candidate Prof Kazi Shahidullah was elected from the Dean Category. He got 494 votes while his White Panel rival Syed Abul Kalam Azad got 467 votes.

Sharif Ullah Bhuiyan of the same panel was elected from the Associate Professor Category with 465 votes. His rival M Mahbubur Rahman got 373 votes.

M Hasanuzzan of White panel was elected from the Lecturer Category. He got 557 votes against Blue Panel candidate M Moshir Rahman's 374.

The five persons elected to the

Academic Council from the Blue Panel are Dr M Samad (459 votes), Dr Md Akhtaruzzan (490 votes), Dr M Abdul Malek (469 votes), Dr AFM Abdul Moin (517 votes) and ASM Maksud Kamal (446 votes). Tahmina Akhter of White Panel was elected to the Council with 468 votes.

In the Finance Committee, Dr SM Mahfuzur Rahman of Blue Panel defeated White Panel candidate Dr Anwar Hossain. Rahman got 448 votes and Hossain got 406 votes.

The left-leaning Pink Panel did not get any seat.

M. Hasanuzzan of White Panel got the highest votes of 557 while Dr Al Mahbub Uddin Ahmed of Pink Panel got the lowest votes - 52.

Out of 1074 votes, 974 were cast. The election was conducted by DU Treasurer Prof. Abul Hashem as election commissioner.

Two BCP

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As a 'fort' of armed cadres of BCP Shailen group. We will storm into the village anytime keeping in view safety of villagers in case of confrontation with the outlaws, OC Zakir Hossain said.

The murders are sequel to BCP's internal feud over capturing leadership of Rangpur union of Dumuria upazila where anti-Shailen group has stronghold. OC said. Preparations have been taken for combing operation at the village, he added.

Their bodies were probably dumped somewhere at Batherba village where the outlaws fought at least twice on March 26 night, Rangpur UP chairman said.

The UP chairman escaped to Khulna town fearing attempt on his life for opposing the latest onslaught of outlaws.

Ramesh and Hafiz were shot dead when they were pasting poster in Batherba village on the occasion of convention of Krishak Sangram Samity due to be held on April 7.

They were attacked when they entered the house of one Abed Sana for drinking water. Three others managed to escape, police said.

Local AL and BNP leaders said some unions of Dumuria upazila have turned into 'impregnable fort' of outlaws where police fear to get in for normal duty.

Milon murder

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by the DB police.

DB police produced Sumon before the CMM's court, Dhaka yesterday with a prayer for 'shown arrest' in the Murgi Milon Murder Case. Police also prayed for seven days' remand for interrogation of Sumon.

After hearing both the sides, the court granted him (Sumon) three days' remand after showing him arrest in the murder of Murgi Milon.

to the members to play their due role in consolidating democracy and achieving socio-economic development.

"It is our constitutional responsibility to address issues related to people's aspiration and problems, and solve those through discussion by attending the parliament session regularly," Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury said in his welcome address.

Three new MPs - Shawkt Momen Shahjahan, BM Nazrul Islam and Prof. MA Kaderi who won by-elections to Tangail-8, Satkhira-1 and Pabna-5 JS seats respectively also experienced their first day of session yesterday.

After the welcome address, the Speaker announced a five-member panel to run the session in absence of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker. The panel members are: A B M Abul Kashem, Advocate Fazle Rabbi, Ramesh Chandra Sen, Farida Rouf Asha and Rustum Ali Farazi.

The Jatiya Sangsad also adopted an obituary reference for five noted personalities including one MP who died recently.

The persons are: Former parliament member Mohammad Shahidullah Khan, former minister MA Munim, former minister Abu Zafar Mohammad Obaidullah,

former deputy speaker of National Assembly Haji ATM Abdul Matin and joint secretary of parliament secretariat Kazi Shamsuzzaman.

Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury moved the obituary reference and the House adopted it unanimously.

The House was adjourned till 10 am on Monday next.

Bushra murder

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without Rezzak Khan. The defence lawyers, however, were ready for hearing. The court then fixed May 3 for next hearing.

Mosammat Laila Islam, the complainant of the case, submitted a naraji petition on January 3 as another accused Mosammat Runu Kader, wife of M A Kader, was dropped from the charge sheet by three investigation officers.

Accused M A Kader, Kaniz Fatema Hena, Sheikh Shawkat Ahmed Ruhul, and Sufia Begum were produced in the court while Sheikh Kabir Ahmed remained absconding.

Rushdania Bushra alias Phool, 18, a college student and daughter of a retired police officer, was raped and murdered at their Hazipara residence in the city's Rampura area on the night of July 1 last year.

Over 20 billion yen

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co-financed with Sumitomo Bank, with JBIC taking a 60 per cent portion of the total, or 4.2 billion yen.

A JBIC announcement here said the proceeds of this buyer's credit would be used to purchase equipment from Japan for the construction of a Di-Ammonium Phosphate fertilizer complex implemented by Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC).

The financing is sub-loaned to the project executor via the government of Bangladesh. The Japanese exporters are Toyo Engineering Corp and Mitsui and Co Ltd.

The JBIC Governor also signed yesterday ODA loan agreements amounting to 13,813 million yen (13.81 billion) to finance the Greater Faridpur Rural Infrastructure Development Project, Rural Electrification Project (Phase V-B) and Rupsha Construction Project in Bangladesh.

The 8,300-million yen loan for the Rupsha Bridge Construction Project will finance civil works and procurement of materials, equipment and services for constructing a bridge over the Rupsha river flowing through Khulna City.

It says the 4,055-million yen loan for the greater Faridpur Rural Infrastructure Development Project will provide funds for civil works,

procurement of equipment and the NGO activities for the training of local officials to develop rural infrastructure, including main rural roads, village markets and rural administrative facilities.

Another 1,460 million yen loan for the Rural Electrification Project (Phase V-B) will finance civil works and procurement of materials, equipment and services to establish power distribution networks, bringing electrification to 57,000 households.

JEC meeting

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defence portfolio after Georges Fernandes resigned over the kick-back scam in defence deals, which followed an expose by an internet portal.

The last meeting of the JEC, led by the foreign ministers of the two South Asian neighbours, was held back in 1999.

The postponed meeting was to discuss several key bilateral issues such as tariff concessions and transhipment.

Meanwhile, a five-day Dhaka-Delhi border conference began in the Indian capital on March 28.

The agenda includes implementation of 1974 Mujib-Indira agreement, exchange of enclaves, illegal occupation of lands, cross-border smuggling and other related issues.

Yet another split in JP

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According to the press statement, Shahjahan has been expelled for his "unconstitutional" appointment as the acting secretary-general, while Raushan and Kader for their attempt to damage the four-party alliance and tarnish the image of the party. They were also accused of striking a deal with the government and going back to the parliament in violation of a JP presidium decision. Twenty MPs led by Raushan Ershad joined the parliament session yesterday. With the Matin-Manzur group, number of Jatiya Party factions rose to three. Previously, when Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Manju took the government's side, Ershad ousted him from the party. Soon afterwards, Manju along with Mizan Chowdhury formed a faction of JP. All these three factions claim that they are the mainstream JP and have, therefore, the sole right to the party's election symbol, "plough". Regarding appointment of an acting chairman without ousting Ershad, Manzur told The Daily Star that "as per the party's constitution, Ershad has already lost the primary membership of the party due to

moral turpitude (following the court verdict on Janata Tower corruption case). That is why we no longer need to ouster him."

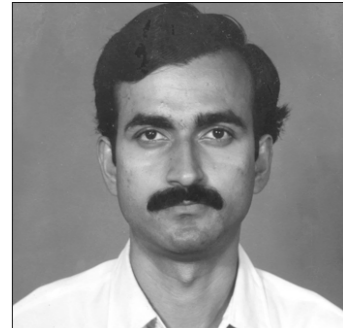
"I don't need to comment on Ershad. He has become a dead horse politically. He should now beg pardon from the nation and retire from politics."

Manzur vehemently ruled out the possibility of patching up with Ershad.

"There is no possibility of shaking hands with Ershad in the future. I am Nazim Rahman and once I leave a place, I don't go back."

Kader, meanwhile, questioned Manzur's authority.

He claimed that all JP MPs and most prominent members were with Ershad.



Nasir Uddin Tutu

Softened

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last day of an ultimatum to the government is seen very crucial.

If the latest political developments are anything to go by, the difference between the AL and BNP on timings for the government to quit has now reduced to 10 days from 18. The prime minister's earlier offer to relinquish power after 17 April against the opposition's March 30 deadline.

The opposition leader's suggestion for dissolution of the parliament in the first week of April would now enable the prime minister to go by her original plan to quit after celebrating the Mujibnagar Day on April 17. Hasina would be able to continue in office until April 22 as the Constitution permits a 15 days for the incumbent to hand over power to a caretaker government.

Commenting on the prevailing political situation, an influential minister told The Daily Star that positive undercurrents are there to thrash out an amicable solution to the existing crisis despite a hardened public posture by both political camps.

Another minister said he is still hopeful of an early election, which is equally important for both sides to avoid voting in the rainy season that may result in low turnout of voters.

Meanwhile, the BNP-led opposition alliance still prefers going ahead with the agitation programmes apparently to keep up the morale of the activists unless and until a solution is at hand.

Doctor crushed under wheels

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A doctor was killed in a road accident near Motijheel thana yesterday.

The victim was identified as Nasir Uddin Tutu, 30, a homoeopath, who was a resident of Bara Maghbazar in the city.

A minibus bearing the number Dhaka Metro Ja-5864 crushed Nasir while he was crossing the road at about 1:00 p.m. He was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he died shortly afterwards.

He married last year and was father of a seven-month old baby.

Foil AL bid

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He said BNP will get 200 seats and other components of the four-party alliance 50 seats in the election.

Saifur Rahman, who is MP from Moulvibazar Sadar constituency, criticised the AL Government and said its Finance Minister SAMS Kibria has 'destroyed' the stock market. Though the government claims that it has made the country self-sufficient in food, the domestic market is full of foreign rice.