

BNP memorandum

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beginning on June 6 to enact the proposed law.

Briefing newsmen later, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said they have also requested the President not to assent to the 'anti-people law'.

The proposed law will also provide VVIP facilities to Sheikh Hasina and her family members even after her resignation. This is contrary to the concept of caretaker government and mislead the voters during the coming election, they told the President.

During the nearly one and a half hours' meeting from 7:45pm, the BNP leaders also complained to the President that lakhs of tones of wheat and money were being allotted to ruling party lawmakers and leaders before the government's resignation.

This will influence the election they said and sought the President's intervention to stop it, Bhuiyan said.

On the on-going drive to recover illegal arms and arrest criminals, they told the President that such a drive should be launched by the caretaker government to ensure its neutrality.

Opposition leaders and activists are being harassed now under the drive, launched despite objection from the Election Commission and the police administration, they claimed and requested the President to advise the government to stop it.

Other members of the delegation were Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, M Saifur Rahman, Khandaker Delwar

Global Forum confce

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Mr Korthals in his speech welcomed the delegates and focussed on three points to expand various aspects of the judicial system which plays a crucial role in fighting corruption.

The first step is to have an impartial and effective legal machinery in place. The second step is to give more importance to the role of public prosecutor. Because of the complex nature of offences involved, the office of Special Public Prosecutor should be introduced for these, he suggested.

The third element is the position of judiciary itself. The judicial system must be allowed to function impartially and should get enough resources to be really effective, he added. "Fighting corruption means being transparent and accountable".

A statement by US President

3 muggers beaten

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three muggers were beaten up by a mob while trying to rob a woman rickshaw passenger at Bhutergali in the city's Dhanmondi area yesterday afternoon.

The incident took place when the lady was passing through the area in a rickshaw at about 4pm yesterday. When she reached Bhutergali, three muggers stopped her rickshaw and tried to take away the gold chain from her neck.

As she cried out for help, local people rushed to the spot and managed to catch all the three muggers and beat them up.

George W Bush was read out by US Ambassador Cynthia Schneider at the opening session.

President Bush said that a few years ago, talking openly about corruption was considered a taboo. Many countries from Asia to Europe and Africa to Americas are now demanding greater transparency and accountability in public affairs.

Bush underscored US support for the Global Forum's work,

applauded the large number of participating states and thanked The Netherlands government for hosting this event.

Erving Herfkens, Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation also addressed the opening session.

Ms Herfkens said every country must tackle corruption even more ambitiously. The executive, legislative and judiciary branches of each country must make fighting corruption a priority, she added.

The minister said corruption drains away the benefits of globalisation. One has to be very careful while promoting decentralisation to stimulate economic growth, greater participation and security, especially for the poor and the most marginalised, she added.

Peter Eigen, Chairman, Transparency International, in his speech said there has been enough talking about corruption, and the need for today is to act. He requested the participants to recognise the danger from inaction and suggested that they "lock and bolt the door against those who might exploit it".

The Global Forum II will also have a series of workshops on

themes like (1) Integrity and Governance (2) Law Enforcement (3) Customs (4) Corruption, Transition and Development and (5) Government and the Business Sector.

The conference will adopt a Final Declaration and transfer the responsibility to the Republic of Korea to organise the Global Forum III in Seoul in 2003.

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Yasmeen Murder Case

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They also agreed with the submission made by the state attorney that such crimes should be considered a crime against the humanity.

Yasmeen's tragic end had triggered a public outcry and violent demonstrations in which seven people were killed in police firing at Dinajpur town.

The protest and women's rights bodies' pressure led the then government to bring charges against the policemen, who were also accused of tampering with and concealing evidence of rape.

Yasmeen on her way home to Dinajpur from Dhaka had boarded a bus which dropped her away from Dinajpur town at night. The policemen on highway patrol offered her a lift to the town.

But her body was found beside the highway later in the morning.

Due to the public outcry over the incident, police was forced to register a case against nine people, all policemen except one, a doctor.

The doctor conducted autopsy of Yasmeen's body and reported that she was not raped.

But the authorities had to go for a second autopsy that found evidence of rape before she was strangled.

Five policemen including the then SP of Dinajpur Abdul Mottalib and OC of Kotwali thana and the doctor who performed the first autopsy were acquitted by the trial court. They were accused of destroying evidence.

The government appealed against their acquittal and it is coming up for hearing in the High Court on June 17.

The HC verdict was greeted by a number of women's rights activists

Advocate Nazrul Islam Talukder, Advocate Emdadul Huq Azad and Advocate Nilufar Yasmin defended the three accused.

The accused have scope to file petition before the Supreme Court for leave to appeal within 30 days of collecting certified copies of the verdict through their lawyers.

3 Petrobangla directors

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charge as Director (Mines and Minerals) for the last two months

The sources said Ahsanullah is due to retire in October this year and Dr M Ismail in April next year.

Meanwhile, the post of Chairman remains vacant for the last one week following expiry of the tenure of Mosharrif Hossain. Director (Finance) SR Osmani is now Acting Chairman of Petrobangla.

Some sources said there are four potential candidates for the post of Chairman, including former chairman Mosharrif Hossain. He had

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Salahuddin Quader, who is MP from the area, is likely to attend the death anniversary programmes at Rangunia, they said.

Meanwhile, various security agencies are watching the situation and have decided to maintain tight security at Rangunia tomorrow, sources concerned said.

A leader of the city unit of BNP, seeking anonymity, said: "We have to go to the 'mazar' but we are concerned about possible outbreak of violence there."

already got a record extension of tenure as chairman for four times and it is likely that the authorities would now choose someone new.

However, other sources pointed out that Mosharrif enjoys the prime minister's confidence and there is a strong possibility of his getting extension of tenure for the fifth time.

Next in the list is former chairman of Power Development Board Nuruddin Mahmud Kamal. Having a background of geology, Nuruddin had been keeping himself busy participating in gas and energy related dialogues at the top level since his removal from PDB in March '99. Trusted by the prime minister, Nuruddin's prospect is also bright, sources noted.

The Energy Secretary had taken a move for appointment of the Energy Ministry's Additional Secretary Aminur Rahman as chairman of Petrobangla. Former director (finance) of the organisation Sajedul Karim is also an aspirant for the post.

Sources ruled out the possibility of Acting Chairman Osmany becoming the Chairman because of his age.

15 Talibans

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remained for five days for interrogation.

The arrested have been identified as Abu Dazma, 21, Md Ismail 18, Kutubuddin, 19, Abu Saeed, 17, Zahid Islam, 18, Naimur Rahman, 17, Akijuddin, 18, Shabbir, 16, Ariful Islam, 16, Mohabbet Billah, 20, Sultan Ahmed, 18, Afzal 18, Mostafiz 19 and Masum Billah, 18.

Trawler drivers Naeem, 24 and Shamim, 28, were also arrested.

Opposition vows

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midway through her way to a programme in the city immediately after the AL came to power.

Even the vehicle of handful

security personnel currently provided for the leader of the opposition cannot run properly because of its bad condition.

"If her vehicle reaches

Rangpur and then she takes rest, the security vehicle would stay at Jamuna Bridge," he added.

Bhuiyan alleged that more than

50,000 people were killed for various reasons during the last five years, and this was due to the government's failure. So, no law can give security to Sheikh Hasina and her family members by leaving the common people insecure.

Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid said the process to introduce 'monarchy' in Bangladesh would begin, if the new law is enacted.

Sadeque Hossain Khoka MP advised the prime minister to lodge a GD entry with the police station concerned so that the police could

ensure security after her resignation.

BNP leader Mirza Abbas said the only safest place for Sheikh Hasina is Dhaka Central Jail and no law would be required if she is sent to jail on charge of corruption, crime, killing of hundreds of people and looting of the public wealth.

The four-party opposition alliance will stage nationwide demonstrations on June 11.

City BNP President Sadeque Hossain Khoka presided over the rally. And BNP leaders Dr Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain, Selima Rahman, Amanullah Aman, Abdus Salam and Abu Sayed Khan

Khokon, Jamaat leaders ATM Azharul Islam, Jashimuddin Sarkar and Rafiqul Islam Khan, JP leaders Kazi Firoz, Taiubur Rahman and Quamrul Islam Sajal, and Islami Oikya Jote leaders Ahmed Abdul Qader, Abdur Rab Yusufi and Abul Kashem, among others, addressed it.

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Crisis in JCD surfaces again

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One group supporting JCD president Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu gathered at the Madhu's canteen area while another group patronised by its general secretary Shahabuddin Laltu positioned itself at the central library gate.

The third group led by JCD's DU unit president Monir Hossain also gathered in front of the library, sources added.

All three groups carried firearms. No untoward incident was however reported.

The Pintu group nevertheless held a rally yesterday, which was boycotted by his rivals in the other two groups.

Talking to The Daily Star, agitated JCD leaders alleged that musclemen and identified terrorists who were cadres of the party's two top leaders were included in the fully fledged committee while students and dedicated activists who were in

the anti-government movement during last five years were left out.

"We will resign en masse from the organisation if the committee is not reorganised immediately," a group of JCD activists gathered in front of the DU central library told The Daily Star yesterday.

They said they are determined not to do politics under the leadership of non-students and terrorists. It's better to quit politics, they added.

The JCD activists said the committee was formulated in January by the recently expelled BNP 'hardliners' in collaboration with JCD president Pintu in order to establish their supremacy in the party.

Pintu group activists expressing similar reactions said, "We the students of Dhaka University have been sidelined whereas two-thirds of posts in the committee have been given to boys picked up from the city unit by the party president."

The strife in JCD began in December last year when BNP

Chairperson Khaleda Zia declared the five-member primary committee of JCD with Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu and Shahabuddin Laltu as president and general secretary respectively.

Following violent protests against the appointments by a vast number of JCD leaders and activists, the BNP chairperson at that time had assured them accommodation in the full-fledged committee.

Two top JCD leaders on condition of anonymity ruled out the possibility of a committee reshuffle, saying most leaders of BNP and its different front organisations are worried about a drawn-out conflict within JCD with only a short time remaining before the upcoming general election.

The metropolitan PP Quamrul Islam

appeared for the state while Advocate Hazi Nazrul Islam, Mohammad Hanif, Mizanur Rahman, Abdul Majid Munshi, Mohammad Arshadul Haque, SM Rafiqul Islam, Masud Ahmed Talukder and Abu Abdullah Bhuiyan for the accused.

Hasina approves draft manifesto

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When contacted for details, member-secretary of the steering committee, Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, however, declined to say anything about the manifesto at this stage. Other committee members are equally tight-lipped.

Other members of the manifesto drafting committee are advocate Gaziul Haq, architect Mazharul Islam, Professor Dr Harun-ur-Rashid and Ataur Rahman Kaiser, Syed Ahmed, Monaeem Sarkar and Nuh-ul-Alam Lenim.

AL is conducting all of its poll-related activities, printing and publicity activities from a rented house at Dhanmondi, where Kibria meets his steering committee members and different sub-committees on a regular basis.

It is reliably learnt that in its draft manifesto, the AL did not go for much change in its strategies and commitments drawn out earlier in the 1996 manifesto.

The new 21-point poll manifesto sets a growth target of seven to eight per cent for the country and put special emphasis on reducing the wide gap between the import and export volumes and eradicate trade imbalance.

It promises to simplify laws to attract direct foreign investment in industrial sector with special thrusts on information technology, agro-

based industries, jute, and leather and cement manufacturing.

It says that steps will be taken to face the post-2004 challenge in the garment sector on expiry of the existing preferential quota system.

It claims that one lakh and 3,777 new industrial units have been set up in the country since Awami League took over in 1996.

The manifesto says that AL, if elected to power, will consider export of gas after confirming a 50-year reserve for domestic consumption.

To ensure accountability and transparency in administration, the manifesto says AL will implement all recommendations of the Public Administration Reform Commission (PARC).

It promises steps to stop all forms of child labour and ensure trade union right to all workers.

The manifesto envisages greater financial autonomy to local government bodies at four-tiers - village, union, upazila and district.

It says that to protect the local viewers from bad influence of satellite television culture, AL will chart out policy guidelines for private satellite channels.

Claiming 65 percent success in literacy movement, the manifesto says that country will be made illiteracy-free in less than five years.