

The Daily Star

COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XI No. 44

DHAKA SATURDAY OCTOBER 6, 2001

FALGUN 16, 1407 BS

ZELHAJ 3, 1421 HIJRI

16 PAGES PRICE: Tk 6.00

www.dailystarnews.com



A five-member BNP delegation led by Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury called on President Shahabuddin Ahmed at the Bangabhaban yesterday morning.

Speaker likely to administer oath to MPs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speaker Abdul Hamid has said he might administer oath to the newly elected members of Jatiya Sangsad if his party Awami League approves. About the schedule for oath-taking, he told The Daily Star last night that though it was fixed for tomorrow, procedural preparations might take a longer time.

The Speaker said President Shahabuddin Ahmed telephoned him and wanted to know whether it would be possible for him to administer the oath tomorrow.

He told the President that the decision would be taken once he gets the gazette on election results from the Election Commission. He did not get the gazette till last night, he said.

"The President also informed me that I would get the official gazette notification today (Friday). I did not get it," the Speaker said.

After the gazette notification is made available, the parliament secretariat will serve letters to the parties concerned, asking them to attend the oath-taking ceremony. "The decision would come only after I get the official result," the Speaker said.

The Speaker believed that the oath-taking might not be possible on Sunday. "It would take time - one

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

INSIDE TODAY

Article 4

Election 2001: An analysis
Nazim Kamran Choudhury

Business 6 & 7

Prices of essential food items soar on supply dearth
G7 won't discuss economic stimulus package: Germany

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Oct 6		5-41 pm
Oct 7	5-52 am	

Prayer Timings

Oct 6		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-20
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-48	5-54
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Blair praises Musharraf's plan to restore democracy

AFP, Islamabad

British Prime Minister Tony Blair yesterday congratulated Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf on his promise to restore democracy next year, three years after the October 1999 coup.

"I welcome the roadmap for democracy announced by the president on the 14th of August. That is the right path," Blair told reporters at a joint press conference with Musharraf following talks here in the Pakistani capital.

His support follows Pakistan's offer of "full cooperation" with the US-led war against terrorism, including the possible use of Pakistani airspace for attacks against the Taliban and their "guest" Osama bin Laden in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Blair signalled that Britain was

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Khaleda to be sworn in as PM Monday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will be sworn in as Prime Minister on Monday.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed will administer the oath at Darbar Hall of the Bangabhaban at 7pm.

The President will then administer oath to members of her cabinet.

The newly elected members of the 8th Jatiya Sangsad belonging to the BNP-led four-party alliance will take oath tomorrow morning at Sangsad Bhaban.

This was decided when a five-member BNP delegation led by Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury called on the President at the Bangabhaban yesterday morning.

Bangabhaban sources said the President told the delegation that Speaker of the 7th Jatiya Sangsad Abdul Hamid would administer oath to the elected MPs.

Other members of the delegation were BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Moudud Ahmed, Khandaker Mahbubuddin Ahmed

and MK Anwar.

Talking to The Daily Star later, a member of the BNP delegation said the President told them that he talked to Abdul Hamid, who agreed to administer the oath.

If the Speaker denies, the President assured them that the oath would be administered by another person as per Constitutional provision. The President suggested the BNP delegation to meet the Speaker and request him to administer the oath.

See editorial on page 4

The BNP leader said, after 1991 general election, the then Chief Election Commissioner Justice MA Rouf had administered the oath to MPs.

After the 1991 polls, Khaleda Zia was sworn in as the country's first woman prime minister on March 20, 1991.

The then Acting President Shahabuddin Ahmed had administered oath to her and her cabinet members. The number of cabinet

ministers on the day was 11 and that of state ministers 21.

BNP sources said the party had thought of oath-taking ceremony on October 11, the last day of the tenure of the caretaker government. But it now wants it to take place earlier because of Awami League's announcement of movement programme.

BNP sources said Khaleda Zia is having hectic discussions with party's policy makers, senior leaders and professional bodies to select members for her cabinet. For this, she has given top priority to honesty, sincerity, dedication and competence.

Young leaders and new faces may get prominence and a good number of senior leaders who were in her previous cabinet may not be included this time.

Hectic lobbying has started in BNP and also among component parties of the four-party alliance led by it.

BNP leaders are visiting the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

US, European envoys deplore violence against AL

UNB, Dhaka

A delegation of American and European ambassadors yesterday met Awami League President Sheikh Hasina and exchanged views on the October 1 general election and its results.

Hasina, who has rejected the results describing it rigged and manipulated, said her party would do whatever necessary to protect the people's voting rights and uphold democracy.

The 4-member delegation, led by Canadian High Commissioner David Preston, included US Ambassador Mary Ann Peters, British High Commissioner Dr David Carter and EC Head of the Delegation Ambassador Antonio de Souza Menezes.

Hasina said Awami League had made supreme sacrifice to establish nonparty caretaker government and people's voting right denied by the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Act responsibly & accept polls results, Carter urges Hasina

BSS, Dhaka

Former US President Jimmy Carter has urged the Awami League to "act responsibly and accept the results of the election in order to strengthen Bangladesh's democratic institutions in the long-term."

Carter, in a statement released yesterday from Atlanta, Georgia, said, "I lost presidential election myself. I am well aware of how hard it is to accept such a defeat."

Praising Awami League's role in promoting democracy in Bangladesh, Carter said, "The party has played an important leadership role for democracy in Bangladesh, and this is a role that must continue in opposition. This is the essence of democracy."

Carter was scheduled to visit

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



No hard feelings... BNP leader Sadeque Hossain Khoka (left), who won the Dhaka-7 seat in Monday's election, puts a slice of cake into the mouth of his rival Awami League candidate Mohammed Sayeed Khokon (middle), while Khokon's father and Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Mohammed Hanif sips a glass of soft drink at the Nazirabazar residence of the mayor yesterday. Khoka was on a goodwill visit.

AL begins week-long agitation programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League staged a demonstration in the city yesterday, launching its week-long agitation programme in demand for cancellation of Monday's parliamentary election results by October 10 and holding of a fresh election.

The programme includes protest rallies across the country from October 6 to 9 and road barricade on October 10.

The demonstration held in front of AL central office at Bangabandhu Avenue was participated by a large number of people. They listened quietly as leaders described how the party's victory in the polls was snatched.

AL workers visibly demoralised by election debacle of the party chanted slogans against 'rigging' in the polls.

Addressing the rally, AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman asked the party rank and file to make the October 10 road barricade a success.

He said AL was fully aware of a 'deep-rooted conspiracy' against the party, yet it took part in the election as it believes in democracy.

The caretaker government destabilised the administration by transferring 2000 government officials since it took over in mid-July, Zillur alleged.

AL presidium member Tofail Ahmed said the party is left with no option but to go for movement.

He alleged that the administration was provided with lists from 'Hawa Bhaban' (BNP's Banani office) and accordingly police raided houses of AL leaders and workers and harassed them unnecessarily.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

A welcome gesture

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

City BNP President Sadeque Hossain Khoka, who was elected MP from Dhaka-7 seat, yesterday visited the residence of city AL chief and Mayor Mohammad Hanif.

Mohammad Sayeed Khokon, son of Hanif, contended with Khoka in the just-ended general election.

Khoka made it clear during the visit, which is regarded as a goodwill gesture in political circles, that he did not feel antagonism towards Khokon.

"We were leaders of our respective parties...after election we are leaders of all. I hope Khokon should not lose heart. This is no defeat at all for the young man. He is an entrant to politics...a bright future awaits him," Khoka said.

In reply, Hanif said, "We have contested the election and there is win and defeat in the polls. There must be win and defeat in democ-

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Dengue seems under control

Experience, training pay off: Experts

STAR REPORT

Dengue infection seems to be "fairly under control" now because a good number of doctors have been trained for treatment of the deadly disease, experts say.

The official death toll from Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever (DHF) in the country came down to 18 this year from last year's 93 although the number of people infected with Dengue virus rallied round last year's 5,500.

The unofficial death toll last was however over 500 last year and experts had predicted that the worst was yet to come.

Doctors are now capable of managing the disease better than in previous years. The National Guidelines for Clinical Management of Dengue Syndrome prepared by the Health Directorate immensely contributed to this, said an expert.

Last year, most of the doctors were unfamiliar with the disease. In fact, many Dengue patients were found treated for suspected typhoid, jaundice and influenza, he said.

Prevalence of dengue virus, borne by Aedes mosquito, increased in Dhaka city dramatically this year. It is almost endemic in 85 out of the 90 wards in the city, according to a recent door-to-door survey. Dengue infection breaks out during the wet season and continues till end of November.

Prof Nazrul Islam, Head of Virology Department at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMUH), said, "Following last year's den-

gue outbreak, we conducted a joint study with the Centre for Disease Control in Atlanta in USA, Institute of Infectious Disease, Japan and the Bangladesh Livestock Research Laboratory in Savar. We concluded that all the four types of Dengue virus are present among a certain percentage of the population in Bangladesh."

When contacted, Dr Kanak Ranjan Talukder, Director of Communicable Disease Control at the Health Directorate, said, "Last year, most of the doctors did not know how to diagnose Dengue. So many patients died. But this year, despite a similar infection rate, the death rate is considerably lower compared to the previous year."

"Since Dengue exists in Bangladesh, we have to live with it. But the most important thing is to keep the mortality rate below one per cent. I think we have achieved it."

So far, the Health Directorate trained 260 doctors across country, including private practitioners. By turn, all civil surgeons' offices in districts trained more doctors.

In early fifties, only nine countries had experienced DHF. The number increased more than four times by 1995.

Some 2500 million or two-fifths of the world's population are at risk of Dengue infection and 50 million more may be infected every year, a WHO report said.

Aedes mosquito is found in tropical and sub-tropical

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

US ground forces off to Uzbekistan

AP, Tashkent

The US Army dispatched about 1,000 infantry soldiers to this former Soviet state yesterday senior American officials said, while the Uzbek leader announced he had granted permission for US forces to use an air base in his country.

At a joint news conference with US Defense Secretary Donald H Rumsfeld, Uzbek President Islam Karimov said the air base could be used to base US transport planes, helicopters and troops for search-and-rescue missions.

The president stressed, however, that US forces in Uzbekistan could not be used to launch air or ground attacks. US special operations soldiers also would not be allowed in Uzbekistan.

"We are not quite ready for this," he said.

A senior US official traveling with Rumsfeld said about 1,000 members of the 10th Mountain Division based at Fort Drum, New York, were en route to Uzbekistan from the United States Friday. They are to provide security for other US forces in the region, officials have said.

Karimov said a legal document spelling out the specifics of this arrangement, including what he calls guarantees for his country's security, was being completed and eventually would be made public.

"We have no secret deals," the president said.

Rumsfeld told reporters he had expressed Bush's appreciation for Uzbekistan's cooperation.

The support of Uzbekistan, a former Soviet republic in Central Asia bordering Afghanistan, is crucial should US forces launch military action against the Taliban rulers of Afghanistan, who are harboring Osama bin Laden, the prime suspect in the Sept 11 terror attacks on New York and Washington.

US President George W Bush has warned that the Taliban must surrender bin Laden or face retribution.

Rumsfeld, visiting the Middle

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6