

# Hartals for days if necessary: Nasim

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League organising secretary Mohammad Nasim yesterday said his party would call for hartals day after day, if necessary, in interest of the country.

"We are not committed to anybody that we will not call hartal in the country. If necessary, we will call hartal day after day in interest of the country," he told a rally organised by Joy Bangla Sangskritik Jote in front of the party central office on Bangabandhu Avenue, marking the Jail Killing Day.

Chaired by president of Joy Bangla Sangskritik Jote Salahuddin Badal, the rally was addressed, among others, by Justice KM Sobhan, Awami League leaders Amir Hossain Amu and Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Jubo League general secretary Advocate Kazi Iqbal Hossain and the Jote general secretary Mohammad Abdul Kader.

"The government has resorted to atrocities on the leaders and activists of Awami League instead of curbing terrorism," Nasim alleged.

Prices of essentials have been

spiralling since the four-party alliance government took office, he said.

Amu called upon the people to make the seven-day long Awami League programme, beginning on November 5, to protest repression on AL workers and leaders, a success.

## Buriganga river Eviction drive begins tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka

A drive to remove illegal constructions on the bank of the river Buriganga under Fatullah thana of the district begins tomorrow.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) will launch the drive, which will continue till November 5. All owners of illegal constructions have been asked to remove them immediately, the release added.

Earlier, BIWTA evicted a total of 260 illegal constructions out of 304 on the bank of the river Buriganga.

# Steps to remove traffic jams in city

UNB, Dhaka

As part of a move to ease intolerable traffic jams in the capital, the government has decided to immediately remove illegal bazars from footpaths and waysides.

A meeting chaired by Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury on Thursday also decided to take punitive measures against the owners of vehicles and drivers who would violate traffic rules.

"Legal actions will also be taken against those who will illegally park their cars and occupy roads by putting construction materials," said an official handout.

Under the drive, mobile courts would be set up to check cars at various points. The authorities would also take necessary steps so that illegal occupants could not recapture the reclaimed property belonging to various organisations.

Besides, lanes would be opened for movement of rickshaws on left side of the road to help remove traffic jams at different crossings in the city.

Home Secretary Dr. Sa'dat Hossain, Inspector General of Police, BRTA Chairman, Joint Secretary of Communications ministry and concerned senior officials attended the meeting.

# Jail Killing Day

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war in the absence of Bangabandhu, were put behind bars after assassination of the architect of the country and were gunned down inside the jail.

The killings took place prior to a short-lived military coup led by Brigadier Khaled Mosharraf against the killers of Bangabandhu.

Tajuddin was the first prime minister and Syed Nazrul the first acting president of the government in exile. Both Capt. Mansur Ali and M Kamruzzaman were the members of Bangabandhu's cabinet and top leaders of the then Awami League.

The Awami League and its front organisations have chalked out an elaborate programme to observe the day across the country. The party will hoist black flags; and the national flag and the party flag will fly at half-mast at all party offices.

At 7:00am, the party chief will place wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Bangabandhu Bhaban. The party will arrange a wreath-placing programme at the graves of martyrs of the August 15, 1975 and of the national leaders at the Banani graveyard at 7:15am, which will be followed by milad mahfil and recitations from the holy

Koran.

In the afternoon, the Awami League will organise a memorial meeting in honour of the late leaders demanding the speeding up of trial of the jail killing case. Sheikh Hasina will preside over the meeting.

The day used to be observed at the state level in the last five years of Awami League. But, this time, the observance of the day will be kept low-key following the change in power through the October 1 general election.

In 1996, the Awami League, assuming power after 21 years, initiated trial of the jail killing case. Now, the fate of the case hangs in the balance as it is still pending with the court. One of the prime accused in the case, KM Obaidur Rahman, elected on a BNP ticket, is reportedly awaiting release from the prisoners' cell at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital.

Twenty-four people were charge-sheeted in the jail killing case and eight of them in the Dhaka Central Jail are facing trial.

Meanwhile, Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, a cultural front of the AL, formed a human chain in front of the Jatia Press Club yesterday demanding execution of the heinous killers.

# AL: Ganobhaban

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through the October 1 polls, said the last parliament had passed security legislation for the daughters of father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The law provided two separate houses for Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana.

Later, the cabinet allotted Ganobhaban to Sheikh Hasina according to the law. "Considering the security concerns of the two surviving daughters of the father of the nation following the massacre of the August 15, 1975 the cabinet lawfully allotted Ganobhaban to Sheikh Hasina," AL noted.

Khaleda Zia's cabinet, it said, not only cancelled the allotment hastily without making any arrangement for her safe accommodation ignoring the legal compulsions but also changed its name out of political vendetta.

"Even without informing Sheikh Hasina and before shifting her luggage, the Ganobhaban was occupied."

Awami League observed that without making secured accommodation, the present government virtually increased the security risks for Sheikh Hasina whose life is under constant threat from the killers of father of the nation.

It reminded that while in power Awami League neither cancelled nor evicted Khaleda Zia who without legal basis "occupied" the state property "Sena Bhaban" designated for the army chief, another house adjacent to the Sena Bhaban and yet another at Gulshan.

The former ruling party said within a few days of assuming power, the present government suddenly wrote off the Ganobhaban allotment and thus set an example of "nasty, vindictive, discourteous and unlawful act."

People will one day give an appropriate reply to what Awami League called small-mindedness and political vendetta of Khaleda Zia and her government.

# All dev projects

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costs' of the projects are way above the 'apparent costs.' The country would 'actually get' things worth between \$300 million and \$400 million under the suppliers' credit because highly inflated costs were shown.

The suppliers' credit deals include five under the energy ministry, two under industries ministry and the rest under communications ministry.

The deals under energy ministry are for 90 MW second phase Fenichganj project involving \$10 million, 210 MW Khulna power project costing \$93 million, 21 MW Siddhirganj project involving \$80 million, 250 MW Barapukuria project costing \$198 million and extension and rehabilitation of a sub-station at Dhanmondi under DESA, involving \$17 million.

The projects under industries ministry are \$70 million balancing, modernisation, rehabilitation and expansion (BMRE) of Karnaphuli Paper Mills and \$ 29 million Shahjalal Fertiliser plant.

Under the communications ministry, four deals costing \$37 million are for the railway and one involving \$5.7 million are for import of Volvo bus from Sweden for BRTC.

According to sources, five of the deals all big ones were signed in May and June this year.

Meanwhile, the World Bank in a report on suppliers' credit said the surge in such credit brings with it substantial medium to long term

payment liabilities and raises questions about debt sustainability.

It said the government will have to pay \$1523 million as principal suppliers' credit during 1997-2003. This includes the recent \$600 million credit.

The WB also said considering that Bangladesh can have access to soft loans from multilateral agencies, its increasing reliance on non-concessional flows to finance industry and much needed infrastructure in the near future seems ill advised.

**Shab-e-Barat**

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holiday. No newspaper was brought out yesterday.

The Bangladesh Betar and TV channels came up with special programmes, while newspapers published special articles highlighting the significance of the night.

BSS adds: Prime Minister Khaleda Zia attended a milad mahfil organised by the Bangladesh Jatiyata Ulema Dal on the occasion of the holy Shab-e-Barat at the Mazar of late President Ziaur Rahman at Zia Uddin on Thursday.

Earlier, Khaleda offered fataha at the mazar of Ziaur Rahman, Najibul Basher Majidbandari, president of the Ulema Dal conducted the munajat seeking peace of the departed soul of the late president and success of the BNP government.

# Hamid

FROM PAGE 1

Former Speaker Abdul Hamid, now made Deputy Leader of the Opposition, played a pivotal role in persuading AL leadership to reconsider the party decision that its MPs-elect would not take oath.

Hamid is an experienced parliamentarian who was elected to the House seven times till now.

AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman was Deputy Leader of the House when AL was in power from 1996 to 2001 and party president member Abdus Samad Ziad was Deputy Leader while the party was in the Opposition during 1991-1996 period.

Md Abdus Shahid, new Chief Whip of the Opposition, is a former whip and an MP from Moulvibazar-4 constituency.

Abul Hasnat Abdullah, who was Chief Whip of the Treasury Bench from 1996 to 2001, failed to secure any of the two parliamentary seats in Barisal he had contested for this time.

AL organising secretary and former home minister Mohammad Nasim was Chief Whip while AL was in the Opposition during 1991-96 period. Nasim contested the recent election from three constituency in Sirajganj and won in one.



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, along with family members, offering munajat at the mazar of former president Ziaur Rahman on Thursday night.

# India, Pakistan

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favour inclusion of the Taliban in a new broad-based post-conflict government in Afghanistan and backed India for a larger role in setting up a new dispensation in Kabul.

Indian Defence Ministry sources said Pakistan has been moving reserve troops and armoured vehicles facing the Indian border at Akhnoor in Jammu and Kashmir and Ganganagar in Rajasthan state. The additional build-up comprises infantry divisions and a large armoured brigade. Official sources here say the Pakistani build-up includes strike components such as armoured, mechanized and air formations and other combat arms.

India has told Pakistan that it has not deployed reserve troops in Jammu and Kashmir.

Meanwhile, US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld arrives here on Monday from Pakistan to discuss with Indian leaders strategic defence cooperation on a long-term basis. He will meet Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes on.

During his interaction with senior Indian leaders, Rumsfeld is likely to discuss military cooperation with India in the wake of lifting of some US sanctions imposed following testing of nuclear device by New Delhi in May 1998.

India, sources said, will use the opportunity to convey to Rumsfeld the concern over renewal of American military aid to Pakistan which in the past was used to arm the militants operating in Jammu and Kashmir. They said the US Defence Secretary, who arrives here shortly after Prime Minister A B Vajpayee leaves for a visit to Russia and US on Sunday, will discuss with India the American strategy in the fight against Afghanistan and contours of a post-Taliban government in that country.

Rumsfeld is the second ranking US official to visit New Delhi in less than a month. US Secretary of State Colin Powell had come last month.

# Nasim

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year rule the Awami League government did not follow the politics of vengeance, rather it worked day and night for the people.

"The only wrong Awami League did during its five years was the appointment of Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed as the President," he added.

The meeting presided over by UP Chairman Ismail Hossain, was also addressed by Latif Mirza, Abu Yusuf Suza and Principal Bakul Sarker.

Later, Nasim visited the house of slain Jubo League leader Kanak and consoled the bereaved family members.

# European envoys discuss communal harmony with home minister

BSS, Dhaka

A delegation of ambassadors of EU and five European countries led by Niel Severi Mounk, Danish Ambassador to Bangladesh, Thursday called on Home Minister Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) Altaf Hossain Chowdhury at his office at secretariat in the city.

They discussed different issues including communal harmony, creation of conducive atmosphere for investment, easier system of visa processing and formation of a human rights commission.

The members of the delegation are ambassadors of the Netherlands, European Union, Italy, France, Germany and Denmark. The ambassadors appreciated the free, fair and peaceful parliamentary elections on October 1, the release added.

The minister and the ambassadors expressed the hope that the existing mutual and brotherly relations between Bangladesh and European countries will be strengthened in the years to come.

State Minister for Home Mohammad Lutfulzaman Babar was present at the meeting.

# PM concerned

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with Khaleda Zia congratulating her on her landslide victory in October 1 election.

Responding to Shahida Zamil who is also law, judiciary and parliamentary affairs minister of Pakistan, Khaleda Zia said Bangladesh is deeply concerned over the Afghanistan situation because of the refugee problem.

The prime minister mentioned that her foreign minister handed over the first consignment of medicine for Afghan refugees to the UNHCR on Thursday.

Khaleda further said it would follow other relief materials including blanket, floor rags and woolen sweater for children.

Foreign Secretary Shamser Mobin Chowdhury told newsmen that the meeting lasted 40 minutes and the discussion was held in a cordial atmosphere.

On the Afghan situation, the special envoy said the matter was "serious", Pakistan condemns terrorism and therefore supported the American action, she said.

The prime minister said the Dhaka-Islamabad relationship is very cordial and friendly, and this would be diversified in other areas as well.

Khaleda requested the envoy to convey her thanks to President Musharraf for this invitation.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Reaz Rahman, Foreign

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# Currencies

FROM PAGE 1

from a Pakistani national at the airport. The total amount (in local currency) was about Tk four crore.

The currencies are Afghanistan currency Afghani 4, 97,000, Pakistani Rupee 12,300, Iran Rial 90,000, Tk 8,000 and 27.5 kg of coins, Indian Rupee 1,900 and Thailand Baht 1,360.

Customs sources said that on suspicion, they challenged the Pakistani citizen at the passenger transit, checked his luggage and found the currencies.

Identified as Wakar Muktar, the man was handed over to Cantonment police. His passport number is H823714 and he was scheduled to fly board a Singapore flight.

Police produced him in the CMM's Court yesterday morning with a prayer for seven-day remand. The court however granted two days' remand.

Earlier, Customs Inspector Waraz Ali had filed a case with the Airport thana in this connection.

# AL govt

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the cases make it clear that the main purpose of the cases was to harass the BNP leaders. The cases kept the leaders busy appearing in courts.

Former Public Prosecutor (PP) during the rule of AL Government Qamrul Islam told The Daily Star, "Most of these cases are now under investigation and some are on trial. But the court gave no verdict on any case."

The former PP added that the caretaker government withdrew some 200 cases filed against BNP leaders - of which, 72 were being handled by him. The number of cases was pared down to a few by the time the current government took over power, he put differently.

"We pursued these cases seriously. But the legal procedures require time and thus none of the proceedings of the cases was completed."

Many of the true issues got buried in the climate of political arm-twisting thanks to the AL's lack of seriousness to pursue the cases.

# CMM summons 7

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tion report. The report prepared after a year-long investigation alleged that the accused had concealed price sensitive information, violating securities regulation.

The court then issued summons on all the seven accused to appear before it on December 26 this year.

The SEC probe revealed that some of the accused resorted to insider trading and manipulating the price of the company shares both in Dhaka and Chittagong stock exchanges.

The investigators said the accused persons signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with a Dutch company, Eerste Nederlandse Cement Industrie (ENCI), on August 10, 1999 for joint management of the company through transfer of some 26 per cent of its shares.

SEC officials observed that despite being aware of the securities market regulation, which calls for immediate dissemination of such price sensitive information, news regarding the MOU was not disseminated to the stock exchanges or the investors till

January 16 last year.

The probe report alleged that on the contrary, Harun engaged his brother Ejazur Rashid in trading of shares in the stock market for illegal gains, keeping investors in the dark.

The investigators also said that besides the MOU, they were in possession of a document which referred to an agreement for transfer of the shares and it was concealed from the probe body.

Despite repeated attempts, Harun could not be contacted for his comments.

Meanwhile, the Dutch company last week announced its intention to purchase 6,45,000 shares of Chittagong Cement, which constitute 25 per cent of total shares of the clinker company.

With this, the Dutch company will have 51 per cent ownership of Chittagong Cement.

Both Harun and Tayab had also disclosed their intention to sell off their entire shares in the clinker company.



A colourful procession was brought out in the city yesterday to mark the 7th National Voluntary Blood Donation and Posthumous Eye Donation Day.

# B52s pound Taliban field HQs

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Bagram air base, where 100 fresh recruits from Pakistan arrived recently to fight with the Taliban.

He said a preliminary opposition estimate showed that 13 Taliban tanks had been destroyed along with several types of guns including heavy machine guns and anti-aircraft weapons.

The report could not be independently confirmed, and Taliban spokesmen in Kabul were not available for comment.

Another report adds: US bombs have halted the operation of Afghanistan's biggest power station, cutting electricity to two major cities, a Taliban spokesman said yesterday.

The Kajaki hydro-electric power station in Helmand province was bombed on Wednesday afternoon and electricity supplies to the cities of Kandahar and Lashkarga have been completely halted, said Qari Fazal Rabi, chairman of the militia's Bakhter information agency.

The power station, about 90 kilometers northwest of Kandahar in southern Afghanistan, is close to Afghanistan's biggest dam, also called Kajaki, which was not damaged, the official said.

The Taliban militia yesterday claimed to have shot down and destroyed an unidentified US aircraft west of the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif.

Several Taliban sources in the

eastern city of Jalalabad told AFP that the plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire and crashed in Char Bolak district of Balkh province, near the border with Uzbekistan.

"We confirm that we have hit a US plane. We saw it going down in Char Bolak district but we're still waiting for details," said Sher Shah Hamdard, chief of the Taliban's Bakhter news agency in Jalalabad.

Between 70 and 100 US soldiers have been killed in Washington's military campaign against Afghanistan launched on October 7, an official of Afghanistan's ruling Taliban said.

Between "70 and 100 American soldiers who landed in Afghanistan have been killed," the Taliban's "consul general" in Karachi told Qatar's al-Jazeera satellite TV channel.

On Thursday, Washington ruled out a military pause for Ramadan, which starts in mid-November.

"This is an enemy that has to be taken on and taken on aggressively and pressed to the end," US national security adviser Condoleezza Rice said, after pleas from Muslim nations for a pause.

"We can't afford to have a pause."

Meanwhile, Bin Laden, in a letter released and certified as authentic by Qatar's Al-Jazeera television station, urged Muslims to defend Islam against what he called a Christian crusade.

"Muslims in Afghanistan are

being subjected to killing and the Pakistani government is standing beneath the Christian banner," the letter said.

Bin Laden and the Taliban have enlisted the sympathy of Muslims in different parts of the world with calls for jihad.

The governor of the war-battered city of Kandahar, where rubble from flattened houses litters the streets, said the fundamentalist Taliban movement would survive even if US forces kill their leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar.

AFP from Washington says, The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Wednesday flatly denied that one of its agents had contact with Osama Bin Laden in July while the suspected terrorist was allegedly being treated in a Dubai hospital, as reported by two French media outlets.

CIA spokeswoman Anya Guelsher called the report "complete nonsense."

Le Figaro and Radio France International reported Wednesday that a CIA representative met with the man suspected by the United States of being behind the September 11 terrorist attacks while he was undergoing kidney treatment at the American hospital in Dubai.

The director of the hospital has denied that bin Laden had been a patient there.

# Padma Bridge

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would be completed within the next one to two years.

The prime minister urged the Japanese government to undertake more projects in Bangladesh availing its expertise in the infrastructure development particularly in the construction of roads and bridges.

Referring to Japanese assistance in the construction of Jamuna Bridge and a number of activities of other Japanese companies in Bangladesh, Kobayashi said the Japanese investment in Bangladesh now stood at over 1.1 billion US dollars.

The ambassador warmly congratulated Khaleda Zia for her BNP-led alliance's overwhelming victory in the October 1 national election and also her assumption of office of the prime minister. He conveyed greetings of the Japanese prime minister to Khaleda Zia.

Referring to the visit of Japanese observer team to Bangladesh during the October 1 Parliamentary elections, the ambassador said the team was high impressed by the fairness in the elections.

Kobayashi said Japan would celebrate the 30th anniversary of Japan-Bangladesh relations next February through holding colourful programmes in Bangladesh. Musical and cultural troupes will visit Bangladesh in celebration of the occasion.

Describing as historic and very deep the relations between Bangladesh and Japan, the prime minister said her government would provide all cooperation for celebrating the anniversary.

The ambassador expressed his satisfaction over the existing relations between Bangladesh and Japan and underlined the need for strengthening the bilateral relations in the coming years. He called for expanding cooperation in the economic and cultural fields.

The ambassador reiterated his government's invitation to Khaleda Zia to visit Japan. Khaleda also extended her invitation to her Japanese counterpart to visit Bangladesh at a mutually convenient time.

Foreign Secretary Shamshar Mobin Chowdhury was present.

**Boiler oven**

**FROM PAGE 12**

up in flames. All the drums were filled with oil. Machinery and oil worth about Tk 30 lakh were burnt to ashes, fire service sources said.

Six fire-fighting units from Savar, Mirpur and Manikganj rushed to the scene but failed to bring the blaze under control even after three hours.

Later, using compound foam firefighters managed to extinguish the fire at about 4 pm.