

## Govt employees warned against involvement in politics

BSS, Dhaka

The government yesterday warned government officials and employees against their involvement in political activities saying they would face tough legal action for their links with such activities.

"There is no scope for government officials and employees to be involved in any political activities and organisational of social initiatives linked to politics," an official handout said here.

It added that the tough action would be taken against the officials and employees in line with their code of conduct and the existing laws if they were involved in such activities.

The handout said the warning was issued following newspaper reports on involvement of some government officials with a newly formed organisation named "International Institute of Zia Studies."

It also warned that there would be no discrimination in taking action for such activities.

## Some secys, Div Commissioners may be changed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government plans to change some secretaries and all the six divisional commissioners by the end of the month, official sources said.

The changes will take place on completion of the government's 100-day programmes when performances of the top-ranking officials will be reviewed.

The sources said the government is also planning to announce another 100-day programmes and so, it is going for changes in some vital administrative posts.

According to the sources, four to five secretaries will be changed considering their performances in past 100 days. Besides, some additional secretaries and joint secretaries may be promoted in accordance

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## Hajj flight from today

BSS, Dhaka

Biman Bangladesh Airlines starts operating this year's Hajj flights today.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is expected to inaugurate the Hajj flight at Zia International Airport at 10 am, a Biman press release said yesterday.

The inaugural flight BG 0121 with 224 Ballotee Hajj pilgrims will leave Zia International Airport for Jeddah at 11 am.

This year Biman, the national flag carrier, will operate a total of 82 pre-Hajj flights exclusively with its own DC-10 aircraft.

"Over 3,000 pilgrims will perform the holy Hajj under the government arrangement through Biman flights. Biman has also planned to carry about 20,000 non-ballotee pilgrims to Jeddah for performing Hajj," the release said.

The pre-Hajj flights will continue up to February 16 while the post-Hajj flights will start from February 27 and continue till March 26.

# Gunmen attack US office in Kolkata, kill 5 cops

## Advani sees ISI link, police suspect Harkat



SAKYASEN MITRA, Kolkata

Unidentified gunmen in a dawn attack on the United States Information Centre here yesterday killed five policemen and left 20 others injured.

Four armed terrorists, in two motor-bikes arrived in front of the heavily guarded American Centre and started firing indiscriminately leaving four policemen dead on the spot. Another policeman later died at hospital.

Of the 20 injured, the condition of six is stated to be critical. American Mission Staff were not present when the attack took place.

A red alert has been declared in the entire West Bengal state and security tightened in Kolkata.

Till writing this report, there was no report of arrests. The police have recovered bullets and empty cartridges from the area and have sent them to the relevant departments.

"We are trying to determine the weapons that had been used by the attackers," said Police Commissioner Sujay Chakrabarty. The eyewitnesses to the entire incident have also not been able to say much about the identity of the attackers.

The American Centre is situated on Chowringhee Road very close to the ITC Building and the Tata Centre. The roads in the area are usually deserted in the morning. And being a wintry morning it was more so when the attack took place at around 6.27 am.

The attack continued for about 10 minutes during which the terrorists fired about 40 rounds. They also fired a grenade from a grenade launcher but it did not explode, witnesses said.

Had it exploded the doors to the American Centre would have certainly

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Campus Violence: BCL General Secretary Ajoy Kar Khokon (left) and Law Secretary Proshanto Bhushan Barua (right) were injured yesterday when JCD activists allegedly attacked a BCL rally on the Dhaka University campus.

# JCD allegedly swoops on BCL rally at DU: 40 hurt

DU CORRESPONDENT

At least 40 leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), including its president and general secretary, were injured when activists of ruling BNP's student wing Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) allegedly attacked a BCL rally on the Dhaka University campus yesterday noon.

According to sources and witnesses, the JCD activists indiscriminately beat the BCL leaders up for about an hour in presence of a large number of police contingent on the spot. At least seven BCL leaders, one of them female, suffered head injuries.

The BCL called a strike at Dhaka University today and tomorrow and at other educational institutions across the country tomorrow in protest at the attack. The BCL leaders also held a press conference at its office in the city in the

evening. The JCD men fired at least two gunshots while police lobbed four tear gas canisters during the incident.

Hundreds of innocent students stood in the corridors of the Arts Building and watched the incident as classes were disrupted for hours. Violence erupted in front of the Arts Building at around 1:00pm when a group of JCD activists allegedly threw stones at a BCL rally at the foot of Aparajeo Bangla.

BCL leaders along with some 100 activists were holding a scheduled rally there protesting changes in the textbooks.

The sources and witnesses said the JCD activists suddenly swooped on the BCL gathering. Within minutes, a huge number of JCD activists from different residential halls and Madhu's canteen rushed to the place of occurrence and surrounded the BCL workers.

The JCD activists continued to throw stones and hurled abuses at the BCL workers. However, few hall unit leaders of JCD tried to stop their fellow workers.

As the JCD activists said that they were looking for BCL General Secretary Ajoy Kar Khokon, his comrades took him to a room in the Arts Building.

At around 1:25pm, the police offered their assistance and escorted the BCL activists out of the campus. But, the JCD men again allegedly attacked them with iron rods and wooden sticks, forcing their BCL rivals to run for cover inside the Arts Building.

They chased the BCL workers and allegedly beat them up in the corridors of the Arts Building and areas close by. Several BCL leaders however hid in different rooms.

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# Donors want govt to prepare poverty paper for more aid at Paris meet

STAR REPORT

Donors have categorically said the government needs to prepare a medium-term poverty strategy for development to get more foreign assistance at the coming so-called Paris Club meeting in March.

After a meeting between the government and the local consultative group of donors at the national economic council (NEC) building yesterday, Country Director of the World Bank Frederick T Temple told journalists that donors are satisfied with the government short-term measures to backstop the economic downside.

But, he said, the government will have to have a medium-term strategy ready to melt the ice for larger aid promises at the coming Bangladesh Development Forum meeting.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman told the journalists after the meeting that the government would need a greater quantum of aid to stabilise the "devastated economy", left by the Awami League government.

"We have indications that donors would pledge amount close to our need," said the finance minister.

Meantime, during the discussion on the preparation of a poverty reduction strategy paper, donors also raised the issue of bringing transparency to the incomes and expenditures of the political parties.

The finance minister said that in every society patronisation of political parties by business groups is necessary for democracy to flourish. However, whether such business interests affect policy measures is a matter to ponder, he said.

The donors also wanted involvement of the parliament in formulation of the poverty paper and said devolution of power and local government strengthening are necessary for development.

Saifur, however, said this would mean giving upzilas the power to control revenue collection and policy, which may create tension at the local level.

Saifur also explained to the donors various priority steps taken up by the government to bring transparency and accountability in the administration. Moreover, the government has initiated measures for institutional reforms, he said.



Bangladesh's (L-R) Tareq Aziz, Khaled Mashud and Mehrab Hossain celebrate the fall of a Pakistan wicket during the first one-day international at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

## Pakistan 1-up Batsmen spoil good work of bowlers

HASAN MASOOD, from Chittagong

Bangladesh's batsmen spoiled the good work of the bowlers allowing Pakistan to run away with a 49-run victory in the opening match of the Coca-Cola One-day Series at the MA Aziz Stadium on Tuesday.

Khaled Mashud's men broke the hearts of a near-capacity partisan crowd as chasing a reachable target of 202 their innings stopped dead at 153 for seven in 50 overs.

The spectators at the stadium came alive in the early part of the game after debutant Tareq Aziz rocked the solid Pakistani batting with a fine display of accurate, aggressive pace bowling. Aziz returned a match figure of three for 19 in his 10 overs.

But the rookie's brilliance with the ball failed to inspire the oft-erratic local batsmen and soon they found themselves reeling at six for 68 in 27 overs.

The depleted batting in the absence of an in-form Habibur Bashar soon ran out of steam despite an 87-run stand for the

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# AL demands CEC's resignation alleging his partisan role

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) has demanded immediate resignation of Chief Election Commissioner M A Syed accusing him of playing a partisan role in the general and by-elections.

"No more elections under this CEC," an AL spokesman told newsmen after an eight-hour meeting of the Awami League Central Working Committee (ALCWC) yesterday at the party central office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city. Sheikh Hasina chaired the meeting.

Because of recent experience, AL has decided not to participate the long overdue elections to the local government bodies under the incumbent CEC, the meeting sources said. Syed was appointed

CEC on May 29 1999 when the AL was in office.

The party would initially go for movement to force the CEC to resign and then launch a massive anti-government agitation programme, party insiders said.

The ALCWC also decided to serve show cause notices on 540 party leaders, including seven central ones, for their alleged anti-organisational activities.

The meeting reviewed the country's latest political situation, discussed restoration of party discipline, formation of a relief fund for the victims of government sponsored terrorism, overhauling of the party leadership, joining in parliament proceedings and the party chief's security issue.

Most of the central committee members who attended yesterday's

meeting spoke on their grievance. Several other leaders attended the meeting on special invitation.

According to meeting sources, the AL chief has expressed dissatisfaction over in-discipline by a certain quarter of the party leaders and urged them to refrain from doing activities that goes against the party interest and discipline.

She directed the leaders concerned to issue show-cause notices immediately to the leaders who have been charged with anti-organisational activities.

Hasina called upon her party colleagues to restore discipline in the party rank and file and get prepared for movement against the 'fascist' government.

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## HC asks Natore police Submit statement on alleged repression on Hindus in Lalpur

BSS, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday ordered police to submit a written statement on an alleged repression on Hindus in Lalpur area of Natore during the past three governments.

The court ordered police super of the district to submit the report by February 28 in line with a petition alleging that some 1,400 Hindu families were forced to leave the country due to repression carried out by "Jargis Bahini" at Lalpur from Ershad to Awami League regimes up to 1998.

Dinesh Chandra Biswas, a resident of Doaria village under Lalpur thana, filed the petition with the help of Ain-O-Shaish Kendra on

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# Separation of judiciary Law ministry now awaits PM's green signal

ZAYADUL AHSAN

The law ministry has sought the government's "political decision" on separation of the judiciary from the executive, sources said.

The ministry yesterday sent Prime Minister Khaleda Zia a summary of recommendations on the steps that could be taken in this regard. It is now awaiting directives from the prime minister, the sources added.

According to the summary, the Supreme Court has already given specific guidelines of separating the

judiciary, which have to be implemented by March 17 this year.

As per the Supreme Court guidelines, the ministry has drafted three rules and regulations and a draft bill for amendment to the criminal procedure code (CrPC). These are ready for implementation once the government gives the stamp of approval.

In case the government wanted to explore more options, the ministry suggested formation of a cabinet committee on the issue.

Meanwhile, the pressure on the government to provide independ-

ence to the judiciary has mounted. On Monday, the World Bank at a meeting with the law ministry reviewed the progress of the Legal and Judicial Capacity Building Project and wanted to know the progress on judiciary separation. The Bank was told that the government was taking some time as the method to be followed was yet to be decided.

On Sunday, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court set a fresh deadline, for the last time March 17 this year -- for the govern

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Arshad-uz-Zaman

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Jan 23		5-38 pm
Jan 24	6-42 am	

## Prayer Timings

Jan 23		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-40	6-15
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-43	5-48
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation