

Hasina: Govt torture

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government constructed innumerable roads and bridges during its five-year rule and ruled the country with competence and sincerity.

"We had worked for the people and ensured peace and security of public life and two square meals a day. We turned the country into one with food-surplus and left a strong economic base."

Hasina said for the welfare of the Bastuhara (homeless people) her government had taken a lot of projects, including the popular Asrayan projects, housing project and Ghore Fera scheme.

"We had taken an initiative to ensure home for every homeless and provided homes to 33,000 families under the Asrayan project, which was taken to provide homes for 50,000 families," she said.

But the present government, she said, from the outset is saying that there is no money in the country to create an excuse for selling out gas. "You will have to understand what type of conspiracy is going on against you."

She alleged that the present government is dropping one project after another to create the scope for misappropriating money. They will again start these projects taking "bribes".

The Awami League president said prices of all things increased "for corruption and misrule" of this government.

This government has raised prices of petrol, kerosene, gas and

No-one spoke

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an angry Huda accused the speaker of forcing him to go berserk.

Having gone through similar experience on that day, Industries Minister MK Anwar asked the speaker to allocate a time slot (during the zero hours) to entertain all points of order of a day. Accordingly, Speaker Sircar announced that he would allow such points only after disposal of call attention notices from yesterday.

Parliamentary Affairs Adviser to Prime Minister Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury urged the chair to allow point of order only on genuine issues, however.

But the arguments made little difference yesterday as none of the MPs sought the floor during the allocated time.

23 AL leaders

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Ullah and Abdul Hafiz. But they could not be released from jail as the detention order against them was sent to the Dhaka district magistrate.

All the accused except Mawlawi Abdul Khair, Mafiz Uddin and Mohammad Mohan Hawladar were sent to the Dhaka Central Jail. The three were placed on a one-day remand for interrogation.

Airport police arrested Mohammad Rahmat Ullah, 22, Abdul Khair, 45, Mafiz Uddin Ahmed, 47, and Mohan Hawladar, 52.

Habib Hasan, 38, Sirajul Islam, 40, Ziaul Majumder, 25, Anisuzzaman, 27, Nurul Amin, 28, Mohammad Jewel, 28 and Mukul Hossain, 25, were arrested by Uttara police.

Badsha Mian, 22, Jalal Hossain Talukder, 30, Sento Hossain, 22, and Mosiur Rahman, 29 were arrested by Mirpur police.

Abu Taher, 36, Mohammad Jahangir Hossain, 30 and Ismail Hossain were arrested by Badda police. Mohammad Minhaz Uddin was arrested by Lalbagh police.

Majhul Haq and Jillur Rahman were arrested by Tejgaon police; and Sarafat Hossain, 39, and Abdul Hafiz, 26, were arrested by Kotwali police.

The police, however, refused to accept these arguments.

Growth quadrangle

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Research in India Prof. Charan D. Wadva, Vice-Governor of Yunnan province in China Shao Qiwei, Director General of Myanmar Border Trade Department Ray Winn and CPD Executive Director Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya.

As these four nations are members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the markets of these nations can be more open to each other, the leader of the Chinese delegation and vice-governor of Yunnan province, Shao Qiwei, said.

"We should actively explore methods and ways of conducting further cooperation in making the regional economic activities more efficient," he suggested.

"Under the leadership of the Chinese central government and given the new historic opportunities, Yunnan is willing to make every effort to promote regional economic cooperation," he assured.

Pointing to the strategic importance of Yunnan, he said, "Located on the southwest frontier of China, it is complementary to India, Myanmar and Bangladesh in resources and economic development."

Yunnan took the first initiative for regional economic cooperation among Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar, he recalled.

The home minister of Assam said the time has come to turn the disad-

water, while the prices of rice, edible oil, salt and pulses also increased, but, she said, during the five-year period, there had been no price rise of anything.

Bastuhara League President Tofazzal Hossain Babu, General Secretary Abul Kalam Azad, Erfan Hawladar and Sadequr Rahman also spoke at the meeting.

Awami League leaders former home minister Mohammad Nasim, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, Abdul Mannan, Adul Mannan Khan and Samik League President Abdus Salam Khan were present.

AL may discuss

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February 15 deadline to reply to the show cause notices include joint secretary Mozaffor Hossain Paltu, members of the central steering committee Monayem Sarkar, Siddiqur Rouf Khan, Nurul Fazal Bulbul, Prof. Fazul Huq and Nurul Majid Humayun.

Party insiders said these top leaders would likely be excluded from the central committee.

Their possible replacements are deputy leader of the opposition Abdul Hamid, chief whip of opposition Abdus Shahid, former state minister Syed Abul Hossain, Zafurullah Chowdhury, former parliament member Latif Siddiqui and Saber Hossain Chowdhury.

Contempt petition

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ments earlier.

Barrister M Amirul Islam made his submission before the court. He submitted to the court that Sheikh Hasina did not make such comments and at that time the court wanted to know whether she issued any rejoinder against the published reports.

Amirul Islam answered in the affirmative and the court directed him to submit such rejoinder before the court. As it was not available with Amirul Islam, he prayed for time. Upon his prayer, the court fixed the next date of hearing on February 11 and directed him to submit the same on the day.

'Little' Jonny

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guardians obtained appropriate legal documents proving that he is not the boy they were looking for.

On April 28 1999, the Dhaka Kotwali police arrested a young man named Jonny, aged 25, son of Abdur Rab, hailing from Bakra village under Jhikargacha thana in Jessor.

During interrogation, the youth told the police that his name was Jonny, aged 25, son of Abdur Rab, hailing from Bakra village under Jhikargacha thana in Jessor.

Ershad Shikdar has already been given death sentences in seven murder cases.

Ganges water

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for water data monitoring, including measurement and recording of water level at the Hardinge bridge point, were "in order".

The next meeting of the joint committee will be held in West Bengal at the end of this month.

The committee comprising experts from Bangladesh and India will monitor the water discharge at Farakka.

Embezzlement

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the FIR that the money was embezzled by the principal accused Lutfor Rahman by forged means.

On March 12, 14, 18 and 23 last year he deposited embezzled money in his savings account and also in the savings accounts of two other accused at different dates.

The DGM has further stated that as an employee of the clearing section Lutfor Rahman was assigned to encash cheques through clearing house of Khulna branch of Bangladesh Bank.

These cheques belonging to clients of different branches of Agrani Bank were sent to the corporate branch for clearing through 'Debit Advice'. But accused Lutfor Rahman did not deposit the money to the branches after clearance of the cheques, the FIR said.

Police yesterday arrested Manik Khan, one of the three accused and an employee of Rupali Sea Foods Ltd, Khulna. Others are absconding.

Ershad Shikdar

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acquitted. Twenty six prosecution witnesses were examined as learnt from the 37-page judgement.

The prosecution story in brief is that Insaif, Kamal and Khaleque were called by Ershad Shikdar to Skid Ghat from KDA New Market area on May 27, 1998. The accused took the three to the Ice Factory at Skid Ghat where Ershad himself hacked all the three to death.

At midnight, the bodies were cut into pieces and packed in three large baskets and then dumped into Bhaiarab river as told by Noor-e-Alam in his judicial confession. Handing worker Ayub Ali is the complainant of the case.

Insaif, Kamal and Khaleque were brutally murdered for not supporting Ershad's drug and women traffickings, Noor-e-Alam said.

Ershad and nine other accused were produced in the Judges Court amid unprecedented tight security.

He was not allowed to talk to his relatives including sons. Two platoons of police and two platoons of Armed police battalion were deployed at all key points from jail gate to Judge's Court.

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Border talks

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joined by a 14-member Bangladesh delegation led by Joint Secretary (political) of the Ministry of Home Affairs Janibul Haq, while Meera Shankar, joint secretary (north) of the Ministry of External Affairs led a 13-member Indian delegation.

At the meeting, the JBWG was divided into two components - JBWG-I and JBWG-II - to provide greater opportunity to address different aspects of border issues.

The Indian and Bangladesh sides pledged at the end of the meeting that "further detailed discussions would lead to a resolution of pending issues".

According to JBWG TOR, other outstanding border disputes like intrusion and firing by border guards will not come under the purview of the talks. Nor will the outstanding issues related to maritime border demarcation, trespassing and construction of barbed wire fencing by the Indian side be addressed.

3 rivers

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connection, the BUS will hold a rally at Trimohini village under Khilgaon thana today.

Voluntary organisation 'The Hunger Project' and 'Save Buriganga Movement' have supported their movement.

A similar rally was organised in March last year and about 10,000 people from 37 villages joined it.

Leaders of the BUS yesterday exchanged views with newsmen at Nasirabad High School in the area. Later, they brought out a procession of the villagers to press home their demand.

The school principal countered the argument and said that Jonny, now nine, was only six years old at the time.

The principal told the police that Jonny was present at the school in Jessor, not in Dhaka, as shown in the school's attendance register.

The police, however, refused to accept these arguments.



Visiting delegation of the Communist Party of China placed a wreath at the National Memorial in Savar yesterday to pay tribute to the martyrs in the Liberation War.

Israel asks US for advanced warning in case Iraq attacked

AP, Jerusalem

Israel has asked for advance notice from the United States in case Washington attacks Iraq as part of its war on terrorism, Defence Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer said yesterday.

Ben-Eliezer said he told U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell in a meeting in Washington on Tuesday that Israel needs time to prepare for a possible retaliatory attack by Iraq on the Jewish state.

The defense minister said he did not know whether there were U.S. plans to attack Iraq. The United States has not said if Iraq will be a target in the war on terrorism. In his State of the Union address last week, U.S. President George W. Bush designated Iraq, Iran and North Korea an "axis of evil."

The United States has accused Iraq of supporting terrorism and trying to rebuild its banned weapons programmes.

Ben-Eliezer said he did not give Powell his opinion on whether Iraq

should be attacked. Israel has in the past advocated tough U.S. action against Iraq and Iran.

"In the case of Iraq, it's important that we get an alert beforehand in order to prepare," he told Israel Radio.

"We are taking into consideration that if Iraq will be attacked, we are likely to be one of its first targets."

During the Gulf War in 1991, Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel, causing great damage, mainly in the Tel Aviv area, and killing two people.

Expecting the Scuds might be equipped with chemical or biological warheads, Israel distributed gas masks to citizens at the time. In the end, Iraq fired only conventional warheads.

Following the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States and the U.S. anti-terrorism campaign in Afghanistan, Israelis have crowded gas mask distribution centers to get their equipment checked. But the Israeli army has not yet ordered the population to take special precautions.

The use of Saudi Arabia's Prince Sultan Air Base and other military facilities is seen as essential for the success of any US campaign against neighbouring Iraq.

Another source quoted by Al-Hayat recalled Riyadh's position that any change to the Iraqi regime must come from within the country itself.

At the cabinet committee meeting, the prime minister reminded her colleagues of her election pledges and the government's priority on curbing terrorism and improving law and order. She ordered the officials concerned, specially the field level ones, to work sincerely.

She asked law and order committees at different levels to step up their efforts and ordered formation of new committees where those were not formed as yet. She also stressed increase of police patrol throughout the country and asked officials concerned to discharge their duties without fear and favour.

Home Secretary Dr Sadat Hossain apprised the meeting that confidence has been created among the people about the government's sincerity and transparency in its efforts to improve law and order.

The meeting which was attended by, among others, by LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Law Minister Moudud Ahmed, Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, Livestock Minister Sadek Hossain Khoka, Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas, Education Minister Osman Faruk and State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfuzzaman Babar.

Law & order

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In the city, 40 people were murdered last month.

In its 100-day programme, the government also identified 23 top terrorists as most wanted criminals in the city and announced reward for nabbing them. But none of them could be arrested as yet.

He said the government in the name of judicial inquiry has shelved the sensational murder cases and bomb blasts, including the much-talked-about Udchi killing and Ramma blast.

"The government has made a design to protect the main accused, who are now in the ruling coalition," he said.

Murder, arson, rape, looting and repression on the opposition activists.

The government does not even allow the opposition political parties to raise their voice against its misdeeds, Nasim alleged.

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