

Impeach president

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debated earlier than fourteen nor later than thirty days after the notice is so delivered: and the speaker shall forthwith summon parliament if it is not in session."

The lawmakers observed that a president nominated by the party could not ignore the contribution of the party's founder. "If he wanted to be neutral, why did he nominate his son at the parliamentary seat vacated by him?" asked another lawmaker.

Meeting sources said, Deputy Minister for LGRD Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu opened the discussion on the president's role and many others joined it. Ziaul Haq Zia, the LGRD state minister however tried to quell the tension, saying that it would be wise to discuss the issue at higher levels of the party.

Fifteen mostly young lawmakers spoke at the parliamentary forum on various issues including the latest political situation, law and order situation and organisational position.

Prime Minister and Leader of the House Khaleda Zia presided over the lengthy meeting attended by 190 lawmakers. The meeting was adjourned till 4:00pm today.

Several lawmakers mentioned the reception awarded to Leader of

Karzai sworn in as president

AFP, Kabul

Hamid Karzai was sworn in yesterday as president of Afghanistan's new transitional administration in a ceremony which marked the end of the nine-day Loya Jirga grand assembly.

Karzai swore to "protect the independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan in the name of God".

The newly installed leader then thanked the organisers of the Loya Jirga for their work over the past few months in the build-up to the grand assembly.

"I think the (Loya Jirga) commission for all the hard work they have done over the last five months," he said.

Special commemorative medals were awarded to several dignitaries including UN envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, US envoy Zalmay Khalilzad, the outgoing commander of the International Security Assistance Force General John McColl and Loya Jirga chairman Mohammad Ismail Qasimyar.

the Opposition Sheikh Hasina at Munshiganj by Mahi B Chowdhury, son of the president, who won the seat vacated by the president.

"Should we give reception to the Leader of the Opposition when she visits our constituencies?" asked one.

The BNP lawmakers observed that a dual administration ruling over the Ministry of Home Affairs was reason for deteriorating law and order situation, and demanded strict measures against it.

Some of the lawmakers who spoke in the meeting also praised the role of prime minister's eldest son Tarique Zia in the last election and requested her to make him the BNP chief.

Among others, Mashiur Rahman, Nadim Mostafa, Ilyas Ali, Rustam Ali Farazi, Shahid uddin Ahmed Any, Fazul Haq Milon, Helauzzaman Talukder Lalu, Sultan Mohammad and Shamsuzzoha spoke at the meeting.

Sedition case Shafiur Rahman, 4 others granted permanent bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday granted permanent bail to former home secretary and incumbent election commissioner Shafiur Rahman and four others in a sedition case.

Judge (in-charge) Mollah Mostafa Kamal passed the order upon a petition seeking permanent bail for the accused.

Earlier on May 27, the same court had granted ad interim bail to the accused till yesterday.

The four other accused are former student relationship officer in the education ministry and incumbent officer on special duty (OSD) in the establishment ministry Abu Alam Mohammad Shahid Khan, former joint secretary to the women's affairs ministry and incumbent member of public service commission Sirajuddin Ahmed, former senior assistant secretary and incumbent OSD in the establishment ministry Rabbiul Alam Mohammad Obaidul Muktadir Chowdhury and former president of Secretariat Karmachari Sangjukta Parishad Syed Mohiuddin.

Jubo League activist beaten to death in Feni

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Feni

A Jubo League activist was beaten to death by some Jubo Dal activists at Daulatpur in sadar upazila yesterday morning.

The victim, Delwar Hossain, 32, son of Ali Ahmed of village Daulatpur came under attack while he was returning home from Feni town in a microbus at about 8-30 pm.

The Jubo Dal activists stopped the bus, dragged him out of the vehicle and beat him mercilessly.

Hearing the incident, police from Dhulia police post rushed to the spot and rescued him in a critical condition. They sent him to the Sadar hospital where he succumbed to injuries at about 3:30 am.

After autopsy police handed over the body of Delwar to his family.

A case was filed with Feni sadar police station yesterday in this regard.

None, however, was arrested till 9 pm yesterday.

Garment employee shot dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An armed gang killed the embroidery-in-charge of a garment factory at Mirpur in the city yesterday.

Mohammad Sagar, 25, of the Opex Garments, was shot dead in front of his workplace at section No. 13 in Mirpur at 5:30pm. Sagar was accompanied by his friend Golam Mostafa during the incident.

Sources said the body of Sagar, a resident of Banani, was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy.

The duty officer of the Kafrul Police Station said last night that he was aware of the incident. Some police officers were sent to the spot. But none could be arrested in connection with the killing, he said.

War fallout

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should without delay chart out a contingency plan in case of war between the two nations.

Although they seem to have retreated from the path to war, Bangladesh must have its own contingencies in place to combat any nuclear fallout.

Deputy leader

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said, another section of BNP leaders was trying to pursue Khaleda Zia to create more than one post both of deputy leader and deputy prime minister to make all contenders happy.

Yet another section argued that it would not be wise to create more posts because the cabinet is already being criticised both in and outside the party for its largeness.

The leaders said the creation of the post of deputy prime minister does not arise at all because Khaleda is still quite active and physically fit.

She is attending both office and parliament regularly, so creating the post of deputy prime minister is unnecessary and may make more party leaders aspirants, as happened after formation of a 60-member jumbo cabinet.

Due to these conflicting suggestions, said the BNP sources, the prime minister may not appoint a deputy leader or introduce a new post of deputy prime minister right now.

Judiciary

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instead of forming the commissions. Besides, the proposed structure of the service commission is not in line with the 12-point directive.

At this stage, the court inquired about the structure of the service commission. The AG explained that a judge of the Appellate Division would head the seven-member commission. Its members would include a representative from the Public Service Commission (PSC), the law secretary, the finance secretary, the dean of the Law faculty of Dhaka University, the district judge of Dhaka and the registrar of the Supreme Court.

The court then said this structure does not comply with the 12-point directive because it sought a commission having majority members from the higher and the lower courts and the judiciary. If the PSC could operate without secretaries, why should the Judicial Service Commission need them? the court asked.

After coming to power through the October 1 general election, the present government got shifted four times the deadline for implementing the 12-point directive given on December 2, 1999.

Earlier, the Awami League government and the caretaker government got the deadline shifted nine times.



Prime Minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia presiding over the BNPPP meeting at the Sangsad Bhaban yesterday.

Shady shipbuilding

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An insider said the draftsmen under the Mechanical and Marine Engineering Cell of the BIWTA usually follow a single stereotypically designed vessel for every prospective owner. The design is duly signed by the naval architect and it gets the final approval for construction. Sources said the approval costs about Tk 25,000.

The draftsman-in-charge of the scheme then directs the prospective owner to one of the many shipbuilders along the Buriganga or Sitalakhya rivers to find a place to rent and construct a dockyard, sources added.

The process of building the ship starts at the hands of a contractor, who has little or no formal education to begin with. The contractor is responsible for arranging raw materials, ensuring quality welding and strictly following the design.

According to experts, during the building of a vessel there is hardly any supervision. Owners are concerned with their expenses and contractors usually ensure the investor the 'best value for their money' by using 'cheap' materials for the construction.

Abdur Rahim, associate professor at the BUET's Department of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering, said given the existing shipbuilding facilities in these

numerous dockyards, none of the vessels are made with watertight decks -- a vital component for its safety. If this safety precaution is taken, the ship's durability and resistance can be improved tremendously. "With our huge manpower and expertise, this sector could produce quality vessels but constructing such a vessel may increase the cost by 20 per cent," he added.

Rahim also said if the owner is forced to comply with some of these vital requirements during the construction, he will eventually save a lot of expenses in damages and maintenance. He pointed out that every year crores of taka worth of goods is lost as faulty vessels take water in their hull and sink.

After two launch accidents last month in which over 500 people have died, the government announced that stringent measures would be taken to ensure safety in the country's waterways. So far government actions have been restricted within meetings and pledges. Last week, the Ministry of Shipping held a meeting at its premises deciding that officials would have to sit with the experts to take up measures.

An expert requesting anonymity told The Daily Star that there is no need to import any technology from abroad to develop the country's shipbuilding sector. "If you are

sincere, you can organise the sector within a very short time because you have a rich tradition in shipbuilding and most importantly, a qualified manpower waiting to be picked up," said the expert.

SPA detention

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ministry extended their one-month detention order.

Advocate Khan Saifur Rahman appeared represented the detainees while Additional Attorney General Abdur Rezak Khan and Assistant Attorney General Zaman Akhter Bulbul appeared on behalf of the government.

Earlier on April 15, a broader bench of the High Court comprising Justice Shah Abu Naim Mominur Rahman, Justice Bijon Kumar Das and Justice Khademul Islam Chowdhury had also declared illegal extension of the detention period.

While delivering its judgement on a writ filed by former lawmaker Mookbul Hossain challenging the extension of his detention, the court said that the detainee shall have to be brought before the Advisory Council and that detention can only be extended as per the approval of the council.

The Advisory Council usually is composed of two judges from the High Court Division and one high government official.

Israel retakes two towns

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torry illegally.

Most were sent back to the West Bank, while the rest were detained for trial, the radio said. It did not give any precise figures and police officials were not immediately available for comment.

The Palestinian leadership condemned the announcement of Israel's get-tough policy, calling it "part of a plan aiming to destroy our institutions."

"This aggression aims to wipe out the international diplomatic efforts to put the peace process back on track and stop the crimes of the Israeli occupation forces," a statement said.

The hardening of Israel's position came as US President George W. Bush was finalising a peace plan based on the creation of a Palestinian state that Sharon, standing amid the debris of Tuesday's bombing, angrily rejected.

There was no immediate US reaction.

Israeli officials expressed the hope their actions would not compromise Bush's peace efforts but made it clear that they could not stand by while the suicide attacks continued.

Palestinian and Israeli officials said Israeli infantry units backed by dozens of tanks as well as armoured personnel carriers and helicopter gunships moved into Jenin and its refugee camp around dawn.

The camp was the scene in April of the fiercest fighting in Israel's six-week West Bank military offensive.

Palestinian security sources said the Israelis arrested more than 10 militants in the town, from where several suicide bombers have originated. A local hospital was taken over and its director arrested.

The army also entered the home of the local leader of the Islamic Jihad group in the refugee camp. He was not there but his 70-year-old mother died of a heart attack in the commotion, the sources said.

They said the Israeli army had towed at least five caravans by trailer into the Jenin refugee camp, suggesting it was going to stay for some time.

The Israeli spokesman said the army also reoccupied Qalqilya further south, briefly occupied Nablus, and arrested five Palestinians around the West Bank towns of Hebron and Bethlehem.

In Washington, Bush was determined to keep his peace efforts on track, fine-tuning a strategy for ending the nearly 21-month-old conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

"We believe in peace in the Middle East, that we're going to be steadfast toward a vision that rejects terror and killing," the US leader said Tuesday.

Aides have said that Bush was mulling a proposal for the creation of a "provisional" Palestinian state and could call for an international confer-

ence to discuss the matter.

Bush had been expected to speak yesterday. But a well-informed Israeli source told AFP that the speech had been put off until at least today and tomorrow "and there is strong pressure not to deliver it at all."

The source, who asked not to be identified, said the Americans started to have misgivings a few days ago but doubts were heightened after Tuesday's bombing.

The source said the debate in Washington had sharpened between US Secretary of State Colin Powell, who favours a peace initiative, and hardliners such as Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

A US official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, confirmed the rumblings within the administration but doubted Bush would scrap his remarks altogether.

The Washington Post, citing US and diplomatic sources, said Bush's new Middle East policy would call for the early creation of a provisional Palestinian state and the completion of negotiations over permanent borders within three years.

It said Bush would propose that the plan be adopted at a Middle East peace conference, tentatively set for September, provided there had been progress in revamping Palestinian security forces and reducing violence against Israelis.



Israeli border guards check identity of a Palestinian man at the Surda checkpoint, on the northern exit of the West Bank city of Ramallah yesterday. Israel pushed into West Bank towns and vowed to occupy the territory until Palestinian militant attacks are halted. A suicide bombing killed 19 Israelis Tuesday on a bus traveling from Gilo, a controversial Jewish settlement.

JS proceedings

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have reflected their bad taste... We can't sit with them in the House," Hamid said, reacting sharply to what was said about the opposition leader the day before.

On Tuesday, the parliament approved the resolution censuring Hasina for her remarks about the burial of late president Ziaur Rahman. The motion termed as 'vulgar, filthy, derogatory and unfortunate' Hasina's comment that slain president's body was not in his Sher-e-Bangla Nagar grave.

"To prove that he is neutral, the speaker must delete the entire proceeding on the unconstitutional motion. Otherwise, we'll be forced to conclude that he is not neutral and does not want us to join the House."

Commenting on the role of Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar, Hamid said he (speaker) appeared to be a puppet as the ruling coalition lawmakers were blasting the opposition

leader freestyle. "The speaker was a mere statue seated in the chair."

Hamid, also the immediate-past speaker, called illegal the way the motion was moved by a BNP MP and accepted by the chair. "Relevant rules were not followed in bringing the supplementary agenda to the resolution for which the scheduled agenda was suspended," he said. "This proves the sovereign parliament has been turned into a platform of the four-party alliance."

The deputy opposition leader said it was very unfortunate that the House took up for discussion a statement the opposition leader had made outside the parliament.

He also echoed Hasina's claim that neither his widow (Prime Minister Khaleda Zia) nor his sons saw the late president's body.

AL reaction

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ment giving the party's reactions to the vote of censure on the opposition leader for her remarks on ex-president Zia's mazaar.

When discussion on the budget should be the main agenda of the budget session, it digressed to an "irrelevant" matter about Sheikh Hasina, he said.

"It's not only unprecedented but also a smear on the history of parliamentary democracy."

Zillur, apparently to defend his party chief, said, "It's still fresh in the people's memory that after the killing of Ziaur Rahman, his torn and twisted body was buried in Raozan."

The statement said Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and her disciples are the beneficiaries of "politics of falsehood" involving a dead body wrapped up in coffin.

The people still remember that Khaleda had also stated that she could not see the body of her husband. Even the orphaned sons of Zia could not see their father's body for obvious reasons. "And the reason is that the body was not Zia's," the AL statement said.

It questioned why the BNP government coming to power thrice did not take any initiative for the trial of the killers of Zia. Even the Khaleda Zia government stopped the inquiry into the Zia murder case.

Moreover, the dates for the hearing on the Zia murder case were fixed 150 times in a court in Chittagong. Also, Khaleda Zia did not take any step, says the AL.

"Why does she keep mum? Where lies the mystery?" Zillur asked.

Zillur said the opposition leader questioned the logic of the budgetary allocation of Tk 100 crore for renovation of Zia's mazaar where the body of Ziaur Rahman was not buried and of imposing new taxes and VAT on the common people at the same time.

It is a violation of parliamentary convention and practice to have a discussion on a resolution (general) by ignoring the rules 32, 147, 156 and 270 of the rules of procedure, suspending the remaining business of the day, Zillur said.

It is the responsibility of the speaker to conduct the proceedings of parliament following the constitution and rules of procedure, he added.

"But the speaker being a pawn of the government injured the sentiments of the nation."

Zillur said Awami League President Sheikh Hasina being a pious woman prays five times a day and recites the Qur'an. She, he said, dedicated herself to the cause of the people.

Censure jolts AL plan

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Central Working Committee (ALWC) and 58-strong AL Parliamentary Party at 10:00am at a community centre in the city's Dhanmondi area.

"This meeting will decide the timing of our joining the current budget session of the eighth parliament unless the government's aggressive move of censoring our leader in the Jatiya Sangsad sways the mood of the meeting otherwise. I hope that does not happen and we decide in favour of joining the parliament," said a senior AL lawmaker, on condition of anonymity.

Another lawmaker said the parliament's adopting a resolution censuring the opposition leader has hurt the AL leaders and workers. He added many of them might ventilate their anger against the government and the resolution at today's joint meeting.

"Though the development angered all of us very much, I hope our leaders at today's joint meeting decide in favour of joining the parliament," said a presidium member of the party, who also preferred not to be named.

Earlier at a two-day meeting of the ALWC, held on June 10 and 11, the main opposition party agreed in principle to end the party's prolonged parliament boycott.

An overwhelming majority of the AL lawmakers favoured going to the parliament. But at the same time, they expressed deep concern at the Jatiya Sangsad's adoption of a resolution on Wednesday condemning the leader of the opposition for her remarks about late president Ziaur

Rahman.

At a meeting with a group of lawyers in the city on Monday, Hasina had claimed that the body of late president Zia was not there at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar where his grave is. "Let them prove it, let there be a DNA test," she was quoted Tuesday by newspapers as saying.

Meanwhile, speaking on condition of anonymity, some AL lawmakers felt that the party president had better not talk about the sensitive issue, particularly when country's democracy is at a crossroad.

However, justifying Hasina's picking the issue at this time, a senior AL presidium member said, "She raised the issue of Zia's grave while discussing on the proposed budget. The point was raised because the government is planning to spend a huge amount of money for beautification of the grave while suspending construction of a monument in tribute to the War of Independence at Suhrawardy Udyan."

Akbar

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200 million for the container terminal. "We have to protect Chittagong Port," he said.

"We have also proposed that both the sides will handle half of the containers when their number exceeds nine lakh a year. They (SSA) are also not ready to accept it," Akbar said.

The minister said Chittagong Port handled 4.5 lakh containers last year. In next five years, the number would be around 9 lakh a year.

Meanwhile, the issue of container terminal whipped up a debate and sparked agitation by the trade unions at Chittagong Port.

The High Court recently stayed building of the private container terminal in Chittagong.

The minister also said a committee would be formed to recommend reduction of various charges at the port. It will also identify 'unseen charges'. The committee will include representatives of the port users.

He mentioned that there is no estimate of nearly 60 per cent of the money spent by businessmen for export and import purposes at the port.

Akbar felt that shipping should get at least 25 per cent of the budgetary allocation for communication sector. But in the proposed budget, 'only 1.9 per cent of the amount has been allocated for shipping,' he noted.

FBCCI President Yussuf Abdullah Harun, among others, also spoke on the occasion. Managing Director of Kuehne and Nagel Ltd Rafi Omar gave the keynote speech.

Game

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Portugal and Italy -- have made them only the second Asian side to get this far, after neighbours North Korea in 1966.

Senegal, who upset defending champions France and Denmark to emulate Cameroon's 1990 feat, are only the second African team to reach the last eight.

The United States, as big a surprise as any in the tournament, have beaten Portugal and Mexico.

Europe, who have four teams left -- England, Germany, Spain and Turkey, have their lowest ever representation though they also had just four sides in the 1970 quarter-finals in Mexico.

South America have just four-times World Cup winners Brazil carrying the continent's hopes.

Only seven teams have won the World Cup and three are left in the competition -- Brazil, Germany and England.

A few more shocks would be needed for an eighth team to win the trophy but, at these finals, nothing is impossible anymore.