

# AL storms out of JS

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discussion on prices of essentials in the current session, which will continue until December 2 with a long Eid break.

The AL demanded discussions on price spiral of essentials, 'crossfire' deaths in the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) custody, grenade attacks on AL's Bangabandhu Avenue rally, monga and the verdict in the jail killing case, adjourning the House's business.

But the ruling party rejected the demands except a general discussion on price hike. Speaker Jamir Uddin Sircar will decide when the discussion will take place.

After yesterday's business, the speaker invited the AL lawmakers to apprise them of the Bac decision on general discussion. An AL delegation headed by Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shahid met the speaker at his chamber and again demanded discussions on the Rab activities, custodial deaths and crossfire in particular.

On September 14, the main opposition staged a walkout of the House in protest against speaker's refusal to hold discussions on grenade attack adjourning regular business of the House. The AL, however, decided later to join the current session.

The AL parliamentary party (ALPP) at a meeting yesterday morning decided to stage 'unprecedented' protest in the current JS session against failures of the BNP-led coalition government to control skyrocketing prices of essentials, meeting sources said.

The AL lawmakers would continue to raise protest on some crucial issues through call attention notices and point of order. The parliamentary party will sit again on Sunday to discuss the latest development and review its strategy, sources said.

Walking out of the Bac meeting, Opposition Deputy Leader Abdul Hamid told reporters that ruling party leaders had obstructed them from speaking at the meeting. Even the finance minister undermined them giving 'unparliamentary' speeches.

Asked about the allegation, Saifur Rahman at first declined to comment and asked reporters to talk to the speaker who chaired the meeting. But after a volley of questions from the reporters he said, "What allegations? It was our right what we have said."

**BAC MEETING**  
Joining the Bac meeting, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid demanded discussions in the House on a number of issues including the August 21 grenade attacks. But Speaker Jamir Uddin

## Tigers

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Sircar claimed the issue was already discussed in the last session in accordance with a decision of the Bac on September 12.

Hamid and Abdus Shahid then challenged the speaker's claim and said there was no such decision at Bac meeting. They asked for producing the proceedings of that meeting.

In response, the speaker told the opposition members: "There is no precedent for giving the business advisory committee meeting proceedings."

"At this point Saifur Rahman interrupted the speaker and told us that we have no right to get the proceedings," said Abdul Hamid. "We did not get such proceedings during your term and we will not give you this time," Hamid quoted Saifur as saying.

The finance minister frequently prevented us from speaking at the meeting and the way he talked was 'indecent,' said Hamid, a former speaker.

At the meeting Abdus Shahid asked the speaker to tell under which provision the August 21 grenade attack was discussed in the last session where the treasury bench members in their free-style speeches accused the AL of the attack.

"You rejected our demands of House adjournment for holding the discussion saying that the matter is sub judice, then how you allowed discussion on it?" he posed the question.

The Bac decided that the current session will be continued until December 2 with a 23-day break from November 5 to November 27 for Shab-e-Qadr and Eid-ul-Fitr.

The House will sit at 1:30pm until November 4 and at 4:15pm from November 28.

### YESTERDAY'S SESSION

Yesterday's business started at 1:45pm, 15 minutes behind schedule, and was adjourned 30 minutes later after speaker's welcome address, nomination of a five-member panel of chairmen and adoption of an obituary reference.

The obituary reference was adopted at the death of BNP lawmaker KM Abu Taher, five former lawmakers and an official of the parliament secretariat. Both treasury and opposition bench took part in a short discussion on Taher.

Opposition deputy leader Abdul Hamid and Abdul Kader Siddique of Krishak Sramik Janata League said normal death has become a rare case these days amid downside of law and order. "Abu Taher is lucky as his death was normal," Hamid said.

The House will resume at 1:30pm on Sunday.

Bangladesh will have to score another 153 runs to make the Black Caps, who declared their first innings on 545 for 6, bat again.

The hosts, who were 82-3 in the first innings overnight, added exactly 100 runs before being bundled out shortly after lunch and were forced to follow-on. But the home side suffered an all-too-familiar batting collapse before stand-in captain Khaled Mashud's third half-century (51 off 87 balls) inspired a fightback by the tail.

Rafique hit some lusty blows – five fours and a six against a very attacking field setting – with Baisya giving him company in the final half-hour's play.

Vettori, who grabbed 6-70 in the first innings, was once again the wrecker-in-chief and accomplished his second 10-wicket haul when he took 4-77 in the second essay. The Left-arm spinner, who captured eight wickets in Dhaka including six in the second innings, appeared unplayable with his bounce and turn to help Stephen Fleming's men take 15 wickets on the day. Wiseman has so far taken five wickets in the match.

The rot began early in the morning when Mohammad Ashraful decided to go down the wicket and hit over the top even before setting his eyes in. It was only the second delivery of the day when he drove Baisya into the safe hands of Nathan Astle. Top scorer for the Tigers with 67 in the first Test, Ashraful finished the test on a pair when he was dismissed by Vettori in the second innings for a four-ball duck.

Overnight 45, Javed Omar completed his fifth Test fifty and became the second Bangladeshi batsman to cross the 1,000-run mark in Test cricket after Habibul Bashar, who has 2,079. But the opener gave up soon when he was caught by Scott Styris off Wiseman on 58.

With two fours and three sixes in his 40-ball 32, left-hander Rafique also played an entertaining knock in the first innings, but that was nowhere near to getting his side past the follow-on mark.

## Arafat

**FROM PAGE 12**

U.S. ally, who see him as an obstacle to peace.

Doctors from Jordan arrived at Arafat's battered compound in the Israeli-encircled West Bank city of Ramallah to carry out tests and Arafat's wife Suha planned to return home from France after years apart, officials said.

An Egyptian medical team was also expected.

Raanan Gissin, a spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, said in Jerusalem that Israel would allow Arafat to travel anywhere for medical treatment as a humanitarian gesture.

Asked whether Israel would permit Arafat to return to the West Bank should he leave, Gissin said: "If the doctors will say that he needs to come back after he receives treatment, Israel will not impose any restrictions on that."

Arafat had said it could not guarantee Arafat's return if he ever left Ramallah, but Sharon shifted course after speaking on the telephone with Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei late on Wednesday.

Arafat, a short, stubble-bearded Palestinian icon usually seen in his trademark black-and-white Arab headdress, has named no successor in the decade since emerging from exile under interim peace accords.

Should he die, speaker of parliament Rawhi Fattouh would replace him as Palestinian Authority president for a 60-day period during which elections would be held.

Arafat's incapacitation or death could raise fresh questions about Sharon's unilateral plan for withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the West Bank in 2005, a move that has caused political turmoil in the Jewish state.

Sharon has said that with Arafat in power, Israel has no negotiating partner, forcing him to go it alone to "disengage" from conflict with the Palestinians.

Gissin said it was premature to speculate on the fate of the pullout if Arafat died, but if any new Palestinian leadership met "its obligation to fight terrorism" and institute reforms "we can reconsider our overall disengagement plan".

Israel accuses Arafat of fomenting violence after peace talks collapsed four years ago, an allegation he denies.

At Arafat's compound, his cousin, security chief Mussa Arafat, said the president "ate cornflakes this morning and was able to walk to the bathroom." Other officials said Arafat had managed to say his morning Muslim prayers.

Medical sources said he had been suffering frequent relapses and sometimes appeared dazed and did not recognise those around him. Officials denied Israeli reports he has cancer.

Arafat has for many years suffered from shaking – symptomatic of Parkinson's disease. Aides, however, have said it was the result of a 1992 plane crash.

Arafat shared a Nobel Peace prize with Israeli leaders Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, but peace talks on a final agreement for a Palestinian state collapsed in 2000 and bloodshed followed swiftly.

Blaming Awami League for the murder of Rouf, JCD activists brought out procession, held rally and damaged some shops and passing vehicles.

On foreign trade, the update said the surge in exports continued in FY2005 with year-on-year export rising by 26.4 percent in July-August 2004, mainly due to robust performance of knitwear and garments. The impacts of forthcoming Multi-fibre Arrangement phase-out and the flood



PHOTO: STAR

Commuters get stuck in a long traffic tailback on the road at Kalabagan that stretched as far as Mirpur Road in the capital yesterday thanks to traffic mismanagement ahead of the Eid.

## 9 more controversial

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almost all the selected candidates.

The RU advertised four posts for the five-year honours-and-masters courses of three languages – two posts for Persian and one for Sanskrit and Urdu each. The selection committee, however, chose four candidates for the Persian language, three for Sanskrit and two for Urdu.

Among the four candidates selected for Persian language, two each are from ruling BNP's student front Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and coalition partner Jamaat-e-Islami's student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS).

Umme Qulsum Minni, who is among the selected, is Women Affairs Secretary of present RU unit of JCD, while Ataur Rahman is President of Shah Mokhund Hall unit JCD and a member of the former convening committee of RU JCD.

The two others – Shahidul Islam and Nasir Uddin – are well known on the campus as cadres of ICS who are still active in the party politics.

JCD leader Ataur is an accused in the case filed early this year by ICS

men for the January 13 and 14 violence on the campus that left an ICS activist killed and more than 50 students injured.

Shahidul Islam is also an accused in a campus violence case filed in 1996 by the then JCD leaders.

Shahidul Islam was found guilty in political processions, meetings and demonstrations on the campus in recent months, said sources adding that they had played roles in many terrorist activities.

Among the three candidates for Sanskrit language, Nuruddin Badshah has links with BNP while Jubli Biswas is wife of Prof Dr Nikhil Ranjan Biswas, a teacher of the department.

Chosen Urdu language candidates Osman Gani and Sharifullah have connections with the politics of ICS.

Language department Chairman and a member of the selection committee Prof Dr Md Nurul Huda refused to comment on the allegations adding that no more details could be given before the syndicate opens the sealed list for endorsement.

The law will be tabled before the cabinet on December 17 after its review and scrutiny.

Food and Disaster Management

Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain, Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman, State Minister for Land Ukip Abdus Sattar Bhuiyan, State Minister for Environment and Forest Jafur Islam Chowdhury and other high officials attended the cabinet meet.

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