



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina talks to US Ambassador Patricia A Butenis, left, and outgoing Indian High Commissioner Veena Sikri, right, when they call on her at Sudha Sadan in the city yesterday.

### CG chief urged to perform duty neutrally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of two rights organisations yesterday urged the president to appoint competent and neutral persons as the advisers to the caretaker government and to create a peaceful environment in the country.

Bangladesh Manobadhikar Samonnoy Parishad (BMSP) and Shushashoner Janney Nagorik (Shujan) held a brief rally and took out a peace procession from Shahbagh that ended at Muktang in the city.

Though the president has been able to give the nation a sense of relief, as he became the chief of caretaker government, he should perform his duty neutrally, the speakers said.

They also demanded that an independent secretariat of the Election Commission (EC) should be established.

The demands also include democracy within the political party, compulsory registration for the political parties, providing detailed information of the candidates to the voters, provision of 'no-vote' and introduction of a system to recall the elected representatives.

President of Shujan and prominent economist Prof Mozaffer Ahmed, Columnist Abul Moksud, former Chief News Editor of Bangladesh Television Rafikul Islam Sarkar, President of BMSP AHM Noman, Dr Nuruddin of Sheba and Tushar Rehman of Citizens' Rights Movement also spoke at the rally.

### Implement 11-pt of 14-party to prove neutrality

#### South Asian People's Union tells Iajuddin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

South Asian People's Union against Fundamentalism and Communalism and Forum for Secular Bangladesh yesterday called on President and Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed to prove himself to be neutral by implementing the 11-point reform proposal of the 14-party combine.

The reform proposal must be implemented without delay in order to hold the 9th parliamentary election in a free, fair and peaceful manner, they said in a statement.

They also urged the President to cancel contractual appointments and remove the officials appointed on political considerations in the Election Commission, civil administration and police department.

At the same time, those who were transferred, suspended or made OSD for their neutrality and out of political vengeance should be brought back to their respective posts, they added.

They said thousands of Islamist militants are still in hiding and the vested quarters would use them during the election.

They called on the chief adviser to arrest godfathers of the militants, extract information about their network and activities from them and make those public.

They also demanded arrest of and punishment to those responsible for repression of religious minorities that began after the takeover of the caretaker government in 2001.

Otherwise, there might be a repeat of such incidents in a larger scale this time, they added.

### JP (Monju) concerned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A presidium meeting of the Jatiya Party (Monju) yesterday expressed deep concern over massive political violence across the country during the transfer of power and formation of a caretaker government.

The meeting urged President and Chief Advisor of the caretaker government Prof Iajuddin Ahmed to take necessary steps for making the next election process safe, neutral and acceptable to all.

The meeting presided over by party chairman Anwar Hossain Monju underscored the need for participation of all political parties for creating a congenial atmosphere.

The meeting also demanded necessary steps for making the administration and election commission free from all political influence, says a press release.

The signatories to the statement included Prof Kabir Chowdhury, Binodbihari Chowdhury, Justice KM Sobhan, Advocate Gaziul Haque, Kalim Sharafi, Ajoy Roy, Maj Gen (retd) CR Dutt, Prof Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir, Barrister Shafik Ahmed, journalist Kamal Lohani, Hasan Azizul Haq, artist Qayyum Chowdhury, Hashem Khan, Rafiqunnabi, Syed Shamsul Haq, Rabiul Husain, Shahriar Kabir, Prof Muntasir Mamun, Muhammad Zafar Iqbal and Kazi Mukul.

In another statement, progressive teachers of Jahangirnagar University urged the chief adviser of the caretaker government to depoliticise the administration in order to hold a free and fair election.

The signatories to the statement included Prof Khondaker Moudud Elahi, Prof Suvash Chandra Das, Dr Tajul Islam, Dr Ajit Kumar Majumder, Prof Mahmuda Gani Ahmad, Prof Mohammad Salimullah and Prof Sabiha Sultana.

### Prof Yunus to address microcredit summit

UNB, Dhaka

Nobel Peace Prize winner Prof Muhammad Yunus will speak at the Global Microcredit Summit 2006 beginning on November 12 in Canada.

More than 2,000 delegates from over 100 countries are expected to take part in the global event organised by the Microcredit Summit Campaign, according to a press release received from Washington, DC.

The delegates would assess the progress made toward the Campaign's goal of reaching 100 million of the world's poorest people.

### Bomb attacks on GF leaders condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Forum (GF) and 11-party have condemned the bomb attacks on their leaders by Jamaat-Shibir activists in different districts on Monday.

In a statement yesterday Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain expressed concern over the attack on Fazle Hossain Badshah from a rally of Jamaat-Shibir in Rajshahi.

He also condemned the attacks on MA Latif, president of Chandpur District Gono Forum and MH Kabir, a Gono Forum leader of Mymensingh.

Dr Kamal demanded punishment of the miscreants responsible for the attacks.

Meanwhile, 11-party at a meeting in Rajshahi yesterday urged the caretaker government to stop Jamaat-Shibir activists from carrying out their violent activities.

The 11-party leaders also urged the President to prove his neutrality.

They will hold a press conference today.

The meeting was attended by 11-party Coordinator Nurul Islam, Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon and General Secretary Bimol Biswas and Presidium Member of Gono Forum Pankaj Bhattacharya.

## 'Remove officials appointed on political considerations'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Civil Service Samannay Committee and Cadre and Non-Cadre Engineers' Action Committee yesterday urged the President to remove the top officials appointed on political considerations and cancel all contractual appointments in order to ensure neutrality of the administration.

They said the decision to cancel contractual appointments of nine secretaries is a positive step, but transfer of only 18 secretaries will do little to ensure impartiality as they were transferred from an important ministry to another important ministry such as home affairs and local government.

Besides, there are no changes in other ministries such as establishment, education and agriculture, the committee leaders said at a joint meeting held at the Institution of Engineers, with Samannay Committee President Md Nurul Huda in the chair.

They also alleged that most officials were promoted to the level of deputy secretary and above in the last five years on political considerations.

They demanded that these officials be replaced with efficient and qualified persons, thereby ensuring impartiality of the civil administration.

Samannay Committee Secretary

General Md Nazrul Islam, Mesbahur Rahman Tutul, Dr Mushtak Hossain, AKMA Hamid and Ashraf Ali Khan attended the meeting.

### Short film festival postponed

BSS, Dhaka

The Future Short Film Festival which was to be held at British Council auditorium from November 2 has been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances.

The festival will be rescheduled later, said a press release.



Karmojibi Nari, a women's rights organisation, stages a demonstration in front of Bangabhaban yesterday demanding that one-third of advisers in the caretaker government should be women.



Bangladesh Manobadhikar Samonnoy Parishad (BMSP) and Shushashoner Janney Nagorik (Shujan) take out a peace procession in the city yesterday.