

Pak envoy calls on Khaleda

UNB, Dhaka

Pakistan High Commissioner to Bangladesh Alamgir Babar called on BNP Chairperson and former prime minister Khaleda Zia at her Banani office yesterday evening.

It could not be known what they discussed during their 45-minute meeting, as there was no press briefing.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, former foreign minister M Morshed Khan and BNP Chairperson's Adviser Riaz Rahman were present at the meeting.



PHOTO: STAR
Pakistan High Commissioner to Bangladesh Alamgir Babar calls on BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her Banani office in the city yesterday.

Court orders to attach RCCI furniture

RU CORRESPONDENT

A court in Rajshahi ordered to attach furniture of Rajshahi Chamber of Commerce and Industries (RCCI) building worth Tk 50 lakh.

The open tender of the furniture will be held on February 15, 2007.

RCCI sources said former RCCI president Mustafizur Rahman Suja filed an election forgery case in 1997 against his opponent, the then president Muhammad Ali Sarkar with Rajshahi District Joint Judge Court.

Later, as the then president did not respond to the case in the court and did not attend before the court for long, the court handed down a verdict recently against the RCCI.

In the verdict, the court ordered to attach goods of the chamber building worth Tk 50 lakh.

Blaming former president, the present president of the RCCI Lutfor Rahman said due to the negligence of Muhammad Ali, the goods of the newly constructed three-storey building is on the way to open tender.

On Sunday morning, court staffs hanged notices to the RCCI gate by beating drum. We are going for a legal battle, said the president.

Muhammad Ali told the reporters that after hand over of power, nobody is responsible for any liability in the institution.

UP CHAIRMAN MURDER Eight arrested

PBCP claims responsibility

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police arrested eight people in connection with the murder of Goalkandi union council chairman Jahangir Alam yesterday while outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) claimed responsibility of the killing.

Jahangir Alam, 38, also the executive member of Bagmara upazila Awami League, was shot dead at Jalpaitala on Sunday night.

Locals caught Matiur Rahman with firearms when the killers were arrested from the scene. Police arrested him and handed him over to Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) for interrogation.

Following his information, police arrested Mithun, Khoaz, Saiful, Zakaria, Mojahar, Hannan, and Mannan from different areas in Bagmara. Sources said, Matiur confessed that they killed Jahangir in exchange of Tk 5 lakh.

However, Nikhil Sarkar claiming to belong to PBCP told local newsmen over phone that they committed the murder identifying Jahangir as a 'class enemy'.

Fair polls far cry

FROM PAGE 1

Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed and the major political parties have to shoulder the responsibility for creating a situation where the four were left with no alternative but to resign.

"It will have a destabilising effect and creating an atmosphere congenial to free and fair holding of the upcoming election will be difficult," former adviser M Hafizuddin Khan told The Daily Star over telephone.

He said the advisory council might become "dysfunctional" and no one would want to accept a role in the caretaker government as it has been embroiled in controversy.

Wahiduddin Mahmud, a noted economist and also a former adviser to the 1996 caretaker government, said, "Further course of events now looks even more uncertain."

"It's (the resignations) a serious blow to the present caretaker government and has irreparably undermined its credibility," said Wahiduddin, adding that replacing them (the resigned advisers) with another set of advisers will hardly repair the credibility gap.

He said the four advisers could still contribute by detailing exactly what went wrong leading to their resignation.

Another adviser to the 2001 caretaker government, Mainul Hossain Chowdhury, blamed the political parties for bringing the

5 killed in road accident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Five people died and 40 others were injured in a bus-truck collision on the Dhaka-Sylhet highway in Dakkhin (South) Surma area yesterday morning.

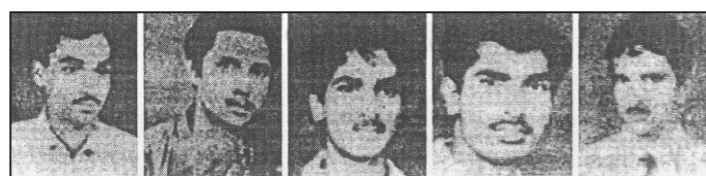
Police and locals said the accident took place at about 5:30am when a Dhaka-bound stone-laden truck collided head on with a Sylhet-bound passenger bus at Lalbazar, 10-km off Sylhet city, killing three on the spot and

injuring 42 others.

Of the injured, two died at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital soon after admission. Their identity could not be known. The remaining 40 injured are undergoing treatment at the hospital.

The three, who died on the spot are Shahjahan, 50, driver of the bus, Selim, 25, of Shantinagar, Dhaka, and Abul Kalam Azad, 35, of Kanishail village under Golapganj upazila, Sylhet.

Death anniversary of 5 martyrs today



Today is the 36th death anniversary of four martyred brothers -- Mukarram Hossain Mukul, Mansur Hossain Manju, Mastaque Hossain Anju and Mosharruf Hossain Ranju and their brother-in-law Yusuf Ali, extreme right, says a press release.

They had sacrificed their lives for the country during the War of

Liberation.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at Hossain Nagar, Baitus Mozammel Jame Mosque on Saver EPZ Link Road. Foods will also be distributed among the destitute.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested attend the programme.

Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country having chances of light rain or drizzle at one or two places over Khulna, Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today

Light to moderate fog may also occur over the river basins of the country during early morning, Met Office said in a forecast.

It said that night temperature may rise slightly over the northern part and remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country.

Highest temperature 29.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chittagong and lowest 11.7 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:13pm today and rises at 6:32am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature		Humidity in	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	27.7	16.6	83	72
Chittagong	29.5	16.3	79	71
Rajshahi	27.5	14.3	94	87
Khulna	29.0	17.4	91	81
Barisal	28.0	15.4	92	91
Sylhet	27.5	15.2	88	75
Cox's Bazar	28.8	17.0	66	72

Indian envoy meets Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

India Acting High Commissioner to Bangladesh Sarvjit Chakravarti yesterday made a courtesy call on Awami League President Sheikh Hasina at her Sudha Sadan residence.

During an hour-long meeting they discussed the current political situation of Bangladesh.

4 more secys transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The caretaker government yesterday shuffled and transferred four secretaries to different ministries.

According to an establishment ministry circular, SM Zafar Ullah of Housing and Public Works Ministry was swapped with AK Motaher Hossain of Hill Tracts Affairs Ministry, while Luthfar Rahman Talukder of Land Ministry with AFM Matiur Rahman of Rural Development and Cooperatives Division.

Meanwhile, in a separate circular, the ministry reinstated Col Salahuddin Ahmed, who was serving as the director of Ansar and Village Defence Party (VDP) on deputation, to his job at the Armed Forces Division.

In another circular of the ministry, Bezpa secretary Sayed Ahmed was made officer on special duty (OSD).

Deployment of army condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political parties condemned the decision of army deployment and the midnight speech of the president/ chief adviser

and demanded reversion of the army by sending them back in the barracks.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) in a statement said that the speech of the president was an echo of BNP Jamaat's voice. The former opposition parties are responsible for the present political unrest, read the statement. CPB also urged the countrymen to resist all conspiracy against the country and democracy.

Workers party of Bangladesh termed Iajuddin as a 'conspirator at midnight'. He cannot conduct the oaths of the advisers, deploy army and address the nation but at midnight, the party statement alleged.

Five Left Parties said that resignation of the advisers has demolished the caretaker government system. They said that chief of the caretaker government prompted the four advisers to resign by taking whimsical and autocratic decisions.

In a statement Gono Forum said that the president unveiled himself as a neo-autocratic administrator. They said that the people have refused the speech. President and General Secretary of Jatiya Mukti Council Badaruddin Umar and Faizul Hakim at a statement refused the speech of the president and said army was deployed not to aid the civil administration but to resist public upsurge.

Eleven party in a statement termed the speech of the president 'shameless'. Regarding the realisation of package demands, the president did not tell the truth, they alleged.

The statement said that the caretaker government doesn't remain anymore after the resignation of those four advisers. Iajuddin is trying to destroy the idea of caretaker government and it is proved by his recent attitude, the statement added.

Another hotel staff succumbs to his injuries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

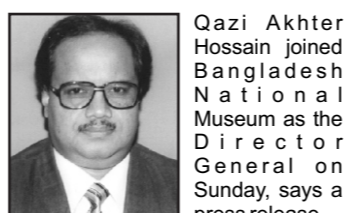
Another hotel employee shot by unknown extortionists succumbed to his injuries in the early hours of yesterday.

Subol Chandra Das, 35, who was shot by a gang of extortionists at Hotel Sunrise at Malibagh Chowdhury Para in the city on Sunday, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Hotel sources said the criminals, who had been demanding Tk 50, 000 from the hotel owner, might have carried out the incident for money.

Rafiqul Alam, the other hotel employee, who was also critically injured in the incident, is now under treatment at DMCH.

Akhter new DG of Nat'l Museum



Qazi Akhter Hossain joined Bangladesh National Museum as the Director General on Sunday, says a press release.

An employee of 1982 batch, Akhter served as the joint secretary of local government department earlier.

He also worked for Bangladesh Television as news producer.

4 advisers resign in frustration

FROM PAGE 1

The advisers, who had repeatedly expressed their frustrations over the president's unilateral actions and even remained absent from office for a day, took the decision following Iajuddin's unwillingness to recast the Election Commission (EC) as per the CG's package proposal, and his unilateral decision on army deployment.

"I have resigned as I could not work for creating an atmosphere for a free and fair election," Akbar Ali said.

"We could not work properly for creating an atmosphere for holding the next parliamentary election in a free and fair manner. We had given many suggestions that were ignored," Sultana Kamal said.

Echoing the same view, Shafi Sami told reporters, "I had said on several occasions that if I could not play proper role for a free and fair election, I would resign, and that is why I have done so."

Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury said, "Mainly, the decision on deployment of armed forces at this moment is not acceptable. It was not possible for me to help improve the situation as it has further been clouded by the deployment of armed forces."

The four advisers had communicated with the Bangabhaban on Sunday and set appointment to meet the president at 11:00 am yesterday, but Iajuddin suddenly cancelled the appointment. All the four did not attend their offices yesterday and sent the resignation letters through messengers.

They were later invited to have tea at the Bangabhaban in the afternoon but none of them responded to it.

Akbar Ali said he wanted to meet the president to submit his resignation. Although he got an appointment, it was cancelled later. "When the chief adviser has no time for four advisers, how can we stay?"

In the first such incident in the history of caretaker governments, the four advisers stepped down 42 days after the advisers were sworn in on October 31 night amid a volatile political situation.

Telenor urged to cede control of GP

FROM PAGE 16

Bangladeshi joint venture in GrameenPhone.

The leading mobile phone company in Bangladesh with more than 10 million subscribers, GrameenPhone is 62 percent owned by Norway's state-controlled Telenor and 38 percent by Grameen Bank, founded by Yunus in 1983 to provide micro-credit to his nation's poorest citizens.

Yunus claims that Telenor has violated their 1996 agreement under which the Norwegian group was to cede control of GrameenPhone within six years, but now refuses to do so.

Telenor argues that the agreement was merely a declaration of intent and was not binding.

"If we could reach a solution that the two sides could agree on, that would be a big breakthrough for Yunus' philosophy," Norway's speaker of parliament Thorbjorn Jagland told daily Dagbladet yesterday.

"After all it is the poor women of Bangladesh who made Grameen Bank and this telecoms company what they are," he said.

During his Nobel lecture on Sunday, when he received the Peace Prize at a ceremony in Oslo, Yunus said the aim was to make GrameenPhone "a social business by giving majority ownership to the

poor women of Grameen Bank."

"Some day GrameenPhone will become another example of a big enterprise owned by the poor," he said to loud applause from the audience, which included Telenor chief executive Jon Fredrik Baksaas.

GrameenPhone is a highly profitable unit for Telenor. The company (Telenor) claims it has acted in a socially responsible way by investing heavily in the developing country.

SWEDISH KING CROWNS NOBEL WINNERS
AFP reports from Stockholm: Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustav handed gold medals and diplomas to this year's Nobel laureates for literature, economics and the sciences on Sunday, with US winners scooping all but one of the honours.

Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk was the only non-American on the all-male list of winners at the ceremony in Stockholm, taking the literature prize.

The prize for chemistry went to Roger Kornberg of the US. He attended his first Nobel ceremony in 1959, aged 12, when his father Arthur received the Nobel prize for medicine. Arthur Kornberg duly accompanied his son at Sunday's prize-giving.

John Mather and George Smoot shared the prize for physics for their work on the origins of the universe, while the medicine award was also shared, this time by the geneticists Andrew Fire and George Mello.

The other US laureate was Edmund Phelps, who received the Nobel Prize for Economics for his research on inflation and growth.

As well as the medals and diplomas handed over by the king, each prize bears a cheque worth 1.1 million euros (1.45 million dollars), which is split in the case of joint winners.

Earlier on Sunday, the pioneering Bangladeshi micro-credit banker Prof Muhammad Yunus received the Peace Prize at a ceremony in Oslo, where the Norwegian Nobel Committee which allocates that prize is based.

The award ceremonies are held on the anniversary of the death of Alfred Nobel, the scientist and industrialist who set up the prizes in his will.

The Stockholm ceremony was due to be followed by a gala dinner and ball in the town hall, attended by members of the royal family and the Swedish government.

Forced retirement of former IG prison stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed the forced retirement of former inspector general (prisons) Liaquat Ali Khan and issued a ruling on the government why the order would not be declared illegal.

The immediate past BNP-led four-party coalition government had sent Liaquat into retirement on October 23 immediately before handing over power to the caretaker government.

Soon after coming to power in October 2001, the coalition government made Liaquat, who had been IG Prisons since February 2001, OSD (Officer on Special Duty) on November 19.

A joint secretary rank official, Liaquat was attached to the establishment ministry later and remained OSD over the whole tenure of the government before he was sent into forced retirement.

Aggrieved Liaquat filed a writ petition on Sunday challenging the legality of his retirement order.

After hearing the matter, the HC bench stayed the order for three months.

The court also asked the government to show cause in six weeks why the retirement order would not be declared illegal.

Barrister Amir-Ul Islam and Barrister Moniruzzaman Asad moved for the petitioner.

Referring to the election schedule announced on November 27, they said the country has yet to witness the election fever due to the political deadlock. The political situation is not congenial for holding a free and fair election. The president/CA in his address to the nation on Sunday night could not assure the nation of free and fair polls, rather his address triggered controversy, they added.

Pro-BNP bodies hail army deployment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different pro-BNP professional bodies hailed the speech of President/Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed, saying that the speech is a 'guideline for the nation'.

They also welcomed the decision to deploy the armed forces to maintain law and order ahead of the election.

Greeting president for his address to the nation, a total of 1101 doctors in a joint statement said some political parties in the name of blockade and movement are creating anarchy in the country through vandalism in different places including the Supreme Court (SC).

The decision of deploying the armed forces is timely, said leaders of Bangladesh Sammita Peshajibi Parishad in a joint statement and added that the decision was made in a time when democracy was questioned and the people frightened.

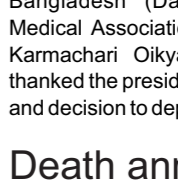
Association of Engineers, Bangladesh (AEB) said the way the 14-party alliance killed people, crippled the economy and vandalised the SC in the name of movement, prove that they are trying to make the country a subordinate state.

They also urged all the political parties to give up all the 'undemocratic' programmes and to participate in the next election to keep the democratic process on track.

Doctors Association of Bangladesh (Dab), Bangladesh Medical Association and Shikhhak Karmachari Oikya Parishad also thanked the president for his speech and decision to deploy army.

Death anniversary

Today is the 35th death anniversary of Nizam Uddin Ahmed, an eminent journalist and martyred intellectual,

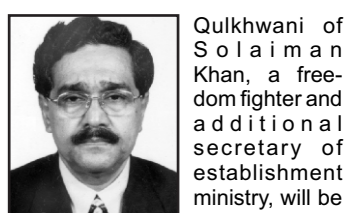


says a press release.

On this day in 1971, Rajakar and Al Badar men forced him out of his house while he was having his lunch. He went missing since then.

"Shaheed" Nizam was a popular journalist and worked for BBC, APA and UPI as Dhaka Correspondent.

Qulqhwani



Qulqhwani of Solaiman Khan, a freedom fighter and a additional secretary of establishment ministry, will be held at his

79/C, Asad Avenue, Mohammadpur residence in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

He passed away due to cancer at City Hospital in the capital on December 7 at the age of 56.

Solaiman left behind his wife, one son, one daughter and a host of admirers to mourn his death.

His family members have requested his friends and admirers to attend the programme to pray for salvation of the departed soul.