

## Khaleda asked

FROM PAGE 1  
five reasons for requesting Khaleda to return the house to the military estate officer.

Firstly, there is no way to sell, lease out or hand over a military property inside cantonment area to a civilian, according to the Military Services Regulation. Neither the government nor the president, or any other authority, has the right to do so. So the proposal and all activities regarding the leasing out of the land on July 10, 1981 were illegal.

Secondly, military properties can be abandoned but the land was not abandoned for Khaleda Zia.

Thirdly, considering public interest any property of a cantonment can be auctioned to a person, according to the Cantonment Administration Rules. But the provision of public interest was not considered and there is no scope for such consideration.

Besides, it is illegal to conduct political activities inside the protected area of a cantonment. This is also a threat to military discipline, safety and security of defence establishments, the notice mentioned.

Lastly, the army cannot lease out any military land to a person, according to the Cantonment Act.

Earlier in the evening, Brig Gen (retd) Hannan Shah, adviser to the BNP chief, told The Daily Star, 'Asking her to leave the house within 15 days is a violation of the Cantonment Act.'

The former prime minister's counsels Rafiqul Islam Miah and Mahbub Uddin Khokon said they will soon file a writ petition with the High Court (HC) challenging the legality of the notice.

Caretaker of the house, Mohammad Yunus, received the official letter from cantonment officials at around 4:00pm and later handed it to Khaleda, who has been living there with her family for around three decades.

On April 7, the government cancelled the allotment citing a number of 'anomalies' in the way the house was allotted.

The decision came at a cabinet meeting presided over by Prime Minister Sheikh

## Sircar drew Tk 5.5 lakh

FROM PAGE 1  
"What he has done is moral turpitude because he could get maximum Tk 1.5 lakh to that end as minister status as per the Speakers and Deputy Speakers Remuneration and Privilege Act, 1974," Badal added.

"He [Sircar] committed a major crime by taking this amount of money violating the laws and the committee considers this as a major moral turpitude," Badal continued.

Mentioning the undertaking of Sircar through which he took the money, sub-committee chief Shahjahan Khan said, "In the note he [Sircar] said he wants to know how much money he is supposed to get for decoration but also instructed the officials to purchase decoration items as required and promised not to spend more than that."

"It's so unfortunate that he [Sircar] gave notes to know the amount of money he was entitled to receive and in the same note he gave the approval for receiving Tk 12.26 lakh for decorating the residence on Bailey Road," Shahjahan Khan added.

He said they have summoned the contractor, who was involved in beautification and arboriculture project of parliament worth Tk 1 crore.

Shahjahan said Sircar spent Tk 7.24 lakh on entertainment purpose in 2004-05, Tk 2.5 lakh in 2005-06, and Tk 5.51 lakh in 2006-07 [in three months].

## PM meets Zillur

FROM PAGE 1  
assuming the office as prime minister on January 6, UNB reports.

She will perform umrah during her visit.

She also apprised the president about various decisions and steps taken by the government and informed him that her government has already achieved success in reducing the prices of essentials within a short time.

She also enquired about the president's recent medical check-up at the Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore last week.

President Zillur expressed satisfaction over the government's success in different sectors, especially in controlling the prices of essentials.

High officials of Bangabhaban and the Prime Minister's Office were present on the occasion.

SAJDAQANTAL CHIEF Awami League (AL) Presidium member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury will act as president of AL until Hasina returns from Saudi Arabia.

The decision came at an emergency meeting of the AL presidium held at Hasina's residence Jamuna yesterday with Hasina in the chair.

The meeting also discussed current political situation of the country including the much-talked about cancellation of the lease of the cantonment house of the BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and the government's move to try war criminals.

Hasina.

A week before that, Hasina told parliament that the BNP chief was given the Shaheed Mainul Road house bypassing the rules of the Cantonment Board.

She urged her to leave the house of her own accord so that a block of flats could be built for the families of the army officials killed in the BDR carnage on February 25.

Quarter Master General Lt Gen Jahangir Alam Chowdhury was asked to take necessary measures to implement the cabinet's decision.

That an individual cannot be allotted two government houses was the rationale mentioned for cancelling the allotment.

Highly placed sources in the administration however told The Daily Star that Khaleda's activities and remarks following the bloodbath at BDR Pilkhana headquarters were the reasons behind the cancellation.

According to some ministers, the cabinet in 1981 did not allot her the Mainul Road house; it rather gave her one on a 1.5 bigha land in Gulshan the following year.

As the cantonment authorities cannot allot anyone a house, the allotment of the house in BNP chairperson's favour was illegal, they argued.

Khaleda, widow of late president Ziaur Rahman, has been renting out the Gulshan house since its allocation in 1982.

Al lawmaker and former law minister Abdul Matin Khasru in parliament said the 99-year lease on the cantonment house is subject to a number of conditions including restrictions on political activities there.

But Khaleda has violated the stipulations by carrying out political activities from that house and allowing Dandy Dyeing to set up an office, he reasoned.

Khasru wanted to know if the government would cancel the allotment for a breach of the lease.

In reply, Hasina said her government would soon take a decision about it.

## 5 hurt in bomb explosion in Mirpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five people sustained injuries as a bomb exploded in front of a fruit shop near a police check post in Mirpur last night.

Injured Rana, 22, Nasir, 32, Saju, 28, and Alam, 30, were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and Ali Akbar, 60, was rushed to a local hospital.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) Zakir Hossain Mullah of Shah Ali Police Station told The Daily Star that a bomb exploded in front of Ali Akbar's roadside fruit shop near the police check post on Dhaka Zoo Lane at Rainkhola around 9:15pm.

He said an unidentified man apparently abandoned the bomb in a bag. At the time of the explosion two petrol cars of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) were parked on both sides of the shop, he added.

Quoting Akbar, the OC said when Akbar attempted to put the abandoned bag aside it exploded.

However, the OC could not ascertain the target of the criminal.

Following the incident, members of different law enforcement agencies rushed to the scene.

None was arrested in this connection, police said.

## JMB suspects

FROM PAGE 1  
Sadar Police Station.

Later, they were arrested under Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code and produced before a local court, which placed them on a five-day remand each.

The arrestees are Abdus Salam, 25, of Daspara in Modhupur of Tangail, Mizanur Rahman, 21, of Gopinathpur in Sarishabari of Jamalpur, Mohammad Zakaria, 28, of Krishnapur in Nalitabari of Sherpur, his wife Rabeya Begum, 23, Tareque Mostafa Masum, 29, of Moghbazar in Dhaka, and his wife Syeda Halima Yasmeen.

They had rented the ground floor of the three-storey house at Munshipara around one and a half months ago.

Contacted last night, Officer-in-Charge of Jamalpur Police Station Abdul Matin said that during primary interrogation, the arrestees said they are followers of Prof Abdul Majid of Charfason in Upazila in Bhola.

"We are checking whether the detainees are involved with JMB or any other militant organisation," he said.

Our Correspondent reports from Barisal: Three separate letters in Bangla signed as JMB reached Unicef, International Federation of Red Cross and World Food Programme Barisal offices by post yesterday afternoon.

Assistant Commissioner of Barisal Metropolitan Police Hayatul Islam told The Daily Star that the officials of the organisations submitted copies of the letters to police. Visiting the offices, police have increased the surveillance activities in the areas, he added.

The committee was also assigned to investigate allegations, if any, against Hamid during his tenure as the speaker for three and a half months during the seventh parliament in 2001.

DELWAR MAY BE SUMMONED Advocate Rabbi Mia yesterday told reporters the probe body has found corruption charges against Delwar Hossain.

He alleged without details that Delwar took away some government materials while leaving his NAMFlat.

## Vital changes

FROM PAGE 1  
Faced with a group of unruly party men, refrained from attending the last few meetings.

Those, who are widely known as corrupt and controversial leaders in and outside the party, should not be allowed to remain in the standing committee, party insiders said.

Those who threw the party into deep crises by misguiding Khaleda Zia when BNP was in power should be ousted from the standing committee, said a central party leader wishing Hayatul.

He further said police are preparing to lodge a general diary and take special security measures in this connection.

## Chennai thrash

FROM PAGE 16

Scene recently at the age of 37, struck a sizzling 65 at Saint George's Park in this southern coastal city before being run out by Rahul Dravid.

The departure of Hayden just one ball after fellow opener Parthiv Patel was out for 30 did slow a Chennai charge that saw them dash to 106-0 after 10 overs, but they finished on 175-5 to set Royals a challenging target.

Enter Sri Lanka wizard Muralitharan to cause havoc and snap up three wickets, including the prized one of former England captain Kevin Pietersen for a duck, and all the damage was inflicted at the expense of just 11 runs.

Against this backdrop, a four-member special committee led by Khaleda Zia is working on the process of reorganising the district committees.

The other members are Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain and Moudud Ahmed.

BNP's efforts to reorganise its district committees stumble due to the controversy surrounding its national standing committee.

Even the standing committee failed to announce the names of the conveners and joint conveners of district committees although it sat several times to finalise the names.

Standing committee members, however, claim that they have already completed the task of choosing the conveners and joint conveners and will announce the decision any time.

Party leaders, however, said some party leaders known as 'corrupt' are responsible for slowing down the process of reorganising the party as they want to see those who are in their good books as conveners and joint conveners of district committees.

The decision came at an emergency meeting of the AL presidium held at Hasina's residence Jamuna yesterday with Hasina in the chair.

The meeting also discussed current political situation of the country including the much-talked about cancellation of the lease of the cantonment house of the BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and the government's move to try war criminals.

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