



Reverellers celebrate outside the Congress party office in Mumbai yesterday. In the key state of Maharashtra, the Congress and its ally won the state assembly elections.

PHOTO: AFP

Defeat shows BJP losing national stature: Cong

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, New Delhi

A jubilant Congress yesterday said the assembly poll results showed that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was 'losing its national stature' and that people are increasingly aligning with the Congress across the country.

"The election results in Maharashtra, Haryana and Arunachal Pradesh have shown that the Congress is the only party working for the welfare of the people. For the BJP, it is not down... but almost out of the national political scene. It is losing its national stature," said party general secretary V Narayanasamy.

Narayanasamy, the minister of state for Parliamentary Affairs, told IANS that the Congress win was an indication that people

supported the policies and programmes implemented by the state and the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government at the centre. "This is a mandate given by the people for the able leadership of Congress president Sonia Gandhi, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and general secretary Rahul Gandhi," said Narayanasamy, who is also the All India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary in-charge of Arunachal Pradesh.

The ruling Congress-Nationalist Congress Party alliance is poised to win 148 seats in the 288-member Maharashtra assembly, while the party has swept the 60-seat Arunachal Pradesh assembly elections as widely expected. However, in Haryana it is six seats short of majority in the 90-member assembly.

Make JS functional

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have functioning parliament comprising the government and the opposition parties.

In a parliamentary democracy, he said, the government will try to implement its policies while the opposition make it sure that things are going on right way through questioning and constructive criticism.

"It's important for Bangladesh that parliament is functioning. This is essential, but we're observing that the opposition is not participating in it as much as it should," the envoy noted.

The main opposition BNP has long been abstaining from attending the parliament sessions following a dispute over sitting arrangements in front row.

Frowein said both the government and the opposition have to show creativity and take necessary steps to make the parliament effective as they were voted by the people to play their respective role.

Discerning the last general election results, he said the opposition got little over 10 percent of the seats based on 30 percent of the votes. So, the opposition may be small in numbers but represents quite important percentage of the people—and they should join the

parliamentary debates on national issues.

The ambassador said an 8-member European parliament delegation comprising five MPs and officials will visit Bangladesh from October 31 to November 3 to find out problems of climate change, fighting poverty and development of Bangladesh.

Apart from parliament, he said, "we're encouraging strongly the functioning of very

important institution in a democracy like the election commission, anti-corruption commission, public service commission, regulatory reforms commission, human rights commission and information commission."

These institutions are important pillars of a democratic country because they have the watchdog functions to ensure checks and balances, he observed.

When it comes to EU, he said, "we are continuing to support Bangladesh in the field of our values—democracy, human rights, good governance and fight against corruption."

On development side, he said all the countries in the European Union and other donors are coordinating as much as possible to streamline their efforts to fight poverty which is still a big problem in Bangladesh.

Referring to the new poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), Frowein said all donors are working intensively with the government in the framework of the local consultative group (LCG).

On the European Development Day, being observed in Stockholm on October 22-24, the EU diplomat said it is an annual meeting between EU member-states and partners in developing countries where Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will speak at a session on the 'Road to Copenhagen and Beyond' tomorrow.

The ambassador said Bangladesh needs to be on the world map for climate change and the European Union considers Bangladesh an important country to show how the country gets on with the economic

downturn and the climate change.

"We're very much at the side of Bangladesh and make sure Bangladesh is on the radar of the world concerning the climate change and its vulnerability to climate change."

Frowein noted that Sheikh Hasina's meetings with European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and European Parliament President Jerzy Buzek in Stockholm are very important when they will talk about the impacts of the climate change and development issues. Both the EU leaders have got lot of interest in Bangladesh's development, he added.

Mona Lisa's smile mystery solved

ANI, London

Neuroscientists at the Institute of Neuroscience in Alicante, Spain claim to have solved the mystery as to why some people see Mona Lisa's smile and some don't.

According to boffins, Leonardo Da Vinci's Mona Lisa is both smiling and not smiling, depending on what cells in the retina pick up the image and what channel the image is transmitted through in the brain.

"Sometimes one channel wins over the other, and you see the smile, sometimes others take over and you don't see the smile," says Luis Martinez Otero, a neuroscientist at Institute of Neuroscience in Alicante, Spain, who conducted the study along with Diego Alonso Pablos.

US keeps close watch on Pakistan's nukes

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Washington

The US is watching very closely the security threat posed to Pakistan's nuclear arsenal by militants as also the proliferation threat from those directly engaged in Islamabad's weapons programme, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has said.

But Washington does not think recent militant attacks in Pakistan including the one on its military headquarters 'pose a threat to the nuclear command and control or access,' she said in an address on non-proliferation issues at the US Institute of Peace think tank Wednesday.

"But we have certainly made our views known and asked a lot of questions and are supporting the Pakistani Government in their courageous efforts against these extremists, which, to us, is one of the most important steps they can take," Hillary said.

Underling Obama administration's concerns about the safety of Pakistan's nuclear weapons and nuclear proliferation through the notorious AQ Khan network, she said, 'those two concerns are part of each and every engagement that we have.'

Baffled by blast

FROM PAGE 1

Supporters of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman may have had a role in the attack since Taposh is one of the prosecutors in the Bangabandhu murder case trial now going on at the Supreme Court.

Taposh is the son of Sheikh Fazlul Haq Moni, nephew of Bangabandhu, who was slain on August 15, 1975, along with other family members of Bangabandhu.

The Bangabandhu murder case had remained stalled for seven years since 2001 as the killers had strong political backing. The proceedings of the case resumed recently after the Awami League came to power.

Investigators say supporters of Bangabandhu's killers or their Freedom Party might have launched the attack not just to kill Taposh, but also to create a panicking situation either to delay or foil the trial.

Another motive behind the attack could be conflicts within the Awami League although there has been no report of such extreme intra-party feud that may prompt such an incident.

In another reasoning, investigators suspect a link between the attack and the February 25-26 BDR mutiny.

Taposh drew attention of many when it was reported that a few BDR personnel held meetings with some political leaders including him before the mutiny. After the mutiny was over, a section of aggrieved persons pointed fingers at Taposh and some other ruling party politicians, accusing them of instigating the mutiny.

Investigators say some people could have attacked Taposh out of such grievances, justified or not.

Additional Director General of Rapid Action Battalion Mizanur Rahman Khan notes that this is an early stage to give hints about the attackers. "We may start with analysing the target (Taposh). We are investigating the matter thoroughly," he said.

Meanwhile, bomb experts have collected evidence from the attack site at Motijheel. Some evidence is being tested at laboratory. It is thought that the bomb was manufactured locally using ammonium nitrate, an element commonly used by the JMB. But the banned militant outfit also uses an electric circuit in their bombs, which was not present in the bomb used in the attack on Taposh.

Rab Deputy Director of Bomb Squad Maj Momtazur Rahman told The Daily Star, "There is not enough evidence at the attack site to draw a clear-cut conclusion at this stage. We can only say the bomb was somewhat powerful. It may have been manufactured with 200-500 grams of explosives."

Another investigator said some clues might have been lost since the crime scene was not properly preserved.

In a bid to find out the motive behind the attack, the

Qureshi blames US for rise of terrorism in Pakistan

'Soft target' Karachi Port next on terror hit list: Intelligence report

ANI, Islamabad/Karachi

Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi has blamed the United States for the rise of terrorism in the country.

Interacting with media persons during a press conference at the Multan Airport, Qureshi held America responsible for the continuous spate of violence in the region.

"We've made it clear to the Americans that they are responsible for this problem. They established training camps and created Mujahideen to disintegrate Russia. When it collapsed, they left and we fell prey to the menace of terrorism," The Nation quoted Qureshi, as saying.

Qureshi said that the issue of terrorism needed a regional-level solution and urged countries like Afghanistan and Iran to support Pakistan in its effort to fight the menace.

Commenting on the on-going military offensive in South Waziristan, the strong-

hold of the Taliban, he said the government had taken all political parties on board before giving a nod for the operation.

Responding to a query regarding the controversial Kerry Lugar bill, Qureshi said the final decision on it would be taken by Parliament, but stressed that there was no ambiguity on the legislation now.

"We're not bound to accept any American condition. But we need their support to defeat terrorists. That's why we'll have to improve our relations with the Americans instead of deteriorating them," he said.

Meanwhile, a Pakistani intelligence report has revealed that following the brazen terror attacks on the Army General Headquarters (GHQ) and other security installations, extremists are now on the lookout for a 'soft target' and could attack the Karachi Port in near future.

Sources said intelligence agencies have also warned about a probable attack

on various seaports across the country.

The Daily Times reported that Sindh Home Minister Dr Zulfiqar Mirza has also acknowledged the impending threat to country's seaports and other important installations within Karachi.

It is worth mentioning here that there is only a single police station with about a dozen policemen guarding the whole Karachi port area, which houses several important installations such as the Karachi Port Trust oil terminal, the dock yard, shipyard, Customs House and PNSC building.

The security force deployed in the port area is ill-equipped to counter any terror attack, which makes the Karachi port a sitting duck for the militants to unleash their terror.

A senior police official, however, claimed that they are prepared to thwart any extremist attack. He said that apart from the security being beefed up, the Navy and other concerned departments have also been directed to maintain a strict vigil in the area.

Pak army strategist killed

Major anti-Taliban offensive goes on in northwest

AP, ANI, Islamabad

Suspected militants on a motorbike shot and killed a top Pakistan army official along with another armyman in Islamabad yesterday, striking at security forces as they pressed ahead with a major anti-Taliban offensive in the northwest.

The assault in Islamabad showed the insurgents are able to hit the heart of the country despite ramped up security and deploy diverse tactics in their fight.

Deputy Director General Military Operations

Brigadier Moin was killed along with another official when unidentified gunmen opened fire at the military jeep in which they were travelling.

Brigadier Moin is believed to have been involved in the strategy making for the on-going offensive in South Waziristan as well as the Swat operation, The Dawn reports.

The offensive in South Waziristan is considered a critical test of the nuclear-armed Pakistan's campaign against Islamist extremists aiming to overthrow the state and involved in attacks on Western forces in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Jasim mulls legal action

FROM PAGE 1

conspired against him due to political rivalry and had him sent on forced retirement just when he was waiting for a promotion.

On October 18, the Supreme Court upheld the High Court verdict declaring illegal the parliament membership of Awami League lawmaker Jasim Uddin, who was elected from Bhola-3 constituency.

Earlier this year, Hafiz, who conceded defeat to Jasim in the polls, filed a writ petition challenging Jasim's election. The HC declared illegal the EC's decision to allow Jasim to contest the ninth parliamentary elections.

As per the Representation of the People Order, if anybody is sent to compulsory retirement, he or she cannot contest parliamentary elections within five years of the retirement. Jasim went on retirement on August

31, 2004.

Meanwhile, Hafiz, nearest rival to Jasim in the December 29 elections from Bhola-3, at a press conference demanded re-election among the other three legal candidates or declaring him as the winner since he secured the highest votes among the legal candidates.

At the press conference at his Banani home he said it would be unjust for him if a by-election is held.

Refuting Jasim's allegation that he had him sacked, Hafiz said he did not know Jasim before the election and he had retired from the army before Jasim joined.

Jasim claimed that inclusion of the word 'compulsory' in his retirement order was illegal as he was not involved in any corruption and the causes for his 'premature retirement' does not say

that it was a "compulsory retirement".

He also said he had sent a letter to the army chief and the prime minister about urging them to have the word 'compulsory' deleted from his retirement order.

Judge Advocate General of Army Headquarters, Armed Forces Division and the Defence Ministry separately gave their comments that the word 'compulsory' in his retirement order was included illegally, he said.

Maj (ret'd) Jasim said the army is his dream institution and he would think several times before doing anything against it for the error made.

Replying to a query Jasim said he would once again participate in a by-election takes place in Bhola-3 as five-year period of his retirement has now past.



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ডেসটিনি ডেভেলপার্স লিঃ

(ডেসটিনি গ্রুপের একটি সহযোগী প্রতিষ্ঠান)

বহুতল ভবনের জন্য আকর্ষণীয় স্থাপত্য নক্সা আহ্বান

ঢাকার মিরপুর রোড সংলগ্ন দারুস সালাম এ অবস্থিত ১০৫ শতাংশ জমিতে বহুমুখী ব্যবহারোপযোগী বহুতল বিশিষ্ট (রাজউক বিধি অনুযায়ী সর্বোচ্চ তলা বিশিষ্ট) ভবন নির্মাণের লক্ষ্যে Floor Layout plan and 3D Perspective view/elevation ইত্যাদি সহ যথোপযুক্ত স্থাপত্য নক্সা এবং Model আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে।

আগ্রহী স্থপতি/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে আগামী ৩০শে অক্টোবর ২০০৯ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন (রবিবার থেকে শুক্রবার) সময়ে ডেসটিনি গ্রুপের অফিস জাতীয় স্ট্রাউট ভবন (১৩ তলা), ৭০/১ ইনার সার্কুলার রোড, ঢাকায় Topographic Map সহ বিস্তারিত তথ্য প্রতি সেট ৳২০০০.০০ (দুই হাজার) টাকা আর এন্ড ডি/হিসাব বিভাগ থেকে সরবরাহ করা হবে। আগামী ৩০শে নভেম্বর ২০০৯ তারিখের মধ্যে নক্সা ও মডেল জমা দিতে হবে।

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টেকনিক্যাল এডভাইজার

ডেসটিনি ডেভেলপার্স লিঃ

(মোহাম্মদ রফিকুল আমীন)

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