

BNP back

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He urged them to play their due role in parliament. "The government may make mistakes. The opposition's duty is to detect those and the government's is to correct those," noted the speaker.

The presence of the opposition lawmakers led by Khaleda Zia brought the House alive after a long time.

Later, chief whips from the opposition and treasury heated up the atmosphere by trading broadsides.

After placing the demands, the opposition chief whip launched a blistering attack on the government for "deteriorating law and order and illegal admission trade by Chhatra League members."

He questioned the credibility of the December 29 parliamentary polls and accused the government of scheming to establish a one-party rule in the country again.

The treasury bench broke into a noisy protest at Faroque's remarks.

They tried to shout him out. They complained the speaker was allowing him too much time when the House had a scheduled business to deal with.

The opposition lawmakers too shouted, sending the House into a deafening din.

The speaker however allowed Faroque to carry on his 15-minute speech.

The chief whip and a number of ruling party MPs stood and tried to draw the speaker's attention to the rules of procedure.

Hamid told the treasury bench that he was aware of the rules. "They came after a long time. So I gave him the floor even though it was a little deviation from the rules of procedure," he argued.

He urged the lawmakers from either side to show patience and not to cause unnecessary excitement by attacking each other. "Attacks and counter-attacks are no good for democracy," he said.

After that, treasury bench Chief Whip Abdus Shahid took the floor and delivered a coun-

ter-blast to the opposition accusations.

He dismissed out of hand his counterpart's allegation about the December 29 parliamentary election.

He alleged the BNP-led four-party alliance had plotted a stage-managed election to continue in power. They had 1.20 crore fake voters on the electoral roll by the then chief election commissioner MA Aziz.

Shahid also blamed former speaker Jamiruddin Sircar for the row over seating arrangements.

He said Sircar had allocated the opposition deputies all front-row seats on the left of the speaker's podium in an attempt to render the House ineffective at the outset.

Sircar however refuted Shahid's allegation and claimed what he did was correct.

"We are here to stay unless they [treasury bench] force us to leave by making indecent and false allegations against us," Sircar added.

BNP standing committee members Sircar and Moudud Ahmed joined the House for the first time yesterday. Both were elected to parliament in April 2 by-election from Bogra 6 and 7 constituencies.

The day's scheduled business began after the 50-minute unscheduled debate.

However, speaking on private-member resolutions, several ruling party lawmakers blasted the past BNP-led government.

The speaker reminded them: "You can't make political statements now. You may do it when you'll speak on the thanksgiving motion on the president's address."

The last time the opposition members attended parliament was on April 7, the last day of the ninth Jatiya Sangsad's inaugural session that began on January 25 last year.

They started boycotting the House in the second session for more seats in the front row. Later on, other issues came.

Parliament had to do without opposition in 81 of 103 sittings till Wednesday.

Opposition walks out

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Later, at a press briefing at the parliament media centre, the opposition demanded resignation of the home minister for "her failure" to control downslide in law and order. They also criticised Sahara for her remarks on Zia.

"The way the home minister used indecent words against shaheed Ziaur Rahman is unprecedented. It is very unfortunate and shameful," BNP lawmaker Salauddin Quader Chowdhury said.

He said they want an efficient and responsible home minister. BNP lawmaker Moudud Ahmed said, "The home minister labelled Ziaur Rahman as a killer to force us to walk out of parliament."

Asked when they will return to parliament, Salauddin said, "We will rethink our stance on joining parliament in the changed situation."

Speaker Abdul Hamid, however, declined to give the opposition lawmakers the floor, saying no discussion can be held on the statement issued under section 300 of the rules of procedure of parliament.

The speaker picked the next item from the day's order and gave the floor to AL lawmaker Moshlem Uddin Ahmed for speaking on the thanksgiving motion of the president's address.

The BNP lawmakers continued shouting while the AL lawmaker started speaking. Treasury bench lawmakers welcomed his speech by thumping desks while a number of BNP lawmakers were seen to throw files from their desks.

At this time, Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia entered the House and led the walkout at 7:05pm.

The opposition lawmakers did not return yesterday. In her statement, Home Minister Sahara Khatun warned of taking stern actions against people responsible for anarchy and unrest in educational institutions.

"The brutality at Rajshahi University reminds us of the barbaric activities of Jamaat in 1971. They are now carrying out subversive activities to foil the trial of war criminals," she said. She said the whole nation is united and the trial of war criminals must be completed.

After the opposition's walk-out, Speaker Abdul Hamid explained his decision of not allowing the opposition lawmakers to speak on the home minister's statement.

He also declined to give the floor to AL lawmaker Suranjit Sengupta, saying a point of order cannot be allowed during the discussion on the thanksgiving motion.

After the discussion on thanksgiving motion yesterday, the treasury bench lawmakers launched blistering attacks on the opposition for walking out of the House and their behaviour including throwing files in parliament.

AL lawmaker Fazle Rabbi Mia said, "Their walkout proved that they are not sincere to make parliament effective."

AL lawmaker Tofail Ahmed said, "If the opposition lawmakers do not return to the House on the next sitting, it will prove that they came here today to save their memberships."



A photo taken yesterday shows Saifur Rahman, a fourth year student of Bangla department at Rajshahi University, undergoing treatment at the city's Orthopaedic Hospital. Shibir cadres had cut tendons of his hands and legs during a clash at the RU on Tuesday.

RU victim maimed for life

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for months before being able to walk normally again.

"We want normalcy back in our brother's life," said Rajjuur Rahman Raja, elder brother of Badshah.

A student of Rajshahi University and an activist of Bangladesh Chhatra League, Badshah was brought to Nitor in the early hours of Wednesday for better treatment.

Prof Abdul Awal Rizvi, director of the hospital said a four-member team of doctors headed by Prof Dr Mohammad Iqbal Qavi operated on Badshah yesterday.

"Although it is not wise to comment on his condition right now, we suspect Badshah might not be able to use his left hand ever again," he said adding that Badshah will also have to limp for several months as it usually takes that long to walk normally after tendons of one's legs are cut.

Badshah told The Daily Star that he was in a group of retreating Chhatra League activists during the clashes, and fell behind. A group of armed Shibir cadres soon caught him and dragged him to Habibur Rahman dorm.

"They first stabbed me in the shoulder and the neck,

and then dropped me to the ground. Then they cut the tendons of my arms and legs with knives. Then they started beating me with iron rods, and I became unconscious at that point," he said.

Another victim Arif, who was also brought to Nitor with Badshah, said he was studying in the student mess where he lives around 11:30pm on Monday when a group of armed Shibir cadres went there and dragged him to a nearby field where they mercilessly hacked him with sharp weapons before cutting the tendons of his arms and legs.

Prof Rizvi said they operated on Arif yesterday as well, and he will also take a long time to recover from the injuries, although hopefully he will not lose the use of any limb.

"They were telling me if I join Shibir they would spare me, otherwise they would slaughter me," Arif said, "As I declined they hacked me repeatedly and left me lying covered with a bed sheet."

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday visited the injured students in Nitor and said the government will take stern actions against the perpetrators of the mindless violence.

"People who carried out the barbaric inhuman acts violating the laws of the country, will face stern government actions," he told The Daily Star.

He consoled Badshah and Arif, and assured them that the government will bear all cost of their treatment.

Rajshahi Jamaat

FROM PAGE 1
Rajshahi city Jamaat General Secretary Abul Kalam Azad termed the arrest unfair and gave a statement protesting it.

As police recovered the body of a Shibir leader from a house at Chaitonnaypur under Shibganj upazila in Chapainawabganj early yesterday, they arrested two people there.

The deceased was identified as accounting student Hafizur Rahman Shahin, 25. He was a student of Rajshahi Collage but the student welfare secretary of Rajshahi University Shibir unit, Jamaat sources said. He is the son of Abdul Mannan of Rajshahi town.

Superintendent of Police Nazrul Hossain said police on information raided Touffijul Islam Tanu's house around 2:00am. He said some Shibir cadres took shelter there after the Rajshahi University incident.

Sensing the presence of police, they fired a shot, said police adding that policemen heard the shot and entered the house and found a body lying on the floor.

Police also arrested house owner and local Jamaat leader Touffijul Islam Tanu and his son Shibir leader Mahfuzur Rahman, 27.

Fazlur Rahman, Officer-in-Charge of Shibganj Police Station said police filed a murder case against Mahfuz and three to four unidentified people.

In Dhaka, Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid blamed police for killing Shibir activist Hafizur Rahman Shahin. "Police shot Shahin to death in his sleep at his friend Mahfuz's house. This is an inhuman act. Now we are scared," he said.

Police and Chhatra League Rajshahi University general secretary on Wednesday filed two cases accusing around 600 Shibir activists in connection with the violence. Three days after the nightlong mayhem at Rajshahi University, an injured Bangladesh Chhatra League worker Kawsar Alam Sarker filed a case with Motihar Police Station accusing 24 Shibir men of stabbing him during the violence.

RMP yesterday suspended another police officer, in connection with negligence of duty on Tuesday at Shah Makhdum Hall where Faruk was killed, raising the total number of suspended policemen to nine. Sub-Inspector Anwar Hossain Babu, second officer of Motihar Police Station, was also closed to the Rajshahi Police Lines.

A joint team comprised of Rapid Action Battalion and police personnel rounded up 45 Shibir men between 1:30am and 6:00am yesterday raiding Rajshahi University and its adjoining areas.

Police arrested 32 Shibir cadres, 16 of them accused in the two cases filed Wednesday, from Natore, Rajshahi and

Chapainawabganj districts in an overnight combing operation. The number of total arrestees is now 78.

Six of them were sent to a court yesterday and placed on five-day remand each.

State Minister for Home Shamsul Haque Tuku said, "The law enforcement agencies have been ordered to launch a combing operation at Rajshahi University areas and educational institutions known as strongholds of Jamaat-Shibir."

He told this to reporters after a special meeting with heads of the law enforcement agencies at the home ministry.

The meeting was convened in the backdrop of Tuesday's violence at Rajshahi University and the killing of Faruk Hossain, a final year student of the university's mathematics department. Faruk was an activist of Chhatra League, the student front of ruling Awami League.

The university and villages around its campus are known as strongholds of Jamaat-Shibir.

"Jamaat-Shibir men are involved in the acts of cruelty. Police will conduct operations in different universities, colleges and educational institutions where the anti-liberation forces have strong bases," Tuku said.

Police raided over 50 messes dominated by Shibir in the port city early yesterday.

However, none was actually arrested in the drive.

Police sources said half the Shibir activists had already left the messes while some of them were found completely empty during the drive.

They picked up five people but later released them, said Chittagong Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner (north) Banaj Kumar Majumder.

He said police served forms at the messes for filling up by all the residents of the messes. As per a government order, the residents require to provide their father's and mother's names, addresses, names of the educational institutions they go to, their roll numbers, voter ID numbers, employers names and addresses, and a few more important information in the form.

"The residents were asked to submit the forms within two days and after getting the information we would monitor their activities," he said.

At a protest rally on Rajshahi University campus yesterday Chhatra League demanded immediate removal of university Vice-Chancellor Prof Abdus Sobhan and held the university authorities responsible for failing to provide security to students.

Our staff correspondents in Rajshahi and Chittagong, our correspondent in Chapainawabganj, our Rajshahi University correspondent and United News of Bangladesh contributed to this report.

ARMS HAUL CASE Rezzaqul's remand extended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chittagong court yesterday granted a two-day remand extension of former National Security Intelligence Director Rezzaqul Haider Chowdhury in connection with the Chittagong arms haul case.

The court of Chittagong Metropolitan Magistrate Azizul Hoque extended the time limit following a hearing on a prayer submitted by the Criminal Investigation Department.

On Monday the same court placed the former NSI chief on a three-day remand. The CID prayed for a five-day remand.

Senior ASP Moniruzzaman Chowdhury of CID Chittagong Division appealed for a five-day extension on Tuesday. Moniruzzaman told The Daily Star that they prayed for the extension since the time granted earlier by the court was insufficient for interrogation.

Former NSI DG Rezzaqul would be sent to the CID headquarters in Dhaka for interrogation and it takes two days to go to Dhaka and return to Chittagong, he added.

RU incidents

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The bench came up with the rule following a report published in The Daily Star yesterday titled "Shibir grows under teacher-admin care."

Some Supreme Court lawyers including former law minister Abdul Matin Khasru, advocate Manzill Murshid, advocate Ruhul Qudus and barrister Moksaddul Islam placed the report of The Daily Star before the court.

They prayed to the court to direct the government to form an enquiry commission to investigate Tuesday's incident at RU that left one Bangladesh Chhatra League worker dead and about a hundred people injured.

Following the gruesome activities on the RU campus, the lives of students of the university as well as people have become endangered, they said.

They also said it should be investigated whether there was any involvement of RU vice-chancellor and administration in such heinous activities.

Indian hostel

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and were being airlifted to hospitals in the state capital of Itanagar, 260 kilometres (160 miles) from the district of Kurung Kumyee where the hostel was located.

"Twelve bodies have been found. Efforts are on to look for anybody trapped or buried in the debris of the hostel," district magistrate Remu Kemkei told AFP.

He said authorities were investigating the cause of the fire but they believed it was accidental as students were burning candles because of an electrical power failure.

The Don Bosco School missionary school is located in a tribal area of Arunachal Pradesh.

Most of its students are members of tribes who come from remote areas to study at what is considered to be one of the best schools in the region.

The hostel was privately run as the school did not provide its own accommodation.

Ichhamoti

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The decision was taken at a meeting held at Bongaon sub-divisional office of India yesterday, Khulna divisional office of Bangladesh Water Development Board (WDB) sources said.

The five-member Bangladesh delegation was led by Superintendent Engineer of WDB Abdul Majid Mollah, while the Indian team was led by Chief Engineer Director of Waterways SK Chattopadhyay.

Both the delegations have agreed and underlined the importance of immediate dredging of the Ichhamoti River to save the people of both the countries from the floods.

The WDB sources said Bangladesh and India had been carrying out trade and business decades ago before the Ichhamoti River lost its navigability.

After drying up of the Ichhamoti, the bordering area of Bangladesh got submerged by water from India during the rainy season.

Ahmadinejad

FROM PAGE 16
the nuclear fuel to be supplied by France and Russia.

Its defiance has drawn Western warnings of new UN sanctions, and the US Treasury Department on Wednesday imposed an asset freeze on an Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps commander and four subsidiaries of a construction firm owned or controlled by the elite force.

A restricted document of the International Atomic Energy Agency revealed on Thursday that Iran had informed the UN watchdog on Monday that it would start enriching uranium to 20 percent from Tuesday.

The one-page document said Iran had said it intended to enrich a small amount -- about 10 kilograms (22 pounds) -- to the higher level and had asked for the agency's inspectors to be present at the enrichment plant at Natanz.

IAEA chief Yukiya Amano noted that Iran currently had just one cascade of centrifuges at the Natanz plant capable of the additional enrichment.

Earlier this week, Iran's atomic chief said the separate cascade was "more on a lab scale," suggesting its output would be limited.

Ahmadinejad mocked Western governments' focus on removing the majority of Iran's existing stockpiles of low-enriched uranium (LEU) from the country.

He boasted that the Natanz plant, where Iran has been enriching uranium in defiance of UN Security Council ultimatums and sanctions, had the capacity to produce large quantities to replace any Iran shipped out.

"They think it is such a big job to take some hundred kilos of 3.5 pct uranium out of Iran," he said, referring to the UN-drafted deal, which proposed supplying the fuel for the Tehran research reactor in return for Iran shipping out most of its stockpiles of LEU.

"We are making several kilos of this in Natanz every day. In the near future, inshallah, our daily production will be tripled."

Ahmadinejad also questioned why Iran had drawn such a chorus of criticism with its announcement last Sunday that it would begin enriching uranium to 20 percent.

"Why do they (world powers) think that 20 percent is such a big deal? Right now in Natanz we have the capability to enrich at over 20 percent and at over 80 percent, but because we don't need it, we won't do it."

Experts say that once Iran has enriched uranium to the 20 percent level, there is nothing to stop it carrying on to the 93 percent level needed to produce nuclear weapons as the technology is the same.

The West suspects Iran of using its nuclear programme as a cover for efforts to build the atomic bomb, a charge Iran strongly denies.

The United States has stepped up the pressure on Iran since it announced on Tuesday that it had begun work to enrich uranium to 20 percent, which it says is for a medical research reactor in Tehran.

Also in his speech, Ahmadinejad lashed out at US President Barack Obama, whom he accused of squandering an opportunity to change Washington's traditional policy of support for the Jewish state.

"Unfortunately, the hope for change (in US policies) is in the process of rapidly changing to despair," he said, referring to hopes stirred by the election of the superpower's first black president.

"He (Obama) is missing opportunities and is not acting correctly," Ahmadinejad told the crowd.

On Tuesday, the US president pushed for a "significant regime of sanctions" unless Iran accepts international proposals aimed at curbing its nuclear ambitions.

Probe confirms

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and some of the corrupt employees are still making money out of those letters. The president of the DMCH fourth-class employee's union is also involved in the recruitment trade, sources said.

When asked Abdul Khalek, president of DMCH fourth-class employees union who was allegedly involved in the recruitment trade, said that he doesn't know anything about it adding that if people talk that way he can do nothing about it.

The leaders of Bangladesh Medical Association said the recruitment should be cancelled otherwise such corruption will recur.

"If any irregularity is found in the recruitment it should be cancelled and a fresh recruitment process should be started," Secretary General of BMA Shafuddin Ahmed told The Daily Star.

A group of leaders, however, are thinking otherwise. They think that cancellation will spell new problems, as people will then go to the court to get back their jobs. And if the court issues stay order the recruitment process will come to a stop.

The shortage of fourth-class employees is already hampering the regular activities at the DMCH and if such stalemate continues, patients will have to suffer a lot, said a number of attendants to The Daily Star.

Alongside DMCH high-ups and pro-Awami League doctors and medical students, some quarters close to ministers and lawmakers were said to have been involved in hectic lobbying over the recruitment.

The Daily Star has collected

Rejoinder

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gets JS probe report" mentioned, "The allegation Barrister Mainul brought against his brother is that Manju distributed Tk 2 crore he amassed by illegal means in the Daily Ittefaq to establish his supremacy in the newspaper house."

In his rejoinder, Mainul said, "To be on the safe side, I only denied 'my complicity about the sources and nature of money'."

Mainul Hosein also enclosed the letter he had sent to the Anti-Corruption Commission against his brother with the rejoinder.

"Naturally one has to feel disturbed about the source and nature of this huge amount of money used in my company," Mainul said in his letter to the ACC.

copies of at least 30 applications with recommendations of ministers, lawmakers and government high-ups.

It was alleged that some leaders of Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad, pro-AL doctors' association, DMCH employees and bigwigs had received money from candidates by assuring them that they would get the job.

Leaders of fourth-class employees were requesting the director to recruit 51 of their candidates while the Parishad leaders wanted at least 20 of theirs to be chosen.

Replying to a query about a month back Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque said, "No ministers or lawmakers can make recommendations and the authorities must comply with the rules."

"We will look into the allegations and make sure corruption does not mar the recruitment," he said.

The minister could not be reached over his cell phone yesterday despite repeated attempts.

PM shows

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national convention of the agriculturists.

"I did not start in due time because for my move the roads would have been blocked and the SSC candidates would have to suffer," she said.

The PM also mentioned she used to go to any programme she usually starts by taking some extra time in her hand. But this time she did not do that just for the convenience of the SSC candidates.

PM talks

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Both the leaders recalled the great contribution of the late Palestine leader Yasser Arafat toward establishing Palestine as a state and peace in the Middle East.

The Bangladesh premier presented the visiting president some paintings portraying a boat and the greenery in the landscape of Bangladesh.

President Abbas also presented Hasina several paintings of Jerusalem City surrounding the holy Al Aksa Mosque, Azad said.