

# Ershad owns three houses

By Staff Correspondent

Deposed president Ershad owns three houses worth Taka 32,74,772; one in Dhaka and two in Rangpur.

Deposing before the special judge court chaired by Judge Mohammad Ali Khan yesterday the prosecution witnesses said that Ershad had given his house in Dhaka to his wife Rawshan Ershad and son Rahgir Al Mahi (Saad Ershad) as a gift while that of Rangpur had been rented out.

The prosecution side yesterday produced 11 witnesses including Shamsul Haq, manager of Rupali Bank Cantonment Branch who was also produced earlier.

The prosecution side was led by Attorney General Aminul Haque while Deputy Attorney Generals Hasan Arif and Amirul Kabir Chowdhury. APP Fariduddin Ahmed assisted him.

On the other side the defence was led by advocate Sirajul Haque while TIM Fazeel Rabbil, Yousof Hussain Humayun, Sudhir Kumar Hazra and Mosharraf Hossain Kazal assisted him.

Prosecution witness Shamsul Haque during his cross-examination expressed his ignorance about a suggestion that the FDR with Cantonment Branch of Rupali Bank was opened by Ershad much earlier, and that in 1987 it was renewed for three years. In this FDR there was 10 lakh taka which was subsequently frozen by the government.

Prosecution witness Lt Col (ret'd) Nurul Haque member, Land and Estate of RAJUK, deposing before the court said that Ershad got a one-bigha plot, No NWC/8 Road No 62, Gulshan from RAJUK in 1980 which was valued at Taka 5,66,666. Ershad had to pay Taka 5,81,336 including interest for the plot. After construction of a house on this plot it was given to Rawshan Ershad and Rahgir Al Mahi (Saad Ershad) on May 3, 1984 as a gift, he said and added that a gift certificate was registered with the RAJUK.

During cross-examination he said that RAJUK had so far allotted 20,000 plots to different persons and many of them got even two bigha to two and a half bighas plots.

Deposing before the court another prosecution witness Abdur Rashid, Executive Engineer of Mahakhali Branch of Public Works Department said that he assessed the value

of the house along with an inspector of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption on February 16, 1991 and found that the cost of the house was not less than Taka 15,33,624. During cross-examination he said that the valuation was assessed at 1981 prices as it was found that the house was built that year.

Prosecution witness MA Wadud, Director of T&T Board deposing before the court corroborated the statement of the Executive Engineering (Tech) of T&T Board, who was produced earlier and witnessed to the international maritime earth satellite and high powered TV antenna which were recovered from Sena Bhawan. Wadud said that he did not know whether the TV antenna was given by the Crown Prince of Kuwait.

Arifur Rahman Secretary of National Tea Company who was produced as prosecution witness said that Ershad earned a sum of Taka 67,602 as profit from his 250 shares of the company worth Taka 25,000.

Executive Engineer Shajahan Ali deposing before the court said that he stayed at the house of Ershad in Rangpur from April 1984 to March 1989 and paid Taka 4000 per month to Ershad's mother as rent.

Executive Engineer of Rangpur Public Works Department said that he assessed the value of the two houses at Taka 11,59,812.

The prosecution side also produced Senior Assistant Secretary of Home Ministry Abdul Malek as prosecution witness.

Three of the servants or Ershad Shafiqul Islam, Hossein Ahmed and Abu Sayeed were also tendered to the court for deposition.

Till yesterday the prosecution side produced 24 witnesses. The court was adjourned till Sunday next.

### More lawyers

UNB adds: Ershad now undergoing trial in a corruption case has appointed five more lawyers to defend him.

They are Mofizur Rahman Majumdar, Mustafa Jamal (Baby), Sharif Ahmed, Shafiqul Islam Babul and Helaluddin. All of them were appointed earlier but dropped few days ago.

With them, 15 lawyers are enlisted to defend the deposed President who has already been convicted in an arms case and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment.



The city unit of BNP brought out a jubilant procession Wednesday to mark the switchover to parliamentary democracy. — Star photo.

## Khaleda: Parliamentary democracy

From Page 1 Col. 5 who had sacrificed their lives for independence and democracy and prayed to Almighty Allah for the peace of the departed souls. The nation would for ever remember those whose supreme sacrifices opened the golden gate of democracy.

Begum Zia said power was usurped from an elected government on March 24, 1982, following which started a reign of oppression, misrule and activities devoid of any principle. All democratic values were destroyed including judiciary and seeds of corruption were spread in all spheres of society and the administration was made subservient, she said.

She said the national economy was crippled by rampant plundering.

Begum, Zia said in this backdrop a new government was formed after fair and free elections in the country following a mass upsurge. But within 39 days of formation of the new government a great calamity descended on our national life.

The Prime Minister said with your cooperation, we had employed all our energies to tackle this crisis, in the midst of an economy destroyed by autocracy on the one hand and resource constraints on the other.

Begum Zia said, immediately after overcoming this crisis we started working our constitutional procedure for transition to parliamentary democracy and fulfil promises to the countrymen.

The Prime Minister mentioned that one-party rule and presidential system were introduced in the country in

1975. Later on, she said, Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman introduced multi-party system of democracy and following his path the parliamentary form of government was being established.

She said various questions had cropped up in the people's mind about the system of government after parliamentary elections on February 27 in the light of bitter memories of nine years of autocratic regime. So it became necessary to restructure the system of government.

Begum Zia said she had indicated that the Sangsad could alone decide the system of government in the country. She said with this end in view we started discussion at various levels. After long discussions, study of needs of the hour and detailed analysis of realities in the society, we were sure that there were unanimity, both inside and outside Parliament on the system of government, she added.

Begum Zia said soon after ascertaining the views of all, BNP decided to establish parliamentary system of government through placing the new amendment bills.

The Prime Minister said people's democratic journey had reached this successful phase through great sacrifices and bloodshed which would be written in golden letters in the national history.

She said an institutional base has been established with the passage of the 11th and 12th Constitution Amendment Bills by the Sangsad last midnight. She said parliamentary system was going to be established once again after long 16 years replacing the presiden-

tial form of government. The system would formally be introduced after receiving final verdict of the people through a referendum, to be held soon, she said.

Begum Zia said, 'our government was formed with the support of the people who are vested with sovereign power' people's verdict was final to us in all respect, she added.

Editorial on page 4

## 'Our indebtedness to Rabindranath immense'

By Staff Correspondent

The 50th death anniversary of poet Rabindranath Tagore was observed on Wednesday through out the country.

Different socio-cultural and literary organisations held discussion meetings and arranged cultural functions on the occasion.

In the city, Bangla Academy arranged a discussion meeting where speakers said that the Bengali nation was indebted to the great poet who enriched the Bengali language and the society through his writings and paintings.

BSS adds: Shilpakala Academy organised a musical and dance drama titled 'Kushumey Kushumey Charan Chiniya' participated by eminent artists of the country. The musical soiree organised in this connection was participated by leading artists, including Popya Sarwar, Sa'adi Mohammad, Mita Haq, Mridul Kanti Chakraborty and Kumkum Mirza.

## Bye-election

From Page 1 Col. 6 nation papers with the Returning Officer or Assistant Returning Officer or with the both is August 20.

Scrutiny of the nomination papers will be held by the Returning Officer only on the following day (August 21), while the last day for withdrawal of candidature is August 26.

Polling will be held on September 11.

The Election Commission has appointed the Additional Divisional Commissioner-1, Dhaka Division, Returning Officer for constituencies Dhaka-5 and Dhaka-9.

The Deputy Commissioners concerned of the remaining constituencies have been appointed Returning Officer for their respective jurisdictions.

The District Election Officer-4 and the District Election Officer-3, Dhaka have been appointed Assistant Returning Officer for constituencies — Dhaka-5 and Dhaka-9 respectively and the District Election Officer-2 of Chittagong district will act as Assistant Returning Officer for the constituency Chittagong-8.

The concerned Upazila Nirbahi Officers of the remaining eight constituencies have been appointed Assistant Returning Officers for their respective upazilas.

Out of the 11 seats, 10 have fallen vacant as four candidates, who were elected from more than one constituency in the last Jatiya Sangsad Election, surrendered all but one such seats as per provision of law, the press release said adding the seat of constituency Madaripur-1 fell vacant following the death of its elected member on May 19.

## Ershad

From Page 1 Col. 5 meet Ershad once a week for consultation.

Attorney General Aminul Haque said facilities in the jail were curtailed following recovery of Taka 4630 from the possession of Ershad in the jail.

Ershad said the money had been with him when he was in Gulshan sub-jail and no opportunity had occurred to hand over the money to any one.

Hearing both the sides the learned Judge asked the Attorney General to see whether the accused could be given more facilities in the jail.

About the multi-purpose Jamuna Bridge Project, the WB Vice-President said the bank appreciated the keen interest of all political parties in the project. It is of course an important project for linking the two parts of the country, he admitted while adding that the project would involve a huge amount of development expenditures involving borrowings from the external sources.

He said the returns on such huge investments for the Jamuna Multi-purpose Bridge Project as much as other studies would have to be examined in more details along with the overall development expenditure prioritisation exercises by the government. It is only recently that the prioritisation exercise were completed by the government, he said while adding that he would at this stage not like to comment about whether the project was going to the delayed or speeded up.

About his meeting with the government leaders in Bangladesh, Atilla Karasmanoglu said he had very useful and constructive discussions with them. In this connection, he mentioned about his meetings with the Acting President, the Prime Minister, the Finance and Planning Minister and several other ministers involved in economic policy formulation and implementation.

The policy statements by the Government leaders and the programme for actions for reforms are quite encouraging, he observed.

## The Midnight File

### Soviet pilots strike work Saturday

MOSCOW, Aug 7: Soviet pilots decided Wednesday to go ahead with a strike scheduled for Saturday, with air traffic controllers still to decide whether to join them. The nation's 57,000 pilots decided to stage a three-week walkout, and the country's 12,000 air traffic controllers, if they decide to strike at all, would go off the job indefinitely, officials said. reports AP.

## Referendum

From Page 1 Col. 7 Polling stations will be those which were used during the last parliamentary elections. After appointment of the Returning Officer and Assistant Returning Officers, Presiding Officers and Polling Officers will be appointed, and services of law enforcing agencies enlisted.

Presiding Officers will send results of referendum to Assistant Returning Officers who in their turn will compile the results and forward those to the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer will announce results of the referendum.

Sources say that the Election Commission has already drafted rules under the proposed referendum law, to deal with minute details about the procedures for holding of the referendum. The rules are expected to be cleared by appropriate authorities very soon.

While moving the referendum bill in the parliament for immediate consideration on Wednesday Dr Badruddoza Chowdhury, Member-in-Charge of the bill requested 105 Opposition Bench members to withdraw their amendments. He said that since the Constitution 12th Amendment Bill was passed by the House unanimously, and referendum was needed to okay it; none should object to the passage of the referendum bill. He sought the support of the Opposition Shetkh Hasina in this regard.

Shetkh Hasina in reply request Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas who presided over the sitting, to announce names of the MPs giving amendments for the purpose of record. The Speaker obliged. The amendments were then rejected by the House by voice votes.

Finally the House passed the referendum bill unanimously.

The Secretary of the Election Commission is likely to be made the Returning Officer for the referendum. All Deputy Commissioners of the 64 districts are likely to be made Assistant Returning Officers. Upazila Nirbahi Officers will be asked to assist the Assistant Returning Officers in their work.

## People's hopes

From Page 1 Col. 7 hailed passage of the constitution amendment bills.

They said the bills will pave way for political stability and economic self-reliance of the country.

The DUCSU leaders congratulated Begum Khaleda Zia for the passage of 11th and 12th Constitution Amendment Bills in parliament and called upon people of all strata to cooperate with the present government for building the nation and the country.

The President of Bangladesh National Awami League, Prof Mozaffar Ahmed and General Secretary Pankaj Bhattacharya said all the black laws should be repealed and the democratic rights of the people be upheld to make the parliament sovereign.

The Combined Cultural Alliance urged the people to remember the martyrs of anti-autocracy movement in this happy moment. It also expressed hope that under the parliamentary system the rule of law will be established and terrorism rooted out.

## Anwar

From Page 1 Col. 5 of the provisional leave petition.

Our staff correspondent adds: Anwar Hossain was freed yesterday.

Tito's release ordered Another report said a Division Bench of the High Court Division yesterday ordered release of the detenu, former state minister Khaledur Rahman Tito, if he was not wanted in connection with another case.

## Hasina: cooperation

From Page 1 Col. 4 that her party did never hesitate to take any step to protect the interest of the people.

As regards the Indemnity (Repeal) Bill submitted by Awami League, Sheikh Hasina said the Indemnity Ordinance (1975) was a black chapter in the Constitution of our country.

If there is rule of law in the country and there is scope of trial for any killing, then why can't I seek justice for the killings of my parents? asked Sheikh Hasina in a choked voice.

She called upon the ruling party to cooperate in the passage of the Indemnity (Repeal) Bill and said the bill would bring an end to the politics of killings and conspiracies.

The AL chief also urged her party members and the people to wage movement all over the country demanding trial of the killers of Bangabandhu. She announced that AL

would organise a public meeting at Panthapath in the city on August 15.

She said the Radio and the Television should play a neutral role and demanded a special programme on Bangabandhu on these media on his death anniversary.

Sheikh Hasina declared that her party would continue struggle for economic emancipation of the people and urged the people to remain united for achieving their rights.

Pointing out to the price hike of essentials, she demanded implementation of the Pay Commission Report. She mentioned that the government officers and employees should also keep in mind that they were accountable to the people and so, they should discharge their duties accordingly.

Sheikh Hasina demanded immediate reopening of the closed educational institutions and adequate measures for ending campus violence. She protested the terrorist activities of a certain quarter in Chittagong University and alleged that the Vice-Chancellor of the University remained hostage in the hands of the terrorists.

Criticising introduction of the VAT system, Sheikh Hasina said the new system had created adverse impact on the economy. She maintained that the VAT system could be introduced only after creating

a favourable atmosphere.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) Abdus Samad Azad said the demand for parliamentary democracy was incorporated in the Joint Declaration of the three major alliances. By passing the 12th Amendment Bill that commitment to the nation was fulfilled, he said. He demanded independence of the judiciary as was stipulated in the Joint Declaration.

Awami League General Secretary Begum Sajeda Chowdhury said her party decided to fight for the parliamentary form of government in 1978. Sheikh Hasina's seven-point demand also included demand for switching over to parliamentary form, she reminded.

She called upon the ruling BNP to cooperate with Awami League in passing the Indemnity (Repeal) Bill. She mentioned that the killers of Bangabandhu claimed that late President Zia provided them with the blueprint for the killing. 'If BNP does not cooperate with Awami League in repealing the Indemnity Ordinance, then the claim of the killers would prove true,' she said.

About the country's long ailing jute sector, he said the annual burden of loss in the overall jute sector in Bangladesh was about Taka seven billion.

He also mentioned about the system loss in the power sector. The loss is now about 40 per cent which means that out of every one US dollar of expected operational earnings the power sector get only 40 US cents, he said. He pointed out that if the system loss of the Power Development Board could be reduced, Bangladesh could implement a project like Jamuna bridge in every four years.

Karasmanoglu observed that he understood what difficult choices the new elected Government faced for effecting reforms and improving overall economic efficiency. The problems are all the more challenging because of the past negligence, he added.

He stated that there were some industrial units in Bangladesh which were permanently sick. Nobody likes the idea of closing down units but keeping the permanently sick units somehow operational is certainly not the an-

## Economic reforms

From Page 1 Col. 7 savings in expenditures, he noted.

He stressed the need for carrying out reforms in close coordination in areas of trade, industry and financial sectors. The goals of the new industrial policy of the Bangladesh government for an export-led growth pattern can be attained only through such coordinated reforms, he said while adding that the policy objectives would not be achieved without liberalisation of trade.

He observed that the reforms in the public sector would need to be carried out in effective ways while making efforts at the same time for maintaining macro-economic balances.

'We are prepared to support the reforms by providing funds to help absorb any adverse impact on the balance of payments and other economic sectors related to the changes', he said.

About the country's long ailing jute sector, he said the annual burden of loss in the overall jute sector in Bangladesh was about Taka seven billion.

He also mentioned about the system loss in the power sector. The loss is now about 40 per cent which means that out of every one US dollar of expected operational earnings the power sector get only 40 US cents, he said. He pointed out that if the system loss of the Power Development Board could be reduced, Bangladesh could implement a project like Jamuna bridge in every four years.

Karasmanoglu observed that he understood what difficult choices the new elected Government faced for effecting reforms and improving overall economic efficiency. The problems are all the more challenging because of the past negligence, he added.

He stated that there were some industrial units in Bangladesh which were permanently sick. Nobody likes the idea of closing down units but keeping the permanently sick units somehow operational is certainly not the an-

swer, he added.

He said Bangladesh would need to make all-out efforts to increase agricultural production, ensure food security, raise industrial efficiency, create competitive environment for trade, and invest more in health, education and other areas for human resources development. He felt that the basic policy goals of the new Government 'are quite in tune with the needs.'

A transparent and efficient administration, he observed, could implement the programmes in an effective manner. As the Government makes progress in implementation of reforms, the World Bank and the donor community will also continue to support its development efforts, he added.

The WB Vice-President said high prudential standards were needed for the financial sector and enforcement of discipline. He noted with satisfaction the steps taken by the Government for reforms in the financial sector. Recovery rates for bank credits, realistic interest rate structure and effective and well-defined monetary policy are the essential conditions for an efficient financial sector, he said.

He pointed out that a WB mission would arrive shortly in Bangladesh to review the financial sector adjustment programme for the release of the second instalment of credit funds by the bank under the programme. 'I see good reasons for the release of the second instalment credits for financial sector reforms', he added.

About the possibilities of resumption of the bank's credits for the energy sector development programmes, he said, there was already a WB mission working in the power sector. For disbursements of credits, a clear programme for reducing the system loss and other reform arrangements will have to be finalised for effective implementation, he said.

Replying to a question on prospects for finalisation of industrial sector credit, Karasmanoglu expressed the

**Call DHL**

For fast, reliable desk-to-desk deliveries of urgent documents and parcels to over 1344 offices in 187 countries.

**DHL**  
WORLDWIDE EXPRESS®  
You are in safe hands all the way.

DHL WORLDWIDE EXPRESS C/o Homebond Packers and shippers Ltd, 94 Motiheed C/A Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh Tel: 241277 / 241376 / 246720 Telex: 671401 DHL CO BJ Fax: 88-02-863155 \* Chittagong Tel: 500140 / 503548 \* Khulna Tel: 24286 / 24791