

Bid to oust Kim Jong: 10 officers executed

TOKYO, Feb 6: More than 10 officers, including three colonels, have been executed in North Korea for attempting to oust Kim Jong-Il, the son and heir apparent to President Kim Il-Sung, a press report said here today, says AFP.

The Sankei Shimbun reported from Seoul that the 10 men, including officials of the Public Security Ministry, had opposed Kim's appointment in December as chairman of the central military commission, a post which had been held by his father. Sankei quoted Western intelligence sources who had travelled to the North Korea-China border recently. The paper quoted the sources as saying that the information was obtained from Chinese officials well versed in North Korea.

The paper did not give the exact date when the alleged executions took place.

It also quoted the Western sources as saying that those who were executed had been trying to replace Kim Jong-Il with one of his brothers.

The information could not be independently confirmed as Communist North Korea is virtually closed off to the outside.

Government officials and intelligence sources in Seoul told AFP they had no information.

Kim Jong-Il, labeled as 'the dear leader' in North Korean propaganda, has long been groomed as a successor to his father, the great leader. The elder Kim is expected to pass the reins to his son this year.



Leela Samson spent whole day at the Kallyani School for Retarded Children yesterday. The noted exponent in the Indian classical dance is in Bangladesh at the invitation of the school. —Star photo

4177 projects implemented

Star Report

The government implemented 4,177 projects aided by different donor countries and agencies in last eight years ending fiscal 1989-90, a ministerial source said.

According to the source, the projects involved Taka 33,609 crore. A chart of the Finance Ministry showed that 697 such projects were implemented in fiscal year 1989-90. This was followed by 505 projects in 1981-82, 501 in 1988-89, 451

in 1987-88, 442 in 1984-85, 430 in 1983-84, 413 in 1982-83, 410 in 1985-86, and 328 in 1986-87.

The donor countries and agencies that aided the projects included Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, West Germany, France, Finland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, China, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, India, Pakistan, the Ford Foundation, International Development Agency, Islamic Development Bank, IFAD, IFC, OPEC, UNICEF, UNDP, and the Asian Development Bank etc.

Bangladesh received foreign loans amounting to Taka 1,684 crore between April 1 and December 31 of 1991, another source in the ministry said.

Writ challenging VAT Act rejected

A High Court Division bench of the Supreme Court Wednesday rejected the writ petition challenging the provisions of Value Added Tax Act 1991, reports BSS.

The bench comprised Justice Fazle Hussain, Mohammad Habibur Rahman and Justice K. M. Hasan.

Sanjoy Ghosh, proprietor, Rasik Lal Sweets, had filed the writ petition challenging an order imposing fine of Taka 25,000 under section 37(1) under the provisions of Value Added Tax Act.

Fazul Karim, senior Advocate appeared on behalf of the petitioner. Deputy Attorney General A. Y. Salehuzzaman appeared for the state.

Accept demands of bank employees, says Hasina

Awami League President and Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina Thursday asked the government to accept the demands of bank employees through discussion, reports UNB.

The nationalised bank employees have been demanding, among other things, incentive bonus of 1990 and fringe benefit.

Hasina, in a statement, recalled the contribution of the bank employees to the anti-autocracy movement and said the government should concede to their just demands without taking recourse to repression.

The Bangabandhu government introduced the incentive bonus for the bank employees who had been enjoying it until 1989, she said and alleged that despite making profit the government was conspiring to push them towards movement.

Recalling the BNP government's action in 1979 leading to termination of thousands of bank employees, Hasina said bank officials and employees were deprived of bonus when loan interests of crores of Taka were being exempted.

The opposition leader warned that the government will be responsible for any situation arising from non-acceptance of the demands of the bank employees.

Flag meeting

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ussion to resolve the scattered incidents along the border of the two countries, the sources added.

The last meeting between the border guard commanders of the two countries was held in November last.

26 shops gutted in Comilla

COMILLA, Feb 6: At least 26 shops were gutted and goods and property worth Taka 70 lakh destroyed in a devastating fire which broke out in the local Rajganj Bazar early this morning, reports BSS.

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'Germany to encourage democracy'

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The German government towards the development of the Third World and the strengthening of bilateral ties with the developing nations. He said it was for the first time ever that a senior German official had gone to Bhutan, underlining the importance of a unified Germany attaches to its role as a responsible power in the changed global scenario, especially following the sweeping changes in Europe.

Turning to his talks with Bangladesh leaders including Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali, Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman, Schafer said the discussions summed up the long-standing relations and covered a wide range of subjects including the democratization process in Bangladesh, its economic priorities and policies of the government, etc.

The sharing of Ganges waters with India and the Myanmar refugee problem also came up, he said.

He said he had also discussed the present political events in Europe and their possible effects on countries like Bangladesh. Another important issue was disarmament which, he said, was of interest for a country like Bangladesh since every penny (read Deutsche Mark) saved from the arms race could be better shared in the development endeavours of the poorer nations.

With reference to the Bangladesh economy, Schafer said although it is difficult for a democratic government to overcome all the temporary problems facing the country's economy yet the government must show both the political

will and the courage to take decisions. He said the trend towards privatization had still some way to go.

Recalling the experience of nationalisation in the former East Germany, Schafer said there should be as little government interference as possible to encourage private initiative. Of course, he said, the government should lay down some basic guidelines and also ensure that privatization is a socially founded process, reflecting the social responsibilities of the private sector. Reaffirming his own faith in private enterprise, he said "it often starts with problems but always ends in success."

The German Deputy Foreign Minister also stressed the need for Bangladesh — as almost every other developing country — to arrest the population boom without which he felt there would catastrophic consequences for the entire world.

Turning to Germany's economic relations with Bangladesh, Schafer said contrary to fears that unification and fresh commitments in Eastern Europe would lead to a decrease in the quantum of aid flow to the developing nations, German aid, especially to Bangladesh, had in fact increased by almost ten percent to 141.5 million DM. Out of this 104 million DM is earmarked for financial cooperation, 15 million in technical cooperation, 7.5 million into food aid and five million into humanitarian aid. Another 10 million is channelled through the NGOs.

He said he would like to take the opportunity to "underline again that our development aid is not and will not serve as a quarry for other

politics, that means that funds that have been designated for aid will not be used for other purposes."

He said the German government's cooperation with Bangladesh is focussed mainly on family planning, flood protection, rural development, especially the uplift of women, and energy. However, he mentioned some "bureaucratic obstacles" stood in the way of aid utilization.

Citing the example of German reconstruction after the two World Wars Schafer said this was achieved only through the resilience and determination of the German people and proper planning by its leaders.

Reaffirming Germany's commitment to peaceful resolution of all outstanding disputes among nations, the German Minister said "We believe a consequent foreign policy must be aimed at resolving long-standing regional disputes through negotiations and without resort to force."

Lauding the concept of the SAARC as a vehicle for regional cooperation he said Germany hopes it develops along the lines of the European Community.

Answering a question, Schafer said his country was constitutionally obliged to give political asylum to aliens who suffered persecution in their homes.

But, he added, many cases of aliens in Germany were fraught with inaccuracies and his government was dealing with each and every case on its merit.

German Ambassador in Bangladesh Dr Karl-Heinz Schotyssek was present at the press conference.

Tk 122 cr needed to meet teachers demand, JS told

Deputy Leader in

Parliament Dr Badruddoza Chowdhury Thursday night urged the Opposition to ask itself if people can now pay Tk 122 crore in additional taxes required to meet the demand of striking teachers, reports UNB.

"There is no scope of being emotional or sentimental", Dr Chowdhury told the Opposition members who wanted teachers demand be accepted to bring them to classes before the degree examinations begin February 10.

About 2,50,000 teachers of private schools, colleges and madrasahs are on strike since January 18 to press home their demands.

It must be considered if the poor economy can afford to pay additional benefits to the teachers just now. It should also be considered if the people can pay additional taxes under the prevailing situation, the Deputy Leader of the House told the Opposition members.

He said Opposition has also a responsibility and its action should be directed towards overall good to the people and not to achieve narrow party or individual interest.

Later, the House rejected by voice vote a resolution seeking to have one primary school in each village of the country.

Winding up the brief discussion on the resolution, Education Minister said there are about 64 thousand educational institutions including Ektadia Madrasahs for providing primary education.

Gallery

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supplementaries. The embarrassed State Minister again expressed his inability in answering questions and requested the Deputy Speaker to transfer the questions on Finance Ministry to some other day.

This apparently infuriated Awami League Member Sheikh Selim who commented that shifting of questions by a ministry concerned amounts to ignoring the authority of the House. He pointed out that one question could be shifted once. Mr Selim had reasons to be angry as it was yesterday when his question on the BCCI bank was shifted again.

The Deputy Speaker was also finding it difficult about what to do. Earlier when he had agreed to shift the questions, one of the members raised a point by saying that what had already been said in the House could be considered a part of some other day's proceeding.

The absence of the Finance Minister and the request of the State Minister seemingly made him jittery. To cool down the angry member, he gave a ruling by saying that 'all questions on the Finance Ministry will be raised on a day to be decided later.' But the Deputy Speaker added 'I will see so that the Finance Minister is here to answer your questions.'

The Deputy Speaker's ruling did not satisfy the Jamaat MP Moulana Sobhan. He wanted to know why the office (meaning officials concerned) of the State Minister was absent. He further added 'this is the way the government servants are affecting our activities.'

The comment made the Deputy Speaker happy and he said it was an appropriate comment.

The Midnight File

Kashmiris firm to cross ceasefire line

ISLAMABAD, Feb 6: The leader of a militant Kashmiri group said today that thousands of Kashmiris were determined to cross the ceasefire line dividing India and Pakistan despite the threat of armed conflict. Amanullah Khan, chief of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), said Kashmiris in general and the JKLF in particular could not be a "silent spectator to the hell let loose by Indian forces in the occupied Kashmir," reports AFP.

Miyazawamen must testify, demands Opposition

TOKYO, Feb 6: Japan's parliament was paralysed today as the opposition pressed on with a boycott of budget debates to back demands that colleagues of Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa testify on political funding scandals. Raising the stakes, opposition parties now demand that 18 people testify on the scandal alleged to centre on former cabinet minister Fumio Abe, who is charged with demanding and accepting 90 million yen (6.40,000 dollars) in bribes from a land developer, reports Reuters.

70 missing: Boats capsize off Dominican coast

SAN JUAN (Puerto Rico), Feb 6: Some 70 people were reported missing today after two boats carrying dozens of people from the Dominican republic to Puerto Rico capsized in heavy seas, the US coast guard reported. Twelve of the some 80 people aboard the vessels reached shore safely after the two boats sank at about 5 am (1000 GMT) about eight kilometers (five miles) off of Punta Cana, on the Dominican Republic's east coast, the coast guard said, reports AFP.

Rohingya issue

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ishing the innocent civilians. Though it is difficult to verify the allegations of the refugees, the fact that they are leaving their homes and fertile rice fields indicate how bad things are inside Arakan, home to three million people.

The military rulers in Myanmar have earned an ill-name worldwide for crushing the pro-democracy movement and keeping the country's best known political leader Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest.

The Rohingyas who have opted for a hard life in the rugged region in southern Bangladesh deserve sympathy. But they also are not as innocent as they claim.

A section of the Rohingyas is involved in insurgency spearheaded mainly by the Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO) and Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front (ARIF).

In recent press interviews RSO President Dr Mohammad Yunus claimed that they were running at least 12 guerilla training camps in the jungles in Arakan and along its border with Bangladesh.

According to him the guerillas are preparing to step up their operation inside Arakan.

He also claimed that the insurgents use arms grabbed from Burmese soldiers. Besides, they buy from South East Asian markets.

The RSO is silent about the sources of money that bought the arms from open markets.

But sources close to these guerilla groups say, they get money from the Rohingyas scattered in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, U A E, Kuwait and Malaysia. Another source of money is humanitarian donations they get from various Islamic groups and countries, especially Saudi Arabia usually given to Muslims from Distressed Zones.

An estimated 1.5 million Rohingyas who fled their homes over the years are said to be living in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Dubai, Kuwait, Malaysia and Bangladesh.

The sources said many Rohingyas have been able to convince Saudi Arabian authorities to consider them as Muslims from a Distressed Zone and thereby get the humanitarian assistance.

The Rohingya insurgents call themselves Mujahideens, a term used by Afghan guerillas. According to the sources the Rohingya rebels have been able to make contacts with Afghan Mujahideens.

The sources said 'the Hikmatullah group of Afghan Mujahideens have trained a

4 killed, 25 hurt in Khulna bus collision

From Our Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Feb 6: At least four people were killed and 25 injured when two mini-buses collided near Noapara hat under Fakirhat upazila on Khulna-Mongla highway this morning.

The victims were Nazrul(32), and Adel (30), two drivers and two passengers, one of whom was identified as Wahab Hawladar(40), a teacher of Mongla High School.

Witnesses said, the accident occurred when the Bagerhat bound bus tried to save a woman on the highway at about 10:30 am.

Of the injured, 14 were admitted to 250 bed hospital, Khulna, 2 at Bagerhat hospital and 5 at Khulna Sadar hospital.

number of Rohingya guerillas in Afghanistan.

Bangladesh government appreciates the plight of the Rohingya refugees and sincerely wants their honourable repatriation. Dhaka also seems to have accepted Myanmar's contention that the troop deployment is not against Bangladesh.

But the insurgency factor has made the situation complex for Bangladesh. Myanmar suspects that some of the rebels are inside Bangladesh. It has already asked Dhaka to look into this.

Bangladesh, insisting that it has nothing to do with the rebels, has promised Myanmar it will not allow its territory to be used by insurgents, which is consistent with Bangladesh's foreign policy.

Myanmar's deployment of troops and its attack on a Bangladesh border outpost indicate it still does not believe what Dhaka says about insurgents.

Last Mondays parliamentary debate on the situation brought to light certain new allegations from some opposition members.

While Sheikh Hasina simply demanded a clear statement from the Foreign Minister if any foreign country or Rabita has set up any training camp in Chittagong Hill Tracts, her party member Tofael Ahmed was more specific in accusing Rabita Al Alam Islami of arming Rohingyas and training them.

Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman refuted the allegations saying Rabita is not at all involved nor is there any rebel training camp.

Still, some political as well as official sources think that certain local and foreign vested interest groups are trying to exploit the Rohingya situation.

The issue has reached a point of confusion and suspicion. Thus the suggestion that an all-parliamentary delegation be sent to the area to assess the situation deserves serious thought.

Black money

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source of the money was not questioned.

Both the members of the chambers and the government representatives held the same opinion that income tax clearance should be a criteria in enrolling members of different chambers. They also agreed that more businessmen should be included as members of the chambers which would enhance self discipline.

Federation President Akram Hossain said the home products should bear the seal of Bangladesh standard and testing institution and the chamber members should not sell substandard products.

Telephone

From Page 1 Col 7

metre, MDF and cabinet were under strict vigilance by the responsible care-takers so that no unfair means could be adopted from these places. Besides, he added, metre rooms were kept under lock and key and closed circuit televisions had been set up under the care of responsible officials at these rooms. Steps have also been taken to stop attempts of establishing international trunk call (ITC) through soft wire at the ITC department, he said.

Responding to a query, the Minister said that two government projects undertaken in the fiscal year 1990-91 were now under materialisation. The projects involving Taka 20,514.29 for digital microwave link between Dhaka-Bogra-Mymensingh and Dhaka-Sylhet and digital radio link at the upazilas and other places.

Countdown to Shaheed Day

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Begum Zia said her government's main objectives are to remove all irregularities created during the nine years of autocratic rule and put the country on the right track.

She called for reducing the country's dependence on foreign aid to make the country self-reliant through increased production and proper implementation of the development programmes.

The Prime Minister also called for participation of the people from all walks of life in various development projects.

Referring to the development in the northern region of the country, Begum Zia said in the BNP government will go for rapid industrialisation for overall socio-economic development in the north.

In this context, the Prime Minister reiterated that the construction of the Jamuna Bridge will begin soon.

Begum Zia underscored the need for making the on-going canal digging programme a success for increasing food production in the country.

She also suggested tree plantation on both sides of canals to stop environmental degradation and for development of pisciculture in the excavated canal. Water in the canals will act as reservoirs during the dry season.

Whatever point the Observer might have been trying to make, it was all lost in a gushing forth of fundamentalist sentiment, led by Maulana Akram Khan, owner of the daily Azad, which was largest selling newspaper in East Bengal at the time.

"If the government does not do anything about this, then the Muslims themselves

will take the necessary action". Akram Khan said in a fiery press statement, as if the Observer and its staff had nothing to do with Islam or Muslims, and he was the spokesman of all Muslims in the country.

Muslim League elements such as Shah Azizur Rahman, Ragib Ahsan, Saheb Alam etc lost no time in attacking the Observer as "anti-Osman" and "anti-Islam".

On the night of February 13, 1952, the East Bengal government imposed a ban on the paper under the East Bengal Public Safety Ordinance of 1951. Hamidul Huq Chowdhury and editor Abdus Salam were arrested, but later released on bail.

Interestingly, the government did not ban the paper only because of its Feb 12 editorial. The government said that it had "proof" that the Observer had been carrying out "treacherous activities for the past two years", and it also had "proof" that those involved in the publication of the paper "owed their allegiance to a foreign power".

On the same day, the government closed down the Al-Helal Press from where the Observer used to be printed.

Today's programme

The 21-day traditional "Grantha Mela" (book fair) of the Bangla Academy to commemorate the martyrs of the historic Language Movement begins today (Friday).

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will inaugurate the fair as chief guest in the academy premises at 4-30 pm while State Minister for Culture Prof. Jahanara Begum