

### ATP plane procurement case against Ershad Prosecution again takes time for framing charge

The framing of charge against former President H M Ershad and three others in a deal for the procurement of three ATP (Advanced Turbo Prop) aircraft could not be held Monday as the prosecution prayed for time for preparation, reports BSS.

Additional and Special Judge Qumrul Islam Siddiqui after hearing both sides fixed March 8 as the next date for framing the charge against the accused persons.

The accused persons — former President H M Ershad, Lt Col (Retd) H M A Gaffar and Ziauddin Ahmed Bablu, former ministers of Civil Aviation and Tourism, and A K M Mosharruf Hossain, former Industries Secretary, were produced before the Special Court No-4 Monday for the second time for framing charges against them. They were earlier brought in November last year for the same purpose.

Attorney General Aminul Haq, who was recently appointed by the government to conduct the case, told the court that he needed time to be ready for framing the charges.

The lawyers appearing on behalf of the accused informed the court that they were yet to receive relevant papers of the case. "Unless we are supplied with all papers we cannot appear in the case," the attorneys stood up one after another and told the court.

The Judge ordered the prosecution that the defence lawyers be supplied with all relevant papers at the earliest enabling them to be ready for

the next hearing. The Attorney General assured all concerned that the order would be carried out.

The case in brief is that the accused persons with an ulterior motive and through maximum misuse of power acted either for their own pecuniary benefit or to give it others ordered for the purchase of three ATP aircraft from British Aerospace Company ignoring the opinion of aviation experts. The accused persons by their actions had caused a loss amounting to Taka 22,43,72,559 to Bangladesh Biman and eventually to the state.

### Teachers

From page 1 Col 8  
mention of their 15-point charter of demands.

The demands include enhancement of salaries, restart of teachers welfare trust, promotion of the experienced teachers.

Later the teachers held a sit-in demonstration at the Shikha-Bhaban and also held another meeting there.

The leaders of the teachers' organisations at the rally cautioned they would not examine the scripts of the Degree examinations. The leaders also said that they would abstain from preparing the HSC examination forms and other related duties and also boycott the SSC exams if the government failed to fulfill their demands.

The leaders announced their fresh programmes that include a grand rally in front of the National Press Club on February 15.

## Every citizen a walled up Anarkali

By Waheedul Haque



Born at the beginning of the Thirties, I feel it perfectly right to look at my generation as one that has taken into its stride all kinds of political movements and social upheavals and other such nation-sized actions this or that side of what is collectively good. There may still be some good housewives who liberally store up provisions on the eve of an impending hartal. But I dare say they have no counterparts among the unthinking uncaring males. And even among women they are becoming a rarity.

After my ordeal of a journey to Khulna and back I have decided to join the ranks of those rare birds even at the cost of looking somewhat both calculating and feminine. If such a radical change is allowed by my advanced years, that is.

On Saturday, the 8th of February, a country-wide strike of all kinds of private 'public' transports started. I don't know why the strike-wallahs chose the day on which fell the Saraswati Puja as well. Perhaps there was no connection and the organisers didn't really mean to give us — the nation — a lesson, — although lessons in everything, as is known to all in the subcontinent as well as all South Asia, belong to the department to that particular deity. Even if it was unintended I got my lesson all right.

I set out for the airport on a hired scooter. The Dhaka buses are infamously unfit for human consumption — all that use them do that at the cost of abysmal degradation. A habitual bus-rider for ages, I have on my way picked up unalloyed hatred for the Dhaka buses and was feeling sick of light-hearted elation which, on hindsight I can trace, was due to there being

no buses and trucks on the roads. Reaching the airport I was however compelled to enquire of my co-passengers as to how would we proceed from Jessore airport to Khulna, my destination as well as many others. Will the Biman bus be there? O sure, was the answer. On landing at Jessore I sure enough sighted the Biman bus even while crossing the tarmac. My heart leapt up when I beheld that and someone bucked me up — make haste, Sir, and take your seat first. Was there a sense of premonition there in that voice or in the way the passengers took their seats? I could not dwell on such an important question as my mind was set elsewhere. If so many passengers are indeed bound for Khulna, and not, Jessore, why shouldn't there be airport at Khulna too? If it has to be only one airport for that region, shouldn't passenger-strength be allowed to decide the issue?

The bus was moving as I was musing over the misfortunes of a rejon that has latched to throw up great leaders and dictators and lieutenant-generals. And I had a feeling that the bus people, the mastan-looking conductor and the driver with a patrician mien enhanced by composure and imperturbability and an urban of a helper — were somewhat nervous and the bus was doing far less than it should. No sooner had I had that thought — splank-chunrrrrr-chuk... the windshield went asplutter. The flash of shocked surprise over, all thirty pairs of eyes focussed on a big hole in the windshield — the missile must have been of the ICBM range. The driver luckily was unhurt and he took the correct and

Continued on page 2

## 5 witnesses in Milon murder case 'hostile'

By Staff Correspondent

The prosecution side in the court of the second Additional Sessions Judge, Dhaka, Monday declared five witnesses in Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon murder case hostile.

The five witnesses examined and cross-examined yesterday were Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, former secretary general of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), a shopkeeper Abul Hasem, a peon of Bangla Academy M Kafiuddin and two guards of Bangla Academy Nurul Huda and Abbas Ali.

Among 30 witnesses, nine have been examined and cross-examined in the last three days and of them, five declared hostile.

The plaintiff of the case, Dr Mostaq Hossain, was absent for the third consecutive day yesterday.

The witnesses yesterday told the court that they heard about the incident from the people on the roads near Bangla Academy and Teachers Students Centre (TSC) of Dhaka University on November 27, 1990.

The witnesses could not confirm that Dr Milon was killed by the persons charged with murder.

After declaring the witnesses hostile, the prosecution side went on cross-examination.

The defence solicitors in the court refrained from cross-examining the witnesses except M Kafiuddin who was interrogated by defence lawyer Ramzan Ali.

During the examination and cross-examination, defence lawyers Sirajul Haq, Amzad Hossain, M Mohsin Miah, Al-u Sayed Sagor, and Ali Asgar Swapan were present in the court while Public Prosecutor (PP) Abdul Razzak Khan, APP Mahub Ahmed, APP Nurul Islam and APP Mohammad Mostafa were on behalf of prosecution side.

The second Additional Sessions Judge, M Ismail Mia, adjourned the court till 11 am today (Tuesday).

## Shaheed Day

From page 1 Col 8  
fore politically highly vulnerable.

In that context, the role played by a number of newspapers proved to be significant in countering government propaganda and projecting the demands of the language workers in their true light.

The Calcutta-based daily Ittehad, edited by Abul Mansur Ahmed, had already declared its backing for Bengal even before Pakistan was established as an independent country.

Prominent among the other pro-Bengali papers were the weekly Ittefaq, founded by Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani and edited by Tofazzal Hossain (Manik Mia), the weekly Sainik backed by the Tamuddin Majlis and edited by Abdul Gaffar and the Sylhet-based Naobelal edited by Jubo League leader Mahmud Ali.

The issue of language became a hot topic for debate after Pakistan's ruling Muslim League leadership launched vicious attacks on Constituent Assembly member from Comilla, Dharendraanath Dutta on Feb 25, 1948 for proposing to make Bengali one of Pakistan's state languages.

Naobelal's editorial of March 4, 1948, just seven days before the newly-formed State Language Action Committee launched what became known as the Language Movement on March 11, addressed the Muslim League's Bengali-speaking Assembly members, which was reproduced in Badruddin Umar's three-volume 'East Bengal's Language Movement'.

"I have those, who are hitting at the very foundation of the mother tongue, not thought for a second that it is through her own language that a nation's hopes, aspirations, ideals, sorrow and happiness can take shape? A nation without a flourishing language of its own will be a nation without a backbone."

"Under some strange influence, they (Bengalee Muslim Leaguers) may forget or abolish their own existence, but the 44 million people of East Pakistan will never forgive them. The people will never tolerate any insult to their mother tongue, Bengali."

That is why students of Dhaka University have already taken to the streets in protest. Not only the university, but a great movement is building up all over East Pakistan. When this public anger will reveal itself in its full fury, then the thrones of these (Muslim League) leaders will also face collapse."

That was March 4, 1948. Rarely has a newspaper editorial spoken with such farsight and honesty.

## Saifur sees anti-democratic hands behind strikes

Finance Minister Saifur Rahman Monday lashed at a wave of strikes and categorically said the government won't stoop to any 'bndue pressure' that goes against national interest, reports UNB.

Reacting to newsmen over a chaotic situation caused by demands for financial benefits and action programmes of various professional groups and transport owners, Rahman said deliberate political instigations were behind such "illogical and undue" pressure.

"I am convinced anti-democratic forces are trying to destabilise the government by fanning illogical demands," said Rahman, who returned home Monday morning after a week-long tour of Europe.

"It's very much unfortunate that the government is not being allowed even a year to settle down and pull a shattered economy up on the track."

The Finance Minister's reaction came at a time when non-government teachers have been on strike for the last 24 days demanding pay hike, transport owners keeping their vehicles off the road asking for reduced fuel price and bank employees agitating and preparing for greater action for a separate pay scale.

Rahman accused opposition politicians of "irresponsibly" advocating for meeting the demands. "My appeal to the responsible politicians that they must show the sources of funding these demands while pleading for."

"Entire society has become demand-oriented, waves of demands plagued all the micro sectors... no economy can run in such a chaotic situation," Saifur Rahman urged all to restrain and give the new government time to put hold on the affairs and bring about stability and order in the economy.

Referring to bank employees' demand for incentive bonus, the Finance Minister

## Donors threaten

From page 1 Col 4  
suggested 'forceful action' for strengthening the Power Development Board (PDB) and the Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA), and for curbing labour indiscipline. "Otherwise," it said, "we see no room for improvement."

About 500 million US dollars of matured credit to the power sector remained frozen in the pipeline because of fund suspension by donors, crippling all development works in the sector.

Authoritative sources said even the periodic maintenance and replacement works in the power sector were being seriously hampered due to fund scarcity.

said "the question of bonus does not arise when all the banks are losing every year".

## Rohingyas

From page 1 Col 8  
sheltering the Rohingya insurgents, a charge strongly denied by Dhaka.

The RSO source said that at this stage they wanted to concentrate more on the plight of the refugees fleeing in thousands into Bangladesh to escape alleged atrocities by Myanmar's military government.

The jungle guerrilla activity was suspended after Dec 21, when a Myanmar army-patrol killed one BDR jawan and a civilian in an attack on a BDR outpost at Rejupara.

"We have reviewed our plan of action after this attack and concluded that the Burmese junta should not be given an excuse to attack Bangladesh again," the RSO leader said.

He claimed that the number of refugees pouring into Bangladesh had swelled to more than 90,000 with 500 new arrivals reported daily.

Bangladesh government has estimated the number between 42,000 and 45,000.

## Transport strike enters fourth day today

By Staff Correspondent  
The country wide strike by the road transport owners enter its fourth consecutive day today causing immense misery to the people.

Road communications remained static on the third day of the strike while no effort was made to break a deadlock between the government and the striking transport owners.

Leaders of the owners said that there was no meeting with the government to resolve the issue.

Bangladesh Road Transport Association, a platform of the owners, struck from February 8 to press for its 19-point charter of demands. The Association demands reduction in fuel prices to the pre-Gulf war level, reduction of duty on automobile spare parts, stoppage of illegal toll collection, increase in the time frame for payment of presumptive tax and decentralisation of the existing route permit issuance system.

The Association meeting, with its president Alhaj AK Joydul Abedin in the chair, decided that the strike be continued till realisation of the demands.



Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar visited a Degree examination centre at Eden Girls' College in the city yesterday. —PID photo

## AL demands expulsion of Golam Azam

By Staff Correspondent  
A rally of Dhaka city Awami League Monday afternoon demanded immediate expulsion of Jamaat leader Golam Azam from the country.

Speakers at the rally, held in front of Jatiya Press Club, also demanded passing of the Indemnity (repeal) bill and warned that Awami League would wage movement if government made further delay in passing the bill. The rally was held as a mark of protest against the killing of Shamsul Alam, a city AL worker. The speakers demanded exemplary punishment of the killers of Shamsul Alam.

Presided over by city AL president Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, the rally was addressed, among others, by party's central leaders MA Jalil, Matia Chowdhury, city leaders Shahara Khatun, Mozaffar Hossain Maya, and MA Aziz. Matia Chowdhury criticized the BNP government for its 'dilly-dallying tactics' to pass the Indemnity bill in Jatiya Sangsad.

She supported the just demands of the striking non-government teachers and those of the striking transport owners and workers. She said that the government failed to solve the problems of teachers though their memorandum was submitted to the government 70 days ago. She also demanded repeal of the Special Powers Act.

MA Jalil alleged that the anti-liberation forces were being rehabilitated with the help of the present government. He Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, announced at the rally that there would be trial of Golam Azam in the court of people on March 26, the Independence Day.

## Degree exams begin

From page 1 Col 2

though they had earlier supported the teachers strike and decided not to hold the examinations.

He also said that they would continue their ongoing indefinite strike and would urge the government teachers again to boycott the exams.

Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar expressed satisfaction over the smooth holding of the Degree examinations.

At a press briefing Monday evening at his office, the Minister said that a total of 1,17,680 examinees are appearing the examinations.

"Examinations were held at the centres smoothly and in a peaceful atmosphere. There was no disturbance anywhere," said the Minister adding that it was possible because of the co-operation of the students, guardians, teachers, government and non-government officials and employees.

In reply to a question, the Minister said that the DCs were instructed to engage officers from the district administrations to fill up the gaps created by the abstention of teachers.

The Minister mentioned that the government was aware of the demands of the non-government teachers and that their 'just demands' were under active consideration. He expressed the hope that the issue would be solved through negotiations.

Our correspondents add: In Narayanganj the Degree examinations in four centres were held peacefully while one candidate was expelled from Tolaram Government College centre for adopting unfair means. In Kishoreganj 43 candidates were expelled. Of them

19 were from Pakundia centre, 14 from Kotiadi, 3 each from Hossainpur and Bhatrab and two each from Bajitpur and Kishoreganj Government College.

In Mymensingh 121 Degree examinees were expelled from 9 centres of the district for adopting unfair means in the examinations yesterday.

In Munshinganj 5 candidates were expelled from Government Haraganga College.

## Bank unions

From page 1 Col 7  
government to accept their 10-point charter of demands within the week.

The trade unions also decided to embark on a 'greater movement' if the government failed to find an acceptable solution to the problems by then.

This was disclosed at a press conference organised by the Sonali Bank Officers' and Employees Coordination Council held at the bank's head office in Motijheel yesterday afternoon.

President of the Sonali Bank CBA and Coordinator of the Coordination Council for the four bank unions Baker Hossain said the government requested the unions to postpone their programmes for the next 15 days to allow the government to examine their demands. The union leaders, however, decided to wait for only a week before embarking on a greater movement to re-align their 10-point demand, Hossain said, adding that the government was given much time earlier to consider the demands but failed to pay heed to their legitimate demands.

The press conference was also attended by Sonali Bank CBA leaders Rahmatullah Choudhury and Abdul Jabbar Shikder.

## The Midnight File

### Fundamentalists kill 6 cops in Algiers

ALGIERS, Feb 10: Six policemen have been murdered in Algiers by Islamic Fundamentalist 'Alghans'. Algerian veterans of the Afghan war, Algerian radio reported today, reports AFP.

### Planes with western food arrive CIS cities

MOSCOW, Feb 10: Planes carrying food and medicine from the West began arriving in cities across the Commonwealth of Independent States today as 'Operation Hope' got underway to show support for people in their hour of need, reports Reuters.

## All but one demand

From page 1 Col 4  
shoulder the additional burden of the money required to implement the idea right now, the State Minister added.

The Opposition, demanding immediate fulfilment of the demands made by different sections of people should also suggest to the government how this money could be collected without drastic cuts in the development budget, the State Minister argued.

Sheikh Hasina, the Awami League Chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, in a bid to refute Pata's argument said, "As you are in power you yourself have to find the ways and means of collecting the money required to meet the demands of the people."

The AL Chief, referring to the ruling party's pledge to reduce the fuel price made earlier, said that the government had now shifted its position on the issue.

The AL Chief also accused the ruling party of behaving like the past autocratic regime of General Ershad.

The other Opposition MPs while deliberating on the issue accused the government of not taking the Opposition parties into confidence in solving the problems facing the people.

Tofael Ahmed of the AL said, "We do not expect the government to solve all the problems overnight, but one year after the BNP's taking over of power it seems that it has failed in all respects in dealing with the people's problems."

Suranjit Sengupta of the Ganotantri Party accused the government of insincerity in handling the problems of the struggling sections of people.

All the government needed was to scrutinise the demands made by different sections of the people sincerely, identify the genuine problems and take effective steps to solve them, Suranjit added.

In that case, Suranjit continued, the government could seek the cooperation of the Opposition in Parliament. But the government seemed reluctant to do so, he added.

"If things go on like this the Opposition will not be sitting idle in Parliament," Suranjit threatened the government, adding that the Opposition would be compelled to take to the streets.

Dr Badruddoza Chowdhury, while refuting the Opposition allegation that the government was insincere in solving the people's problems said, "BNP was very particular in facing the people's genuine problems step by step."

"We have meanwhile sat with the striking college teachers several times to solve their problems but the AL, while in power after the independence of the country, did not even bother to sit with the teachers, on strike for 175 days then, to give them a patient hearing."

The government was sympathetic towards the problems of different sections of the people and would try its best to mitigate their sufferings, Dr Chowdhury concluded.

Mashtur Rahman of the BNP said that the fuel price should definitely be reduced but that the Opposition should also give a second thought to the issue as to whether it should be done right at the moment or in next July.

"An Opposition member in the Standing Committee maintained the other day that inefficiency of the teachers had led the students astray while the Opposition blamed the government for not conceding to the teachers' demands during their deliberations on the issue in the House," Mashtur regretted.

He urged the respectable Opposition members to give up this double standard in the nation's interest.

## Seen from the gallery

From page 1 Col 2  
'prescription' that would cure the disease. Even prescriptions for political ills have become synonymous with his comments on any of the subjects. Like an actor on the stage he knows when to raise his voice, when to assert and when to throw naivete but hard-hitting comments at his opponents.

Having the advantage of being the last person to speak in the absence of the Leader of the House, Prof. Chowdhury started it yesterday casually. By the time he said that his party was not scared in negotiating problems with others and added that when the Awami League was in power it failed to negotiate with teachers even after a 175-day stalemate, the Awami Leaguers had to keep quiet. They also did not expect such a relevant reference and failed to make any noise.

Professor Chowdhury also knows how to make himself audible with a multi-directional sensitive microphone on. But most of the members, it seems, are not used to such microphones and are consequently inaudible.

Manirul Haque Chowdhury, is one of those, who probably need a little more articulation even if he tries to harangue. He was reminded of this by Tofael Ahmed when he got the floor to speak. Tofael Ahmed, his

one time political guru called him 'tumi' and commented 'try to speak softly, we can't understand you'.

It says, for an intelligent man an indication is enough (akel man ke lye isharat kafi hai). For Suranjit Sengupta it was very much applicable yesterday. The Speaker did not call his name but they exchanged glances and the permission came for Gupta.

When the general debate on the transport strike was coming to a close, the Speaker had to restrain Moudud Ahmed from making a point of personal explanation. Earlier, the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina commented that Moudud Ahmed had always sided with the Treasury Bench even when Awami League was in power. Unfortunately he (Moudud) missed the chance this time and she expected Moudud would learn the language of the opposition.

Moudud Ahmed wanted to clear his position and begged for a minute from the Speaker. But the Speaker stopped him saying that a statement from Moudud 'will generate heat' and observed that Sheikh Hasina did not say anything that deserved personal clarification.

## Alex Haley

From page 1 Col 4  
midnight at Swedish hospital, where he was admitted for treatment Sunday evening, the nursing supervisor said. The cause of death was not immediately disclosed.

Haley was best-known for 'Roots: The Saga of an American Family,' which traced the African ancestry of a black family and became a hugely successful 12-hour television mini-series that drew 130 million viewers — said at the time to be the largest audience in television history.

The book won him the 1977 Pulitzer Prize, one of the most prestigious US literary awards.

Haley was born in Ithaca, New York and grew up in Henning, Tennessee where his older relatives' stories led him to devote 12 years methodically tracing his mother's side of the family back six generations.

## Police, students

From page 1 Col 7  
pelted stones in response too. Similar clashes took place in the Shaheed Minar area when the demonstrators were again obstructed by the police while damaging vehicles.

The agitating students later attacked a police van near TSC at about 1:30 pm and police instantly chased them.

A series of chase and counter chase took place there for about half an hour.

There rounds of gunshots were also heard during the clash from the Jagannath Hall areas.

The Chhatra League (N-S) rally held in front of the Jatiya Press Club was addressed, among others, by Nazmul Huq Prudhan, Shafi Ahmed and Abdullaht-Quayum.

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