

ATP case : Hearing adjourned till Mar 14

The hearing of charges against former President H M Ershad and three others of corrupt practices in the deal for procurement of three ATP (Advanced Turbo-Prop) Aircraft has been adjourned till March 14, reports BSS.

The hearing, which was to have resumed today, was postponed following a prayer from the defence.

The defence appealed to the Additional and Special Judge Qamrul Islam Siddiqui to adjourn the hearing as Amzad Ali, Attorney of Ziauddin Ahmed, former Civil Aviation Minister, has fallen sick. Mofazzal Hossain, junior of Ali, made the application asking for adjournment.

The Attorney General, Aminul Haq, objected to the prayer saying this was a flimsy ground to seek adjournment. He stressed that hearing should start for quick disposal of the case.

Khandakhar Mahbub Hossain, appearing on behalf of Ershad earlier asked the court to decide about the application filed on behalf of his client before going for the charge hearing. Referring to the prayer for adjournment, Mofazzal Hossain said it had been tradition in the courts that an adjournment on personal ground was never objected to.

The Attorney General wanted to know from the defence that if it was a case of genuine sickness, then why they had not informed him of it earlier so that the hearing date could be shifted without causing any inconvenience to any side. He reminded all of the huge expenditure and efforts to hold each sitting of this special court.

Khan Saifur Rahman appearing on behalf of Lt. Col. (Retd) H M A Gaffar suggested that before the prosecution begins

telling the court about the charges against the accused, the defence be supplied with a copy of the charges.

Ershad's counsel Khandakhar Mahbub Hossain made renewed appeal for not holding charge hearing and told the court that he would object to such hearing.

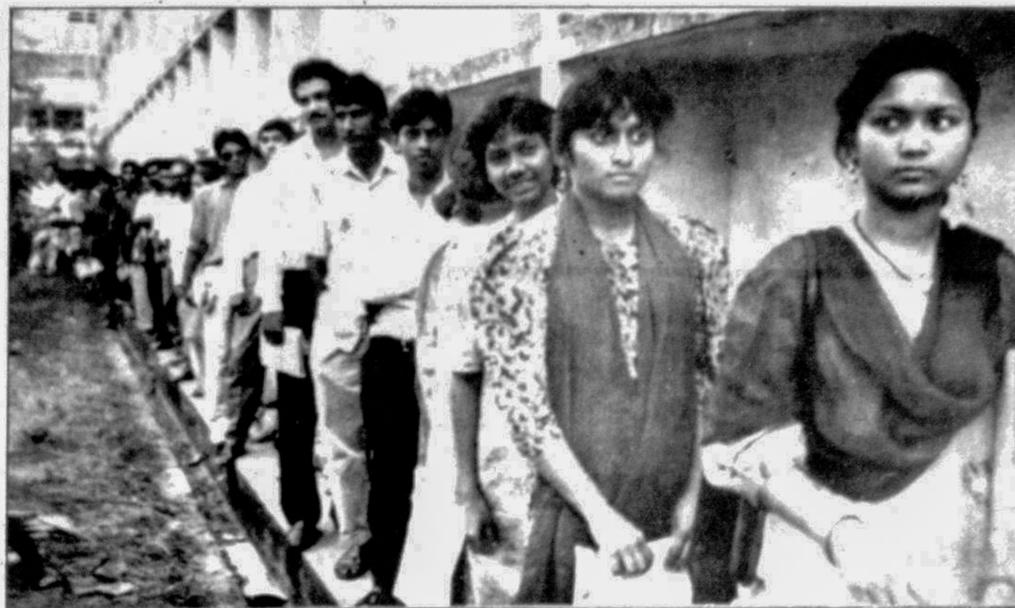
The Attorney General while reiterating his objections of the defence to hold the hearing, said as per law court could charge the accused suo moto. He, however, stated it was absolutely the discretion of the court to allow the hearing.

The Judge after hearing both sides and also taking their counsel, fixed March 14 for the hearing of the charges. He further said even if one of the defence Attorneys failed to turn up, charge hearing would go ahead.

Earlier all the accused, H M Ershad and Ziauddin Ahmed and Lt. Col. (Retd) H M A Gaffar both former Ministers of Civil Aviation and A K M Mosharraf Hossain, former Industries Secretary, were produced before the court. Excepting Ershad, all the three are on bail.

Like February 10, the last date of this case, Mosharraf Hossain was seen sitting beside Ershad in the dock. They were also seen talking most of the time.

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 benefits or to give it to 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 more than Taka 22 crore to Bangladesh Biman and eventually to the state.



DU admission seekers in a long queue on the last day of submitting application forms.

—Star photo

44,000 vie for 3,692 DU seats

By Masud Arif

About 44,400 students will contest for a total of 3,692 seats of first year Honours courses in Dhaka University for the session 1991-92. According to the statistics on an average 12 students will contest for a seat this year as against 11 students for the last two years.

The university authorities received the applications yesterday. The admission test will

begin from March 20.

About 16,000 students, the highest number of candidates applied in 'Gha' unit. About 45 students will compete for a seat in this unit. Those who want to change subject or faculty have to apply through this unit.

Beside, 12,620 students have applied in 'Ka' unit (faculty of science), 9,680 in 'Kha' unit (faculty of arts) and

some 6,110 in 'Ga' unit (faculty of commerce).

Around 43,000 students applied for the same number of seats in 1990-91 session while 39,000 students competed for a total of 3500 seats in 1989-90 session.

The counters to receive applications at the university campus witnessed heavy rush over the last two days.

The DU authorities had to

introduce more counters to cope with the situation and used mick for distribution of admit cards.

Heavy rush was also reported from banks engaged in distribution of application forms.

No untoward incident was reported this year in distributing the forms, bank sources said. Different counters were arranged for the girl-students.

Kiwis in semis

Zealand reached 206 for five in response with nine balls to spare.

The West Indies suffered its third loss in five matches and is in grave danger of missing out on a semifinal spot.

In Brisbane, the South Africans benefited when rain fell midway through the Pakistani innings.

South Africa scrambled to 211 for seven in its allocated 50 overs, thanks to a lively 54 from Andrew Hudson and an unbeaten 47 from Hansie Cronje.

Then, after rain fell in the 22nd over with Pakistan on 74 for two, the match was reduced to 36 overs and Pakistan was set a target of 194 for victory.

The Pakistanis set about the chase with gusto, but were 173 for eight at stumps and lost by 20 runs.

The South Africans scored their third win in five matches to move into third place in the nine-nation tournament behind New Zealand and England.

Pakistan has only three points from its five matches and faces almost certain elimination from the semis despite a superb performance from captain Imran Khan, who took two for 34 with the ball and then made 34 in the desperate run chase.

(Details on Sports Pages.)

US Navy

From Page 1 Col 4

that we are keeping an eye on this and we are not going to put up with anything that may jeopardize the stability of that region," said the official, who spoke on condition he not be identified by name. At the State Department, an official said the United States was concerned that North Korea is transferring destabilising weapons to the Middle East.

That official, who also spoke on condition of anonymity, said the administration particularly opposes the proliferation of surface-to-surface missiles in the region.

He said the administration would view with concern any transfer of that type.

20 shops gutted by fire in Savar

From Our Correspondent

SAVAR, Mar 8 : A fire at a market near the Savar Cantonment gutted 20 shops today, damaging property worth Taka 50 lakh.

Police said that a fire, originating from an electric short circuit, broke out at 8.30 am at the Nabinagar Cantonment markets. It engulfed 16 ration shops, 12 grocery shops and two motor-cycle repair shops.

Five people received minor injuries during rescue operation, police said.

Fire fighters from Dhaka and Manikganj extinguished the fire after an hour.

The Dhaka-Aricha Road communication remained suspended for half an hour when the other shop owners of the market dumped their goods on the highway.

Spectre of communism haunts Gorbachev

ZURICH, Mar 8 : Communism could rear its head again like a monster of Greek Mythology, former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said in an interview published on Sunday, reports Reuter.

"It can come back to life. It's like the Hydra of the Greek myth, whose heads grow back after they have been chopped off," he told the Swiss Tabloid Sonntage Blick in a Moscow interview.

Gorbachev, who only renounced the Soviet Communist Party he headed after it supported a failed coup against him in August, said Communism had brought his democratic reforms to grief.

"I reformed Soviet society quite consciously. But all the reforms ran up against the party monopoly, because they were a threat to the interests of the ruling class. That's why they were doomed to failure. That's why the whole system had to be renewed," he said.

He added he was working on a new book, to be called "The Death Throes of the System".

Gorbachev, who now heads a political research institute, said he would continue to work for his ideas in the background.

"I'm glad it's (Russian President) Boris Yeltsin who

has to worry about Russian politics. I very much hope he is successful," Gorbachev said.

He gave little hint of any ambitions to return to public office himself. Asked what would happen if he were President again, he replied, "history doesn't like 'ifs'."



Gorbachev

Gorbachev rejected the idea that he had been too impulsive during his six years in office.

"A politician without passion, without inner force, who doesn't explode every now and then, is not a politician but a boring person," he said.

"I'm very sensitive. I forgive a great deal, and often that rebounds on me," he added "I don't want to change, though."

Rao

From Page 1 Col 8

The statement came following similar remarks overnight by Rao and Congress (I) General Secretary, Ghulam Nabi Azad, that they were confident of beating back the Opposition in the house.

"I am not worried," Rao told reporters in the central Indian city of Nagpur on Saturday. "Be assured that the government will survive."

He, however, declined to go into details.

Congress (I) and its allies command 262 MPs in the Lok Sabha, the elected house of parliament, whose present strength is 532. The government needs the support of at least five other MPs to survive.

Clash snaps bus communication

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 8 : A simple dispute between bus drivers at Pabna developed into a serious clash that snapped the bus communication from here to Pabna since Sunday morning, reports UNB.

It erupted when workers of Pabna Sramik Motor Union on Saturday forced the drivers of buses from Sirajganj to park their vehicles at the end of the long queue at Pabna bus stand.

Being discontented, drivers from Sirajganj protested at it which immediately sparked into a scuffle with the Union workers.

Jamaat

From Page 1 Col 4

Matin Chowdhury on Thursday and Saturday night respectively on the issue.

Jamaat leader, sources say, wanted to know the position of the Government and he was told to wait.

Party sources further say, central leaders have already issued a circular to party workers. In the circular the workers have been advised to remain alert and prepare against any 'attack' from the pro-liberation forces.

Party sources further say, Jamaat workers would remain on the defensive on the day but would not allow others to play foul.

Trial Committee sources say it would issue notice on Golam Azam to appear in person before the 'court' on the day and believes 'it would be a trial in absentia.' Nevertheless, sources say, they would allow a lawyer to represent Golam Azam.

Meanwhile, Barrister Razaq, known as a pro-Jamaat lawyer, has approached the trial committee to allow him to defend Golam Azam provided 'security is ensured.'

The committee sources further say they are preparing a position paper on the Jamaat letter sent to diplomatic missions which would be made public soon.

Montu issue

From Page 1 Col 7

that punitive measure taken against Montu was not discussed in the meetings earlier.

"Rather, Kamal Hossain left the Working Committee meeting Thursday at about 8 pm to attend a dinner hosted by a foreign mission while the meeting continued till 3 am that night," said Nasim.

According to sources close to Montu, he is yet to receive the letter issued by the party Working Committee officially informing him the suspension order and asking him why his membership will not be cancelled.

Meanwhile, Montu has convened a meeting of the Dhaka district committee of the party on March 13.

The meeting will be held at the central office of Awami League.

The Midnight File

Pak BCCI branches merge with govt-owned bank

ISLAMABAD, Mar 8 : Pakistan on Sunday merged three branches of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, with a government-owned bank. The merger is based on terms set by the liquidators of BCCI, state-run Habib Bank and the Central Bank, the Finance Ministry said. "Under the merger plan, the assets and liabilities of the three Pakistan-based branches of BCCI will vest Habib Bank Limited, which will manage them through a subsidiary. All unencumbered deposits and claims will be payable in full," reports AP.

Ethnic clashes erupt in Rwanda : 15 killed

NAIROBI (Kenya) Mar 8 : At least 15 people were killed and thousands fled their homes following five days of ethnic clashes east of Rwanda's capital, Rwanda radio reported. The Saturday night broadcast, monitored in Nairobi, said members of the Hutu tribe, Rwanda's largest, attacked Tutsi tribes-people in Kanzenze hills, about 20 kilometers (12 miles) from Kigali, the nation's capital, reports AP.

Seven killed, 40 hurt in accidents

By DMCH Correspondent

Seven persons were killed and 40 others were injured in incidents in the city and in Mymensingh Sunday.

Moazzem, 25, a student of Jahangirnagar University, succumbed to his injuries early Sunday at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) after being admitted there following a road accident on the Dhaka-Aricha highway Saturday night.

While Moazzem was returning from Savar by a rickshaw, a minibus ran it over near the campus, university sources said.

Two pedestrians, a 60-year-old woman and her eight-year-old son died on the spot when a bus, Dhaka Cha-4743, ran them over near Mohakhali bus terminal at about 3:30 pm yesterday. The victims were not identified.

Both the bodies were sent to the morgue of the DMCH, Gulshan police said.

Our IBAU Correspondent adds: At least four people, including a UP member, were killed and 40 others injured, five critically, in a bus accident near Turkhali Bazar on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway on Sunday noon.

Two of the dead were identified as Abdul Jabbar (50), a union parishad member and Babul (20). The seriously injured passengers were admitted to the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, hospital sources said.

Eyewitnesses said that the over-loaded bus (No. Mymen. Bha-1777) fell into a roadside ditch as the driver lost control of the vehicle. He, however, managed to escape from the scene of the accident.

BCL factions

From Page 1 Col 7

Montu-backed and Jatayatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) sheltered 'third world' group from the Surjansen and Mohsin hall areas, sources said.

Besides, the 'first world' and 'second world' — named BCL (S-A) activists jointly countered the action by firing around 15 shots from Madhu's Canteen and 'Kala Bhaban' areas, witnesses said.

The trading of shots between the BCL (S-A) factions created panic among the general students and others who came to submit application forms in Kala Bhaban area.

Later, the JCD brought out a procession and held a rally in front of the DUCSU building.

Addressing the rally, JCD leaders Nazimuddin Alam, Fazlul Huq Milon and Maniruzzaman Monir condemned the BCL (S-A) and said that its intra-party conflict was creating all the trouble on the DU campus.

Meanwhile, BCL leader Ansari said that the JCD had sheltered all activists expelled from their party and was creating such untoward incidents on the campus continuously.

Meanwhile, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front leaders Belal Chowdhury and Razeuzzaman Ratan in a joint statement condemned the incidents and urged the government to take immediate action against the armed hooligans.

40,000 Rohingyas

From Page 1 Col 4

and the situation was under control in the area, he said. "They are being provided with the basic necessities, but there is scope and need to improve the facilities further."

The State Minister said that at present a total of 1,01,159 refugees had been counted by his ministry. Of the total number of refugees residing in the camps, 71,421 are registered while 27,368 remained unregistered and another 2,370 refugees staying outside the camps had been identified.

He said that steps had been taken to register all refugees staying in the camps by the end of the current week. "Unless they are identified and registered now, they might face difficulties at the time of repatriation."

He added that steps were also being taken to keep the refugees isolated as much as possible for their safety. "Very soon we are going to erect perimeter fences around the refugee camps."

The state minister noted that in addition to the six camps already in operation, work on setting up four new camps was undertaken last week of which two have already been completed. He mentioned that finding a big tract of land is difficult as it is not possible to set up camps on private land.

The new camps are being built with CI-sheet roofs and we want to complete them as

soon as possible before the monsoons begin.

He said that the Relief Ministry had already distributed cash and goods worth about Taka 6 crore in addition to the materials provided by the Health and LGRD ministries.

The relief materials distributed so far included 240 metric tons of wheat, 490 metric tons and 360 bags of rice, 1550 tons of biscuits, 2,000 cartons of powdered milk, 100 cartons of old clothes, 962 cartons of baby food, 23,500 plates, 17,000 utensils and 83 cartons of tin food. In addition to the Relief Ministry, the Health Ministry is involved in providing medical services and the Public Health Engineering Department of the LGRD Ministry is helping to set up the camps and sanitary facilities. The Home Ministry is in charge of the security in the camps.

A coordination committee of all the ministries is chaired by the Home Minister, the state minister said. The Foreign Minister briefs the committee from time to time on the international aspects of the refugee problem.

Khan noted that the Prime Minister constantly inquires about the situation and the on-going relief efforts.

"I pray and hope that the Rohingyas refugees can return to their homeland as soon as possible and get back their rights as citizens of their country," he concluded.

AL plans agitation before budget session

Opposition Awami League is planning to go for street agitation before the next budget session of Parliament to press the government for resolving certain political and economic issues, reports UNB.

A uniform opinion favouring immediate movement came at the just concluded extended meeting of the party's central committee held Mar 1-3 when district leaders suggested the party high command not to give any more concession to the government.

Talking to UNB, Opposition Chief Whip and Awami League Publicity Secretary Mohammad Nasim said "we will start about agitation before the next budget session as we find no alternative to movement in resolving the problems."

He ruled out any joint movement on the basis of alliances as in the past and said this time Awami League will go alone with its economic and political programmes for protecting people's fundamental rights and ensuring their well-being.

Nasim, however, said they will welcome any party who likes to join the Awami League's movement by accepting its programmes.

The movement, he said, will be based mainly on some crucial issues like Indemnity Ordinance (Repeal), Bill, citizenship of Jamaat leader Golam Azam, 'so-called' anti-terrorism bill, price-hike and law and order.

Nasim said the extended meeting had empowered party

chief Sheikh Hasina and the central working committee to take any programme of action suiting the urgency of the situation.

The government, he said, has utterly failed to solve the problems in socio-political fields as well as in economic fronts. The ruling party has also failed to implement its pre-election commitments, he added.

The Awami League leader said the district committees of the party have been asked to complete their council conferences by April 30 in a bid to revitalise the organisation.

Shaheed Minar demolished in Pabna

PABNA, Mar 8: Unidentified miscreants demolished Shaheed Minar at Edward University College early today, triggering waves of protest in the town, reports UNB.

Students of the college found the minar destroyed after midnight last night.

Several political parties, student fronts and others brought out processions this morning condemning the act and held Jamaat-e-Islami responsible.

Islami Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat, in a press release here, however, denied their involvement in the incident and also condemned it.

Anvar: World call

From Page 1 Col 4

tance so far provided by the humanitarian UN body stands at Tk 5 crore.

The Secretary informed that the UN agency had initially paid Tk 1 crore to meet primary requirements.

UNHCR Director for Asia and Oceania Jamshed Anvar recently handed a cheque for Tk 2.5 crore to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

The quantities are part of a 20 million-dollar programme the UN body has drawn up to look after the refugees who have camped in Bangladesh fleeing repression by the Myanmar junta.

On a query, Hakim said the government had so far sanctioned Tk 1.32 crore to provide relief to the refugees.

It also allocated 493 tons of rice and 290 tons of wheat, besides huge quantity of relief

material including biscuits and powdered milk.

Another reports says, a UNHCR official arrived Dhaka Sunday from its headquarters in Geneva to coordinate a massive relief operation for the Rohingyas refugees.

Darus Byandar will be in charge of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) local mission for certain period.

Restaurants

From Page 1 Col 5

restaurants open maintaining the sanctity of Ramzan. "we took the decision as the government directive was partial and did not direct to keep the big hotels and snack-shops closed, said the president.

Another official of the Association, M Atiqur Rahman confirmed that most of the 7,500 restaurants in the city were kept open yesterday.

Editor: S. M. Ali

Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Published by S. M. Ali on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at Offset Printing Dialogue Publications Ltd., 19 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: 28/1, Toynbee Circular Road, Dhaka-1000. Tel: PABX-246023-4, 245061-2. Advertisement: 245063 & Ext. 20. Fax No. 88-02-863035. GPO Box No. 3257. GRAM: DAILY STAR, DHAKA.



Partial view of the shops gutted in a fire at the Savar-Nabinagar-Cantonment Market. —Photo: Shamsuzzaman