

One billion dollar scandal Indian opposition demands Monmohan's resignation

NEW DELHI, June 7: India's worst financial scandal brought opposition demands on Saturday for Finance Minister Manmohan Singh to resign and a decree setting up a special court to deal with suspects in the case.

An official spokesman said President Ramaswamy Venkataraman issued an order asking the Bombay High Court to nominate a judge to try suspects in the 30 billion Rupee (1 billion dollars) scandal involving illegal stock dealings.

He told Reuters the presidential order, a temporary move which parliament must ratify, provided for the confiscation of the assets of suspects. Those charged so far in Bombay, India's commercial and financial centre, include big bull broker Harshad Mehta, the man at the centre of the scandal, and five bankers alleged to have fed him funds illegally for buying shares.

A Bombay court remanded all 10 men charged with criminal conspiracy in police custody until June 19.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) told the court it wanted them to be remanded for sustained interrogation which would include lie-detector tests.

They were detained in raids on over 30 premises in Bombay on Thursday by 150 CBI men, who seized large numbers of documents. CBI sources said they expected to make further arrests.

The CBI has been probing alleged collusion between stock brokers and bankers in illegally diverting funds from the governments' securities market to the booming Bombay stock market.

The one-year-old minority government of Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao has promised that all the guilty will be punished.

The main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) demanded the Finance Minister's resignation. Singh should resign if he has any conscience, BJP President Murli Manohar Joshi told a news conference in Delhi.

BTC Dhaka factory resumes production

The Bangladesh Tobacco Company Saturday resumed production of cigarettes after a week-long closure of its factory, reports UNB.

BTC's only factory in the capital was declared closed Monday last for an indefinite period amidst strike by a section of workers. The other factory in Chittagong was closed down last year.

The decision of reopening the factory was taken following an agreement between the BTC management and the Workers Union on Friday.

Marketing Manager Ihab Sattar told UNB that the factory resumed normal production in three shifts since 6 this morning. The company will start shipment of different brands of its cigarettes from today (Monday) for sale.

Dhaka signs

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Nations Conference on Environment and Development, currently taking place in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

President Fernando Collor was the first to sign the convention. Bangladesh was the eighth country to sign it on the opener day.

The negotiations for the convention were concluded in Nairobi on May 22 this year. It aims at conserving biological resources and ensuring their sustainable use. It also includes mechanism for transfer of technology and financial resources to the developing countries for implementation of the provisions of the convention.

The minister reiterated to the journalists the commitment of his government to the convention. He stated that Bangladesh which was rich in flora and fauna, was undertaking all possible measures to preserve this national heritage of global importance.

He expressed his hope that adequate assistance would be forthcoming from the developed countries and other international sources for this purpose for Bangladesh as well as for other similarly placed Least Developed Countries.

School children

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passing police vehicle.

"Help me, I am injured," said Tapash Roy, a 10-year-old, who was playing with his friends in the playground.

Assistant Commissioner of Police Ershad Ali promptly collected the injured kids in his car and rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Shrapnel pierced the lower abdomen of Tapash. The two other injured, Ahsan Kabir and Johnny Paul, received wounds on their left leg and left arm respectively.

In the hospital all the kids were in a dazed. Giving an account of the incident Tapash murmured "I don't know anything. I suddenly heard a loud noise. I saw some young men running with weapons in their hands. They shot directly at a black car which zoomed off. Then I felt something cold in my shirt. It was blood."

Ahsan said that after the first explosion he peeped out of the gate to see what was

Internal resource contributes 24 pc to ADP, Saifur tells IMF official

Finance Minister M. Saifur Rahman Saturday told the visiting IMF Executive Director, G.K. Arora, that a quarter of the funding of the current year's Annual Development Programme (ADP) was made from the country's own resources, report BSS.

The mobilization of internal resources had enabled the country to contribute 24 per cent to the ADP of fiscal 1991-92, the Finance Minister said this when Arora called on him at his Secretariat office in Dhaka.

Rahman gave a comprehensive resume of the overall national policies, particularly economic, fiscal and monetary policies undertaken by the present democratic government. He said that the measures had started yielding good results, an official handout said.

Finance Secretary Nasimuddin Ahmed was present. The Finance Minister expressed his confidence that a significantly higher development investment would be achieved next year and that domestic resource would be adequate to support it.

Arora appreciated the excellent performance of the government in macro economic management and in controlling inflation which is the lowest among the south Asian countries, the handout said.

He also praised government efforts in containing current expenditure reducing fiscal and external account deficits.

The IMF Executive Director felt that the government should pursue the reform programme and attach considerable importance to diversification, growth and competitiveness of the export sector.

He, however, expressed disappointment over the poor performance of public sector corporations and agencies and felt that they needed effective action by the government.

Later Arora called on Finance Secretary at his office.



Central leaders of Awami League placing wreaths at the portrait of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman yesterday on the occasion of historic 7th June. — Star photo

Hectic campaign on JCD council session June 16

By Nazmul Ashraf

Hectic campaigns by candidates for the central leadership of the ruling BNP's student wing Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) in now on as the council session of the organisation draws near.

The JCD council session is going to be held on June 16 after a lapse of five and a half years. The last council session to elect the JCD Executive Committee was held in December, 1986.

The EC was dissolved in early 1990 following internal feuds. Since then the organisation is being run by a convening body led by the DUCSU Vice-President Amanullah Aman, MP.

With the council session at hand, candidates are busy trying to gain support of the councillors in the educational institutions including the Dhaka University and the JCD offices in the city.

Besides, they are also touring the district headquarters to seek support of the councillors outside the city.

The date for the council session was decided at a meeting of the JCD convening committee members with the BNP chairperson Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her Sugandha office on June 3.

A total of 193 councillors from across the country are expected to elect their central leadership at the BNP central office in Dhanmondi in the

city on June 16. The councillors will fill up prescribed forms naming their candidates for the 61-member executive committee of JCD. The BNP chairperson will approve the entire EC in consultation with party central leaders.

According to JCD sources, the aspirants for the post of president include: DUCSU AOS Najmuddin Alam, JCD Joint Convenors Fazlul Haq Milon and DUCSU GS Khairul Kabir Khokon and ex-RUCSU VP Rizvi Ahmed. Those interested in the general secretary post of the organisation are: Elias Ali, former EUCSU VP, Farid Ahmed, Rafiqul Islam Jaglu, Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anny, Habib ul Nabi Sohel, Abul Khaer Bhutyan, Khandaker Jahangir Alam, Harun or Rashid and others.

The prospective candidates for the seat of organising secretary include: Quamruzzaman Ratan, Abdul Malek, Ihabul Islam Ihab, Shirin Sultana and Emdad Khan.

JCD sources said that unlike in the previous council sessions, this year the election of the JCD EC would be more democratic. In the last council session, councillors were, in some cases, compelled to vote for candidates not of their choice.

With a view to holding the council session freely, the BNP has taken adequate measures.

'Closure of jute mills to have dire consequences'

By Staff Correspondent

Economists, politicians and labour leaders at a seminar Saturday said that the closure of an increasing number of jute mills would have dire consequences on the economy.

As over three crore people are involved in the jute sector its closure is likely to affect the society as a whole.

The speakers were participating in a seminar on 'save jute, jute industries and save the country', organised by the Workers Party at the Dhaka centre of the Engineers Institute.

Presided over by party president Amal Sen, the seminar was addressed by economist Dr Attur Rahman, Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon MP, Five-party leader Nirmal Sen, jute workers' leader Abul Bashar, Lutfar Rahman, Moklesur Rahman, textile workers leader Iqbal Majumder and BJMC official Arifur Rahman.

Dr Attur Rahman said that successive governments played "political games" with the jute and textile sectors and hired workers to strengthen their respective party bases in different mills and factories. The need and capacity of the mills were never considered.

Dr Rahman pointed out that no government had ever conducted any study on how the situation in these sectors be

Militants, army trade fire in Kashmir: 2 killed

SRINAGAR, June 7: An exchange of fire between militants and the army Sunday left at least two dead and five houses smouldering, witnesses said.

Militants fired upon army search patrols in Bogam village, 20 kilometers west of Srinagar, killing a soldier and seriously injuring another, said state police chief BS Bedi.

The soldiers, who belonged to the Raj Rifles group, threw grenades into two houses to flush out the militants carrying out the Muslim insurrection. The houses caught fire, Bedi said. He did not elaborate.

came so serious especially regarding jute which was once known as the 'golden fibre'.

Criticising the World Bank policy, he said "The Bank has been playing a dubious role in our development."

"On the one hand it (WB) is airing its sympathy about our economic problems while on the other it is setting terms and conditions contradictory to development," he added.

"In a slow process we have been made dependent on foreign aid," he said adding "The situation has reached such a stage that today we are unable to utilise foreign aid due to shortages of counterpart funds."

NGO activities

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two countries sit for the sixth round of talks, since signing the agreement, at the Myanmar border town of Maungdaw today to discuss the 'latest developments', a senior Foreign Ministry official said yesterday.

At the fifth meeting, Thursday, Bangladesh side proposed for a higher level talks on June 15 but Myanmar was non-committal.

Yesterday, Bangladesh received an offer from Myanmar for holding the meeting today and readily agreed to the proposal.

Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Omar Faruq and Myanmar Immigration Ministry's Director General Maung Aung will be leading the respective teams at the talks.

As the officials talk of NGOs, the blame has been put more on the Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO) and the Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front (ARIF) — both active among the Rohingyas sheltered in the makeshift camps.

Allegations are also heard against the Bangladesh chapter of the Makkah-based Rabitat al-Alam al-Islami which has a charity network in the area. Dhaka office of the organisation, however, denies the charge.

Observers also question the

AL observes June 7

Bangladesh Awami League Saturday commemorated June 7 of 1966 with hoisting of the national and party flags at Bangabandhu Bhaban and party offices and placing of wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, reports BSS.

On June 7, 1966, nationwide hartal was observed in the then East Pakistan pressing for autonomy for the region on the basis of Awami League's six-point charter of demand and release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from detention.

Admjee Mills worker Manu Miah was killed in police firing during the hartal hours. Awami League leaders Abdul Samad Azad, Sheikh Abdul Aziz, Mohiuddin Ahmed, Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, Abdur Razzak, Amir Hossain Amu, Abdul Jalil, Tofael Ahmed, Motia Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan, Ivy Rahman were among others who were present at the wreath placing ceremony. One-minute silence was observed on the occasion.

Security press

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Bangladesh Bank, was converted into a company with a view to running it on a commercial.

The meeting of the Board of Directors, however, discussed the plans on which it would be run with its new structure.

According to a source, the matter of partial disinvestment of the company to the private sector was also discussed in the meeting.

The set up of the staff of the BSPP will, however, remain unchanged, the source said, adding that some more staff might be required to run it on a commercial basis.

The meeting granted appeal for the leave of its Managing Director AKM Sekander Hossain and General Manager (administration) Abdus Sobhan for three months and also decided to appoint the Director of Bangladesh Bank Abul Quasem as the Acting Managing Director of the company.

The Managing Director earlier on May 31 resigned from his post following the incident of assaulting the General Manager (administration) by the employees of the BSPP.

According to the sources, legal actions were taken against some of its employees responsible for the incident.

Viral fever

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congestion, nausea and high temperature accompanied by severe body pain.

It appears that the ailment is not localised in any one particular area but is spread across the city.

Physicians from different areas agree that the outbreak of viral fever has increased sharply in recent weeks.

Children and the old are most vulnerable to the infection and in some cases even an entire family may be bed-ridden for days together, they add.

What are the viruses that cause this fever? Dr Md Fazlul Haque, Associate Professor of Medicine at the Sir Salimullah Medical College, says that three types of viruses — rhino, eco and adeno — coupled with a change in the weather and influenza are primarily responsible for this fever.

He cautions that, in some cases, the fever may be fatal by affecting the brain leading to the death of the patient.

Doctors are of the opinion that the treatment of this type of fever is always symptomatic and no antibiotic can provide adequate remedies.

National Professor Nurul Islam says that the use of antibiotics is not justified in most cases. The infection being viral in nature, antibiotics do not have any beneficial effect except when there is a 'superimposed secondary' infection, he explains.

Notwithstanding the limitations of antibiotics in treating this fever, he regrets that physicians continue to prescribe it.

Ideally, he says, patients should increase their intake of fluids and nutrition and points out that there is absolutely no restriction on diets.

To control the temperature and for symptomatic relief, he advises the use of aspirin for those above twelve years of age and paracetamol for minors in prescribed portions.

However, the cautions that patients with a history of bleeding tendencies and peptic ulcer should avoid taking aspirin as it has a thinning effect on blood.

The incubation period — the interval between the infection and the development of symptoms — of the virus, Professor Islam notes, may take between a few hours to four or five days.

The fever normally persists for four to five days while it can last for longer periods, he says, in which case patients should be referred to specialist physicians.

Those infected by the virus should avoid close contact with other family members and use a handkerchief while coughing or sneezing so that others around them are not infected.

As preventive measures, Professor Islam recommends maintaining a clean environment at home, practicing good personal hygiene and eating a nutritionally balanced diet.

Khaleda

From Page 1 Col 8

on condition of anonymity, said the stranded people will be given identity cards after the computer-finalised figure is available.

They said Bangladesh and Pakistan had no dispute on the repatriation of the Urdu speaking people who opted for Pakistani citizenship following the independence of Bangladesh.

Still, funds for transportation of the stranded Pakistanis remain the main roadblock in the process of taking the suffering people back to their land of choice.

A few years back Pakistan estimated that at least 500 million dollars will be needed to airlift the stranded people living in 70 flimsy camps dotted across Bangladesh.

The sources said Pakistan had so far contributed 25 crore rupees to the repatriation fund with another 5 crore rupees donated by Makkah-based Rabita al Alam al Islami.

Pakistan hopes that Rabita and some friendly Middle Eastern countries will come forward with the funds needed for ferrying the stranded people to Pakistan.

Bangladesh, which has spent more than 211 crore Taka for the welfare of the stranded Pakistanis in past 20 years, will press for a time-frame for the repatriation during Begum Zia's visit to Pakistan, informed sources said.

They said the repatriation would be a major topic in the talks between Begum Zia and her Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif.

Officials from both countries are working on the schedule for Begum Zia's visit, her first to Pakistan since she became the prime minister more than a year ago.

Begum Zia will discuss with Nawaz Sharif other bilateral problems, including share of assets and liabilities of the erstwhile federal Pakistan. The expansion of trade and economic cooperation will also be discussed by the two leaders.

The Midnight File

15 killed as Serbs shell Sarajevo

BELGRADE, June 7: The Bosnian capital Sarajevo had its "most difficult night" in two months, local radio said today as officials reported at least 15 people killed in overnight shelling by Serbian secessionists. The night sky was lit up by dozens of fires, which firemen could do nothing about because water supplies had been cut off. A hospital was among the targets, and five patients were wounded, reports AFP.

University of Zimbabwe expels 10000 students

HARARE, June 7: The university to Zimbabwe has expelled all its 10,000 students following a month of class boycotts and sometimes violent demonstrations for higher grants, the Sunday Mail newspaper reported, says Reuter.

Panamanian plane with 47 passengers missing

BOGOTA (Colombia), June 7: A commercial airplane carrying 47 people has disappeared between Panama City and Colombia, officials said Sunday. The Panamanian Copa flight was scheduled to arrive Saturday night in the city of Cali, but never appeared, reports AP.

Rly employees

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However, the document added that it had been agreed between the Railway department and the MOF that a sum of Taka 1000 million would be provided in the budget for the 1992-93 period for this purpose.

The Minister said that 18 Railway officials had been given forced retirement on charges of corruption and inefficiency while a ban was imposed on new recruitment.

He added that a series of measures had been taken up at the recommendations of ADB to make the Railway department deficit-free by the fiscal year 1994-95.

The measures include giving priority to carrying goods and speedy clearing of container traffic, strengthening of general and special ticket checking and the formation of 83 local advisory committees and a Railway advisory committee at the centre.

Oli Ahmed said that the Railway sector's total loss had been reduced to Taka 125 crore during 1991-92 from more than Taka 150 crore a year earlier.

He said that the BR had earned Taka 220.19 crore in the first eleven months of the current financial year compared to Taka 199.32 crore during 1990-91.

Earnings of all major rail stations including Dhaka, Chittagong, Dinajpur, Bogra, Shantahar, Khulna and Rajshahi had increased during the period.

He pointed out that the

Women labour

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took into consideration some of the agricultural activities performed by women as economic activities for which the female participation rate stood at 61.6 per cent at the national level in 1989. It was 9.4 and 8.7 per cent in 1985-86 and in 1984-85 respectively.

According to the report, because of entry of rural females into agriculture based economic activities, the employment in agriculture shows a sharp increase from 17.5 million in 1985-86 to 37.0 million in 1989.

Of the major occupations of the labour force in the country, fastest growth rates have been observed in professional and technical, administrative and managerial, clerical workers, sales workers and service workers which grew at annual rates of 19.4, 24.9, 22.1, 19.8 and 19.0 per cent respectively. However, highest number of both men and women are employed in agricultural occupations.

The report shows that only 12.7 per cent of the country's labour force works 45 to 49 hours a week while 19.8 per cent works less than 15 hours, and 6.5 per cent works more than 70 hours.

On an average, 84.6 per cent of the male and 17 per cent of the female workers are adequately utilized meaning they work 40 hours or more a week.

The average weekly earnings for both sexes of workers stood at Taka 423, while for men it is Taka 477 and for women Taka 202.

According to the survey, of the 31 million children, 6.1 million were economically active. Children, 5-9 years old, worked as labourers and their number was 1.9 million approximately. Of the total population aged 5-9 years, 17.4 million were economically inactive. The report further shows that 85.3 per cent of total rural child labourers are working in agriculture whereas 60.2 per cent of urban child labourers are working in non-agricultural sector. Child labourers dominate in agriculture, forestry and fishing sector.

Of the people having degree and above level education, 3.9 per cent are unemployed, of whom 2.3 per cent are men and 16.9 per cent are women.

Dhaka railway station earned Taka 24.33 crore in the current financial year as against Taka 19.40 crore of the previous year and the Chittagong station earned Taka 20.40 crore compared to Taka 16.40 crore the year before.

Replying to a question, the Communications Minister said that there is no plan to reduce the non-profitable passenger train service further in the future.

The ministry document pointed out that so far 42 non-profitable passenger trains have been cancelled and two branch lines have been closed down.

The MOF has already agreed to provide public service obligation payment in the next budget for operating 'unremunerative services'. The amount initially agreed upon was Taka 580 million with a proposal to reduce it gradually, the document added.

UNB added: The Communication Minister said a road development project under an Asian Development Bank assistance of 108.292 million SDR has been taken up.

The project includes development of 76 km of Daudkandi-Feni section of Dhaka-Chittagong highway, 107 km of Dohajari-Cox's Bazar road, 147 km of Daulatdia-Paridpur-Jhenidah-Kushtia road and 330 km development works of Dhaka-Chittagong-Dohajari road.

He said the ADB would also extend assistance in the development works of road network between Dhaka-Sylhet, Dhaka-Tangail, Dhaka-Aricha, Dhaka-Daudkandi, Feni-Chittagong and Chittagong-Dohajari.

Referring to Jamuna bridge, the minister said the tender for the project would be floated in the first week of September and repair works on the damaged bridge over river Karnafuly would start within next two months. He said about Tk 380 crore has been collected as Jamuna bridge levy so far.

When his attention was drawn to a news item about retrenchment of some workers of Roads and Highways department, Oli Ahmed said no permanent staff was sacked but admitted that 701 workers under master roll recruited illegally by some engineers were terminated.

He said the Chief Engineer of Roads and Highways was removed from the post for employing workers in violation of government rules.

Oli Ahmed, who attended the 3-day ministerial level meeting of ESCAP in Bangkok from June 3 to 5, said the participants at the conference lauded the role of Bangladesh government in development of the country's communication sector.

He said during his stay there he exchanged views with some of his counterparts.

9 get life term for murdering 4 in Habiganj

HABIGANJ, June 7: Nine people were convicted to life imprisonment for murder in two separate judgements here recently, reports UNB.

Md Zahurul Islam District and Sessions Judge, Habiganj, convicted four people and sentenced them to life term and a fine of Tk 1000 each for murdering a woman.

Convicted are: Haris Ali, Dhanu Miah, Faizur and Manu-ahar of village Mokampur of Bantachang upazila.

According to the prosecution, convicted Haris Ali along with others killed his wife Noorjahan Begum on November 11, 1988. Her body was recovered from a paddy field after three days. Except Dhanu Miah, the other convicts are still absconding.

In the another case Abdul Mannan, Additional District and Sessions judge convicted five people to life term and a fine of Tk 1000 each for murdering three persons.

Editor: S. M. Ali

Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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