

Hearing appeal continues

'Renaming of UZs unconstitutional'

The hearing of the appeal against the verdict of the High Court Division on the promulgation for dissolution of the Upazila Parishad continued Wednesday before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, reports BSS.

Dr Kamal Hossain, appearing for the petitioner's submitted that the power of Upazila Parishad being a power in the republic, it belongs to the nation and its exercise on behalf of the people can be effected only under and by the authority of the Constitution.

Dr Kamal said Repeal Ordinance seeks to destroy the democratic policy and upset the democratic process, preserved and protected under Article 7 of the Constitution.

Before Dr Kamal's submission, Barrister Amirul Islam said that the nature of the Repeal Ordinance could not have been lawfully made under the Constitution and the Ordinance had been conceived illegally.

Islam also said that the renaming of upazila into thana has been unconstitutional and unlawful and this step is an example of another unlawful act.

The hearing resumes today (Thursday).

Dr Kamal Hossain, Barrister Amirul Islam and Advocate Zakir Ahmed appeared for the petitioner.

Attorney General Aminul Huq, Additional Attorney General Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan and Assistant Attorney General Obaidur Rahman Mostafa appeared for the government.



The inquiry commission formed by the government to probe into the police action on journalists began functioning yesterday. — Star photo

BHRC report 'Police responsible for assault on newsmen'

By Staff Correspondent

An inquiry report, on June 21 Press Club incident held police fully responsible for the attack and torture on journalists.

The report prepared by Bangladesh Human Rights Commission (BHRC) released Wednesday said that police instead of saving people used their weapons and resorted to violence.

The report disclosed that police attacked the journalists without any provocation and snatched away money bags, wrist watches, mini cassette recorders and also damaged the motorbikes of journalists standing inside the Press Club.

The probe conducted by BHRC Chairman Justice K M Sobhan said the action on journalists at Press Club premises was totally intentional as a number of senior police officials including DMP Commissioner Raqibul Huda were present on the spot and ordered their men to attack on journalists even after their identification.

The BHRC suggested punishment to the police officials and constables for violating Section 35 (5) of the Constitution which prohibits any torture and repression.

The report revealed that the police raid at the Press Club and its adjoining areas continued for about three hours from 6-15 pm under the direct supervision of Inspector Shahabuddin Dilip of Motijheel Thana, Officer-in-Charge of Ramna Syed Akhlaq Hossain and Assistant Commissioner of Detective Branch Ruhul Amin.

According to the report, the incident ensued when two cocktails were blasted on the road near House Buildings Finance Corporation.

At that time Nirmul Samannye Committee was holding a meeting in front of the office of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB).

Police instead of resisting the bomb attackers charged batons on participants of the meeting.

When police lobbed teargas shells and tried to arrest several people, the working photographers on the spot also came under police attack.

Photo-journalist Mohammad Alam of Dainik Al-Amin was first injured seriously and fell down on the street. Humayun Kabir Iltis of The Daily Star while trying to take some snaps of Alam, also fell prey to police action.

Iltis had a blow on his forehead and was later kicked by some constable.

Inspector Shahabuddin and OC Akhlaq along with their men unleashed a reign of terror in the area. The incident left more than 50 journalists injured, 16 of them were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

'Country has 9107 prostitutes'

By Staff Correspondent

The country has 9,107 listed and floating prostitutes, according to the estimates of the district social welfare offices.

This was stated by the Social Welfare Minister, Tariqul Islam in parliament in reply to a question from Shudhangshu Shekhar Haldar of Awami League.

The Kandupatti brothel of Dhaka city has the highest number of prostitutes while there is no brothel at Chittagong Sadar, Khagrachhari, Rangamati, Dinajpur Sadar, Pabna Sadar, Barisal, Kushtia and Bandarban.

Kandupatti has a total of 3552 prostitutes of which 1140 are enlisted.

After Kandupatti, the second highest number of prostitutes has been recorded at Rajbari of Faridpur which has 1000 prostitutes.

AL-led Opposition

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Between the government and the boycotting opposition as a 'case of bad precedence', Nizami said that the dropping of cases under pressure and terrorism against those declared 'illegal' was a bad precedence, too.

Earlier 'sincerely congratulating' the opposition members who joined the House, Nizami said that had the ruling party behaved wisely it could have brought back the boycotting members to the House by accepting their demands number three and four.

Saying these words, Nizami along with his colleagues left the House amidst boisterous members of Opposition.

Later, briefing the newsmen, Nizami said that the accord would affect the smooth functioning of parliamentary democracy.

Referring to his comments in the House about the last two demands of the Opposition, Nizami said that they could sense it from the conversations they had with some of the AL MPs during the days of stalemate.

When asked to comment whether the accord would affect their relationships with the Treasury Bench, the Jamaat leader said that they were not obliged to maintain permanent friendship with anyone and added that they would review the attitude of the ruling party.

Nizami further added that a section of the ruling party was in enicente with the Opposition on the issue of Golam Azam.

Replying to a question, Nizami said that they would decide later about rejoining the session of the House.

After Jamaat walked out, in

Saifur: MCCI

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Regarding imposition of taxes, he said, certain taxes imposed are not for revenue, but for introducing a mechanism for tax sharing.

"The whole macro-economic management will be that all have to share the burden," he added.

Accepting criticisms from various quarters on the proposed budget, Rahman said it could never be satisfactory to all.

"My budget is not hundred per cent satisfactory even to me," he said, adding that it was in fact 'the process of balancing the social conflicts'.

Saifur Rahman said the only way to remove poverty was by creating employment opportunity through massive investment both in private and public sectors.

The poverty alleviation programmes were actually 'the poverty continuation programmes', he observed.

The Finance Minister listened to the complaints of various sectors from their representatives at the meeting as well as the suggestions on the matters.

Replying to a complaint regarding the proposed pre-shipment inspection, he said it was to protect unauthorised import in the country.

He defended his stand on the tariff structure, income tax on export, exchange rate adjustment and also assured the businessmen of considering a number of suggestions on various budgetary proposals.

The meeting was attended, among others, by Finance Secretary Nasimuddin Ahmed, NBR Chairman Dr Mashur Rahman, Governor of the Bangladesh Bank Segufa Bakht Chowdhury and other government high officials with MCCI in the chair.

Morshed Khan in his speech put forward a number of proposals including formation of two committees — one for the domestic market oriented and the other for export oriented industries — to look into the specific problems of the sectors.

The Finance Minister agreed in principle to form the committees.

Public trial

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over, there was no democratic environment in Bangladesh after 1975 to hold the trial.

Mamun Azami refuted allegations against his father as according to him, there was no evidence of any wrong-doing.

Compare of the programme, Ms Sahshi Singh 'threw' the discussion to the audience for their opinion. The audience was divided on the issue as a section, led by Bangladeshi journalist and community leader Mohiuddin Chowdhury and Kabir Ahmed, Chairman, Greater Manchester Bangladesh Association, further elaborated the charges with specific examples of genocide by Prof. Golam Azam through the Razakars.

A section which included Amin Al-Azami, another son of Prof. Golam Azam, stressed the point that he cannot be tried after 20 years.

The audience, however, gave an overwhelming majority opinion that Prof Azam should be tried according to the legal process.

Before the trial part of the programme began, Granada TV presented interviews with Begum Jahanara Imam, Chairman of the Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, and Panna Kaiser, wife of late Shahidullah Kaiser, and showed scenes of the mass graves of 1971.

Jahanara Imam firm to continue movement

Ekatuiter Ghatok-Dalal Nirmul Committee convenor Jahanara Imam Wednesday reiterated her determination to continue the movement till implementation of death sentence of prof Golam Azam and ban on politics of Jamaat-Islami, reports UNB.

Gas pipeline

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From then on, ROW was given on a piecemeal basis which hampered the progress of the project. The last ROW to Saipem was given on February, 1992.

However, the work stopped totally in December, 1990 at Sylhet area as ROW was not available. The work remained suspended as the local people resisted laying of pipeline till January of 1992.

Meanwhile, as the term for the work expired, Saipem and the World Bank consultant of the project, Pencil, asked for extension of the term for another year along with a claim of 28 million US dollar in April, 1991.

The contract period had been extended in May, 1991 disregarding the contract. In September the same year, Petrobangla, Saipem and the World Bank consultant, Pencil in a meeting fixed the compensation at 14 million US dollar. Petrobangla assured that this amount will be recommended to the government authorities and the World Bank for approval. Later the government approved the amount.

However, the government took some 'disciplinary' actions against some Petrobangla officials.

But concerned sources alleged that the government actions had been 'biased' and 'misguided'.

The Chairman of Petrobangla, Lutful Matin was allegedly removed for fixing the amount of compensation.

However, Matin joined the Petrobangla in December, 1990 while the contract was signed in February the same year. Concerned sources feel that actions have to be taken against those Petrobangla officials who made the contract without acquiring ROW.

Some high officials of Petrobangla told The Daily Star on anonymity that investigation must be carried out to find the persons responsible for the loss.

The Energy Ministry has also recently formed an inquiry committee but it has not yet completed its investigation.

Floods

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villages of Bera upazilla went into the gorge of Jamuna during the last two days.

The villages are Bherakhola, Nakalia, Haturia, Ranghathpur, Bhangra, Ganopadadia, Madhupur and Nagarbari.

The river rose about 26 cm and was flowing 85 cm below danger level.

It may cross danger level within a day or two if the water level maintains the uptrend, say Hydrology experts of the Water Development Board here.

Sirajganj correspondent adds: More 300 families from eight villages of Kazipur and Sadar thanas took shelter on the Brahmaputra flood control embankment as the Jamuna continued swelling.

Local people and Water Development Board sources said gushing water also rendered 100 families of Shahjadpur thana homeless.

Homesteads in the lowlying char areas in Kazipur and Chawhali thanas were also inundated.

The Midnight File

Saudi banker indicted

NEW YORK, July 1: A leading Saudi Arabian banker and an associate were indicted Wednesday on criminal charges they schemed to defraud depositors of the failed Bank of Credit and Commerce International of some \$300 million. Indictments were handed up by a grand jury in New York County Court against Sheikh Khalid Bin Mahfouz, Chief Operating Officer of the National Commercial Bank of Saudi Arabia, and Haroon Kahlon, an associate, reports AP.

German cabinet okays federal budget

BONN, July 1: Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government today approved the German Federal budget for 1993 without allocating funds for the European Fighter Aircraft (EFA), a Finance Ministry spokesman said. The cabinet, which approved the budget with a planned deficit of 38.0 billion marks (US \$65 million dollars) for building plants for production of the Eurofighter, reports Reuter.

Tehran meet on industrialisation

Asian LDCs must get access to advanced technology

From Mahfuz Anam

TEHRAN, July 1: Bangladesh underscores the need of Asia's LDCs to have free access to advanced technologies available in the region.

Planning Minister, Zahiruddin Khan said this while addressing the plenary session of the ESCAP conference of ministers of industries that began here on Sunday.

Such access he said was critical for the poor countries to break away from the stranglehold of poverty and industrial backwardness.

Without such access these countries will be unable to bridge the technology gap and attain the rate and level of industrialisation that is essential to improve the economic condition of the masses, he added.

Regional efforts must therefore be directed towards linking up the least developed economies of the region with the regional and global dynamic trends, the minister said.

The developing countries of the region were following sound macro-economic policies, adopting stringent fiscal and monetary discipline and opening their economies to challenges of foreign competition in order to create a favourable climate for investment and technological co-operation with developed countries both from within and outside the region.

He expressed the hope that these efforts of the LDCs, often adopted at considerable social and political sacrifices, would generate appropriate response in the form of necessary flow of investment and technology transfer.

Khan informed the assembly that Bangladesh has undertaken economic reforms and industrial restructuring programmes, including liberalisation of trade and foreign exchange regimes in order to create the right climate to attract foreign investment. A vigorous policy of privatisation of the economy is also being pursued to inject dynamism into the economy which is already showing signs of gaining momentum, the minister said.

Efforts of LDC countries, including that of Bangladesh, are not by itself enough to bring dynamism and growth in these economies, which are often burdened with huge population, stringent resource constraint and low labour productivity.

Support of advanced countries, especially from the ESCAP region, in the form of investment, access to technology, training, preferential trade and other facilities are therefore most urgently needed, Khan pointed out.

Regional co-operation to facilitate free flow of productive factors, based on the recognition of complementarities of the region's economies will benefit all, the minister said.

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PM: Afforestation

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She said, "promotion of afforestation is one of main objectives of our on-going nation-wide canal digging programme, saplings were being planted on both sides of the canals."

The Prime Minister said women folk were being encouraged to participate in tree planting and the youth should likewise be involved and mobilised for successful implementation of the programme.

Begum Zia said, "We will have to properly utilise our religious values about tree plantation which has been given due importance in Islam." She said the people who were deeply religious by and large should be properly motivated to go for tree planting seriously.

The function was also addressed by Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Mian, Environment Minister Abdullah Al Noman, State Minister for Forest and Environment Gowesswar Chandra Roy, Kamrul Islam MP, Head of Agriculture Resident Mission of World Bank Syed A Rana, Chief Conservator M N A Kabeel and Deputy Representative of UNDP.

Later, the Prime Minister planted a sapling at Uttara Sector 11 (eleven) where the programme was held.

In Rajshahi the Prime Minister underscored the need for increasing the forest coverage to 25 per cent from the present nine per cent for maintaining ecological balance in the country.

The Prime Minister said we have to adopt the policy of planting a sapling before felling one.

Begum Zia said the present government was putting in relentless efforts for the preservation of trees and forests. She mentioned the recent introduction of the forest act. She said orders had been given to strongly apply the rules regarding the banning of use of firewood in brick fields.

Referring to the desertification problem in the northern districts of the country the Prime Minister said the government had taken up a Tk 350-crore integrated projects to fight against their desertification of Barendra region. Under the programme tree plantation, improvement of irrigation and agriculture were included, she said.

Poultry farm case

Formal charges against Ershad July 8

The hearing of the proposed charges against the former President H M Ershad of misuse of power and working with mala fide intention to draw pecuniary benefits either for himself or others ended Wednesday, reports BSS.

Divisional Special Judge Mohammad Ali after two days of hearing, fixed July 8 as the date for framing formal charge against Ershad and five others.

The case revolves round waiving of interests amounting to about Taka 35 lakh payable by a private poultry farm to Bangladesh Shilpa Bank (BSB) against loan.

A total of six persons including former Industries Secretary A K M Mosharraf Hossain have been implicated in the special case No-21 of 1992 — the state versus Lt. Gen H M Ershad and others.

Public prosecutor who made the proposed charge said that Ershad and Mosharraf Hossain by misusing their official positions and resorting to corrupt practices had influenced BSB to exempt Taka 34,86,801 realisable from the Three Star Poultry Farm Limited, Savar, as interest against loan taken from BSB. Ershad was proposed to be the principal accused with Mosharraf Hossain as co-accused, while 4 others all associated with the Three Star Poultry Farm as abettors.

Prosecution charged that accepting an application from Nurun Nahar Shelly, one of the accused, for exempting interest Ershad had complied without enquiring into the matter.

Ershad's attorney while opposing the charge on the first day of hearing said receiving or accepting an application by an elected president was no crime.

M A Noor, appearing on behalf of Mosharraf Hossain said his client's handing over the petition to the Managing Director of BSB should not be construed as an act of illegality or offence.

Noor said his client neither passed any order to waive interest nor influenced any board member to do so.

The defence lawyer said it was an irony that all the four members to voted for the relief are outside, while his client who presided over the board meeting was here to face the charges.

Noor further stated that there was a total ban to institute any suit or prosecute by outsiders the Chairman, Managing Director or any employee of BSB for any act done on good faith. He said the case was misconceived against accused Mosharraf Hossain and was aimed at harassing his client. He requested the prosecution to drop the case against Hossain.

Ramzan Ali Khan, defending Firoz Kabir, former Chairman of Savar Upazila and one of the directors of the Three Star Poultry Farm said there was no proof that his client carried the application to Ershad asking for exemption nor exerted any pressure on BSB board of directors.

Khan said before making the petition to the president, the farm was allowed interest exemption. The prayer was for increasing the number of instalments to lessen financial pressure, he stated and said it was no offence to seek relief.

He alleged harassment against his client and prayed that the case be dropped.

Advocate Mohammad Ali, Defence Lawyer of Jahangir Kabir, Borhanuddin and Nurun Nahar Shelly showed a letter of BSB that asked the poultry farm to pay back loan in instalments settled earlier.

He mentioned his clients have been paying instalments regularly and paid it last month also. The only offence they might have committed was that they applied and requested to increase the number of instalments, he said.

The defence lawyer said that seeking relief could not be an offence and it was within their fundamental rights as citizens to submit a prayer.

Tk 46.44 cr DU budget

From Page 1 Col 8

The deficit shown in the proposed budget is Tk 5.56 crore while carried over deficit of Tk 1.41 crore of the fiscal 1991-92 will be added to it.

The increase in expenditure stood at 16.28 per cent this year while it was 16.59 per cent in 1991-92 and 5.27 per cent in 1990-91.

The main allocation in 1991-92 fiscal was Tk 36.77 crore but in the revised budget it became Tk 39.94 crore.

Addressing the budget session, the Treasurer urged the government for additional allocation. Otherwise, he maintained, it will be very difficult to run its academic activities.

He further appealed to the government to save the university from the hand of financial crisis by allocating Tk 1.41 crore for 1991-92 and Tk 5.56 for the fiscal 1992-93.

He said the University Grants Commission (UGC) were not getting money for the salaries of 269 teachers, officers and employees which amount to Tk 1.74 crore annually.

The university were also not getting enough money for repairing those dilapidated buildings, he said.

Shahiduddin referred to the per student allocation and observed that this was much lower to that in other universities of the country.

The Treasurer said that the tuition fees and seat rent at the university were illogically low putting a stress on the expenditure for its revenue earning.

As for example, Prof Shahiduddin said the university earned Tk 23.65 lakh from the tuition fees of students during last fiscal year while the expenditure was Tk 35 lakh to collect the same.

* The university was also giving a substantial amount of subsidy to its transport sector. He cited an example that it earned Tk 7.50 lakh in last fiscal from its transport sector while the university's expenditure to maintain the sector was Tk 79.52 lakh.

In order to offset these losses, a budget advisory committee was formed earlier which had suggested to increase the university's earning.

It suggested for building supermarkets in unutilised land of the university to earn wealth.

Editor: S. M. Ali
Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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