

Hearing continues

'Establishment of UZ led to political agitation'

Attorney General Aminul Huq has argued that the upazila is not an administrative unit within the meaning of the Constitution. The ordinance abolishing the upazila does not therefore come in conflict with any provision of the Constitution. He was placing his arguments before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court as the case challenging the upazila dissolution came up for hearing yesterday, reports BSS.

The hearing of the appeal petition against the verdict of the High Court Division on the promulgation for dissolution of the Upazila Parishad continued for the tenth day Wednesday.

Huq said that the meaning of administrative unit given in the Constitution required a declaration within the meaning of respective provisions. Since there is no such declaration, any unit cannot claim to be a local body. If any area having local body is not in conformity with the article of the Constitution it can be "abolished, destroyed and crushed at the pleasure of the legislature," he said.

Huq also discarded the agreement made by the appellant side that any law inconsistent with the Article 7, 9 and 10 of the Constitution was liable to be void. "Such contention is erroneous," he said. The provisions of Article 7 is subject to Sub-Article 2 of Article 8 which clearly says that fundamental principles of the state policy as laid down in part II of the Constitution and Article 8 to 25 are not judicially enforceable, he stated.

The Attorney General said the establishment of upazila had led to serious political agitation because the establishment of upazila led abolition of the sub-division as an administrative unit. There was demand for the restoration of the sub-division.

The Attorney General said Ershad regime succumbed to the agitation and converted all the sub-divisions into 64 districts. This has led to "white elephant administration" along with upazila system. Government has to carry huge burden of expenditure, the Attorney General said.

Huq further said the word 'designation' pre-supposes any area marked out or indicated. Upazila has never been marked out or designated as an administrative unit within the meaning of the Constitution. Therefore, the repealing ordinance now act does not suffer from any irregularities of the constitutional provision, he argued.

The hearing of the case will resume on July 19.

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

Barrister Syed Ishiaq Ahmed, Barrister Amir-Ul Islam and Advocate Zakir Ahmed appeared for the petitioners.



Construction of storm sewer in progress.

— Star photo

Pope undergoes surgery

ROME, July 15: Pope John Paul II had a benign intestinal tumour removed during an operation in a Rome clinic early today, cardiologist Attilio Mascari said, reports AFP.

Mascari, a consultant to the medical team that operated on the Pope, told journalists that the tumour involved was benign but "very large."

Khaleda wishes recovery of Pope

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in a message issued here last night wished speedy recovery of his holiness Pope John Paul II who underwent an operation for removal of a tumour, reports BSS.

The message said "I am depressed to learn that your holiness had undergone a surgical operation for removal of an intestinal tumour in a hospital in Rome. The government and the people of Bangladesh join me in praying for your speedy recovery, long life, health and happiness."

Clash over toll collection: 10 hurt, 3 held

By Staff Correspondent

Two groups of extortionists clashed at the Muharram-Fair at Azimpur exploding crackers Wednesday afternoon.

At least 10 people received minor injuries during an hour long clash and three young boys were arrested by Lalbagh police for their alleged involvement in the clash.

The clash stemmed from an altercation between the members of two groups who were collecting tolls from the shoppers in the fair.

Activists of both the groups exploded at least a dozen of crackers during the chase and counter chase began at around 5:30 pm yesterday.

Lalbagh police said they rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. They also arrested three young boys — Babul, Abdul Hannan and Abdul Jabbar from the spot.

3 lakh cases pending

There are 3,04,579 cases now pending with the civil courts throughout the country, State Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs M Aminul Huq informed the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, reports BSS.

Attack on Jamaat procession in Pabna: 17 hurt

PABNA, July 15: Seventeen Jamaat activists were injured, 12 seriously, when their procession was attacked by a rival group near Bera bazar today, reports UNB.

All the seriously injured were admitted to Bera Thana Health Complex where the condition of three, including Jamaat's thana Nazem Matiar Rahman, was stated critical. Two others in critical condition are Abul Kalam Azad and Abul Hossain Khokon.

District Jamaat Ameer Maulana Abdur Rahim in a statement alleged Awami League activists attacked the "peaceful" procession on its way to the Thana Nirbahti Officer to submit memorandum demanding immediate release of Prof Golam Azam.

The attackers with hockey sticks, daggers and other lethal weapons swooped on the procession suddenly.

He also alleged that police were inactive during the attack.

Earlier, the Jamaats in a rally at the C & B Square threatened to go for greater movement if their party chief was not set free.

Thana Jamaat-e-Islami filed a case holding AL supporters responsible for the incident.

Storm sewer project nearing completion

By Staff Correspondent

The road digging for Storm Sewer Construction Project of the WASA that has been disrupting road communication in downtown Dhaka is expected to be finished by this month, officials said Wednesday.

The storm sewer-building programme, as part of the 159-crore-taka Dhaka Integrated Flood Protection Project, was set to be completed by Sunday. Now it will take 15 days more. One near the New Market will require still more time, said officials.

About 15 days of the project time have already lapsed because of the rains, Eid vacations and transport strike, they pointed out.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) funded project involves Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), Water Development Board (WDB) and Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA). A WASA official Wednesday informed that about nine and a half kilometer out of the planned 12.5 kilometer storm sewer line had so far been constructed.

The remaining part would be constructed during this month, he said. The official asked not to be named.

The project aims at constructing 50 kilometers of storm sewer to add to the existing 125 kilometers.

Giving details, a WASA engineer said that the 140-square-kilometer lines in western Dhaka had been completed under the first phase of the Flood Protection Project.

Storm sewer construction in the less populated eastern part of the city would start later, he said.

The engineer pointed out that since 1963 no major storm sewer construction programme was taken up by the government.

Body of young man recovered

By Staff Correspondent

A young man was murdered and his body thrown into a ditch at Haji Basiruddin Road at Shenpara under Demra Police Station early Wednesday.

On receiving information, Demra police rushed to the spot and recovered the body from the ditch at around 5 am Wednesday.

According to police, the victim, a young man of around 30, could not be identified.

Police suspect that the young man was killed after being stabbed repeatedly. The body was sent to Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

A murder case was registered with Demra police. However, police were yet to identify the killers and find out the motive behind the murder.

Dacoity at textile mills

From Our Correspondent

GAZIPUR, July 15: A group of bandits stormed Anjali Textile Mills Limited at Chhoydana, Jaydevpur, tied up its workers and looted cloths and machinery worth Taka 21 lakh and decamped with Taka one lakh in cash at around 2 am Wednesday.



A visitor having a look at an object of art at the Contemporary Young Artists' show in the Shilpakala Academy in the city yesterday.

Two robbed

By Staff Correspondent

Two persons were robbed of Taka 1,48,000 at Mitford Road and Nawabpur Road in the city Wednesday.

Narayan Chandra Mondol, a manager of an auto chemical shop, while going to Nawabpur branch of Islami Bank Limited, was robbed of Taka 1,28,000 at Mitford Road Wednesday morning.

12 hurt as Jubo Command, AL activists clash

SIRAJGANJ, July 15: At least 12 people were injured in a clash between Jubo Command and Awami League activists here this afternoon, reports UNB.

Seriously injured Anwar Hossain (28), a local Jubo Command leader, was admitted to the General Hospital.

The clash occurred in front of the Awami League office at around 1:30 pm, halting traffic in the Mujib and Suhrawardy roads.

Jubo Command sources alleged Awami League supporters attacked their procession brought out against "Indian agents".

But Awami League denied the charge.

Erosion leaves 800 families homeless in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, July 15: About 800 families were rendered homeless during the last 48 hours as the river Jamuna continued to swell and erode its bank in the district, reports UNB.

Of them, 500 families were affected as one and half mile of the Khondibandi embankment were eroded during the period.

The affected people have taken shelter at the Patagram and newly built flood embankments.

About 300 families became homeless in five thanas of Kazipur, Sadar, Belkuchi, Chowhali and Shahadatpur during the period, Water Development Board (WDB) sources said.

Meanwhile, Kazipur Health Complex, Meghalhat and some adjacent villages of the old flood embankment were flooded. About 50 villages in char areas also remained under water.

In Ullapara thana of the district and Faridpur thana of Pabna district, about 30 villages were flooded during the period due to cracks that developed in the sluice gate of the flood embankment in Shahadatpur thana, the source said.

The WDB has built a temporary dam to protect Patagram, Singabari and other villages from the onrush of flood water.

Embarkation fees raised

Embarkation fees have been raised to Tk 300 from Tk 200 for plane passengers on international route and Tk 25 from Tk 20 for passengers on domestic routes, reports UNB.

An official handout yesterday said the increased rate will be effective from July 22.

One to die, 4 get life-term for murder in Manikganj

MANIKGANJ, July 15: One person was today sentenced to death and four others got life-term in jail for murdering a man in the Sadar thana a year back, reports UNB.

District and Sessions Judge Khandker Musa Khalid awarded the capital punishment to Kawser, the main accused in the sensational Ajhar murder case.

His accomplices — Ruhul Amin, Omar Ali, Asman and Rafiqul Islam — were convicted to life imprisonment for their complicity in killing Ajhar Ali on June 25 last year.

Nirmul Body

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Jahangir. A committee press release said that Sub-Inspector Sawkat-Ul-Islam tore the national flag after "snatching it away from the hand of our workers" on July 11 in Kushtia.

The committee meeting blasted the "false" statement made by the Home Minister in parliament "who advocated in favour of the police officer."

The committee also demanded immediate withdrawal of "false" cases against 60 student leaders of Rajshahi University.

Allahabad HC

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federal government 'appeals to suspend its crusade.

The "categorical rejection" was voiced by a VHP spokesman in Ayodhya who accused Prime Minister VP Narasimha Rao's government of "distorting facts" on the issue, PTI reported without elaboration.

Tensions have mounted since the construction began, sparking fears of communal violence.

Rao's Home Minister S B Chavan told parliament here today he had urged the Uttar Pradesh administration to ensure the temple crusade was suspended until a court verdict decides on the status of the disputed Ayodhya shrine.

IDB camp

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grams of rice, 60 grams of lentil and 20 grams of cooking oil to each of the refugees every day. Besides, NGOs distribute soap, clothing and other essentials.

"We are happy with the food we get," said Mohammad Hossain, a refugee at Dhoapal camp speaking on the rations.

The Midnight File

Tigers kill 18 Lankan bus passengers

COLOMBO, July 15: Suspected Tamil guerrillas sprayed bullets into a crowded bus in eastern Sri Lanka today, killing 18 Muslim passengers and seriously wounding seven more, officials said. Chief military spokesman Colonel Sarath Munasinghe said they believed that gunmen from the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) carried out the ambush in coastal Batticaloa district, reports AFP.

Jordan to allow UN team to visit border with Iraq

AMMAN, July 15: Jordan will allow a team of UN officials to visit the border with Iraq to inspect the kingdom's efforts to prevent banned material from entering Iraq, a senior government official said Wednesday. The move came three weeks after Jordan angrily rejected a US proposal to station 50 UN observers in the kingdom to monitor enforcement of United Nations sanctions against Iraq, reports AFP.

SSF bill passed

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not the same thing, he added. Ruling out the necessity of two-thirds vote to amend the Bill, Salam Talukder said that if read with 4th Schedule of the Constitution confusion would be clear.

Before Salam Talukder could reply to the allegations he sought permission from the Speaker Shaikh Razaq Ali to decide whether to withdraw the Bill or press for its passage. He commented that he was feeling flabbergasted in the face of arguments coming from the members of opposition.

Later, briefing the journalists, Abdus Samad Azad said that during the rule of Ershad all opposition parties including the BNP opposed the Bill for its content. But the BNP has retreated from its public stand on the Bill, he added.

Samad Azad further added that the opposition sincerely believed in the necessity of a security force to protect the Prime Minister.

Suranjit Sengupta observed that the bill was a violation of the fundamental rights, while Rashed Khan Menon said that every country had arrangements to protect the Prime Minister but nowhere in the democratic world such an equivalent could be found.

Brushing aside the criticisms, Abdus Salam Talukder said that to provide security to the President a force called Presidential Guard Regiment was there and added that if necessary it could be strengthened further.

Referring to an Opposition allegation that male security for a female Prime Minister went against the Sharia, the Minister wanted to know how 'male civilians were providing security to the Leader of the Opposition.

Salam Talukder said that it was not a new Bill but was a substitution. He further said that when the PSF Act was introduced in 1986 it was opposed because Ershad created an additional force for his security while the President's Guard Regiment was there.

Pointing to the need for the security of the Prime Minister, Salam Talukder observed that in all democratic countries of the world such a law existed.

Refuting the Opposition claim that people were the best security, the Minister said that Lincoln, Kennedy, Indira Gandhi, Sheikh Mujib, Ziaur Rahman and MK Gandhi were all popular leaders but were assassinated. So the popular security and the security provided by a security force were

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Refugee camp firing victim dies

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, July 15: A victim of Tuesday's police firing to fend off a mob, which attacked the Naikyangchhari Refugee Camp, succumbed to his injuries today.

Officials said Muhammad Hossain, a passer-by who received bullet wounds during the incident Tuesday, died at the Naikyangchhari Health Complex this afternoon.

At least 20 people, including refugees and policemen, were injured in a clash at the camp in Bandarban district.

Financial loans

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Defending the Bill, Rahman said the Bill would not curb the fundamental rights of the borrowers.

Referring to the provision for deposition of half of the money decreed on him for appeal, he said it would check the delaying tactics intentionally adopted by the defaulters in repayment of the loans causing liquidity crisis in the banks.

Defending the provision for serving summons through newspapers, the State Minister categorically said it was in addition to the provision provided in the Civil Procedure Code (CPC). The provision was incorporated in the bill as the defaulters time and again tried to evade court notices through changing their addresses, he added.

"We are happy with the food we get," said Mohammad Hossain, a refugee at Dhoapal camp speaking on the rations.

6 killed, 60 injured in road mishaps

By Staff Correspondent

At least six people were killed and another 60 injured in four separate road accidents in Dhaka, Mymensingh and Manikganj during the last two days.

Our Mymensingh Correspondent reports: Five people were killed and 35 others injured in two separate road accidents at Bhaluka and J C Guha Road in Mymensingh on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Three people died on the spot and 35 others were injured, 18 of them seriously, when a passenger minibus and a truck collided head-on at Bhaluka-Bheradaha point on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at around 5:30 am.

The bodies were sent to the morgue of the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital for autopsy and the injured were admitted to the same hospital. The victims could not be identified immediately.

Two persons — Abdus Salam (25), and Shahidul Alam (32)

died on the spot when a speeding truck ran them over at J C Guha Road on the Mymensingh-Kishoreganj road at around 10:30 am Tuesday.

Our DMCH Correspondent reports: A pedestrian died on the spot when a speeding truck knocked him down on the Demra-Narsingdi road at around 5 pm Tuesday.

The victim, identified as Abdul Hamid (35), was fatally injured and sent to the Pangu Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries the same day.

The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

In another accident on the Dhaka-Aricha highway, at least 25 people were injured when a truck carrying passengers collided with another truck at Banajuri in Gheor under Manikganj district Wednesday.

Of the injured, eleven were admitted to the Manikganj Sadar Hospital while the others were given first aid.

11 left-wing parties lend support to Cuba

By Staff Correspondent

Eleven left-wing political parties in the country yesterday formed a committee to mobilise public opinion against 'US-action' in Cuba and to collect materials in aid of the Cuban people.

Formation of the 101-member body was unanimously adopted at a joint meeting of the parties aided by some intellectuals at the Engineers' Institution in the capital.

Headed by lawyer Shamsul Haque Choudhury, the committee would meet soon to chalk out programmes like mobilisation of public opinion and collection of goods to aid the Cuban people, said Haider Akbar Khan Rono of the Workers' Party while naming the committee members.

The joint meeting was convened to express solidarity with the Cuban people's struggle against 'US-led imperialist forces' and to extend 'moral and material' support to Cubans.

Chaired by Saifuddin Ahmed Manik of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), the meeting was also addressed by Rashed Khan Menon, MP, of the Workers' Party, Badrudin Umar of Ganatantrik Biplobi Jote, Dr Anisuzzaman and Rangal Sen of the Dhaka University, Ali Ahsan of the World Peace Council, and Faiz Ahmed of Sammlito Sangskritik Jote.

Parties that arranged the

meeting, included: CPB, National Awami Party, Ganatantrik Biplobi Jote, Workers' Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Aref-Insu), both the factions of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Oikya Prokriya, Ganatantri Party, Bangladesh Samyabadi Dal, Gana Azadi League and Sramik Krishak Samajbadi Dal. Leaders of the Left student organisations were also present.

Sixty of the 101-member committee were named in the meeting while 41 others would be co-opted.

The committee members include: Sirajul Islam Choudhury, Rangal Sen and Dr Anisuzzaman of DU, Anupam Sen of Chittagong University, Anu Muhammad of Jahangirnagar University, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik of CPB, Dilip Barua of Samyabadi Dal, Mujahidul Islam Selim and Nurul Islam Nahid of CPB, Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan of BSD (Khaleq), A F M Mahbulul Haq of BSD (Mahbul) and Sardar Fazlul Karim of the DU.

Transport

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creating panic in the area and forcing people to run helter skelter, while shops and other business establishments had to be closed down.

The clash was a sequel to earlier clashes on Monday and Tuesday between the two groups, both claiming to be affiliated with the ruling BNP.

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