Sharif to accept SC verdict, prepare for elections

ISLAMABAD, May 8: Deposed Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Shartí expressed confidence in the impartiality of Pakistan's judiciary as the Supreme Court today resumed hearing a petition against his dismissal by the president, reports AFP.

In a packed court room 11 of the country's top judges started hearing Sharif's constitutional petition challenging President Ishaq Khan's April 18 order dismissing Sharif's government and dissolving the National Assembly.

Security was tight around the court and entry restricted through special passes.

Riot police guarded the nearby parliament building as Sharif has asked the court to restore the lower house.

Chief Justice Nasim Hassan Shah has promised to try to reach a decision in a week.

Before leaving for Islamabad to attend the proceedings Sharif told reporters in Lahore that he would fight an individual's decision to dissolve the assembly in the court whose "credibility is beyond any

"I have full confidence in the impartiality and independence of the judiciary", the 43year old industrialist turned politician said.

Asked what he would do if the court's decision went against him, he replied "I will accept the court's verdict whole heartedly and prepare for the general elections.

Ishaq Khan promised elec-

tions for July 14 after firing the Prime Minister after a bitter three month tussle during which Shartf had attempted to clip the presidency's sweeping powers.

There was speculation that if the Supreme Court declared Ishaq Khan's action illegal and restored the assembly, the president would engineer a vote of no confidence against

Such a move, Sharif observed, would constitute another conspiracy against the

He said the dismissal of his government had not only "tarnished" the country's image abroad but also impeded national development.

Holding the President responsible for political turmoil and the deteriorating economy, Sharif called it the nation's "hard luck" that foreign investors had started windingup businesses following the ouster of his reformist gov-

Through his reforms, he said Pakistan was being turned into an "Asian tiger" adding that the president's action had pushed the country's development back five years.

The caretaker government of Balkh Sher Mazari Friday unveiled the first case of "corruption" against Sharif, accusing the deposed premier of manipulating a reduction in import duty on scrap metal for the benefit of his family's steel industry.

Janata Tower Case

May 11 fixed for argument

Deposed president Hussain Muhammad Ershad yesterday pleaded "not guilty" to the charge of misuse of official position to earn pecuniary benefit for himself or for others in the Janata Tower Case, reports

Ershad was accused of allotting plots through illegal means which caused RAJUK a loss of Taka 5,48,70,900. The charge-sheet further alleged that Ershad and his wife Raushan had handed over cash and cheques amounting to Taka 10 crore to Nirman International Limited for construction of the Janata Tower.

Making his statement under Section 342 of the Criminal Procedure Code in the Special Judges Court, Ershad said the case is motivated with the objective of maligning him in the eyes of the public.

The deposed president said this when the Additional Sessions Judge and Special Judge Md Ansaruddin Sikder, after reading out the contents of the deposition made by the prosecution witnesses supported by the FIR and chargesheet, sought his opinion about the charges.

Ershad is the principal accused in this case and according to the judge he is punishable under Section 5 (1) (D) of the prevention of the Anti-Corruption Act of 1947 and under Section 5 (1) (E) of the Act 2 of the Prevention of

Corruption Act (PCA) of 1947. Twenty persons have been accused in this case, including Begum Raushan Ershad, former minister MA Sattar, for-RAJUK Chairman M Rahmatullah and former parliament member Al-Haj Abdul Wadud Khan. Three accused persons are absconding.

Begum Raushan Ershad is the chairman of the Janata Publishing Limited which owns the Janata Tower.

Statements of the accused over, the judge fixed May 11

for argument. Making his statement, Ershad said he was sanguine that the lands were handed over after fulfilling necessary formalities. He denied that the allotment of plot had any connection with the Janata

Publishing Limited (JPL). He denied allegations of paying Taka 6.5 crore in cash to the Nirman International for the construction of the Janata Tower. He said had he wanted to pay any money to KZ Islam, Managing Director of Nirman. he could have given that directly and not through junior

officers, as has been alleged. He appealed to the judge to consider all aspects of the case in the interest of justice and pleaded himself innocent.

Begum Raushan Ershad replying to the allegations, said she had neither influenced nor abetted her husband or the former RAJUK chairman Rahmatullah of anybody for allotment of the plots at Kawran Bazar Commercial Area or its transfers.

Raushan Ershad stated that April 27.

she had used her certificate name Raushan Ara Begum in the application form in good faith so that none could be influenced by her husbands name and address. She claimed herself as the chairman of a legal, bonafide company which was duly registered as a joint stock company The land on which the Janata Tower has been built was procured by JPL as per law after

Begum Raushan Ershad is punishable under Section 5 (2) of the PCA and Clause 109 of the Penal Code, the judge said.

paying appropriate price, she

"Former RAJUK chairman M Rahmatullah while pleading not guilty," said he had only acted as a government employee. He said the land in question was given to the persons concerned in compliance with the written order of the then President (Ershad) and with the knowledge of the

RAJUK. He denied having colluded with former President Ershad or with anybody in any manner or abused his official position. He also denied obtaining any pecuniary advantage or interfering with or dictating any note to his subordinates in the allotment or transfer of the

The judge said Rahmatullah is punishable under Section 5 (2) of the PCA.

The judge then asked the remaining 14 accused, one by one, to comment on the allegations brought against them. All of them pleaded not

guilty. All the accused including Ershad and his wife declined

to bring in any defence wit-Thirty-five prosecution witnesses (PWs) made depositions in the case. The PWs included

four former defence personnel, employees of RAJUK and senior executives of Nirman International, a construction

After the statements by the accused, Attorney General Aminul Haq submitted a prayer asking the court to make a local inspection of the Janata

Khondker Mahbub Hossain and Sharfuddin Ahmed Mukul, defence lawyers for Ershad and Begum Ershad respectively, objected to it, saying there was no need for such an inspection as they do not deny the existence of the Janata

Cancel JU admission test: JCD

By JU Correspondent

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) unit of the Jahangirnagar University at a meeting yesterday demanded cancellation of the first year admission test alleging leakage of question papers.

The admission tests for first year Honours classes of the were held from April 23 to

academic session Editor: S. M. Ali

Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam Published by the Editor on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel 'C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at The Sangbad Ltd., 36 Purana Paltan, Dhaka. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No. 11; Road No. 3; Dhanmondi R/A., Dhaka-1205. PABX:



Buddhist monks demonstrate in the eastern town of Bodhgaya, Patna in India yesterday demanding the handover of a Buddhist shrine under Hindu management. Buddhists say the shrine marks the place where the Buddha attained enlightenment. - AFP photo

of Tk 2 per US dollar over the

existing exchange rate for the

advance income tax on total

export proceeds. Recommen-

dation for extending ware

house facilities to all exporters

While suggesting an exclu

sive bank for export, FBCC1

called for extending the time

limit for adjustment of con-

cessional bank loan for export

bank are defying the govern-

ment decision to keep interest

on export credit at the lower

level of existing band, the fed-

eration recommended to the

authorities concerned to issue

specific order to banks to fol-

To inspire use of local fab

ric, it also pleaded a 15 per

cent cash incentives to the

garment industry, providing

facilities to the pharmaceutical

sector for entering the export

market has too been sug

Chakmas

two countries. "It is a big step

forward for strengthening the

relations between the peoples

of the two countries," the min-

Both the ministers of

Bangladesh and India with

Chief Minister of Tripura di-

rected their officials to discuss

committee on Chittagong Hill

Tracts Rashed Khan Menon

MP, Shahjahan Chowdhury MP,

Md Shahjahan MP, Mostaque

Ahmed Chowdhury MP, Sayed

Wahidul Alam MP, Bangladesh

Home Secretary Azimuddin

Ahmed, Foreign Secretary

Reaz Rahman, Special Affairs

Secretary AM Nasrullah Khan,

Bangladesh High Commissio-

ner in India Farook Sobhan

and Indian High Commissioner

in Bangladesh K Rathunath

were also present in the

Tripura Chief Minister Da-

sharath Dev and the governor

of the state KV Raghunath

He also attended a dinner

hosted in honour of him and

the members of the delegation

by the governor of Tripura.

Oli also called on the

Members of the special

of the agenda and finalise it.

isters added.

meeting.

Reddy.

From Page 1 Col 7

low the decision.

Pointing out that many a

to 270 days from 180 days.

was put forward too.

It also asked to waive the

FBCCI recommends fiscal incentives

exporters.

The Federation of Bang ladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI) has recommended a package of fiscal incentives to the exporters, including 100 per cent income tax rebate on export earnings, to boost the country's export, reports UNB.

The 45-pronged recommendations of the apex chamber are expected to be tabled for a discussion in the 24th meeting of the Export Prom otion Council, scheduled in Dhaka today.

To compensate the now-defunct traditional fiscal incen tives like XPB and XPL, BFCCI advocated an export premium

Nirmul

From Page 1 Col 5

Committee convenor Jahanara Imam told The Daily Star Saturday night that her committee would go ahead with the sit-in programme and added that it would be a nonviolent one.

She urged the supporters to carry out the programme peacefully and said the demonstrators would sit down whereever they faced any obstruction from the police. Jahanara Imam said that a number of MPs would join the

request them to raise its demands in parliament. The committee has been campaigning for the trial of Jamaat-e-Islami chief Golam Azam for his alleged crimes committed during the

sit-in. The committee would

country's Liberation War. It also demands banning of fundamentalist politics, and a stop to harassment of the committee's supporters.

Our DU Correspondent adds: Different students organisations Saturday held rallies at the Dhaka University campus in support of today's sit-in programme in front of the Jatiya Sangsad.

The pro-Awami League Chhatra League (M-I) brought out a procession and held a rally in front of the DUCSU building vesterday morning demanding trial of Golam Azam as a 'war criminal'

The Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) also brought out a big procession and held a rally at the Aparajeo Bangla yesterday morning, urging the students to make the sit-in a success.

Later in the afternoon the GCO and the Muktijoddha Chhatra Command brought out processions and held rallics near the Teachers Students Centre [TSC].

From Page 1 Col 5 the convocation speaker at the function which was also addressed by VC of BUET Prof Mohammad Shahjahan.

On arrival at the University, the Prime Minister was received by the Vice Chancellor and other senior teachers.

Clad in a blue convocation gown, Begum Zia joined the colourful parade of BUET's fourth convocation ceremony. Its first convocation was held in 1972, second in 1976 and the third sixteen years later in

The Prime Minister reiterated her government's firm commitment to improve academic environment in all educational institutions of the country by stamping terrorism and session-jam.

Terming terrorism as a "vicious malaise" polluting the educational arena, Begum Zia asserted "terrorism and session-jam have to be uprooted. They cannot be allowed to continue."

She referred to an all-party meeting, discussion between the government and teachers and the recent exchange of views with the guardians on finding ways and means to solve the staggering problems.

The Prime Minister and the convocation speaker were presented with the crest of BUET. Former Ahsanullah Engineering College was upgraded to the present Engineering University in 1962.

Tagore's birth

Begum Zia called for retuvenating the Bangladeshi culture which is rooted in the soil and the people. "The Bangladeshi culture has been nourished through a thousand vears of tradition."

Tagore, she said, derived his inspiration from the close relation he maintained with

"He has enriched our language and literature while his songs and poems had inspired us during the Independence War," she added while paying tributes to the poet who wrote the national anthem.

The Prime Minister said that the celebration of Tagore's birth anniversary at the time of transition to a new Bangla century calls for a fresh evaluation of the poet.

was also eventful for the nation for a number of reasons, Begum Zia pointed out. "In this century we have earned our national identity, established the honour of our mother tongue and started a fresh march on the road to democracy and development.

The government, she added, was actively considering the formulation of a national language policy aimed at enriching the language and literature.

The Rabindra-fair and exhibitions at the academy premises organised by the Cultural Ministry were followed by a function which included recitations of Tagore's poems, songs and dance numbers.

The Prime Minister wit-

nessed the musical soiree. State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum, Secretary of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs Islam Uddin Malik and renowned Rabindraresearcher Abdul Ahad also

spoke on the occasion. Noted national artistes and part in the function.

From Page 1 Col 8

Recalling the role of the poet as a dedicated social reformer and a campaigner for women's awakening, the Prime Minister said 'He has time and again reminded us of human dignity and values, and laid importance on self-re-

Bangladesh and her people.

The fag end of the century

members of cultural organisations including the Shilpakala Academy, the Bulbul Lalitakala Academy and the Rabindra Sangeet Shilpi Sangstha took The programme was broad-

cast live over radio and televi-

Begum Zia later inaugurated a Rabindra Mela at the Shilpakala Academy premises.

JS session from today "Although we did not disagree

From Page 1 Col 4

BNP leader Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Works Minister Rafigul Islam Miah, Farida Rahman, MP of the BNP, Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, MP and Mohiuddin Ahmed, MP of the Awami League (AL) and Shamsuddoha of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) were present in the yesterday's meeting of the committee.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali presided over the meeting. Rafigul Islam Miah and Sajeda Chowdhury represented the Prime Minister and Leader of the House Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina respectively. According to the consensus

reached yesterday, the session beginning today would be prorogued on the 13th of this month unless any major issue of public interest was raised by either the ruling party or the opposition, Khandaker Delwar Hossain told The Daily Star last night. "If such a situation arises in

the house, the business advisory committee would meet again to review whether the prolongation of the session was needed or not," the Chief Whip "If the present situation remained unchanged, the ses-

Raffgul Islam Mjah told The Shamsuddoha of the CPB told The The Daily Star.

sion would be prorogued on

May 13, while the budget ses-sion would begin on June 10,"

to a five-day session this time, the opposition would prefer to extend the tenure of the session with a view to holding a policy debate on the national budget to be placed by the government."

Munirul Hoque Chowdhury, MP and Matiur Rahman Nizami, MP, representatives of the Jatiya Party and the Jamaat in the business advisory committee, were conspicuous by their absence. The AL leaders who attended the meeting were not available for their comments even after midnight last night. Meanwhile, parliament will

elect a panel of chairman on the opening day of the session today to preside over the house in the absence of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker. According to sources, the

State Minister for Establishment Nurul Huda would submit the annual report of the Bangladesh Civil Service Commission for the year Law and Justice Minister

Mirza Golam Hafiz is scheduled to table four ordinances promulgated by the government since the last session. The four ordinances include The Bank Company (amend-

ment) ordinance 1993, the Bangladesh (Freedom Fighters) Welfare Trust (amendment) Ordinance, 1993, the Securities and Exchange (Amendment) Ordinance, 1993 and the Securities and Exchange Commission Ordinance, 1993.

Mostafiz off to Bali

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman left Dhaka vesterday for Indonesia to attend the Non Aligned standing ministerial committee meeting on economic cooperation beginning in Bali tomorrow, reports BSS.

The meeting will consider all economic issues, with particular emphasis on revitalisaion of the North-South dialogue, promotion and strengthening of South-South cooperation and role of the United Nations in international cooperation and development, he told newsmen prior to his departure. The tenth NAM summit in

Jakarta last year decided that the movement will pay greater attention to international economic issues and accordingly, the standing ministerial committee on economic cooperation which was constituted in the NAM summit in Harare in 1986, was reactivated. The NAM took this decision

in view of the dramatic transformations in the international arena, particularly the end of the cold war and East-West bipolarity. Indonesian Foreign Minis

the meeting of foreign ministers from 37-member countries of the committee. The Foreign Minister said Bangladesh, as a member of

ter Ali Alattas will preside over

the committee, will play an active and constructive role at the conference. Dhaka will particularly highlight the serious difficul-

ties being faced by the Least Developed Countries and renew its call for full, effective and timely implementation of the programme of action for the LDCs for the 1990s adopted earlier.

The Foreign Minister leads a four-member Bangladesh delegation to the meeting.

The other members are AKM Farooq, Bangladesh Ambassador to Indonesia, Syed Muazzam Ali, Director General in the Foreign Ministry and Masud Aziz, Director in the Ministry.

Mostafiz is expected to return on May 13.

> Bosnia From Page 1 Col 4

Both were among six towns designated by the UN Security Council as safe areas Thursday.

There was no immediate word on lzetbegovic's response to the proposal on Gorazde. Under the agreement, one

company of peacekeepers about 120 soldiers - and UN military observers would go to Zepa on Saturday. Previous agreements re-

have been ignored. Top economists

garding Muslim enclaves often

From Page 1 Col 8

commended and improved upon in the years ahead.

He said the most recent ev idence for 1992-93 showed that the so-called macro-economic gains derived less from substantive, policy reforms than the negative consequence of weak project implementation change in budget classification methods and the persistence of an ongoing economic reces-

"There is no logical basis to argue that import liberalisation by one country, in a world economy in recession, replete with trade distortions, with widely varying supply side responses between countries, will automatically lead to im proved competitive behaviour by local producers". Rehman Sobhan said, referring to continued argument by the development partners of Bangladesh for a greater import liberalisation, more privatisation, more depreciation of the exchange rate and a greater capacity to

discipline the labour force. He said neither the WB nor the policymakers of the country had produced one shred o evidence to support the proposition that the much greater degree of economic liberalisation and privatisation registered in the period 1992 93 improved the rate of manu facturing investment, growth or economic competitiveness.

O Sadaat defending the position of the development partners, specially the World Bank, said Bangladesh did not in fact, privatise its enter prises but in practice had pursued a policy of denationalisation. The earlier privatisations, for instance, virtually ignored the standard steps involved in any serious privatisation process, he added. He, however, identified five

elements which, he felt should be kept in mind in iniplementing the privatisation programme: (1) the need to develop a clear rationale for privatisation; (2) the impor tance of ensuring a conducive business environment; (3) the need to manage the process transparently; (4) the vital im portance of creating a strong institutional capacity to implement the programme; and (5) providing clear political commitment.

The Midnight File

Trial of 10 fundamentalists begins in Egypt

HAEKSTAP (Egypt), May 8: Ten Muslim fundamentalists, chanting abuse at the court and President Hosni Mobarak, went on trial Saturday on charges of committing terror attacks on tourists and officials. All denied the charges. They could face the death penalty if convicted, reports AP.

Storm kills 43 in Beijing

BEIJING, May 8: A flerce wind and sand storm killed 43 people in Gansu province in northwest China, the official television news reported Saturday. It said most of the dead were children who were caught outdoors in the storm, which blew up suddenly Wednesday afternoon in Jonehang, a desert town more than 1,200 kilometers west of Beijing, reports AP.

UN running out of money to clear mines from Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD, May 8: The United Nations in running out of money to clear an estimated 10 million land mines from Alghanistan and make the countryside safe for returning refugees, reports AP.

PM seeks consensus

From Page 1 Col 7 human resources development and increase of competence in

public sector.

Poverty alleviation has been identified as a priority sector and the demands for meeting the poor people's basic needs top our programmes, the Prime Minister said, adding her government wanted to turn each citizen of the coun try into an efficient worker, develop their confidence and to utilise their productive

Begum Zia said her admin istration had adopted the policy of establishing accountability and transparency at all lev

She said discipline had been restored in the financial institutions due to the steps taken up by her government while reforms programmes had been adopted to build up an administration conductve to a market economy.

emphasis had been given on the private sector development to create employment opportunities and a liberal trade policy adopted to boost exports. She referred to a recent

The Prime Minister said

economists of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies which said that rural poverty had reduced significantly in the two years. The International Develop ment Agency (IDA) in its latest

survey carried out by the

ladesh saying Bangladesh was one of those ten countries which achieved notable Manju

report also commended the

economic progress of Bang-

From Page 1 Col 8 he had termed the government autocratic and said its rule had made public life repressive. The government felt this speech had tarnished its image in the country and

Secondly, Manju was blamed for patronising anarchists in the Dhaka University and elsewhere in the country which had affected the law and order situation. More over, the source

added, Manju was accused of defalcation and embezzlement of government funds, for which the Anti-corruption Bureau had begun investigations against him. However, the order yesterday said, "The government is

detainee, Anwar Hossain Manju MP, immediately," said the Meanwhile, the release order has been sent to the jailer of the Rajshahi Central

satisfied to order the release of

Jail Saturday evening, according to the source. Aurango

From Page 1 Col 8 Just when defence lawyers were due to conclude their arguments, the judge ordered the postponment of the trial until further instructions from the higher court.

"I have written to the Registrar, Supreme Court (High Court Division) for withdrawal of the case from my file ... So further proceedings of the case are postponed," said Judge Nasiruddin Ahmed in his Naik Ali Azam of the DGFI

was murdered in 1980 and Awami League MP, Aurango was arrested after absconding for 12 years for his alleged involvement in the murder. The case was revived last year and Aurango was arrested

from Hotel Purbani in Dhaka on October 24, 1992. On March 11, a Division Bench of the High Court, on a prayer from the prosecution, set aside an order of the lower court which had granted Aurango bail. The High Court also ordered the District and Sessions Judge to conclude

the trial.

Originally, the trial had begun in the court of the District and Additional Sessions Judge, Dhaka, Habibul Awal, before being shifted after three witnesses had been examined there and Aurango had been granted bail.

economic progress last year, Begum Zia mentioned.

The Prime Minister said that the donor countries and the agencies in the recentlyconcluded Paris Consortium also evaluated Bangladesh's economic post tion and said, The present government which came to power two years back with a pledge to introduce market economy and establish social justice and equality has achieved significant sur

She also said Bangladesh in 1993 had proved incorrect a statement in 1975 by the London-based Financial Times journalist Kevin Rafferty that "Bangladesh is the end of the great development dream. The country has no future". The same paper, in an arti-

cle published on March 26 this year, said the democracy is taking its firm root in Bangladesh and the country could now boast of attaining progress in the field of economic reforms and development, she said. She asked the economists to work out strategies for util-

ising Bangladesh's economic prospects and help the government's development efforts through their suggestions. The organisers thanked the Prime Minister for attending

the conference. Begum Zia was the first democratically elected head of the government who attended the conference of the BEA in 12 years since Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman had inaugurated the biennial conference of the association in 1981.

Hasina

From Page 1 Col 3 mentation of its demand and again entered into another agreement for the implementation of that agreement. Several meetings were also held between the SKOP leaders and the ministers where pledges were made for the implementation of the agreement, she said adding: even the Prime Minister assured of the implementation of the

agreement at a meeting with the SKOP leaders. She said that labour dissatisfaction and discipline had been deteriorating as the government was not coming out with any clearcut statement about the demand of the SKOP which would leave an ominous impact on the socio-economy and industrial production of

the country. Govt-SKOP talks From Page 1 Col 4

meeting with the Adamjee Jute Mills workers' leaders at the BJMC office at the Adamiee Court building yesterday morning.

The minister invited the

Patkal Sramik Karmachari

Sangram Parishad leaders to a

comprehensive negotiation scheduled to take place at the same venue at 7 this evening. The State Minister for Textiles Major Abdul Mannan (retd) has also scheduled his meeting with the textile mills'

labour leaders at the BTMC office at 3 pm today. Both the ministers communicated their decisions to the labour leaders yesterday.

The SKOP and the jute-textile-cotton-sugar-BSEC workers called for the May 11-13 strike as part of their on-going agitation aimed at forcing the government to implement a Memorandum of Under-standing (MOU), signed by the government and the trade union federations July 6 last

Import policy

From Page 1 Col 7 make industrial growth slower

BCI directors, including

Prof Mazharul Islam, Abdur

and difficult."

Rashid, Gazi Golam Dastagir, A M Montruzzaman, Col (retd) Kazi Selimuddin Ahmed, Golam M Khan, Neaz Rahim and Khurshid Azam, representing different affected sectors, were present at the press conference.

'500092-4. Advertisement: 500091 (Direct) Fax No. 88-02-863035. GPO Box No. 3257. GRAM: DAILY STAR DHAKA.