Defence counsel tells court

'Ershad is victim of political situation'

Allegation of corruption against the leaders when they lose power is a usual feature in developing countries, and H M Ershad is victim of such a situation, chief counsel for the former President told a Special Court yesterday, reports UNB.

Citing an example of political victimisation in Third World countries, the counsel said that in Pakistan, Asif Zardari, husband of Benazir Bhutto, was thrown into jail after they fell from the power. But now with political change Zardari rose to power

overnight. Refuting the prosecution argument in the Janata Tower case in which former President Ershad was charged with corruption, defence counsel Khandaker Mahbub Hossain said many allegations were brought against him (Ershad) with the political change in December 1990. "There were wide allegations of his funnelling abroad 40 thousand crore dollars but it could not be proved."

In the present case, the counsel added, the former President in his recommendations had asked RAJUK, to allot land to the "highest bidders among those affected".

It is natural and humane for a president of the country to

President faces twin charges abuse of power by giving illegal allotment of 12 katha commercial land to Janata Publishers of which his wife Raushan Ershad is chairman and payment of taka 6.5 crore, beyond known sources of his income, for construction of the

The charges may earn a maximum of 7 years in jail for the deposed President, already serving 10 plus 3 years for keeping unauthorised arms and possession of taka 2.92

The defence counsel was yet to argue on the second charge when special judge Ansaruddin Sikder adjourned the hearing till Saturday.

Earlier, concluding his ar-

200 hurt in Ctg

Sayedabad bus terminal for Chittagong while no bus could start from the Mahakhali and Gabtoli terminals on the day because of obstruction by the strikers.

Due to the strike, no private inter-district buses could move from Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi.

Life in all the major metropolitan cities remained normal where offices, banks and business establishments functioned smoothly.

An official handout said vesterday that 11 textile mills under the Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC) operated as usual while the SKOP leaders claimed that the strike was observed in 78 and private sector textile mills in Dhaka, Khulna Chittagong, Narayanganj and Bogra.

On the second day of the shutdown yesterday, increased number of policemen and para-military BDR personnel were deployed in parts of the divisional headquarters and

Three persons were picked up from the Nabisco Biscuit Factory area in Tejgaon in the city when police tried to disperse a gathering of workers in the morning. On-duty police officials asked the SKOP coordinator Dr Wajedul Islam not to use a loudspeaker while addressing the gathering. But SKOP sources said the police order was defied.

The strike organisers claimed that all the 16 sugar mills of the country remained closed but the Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation which runs the mills said the Dewanganj Sugar Mills was in operation on the

The strikers further MCCI, DCCI

From Page 1 Col 8

He suggested that the government should announce that it would ensure the workers rights and privileges as provided for in the labour laws.

Latifur Rahman also felt that the government should ask the trade unions responsible for the loss of production arising from their illegal strike to show cause, as laid down in the law.

The DCCI (Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry) President ATM Waziullah, in his statement, said the role of the trade unions should be a constructive one, in conformity with the changing scenario of economic development. It must be realised that unrealistic wage hikes could only make the industries noncompetition in the long run.

he added. "Workers would get higher wages automatically once their productivity is high", he said, adding that irrational and unjustified pressure created by

SKOP might jeopardize the endeavour for industrialisation. Waziullah, however, stressed the need for a continuous tripartite dialogue among the employers, trade unions and the government to create a

harmonious labour relation-He also said that a consensus should be reached for keeping the workers out of politics.

recommend the case of affected people. The land in question at Kawran Bazar was allotted in accordance with the rules, the defence counsel said, denying that Ershad had collusion with anyone in the

The 63-year-old former multi-storied Janata Tower.

crore unearned money.

gument, Attorney General Aminul Haq said that Ershad had failed to explain how he acquired Tk 6.5 crore he paid to Nirman International for construction of the Janata Tower. Therefore, it can be safely presumed that he was in possession of the money.

claimed that workers ab

From Page 1 Col 4 stained in 62 out of 78 public A few buses left the and private sector jute mills. However, the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) claimed 13 of its 33 mills were in operation.

> According to the organisers, the shutdown was observed in all the 21 steel rerolling mills.

Commenting on the shutdown, SKOP coordinator Dr Wajedul Islam claimed the programme was *98 per cent' successful. The SKOP and the combine

of four trade union federations, in separate statements last night, strongly condemned the police attack on the striking workers in Chittagong.

The SKOP termed the action 'barbaric' and demanded proper treatment of the injured persons and immediate and unconditional release of those arrested.

Our Gazipur correspondent adds: The SKOP strike was observed peacefully in the Tongi and Gazipur industrial areas

US troops may join UN forces in Macedonia

WASHINGTON, May 12: President Clinton said Wednesday the United States cannot turn its back on the blood Balkan civil war for fear of getting into another Vietnam and predicted new allied steps in the coming days will "make peace more likely," reports AP.

Although Clinton said no final decision has been made, it appears increasingly likely the steps will include sending a small contingent of American troops to join United Nations forces in the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, a symbolic deployment designed to stop the fighting from spread

Ogata hopes

From Page 1 Col 8 find ways to resolve the prob-

Responding to a question, Ogata said the UNHCR would prefer the repatriation of the refugees "as soon as possible."

"I cannot give any date as it is upto the refugees themselves, but we certainly would try to create favourable condition for their return."

She told a questioner, "We respect the judgement of the refugees themselves as some have already returned, though not a lot."

Replying to another question, she expressed serious concern at the rapidly deteriorating situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Ogata said the prevailing situation is "extremely serious and worrying" as fighting continues in many parts, particularly in eastern Bosnia.

Lauding the role of the international community for its effort to contain the fighting, the UNHCR chief, however, said, "Although the peace process is going on yet it has not been implemented."

Werner Blatter, Director of the UNHCR Regional Bureau for Asia and Oceania, Sylvanna Eoa, spokesperson for the High Commissioner, and Drene Khan, Executive Assistant, are also accompanying the UN

During her stay here, the High Commissioner will call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and several Ministers.



Dr Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, called on President - PID photo Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban yesterday.

Dhaka, UNHCR sign MOU

From Page 1 Col 7 durable' solution to the prob lem through the dignified and safe return of the refugees and ensuring that the influx does not recur, as in the past.

The presence of the High Commissioner and signing of the MOU will go a long way towards ensuring that," he

Referring to the 14 bilateral meeting held with the Myanmar side on the refugee problem, Rahman said that Bangladesh received "reasonably good cooperation" from Myanmar in determining the conditions for the return of the refugees.

However, he acknowledged that "as far as the international community is concerned, it does not have impartial UN presence" in Myanmar to determine the prevailing conditions there. Bangladesh seeks UN pres-

ence inside Myanmar territory for the safe and voluntary return of the refugees to their home, he said. The MOU stipulates that

the UNHCR would assist Bangladesh in the smooth repatriation of refugees "who opt to return on the basis of their own judgement of the situation in their country.

It also added that "the two sides shall cooperate with each other to prevent any attempt by any side to interfere with the exercise of freedom of option by the refugees."

A refugee wishing to return to Myanmar, the MOU said, can do so at any time, and none can prevent him from

nications Fazlur Rahman.

rising on a point of order, told

the House that the opposition's

behaviour in the House for the

last few days did not sub-

stantiate their claim that they

really want economic issues to

islative business in the face of

the opposition's repeated at-

tempts to discuss the Nirmul

Committee issue", the minister

raised by the opposition and

discussed by the House would

clearly show how many hours

the current session had to

spend on trivial matter", the

Workers Party took the floor at

this point and said the House

had failed to take up the prob-

lems of the country's labourers

when the industrial workers

were on a 72-hour strike for

pressing implementation of an

accord signed with the gov-

"The Finance Minister al-

ways agrees to the opposition

proposal on a policy debate on

the country's economy in the

House but when he discussed

the issue with the donors, the

MPs were not invited to take

part in the deliberations",

dent Boris Yeltsin today

ordered the convening of a

constituent assembly for June

5 charged with finalizing a new

draft constitution for Russia,

announced, reports AFP.

press office said.

a new constitution.

the President's press office

made up of two representa-

tives from each subject of the

Russian Federation as well as

representatives of Yeltsin and

from the parliament under a

decree signed by Yeltsin, the

holding the assembly was nec-

essary because the Congress of

People's Deputies, the conser-

vative-dominated fullscale par-

liament, had "blocked" plans to

hold a national referendum on

the convening of a constituent

It said Yeltsin had ordered

The decree asserted that

The assembly would be

Menon complained.

Rashed Khan Menon of the

"An account of the issues

observed.

minister said.

ernment.

"We could not take up leg-

be discussed in Parliament.

exercising this right, while, likewise, no refugees would be forced or coerced to leave Bangladesh. And the UNHCR would assist those who would like to return voluntarily.

According to the terms of the MOU, the government would ensure the safety and security for the refugees and would not allow armed elements in the camps nor possession of arms, ammunition and explosive devices by them without proper permission of the competent authority.

The agreement lays down that the refugees must not get involved in any criminal activities including violence, rioting, possession of arms and ammunition which would be prejudicial to the public order and national security of the host

Persons arrested or detained under the laws of the host country from the refugee camps would be able to avail legal assistance provided by the UNHCR or would be released in accordance with relevant procedure.

Under the accord the government, in association with UNHCR, would hold periodic information sessions in various camps to raise the level of awareness of the refugees of their options and responsibili-

The UNHCR, under the accord, would undertake promotional activities to motivate refugees to return home and would provide assistance for repatriation.

Both sides also agreed to organise orientation sessions

Menon also said that if the

finance minister really meant

to hold an effective policy de-

bate on the economy, he

should arrange for it before

Leader of the Opposition, vig-

orously refuting State Minister

Fazlur Rahman's allegations

against the opposition, said in

fact it was the opposition

which always pressed for dis-

cussion of economic issues on

fered the opposition's coopera-

tion to the ruling party for

identifying ways and means for

solving the problems of the

however, supported Fazlur

Rahman's view but differed

Deputy Leader of the House,

while winding up the un-

scheduled debate, said that the

opposition's noncooperation

with the government would

not help the country to ad-

concerned to keep in mind

the interests of the people

whenever a member takes the

The session will resume at

of the referendum of April 25,

which confirmed the legiti-

macy of the president of Russia

and confidence in his social-

the constitutent assembly

would be charged with

"finalizing the draft new con-

stitution" but did not make it

clear if the body would also be

tasked with approving the new

constitution still used in

Russia, only the Congress has

the power to modify the con-

the assembly would be carried

out "taking into account pro-

posals" from various regional

governments, organs of state

power, political parties and

stitution or enact a new one.

Under the Brezhnev-era

The decree said the work of

The decree said only that

floor to address the House.

Chowdhury appealed to all

Shahjahan Siraj of the JSD,

Badruddoza Chowdhury,

Samad Azad, however, of-

the floor of the House.

with his approach.

vance economically.

four this afternoon.

economic policy. "

basic law for Russia.

movements,

Yeltsin calls constituent

assembly June 5

MOSCOW, May 12: Presi- assembly "based on the results

people.

Abdus Samad Azad, Deputy

placing the next budget.

Unscheduled debate

and training workshops for camp officials and of the government and local officials of the UNHCR and the NGOs

They also agreed that any difference in interpretation or implementation of the MOU would be resolved amicably through consultations and in failing to do so, both sides reserve the right to withdraw from the agreement by giving a 30 days' notice in writing.

According to the MOU, both sides also agreed not to make any statement on any matter related to the MOU and prejudicial to their relations.

The MOU also noted the willingness of the UNHCR to provide technical assistance and financial support to the communities where the influx of refugees have caused negative impact on environment and other infrastructures and that this would be through appropriate agreement with the Ministry of Relief and the Economic Relations Division of the government.

Prior to the signing of the MOU, the Foreign Secretary the UN High Commissioner for Refugees discussed different aspects of the Rohingya refugee problem.

The UN envoy was assisted by Werner Blatter, director of the UNHCR regional bureau for Asia and 'Oceania, and D Bayandur, UNHCR representative in Dhaka, while the Foreign Secretary was aided by Additional Foreign Secretary Mahiuddin Ahmed and Addi tional Secretary of the Home Ministry Saffur Rahman.

Mausoleum visit From Page 1 Col 5 Victory Day during his life

This convention was being followed, he said adding, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and her cabinet colleagues visited Savar National Mausoleum to pay respect to the martyrs on the Victory Day during last two years in power.

Prof Chowdhury, said, however, a BNP delegation paid a visit to the National Mausoleum at Savar on the Independence Day on March 26 this year and placed wreath

Earlier, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in parliament Abdus Samad Azad alleged that for the first time since independence, the President and the Prime Minister did not go to Savar National Mausoleum to pay respect to martyrs of Liberation War on Inde-pendence Day this year.

He complained that the government as host of Seventh SAARC Summit did not also take the SAARC leaders to the mausoleum.

Azad requested the chair to allow a full dress discussion on the matter.

Nor westers From Page 1 Col 7

Chowhali, Belkuchi and Kamarkhand

Among the injured two were admitted to Chowhali Health Complex with serious wounds. Meanwhile, five people

were reported missing after an engine-boat carrying 29 passengers capsized in the Jamuna near Chowhali during the nor'wester. Rest of the passengers, however, swam ashore. Our Correspondent from

Gazipur reports: More than 10 workers were injured when the roof of a garments factory in Tongi collapsed during a storm that sweeped over the area around 7 pm Wednesday. Four persons were admitted to the Tongi Hospital.

They are: Shamsul Huq, 40, Rafiq Mia, 30, Mokhlesur Rahman, 35, and Shafiqul Islam, 28. The others received first aid.

The storm, which blew

away a part of the tin-roof of Fortuna Garments at Chhaydana of Tongi also caused disruption in the power supply. Several electricity poles

were uprooted during the storm, plunging the industrial area into darkness from 7 pm.

8-hr hartal

From Page 1 Col 5 two this afternoon a success. Opposition party sources said that emergency services including ambulances, fire service vehicles, and newspaper transports would be exempted

from the shutdown. The alliance would hold a rally at Bangabandhu Avenue at

Hasina's call

Meanwhile, Opposition leader and Awami League President Shetkh Hasina yesterday requested the people to observe today's hartal to protect their constitutional and fundamental rights and press for the trial of Golam Azam as a war criminal.

In a statement Hasina said the BNP government not only had failed to run the country. it had also "destroyed the spirit and values of the Liberation War by giving support and shelter to the Jamaat Shibir forces which opposed independence."

This government is virtually involved in a conspiracy against independence and sovereignty by trying to protect a war criminal," the opposition leader said.

The opposition leader said the country's judiciary has no independence.

Muktijoddha

From Page 1 Col 8 retary, the Defence Secretary and the Managing Director of the Bangladesh Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust.

It was informed at the meeting that in the first nine months of the current financial year 11 organisations of the trust had earned profit while eight organisations incurred

The meeting also reviewed the annual financial performance of the year 1989-90, 1990-91 and 1991-92 of the trust and the condition of different organisations under the

At the start of the meeting, held at the Prime Minister's office, the managing director of the Kalyan Trust Brig Mohammad Shahidul Islam gave a brief resume of the activities of the organisation. The trust was formed in 1972 with the aim of providing help to the crippled freedom fighters and the members of the martyred families.

Islam said financial assis tance had been provided to the crippled freedom fighters and the members of the martyred families till 1980 from the earnings of different industrial units and commercial institutions under the trust.

Later, Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman had introduced state honorarium from the national budget for them following the trusts' inability to provide financial help.

Bangkok toy factory fire toll rises to 240

BANGKOK, May 12: Weary rescue workers continued the search today for the bodies of more people killed in Thailand's worst fire, as the death toll in the Bangkok toy factory blaze rose to 240, most of them young women, reports

The Midnight Eile

Nepal to stem influx of Bhutanese

KATHMANDU, May 12: With more than 100,000 Bhutanese refugees camped on Nepalese soil and more pouring in, the government today introduced its first measures to stem the influx with help from the United Nations, the foreign ministry said here. A ministry Press Note said stringent screening measures had been put into effect today on the Nepalese side of the border with Bhutan, reports

UN evacuates 37 wounded civilians from Zepa

ZAGREB, May 12: United Nations helicopters evacuated 37 wounded civilians from the Muslim enclave of Zepa today by agreement with rebel Serbs who have been besieging the Bosnian town, UN officials said, reports Reuter.

Govt to follow verdict: Mazari

SC to order restoration of NA, hopes Sharif

ISLAMABAD, May 12: Deposed Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said in remarks published today he was optimistic that the Supreme Court would order the restoration of the dissolved National Assembly, reports

Speaking to a crowd in the city of Abbotabad late Tuesday, Sharif attacked President Ghulam Ishaq Khan saying he had done a great injustice to the nation by dissolving the assembly and the elected gov-

His petition challenging the president's April 18 actions currently being heard by the Supreme Court which has said it will give a verdict soon.

Sharif said if the courts' decision was not in our favour, his party would reseek people's mandate in elections scheduled by the president for JMB construction

From Page 1 Col 5 lopment Bank and OECF of Japan had agreed in principle to provide Bangladesh with 150 million US dollars each for the construction of the

Explaining reasons for the delay in the start of the actual construction work of the bridge, the State Minister pointed out that the foundation stone of the proposed bridge had been laid with great fanfare during the past autocratic regime.

But the then authorities had not taken any steps for regularising the project and arranging for the necessary funds for construction work to start, he said.

Dispelling opposition apprehensions of further delay in the construction of the bridge, the state minister said there was no scope of failure on the part of the present govern-

Responding to another supplementary question from Abdur Rahim (AL), Fazlur Rahman informed the House that Taka 468 crore was realised as levy and surcharge for the Jamuna Bridge project till April, 1993.

Rahman said that the collection of levy has been stopped from July last but the surcharge was being realised.

His successor, caretaker Prime Minister Balkh Sher Mazari, has said his government shall follow the Supreme Court's decision. Mazari, in a letter submitted to the court by his counsel Tuesday, vowed to organize elections on schedule and said he had asked the armed forces to provide a supervisory structure

to ensure complete fairness. The nation's attentions riveted to the current legal battle in the Supreme Court with political parties in and outside the caretaker administration awaiting the judgement.

Observers said the court's verdict, expected next week, should remove the prevailing suspense over the fate of the promised elections.

Reported observations by members of the 11-judge bench during the five-day old proceedings have stirred speculation that the assembly could be revived.

HC orders release of Tito

A High Court Division Bench

vesterday ordered release of Khaledur Rahman Tito from detention if he is not wanted in any other cases, reports The court found that the

order of detention against him under Special Powers Act was illegal and without lawful authority.

N-S dialogue

From Page 1 Col 6 session the outcome of the SAARC Summit recently hosted in Dhaka.

He met President Soeharto and conveyed to him greetings from Prime Minister Begum Zia and renewed an invitation to him on her behalf to visit Bangladesh. The Indonesian President accepted the invitation to pay the visit at a mutually convenient time.

The Foreign Minister also met his counterparts from Malaysia, North Korea, Palestine, India and Pakistan and discussed with them matters of mutual and regional in-

ঢাকা ওয়াসা জরুরী বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সম্মানিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দের অনুরোধে ঢাকা ওয়াসা ৩১শে মে, '৯৩–এর মধ্যে এককালীন সমুদয় বকেয়া পরিশোধ সাপেক্ষে সারচার্জ ব্যতীত পানি/পয়ঃ বিল পরিশোধের সুযোগ দিচ্ছে।

বকেয়ার পরিমাণ ও প্রকৃত পরিস্থিতি বিবেচনা করে সহজ কিস্তিতেও বিল পরিশোধের সুযোগ দেয়া হচ্ছে।

কিন্তি সুবিধা দেয়া সত্ত্বেও যারা নিয়মিত বিল পরিশোধ করছেন না ভবিষ্যতে তাদের আর কিস্তি প্রদান করা হবে না এবং তাদের সংযোগ তাৎক্ষণিকভাবে বিচ্ছিন্ন করা হবে

ঢাকা ওয়াসার ম্যাজিস্ট্রেট – এর নেতৃত্বে ভ্রাম্যমান আদালত খেলাপী গ্রাহকদের সংযোগ তাৎক্ষণিকভাবে বিচ্ছিন্ন করা ছাড়াও পিডিআর এ্যাক্টের অধীন আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করছে। বিশেষ স্কোয়াড গ্রাহকের বাড়ী বাড়ী তল্লাশী চালিয়ে খেলাপী গ্রাহকদের সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্ন করছে।

বিল না পেয়ে থাকলে আজই সংশ্লিষ্ট আঞ্চলিক অফিস অথবা ওয়াসা ভবনে বাণিজ্যিক ব্যবস্থাপক (ফোনঃ ৩২৭২৪৫) বা সদস্য (অর্থ) (ফোনঃ ৮১৬৭৯৯)—এর সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন

সংযোগ বিচ্যুতি ও আইনানুগ কঠোর ব্যবস্থা এড়াবার জন্য এবং সারচার্জ ব্যতীত বিল পরিশোধের সুযোগ গ্রহণের নিমিত্তে আজই বকেয়াসহ হালনাগাদ পানি/পয়ঃ বিল পরিশোধ করুন।

তথ্যাসা-জঃ তঃ ১৮৭/৯৩



আপনাদের সেবায় নিয়োজিত ঢাকা ওয়াসা।

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

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