



Members of the Prokrichi who observed an 8-hour hunger strike at the Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Prokrichi observes hunger strike

By Staff Correspondent

The non-administrative civil servants and the professionals including engineers, agriculturists and doctors in government service (Prokrichi) yesterday observed an eight-hour token hunger strike in the city to press home their 17-point charter of demands for administrative reforms.

Several hundred government officials and professionals began the fast at 9 am at the Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) premises and broke it at 5 pm.

Selina Akhter, 60, mother of Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon who embraced martyrdom during the democratic movement against the Ershad regime in 1990, offered a glass of fruit juice to Prokrichi chairman Dr M A Majed to break the token day-long fast.

Political leaders, Parliament members of both the ruling and opposition parties, leaders of different socio-cultural organisations and student communities came to the IEB premises to express their solidarity with their 17-point movement.

The leaders of these organisations who addressed the fasting officials and professionals included Mujahidul Islam Selim of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Hasanul Huq Inu of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), Khalequzaman of the Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD), L K Siddiki MP and Dr A K M Qumruzzaman MP of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Dr Kazi Abu Yusuf of the Awami League (AL), Barrister Amirul Islam of the Gano Forum, Fayed Ahmed of the Sammilta Sangskritik Jote and Advocate Mahub-e-Alam of the Supreme Court Bar Association.

Sleeping bank

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Meanwhile, in an extraordinary move, 230 members of the Parliament (MPs), in a joint recommendation to the Finance Minister, have demanded that the Sundarban Bank be given the necessary clearance to start operation.

Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad, Shaikh Razzak Ali, in a personal request to the Finance Minister, also reportedly recommended that the Sundarban Bank be allowed to function.

If allowed to operate, the bank would have a Taka 40 crore paid up capital with Tk 20 crore as the sponsors' contribution. The authorised capital of the bank would be Tk 300 crore.

Medical test for BCS candidates Nov 25

Medical tests for the temporarily selected candidates of the 13th BCS examination, 1992-93, will begin from November 25, reports UNB.

The tests will be held in different batches in 12 working days till December 8 at Midford Hospital, Institute of Cardiovascular Disease and Hospital, PG and Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Bangladesh Public Service Commission is sending letters to the candidates, referring to the medical boards.

CPB MP

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to follow suit, sources added. Mozahar was not available in the city for comments since he was busy organising the planned meeting and to receive the PM in his area. However, Nazir Hossain, another MP of the CPB who joined the ruling party only last month, confirmed Mozahar's decision.

Nazir's own changing of party allegiance was announced at a public meeting, attended by the Prime Minister, at his Sunamganj constituency in mid-October.

Nazir Hossain and Mozahar Hossain are two of the five CPB MPs who were elected on the Awami League's election symbol — the boat.

Of the three other CPB MPs, Dabirul Islam is actively considering joining the AL while Mohammad Yusuf, who was included in the recently-launched Gano Forum's central body is also reported to be now preferring the AL, close associates of the two told The Daily Star.

Shamsuddoha, the other CPB legislator, became a central leader of the Gano Forum by merging his faction of the CPB with the Forum.

When contacted last night, Dabirul Islam said he would meet the AL chief and Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Hasina on her return from China and discuss with her his joining the party.

"I am already in the AL and my formal joining can take place at any moment", he said.

Justifying his decision, Dabirul said he was indebted to the AL since the party's symbol had helped him win the polls twice. Besides, he added, the AL was the biggest pro-Liberation party in the country and the most important political task in the country now was to resist the anti-Liberation forces.



Falu Miah being escorted by members of the Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) outside the Dhaka Central Jail gate yesterday. The BSEHR helped secure his release. — Star photo

Falu Miah is free again!

Staff Correspondent

Falu Miah, the modern-day Count of Monte Cristo who languished for long 21 years in the Dhaka Central Jail, is at last a free man.

Fifty-plus years old Falu, convicted of a dacoity and kept without a charge long after the completion of his sentence, was brought to the court of the District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka, Abdus Salam, yesterday and set at liberty.

Falu, who made the headlines after his tragic case came to light Sunday, was also granted bail by the judge regarding two unspecified cases against him. Elina Aziz, a lawyer representing the Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR), moved the petitions for bail on Falu's behalf.

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Director (Investigation) Saiful Islam Dilar of the BSEHR and Elina Aziz received a dishevelled Falu Miah at the jail gate and took him to the BSEHR office.

A poor day-labourer of Savar, Falu Miah last visited a court in 1977 when he was sentenced and convicted by a special military court in the dacoity case. He was put behind bars in August, 1972.

Son of late Lal Chand of village Salehpur, near Amin Bazar under Savar thana, Falu has developed asthma and other complications during his more than 21 years of confinement.

Another top Arafat aide shot dead

SIDON, Nov 15: Gunmen shot and killed the top official of PLO leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement in Lebanon today, security sources said, reports Reuters.

Mouin Shabaytah died in hospital after being hit by seven bullets when his car was riddled by sub-machinegun fire in the port city of Sidon, 40 km (25 miles) south of Beirut.

The unidentified assailants fled and there was no immediate claim of responsibility. Shabaytah, 58, was the second senior Fatah official to be shot in south Lebanon in less than a week.

Meanwhile, Israel and the PLO resumed talks today on an Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

A PLO official said the talks were going on at a secret Cairo venue.

The Israeli embassy, the PLO mission and Egypt's Foreign Ministry all refused to say whether the meeting had started. But the official, who requested anonymity, said in late afternoon that the sixth round of talks had been going on for more than two hours.

Diplomats had expected the meeting to start at noon (1000 GMT).

They said the negotiators, led by PLO strategist Nabil Sha'ath and Israeli Major-General Amnon Shahak, would be trying to define 'Jericho' and agree how many Israeli troops can remain in Gaza to protect 3,000 Jewish settlers.

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The two sides are struggling to reach agreement in time for an Israeli withdrawal to start as scheduled on December 13.

They are holding the talks in secret to avoid the media, which they complain has embarrassed both sides by presenting compromises as concessions. Earlier rounds were held in the small Egyptian resort of Taba, where it was impossible to hide from reporters.

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Hearing of Champa Murder case resumes

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 15: Hearing of the sensational Fauzia Rahman Champa murder case resumed today at the court of District and Sessions Judge Moinul Huq. The hearing will continue for three days.

Three witnesses were examined today. They are Champa's husband Shahidul Alam and doctors of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Dr Rafiqul Islam and Dr Liaquat Ali Khan. Champa's son Khairul Alam, 6, who accompanied his father, was also produced before the court.

The first phase of the hearing continued for five days from October 16. Twenty-one witnesses have been examined till yesterday. The prosecution was represented by Abdul Majid Munshi, Special PP, and Muklesur Rahman, PP.

The accused was defended by Sirajul Huq and Mahub Hussain.

Dhaka eligible

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proved the draft of Nationalised Manufacturing Industrial Workers (conditions of service) Act 1993 to facilitate implementation of the recommendations of the National Wages and Productivity Commission.

The act was proposed by the Ministry of Labour and Manpower.

Ministers-in-charge of different ministries and divisions attended the meeting.

Mona murder

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and Mahubul Alam Mamun of the killing. Charges under Sections 302, 394 and 34 of the penal code were brought against the accused when the case was first placed before the court on October 6 last.

On the first day of hearing the recording officer and the then Sub-Inspector of Police of Kotwali thana Dhiren Mohapatra were produced as witnesses.

The witnesses were not examined by the defence because Jong's lawyer was absent on the day.

The court appointed APP Md Maynuddin as State defence for the other accused — Mahubul Alam Mamun — since there was no lawyer to represent the second accused either.

January 9, 1994 has been fixed as the next date of hearing.

Hazratbal siege

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nagar, the Kashmir summer capital, had called on the population today to march on Hazratbal mosque to force a lifting of the siege.

Indian troops shot dead more than 50 demonstrators on October 22 and only a few token protesters took place here today.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) reported meanwhile that 13 people were killed in clashes between Kashmiri Muslim separatists and Indian troops in the Kashmir valley on Sunday and today.

AP adds: Indian forces shot and killed 12 militants today as they tried to enter Jammu-Kashmir state from neighboring Pakistan, the military said.

The shootout occurred in Kargil, a mountainous district of the state that is 200 kilometers west of Srinagar, the summer capital.

The Midnight File

Cyclone claims 3 in Karachi

KARACHI, Nov 15: At least three fishermen died and 10 were reported missing as tropical cyclone 1-a moved on off the Karachi coast Monday, the Meteorological office and ambulance sources said. The three were killed when a wall collapsed on a boat in the harbour area and two others were seriously injured, ambulance sources said, reports AFP.

6 killed in Afghan fighting

ISLAMABAD, Nov 15: At least six people were killed and 10 injured as the Afghan capital Kabul came under a heavy rocket attack late today state run radio Kabul reported. The broadcast monitored here said a barrage of 85 rockets slammed the residential districts in Kabul. The attack was the first after a lull lasting several months, reports AFP.

Cuban refugees steal plane

MIAMI, Nov 15: About a dozen Cuban refugees stole an airplane and flew it to freedom today landing at dawn at the Opa-Locka Airport outside Miami, local radio reported. The Cubans appeared to be family members of the pilot and co-pilot, according to a Cuban American National Foundation spokesman quoted on local radio. The Cubans were taken into custody by US authorities, reports Reuter.

Saifur in Tokyo

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, leading a six-member delegation, arrived in Tokyo yesterday on a four-day official visit of Japan, reports UNB.

Rahman was received at the Narita Airport by Ambassador Mahubul Huq, Economic Minister of Bangladesh Embassy S M Shahjahan, senior representatives and Foreign Ministry officials of Japan, said an official handout issued in Dhaka.

During his visit, the Finance Minister will meet his Japanese counterpart Hirohiza Fuji, Chief Cabinet Secretary, Parliamentary Vice Minister of Miti, Parliamentary Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Vice Minister for International Economic Affairs and Economic Planning Agency.

Saifur Rahman, who is Chairman elect of the Board of Governors of the World Bank and IMF, is also expected to meet the President of the Asian Development Bank, Chairman of the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) and

Chairman of the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Members of his delegation are Executive Director of the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority (JMBA) M Muhammad Ali, Industries Secretary A H M Abdul Hye, Secretary of the Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry M Faizur Razaque, Additional Secretary of External Relations Division Dr Saadat Hossain and Dr Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, consultant of JMBA.

Defence of Taka

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these cost push pressures on competitiveness can be eased immediately is devaluation.

The World Bank's argument has one flaw, however. Devaluation will make the price of Bangladeshi exports more attractive at current cost. But what is the guarantee that devaluation itself will not raise the cost? After all, export industries as well as the industries servicing these are import dependent to various extent. Devaluation will increase their import costs as well as the Taka cost of servicing their foreign debts.

The defences that the Finance Minister is putting up against the Bank's pressure to devalue are presumably the uncertainty attached to the immediate effect of devaluation and the programme at hand to raise Bangladeshi industries' competitiveness through trade liberalisation.

Minister Rahman's trade liberalisation programme has reduced average tariff rates leading to cost saving for many industries. But Bangladeshi competitors in the global market are taking similar measures. If Bangladesh cannot match this, the deciding factor will be the trend in price of inputs like power and utilities and of wages. If wage rate increases outpace productivity growth and if utility prices cannot be lowered Bangladeshi exports will face an uphill battle and, ultimately, the present defences for the external value of the Taka will crumble.

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ঢাকা ওয়াসা বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা ঢাকা ওয়াসার সম্মানিত গ্রাহকদের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাইতেছে যে, সরকারের অনুমোদনক্রমে ১৭-১২-৯৩ইং হইতে পানি ও পয়ঃ কর নিম্নরূপে পুনঃ নির্ধারণ করা হইলঃ

Table with columns: ক্রমিক নং, হোল্ডিংয়ের প্রকৃতি, মিটারবিহীন, মিটারযুক্ত (প্রতি হাজার গ্যালন, প্রতি হাজার লিটার). Rows 1-3 detailing water charges for different categories.

৪। মিটারযুক্ত বা মিটারবিহীন সংযোগের জন্য নিম্নতম হার মাসিক টাকা ১৮.১০।

৫। পানি ও পয়ঃ সংযুক্ত হোল্ডিংসমূহের পয়ঃ কর পানি করের সমান হইবে। শুধুমাত্র পয়ঃ সংযোগযুক্ত হোল্ডিংয়ের ক্ষেত্রে বার্ষিক মূল্যায়নের ২২.৬২% হারে বন্সদের কর পরিশোধ করিতে হইবে।

৬। ওয়াসার চালু পয়ঃ লাইনের ১০০ ফুটের মধ্যে অবস্থিত পয়ঃ সংযোগবিহীন হোল্ডিং-এর বার্ষিক মূল্যায়নের টাকা ৮.১৫% হারে বন্সদের পয়ঃ কর পরিশোধ করিতে হইবে।