

Japanese boat purchase case Ershad seeks a change of trial court

The trial of deposed President Hussain Muhammad Ershad in the Japanese boat purchase case was adjourned yesterday to allow the former ruler's defence lawyers to move a petition in the High Court seeking to transfer the case, reports BSS.

Just as the Special Judge's court chaired by Divisional Sessions Judge Anwaruddin Sikder was to take up proceedings, Yusuf Hossain Humayun, Ershad's defence counsel, submitted a prayer seeking time to file an application in the High Court to transfer the case from this court.

Humayun, in his prayer, alleged that certain remarks by Judge Sikder in a previous case in which Ershad was sentenced and convicted, have created an apprehension in the mind of his client about getting justice in the present case. The defence lawyer further alleged that despite repeated appeals, his client was deprived of discussions with the counsels, as allowed under law.

After going through the defence prayer, Judge Sikder sought comments from Ershad on the allegations made by Humayun in the petition. Ershad smilingly admitted receiving enough time and opportunities provided by the court to carry on with the case. He was also heard urging Humayun to drop that portion of the prayer relating to not getting time and adequate opportunities for consultation.

When asked by the judge to comment on the contents of the defence prayer, public prosecutor Ashrafuddin Ahmed said the allegations were "false and baseless."

Judge Sikder observed that if the accused persons have no faith in the court, there was no

point in carrying on with the trial. He, however, stated that the defence should have submitted its present prayer on the previous date of the trial on May 14. No such cause had arisen yesterday to justify the petition and the defence lawyers were only trying to kill time, Sikder commented. He said if they had any real complaint, they could have raised the issue much earlier.

Counsel Humayun said the defence had the right to pray for a transfer of courts at any time it deems appropriate.

Earlier A K M Hossain, Deputy Commissioner of Panchagarh appeared in the court to make his deposition which remained incomplete. Hossain, who is the prosecution witness-1, had made partial deposition on May 14.

Before calling it a day, Judge Anwaruddin Sikder asked Yusuf Hossain Humayun to present before him by next Saturday the order of the High Court regarding the defence petition seeking transfer of the case from this court.

On the previous date of the trial, i.e., May 14, Ershad's lawyers boycotted the court because Judge Sikder did not entertain their prayer for an adjournment of the proceedings on some untenable ground.

Ershad and a Japanese national have been indicted in this case which relates to the acceptance of the second lowest bidder by violating set rules in the purchase of relief boats under a Japanese grant which caused the state to sustain a loss amounting to about Taka 33 crore.

Ashrafuddin Ahmed was assisted by Masud Ahmed Talukder and Kazi Golam Faruque. Nitai Roy Chowdhury assisted Yusuf Humayun.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing the inaugural function of the two-day workshop on 'Role of Secondary, Technical and Higher Education in Human Resource Development and Poverty Alleviation' at the International Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

Tk.42.40cr power project for 3 CHT districts

RANGAMATI, May 28: The government has been implementing a Tk.42.40 crore comprehensive electrification programme in three hilly districts of Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari, reports UNB.

This was revealed at a review meeting on the overall electrification network in the hilly areas held at the Rangamati Circuit House today with Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khondoker Mosharrif Hossain in the chair.

Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) has been implementing the programme and over 20 per cent work has so far been completed.

The programme with a foreign exchange component of about Tk 5 crore has started in 1991-92 fiscal year and is expected to be completed by 1995-96.

Under the programme 442 kilometres power line will be set up and 114 transformers installed in the districts.

Khaleida holds

SAVAR, May 28: Panicked residents of the municipality have sought the help of the local administration to save them from a crazy monkey that bit some 30 people in last two days, reports UNB.

Residents said the monkey made sudden attack on the inmates of a house hiding itself in trees or on the roof of the house. Youths equipped with lethal weapons failed to confront the daring creature.

They could not say how and from where it appeared in the locality.

Thirty people, including three children and two women, were injured by the crazy primate on Friday and Saturday.

Inhabitants of Madyapara submitted a memorandum to Pourashava authorities and Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) today calling for help to save them from the attack of the monkey.

Brothers in DMFA final

From Page 1 Col 7 reminded once again that whoever consciously sold him to the black-and-whites must be a swindler of some class as the remainder of a quartet continued to show his want of even a decent degree of quality, much to the chagrin of a near full-house crowd.

Mahbubur Rahman Roxy and Kaiser Hamid missed a couple of excellent opportunities and Ponir flung himself full length to his right to arrest a crisp Riaz header off a Shabbir cross.

Mohammedan's miseries compounded as skipper Shabbir gradually withered almost into nothingness and with 'Brothers' lacking the fire power to make the most of the yawning gaps in the citadel across the pitch, football became pathetically chaotic, all sound and fury signifying nothing.

The deadlock continued in the thirty minutes of extra time, leaving no other option for referee Mansoor but to summon the penalty shoot-out to decide the first finalists and Brothers deservedly came out of the ordeal with flying colours.

Abahani Krira Chakra take on the new-look and exciting Muktiyodha K C in the second semifinal today at the Dhaka Stadium, scheduled for a 5:30 start.

While the depleted Abahani should draw some inspiration from the debutant Iraqi Nazar Ali, Muktiyodha will be without their skipper and star custodian Mohsin, reportedly taken ill.

Contrary to expectations Brothers Union with almost no weighty names in their ranks, began on an aggressive note with newcomer Ranjan signed from Rahmatganj playing a pivotal role.

JS body, Shantibahini to hold informal talks

CHITTAGONG, May 28: Members of the parliamentary sub-committee on CHT are likely to hold informal talks with the leader of Shantibahini on June 4 at Dudukchhari border village under Panchhari thana of Khagrachhari district.

According to highly placed sources, the informal talks are aimed at finding out the points of agreement between the two sides to help resolve the hill tracts issue.

The decision to hold informal talks was taken at the seventh round of dialogue between the parliamentary committee on CHT and Shantibahini leaders on May 5 at Khagrachhari and the sub-committee was constituted with Rashed Khan Menon, MP, Kalparanjan Chakma, MP, Mostaque Ahmed, MP, Md Shahjahan, MP.

The informal talks with Shantibahini leaders will precede the 'main dialogue' likely to be held shortly, sources said.

The authorities on Thursday informed the leaders of Shantibahini about the holding of informal talks on June 4, the sources said.

So far seven rounds of talks were held between the parliamentary committee headed by Communications Minister Oli Ahmed and Shantibahini team led by JB Larma alias Shanto Larma, President of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Shangkati Samity (PCJSS), to find out a political solution.

Meanwhile, as per agreement between the two sides, ceasefire has been continuing in the CHT for over one and a half years to facilitate the holding of peace talks.

Students protest murder of teacher

By Staff Correspondent

The students of the Tejgaon Government Polytechnic School yesterday brought out a silent procession in the city to protest the murder of the school's assistant teacher Motiur Rahman during the Eid holidays.

The students dressed in white uniforms brought out the procession from the school at around 12 noon and ended in front of the Jatya Press Club at around 1:30 pm.

At a meeting in front of the Press Club, the students denounced the authorities for the 'deteriorating law and order situation'. 'The government is failing to ensure the security of life of the people,' the students said.

The Dhhanmondi thana police recovered the decomposed body of Motiur from his flat in Kalabagan last Monday.

Monkey creates havoc in Savar

SAVAR, May 28: Panicked residents of the municipality have sought the help of the local administration to save them from a crazy monkey that bit some 30 people in last two days, reports UNB.

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The Dhhanmondi thana police recovered the decomposed body of Motiur from his flat in Kalabagan last Monday.

He kept the tentative Mohammedan defenders, particularly the tall Rehan, guessing and managed two shots at the goal but Sheikh Abdullah Lahul, now a regular feature under the Mohammedan bar made splendid saves to keep his side afloat.

Tributes to Shilpacharya

The 18th anniversary of death of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin was observed in the country yesterday, reports UNB.

Different socio-cultural organisations organised various programmes to mark the day.

Speakers at a discussions arranged by the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at its auditorium paid tributes to the memory of Zainul describing him as the pioneer of paintings in the country.

The discussions on Zainul Abedin and his works' was chaired by Director General of the Academy Mobarak Hossain Khan and addressed by painters Quayum Chowdhury, Hashem Khan, Prof Abul Kalam Manjur Morshed, Prof Syed Manjurul Islam and Shubeer Chowdhury.

To observe the day, the Bangla Academy organised a discussion meeting at its auditorium in the afternoon. It was addressed by Prof Nazrul Islam and Prof Mohammad Harun-or-Rashid.

The Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Smriti Parishad held a milad mahfil and offered fateha at the mazar of the late artist. They also arranged a discussion at the Jatya Press Club to mark the day.

Baghdad blasts Saudi King

BAGHDAD, May 28: Iraq issued on Friday its strongest attack on Saudi Arabian King Fahd since the Gulf war, reports Reuters.

'The king is a petty agent...' Baghdad newspapers quoted Foreign Minister Mohammed Saeed Al-Sahaf as saying.

The minister was reacting to remarks by the Saudi monarch on Tuesday in which he said Iraq had not complied with ceasefire terms ending the 1991 Gulf war. He also forecast that the world's attitude towards UN sanctions imposed on Iraq would not change.

Saudi Arabia invited foreign troops onto its soil in 1990 to face Iraqi troops who had invaded Kuwait.

Baghdad newspapers also hit out at King Fahd for calling for an end to the government in Baghdad.

Nazmul Huda urges opposition to join budget session

CHITTAGONG, May 28: Information Minister Nazmul Huda today urged the opposition parties to join the corfling budget session in order to make Parliament meaningful and ensure the people's welfare, reports BSS.

Addressing a freshers' reception at the Satkania Government College here the Information Minister said the opposition parties should not be in the street to press home their demand. They must return to Parliament which is the focal point of all national activities, he added.

Referring to the demand of opposition parties for holding the elections under a caretaker government, the Information Minister said any party or individual member of Parliament may come up with a bill in accordance with the constitutional rules and procedure.

Biman engineers

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frame/licence in 1970 and Abdur Rahman did not pass the examinations of basic airframe course, apprentice course and F-27 type course.

Plaintiff Anam, who is now under suspension for violating office discipline, appealed to the court that since he has passed all the three licence examinations, he should be promoted to the post of deputy chief engineer.

Khairul Anam also filed criminal cases against the two with the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) Dhaka, on Thursday. The CMM referred the case to the court of first class magistrate A K M Kamaluddin who ordered the CID to probe and submit a report immediately.

When contacted, Assistant Manager (Legal Affairs) of Biman Shafiqul Islam told The Daily Star that the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) is the licensing authority and 'We do not know how they got licences.'

When contacted over telephone, Abdur Rahman said the case is baseless.

'Why did he (Anam) bring the charge after 25 years if he had known everything,' Rahman questioned.

He said he has given necessary papers to his lawyers to fight the case.

'Thank God, I kept the certificate, otherwise it would have been a humiliation just before the retirement,' Abdur Rahman said.

The Midnight File

Russia still far from democracy: Solzhenitsyn

VLADIVOSTOK, Russia, May 28: One day after returning from exile, Alexander Solzhenitsyn fired a broadside at the government Saturday, saying Russia is still far from democracy and has yet to begin real economic reforms. The 75-year-old Nobel Prize-winning author spoke to reporters after touring a hospital and farmers' market in this Pacific port city, the first stop in a 10,000-kilometer cross-country voyage to his new home near Moscow, reports AP.

Fresh fighting in northern Bosnia

SARAJEVO, May 28: Fresh fighting erupted in northern Bosnia after the republic's warring factions accused each other of blocking progress at the latest round of peace talks. The Bosnian Serbs said six rockets fired by Croat forces hit the northern town of Brcko, which commands a vital Serb supply route. They also said they repelled an assault by the Muslim led government army in the area of Mount Majevisa, where an important television relay tower is located, reports Reuters.

UN-DPRK nuclear talks yield no results

WASHINGTON, May 28: Talks between North Korea and the UN's nuclear watchdog agency appear to have ended in failure, a senior US government official said Friday, reports AP.

The talks were an attempt to resolve a dispute over the defueling of a North Korean nuclear reactor.

The official, speaking on condition he not be identified, said President Clinton's administration nonetheless was willing to resume its own high-level diplomatic talks with North Korea. He said no date has been set for resuming those talks, which could set a basis for normalizing US relations with North Korea.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher, in comments after a speech to the Asia Society in New York, said a new round of US-North Korean talks would be 'a difficult and complicated one because we will have to resolve in that dialogue the nuclear issues as well as holding out the prospect of having more normal relations.'

Christopher said in the speech that 'if North Korea rejects these negotiations,' the United States will be in a better position to garner international support for UN economic sanctions, which would condemn North Korea to 'pariah status.'

Christopher did not mention the breakdown of the IAEA-North Korea talks the past week.

Meanwhile, Robert L Gallucci, the State Department official coordinating US policy on Korea, was quoted in an interview published Friday in a US spy satellite and passed on to the Japanese government suggest that the new missile would be an improved version of the Rodong 1 missile tested last May, the Yomiuri and Tokyo Shimbun newspapers reported.

Fauzderhat rly station ransacked

CHITTAGONG, May 27: Some unruly passengers allegedly ransacked the Fauzderhat railway station and injured an employee of Sagatika Express train last night.

According to railway police, the incident occurred when the express train bound for Chittagong from Chandpur stopped at Fauzderhat station at 11 last night. The passengers attacked the station protesting the train's stoppage at Fauzderhat station.

Leghari

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States must speak out against repression in Kashmir and play in effective role for the resolution of the dispute. He said Pakistan believed that the United States, as the only super power of the world, could intercede and resolve the issue.

The President said Kashmir remains a major flash point in the world and any miscalculation could lead to an accidental war, the international community owed it to the world peace to extend all help to resolve the dispute.

Meanwhile AFP reports, Indian army captured a top Kashmiri Muslim militant leader today in the state capital of Srinagar, army sources said.

Maussam Ali, supreme commander of the Al-Barq organisation, offered no resistance and gave himself up after his hideout in the Rajbagh district was surrounded by troops, the sources said.

Sylhet GP

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Merger with the AL could strengthen the mainstream pro-independence forces of the country, the Oduled faction, backed by Suranjit Sengupta, argued at the conference.

On the other hand, Abdul Hamid, general secretary of the party's Sylhet district unit and his supporters said at the conference that the AL had deviated from the spirit of country's liberation war. The GP should maintain its independent identity with a view to asserting the spirit of the war of independence they argued.

This faction reportedly enjoys the blessings of Peer Habibur Rahman.

Dhanmondi lake

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plants, at least four milligram dissolved oxygen is required for every litre of water.

For angling, the standard of dissolved oxygen is four milligram per litre while for other recreational activities, it is five milligram per litre, DOE officials pointed out.

They said that the sewage line near Dhanmondi Road-32 was disposing storm water coupled with solid wastes into the lake.

The DOE report identified man-made waste dumping, rotting of leaves and plants and disposal of storm water to be the main reasons for water pollution in the Dhanmondi lake.

'Mud, debris, and all kinds of rubbish are now being dumped into the lake,' said one DOE official. 'In future, you will not even dip your finger into the Dhanmondi lake, let alone angling.' The official, however, declined to be named.

Meanwhile, high level of pollution has caused serious reduction of fish stock in the Dhanmondi lake.

Officials of the Fisheries Department, which runs a project in the lake, said that the annual catch of fish from the lake has sharply decreased because of their death due to water pollution.

31 Bangladeshi Hajis died

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they are Bangladeshi and their names are: Morsheed Mia, Gias Uddin, Mohammad Ali, Mohammad Sharif Idris Ali and Masud Ahmed Ahmed.

The three persons, suspected earlier to be the victims of Meena incident but later proved to have met natural deaths, are: Begum Samrukh, Bachu Mia and Shafiqur Rahman.

The teams further unveiled the detail identifications of ten persons who died of diseases or faced natural deaths.

They are: Mahjar Ahmed, passport No (1007), Abdullal Mamun (5661), Abdul Berek (British 00740533), Mujibul Haq (H-739799), Mohammad Bachu Mia (3667), Tajul Haq (1309), Tajul Islam (1509), Mrs. Shamaron Bibi (British G 442087), Shafiqur Rahman (1034) and Abdul Alim (3802).

Besides, another Bangladeshi Hajj died near Masjidul Haram on May 18 but his identity could not be ascertained as there was no relevant documents with him.

The teams also identified 18 persons who were still missing and did not come back to their respective residences. The names of the persons with

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