

Boat purchase case against Ershad

Cross-examination of PW-1 ends

Cross-examination of prosecution witness (PW-1) in the Special Case 19 of 1993 began yesterday in the court of Senior Special Judge, Dhaka Md. Abdus Salam, reports BSS.

Deposed president Hussain Muhammad Ershad and K. Inoyama, a Japanese national representing the Marubeni Corporation, are the accused in this case, known as the Japanese boat case. They are charged with misusing funds and causing the State a loss of Tk 33 crore.

AKM Hossain, Deputy Commissioner of Panchagarh, the PW-1, is the informant in this case whose FIR (First Information Report) was lodged in 1992. Hossain, who was the Deputy Director of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption when the FIR was lodged, made his deposition on May 14, 1994.

Formal charge against Ershad and Inoyama, who has remained absconding, were brought on April 11.

Hossain said, he had made a comprehensive enquiry into the matter before lodging the FIR, but declined to divulge the sources of the information.

When pressed by Ershad's defence counsel Yusuf Hossain

Hunayun to name the source, Public Prosecutor (PP) Abdur Razzak Khan raised objection and said as per law, the witness was not bound to disclose the identity of the source. The PW-1 said that he was not divulging the source at the directive of his superiors.

In reply to a query, the witness said he had visited the President's Secretariat, Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation and the Economic Relations Division on the Finance Ministry in connection with the case.

The PW-1 informed the court that preliminary enquiry into the case began sometime in May-June 1991, but he could not remember the exact date.

The witness said the Bangladesh Government had initiated an agreement for the procurement of the boats in question and that it was also a fact that that agreement was initiated in the backdrop of extreme national emergency caused by the unprecedented floods of 1988.

When asked to comment as to whether there was any misappropriation involved in the purchase of the boats which are suitable for Bangladesh's

People will bear witness to BNP's work: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said the people would bear witness to the development carried out during the past three and a half years by her government, reports UNB.

She ridiculed the statement of Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina who reportedly told a public meeting in Feni on Sunday that the present BNP government had done nothing for the people.

"The people are witness to what the BNP has done for their welfare," Begum Zia said while addressing a function at her Hare Road office last night, arranged to welcome those who joined her party from different political parties of Feni district.

About 500 leaders and workers of the Awami League-backed Sramik League and Jubo League, the Jamaat-e-Islami's student front Islami Chhatra Shibir, and UP chairman and members from Chhagaiyala, Parshuram and Fulgazi thanas joined the BNP yesterday.

The Prime Minister said

the BNP government had always worked for improvement of the lot of commonman and development of the country and would continue to do so in future.

She mentioned the improvements of infrastructure and in the country's economy, and reminded that the BNP government had inherited a ruined economy from the nine years of autocratic rule.

Begum Zia listed the development programmes initiated by her government in all sectors for socio-economic improvement of the people and the country.

"We have fulfilled most of our election pledges," she said.

Post and Telecommunications Minister Tarique Islam, Livestock and Fisheries Minister Abdullah al-Noman, State Minister for Textiles Maj (Retd) Abdul Mannan, Whip Mahbubul Alam Tara, Feni district BNP president Abul Hasem, vice president Abdullah Chowdhury and general secretary Shahiduddin Ferdous also spoke on the occasion.

India test fires Trishul

BALASORE, Aug 1: India's indigenously developed surface-to-air missile "Trishul" was test fired from the interim test range at Chandipur-on-sea, 14 km from here, this afternoon, according to official sources, reports PTI.

The missile was fired from a mobile launcher. Two more test firings of the missile are likely this week, the source said.

Designed and developed by the defence research development organisation, "Trishul" has a range of 500 metres to nine km. The solid fuel motor missile with the capacity to carry 15 kg of warhead has a triple battle field role for the army, air force and navy, the sources said.

BSRS

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habilitate all those projects, the official observed.

The BSRS MD, however, said the sick units do not require that much funds for rehabilitation. What they need is rescheduling of their loans and, in some cases, exemption of penal interest. The BSRS board would take decision in this regard very soon after consultation with the working committee members, Al-Amin Chowdhury said.

He also said that he had visited a number of those projects and found most of them in operation. There is no reason for those projects to be sick or defaulter.

The BSRS MD said and referred to the cold storage projects, most of which he had found stacked full with a lot of goods.

Al-Amin Chowdhury informed The Daily Star of the BSRS's plan to begin commercial banking and finance new projects and said it is now awaiting government permission.

According to information, the BSRS recovered Tk 34 crore from its borrowers in the 1993-94 fiscal year as against Tk 22 crore in the previous year — while it disbursed only four crore taka in '93-94 and Tk 5 crore in '92-93 to some of its projects as working capital and for BMRE.

Oli: Bhatia

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completion of the repatriation of tribal refugees would contribute to further improving relation between the two countries.

Indian Foreign Secretary K. Srinivasan, Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Farooq Sobhan, Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh K. Raghunathan and Secretary, Special Affairs Division, Ataul Karim were present on the occasion.

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia presiding over the weekly Cabinet meeting at Bangabhaban yesterday. — PID photo

Dissolution of Nepali parliament

Court orders cabinet to explain

KATHMANDU, Aug 1: Nepal's Supreme Court has ordered the cabinet to explain its dissolution of parliament in a unique case likely to clarify the balance of power among the executive, legislative and judicial branches, reports AFP.

After hearing debate on a motion challenging the constitutionality of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala's recommendation to dissolve parliament, the Supreme Court today ordered his cabinet to explain the move, court sources said.

On Koirala's advice, King Birendra last month disbanded Congress and called for new elections.

Two ex-parliamentarians, Ganesh Pandit of the Nepal Communist Party and Hari Prasad Nepal of the Nepali Congress, field a motion asking the court to strike down the disbanding of Congress.

They argued that under those circumstances, Koirala had no right to recommend

disbanding the parliament.

During the hearing, the Chief Justice issued an order to Koirala's cabinet to explain the cause and legal grounds for the disbandment.

Chief Justice Upadhyaya said a final hearing would be held on August 22.

Lawyers Sarbagya Ratna Tuladhar, Krishna Prasad Bhandari and Sushila Karki told the court that the future of Nepal's parliamentary democracy and human rights guarantees rest with the legislature.

Spectators packed into the court room to hear the case, while several hundred others, including students, youths, politicians, and intellectuals, listened to arguments from a passageway outside the building.

Political analysts said that the fate of beleaguered Koirala now hangs on the final verdict of the Supreme Court.



Mourners carry the body of a Hizbul Mujahideen militant for burial yesterday in northern Kashmir following a fierce battle between Muslim secessionists and Indian security forces. At least six persons were killed in the battle. — AFP photo

Sufia Kamal calls for fresh vow

By Staff Correspondent

The new chief of the Ghata Dal Nirmul Samannaya Committee Begum Sufia Kamal yesterday called for a fresh vow for translating into reality Jahanara Imam's dream — trial of the 'war criminals' and elimination of the fundamentalist forces.

Recalling late Jahanara Imam's contributions to the campaign against the religion-peddlers and *fatwah* in 1971 and they would again be victors against the same evil forces, Razzak hoped.

Kazi Aref said the rise of fundamentalism and communalism was a shame for the nation. He also demanded trial of the Baitul Mukarram's Khatib as a traitor.

Chaired by Sufia Kamal, the rally was also addressed by Nirmul leaders including Abdur Razzak MP, Kazi Aref Ahmed, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Syed Hasan Imam, Nurul Islam Nahid, and Abul Chowdhury.

Abdur Razzak, in his speech, alleged the killers and collaborators of 71 were conspiring to revert Bangladesh to Pakistan and accused the Khaleeda government of back-

ing the conspirators.

Razzak accused the Khatib of Baitul Mukarram of committing treason by speaking against the Liberation War and the independence of the country.

The patriotic *Imandars* (believers) won against the religion-peddlers and *fatwah* in 1971 and they would again be victors against the same evil forces, Razzak hoped.

Kazi Aref said the rise of fundamentalism and communalism was a shame for the nation.

The Nirmul chief also called on all pro-Liberation people to work unitedly for freeing the nation from the grip of the orthodox, fanatic and anti-Liberation forces.

Chaired by Sufia Kamal, the rally was also addressed by Nirmul leaders including Abdur Razzak MP, Kazi Aref Ahmed, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Syed Hasan Imam, Nurul Islam Nahid, and Abul Chowdhury.

Hasan Imam said police and BDR personnel did not resort to action against the Jamaat-Shibir armed goons in Chittagong because of government directives.



The Jatiya Party held a rally at the south gate of Baitul Mukarram in the city yesterday. — Star photo

The Midnight File

Serbs ready to reopen talks

SARAJEVO, Aug 1: Bosnia's Serbs said today they wanted to reopen peace negotiations immediately with the major powers. Bosnian Serb leaders said they wanted to discuss the division of Bosnia outlined in a map which lies at the heart of the peace plan proposed by the "contact group" of the United States, Russia, Britain, Germany and France, reports Reuter.

Indian police raid ULFA hideout in Assam

NEW DELHI, Aug 1: Indian police raided an Assamese separatist hideout in neighbouring Bhutan but the guerrillas fled after shooting shots, an Assam state government spokesman said today. Police crossed the international border and chased some 15 activists of the Maoist United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) for five km (three miles) into Bhutanese territory on Sunday, he said, reports Reuter.

SAARC ministers say meet was constructive

Most of the SAARC foreign ministers left Dhaka yesterday for their respective homes describing the two-day meeting of the Council of Ministers as "very useful" and "constructive" for the overall performance of the seven-nation regional forum, reports BSS.

Asked about his meeting with Indian State Minister for External Affairs in Dhaka Sunday Ali said it was an useful meeting when both sides enjoyed "very friendly" relations.

Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman farewelled at the airport.

Also present were Additional Foreign Secretary Mohiuddin Ahmed, Bangladesh High Commissioner to Islamabad QMA Rahim and his counterpart in Bangladesh Anwar Kamal.

Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary Bernard Tilakaratne also left yesterday. Foreign Minister ACS Hameed had left earlier for upcoming national elections in his country.

Foreign Secretary MR Osmany saw him off.

Bangladesh High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Shamsher Mubin Chowdhury and Sri Lankan High Commissioner in Dhaka Dr Abu Hanifa were present.

DUTA to boycott Dr Ershadul Bari

By DU Correspondent

The teachers of Dhaka University have decided to boycott Dr M Ershadul Bari.

The Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) took the decision at a meeting yesterday.

Dr M Ershadul Bari, Dean of the Department of Law of the university, was expelled from the DUTA last Friday for his alleged anti-organisational activities.

Earlier, on July 25, the DUTA suspended the membership of Dr Bari as he reportedly spoke against the playing of the national anthem at the senate meeting of the National University on July 19.

HSC exams

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terday. No untoward incident was reported from any of the centres. The board is also conducting HSC examinations at five overseas centres.

No report was, however, received as regards the foreign centres at Abu Dhabi, Doha, Jeddah, Riyadh and Tripoli.

Our Comilla Correspondent reported 196 expulsions from 119 centres. CID police held two persons on charge of selling what they called Bengal first paper questions. But actually those were not the question papers.

Meanwhile, a government handout last night dismissed press reports on leakage of questions papers of Comilla Board. The reports were baseless and misleading, the handout said.

According to our Rajshahi correspondent, 790 examinees were expelled in 15 districts out of 16 under the Rajshahi Board. A total of 1117 answer scripts were found with mistakes in using the 'computer sheets'. Officials however said those would be corrected by the Board.

A report from Jessore mentioned 69 expulsions no untoward incidents were reported.

21 indicted

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Armed terrorists gunned down six men and wounded many others at Nawabganj under Lalbagh thana on January 31, a day after the city mayor and ward commissioner polls. Of the injured, one died later.

The newly elected Ward Commissioner of the area, Humayun Kabir, lodged a case with the Lalbagh police on the day.

The accused persons are Abdul Aziz, Abdul Alim alias Shaheen, Abdus Salam alias Moti, Jahid Hossain alias Babu, Monir Patwari, Swapnil, Selim, Javed, Minna, Afzal Hossain, Mohammad Faruq, Dil Mohammad, Mahtab Hossain, Sattar, Moazzam, Hajji Abdul Majid, Kalu, Joynal, Amir Hossain and Abdul Hossain.

The main purpose of this factory should not be making profits. It is unique in all aspects. It can help industrialisation of the country," they said.

If the authorities are committed enough, the Machine Tools Factory still has got a future. If not, it dies," the sources remarked.