

JP office case resumes PW completes deposition

By Staff Correspondent

The trial of former president HM Ershad in the Jatiya Party Office case resumed before the Special Judge's Court, Dhaka, yesterday.

Making his deposition, prosecution witness Md Isa Huq, Executive Engineer, PWD (Design Section) stated that the deposed ruler had paid seven to eight visits to House No 104, Road No 3, Dhanmandi residential area to personally supervise the renovation and refurbishment of the abandoned property being used as the central office of the then ruling Jatiya Party.

Ershad, former Works Minister Mostafa Jamal Haider and former acting Works Secretary MA Rouf are charged with misusing official authority and thereby causing a loss of Taka 82 lakh to the national exchequer by authorising wasteful and illegal expenditure.

Prosecution witness Huq, whose deposition was completed yesterday before Additional Sessions Judge Zinat Ara, also told the court that Ershad used to issue instructions from time to time for alterations and beautification of the house.

On one occasion, Ershad instructed witness Huq, through the Jatiya Party office

secretary Majretul Imtiaz, to renovate a room of the house in question for the JP chairman (Ershad himself) in line with the design of the operations room of the country's President at the Supreme Command headquarters of the Army.

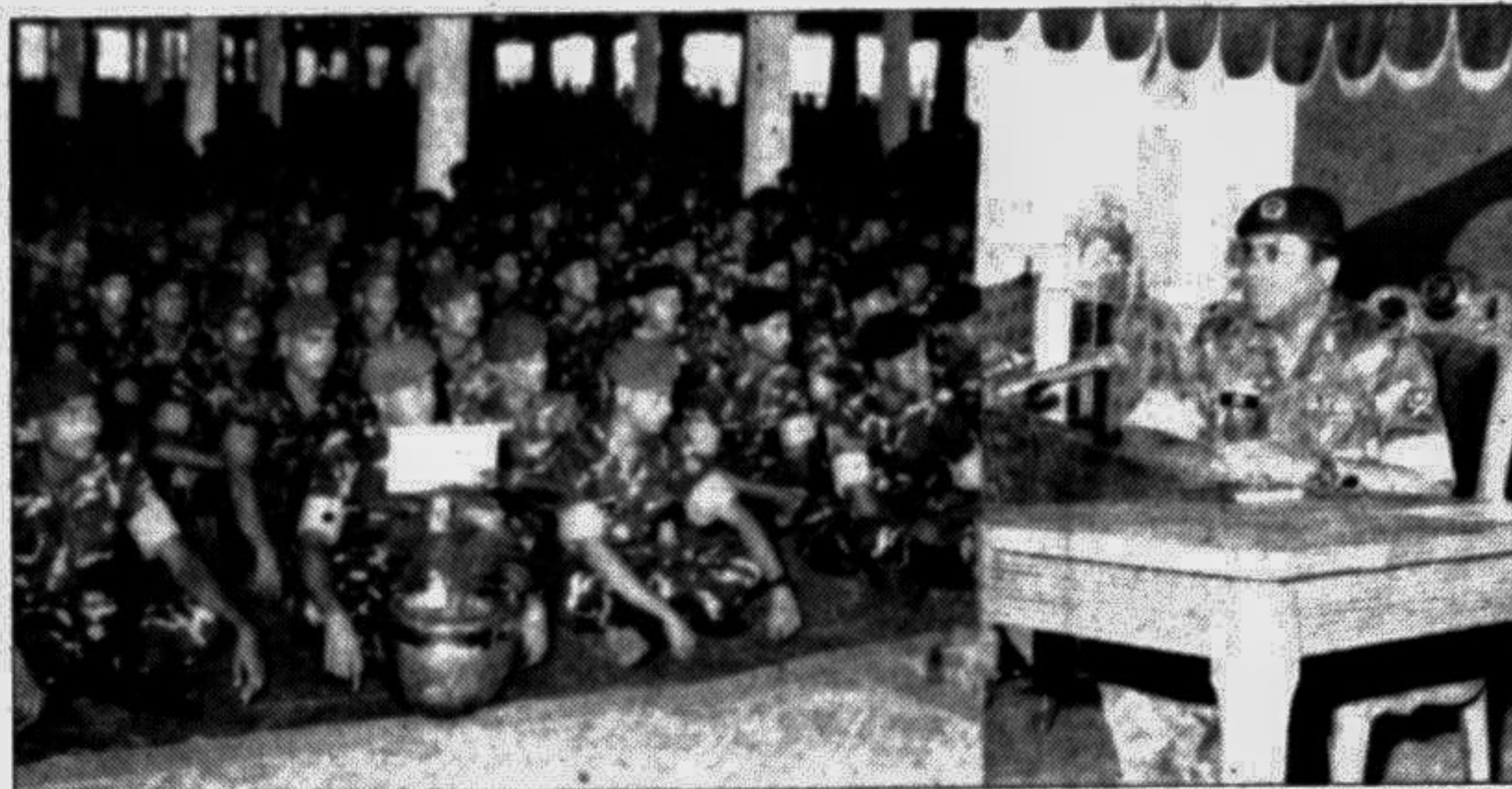
Such instructions, often also including orders for special furniture and fittings, caused escalation of costs.

Before the start of witness Isa Huq's deposition, main accused Ershad, on permission from the judge, made a statement in which he repeated his earlier decision to withdraw his defence lawyers for, what he alleged, the fact that the government did not want him to get a fair trial.

Special Public Prosecutor Abdur Razzak Khan, who conducted yesterday's deposition, vehemently objected to this.

Judge Zinat Ara told Ershad that despite withdrawing his defence counsels, he had the right to cross-examine the witness. Although initially very keen to do so, Ershad later appeared rather hesitant. However, on being reassured by the judge, he agreed to cross-examine the witness.

The trial resumes today.



Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General A S M Nasim addressing army personnel at the Savar Cantonment yesterday

Gen Nasim visits Savar cantt

SAVAR, Sept 7: Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Abu Saleh Mohammad Nasim, Bir Bikram, visited the Savar Cantonment today. It was his first visit to the cantonment after taking over as the Chief of Army Staff, an ISPR press release said, reports BSS.

General Nasim addressed the officers and troops of the Savar area at a 'darbar'.

On his arrival at the cantonment, the Chief of Army Staff was received by the local Area Commander Major General Mohammad Abdul Matin, Bir Protik.

Police raid Ctg College hostels

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CHITTAGONG, Sept 7: The Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) in a pre-dawn raid on the Chittagong Government College hostels and arrested two persons along with arms and ammunition. According to Kotwali police, the arrested persons are Nurul Islam and Abdul Mannan who are reportedly the members of a fundamentalist student front. The recovered weapons include one gun, five cocktails.

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Fonda blasts donors for tying politics to aid

CAIRO, Sept 7: UN goodwill ambassador and former actress Jane Fonda today blasted donor institutions for putting political conditions on development aid to Third World countries, reports AFP.

"Humanitarian aid for women, for children, for family planning cannot be tied to political strings. It has to happen no matter what," she told a news conference at the UN International Conference on Population and Development.

Pressure must be put on donor institutions like USAID, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank "to make sure their lending policies... don't hurt women".

Fonda called for more institutions to follow the example of small-lending institutions "that give small loans to the poorest of the poor (Third World) women not requiring collateral" for microeconomic enterprises.

A woman could become financially independent if donors paid just forty dollars a year for her to buy a sewing machine or cow, she said.

Fonda will visit Bangladesh early next year to left the opinion builders and seek their support for improvement of condition of the poor.

Talking to BSS special correspondent here this morning Fonda said, "I hope to visit Dhaka in March or April, 1995 to acquaint myself with activities of some social sector projects".

Fonda had words of praise for activities of BRAC, Grameen Bank and Women Health Coalition.

She described Bangladesh as a great example of success in family planning. She is in favour giving education to young people for sexual responsibility.

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Japan to invest Tk 5000cr in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Sept 7: Special Envoy to the Prime Minister Morshed Khan said here today that the Japanese government would invest Taka 5,000 crore for industrial area to be developed on the other side of the river Karnaphuli during the next five years, reports BSS.

With the development of this industrial belt, large-scale employment would be ensured in this region which would immensely contribute towards removing unemployment problem.

Khan said, the basic objective of politics of present government is economic development and thus it was striving hard to implement the 19-point programmes step by step despite the resource constraint.

Khan, who is now in Chittagong on a four-day visit, was addressing a series of public meetings at Chowdhury Hat, Charandeep and Sreepur of Boalkhali thana.

Dhaka to oppose

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technical resources for the family planning programme. He strongly pleaded for doubling the resources at the disposal of the international community to help contain the prevailing population growth rate of the developing countries.

Describing population growth rate as a global problem, he said the environment would be threatened due to additional demands on scarce resources unless the growth rate cannot be contained through collective efforts.

Expressing Bangladesh's willingness to share with other countries, especially with the South, the success of the family planning programme and expertise, the minister sought generous contribution of all countries of the North and the international agencies to the process of proposed South-South cooperation. He said, "It is our collective responsibility to work toward the solution."

Kamal Yusuf said "The family planning programme alone cannot ensure sustainable development." What is needed additionally, he said, is more accelerated development of other social sectors, covering women's education, employment opportunities and increased access to primary health care.

In this context, he referred to the priority attached by the Bangladesh government to gender issues.

Three more postal staff suspended in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Sept 7: Three more employees of the Sylhet head post office have been put under suspension for their alleged involvement in the recently detected case of misappropriation of Tk 35 lakh.

With this, the number of employees and officials suspended stood at ten. Three assistant postmasters and four office assistants were suspended last week.

An organised gang of postal employees misappropriated the sum collected during the period from 1989 to 1992 as motor vehicle tax. The irregularity was detected by an audit team recently.

Hasina

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its front organisations, including former central leaders of BCL.

Termining the BNP rule "a reign of terrorism and corruption," the AL chief said, "The BNP has also made students politics unhealthy. BNP MPs and leaders using government cars visit different educational institutions when students union elections are held there and assures the teachers and students of benefits if JCD is elected," she alleged.

"The BNP is corrupting students from the college level. How can you expect to have a better and healthy generation if such politics continues?" Hasina asked and urged the students to resist this.

Hasina reiterated AL's plan to eradicate illiteracy from the country by 2020. Chhatra League workers will have to play a significant role in this regard, she added.

"But remember, I disapprove doing students politics ignoring examinations. The student leaders and activists must study. Their good results will be rewarded in life," the AL chief said.

Hasina emphasised expanding the BCL network and urged its members to help build a "Sonar Bangla" as dream by founder of the BCL Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The convention will elect a new executive committee of the BCL.

The last convention was held May 11, 1992. According to the outgoing BCL president and general secretary, the convention for 1993 could not be held due to campus terrorism.

The Midnight File

OIC faces financial crisis: Al Gabid

ISLAMABAD, Sept 7: The Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) faces a financial crisis that is seriously affecting the running of the 51-nation group, OIC Secretary-General Hamid Al-Gabid said today, reports Reuters.

Chinese Defence Minister in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Sept 7: Chinese Defence Minister Chi Haotian arrived in the Indian capital Wednesday to discuss the question of troop reduction to ease tension along a disputed border, officials said. India and China fought a border war in 1962 and their troops have faced each other since then. During his six-day visit, Gen Chi will meet Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao who also holds the defence portfolio, and senior officials of the ministry and visit some Indian defence establishments, reports AP.

LDF rally calls for unity against fundamentalism

Intellectuals and political leaders at a rally in the city yesterday called for greater unity of all sections of the people to resist the fundamentalist forces and consolidate the spirit of the Liberation War, reports UNB.

They also urged all to be united to press the government for realising the demand for a caretaker government to ensure free and fair election.

But the unity should be of the pro-liberation forces, not with the fundamentalists and the autocratic forces, they told the rally organised by the Left Democratic Front (LDF), an alliance of eight smaller political parties.

The rally at the Tophkhana Road was to express solidarity with the agitation against communalism, 'fatwabaq' and fundamentalism, and in favour of the spirit of the Liberation War.

LDF leaders Rashed Khan Menon MP, Nirmal Sen, Mujahidul Islam Selim, Dilip Barua, Hasanul Haq Inu, Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan, AF M Mahbubul Haq, Iqbal Majumder and Bimal Biswas addressed the four-hour-long rally.

Gano Forum leader Dr Kamal Hossain, Mohammad Afzal of the Ganotantri Party, Faiz Ahmed of the Sammilita Sangskritik Jote, educationist Ahmed Sharif, poet Shamsur Rahman, Amirul Haq Amin of the Garment Workers' Federation, Lutfor Rahman of the SKOP, Sheikh Asad of the Jatiya Janata Party, Mohan Raihan of the Kabita Parishad, Kamal Siddiqui of the

proposed reorganization plan also stressed the need for more government funds to meet the increased requirement. The bureau, which has no income of its own, depends totally on the government's development budget allocations for its trade promotional activities.

Sources concerned said that the budgetary allocation in 1977-78 was Taka 92.71 lakhs, which stood at Taka 1.93 crore in 1993-94. Though the Taka amount has been increased, yet in terms of the exchange rate with the US dollar, the real sum has substantially decreased, said an EPB official, pointing out that the country's foreign exchange earnings since '77-78 had increased five times.

Strike observed in CMC

CHITTAGONG, Sept 7: The situation at the Chittagong Medical College remained tense today as the JCD enforced a student strike in protest against the arrest of five of its activists during Tuesday night's raid by police.

The arrested students were, however, released on bail today.

The medical students brought out procession on the campus today carrying an effigy of the college principal and raised slogans condemning the police raid.

A large number of police are still staying on the campus to contain any fresh violence