

Ershad's trial in JP Office case adjourned till Sept 24

By Staff Correspondent

The trial of former president H M Ershad, the main accused in the Jatiya Party Office Case (Special Case No 50 of 1993), in the court of the Special Judge, Dhaka, was adjourned yesterday until September 24.

Yesterday's proceedings saw the completion of deposition by prosecution witness number four S M A Mannan, Sub-Assistant Engineer, PWD Circle, Myemensingh. His cross-examination was about to start when First Additional Sessions Judge, Dhaka, Zinat Ara adjourned the court.

PW 4 Mannan corroborated the statements made by PW 3 Isa Huq, Executive Engineer, PWD Design Section, who had told the court Wednesday that the former ruler used to frequently visit the abandoned House No 104, Road 3, Dhanmondi which was being used as the central office of the then ruling Jatiya Party.

Both witnesses testified that during such visits, Ershad used to issue instructions and on-the-spot orders regarding

the renovation and refurbishing of the house.

Mannan said such instructions naturally led to escalation of the estimated costs which had to be revised several times. He also identified some documents produced by the prosecution as exhibits.

The deposition of PW 4 completed, Judge Zinat Ara asked Ershad — who has withdrawn all his lawyers alleging that he wouldn't be getting a fair trial in any case — whether he would like to cross-examine the witness, as he had done Wednesday with regard to PW 3. To this Ershad declined, saying "What's the use? All will go against me."

However, the judge assured him that he may, if he wished, cross-examine the witness after the cross-examination by the counsels of the two other co-accused — former Works Minister Mostafa Jamal Haider and acting Works Secretary M A Rouf.

Public Prosecutor A Razzak Khan conducted the deposition of PW 4.



President Abdur Rahman Biswas (R) presenting certificate to Kazi Rafiqul Alam (L), executive director of the Ahsania Mission, for outstanding contribution in the field of education at a function marking the International Literacy Day at the Osmany Memorial Hall in the city yesterday. Information Minister Nazmul Huda (L) is also seen. — Star photo

Literacy Day observed

By Staff Correspondent

The International Literacy Day was observed in the country yesterday with a call for concerted efforts to achieve the target of education for all by the year 2000.

Various socio-cultural and literary organisations took up elaborate programmes on the occasion.

The Primary and Mass Education Department organised a discussion yesterday morning on "Education First for Development of Bangladesh" at the Osmany Memorial Hall in the city.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas attended the function as chief guest, while Information Minister Nazmul Huda was present as the special guest.

Former chairman of the Public Service Commission S M Al-Husainy presented the keynote paper at the meeting. Former adviser to the President, Azizul Huq, educationist and former Secretary of the Ministry of Science and Technology, Abdullah Al-Muti Sharfuddin, The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam, Executive Director of the Non-formal Education Expansion Programme, Khandaker Shahidul Islam and Joint Secretary of the Primary and Mass Education Division, S M Shamsul Alam spoke on the occasion.

A colourful procession was brought out by the students of UCEP schools in Dhaka to mark the day. Mayor of Dhaka Mohammad Hanif was at the head of the procession.

Commissioners of Ward No 47 and 54 Sadeq Khan and Mokhesur Rahman, high officials of UCEP and teachers of the UCEP schools participated in the procession.

Hasina

From Page 1 Col 8

Referring to the Dhaka Siege programme, the Awami League President said the siege will be laid on entire Bangladesh if the government tries to foil tomorrow's programme.

"Build up resistance wherever you face obstruction," she said and warned that non-stop agitation will start if the government resorts to repression, torture or firing on the people during tomorrow's siege.

The Awami League chief said the ruling party is opposing the demand for a caretaker government knowing well that it has no chance to be elected without rigging.

She alleged that the BNP violated all the promises it had given to the people and the workers. The BNP can not give anything to the people excepting corruption, nepotism and terrorism.

Awami League leader Amir Hossain Amu, Shamsur Rahman Khan Shahjahan, Abdul Mannan, Rahmat Ullah Chowdhury were present.

Jharna, 15, was found murdered in a house at Road-2, Block-D, Section-2, Mirpur where she worked as a maid.

Police recovered the body Wednesday morning and later arrested the seven persons from the house for their alleged involvement in the murder.

JP presidium, WC meet today

An emergency meeting of the Jatiya Party (JP) Presidium and Working Committee will be held at the Gulshan residence of acting Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury at 9:30 am today. JP Secretary General Khaledur Rahman Tito asked all the members and presidents and general secretaries of the front organisations in Dhaka city to attend the meeting, reports UNB.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmondi B/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-963036, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.

British MPs visit Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Sept 8: Three members of a visiting British parliamentary delegation passed a busy day today in Sylhet. Jack Aspinwall, a Conservative Party MP, Roger Goddard, Labour MP, and Viscount Waverly, a Member of the House of Lords were accompanied by Brian Donaldson, First Secretary (Immigration), British High Commission in Dhaka.

Speaking at a reception at the Bangladesh Overseas Centre here Aspinwall assured that on return he would take necessary steps for solving the existing problems being faced by the immigrants and returning residents from Bangladesh.

He also suggested simplification of the visa procedure and for establishment of an immigration desk in Sylhet. Aspinwall also regretted the resurgence of racism in the UK in recent years and hoped that stricter laws would be enacted in the British Parliament to curb racial discrimination.

Presided over by the Deputy Commissioner Abu Taher Khan, the ex-officio president of the Overseas Centre, the function was also addressed by Prof Habibur Rahman, Alhaj Mubaswir Ali, Ibrahim Choudhury Khokon, Shakil Chowdhury and Nurul Islam Chowdhury.

During the day-long programme, the British parliamentarians also visited the Sylhet International School, Sylhet Passport Office and the Luckatooah tea estate.

The three British MPs are part of a six-man parliamentary team which arrived in the country September 5 on a six-day visit.

PM visits

From Page 1 Col 5

caught unaware as she drove to the village school. Begum Zia straightway went to a classroom (Class III) and talked to the students and teachers.

The Prime Minister asked the students various questions and advised them to concentrate on their studies. She also enquired about teachers' attendance in school from the students.

Begum Zia also visited the teachers' room of the Kanchakura school and made queries on attendance of teachers and students. She found some students do not come to schools regularly.

The Prime Minister directed the school authorities to ensure regular attendance of their children. "It necessary, go to their houses to find out causes of their absence," she said.

On her way back to her office, the Prime Minister stopped at the Uttara Anwara Model Degree College, talked with the students and enquired about their studies.

HC issues rule on Ittefaq editor, 2 others

By Staff Correspondent

A vacation bench of the High Court, upon a writ filed by Barrister Mainul Hossain, Executive Director-1, Ittefaq Group of Publications, yesterday issued rule on the DC, Dhaka, the Secretary, Ministry of Home and Anwar Hossain, editor and publisher of the Ittefaq, the country's largest circulated daily.

The bench comprising Justice Mohammad Mozammel Haque and Justice Badrul Islam Choudhury asked the respondents to show cause why the Deputy Commissioner, Dhaka should not be instructed to restrain Anwar Hossain from functioning as and printing his name as editor of the Ittefaq in violation of the requirements of Sections 7 and 12 of the Printing Presses & Publication (Registration and Declaration) Act, 1973 and why the DC Dhaka should not also be directed to require Anwar Hossain to obtain a fresh authenticated declaration for the purpose of acting as the printer, publisher and editor of the said newspaper.

Dr Kamal Hossain with Barrister Joydul Abedin appeared for the petitioner.

RAJUK asked to give possession of Baridhara plots

The Petition Committee of the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday directed the Rajdhanii Unnayan Kartipakkha (RAJUK) to immediately hand over plots to the allottees in Baridhara "J" block in the capital, reports UNB.

The directive came after a meeting of the Committee with Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali in the chair held detailed discussion on a petition of the allottees who could not be given possession of their plots due to various complications.

The petitioners alleged that the plots were not handed over to them although a long time has passed since they received the allotments.

The meeting also directed the RAJUK to take special care so that the owners are not harassed after getting possession of their plots.

It also directed that the houses of the Parliament Secretariat, which are now under the control of the government's Housing Directorate, be immediately handed over to the Parliament Secretariat pool.

Committee members L K Siddiqui, Mia Mohammad Munsur Ali, Begum Farida Hasan and Mohammad Shahidul Islam, all of the treasury bench, attended the meeting.

The Midnight File

Six shot dead in Karachi

KARACHI, Sept 8: At least six people were shot dead and three critically injured by sniper fire, after an attack by gunmen here today, police said. All the victims are believed to be members of a faction of the ethnic-based Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), police said. We expect tension to increase Friday as information about the attack on the MQM Haqiqi faction spreads, a police official said, reports AFP.

Israel proposes 'marginal' withdrawal from Golan

JERUSALEM, Sept 8: Israel has proposed only a 'marginal' withdrawal from the Golan Heights over three years, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said today. The clarification was made in cabinet after Golan settlers charged that Rabin had already agreed to a total withdrawal and to evacuate the Jewish town and villages there, officials in the prime minister's bureau said. Rabin said none of the 31 Jewish settlements on the plateau would be removed during the three years, reports AFP.

Common stand of S Asian nations on GATT needed

By Staff Correspondent

Participants in a preparatory meeting for the South Asian Dialogue to be held in Kathmandu in November have stressed the need for a common stand of the seven nations in respect of GATT negotiations, direct foreign investments and other policy issues.

The meeting organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue — a local think-tank — and held at its office Wednesday, was attended by Dr Pai Panandiker, Director of the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, Dr Mubashir Hasan, Chairman of the Independent Planning Commission of Lahore and a former finance minister of Pakistan, Devendra Panday, a former finance minister of Nepal and Prof G H Peris, Director of the Centre for Ethnic Studies, Sri Lanka.

The local participants in the discussion included Amir Kashru MP, former Secretary of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) M Moniruzzaman, former Secretary General of SAARC Abul Ahsan, ERD Secretary Lutfulah Majid, MCCI President Latifur Rahman, Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam and President of Bangladesh Employers' Association Laila Kabir.

The discussion, moderated by Prof Rehman Sobhan, was designed to help prepare the agenda for the Kathmandu meeting.

The participants focussed on the prospective areas for economic cooperation within South Asia and emphasised the need for coordination of various national policy initiatives and responses, specially in the light of aid conditionalities imposed by the donors. They stressed the need for coordination of their export policies and prices of goods.

The participants felt that in spite of the existing difficulties and certain conflicting interests, there was no alternative to developing a common stand to ensure sustainable development of the South Asian countries. Such policy coordination was of critical importance for the economic development of the countries of the region.

Vatican

From Page 1 Col 3

make it legal, delegates said. The Vatican again came under stiff pressure this morning to let the conference get on with its main task — drafting a programme to restrain world population growth over the next 20 years.

Britain pressed the Vatican and its allies — mostly Latin American countries — to sign up or opt out. Lynda Chalker, British Minister of Overseas Development, told delegates that the deadlock over the language on abortion could be a fruitless waste of valuable time. Egypt and the United States have also urged the Holy See to make up its mind.

Delegates said the prospects for a new compromise that could satisfy the Vatican were bleak because many countries who accepted the language in an earlier compromise attempt said it was a 'bare bones compromise' from which they would not budge.

Identical problems

From Page 1 Col 5

nations of Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal. The last meeting of the forum was held in Lahore last year. The theme of the Kathmandu meet was finalised at the preparatory meeting here on Wednesday, as "strengthening democracy and empowerment in South Asia."

"We believe that unless true representation of the masses is established and they are politically empowered, the governments in the South Asian region will continue to be dominated by greedy and exploiting elite and their henchmen," he noted.

About SAARC, Dr Hasan said it has failed to be as effective as it should have been. "But it should be hoped that in the long run SAARC will play a very vital role in the sub-continent. For the time being our governments are too busy with internal problems and confronting one other."

Asked which aid conditionalities are objectionable, he said the most common type is tied aid, which is linked with the procurement of goods and services from the donor country. "It restricts competition and costs us dearly."

He was also critical of some aspects of the structural adjustments prescribed by the donor agencies, which are beyond the requirement to conform with GATT.

He also spoke out against the privatisation process being followed under the economic adjustment initiatives. "The people's assets are being squandered cheaply and I have also noticed in Pakistan that once these assets come into private hands, the prices go up unreasonably."

Privatisation needs to be done with great care, he said, and enterprises in the gas, electricity, transport and heavy industries sectors should not be privatised. He added that mechanisms should also be put in place to guard against creating monopoly, price fixing and against causing artificial scarcity.

While the country's import price index has been increasing, the export price index has been decreasing, putting it in a disadvantageous position in international trade. The export price index with a baseline of 1979-80, was 95.70 in 1987-88, 92.60 in 1988-89 and 95.60 in 1989-90. It, however, rose a little to 101.90 in 1990-91 but went down to 98.00 in 1991-92, 96.60 in 1992-93 and was 96.60 also in 1993-94. The import price index was 91.40 in 1987-88, 97.20 in 1988-89, 103 in 1989-90, 107.40 in 1990-91, 104.40 in 1991-92, 107.60 in 1992-93 and 110.80 in 1993-94. The commodity terms of trade index with the same baseline was 104.70 in 1987-88, 95.30 in 1988-89, 92.80 in 1989-90, 94.90 in 1990-91, 93.90 in 1991-92, 89.80 in 1992-93 and 87.20 in 1993-94.

Additional District Magistrate and Police Super visited the spot today. The BDR filed a case with the Kaliganj police but none was arrested. Chamtar Hat is one of the biggest hats in Lalmonirhat district.

While the country's import price index has been increasing, the export price index has been decreasing, putting it in a disadvantageous position in international trade. The export price index with a baseline of 1979-80, was 95.70 in 1987-88, 92.60 in 1988-89 and 95.60 in 1989-90. It, however, rose a little to 101.90 in 1990-91 but went down to 98.00 in 1991-92, 96.60 in 1992-93 and was 96.60 also in 1993-94. The import price index was 91.40 in 1987-88, 97.20 in 1988-89, 103 in 1989-90, 107.40 in 1990-91, 104.40 in 1991-92, 107.60 in 1992-93 and 110.80 in 1993-94. The commodity terms of trade index with the same baseline was 104.70 in 1987-88, 95.30 in 1988-89, 92.80 in 1989-90, 94.90 in 1990-91, 93.90 in 1991-92, 89.80 in 1992-93 and 87.20 in 1993-94.