

## JP office case

## Ershad should get severe punishment: PP

The government prosecutor yesterday sought maximum possible punishment for deposed president HM Ershad and two other co-accused in the special case regarding the refurbishment of an abandoned house as the Jatiya Party (JP) office, reports BSS.

The prosecution concluded its argument on the fifth day yesterday. The defence argument is scheduled to begin today.

Public Prosecutor Abdul Razzak Khan sought the "severest" punishment for Ershad and his two associates as per law for the offences they had committed with regard to refurbishing an abandoned house in the capital by spending huge government money in contravention to set rules and abuse of official position.

Former works minister Mostafa Jamal Haider and former works secretary MA Rouf are co-accused in this case.

The house bearing in Dhanmandi residential area which has been refurbished at an expenditure of about Tk 82 lakh was used by Jatiya Party as its central office till the fall of Ershad.

The PP said that Ershad, the principal accused in this case, holding the highest position in the state, acted most irresponsibly to get the work done by issuing verbal instructions. He obtained benefit out of the huge expenditure of the state, Khan said.

Zinat Ara, Additional Session and District Judge (First Court), Dhaka was presiding in the special judge's court which is housed in the first floor of a building opposite to the Dhaka Central Jail.

The defence declined to start argument on behalf of the accused persons when asked by Judge Zinat Ara. Yusuf Hossain Humayun, counsel of Haider said that since the chief counsel of the principal accused is absent, the argument should be started tomorrow. She gave her consent to the prayer and adjourned the proceedings till today.

The PP charged that Haider aided and abetted the principal accused which led to illegal and unauthorised extravagant expenditure. Rouf being the principal accounting officer of the ministry instead of preventing them allowed the unusual spending to take place.

Accused Ershad committed an offence of unusual dimension and acted in a very irresponsible manner.

and deserves severest punishment as allowed under law, the PP argued.

Jatiya Party and its predecessor Janadal which occupied the house since 1984 never paid any rent, according to admission by the defence in the court.

The PP mentioned that besides civil and other works encompassing massive renovation and refurbishing, fund from state exchequer was also used to buy 10 airconditioners and furniture and other accessories worth over Tk 16.24 lakh for the house.

He wondered how public money could be spent in supplying carpet worth over Tk 2.16 lakh for the house which was used by the political party. The articles which were supplied as furniture and accessories included even towels and flower vases.

There were 20 prosecution witnesses in this case, while the number of witnesses from the defence side were 10 who included former prime minister Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury.

The PP reminded the court that as per government rule, one per cent of the valuation of an abandoned house could be used for repair. He said after spending huge money the valuation of the house was fixed at Tk 1.34 crore, therefore the refurbishment expenditure should have been Tk 1.34 lakh.

Besides spending huge public money for a political party, services of a large number of government officials from chief engineer down to petty officers were employed in the work demonstrating the abuse of power by the accused persons.

As for the finance minister's permission (the no objection certificate to carry out the work), the PP said it was given subject to the fulfilment of several conditions, which were to have been met, he said adding that the "finance ministry was misled in awarding the permission."

Khan said it is true that the house in question is a government property. But it was not used for the purpose of the government, but for a political party, he said.

He asserted that the prosecution has enough materials to prove beyond any reasonable doubt that because of the unlawful instruction and abuse of positions by the accused persons, huge fund from the state exchequer was spent for the benefit of a private party.



The British Nuclear Test Ban Coalition launches its boycott campaign in London yesterday on French wine in a bid to stop the nuclear tests planned by the French government in the South Pacific. — AFP/UNB photo

## Ambassador Quayum dead

Bangladesh Ambassador to Morocco Abdul Quayum died of heart attack yesterday afternoon in Dhaka, shortly after his return home. He was 55, report agencies.

The diplomat suffered a massive heart attack in the VIP lounge of Zia International Airport soon after he



alighted from an aircraft. He was rushed to Suhrawardy Hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.

Quayum, concurrently assigned to Mali, came home in connection with the ensuing visit of Malian President Alpha Oumar Korane to Bangladesh. He also accompanied Labour and Manpower Minister Mir Shawkat Ali during the minister's tour of the west African country few days back.

A career diplomat, Quayum served in various capacities in Bangladesh missions abroad and also in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He joined the then Pakistan foreign service in 1965.

He left behind his wife, four children and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

He will be buried at Banani graveyard after Juma prayers on Friday, an official press release said. His family members are now in Rabat.

## Nobel laureate Chandrasekhar dead

CHICAGO, Aug 22: Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar, whose groundbreaking theories on astrophysics won him the Nobel Prize in 1983, died on Monday, the University of Chicago announced. He was 84, reports Reuters.

Chandrasekhar, who had been affiliated with the school for a half century, died of heart failure at the University of Chicago hospital, the announcement said.

"Chandra was one of the great astrophysicists of our time," said fellow Nobel Laureate Hans Bethe of Cornell University in a statement. "He showed that white dwarf stars cannot grow beyond a certain mass, the same mass that triggers the explosion of supernovas."

## Rickshawpullers

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along roads could be checked and trucks left free for rickshaws.

Twenty-one per cent of the respondents blamed the traffic jam on "improper" traffic handling by traffic police and 20 per cent on "too many rickshaws".

The survey found that only 17 per cent rickshawpullers in the city come out with their rickshaws during hartals. Only four per cent of them said hartals were called recently demanding neutral caretaker government for fair election.

Drought, population growth and hoarding are the three main reasons for rise of rice price, majority of the respondents said.

An overwhelming 70 per cent said they have become voters while 10 per cent said Election Commission men did not show up for registration and the rest 20 per cent could not enroll themselves as voters for other reasons.

## US to deploy troops near Kuwait soon

CAMP PENDLETON (California), Aug 22: Some 300 navy and marine soldiers left this military base in California Monday for military exercise in Kuwait, as hundreds more at a Texas facility prepared to join them, reports AFP.

Some 1,400 US troops were expected to be deployed in the region in the next few days with the purpose of dissuading Iraq from attacking the Emirate it invaded in 1990.

Reuters adds: Iraq has protested to the United Nations over alleged violations of its territorial waters by US and British patrols. Baghdad's state-run newspapers reported today.

The papers, carrying an Iraqi News Agency (INA) report from New York, said Iraq made the protest in a detailed letter submitted to the United Nations. It did not say when the protest was

made.  
INA said the alleged violations of our territorial waters confirm the persistence of the US and British governments in carrying out provocative actions against Iraq... to create pretexts and excuses to justify their hostile interests.

## 5 injured as JCD factions clash at MMC

MUMBAI, Aug 22: Five activists of the Jatiyabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) were injured, two with bullet, in an intra-party clash today at the Mymensingh Medical College, witnesses said, reports UNB.

Mulakkharul Islam Rana, president of the JCD college unit, and another suffered bullet wounds.

## JS session from Sept 6

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masses on December 28, 1994.

The last session of the parliament passed the national budget for 1995-96 and some bills.

The opposition parties, now agitating for dissolution of the parliament to pave the way for holding of an early general elections under the supervision of a non-party caretaker government, are terming illegal all the acts by the parliament since the opposition MPs' resignation.

They argued that this parliament had become illegal since May 4 as no by-polls were held by that date to the opposition seats that automatically fell vacant following resignation of the opposition MPs.

## Solar PV panels to help solve energy crisis

By Staff Correspondent

The country's energy crisis can be met by installing solar photo voltaic (PV) panels on roof tops, at a very moderate cost, speakers at a seminar in the city said yesterday.

The government and several NGOs have already installed such solar energy systems successfully in some villages of the country, the speakers said.

"The government is now framing an energy policy, the first of its kind in the country, to make solar energy in the off-grid areas available at low cost" said Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandker Mosharraf Hossain. While inaugurating the seminar.

It was disclosed at the seminar that energy can be reached to 80 per cent of rural non-grid areas of our country by proven alternate renewable energy sources.

Presided over by Aziz-ul-Haq, former advisor to the government, the seminar on "Application of solar energy in Bangladesh" was also addressed by Rashed Maksud Khan, president of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Afroze Rahim, chairman, Rahim Afroze Bangladesh Ltd, Prof Muhammad Ibrahim, director, renewable Energy Research Centre, Dhaka University and Dr Abdullah Al Muti Sharfuddin.

The key-note paper was presented by Dr Sajed Kamal, President, International Consortium for Energy Development, a Boston-based non-profit corporation.  
The seminar was organised by the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) in co-operation with the Human Development Foundation.

## Entrepreneurs urged to invest in health sector

By Staff Correspondent

There are great potentials for entrepreneurs from home and abroad to make new investments in the country's health sector, said Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury, Deputy Leader of the House, yesterday.

"Only 60 per cent of our people have access to the public healthcare system, let alone the specialised services. The gap between need and supply is big," B Chowdhury said. He was addressing as a guest speaker at a discussion on 'Investment Opportunities in Health Sector in Bangladesh' at a city hotel.

Organised by the American Bangladesh Economic Forum (ABEF), the discussion was chaired by its president Forrest E Cookson.

"We have several plus points including cheap labour and homogeneity of the people, for investment in health in Bangladesh," Chowdhury said.

## BNP leaders

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pulsion of holding by-polls to the large number of seats and also to avoid the huge expenditure involved in holding the by-polls only months before the next general elections, are due.

As per the Constitution, the Election Commission has a compulsion to hold the by-elections by mid-December this year.

The ruling party is now closely monitoring the Opposition agitation and is also exploring possibilities for a negotiated settlement of the political stalemate, the sources said. The party were also preparing to gear up its political activities to face Opposition agitations like hartals.

The party stalwarts think that the current Opposition movement would fail to evoke public response to a large extent and such action would affect their popularity ahead of the next general elections.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister and BNP Chief Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to address a public rally in the city on the occasion of the party's founding anniversary on September 1. She may renew her call to the Opposition to return to the negotiating table, one source said.

## Eliadah's release Hearing on appeal against stay order Aug 29

By SC Correspondent

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday fixed August 29 next for hearing the petition for leave to appeal against the verdict of the High Court Division for releasing the American girl Eliadah McCord.

The Appellate Division passed the order upon an application, on behalf of Eliadah, for vacating stay order on the HC verdict.

The full bench Appellate Division with Chief Justice A T M Afzal presiding heard both sides and set August 29 for the hearing of the leave application filed by the State against the HC order of August 9.

Justice Latifur Rahman of the Appellate Division earlier stayed the HC verdict till November 2 in his chamber upon a prayer of the government in order to file a leave petition.

The HC ordered release of Eliadah, convicted for heroin smuggling, on the grounds of benefit of doubts after reducing her punishment from life imprisonment to two years, which she had already served.

"To demonstrate the work ability and social acceptability of solar energy, the Rural Electrification Board, with the financial help of the French government, has undertaken the pioneering venture to set up the first ever pilot solar village in Narsingdi district", the minister informed the seminar.

The place has been selected because these two villages, located in a shoal, could not be connected with the conventional grid electricity from REB or Palli Biddiyut Samity (PBS), nor is there any chance in the future to reach electricity there, the minister mentioned.

In his key-note paper, Dr Sajed Kamal underlined that solar energy with its vast systems of light, heat, water movement and photo-synthesis has the potential to revolutionise the global technology, economics and politics of energy.

Through audio-video and slide demonstration, Dr Kamal also explained various aspects of growing applications of solar technologies in a wide range of domestic, industrial and consumer products.

## The Midnight File

## Floods kill 23 in Bihar

NEW DELHI, Aug 22: Flash floods triggered by incessant monsoon rains have killed at least 23 people in the eastern state of Bihar, damaging crops and inundating vast stretches of farmland, the Press Trust of India said today. Officials in the state capital Patna said more than 2.3 million people were affected by the floods with several rivers including the Bagmati, Kosi and Gandak flowing above their normal levels, reports AFP.

## 3 Al Baraka Bank employees held

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Aug 22: Police today arrested three employees of the Al Baraka Bank, Narayanganj branch for their alleged involvement in misappropriation of some Tk five lakh.

The arrested persons are: Guard — Abdul Qudus, cashier—Nasir Uddin and executive officer—Mahmudul Hasan.

## Egyptian envoy

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ernment to enhance the image of Bangladesh abroad.

During the meeting, Mohammad Kamal Elmiligy praised the government's economic programmes which put Bangladesh on the road to uplift and self-reliance.

Begum Zia termed the bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries as excellent and hoped that the existing ties would be strengthened in the years to come.

## Childlifter held at ZIA

A squad of the special branch of police last night recovered a child from the possession of a trafficker named Zakir Hossain at the Zia International Airport (ZIA), reports BSS.

Zakir Hossain, son of Yousof Ali of Bhatara under Gulshan thana, took Masud aged eight years to the airport with an intention for trafficking him to Abu Dhabi.

Masud is the son of Abul Hossain of the village Shasangachha under Sadar thana of Chandpur district who was brought to Dhaka by Zakir Hossain to bring him up.

Later Zakir managed to have a passport for Masud identifying him as his son.

The squad on a tip-off arrested him and recovered Masud from his possession.

Masud is now under safe custody and Zakir has been given 120 days' detention. A case has also been filed with Cantonment thana in this connection.

## Erosion

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The All Party Committee for the Protection of Chandpur will bring out a procession tomorrow to protest the authorities "indifferent attitude" towards saving the town from river erosion.

The acting chairman of the Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and local BNP member of Parliament Prof M A Abdullah visited the eroded areas today.

Talking to newsmen, Mizan Chowdhury demanded immediate steps to stop the river erosion and said the town could not have faced this disaster if necessary steps were taken during the dry season.

Meanwhile, the president of the Chandpur District Association in Dhaka, Siddiqur Rahman and general secretary Amir Hossain Khan in a joint statement today urged the Prime Minister to take steps to protect the Chandpur town. Otherwise, the people of Chandpur would be compelled to launch a mass movement, they warned.

## WASA employees' ultimatum

By Staff Correspondent

The officers and employees of WASA yesterday gave an ultimatum to the authorities to accept their 5-point demand, including cancellation of the move of leasing out some of its activities, by September 4.

Announcing the ultimatum at a rally at the WASA Bhaban premises, convenor of the WASA Karmachari O Karmakarta Oikya Parishad Abdul Hamid also announced a 15-day action programme beginning September 5. The programme includes sit-ins at all regional offices from 9 am to 11 am on Sept 5 and at the WASA Bhaban from 11 am to 1 pm on September 6 and 7, and a two-hour work stoppage from September 9 to 19.

## Grant component

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Multilateral aid which usually comes as long-term loan started dominating in the aid package from 1990-91.

In 1989-90, disbursement of bilateral aid was 912 million US dollars, compared to 898 million from multilateral sources. The following year, bilateral aid flow dropped to 680.7 million dollars while multilateral peaked to 1052 million.

Further, the flow of aid by category shows a downtrend in food and commodity aid.

Food aid had declined consistently from 42 per cent of the total aid in 1971-75 to 11 per cent in 1990-94. Commodity aid similarly fell from 42 per cent to 25 per cent during the same time.

The publication of the Ministry of Finance said with the quantum of grants in the aid package shrinking, volume of external borrowings is fattening every year, resulting in a progressive increase in per-capita debt overhang.

Country's per-capita debt obligation snowballed to 133 US dollars in 1993-94 from 6.59 dollars in 1973-74.

As the aid scenario turns adverse with the falling trend in grants, the Finance Ministry viewed that the country should be more selective in receiving foreign assistance and attach more importance to quality of aid.

## HBFC loan

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amount of Tk 323.47 crore in 1994-95 fiscal. House building loans were sanctioned to 3310 applicants out of 3602 applications received during the period.

Since inception of the Corporation in 1952, Tk 1600.89 crore was disbursed against the sanctioned amount of Tk 1980.21 crore till June this year. A total of Tk 934.56 crore was recovered against the recoverable amount of Tk 1090.62 crore during the same period.

He said the Corporation had financed 1.7 lakh housing units and solved the housing problem of more than 5 lakh urban people since its inception.

The inaugural session of the conference was also addressed by Banking Division Secretary Dr ATM Shamsul Huda and Chairman of the Board of Directors Sayed Amir-ul-Mulk.

## Branch Shifting

National Credit and Commerce Bank Limited, Khulna Branch has been shifted to new premises from the 23rd August 1995.

<b>New Address</b>	<b>Old Address</b>
3, K.D. Ghosh Road (1st floor) Khulna	4B, K.D.A. Commercial Area Khulna
Tel : 24491, 21492	



**National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd**  
BANKING WITH A TOUCH OF HEART

Editor: Mahfuz Anam