

# Pay-off scandal Another Indian minister quits

NEW DELHI, Jan 20: An Indian minister today offered to emulate three of his cabinet colleagues and quit after newspapers said that he was also involved in a multi-million-dollar bribery scandal, reports AFP.

Minister of State for Environment Rajesh Pilot said in a letter to prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao that he would like to resign in the wake of charges that he took money from a businessman at the heart of the scandal.

"I particularly feel difficult to continue to work in such a situation," Pilot said in his three-page letter, copies of which were released to the Press here.

A newspaper Friday listed Pilot as one of seven more ministers in Rao's cabinet who were among 115 politicians and bureaucrats who accepted huge bribes from the businessman between 1988 and 1991 in return for favours.

The revelation came after federal detectives on Tuesday accused three cabinet ministers and seven Opposition leaders of having taken bribes from Surendra Jain, a tycoon.

Meanwhile, an opposition party called upon Rao to step down to let federal detectives

launch a thorough probe into the scandal.

Socialist Party president Mulayam Singh Yadav said in the northern town of Bahror that Rao's silence over the scandal "indicates that he is also not clean in the affair," the Press Trust of India reported.

"If Rao wants to prove his innocence, he should resign as Prime Minister and hand over the whole matter to CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation), he was quoted as saying.

It was the first call for Rao's resignation since the CBI on January 9 accused the three cabinet ministers and seven opposition leaders of accepting bribes.

Opposition leader Lal Krishna Advani, one of the accused, immediately quit parliament. The three ministers resigned the next day following mounting public pressure. All four, however, denied the graft charges.

### 1 killed, 5 hurt as bus, truck collide in Comilla

COMILLA, Jan 20: A head-on collision between a bus and truck led one driver dead on the spot and five passengers injured on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in the district today. Witnesses said the mishap took place early in the morning when the Chittagong-bound bus collided with a Dhaka-bound truck at Eliotganj bazar in Daudkandi thana. The body of the unidentified bus driver was sent to Comilla Sadar Hospital for autopsy. The injured were given first aid at Gouripur Hospital. The driver of the truck, however, managed to flee the scene. A case was filed with Daudkandi police, reports UNB.

### 166 Bhutanese refugees held in India

CALCUTTA, Jan 20: Indian police in the remote Himalayan frontier with Nepal have arrested 166 Bhutanese exiles and thwarted their planned march to Bhutanese capital Thimphu, police said Saturday, reports AP.

The marchers, representing 100,000 ethnic Nepalese who were driven out of Bhutan in early 1990's amid cultural clashes, wanted to urge the Bhutanese king to let them return to their homes.

"We had imposed prohibitory orders on the border entry point and they were arrested for violating that order," said West Bengal state's Deputy Inspector General of Police SIS Ahmed.

The arrests were made on Wednesday near the Raniganj border post, 500 kilometers (310 miles) northeast of Calcutta. But reports were delayed because of lack of communications with the area.

Ahmed said 13 of the exiles were freed after they sought bail, but others were kept in police custody as they refused to furnish bail bonds.

### Jamaa Islamiyya threatens to attack US leaders

CAIRO, Jan 20: The Muslim militant Jamaa Islamiyya threatened today to attack US leaders and interests to avenge a life sentence handed down by a US court on its spiritual leader Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman.

A statement from the group's main armed wing said "hit American interests and personalities." The blind Sheikh was sentenced to life imprisonment by a New York court on Wednesday.

### Benazir ready to open talks with India

TOKYO, Jan 20: Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto today said she was willing to hold bilateral talks with India, amid reports that New Delhi is to resume nuclear testing, a press report said, reports AFP.

Speaking at Tokyo's Gakushuin University on the final day of her four-day visit to Japan, Bhutto called on Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao to hold summit talks.

"Let India join Pakistan ... anywhere in the world at any time to ensure what happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki will never happen in Lahore or Delhi," Bhutto told an audience of some 750 people, Kyodo news said.

India, Pakistan's traditional rival exploded a nuclear device in 1974. The New York Times reported last month that India was gearing to conduct another test. The report was dismissed by New Delhi as "speculative and baseless."

During a meeting with Bhutto Thursday, Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashi-moto urged his Pakistani counterpart to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty along with India.

Bhutto has said Pakistan will not join the treaty unless India does.

Reuters from Washington adds: The United States accepts India's assurances that it does not plan to test a nuclear weapon, a senior US arms control official said on Friday.

"We're assuming that there will not be a test," John Holm, Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), told reporters.

India, which exploded a nuclear device in 1974, is one of three "threshold" nuclear powers considered capable of developing nuclear weapons quickly if they have not already done so. The others are Pakistan and Israel.

US Ambassador to India Frank Wisner, in a speech in Bombay last week, urged India not to develop nuclear weapons, saying it would worsen regional tensions rather than enhance national security.

Diplomats in Geneva, where a 38-nation conference for disarmament begins its 1996 session next week with a global test ban topping its agenda, say India could delay progress by seeking to link a ban with wider nuclear disarmament talks.

### Train mishap

From Page 1

have lost their mental balance from the accident.

Rahman said the families of all the dead would get compensation as per the rules of the Railway Division. Of the injured, 13 have already received Tk 2,000 each as compensation.

He said the driver of one train was killed on the spot while another driver and other guards and assistant drivers of both the trains were still absconding.

Punitive action will be taken against the responsible persons under the Railways Act, the Railways Inspector added.

### Seminar on CHT today

A seminar on "The Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Process" will be held at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium at 10:30 am today. Former Foreign Minister Muhammad Shamsul Haque will be the chief guest at the seminar organised by Hill Tracts National Coordination and Peace Council, reports UNB.

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia performed the maharat of the feature film 'Begum Rokeya' at the Osmany Memorial Hall yesterday. — PID photo

## School teachers threaten agitation

Secondary school teachers at a national convention here yesterday warned of greater agitation if their demands are not met by February 1, reports UNB.

They announced a one-and-a-half-month-long programme, including "mass contact" from February 2 to March 2, two-hour token work stoppage from March 3 to 10 and day-long work stoppage on March 11.

The school teachers will announce their next course of action at a representatives' council here on March 15.

FBCI President Salman F Rahman inaugurated the convention at Kalabagan Kira Chakra Ground, stressing the need for a balanced education to lead the country to prosperity.

Bangladesh Teachers' Association President Sheikh Amanullah presided over the convention, also addressed by Bangladesh Teachers' Associations Federation (BTAF) Secretary General Kazi Faruque, Ali Akbar Khan Dolar, Asadul Haque, M Toaha, Rahmat Ali, Amin Laskar, Abdul Latif, M Shahidullah and Selim Bhuiyan.

The convention formed a new executive committee with Sheikh Amanullah as President and Selim Bhuiyan as Secretary General.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh College Teachers' Association yesterday (Saturday) submitted copies of a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioners throughout the country to press home their 9-point demand.

In the capital, a delegation of the association led by its General Secretary Kazi Faruque submitted a memorandum to the DC of Dhaka, said a press release.

## Fighting leaves 27 killed in Somalia

MOGADISHU, Jan 20: At least 27 people were killed and 32 wounded in heavy fighting overnight between fighters loyal to Somali warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid and rival Rahanwein Clan forces in Huddur, southwest Somalia, reliable sources said today, reports AFP.

Fighting erupted when militiamen belonging to the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA) attacked the town in an attempt to dislodge Aidid's fighters, who captured it on Tuesday, in a battle that left 18 people dead and 47 wounded.

Aidid is trying to extend his control to the fertile Jubba Valley region where Huddur is situated.

Aidid's supporters here said the attack by the RRA militiamen was repulsed, but RRA's spokesman in Mogadishu Mohamed Nur Jilal claimed his fighters were pressing on with the offensive.

## New organisation formed

By Staff Correspondent

A new organisation styled Jatiya Nagorik Forum was floated here yesterday demanding holding of a free and fair elections under a neutral caretaker government.

A 48-member convening committee of the Forum was constituted with Lt. Col. (ret'd) Zillur Rahman as its convener. A former leader of the pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Golam Farooq Ovi — is also among the three joint conveners of this Forum.

Jatiya Nagorik Forum organized a press conference in the city and expressed its deep concern about the current political crisis in the country.

There are 16 retired army personnel including six ex-Majors, nine Lt. Colonels and one Captain, in the convening committee of the Forum.

Replying to a question, they replied that armed force was now trying to consolidate the democratic process and said, "We don't want army to come to power."

Ovi, who was expelled both from the Dhaka University and JCD, told newsmen that a qualitative change was badly needed in the students politics of the country.

## Maharat of film on Begum Rokeya held

The making of a full-length colour feature film to immortalise the unique contribution of Begum Rokeya was given go-ahead by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday, reports UNB.

Speaking at the maharat function of the film based on the whole life of Begum Rokeya, the pioneer of Muslim women awakening in British India, the Prime Minister said her government took the venture to inspire the women of the country to establish their rights in society.

"Today the womenfolk is more conscious than in the past. Women are leading in different development activities and establishing their rights," she told the function in the Osmany Memorial Auditorium in the city. The advancement of Muslim women in the region is the contribution of Begum Rokeya, she added.

She said her government also had introduced Begum Rokeya Jatiya Padak to further inspire women to come forward alongside man in nation-building activities.

Paying glowing tribute to Begum Rokeya Sakawat, Begum Zia said she had shown the path of modern belief, contemporary spirit and free mind.

"Education is key to development" — this truth had been proclaimed aloud by Begum Rokeya about 100 years ago, Begum Zia said and added that she (Rokeya) had devoted herself to awakening the Muslim women for the interest of the country and

society.

The Prime Minister said the teaching of Begum Rokeya did not only give us light, but also courage to fight against injustice and superstition. Begum Rokeya had realised that the overall development of a society can be ensured through equal and active participation of women.

The film will be made at an estimated cost of Tk 77.60 lakh jointly by the Ministry of Information and a private enterprise, SS Productions. The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs will supervise the film-making.

A loan of Tk 21 lakh has been given from the Prime Minister's Welfare Fund while the Information Ministry will provide technical and other facilities worth Tk 7 lakh for the venture. SS Productions will bear the remaining Tk 49.60 lakh.

National film award-winner actress Shabana will portray the main role of Begum Rokeya in the film, to be directed by Subhash Dutta.

In the maharat function actress Shabana first handed over the film-script to Prime Minister Begum Zia who, in turn, gave it to director Subhash Dutta, asking him to make the film with utmost sincerity.

Later, the first and last shot of the full-length colour feature film were taken at the stage in presence of the audience. A minor girl acted in the first scene, while how Begum Rokeya died was screened in the last shot.

By DMCH Correspondent

At least two persons died in separate incidents in and around the city yesterday.

Kabir, 35, died in a road accident at Mohammadpur, in the city yesterday.

When contacted the Mohammadpur police said that no such incident has been reported to the thana. They, however, mentioned that one person collapsed on the road while going to his office and later died in the hospital.

Nurul Islam, who received bullet injury, while resisting some armed dacoits at Hari-rampur, Manikganj, succumbed to his wounds at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

## Warrant of arrest against Ajker Kagoj editor

Warrants of arrest have been issued against the Ajker Kagoj editor and two other senior journalists of the daily in a defamation case filed by State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Major (ret'd) Abdul Mannan, reports UNB.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Shahiduddin Ahmed yesterday passed the order against Editor Kazi Shabed Ahmed, News Editor Abu Bakar Siddique and News Editor-in-Charge Syed Borhan Kabir, named as accused in the suit.

It was stated in the case that the accused people, in collusion with others, published a "false and fabricated" news in the daily in its issues of December 7, 20, 21 and 30.

The news defamed him (the state minister), the Prime Minister and her son, Tarek Rahman, the complainant said.

Lastly, the daily in its January 16 issue published a news item under the caption, "Bid to privatise Sonargaon Hotel," which defamed him "socially, political and personally," the complainant added.

## US opposes int'l tax to finance UN

WASHINGTON, Jan 20: The Clinton administration on Friday flatly rejected the idea of any kind of international tax to support the United Nations, reports AP.

"The United Nations does not have the authority to impose or collect any form of tax, and the United States government would not consent to any proposal to grant it such authority," said State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns.

On Wednesday, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination, denounced several proposals under discussion in the UN General Assembly for increasing UN funding.

Dole accused the UN of engaging in an "out-of-control pursuit of power" and said Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali would have himself become chief of the "International Internal Revenue Service."

Burns, in rejecting an international tax, referred to a BBC interview last weekend in London in which Boutros-Ghali mentioned proposals to raise UN funds by directly taxing the world's citizens.

"The United States government does not support any form of worldwide tax to support the United Nations," Burns said, reading from a statement.

He said the best way to ensure adequate and predictable funding for the United Nations is through reforms

## 20 hurt as BCL Shibir clash in Moulvibazar

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 20: Twenty persons were injured in a clash between the activists of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Islami Chhatra Shibir at the Kholmogjan thana headquarters under Moulvibazar district this afternoon.

Of the injured, four Shibir activists have been admitted to the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital with serious injuries. They are Mamun, Nizam, Altaf and Imad.

Both the groups used lethal weapons in the clash. A tense situation is prevailing in the Kholmogjan thana headquarters.

## Tomb-stone on Jahanara Imam's grave removed

The tomb-stone on the grave of Jahanara Imam at the Mirpur Graveyard of Martyred Intellectuals was again removed, the Nirmul Committee alleged yesterday, reports UNB.

The Committee leaders found the tomb-stone missing when they went to the graveyard to pay their respect to the crusader against anti-liberation forces on the occasion of the fourth founding anniversary of the committee, formed by Jahanara Imam in 1992.

Condemning the incident, the Nirmul Committee called it "a deep conspiracy against the war of independence."

For long, the anti-liberation forces have been trying to destroy documents, sculptures and other materials related to the Liberation War, said a statement of the Committee here yesterday.

It demanded proper investigation into the incident and exemplary punishment to those responsible.

Earlier, the tomb-stone was replaced twice after these were found missing from the grave of Jahanara Imam, more popularly known as Shaheed Janani.

## Two die in incidents

By DMCH Correspondent

At least two persons died in separate incidents in and around the city yesterday.

Kabir, 35, died in a road accident at Mohammadpur, in the city yesterday.

When contacted the Mohammadpur police said that no such incident has been reported to the thana. They, however, mentioned that one person collapsed on the road while going to his office and later died in the hospital.

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## Bank dacoity in Moulvibazar

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 20: Armed dacoits looted one DBBL gun, cash amounting to Taka 4 lakh 58 thousand and 16 totals of gold ornaments worth about Taka one lakh 12 thousand from the Tengrabazar branch of Rupali Bank in Moulvibazar district early today.

A gang of about 10 armed dacoits attacked the residence of the manager attached to the bank at about 1 pm and confined the inmates in a room at gun point. They took away the key of the bank and iron safe and entered the bank.

Meanwhile, bank dacoities were committed on the Gashnagar branch of Agrani Bank in Moulvibazar PS on December 26 and Munsibazar branch of Agrani Bank in Rajnagar thana on December 21 last.

## The Midnight File

### Bosnia's warring factions free 225 POWs

SARAJEVO, Jan 20: Bosnia's warring factions freed 225 prisoners of war but held on to more than 700 others despite a midnight deadline for their release set in the Dayton peace accord signed a month ago, Red Cross official said, reports Reuter.

## 54 die in Indonesian ferry disaster

JAKARTA, Jan 20: Fifty-four people were killed and more than 100 others missing today after a passenger ferry sank in high seas off Indonesia's westernmost province of Aceh, officials said.

A local transport ministry official told Reuters 20 Britons and one American woman were among the 39 people who survived the Friday night disaster when the ferry, which carried more than 200 people, sank after crashing into rocks.

Nine foreigners were on board the ferry, he said.

The report we have says 39 people survived, 54 have been confirmed dead and the others are still missing," he said by telephone from Banda Aceh, capital of Aceh, 1,800 km (1,125 miles) northwest of Jakarta.

The official identified the Britons as Stephen and Caroline and the American woman as Margaret. He gave no other details but said the search was still underway.

The ferry, named Gurita or octopus, sank after hitting rocks.

## Tribal rebels kill 5 CRP men in Tripura

NEW DELHI, Jan 20: At least five paramilitary troops were killed and 11 injured in the far-eastern Indian state of Tripura today when tribal rebels ambushed a medical team conducting the country's biggest anti-polio drive, reports AFP.

The Press Trust of India, quoting officials in the Tripura capital Agartala, said five members of the Central Reserve Police Force died when the rebels attacked the group they were escorting to an immunisation booth.

Four of the injured are in critical condition and have been moved to a hospital in Agartala, they said.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack, which took place in a western district of Tripura.

Witnesses said the militants sprayed bullet on the team, adding that they took away carbine rifle, three guns and ammunition belonging to the troops before fleeing.

Police sources said a manhunt had been launched for the militants and security beefed up along the frontier to prevent the attackers from fleeing.

India launched the second leg of its biggest public health campaign today in which nearly 90 million children are expected to be immunised against polio in a bid to eradicate the disease by 2000.

The 36-million-dollar campaign mainly targets children under three years of age and involves some two million health workers, 10 million volunteers and 200 million doses of the oral polio vaccine.

## 4 Bangladeshis charged in court later

The economic boom of more than eight per cent growth the past eight years has resulted in a worker shortage, and there are about 800,000 foreigners with work permits and 300,000 illegal immigrants in Malaysia.

Most of the foreigners are Indonesians, Thais, Filipinos, Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans, Pakistanis, Burmese and Indians.

AFP adds: Whipping and imprisonment will be made mandatory for anyone convicted of forging passports under proposed amendments to Malaysia's immigration act, officials said.

Those found guilty of using false documents to obtain passports will face similar punishment, Deputy Home Minister Ong Ka Ting was quoted as saying in the New Straits Times today.

Stiffer penalties are necessary because of the rising incidence of forged passports, including restricted passports for travel to Singapore, Ong said.

## Fire kills one in Cox's Bazar

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Jan 20: Two devastating fire killed one and injured another 11 here.

The first incident took place at Hoalkong Bazar under Teknaf thana at 4 in the morning which is believed to have been originated from a bakery.

Sulttan Ahmed, 50, who was sleeping inside the bakery, was roasted alive. Another 10 persons were injured in the incident and 15 shops were burned as ashes before fire-fighters came.

The second accident took place at Dignara village under sadar thana of the district at around 4 pm. As many as 11 houses were gutted before fire brigade had arrived at the spot. These two incidents, according to witnesses, caused a damage of property worth Tk one crore approximately.

## Docs at DMCH Mustafiz

From Page 1

Directorate claimed that they were under pressure from "powerful quarters" for issuing licence to the IEH.

Earlier, the Directorate, through advertisement in the media had urged all clinics and hospitals to get registered with the Directorate, said Asharunullah. But the IEH authorities did not pay any heed to it, he said.

Bangladesh Manobadhikar Sangstha, a human rights body, has also lodged cases against the IEH for alleged wrong treatment of patients.

## Docs at DMCH Mustafiz

From Page 1

pressed its support to the demands of the interne doctors who went on strike on January 16.

A case has been lodged with the Ramna thana in connection with the incident. None was arrested till filing of this report last night.

## DSC okays

From Page 1

telephone last night.

He said, a new set of rules has been prepared reformulating the existing rules to make the DSE more transparent and accountable.

The existing rules for listing companies, formulated about 40 years back, are not able to meet the demand of the present day, he said.

The new rules have been approved at the council meeting of the DSE yesterday and sent to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for final approval.

Under new rules listed companies will be bound to inform the DSE regarding every decisions taken by the management of the company that will effect the share price of that company.

## N-plant

From Page 1

times but could not be implemented due to absence of firm policy decision and lack of funds.

First approved to generate only 70 MW electricity, the latest and revised proposal approved by the ECNEC in the late 70s was to produce 125 MW. BAEC sources said.

"But, now we are thinking of a 400 to 600 MW reactor," said the BAEC Chairman, adding that the demand for power in the country has increased substantially.