

Janata Tower case

Ershad's bail petition hearing on Apr 4

By SC Correspondent

The High Court Division yesterday fixed April 4 for hearing of the bail petition of former president H M Ershad, in the Janata Tower case.

Khandker Mahbub Hossain, Counsel for Ershad, will move the petition before a division bench of the HC comprising Justice Mohammad Golam Rabbani and Justice A T Monwaruddin.

In the case, under Section 5 (2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, Ershad along with 21 co-accused, including Begum Raushan Ershad and the then Chairman of the Rajuk has been convicted for seven years rigorous imprisonment.

All the convicts except Ershad have been granted bail.

Telecom case hearing adjourned till June 4

The hearing of the trial of former president Hussain Mohammad Ershad yesterday in a

corruption case relating to a deal in telecommunications was adjourned till June 4.

Senior special and sessions judge fixed June 4 as the next date of hearing of the "T and T case" after prosecution prayed for two months' adjournment yesterday.

Defence objected to the submission of the adjournment prayer at the judge's usual court in the court area, instead of the special judge's court situated opposite to the gate of the Central Jail. The judge rejected defence's contention and granted time petition of the prosecution.

Besides Ershad, five others, including former minister Kazi Feroze Rashid, are accused in the case.

Advocate Humayun Kabir Manju appeared on behalf of Ershad, while the state was represented by public prosecutor Abdur Razaque Khan.



Leaders of the Awami League led by party president Sheikh Hasina (L) and of the BNP led by its standing committee member Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury (R) called on Chief Adviser Justice Habibur Rahman at his office yesterday. — PID photo

CEC must resign

From Page 1

She said illegal arms holders and terrorists should be rounded up irrespective of their party affiliation.

She demanded security of the government officials, artists, and others who had expressed solidarity with the recent movement.

Awami League leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Zillur Rahman, Abdul Mannan, Amir Hossain, Amir Tofael Ahmed, S A M S Kibria, Abdur Razzak, Gazul Haque and Abdul Momen were present.

AL sources requesting anonymity, said that the list containing the names of at least seven persons proposed to be advisers was prepared by party chief Sheikh Hasina. Party leaders were earlier consulted.

The sources added that the names of at least two persons were also proposed as probable replacement for the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC).

The Jatiya Party leaders led by its acting chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, during their meeting with the Chief Adviser, demanded reconstitution of the Election Commission and inclusion of the eligible voters, who had been left out of the voters' lists, for free and fair elections. They also stressed the need for recovery of illegal arms.

JP leaders Begum Roushan Ershad, Barrister Moudud Ahmed, Qazi Zafar Ahmed and Shah Moazzem Hossain were present during the meeting.

Jatiya Party submitted a list of persons suggesting their inclusion in the council of advisers, party leader Moudud Ahmed told The Daily Star last night. He, however, did not give details.

Moudud further said his party demanded resignation of the CEC and reorganisation of the Election Commission.

JP also suggested probable replacement for the Chief Election Commissioner, he said.

Jamaat-Islami is likely to meet the Chief Adviser soon. Jamaat sources said they would propose a list of advisers only if other parties did so.

Earlier, a delegation of Gono Forum led by its president Dr Kamal Hossain called on the Chief Adviser.

They exchanged views with the Chief Adviser on the holding of free and fair elections. The Gono Forum leaders demanded creation of an environment free of arms, reconstitution of Election Commission, reduction of election expenses and neutral administration for peaceful and fair elections.

Gono Forum leaders Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Maj Gen (ret'd) Khalilur Rahman, Ziaul Haque, Pankaj Bhattacharya and Advocate Zahirul Islam were present in the meeting.

A S M Abdur Rab, secretary general of JSD, along with his party leaders also met the Chief Adviser.

NDP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury also met the Chief Adviser and exchanged views on holding free and fair elections.

15 hurt as Jubo Dal, Jubo League clash

RANGAMATI, Apr 1: Fifteen people were injured, two seriously, in a clash between the activists of Jubo League and Jubo Dal at Kaptai on Sunday night. Witnesses said the clash erupted when the victory processions of the two rival organisations confronted in the area at about 9 pm. Of the injured, an activist of Jubo League, was admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital in a critical condition, reports UNB.

Of the injured Aktaruzzaman, 35, Akluddin, 32, and Mabiluddin 30 were admitted in Kushtia General Hospital and others were given first aid.

A case has been registered with Kushtia police station in this connection.

Six nor'westers likely this month

Upto six moderate or severe nor'westers are likely to hit Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Moulvibazar and Comilla during the current month, reports UNB.

A Met office long-range forecast said yesterday three to six moderate nor'westers are likely elsewhere across the country, the forecast said.

A depression is likely to be formed over the Bay in the second half of the current month.

Weather Office predicted flash flood over some parts of the greater Sylhet district during the same period.

Sylhet division is likely to experience the highest 200-240 mm rain in the period against normal 228 mm.

Dhaka division may have 100-150 mm rain against normal 110 mm, Chittagong division 100-120 mm against normal 100 mm, Barisal 60-80 mm against normal 84 mm.

Two shot dead in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Apr 1: Two persons were shot dead and at least 20 people were injured in an armed clash between two rival groups at village Dahakula under Sadar thana this morning, according to witnesses and police.

The dead were identified as Afuiddin, 30, and Jalaluddin, 25.

Of the injured Aktaruzzaman, 35, Akluddin, 32, and Mabiluddin 30 were admitted in Kushtia General Hospital and others were given first aid.

A case has been registered with Kushtia police station in this connection.

Trishal JCD leader chopped to death

MYMENSINGH, Apr 1: A Jatityabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader was chopped to death during a victory procession of the Awami League and Jatiya Party at Trishal thana in the district on Saturday, reports UNB.

Local people said a group of armed assailants hit Shahidullah Baten, 20, sports affairs secretary of Trishal Nazrul College Students' Union, by sharp weapons at Trishal bazar in the night.

He was rushed to Trishal thana health complex where attending doctors declared him dead.

Witnesses said a victory procession of AL and JP was passing the area hailing formation of non-party caretaker government. The processionists also damaged the sign-board of the office of BNP at Birampur bus stand.

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BNP, Jubo Dal leaders held in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 1: Police arrested eight people including a senior vice president of the city BNP unit and a Jubo Dal leader on different charges today.

According to police sources, police arrested city BNP senior vice president Abdul Mazid and three others from Mazdar area at around noon. The other arrested are Yasin, Delwar and Munir. They also belong to the local BNP unit.

In another drive, Fatullah police arrested Aslam, a local Jubo Dal leader, along with three other persons. They are Mazeda Begum, Suman and Ripon. police also recovered a US-made revolver, five rounds of bullets and Tk 54,000 during the drive.

2 shots fired at ex-minister's residence

Unidentified miscreants fired two shots last night at the Sher-e-Bangla nagar residence of former state minister for irrigation and water resources Mosharrar Hossain Shahjahan when he was sitting in the premises of his house.

He told BSS over telephone that the miscreants had soon left the place after the incident at around 10-30 pm. "I think they have attempted on my life," he said.

Mobile patrol police chased the miscreants but could not arrest them, he added.

When contacted, Tajgan thana police told that they had been informed by Shahjahan about the incident and forces were sent there for investigation.

The Midnight File

BJP vice-president resigns

NEW DELHI, Apr 1: India's main opposition, the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) received a setback today when a party vice-president resigned and indicated he may join the ruling Congress Party. Arif Beg resigned from the BJP in protest against the party's refusal to nominate him as a candidate for the coming general elections, reports Reuters.

Curtain falls on Bijoy Manch

From Page 1

He told the huge crowd amidst cheers.

Hanif, also the City Awami League president, who led an indefinite sit-in from the Janata Manch on March 23 to unseat Begum Zia and form a neutral caretaker government, formally announced yesterday the closure of the historic podium, renamed Bijoy Manch on March 30 after the resignation of Begum Zia.

Criticising Begum Zia and other BNP leaders for "provocative" remarks on Saturday and Sunday against the Janata Manch and those who expressed solidarity with the caretaker movement, Hanif said this would only vitiate the peaceful atmosphere.

"We want peace, we don't want any bloodshed," he said, adding that had they wanted anything untoward, that could have been done through a single instruction on March 23 when people of Dhaka came out on the street and joined the indefinite sit-in.

Hanif said that after losing power Begum Zia has become imbalanced and uttered provocative statements not expected from a person who held the office of the Prime Minister.

The BNP Chairperson should restrain herself and use the language of politics, he added.

The Mayor urged the caretaker government to punish those who were giving provocative speeches to "destroy the peace process needed for a peaceful election in the country."

Protesting the remarks of BNP leaders about the Janata Manch, he said this manch is not a platform of any political party. It is the manch of the people — of 86 lakh people of Dhaka City — where teachers, students, officials, employees, freedom fighters, lawyers, journalists, poets, intellectuals, retired army officers and all professional groups came and expressed their solidarity.

"People want peace, our leader Sheikh Hasina asked us to maintain peace and continue peaceful movement to restore the people's voting rights," said Hanif.

The Mayor called upon the people to give appropriate reply to any provocation and autocratic gesture through ballots in the coming elections.

The meeting, organised by the coordination committee of professional groups, was also addressed by Mukti Joddha Sanghati Parishad leader Col (Ret'd) Shawkat Ali, Sajeda Chowdhury, Principal Qamruzzaman, Mustafa Sarwar, Hasan Imam, Kalim Sharaf, Advocate Shaukat Huj Chowdhury, Matia Chowdhury, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Principal Abdul Ahad, Obaidul Karim, Azizul Islam Bhuyyan, Prof Syed Muddasser Ali, Shaikh Mohammad Shahidullah and Dr Shara-fuddin Ahmed.

The BNP Chairperson should restrain herself and use the language of politics, he added.

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Khaleda's directive to partymen

BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday directed the leaders and workers of the party to invigorate the political and organisational activities at metropolitan city, town, thana, union and ward levels for consolidating and strengthening the base of the party, reports BSS.

In a statement issued here last night, Begum Zia urged the central leaders, former ministers and parliament members to go to their respective districts and localities immediately to intensify the party activities in consultation with the local leaders and workers.

She also urged them to remove the disputes, if any inside the party, through discussions with the local leaders and workers.

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Quake shakes India, Pakistan

NEW DELHI, Apr 1: India's capital New Delhi was struck by a moderate earthquake today, but there were no reports of injuries or damage, officials said.

A spokesman for the Indian meteorological department told Reuters that the quake measured 5.5 on the Richter scale and was recorded at 1:39 pm (0809 GMT).

He said the government agency had not yet determined the epicentre of the quake.

Another report says, a moderate earthquake jolted parts of central and northern Pakistan today, but there was no immediate report of any damage, officials said.

A seismological centre in the northwestern town of Peshawar said the 1.08 pm (0808 GMT) quake was measured 5.3 on the Richter scale, powerful enough to cause heavy damage in a populated area, and was centred 300 km (190 miles) southeast of there in the central province of Punjab.

The tremor, coming only a week after one measuring 4.6 on Richter scale shook northern Pakistan, was also felt in Islamabad and the Punjab cities of Lahore and Faisalabad, centre officials said.

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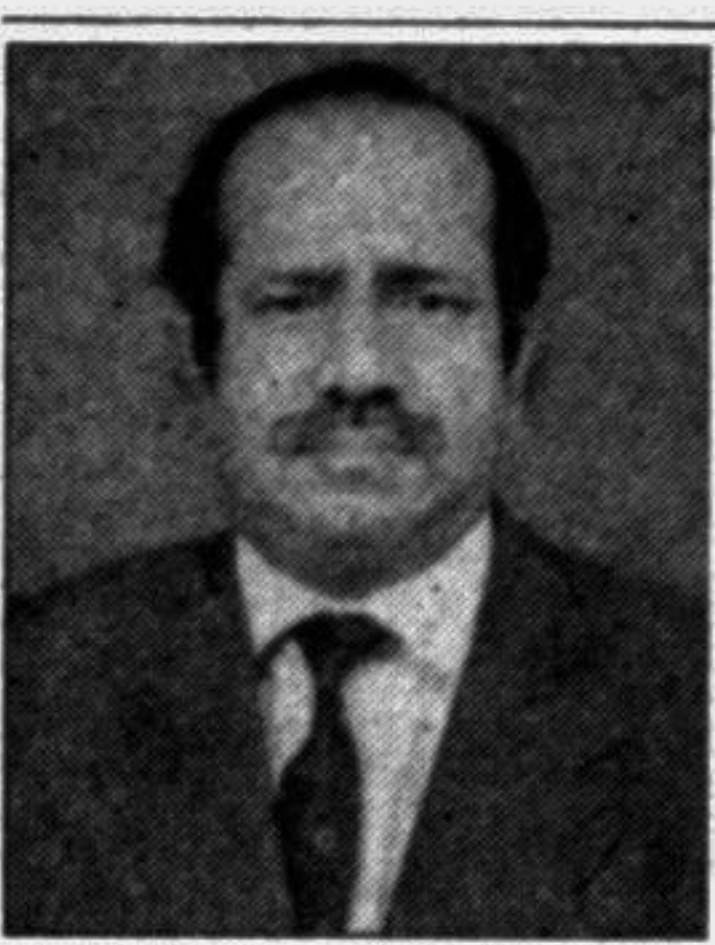
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Barrister Shawkat Ali Khan



Nazrul Islam Chowdhury

New SC Bar Association executives

By SC Correspondent

Barrister Shawkat Ali Khan and Nazrul Islam Chowdhury have been elected president and secretary respectively, of the Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association.

The election of the Executive Committee of the Association for the terms 1996-97 was held on March 30 and 31.

Barrister Shawkat Ali Khan, a senior advocate and leader of the Awami League secured 580 votes and defeated his rival candidate Barrister Nazmul Huda, a former BNP minister, by 184 votes.

Nazrul Islam Chowdhury, an advocate of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court defeated S M Munir by 210 votes. Both of them are the former leaders of the Bangladesh Chhatra Union.

A F Hassan Ariff and Barrister Md Muzammel Hossain were elected vice president and Syed Mahbubur Rahman was elected treasurer.

The advocates of the Supreme Court chose Md Mahbub Ali and Mamoon Rahman as assistant secretaries while Saifuddin Ahmed Chowdhury, Khandker Gulzar Hossain, Md Rezau Hoque, Md Abdus Salam Mondal, Shahriyar Moutaz ul-Mulk, Maleka Parvin and Saba Begum were elected members.

The political system does not determine what a former president should do, what he should live on. I am too young to get retirement benefits," said the 52-year-old Walesa.

In addition, Polish tax authorities are demanding more than 400,000 dollars in taxes on a million dollars which a US film company paid him in 1989. He has just mortgaged his home in Gdansk to try and meet that bill.