

# Public Servants Retirement Act challenged

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the government to show cause within 10 days why its arbitrary power to retire any government servant on completion of 25 years of service will not be declared ultra vires of the Constitution, reports UNB.

A High Court Bench issued the rule upon a writ challenging the Public Servants (Retirement) Act of 1974 empowering the government to retire anyone without showing any cause on completion of 25 years of service.

The writ petition was filed with the HC Bench comprising Justice M Mahmudul Rahman and Justice KM Hasan by Barrister Amirul Islam on behalf of former director of Ansar Lt Col (Retd) Harun-Rashid.

He challenged his compulsory retirement on the ground of public interest without any showcause.

Meanwhile some forced retired senior government officials have urged the caretaker government to consider their plea for reinstatement.

The retired officers in a meeting here yesterday alleged that they were forced to go on retirement as part of the police process of the past government.

**College student electrocuted**

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, Apr 9: A college student, Mahbuba Khanam Mukti, 21, was electrocuted today at her home in Gaoshar village of Char Baria under Kotwali Thana.

The accident occurred when she was pressing clothes with an electric iron.

She died on the way to Barisal Medical College Hospital.

**Bomb blast at DU Journalism Dept**

By DU Correspondent

Some unidentified miscreants exploded a bomb near the office of the Chairman of Journalism Department of Dhaka University yesterday at around 11:30 in the morning.

The Chairman of the Department, Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique, who is also the general secretary of the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) was in his office during the bomb explosion.

Protesting the incident, the students of the department brought out a procession and held a rally at the main gate of the Arts building. They demanded an investigation into the incident and exemplary punishment to the miscreants.

The students will also submit a memorandum to the Vice-Chancellor today demanding arrest of the miscreants.

UNB adds: The Academic Committee of the department in an emergency meeting yesterday expressed deep concern at the bomb attack and demanded of the authorities to investigate into the heinous incident.

Besides, some 40 senators of Dhaka University expressed concern at the bomb explosion.

In a joint statement, they condemned the incident and demanded immediate arrest of those responsible for it.

The DUTA also at an emergency meeting condemned the incident and demanded exemplary punishment of the offenders.

**Khaleda at Chittagong**

From Page 1

Khaleda during the "so-called" non-cooperation movement against her government by the opposition parties that shatter the country's image abroad as a sound production base.

Potential investors from Singapore, Korea and Japan died away because of the political disturbance in the country, she said. What are they who destroyed the country and pushed the economy backward — and of foe of the people?

She further asked: "Why and whose interest they forced the Chittagong railway station built at a cost of Tk 12 crore and damaged offices of foreign investors, banks and financial institutions in Chittagong. Whose interest was behind looting and ransacking of the Biman office?"

Giving a brief resume of her government's efforts for the development of the port city, the former Prime Minister said Chittagong was declared the commercial capital of the country and necessary steps were taken to implement it.

Also, she said, the airport in the city has been upgraded as an international one, foundation stone of the World Trade Centre laid, the country's second stock exchange established, new EPZ created and the stadium renovated and expanded.

Listing the development activities during the five-year rule of her government, Begum Zia said BNP has put the country on the track of development after "rescuing it from the debris of the autocracy".

Hundreds of bridges and culverts were built, roads and highways constructed, rural areas brought under electrification, schools and cyclone shelters constructed in last five years, she said.

The development activities during last five years surpassed the development of previous 20 years, Begum Zia said.

Presided over by party's Joint Secretary General Abdullah Al-Noman, the meeting was also addressed by BNP leaders Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, Oil Ahmad, Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia, Chowdhury Tanveer Ahmed Siddique, Jahan Ara Begum, A M Zahiruddin Khan, L K Siddique, M Moshad Khan, Mirza Abbas, Amanullah Aman, Kamruzzaman Ratan, Khairul Kabir Khokon, Syed Wahidul Alam, Syed Najibul Bashar Majib, and Begum Rosy Kabir, Zafurul Islam Chowdhury, Sarwar Jamal Nizam, MA Hannan, Nizamur Rahman, AM Nizamuddin and Tareq Rahman.

The miscreants assaulted him and stabbed him indiscriminately.

Two persons — Sheikh Abdul Mannan, 28, and Shafigul, 20 — were arrested in this connection, police said. Two cases have been filed with Mirpur thana.

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Chief Justice ATM Afzal administering the oath of office to Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena at his Supreme Court chamber yesterday. — Star photo

## CEC takes oath

From Page 1

Chief Justice ATM Afzal administering the oath of office to Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena at his Supreme Court chamber yesterday.

**Life sketch**

Abu Hena was born on April 10, 1937 at Bahadurpur village under Pangsha thana of Rajbari district. He passed his Masters in English from Dhaka University in 1959 and joined the civil service in 1963. He was the SDO, Moulvibazar in 1966 and ADC, Dhaka from 1967 to 1968. In 1970 he became Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Abu Hena was District Commissioner of Khulna in 1972 and Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Defense from 1973 to 1974. He became Divisional Commissioner of Khulna in 1979. Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home in 1981, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation in 1987. He was also secretary, LGRD ministry in 1988.

Abu Hena was made Bangladesh Ambassador to Japan in 1991 and to the Philippines in 1993. He was Secretary in the Ministry of Jute in 1994 and in the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock in 1995. Hena completed his two-year contract service as Planning Commission member on Monday.

**3-party, BNP welcome Abu Hena**

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami in a joint meeting Monday night welcomed the caretaker government's steps to reorganise the Election Commission.

Talking to this correspondent after the meeting, Jatiya Party secretary general Anwar Hussain Manju said the meeting expressed its pleasure that the EC was restructured with the appointments of a new Chief Election Commissioner and a Secretary for the EC.

The meeting, held at the residence of Abdus Samad Azad, was attended by AL leaders Samad Azad, Tofael Ahmed and Mosharraf Hossain, JP leaders Moudud Ahmed, Kazi Zafar Ahmed and Anwar Hussain Manju and Jamaat leaders Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid, Sheikh Ansar Ali and Quamruzzaman.

According to Manju, the meeting also urged the caretaker government to bring changes in the administration where appointments were made on political considerations over the last five years.

Asked about any possibility of an electoral alliance among the three parties, the JP secretary general said, "At this moment we are not thinking in that line. But, I don't want to comment on what might happen in the future."

BSS adds: The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has also welcomed the appointment of Abu Hena as the Chief Election Commissioner.

In a statement, BNP secretary general Abdus Salam Talukder expressed the hope that under the able supervision of Hena, the seventh general elections would be held as soon as possible. He assured about cooperation of his party to the new Chief Election Commissioner in conducting the upcoming elections.

**Grameen Bank DGM stabbed**

By Staff Correspondent

A deputy general manager (DGM) of Grameen Bank, Masud Isa, 38, was seriously injured when an armed gang stabbed him at Mirpur Section-1 yesterday morning.

Masud was shifted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) last night. His condition was said to be critical, medical sources said.

The DGM, residing at Darus Salam road, Mirpur Section-1, was attacked near Bangla College when he was jogging at around 6 am.

The miscreants assaulted him and stabbed him indiscriminately.

Two persons — Sheikh Abdul Mannan, 28, and Shafigul, 20 — were arrested in this connection, police said. Two cases have been filed with Mirpur thana.

## 3-day SAIC meet begins in city

A three-day meeting of the Dhaka-based SAARC Agricultural Information Centre (SAIC) began yesterday with a call for a regional agricultural information system, reports UNB.

Such a system can ensure effective promotion of cooperation in the field of agricultural information among the SAARC member countries, Director of the SAIC Dr M Zahangir Kabir told its 10th governing board meeting at the SAIC conference room in Dhaka.

The inaugural function was addressed, among others, by SAIC governing board Chairman Dr Mangla Rai and Executive Chairman of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) Dr M Sujat Ullah Chowdhury.

The SAIC Director emphasised the need for sharing a common Agro Ecological System and Socio Economic Environment for sustainable development of agriculture.

It is the strength of information that will help promote agricultural production, he said.

Dr Mangla Rai stressed the need for effective dissemination of agricultural information among the SAARC member countries for sustainable agricultural development.

The SAIC meet is expected to estimate the budget for fiscal 1996-97 and matters relating to functioning and administration of the SAIC.

Representatives from Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, host country Bangladesh and SAARC Secretariat are participating in the meeting.

**Huge arms seized in a week in city**

By Staff Correspondent

Police seized huge arms and ammunition in its special arms recovery drive in the city during the first week of this month.

Thirty-six cases under the Arms and Explosive Act were also filed against 90 people, police said.

The recovered fire arms include 161 cocktails, 768 rounds of bullets, sawed-off rifles, 11 revolvers, pistols, pigeons and sharp instruments like daggers, machetes and bayonets.

Meanwhile, five persons, including a woman, were arrested and arms and ammunition recovered during raids in different parts of the city yesterday.

Detective Branch police during a raid in a house at Karatola in the old part of the city arrested one Afroza Begum, mother of a terrorist Morsalin.

Afroza was arrested on charge of possessing 48 rounds of bullets, police said. Morsalin, who was involved in terrorism in Syedabad and Swamibagh areas, however, escaped.

Lalbagh police arrested four persons and recovered one cut rifle, one pigeon and some bullets during raids in Shahidnagar and Killar Mor areas early yesterday.

The arrested were identified as Murad, 30, Pagla Mozibor, 28, Hemayet Hossain, 19, and Alamgir, 22, police said.

**Urs of Shahjalal ends in Sylhet**

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Apr 9: The annual Urs of Hajrat Shahjalal (RA) ended here early today with thousands of devotees from across the country participating in the Akheri Munajat.

**Govt wants to stabilise**

From Page 1

crowding out effect on the private sector.

The Adviser, in response, said that in revising the ADP, priorities would be recast to economise scarce resources to improve quality of project implementation and the same time also to emphasise projects which improved employment situation for the poor.

Government officials informed the meeting that the ADP had already started and all projects and components of projects would be reviewed to make it pragmatic.

The priority of the caretaker government is improving the law and order and holding a free and fair election. But at the same time, the economy has to be placed on a right footing for stability of the next government, Prof Mahmud said.

US Ambassador David N Merrill said special attention should be given to the banking sector to avoid further deterioration of fiscal discipline.

He allegorically highlighted the task of the caretaker government. He said there are two types of tenants — one which leaves the house in an untidy condition while the other type leaves it clean and shining. He hoped that the caretaker government will be like the second type of tenants.

The Japanese Ambassador assured resumption of the

## Police yet to nab terrorists from Saidabad terminal

Star Report

Police failed to arrest the persons involved in terrorist activities centering around establishing supremacy over the Saidabad bus terminal, according to bus operators and witnesses at the terminal yesterday.

Expressing concern, a bus operator said, "the police could wipe out the criminals if they wanted so."

The bus owners claimed that those who have been arrested are innocent transport workers.

Soon after the resignation of the BNP government Saidabad and few other terminals in the city became the boiling pot as the rival groups backed by various political parties engaged in bus battles to overthrow the BNP backed unions from the city bus terminals.

A lull prevailed over the Saidabad bus terminal yesterday.

**Prof Fazlul Halim Chy dead**

By DU Correspondent

Professor Fazlul Halim Chowdhury, a former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University (1976-83) died of heart attack yesterday morning at his Gulshan residence. He was 66.

The university will remain closed today as a mark of respect to the former VC.

The Namaz-e-Janaja of the late Prof Chowdhury will be held at the Dhaka University central mosque after Asr prayers tomorrow. He will be buried at Banani graveyard after the arrival of two of his daughters from abroad.

He left behind his mother, wife, one son, three daughters and a host of relations and well wishers to mourn his death.

Born in Choudhagram, Comilla, in 1930, Prof Chowdhury obtained his BSc and MSc degrees in Chemistry from Dhaka University in 1950 and 1951 respectively. He secured first position in both the examinations. He obtained PhD degree from Manchester University, UK in 1956 and received the Exhibition Scholarship in 1953.

Prof Chowdhury joined the Chemistry Department of Dhaka University as a lecturer in 1952 just after obtaining his MSc degree. In 1958 he joined the Chemistry Department of Rajshahi University as a Reader.

Prior to joining Dhaka University as the Vice Chancellor in 1976, Prof Chowdhury had served as the Chairman of the Chemistry Department and Dean of the Faculty of Science of Rajshahi University. He served as the VC of DU for seven years until March 20, 1983.

The quikhwani of Prof Fazlul Halim Chowdhury will be held on Friday at his 13/5 Gulshan residence after Asr prayers.

Meanwhile, President Abdur Rahman Biswas, Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman, Adviser for Mineral Resources and Water Resources Dr Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, Vice Chancellor of DU Prof Enayuddin Ahmed have expressed deep shock at the death of Prof Chowdhury.

Chief Adviser Md Habibur Rahman visited the Gulshan residence of the late Prof Fazlul Halim Chowdhury to pay his last respect to the distinguished educationist.

The chief adviser stayed there for some time, talked to the family members and conveyed his deep sympathy to them.

**EU may partially lift ban on UK beef products**

BRUSSELS, Belgium, Apr 9: European Union (EU) veterinary experts will meet tomorrow to consider a partial lifting of the worldwide ban on British beef products, possibly by allowing exports of beef-derived gelatin, reports AP.

The EU imposed the ban March 27 as fear grew that humans could contract a deadly illness related to mad cow disease — a brain-wasting cattle ailment that has ravaged herds in Britain.

Britain claims there is no human health risk from eating beef and reacted angrily last week when the EU refused to lift the export ban.

EU farm spokesman Gerry Kieley said Tuesday the veterinary committee, which first recommended the ban, would consider lifting the export restrictions on some "individual products."

He said the most likely would be gelatin, which is made from boiling down animal bones and skins and is used in jellies, glues, cosmetics and other products.

## The Midnight File

### 17 killed in Colombian violence

BOGOTA, Apr 9: Seventeen people have died in bombings, ambushes and armed clashes as a nation-wide strike called by Colombian rebels entered its second and final day today, authorities said. Defence Minister Juan Carlos Esguerra said after an emergency cabinet meeting late Monday that the rebels had failed to bring the country to a standstill as they had hoped, reports AFP.

## Damage management

From Page 1

orders and make shipment in the shortest possible time when orders are placed. This can effectively reduce the lead time for us."

The lead time, calculated from placing of order to shipment of garments, is now seen as a vital issue to retain competitive edge as buyers are now reluctant to bear interests on 120-day back to back LC.

But until the Bangladesh Bank reimburses the fund to the banks, we are charged usually between 12 and 14 per cent interests," said Taher. "As an emergency case now, the rate should also be reduced to Libor plus one per cent."

The Indians because of their backward linkage and direct marketing policy are opening LCs before their shipment of apparels," said Anisur Rahman Sinha, Chairman of Opet Garments. "EDF can do it for us. But the real answer would be to develop backward linkage and direct marketing."

"We now have to keep the factories open for at least up to July because now is the time for placing of orders," said M Anwarul Azim, another leading garments factory owner. "The buyers are keeping watch on our business situation. If they find us sick, crippling or closed, they would not dare to place orders with Bangladesh."

Many factories are now looking for sub-contract from the bigger units.

Garments owners who have enough goodwill in the international market are now trying to make up their losses by increasing exports.

"I have goodwill to fetch more orders but I do not have the capacity to increase production. So what I am doing is, I am buying quotas from those who do not have any orders and utilising their capacity. This is a good damage management strategy for us since I am being able to fetch more money while the factories which were to remain idle because of lack of orders, are surviving by going for sub-contract," said a garments factory owner.

Another suggestion that many garment owners put forward to 'salvage' the industry is to devalue taka against dollar by at least 10 per cent with six months retrospective effect for exporters, one source pointed out.

## SC Bar Assoc team meets Chief Adviser

A 14-member delegation of the Supreme Court Bar Association executive committee called on Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman at his office yesterday afternoon, reports UNB.

The delegation, led by association president Barrister Shawkat Ali Khan, congratulated Habibur Rahman on his assumption of the office of the Chief Adviser of the caretaker government.

Adviser for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Barrister Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed and three former presidents of the association — Khandaker Mahbub Uddin Ahmed, Kazi Golam Mahbub, and M Hafizullah — were present during the meeting.

## Champa murder

From Page 1

six people including her brothers-in-law, sister-in-law and the husband of her sister-in-law.

The Sessions Judge, Barisal found Nasiruddin Zamil and Zahurul Alam Kamal, both brothers-in-law, and Zillur Rahman, husband of the sister-in-law, guilty under Section 302/34 of the Penal Code and convicted them for life imprisonment. The trial court also found them guilty under Section 201/34 of the Penal Code and sentenced them for three years rigorous imprisonment and find them Tk 5000 each in default sentenced further six months rigorous imprisonment.

The convicts challenged the judgement and order of conviction and filed criminal appeals before the HC.

The HC observed that the prosecution could not prove who, when and why murdered the victim i.e. the prosecution could not prove their case beyond reasonable doubt and the accused are entitled to benefit of doubt.

Senior Advocate Sirajul Huq, Abdul Malik and Khandker Mahbub Hossain moved for the convicts.

Deputy Attorney General AFM Shahid and Assistant Attorney General Syed Abu Kawsar represented the state.

## Hasina

From Page 1

ration of the people.

"The history of the BNP government is the history of killing, torture, corruption and politicisation," she said calling upon the people to take revenge against its misrule through ballots.

The Awami League chief said the people have snatched the victory of the movement for establishing their rights to vote and food and they will also succeed in making the nation self-reliant.

She alleged that the armed terrorists of BNP were threatening those officials who were with the people during the last movement and warned that the threats would not be tolerated any more.

"Was it a crime to stand by the side of the people instead of supporting a vote-dacoit government?" she questioned while demanding punishment of the "armed hoodlums."

The Awami League chief reiterated the demand for an effective arms recovery drive and arrest of all illegal arms holders for a free and fair election.

The meeting, presided over by city AL president Advocate Monjurul Imam, was addressed by, among others, party leaders Salauddin Yusuf, Amir Hossain Amu, Tofael Ahmed, Harun-ur-Rashid, Obaidul Kader, Shamsur Rahman Mia, Alhaj Mizanur Rahman Mizan and Mostafa Rashide.

Earlier, Hasina was greeted by party leaders and workers when she arrived at the Jessore airport at about 8:15 am by a Biman flight. On her way to Khulna, she addressed roadside meetings at Asundia Bazar, Noapara and Pultama.

Hasina will return to the capital tomorrow (Wednesday).

## MPs of 6th JS

From Page 1

However, the residents no longer have telephones at their disposal as the PABX lines have been disconnected at both the hostels.

A number of MPs of the 5th JS, which was dissolved on November 24, 1995 and some of the then opposition MPs who had resigned on December 28, 1994, continued to stay in the MP hostels till early March of this year, according to the sources.

Meanwhile, the Joint Secretary (administration), JS Secretariat, refused to comment on the issue when contacted over the phone yesterday.

It may be mentioned here that ministers vacated their official residences immediately following the dissolution of the 6th JS.