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Rao exempted from court appearance

NEW DELHI, July 31: Former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao won a reprieve today from the Supreme Court, which ruled he will not have to personally testify in a fraud case against him, reports AP.

Rao's legal problems, however, were intensifying the challenge to his leadership of the Congress Party by rebels who blame him for the party's defeat in elections earlier this year.

The Supreme Court agreed to hear Rao's appeal against a lower court's decision to summon him as a co-defendant in a case involving a payment of 100,000 dollars by a London-based businessman seeking a government contract to supply newspapers.

Chief Justice AM Ahmadi and Judge BL Ansaari said it would listen to arguments on August 12. In the meantime, Rao would not have to appear in the case, the judges ruled.

Earlier, the New Delhi High Court had rejected Rao's appeal against the summons.

The businessman alleged he paid the money to a Hindu holy man who was close to Rao and other government officials to secure the contract. He claims he met Rao in New York, and quoted him as saying, "Your work will be done."

On Tuesday, Rao said, "I am totally innocent and I have nothing to do with the case." But the court battle has

been a blow to Rao's prestige. Three former ministers in his Cabinet met Rao yesterday and later publicly demanded that the step down from the party leadership until his name was cleared by the court.

Rao was India's prime minister from 1991 until May this year, when his Congress party lost the general elections to a coalition of center-left parties.

Fertiliser dealership cancelled

Fertiliser dealership of M/S Sarkar Traders of Singra thana under Natore district has been cancelled for selling out the quota of fertiliser he lifted from factory in the black market, reports BSS.

BCIC sources said that the security money of the dealer has been forfeited and legal measures would follow on the basis of recommendation of local authorities.

The cancellation of the dealership of M/S Sarkar Traders was taken on a report given by local authorities in Natore.

Under the arrangement of dealership, 2,345 dealers of BCIC are supposed to lift their allotment of fertiliser from the designated factory and sell those on fair prices.

Missing of Kalpana Chakma: Probe body to be formed

A delegation of Marmas Chakma and Tripura Sangha yesterday called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her chamber in the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, reports BSS.

When the delegation referred to the recent missing of Kalpana Chakma, the Prime Minister assured them that a three-member judicial enquiry committee would be formed headed by a retired judge of the Supreme Court to probe the incident, find out persons responsible for and see such incident does not occur in the future.

The delegation apprised the Prime Minister of various problems in the hill tract area. The Prime Minister assured the delegation that with the cooperation of all people of the hill tracts, problems in the area would be solved.

Kalpanarajan Chakma MP, Dipankar Talukdar MP and Bir Bahadur MP were also present during the meeting.

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SEC amends guidelines on issuance of right shares

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has amended the guidelines on issuance of right shares, according to the quarterly review (April-June 96) of the Commission, reports BSS.

Under the guidelines, competitions of the companies in the financial forecast are required to be stated in the right share offer document in addition to the basis and assumptions of such items, the review said.

The issue price of right shares should not normally exceed the average market price for the last three months prior to right offer, net asset value and earning based value.

The Commission, with the prior consent of the government, has made the regulations for merchant banker and portfolio manager, and they must have a certificate of registration from SEC to carry out issue management, underwriting and portfolio management activity.

An issue manager, underwriter, portfolio manager must have a capital of at least Taka

2.5 million, Taka 10 million and Taka 10 million respectively to obtain the SEC certificate, according to the new rules. An underwriter can underwrite issue or a portfolio manager can manage portfolio worth five times of the capital.

If a person carries out all these activities, he must have a total capital of at least Taka 20 million, the rules clarified.

The SEC has the right to suspend or cancel the certificate of registration for violation of code of conduct or the provisions of the regulations.

SEC member Dr AKM Shahab Alam said the SEC adopted all these rules to protect the interest of investors.

Dr Alam said hardly 10 per cent companies used to hold the annual general meetings (AGM) before the setting up of the securities and Exchange Commission in 1993.

At present almost all the companies are holding AGM at the end of their financial year. Dr Alam said adding that the companies were now providing half-yearly financial statements to the shareholders. This is the very significant and positive response of SEC regulations, he said.

Dr Alam said the SEC had set up a public reference room for the investors. Prospectus and half-yearly financial statements of public limited companies are available at the reference room for the use of investors, he said.

Speaker rejects 120 call-attention notices

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury has accepted three out of 123 call-attention notices submitted by the members from July 25-31, reports UNB.

The Speaker, however, sanctioned to the MPs whose call notices were not accepted half an hour or two minutes each under Article 71 of the Rules of Procedure to speak on their respective subjects.

A total of 11 MPs delivered their speeches on their rejected notices in the morning session yesterday.

The Parliament witnessed a mini-debate following the speech given by BNP MP Prof Shahidul Islam.

Taking floor on point of order, BNP's MK Anwar drew the attention of the Speaker and argued a total of 15 MPs should have been given chance within the half-an hour time, but only 11 MPs spoke. He requested opportunity for the remaining four to speak.

But the Speaker did not allow the four other MPs to speak on their rejected notices.

Of the notices, the Speaker informed the House, one has been sent to the Business Advisory Committee, one is under his examination, one has been withdrawn and the rest were not accepted as matters of special privilege.

JP leaders meet Ershad today

By Staff Correspondent

Senior leaders of the Jatiya Party are likely to meet party chief H M Ershad at the Sangsad Bhaban today, to discuss the party nominations for the by-elections to the vacated seats of the Jatiya Sangsad, according to highly placed sources in the party.

Ershad is likely to finalise the party list of nominees after exchanging views with party stalwarts today, the sources said.

By elections to 16 vacated seats of the parliament are scheduled to be held on September 5. The last date for submission of nomination papers has been fixed on August 5.

ALPP meet

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Hasina, the meeting began at 10 in the morning and continued till the House sat for its first morning session at 11 am yesterday.

According to the party sources, the AL MPs appreciated the main Opposition BNP's participation in JS Business Advisory Committee meeting held on July 30.

On the budget issue, the ALPP leaders did not entertain an invitation for attending a pre-budget meeting.

An AL lawmaker told The Daily Star that the ruling party deputies would take part actively in the House discussion on the proposed budget while they would prefer to remain cautious about making points on the supplementary budget for the 1995-96 fiscal, since the original budget was famed day the BNP government.

JS body to deal with private members' Bills

Parliament yesterday constituted a 10-member committee to deal with private members' Bills and resolutions, reports UNB.

Chief Whip Abdul Hasnat Abdullah proposed the committee with Col (Retd) Shawkat Ali as its chairman.

Other members of the committee are: Abdul Latif Mirza, AKM Jahangir Hossain, K Asaduzzaman, Rajiuddin Ahmed, Prof Panna Kaiser, Barrister Nazmul Huda, Barrister Mohammad Aminul Haque, Barrister Rabeya Bhuiyan and Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury.

Opposition Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain regretted that they had given four names for the committee, but only one member was included in it.

Also, we didn't suggest the name of Barrister Nazmul Huda, but he was included in the committee, if things go on like this, how shall we extend our cooperation to them?



The visiting high-powered Japanese Economic Mission called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday.

— PID photo

Pandemonium averted

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gion in parliament.

In his speech, ruling party MP Dharendra Debnath Shambhu had said that his party was ready to uphold 'Bismillah', now enshrined in the Constitution. "But at the same time, the BNP has to accept Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as the father of the nation, which has also been mentioned in the Constitution."

During his speech, Shambhu also accused the former BNP government led by Khaleda Zia of various corruptions, including receiving bribes, misappropriation of public money, nepotism and undemocratic practices. Referring to a "High Court verdict," the ruling party MP also said that the court had declared the "mass-promotion of civil servants," a decision by the former BNP administration, illegal.

Referring to Khaleda Zia's refusal to be a member of the Privilege Committee of the present Jatiya Sangsad, he also accused the Leader of the Opposition of ignoring her duties, and observed that with such unwillingness, she should quit the post. He also accused the late President Ziaur Rahman of promulgating national law.

Taking the floor on the ground of personal clarification, Barrister Zamiruddin Sircar who was education minister in Khaleda Zia's cabinet told the House that the High Court never declared the mass promotion illegal. "It was Khandaker Mostaque Ahmed of the AL, not Ziaur Rahman, who promulgated martial law in the country and a section of AL leaders including late Abdul Malek Ukil had joined the Mustaque cabinet," Sircar added.

At this point, Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim managed to secure the floor to protest Sircar's statement saying, "People of the country know who had protected Mustaque as well as the killers of Bangabandhu." He also accused, indirectly, Ziaur

Rahman of "killing" Col (Retd) Abu Taher. The minister, however, requested all concerned to confine their speeches on the supplementary budget.

The Speaker then gave floor to Shamsuzzaman Duda who began his speech by paying tributes to Ziaur Rahman "for declaration of independence, specially when a leader fled from the country leaving the nation with no direction." Amidst uproar of the treasury bench MPs, Duda criticised Shambhu for his alleged comparison between "Holy Quran and Bangabandhu." The Speaker immediately turned off his microphone.

Others who addressed the

Body on package drama submits report

The committee, formed to formulate a policy relating to package drama, has submitted its report to the government, a PID handout said in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

A seven-member committee headed by Additional Secretary of the Information Ministry M. Nazrul Islam Siddiqui, has been formed to formulate a policy by examining the existing guidelines regarding the buying or sponsorship of package drama or programme.

The other members of the committee are: Shahid Akhand, Syed Salahuddin Zaki, Mohammad Jahangir, Atiqul Huq Chowdhury and Mohammad Hasan Imam.

Both of them were produced before the court this evening.



Palestinian President Yasser Arafat (R) and Ahmed Korei, President of the Palestinian Legislative Council, held hands as they arrive for meeting of the council in Bethlehem town, West Bank Tuesday. Korei withdrew his resignation yesterday after reaching a compromise with Arafat.

Student arrested with arms at RU

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, July 31: Mother thana police today arrested Raihanul Islam Dolar, a third year Honours student of the Islamic-History Department with a pistol and a knife in his possession.

Acting on a tip off, police raided room no 342 of Mother Bakhsh Hall and arrested him. Following his confession police later arrested Opu, another student, from outside the campus.

Both of them were produced before the court this evening.

PM assures

From page 1
both domestic and foreign, can invest directly.

The minister said the new government was pursuing policies for supporting and encouraging private investment by liberalising policies, simplifying implementation process and reducing duties on imported industrial raw materials.

The government, he said, emphasises on export-led growth strategy focussed in the new budget which would also improve the investment climate in Bangladesh.

The delegation informed the minister that a formal high-powered joint meeting will be held in Bangladesh in November next and will finalise the sectors for more Japanese investment in Bangladesh.

The mission also informed that the Japanese government has set up a new task-force headed by the Japanese Prime Minister to expedite their investment abroad.

The minister said a high-powered task force was also formed in Bangladesh to accelerate the investment.

Australian minister in city

Western Australian Land Minister Graham Keirath arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a three-day official visit to Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Joint Secretary in charge of the Ministry of Land A K M Ruhul Amin received the Western Australian Land Minister at the Zia International Airport.

He will take part in a seminar in Dhaka today. Graham is accompanied by Allan Skinner, chief executive of the department of Land of Western Australia and its executive director David Mulcahy.

Later, Graham Keirath called on State Minister for Land Alhaj Rashed Mosharraf at his official residence yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed different issues relating to mutual interests.

The Land Minister apprised his Australian counterpart the matters relating to modernisation of land administration in Bangladesh, said an official handout.

Australian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Kenneth W Aspinall was present.

Bubka

From page 1

She walked off in floods of tears and was hugged and kissed by an Irish team official before being led away.

In men's hockey, South Korea snatched victory from the brink of defeat to heap further humiliation on India today.

The Koreans, who trailed 1-3 in the second-half, drew level and then stroked out India 5-3 in the tie-breaker to set up a play-off with Pakistan for the 5th and 6th placing.

The Midnight File

8 Kashmiri militants killed

SRINAGAR, India, July 31: Eight Muslim militants were killed today when Indian troops overran a rebel training camp in the southern Kashmir district of Anantnag, officials said, reports AFP.

Breastfeeding Day today

The World Breastfeeding Day will be observed in the country as elsewhere in the world today, report agencies.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday issued separate messages on the occasion.

President Biswas said the best food for an infant is the milk of his or her mother.

He also stressed the need for making the people aware about the badside of feeding artificial milk to their children. He said the breast feeding is the best means for maintaining good health for both mother and child.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laid emphasis on united efforts for grooming every child as a healthy citizen for socio-economic development and progress of the country.

In her message the Prime Minister said breastmilk is the best food for development of a child's physical and mental health.

"The trend of bottlefeeding is increasing due to lack of knowledge, superstition and influence of international trade," she observed.

Pakistan to buy 320 tanks from Ukraine

ISLAMABAD, July 31: Pakistan has signed a deal with the Ukraine to buy 320 brand new T-80 D battle tanks worth 550 million dollars, a newspaper reported here today, says AFP.

The contract was signed here yesterday by a Ukrainian delegation and senior officials from Pakistan's Ministry of Defence, the News said, quoting official sources.

No comment on the report was immediately available from the Defence Ministry, although the two sides are known to have been engaged in negotiations for a long time to conclude a tank deal.

Under the contract the delivery of all the tanks of Pakistan will be completed by the end of 1999, the newspaper said.

Slip of tongue

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Speaker said this when Chief Whip of the Opposition Khandaker Delwar Hussain claimed that Barrister Nazmul Huda's name was included in a

standing committee though BNP did not suggest his name and Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Abdul Hasnat Abdullah contested the claim. Abdullah claimed that he had a signed copy of the list of names suggested by BNP in which Huda's name was proposed by Delwar.

The Speaker strictly maintained the allocation of time for MPs during the discussion on the supplementary budget. But he was soft to BNP lawmakers Prof Shahidul Islam who sought an extra minute after the expiry of the 7-minute time scheduled for Islam appealed to the Speaker saying "Mr Speaker, Sir, you are a freedom fighter and so I am. Please give me some more time."

Seminar

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private entrepreneurs, public agencies and NGOs.

Dr Binayak Sen said that the characterisation of the rural non-farm as residual sector with little promise for growth was no longer the typical scenario in the rural area.

The shift to non-farm occupants has been, on balance, pro-poor in nature, both in terms of greater potentials for poverty alleviation in these activities and modernising the over-all income inequality," Sen added.

Shahid Khandaker of the WB in his paper said that lack of access to credit was a binding constraint on rural non-farm activities.

Shahid Yusuf and Parveen Kumar said that rural industries needed a concentrated dose of entrepreneurial initiative. In China, local authorities have frequently taken the lead, putting up risk capital and providing leadership and managerial inputs.

Prof Nurul Islam, former deputy chairman of the Planning Commission, said that growth could be achieved from the sector by supplying the market with vocationally trained students and providing liberal credit.

Shekhar Shah of the WB suggested that the decentralisation of the services that the Board of Investment provide towards setting up of rural industries promote rural non-farm activities.

3 killed, 14 hurt in road mishaps

At least three persons were killed and 14 injured in road mishaps in Barisal and Meherpur yesterday, reports UNB.

Two people, including a minor boy, were killed in separate road accidents in two thanas of Barisal district.

Police said a seven-year-old boy, Sohag, died on the spot when a bus hit him at Dhapar in Sadar thana on Barisal-Pirajpur road in the afternoon.

Police seized the bus, but the driver fled the scene. The body was brought to Sadar hospital morgue for autopsy.

In another incident, a teen-aged boy, Nasir, was killed after he fell from the roof of a bus at Barpasha in Bakerganj thana on Barisal-Patuakhali at about 5 pm.

The body was sent to Bakerganj thana. Separate cases were filed with the local police.

Meanwhile, one person was killed and 14 others were injured in a road accident at Madnadanga on Kushtia-Meherpur highway yesterday.

Witnesses said Abdul Jabbar, 40, of Karafi village in Gargi thana died on the spot when a Meherpur-bound bus from Kushtia turned turtle on the road in the morning.

The injured were admitted to Meherpur Sadar hospital. Of them, conditions of Nabil, 35, Mosharraf, 40, and Saber, 35, were said to be critical.

BNP: Agri subsidy

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income was 247 dollars in 1994-95 and 223 dollars in 1993-94.

In 1995-96, before BNP government left power the per capita income rose to 265 dollars," he said adding that this achievement was made despite Awami League's constant "terrorism and negative" politics, which repeatedly disrupted the country's economy for the last two years.

"Yet Mr Kibria tried to hide the success of BNP for taking the per capita income level to 265 dollars. It is easily understood what democratic attitude worked behind this falsehood," he said.

He noted that during the BNP rule the growth rate was stable at 4.5 per cent. "Nobody in the past had attained such stable growth rates," he said and claimed that the BNP government could have had attained higher rate had it not been "victimized by political terrorism."

He alleged that the growth rate estimated by the finance minister had underestimated contributions of some of the sectors which include food production, fisheries and other sectors. He said that if a joint investigation committee was formed with Opposition members, many hidden facts could be revealed.

The BNP Secretary General said that when BNP came to power the domestic resource contribution to the Annual Development Programme (ADP) was 10.1 per cent. It increased to 42.25 per cent during the last five years, he added.

Fertiliser crisis

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Tofael, replying to a call attention notice from Prof Shahidul Islam of BNP, had alleged that the BNP government had politicised the fertiliser dealership and that 18 peasants were killed in clash for fertiliser during its rule. Till January this year, the then BNP government issued dealership to 2345 people, many of whom were not genuine traders, Tofael claimed.

He informed the House that one Hazrat Ali, a dealer from Natore who failed to distribute fertiliser in his area would lose his deposit money amounting Taka 2 lakh. "Orders have been issued to cancel his dealership and to arrest him," the Industries Minister said.

Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan refuted Tofael's allegations, and told the House that fertiliser dealers were recruited by a dealership committee and that successful distribution of fertiliser by those dealers had proved how wise the choices were.

He said, despite interruption caused by hartals and blockades called by the then Opposition, those dealers reached fertiliser to peasants.

A member of AL and BNP lawmakers participated in the debate on fertiliser distribution till 12:45 pm.

Before the morning session was adjourned Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Badruddoza Chowdhury proposed to hold a discussion on fertiliser some day in the House. But the Speaker did not fix any time schedule for the discussion.

Abdul Awal BEA president

By Staff Correspondent

Abdul Awal Mintoo has been elected president of the Bangladesh Employers' Association (BEA), said a press release.

Mintoo is Managing Direc-



tor of Dulamia Cotton Spinning Mills Ltd. and he is also a promoter-chairman of the National Bank Limited.

Rokia A. Rahman, Managing Director of R. R. Cold Storage, has been elected Vice-Chairman.

The members of the association are: Benajir Ahmed, MD, Raymond Garments Ltd., Khurshid Azam, MD, Mohsen Jute Mills Ltd., S. A. Azim, Chairman, Azim and Son, (GT) Ltd., A. Q. I. Chowdhury, GM, James Finlay Plc., A. Rahim Chowdhury, MD, Arab Bangladesh Bank Limited, Tapan Chowdhury, MD, Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Sabrina Islam, MD, Concoide Garments Ltd., M. A. Kashem, MD, Mutual Jute Spinners Ltd., Nicholas J. S. Miller, MD, Nestle Bangladesh Ltd., and AKM Shamsuddin, MD, Rhone-Poulanc Rorer Bangladesh Ltd.

Airport Road

From page 1
computerised system would help check road accidents in the city.

The DMP Commissioner said that they can now easily monitor different issues related to an accident in any city point. These include the nature of accident, position of the victims on the road during the mishap, rate of accident in any particular point, weather and light condition during the accident, time and day of accident.

The data showed that most of the accidents at the Biswa Road-Airport Road Crossing at Khilkhet during the last one year occurred on Saturday. The rate was almost the same on Fridays and Thursdays. Twenty one accidents out of 24 occurred in fair weather and in 15 incidents, the victims were the pedestrian. Commissioner Salam added.

Quoting the World Bank sponsored study conducted for the proposed Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP), Salam also pointed out different problems related to the traffic congestion in the city roads. These included lack of coordination and overlapping activities among Dhaka City Corporation, RAJUK, WASA, and BRTA; lack of parking facilities, poor drainage system and inadequate traffic management and enforcement of laws.

However, the Commissioner said that the traffic congestion and other problems in the city roads could be removed by educating the road users, introducing a reliable and dependable bus service and multi-functional signal system and creating awareness among the professional drivers.

Editor: S. Mahfuz Anam