

BLUE DART

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TO INDIA

A grief-stricken relative of one of the four persons killed in firing by Ansars at Sadhapur village in Savar. — Star photo

13 Ansars taken to thana

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clash with villagers at Sadhapur, six km off Savar thana. Friday morning, The Ansars were deployed in the village at 100-acre plot reportedly owned by Partex Real Estate Ltd, a sister organisation of Partex Group.

The girl, killed in the violence, came from Singair in Manikganj to a relative's house in Sadhapur. She got married a couple of months ago and her husband was abroad, said some women in the village.

Some local people who claimed to have witnessed Friday's incident, said that the Ansar personnel at the camp opened fire as the villagers gathered near the camp to protest the activities of an Ansar who made indecent comments to a young girl. The girl was collecting dry leaves from under a tree near the camp.

The villagers became more agitated and wanted to vent their anger against the Ansars and the guards posted there by the Partex Real Estate Ltd as they were being resisted from going to the plot of land for last couple of weeks, according to some villagers residing near the camp.

The Ansar Adjutant of Dhaka district Nurul Karim, however, told the correspondent, that according to their primary investigation, a section of villagers started gathering near the camp from 10 in the morning on Friday as there was a rumour that people from Partex Group would come to the village on that day and evict the villagers residing on the plot. Later, they started chasing Ansars at three small outposts around the camp. More than 100 people then attacked the camp, hit the Ansars with sticks and sharp instruments and ransacked their rooms.

At one stage, the mob tried to snatch firearms from the Ansars. The Ansars then chased the mob and opened fire to save themselves and the arms and ammunition, added the Ansar official.

Besides, some officials of different law enforcing agencies and others concerned did not rule out involvement of a vested quarter in creating different problems as regards the land owned by Partex Real Estate.

Partex grabbed our land which we inherited from our fathers, grandfathers," said Zainul Abedin, 65, a villager.

"For years, we are growing vegetables and residing there."

said a young man of the village. Two-year-old Alamgir, only child of Mojibor Rahman Mollah, one of the four persons killed, could not understand what was going on around his mother. Jahanara, could not stop crying since Friday night.

More than 100 people and families who were the real owners of the land claimed by the Partex Group, said Md Shamsuddin, chairman of Bongaon Union Parishad. Sadhapur village is under this union.

Shamsuddin added that he had heard about a trouble between villagers and the Partex Group since January. A couple of days before the Eid-ul-Fitr, in the first week of February, the Ansar camp was set up at the initiative of Partex Group and the villagers were asked not to use the land.

He also said that they held a meeting with the local MP to solve the problem while a case was also lodged in this regard.

Meanwhile, chairman of Partex Group M A Hashem said that they had purchased the land in Sadhapur completing all formalities and were planning to set up there a composite textile mills for which they would have to spend about Tk 246 crore.

"If there was any problem about the land, we could not have set up Ansar camp there," said Hashem over telephone. The Ansar authorities after verifying the relevant documents approved deployment of Ansars there "for the security of our land," he said.

Iranian quake

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water buffalo and sheep could be seen buried under the rubble. A donkey brayed from a collapsed stable, but villagers said they could do nothing without bulldozers.

"We have lost everything. Only 20 people have survived out of a population of 85," said Ali Hatami, who lives in the capital Tehran and drove all night to see his family.

The villagers, most of them farmers, said they were inside their houses when the earthquake struck.

"I couldn't get my balance for three minutes because the ground was shaking so badly," said Parviz Moossazadeh, an iron-monger in Sarain.

"I got out of the door just before my house collapsed."

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তারিখ: মার্চ ৩, ১৯৯৭

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Separation of judiciary

JS decision on bill soon: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Parliament would soon take decision about the bill seeking separation of the judiciary to ensure the rule of law in the country, reports UNB.

"Judiciary system of a country speaks of its progress and civilisation. The rule of law is an imperative to run a modern welfare state," she said while inaugurating the Judicial Administration Training Institute and Judicial Administration Training Course for Assistant Judges.

She said her government is keen to make the country's judicial system dynamic and up-to-date as it is determined to separate the judiciary from the executive.

The Prime Minister told the function at the old High Court building that a Task Force had been constituted to implement a project aimed at modernising the judicial system and amending the old laws in line with the policy of free market economy.

She hoped that a radical change in the judicial system

would take place in the country's judicial system with the implementation of the project by the Task Force within a year.

To bring about a thorough reform in the laws and judicial system of the country, a law reform commission has also been formed.

Terming judiciary one of the major organs to establish the rule of law in all spheres of social life, Hasina said it is not for a handful of people, it is for every citizen of the country.

"We have total faith in the freedom of judiciary. In light of the Constitution, our government is determined to ensure the separation of the judiciary from the executive organs of the state."

Referring to the Judicial Training Institute, which she termed as the specialised one and unique of its kind in the country, Hasina said it had been brought under the purview of the Task Force to increase the facilities and efficiency of the judges besides imparting training to the lawyers and the judges.

Hasina asks partymen Make national council a success

Prime Minister and Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the party leaders and workers to make its two-day triennial national council from March 28 a success, reports UNB.

She was presiding over a joint meeting of ministers, AL Presidium members, advisors, secretaries and Working Committee members at Ganobhaban in the evening, said a press release.

The meeting discussed the accountability of the government to the party and the people in running the state affairs and decided to strengthen the accountability process for consolidating the hard earned democracy.

It urged the people and party leaders and workers to observe historic 7th March, Bangabandhu's 78th birthday on March 17 and independence day on March 26 in a befitting manner.

AL-BNP leaders

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had backed out later. Without rejecting the BNP claim that the ruling party had agreed to a proportionate representation in the committees, the AL leaders informed Khan-daker Delwar yesterday that they were rather interested to sort out with the BNP a set of questions. These included how the BNP was to effectively cooperate with the ruling party to smoothly run the parliament and its standing committees, meeting sources said.

In case of a failure to ensure a 'package deal' with the BNP, the AL would prefer to go by the precedence set up in the fifth Parliament in which the BNP was in the Treasury Bench. In the fifth Parliament, representation in the parliamentary committees were not distributed in proportion to the parliamentary strengths of the parties and groups.

The leaders, however, had agreed to meet again after they have discussions with their respective party chiefs, meeting sources told The Daily Star.

Tribal leaders

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meeting with the Bangladesh delegation, led by the Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Abul Hasanul Abdullahi, in Agartala, the capital of Tripura.

The seven-point demand put forward by the refugee leaders to the Bangladesh team include an end to the 'uneasy' situation in CHT and security for the refugees on their return.

The Bangladesh delegation also visited the largest refugee camp at Takumbari in southern Tripura near the Bangladesh border, where at least 10,000 mainly Chakma refugees have been living since 1986.

The meeting was told that the ministry had taken steps to supply adequate diesel. Farmers have been urged to operate their pumps at night to get undisturbed power supply.

Referring to the expansion of the Rural Electrification Board (REB) network, the PM said only the extension of line is not enough, supply of power should be ensured.

State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Principal Secretary to the PM, Cabinet Secretary, Energy Secretary and other officials were present in the meeting.

World Bank

From Page 1

that all information available from official and business sources, such as importers' and VAT registration list and land records, could be exploited to identify new tax payers, it added.

The existing supplementary duty rates should be examined with a view to ensuring that the costs of negative externalities are passed on to the users.

Higher supplementary duties for some items would be justified also as a way of recovering user fees in the case of vehicles and petroleum products, the WB suggested.

The existing income tax and VAT exemptions and loopholes, including tax holidays, should be reexamined and curtailed or withdrawn, while further reductions in income tax rates could be considered, the WB report said.

JMB to ensure equal development in eastern & western regions'

From Govinda Shil

BOGRA, Mar 1: Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Zilur Rahman said here today the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge would become an international bridge soon after its completion in the middle of next year.

"It will be a gateway to Asia and Europe," Rahman said at the Rural Development Academy. He was inaugurating a three-day regional workshop on the Northwest Area Development Study, jointly organised by the Ministry of Planning and the Asian Development Bank.

The inaugural session was attended by the resident representative of the Asian Development Bank, Phanephool Horayangura, the Secretary of the Planning Division Shah Md Farid, the Divisional Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner of Rajshahi Division and the project director of the Northwest Area Development Study (NWADS).

Zilur Rahman said, it was Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who had felt the need for a bridge over the Jamuna river for developing the northern districts by connecting the region with the rest of the country through easy and speedy communication.

He hoped the Jamuna Bridge would accelerate the economic growth of the region and ensure equal development in the eastern and the western regions of the country.

The ADB representative said, 25 project proposals would be sent to the donor countries and agencies for financing after the end of the workshop.

The Planning Secretary said, the projects would be included in the next 'Five-Year-Plan' for implementation.

Baluchistan

From Page 1

possibly reaching 150, as they dug through the rubble and found more bodies.

The earthquake struck as people were sleeping and most of the dead were buried when their flimsy homes made of sunbaked mud collapsed.

Another report from Beijing says: A powerful earthquake jolted a far western Chinese county today, killing two people and injuring at least three others, the latest aftershock since two deadly quakes hit the area six weeks ago, state seismologists said.

The magnitude-6 quake struck at 2:04 pm (0604 GMT) in Jiashi County in the Xinjiang region, about 1,250 kilometers west of Beijing, the State Seismology Bureau in Beijing reported.

It could be felt 50 kilometers west in Kashgar, an oasis on the Silk Road that once linked China to the Mediterranean, it said.

Bangabandhu murder case

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tan Shahriar Rashid Khan; Tahmiduddin 'Taki', former minister of state for information; Lt Col (Rtd) Mohiuddin Ahmed, former Acting Director, BNCC, Dhaka; Capt (Hon) Abdul Wahab Joarder and Begum Zobiaida Rashid, wife of Lt Col (dismissed) A Rashid Khan-daker. The six have been arrested so far in connection with the Bangabandhu murder case, lodged with the Dhanmandi thana.

The CMM, after hearing both the prosecution and the defence lawyers, observed that all formalities in connection with the case were completed and that the case was now ready for trial.

The accused were produced before the court at around 1:45 pm amidst tight security. Police in riot gear were seen posted outside the court premises as well as the court room. They were also verifying the identities of people entering the court room.

Hours before the accused were brought to the dock, the court room was packed with lawyers from the prosecution as well as the defence, relatives of the accused and journalists.

People wearing black coats marched around the court premises before the accused were brought. They chanted slogans demanding immediate execution of the accused. Similar procession was brought out of the accused were escorted out of

the court room after their 20-minute stay there.

While being escorted out, the only woman accused in the case was seen being spat at by a person wearing black coat.

Advocate Mahbubur Rahman, Supreme Court lawyer and a BNP MP and former minister in the Ershad regime opened the argument on behalf of the defence, seeking to know what business the court intended to transact on the day.

The prosecution side was represented by Serajul Huq, a senior lawyer of the Supreme Court. The lawyers argued mainly in English.

While Mahbubur Rahman started his argument, some people wearing black coats on the prosecution side were heard as saying "Our people must not shout", apparently trying to calm the noisy colleagues. But their caution went unheeded and the proceedings went on amidst a noisy atmosphere.

The defence urged the CMM to go through the case records and orders on the case carefully before transferring it to the Sessions Judge's Court.

Until and unless all legal requirements are complied with and exhausted, the case cannot be treated as ready for trial, he argued.

Submitting before the court that section 87 of the CrPC had not been complied with and exhausted, Rahman said most of the absconders were in the

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A BNP city unit procession protesting the City Corporation's failure to eradicate mosquitoes yesterday. — Star photo

BNP demonstrates

From Page 1

"If you are not getting necessary cooperation and support from the Awami League government, then come to the street and join us," he asked the mayor.

Bhuiyan condemned the government action in evicting slum dwellers and street hawkers without arranging their rehabilitation.

City BNP convenor Sadeq Hossain Khoka, who presided over the rally, demanded resignation of the mayor. He alleged that the mayor has become a rich man through corruption.

The rally was followed by a procession. The processionists carried large models of mosquitoes and chanted slogans demanding mayor's resignation.

Police intercepted the procession at Gulistan T&T crossing when it was advancing towards Nagar Bhaban, headquarters of Dhaka City Corporation. The processionists held another protest rally there.

Quddus elected BGMEA president

By Staff Correspondent

Mostafa Golam Quddus, a leading garments manufacturer, has been elected president of the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

The other office bearers, declared by Rashed Maqsood Khan, chairman of the BGMEA election board are Mahbub Ali, 1st vice-president, Nurul Haque Shikdar, 2nd vice-president, Abul Kashem Haidar, Vice-President and KM Zaman (Rome) treasurer.

The election was held at the BGMEA office yesterday.

According to the trade organisation Ordinance 94, the elections were held in 9 vacated seats of the 27 member BGMEA executive committee on February 25 where the BGMEA Sam-millito Farhad led by Mostafa Golam Quddus owner of Dragon Sweater, secured 7 seats and the BGMEA Forum, led by Anisur Rahman Sinha, bagged the remaining 2 seats.

The BGMEA election process was completed with the election of new office bearers yesterday, said a press release of the BGMEA.

After the election, the outgoing president of the BGMEA, Anisur Rahman Sinha, congratulated the new members of the executive committee.

He hoped the new committee would be able to solve the problems being faced by the garments exporters.

All relevant records as well as petitions moved yesterday on behalf of different accused persons were sent to the trial court.

Col (Rtd) Syed Farooq Rahman and Lt Col (Rtd) Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan filed petitions yesterday for retraction of their confessional statements made after long police remand.

JP move to reorganise party

By Staff Correspondent

The former chairmen of now defunct upazilas belonging to the Jatiya Party and the JP nominees in the last general election at a meeting in the city yesterday decided to create a cell against each portfolio of the central leadership for strengthening the party, according to the meeting sources.

The meeting was held in the premises of the Asiatic Printers at Tejgaon.

Announcing the steps to reorganise the party, the chairman of the party, H M Ershad said each of the central member would be made convener of the cell. The cell will link the party through various tiers of leadership at the grassroots level.

Kibria

From Page 1

country. The Finance Minister said the present government was determined to increase economic growth by eradicating poverty and thus industrialists and entrepreneurs would act as auxiliary forces in this regard.

Kibria said, only twelve per cent loan defaulters are in private sector. The present government will take all necessary steps for the rehabilitation of the sick industries of the country, he said adding they (sick industrialists) are no longer loan defaulters.

But the sources said he made his decision final, even telling his chauffeur not to take petrol in his car from the government transport pool. "I would pay for it," he told his driver provided by the Commission.

Visitors at trade show

From Page 1

with brand names advertised on top of the merchandise?" asked a buyer at the stall.

At the stall of International Development Enterprises, a young man was demonstrating a "Dhenki Kall," a manual bamboo-made shallow tubewell which, according to the representatives of the NGO, was devised in Rangpur by one Narendra Debnath. "A lot of people are interested in it, we have even had foreigners showing interest in the device," said the sales person. To set up a Dhenki Kall the cost ranged between Tk 600 and Tk 1,000.

At the Winter Garden section, several big US companies had their stalls set up. Caterpillar, the famous US heavy equipment manufacturer, was represented by the Bangladeshi representative GETCO. Mark Manint, who flew in from his Bangkok headquarters, expressed his satisfaction over business in Bangladesh and said that there was an excellent turnout of the general public at the show.

The financial transaction procedures are bit tight here and the LC system is quite lengthy," said Manint adding that the LC system, non-existent in many developing countries in Asia, was causing wastage of valuable time for businesses. "I am sure the government has obvious reasons for such LC system but it would

be better to think of something more liberal."

Under the same roof, LEADS Corporation Ltd, the local agent of NCR, set up their stall with Cash Dispensers and a range of latest banking equipment. "We can equip a bank with these machines to run the day-to-day business on fingertips and with accuracy," said Mokbul Hossain, the marketing manager of the firm. He said that local banks such as Prime, Janata and Dhaka banks have shown interest in the equipment.

The three-day show which concluded yesterday evening was jointly organised by American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh and the US Embassy in Bangladesh. A total of 160 US companies were represented in 99 booths.

According to the organisers, the crowd at the 6th annual US Trade Show reflects the growing interest about US products and goods among the people. A Gafur, Executive Director of Amcham, said that more than 20,000 people visited the show beginning from February 27.

In terms of participating companies the show registered a 30 per cent growth over the previous year. He said that this year about 65 expatriate businessmen visited the fair. They have also expressed happiness observing the tremendous rush of the people at the exhibition. Gafur added referring to the comments by the foreign visitors.

GRATITUDE

ON BEHALF OF HER FAMILY MEMBERS, SAJEDA REAZ, WIFE OF LATE AL-HAJ REAZUDDIN AHMED (BHOLA MIAH), WISHES TO CONVEY HER HEART-FELT/SINCERE THANKS TO ALL RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND WELL-WISHERS, AT HOME AND ABROAD, WHO HAVE COMMISERATED WITH HER ON HER RECENT BEREAVEMENT. D-255

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motiheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90, Kakrail, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Email: dstar@bangla.net