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PHILIPS

Rehabilitation of 40000 Bangalee families in CHT demanded

KHAGRACHHARI, Jan 12: Leaders of the Bangalee Krishak Samik Kalyan Parishad demanded of the government to rehabilitate nearly 40,000 Bangalee families permanently in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, reports UNB.

Thousands of Bangalees of "Guchchha Grams" (cluster villages) in the CHT, rehabilitated temporarily in the 80's, are now very much worried about their existence following peace accord, they said at a press conference at the local press club on Sunday.

Parishad general secretary Abdul Awal read out a written statement at the press conference. Its vice-president AKM Shahidul Islam, Mahbubur Rahman and Abdul Mazid were also present.

The Parishad leaders sought intervention of the ruling and opposition party leaders in protecting the fundamental rights of the Bangalees living in the "Guchchha Grams".

They also demanded of the government to meet their seven-point charter of demand, including rehabilitation with adequate compensation, exemption of loans and granting fresh long-term loans to the inhabitants of "Guchchha Grams".

Poor show

From page 1

six before running himself out while chasing a non-existent second run.

After that disastrous start, the prospect of even reaching the 100-mark looked bleak when skipper Akram Khan, at 7, made a long trudge towards the dressing room, leaving Bangladesh at a precarious 76 for five in 28.2 overs.

Previous match hero Khaled Mahmud and Mohammed Rafique, who top-scored with 29, offered some sort of resilience, but once they made their exit, Bangladesh were skittled out for a paltry 134 in 39.3 overs.

Off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq, who did most of the damage in the Bangladesh innings, returned as the most successful Pakistani bowler with three for 33 in his eight overs. Considered as the best finger spinner in contemporary cricket, Saqlain also captured the player-of-the-match award for his eight mesmerising overs. He was ably supported by the leggie duo of Shahid Afridi and Mush-taq Ahmed, who evenly shared four wickets among them.

After the good work of their tweakers, Pakistan raced on to score 136 in only 24.2 overs, losing only the wicket of their dashing opener Shahid Afridi.

While Afridi was out for 11, his opening partner Saeed Anwar smashed a brilliant unbeaten 73. The left-handed batsman, who took the toothless Bangladeshi attack to the sword right from the start, completed his 21st half-century off only 44 balls with a four off Khaled Mahmud in the 14th over. Anwar smashed 13 boundaries in his fluent 69-ball innings.

With Saeed Anwar on song, Pakistan reached their 50 in only 7.5 overs and hundred in 17 overs.

He shared 43 runs for the first wicket with Afridi before the latter fell in the 6th over, miscuing a Safiuddin delivery to Sanwar at mid-off.

After the departure of Afridi, Saeed Anwar, who holds the world record for the highest score of 194 in one-day cricket, steered Pakistan home without further damage, putting on 93 runs for the undefeated second wicket with Aamir Sohail.

Sohail scored 37 with the help of half a dozen fours.

PID statement

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Ministry yesterday evening, Principal Information Officer (PIO) Moqbul Ahmed, said that he was not in a position to say anything about the issue right at that moment.

"The PID only releases things, under different titles, coming from different offices of the government. I cannot say anything about your contention before I check it with competent authorities," the PIO said. "On top of all, the PID release, which was carried by almost all the major dailies was not an official handout. It was an 'unofficial release' by the PID."

Meanwhile, Finance Minister SAMS Kibria while talking to convener of the BCS (admin) Action Committee Dr. Mujibur Rahman yesterday claimed that the issue had been sent to the JS Committee on Establishment Ministry. UNB news agency reported.

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BCS (Administration) cadre officials held a meeting at the conference room of the Finance Ministry yesterday.— Star photo

Shafaat Jamil discloses in court

Col Farooq had hinted about contact with Indian army

Col Farooq, after the assassination of country's independence leader Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, had hinted at the senior officers about their contact with Eastern Command Headquarters of the Indian army, reports UNB.

"Don't worry, Sir. We have round the clock communication with the Fort William," Farooq assured Brigadier Khaled Mosharraf when the senior army officer expressed his apprehension about Indian intervention following the killing of Bangabandhu.

This was revealed during cross examination yesterday by Col (ret'd) Shafaat Jamil, the 44th prosecution witness in the Bangabandhu Murder Case, describing apprehension of the then CGS of Bangladesh Army and the assurance given by the principal accused.

"You formed an illegal government through killings. What will be the fate of the country if the Indian army intervenes in Bangladesh incidents as there is a 25-year friendship treaty," Khaled Mosharraf was quoted by the witness as saying to Farooq.

The reported talks between late Brig Khaled Mosharraf and Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farooq Rahman took place in the office room of the then 46 Brigade Commander Shafaat Jamil in the afternoon of August 15, 1975.

"The then Awami League government had signed the friendship treaty with India... but the present government did not renew it," said PW-44 when cross examined by advocate Khan Saifur Rahman, the defence lawyer for Farooq.

Col Jamil came up with the elaborate description of Farooq's assurance when he was asked by the defence lawyer if after the August 15 bloody incidents they had thought of seeking cooperation from the Indian army against the changeover.

"We neither thought about any help from Indian troops, nor ever tried for it," he said explaining the pressure of Indian helicopter in Bangladesh territory that crashed in Noakhali a day before the assassination of country's founding President.

"It should be clear that no Indian troops were in Bangladesh. But at that time an Indian helicopter with their own crews was engaged in assisting our army in counter-insurgency operation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts," the witness said.

Regarding the post-August 15 governments, Col Jamil, who was a key leader of the coup against Khandaker Mushtaque and arrested army chief Zia on November 3, 1975, said: He (Zia) was not legal when he took over from Sayem. Ziaur Rahman was legalised later through elections.

All officers, except those involved in the killing of Bangabandhu and staying at Bangabhaban, were united against the activities of Army Chief Ziaur Rahman. They supported my initiative and took part," the former 46 Brigade Commander said about the abortive coup.

Asked as to why they went on operation to topple the Mushatque government, Col Jamil replied that he (Mushatque) was an illegal President. "We went on operation to oust him on November 3 as we could not go for action in previous 81 days."

Replying to a question, he said the martial law was neither withdrawn nor enforced after Sayem took over. A status quo was maintained until November 7.

He also termed "totally illegal" the martial law, officially

proclaimed five days after the killing of Bangabandhu, under the leadership of Khandaker Mushtaque Ahmed, a minister of Sheikh Mujib's cabinet.

"A martial law is legal when it is proclaimed under the chief of staff and followed through the chain of command. But a martial law enforced through killing and coup by retired officers and civilians is not legal," said the ex-army officer.

The then brigade commander said he or any other military officer was not confined after the August 15 bloody incidents. "But mentally, all were confined as the killers made them hostages by tanks and artillery guns."

"In fact, the armed forces were loyal to the government in power before the August 15 incidents... After the assassination of Bangabandhu, all had to accept the situation to avert bloodshed and civil war."

Regarding the November 7, 'Sepoy Revolution', a sequel to November 3 attempt to bring back the chain of command in army, he said as far as he knew 13 officers, including a female, were killed by the 'disgruntled' soldiers.

Some valiant freedom fighters, including Brig Khaled Mosharraf, were killed during the revolution mainly organised by Gano Bahini of Col Taher that freed General Zia from house arrest. Jamil was injured.

The cross examination of the PW-44, Col Jamil, began at the court of Dhaka District and Sessions Judge Kazi Golam Rasul when it resumed at its special elash at Nazimuddin Road yesterday morning after a five-day recess.

Advocate Khan Saifur Rahman will also examine the witness when the court resumes this morning.

2 shot dead in Jhenidah

JHENIDAH, Jan 12: Gunmen shot and killed two people at Gobrapara village in Hari-nakunda thana of the district on Sunday, reports UNB.

Police said a gang of about 12 armed miscreants swooped on Golam Nabi, 45, and Afzal Mollah, 42, in a paddy field at about 9 pm and shot and chopped them. They died on the spot.

The victims were believed to be the activists of the outlawed Biplobi Communist Party.

The bodies were sent to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Ferry service

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rivers yesterday till 6 pm. The official said two ferries, Raipura and Racy, hit hidden shoals while coming to Aricha and were now stranded in the Jamming and the Paddy with a total of about 100 vehicles.

Rapier hit a shoal at 11-30 p.m. Sunday while coming from Natakhol and Racy hit a shoal at about 2-30 a.m. yesterday while from Daulatdia, he said. "Two tug boats have been engaged and we hope the ferries will be salvaged by tonight."

The BIWTC authorities sent flattened rice and molasses for the stranded passengers, he said.

Admin cadre

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minister since he told them that the administrative matter has been referred to a parliamentary standing committee for scrutiny.

The action committee members told the finance minister that there was no point in issuing the handout on Sunday night since they never staged any rally or had any intention of holding that yesterday.

They also said they want implementation of the order made by the Prime Minister on upgradation of the 321 administrative posts. It is a simple administrative matter, which could be dealt with by the Committee of Secretaries.

The minister reportedly told them that he sent the matter to the parliamentary committee since the other 28 cadres did not accept it. Later the administration cadres officials met the newly-appointed Establishment Secretary Dr Shah Mohammad Farid.

They also held a meeting at the conference room of the finance ministry to discuss their next course of action.

"Everything will depend on the outcome of our meeting with the PM," one of the leaders of the action committee told reporters.

BCS Administration Services Association, the officially recognised body of the civil servants, have convened a general meeting on January 17, to discuss the situation relating to the agitation by the action committee.

Indemnity

Hearing of appeal against HC verdict adjourned

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday adjourned the hearing of the appeal against the judgement of the High Court division regarding the validity of the Indemnity (Repeal) Act, 1996 till February 8, reports BSS.

On behalf of the state, the advocate-on-record prayed for adjournment of the appeal hearing. The counsel for the appellant, Barrister Korban Ali, opposed the prayer.

After hearing both the sides the court allowed the prayer and fixed the date of hearing on February 8.

Col (ret'd) Shahriar Rashid Khan and Col (ret'd) Syed Farooq Rahman, both accused in the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Murder Case, challenged the validity of the Indemnity (Repeal) Act, 1996.

A division bench of the High Court division of the Supreme Court upon hearing two writ petitions challenging the validity of Indemnity (Repeal) Act, 1996 declared that the Indemnity (Repeal) Act is valid.

Expansion of road in Dhamrai

WB asks LGED to look for alternative

By Staff Correspondent

The Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) has decided to go ahead with the construction of the part of Dhamrai-Dhantara road which passes through some historical temples and structures.

Official sources, however, said the road will not be widened, as planned earlier. Instead, the existing narrow road would be given a facelift under the World Bank (WB) aided project that is supposed to improve communication between Dhamrai and Dhantara.

On November 20 last year, The Daily Star reported that the fate of several historic temples at Dhamrai was hanging in the balance because of a WB-aided project for expansion of a road through the area.

Following the report the WB suspended the project and investigated the matter. WB sources said during the investi-

gation, top LGED officials admitted that the very concept of the project was wrong at that particular part.

"When you already have a ready alternative for a by-pass road, why did they choose to make the road pass through there in the plan?" asked a source at the LGED, pointing out that the construction of the 115-metre-long bridge over the Bangshi river in line with the temples was "itself a conspiracy to destroy the tradition of Dhamrai."

Meanwhile, the TNO of Dhamrai has personally gone on a campaign to mobilise public opinion in the area to go ahead with the widening of the road and demolishing the aged structures, according to local sources.

The TNO could not be reached for his comment. But it was learnt from the WB sources that it had asked the LGED to immediately conduct a survey for a by-pass road.

"The LGED has agreed to do the survey for a bypass," said a WB source.

Bank deposits

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is another major factor".

A senior banker, however, hoped that the deposit figure would rise when the estimate for the remaining period of the year is completed. Transactions in December normally remain higher than that in any other month. "So there is every chance that the deposit figure will rise," he added.

To meet the budget deficit the government continued to borrow from the banking system and the amount rose to Tk 1707 crore during fiscal year 1996-97, surpassing the previous year's Tk 1696 crore. "Government is so desperate to borrow money from the banking sector that it is ready to give even 9 to 10 per cent interest as against below 4 per cent earlier," said the managing director of a bank.

"As the government is offering 10 to 13 per cent interest on different kinds of savings certificates people showed much interest in buying those, instead of keeping money in banks. This also contributed to reducing the deposit," he mentioned.

Corporate advisory services and fund-raising for local and multinational companies were the main activities for Peregrine in Bangladesh. Research was another major area of business.

The company, the first international investment bank in Bangladesh, began business in June 1996 after obtaining "operating permission" from Bangladesh Bank in 1995.

Of late, a second international investment bank, Sri Lanka's Vanik, has started operations in Bangladesh.

"There were hardly any direct investments made by Peregrine," one source said and added the company held funds for investment in Bangladesh "raised from outside the country."

The source quoted a Peregrine official as calling the size of the funds "a very very closely-guarded secret."

Since March last year, when Peregrine was implicated in the much-publicised share market scam, the company has virtually been out of business.

One of Asia's largest investment banks, Peregrine plunged into the crisis after Zurich Cantre Investments Ltd pulled out of a deal to put in 200 million US dollars into a rescue

Ex-minister Abdur Rahman dead

Former Minister for Works and Religious Affairs Alhaj Abdur Rahman died of old age complications at PG Hospital last night. He was 78, family sources said, reports BSS.

The deceased left behind his wife, two sons and four daughters, and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his death.

Late Rahman, who was a close associate of Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, was a Vice President of National Awami Party before joining the cabinet in 1978.

The namaz-e-janaza of Abdur Rahman will be held at Tangail Central Jame Masjid today.

He will be buried at the Tangail central graveyard. The quikhwani of Abdur Rahman will be held at his residence at Miabari in Tangail on January 16.

Peregrine's liquidation

From page 1

at a January 1995 international investment conference in Dhaka, also refused to speculate on what would happen to the company's Bangladesh funds.

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One of Asia's largest investment banks, Peregrine plunged into the crisis after Zurich Cantre Investments Ltd pulled out of a deal to put in 200 million US dollars into a rescue

package. Peregrine also tried unsuccessfully other options to find funds, knocking at potential investors and banks. As a result, the company defaulted on a US payment.

Hong Kong's securities watchdog, the Securities and Futures Commission, has already issued restriction notices on some members of the Peregrine Group and the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong suspended Peregrine Brokerage Ltd's membership on Friday.

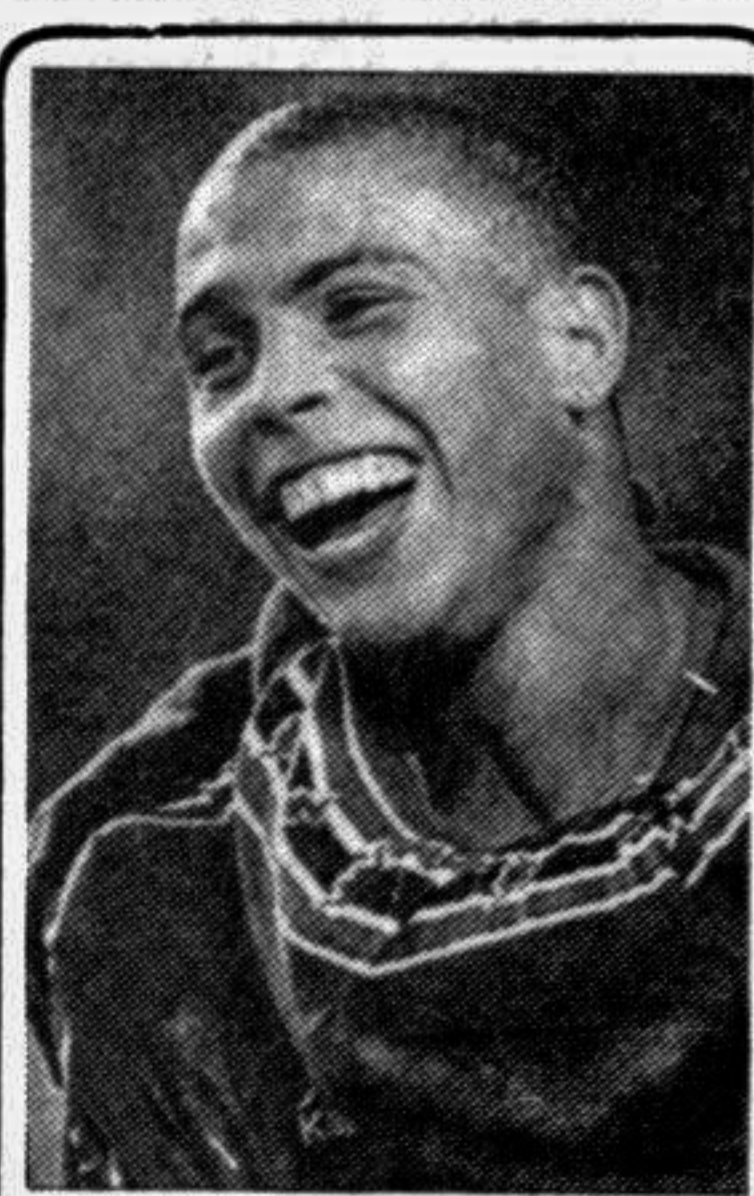
Launched in 1990, the award-winning company's profits reached as much as 130 million in 1995.

The Anglo-Chinese stock broker drew rich private clients mainly because of its strong local ties, British expertise and connections to top Hong Kong tycoon Li Ka-shing.

With a large number of clients from mainland China, many of whom also held shares in Peregrine Investment Holdings itself, the company's collapse was hastened by the crisis in Southeast Asia, especially because of its heavy exposure on Indonesia.

In Bangladesh, Peregrine also catered to the rich and the influential.

But alerted by the company's fate in the US and Vietnam, where it was fined, some multinational banks avoided taking exposure on Peregrine, a banking source said. In Vietnam, it was asked to wind up its business.



Ronaldo on the top again

PARIS, Jan 12: Brazilian star striker Ronaldo won the FIFA World Player of the year award here today — the first player to win the award twice since its inception in 1991, reports AFP.

The 21-year-old Ronaldo, who also won in 1996, cantered home with 480 points ahead of compatriot Roberto Carlos (65 pts) while Dutchman Dennis Bergkamp and French star Zinedine Zidane shared third place with 62 points.

Votes were cast by 121 national coaches.

Brazil had double cause to celebrate as they picked up the International Team of the year award.

Jamaat won't join JS unless CHT accord scrapped

Jamaat-e-Islami MPs will not join the winter session of Parliament summoned on January 14.

"Jamaat MPs are not going to Parliament unless the CHT agreement is cancelled," Jamaat Secretary General Moulana Matur Rahman Nazim told UNB yesterday.

Jamaat has three MPs in the 330-member Jatiya Sangad. Main opposition BNP, which is abstaining from the House since last August, will not also turn up to this session until their various demands, including cancellation of the CHT accord are met.

Meanwhile, leader of the Jamaat parliamentary party Maulana Delwar Hossain Saidee also declared his party's decision to boycott the coming parliament session.

It is clear that the session is summoned to give legal coverage to the CHT agreement which is against the national interests, country's territorial integrity and the constitution," he told a press conference at the Jatiya Sangad Bhaban.

Trawler capsizes in Rupsha: 2 missing

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 12: Two unidentified persons are reportedly missing after a trawler capsized this evening in the river Rupsha.

Witnesses said the accident occurred as a result of the head-on collision with a mechanised ferry.

Central Jail

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istry said that construction work of a prison for housing 300 classified prisoners within the boundaries of the jail has already been started.

Meanwhile, plans to shift the under-trial prisoners at Dhaka Central Jail to Tegharia has been postponed considering the inconvenience to bring them to the court every day, the sources said. Primary site selection for constructing another separate prison for the under-trial prisoners was also completed during the previous government.

Sundarbans

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this waste," he said pointing at the rotting heaps of logs. "These precious logs get rotten in high salinity within a few months and this causes heavy loss of public funds," he said.

Other officials present at the site said the court did not give permission to sell those until a verdict is given.

"We can easily save crores of taka by immediately selling these confiscated items and depositing the money in the government coffers," said an official. "When the verdict is eventually given, the fate of the money becomes obvious. Logs are highly perishable in this saline condition," said one of them.

But some local people alleged that this sort of permission would benefit the forest officials who do not enjoy any good reputation as far as conservation of the forest is concerned. "There must be a special team to monitor the whole process of confiscation of logs and their eventual sale," said a businessman at Mongla.