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Killing of four BTV officials on Nov 7, 1975

By Staff Correspondent

The CID yesterday arrested five Bangladesh Television officials - one of them now retired - on charges of their involvement in the killing of four of their senior colleagues on November 7, 1975.

The arrested are Producer Lutfar Rahman Talukdar, Transmission Controller Aynul Kabir, Assistant Directors Abdul Awal Sarker and Abul Kashem Bagoja and former BTV official Ainuzzaman. CID officials said.

The five accused persons came to the CID headquarters in the city yesterday morning as they were summoned three days ago. They were later arrested.

The investigators were questioning them at the CID office till last night. The five are likely to be produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court today.

The investigation officer, ASP Khalequzzaman, told The Daily Star last night that he would seek five days' remand. They have been accused of involvement in the killing of the then Administrative Officer of BTV AB Siddique, Chief Accountant Akmal Khan, Director (Programme) Manirul Alam and Assistant Photographer Firoz Khatun.

Earlier, CID arrested retired Havildar Altaf Hossain on October 21, 1997 in connection with the murders. Altaf is on bail now.

The four officials were shot dead on November 7, 1975 by some military personnel allegedly in collaboration with some BTV employees, according to CID investigators. They were killed as part of a blueprint chalked out by their rival group in the BTV following a dispute in the employees' union, the investigators said.

CID arrests 5

The four officials were confined in a room in the BTV building on November 7, according to the investigation. Then the killers, led by Havildar Altaf Hossain, dragged them behind the building and shot them on the night of November 7. The bodies were dumped in the nearby jheel.

Families of the victims had lodged separate murder cases with Gulsian thana on November 19, 1975 accusing unidentified killers. No name was mentioned in those FIRs, police said.

The Detective Branch (DB) of police took over the cases and submitted a final report in January 1978 after investigation. The cases were dismissed as the DB investigation failed to identify any killer.

DB had arrested and then released two of BTV officials - Abul Kashem Bagoja and Abul Kashem (no more in service) after the final report, CID officials said.

CID is yet to arrest the latter and is now looking for him. In March 1997, CID revived the case filed by the wife of Akmal Khan.

In the course of the investigation, CID has so far interrogated about 150 people including former and serving BTV officials and army personnel, CID sources said.

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Six bills placed amid opposition

By Staff Correspondent

Introduction of six bills in Jatiya Sangsad, one of those allegedly out of the way, faced strong criticism from the opposition members yesterday.

All the bills, however, were introduced in the House by voice votes.

One of the bills sought ratification of the recent Presidential Ordinance imposing fresh surcharges and duties on various services and imports.

Another bill - International Financial Organisations (Amendment) Bill, 1998 - sought legal authority of the government to accept, with or without any condition, any proposal for any amendment to the agreements with certain international financial institutions including International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

Three other bills sought amendments to three legislations to provide for appointment of 'more' than one province chancellors in the universities of Dhaka, Rajshahi and Chittagong.

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BNP walks out after Nasim's fiery speech

By Special Correspondent

BNP staged a walkout yesterday protesting what it said the Speaker's failure to expunge a speech by works minister Mohammad Nasim on the issue of permitting its two detained MPs to attend parliament.

The minister had blasted the opposition for "defending" the killers of August 15 and Nov 3.

The heat that blew over the House briefly on the first day of the winter session sparked off a point of privilege raised by Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof Badruddoza Choudhury, demanding an answer from the Chair on the letters of two MPs - K.M.Obaidur Rahman and Alamgir Kabir - requesting permission to attend the House business.

As emotions heated up with a fiery charge led by Mohammad Nasim denouncing the killers of August 15 and Nov 3, his high-pitched speech was punctuated with remarks from the Opposition Bench like "what about Siraj Shikder's murder".

Some BNP MPs pointed their fingers at the Treasury Bench while Nasim was blasting the killers of August 15 and Nov 3. After the minister finished his speech, the Chair ruled that they couldn't be allowed to participate in parliament's business as they are facing criminal charges, one for a 'very tragic killing' and the other on different criminal charges.

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Nov 8 verdict Tight security in & around court

Tight security measures have been taken in and around the court area ahead of the verdict in the Bangabandhu murder case on November 8, reports UNB.

"We've already taken effective and adequate steps against any possible attempt to create disturbances during the verdict," said a senior police official yesterday.

During the verdict, movement of all modes of vehicles will be restricted in the court area, he said.

About 2,000 uniformed policemen will be deployed in and around the court on the day of the verdict. Other members of the law enforcing agencies will also be kept on alert.

Meanwhile, police have been keeping close watch on some people suspected to be trouble-makers and have also identified at least 50 points as probable trouble spots.

Police sources said they have increased their vigilance in some areas and on the movement of certain people as well as on their residences.

Politics at KMC banned

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Nov 5: Student politics has been banned on Khulna Medical College campus with effect from today.

This decision was taken at a meeting of the Academic Council on Wednesday with Principal Prof Md. Abdul Hannan in the chair.

Khulna Medical College is yet to get recognition of both Bangladesh Medical Council and the British Medical Council, said the principal.

Be in House and face them

By Nazmul Ashraf

Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia has instructed the BNP MPs to attend the Jatiya Sangsad session regularly to ventilate their grievances on the floor of the House and strengthen the anti-government street agitation as well.

"We can't give the government a walkover by boycotting the parliament where we must raise our voice against all its failures, repression and corruption," she was quoted as telling a meeting of BNP Parliamentary Party (BNPPP) just before the JS went into its winter session yesterday afternoon.

"We'll utilise both the Sangsad and the streets to continue the anti-government agitation," she reportedly told the meeting.

The Opposition leader yesterday left the House after 47 minutes. A good number of BNP lawmakers followed her.

Khaleda's instruction to attend the parliament came after some of her party's young lawmakers were vocal in the BNPPP meet for all-out agitation till the fall of this government and demanded that she announce tough programmes to that end.

Meeting sources said an influential BNP MP also spoke for boycotting the House on crucial issues like the Upazila Parishad Bill, likely to be passed in the current session.

Responding to demand for fresh course of action, the Opposition leader said it will be decided by the National Standing Committee, BNP's highest policy-making body, and in consultation with other opposition parties.

Khaleda is expected to announce the next course of agitation at tomorrow's public meeting at Paltan Maidan in the city.

BNP's rank and file has meantime dismissed programmes like train march, barricade and hartal, insiders said.

In the BNPPP meeting, party legislators including Fazlur Rahman Patal, Joyal Abedin Faruk, Ziaul Haq Zia, Shamsuzzaman Duda, Ruhul Quddus Talukdar Dulu and Najmuddin Alam flayed the government for 'political killings, arrests, imprisonment and attacks on the partymen across the country.' They also alleged they are not being involved in the development works at their respective areas only because they belong to the opposition party.

Some of them found no other option to toppling the 'tyrant' government through non-stop street agitation like hartal, gherao.

MK Anwar suggested strongly opposing the imposition of post-flood surcharges which were 'additional burden on the flood-hit nation.'

Earlier, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof. Badruddoza Choudhury and Chief Whip of the Opposition Khandakar Delwar Hossain briefed the meeting about the discussion at the JS Business Advisory Committee meeting yesterday.

The two senior opposition lawmakers described the attitude of the Treasury Bench representatives in the committee including the Leader of the House herself as very aggressive. They said all the three BNP proposals for general discussions on issues of public interest in the House were rejected.

Share scam cases Dr Zahir rejects appointment as Special PP

By Staff Correspondent

Top corporate lawyer Dr M Zahir has rejected an appointment by the Law Ministry to assist the Public Prosecutor in dealing with the share scam cases.

In the letter of rejection, Zahir gave his reasons.

"I reject this appointment both because I am not willing to act on prescribed government fees as Special Public Prosecutor and also because you have not gone by the basic rules of the Bar Association which a person of your standing should know," Zahir said in a letter to the secretary at the ministry.

The ministry recently named Dr M Zahir, Dr AKM Ali and Syed Hyder Ali as Special PPs to handle the cases. Earlier the ministry had appointed Syed Rezaur Rahman as Special PP.

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on April 4 last year sued 15 companies after a probe committee report. Three of the accused companies later filed petitions challenging the merits of the cases which went to High Court and then to Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court later rejected the petition filed by the three accused companies. The legal barriers to proceeding of the cases had thus been removed. The trial of these cases is likely to begin this month but finding competent lawyers remained a key issue.

The SEC officials sought government permission to hire lawyers matching those of the accused companies. "If we use the public prosecutors then we are unlikely to win any case," SEC officials argued.

The government later appointed the three and said that

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DSE in crisis Rashid wants his seat back

By M Shamsur Rahman

The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) slipped into a fresh crisis yesterday as a Council member insisted that all four councillors be allowed to continue for another term. The plea from Kazi Firoz Rashid came after the election committee allowed present chairman Rakibur Rahman to stay on.

In a letter to the election body, Rashid said that a lottery held on October 31 had decided on the four who should retire. "If one of them is allowed to continue, the decision should also apply to others."

The election committee met yesterday to respond to the application but failed to arrive at a decision, sources said. It will again sit on Saturday.

"They are taking time to seek legal opinion," a source in DSE said.

"Your historic decision nullified the effectiveness of the whole lottery process. As a result, all of us, the present council members (including the four to be dropped as per the lottery), continue to remain councillors."

"Therefore, we do not think there is any need to hold elections for four new councillors. If there is any move to hold elections, it would be deemed entirely illegal. You are therefore requested to stop all election activities and give your opinion on the issue."

According to DSE's new Articles of Association adopted late last year, four of the 12 elected members of the present council are to retire this year. These vacant posts are to be filled through a direct election.

As no one volunteered to retire, a lottery named the four - Chairman Rakibur Rahman, Kazi Firoz Rashid, Ahsanul Islam and Dewan Suhel Afzal.

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Keep cool against provocation

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the ruling party MPs to remain alert against any provocative acts, and face any eventuality with patience, reports UNB.

The directive came at a meeting of the Awami League Parliamentary Party (ALPP) at Sangsad Bhavan in the afternoon. The Prime Minister presided over the meeting.

Speaking about the local government system, the prime minister said steps would be taken to make the local government structure modern and effective for the people.

She thanked her colleagues for their sincere and devoted service to the nation in facing the century's severe flood.

Hasina asked her party deputies to closely monitor the relief distribution, agri-rehabilitation programme, and other problems in their respective constituencies.

Mentioning the allocation of farm loans worth Tk 3,270 crore, she also asked the MPs to monitor their disbursement to the affected people for boosting agricultural production.

The prime minister said the massive post-flood rehabilitation programme will be completed by the end of the year.

Govt moves to import onion

By Gobinda Bar

The government is considering importing onion from some South East Asian, Gulf and Central Asian countries to contain its a sudden price rise, officials said here yesterday.

"We are examining the viability possible import cost, and probable subsidy on the item," Commerce Secretary Syed Abdullah Farouk Chowdhury said here yesterday.

People in the nearby offices said they had lodged complaints with the authorities several times in the past. The authorities recently removed slums from the area but the fish markets and similar other structures were not touched.

Govt moves to import onion

By Staff Correspondent

The three unauthorised wholesale fish markets which have long been creating a nuisance in Kawran Bazar area cannot be removed immediately because the Dhaka City Corporation has no alternative space to rehabilitate the 300 traders.

Meanwhile, DCC's fish market, hardly hundred yards from the unauthorised markets, is being used by illegal occupants for accommodation and as kitchen for fish traders.

When asked, an official of DCC's Market Wing said that they did not know anything about 'outsiders occupying the DCC market'. But they mentioned that the market was not rented.

Traders at the unauthorised markets said that they were regularly paying a 'handsome amount' annually to DCC officials as 'taxes' to do business on the DCC land. Since the markets were unauthorised, payments were also being made 'unofficially'.

General Secretary of Sonargaon Market, the largest of the three markets, Mohammad Ramzan Ali Khandakar said that every day fish worth several lakh taka were traded in

AL conspiring to foil spirit of Nov 7: BNP

BNP has urged the people to observe the National Revolution and Solidarity Day on November 7 ignoring the 'conspiracy' of the Awami League government, reports UNB.

In a press briefing yesterday evening at the party's central office, Akbar Hossain MP, convenor of the National Revolution and Solidarity Day Observance Committee, also urged the people to stand against the

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