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6 top police officers sent into retirement

By Staff Correspondent

Six senior police officers who had come from the Army were sent into retirement yesterday. Home Ministry sources said.

Among the retired, four were holding the rank of additional inspectors general and two deputy inspectors general of police.

The additional IGs who have been retired are Shahidul Islam Chowdhury, Chairman of the BIWTC, Wahidul Huq, Director General of Immigration and Passport, N Hussain, Chairman, BRTA, Shohidul Haq, OSD in the Establishment Ministry.

The two DIGs who have been given retirement are Osman Ali Khan, OSD, Establishment Ministry and Rafiqul Alam, in the Police Headquarters.

All the six officials given retirement were absorbed in the police from Bangladesh Army mostly during the Ziaur Rahman regime, according to UNB.

Some 23 former army officers had been absorbed as police officers at different times. A total of 18 of them were sent on retirement, including 12 during the tenure of present government.

At present, only two ex-army officers are in police force. They are additional IG Mahabub Al Farid and Modabbir Hossain Chowdhury. Three had retired in normal process.

No hartal if govt agrees to demands, says Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said her party is against hartal and will not support it in future.

BNP was forced to hartal for few days to protest the government's policies and undemocratic policies and activities, she told a World Bank delegation at her 29 Minto Road official residence yesterday.

The former Premier said: "The planned hartals might not be needed if the government shows sincerity and agrees to the BNP demands."

A three-member WB team led by its vice president Joseph Stiglitz had a 45-minute discussion with the opposition leader and top ranking BNP leaders on various important issues, including country's economic condition and hartal.

Briefing newsmen, Begum Zia's advisor M M Rezaul Karim admitted that the hartal issue was discussed, but he refused to elaborate the views of WB officials.

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2 killed as bomb goes off in MP's house

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Mar 15: Two persons were killed and another was critically injured in a bomb blast in the house of a ruling party MP at Chhatrak in Sunamganj district this afternoon.

The incident took place while bombs were being prepared on the first floor of the two-storey house, local sources said. One of the dead was identified as Abul Kalam Babul, 35, a member of thana Awami League. The identity of the other could not be known immediately. The injured, Abul Lais Chowdhury who is a cousin of the Awami League MP, Muhibur Rahman Manik, was admitted to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital. The MP was staying in the capital.

Babul, hailing from Sylhet, used to stay in the MP's house and was involved with business for a long time, the sources added.

According to police and local people, a huge sound was heard at around 3:45 pm. Soon after, a police team rushed to the MP's house at the Hospital Road. Three rooms were badly damaged in the blast. There was a hole on the floor. The grill of the veranda and a window were blown away. The bodies were seen lying on the floor.

Elder brother of the MP Muhibur Rahman, who lives on the ground floor, said, "I was in the toilet when the incident took place and I came out hurriedly after hearing a huge sound. I saw huge black smoke at the time. But I don't know anything about the explosion."

Somebody from outside might have thrown the powerful bomb into the house or it might have been placed in the house sometime before the incident, Muhibur said.

The Deputy Commissioner and the Police Super of Sunamganj was staying at the house cordoned by police. Both of See Page 12 Col 8

1996 share scam cases Charges framed against SES, First Capital and four directors

By M Shamsur Rahman

Two companies and their four directors have been charged with manipulating the country's share market in 1996. The Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Court yesterday framed charges against SES Company Ltd and First Capital Securities Ltd.

The charges were also brought against Runa Alam and Sabet Siddique, both directors of SES Company Ltd, and Rizwan Bin Farouk and MKM Mohiuddin, both of First Capital Securities Ltd, for manipulating the share market during the period from July to December in 1996, through false foreign Delivery Versus Payment (DVP).

"During the period, you have artificially induced the share prices violating laws. You have also applied fraudulent means to manipulate the market," Judge Mollah Mustafa Kamal read out the charge.

The accused, on being asked by the judge, denied the charges. The judge said trial would be held as they all pleaded not guilty.

The prosecution argued that the delivery versus payment was used as a "weapon" to influence the share prices.

"The people on the streets were deceived as these transactions were fictitious and never took place. The transactions were recorded on the DSE trading sheet and the people on the streets had no way of knowing these artificial transactions. The price index kept on leaping based on these artificial transactions."

The defence, however, filed an application with the Metropolitan Sessions Judge on Thursday last seeking transfer of the cases to the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Court.

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JCD calls strike

Hasina to open 'Bangabandhu Chair' today

By DU Correspondent

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) has called a strike on Dhaka University campus to protest the visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today.

The prime minister is scheduled to visit the university today to inaugurate the "Bangabandhu Chair" in the Department of History.

"All the academic and administrative activities of the university will remain open as usual," DU Vice-chancellor Prof AK Azad Chowdhury told The Daily Star.

"Nothing has happened to suspend the activities or close the university," the VC said.

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Rafiq was sacked for speaking truth, says Khaleda

BNP Chairperson Khaleda

Zia yesterday said Minister Maj (ret'd) Rafiqul Islam, Bir Uttam, was sacked for speaking the truth, reports UNB.

Major Rafiq was removed from the Home Ministry as he told that the Jessore killing resulted from grenade explosions and such explosives are only possessed by army," she said.

Khaleda Zia was exchanging views with DCCI delegation at her 29 Minto Road official residence in the evening.

About the allegation that the former Home Minister and the Police Super of Jessore did not discharge their duties properly, the opposition leader asked:

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Corruption institutionalised in civil service, seminar told

By Staff Correspondent

Corruption has been institutionalised in the civil service in the country. No one denies its existence. However, difference of opinion exists only on its nature, level and extent.

This was observed in a keynote paper presented yesterday at a working session of the on going 'International Seminar on Administrative Reforms for Development of Bangladesh' in the city.

The keynote paper, presented by Prof. Mohammad Mohtab Khan of Dhaka University, said "Centralisation of authority, elitism, authoritarianism, corruption, lack of accountability and transparency, resistance to change are the main characters of the bureaucracy."

The session was chaired by Rahmatullah MP while CPD executive chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan, Ziaur Rahman MP, former country director of the World Bank Pierre Landell-Mills, former finance minister AMA Muhith, former secretary

of the day were presided over by Commerce and Industries Minister T Jai Ahmed and Food and Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury.

Tofail Ahmed criticised the foreign investors for delaying projects after getting approval from the government. He cited the delay in the setting up of

large-scale power plants and private Export Processing Zones for foreign investors.

"We have awarded contracts to a number of foreign companies for setting up large-scale power plants within a 10-month period. But the progress is still very negligible though two years have already passed," Tofail said.

"The government is also in a bad position with another big foreign invested venture, Karnaphuli Fertiliser Company (KAFCO), the minister noted. Referring to local business men and industrialists, he said they often become defaulters because of devaluation and high interest rates."

Matia Chowdhury blamed military rule in the past for spreading corruption down to the grassroots level. Declaration of martial law one after another destroyed whatever values remained in the middle class of the society," she said.

The others who took part in See Page 12 Col 4

First Asian Test Championship Pakistan lift trophy in style

By Al-Amin

The curtain of the cricket carnival that travelled across the sub-continent for the last one month fell at Dhaka yesterday with Pakistan winning the first ever Asian Test Championship in a most convincing fashion, defeating Sri Lanka in the final by an innings and 175 runs.

Quite fittingly, Wasim Akram, the most enterprising icon in the three-nation meet with hat-tricks of wickets in back-to-back Tests, held aloft the crystal trophy on a wonderful afternoon at the Bangabandhu National Stadium after his highly motivated side outclassed the islanders in every department of the game.

The predictable Pakistan

victory was stamped at the stroke of the tea break on the fourth day when Sri Lanka, resuming their second innings on nine for three, lost their last batsman with the scoreboard reading 188.

Sri Lanka, who scored 231 in the first innings, needed another 354 runs at the beginning of the fourth day to eclipse the mammoth Pakistan first in-

nings score of 594. But the beleaguered islanders, badly shaken by a mesmerising spell from Pakistan skipper Wasim Akram on the significant third day, were heading for their lowest ever Test score when they were reduced to 116 for nine in 46.2 overs.

Only a gritty last-wicket stand of 75 runs between Hashan Tillakaratne and num-

ber eleven batsman Sanjeeva de Silva saved them from a complete humiliation. The record Sri Lankan partnership for the tenth wicket, which frustrated the Pakistanis for quite a while, finally came to an end when off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq rattled the middle stump of Sanjeeva.

Tillakaratne, who put up a brave light after Sri Lanka plunged into deep trouble at 61 for seven, remained unbeaten on a fine 55, studded with ten fours.

Nothing could, however, take the shine away from the stupendous performance of the Pakistanis, who dominated the under-strength Sri Lankans from day one.

Akram, who led his side from the front, took two wickets in the first innings in successive deliveries, effectively evaporating Sri Lanka's hopes of getting enough runs on the See Page 12 Col 1

we SCORE... while others watch

Standard Chartered



The proud skipper
A bowler Akram holds aloft the trophy for the Coca-Cola Asian Test Championship. — Star photo

Bangladesh, Pakistan play ODI today

By Sports Reporter

Bangladesh will take on the powerful Pakistan side in a day-night one-day international match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium this afternoon.

The match that will be telecast live by Star Sports and Bangladesh Television, will start at 2 pm BST. Radio Bangladesh will also provide ball by ball commentary of the match.

Neither of the teams has been finalised yet.

Tickets

The tickets for today's match will go on sale through four branches of the Baraka Bank at Dilkusha, VIP Road, Nayapattan and Principal Office from 10 am this morning. Tickets will also be available at the ticket counter of the stadium from the morning.

The rates of different gallery tickets are the same as they were for each day of the Asian Test Championship final between Pakistan and Sri Lanka. However, those who have gallery tickets for the fifth day of the Test match, will be allowed to use those for today's match. This rule does not apply for the hospitality boxes, which will have to be rented at Tk 12,000 for the AC booths and Tk 10,000 for the Non-AC ones.

Bills for four city corpsns passed

Jatiya Sangsad yesterday passed four identical amendment bills for four city corporations of the country, reports BSS.

The bills are the Dhaka City Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1999, the Chittagong City Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1999, the Khulna City Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1999 and the Rajshahi City Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1999.

The bills sought to extend the tenure of holding elections to the four city corporations by not exceeding 180 days and the Chief Election Commissioner will fix up the polling date.

The extension was sought to facilitate delimitation of reserved seats for women commissioners for conducting their direct elections in line with the present government's commitment to ensure greater participation of women in development activities in all spheres of society.

The bill in amended form said "There shall be reserved, exclusively for women, such number of seats, here in after referred to as reserved seats, as is equivalent to one third of the number of commissioners fixed by the government."

The extension of time-limit sought in the bills is also required for preparing the voters list.

SC Bar Assoc polls from today

By SC Correspondent

The two-day annual election of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) will begin today.

The election will resume on Thursday after a day's interval because of the government holiday on the occasion of the birthday of Bangabandhu.

The polls will start at 10 am and it will continue till 5 pm with a one-hour break from 1 pm to 2 pm each day.

One thousand seven hundred and nine voters will cast their See Page 12 Col 3

2 leaders should soften stance, reach consensus: DCCI

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry yesterday stressed the need for an immediate understanding and consensus between the two top leaders of the government and the Opposition.

They urged them to soften their stance in the greater interest of the nation.

A 14-member delegation of the DCCI led by its president MH Rahman met Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia at her official residence in the evening.

The chamber leaders said there is no alternative to establishing consensus on political stability to keep economic activities out of the purview of political agitations.

Khaleda told the delegation that the national economy was mainly being affected by extortion by the ruling party people, not by hartals. The Jamuna Bridge is going to be closed due

to extortion by Awami League activists, she added.

"I am not at all in favour of hartal. I also deeply opposed hartal in the past. But what we will do if we are not allowed to speak in parliament and also on the streets," the BNP chief said.

The opposition parties are not being allowed to speak both in and outside the parliament on deterioration of law and order, ruination of the economy, terrorism, killings and other important public issues.

The former prime minister said, when BNP was in power, it gave adequate time to the opposition to speak in the House.

She alleged the government filed false cases against BNP leaders and workers. Citing examples, she said the government filed murder case against Moshed Khan MP, bomb explosion See Page 12 Col 7

TUs at Ctg port announce fresh programme

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 15: Chattagram Dock Bondar Sramik Karmachari Parishad, an alliance of 22 trade union bodies announced fresh agitation programmes today.

The programme includes a four-hour work abstention on March 23 if their demands were not met by March 22.

The parishad announced its decision at a rally of port workers and employees held on the premises of Chittagong port office today.

Several thousand dock workers attended the rally demanding cancellation of permission given to an American company for installation of a private container terminal at Patenga.

The programmes also included holding of demonstration.

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Another Jessore blast victim flown to Dhaka

Nusrat Naorin, an artiste of Uddhi Shilpi Goshthi and a victim of the bomb blast in Jessore, was flown to Dhaka Combined Military Hospital (CMH) yesterday at the directive of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, reports BSS.

Naorin, who was undergoing treatment at the Khulna Sadar Hospital, was brought to the capital by a helicopter as her condition deteriorated, official sources said.

Suspected Harkat man held

Special Branch of police arrested a suspected member of Harkat-ul-Jihad from a residential hotel in the city yesterday evening, reports UNB.

The arrested man, identified as Abu Mohammad Farooq Hossain was bearing passports of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

Police suspected that Farooq Hossain might be a Pakistani citizen and a trainer of Afghan Mujahed.

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Prayer Timings

March 16

	Azhan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:30	5:35
Zohr	12:45	1:30
Asr	4:30	4:35
Maghrib	6:20	6:23
Esha	7:30	7:35

Source: Islamic Foundation