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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.

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 Mahmud Al Farid and Mdabir 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 partisan 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 Chhataki 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 the thana headquarters 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

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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 said.

Special Public Prosecutors Dr A K M Ali, Syed Rezaur Rahman and Syed Hyder Ali represented the prosecution while A Malek appeared for SES Company and Hannan Arif for First Capital Securities.

Arguments on charge framing against Intiaz Hossain & Company and Securities Consultants Ltd would begin today while those against Runup Oil and Feed Ltd on March 18.

The court is expected to resume hearing today on charge framing against Beximco Pharmaceuticals, Shimpukur Holdings and Doha Securities. On Sunday, the court partially heard arguments on Shimpukur Holdings when the prosecution opened two other cases at the same time.

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.

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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 Mohabbat 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."

Two other working sessions on the day were presided over by Commerce and Industries Minister Md. Ali 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

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 Finance Minister Maj (retd) Rafiqul Islam, Bir Uttam, was sacked for speaking the truth.

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 Jessor did not discharge their duties properly, the opposition leader asked:

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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 Pakistani 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 number

eleven batsman Sanjeeda 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 Sanjeeda.

Tillakaratne, who put up a brave fight 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

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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 Al Baraka Bank at Dilkusha, VIP Road, Nayapaltan 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.

TUs at Ctg port announce fresh programme

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 15: Chittagong 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 parishioners 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 Uddchi 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.

Bills for four city corps passed

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 Md. Ali 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 extortions by the ruling party people, not by hartals. The Jamuna Bridge is going to be closed due

to extortions by Awami League activists, she added.

"I am not at all in favour of hartal. I also deadly 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 an unspecified number of BNP leaders and workers. Citing examples, she said the government filed murder case against Morshed Khan MP, bomb explosion

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Verdict on transfer of court Thursday

By Staff Correspondent

The verdict of an application to transfer the case regarding removal of four Beximco directors from the Board of AB Bank would be delivered on Thursday, the judge said.

Judge Kazi Ebadul Huq, who presides at court six at High Court Division, yesterday heard arguments from both the petitioners and defence.

On Thursday last, Barrister Rafique-Ul-Huq filed an application before the court for transfer of the case expressing apprehension by his clients about hearing in the said court as a result a story published in The Daily Star.

The second defence point is a report carried by The Daily Star allegedly creating controversy about the case. Mahmud argued

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In his arguments defence lawyer Barrister Rokunuddin Mahmud said that the applica-

Dhaka-Calcutta bus service

Trial run likely from Thursday

By M Anwarul Haq

The Dhaka-Calcutta bus service is expected to start with a trial run on Thursday, marking the opening of direct 'surface communications' between the two countries.

However, inauguration of the Dhaka-Calcutta bus service will not witness any high level diplomatic travelling from either side.

The trial run from Dhaka will carry a group of about 20 mid-level government officials. A bus from Calcutta carrying a similar team is due to arrive in Dhaka on March 20.

The teams from the two sides will see for themselves the road conditions, immigration

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facilities and customs arrangements. They will also review the overall condition of the 350 kilometre route to suggest steps for further improvement to make travel convenient for passengers.

It is learnt that after the trial run for three months, a protocol on direct bus service will be signed between the two countries.

A news item creeded by IANS from Calcutta on Saturday said that finishing touches were being given to a 45-lakh rupee airconditioned waiting hall at Salt Lake in east Calcutta for the passengers of Dhaka-Cal-