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CPA probe into pilferage of fabrics begins

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, May 10: Chittagong port authority has begun an investigation today into a case of pilferage of one container of garments fabrics worth about Taka two crore from container terminal of the port, official sources said.

The port authority already suspended six of its staff for their alleged connivance in the pilferage, sources added.

The suspended staff are traffic inspector Krishna Pada Das, assistant traffic inspector Abdus Salam, senior outdoor assistant Abdul Kadir Bhuiyan, junior outdoor assistant Abul Kasem, port security gate sergeant Arun Chandra Das and ASI Ali Asgar Khan, port sources said.

The consignment of fabrics imported by a garments factory based in Dhaka, was delivered to a fake importer recently by submitting forged documents through a C&F agent.

The three-member probe body headed by traffic officer Kudrat Millat, is expected to submit its report within a week, port sources said.

Sierra Leone

UN troops ready for deployment

UNITED NATIONS, May 10: The three reinforced battalions of UN peacekeepers for Sierra Leone appear ready to deploy by next week but so far only one of them has air transport into the country, a UN spokesman said, reports AP.

The United States has offered to airlift in the Bangladeshi contingent, and is considering helping to transport Jordanian and Indian units, Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon said Tuesday.

UN spokesman Fred Eckhardt said Russia had indicated it might help.

The United Nations hopes to round out the 11,100-member force to help reinforce the embattled 8,700 peacekeepers who have come under fire by rebels of the Revolutionary United Front in clashes that have resulted in the detention of 500 UN troops.

Eckhardt noted, though, that transporting a single battalion of about 800 peacekeepers and their equipment requires about nine flights — a logistical nightmare considering the size of the small international airport at Lungi on the Sierra Leone coast.

He said the three contingents have told the United Nations they would be able to speed up deployment of all or at least part of their units — originally scheduled for mid-July — to May 15.

Road accident kills 4 in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, May 10: Four people were killed and 18 others injured, five of them severely, in a road accident at Jilerdanga village under Dumuria thana this morning.

The dead were identified as fish trader Manu Mia, 38, Professor Mizanur Rahman of Khulna Ahsanullah College, contractor of PWD Nurul Islam Siddique, 32, and Malati Sarker, 25, of Koiria thana.

The injured were admitted to KMCH and different clinics in the city.

According to witnesses, the accident took place at about 9:30 am when the passenger minibus (Khulna-Ba-1009) bound for Paikgacha from Khulna city skidded off the road and fell into a ditch while trying to save a car on the road.

Dead bodies were sent to Sadar hospital morgue for autopsy.

JS body discusses audit objections involving Tk 19.70 cr in Food Ministry

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Accounts yesterday discussed some audit objections involving Tk 19 crore 70 lakh in Food Ministry raised by the Comptroller General of Accounts. This was stated at a meeting of the committee held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban with its chairman S M Akram in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting was informed that Tk 1.35 crore has already been realised against the total money and that the dues are Tk 17 crore 70 lakh. The meeting recommended some steps to settle the audit objections.

Besides, the meeting discussed different aspects of food management including procurement, stocking and distribution as well as shortage in godowns.

Committee members Col (Retd) Shawkat Ali, Mohammad Mojibur Rahman, Mustafizur Rahman, Nurul Islam Naheed, Hafiz Uddin Bir Bikram and Abdul Mannan attended the meeting.



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia waving to the crowd before addressing a public meeting at Chalakhar High School ground in Monohardi under Narsingdi district yesterday.

— Star photo

Great expectations greet ETV

By Nazmul Ashraf

The ballroom of Hotel Sonargaon yesterday was filled with VIPs including ministers, MPs, popular artists, cultural activists, mediamen and members of various professions and their spouses.

The large room was colourfully decorated with giant TV screens all around to display live telecast of the formal launching of Ekushey Television (ETV), the country's first private television station. ETV also has the privilege of being the first terrestrial satellite television in the South Asia region.

ETV began its trial operation on March 8 this year and went on a wider broadcast from April 14. Now reaching people in South Asia, ETV plans to cover Middle-East soon and then Europe and America.

Curious people also gathered around Jahangir Tower housing the ETV offices, just opposite to Hotel Sonargaon. Attractive decoration and illumination of the nine-storey building drew large crowds throughout the day. Security was beefed up in the area.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced formal launching of ETV at 8.10 am amid loud cheers and applause. She called it an "extraordinary day" and hoped that the private television would live up to people's expectations.

Referring to the Opposition's criticism of the state-controlled BTV, Hasina said in a lighter vein, "I hope the Opposition will cooperate with ETV," referring to the new station which has a slogan 'We are committed to changes'.

"Maybe they will boycott ETV too, after seeing that I have opened it," a smiling Hasina added.

The prime minister then enjoyed an ETV programme, a special for the launching ceremony, which carried welcome messages from both her as well

as Khaleda Zia, Leader of the Opposition. Prepared and presented by popular TV personality Hanif Sangket, the programme also carried interviews of a cross section of people about their expectations from the country's first private TV.

ETV Chairman Abu Sayed Mahmud, in his introductory remarks, said his television will strive to contribute to fulfilment of people's basic expectations and project the country to the world. "We want to inspire the younger and future generations with the spirit of immortal achievement of Ekushey," he said, explaining the naming of the TV after Amar Ekushey (February 21, 1952), the Language Martyrs Day.

British journalist Simon Dring, who had covered Bangladesh's War of Independence, generated much enthusiasm among the audience by speaking in Bangla. The audience enjoyed his speech though it was not so accurate in pronunciation.

"You cannot call me a foreigner anymore," he said amid peels of laughter around. "I feel proud to say that I was here on this day during your struggle for independence. And again, I am here at another historic moment," said Dring, an MD of ETV Limited.

The first official programme that went on air as the inaugural function started at 7.00 pm was a documentary featuring the work that went behind getting the show on the road, starting from obtaining the permit to the first broadcast earlier this year.

The venue at Hotel Sonargaon was vibrant with festivity and enthusiasm as everyone celebrated the country's first private TV station coming into being.

However, none from the major opposition parties was present.

Justice Sadeq was made CEC on advice of Khaleda: Biswas

Former president Abdur Rahman Biswas said that he had appointed Justice A K M Sadeq, Chief Election Commissioner, on advice of the then Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, reports UNB.

"Do I deny it? I don't say no. It's a matter of record," he told UNB as a dilemma continued over appointment of a new CEC after resignation of Abu Hena.

Biswas, however, said at that time there had not been so much controversy over the appointment of Chief Election Commissioner and suggested that the ruling party and the opposition should come to an understanding on the appointment of new CEC now to avert controversy before the next general elections.

The former president appointed Justice Sadeq on April 25, 1995 as per former prime minister Khaleda Zia's recommendation made on the same date. The former premier in her hand wrote "appointment may be given" on a summary sent by the former prime minister's secretary, Abdullah Harun Pasha.

About the appointment of ex-CEC Mohammad Abu Hena Biswas said the appointment was given by him, but, "it's true, on advice" of Justice Habibur Rahman, the then chief of caretaker government, in 1996.

The former president said he had pointed out to Justice Habibur Rahman whether it would be wise to appoint an executive man as Chief Election Commissioner, a post always given to a judge of the High Court.

"I was little bit startled about it," he said, adding, "Of course Justice Habibur Rahman had nothing to do with it since Abu Hena was nominated as consensus candidate after his discussion with Awami League and BNP leadership at that time."

He said that it would be good to appoint a new CEC from among the High Court judges, either a sitting or a retired one.

Guessing a crisis if a new CEC is not appointed on consensus, Biswas said the Chief Election Commissioner is appointed for five years and he cannot be removed until he tenders resignation.

"So if the new CEC is not acceptable to major political parties or beyond controversy, question may come again for appointing another CEC during the next caretaker government," Biswas said.

Sharif moved from Karachi jail to Attock Fort

KARACHI, May 10: Deposed Pakistan prime minister Nawaz Sharif was moved today from his prison cell in Karachi to Attock Fort in the north to go on trial for corruption, jail officials said.

Sharif, 52, who was ousted in a military coup in October, was taken on a special flight to Attock.

He was fine and in good shape, jail superintendent Nusrat Mahgub told AFP.

Chief Public Prosecutor Raja Qureshi said on Tuesday that the trial at Attock Fort, which serves as an interrogation centre in the North West Frontier Province, would open on May 12.

Sources said the proceedings will be conducted by a special anti-graft court in a case filed by the army-led National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

The charge relates to the purchase of a Russian helicopter by Sharif in 1993.

Officials say the wealthy industrialist-turned politician concealed the helicopter deal worth millions of dollars in his income tax returns.

Sharif was sentenced last month to life imprisonment by an anti-terrorism court in Karachi on charges of hijacking and terrorism.

Dissatisfaction over report on manpower export

By Staff Correspondent

Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Labour and Employment yesterday expressed dissatisfaction over a report of the Ministry about allegations of malpractice by a number of manpower recruiting agencies while sending Bangladeshi workers to Saudi Arabia, sources concerned said.

The Bangladesh Mission in KSA (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) had informed the Ministry about it four months ago.

Then a ruling party lawmaker brought to the notice of the parliamentary committee that several hundred Bangladeshis were cheated with false promises for jobs in the KSA. The committee was told that 1,000 Bangladeshis were

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Triple murder Arrested four placed on fresh remand

By Court Correspondent

Four people arrested in connection with the triple murder case in the city were placed on a fresh remand for three days.

They are Abul Hossain Alam, Shahi Akram, Golam Mohammad Rafiqul Islam and A K M Khairul Alam Nantu.

Police arrested them from Belkuchi thana area in Sirajganj on May 2.

They were produced in the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka yesterday after completion of two days' remand.

Police prayed for another five days remand, but the court granted it for two days.

Earlier, the arrested four were taken on five days remand in two phases.

Three young men Babar, Selim and Russel were shot dead on April 5 at Rasulbagh in Gulshan thana.

PM announces package of incentives for UP chairmen, members

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government would construct Union Parishad complex in each union of the country so that people can avail of all kinds of services from one centre, reports UNB.

"Our government is working hard to rejuvenate the rural economy and has taken a number of development programmes in this regard," she said while addressing the members of Bangladesh Union Parishad Chairman Samity at ICC.

About the construction of UP complex, Hasina said 20 complexes would be set up each year with modern designs.

Some 136 members out of 140 of the Samity, led by its president Mir Enayet Hossain Montu called on the Prime Minister.

Asking the UP chairmen to prepare an organogram to further strengthen Union Parishads, Hasina said UP has been announced as administrative unit and her government would take effective steps to strengthen it.

Responding to the demands of the chairmen, she announced that the monthly allowance of chairmen has been raised to Tk 1,500 from Tk 1,050 and that of members to Tk 700 from Tk 400.

The Prime Minister also urged the UP chairmen to form a Welfare Trust and assured them of giving Tk one crore for the welfare fund.

She announced that the UP chairmen who have private vehicles will get Tk 500 a month as fuel bill and those who have no vehicles will be given loan for purchasing vehicles.

Turning to government's various development schemes in the social sector, Hasina said her government has introduced allowance for the elderly people and allowance for the widows and distressed women in addition.

tion to the microcredit programme for the rural people.

She asked the UP chairmen to distribute relief materials and other government assistance carefully so that no misuse could take place.

About Upazila Election, Hasina said the government has taken up all sorts of preparation for holding Upazila Parishad election, "but the Election Commission is not taking effective steps in this regard."

On rural infrastructure development programme supervised by UP chairmen, she said the development fund would be raised to Tk 50,000 from Tk 25,000. The capacity of Gram Adalat (Rural Court) to fine will be raised to Tk 10,000 from Tk 5,000.

The Prime Minister said her government has another programme for setting up community healthcare centres across the country.

A total of 18,000 community healthcare centres, including 13,500 new ones, will be set up in the country, with constructing 6,000 centres this year.

Laloo gets bail

PATNA, India, May 10: A court in India's eastern state of Bihar today granted bail to a powerful regional leader who has been in jail for more than a month on charges of owning assets disproportionate to his income, reports Reuters.

Former Bihar chief minister Laloo Prasad Yadav surrendered last month before a special court which handles Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) cases after arrest warrants were issued against him and his wife, Rabri Devi.

"The petitioner is granted three months interim bail," said Justice Shashank Shekhar Singh of Patna High Court. Patna is the capital of Bihar state.

CU reopens after 4 months of closure

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, May 10: Chittagong University reopened today after a closure for over four months.

University bound shuttle train and buses left today. But attendance of the students was poor while few classes resumed, campus sources said.

While talking to this correspondent, pro-Vice Chancellor Dr Abu Yusuf Alam said academic activities at CU were restored today amid normal and peaceful atmosphere. Attendance of students will improve soon with the resumption of classes in full swing.

Chittagong University faced a longdrawn stalemate after two Shibir activists were killed in a gunfight with BCL activists on December 19 last year.

The University syndicate last week expelled four BCL activists and one Shibir activist on the basis of two separate probe reports in connection with clashes on the campus on May 15 and December 19 last year.

SC rejects petitions of Obaid, Manzoor, Bazlul Huda

The Supreme Court upheld a decision of the High Court yesterday rejecting the petitions of accused K M Obaidur Rahman and Nurul Islam Manzoor of the Jail Killing Case, seeking to expunge witnesses' statement, reports BSS.

The full bench of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court pronounced the judgement when the court rose for the day. The full bench comprised of Chief Justice Latifur Rahman, Justice Bimalendu Bikash Roy Chowdhury, Justice A M Mahmudur Rahman, Justice Mahmudur Amin Chowdhury and Justice Kazi Ebadul Haque.

Obaid, a BNP MP, and Nurul Islam Manzoor, BNP leader, filed application before the Appellate Division after a High Court bench dismissed their prayers on April 12.

The prayer sought to expunge the statements made by the witnesses under Section 161 of Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and also by a co-accused Taheruddin Thakur under Section 164 from the proceedings of the Jail Killing Case.

The Appellate Division also upheld a decision of the High Court that had dismissed a prayer by sacked Major Bazlul Huda, seeking a verdict against his indictment in the Abdur Rab Serniabat Murder Case. Bazlul Huda filed application before the High Court seeking to quash the order of framing charge by the trial court.

Bazlul Huda was convicted and sentenced to death by the Sessions Court, Dhaka, in the Bangabandhu Murder Case.

Senior advocate Khandker Mahbubuddin Ahmed appeared for Obaid and Manzoor. Advocate Mahbubur Rahman appeared for Bazlul Huda. Deputy Attorney General Mohammad Farooque appeared for the state.



Let it be true

Presidium member of the ruling Awami League Suranjit Sengupta and Chief Whip of BNP Khandaker Delwar Hossain at an anti-hartal seminar in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Murder of two brothers Main accused seen roaming near victims' house

By Staff Correspondent

The main accused in the double murder case was allegedly seen roaming near the house of the victims yesterday.

Kamal Pasha, who called the two brothers out of their house at Mohammadpur on Friday morning before they were shot dead was seen near the house at about 2:00 pm yesterday, alleged one of the family members.

Pasha is an FIR listed accused in several other cases including those of murders, said police. He came to the colony area at Kazi Nazrul Islam Road at Mohammadpur and was seen calling some of his relatives who reside in the nearby flats, he said.

Two brothers — Ashfaq Hossain Jewel, 28, and Mohammad Ali Rebel, 24, were gunned down within 15 minutes after they were called out from their house by professional killer Kamal Pasha, according to the FIR.

In another development two brothers of the victims were brought to the offices of Detective Branch yesterday afternoon and their statements on the incident were recorded, said DB sources.

The DB, however, said that they were yet to know the motive behind the killing.

Asked whether they knew

the whereabouts of Pasha, a DB source said that they were looking for Pasha in different areas.

Meanwhile, Mahbub, who accompanied Pasha when the two brothers were called out of their house was sent to the jail custody yesterday after the end of three-day remand.

'Govt considering appointment of Ombudsman'

Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Matin Khasru yesterday said the government is actively considering the appointment of an Ombudsman, reports BSS.

The minister was talking to European Commission ambassador Antonio De Souza Menezes when he called on him at his office.

The minister praised EU countries for assistance to different development endeavours of the government.

He sought assistance and support from EU member states to protect human rights and ensure good governance.

The UN envoy, lauded Bangladesh's endeavours for world peace and appreciated government's role in promoting good governance.

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim
CHEHLAM



Ahram Khair (Bishal)

Our beloved Bishal departed on 1 April 2000 leaving us to mourn forever his untimely death. We would like to extend our gratitude to all our friends, relatives and well-wishers who, through their unrelenting support, love and prayers have given us the strength to cope with this irrevocable loss and have stood by us in our struggle to survive the pain of Bishal's absence. Please join us in prayer for the salvation of his soul at a Milad Mehfil to be held at Bishal's house after Asar at 5:30 p.m. on 12 May 2000, Friday.

Begum Mumtaz Khaleq, Abul Khair Litu, Mahua Khair Asfar Khair, Kushol, Hema, Dipi, Shupri, Keya & Shongita House 6, Road 69, Gulshan II, Dhaka Tel: 8827708

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