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Bushra murder CMM rejects remand prayer as suspects were held under Sec 54

By Staff Correspondent

The Detective Branch of Police will seek today before the Metropolitan Court of Sessions, Dhaka remand of the persons arrested in connection with the rape and murder of college girl Bushra Islam Phool. The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka yesterday refused to place them on remand.

Phool, 18, the only daughter of a retired police officer was killed by unidentified miscreants in the bedroom of their residence at Hajipara in the city on Sunday.

Father of the victim who now in US is expected to return today, said family members. She will be buried after his arrival.

The DB in its prayer had said that the arrested three might have information about the murder. They are Showkat Ahmed Rulul, brother-in-law of Abdul Kader, owner of the house where the murder took place, Sofia Begum, domestic help and Minto, an alleged criminal of the area.

Explaining why the accused were arrested under Section 54 of the CrPC, an investigating official said they were arrested on suspicion under a specific case.

To prevent abuse of Section 54, which came under scathing criticism in the past, the CMM had informed authorities con-

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Zila Parishad Bill: BNP may file writ

By Staff Correspondent

Main opposition BNP is considering filing a writ challenging the provision in the newly passed Zila Parishad Bill that empowers the government to appoint an administrator until the election.

Sources said BNP Secretary-general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan asked party Vice-chairman Barrister Nazmul Huda MP yesterday to examine the pros and cons of the bill and discuss the matter with party's senior lawyers before filing a writ against the "undemocratic and unconstitutional" provision.

Senior lawyers of BNP are expected to sit today to examine the Zila Parishad Bill whether the provision for appointment of an administrator violates the constitution.

Meanwhile, the BNP secretary-general in a press statement yesterday strongly protested the "unilateral passage" of the Zila Parishad Bill. He said the new law is completely "undemocratic and contrary to the constitution."

Bhuiyan said the government hurriedly passed the bill and included an amendment at the last moment to fully politicise the local administration so that it can rig the future national election.

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June	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
July 5	5:16am	6:40pm
July 6	5:16am	6:40pm

Prayer Timings

July 5	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:15	4:45
Zohr	1:00	1:20
Asr	5:00	5:15
Maghrib	6:50	6:55
Esha	8:15	8:45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Breakup of India feared

Vajpayee cabinet's 'no' to Kashmir autonomy

NEW DELHI, July 4: The federal government today rejected a demand by the legislature of Jammu-Kashmir to give it autonomy and allow it to have its own president, prime minister and courts, reports AP.

The federal government fears it will prompt other states to make similar demands, which could lead to the breakup of the country.

The rejection of the autonomy demand by the Cabinet of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee could strain relations in the coalition, which includes the party that made the autonomy demand.

The state legislature of Jammu-Kashmir adopted a resolution 10 days ago that it revert to the status before 1953. At

that time, the state government controlled all activities except defense, foreign affairs and telecommunications. In the 1960s, the federal government abolished the special laws.

Kashmir enjoyed special status since the nation became independent in 1947 amid a dispute between India and Pakistan for control of Kashmir.

Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party, which promotes Hindu nationalism, has objected to the special status for Jammu-Kashmir, but has not pushed that agenda since it does not enjoy a majority in Parliament. The National Conference, which governs Jammu-Kashmir, is also part of the coalition led by the BJP.

Vajpayee's Cabinet today

met for nearly two hours in New Delhi and then rejected the state legislature's resolution.

"The Cabinet feels that acceptance of the resolution would set the clock back," said Interior Minister Lal Krishna Advani, who oversees Kashmir's affairs. "The government is of the firm conviction that national integration and devolution of powers to states must go together," he said.

Advani said the government wants to give more powers to states, but will not grant them autonomy.

"If you were to accept the resolution, it would set in motion certain trends which are not in favour of national unity," Advani told a news conference after

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Fiscal management & tax system in disastrous situation: Saifur

By Staff Correspondent

Former finance minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday said 'amateurish approach' of the present finance minister has put the country's fiscal management and tax system in a 'disastrous situation'.

"The next finance minister, whoever comes to power, will find it difficult to run the economy due to Kibria's unskilled management", Saifur, a central leader of opposition BNP said at a post-budget press conference here.

Due to poor understanding of fiscal matters, he set a highly ambitious target of 22.5 per cent revenue growth in the last financial year, but failed to achieve it, Saifur said.

"Revenue growth in the last financial year was actually zero if we take inflation into consideration," he said.

"In the last four years, average revenue growth was 7.5 per cent while expenditure grew by 15 per cent. On the other hand,



Saifur making a point at the press conference

Night guard murdered, body of teenaged boy recovered

By Staff Correspondent

A night guard of Mirpur Botanical Garden in the city was killed allegedly by some dacoits in the early hours yesterday.

In another incident, the body of a teen-aged boy was recovered from a passenger bus at Gabtoli yesterday afternoon.

Police said night guard Entaz Ali, 40, was stabbed in the throat by dacoits at about 1:30 am yesterday when he tried to save another guard of a house near the Botanical Garden.

Quoting the FIR filed by Ali's son Shahidul Islam, Mirpur police said a gang of dacoits came to Mirpur embankment in a trawler and tied up Abdul Halim, night guard of the nearby house, to commit dacoity there. When Halim screamed for help, Ali rushed and was engaged in a scuffle with the dacoits.

The dacoits stabbed him and fled away in the trawler.

Local people later took Ali to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

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Flow of foreign aid poor

By Rafiq Hasan

Flow of foreign aid was 41 per cent less during the first 11 months of fiscal 1999-2000 than that in the corresponding period of the previous financial year.

The total foreign aid was 1206.8 million dollars from July 1999 to May 2000 against 2054 million dollars in the corresponding period of fiscal 1998-1999, sources in the Economic Relation Division (ERD) said.

Finance Ministry sources said the flow of foreign aid, particularly food aid was "very high" in fiscal 1998-99 because of the devastating flood in the country in that year. The food aid was worth 269.8 million dollars in fiscal 1998-1999, which came down to 50.5 million dollars in the following year. The sources however said the total aid in fiscal 1999-2000 may reach 1500 million dollars.

Food aid is declining also because donors are reluctant to disburse food aid as the country

is nearing food autarky, the sources said.

The total aid in fiscal 1999-2000 included 110.5 million dollars commodity aid and 1045 million dollars project aid.

In fiscal 1999-2000, the disbursement of aid was also far less than the donors' commitments. ERD estimates show that the donors pledged 2040 million dollars but the disbursement was 1206 million dollars till May this year.

The Finance Minister in his budget speech announced a 17,500 crore taka annual development programme for fiscal 2000-2001, more than 49 per cent of which has been projected to come from external sources as foreign aid and donation.

Before the aid consortium meeting in Paris in April this year, donors indicated that they would provide between 1.80 and 2.20 billion dollars as aid to Bangladesh during fiscal 2000-2001.

Evaluating the aid flow, Finance Ministry sources said the government will have to go for massive borrowing to fulfil the target of foreign assistance for the development programme.

One source however commented, "It would not be much difficult for the government as many countries are ready to provide loan or credit instead of donation."

Till May in fiscal 1999-2000, Asian Development Bank (ADB) topped the list of the 33 donors by providing 273.9 million dollars as project aid, followed by Japan with 262 million dollars including 143.5 million as project aid and 110 million as commodity aid.

Only four donors provided food aid to Bangladesh during the period. They are Australia (6.6 million dollars), Japan (7.9 million dollars), World Food Programme (31.3 million dollars) and France (4.7 million dollars).



US President Bill Clinton salutes vessels from the US Navy and visiting navies in the International Naval Review 2000 as he sails aboard the USS Hue City on the Hudson River yesterday in New York, NY as First Lady Hillary Clinton stands by. The Clintons are participating in ceremonies in honour of US Independence Day and OpSail 2000, a parade of "tall ships" from around the world.

— AFP photo

Relocate Sectt, cantt and DU

Japanese environment experts suggest at city workshop

By Staff Correspondent

Experts have suggested relocation of Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka Cantonment and Dhaka University to ease growing traffic congestion and air pollution.

Japanese environment experts at a workshop recommended for shifting of Bangladesh Secretariat to Sher-e-Bangla Nagar or Savar with better mass transit facilities.

Dhaka Cantonment to existing Savar Cantonment and Dhaka University to Kanchpur (near Dhaka-Chittagong Highway) to ensure planned land use.

They identified lack of infrastructure, rapid rise in transportation demand, non-motorised vehicles on roads, lack of application of proper traffic management schemes, industrial growth, construction

boom, re-suspension of dust and open burning responsible for environmental problems in the country's major cities.

They were speaking at a workshop on Improvement of transportation and environment in Dhaka at a city hotel yesterday. Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) with support of the Embassy of Japan organised it.

The experts also said increasing traffic congestion in the streets, use of leaded gasoline, increasing number of two-stroke engine vehicles and high content of sulphur in diesel have made vehicular emissions all the more harmful.

They said the level of motorisation in Dhaka is still low compared with other Asian cities.

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Harmful untreated waste from overflowing sewers have flooded Imamganj, a busy business centre of the city, making communications difficult and health risks greater. —Star photo

Buriganga DoE yet to decide action against encroachers

By Staff Correspondent

The Department of Environment (DoE) is yet to decide what action it can take against the Senakalyan Sangstha and other encroachers who occupied vast areas of Buriganga river at Shyampur near Postogola in the city.

The Daily Star published a report on Tuesday that several acres area of Buriganga at Shyampur had been taken over by the Senakalyan Sangstha and others. The Sangstha is dumping soil to fill over 2.15 acres of the river to construct a godown and a terminal for ships.

Top DoE officials said that anyone launching such a project without environment clearance certificate could face fine as well as ban on construction work under the Environment Conservation Act, 1995.

But officials yesterday said they did not know about the encroachments at Shyampur. They said they will look into the Daily Star report and see what they can do.

"As per our procedure, we will write to the Planning Ministry to know how such a project got its approval without environment clearance certificate," said an official.

Opposition's demonstration today

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP-led opposition alliance will stage demonstrations across the country today protesting deterioration of law and order and demanding resignation of the government.

As part of the programme, the BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote will hold joint rallies and bring out processions in all cities, district and thana headquarters.

In Dhaka, the city unit of All Party Action Council (APAC) will jointly hold a public meeting at Paltan Maidan at 4 pm. BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan will address the meeting as chief guest while city BNP president and APAC convener Sadek Hossain Khoka MP will preside.

Secretaries general of JP, Jamaat and IOJ will also address the meeting. The alliance will bring out a joint procession after the meeting.

Fresh programme protesting passage of the Zila Parishad Bill will be announced from the meeting sources said.

The Central Liaison Committee will meet at 29 Minto Road this noon to finalise the programme to be announced from the public meeting.

7 Jubo Dal, JCD men jailed at Magura

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, July 4: District and Sessions Judge's Court here today awarded five years' rigorous imprisonment to each of seven leaders and workers of Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal and fined Tk 2000 each, in default to suffer one year more RI in a case filed under PSA.

District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Azizul Huq awarded punishment to the seven for an armed attack on the residence of Magura Pourasava Chairman Dr Mahabubul Huq Siddique on March 9, 2000.

The convicts are district Jubo Dal Convenor Khan Hassan Imam Suja, district Chhatra Dal Joint Secretary Arshafuzzaman, Organising Secretary Khaleduzzaman, Jubo Dal activist Tanmoy and Chhatra Dal activists Rajan, Solaiman and Pavel.

According to the prosecution in brief, two rival factions of BNP clashed in a party meeting at its office at MR Road in the town on March 9.

At one stage a rival group attacked the residence of poura chairman Mahabubul Huq's house and ransacked it.

Shafiqul Islam, nephew of Mahabubul Huq, filed a case with Sadar thana the same day accusing the seven for their involvement in the attack.

Conspiracy on to upset law & order: Nasim

By Staff Correspondent

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday that a well-planned "conspiracy" was on to upset the law and order.

He claimed that the "conspiracy" ahead of the next general elections is aimed to negate four years of success of the Sheikh Hasina government.

The home minister said Sunday's gunfire at Dhaka University and the attack on a police camp in Madaripur the day before were parts of the design to discredit the government.

"We must take stern action against the terrorists to maintain peace and stability. We will also expose those who patronise the terrorists," he warned.

Nasim blamed BNP chief Khaleda Zia for the killing at DU. "The BNP is playing with blood to destabilise the law and order."

He also blasted Khaleda for double standard as regards her stance on acts of terrorism. "Begum Zia gives statement regularly against terrorism, but

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Agitation at CEPZ continues: 5 hurt, three more held

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 4: At least five workers were injured at CEPZ when some agitating workers of US towel factory attacked them this morning, police said.

Three agitating workers were arrested in this connection. The injured were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

The incident was a sequel to the agitation of workers in three towel factories of US company Quillex Group. Police and EPZ sources said the agitators beat some workers with sticks and hit them with bottles on the road near EPZ gate this morning in a bid to refrain them from attending their duties.

Earlier, 23 workers of CEPZ were arrested on charge of creating unrest at the zone. All of them were in the jail custody, police said.

Meanwhile, stalemate in three US factories continued as workers abstained from duties demanding reinstatement of 15 workers, CEPZ sources said.

Goods train service with India within 3 days

By Staff Correspondent

The goods train service between India and Bangladesh through the Benapole-Petrapole border will resume within two or three days as the railway authorities of the two sides signed a 'working agreement' in the city yesterday reviving the old route, reports BSS.

However, the route will not ensure movement of passenger trains between the two neighbours as both the governments are yet to decide on the issue, official sources said.

Additional Director General of Bangladesh Railway (BR) NM Khurshid Anwar and Additional Member (traffic) of Indian Railway Board Swarup Kumar Gupta signed the agreement on behalf of their respective sides at Railway Bhawan in the city.

The route fifth of its kind for both the countries, was introduced by the British government in 1884 and remained non-operative since 1974 due to no commercial viability. In 1994, the then BNP government formed a

committee headed by then Shipping Secretary Wallul Islam to assess feasibility of the route.

Soon after assuming office the Awami League government took initiative to revive the route by upgrading infrastructural facilities and restored train operation on Jessore-Benapole abandoned route leading to the Benapole-Petrapole route last year.

Officials said the route will be shorter by 63 km compared to nearby Darshana-Getha route to Dhaka and it will facilitate smooth traffic of seven lakh metric tons of import-export items in a year.

According to the agreement, goods train from both the sides will be allowed at Benapole and Petrapole from where Bangladesh Railway and Indian Railway will take wagons of the counterparts to their destinations.

The other routes are: Shahbazpur-Mohishashon, Rohanpur-Sinhabad, Birol-Radhika.

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KNM runs out of steam finally

No production since July 1

From Quazi Amanullah

KHULNA, July 4: Production in Khulna Newsprint Mill is suspended since July 1 for lack of pulp and funds, official sources in the mill admitted today.

There was no supply of newsprint from the mill in the last few days as the stock exhausted. This is also affecting publication of eleven regional dailies, sources in the newspapers said.

Most of the KNM officials including its Managing Director and some CBA leaders belonging to the ruling party are now out of the mill fearing violence by workers for suspension of production without prior notice and non-payment of their arrears salary and other dues, sources in the mill said.

An uneasy calm is prevailing in the mill. The recent action taken by the mill authorities against some workers for attacking the Managing Director's official residence has further deepened the crisis,

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