

Writs against PSA case likely today

By Special Correspondent

A writ petition challenging filing of a case under Public Safety Act (PSA) against BNP lawmaker Manzoor Morshed Khan is likely to be filed with the High Court by his lawyers today.

Sources close to the lawyers said Barrister Syed Ishtiaque Ahmed will move the court on behalf of Khan who, along with 16 lawyers, has been implicated in a case filed under PSA for alleged vandalism at the Supreme Court on Thursday.

The case was filed on Monday by a pro-government lawyer.

Barrister Ishtiaque will certify that Khan was in the court on Thursday for the hearing on his writ challenging the constitutional validity of the PSA.

A case was filed under PSA against Morshed Khan in Chittagong for ransacking a sweetmeat shop and looting Tk 45,000 from the cash box on December 26.

Another writ on behalf of the 16 See page 11 col 8

Govt plea sent to Appellate Div

By Special Correspondent

Chamber judge of the Appellate Division (APD) Mainur Reza Choudhury yesterday sent the leave petition of the government to the full bench of the APD for hearing. The petition for leave was filed by the government to appeal against a High Court Division Bench order on the Public Safety Case (PSA) against BNP lawmaker and businessman Manzoor Morshed Khan and his son.

Justice Choudhury fixed Sunday for hearing on the petition. The petition was filed by the state immediately after the High Court Division Bench asked police not to arrest or disturb Khan and his son pending hearing on a rule challenging the validity of the PSA. The rule is returnable by January 30.

Justice Abu Saeed Ahmed and Justice Khademul Islam Choudhury gave the rule on Thursday. The order was given on Monday.

Barrister Syed Ishtiaque Ahmed appeared for Morshed Khan and Additional Attorney General Mahbub-e-Alam for the state.



Students staged demonstration in front of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board office yesterday at Motijheel in the city yesterday, demanding action against people involved in the textbook scandal.

Textbook scandal Students demand action

By DU Correspondent

Bangladesh Chhatra Federation (BCF) yesterday staged a demonstration in front of the Textbook Board office at Motijheel in the city to press home its seven-point demand including action against BEXIMCO, Education Minister, Education Secretary, Chairman of Textbook Board and others involved in 'textbook scandal'.

The BCF also announced a series of programmes in support of their demands including free supply of textbooks printed on quality paper, purging of communally sensitive matters from textbooks, code of conduct regarding printing of textbooks by September for the next education year, eliminating the 'illegal business' of notebooks and guidebooks, appointment of qualified teachers and providing handsome salary and other benefits to them and elimination of all kinds See page 11 col 2

10 killed in rebel attack on Srinagar airport

SRINAGAR, India: Hurling grenades and firing guns, a militant suicide squad engaged in a 45-minute battle outside the gates of Srinagar Airport today, leaving 10 people dead and eight wounded, reports AP.

Lashkar-e-Tayyaba, one of the guerilla groups fighting to separate the Himalayan region of Jammu-Kashmir from India, claimed responsibility for the attack. The group gave the names of six men it said had died in the attack.

That was confirmed by the police and a count of the bodies in a police station near the airport. They were clad in police uniforms with grenades attached.

Two civilians a 16-year-old girl and a bank manager were killed. Their relatives cried over the bullet-riddled bodies in the police station.

Police in the state capital in Jammu confirmed two Central Reserve Police Force officers were killed but an officer at the scene said three constables had been killed, which would bring the death toll to 11. Four woman constables were among the eight people injured.

The militants tossed grenades and fired their guns when they were stopped at the first of many security checkpoints on the main road to the airport, police told The Associated Press in Jammu, the winter capital of the state.

Abu Osama, a spokesman for the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba militant group, called news agencies to claim responsibility for the attack, saying it was carried out by a suicide squad that had made an attempt on the airport last week.

FM opens D-8 Commission meet

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad yesterday opened here the ninth session of the D-8 Commission with a call to adopt right policies and programmes for meaningful cooperation among the member countries, report agencies.

The 2-day session of the Commission would finalise the date and chalk out the agenda of the forthcoming 3rd D-8 Summit to be held in Cairo by the end of February. It will also discuss the bottlenecks in implementing the projects undertaken by the forum.

Delegation from all the 8 countries Egypt, Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Turkey and host Bangladesh are participating in the two-day meeting and will work out the agenda for the next summit of the forum to be held in Egypt next month.

Dwelling on the common concerns of the eight developing countries, Foreign Minister Azad pleaded for the involvement of more segments of civil society with the activities of the forum See page 11 col 3

Dhanmondi Lake Development Project Commercial components in control of musclemen

By Staff Correspondent

Authorities are yet to put 18 commercial components of the Dhanmondi Lake Development Project into operations more than six months after their completion.

The commercial components and other facilities of the project have been lying vacant for over six months, at the mercy of hoodlums. Rickshaws, auto-rickshaws and private cars are also washed on the lakeside.

Although officials claim to have completed about 90 per cent of the project, several components are yet to see daylight. The authorities have failed to recover a large chunk of land on the lakeside, illegally occupied by PWD employees near the abandoned overhead water reservoir at the far end of Road No. 24. Due to the PWD and some other encroachments, a large stretch of the lake between Road-32 Bridge and Road-27 in the west could not be excavated. It is feared that the long-deposited sludge from the unused part of the lake will eventually stream into the remaining stretch.

Amyangshu Sen, secretary of the Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD), said that his ministry had just approved a management policy for the Dhanmondi Lake project, undertaken by the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC).

"Now it is the responsibility of the DCC to run the businesses of the lake," said Sen.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DCC KM Nurul Huda said the delay was due to official procedures towards formulation of a See page 11 col 1



A group of musclemen have reportedly started running the restaurant on an islet in the Dhanmondi Lake opposite the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum under the banner of Russell Smriti Sangsad, although the authorities are yet to put this and other commercial components of the lake development project into operation.

Tayebi Murder Case Hearing resumes today

CHITTAGONG, Jan 16: Hearing of the Indian merchant Zibran Tayebi Murder Case resumes tomorrow in the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, reports UNB.

Victim's wife Pritli Chatterjee came here with her father-in-law T A Khan today to appear before the court for depositing as witness.

Zibran Tayebi, country manager of Entrans Maritime Bangladesh Private Ltd, was shot dead on June 9, 1999 on his way home from office at Agrabad.

His wife had left the country with the body the following day.

After investigation police submitted charge sheet against eight persons including son of a leading industrialist on November 25, 1999. Six of them are in jail.

The court has so far examined 58 witnesses in the case.

Question raised over investigation into Rab murder case

From Quazi Amanullah

KHULNA, Jan 14: CID investigation into the sensational Rob murder case is being questioned by different quarters as the 'godfathers and killers' have so far escaped interrogation.

The complainant, Arifur Rahman Mithu, alleged that Investigation Officer (IO) ASP Khashrul Huq and a top official of CID, influenced by some local leaders of ruling Awami League, are buying time to damage the merit of the case.

The fate of the case has become uncertain, he alleged.

The complainant is the eldest son of SMA Rob, the ruling party's mayoral candidate who was murdered on August 11 last year. Thirteen people were named in the FIR as accused.

Rob's aide Rangulal was arrested before the FIR was lodged. Acting on his statement, police arrested two PBCP outlaws - Bitu and Moyeen - and recovered a sawn-off rifle and a home-made gun from their possession. The two confessed that the arms were used in the murder.

In his judicial confession recorded under Section 164, Rangulal had also said that five others - Shanu, Choton, Shumon, Babul and Kamrul -- were among the gang of killers and that Jubo League activists Mota Selim, Bappi and Bipul carried the arms used in the murder.

The case was handed over to CID in September last year despite serious objection by the complainant and Rob's wife. The complainant expressed 'no-confidence' in CID investigation.

Bitu and Moyeen were interrogated by a joint interrogation call (JIC) in Dhaka during their 12-day remand.

They were brought back to Khulna District Jail when they refused to give any further statement under Section 164 in the CMM's court, Dhaka.

Another PBCP member - Rafiqul Islam Hitler -- was arrested in November from West Baniakhmar under Khulna Sadar thana. The IO interrogated Hitler for one week and recorded his statement under Section 164.

But Hitler's statement differed from the FIR recorded with Sonadanga thana naming 13 persons as accused.

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Japanese team meets Khaleda Aid for gas-based units IT sector offered

By Staff Correspondent

Japan has offered assistance to Bangladesh to set up gas-based industries, develop information technology (IT) and remove air and water pollution.

The offer was made by Koji Nojima, Chairman of Japan-Bangladesh Committee for Commerce and Economic Cooperation (JBCCEC), when he called on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia at the head of a big delegation at her official residence in the city yesterday evening.

Nojima told Khaleda that the Japanese Prime Minister was eager to spread Japanese information technology to countries like Bangladesh, BNP leader MM Rezaul Karim told newsman after the meeting.

He said Nojima and some other Japanese visited India recently and finalised a number of steps for development of the IT sector there. Bangladesh has also good prospects for development of the IT sector, Nojima told Khaleda.

Karim said Nojima suggested urgent steps to control the "severe" air and water pollution in Dhaka and other big cities and offered Japanese technical assistance for this.

Welcoming the offer, the BNP chief said if her party goes to power in the next election, it would undertake projects in the three sectors with Japanese assistance. "Japan will be approached first to implement projects in the three sectors".

Lauding Japanese assistance, she said Japan is Bangladesh's biggest bilateral donor and development partner and has been assisting it in different sectors, especially in infrastructure development. She recalled Japanese assistance in building the See page 11 col 1

UK-based Bangladeshis call for transparency in arsenic mitigation programmes

Confused at the outcome of British aided projects for arsenic mitigation, Bangladeshis living in UK have called for greater transparency and accountability in implementation of the projects, reports UNB.

Doubts about effectiveness of the projects was manifested at a discussion on 'arsenic contamination of water in Bangladesh' held at the committee room of the House of Lords in UK on December 14. It was organised by Bangladesh International Action Network (BIAN) on December 14.

London based BIAN, an organisation of Bangladeshi expatriates in UK, was set up to co-ordinate action and solidarity in support of Bangladeshis. The objective of the discussion on arsenic problem was to create awareness and influence policy to push for changes in the current international development order.

It was also intended to stir the conscience of the British citizens and taxpayers who have always stood by the people of Bangladesh in times of need.

George Foulkes MP, parliamentary under secretary of State, Prof Quazi Quamruzzaman, chairman Dhaka Community Hospital, Sharmeen Murshid chief executive of Brotee, a local NGO, were the keynote speakers in the discussion jointly chaired by Baroness Paula Uddin and Kumar Murshid, senior advisor to the Mayor of London.

Bangladeshi national Soifal Alom who is Mayor of Tower Hamlet in London also took part in the discussion as special guest.

Prof Quazi Quamruzzaman and Sharmeen Murshid talked to newsmen at the National Press Club here yesterday morning about the outcome of the high profile discussion.

They said that speakers from Bangladesh had questioned the validity of a 30-year water policy and criticised the systemic failure of all water agencies and donors to monitor water quality.

They also raised question as to whom the donor agencies are accountable for their activities.

The Bangladeshi expatriates said confusion about arsenic mitigation programme was highlighted in the discussion with a series of allegations of misusing millions of dollars in testing and filtering ground water in the name of arsenic mitigation ignoring the arsenic affected patients.

Lack of coordination among donor agencies, consulting agencies and various project imple See page 11 col 6

Judgement in Nantu Murder Case tomorrow

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 16: The Additional District and Sessions Judge (3rd Court) Taj Mohammad will deliver the judgement in the 'Nantu Murder Case' on January 18.

ErsHAD Shikdar is the main accused in the case.

The murder case was revived in September 1999 following judicial statement of Noor-e-Alam, the chief bodyguard of Shikdar.

Nantu, one of the armed cadres of Shikdar, was hacked to death at Skid ghat on the night of March 29, 1990. Later his body was dumped into the Bhairab river.

Shikdar and his 17 accomplices killed Nantu for protesting drug trafficking in Railway Colony area.

A case was lodged with Khulna thana in this connection on March 30, 1990.

Shikdar, then a ward commissioner of KCC, managed to suppress investigation of the case by bribing police officials as told by Noor-e-Alam in his judicial statement on August 31, 1999.

Close associate of Mufti Hannan held in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 16: Khulna thana police arrested one Yunus Chowdhury, 38, on Monday afternoon suspecting him to be a close associate of Mufti Abdul Hannan wanted in the Kotalpara bomb planting case.

Yunus Chowdhury hails from Chapail village under Narhagati thana of Narail district. He was arrested on the basis of a petition written to the highest authority of police by one Mujibar Rahman Molla of the same village.

Molla in his petition has stated that Yunus Chowdhury is one of the close associates of Mufti Abdul Hannan, mastermind of a conspiracy to kill Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by planting a high-powered bomb near the venue of her public meeting at Kotalpara last year.

Mufti Hannan, main accused in the bomb planting case, used to visit the village home of Jamaat leader Abdus Salam Chowdhury, elder brother of Yunus Chowdhury frequently in 1996.

Mufti Hannan, Salam Chowdhury and Yunus Chowdhury jointly established a soap factory on the other side of Chapail ferry ghat named as 'Tintara Madhumati Soap Factory'. In fact, the soap factory was See page 11 col 7



Members of Sammilito Nari Samaj observed a token hunger strike in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, urging all political parties to give support to the constitutional amendment bill on women's reserved seats in the Jatiya Sangsad.