

Next hearing in graft case against Ershad on May 20

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday fixed May 20 for hearing on arguments in a graft case against former president HM Ershad and another person.

Judge Mohammad Siddiqur Rahman Miah adjourned the hearing following a time petition by the defence lawyer.

Advocate Sheikh Sirajul Islam submitted a petition for adjournment of the hearing. HC stated that he would file a petition, seeking quashment of the case, with the higher court. So, he prayed for adjournment of the hearing.

The prosecution side was ready for hearing on the issue.

After hearing both sides, the court granted the petition.

Ershad, while in office, directed the authorities concerned to rein

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Those days are gone...

Donors now tag many conditions for giving aid, says Saifur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday said the donors assured Bangladesh of more aid provided the government takes steps to put everything in order.

"We will give you what you want, but you have to improve law and order, establish rule of law and good governance in every sphere of life so that people feel secure," he said about the sentiment the donors expressed at the Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF) meeting in Paris.

Saifur was exchanging views with members of the Economic Reporters' Forum (ERF) at the NEC auditorium in the city on the outcome of BDF meet and UN-sponsored Millennium Summit on Financing for Development in Mexico.

Referring to the donors' policy shift in identifying a country for receiving assistance, the finance minister said, "Those days are gone when development funding was provided only on the basis of a country being poor. Now the donors want to see a situation of good governance where aid can be utilised in a proper way and have a positive impact."

"No development can take place in a country that lacks healthy political, economic, social and administrative condition," Saifur said.

He also said the donors at the Paris meet stressed on utilisation of the funds so far accumulated in the pipeline. He said some US\$ 6 billion in committed funds still remained in the pipeline due to non-utilisation.

He said there should be proper co-ordination between different line ministries and departments for preparing projects and utilising the foreign assistance in a judicious way.

However, the minister was of the view that the country should rely more on its internal resources for its development pursuit rather than on external assistance.

"Development process has to be carried out through increased internal resource mobilisation and cutting down wasteful expenditures," he observed.

The minister also said development with own resources is very much possible if the revenue collection

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Goldsmith shot dead in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Pradip Chakrabarty, a goldsmith who was shot by terrorists on Saturday, succumbed to injuries in the city yesterday.

The victim, also called Nantu Chakrabarty, 38, was owner of a jewelry shop at Andarkilla adjoining Hazari Goll.

Witnesses and police said, Nantu was going to Chatteshwari Mindir (temple) by a rickshaw and as he reached Battery Goll, several hundred yards off the temple, some unidentified gunmen sprayed bullets on him at around 3.30 pm on Saturday.

Critically injured Nantu was admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at around 1 pm yesterday.

The motive behind the killing could not be known.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



Relatives of slain Pradip Chakrabarty grieve his death. Gunmen shot and killed Pradip, a goldsmith, at Battery Goll in Chittagong yesterday.

Half-day strike at Ctg port April 17

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chittagong Dock Bandar Sramik Karmachari Parishad staged demonstrations and held a protest rally in the city demanding immediate cancellation of the move to set up a private container terminal at the Karnaphuli estuary.

The Parishad, a conglomerate of 22 trade unions working at Chittagong port, also announced half-day work abstention at Chittagong port on April 17 in protest at the move.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Accent on common regional investment strategy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday were of the view that South Asian countries should formulate a common investment strategy and collectively face the challenges of globalisation.

Participating in the technical sessions of a dialogue on South Asian cooperation, they said the countries in the region were passing through a transitional period with upheavals in their economies.

The dialogue was organised by the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) in collaboration with the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) at the BRAC Centre in Mohakhali.

"Globalisation has not benefited South Asia as around 500 million people in the region are facing economic hardship because of a gradual declining trend in their incomes," said Tapan Kumar Bhaumik, senior advisor of the Confederation of Indian Industry, while presenting a keynote paper.

Painting a gloomy picture of the South Asian economies, he said, "A sound macroeconomic adjustment and a holistic approach are urgently needed to address the growing fiscal deficit."

"To meet the challenges of globalisation as well as of regional cooperation Bangladesh is reviewing its industrial policy to update it and make it more effective," said Industries Minister M K Anwar while addressing a session as chief guest.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

JCD JU factions clash, 5 hurt

JU CORRESPONDENT

Armed clashes erupted between two factions of the JU unit of Jatityatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Saturday night leaving five including its president injured.

Witnesses said a group of activists led by president Ashraf Alam Jewel beat up three other activists -- Sohel, Babu and Majnu -- of a rival JCD group loyal to general secretary Arman, with hammer and hockey sticks, at the university Supuritala at 7:40pm Saturday.

Babu was seriously injured in the attack, which, sources said was a sequel to a previous attack by Arman group on two activists of Jewel group on the night of March 26.

Later, when Arman group was preparing for retaliation, Jewel's followers attacked the SSB Hall with firearms, hockey sticks and iron rods, and ransacked rooms 210 and 211 of Arman group activists in the hall. During the same time, some others beat up Bablu, another Arman group activist who was going to AFM Kamaluddin Hall in a motorbike. The motorbike was set on fire.

They also searched for other Arman group activists in Al Beruni Hall's extension building, but could not find anyone there.

Arman group activists in the meantime took shelter in AFM Kamaluddin Hall and Maulana Bhashani Hall, and locked up the hall gates fearing attacks by Jewel group.

Later Jewel, along with his activists, marched towards AFM Kamaluddin Hall to flush out the Arman group activists. But when they reached the place between SSB Hall and AFM Kamaluddin Hall, they met resistance as bullets were fired from within the hall, and a gunfight broke out between the two groups.

Jewel received a bullet in his arm this time, his followers claimed. Besides, Raihan and Musa of the same group were also injured.

Later, the Jewel group went to the residence of Pro-VC Prof. M

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

BCL leaders in power fray as council meets on Wednesday

SHAMEEM MAHMUD

Activists of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) have entered a hectic fray to secure leadership of the organisation's central body in the coming 27th national council.

The preparation of the council scheduled for April 3 at Paltan Maidan in the city has been finalised in the wake of government repression and apprehension of police arrests, the BCL sources said.

And the council session to form the new committee will be held at the Mahanagar Natya Mancho.

Aspirants for the new committee frequent its party office and lobby with the frontline leaders of the Awami League, although AL chief Sheikh Hasina suggested that the leadership be changed through a democratic process, the sources said.

The contending BCL men doubt whether the new body would be formed through 'election by the councillors' or selection by the AL high-ups.

"We don't know how the leadership will be chosen," said a president-hopeful of the student wing.

It is required of the organisation to be energised with young leaders in responsible positions, but the presidential candidate doubted the depth of knowledge of the district level leaders about central politics.

If the election is held, about 2,500 councillors of the 81 district level committees across the country will cast their votes.

Half the committees were formed six to ten years ago and a large number of councillors are not active in politics at present.

And non-students and business-

One killed in Cox's Bazar clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

One person was killed and ten others injured in a tripartite gunfight between two groups of miscreants and forest guards at Chakoria in Cox's Bazar on Saturday night.

The victim, identified as Saber Ahmed, 32, was killed on the spot. Of the injured, the condition of one Amanullah was critical.

Sources said, two rival groups of miscreants were locked in a gunfight exchanging some 80 rounds of bullets over the illegal extraction of timber from a teak garden of a reserve forest at Chhairakhali. Later the forest guards also fired some 15 shots.

Saber, a notorious terrorist, was accused in a dozen of criminal cases including murder. The news of his death brought a sigh of relief to the local people, sources said.

Alamgir not produced in court due to 'security reasons'

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, former state minister for planning, arrested under Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), was not produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrates Court, Dhaka yesterday although his appearance date was fixed.

Jail authorities sent a custody warrant (CW) to the court for fixing next date of appearance.

Alamgir was not produced before the court due to 'security reasons,' court sources said.

After scrutinising the custody warrant, Magistrate Kazi Meraj Hossain fixed April 15 for next hearing of the case.

During the hearing of bail petition on March 24, Alamgir alleged at the court that he was kept in custody for more than four days after expiry of remand. He further said he was not given any bed sheet or pillow or even the diabetic medicine kept in his brief case.

Alamgir also alleged that some masked policemen abused him severely and tortured him physically.

Earlier, police sent Alamgir to the Dhaka Central Jail without producing him before the court on expiry of remand period, although the law does not support it.

Alamgir was arrested on charge of instigating the government officials and employees to join the anti-government movement led from the "Janatar Mancha" in the city in 1996.

He was arrested at ZIA on return from Singapore on March 15 under Section 54 of the CrPC.

Later, the District Magistrate's Court, Dhaka gave one month's detention to Alamgir under the Special Power's Act (SPA).

The High Court on Saturday issued a rule on the government asking it to show cause within two weeks why the detention of Alamgir under the SPA should not be declared to have been made without lawful authority.

The court issued the rule following a writ petition filed the victim's brother Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir challenging the legality of the detention order.