

PSC was influenced

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were Imamur Rashid, Begum Zinnat Rehana, SM Ansuazzaman, Harun-or-Rashid, Raihanul Islam, Monirul Amin Shammil, Shah Abdul Tariq, Begum Jesmin Ara and AI Mamud Murshed.

The nine applicants in their application forms did not state that they were children of freedom fighters. They collected freedom fighter certificates later to get job under the quota.

The White Paper alleged that the nine applicants in collaboration with the PSC Chairman had collected and submitted certificates stating that their fathers were freedom fighters. They were also allowed to make some corrections in their application forms even after many days of submission of those.

The applicants had first written "no" in the column in which they were required to state whether they were children of freedom fighters. After collecting the certificates, they erased the "no" and wrote "yes".

Similarly, three other applicants in their application forms for 21st BSC examinations had written "no" in the column in which they were required to state whether their parents are martyred freedom fighters. They later erased the "no" and wrote "yes".

The three applicants were Sanjoy Kumar Majumder, Md Masum Hossain and Mita Sarkar.

It was later found through investigation that their fathers are still alive.

The white paper said that certificates of martyred freedom fighters were collected later and attached with the main application forms in collaboration with high officials of PSC.

The white paper further said that an applicant -- Nabirul Islam -- had first stated that he was not son of freedom fighter. But after 11 month he submitted a certificate that his father was a freedom fighter and erased the word "no" and wrote "yes" in the column.

Even the TNO of Magura had certified that Shahidul Islam, father of Nabirul Islam, was not a freedom fighter when the matter was published in newspaper. But Nabirul Islam was selected in cadre service under the quota for freedom fighters' children.

In another case, Tarun Kanti Bala got a job in BCS (Railway) cadre under the freedom fighter quota although as per the date of birth mentioned in the application form, the applicant's age was four years and five months during the Liberation War. Bala's date of birth in the application form is October 20, 1966.

The white paper mentioned over a dozen such incidents and provided documents.

Passenger

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The victim then went to the nearby Airport Police Station and filed a case in this regard.

The Airport Police told The Daily Star that the matter was under investigation but the officer who allegedly stole the bag was yet to be questioned. Another police source said the customs inspector could not be located at the customs hall at ZIA.

Sources at the airport said the officer was on duty till 2pm and left afterwards.

Meanwhile, the director of ZIA denied any knowledge of the incident.

Besides, the customs superintendent at ZIA could not be reached for comments despite repeated attempts last night.

Road link

FROM PAGE 12
who will be visiting Bangladesh possibly in July.

Appreciating Thailand's initiative for the Asian Cooperation Dialogue, he said the states of Asian region could benefit from their united effort to meet the challenges of globalisation.

The commerce minister also mentioned that Bangladesh's exports to Thailand "continued to be dominated by a limited number of items though we have to offer a number of products from our export-basket". He requested Bangkok to diversify its imports from Dhaka.



Activists of the Environment Movement of Bangladesh rally in front of the BRAC Centre at Mohakhali yesterday to retrieve the Gulshan-Baridhara Lake from illegal encroachments.

Festival on Liberation War

FROM PAGE 1
Memorial Auditorium.

This is the second such festival. The first one was held in Agartala, the capital of northeastern Indian State of Tripura in 2001.

Some 200 representatives from Tripura, which sheltered and supported around 80 lakh freedom fighters with money, food and logistics during the War of Liberation in 1971, are attending the festival.

Education Minister of Tripura and convenor of the festival committee Sri Anil Sarker, Minister from Congress Party for Tripura in 1971 Sri Tarit Mohan Das Gupta, Cultural Affairs Minister of Tripura Sri Jitendra Chowdhury, President of Bangladesh Workers Party Rashed Khan Menon, left-leaning 11-party alliance leader Sri Nirmol Sen, Prof Sanjida Khatun, Prof Ansuazzaman and Prof Mesbah Kamal, among others, spoke at the inaugural function.

Addressing the function as chief guest Mannan Bhuiyan, the LGRD Minister, noted: "There are some debates and problems between the two countries, including equitable sharing of the Ganges waters, trade imbalance and border problems." "But we will be able to solve every debate and problem through

dialogue and thus strengthen our relationship," he said to applause from the audience as other politicians and intellectuals from both sides resolved to work for turning the region into a zone of peace and development.

The BNP secretary general, who is a leading freedom fighter, paid glowing tributes to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for Bangladesh although they were not natives of this land, besides his compatriots who fought for independence.

Recalling sacrifice of the brave people of Agartala for the great Liberation War, the minister said during the war people of Tripura had assisted Bangladesh people who took shelter as freedom fighters or refugees, surpassing the total population of the Indian State.

"Taking all risks, they opened their border for us. Enemy shells and bombs ripped through that land and people. Many inhabitants died or were injured or lost property but they didn't hold back from the pledge to help us," commemorated Bhuiyan.

In the commemorative speech he billed theirs as an absolutely rare sacrifice in world history for people from a neighboring land.

Not only in Tripura, lakhs of refugees took shelter in different Indian suburbs and towns and rural areas close to the border.

Bhuiyan termed Bangladesh a progressive and democratic country and said there is no room for extremism, violence and communalism here.

Traffic sergeant

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on the spot.

The driver and his helpers managed to flee the scene leaving the vehicle at Mirpur section 10. Mirpur Police seized the bus.

The body of the victim was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy.

Tareq entered the police department in 1999 under the freedom fighters category. He was the son of Doctor Monwar Hossain and hailed from Kashani in Gopalganj.

Last year, another on-duty traffic Sergeant Rajeshwar Ray was killed in front of Uttara Police Station when a truck driver hit his bike as he ordered the driver to pull over.

Udichi bomb blast

FROM PAGE 12
House.

Besides, at least seven residents of Jessore town appeared before the committee to give statements spontaneously.

The committee also recorded the statement of senior ASP of the CID Dulaluddin Akand, investigation officer of the Udichi murder case. Also, dockets of the case were taken from the officer.

Eighteen accused with their statements recorded this time do not include the prime accused -- Information Minister Tariqul Islam. The investigation officer submitted two separate chargesheets accusing 24 persons, including BNP leader Tariqul.

Reinvestigation into the case began on May 1, which ended the following day. The committee examined dockets, copies of chargesheets, reports by the investigation officer, reports by explosive experts, evidences and the extent of damage caused by the explosion.

The committee members visited the spot and recorded statements of

relatives of the deceased and the injured. The March 6 bomb blast left ten people killed and 188 injured. Of the injured, at least 18 have become disabled, sources said.

Three others of the committee are Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs Mostafizur Rahman, Senior Director of NSI Kamaluddin and CID official Kazi Mujibar Rahman.

Litu, Shanu

FROM PAGE 12
a mayoral candidate from the Awami League. Besides, both of them are wanted in several other criminal cases.

In the run-up to the election, both Litu and Shanu were seen campaigning in the city, although police launched some 'eyewash' man-hunts for them.

Whether three other elected ward commissioners with such criminal legacy will also surrender before the court could not be confirmed.

However, none of the five ward commissioners is beyond the public eye.

WB loan

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Islam added that there was growing recognition within the country that improved governance in procurement would contribute to improving the investment climate and accelerating private sector-led economic growth, the essential pillar for rapid poverty reduction. "We are deeply encouraged by the government's stated commitment to make improvements in this area," he said.

The project would support the Government's efforts to reform procurement rules and procedures, improve management capacity, adopt appeal procedures, and implement mandatory procurement audits and other accountability mechanisms.

It would help establish a Central Procurement Technical Unit within the Ministry of Planning. This new, permanent entity would have the mandate to develop public procurement rules and standard bidding documents; establish regular training programmes; and introduce effective monitoring and evaluation for better management of public procurement.

The no-interest credit is being provided by the World Bank Group's International Development Association, on standard terms, with a maturity of 40 years, including a grace period of 10 years.

Storm

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kms per hour lasted about 30 minutes damaging 100 kutcha houses.

The storm also uprooted more than 500 trees, electric and telephone poles, disrupting power supply and telecommunication network of the district.

Besides, standing IRRI-Boro crops on a vast tract of land have been damaged by the hail-storm.

Award trap!

FROM PAGE 1
Quazi Jahangir Alam, editor of the newsmagazine, in the letters to the businessmen claimed that the award would help their companies get more media exposure.

The magazine uses the Ekushey Television (ETV) to lure the businessmen into trap. "The occasion will be fully covered by the ETV. And we have talked to the television authorities in this regard. This will also heighten your company's image and reputation," said a letter issued to a nominee, signed by the editor.

In the latest turn of events, "the Arthakantha Businessman Award 2001", which the magazine claims to hold on May 13 at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel will involve an estimated Tk 2 lakh. The magazine sought sponsorship from the award nominees for the event.

"It is totally unethical to seek sponsorship from the nominees for an event," one businessman told The Daily Star.

Moreover, the magazine nominates for the award some companies that are no longer in operation, nor did they contribute significantly to the economy to be a recipient of the award.

When contacted, the magazine editor said, "Seeking sponsorship for such an event is not unethical." "I cannot hold it without sponsorship," he told The Daily Star.

The magazine with a very poor circulation forced some high officials of multinational and local companies to place advertisements or to be sponsors for the sake of positive portrayal, sources alleged.

ex-environment and forest minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, ex-food minister Amir Hossain Amu and former LGRD minister Zillur Rahman, Ex-public works minister Mosharraf Hossain, a number of retired and serving civil and defence officials and businessmen including Noor Ali.

They have been charged with irregularities in the appointment of government employees through the Public Service Commission (PSC) and irregularities in the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET); and finance, law and food ministries; corruption and irregularities in the allotment of industrial and commercial plots and construction of Bangabandhu Novo Theatre and Swadhinata Stambha.

It alleged that pro-AL Chhatra League leaders and activists were selected in violation of rules in the 20th BCS batch recruitment by the PSC. PSC Chairman Prof Mostafa Chowdhury and other officials have been accused in this regard.

"A scrutiny of the applications of nine candidates in the 20th BCS examination shows that they all were shown as the children of freedom fighters to avail their quota despite the fact that there was no mention of the criteria in their original applications," the white paper said.

The government also found irregularities and abuse of power in the Red Crescent Society in the allotment of its land at Kakrail in the city to private sector. Charges have been brought against former chairman of the society Sheikh Kabir Hossain and others.

The white paper also found about half a dozen cases of corrup-

tion and irregularities at the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) in the allotment of land, and in the use of funds by the former labour minister. The bureau allegedly allotted land to Borak Travels for the construction of a 24-storied hotel in Gulshan in violation of rules.

It accused the ex-finance minister of abuse of power in exempting huge interests on the loan of Sharif Brothers owned by former AL MP Sharif Khasruzzaman and rescheduling loan up to 2009. 'Irregularities' have also been identified regarding the promotion of general managers in different commercial banks.

The cell found irregularities regarding appointment of officials and employees of the Employment Bank, appointment of sub-registrars under the land ministry and marriage registrars under the law ministry.

Charges of irregularities and abuse of power have been brought against former environment minister regarding appointments and promotions in the Department of Forest.

The white paper also alleged that the former LGRD minister allocated funds and wheat to AL men, violating rules. It also detected irregularities and corruption in the Food Department.

There are charges of corruption and irregularities also in the construction of Bangabandhu Novo Theatre at Bijoy Sarani and Swadhinata Stambha at Suhrawardy Udyan.

Dubious dredging deal

FROM PAGE 1
The project requires dredging in Sabur beacon, front of jetty area, jetty channel and confluence, and the southern anchorage area.

A senior MPA official, requesting anonymity, has meanwhile claimed that the southern anchorage area apart dredging in other areas is going on as per plan. In fact, the company has collected around Tk 20 crore in bills for the work it has done so far, he informed.

There is also doubt whether dredging in other areas is following the contract agreement and acquiring the required depth.

The MPA official, however, dispelled such speculations. "A BIWTA team conducted pre-dredging hydro-graphic survey and they will also survey after the dredging. So I do not think there is any scope of foul play."

When his attention was drawn to the fact that company did not find any problem in disbursing its bills despite floating contract agreements, he said that some unrealised bills were pending with the MPA and there was also the bank guarantee.

The company has given a bank guarantee of Tk 2.5 crore to the MPA as per contract agreement and unrealised bill of Tk 2 crore remains

pending with the MPA. "If the company ultimately fails to complete the job we will forfeit this money," the MPA official said.

But the joint venture company has a record of violating contract agreements.

A few months into the work, the Indonesian company in the joint venture withdrew its trailing suction hopper dredger, hydrographers and hydrography equipment, and send it back home, without prior permission. However, the authorities are yet to slap any fine on the company barring issuance of several warnings.

The company did hire a trailing suction hopper dredger, hydrographers and hydrography equipment from Indonesia though.

However, as some technical faults developed in the trailing suction hopper dredger, it sought permission from the MPA to take the machine to the Chittagong dry-dock and fix it.

The MPA gave 'temporary release order' on condition that the dredger would be brought in Mongla within 15 days and that it would not leave Bangladesh territory before completing the dredging work in Mongla. The company also gave

assurance in this regard through a written agreement.

But, the dredger left Bangladesh in September 2001 and was taken to Indonesia floating the agreement.

Later, the company informed MPA that the dredger was going through repair works in Jakarta and it would be brought back by December 15, 2001.

But, even after four months there is no sign of that dredger.

Moreover, as the hydrographers and hydrography equipment also left Bangladesh for Indonesia, the pre-dredging hydrographic survey in the jetty area was not done violating the contract agreement, sources said.

And due to siltation, the depth achieved so far in the southern anchorage deteriorated in the mean time.

"As you left the area without completing the dredging and has not handed over the dredged channel of southern anchorage, you have to bear the consequence of siltation according to the contract," the project director of the Pussur channel dredging warned the PT Rukindo Basic Dredging Partnership through a letter in October last year.

Residential areas

FROM PAGE 12

This trend attracted the attention of real estate development agencies which began buying up residential buildings for conversion into high-rise ones. For commercial projects, the developers initially preferred sites on the main roads which conveniently served their commercial needs. Their apartment projects, though equally prized, enjoy a somewhat lower priority as compared with the commercial projects. The main driving force for the latter is the highly profitable returns from such enterprises.

As a result, most plots in those areas which previously had single or two-storey houses having a spick-and-span look with large grassy lawns, verdant gardens and select trees, vanished, giving place to multi-storied structures with a predominantly commercial bias.

Inevitably, the craze for acquiring the prime land holdings threw up the price for such lands so much so that the present price might seem staggering. In 1970, the price per bigha of land in Gulshan was Tk 5 lakh, as fixed by RAJUK. Such price has now reportedly skyrocketed to Tk 1 crore on the open market which compares favourably with the exorbitant price of land in Tokyo.

This trend gives an indication as to how viable commercial enterprises in the posh areas built on such costly lands are regarded by real estate builders.

Uttara Model Town was once a very peaceful place to live in. The residents used to enjoy the facilities of a modern town and tranquillity of a suburb. Tranquillity has been changing fast owing to several factors, the more important of which is the growth of commercial establishments on the main roads. The development of this township was undertaken by Rajuk especially for the city dwellers of middle-income bracket. Life nowadays at Uttara has been bedevilled by many-fold problems due to social and environmental degradation experienced over the past several years.

The types of degradations include (1) setting of innumerable number of 'kutcha' bazaars here and there on the roadside, (2) there are numerous wayside shops, grocery shops and tailoring establishments in non-specified places in the residential area. Besides, there are a good number of bigger commercial establishments and some restaurants on the main roads that passed

through the residential area. All this contributes to the growing traffic congestion in the area that was once free from such civic malady. This area, only a few years ago, enjoyed the benefit of somewhat lower house rent, as compared with the prevailing rent rates in Dhaka with similar facilities. The position has now changed with a population increase in that area. The living conditions in this residential area has been lately affected by the setting up of about a dozen garment industries in the area causing inconvenience to the residents and at the same time degrading the physical, ecological and social environment. The lakes and waterbodies suffer from neglect in as much as their waters are misused for public bathing and washing by washermen. Next come the pockets of slums.

The total picture emerging from the gradual erosion of the intrinsic character of these select residential zones reflects the many ills of the metropolitan city.

Local people said local AL, Jubo League and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leaders and activists cannot go for organisational activities, fearing action from 'Obaidullah administration.' His 'main task' is to keep them on the run.

Kapasia police had picked up Jamaluddin, only son of his mother, a student of Alam Government College and a BCL activist, from his house at village Targaon on April 17 and allegedly tortured him to death. His body was recovered from the Shitalakhya river on April 19. Police however claimed he had fled the thana and drowned in the river.

Family members of Jamaluddin, who obtained star marks both in SSC and HSC examinations, alleged that police did not take case regarding his murder due to Obaidullah's objection.

Finally, the victim's mother Ramiza Begum filed a petition case with a first class magistrate's court at Gazipur on Thursday, accusing the OC of Kapasia thana, Gazi Mainuddin, Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Abu Bakar Siddique and constable Aftab Hossain of killing her son.

Meanwhile, a number of leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations in Kapasia expressed their resentment at the activities of Obaidullah and his accomplices.

Obaidullah and the OC could not be contacted despite repeated attempts.

Top army officers

FROM PAGE 1
were made 'purely on political considerations' and 'in violation of constitutional provisions', it said.

The special allocations totalling over Tk 21 crore were given for implementation of various projects in upazilas.

No opposition lawmaker got any special allocation, it said.

The 'white paper' on 'Awami League government's corruption, irregularities and abuse of power during 1996-2001' was prepared by a special cell at the Prime Minister's Office.

The Chief of Army Staff was given Tk 25 lakh for Hathazari upazila in Chittagong, former army chief Tk. 20 lakh for Rangpur, Maj Gen Jibon Kanai Das Tk 15 lakh for Haimchar upazila in Chandpur, Director General of Defense Intelligence Maj Gen Nazrul Islam Tk 10 lakh for Atgharia upazila in Pabna and Maj Gen Masudur Rahman was given Tk 10 lakh for Bhola and Borhanuddin upazilas.

Among the recipients, the then fisheries and livestock minister ASM Abdur Rab got the highest amount of Tk 40 lakh. The then Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury got Tk 25 lakh.

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Jamal murder

FROM PAGE 1
thana, it is alleged.

"Activities of Kapasia police are controlled by Obaidullah and not by the Officer in Charge (OC). The OC and other police personnel have to consult him to go for any action. He decides who should be arrested or not and who should be implicated in cases," one source said seeking anonymity. Many others expressed similar views.

Local people said local AL, Jubo League and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leaders and activists cannot go for organisational activities, fearing action from 'Obaidullah administration.' His 'main task' is to keep them on the run.

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Frigate purchase

FROM PAGE 1
saying the matter was "highly sensitive".

In 1994-95, the then government, in principal, decided to purchase a naval frigate for Bangladesh Navy, but it did not mature due to indecision. In the following year (1995-96), a decision was taken. The Defence Purchase Directorate received nine proposals and shortlisted six of those.

Later, it recommended DAEWOO's proposal for a new frigate costing 101.01 million dollars, excluding ammunition and missiles. On the other hand, a proposal from Korean company Hyundai involving an expenditure of 97.40 million dollars was rejected without mentioning any reason, the white paper said.

It said, on May 10, 1997, the Defence Purchase Directorate invited an international tender giving 28 days' time, which was later extended by two weeks. Twenty-five proposals from nine companies were received. An evaluation committee was also formed. But none of the proposals except that of DAEWOO was evaluated properly, the white paper said analysing the documents.

According to the purchase contract, the warship was supposed to be built in line with the ULSAN Class design and a certificate obtained from the builder. But this was not followed during or after building the ship.

Kidnapped schoolboy rescued in Sirajganj

UNB, Sirajganj

Sadar thana police yesterday rescued a schoolboy who was kidnapped from Chapainawabganj. Arafat, a student of class five, was abducted from Khanpara village in Shibganj upazila of Chapainawab-ganj on Thursday.

Later, the kidnappers took the boy to Sirajganj town in a microbus and kept him confined in a house. But the boy somehow managed to escape.

Police found the schoolboy crying in front of sadar police station and took him to their custody. He will be sent to his village, police said.

Zillur

FROM PAGE 1
concentrating on publishing white papers just to divert public focus from its failures."

Zillur questioned the government's motive behind publishing white papers one after another when there were so many agencies in the country to file and probe corruption charges. "If there is any specific charge against anyone, that can well be pursued under the existing laws of the land."

The elderly AL leader noted that like martial law administrators, the present government was out to vilify the time-tested, dedicated political personalities before the eyes of the general masses. "We strongly condemn such a motive."

Referring to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's statement in the parliament, Zillur said, "From the very beginning, they (government) were threatening that 'from top to bottom' none would be spared."

"It's a manifestation of political vengeance," he said referring to the white papers.

IAF jet crash

FROM PAGE 12
on the balcony of his house. "I saw a blast in the sky and within 20 seconds, the plane fell. I saw the pilot and co-pilot parachuting down."

The rear portion of the plane burned up, he said, and the front crashed into the bank building, with parts hitting the other structures in the busy neighborhood where the district Central Jail is located.

He said the bank was not full, as most of its employees had not yet arrived, although it was open for business.

Mahotra and other witnesses reported that fire engines were delayed or had trouble getting water when they arrived. He said one fire truck broke down when it pushed the site and bystanders had to clear it.

The fighter jet had taken off from the nearby Adampur air force base and was on a routine flight when it crashed, said PK Bandhopadhyaya, the Defence Ministry's spokesman in New Delhi, India's capital.

Hundreds of thousands of Indian and Pakistani armed forces are on war alert in the frontier area and