

Jail killing case

FROM PAGE 1

Obaedur Rahman told Anisul: "Who are you? You are in charge of what? I will take steps to remove you."

On the same day, public prosecutor of the court Abdullah Mahmud Hasan was assigned to cooperate with the special prosecutors in running the case, triggering a 'festering discord' between the special prosecutors and the public prosecutor.

The special prosecutors lodged a written complaint on February 17, accusing Abdullah of taking decisions on his own in conducting the case.

On March 21, the public prosecutor was given the overall responsibility of running the case that gave the special prosecutors an impression that the government did not want them to fight the case.

"We have presented some facts to the court linking the involvement of the defendants with the killing. This is why the defendants lobbied the government for putting us on the sidelines," Anisul said.

After taking office in October 2001 ballot, the present four-party coalition relieved Anisul and other prosecutors, who conducted the case under the past Awami League government, from the job without explaining a reason.

Deputy Leader of the

Opposition Abdul Hamid in a letter to Law Minister Moudud Ahmed in last November demanded their reinstatement.

The court has already recorded the statements of 29 witnesses of 75.

A group of unruly army men, backed by some political leaders, entered the jail on November 3, 1975 and killed four national leaders -- Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, AHM Quamruzzaman and M Mansur Ali.

Kazi Abdul Awal, then deputy inspector general (prisons), filed a case with Lalbagh Police Station the next day, but an indemnity ordinance blocked the trial until 1996 when the AL repealed the law after being voted into office.

But the trial process continued to face legal loopholes.

Of the accused, Obaedur, Nurul Islam Manzoor, Shah Moazzem Hossain and retired army major Khairuzzaman got bail soon after the present government took office.

Taheruddin Thakur, dismissed army lieutenant colonel Syed Faruk Rahman, retired lieutenant colonel Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan and retired major Bazul Huda are in custody.

Shariful Haq Dalim and 11 others went into hiding after investigation into the case opened.

Robbers stab trucker dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Highway robbers killed a trucker and wounded his helper in Jessore on Tuesday.

Police said driver Montaz Ali Munna, 40, was taking 45 barrels of soybean oil said to be worth Tk 7 lakh in his truck to Amir Oil Mill in Jessore from Dhaka.

The robbers stopped the truck at gunpoint and stabbed Munna and helper Akhter at Sadipur in Bagherpara to force them to board a microbus.

One of the robbers of Tootpara in Khulna drove the oil-laden truck to Palash Food Industries at Jhumjhumurpura BSIC industrial estate in Jessore.

Acting on a tip off, police rushed there, seized the truck and arrested Kawsar Ali, manager of the business establishment.

Police suspect the proprietor of the company, Subhash Saha now absconding, has a link to the robbery.

Munna died at Jessore General Hospital.

Third unit of Ghorasal power plant closed

UNB, *Narsingdi*

The third unit of Ghorasal thermal power plant was closed on Tuesday night for non-availability of adequate gas.

Abdul Khaleque, manager (operation), said the 210mw unit ceased generation of electricity from 9:00pm.

Two other units having 80mw capacity remained closed since July last year.

The six-unit Ghorasal thermal power plant has total generation capacity of 920mw.

Narsingdi, an industrial district having a large number of textile factories, is experiencing loadshedding affecting production. Only 22mw power is supplied from Siddirganj out of its demand for 34mw.

Genocide

FROM PAGE 1

On this night in 1971, the Pakistani junta launched 'Operation Search Light' against the unarmed Bengalis. The Dhaka University was attacked and students exterminated in their hundreds. Death squads roamed the streets of Dhaka, killing some 7,000 people in a single night. It was only the beginning.

On March 26, the nation started an armed struggle against the Pakistani occupation forces following the declaration of independence by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The Pakistani forces arrested Bangabandhu as he, through a wireless message, called upon the people to resist the occupation forces.

Later, Awami League leader MA Hannan and Major Ziaur Rahman (later president of Bangladesh), read out the proclamation of independence on behalf of Bangabandhu, which was broadcast from Kalurghat radio station in Chittagong. A nine-month liberation war began ending on December 16.

Tomorrow (Friday), the grateful nation will celebrate the 33rd anniversary of its independence.

As the Independence Day this year falls on the weekly holiday on Friday, the government has declared a public holiday on Saturday.

Apart from official Independence Day programmes, different socio-cultural and political organisations have taken up elaborate programmes to mark the day. Newspapers will bring out special supplements.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina will issue separate messages today on the eve of Independence Day.

Dozen BNP

FROM PAGE 12

immediate steps to stop such campaigning, especially hanging of banners and posters and processions by supporters of the aspirants for nomination, the leader thought.

"If we have to utilise Tk 20,000 crore next fiscal year, we must keep the ADP outlay at Tk 22,000 crore."

Yesterday's meeting discussed 30 snailing foreign donor-funded projects including cyclone shelter, municipal services project, telecoms and radio link projects in Chittagong and the Chittagong Hill Tracts, construction of the Dhanua-Savar gas pipeline, power transmission schemes and Paks bridge construction.

Project directors briefed Saifur on the problems they are facing in implementing the plans.

Some common problems are: harsh conditions of donors, delay in appointing consultants and complications in tender.

While Saifur accepted some of these problems as reasons for slow implementation, he criticised the project directors for their inefficiency that was equally responsible for the slow pace.

The energy ministry performed well in utilisation funds, spending 59 percent of local allocation and 30 percent of project aid. The local government and rural development (LGRD) ministry also spent

PM asks all

FROM PAGE 1

save the country and its ecology as India was withdrawing water during the dry season buildings dams on the upper catchments of many common rivers.

She mentioned Bangladesh's efforts to resolve the bilateral conflict on water issue by taking it up to international level as well as discussing at diplomatic and JRC (Indo-Bangla Joint Rivers Commission) levels.

Khaleda said the transboundary rivers, of which China, India, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh are co-riparians, flow down to the Bay of Bengal through Bangladesh depositing an astounding amount of 1.8 billion tonnes of sediments each year, gradually choking the navigability of rivers.

The prime minister said her government had plan for dredging the rivers, but such ventures were very cost-intensive. She informed the House that the shipping ministry was implementing a Tk 36-crore dredging project to enhance the navigability in the Sadarghat to Ashulia Bridge stretch of Buriganga.

To keep Buriganga, a lifeline for Dhaka, navigable round the year, Water Development Board is also taking steps for channelling water from Brahmaputra to Buriganga through Dhaleswari, Khaleda informed.

After one of her party lawmakers had accused former Awami League (AL) lawmaker Haji Selim of illegally grabbing 'half of the river Buriganga', the prime minister said, not only Buriganga, her government would free all the rivers in the country from illegal encroachment.

Khaleda also told the House that her government was discussing with India to update the Ganges River Water Sharing Contract signed during the previous government of AL.

Replying to a query on expansion of electricity supply in rural areas, she said that her colleagues in

3 outlaws

FROM PAGE 1

village, a PBPC stronghold. The Janajuddho cadres took the three to Perishnagar and slaughtered in turn on a field.

Police recovered the bodies yesterday in the morning before sending those to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Abir Hasan, divisional chief of PBPC, claimed responsibility for the killing over cellophone call to local newspapers.

JS body

FROM PAGE 1

a meeting with Jamaat-e-Islamee lawmaker Delwar Hossain Saidee in the chair discussed the issue and recommended exemplary punishment to the officials responsible for the mismanagement.

The sub-committee also proposed to hold a meeting of the probe body in Saudi Arabia to record statement of the officials there.

Committee members State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharrar Hossain Shahjahan, lawmakers Md Karim Uddin Bharrasha, Shah Md Ruhul Kuddus, Md Motiur Rahman and Md Shahiduzzaman were present.

Dhaka, Delhi

FROM PAGE 12

standards for food articles, textiles and others as a part of a initiative to harmonise standards.

Under the roadmap, India and Bangladesh will accept each other's certifications and testing standards.

Currently, goods are tested at borders of the two countries.

Tk 2,300cr ADP cut

FROM PAGE 1

donor-aided projects," he reasoned.

He was also critical of the ADP design.

"The are many ambitious and unrealistic projects in this year's ADP," the minister pointed out. "I have instructed the officials to scrutinise the ADP flaws so that we can improve it next year."

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parliament, who were deprived by the previous government of getting enough power connections in their constituencies, would be compensated now.

Claiming that her government so far has taken electricity to 6,896 villages, the prime minister expressed the hope that 6,800 more villages would get power connection during her current tenure.

To a query on recruitment in public services, Khaleda replied that so far her government had appointed 87,597 persons in government jobs and hoped to appoint 135,000 more before her term exhausted.

In response to another question, she said Bangladesh was trying to get some trade facilities from Thailand, India and Pakistan on bilateral basis and hoped for some to be gained from China and South Korea under regional trade system.

The prime minister said Bangladesh recently proposed for reserving 20 percent market shares in European Union for garments and 30 percent for low-tech commodities from the least developed countries (LDCs).

Responding to two other questions, Khaleda Zia gave resumes of some of the programmes undertaken for natural calamity preparedness and women emancipation.

6 cases filed against Haji Selim, old Dhaka traders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six cases were filed with the Lalbagh Police Station against former lawmaker Haji Selim, Awami League activists and some old Dhaka businessmen in connection with the Wednesday's violent clash at Lalbagh.

The cases were filed hours after a fierce confrontation between activists of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal and Awami Jubo League over occupation of a place for rally at Lalbagh on Tuesday.

Police then sprang into action, raiding houses of AL leader Haji Selim and some businessmen, who were enforcing a daylong strike of over 40 local business bodies in Old Dhaka to protest against a police raid on the business outfit of a local AL leader at Nalgola on Monday.

Two cases were lodged under Speedy Trial Act, two under Explosives Act and two for hampering state activities, Haji Selim, the ex-MP from Dhaka-8 constituency, was implicated in all the cases, police said.

Local Jubo Dal leader Sayed Hasan Mintu filed a case under Speedy Trial Act while Lalbagh police took care of the rest.

A team of police raided the Devi Das Ghat Lane house of Haji Selim at about 2:00am yesterday and ran a thorough search down the seven-storey building. They also searched some other neighbouring houses, family members of the AL leader said.

Meanwhile, local businessmen alleged that BNP activists also raided their houses in the area, hurled abusive words and threatened them of dire consequences if they staged demonstrations in future.

Though most businesses at the old Dhaka area remained open yesterday, most of the shop owners stayed away from their shops apprehending police arrest.

B Chy announces programme series today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The alternative political stream led by ex-president AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury today announces a series of its programmes in an apparent bid to gear up the platform's organisational activities.

National committee member of the platform Mahi B Chowdhury declares the programmes at a press conference at KC Memorial Clinic in Uttara in the afternoon.

Meanwhile, a source close to the newly formed political forum told The Daily Star last night that they were considering to form a student wing to boost their activities.

"We have already prepared a framework for a student front," the source said.

It is also expected to announce schedules for countrywide public rallies and a 'hated day' against crime and violence.

Earlier on Tuesday, Kamal Uddin Ahmed, ex-current committee member of the ruling BNP's workers' wing Jatiyatabadi Samik Dal, and Mohammad Hossain Bhuiyan, former advisor to Jatiya Party's chief HM Ershad, joined the platform.

BAF chopper

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Another helicopter picked up the two passengers later.

"The helicopter returned safely to the base after a short landing for a malfunction in the air," Mohammad Nazrul Islam, director of the Inter Services Public Relation (ISPR), said.

Hasina

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government's misrule". "We all have to unite particularly against the rampant corruption of the prime minister's family members and ministers."

She said the government has chosen the path of repression by harassing opposition demonstrations, meeting out reprisals for political dissent and denying people their fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution.

Hasina said the government has rendered thousands of workers jobless by shutting down industrial units one after another.

General Secretary of Bangabandhu Parishad SA Malek said: "When the ruler's wish becomes the law, it is anything but democracy."

President of Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) AAMS Arefin Siddique said democracy in the country is in danger. He also regretted the fact that a scheduled meeting between the DUTA and the university's vice-chancellor to discuss the recent attack on Prof. Humayun Azad was cancelled.

Former justice KM Sobhan, who presided over the meeting, said, "We all are aware of the kind of crisis the country is reeling under and the only way to get over it is democratic movement."

Citing restriction on the media's access to Prof. Humayun Azad before his flight to Bangkok for better treatment, he said it proved press is far from free in this country.

Prof Moutaz Uddin Ahmed and Supreme Court lawyer Amirul Islam also spoke.

Govt plans

FROM PAGE 12

motion decision as the frustration among the lower- and mid-level threatened to escalate into commotion and stall government activities like in early 1996.

The frustration began to crop up in the administration when the government elevated around 1,000 officials of 1973 to 1984 batches as deputy secretary to secretary, leaving the cases of several hundred, especially of the 1973 batch who are working in the same posts for 10 to 20 years, unattended.

After taking office, the coalition government also gave a 'wholesale promotion' to officials of 1977 and 1979 batches, elevating them to joint secretary and additional secretary in 13 months.

But a decision about the fate of some officials, especially of the 1973 batch who are nearing retirement age but have not fulfilled the promotion criteria, is yet to be taken.

A highly placed source said the government was considering giving promotion to some of them on humanitarian grounds.

Sources at the establishment ministry said an intelligence agency was examining the present and past of the officials who are on the list of promotion as deputy secretary.

They said their files were sent to the Prime Minister's Office seeking permission whether or not they would be processed for promotion.

Before sending the files to the establishment ministry, the PMO handed them over to the intelligence agency for scanning the officials' political backgrounds, lifestyle, corruption links and professional excellence.

Sources said the PMO asked the intelligence agency to survey the files liberally, but identify who were biased towards the main opposition Awami League.

Establishment ministry sources said the government was also planning to promote deputy secretaries of different batches to joint secretary as many posts stood vacant.

World TB Day

FROM PAGE 12

ICDDR,B (International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh).

In terms of disease burden of pulmonary or lung TB, Bangladesh comes fourth in the world. And, statistically, this burden is increasing fast by the year with one person catching the ailment every two minutes, experts disclosed at the seminar organised to observe World TB Day yesterday.

The theme of the day this year is 'Stop TB Now -- Every Breath Counts.'

Despite a good progress made in treatment coverage, which is roughly 84 percent of the detected cases being fully cured and the rest, 16 percent, dropping out, the extent of case detection remains poor.

Only 38 percent of the estimated TB cases are detected, which the experts term unsatisfactory, comparing to a minimum target of 70 percent recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

"The treatment we offer is of high quality, conforming to WHO's recommendations. And it's free. Yet, over the years, we've failed to make any significant progress in case detection due to lack of awareness among the masses on TB," said Dr Vikarunnessa Begum, deputy programme manager of National TB Control Programme.

The speakers also pointed out that, as a result of the sickness, on an average, the family of a TB patient loses four-month work time and about 30 percent of its annual household income.

About 75 percent of TB infections and deaths occur in the 15- to 54-year age group, which is the most productive one of the population economically, the speakers said.

TB should be suspected when a cough lasts for more than three weeks, they said and recommended a large-scale awareness building drive.

New Hamas chief

FROM PAGE 1

Minister Ariel Sharon in revenge for Yassin's killing.

He told the pan-Arab al-Hayat daily in Damascus that Hamas would confine its struggle to Israeli and Palestinian territory.

"... Since the enemy has targeted our leadership... and a big symbol like Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, it is the right of the resistance to respond against the big Zionist heads," he said.

Asked if that included Sharon, he said: "Yes, including Sharon, but this is up to the military leadership in the field and its capabilities. I hope that they are successful."

Another senior Hamas official said the group had no intention of attacking U.S. targets following Yassin's assassination.

"It's not in our policy to target Americans or American interests," Hamas political leader Sayed Seyam told Reuters.

The State Department had told Americans that Hamas had threatened revenge on U.S. interests after Yassin's death, telling them to leave the Gaza Strip and also advising against travel to Israel or the West Bank.

Seyam said the travel warning was "misleading information" from a government that had blessed Yassin's killing.

Washington said it was "deeply troubled" by the killing on Monday of Yassin -- the founder and spiritual leader of Hamas -- but unlike many countries it did not condemn it.

Rantissi said no orders had been given for militants to strike targets beyond the borders of what Hamas wants as an Islamic state of Palestine -- meaning all of Israel as well as the West Bank and Gaza.

India clinch series

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Mohammad Sami, who claimed 3-63, led a fightback by the Pakistani bowlers, whose five wides and as many no-balls were a vast improvement on the 58 wides and 40 no-balls they conceded in the first four matches.

Lanky seamer Shabbir Ahmed finished with 2-56 while Shoaib Akhtar and Malik claimed one wicket apiece.

India lost openers Virender Sehwag and Sachin Tendulkar by the 15th over, at which time India had put 79 runs on the board.

Tendulkar, one-day cricket's most successful batsman, failed to make 50 for the sixth successive time in a major final when he edged Sami to wicket-keeper Moin Khan after making 37.

Indian captain Sourav Ganguly added 92 for the third wicket with Laxman when he was dismissed by Akhtar for 45.

Rahul Dravid fell for four, Yuvraj Singh for 18 and Mohammad Kaif for 16 as the Indian middle-order failed to cash in on Laxman's efforts.

Among the 25,000 fans at the overflowing stadium was Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, who watched the match for an hour alongside Indian industrialist Nusrat Wadia, the grandson of Pakistan's founder Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

The Bombay-based Wadia was a special invitee of the Pakistan government to the match, part of India's first full tour of the neighbours since 1989.

Presenting a paper at the session, Damien Foundation Bangladesh Country Director Dr M A Hamid Salim said, "TB patients who experienced the sufferings of the disease can be the best advocates for a TB control programme."

The experts said a TB patient would be fully cured if he took all prescribed drugs in right dose and at right time for six to eight months. TB bacteria often become resistant to drugs, before the treatment is complete, and the cure then becomes more difficult, they added.

The National TB Control Programme in Bangladesh that aims to reduce the incidence of tuberculosis, has the objectives to detect at least 70 percent of the contagious TB cases and cure at least 85 percent of them. To achieve these objectives, the programme has adopted a highly cost-effective treatment strategy named DOTs, which is application of a combination of three to four anti-TB germ medications.

The programme involves some 30,000 specially trained health workers, who supervise patients for eight months to ensure that they take right dose of the drugs at right time.

Alluding to the existing situation, Prof M Serajul Islam, a former director of the TB programme, said, "We need to broaden public-private partnership to achieve the goals set by the Who."

Prof Emajudding Ahamed, former vice chancellor of Dhaka University, Prof A K M Shamsul Huq, president of Chest and Heart Disease Association of Bangladesh, Dr M Becc, Who TB consultant in Dhaka, Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, chief of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, and Prof Nabi Alam Khan were also present at the seminar.

Chest and Heart Association of Bangladesh organised the event at Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons auditorium in the city.

Strip.

Hamas announced that two of its followers had been shot dead by Israeli forces as they tried to launch an attack on a Jewish settlement in the southern Gaza Strip late Tuesday.

GAZA PULLOUT DISMISSED

Hamas has always been opposed to the peace process, unlike President Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority.

Rantissi dismissed Sharon's evolving plan for pulling troops and settlers out of the Gaza Strip as no more than a "cover for committing more crimes against Palestinians."

"No one is betting on the peace process now. Is there anyone who thinks the Zionists will ever abandon Jerusalem ... or dismantle settlements, release prisoners or return refugees?"

Marked for death by Israel, Rantissi began his new duties of leader from underground with security around him beefed up. He survived an assassination attempt with minor injuries last June.

50 Maoists die in Nepal air raid

AFP, *Kathmandu*

At least 50 Maoist rebels were killed in an air raid by government forces in western Nepal's Baglung district, a security source said yesterday.

"At least 50 Maoists were killed in an air operation launched by the security forces in Tarakhola, Galkot and Argal villages of Gaglung district