

Tigers revel

FROM PAGE 1
becoming the first Bangladesh captain to declare in Test cricket.

The second innings declaration came at 271 for nine, leaving the West Indies 336 to win off 29 overs.

Left with the highly improbable, if not impossible, task, West Indies were 113 without loss when the two captains agreed to a draw with Chris Gayle undefeated on 66 and Devon Smith 40.

A beaming Bashar said: "It was a total team effort. Whenever we needed someone to step up they did."

Shortly after tea, wicketkeeper Mashud brought up his century driving a flighted delivery from man-of-the-match Chris Gayle through cover for four.

Before the ball reached the ropes, the former Bangladesh captain was already being embraced by number eleven batsman Tareq Aziz.

No by-polls on June 6

FROM PAGE 1
why allocation of election symbol 'bench' instead of 'Kula' to Mannan should not be declared illegal and why the EC should not be directed to allocate 'Kula'.

Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud, lawyer of Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) candidate in the Ramna-Tejgaon constituency Major (ret'd) Abdul Mannan, who won the legal battle, termed the verdict historical.

He said by delivering such a timely verdict, the Supreme Court has saved the nation from another farcical by-election like the one in Magura in 1994 during rule of BNP government.

The Supreme Court upheld its image and proved that it is always ready to deliver in favour of justice without any hesitation, Rokon added.

Mannan termed the judgement "a victory for people and democracy of the country against conspiracy".

Barrister Rafiq Ul-Haq and Barrister Tanjib Ul-Alam also stood for Mannan in the case.

TH Khan, the counsel of the appellants, accepted the verdict, but said it was not told why the prayer was rejected. There was no other court above the full bench, so they had to accept the judgement, Khan added.

Legal experts say the fate of the by-poll will be decided at the HC and it is likely to face more legal tangles once the court disposes of the case.

There would however still be scopes to file leave-to-appeal petition against the judgement, and filing of such a petition will further delay by-poll.

SUSPENSE IN COURTROOM

The SC bench sat at 9:10am yesterday to hear the arguments of the both sides and heard the lawyers' submission for one and a half hours before adjourning for 10 minutes.

Counsels of both sides, curious lawyers, representatives of different candidates, Election Commission officials and newspersons crammed the court in animated suspense.

After the break, the chief justice delivered the verdict at 11:00am.

HOW THE DRAMA UNFOLDED

The legal tangle surfaced in the wake of refusal by the RO of Dhaka-10 to allocate "Kula" to BDB candidate Abdul Mannan. The refusal

Hotelier gunned down in Kusthia

5 policemen suspended apparently over law and order downslide

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

Extortionists gunned down a hotelier on Tuesday night in Kusthia on refusal to pay them money, adding to the long line of killings in the south-western district over the last few days.

Witnesses said an armed gang of seven tied to a criminal outfit, Abed Bahini, stormed Gopal Hotel and Restaurant in Khoksa at about 9:30pm and left its owner Surojit Kumar Saha fatally injured in a hail of bullets.

The 24-year-old son of Dulal Chandra Saha from Kamlapur village bled to death at Faridpur Medical College Hospital after he was shifted from Khoksa Health Complex for better treatment.

His family linked the killing to his refusal to give the extortionists Tk 1 lakh in illegal toll they demanded from him seven days ago.

The killing came barely 30 hours after Matiur Rahman, joint convener of Kusthia district Awami Secchhashebak League, was gunned down on Monday.

Local businesspeople shuttered shops and other businesses and moved out into streets in procession to protest the murder and demand arrest of the killers.

District police authorities suspended five policemen, including Assistant Sub-Inspector Santosh Kumar of Khoksa Police Station, apparently over law and order downslide underlined by the latest killing.

Rivals killed eight underground operatives in a turf war in Baghdanga village in Sadar upazila, 40 kilometers off the district headquarters, on Sunday. At least 23 people were murdered in the district last month.

7 killed in road accidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least seven people were killed and 28 others injured in road accidents in Chittagong, Tangail and Bogra yesterday.

Our Chittagong Correspondent reported that a truck-jeep collision on the Chittagong-Rangamati Highway at Raozan left four people killed and ten injured.

The dead are Shahabuddin, 26, Bijoy Barua, 50, Abul Bashar, 30, and M o h a m a d Y u s u f, 21. Shahabuddin and Bijoy died on the spot while Bas-har and Yusuf on the way to hospital.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred at Shantirdwip near Gohira under the upazila at around 9:30am.

The injured are undergoing treatment at Chittagong Medical College.

Hospital (CMCH) and local health complex. A case was filed with Raozan Police Station.

In Tangail, two persons were killed and 17 others injured when a Dhaka bound passenger bus from Gaibandha skidded off the Dhaka-Tangail Highway and fell into a ditch in the afternoon.

The identity of the dead could not be known. Police and locals sent the injured passengers to Tangail Sadar Hospital.

According to our Bogra Correspondent, an unidentified woman aged about 25 was killed when a roller of the Roads and Highways hit a rickshaw from behind at Chelopara in the town at around 10:30am.

The rickshaw puller, injured in the accident, was admitted to Bogra Mohammad Ali Hospital.

Cop held with heroin worth Tk 4.5 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Narcotics Control Department officials yesterday recovered heroin worth about Tk 4.5 lakh and held two, including a cop, from a hotel in the city.

The recovery also revealed alleged involvement of another cop in drugs smuggling in the city.

Acting on a tip off, a team of the department raided Hotel Midtown in Station Road and seized 46-gram heroine from a room at around 10:00am, sources said.

The officials also held constable Rafiqul Islam of Shaheb Nagar in Ishwarganj in Mymensingh and Abdul Gafur of Khazuria Chaimanbari in Chittagong.

Rafiqul, however, alleged one driver Bakaul of General Railway Police, who is involved in phenisyl and drugs smuggling in Chittagong Railway Station areas, has plotted against them.

Following his information, the Rapid Action Battalion on May 26 seized 2,500 bottles of phenisyl from Kadamtali bus stand, Gafur said. The lot belonged to Bakaul, who has avenged his loss through the conspiracy, he alleged.

Narcotics Control Department handed them over to police.

Motorcycle garage owner shot dead

UNB, Dhaka

A motorcycle garage owner was shot dead by unidentified assailants in front of his house in the city's Khilgaon area on Tuesday night.

The victim was identified as M Sabuj, 20, son of Abul Kashem of Kunjaban, Khilgaon.

Police quoted family sources as saying a gang of four called Sabuj out of his residence at about 10:30pm and sprayed bullets on him. He sustained four bullets in the head, chest and abdomen.

Sabuj was rushed to a nearby clinic and then shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he

Held PBCP cadre names 20 others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police yesterday obtained names of 20 Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) cadres, including their Chuadanga chief, and a bank account from arrested PBCP cadre Badrul Alam Pintu.

Outlawed PBCP's Chuadanga boss Monirul Islam and some students of Rajshahi University and Rajshahi Government College were, among others, in the list given by Badrul Alam Pintu, who was held from a house in Hajrapukur on May 28.

"Following Pintu's confessional statement, we raided a house in Hajrapukur and found an Islami Bank Bangladesh Ltd. cheque," said Detective Branch (DB) Sub-inspector Ahsanul Kabir.

The cheque belongs to Moniruzzaman and his wife Nazma Zaman, who have a deposit of Tk 10.48 lakh in their account, police sources said.

"We requested the bank officials to suspend transaction of the account until the account is frozen," Kabir said, adding Moniruzzaman is known as Monirul Islam in Chuadanga.

Monirul was arrested in Chuadanga six months back. Out on bail, he started PBCP operation in Rajshahi.

Dhaka included

FROM PAGE 1

The telecoms watchdog earlier decided to award fixed phonelicense to three more private operators to increase Bangladesh's tele-density, which is the lowest in South Asia.

Westec Limited, QC Telecom Limited and Jalalabad Telecom Limited (JTL) have qualified for the fixed phonelicense.

Bangla Phone Limited and Ranks Telecom Limited have also preliminarily qualified but are required to fulfil certain criteria, BTRC officials said.

Private operators would be able to meet a huge demand for fixed phones in the capital through prompt deployment of either CDMA 2000 1x or wireless local loop (WLL) technology that enables phone without wired network, the BTRC official said.

Currently, state-owned Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTB) enjoys monopoly in providing fixed line telephones in the capital. About half of the BTB's over 800,000 telephones are in Dhaka.

Westec Limited and QC Telecom Limited will launch service in South-East Zone consisting of Brahmanbaria, Comilla, Chandpur, Lakshimpur, Noakhali, Feni,

Saifur for village-centric

FROM PAGE 12

to accelerate their activities. Under the drive, some powers of the ministries will be gradually devolved to city corporations and district, upazila and union parishads, he elaborated.

Credit flow to villages will also be increased, he said, adding the budget will have instructions and directions for banks to sanction loans on the basis of entrepreneurial initiatives and dynamism rather than collateral requirements.

Under the 'caring and village-centric reform', the government will take special steps to provide financial assistance to agro-based industries, the finance minister said. Irrigation will get a range of supports, including subsidy, canal digging and construction of embankment, Saifur added.

According to his plan, the Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) will be transformed into a Seed Corporation and adequate funds provided to strengthen its activities.

The minister also announced that the safety net programme, like old age allowance and widow allowance, would be further expanded.

Delhi offers

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh by pipeline to India, was forced to redraw its plans as Dhaka refused to allow exports.

The company now plans to supply 200 million cubic feet a day to the domestic market by 2006.

Bibiyan, which holds about 5.5 trillion cubic feet of gas reserves, does not produce any gas at present.

"They (Bangladesh) have to decide if they have exportable surplus. Whenever they reach such a decision, they will have no objection to exporting gas to India," Aiyars said.

Asked how soon Bangladesh will be able to assess its gas reserves and exportable surplus, Morshed said, "When we find out."

He also rubbished the numerous studies carried out to establish Bangladesh's gas reserves saying "studies cannot give you gas, only real drilling gives."

Aiyar also raised the issue of using Bangladesh as the transit route for transporting India's share of gas in the gigantic A-1 field in offshore Myanmar.

To this, Morshed responded, saying Bangladesh had no objection to a pipeline travelling through its territory if constructed on

Stop yearend burst

FROM PAGE 1

in taking project and removing obstacles to their implementation to avoid additional expenditure.

"The old and long habit of taking up projects hurriedly at the end of fiscal year even by ignoring normal procedures must be stopped. Unutilised fund should be surrendered in case of non-completion of projects and programmes."

Khaleda said it emerged as a culture of spending allocated project funds in a hurry at the end of every fiscal year, but this tendency should be stopped.

She listed her government's development programmes and programmes to raise the skills and efficiency of public servants.

She said her government took a programme to provide seven-year training for 600 mid-ranking officials to raise their skills.

An initiative to build a 'Scholar Civil Servant' has also been taken and around 3,000 officials will be given the opportunity to obtain PhD and MS degrees at a cost of Tk 1,500 crore, she said.

Briefing reporters after the nearly three-hour meeting from 12:30pm, Cabinet Secretary Dr Saadat Hussain said 80 percent of decisions and government orders were implemented through tireless efforts in the last two and a half years.

Thirty of the 42 secretaries who attended the function spoke.

Prime Minister's Political Secretary MA Harris Chowdhury was present on the occasion.

Acting Secretary to the premier AHM Nurul Islam was remarkable by absence.

Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandbarban.

The JTL would launch operations in North-East zone including Sunamganj, Sylhet, Habiganj, Moulvibazar, Sherpur, Jamalpur, Netrakona, Mymensingh, Kishoreganj, Tangail, Munshiganj, Manikganj, Narayanganj excluding the district headquarters, Gazipur excluding the district headquarters, Tongi, Dhaka excluding Dhaka city, Jinjira and Savar.

Bangladesh's tele-density is still the lowest in South Asia, according to the statistics of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Only 1.56 of 100 people have access to telecoms facility, the 2003 data of the UN telecoms watchdog says.

Cell-phones outnumber fixed line telephones in Bangladesh, which has 0.55 fixed line telephone per 100 inhabitants. The number of mobile phones per 100 people stands at 1.01.

Apart from the BTB's fixed phone, Bangladesh Rural Telecom Authority and Sheba Telecom also provide a few thousand fixed phones via WLL technology. The cellular phones provided by four operators in foreign joint ventures number about 2,300,000.

Kidnappers

FROM PAGE 12

Police said Nasim was abducted from Raja Birat market on May 29. His family failed to trace him despite an exhaustive search.

Nasim's father Kamrul received a call on his mobile phone the next day and the anonymous caller demanded Tk 50,000 as ransom for the release of his son. As told by the caller, he rushed to Gabtoli in Dhaka and met one Saju of Raja Birat who agreed to settle the matter. Kamrul however became suspicious of Saju and with the help of locals caught Saju and brought him to Raja Birat.

Police arrested Saju after the father filed the case against two persons.

According to Saju's confessional statement, police recovered Nasim's body from a ditch in village Bhuya. The other accused is still at large.

Finance Secretary Zakir Ahmed Khan and National Board of Revenue Chairman Khairuzzaman Chowdhury were also present at the meeting held at the finance ministry conference room.

Two outlaws lynched

FROM PAGE 12

On the interlinking of rivers, Indian Water Resources Minister Priyaranjan Dasmuni assured Morshed that nothing would be done to the detriment of Bangladesh.

"Sharing of water resources is as much a concern to India's eastern region as to Bangladesh," he said, adding all issues relating to water share would be resolved amicably.

Morshed had also a 15-minute courtesy call on former Indian prime minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

City mayors

FROM PAGE 12

"and the local bodies also do not push for any tax fearing negative election results."

"Recently, I have checked the accounts of a city corporation. There I found the mayor of the corporation bought a Pajero and was charging Tk 24 lakh a year for its petrol alone."

"In a city corporation there are 200 sweepers. But among them only about 50 actually clean city roads. The rest serve personal purposes of the mayors and the ward commissioners," he pointed out.

"The same goes with the other city corporations in Chittagong, Khulna, Sylhet and other places," he added.

Pry teachers

FROM PAGE 12
Minister on Primary and Mass Education Prof Jahar Ara Begum on Monday rejected nationalisation of the non-government primary teachers' jobs.

It (nationalisation) was a "slip of tongue" before the 2001 general elections, she said while inaugurating a workshop styled Introducing Public Evaluation Examinations after Finishing Class III and V at the Directorate of Primary and Mass Education in Mirpur in the city.

Thirty non-government primary teachers are taking part in the fast-unto-death programme and at least five among them fell sick. The conditions of several others deteriorated yesterday and they were given intravenous fluid due to dehydration and other complications.

The teachers earlier observed a hunger strike programme to drum up support in favour of their demand for nationalisation of jobs, which was an election pledge of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

There are about 75,500 teachers at 19,428 registered non-government primary schools, according to government statistics.

Mirza Abdul Jalil, president of the Krishak League, among other leaders, went to Muktangan to express solidarity with the teachers.

They also agreed to sign a joint cooperation agreement between the two apex business bodies for enhancing trade and economic cooperation between the private sectors of Bangladesh and Laos.

Khulna city BNP leader held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Joint forces yesterday arrested a city BNP leader accused of three murders from his house in Musalmun-para under Khulna sadar thana.

Moin Jamaddar, 33, also accused in three cases filed under the explosive Act, was being questioned at the joint forces camp in Batiaghata until yesterday afternoon.

Police alleged Moin, who was out on bail, used to harbour armed cadres of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party's (PBCP) Janajuddha faction to commit murders, tender manipulation and extortion in the southeast region.

Moin is charged with killing Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) central Vice-president Waliduzzaman Chanchal on October 18, 1998 and businessperson Ruhul Amin and mechanic Hanif of Nirala residential area in 2001.

Two senior leaders and a lawmaker of ruling BNP, meanwhile, are interfering in the interrogation and pressing to let him off, said a high official of Khulna Metropolitan Police seeking anonymity.

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ZIA branches

FROM PAGE 12

action on the basis of intelligence report and instruction from the finance ministry, a ministry official said preferring anonymity.

Sonali, Janata and Agrani banks formed separate committees to investigate the allegation and sent inspection teams to their ZIA branches yesterday.

Officials at the head offices of the banks however told The Daily Star yesterday that the accused officers and staff were involved not in hundi business, an illegal way of transferring money, but in under-hand foreign currency trading.

Sources said the bank officers and staff get involved in buying and selling of foreign currency whenever they are posted at the airport branches and are usually transferred after a certain time.

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Jamaat has links to 16 extremist outfits

Hasina alleges at city rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday alleged that the ruling coalition constituent Jamaat-e-Islami had links to 12 to 16 religious extremist outfits operating in Bangladesh.

Blaming what she termed the free-fall of law and order partially on the organizations, she said they had countrywide networks and trained their operatives in armed combat.

Hasina, also the president of main opposition Awami League, was addressing leaders and workers of the Rickshaw Malik Sramik Oikya Sangram Parishad at the party headquarters on Bangabandhu Avenue.

She accused the government of unfettering fundamentalist extremists people, instead of providing protection for them.

Pegging the government as 'corrupt and terrorists,' she said: "The entire country is now hostage to criminals patronised by the ruling coalition. They have transformed the peaceful country into a land of terror."

The alliance government is now trying to cling to power using black money and illegal arms, she alleged.

"Innocent people are being killed every day in a planned way and it appears that the government has nothing to do to stop the crimes. Khaleda Zia's administration is totally dysfunctional."

Hasina also accused the ruling alliance of conspiring to kill popular AL leaders, indulging in unabated corruption and failing to check price spiral essentials.

The AL chief urged rickshaw-pullers to observe the 24-hour hartal on June 5, called simultaneously by the Awami League and its labour front organisation Jatiya Sramik League, demanding punishment to the killers of lawmaker Ahsanullah Master.

Senior party leaders were present on the occasion.

Security concerns

terrorists were present on both sides of the border but that did not mean either Indian or Bangladesh government was harbouring them.

"What is important that governments in the two countries are taking action against them," the foreign minister added. "I see a great deal of compositeness of the media in both countries when it comes to negatives. We have to change that mindset."

On if a bilateral free trade agreement (FTA) was off the table because of difficulties it has run into, Morshed shot back saying: "If there is a perception that Bangladesh is not interested in FTA and that it has run into hitches, it is wrong. After all, we have signed framework of agreement for free trade with a number of Saarc (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries in the last two years."

He pointed out that a joint working group set up last year to discuss FTA has already held two rounds of negotiation and the process was on track. But he declined to spell out when FTA would be clinched, saying negotiation is a continuous process.

Morshed indicated that Bangladesh would be willing to allow

Security scurry ahead

FROM PAGE 12
Officials of the US embassy met with foreign ministry officials yesterday afternoon to discuss the itinerary of Rumsfeld's visit.

The US secretary is coming to Bangladesh as part of a three-nation tour that will also take him to Malaysia and Singapore. He will be accompanied by a 40-member media team besides officials, BSS reports.

Rumsfeld's visit is the second by a top US official after Secretary of State Colin Powell made a stopover in Dhaka in June last year.

Rumsfeld is expected to hold talks with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan.

He will hold a press conference later.

His visit to Malaysia and Bangladesh is viewed as part of the latest US efforts to shore up support from the Muslim-majority nations to send troops to Iraq under UN umbrella after the interim Iraqi government takes over on June 30.

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