

Shady Bac high

FROM PAGE 1
with the Bac when it was abolished on formation of the ACC. The DG and directors worked in the Bac on deputation while the DDs were the highest-ranking officers of Bac.

FLAWED RECRUITMENT OF EIGHT OFFICERS
The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in 1997 initiated an investigation into the appointment procedure of the Bac officials. A three-member probe committee was formed headed by Khademul Islam, a joint secretary of establishment ministry.

The committee detected irregularities in the recruiting process of eight of them.

It found that six officials of dissolved government projects were appointed as Daco in gross violation of law that says no person who is employed under a project initiated for a temporary period for specified purposes can be absorbed into government services.

M Shahiduzzaman, Sirajul Haq, Abul Kashem Fakir and Abu Yusuf Mia had been working in a project under the Ministry for Youth and Sports, Shamsul Alam Khan as a research officer in a project under the land ministry and Akilur Rahman as a statistician in a project of Public Health and Nutrition Department in the early 80s.

The then government decided to absorb some people, who worked under different projects, on humanitarian ground although they were not entitled to get the jobs.

On completion of the projects, the surplus employees wing of the establishment ministry nominated the six officials for absorbing into the National Board of Revenue (NBR) as third class tax inspectors. They worked in the NBR during 1983-84.

Hiding the fact that they had worked with the NBR, the six officials applied for the Bac job. They were appointed district anticorruption officers in connivance with some corrupt officials of the establishment ministry who nominated them for job.

The Absorption Ordinance, 1985, says once a public servant is absorbed into a post entitled for "surplus" public servant on nomination by the Ministry of establishment, it shall be final and he shall not be entitled to be re-absorbed in any post.

The PMO-formed probe body said the six, who did not have necessary educational qualification for the Bac job, would not get a first class government job unless they had concealed their identity and job information.

The probe report observed that the six officers have committed "serious misconduct" as per the Government Employee (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1985 as they joined a government office while working in another government office.

It said the six were guilty under the Anti-Corruption Act and the Bangladesh Code of Criminal Procedure for the misconduct.

In the same enquiry gross irregularities were found in the absorption of two other Bac officers—Mozammel Hossain and Kazi Abul Bashar.

Mozammel Hossain, who had been working in a voluntary child welfare organisation, got the Bac job in connivance with some officials of the establishment ministry. The ministry nominated him for the job although he did not have required educational qualifications.

Kazi Abul Bashar, who had been terminated from a government project, also managed the establishment ministry nomination with the help of the ministry officials and got the job of district anticorruption officer. But no action could be taken against him as he had retired before a gazette was published on April 6, 2000 based on the enquiry.

Khalilur Rahman, chief of surplus employee wing of the estab-

lishment ministry, was suspended after he was found guilty of helping the eight officials get the ministry nomination illegally by concealing their identities. The enquiry committee accused Khalilur of misconduct, abuse of power and corruption.

However, the suspension order of Khalilur was cancelled in 1998. The authorities awarded him minor punishment, ordering to stop his annual increment for one year.

Overlooking the illegality in their appointment procedure, the government stayed the promotion of the seven officers (excluding Kazi Abul Bashar who retired) for four years showing the reason that "they did not have required education qualification" for the job.

The government also asked them to obtain necessary educational qualification by four years. In the meantime, they were promoted to DDs.

The probe committee found some important necessary documents missing that could have helped trace all the people involved in illegal recruitment of the eight officers.

NO ENQUIRY INTO ILLEGAL ABSORPTION OF 4 DDOs
Nur Ahmed and several other officers were absorbed into the Bac in 1984 from different projects of BIDS (Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies). They joined Bac as district anticorruption officers and four of them were promoted to DDOs.

Aprobe body in 1997 investigated the appointment of Nur Ahmed and found his absorption into the Bac illegal. During his appointment Nur Ahmed was shown as "surplus employee" of the government but the probe committee said there was no scope for considering Nur Ahmed and others as "surplus employees".

Four Bac DDOs, now under scrutiny for absorption into the ACC, were on the list along with Nur Ahmed, which was sent to the establishment ministry for its nomination. They got the Bac job but the authorities did not launch any probe into their recruitment process.

While placing supplementary question, BNP lawmaker AHM Selim, who made the earlier question, began to make a long statement praising the government's success in health sector.

But this time, the Speaker interfered and asked him to put the supplementary question precisely.

The PM took five and four minutes to read out her second and third questions.

The main opposition Awami League that has been boycotting the ongoing budget session, during their earlier participation in parliament, frequently boycotted the PM's question-answer session terming it an "arranged drama" that allowed very little scope for placing questions by the opposition lawmakers.

3 answers

FROM PAGE 1
made to the prime minister who replied talking on her government's efforts to increase production of hilsa fish and develop ICT education in the country.

While placing supplementary question, BNP lawmaker AHM Selim, who made the earlier question, began to make a long statement praising the government's success in health sector.

But this time, the Speaker interfered and asked him to put the supplementary question precisely.

The PM took five and four minutes to read out her second and third questions.

The main opposition Awami League that has been boycotting the ongoing budget session, during their earlier participation in parliament, frequently boycotted the PM's question-answer session terming it an "arranged drama" that allowed very little scope for placing questions by the opposition lawmakers.

2012 Olympics

FROM PAGE 16
winner in a globally televised ceremony after a day of presentations at the IOC session in Singapore's Raffles City complex.

The news was greeted by screams of joy from the London team, long seen as Paris' strongest rival but always thought to be trailing until IOC members gathered in Singapore this week.

The 2008 Olympics will be held in Beijing.

Economists to help

FROM PAGE 16
foreign experts to make sure that the dealings with Tata is done in a transparent manner.

Rahman talked on a wide range of issues including Tata's investment in Bangladesh, the Tengratia blowout, and the India-Myanmar gas pipeline over Bangladesh.

Facing a barrage of questions from the reporters on the price Bangladesh will charge Tata for gas, Rahman said, "Why is everybody so sensitive about Tata? We supplied gas to Lafarge in the past, but we did not see such hue and cry in the media then."

As far as foreign investment is concerned, the Board of Investment (BoI) does not have different lists for "sensitive" and "insensitive" companies for different treatment, he said.

On the issue of allotting land for Tata, Rahman said when thousands of hectares of land are occupied by land grabbers no one dares to object. But now when land is being acquired for the sake of huge foreign investment, everybody appears to be in great shock, he said.

He also said the \$600-700 million investment in Kushtia will greatly benefit the people and the economy of that region.

Rahman said there are six to seven fundamental factors in the negotiation with Tata and consensus on those issues will finally determine whether Tata will invest or not.

Land, power purchase, gas supply and coal mining are the main features in the ongoing round of negotiation between the government and Tata. After these issues are settled, the pricing of gas and power will come up in the next round.

Rahman also said the government will have to consult the devel-

27 more

FROM PAGE 1
each courthouse, to be supervised by the CMM."

The construction of the courthouses will be completed in two years, Babar said, emerging from the meeting that reviewed the achievements on the law and order front in four years of the coalition government.

A proposal is there for setting up the new courthouse for the northern part at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in Tejgaon.

CMM Jalal Ahmed told The Daily Star that the issues of raising the number of courts and setting up of a separate courthouse were discussed at the meeting, but no decision was made. "New Delhi has 166 courts for 80 lakh people, but we have only 23 courts for 1.2 crore people," he said.

The demand for formation of more courts has been there for long and the previous Awami League government constituted three courts in 2001, pushing the number up to 23.

The issue of increasing the metropolitan magistrate's court was again raised when Dhaka Metropolitan Police decided to raise the number of police stations from 20 to 51. "We will need more magistrates when there will be 51 (police stations)," said the CMM.

Sources said a proposal is going to be placed before the government for raising number of metropolitan courts to 75.

"Twenty three courts are not enough for the large number of people living in Dhaka," Metropolitan Magistrate Shafiq Anwar told The Daily Star yesterday.

Presently, 40,000 cases are awaiting disposal in the CMM's court and each magistrate has to deal with about 2,000 cases on average, another metropolitan magistrate told The Daily Star. "To maintain quality, a magistrate should not deal with more than 500 cases."

Anwar suggested at least 80 magistrates should be there to smoothly deal with cases pending for disposal and being filed every day.

MACHINE READABLE PASSPORT, VISA, NATIONAL ID CARDS
Babar told reporters that the government is working to introduce national identity cards, machine-readable passports and machine-readable visas soon.

The process of introducing national ID cards and online visa is underway while the government will start distributing MRP from January, said a meeting source.

Asked about the status of the MRP project, some officials at the Department of Immigration and Passport, however, said the government might miss the schedule.

The meeting was told that the department paid the government Tk 430 crore as revenue in the last four years.

The immigration department of Zia International Airport has been brought under computerised database system and law-enforcers have recovered 110 stolen passport, the meeting was further told.

CID, SB TO WORK INDEPENDENTLY IN DISTRICTS
The meeting decided to allow the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and Special Branch (SB) of the police to operate independently in the districts, where they will have their own officers and own office.

Presently, they work under an SP (superintendent of police).

Besides, steps have been taken to bring the CID, SB and immigration departments under a computer network.

REFORM STEPS
The state minister for home said they have introduced new, innovative ideas in last four years to modernise the ministry and Bangladesh Police (including Rab, CID and SB), Bangladesh Rifles, Ansar and VDP, Narcotics Control, Directorate of Prisons, Metropolitan Magistracy, Fire Service and Civil Defence, Immigration and Passport and Bangladesh Coastguard.

The ministry is now working to reform the Police Regulations of Bengal and going to train up the staff, increase manpower and provide modern equipment for the police, prisons and coastguard departments.

Besides drafting in 13,000 manpower for the police, Rab (Rapid Action Battalion) and Highway Police have been introduced and reforms to the police organogram are on.

"We have already increased the number of police stations in the DMP area from 22 to 28 and 23 more would be set up by next year," the state minister told reporters.

As part of modernisation of the Coastguard Department, letters of credit have been opened for buying ships for the department and 2,500 members have been recruited during the tenure of the government, the meeting was told.

On stopping illegal migration and trafficking in humans, Babar said: "This problem cannot be entirely resolved until the national ID card system is introduced."

On investigation into August 21 grenade attack, he said, "More time will be needed for the investigation and, if needed, Interpol and FBI would again be invited."

Barkat Ullah proposed to impose a regulation for ensuring mandatory marketing of the imported food items within a month of the arrival of a consignment at seaport.

Barkat Ullah recommended application of the Hoarding Act if any trader stockpiles his imported daily essentials, including sugar, milk, rice, oil, pulses and onions instead of marketing them.

Terminating the existing dollar crisis a major factor for the rise in commodity prices, Abdul Awal Mintoo suggested for cooling down the overheated forex market, requesting the commerce minister to talk with the finance minister in this regard.

Mintoo proposed to declare a one-taka incentive over market price against every dollar sent by the Bangladeshi expatriates, which, he thinks, will resolve the greenback crunch on the money market as well as help prevent the illegal handi business.

He also identified an imbalance between the monetary policy and

and speaks Bangla fluently.

DC-10 rescue work

FROM PAGE 1
Harun Chowdhury, who went to the airport yesterday afternoon, was upbeat about the plane being salvaged by today.

He told reporters they would try to lift the aircraft away this morning by cranes either to the tarmac or to the makeshift platform 150-feet away from the runway for resumption of international flights from this evening.

De-fuelling and lightening of the aircraft, and removal of all equipment and seats have so far been complete and the aircraft now weighs 117 tonnes against 183 tonnes at the time of belly-landing.

On the six day yesterday, the rear wheels were still stuck in knee-deep mud, while the nose and front wheel were lifted up using a 90-tonne specially built trolley.

Sources, however, doubt that the plane would be salvaged by today.

"From what I have seen in the last few days, I really doubt whether the plane would be salvaged even tomorrow (Thursday) because the cranes and other logistics are not technically suitable for the job," said an airport official, preferring to remain unnamed.

Biman's Station Manager SR Khan, Airport Manager Squadron Leader Shahin Farhad and Commanding Officer of army rescue team Col Masud denied having problems with co-ordination and the technical drawback.

They said they were putting in their best efforts to salvage the plane, but would not specify any time or date.

"We do not have any lacking in our efforts to salvage the aircraft as early as possible," the station manager told reporters yesterday.

The airport manager Shahin Farhad claimed that they have had all the logistics on hand.

Biman authorities yesterday cancelled two direct flights from Chittagong to Abu Dhabi and

Muscat, which were scheduled to depart at 8:45pm and 9:45pm today. They have made alternative arrangements for the passengers.

"Three extra domestic flights (F-28) have been arranged for passengers of the two flights tonight (Wednesday) from Chittagong to Dhaka and they (passengers) can take their flights from Dhaka to Abu Dhabi and Muscat," said a Biman official yesterday afternoon.

The Dubai-bound Biman flight (BG-047) has also been rescheduled and it will now fly at 9:25am tomorrow (Friday) instead of 8:45pm today (Thursday), if the DC-10 is salvaged by then, the sources said.

Outlaw killed

FROM PAGE 1
Police said Helal was shot during the encounter and died instantly. He was wanted in several cases, including murder, they added.

Police recovered a pipe gun and five bullets from the spot.

AL lawmakers

FROM PAGE 16
to provide gas to kitchens through gas cylinders, but unfortunately he keeps mum in parliament on gas blowout in his own area."

"This parliament does not discuss anything, which will benefit the country and its people," he said.

Faruq Khan, MP alleged that Niko is now digging a new well just beside the old one to save their money.

"Texas-based oil exploration company, GSF, has been assigned to dig the third relief well...but they don't have the experience to do the job," Faruq Khan said.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil MP, Shamsur Rahman Sharif MP, Mirza Azam MP, Zahid Ashan Russell MP, BM Mozammel Huq and Asim Ukil, among others, were present at the press briefing.

Jamaat leader shown

FROM PAGE 16
Dhira was arrested from in front of Criminal Investigation Department office at Malibagh in the capital on Tuesday on suspicion of involvement in Belaluddin's killing, the forwarding report said, adding that he should be shown arrested in the murder case to find out vital clues to the murder.

Belal, Khulna bureau chief of the Daikin Sangram, who was fatally injured in a bomb attack on the night of February 5 at Khulna Press Club, succumbed to his injuries on February 11 at the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka.

Our staff correspondent adds from Khulna: Dhira was quizzed as a suspect of last year's August 21 grenade attacks in front of Awami League office in Dhaka, sources of Paltan Police Station in Dhaka said.

Criminal George Mian arrested by Dhaka Metropolitan Police last month named Dhira as one of those involved in the August 21 grenade attacks, the sources added.

Necessary formalities are under process to bring the Jamaat leader to Khulna in a day or two showing him arrested in Shiplu and Shagor murder cases in Khanjahan Ali Police Station of Khulna city, Deputy Commissioner of Khulna Metropolitan Police Akbar Ali told The Daily Star yesterday.

He will also be grilled to know the motive behind and plan of Belal murder and sources of having remote controlled bombs and grenades, Akbar Ali said.

Dhira planned the remote control bomb at Khulna Press Club on the night of last February 5 which claimed the life of Belaluddin, said Goda yunus in the judicial confession made under Section 164 to the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Khulna.

The state minister for home named Dhira as the mastermind behind the killing in the March 31 meeting of the ministry's Monitoring Cell.

Dhira also made three abortive attempts on the life of Khulna city Awami League Secretary Alhaj Mizanur Rahman Mizan in 1998 and 1998.

Dhira has made fabulous wealth and property by tender manipulation using his close connection with top leaders of an underground party, intelligence sources said, adding that Dhira became angry with journalist Belal when the latter started reporting about his criminal activities and tender manipulation.

Taskforce, DCC

FROM PAGE 1
Bangladesh (TCB) before coming Ramadan.

Altaf said stern action will be taken against those who will attempt to create artificial crisis of commodities by hoarding or any such machinations. Claiming that there is no price hike of essentials, he said the market is now stable and there is no need to be worried.

Advisor to the commerce ministry Barkat Ullah Bhulu, Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) President Abdul Awal Mintoo, the commerce secretary, representatives of the food and agriculture ministries, DCC, Consumer Association of Bangladesh (Cab), and Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) were present at the meeting.

The commerce minister told the meeting that the agriculture, food, industries, home, LGRD, communications, shipping, and commerce ministries have joined forces to keep prices of daily essentials stable at any cost.

Barkat Ullah proposed to impose a regulation for ensuring mandatory marketing of the imported food items within a month of the arrival of a consignment at seaport.

Barkat Ullah recommended application of the Hoarding Act if any trader stockpiles his imported daily essentials, including sugar, milk, rice, oil, pulses and onions instead of marketing them.

Terminating the existing dollar crisis a major factor for the rise in commodity prices, Abdul Awal Mintoo suggested for cooling down the overheated forex market, requesting the commerce minister to talk with the finance minister in this regard.

Mintoo proposed to declare a one-taka incentive over market price against every dollar sent by the Bangladeshi expatriates, which, he thinks, will resolve the greenback crunch on the money market as well as help prevent the illegal handi business.

He also identified an imbalance between the monetary policy and

and speaks Bangla fluently.

Geologists

FROM PAGE 16
said Niko's failure to apply the 'Blow-out Prevention' measure is now leading the Tengratia gas field to the stage of abandonment.

The gas field has developed many geological pockets in the sand layer where has spread, making further drilling highly risky, the expert noted.

"If the gas field is abandoned, the nation will suffer a loss of about 300 billion cubic feet gas worth around Tk 3,600 crore," Badrul said.

Bangladesh Economic Association General Secretary Dr Abul Barakat, however said the losses due to the blowouts and fire would be much more than that if the damage to environment, soil and water are considered.

Geology department Chairman Dr Hossain Monsur, who chaired the seminar, squarely blamed the government for awarding the contract to Niko, ignoring the usual process of production sharing contract (PSC). But only a state minister (Mosharraf) paid for it, he mentioned.

If Tengratia gas field can be developed, Niko will earn between Tk 2,160 crore and Tk 2,880 crore with 10 to 80 percent share of the gas while it will pay only Tk 100 crore to Bangladesh, Monsur pointed out.

He also criticised the government plan to sell gas from Sibiyana field to Tata at a subsidised rate as in the cases of local industries.

Nuruddin Mahmud Kamal, former chairman of Power Development Board, said, Niko deserves to be punished for the destruction of gas resources.

Tengratia can never be a marginal or abandoned gas field having a gas reserve of about 300 bcf. But apparently it is going to be an abandoned one," said Kamal, also a geologist.

Other speakers included Dr Md Ismail, former director (exploration) of Petrochemicals, MA Matin, former general manager of Bapex, Paribesh Banchoo Andolon President Abu Naser Khan, and Sylhet Division Development Forum President Advocate Abed Raja.

Questions

FROM PAGE 1
former minister Oli Ahmed and some other ruling party lawmakers discussed the issue at the parliament lobby yesterday.

They agreed with the press report that the constitution, indeed, does not allow any advisor executive power. Later, they assigned the law minister to brief the PM on the issue, sources said.

Meanwhile, the energy advisor yesterday faced questions about some of his executive decisions, sources said.

If Rahman had no constitutional power to take executive decisions, the two probe committees he formed on the Tengratia explosion stand invalid, some officials told Rahman yesterday.

According to the reports submitted by the committees will also lack legal backup, they added.

Rahman made no comment on these observations, sources said.

Rahman was appointed adviser to the energy ministry last month upon ouster of state minister AKM Mosharraf Hossain.

He enjoys the status of a deputy minister.

Mahmudur Rahman, who also headed the Board of Investment, started the taking active decisions from the beginning, signing files and directing different authorities to take various actions.

"I have been appointed adviser by the government and I am doing my job sincerely," the energy advisor yesterday told the press at Dhaka Reporters' Unity where he faced questions on using executive power.

"The executive power lies with the minister. The prime minister himself is the minister in charge of the energy ministry and I exercise my power as delegated by her. If I am misusing my power, the prime minister will look into it," he said.

"If the government does anything illegally, the government is accountable for that," Rahman added.

The government has four other advisers: Jahanara Begum (adviser to primary and mass education ministry with the status of a minister), Salahuddin Kader Chowdhury (prime minister's parliamentary affairs adviser with the status of a minister), Barkatullah Bulu (adviser to commerce ministry with the status of a state minister), Reaz Rahman (adviser to foreign ministry with the status of a state minister).

Of them, Jahanara Begum has been exercising executive powers so far while the others have been functioning more or less like advisers.

Following wide-spread allegations of corruption against Jahanara Begum, the prime minister has recently asked her to refrain from taking any decisions, sources said.

Since then the entire complex has been under the authority of the Supreme Court and guarded by about 200 policemen and paramilitary personnel.

Security forces were on high alert Wednesday after six armed gunmen were killed Tuesday after they blasted their way into the temple, where a makeshift Hindu temple stands on the ruins of the mosque.

Advani and other top Hindu nationalist leaders on Wednesday protested the attack on the streets of New Delhi and elsewhere.

Court orders

FROM PAGE 16
appear before a lower court on July 28.

The mosque was razed on December 6, 1992, sparking Muslim-Hindu riots in which nearly 2,000 people were killed.

Since then the entire complex has been under the authority of the Supreme Court and guarded by about 200 policemen and paramilitary personnel.

Security forces were on high alert Wednesday after six armed gunmen were killed Tuesday after they blasted their way into the temple, where a makeshift Hindu temple stands on the ruins of the mosque.

Advani and other top Hindu nationalist leaders on Wednesday protested the attack on the streets of New Delhi and elsewhere.

Overcrowding

FROM PAGE 1
house them," Mafiz said.

The number of big cats is also putting pressure on the zoo's finances with half the entire food budget spent on feeding them.

Chief veterinarian Selim Iqbal said hormone pills and injections would be used to reduce inbreeding and unplanned births.

"We don't want to harm their sexual desire, nor do we want to introduce any permanent birth control measures as we want to maintain their ability to breed later," he added.

Niko rekindles fire

FROM PAGE 1
the well head to torch it at 11:30pm," said Sumar, a security guard.

He said the subsequent explosions also made large cracks at many places in the field, causing the flame to spread out.

The Niko officials ordered all the staff to get out of the field for safety before rekindling the fire, Sumar recalled.

This time the blaze spread out to 10 new points, devouring the entire field.

The excessive heat burnt down five power generators and caused two oil tankers carrying around 20,000 litres of diesel to explode with booms at Tuesday midnight and yesterday morning. The tankers were parked in between the burning relief well and the main well that had suffered the first blowout in January 7.

The bursts made a crater on the ground also brought about a landslide at an adjacent hillcock.