

Probe ordered into Finley take-over

Saifur tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday said he asked Bangladesh Bank and Security Exchange Commission to investigate into the allegations of foreign currency being smuggled out by James Finley Limited as the company changes hands.

"I don't know anything about it but I am worried like you going through the newspaper reports," Saifur said responding to a query made by Awami League lawmaker Enamul Haque in the parliament yesterday.

Enamul said the company is smuggling billions of dollars out of Bangladesh in the name of selling property. "For this, Bangladesh is facing dollar crisis," he alleged and wanted to know whether the finance minister was aware of it.

Meanwhile, responding to lawmakers' queries in parliament, Saifur expressed his dissatisfaction

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SHIP BREAKING

Owner warned not to bring ship with toxic threats into Bangladesh

BSS, Ctg

Various government and private organisations in maritime sectors here confirmed yesterday that the dangerous cargoes carrying Norwegian vessel bought by a Bangladesh national was far away from Bangladesh's maritime boundary as authorities cautioned the buyer not to bring it into the country.

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BSF returns bodies of 2 cow traders

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) yesterday handed over the bodies of two Bangladeshi cow traders to Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) at Daulatpur border in Kushtia following a fruitful meeting between the two.

BSF also handed over the Bangladeshi farmer they picked up at Thotarpara in Daulatpur Sunday evening.

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BARAPUKURIA COAL-FIRED PROJECT

Faulty power plant fails to take off yet

First unit inoperative, trial run of the second starts today

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

Due to hundreds of technical faults, the fate of the Chinese built Barapukuria 250 MW coal-fired power plant remains uncertain, sources said.

The 125 MW first unit of the highly over-priced two-unit power plant went out of operation soon after its trial run last month. The authorities are now trying to start test operation of the second 125 MW unit today.

"Problems of the first unit have been addressed. But we will not launch this unit till we see the performance of the second unit. If the second unit runs well, we will then

try to re-start the first unit," says a Power Development Board (PDB) official, expressing lack of confidence in the plant's technology.

Project Director of the power plant Md Fazlul Haque says he expects both the units to start commercial operation by April. "But in many countries, coal-fired plants take more than 4-5 years to go into commercial operation. So, if it takes that much time in our case too, it may not be very unusual," he said.

But some officials of the project expressed doubts whether the first unit would go into operation at all. Initially, the plant was scheduled to start operation in 1998. But due to poor progress of the Chinese-built

coal mining project, the power plant has also been delayed. Consequently, the plant was scheduled to start operation in 2004, then in 2005 and now it is due to operate from April this year.

A new problem for the power plant that emerged recently is that coal being extracted as raw material for it has 20 percent moisture instead of the expected 10 percent.

The first unit was earlier scheduled to start trial run back in October last year but it started in November. And then it had to be shut down due to

technical

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Nab RU Shibir leader right away

Home ministry asks cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The home ministry yesterday ordered police to immediately arrest Rajshahi University (RU) unit Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) President Mahbub Alam Salehi for his alleged link with the killing of RU professor Dr S Taher Ahmed.

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar also directed

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RU TEACHER MURDER

Mohiuddin now says he's innocent

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Prof Muhammad Mohiuddin, one of the two suspected masterminds behind the killing of Prof Taher Ahmed, was put on a fresh six-day remand yesterday.

Metropolitan Magistrate Yusuf Ali granted the remand after police prayed for a seven-day remand as he was produced before the court at

the end of his six-day remand.

"I am innocent. Somebody maliciously implicated my name. Police tortured me giving electric shock on my fingers. I am a patient of heart surgery and unable to bear tortures anymore", a visibly nervous and strained Mohiuddin was saying in an open court.

Through quizzing Mohiuddin,

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Defiant Iran starts nuke enrichment

AFP, Vienna/ Tehran

Iran has started putting uranium feedstock gas into centrifuges, defying the West with actual enrichment work on making what can be nuclear reactor fuel or atom bomb material, diplomats told AFP yesterday.

Uranium enrichment is seen as a red line by the United States and European Union in the long-running international standoff over

Iran's nuclear programme, as it is crucial to making atomic weapons.

Putting uranium hexafluoride (UF6) gas into centrifuges, which distill out enriched uranium, appears a major escalation by Iran in its face-off with the West over a nuclear program which the United States claims hides secret atomic weapons development.

Iran said Monday that it would

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Nepal corruption body dissolved

Deuba could be freed

AFP, Kathmandu

A controversial anti-corruption body established by Nepal's King Gyanendra has been dissolved, paving the way for the release from jail of ousted prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, a senior lawyer said yesterday.

Nepal's Supreme Court dissolved the Royal Commission for Corruption Control and said its decisions should be annulled, said Shambhu Thapa, president of the Nepal Bar Association.

"This is a victory for the rule of law in the country, and it shows that nobody is ... above the constitution," Thapa told AFP.

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Prayer Timing		
February 14		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-25	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-57	6-01
Esha	7-15	7-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		

2 killed in 'crossfire'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two alleged criminals were killed in 'crossfire' during shootouts between police and their accomplices in the capital and Khulna yesterday.

The dead were identified as Ilias, 30, alias Imran of Dhaka and Asaduzzaman Babu of Vedorganj upazila in Shariatpur district.

The DB police arrested Ilias on the Dhaka University campus Sunday night and took him to Meradia to recover hidden arms and arrest his accomplices.

When they reached Budhbarer Hat in Meradia, a gang of criminals opened fire on the policemen who retaliated against the attack. Ilias was shot dead during the gunfight as he tried to escape from custody, Khilgaon police said.

KHULNA

Asaduzzaman Babu, a close aide of notorious criminal Ershad Shikdar, was arrested on Friday at Badda in Dhaka and handed over to Khulna Rapid Action Battalion (Rab).

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Feuding SQ Chy family wanders in legal maze

Cousins battle over business interests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A multilateral family feud has given rise to a bitter legal battle among cousins and has resulted in a split in the joint family of Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, parliamentary affairs adviser to the prime minister.

Salauddin's cousins Salman F Rahman and Sohel F Rahman filed a case against three directors of the QC Container Line Ltd, who are also Salauddin's brothers.

Significantly, Salauddin's name is not among the accused though he is a member of the board of directors.

It was learnt that Salauddin's relationship with his three brothers has deteriorated to such an extent that he did not even invite them to the wedding of his eldest daughter Farzin Quader Chowdhury.

On the last Eid-ul-Azha,

Salauddin said his Eid prayers and sacrificed animals separately from his brothers, making an exception to the long-held family tradition of doing those together with his brothers.

In a latest development in the family feud, Salauddin filed a lawsuit against the general manager of the finance department of the company, Syed Abrar Hossain, on Sunday accusing him of misappropriating TK 95 crore of the company's money. The court issued a warrant for Abrar's arrest following the filing of the case.

Since their father Fazlul Quader Chowdhury had passed away, Salauddin, the eldest among the siblings, had been looking after the family and his three brothers had been obedient to him until the current row parted them a few

months back.

Family sources close to the younger three brothers said it has become almost impossible to keep the joint family intact and they now want their father's property divided among them.

Late Fazlul Quader Chowdhury was a speaker of the erstwhile East Pakistan Assembly and president of the Pakistan Muslim League. He was also an acting-president of Pakistan for a few days. He left behind a huge amount of property including land and houses in Rajauri and Rangunia, a house in Chittagong city named Goodhill, and another house in Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

WHAT CAUSED THE CONFLICT AMONG THE BROTHERS

A number of reasons soured the relationship between Salauddin

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PHOTO: STAR

Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) started selling sugar and lentil at fair prices through mobile shops in Dhaka following price hike of the essential commodities. The picture was taken in front of Bangladesh Secretariat.