

REAPPOINTMENT OF 10 JUDGES

AG urges SC not to proceed with appeals anymore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The attorney general (AG) yesterday submitted a petition to the Supreme Court (SC) for not proceeding anymore with the pending appeals filed by Fakhruddin-led caretaker government against the High Court (HC) judgment that reappointed 10 additional judges with seniority.

The jobs of 10 additional judges were not confirmed during the rule of BNP-Jamaat coalition government.

Attorney General Mahubey Alam told The Daily Star that though he did

not receive any order on his petition, the two appeals filed by the previous government against the HC judgement should be considered as dismissed.

"I have submitted a non-prosecution petition to the Appellate Division not to proceed with the appeals, since the High Court judgement was right and valid. Following submission of the petition, the appeals will not run at the apex court," he said.

Meanwhile, the five-member full bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice MM Ruhul Amin

started hearing on the appeal filed by 29 sitting HC judges against the HC judgement regarding the re-appointment of 10 judges.

The apex court adjourned the hearing of the appeal for yesterday and fixed Thursday (today) for further hearing of the appeal.

In another development, Dr Kamal Hossain and Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam, counsels for 10 unconfirmed HC judges, yesterday proposed to Advocate TH Khan, principal counsel for 29 judges, at his Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) chamber to settle the issues regard-

ing the re-appointment and seniority of 10 unconfirmed judges through mutual understanding.

Without responding their proposal, Advocate TH Khan placed arguments on behalf of his clients at the court.

On July 29 of last year, the SC upon separate petitions filed by the government and 19 HC judges stayed the HC judgement and asked the petitioners to file regular appeals with the SC against the HC judgement.

Later, 10 other HC judges became party along with the 19 judges against the HC verdict.

Institutional capacities vital to offset climate change impacts

Says state minister at int'l conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 3rd International Conference on 'Community-based adaptation to climate change' began in the city yesterday with a call to develop the science of climate change adaptation.

State Minister for Environment and Forest Mostafizur Rahman inaugurated the seven-day conference jointly organised by Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS); International Institute for Environment Development (IIED), UK and Regional and International Networking Group (RING) in association with the Ministry of environment and forest at a city hotel.

Speaking as the chief guest, the minister said climate change is a global environmental issue, but has serious implications on the development and poverty alleviation efforts of Bangladesh.

Mentioning different efforts by the government to offset the impacts of global climate change, he said, "We

need to develop our institutional capacities along with mobilising fund on climate change adaptation."

Head of Climate Division of IIED Dr Saleemul Huq said the countrymen are witnessing evidences of changing climate and it is no longer the fact that it will happen, rather it is happening.

Roughly one billion people from roughly 100 countries of least development countries, small island developing states and African countries will be affected seriously by the impact of climate change though these countries are responsible only three percent of greenhouse gas emissions, he added.

"We need to take both the mitigation and adaptation efforts and also enhance the science of adaptation to the vulnerable poor people," he said, adding that it is important to make the vulnerable people understand the impacts of climate change as well as to internalise local knowledge to combat climate change.

Narrating the impacts of

climate change, BCAS Executive Director Dr Atiq Rahman said, "Bangladesh is at the forefront of the war of climate change and we have to fight."

Research fellow of BCAS Mozaharul Alam said the aim of the conference is to share the latest development in adaptation planning and practices and disseminate knowledge among the stakeholders.

The organisers said the conference consists a three-day field visit to community-based adaptation projects at six sites and three-day interactive discussion on different thematic areas.

Over 200 participants from home and abroad will attend the technical sessions after the field visit, they added.

Ambassador of Royal Danish Embassy in Dhaka Einar Hebgard Jensen, Department of Environment Director General Nojibur Rahman and Joint Secretary of the ministry of environment and forest Rabindranath Roy Chowdhury also spoke.

Case against Shariatpur judge dismissed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday dismissed a criminal case filed against District and Sessions Judge of Shariatpur saying the complainant's allegation baseless, false and fabricated.

Mustaque Ahmed Mobaraki, editor and publisher of The Daily Bangabani, filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka on February 11 against Judge Shamsul Arefin on charges of making a series of forged documents in October last year.

After scrutinising the case dockets and other documents submitted by the complainant, Metropolitan Magistrate Kanika Biswas passed the dismissal order.

In her order, Kanika said no time of occurrence and no name of press have been mentioned in the complaint. Moreover, the charges brought against the opposite party are totally baseless and of no documents. So, the complaint was dismissed.

In his complaint, Mobaraki mentioned that his daily published a news item titled 'a business of Tk one crore in appointment of 57 employees in Shariatpur District Judge's Court' on August 26 last year. The daily also published another news item on September 25 the same year.

The defendant was angered at the news items and sent two people to the complainant for making an arrangement for publishing rejoinders to the point. But the daily did not publish the rejoinders.

The defendant himself then published an edition of The Daily Bangabani on October 6 last year and published the rejoinders in the edition, the complainant said.

RAMNA BATAMUL BLAST

Court unhappy over appointment of lawyers

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday expressed its resentment over appointment of 10 state defence lawyers to represent eight absconding accused by Additional District Magistrate (ADM) without proper rules in connection with the Ramna Batamul blast cases.

Meantime, another Dhaka court recorded statements of two more prosecution witnesses in connection with the August 21, 2004 attack cases.

Judge ANM Bashir Ullah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka said it after getting a list of 10 lawyers sent by the ADM to represent the absconders.

The judge said he earlier ordered ADM to appoint state defence lawyers on behalf of eight absconding accused including Pintu's younger brother Maulana Tajuddin. Following the order, the ADM sent a list of ten lawyers, but he did not mention who would stand for whom. So, the ADM did not act properly and it was insincere and discourtesy, the magistrate added.

The judge adjourned the hearing on charge framing against 14 accused, including Hannan, until March 4 and ordered the ADM to appoint state defence lawyers on behalf of eight absconding accused and sent the list of them on the scheduled date.

The court also directed the authorities concerned to publish advertisements in two national Bangla dailies asking eight absconding accused, including Pintu's brother Tajuddin to appear before by March 4.

After receipt of reports on arrest warrants issued against them earlier, the court passed the order.

The carnage at Ramna Batamul took place during Pahela Baishakh celebrations on April 14, 2001 that left 10 people dead and scores injured.

AUGUST 21 GRENADE ATTACK CASES
Meanwhile, Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 Judge Mohammad Masdar Hossain yesterday

recorded statements of Mohammad Solaiman and Mohammad Akkas in August 21 grenade attack cases.

Later, they were cross-examined by defence lawyers on different points.

The court then fixed February 23 for next hearing of the cases and summoned several witnesses to appear before it on the scheduled date.

In the statement, Solaiman told the court that on August 22, 2004 he learned that his cousin Hanif died in the grenade attacks on an Awami League (AL) rally on Gabgandhu Avenue. On hearing the news, he went to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) where Sharif Faruque Ahmed prepared an inquest report on eight victims including his cousin.

Another witness Akkas told the court that he went to DMCH after getting news of his uncle Rafiqul Islam's death on August 22.

They put signatures on the eight-page inquest reports that were prepared by police in their presence.

Earlier on January 27 and February 12, the court completed recording statements of two witnesses, including the complainant SI Sharif Faruque Ahmed.

Twenty-two people accused of launching the grenade attacks on the rally include detained former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu, Harkatul Jihad (Hujji) chief Mufti Abdul Hannan, Hujji members Abu Sayeed, Shahadatullah Jewel, Rafiqul Islam alias Rafiq, Abu Taher and Maulana Tajuddin.

Fourteen of the accused, including Pintu and Hannan, now in jail, were produced before the court during yesterday's hearing.

Eight others, including Pintu's younger brother Maulana Tajuddin, have been absconding since the cases were filed.

WEATHER TODAY

Rise in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Light fog may occur over the river basins of the country during late night till morning, Met Office said.

Night temperature may rise slightly over the country. Highest temperature 32.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 10.6 degrees Celsius at Ishwardi.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:56pm today and rises at 6:28am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	29.1	17.2	45	30
Chittagong	30.0	17.0	67	58
Rajshahi	28.2	10.7	81	57
Khulna	28.5	13.5	66	64
Barisal	29.4	13.0	65	44
Sylhet	32.0	15.2	60	45
Cox's Bazar	31.6	17.8	51	54



Art critic Moinuddin Khaled reads out a written statement at a press conference at Gallery Chitrok in the city yesterday. On his left are art collector Daud Farhan and Executive Director of the gallery artist Md Moniruzzaman.

Early works of Zainul real treat for first-time viewers

DURDANA GHAS

A wooden house, a river bank with rows of boats, an indigenous man in his home, people reaping harvest - the paintings bear an air of poise and pride which are startling for a viewer seeing those for the first time.

Those are the artworks of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin, the most famous painter of undivided Bengal, was not meticulous to preserve the early works of his life.

Like many other artists, he kept those in a trunk or gave the works away to those who surrounded him.

Fortunately, those people preserved his works like precious gems. Some of the paintings are torn, some are unfinished works and do not have any signatures but carry the same values as the finished ones.

Fifty paintings of Zainul, done in the early years of his life as an artist, adorn the walls of Gallery Chitrok. The exhibition, which will be going on until February 28, is the first of its kind in the country. It is open to all every day from 10:00am to 8:00pm.

Most of the paintings were done between 1930 and 1946 in Mymensingh, Kolkata and Dumki. Many works were done before he had started his

student life in 1932 at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kolkata.

These paintings his earlier works before his landmark painting of famine in 1943.

In his student life, Zainul and artist Anwarul Haque became close friends. Zainul frequented the family house of Anwar at 81 Bondel Street.

Many of the paintings were created in this house and later preserved by the members of Anwar's family. It was a wooden house built by his father who imported the wood from Africa.

Zainul had access to the inner part of the house where he sometimes drew pictures for the embroidery and needlework done by the women of the house.

"In this way, many of his valuable pictures were preserved by the women of the house," said Daud Farhan, nephew of Anwar, who has fifty precious paintings of Zainul from those early years.

"A trunk where he stored his pictures is also an asset of the family," he added.

The family was very conservative about paintings but everybody loved Zainul because of the beauty of the pictures he had painted. Anwar's father let him study at the art college seeing the

wonderful pictures of Zainul. The pictures of urban life were painted during his stay in Kolkata. The pictures of river, boats, paddy field and rural life were painted during his stay in Mymensingh in 1930 and 1931 and when he went there to spend his vacation.

There are some pictures of indigenous people which were painted during his sojourn at Dumki.

Daud said he has a plan to set up a museum at Shakhipur in Tangail to display these prized works. Besides, a committee can be formed for the management of the pictures.

"I have a desire to create a letter bank too so that the letters written by him can be preserved and displayed," he added.

Associate Prof of Institute of Fine Arts Nisar Hossain said: "There is no milestone painting in this exhibition. But these paintings represent the early years of the brilliant artist. The water colour and the materials used by him in 1930 is of high qualities which mean he started painting like a professional artist before starting his student life."

"Some of these paintings do not carry his signatures but critics can easily identify his paintings due to his unique skills," he added.

German MPs arrive Feb 20

UNB, Dhaka

A five-member delegation of the German Parliament (Bundestag) arrives here on February 20 on a five-day visit aimed at renewing and strengthening ties with Bangladesh parliament.

The German parliamentarians are members of the Parliamentary Friendship Group for Relations with the States of South Asia of the German Bundestag, which comprises members of the government coalition as well as of the opposition.

Members of the German delegation are Sebastian Edathy MP, Chairman of the Parliamentary Friendship Group for Relations with the States of South Asia, Prof Dr Norman Paech MP, Vice Chairman, Hans-Peter Thul MP, Holger Ortel MP and Steffen Reiche MP.

They will leave for Chittagong on February 21 to visit the seaport and the Western Marine Shipyards.

Repeal CG system, strengthen EC

Demands Col Oli

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Liberal Democratic Party President Col (ret'd) Oli Ahmed yesterday demanded steps to repeal the caretaker government system and strengthen the Election Commission.

The lone lawmaker of his party in the December 29 national elections said this while addressing the thanksgiving motion on the president's speech.

Oli demanded the government form a committee to investigate the issue of taking money forcefully from the businessmen of Khatunganj in Chittagong.

He also demanded steps to take action against the officers responsible for harassing

politicians during the tenure of the immediate-past government.

"Some people took money forcefully from the businessmen of Khatunganj and they will reveal the names of the culprits once the government forms a committee to investigate the matter," he added.

The LDP chief highly praised the Awami League-led grand alliance government for starting the process of trying war criminals.

Oli further said: "Awami League's name will be written in golden letters in the country's history for taking the initiative."

"We should scrap the caretaker government system and the politicians should honour one another," he added.

Entire admin politicised

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The officials are being reflected everywhere.

"They (the BNP-led government) demonstrated what politicisation is and how many types it could be," said the premier in reply to a supplementary query of independent lawmaker Fazlul Azim, who earlier belonged to BNP.

She however said that her government does not believe in politicisation.

Replying to the scripted question of Azim, Hasina said Bangladesh is among the countries, which are still not affected by the ongoing worldwide economic fallout.

A secretary-level technical committee is now working to find out measures to deal with the possible bad effects from the economic fallout, the premier added.

"The government has also moved to form a high-powered ministerial taskforce comprising eminent economists. The taskforce will determine guidelines to save the country's economy from the long-term effects of the ongoing slowdown," Hasina added.

She however gave assurance that the trend of the foreign aid is still positive and her government is keeping close contact with the World Bank, ADB, EU and other relevant organisations. "We hope foreign investment will increase if good governance is ensured," she added.

Replying to a supplementary query of AL lawmaker Golam Dastag Gazi, the premier said her government is planning to create an atmosphere conducive to setting up new industries and investments, both local and foreign.

The government is planning

to set up a new bank with the money deposited by the immigrant workers at the labour ministry to provide loans to the workers intending to go abroad, she said in reply to another supplementary query of AL lawmaker ABM Abul Kashem.

She alleged that the fund, which is being raised with the money of the immigrants, has been misused in the past. "Relatives of the former prime minister have also taken money from the fund along with the lawmakers who used the money to build education institutions in their areas."

She added her government is also negotiating with the private banks so that they provide loans to the jobseekers abroad.

In reply to a scripted question of AL lawmaker Chayon Islam, the prime minister in her written answer said the process is underway to revive the project titled "one house, one farm" to boost rural economy.

The project was launched during the last AL government in between 1996 to 2001 with allocation of Tk 40 crore. But assuming power in 2001, the BNP-led government cancelled it.

The prime minister also blasted the then BNP-led government for cancelling the project. "They didn't have any responsibility towards commoners. They were busy plundering public money, harassing and killing opponents."

Responding to a supplementary query of AL lawmaker Advocate Rahmat Ali, she said the government would allocate sufficient amount of money in the upcoming national budget to revive the project which will also help alleviate poverty.

She also urged the lawmakers to assist the people in their

respective constituencies so that they can gain start.

Replying to a scripted query of another ruling alliance lawmaker HM Golam Reza on garments industries, the premier said the government has planned to take some measures including setting up a "garment industries village" to make them more competitive in the international market.

A business friendly import policy is being formulated to make the market system competitive considering the international perspective of the open market economy, added Hasina in response to another scripted question of ruling alliance lawmaker MA Zabbar on arresting price hike of essentials.

Sangskritik Jote concerned over propaganda on Shishir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Shammilita Sangskritik Jote yesterday expressed concern over propaganda on Shishir Bhattacharya, a teacher of Institute of Fine Arts and renowned artist, centring a frivolous matter at the institute.

In a statement, president of Shammilita Sangskritik Jote Nasiruddin Yusuf Bachchu and General Secretary Golam Qudus expressed concern.

They also urged the Dhaka University authorities to resolve the matter sitting with both the sides as they all are part of the university.

Cox's Bazar beach ranks number one

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The world's longest unbroken beach Cox's Bazar now ranks number one in the race for the New Seven Wonders of Nature.

Cox's Bazar earlier ranked second in "Group G", a category for seascapes of a total of seven categories under the New7Wonders Foundation. The Sundarbans ranks third in "Group E" for forests, natural parks and reserves.

The results of the first phase of voting in the official New7Wonders of Nature campaign were announced January 7 at the New7Wonders Foundation headquarters and Cox's Bazar initially ranked third.

Voting in the second phase to select the top 7 will continue until July 7, 2009.

The overwhelming support of the citizens of the country, including expatriates, helped Cox's Bazar and the Sundarbans to regain the top positions. Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation said in a statement yesterday.

PRAYERS BY POLITICIANS

HC order on bail on Sunday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) will deliver orders on Sunday on the bail prayers filed by some politicians convicted in absentia in the cases against them.

After concluding the hearing on the petitions, the HC bench of Justice Syed AB Mahmudul Huq and Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury yesterday fixed the date for orders on the matters.

The politicians, including former Awami League lawmaker Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Jatiya Party (Manju) Chairman Anwar Hossain Manju, former BNP lawmaker Nadim Mostafa and former finance minister M Saifur Rahman's son Shafiqur Rahman Babu, surrendered before the court and prayed for bail in different criminal cases in January.

In the cases, they were convicted in absentia. Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud and Barrister Rafique-ul Huq appeared for the petitioners.

Pak envoy's remarks protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Workers' Party of Bangladesh along with other left-wing parties yesterday strongly protested the comment of the visiting Pakistani special emissary Zia Ispahani on the issue of the trial of war criminals.

The party leaders demanded speedy trial of the criminals at a discussion on 'Spirit of Ekushey and non-communal Bangladesh' in the city with lawmaker Rashed Khan Menon in the chair.

The eleven party combine will form a human chain today in protest against the comment in front of the High Court.

"The controversial comment of the Pakistani envoy implicates that their dominance is still prevailing on this land," Menon said.

The spirit of the language movement later inspired the countrymen in the mass uprising in 1969 and the liberation war in 1971, he said, adding that the results of the December 29 general elections are also the indication of their non-communal spirit.

Veteran journalist Fayez Ahmed, language movement veteran Abdul Matin, Workers' Party General Secretary Bimal Biswas, Marxist-Leninist leader Harun Chowdhury, President of Awami League Motiheel unit Ashraf Talukder, General Secretary of Gonotantrik Mojdir Party Zakir Hossain, Abul Hossain and Hazera Sultana also spoke.

Arms recovered on JU campus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday recovered a firearm during a special raid on Jahangirnagar University (JU) campus following clash between two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League on Monday.

The firearm was found abandoned under a culvert adjacent to Physics department yesterday evening.

A national daily on Tuesday published photographs of the clash on the JU campus including a photograph of the gun, police claimed.

Though police managed to arrest the students snapped with the gun on Tuesday, the gun could not be recovered at that time.