

Govt keen to implement water sharing treaty with India

Says state minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Jahangir Kabir Nanak yesterday said the government is working to implement the water sharing treaty with India signed in 1996.

He also said the transboundary water problems would be solved by regional coordination and a task force would be formed to this end.

He said this at a seminar on 'Transboundary river basin of Bangladesh: Situation analysis of water and sanitation' to mark the World Water Day at the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) auditorium.

This year's theme for the World Water Day is 'Shared Water - Shared Opportunities'.

"Had the treaty come into effect, there would not have been any water crisis, but the past governments failed to implement the treaty due to their political weaknesses. We will implement the treaty by strengthening the friendly ties with India," Nanak said while talking to journalists after the seminar.

He said the government will take steps to adopt coordinated policies at the national level to protect the water resources.

A regional water policy will also be adopted along with India, Nepal and Bhutan, he added.

Secretary to the Local Government Division of LGRD ministry Shaikh Khurshid Alam said, "We need to ensure adequate flow of water, its quality and optimum use of the resources to address the water crisis."

DPHE, NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), World Health Organisation (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) and WSP jointly organised the seminar.

Md Mustafizur Rahman, chief engineer of DPHE, chaired the seminar while Dr Andrew Trevett, environmental health adviser and acting WHO representative to Bangladesh, and Carel de Rooy, country representative, Unicef Bangladesh, also spoke.

Prof Rezaur Rahman of Buet presented the keynote paper at the seminar.

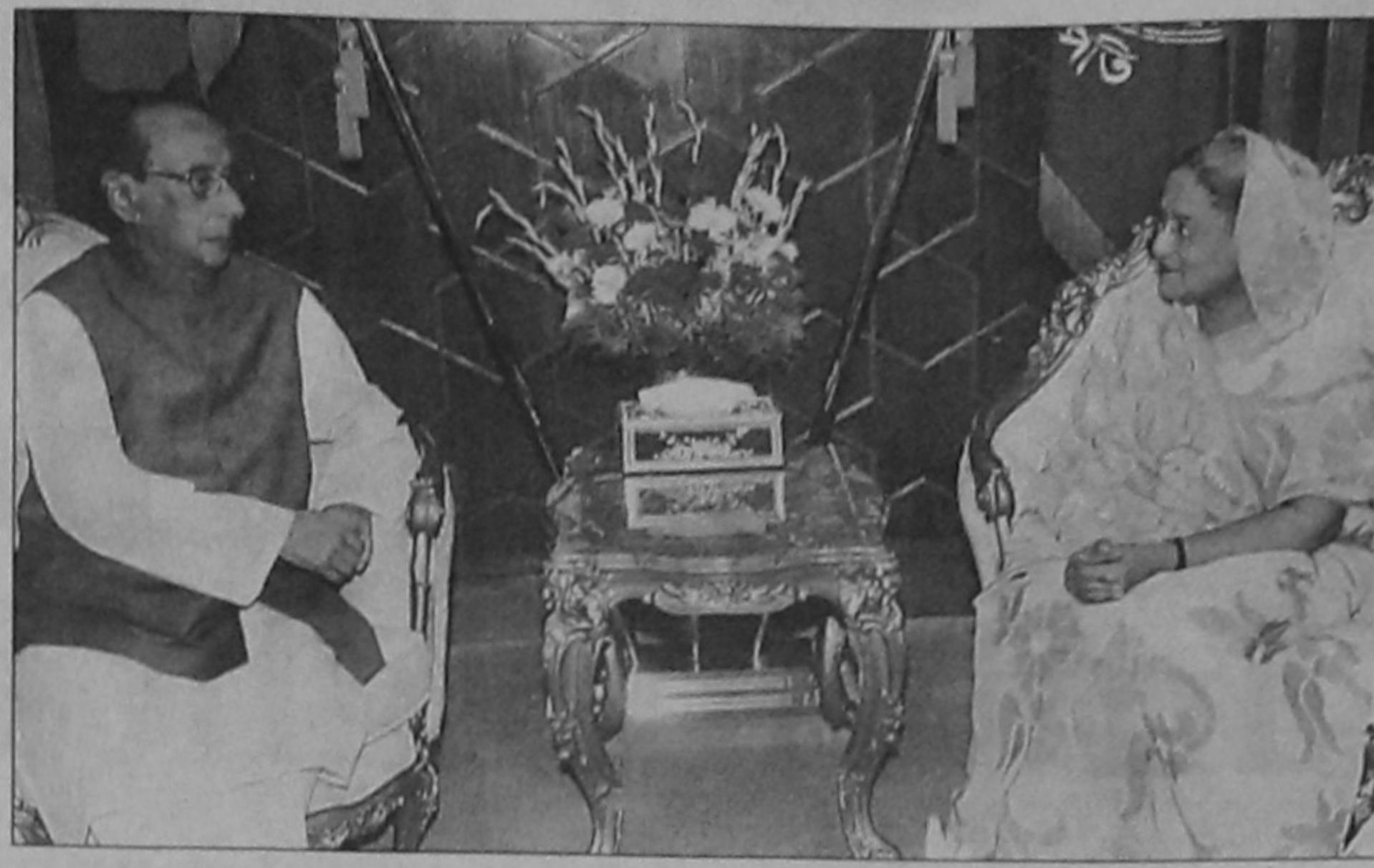
Meanwhile, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Hasan Mahmud yesterday said the government is taking pragmatic steps for resolving the regional water sharing issues as well as moving ahead for sharing the hydropower potentials in South Asia.

In this connection, he mentioned the signing and implementation of Ganges Water Sharing Treaty signed between Dhaka and Delhi in 1996.

The State Minister was speaking as the Chief Guest at a seminar entitled 'Transboundary Water: Sharing Water, Sharing Opportunities' at Dhaka Reporters' Unity Lounge.

Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Society organised the programme. Danish Ambassador Einar Hebogaard Jensen attended the seminar as the special guest.

Hasan Mahmud said international agencies and friends were also interested to support initiatives taken by the government. He said to reap the maximum benefit from transboundary water resources all the countries in the region should act in a coordinated fashion.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina calls on President Zillur Rahman at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Ad-interim bail to Jamaat leader Razzaq, wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday granted anticipatory bail for three months to Jamaat leader barrister Abdur Razzaq Siddiqi and his wife Saleha Razzaq Siddiqi in a case filed by the police on charges of criminal intimidation to on-duty police and trespass.

Upon a bail petition jointly filed by the Razzaq couple, an HC bench comprising Justice Syed AB Mahmudul Huq and Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury issued a rule upon the government to explain within three weeks as to why the petitioners should not be granted regular bail in the case.

The petitioners appeared before the HC for bail in the case.

On March 19, Dewan Abul Hossain, police inspector of the Immigration at Zia International Airport (ZIA), filed the criminal case with the Airport Police Station against them on charges of obstructing the authorities at the airport in the course of their duties at early hours on March 19.

According to the case statement, the couple violated the law by forcing their way into the protected boarding bridge zone ZIA without the authorities' approval or exit seals on their passports, intimidating security personnel and obstructing them from discharging their duty in the early hours on March 19.

After securing interim anticipatory bail, barrister Razzaq filed a writ petition with another HC division bench challenging the legality of filing the case against him and his wife.

The HC is likely to hear the petition today.

Barrister Ajmal Hossain appeared for the petitioners.

BDR MUTINY

153 more suspects shown arrested

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A total of 153 Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) mutiny suspects were shown arrested yesterday in the mutiny case filed with Lalbagh Police Station and sent them to jail.

Meantime, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) team also detained 14 more BDR members for their alleged involvement with the killings and looting at the BDR headquarters on February 25-26.

Besides, three others were placed on different terms of fresh remand for interrogation in connection with the case.

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) produced 153 BDR members before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court at about 5:30pm and prayed to show them arrested in connection with the case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Faisal Atiq Bin Kader granted the petition for showing them arrested in the case and sent them to jail, as the CID did not seek any remand for them.

The arrestees detained by Rab are subi Mohammad Alauddin, havildars Masudul, Shafiqul Islam, Akib Ali, Jalal Uddin Ahmed and Iftekhar Ali, lance naiks Anwarul Islam, Abdul Kayum, Joyal Abedin, Monzurul Islam and Mohammad Shah Alam, sepoys Bazlur Rashid, Alim Raza and Abdul Kalam.

Rab said they gathered important information about the BDR carnage and the arrestees were handed over to Lalbagh police for taking next legal actions against them.

Remand of arrestees

The same court placed sepoys Gofran Mallick and Gausul Azam on a three-day remand while Abdul Latif on a seven-day remand for interrogation against the pray for different terms of remand after CID's Assistant Superintendent Police (ASP) and his wife.

The HC is likely to hear the petition today.

Barrister Ajmal Hossain appeared for the petitioners.

Abdul Kader Akond produced them before the court.

CID is also interrogating 34 others in their custody.

CID has so far showed arrested a total of 328 BDR mutiny suspects in connection with the case.

The bench came up with the decision, telling the lawyers concerned present in the court that they (two judges) will deliver split orders on the petitions and the matters might be transferred to another bench of the HC.

Barrister Rafique, however, yesterday did not appear before the HC bench in connection of this petition, although the bench earlier directed him to appear in person before the court on March 22.

The petitioners' lawyer Advocate Ramzan Ali Sikder yesterday verbally prayed to the HC bench to issue an arrest warrant against him (Rafique), saying that he ignored the HC direction by not appearing before the court.

He said this is an aggravated contempt of court and outrageous conduct by Barrister Rafique-Ul Huq towards the HC.

His conduct has not only undermined the court but also people will lose their confidence towards the court, he said.

Ramzan Ali Sikder later told The Daily Star that he would move the contempt petition before another HC bench.

The HC on February 23 upon the contempt petition issued a rule on Rafique-Ul Huq to show cause within three weeks why contempt proceedings should not be drawn against him on charge of contempt of court for using 'abusive' and 'objectionable' language about a judge of the court.

The HC bench also directed Rafique to appear in person before it at 10:30am on March 22 in connection with this petition filed by Idrisur Rahman and Zahurul Islam Mukul.

On March 17, Rafique-Ul Huq submitted a petition to the court fixed March 22 (yesterday) for passing order on.

Advocate Khondaker Mahbub Hossain and Barrister Ajmal Hossain appeared for Rafique.

Obituary

METRO DESK



Amir Ali Chowdhury, former diplomat and freedom fighter, passed away at Apollo Hospitals in the city yesterday, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, one son, four daughters and host of admirers to mourn his death.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at Gausul Azam Jame Masjid (Uttara Sector 13) after Zohr prayers today.

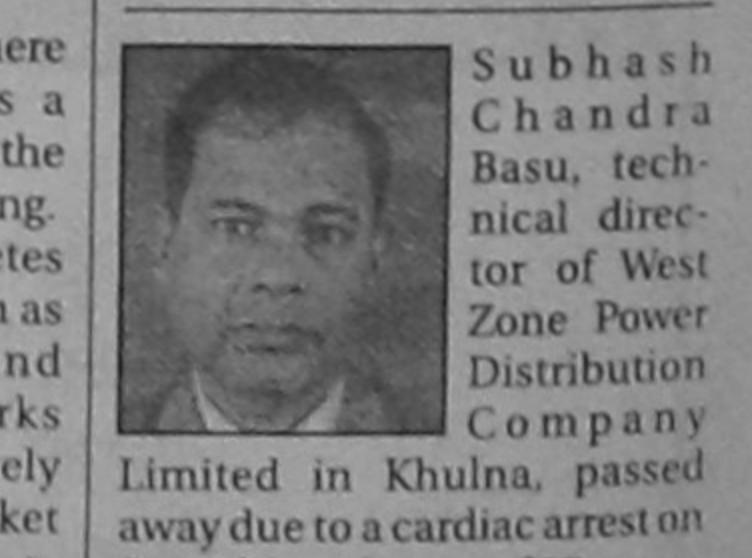
Amir Ali was one of the prominent members of the Bangladesh Mission in Kolkata who flew the first flag of independent Bangladesh on April 18 in 1971.

He served in Bangladesh missions in the United Kingdom, Indonesia, India, Myanmar and Australia.

He was born at Moulihivaria in 1929.

Subhash Chandra Basu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Subhash Chandra Basu, technical director of West Zone Power Distribution (WZPD), Limited in Khulna, passed away due to a cardiac arrest on Saturday at the age of 57, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, a son, a daughter and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

2 killed, 37 injured in road accidents

METRO DESK

Two people were killed and 37 others injured in separate road accidents in Thakurgaon and Thakurgaon in last two days.

Our correspondent from Netrakona reports: Two people were killed and 15 others injured in a road accident on Netrakona-Durgapur road at Suknukuri under Durgapur upazila in Netrakona yesterday.

The dead were identified as Salah Ahmed, 50, of Kusukanda village and Raham Ali, 45, of Billapara village under Durgapur upazila.

Police and locals said the accident occurred when a Durgapur-bound passengers bus fell into a roadside ditch loosing its control leaving 22 people injured.

On information, police rushed to the spot and sent the injured to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital.

Two boys rescued from traffickers

A CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

Police rescued two minor boys while they were being trafficked yesterday at Maksudpur in Gopalganj.

The rescued boys were identified as Ifti and Shawan, both are students of class IV of SM Model Government Primary School in Gopalganj town.

Seriously injured passengers were sent to Mymensingh Medical College and Hospital.

Police confined the bus but its driver managed to flee.

Our correspondent in Thakurgaon adds: At least 22 people were injured in a road accident on Thakurgaon-Panchagarh road at Salondar village under Thakurgaon.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) AKM Liakat Ali said they handed over the boys to their parents.

The boys were rescued while traffickers taking them to Dhaka by a bus. The traffickers deserted them sensing trouble at a police check post on the Dhaka-Kulna highway at Maksudpur.

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