

Ministry asked to submit report on power projects during BNP govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary committee at a meeting yesterday asked the ministry of power, energy and mineral resources and the departments concerned to prepare detailed reports on the initiatives taken by the previous BNP-led four-party alliance government and the caretaker government in the power sector and the expenditure on power projects.

The objective of preparing the reports is to find out why adequate amount of electricity could not be generated during the last seven years.

The ministry and the departments have been asked to submit the reports at the next meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on estimate.

The parliamentary body also formed a three-member sub-committee headed by Rafiqul Islam. The committee members will visit all power stations in the country to identify problems and submit

a report.

Two other members of the sub-committee are Hafizuddin Ahmed and Fazle Hossain Badsha.

At the meeting, the parliamentary body hoped that about 2000 megawatt electricity would be generated this year, which will ease suffering of the people.

"We have asked the ministry and departments concerned to submit detailed account of how much money was allocated for the power sector and how many projects had been taken up to generate electricity during the BNP-led four-party government and the caretaker government," HN Ashequr Rahman, chairman of the committee, told reporters after the meeting at the parliament building.

"We want to know why a single additional megawatt of power could not be generated in the last seven years," he said.

"Several power projects were initiated during the BNP

government, but no electricity could be generated from these projects," he added.

INDUSTRY MINISTRY

Meanwhile, the parliamentary standing committee on the industries ministry yesterday recommended that the government should withdraw or reduce import tariffs on raw materials being used in local industries to protect them.

The committee headed by Tofail Ahmed also passed a proposal to reopen three closed fertiliser mills.

The committee also formed a three-member sub-committee headed by Kamal Ahmed Majumder to investigate irregularities in Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation.

"We want to protect our local industry and we want to protect them from international competition. So, we have recommended reducing the import duty on raw materials," Tofail Ahmed told reporters after the meeting at the parliament building.

CTG ARMS HAUL CASE Ex-NSI director Sahab Uddin on fresh remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chittagong court yesterday placed former director of National Security Intelligence (NSI) Mohammad Sahab Uddin on a fresh six-day remand for further interrogation in connection with the sensational arms haul case yesterday.

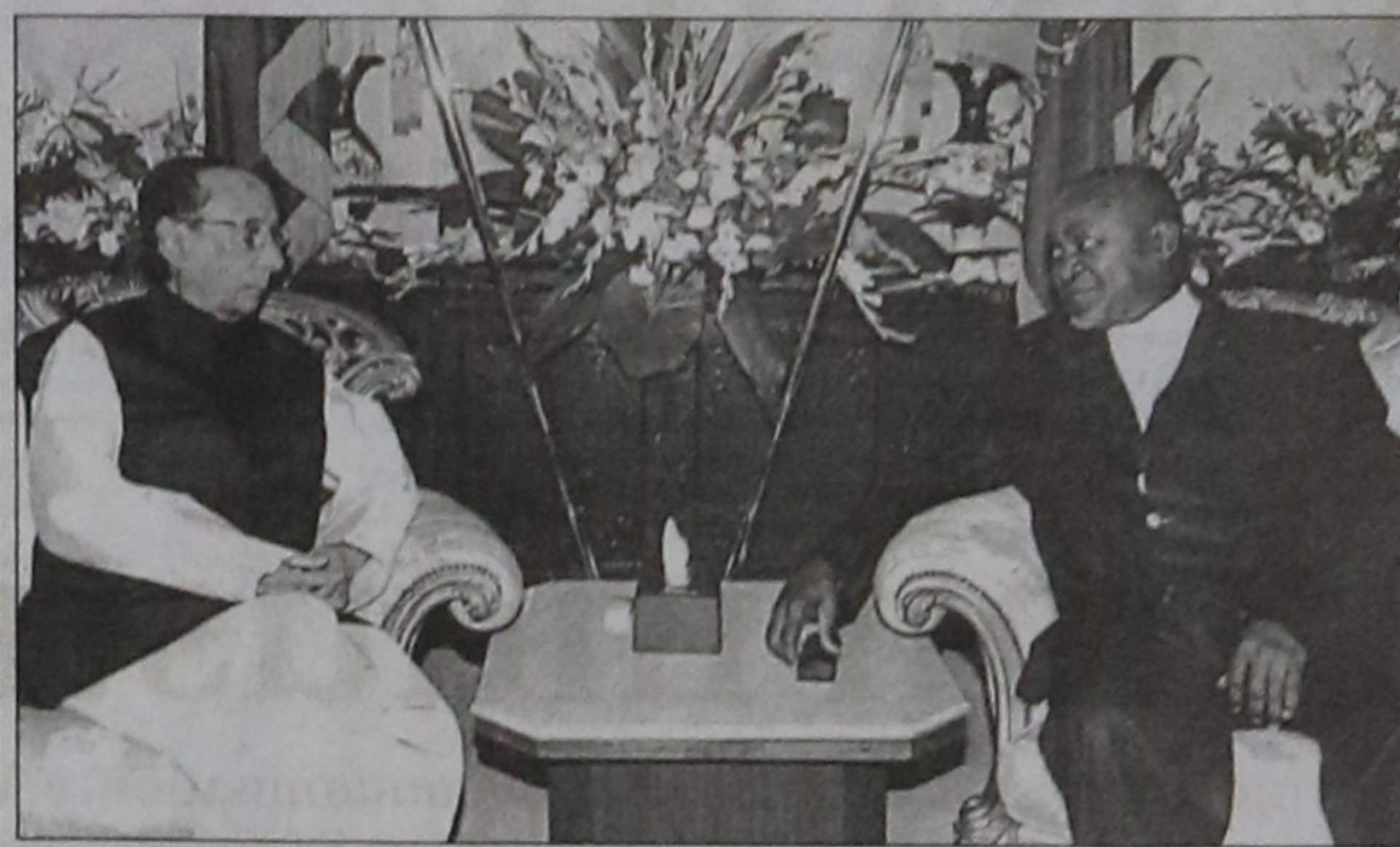
The court of Metropolitan Magistrate Mahabubur Rahman granted the remand for six days when the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) produced Sahab Uddin before it with a prayer for ten-day remand.

CID prayed for fresh remand as the former NSI director did not give much information during his earlier three-day remand that ended on Wednesday.

He might be sent to Dhaka for interrogation in the Task Force Interrogation cell today, said CID Chittagong divisional Special Police Super Mohammad Muslim.

Sahab Uddin was arrested from a residence at Green Road in the capital in the early hours of Sunday for his alleged involvement in arranging transport facilities for firearms and ammunition hauled at Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Ltd jetty in the early hours of April 02 in 2004.

Sahab Uddin, a wing commander of Bangladesh Air Force who joined NSI on deputation, went into voluntary retirement in 2005.



Ugandan Vice President Prof Gilbert Bukenya calls on President Zillur Rahman at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

Bazlur made regular judge of HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Md Bazlur Rahman Chhana, a former additional judge of the High Court (HC), whose job was not confirmed by the previous BNP-Jamaat-led four-party alliance government, was appointed a regular judge of the HC yesterday.

President Zillur Rahman approved his appointment as per Article 95 (1) of the Constitution.

The number of the HC judges now stands at 73, sources said.

Chhana, along with 12 others was appointed to the HC as additional judge for two years at the fag end of the previous Awami League government (1996-2001). But, later the BNP-led alliance did not confirm their services after their two-year tenure had expired.

Ten judges excluding Bazlur Rahman Chhana, out of 13, who were not confirmed during the BNP-Jamaat rule despite the chief justice's positive recommendations fought a legal battle against BNP-Jamaat government's action of not confirming their services.

After a series of legal battles, the Supreme Court (SC) on March 2 this year upheld a HC judgement directing the government to reappoint 10 HC judges.

The Apex court did not permit the government to appoint Bazlur Raman Chhana as he had not prayed to any court to appoint him as a regular HC judge.

The government has appointed the 10 judges following the SC directives and they took oath as regular judge on March 25.

The government has recently decided to appoint Chhana as regular judge of the HC in line with the SC verdict, sources said.

Changes in BDR law likely

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The committee on BDR reformation will submit its proposals to the government next week, he said, adding that the committee prepared the proposals after a survey on 7000 people across the country, including law enforcers, army personnel, retired BDR personnel and government officials.

From the survey, the committee has got at least 10 suggestions for the new name of BDR and at least five proposals for the uniform, he added.

He also said the government extended the time limit of the investigation committee several times only to ensure a fair investigation into the incident.

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Woman found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday recovered the decomposed body of a woman who was killed allegedly by her husband at Ashulia in the outskirts of the city.

The victim was identified as Ranju Khatun, 20, a garment worker and wife of Kabir Hossain of Khejurbagh in the area.

Ranju's uncle Abdus Samad told this correspondent that Kabir fled on Monday night after he strangled her (Ranju) at his house.

He said police found her decomposed body lying on the bed.

Police said house owner Kohinur Begum informed the police after stench was emitting from the room which was locked from outside.

Police recovered the body wrapped in a cloth on the bed and sent it to Dhaka Medical College Morgue for autopsy.

Samad quoting neighbours

said Kabir left the house around 1:00am on Tuesday barrowing Tk 1000 from one of his neighbours, saying that he (Kabir) was going to Pabna as his mother has died.

Ugandan vice president arrives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ugandan Vice President Prof Gilbert Bukenya arrived in a six-day visit in the city yesterday to see different programmes of Brac, says a press release.

Brac Executive Director (International) Aminul Alam welcomed him at the Zia International Airport.

Brac started its operations in Uganda in 2006 and has quickly grown to become one of the largest micro credit providers in the country.



Onlookers gather at a level crossing at Khilgaon in the city after a collision between a train and a bus took place last night. At least two persons were injured in the accident. Witnesses said the Sylhet-bound train hit the bus of Saudia Silk Paribahan which moved onto the level crossing pushing through a barrier as the bus driver lost his control over the steering.

DEROGATORY REMARKS HC warns Judge Bashirullah

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday warned Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge ANM Bashirullah for his 'derogatory' remarks about the HC regarding dispensation of justice and also directed him (Bashir) to become cautious in passing any comment about the order of any superior court in future.

The HC bench of Justice MA Wahhab Mian and Justice Marzi-ul-Huq, however, accepted Bashirullah's prayer for unconditional apology.

Advocate SM Rezaul Karim submitted the apology prayer on behalf of Bashirullah to the court.

In his prayer Bashir stated that he had no intention of showing disregard to the prestige, dignity and honour of the HC and he regretted for his 'unintentional' comments.

On February 23 this year the HC, following a petition filed by Afzal Hossain, an accused in a criminal case, asked him (the petitioner) to surrender before the metropolitan sessions judge's court within eight weeks and asked the lower court to consider his bail prayer.

Afzal surrendered before the sessions judge's court for bail as per the HC order on April 8. But Judge Bashirullah rejected his bail prayer and sent him (Afzal) to jail.

Bashirullah also commented about the wisdom of the HC in dispensation of justice.

Afzal's lawyer advocate AFM Mesbahuddin conveyed the sessions judge's remark to the HC along with his order rejecting the bail prayer.

The HC bench on April 15 issued the suo moto contempt rule asking Bashir to explain why he should not be punished on charges of the contempt of the court for his remarks on the highest court.

1462 more held, arms seized

UNB, Dhaka

Some 1462 suspected criminals were arrested, two illegal firearms recovered and 15 motorbikes seized in a special police drive across the country during the 24 hours ending yesterday evening.

CONSTITUTION'S 5TH AMENDMENT 'Appeal withdrawal a political jealousy'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP leader Nazmul Huda yesterday termed as political jealousy the decision of the Awami League (AL) government to withdraw the appeal against the High Court (HC) verdict which declared the 5th amendment of the Constitution illegal.

"AL has always practised politics of confrontation and the latest decision of the government to withdraw the appeal is another proof of revenge," he said while speaking at a roundtable as chief guest.

The roundtable titled 'Politics of revenge: Public sufferings, shattered national security and economy' was organised by Nagorik Forum at the National Press Club.

"The then president and so-called architect of independence Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had killed democracy, independence of judiciary and freedom of newspapers through the 4th amendment of the Constitution while Zia had restored democracy through the 5th amendment. But the government is now showing political jealousy by cancelling the 5th amend-

ment," Nazmul said. "Cancellation of the 5th amendment means going back to the 4th amendment and one party rule of Bakshal," he added.

Speaking as special guest Brig Gen (ret) ANM Hannan Shah, an adviser of BNP chairperson, said the politics of present government is threatening national security.

He also expressed his doubt about the success of the investigation of BDR carnage.

Jamaat-e-Islami Assistant Secretary General Muhammad Kamaruzzaman said, "We are blamed as war criminals and anti-liberation forces as we have allied with BNP, but if we had allied with the AL then we would not have been blamed like that."

"Several AL leaders have phoned us to say that they could not invite us in their personal programme as they would be thrown out of the party," he claimed.

BNP leader Wing Commander (ret) M Hamidullah Khan and Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal President Moazzem Hossain Alal also addressed the roundtable.

Wazed's condition slightly improves

UNB, Dhaka

Physical condition of the ailing eminent nuclear scientist and husband of Prime Minister (PM) Sheikh Hasina, Dr MA Wazed Miah, has slightly improved said PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad quoting the attending physicians.

"I talked to the attending physicians at Square Hospital. They informed me that his physical condition has slightly improved," Azad told UNB.

Earlier, Hasina went to the Square Hospital at about 3:00pm to see her ailing husband and spent nearly an hour beside him.

Dr Wazed, former chief of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission, has been undergoing treatment over the last one year. Meanwhile, he has received treatment in Delhi and Singapore. Earlier, his family sought doa from the countrymen for his early recovery.

Dr Wazed, suffering long from high blood pressure, renal failure, diabetes and asthma, has been kept under close observation at the Square Hospital.

The physicians on duty told journalists that Dr Wazed was admitted for conducting 'plurbiopsy' in the morning.

Earlier, he was flown to Singapore last March to take treatment at the National Heart Centre where he underwent angioplasty.

CLIMATE CHANGE Seminar on Bangladesh in USA on May 16

ANA, New York

A seminar and a rally will be held in front of the UN Headquarters in New York and Bangabandhu auditorium in Washington, USA this month to make international communities vocal to save Bangladesh from the effects of climate change.

Humayun Kabir, Bangladesh Ambassador in the USA, told ANA that a high profile seminar on climate change will be held at the embassy auditorium on May 16. World famous climate scientists, environmentalists and economists will attend the seminar. Representatives of more than 100 countries are expected to participate at the programme.

Besides, Bangladesh Environment Network, an organisation of the Bangladeshis living in the USA, is taking preparations to hold a rally in front of the UN Headquarters in New York.

From the rally a call would be made to take proper steps to save Bangladesh from the adverse effects of climate change by making international communities aware about the situation of Bangladesh.

DHAKA TODAY

Bird fair

The inaugural ceremony of a two-day bird fair will be held. Dhaka University Tourist Society organises the fair to celebrate the World Migratory Bird Day. Venue: TSC, DU. Time: 9:00am.

Discussion

Projonmo '71 organises a discussion on trial of the war criminals. Venue: Liberation War Museum. Time: 4:30pm.

Art exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of an art exhibition on contemporary artists will be held. Venue: Zainul Gallery, DU. Time: 5:00pm. Oriental Painting Study Group organised the event.

Rally

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society will hold a rally marking the World Red Cross Day. Venue: Holy Family Medical College. Time: 7:30am.

JS body to raise age limit, allowance, number of judges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body yesterday formed a sub-committee to make recommendations on the increase of age limit, allowance and number of judges both in the Supreme Court and the lower judiciary in a bid to overcome the present disarray.

The parliamentary standing committee on law, justice and parliament affairs ministry at its meeting formed the six-member sub-committee with former law minister Abdul Matin Khasru as its head.

The sub-committee was asked to come up with the recommendations within next 45 days.

"We are thinking of taking some innovative steps to remove the disarray prevailing in the judicial system and

modernise it," said Suranjit Sengupta, chairman of the standing committee, while talking to reporters after about two-hour-long meeting in the parliament building.

"We have also asked the ministry to place its recommendations before the committee regarding increasing of allowance, efficiency and ages of judges," he added.

"We want to ensure justice and bring transparency in judicial system," Suranjit said.

"The standing committee has also recommended to increase the number of judges in Appellate Division from seven to 11," he added.

"There is huge backlog of cases in courts, we want to get rid of them," Suranjit said.

Clinker-laden vessel capsizes at Ctg Port

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A lighter vessel carrying 800 tons of cement clinker capsized at the outer anchorage of Chittagong Port yesterday morning.

According to sources, the 1500-ton-capacity vessel 'Tiru-9' was loading clinkers from a vessel 'MV Maris' at Alfa anchorage but it capsized after a clinker-laden marine vessel 'MV Mastro Giorgis' hit it around 8:00am.

However, four crew members of the lighter vessel were rescued, they said.

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Secretary Syed Farhad Uddin Ahmed said the movement of vessels through the port channel remained normal as the accident occurred at the outer anchorage.

He also said a notice will be sent to the owner of the sunken vessel asking him to salvage it.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Hosne Ara (Minon), wife of late Aminul Islam, passed away at LabAid Hospital at Dhanmondi in the city at 10:30pm last night at the age of 64.

She was head of the Department of Political Science of Lalmitia Women's College.

Prof Hosne Ara left behind one daughter, one son and host of relatives to mourn her death.

Her namaz-e-janaza will be held at Gulshan Azad Central Mosque after Juma prayers today.

She will be laid to rest at Banani graveyard.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 28th death anniversary of Khan Bahadur Moulvi Md Ismail, a lawyer and father of Bangla Vision Executive Director Asaf Uddaula, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his residence at House # 10, Road # 3 in Dhanmondi residential area in the city after Maghrib prayers.

Relatives and admirers are requested to attend the programme and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Manoranjan Barua

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the first death anniversary of Manoranjan Barua, founder of Chattala Confectionary and former chairman of Minority Board, says a press release.

On the occasion, special prayers will be offered at his village home at Joara in Patiya, Chittagong. Foods will also be distributed among the destitute.

Relatives and admirers are requested to attend the programme and pray for eternal peace of the soul.

Kazi Habibur Rahman

METRO DESK

Today is the sixth death anniversary of Kazi Habibur Rahman, a social worker of Raiganj upazila in Sirajganj and father of Nurbobi Siddik Swin, sub-editor of The Daily Samakal, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at Rameshorganti under Raiganj upazila in Sirajganj after Zohr prayers tomorrow (Saturday).

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the programme.

Qulkhwani

METRO DESK

Qulkhwani of Shamsul Alam Bhuiyan, a retired police officer and father of journalist Zahirul Alam Badal will be held at his village Fulki in Tangail after Juma prayers today, says a press release.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over the country in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Mild to moderate heat wave is sweeping over Khulna division and the regions of Rajshahi, Ishwardi, Bogra, Dhaka, Faridpur and Madaripur and it may continue.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:31pm today and rises at 5:19am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 39.8 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 20.1 degrees Celsius at Tangail.

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	36.0	22.2	77	53
Chittagong	32.5	26.7	79	77
Rajshahi	39.5	24.1	67	35
Khulna	37.0	26.6	74	53
Barisal	35.5	25.0	77	68
Sylhet	33.6	23.8	69	63
Cox's Bazar	34.0	25.6	69	73