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Witnesses intimidated

Alleges war crimes prosecution; defence denies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution of the international crimes tribunals yesterday alleged that some of their witnesses had been "either intimidated or managed by the accused side", while the defence outright rejected the allegations.

The prosecution made the claim after it declared its 19th prosecution witness hostile in the war crimes case against Abdul Alim at the International Crimes Tribunal-2 yesterday.

The day before and for the first time in the tribunals' history, the prosecution declared hostile its seventh witness in the case against Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami. In the war crimes case against BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, the defence yesterday declined to cross-examine the prosecution witness as the witness did not mention Salauddin even once in the testimony.

Chief Prosecutor Ghulam Arief Tipoo yesterday told The Daily Star that beside the negative propaganda against the trial, "some of our witnesses are being intimidated by the accused's side. They even managed our witnesses with money as money is not an issue for them."

Prosecutor Rana Dasgupta yesterday told The Daily Star, "Our witnesses were either frightened in the present political atmosphere or they were managed by the accused side."

Rejecting the allegations, Tajul Islam, a member of Nizami and Alim's defence team, told The Daily Star that, "Now the prosecution witnesses are telling the truth as they are becoming courageous at the fag end of the present government."

About the allegations of intimidation and "managing" prosecution witnesses, Tajul said, "It is the falsehood of the prosecution. Nobody intimidated any prosecution witness..."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Hard to believe the photo is not of a war-torn distant country where a car bomb had gone off. The photo is of the collapsed Rana Plaza in Savar after the army cleared out the basement of the ill-fated building and ended the rescue operations yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BNP ready for talks

Khaleda tells UN envoy; AL too hopeful

RASHIDUL HASAN and HASAN JAHID CHOWDHURY

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday said her party was ready for a dialogue with the government for resolving the political stalemate over how to hold a free and fair general election.

She also expressed hope that "an amicable solution will be found through talks".

The leader of the opposition made the remarks when the visiting UN delegation met her for the second time, meeting sources said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Water, a packet of biscuits saved her

Reshma describes her 17-day ordeal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

She had worked in Rana Plaza for only 22 days before the building came crashing down on her. With just a packet of biscuits and some water Reshma made it out of the rubble alive on Friday, after being trapped in the debris for 17 days.

In her first formal appearance before the media, the girl yesterday said, "I don't know how I got the courage to go through all these."

Three days after her miraculous rescue, she was finally deemed mentally and physically stable to address journalists. She was, however, hesitant and emotional in the beginning as she tried to recall her traumatic experience.

She could not recall which garment factory she worked in, but said it was on the second floor.

"I went to the office in the morning. I saw people discussing and pointing to



SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

Yet another Jamaat hartal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami is going to observe a countrywide dawn-to-dusk shutdown today in protest against the arrest of its Nayeb-e-Ameer AKM Yusuf.

Yusuf, known as the founder of the infamous Razakar force that collaborated with the Pakistani army in killing three million Bangalees during the Liberation War in 1971, is facing 15 war-crime charges.

A team of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) picked up Yusuf, 84, from his residence in the capital's Dhanmondi area on Sunday.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 8

HC clears way for DCC polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday cleared the way for holding elections to two Dhaka city corporations, vacating its earlier order that had prevented the Election Commission from holding the polls in May last year.

The court came up with the order after rejecting a writ petition that challenged the EC's polls schedule announced in April last year for holding the polls on May 24.

Welcoming the court's order, two Election Commissioners -- Abu Hafiz and Shah Nawaz -- yesterday said the EC would sit soon to move ahead for holding the long overdue polls as early as possible.

"We had moved to hold the polls, but could not do so due to the court's order. We will now make our plans to do it," Abu Hafiz told The Daily Star over the phone.

Talking to reporters at his office, Shah Nawaz said the EC was ready to hold the elections. "Now, we will hold the polls as soon as possible."

After the EC announced the election schedule on April 9 last year, the writ petition was filed challenging the polls schedule.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 8

The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL

Do you think that the upcoming city corporation elections scheduled for June 15 would be free and fair under the present Election Commission?

Yes (30%)

No (70%)

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with Foreign Minister Dipu Moni that this Election Commission will be able to hold a free, fair and credible election with support from an interim government comprising elected representatives?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

YOU MAY ALSO VOTE AT facebook.com/dailystarnews

PRAYER TIMING

May 14

Azan Jamaat
Fajr 4:10 4:45
Zohr 12:45 1:15
Asr 5:00 5:15
Maghrib 6:36 6:40
Esha 8:00 8:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

May 14

Chhota Imambara

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