

ERSHAD'S PENDING CASE

All cleared, except two

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and CHAITANYA HALDER

The trials for two long running cases against former military dictator Hussain Mohammad Ershad, who died yesterday, still remain pending.

Of the two cases, one is the 1995 Maj Gen Abul Manzur murder case and another is a graft case filed in 1994, said court sources.

The Manzur murder case is now pending with the First Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka. It is now under further investigation by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police.

The CID is supposed to submit its probe report by August 28, after scheduling over 20 different dates to complete its probe.

Earlier, the court fixed several dates to announce the judgment in the case. But it ordered further investigation following a petition submitted by the prosecution.

Manzur, commander of sector-8 during the Liberation War, was killed in the Chattogram Cantonment on June 1, 1981, two days after the assassination of the then president Ziaur Rahman.

A case was filed by Manzur's elder brother Abul Mansur Ahmed on February 28, 1995.

According to the charge-sheet, Ershad, the then chief of army, was named as the prime accused.

Another graft case is also under investigation. The Anti-Corruption Commission could not complete their probe since August 1994, when the case was filed.

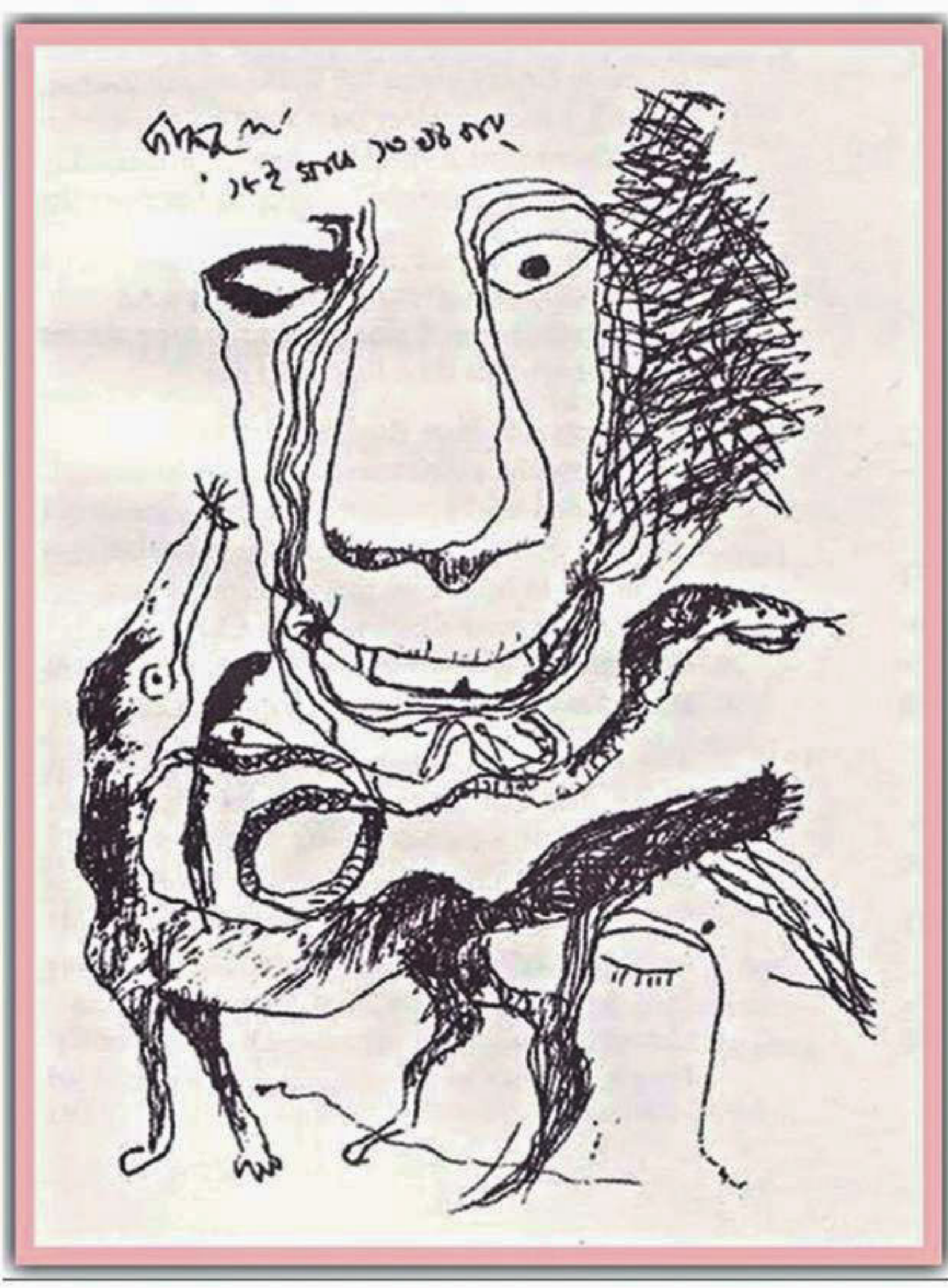
The case statement said that on January 11, 1984, Ershad, the then president, directed the authorities concerned to buy 50 percent of bitumen emulsion required for the Roads and Highways Department from M/s Zakir Industries for his own financial benefit.

Following the order, the authorities bought bitumen emulsion worth more than Tk 17 crores for the department.

When Ershad was compelled to step down from power as president in the face of mass movement in 1990, he had over 33 cases filed against him.

Ershad, who was the Jatiya Party Chairman and leader of the opposition in parliament before he died, was acquitted and discharged from 25 other cases, as

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Sketch that said it all

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

His two artworks have become integral and defining elements of the country's political history.

The first is an illustration of a monstrous Yahya Khan, the Pakistani ruler who ordered genocide in Bangladesh in 1971, and the second is a sketch mocking military dictator HM Ershad.

Just before his death, revered artist Quamrul Hassan drew the sketch that would become an inspiration for the mass movement that saw the downfall of Ershad regime in 1990.

Titled Desh aaj bishwa behayar khopporey (the country is in the clutches of a global scoundrel) is one of the most important work of his career and our art history.

On February 2, 1988, the Second National Poetry Festival was arranged at Dhaka University. Quamrul Hassan went to the venue before the start of the programme as he was invited to preside it.

Leading poets and luminaries, including Shamsur Rahman, Foyez Ahmed, Syed Shamsul Haque and Rafiq Azad, joined the festival.

In the middle of the event, poet Rabindra Gope gave Quamrul Hassan a sketch book. The eminent artist started doing the sketch and completed it, poet Mohon Raihan told The Daily Star yesterday.

Suddenly, he said, Quamrul Hassan felt pain in his chest and fell down. He was taken to the then Shaheed Suhrawardy Hospital in the then Awami League President Sheikh Hasina's car, only to be declared dead by doctors.

Mohon said they took the body of Quamrul Hassan to the Institute of Fine Arts of DU. At midnight, it was heard that the government might take away the body.

"So, we asked Dhaka University students to guard the body. At the time, we heard that Quamrul Hassan sketched something and it is in the

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Ershad to be buried tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The body of Jatiya Party chairman and former president HM Ershad will be buried with state honour tomorrow under supervision of the army, said Inter Service Public Relations (ISPR) yesterday.

Before the burial, his second namaz-e-janaza will be held at the South Plaza of Jatiya Sangsad at 10:30am today. His body will then be kept at the Jatiya Party's central office in the capital's Kakrail from 3:00pm for the people.

Then the body will be kept at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) mortuary following his third namaz-e-janaza at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque after Asr prayers.

On Tuesday morning, his body will be flown to his ancestral home in Rangpur where his last namaz-e-janaza will be held at 10:30am on Eidgah ground.

Later, his body will be brought back to Dhaka for burial at the Banani army graveyard after Johr prayers.

Ershad had been suffering from various ailments including infection to his lungs and kidneys. He was admitted to CMH on June 26 and kept at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). CONDOLENCES POUR IN

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed deep condolences at the death of Ershad.

The Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, cabinet members, different political parties, social and cultural organisations, civic platforms and noted personalities also mourned the departure of the former president.

President Abdul Hamid, in his condolence message, expressed deep

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Three die

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mud from a hill collapsed on her house in Madhujiri area.

Her son and his wife were also injured and admitted to Lama Upazila Health Complex, said Oppela Raju Naha, officer-in-charge of Lama Police Station.

Meanwhile, one Menpong Mro, 25, of Cramadi Para of Bandarban Sadar upazila, died when a chunk of soil fell on him when he was working in his Jhum field on Saturday evening, said U Kyaw Nu Marma, chairman of Sualok Union Parishad.

Our correspondents in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban contributed to this report.

Ershad no more

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students but also by all major political parties, including the Awami League, BNP, Jamaat, and also left parties.

Before his death yesterday morning, he was the leader of the opposition in parliament. In the previous term, he was the special envoy of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

After his fall, he took advantage of weak political alliances and became a pivotal figure in politics.

Ershad, an unpredictable character, had introduced upazila system in 1984 to decentralise power and expanded the national highway system. He also tried to decentralise civil and judicial administration, but failed.

Ershad got commissioned in the Pakistan Army in 1952. In 1956, he married Raushon Ershad, with whom he had a son. The couple also adopted a daughter.

He was reportedly interned along with Bangalee officers stationed in West Pakistan during the Liberation War and returned to Bangladesh in 1973.

Ershad assumed power in March 1982 as the Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA) and three days later he installed Justice Abul Fazl Mohammad Ahsanuddin Chowdhury as president.

He took over the country's presidency in December 1983.

Despite opposition from two major alliances led by the Awami League and the BNP, Ershad managed to hold the upazila polls as well as a referendum on himself in 1985, a presidential election in 1986, and a parliamentary election the same year.

In the 1986 election, his newly floated Jatiya Party bagged majority of the seats. Almost all major political parties except the Awami League boycotted the polls.

In November 1987, a united protest against Ershad turned into a full-blown mass movement that put tremendous pressure on the autocratic ruler.

Despite the political turmoil, he held another parliamentary election in 1988.

Jatiya Party got yet another majority as both the major alliances had boycotted the polls. To cling to power, Ershad went tough on the protesters. Jafar, Dipali Saha, Zainal, Mozammel, Ayub Kanchan and several others were shot dead in 1983.

Selim and Kazi Delwar Hossain in 1984, Noor Hossain in 1987, Naziruddin Jehad and Shamsul Alam Khan Milon in 1990, faced the same fate while taking part in the anti-Ershad movement.

Noor Hossain with slogans "free democracy and exterminate autocracy", written on his chest and back, stands out as a symbol of the spirit of democracy.

Ershad on many occasions denied allegation of suppressing the opposition.

BNP chief Khaleda Zia and AL chief Sheikh Hasina were on house arrest several times during his tenure.

Artist Quamrul Hasan's depiction of Ershad as "Biswa Behaya", (most shameless person of the world) for his controversial decisions after usurping power, at the National Poetry Festival in February 1988 moved the nation.

Ershad was finally forced to step down on December, 6, 1990. He was arrested in 1991 and was released on bail in January 1997.

He had over 33 cases filed against him. Ershad was convicted in two cases and acquitted and discharged in 25 cases during the BNP and AL tenures in power.

General Manzoor Murder case and a graft case against him were pending with courts. All proceedings of four other cases were stayed by the High Court on different dates.

While in jail, Ershad took part in the national elections of 1991 and 1996 and won all five constituencies he vied from. In 1996, Ershad extended support to the AL to form a coalition government.

Seoul considers duty-free access

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the first to invest in the RMG sector in Bangladesh during her first term in 1996-2001, Hasina said Korea may invest in "Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar", which has the most potential as an investment hub for investors under the G2G and PPP models.

She urged South Korea to import woven garments, pharmaceuticals, knitwear, jute and jute products, leather and leather goods, frozen food and ceramic items from Bangladesh.

On the Rohingya issue, the Korean team highly appreciated Bangladesh for giving shelter to the forcibly-displaced people. They said they would do anything they could over the issue, Ihsanul said.

Noting Bangladesh's trade potential, the Korean team members said there were huge investment opportunities here.

They said Korea wanted to cooperate with Bangladesh in the energy, ICT and defence sectors.

On his arrival at the PMO at 4:20pm, the South Korean PM was received by Hasina at the Tiger gate and then the two leaders moved to the meeting room.

Both PMs had a private conversation before the official talks.

After the talks, three instruments were signed between Dhaka and Seoul. Lee Nak-yeon arrived here on Saturday afternoon on a three-day official visit.

He is scheduled to leave Dhaka at

In 2000, Ershad was sentenced in a corruption case and was released on bail in April 9, 2001. He could not run in the 2001 elections.

He was elected lawmakers in 2008, 2014, and 2018.

Ershad also faced criticism for having relationships with several women.

His marriage to Bidisha in 2000 ended in divorce in 2005. He had made her party presidium member.

In April 2005, police arrested Bidisha as Ershad charged his second wife with cheating and theft. Newspapers were flooded with reports that the arrest was a bid of the then BNP-led government to put pressure on Jatiya Party to join their camp in the next general election.

Ershad has a son with Bidisha.

In 2006, he went into hiding following pressure from the then ruling BNP to join its alliance. In December that year, he reappeared at a Paltan Maidan rally organised by the AL, and announced his decision to join the AL-led alliance.

In June 2007 Ershad left the party chief post for about a year as part of his strategy to deal with the pressure from then military backed interim government.

Ershad stayed with the AL-led grand alliance to contest the national election in 2008 and when another parliamentary election was in the offing five years later, he became the centre piece of a long-drawn political drama. He flip-flopped several times over running in the January 5, 2014, polls.

Announcing that the JP would not take part in the polls, he had asked



his party's candidates to withdraw. However, a section of JP leaders led by Raushon decided to run. The BNP-led alliance and most other opposition parties boycotted that election.

More confusions and rumours followed when he was taken to the CMH from his Baridhara home less than a month before the polls. Ershad was elected lawmaker in the polls as his candidature was not withdrawn.

From the hospital, where he had been staying for unknown illness, Ershad went directly to the Bangabhaban to attend the oath-taking ceremony of the prime minister and the cabinet members of the new government on January 12, 2014.

From the Bangabhaban, Ershad went home as special envoy to the prime minister with the status of a minister. Three of his party men were inducted into the council of ministers. Raushon was made opposition leader.

The Jatiya Party faced huge criticism as the party was in the opposition bench and in the cabinet at the same time between 2014 and 2018.

Ershad once again joined the December 30, 2018, national election as alliance partner of the AL.

Party leaders found Ershad, with his record of playing mysterious roles, unreachable for several days in mid-November, 2018, an important time

ahead of the general election.

In the first week of December 2018, Ershad removed Ruhul Amin Hawlader from the secretary general's post and replaced him with Moshirur Rahman Ranga.

In April 10, 2014, Ershad had ousted Hawlader from the post, which he had been holding since 2002, and appointed Ziauddin Ahmed Bablu to the post in recognition of his "significant role" in the party.

Around three years later, Ershad removed Bablu for "negligence" and reinstated Hawlader.

Ershad latest political was after the 2018 election.

On January 4, just a day after the JP Parliamentary Party decided to join the Awami League-led grand alliance government, Ershad decided that his party would be in the opposition bench.

He declared himself as the Leader of the Opposition and made his younger brother GM Quader Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Ershad made Quader the party's acting chairman on January 17. He, in dramatic move, relieved Quader from the post on March 22.

On April 4, Ershad reinstated Quader to the co-chairman post and made him acting party chief in his absence.

On April 5, he again removed Quader from the post of Deputy Leader of the Opposition and appointed Raushan in his place.

On April 6, suffering from serious physical ailments, Ershad donated his all movable and immovable properties to a trust, in which his wife and brother were absent.

Ershad died at Combined Military Hospital at 7:45am yesterday. He was 89.

He had been suffering from various ailments including infection to his lungs and kidneys. Ershad was admitted to CMH on June 26 and was kept at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). His condition later deteriorated.

He will be buried with state honours on Tuesday, under supervision of the Army, Inter Service Public Relations (ISPR) said.

The first namaz-e-janaza of Ershad was held after Johr prayers yesterday at Dhaka Cantonment's Central Mosque.

Almost all top leaders of JP including its acting chairman and Ershad's brother GM Quader, secretary general Moshirur Rahman Ranga, Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Md Atiqul Islam and Workers' President Party Rashed Khan Menon, top army officials as well as activists of different levels and people from all strata joined the janaza.

His second namaz-e-janaza will be held at the South Plaza of Jatiya Sangsad at 10:30am today. Following that, his body will be kept at the party's central office located in city's Kakrail area from noon to 3:00pm for public.

Ershad's body will be kept at the CMH mortuary following his third namaz-e-janaza at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque after Asr prayers.

A pall of gloom has descended over admirers and followers of Ershad following the death as the death news spread. President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir mourned Ershad's death and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul. On Tuesday morning, his body will be flown to his ancestral home in Rangpur where his last namaz-e-janaza will be held at 10:30am on Eidgah ground.

Later, his body will be brought back to Dhaka for burial at the Banani army graveyard after Johr prayers.

Meanwhile, local leaders of Jatiya Party in Rangpur have urged the party top leaders to bury their party chief HM Ershad at his hometown Rangpur instead of Dhaka, from a press conference held at the city's Central Road's party office.

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen will see him off at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

The South Korean PM will then visit Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Qatar as part of his four-nation tour from July 13-21.

DHAKA, SEOUL SIGN 3 INSTRUMENTS

Bangladesh and South Korea signed three instruments on strengthening cooperation in the areas of investment, culture and diplomatic training.

The instruments were inked after the official talks between the two countries at the PMO.

Hasina and her South Korean counterpart Lee Nak-yeon witnessed the signing ceremony.

The instruments are a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) and Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA), a document on cultural exchange programmes between Bangladesh and South Korea for 2019-2023, and an MoU on cooperation between the Korea National Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, South Korea and the Foreign Service Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh.

BIDA Executive Chairman Kazi M Aminul Islam and KOTRA Chief Executive Officer Kwon Pyung-oh signed the first instrument on behalf of their respective sides, while Cultural Affairs Secretary in-charge Dr Md Abu Hena

Mostofa Kamal and Vice Foreign Minister of South Korea Lee Tae Ho inked the second instrument.

Principal of Foreign Service Academy Syed Masud Mahmood Khundoker and the vice foreign minister of South Korea signed the third instrument on behalf of their respective sides.

KOREAN PM PAYS TRIBUTE TO LIBERATION WAR MARTYRS

South Korean Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon paid tribute to Liberation War martyrs by placing wreaths at the National Mausoleum yesterday morning.

A contingent drawn from the army, navy and air force presented a guard of honour to him.

Later, the South Korean PM signed the visitors' book and planted a sapling.

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque, Housing and Public Works Minister SM Rezaul Karim, Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury and State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Dr Md Enamur Rahman received Lee Nak-yeon upon his arrival at the National Mausoleum.

The Korean Prime Minister visited Youngone Hi-tech Sportswear in Savar EPZ and the National Institute of Advanced Nursing Education and Research at Mugdopara in the city.

He will pay homage to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in the capital's Dhanmondi today.