

BSF kills 74 Bangladeshis since '71

By Staff Correspondent

Seventy four Bangladeshis citizens were killed and another 205 were injured in firing by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) on 149 occasions since the independence of the country, according to the Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury.

Replying to questions in the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) Monday, the Home Minister gave different numbers of Bangladeshis nationals killed by the BSF in 1991.

He told the House that 22 persons were shot dead by the BSF while replying to the question of Rahmat Ali of the Awami League. However, he put the figure at 15 while replying to a question of Kazi Abdul Rashid of the same party.

According to the list, no firing by the BSF occurred till 1977. A total of 45 persons were killed and 180 injured during the Ershad regime from 1982 to 1990. From 1978 to 1981, the BSF killed seven Bangladeshis and injured seven others. The first shooting by the BSF took place in 1978 when only one person was injured.

UNHCR

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and Relief today, is likely to brief the heads of Foreign Missions and International organizations about the move to be taken by UNHCR.

Meanwhile, UNHCR is providing transports to ferry refugees from the border areas who became stranded because of recent transport strike, the source said.

The source said a two-member technical staff of UNHCR was due to arrive in Dhaka last night to work on accommodation and sanitation.

Sadako Ogata, the high commissioner of the UNHCR, who was deeply concerned about the tragic condition of the refugees, had already allocated 100,000 US dollars as emergency fund for urgently needed supplies. She expressed her gratitude to Bangladesh for its generosity towards the refugees, a cable sent to Dhaka office of UNHCR office said.

UNB adds: Quoting a Foreign office spokesman, the number of refugees is increasing everyday as the influx of the Rohingya Muslims from the Arakan province of Myanmar into Bangladesh continued.

An estimated 60 thousand Muslims fled Myanmar to Bangladesh to escape the social, political and racial persecution unleashed on them by the Myanmar military regime. The unofficial figure is more than one lakh.

Replying to a question, the spokesman said Bangladesh has kept open dialogue with Myanmar to bring about a peaceful settlement of the problem.



Students of the Chittagong Hill Tracts held a rally in city yesterday to press for their 5-point demand. They also submitted a memo to the Speaker. —Star photo

Furore over bill

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anonymity, also echoed the words of Nazmul Huda. But one of them confided, if the Opposition wants amendments will be made.

Briefing the newsmen Sheikh Hasina said 'it is worst than the Special Powers Act of 1974... it is most unfortunate.'

She blamed that the government was promoting the terrorists. If the government was sincere, terrorists could be tackled under the existing laws, she added.

Sheikh Hasina said the killers of Dr. Milton were still in BNP even the killers of Badal were not being arrested. She said the government-controlled electronic media would propagate that 'we (opposition) do not want to curb terrorism. It is unfair and by using the title of the bill a dirty game will be played.'

Expressing dismay at the attempt to introduce the bill Rashid Khan Menon told The Daily Star that it was 'not necessary'. He expressed the hope that once sent to the special committee 'differences would be ironed out.'

Terming the bill a black law, Suranjit Sen Gupta said it negates the spirit of the Joint Declaration of the Three Alliances. He said that the declaration had promised people rule of law but such a bill would affect dispensation of justice.

Suranjit Sen Gupta said introduction of capital punishment is a return to barbarity.

Terming the bill redundant, Moudud Ahmed of Jatiya Party said it was contrary to the practice of human rights.

The bill

The bill says that the accused under the proposed law shall not be granted bail at any stage of investigation or trial unless and until the court finds sufficient evidence that the accused has not committed the offence.

It seeks to provide punishment ranging from a minimum seven-year imprisonment to death sentence for offences including:

- 1) Snatching or hijacking money.
- 2) Extortion by any means.
- 3) Forcing anyone to give or transfer money or wealth.
- 4) Hijacking anyone or confinement of anyone against his will or compelling or obstructing anyone to go anywhere.
- 5) Evicting anyone illegally from his immovable property.
- 6) Causing damage, destruction or creating obstruction in the functioning of any educational institutions, industrial unit, shops and business organisations, factory, government office, government or private organisation, institution, statutory body or institution, foreign mission, foreign or international organisation.
- 7) Causing damage to or obstructing the use of any place or worship, religious institution or place used by the people.
- 8) Causing damage to river craft, road transport or aeroplane or illegal obstruction of their

movement or forcing the drivers/owners to take to different routes illegally.

9) Causing disturbance in any meeting, rally or procession or illegal obstruction to holding them.

10) Obstruction in the movement of daily necessities of the people or for the functioning of the state.

11) Illegal obstruction in carrying out relief, rehabilitation or service-oriented activities by the government, organisation or individual.

12) Illegal interference in or obstruction to any construction or development activities.

13) Resorting to terrorism by using arms or explosives, murder, physical injuries, keeping hostage, destruction of property, torching and threatening, preparing or abetting others to all such terrorist acts.

Property of those found guilty in such terrorist activities may also be confiscated.

Offences under the proposed law will be tried by special tribunals consisting of Sessions Judge, Additional Sessions Judge and Assistant Sessions Judge located in each district headquarters.

Police, not below the rank of sub-inspector, or any other officer empowered by the government, can prosecute the offenders in the special tribunal for summary trial.

BNP EC meet

An extended meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party will be held on February 25 and 26.

Hasina

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aminations were, however, being conducted smoothly all over the country. He said besides the Government college teachers, about 60 per cent teachers of private colleges were taking part in the invigilation work.

He said the government had the best of intentions to resolve the problem and added that a three-member committee comprising the minister himself and the Finance and Home Ministers had been formed to consider the demands of the striking teachers.

The Minister pointed out that the government had already accepted many of their demands, excepting those which involved fresh monetary allocation.

He said the committee would meet as soon as the Finance Minister returns from his tour abroad. Sircar assured the Sangsad that the recommendations of the committee would be placed before the Standing Committee on Education Ministry of the Jatiya Sangsad.

The minister expressed the hope that a solution would be reached on the issue at the committee which comprised representatives of both the Treasury and opposition benches.

Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury said an additional amount of Taka 125 crore would be required to meet the demands of the striking teachers but to general the amount fresh taxes would have to be imposed.

Similarly, he said, Taka 520 crore would have to be slashed from the budget if the demands of the transport owners were met.

Referring to the opposition's support to the strike of the transport owners and teachers, the Home Minister said let the countrymen judge how such demands could be met.

More concession to Sarbaharamen soon

Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury Monday told the Jatiya Sangsad that many members of different outlawed groups and terrorists had surrendered along with their arms and ammunition, reports BSS.

'We are planning to give more concessions and cooperation to the members of the so-called Sarbahara party and other terrorist groups so that they surrender to the law enforcing agencies,' the Home Minister said while replying to Awami League member Salauddin Yusuf (Kulna).

Rising on a point of order, Yusuf drew the attention of the Home Minister to the terrorist activities in different parts of Southern Bengal particularly in his constituency.

He said one Imran Gazi was killed by the miscreants in broad day-light recently but no action has yet been taken in this regard, he alleged.

The Home Minister assured the member that government would take steps to round up the culprits responsible for killing Imran Gazi within the next 24 hours.

Another report said Chowdhury Monday reiterated that the government was determined to maintain law and order and check the incidents of crime.

Making a statement in the Jatiya Sangsad Monday evening, the Home Minister categorically said action would be taken against offenders under the existing laws of the country.

Chowdhury said apart from routine activities, special drives had been launched to keep law and order situation under control.

Giving a comparative picture of the incidents of crime with the neighbouring and surrounding countries of Bangladesh the Home Minister said the average incident of crime in Bangladesh was much less than that in those countries.

The Home Minister, however, admitted that the law and order situation had not improved satisfactorily and said incidents of terrorism and crime were still noticed in many places.

He said terrorism was not created in one day but it had been patronised during the nine-year autocratic rule.

Chowdhury said Hussain

The Midnight File

Israel's 'last meeting' in Washington

JERUSALEM, Feb 17: Foreign Minister David Levy said today Israel would attend Middle East peace talks in Washington next week but would insist on holding future negotiations closer to home. As far as Israel is concerned this is the last meeting in Washington, a parliamentary official quoted Levy as telling the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee, reports Reuter.

Water to farmlands of Bhutto turned off

ISLAMABAD, Feb 17: Pakistani provincial authorities have turned off irrigation water to the family lands of opposition leader Benazir Bhutto to try to intimidate her, opposition deputies told parliament today. Ten deputies made the complaint in the National Assembly (lower house), saying the authorities had stopped water to the farmland of Bhutto and her mother Nusrat in their home province of Sind since last December, reports Reuter.

Hasina joins BNP lady MPs over tea

By Staff Correspondent

Sheikh Hasina joined the lady MPs of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) over tea yesterday during Maghrib break of the House.

As she was going to her chamber she was stopped by Begum Shamsunnahar Ahsanullah and persuaded to visit the lobby of the women MPs and have tea with them. Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, MP and General Secretary of the Awami League also joined Sheikh Hasina.

Triple murder: Two sentenced to death

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Feb 17: Two persons were given death sentences and four others were sentenced to a year each in a triple murder case here. The court of the Third Additional sessions Judge today.

Mokhesur Rahman, Abdul Razzak and Nur Mohammad were murdered on July 6, 1991 in village Kumargachha under Muktagachha upazila. Ismail and Golam Mostafa were given death sentences by the Judge Rafiqul Islam.

DIRECTOR VACCINE RESEARCH LABORATORY

Gonoshasthaya Kendra has set up a modern, centrally airconditioned, well-equipped Vaccine Research and Microbiology Laboratory at its Savar Complex which will undertake quality testing of vaccines currently in use in Bangladesh, research for vaccine uptake in population and development of new vaccines. A Director is required who will be responsible for running the laboratory, developing research programmes and training of scientists. The Director will also have to participate in the teaching programme of GK's community based medical college. Non-smoking microbiologists and immunologists with post graduate qualifications and a minimum of 5 years laboratory experience may apply. Applicants must be prepared to undertake orientation and further training abroad. Salary negotiable. Eligible women applicants will be given preference. A hand written application including CV, 3 reference and 1 passport size photograph should reach Gonoshasthaya Kendra, p.o. Nayarhat, Dhaka 1350 by 29th February, 1992. Interviews will be held on 15th March, 1992.

Shaheed Day

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faith in Pakistani leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah and eventually spent more time attacking the progressive forces than strengthening the Language Movement.

Majlis leader Abul Kasem wrote in March 1948 that if only they could get the chance to present their demands to their 'Quaid-i-Azam' personally, then they would be able to convince him that 'Muslim League organisations were really the initiators of the movement and its main objective was to strengthen Pakistan, not weaken it'.

Kasem got his 'chance' to meet Jinnah on March 24, but the man from Karachi left Dhaka repeating that only Urdu should be the state language of Pakistan!

Matin and Ahmed explained the Majlis's failure to take the movement seriously even after Jinnah's intransigence.

'All Tamaddun-following Bengali-lovers quietly accepted Jinnah's undemocratic and audacious comments, and failed to utter a single word of protest, because a language-based state was not what they wanted. That is why they did not come forward with a minimum of activity in support of the movement'.

Not surprisingly then, when the movement regained steam in February, 1952 after nearly four years of smouldering, it was the more nationalist forces, such as the militant student community of the uni-

versity, medical college, engineering college etc, the Awami Muslim League, the Communist Party, the Juba League which began to play the decisive role.

Signs that things were moving towards a confrontation, in which the less radical elements in the All-Party State Language Action Committee (APSLAC) such as the Awami League, East Pakistan Muslim Chhatra League, Tamaddun Majlis etc were to be swept aside by the militant students, came on February 18, 1952.

According to Badruddin Umar, 'East Bengal's Language Movement,' a young Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) officer named S H Goreshti was made the magistrate of Dhaka in place of the elderly and more sober Halder, at the instruction of East Pakistan chief secretary Aziz Ahmed.

According to Umar, the then provincial secretary of the Muslim League, Mohan Miah, regarded Goreshti as a hot-headed officer who could not work tactfully in times of crisis.

Mohan Miah claimed to have warned chief minister Nurul Amin of the danger of making such a 'lax' officer magistrate of Dhaka with the general strike of Feb 21 only three days away.

Nurul Amin was unable or unwilling to reverse the decision taken by Aziz Ahmed, a non-Bengali who enjoyed the trust of Karachi.

Move to 'foil' teachers' confce slated

By Staff Correspondent

Various teachers' organisations in separate statements on Monday criticised the government for directing the district administrations to stop the coming of the primary teachers to Dhaka in a bid to foil the grand conference of the teachers.

Terming the measure undemocratic, the teacher leaders blasted the government for issuing indiscriminate transfer orders to the primary teachers and threatening them with stern action.

The teachers organisations also protested the arrest of Abul Kalam Azad, a leader of the Primary Teachers Association and demanded his immediate release.

CIS

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vided through Bangladesh companies or joint venture enterprises, he said.

The Bangladesh delegation comprising representatives from Energy and Foreign Affairs Ministries, Economic Relations Division, Export Promotion Bureau, Sonali Bank, different corporations and business community is carrying offers on exporting electrical cables, sanitary wares, transformers, toiletries, VCRS, medicine and computer accessories.

The team will also settle the fate of agreements made earlier with CIS other than Russia specially in the energy sector.

The Charge d'Affairs of Russia in Bangladesh, Igor A Saprykin, speaking on the occasion, termed the trip as timely and said the relationship between the two sides would grow stronger through it.

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