

'Govt won't allow law & order situation in CHT'

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday deplored the inhuman incident in Rangamati on Monday in which 28 wood-cutters were killed, reports BSS.

"We have to ascertain the nature of the motive behind such an unfortunate incident and put an end to this kind of situation," she said while talking to newsmen at the airport on the eve of her departure for Beijing.

The Prime Minister said when her government was trying to bring peace and stability in the country, the incident in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) was unfortunate.

Sheikh Hasina said her government would put its efforts to stop terrorism in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and take steps for the overall welfare of the inhabitants of the hills.

The Prime Minister expressed her heartfelt sympathy to the families of those killed on Monday and prayed for the peace of the departed souls.

She said she had spoken to the General Officer Commanding (GOC) Chittagong, administration and intelligence men and asked them to take appropriate action.

Sheikh Hasina said that a multi-party parliamentary committee had been formed to enquire into the tragedy and to submit its report in the shortest possible time.

The Prime Minister said steps were being taken so that none could create law and order situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts taking advantage of the incident.

She said after the formation of the new government conspiracies had started to undo progress.

Sheikh Hasina said that when her government was making efforts to improve economy, restore law and order and curb terrorism, some others were creating hindrances.

Referring to the BNP's allegation of rigging in the recent by-elections, Sheikh Hasina said they were complaining about rigging in all places but demanding re-election in two constituencies only.

She said that the by-elections were free and fair, and pointed out that the Awami League nominee in Khulna by-election was defeated by an independent candidate.

Sheikh Hasina expressed the hope that good sense would prevail upon the BNP which, she said, was trying to drive the country to confrontation.

She urged the BNP to honour the verdict of the people and not to hinder the development process.

Briefing newsmen on the Fund's annual report that was released worldwide yesterday, the official said it has undertaken a debt reduction initiative for 41 heavily debt-ridden low-income countries.

"Bangladesh is certainly not among them. Bangladesh is a low income country, but it is not considered as one of the heavily debt-burdened countries," said the official, who cannot be identified under the briefing rule.

He said the country has less than 600 million US dollars loan from IMF as a result of earlier borrowings, but its debt burden is considered within the sustainable limit because of its export growth and low level of debt servicing.

"Fortunately, Bangladesh

Khaleda shocked at killing of wood-cutters

BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia expressed deep shock at the killing of 28 wood-cutters in deep forest of Baghaichhari thana in Rangamati hill district, reports UNB.

"This is undoubtedly a massacre," Begum Zia said in a condolence message yesterday. She condemned and protested the brutal killing of innocent citizens by "terrorists".

The BNP chairperson expressed sympathy for the members of the bereaved families and prayed for the departed souls.

Begum Zia called upon the people of the hill districts to face the situation with patience and tolerance and not to lose temper in the situation.

"This is a proven truth that the path of peace is the best path. Violence and bloodshed cannot resolve any problem," she said in the statement.

Ministers visit CHT

Gano Parishad and many other political and non-political organisations have condemned the killings. A protest procession was brought out by the Gano Parishad.

Our Staff Correspondent adds: In Dhaka, General Secretary of Chittagong Hill Tracts Coordination and Peace Council, Shabinay Chakma in a statement demanded formation of a judicial inquiry committee to probe the incident.

Besides, Chittagong Hill Tracts Hill People's Council, the Jamaat-e-Islami, in separate press releases, condemned the killings.

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The mourning rally was also attended by among others, Dipankar Talukder, Awami League MP from Rangamati, Rabindra Lal Chakma, Chairman of Rangamati Hill District Local Government Council, IG of Police M Azizul Haq, Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong Sahawat Hossain and GOC of the 24 Infantry Division Maj Gen A Matin.

Moudud

Moudud, who was defeated in the by-election by the ruling party candidate with a narrow margin, said he had repeatedly appealed to the Election Commission for repolling in 12 centres of his constituency, but it didn't consider his allegations.

He told newsmen that the EC had assured him of hearing over his allegation and the hearing schedule was fixed on Thursday, but the commission at last published the gazette notification on Wednesday to confirm the victory of Awami League candidate.

"The Election Commission is not neutral. It worked for the interest of the political government," he said.

Moudud said he personally requested the Chief Election Commissioner to cancel voting in 12 centres. But he did not pay heed to his request and visited only three polling centres captured by Awami League activists.

M A Jinnah, who contested the by-election from Chittagong-1 (Mirsaral) constituency, made similar allegations at the press conference and called for restoring people's right to franchise for the sake of protecting the democracy.

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Dhaka's debt burden within sustainable limit: IMF

Bangladesh needs no immediate support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as its debt burden remains within the sustainable limit, an IMF official of Dhaka mission said, reports UNB.

Briefing newsmen on the Fund's annual report that was released worldwide yesterday, the official said it has undertaken a debt reduction initiative for 41 heavily debt-ridden low-income countries.

"Bangladesh is certainly not among them. Bangladesh is a low income country, but it is not considered as one of the heavily debt-burdened countries," said the official, who cannot be identified under the briefing rule.

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"Fortunately, Bangladesh



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Chinese counterpart Li Peng at an agreement signing ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing yesterday. Bangladesh Ambassador Mostafizur Rahman and Chinese Vice Minister for Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Madam Li Guo Hua signed the accords on behalf of their respective governments. — PID photo

Dhaka-Beijing talks

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Choudhury, Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Jawadul Karim and others.

On the Chinese side, Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, Vice Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuang, other ministers and senior officials concerned of the Chinese government were present.

During the talks, the Bangladesh delegation felt that there should be increased cooperation in various fields including investments in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh would welcome Chinese investments in joint ventures like agro-based industries. "If we can develop agro-based industry in our country like China, the rural migration to cities will lessen," Sheikh Hasina said.

Sheikh Hasina said Bangladesh would welcome China's infrastructural help to develop technology in Bangladesh's agriculture sector including livestock and fisheries.

Referring to the four agreements signed today between Bangladesh and China, Premier Li Peng observed that these agreements would add a new chapter in the existing bilateral relations between the two countries.

He also said that his government would study on how to make the present cooperation between the two countries cemented in the coming years.

He showed his keen interest on the poverty alleviation programme undertaken by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government and said they had also brought changes in their economic programmes over the last 20 years.

"We are now progressing with socialist economic policy," he said adding that they wanted one-China policy.

Li Peng also said that the Chinese government believed in good relations with neighbouring countries and described Bangladesh as a good neighbouring country.

10 hurt as Ansars, workers clash at Raozan

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 12: At least 10 persons were injured in a clash between Ansars and workers at the Raozan 210 megawatt power plant premises this afternoon, police and local sources said.

The injured were admitted to hospital.

Police said, the clash started at 1:30 pm when Ansars challenged some workers who were allegedly taking away construction materials from the site.

Ansars opened fire to disperse the unruly workers. The situation came under control after an armed police battalion went to the place.

4 accords

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Bangladesh Ambassador to China Mustafizur Rahman signed the agreements on behalf of Bangladesh while Chinese Vice-Minister for Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Madam Li Guo Hua signed the first three agreements on behalf of China and the agreement regarding double taxation was signed by Chinese Commissioner of Taxation.

Senior Chinese leaders and members of the entourage of the Bangladesh Prime Minister were present at the signing ceremony.

NPWF team meets Prof Abu Sayeed

A delegation of Bangladesh Newspapers Press Workers Federation met State Minister for Information Professor Abu Sayeed at his office yesterday, reports BSS.

The delegation led by Mosharraf Hossain, President and Bazlur Rahman Milani, General Secretary of the Federation, appraised the minister various problems of the newspaper press workers.

The state minister said the present government was aware and conscious about the professional problems being faced by those connected with the newspaper industry. He sought all-out cooperation of the press workers for the proper development of newspaper industry.

Information Secretary Kazi Raquib Uddin was present on the occasion.

The delegation of the federation included vice presidents Wares Ali (Daily Ittefaq) and M Afaz Uddin (BSS), joint secretary general Rafiqul Alam (Dainik Bangla), treasurer M Khalilur Rahman (Bangladesh Observer) and executive members Golam Sarwar Azad (Bangladesh Times), M Mashuk Ahmed (Bangladesh Times), M Mozammel Huq (Bangladesh Times), M Golam Mowla (Dainik Bangla), Jamal Uddin (Dainik Janata), M Abul Hashem (The Daily Star), and Mir Iqbal Hossain (Dainik Dinkal).

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The member of the team, who arrived in Bagerhat on September 8 from Dhaka, also collected the samples of nail, hair and skin of some patients for tests in India as there is no laboratory in Bangladesh for such test.

The leader of the NIPSOM team, Dr Wadud Khan, when contacted, alleged that the Civil Surgeon of Bagerhat did not cooperate with him in giving necessary information about the presence of arsenic in underground water in some areas of Bagerhat district.

Meanwhile, the number of people being attacked by arsenic pollution is gradually increasing in Bagerhat district, said a member of the NIPSOM team.

Arrested DCC commissioner remanded

By Staff Correspondent

The arrested ward commissioner Monwar Hossain alias Dipzol of Mirpur was taken on two days' remand yesterday.

The Detective Branch (DB) police produced Dipzol before the Metropolitan Magistrate Court yesterday afternoon and prayed for 10 days remand. The court granted two days.

Dipzol, aged about 30, was arrested from Noornagar area under Mirpur thana Wednesday morning. He is an accused in several cases filed with Mirpur and Savar thanas, police said.

By-polls to Habiganj-2 on Oct 15

The by-election to Jatiya Sangsad seat-239, Habiganj-2, will be held on October 15, according to the schedule announced by the Election Commission here yesterday, reports BSS.

The seat fell vacant following the death of Sharifuddin Ahmed of Awami League.

As per the schedule, September 16 is the last date for filing nomination papers. The scrutiny of the nomination papers will take place on September 17 while the last date for withdrawal of candidature is September 23.

After the withdrawal of candidature, the returning officer will distribute election symbols. All rules and regulations, including the code of conduct for general election, will be applicable in the by-election.

Faridpur-Madaripur group leader of BCL arrested

By DU Correspondent

Detective Police arrested Tamizuddin Tami, a leader of the Faridpur-Madaripur group of the Bangladesh Chhatra League, in the city yesterday.

He was taken into custody while entering the Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University through the South gate at about 12 noon.

Police said, Tami and his associates under the banner of the Chhatra League let loose a reign of terror in the University area. Tami was staying in the BCL-dominated halls although he was not a student of Dhaka University, police sources said.

Meanwhile, the Vice Chancellor of the university at a meeting on Wednesday issued a 72-hour ultimatum to the Chhatra Dal and the Chhatra League to prepare the lists of their "problem creating" workers.

Housewife killed

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Sept 12: A young housewife was allegedly killed at Enayetnagar under Shiddhirganj thana last night.

According to police, Ambia Khatun, the first wife of Abdul Mannan, a labour leader of Gabtali bus station, killed Rahima Begum, 23, the second wife of her husband.

Mannan married Rahima, a cousin of Ambia, only one and a half month ago and lived with her separately at Enayetnagar. His first wife whom he married eleven years ago, used to live at Savar.

Ambia came to Shiddhirganj last night and wanted Tk 200 from her husband. But he refused to give the money and left the house for work. Later at night, Ambia attacked Rahima with a sharp knife. Ambia left the place after the killing.

Mannan did not return to his house till the writing of this report tonight. The body was sent to the Narayanganj General Hospital for autopsy.

Flood situation in Kushtia still unchanged

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Sept 12: The overall flood situation in Kushtia district remains unchanged. The river Ganges was still flowing 2 centimetres above the danger mark at the Hardinge bridge point. Meanwhile, water borne diseases like diarrhoea and dysentery have broken out in an epidemic form in the affected areas. The affected people are suffering for want of medicines and other medical aid.

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Li Peng to visit

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Later, the Chinese Premier tonight hosted a dinner in honour of Sheikh Hasina at the Western Hall of the Great Hall of the People.

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KHULNA, Sept 12: A seven-member team of NIPSOM has collected the samples of water of one hundred shallow and deep tubewells in Fakirchand Rampal thanas of Bagerhat district to determine the proportion of arsenic. Two persons — Anil Das and Shyamal Das — have died after drinking tubewell water contaminated with arsenic.

The member of the team, who arrived in Bagerhat on September 8 from Dhaka, also collected the samples of nail, hair and skin of some patients for tests in India as there is no laboratory in Bangladesh for such test.

The leader of the NIPSOM team, Dr Wadud Khan, when contacted, alleged that the Civil Surgeon of Bagerhat did not cooperate with him in giving necessary information about the presence of arsenic in underground water in some areas of Bagerhat district.

Meanwhile, the number of people being attacked by arsenic pollution is gradually increasing in Bagerhat district, said a member of the NIPSOM team.

4 accords

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Members of the delegation accompanying Sheikh Hasina, Madam Li Pang, ministers and senior officials of the Chinese government attended the dinner.

The agreements are: 30 million yuan Chinese grant, 100 million yuan Chinese soft loan for Bangladesh, promotion and protection of each other's investment agreements and avoidance of double taxation.

Bangladesh Ambassador to China Mustafizur Rahman signed the agreements on behalf of Bangladesh while Chinese Vice-Minister for Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Madam Li Guo Hua signed the first three agreements on behalf of China and the agreement regarding double taxation was signed by Chinese Commissioner of Taxation.

Senior Chinese leaders and members of the entourage of the Bangladesh Prime Minister were present at the signing ceremony.

NPWF team meets Prof Abu Sayeed

A delegation of Bangladesh Newspapers Press Workers Federation met State Minister for Information Professor Abu Sayeed at his office yesterday, reports BSS.

The delegation led by Mosharraf Hossain, President and Bazlur Rahman Milani, General Secretary of the Federation, appraised the minister various problems of the newspaper press workers.

The state minister said the present government was aware and conscious about the professional problems being faced by those connected with the newspaper industry. He sought all-out cooperation of the press workers for the proper development of newspaper industry.

Information Secretary Kazi Raquib Uddin was present on the occasion.

The delegation of the federation included vice presidents Wares Ali (Daily Ittefaq) and M Afaz Uddin (BSS), joint secretary general Rafiqul Alam (Dainik Bangla), treasurer M Khalilur Rahman (Bangladesh Observer) and executive members Golam Sarwar Azad (Bangladesh Times), M Mashuk Ahmed (Bangladesh Times), M Mozammel Huq (Bangladesh Times), M Golam Mowla (Dainik Bangla), Jamal Uddin (Dainik Janata), M Abul Hashem (The Daily Star), and Mir Iqbal Hossain (Dainik Dinkal).

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