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TO INDIA

A grief-stricken relative of one of the four persons killed in firing by Ansars at Sadhpur village in Savar.

— Star photo

13 Ansars taken to thana

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clash with villagers at Sadhpur, six km off Savar thana, Friday morning. The Ansars were deployed in the village at 100-acre plot reportedly owned by Partex Real Estate Ltd, a sister organisation of Partex Group.

The girl, killed in the violence, came from Singair in Manikganj to a relative's house in Sadhpur. She got married a couple of months ago and her husband was abroad, said some in the village.

Some local people who claimed to have witnessed Friday's incident, said that the Ansar personnel at the camp opened fire as the villagers gathered near the camp to protest the 'activities of an Awami who made indecent comments to a young girl. The girl was collecting dry leaves from under a tree near the camp.

The villagers became more agitated and wanted to vent their anger against the Ansars and the guards posted there by the Partex Real Estate Ltd as they were being resisted from going to the plot of land for last couple of weeks, according to some villagers residing near the camp.

The Ansar Adjutant of Dhaka district Nurul Karim, however, told the correspondent, that according to their primary investigation, a section of villagers started gathering near the camp from 10 in the morning on Friday as there was a rumour that people from Partex Group would come to the village on that day and evict the villagers residing on the plot.

Later, they started chasing Ansars at small outposts around the camp. More than 100 people then attacked the camp, hit the Ansars with sticks and sharp instruments and ransacked their rooms.

At one stage, the mob tried to snatch firearms from the Ansars. The Ansars then chased the mob and opened fire to save themselves and the arms and ammunition, added the Ansar official.

Besides, some officials of different law enforcing agencies and others concerned did not rule out involvement of a vested quarter in creating different problems as regards the land owned by Partex Real Estate.

Partex grabbed our land which we inherited from our fathers, grandfathers," said Zai- ul-Abedin, 65, a villager.

"For years, we are growing vegetables and residing there."

said a young man of the village.

Two-year-old Alamgir, only child of Mojibor Rahman Mollah, one of the four persons killed, could not understand what was going on around as his mother, Jahana, could not stop crying since Friday night.

More than 100 people and families who were the real owners of the land claimed by the Partex Group, said Md Shamsuddin, chairman of Bongaon Union Parishad. Sadhpur village is under this union.

Shamsuddin added that he had heard about a trouble between villagers and the Partex Group since January. A couple of days before the Eid-ul-Fitr, in the first week of February, the Ansar camp was set up at the initiative of Partex Group and the villagers were asked not to use the land.

He also said that they held a meeting with the local MP to solve the problem while a case was also lodged in this regard.

Meanwhile, chairman of Partex Group M A Hashem said that they had purchased the land in Sadhpur completing all formalities and were planning to set up there a composite textile mill for which they would have to spend about Tk 246 crore.

"If there was any problem about the land, we could not have set up Ansar camp there," said Hashem over telephone.

The Ansar authorities after verifying the relevant documents approved deployment of Ansars there "for the security of our land," he said.

Iranian quake

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water buffaloes and sheep could be seen buried under the rubble. A donkey brayed from a collapsed stable, but villagers said they could do nothing without bulldozers.

"We have lost everything. Only 20 people have survived out of a population of 85," said Ali Hatami, who lives in the capital Tehran and drove all night to see his family.

The villagers, most of them farmers, said they were inside their houses when the earthquake struck.

"I couldn't get my balance for three minutes because the ground was shaking so badly," said Parviz Moosazadeh, an iron-monger in Sarain.

"I got out of the door just before my house collapsed."

PM's directive

From Page 1

to meet the demand of North Bengal.

In this regard, she said on completion of the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge, rapid industrialisation process would be started in the northern half of the country.

Export Processing Zone will also be set up for rapid industrialisation in the area.

Mentioning the liberalisation of trade and commerce, the PM said this would also accelerate the industrialisation process, but, she noted, without ensuring power none of the things can happen.

The local and foreign investors who are eager to invest in the country will lose their interest if they do not get power," said the Prime Minister directing officials to generate power to facilitate the investors and the industrialisation process.

Turning to the irrigation of paddy crops in the rural areas, she wanted to know what measures the ministry had taken to ensure uninterrupted power and diesel supply there.

The meeting was told that the ministry had taken steps to supply adequate diesel. Farmers have been urged to operate their pumps at night to get undisturbed power supply.

Referring to the expansion of the Rural Electrification Board (REB) network, the PM said only the extension of line is not enough, supply of power should be ensured.

State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Principal Secretary to the PM, Cabinet Secretary, Energy Secretary and other officials were present in the meeting.

World Bank

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that all information available from official and business sources, such as importers' and VAT registration list and land records, could be exploited to identify new tax payers, it added.

The existing supplementary duty rates should be examined with a view to ensuring that the costs of negative externalities are passed on to the users. Higher supplementary duties for some items would be justified also as a way of recovering user fees as in the case of vehicles and petroleum products, the WB suggested.

The existing income tax and VAT exemptions and loopholes, including tax holidays, should be reexamined and curtailed or withdrawn, while further reductions in income tax rates could be considered, the WB report said.

People wearing black coats marched around the court premises before the accused were brought. They chanted slogans demanding immediate execution of the accused. Similar procession was brought out as the accused were escorted into the

The Daily Star

Separation of judiciary

JS decision on bill soon: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Parliament would soon take decision about the bill seeking separation of the judiciary to the rule of law in the country, reports UNB.

"Judiciary system of a country speaks of its progress and civilisation. The rule of law is an imperative to run a modern welfare state," she said while inaugurating the Judicial Administration Training Institute and Judicial Administration Training Course for Assistant Judges.

She said her government is keen to make the country's judicial system dynamic and up-to-date as it is determined to separate the judiciary from the executive.

The Prime Minister told the function at the old High Court building that a Task Force had been constituted to implement a project aimed at modernising the judicial system and amending the old laws in line with the policy of free market economy.

She hoped that a radical change in the judicial system

Hasina asks partymen

Make national council a success

From Govinda Shil

Bogra, Mar 1: Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman said here today the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge would become an 'international bridge' soon after its completion in the middle of next year.

"It will be a gateway to Asia and Europe," Rahman said at the Rural Development Academy. He was inaugurating a three-day regional workshop on the Northwest Area Development Study, jointly organised by the Ministry of Planning and the Asian Development Bank.

The inaugural session was attended by the resident representative of the Asian Development Bank, Phanephon Horayangura, the Secretary of the Planning Division Shah Md Farid, the Divisional Commissioner of Rajshahi Division and the project director of the Northwest Area Development Study (NWADS).

Zillur Rahman said, it was Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Rahman who had felt the need for a bridge over the Jamuna river for developing the northern districts by connecting the region with the rest of the country through easy and speedy communication.

He hoped the Jamuna Bridge would accelerate the economic growth of the region and ensure equal development in the eastern and the western regions of the country.

The ADB representative said 25 project proposals would be sent to the donor countries and agencies for financing after the end of the workshop.

The Planning Secretary said, the projects would be included in the next 'Five-Year-Plan' for implementation.

AL-BNP leaders

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had backed out later.

Without rejecting the BNP claim that the ruling party had agreed to a proportionate representation in the committees, the AL leaders informed Khan-daker Dewar, yesterday that they were rather interested to sort out with the BNP a set of questions. These included how the BNP was to effectively cooperate with the ruling party to smoothly run the parliament and its standing committees, meeting sources said.

In case of a failure to ensure a 'package deal' with the BNP, the AL would prefer to go by the precedence set up in the fifth Parliament in which the BNP was in the Treasury Bench, the AL leaders hinted. In the fifth Parliament, representation in the parliamentary committees were not distributed in proportion to the parliamentary strengths of the parties and groups.

The leaders, however, had agreed to meet again after they have discussions with their respective party chiefs, meeting sources told The Daily Star.

Tribal leaders

From Page 1

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Baluchistan

From Page 1

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The earthquake struck as people were sleeping and most of the dead were buried when their flimsy homes made of sunbaked mud collapsed.

Another report from Beijing says: A powerful earthquake jolted a far western Chinese county today, killing two people and injuring at least three others. The latest aftershock since two deadly quakes hit the area six weeks ago, state seismologists said.

The seven-point demand put forward by the refugee leaders to the Bangladeshi team include an end to the 'uneasy' situation in CHT and security for the refugees on their return.

The Bangladeshi delegation also visited the largest refugee camp at Takumbari in southern Tripura near the Bangladesh border, where at least 10,000 mainly Chakma refugees have been living since 1986.

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court room after their 20-minute stay there.

While being escorted out, the only woman accused in the case was seen being spitted at by a person wearing black coat.

Advocate Mahbubur Rahman, Supreme Court lawyer and a BNP MP and former minister in the Ershad regime opened the argument on behalf of the defence, seeking to know what business the court intended to transact on the day.

The prosecution side was represented by Serajul Huq, a senior lawyer of the Supreme Court, D.C. The lawyers argued mainly in English.

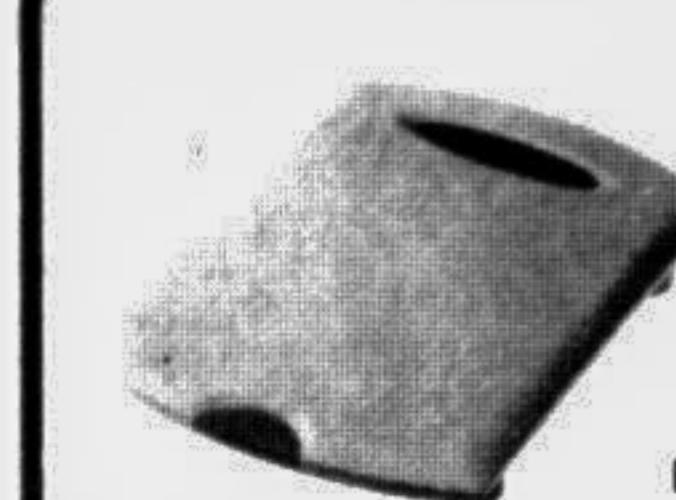
While Mahbubur Rahman started his arguments, some people wearing black coats on the prosecution side were heard as saying "Our people must not shout", apparently trying to calm the noisy colleagues. But their caution went unheeded and the proceedings went on amidst a noisy atmosphere.

The defence urged the CMM to go through the case records and orders on the case carefully before transferring it to the Sessions Judge's Court.

Until and unless all legal requirements are complied with and exhausted, the case cannot be treated as ready for trial, he argued.

Submitting before the court

that section 87 of the CrPC had not been complied with and exhausted, Rahman said most of the absconders were in the for-



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Let's make
things better

PHILIPS



A BNP city unit procession protesting the City Corporation's failure to eradicate mosquitoes yesterday.

— Star photo

BNP demonstrates

From Page 1

"If you are not getting necessary cooperation and support from the Awami League government, then come to the street and join us," he asked the mayor.

Bhuiyan condemned the government action in evicting slum dwellers and street hawkers without arranging their rehabilitation.

City BNP convenor Saded Hossain Khoka, who presided over the rally, demanded resignation of the mayor. He alleged that the mayor has become a rich man through corruption.

The rally was followed by a procession. The processionists carried large models of mosquitoes and chanted slogans demanding mayor's resignation.

Police intercepted the procession at Gulistan T&T crossing when it was advancing towards Nagar Bhaban, headquarters of Dhaka City Corporation. The processionists held another protest rally there.

Police was held at the BNP office yesterday.