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PRAN for health

Bar leaders slam attack on the Bench

Star Report
Top lawyers reacting to the home minister's statements on judiciary said yesterday that the minister abused his parliamentary privileges through his "uncalled for" and "unwarranted" remarks which could impact the judicial process in future.

In his statements made in parliament Monday, Home Minister Mohammad Nasim accused the higher courts of patronising the terrorists "by granting them bail indiscriminately".

The lawyers' reaction came in response to The Daily Star queries.

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I spoke for justice, not against court: Nasim

By Staff Correspondent

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim, facing sharp criticism for his remarks about the higher courts, told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday that what he said was not against courts but about dispensation of justice and sheltering of terrorists.

"I spoke for peace and against terrorism. I spoke for justice and against those protecting the terrorists. I shall continue speaking against whoever protects the terrorists," the minister said while referring to the High Court's granting of bail to Nurunnabi, an accused in the Udichi murder case. He is also an accused in three other murder cases.

Nasim further said that the accused did not turn up in the lower court for bail, nor he sought bail from inside the jail. He was granted bail as soon as he appeared before the High Court.

The minister went on, "Do they not read newspapers? Do they not live in this society? How could they release the accused arrested by law enforcing agency personnel risking their lives?"

In this connection, he said that everyone must be accountable to the people for one's deeds, no matter who one is. "If the prime minister and the elected representatives are accountable, then why should they not be?"

Nasim made the statement as he protested a remark by BNP chief and Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia.

The minister urged her to return to the House and contest what he said about peace and against terrorism. "If necessary, I will prove my remarks with papers and records."

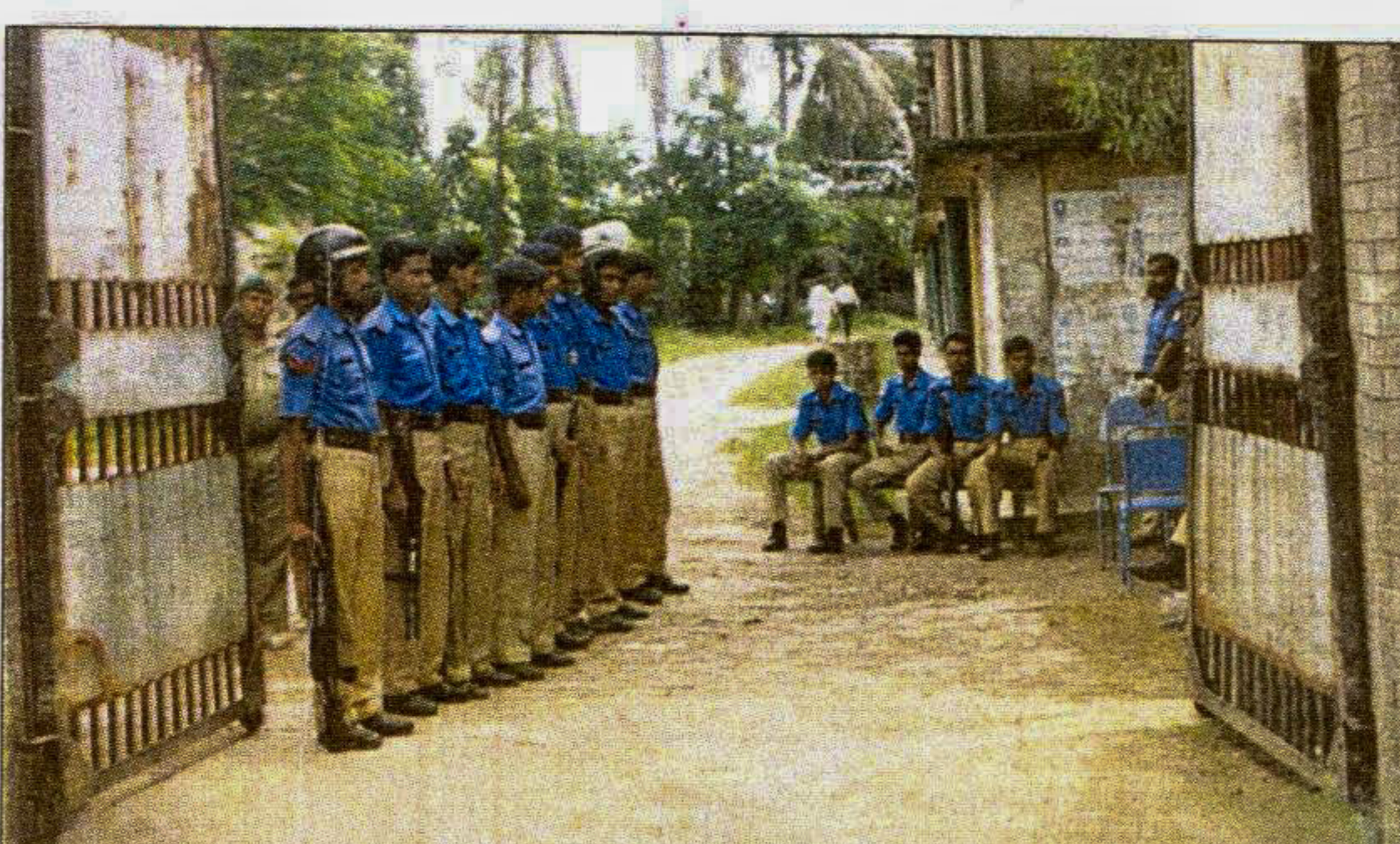
Addressing a public meeting in the city on Tuesday, the BNP chief said that the home minister, if he had the courage, should come out on the streets and say what he said in the parliament about the High Court.

"I don't need to learn from Khaleda Zia what to say on the streets and what in the parliament. If you (Khaleda) have the courage, contest my remark standing in the parliament," Nasim said. She had no right to stay away from the House and

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Fierce gunfight leaves 2 killed

Showdown by rival TUs at Chand Textiles



Police guarding the Chand Textiles Mills after fierce gunfight between two rival groups (top), a ransacked room of the mill colony.

By Staff Correspondent

Two persons were killed and at least thirty injured in a gunfight between two groups of workers at Chand Textile Mills at Shaymapur in the city yesterday morning.

Traffic movement on the Dhaka-Narayanganj road came to a halt for more than an hour as they traded gunshots, exploded bombs and clashed with lethal weapons for about one and a half hours, police and witnesses said. Many of the injured were passers-by.

The dead were identified as Nasir, 40, reportedly a former employee of the mill, and Salahuddin, 23, a pedestrian.

Of the injured, Kamal Srakar, a security guard of the mill and three pedestrians - Rashid, 35, Nizam, 21, Anis, 13 - were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). The rest were admitted to Narayanganj General Hospital, National Hospital in the city and other clinics, hospital sources added.

Witnesses said the clash was sequel to a long drawn rivalry between the two groups of mill workers, one led by Shahadat and the other by Lutfar. Three months ago, the Lutfar group bagged almost all the posts in a CBA election and drove some men of Shahadat group out of the mill, sources there said. Both the groups claim to be backed by ruling Awami League.

The mill authorities and local people alleged that police went to the spot about two hours though they were informed soon after the clash broke out. The mill authorities said, apprehending trouble, they repeatedly requested police authorities earlier to deploy force on the mill premises. But no step was taken.

Senior police officials of DMP Eastern Zone were not available for comment.

Witnesses said, over 50 people belonging to Shahadat group, equipped with firearms, sharp weapons, crackers, iron rods and lathis, arrived near the factory in boats through the Buriganga river at around 9 am. They got inside the premises through the backside of the mill

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Star Magazine

Excavating Mirpur: Killing Fields

The discovery of human skulls and bones as well as bullets and remnants of arms at Noori Mosque site in Mirpur recently, has been a shocking revelation. The evidence so far collected and examined by forensic experts, clearly suggests that the mosque site is one of many mass graves of victims of the Pak Army in '71. Many more revelations have emerged since the discovery, including how and why Zahir Raihan disappeared in January, 1972. Read this Friday's Star Weekend Magazine for details...

Mid-term review meeting from Sept 13

Donors concerned at worsening governance, law and order

By Inam Ahmed

Donors will meet here for a two-day mid-term review of the country's development agenda on September 13 with a grave concern over the worsening governance and law and order.

The deteriorating law and order has also made the donors worried about the smooth functioning of both development projects and private investments.

According to an official of one donor country, the development partners are very frustrated about the governance situation as there has been no improvement in public administration.

Out of 22 reform proposals sent to the Cabinet by the Public Administration Reform Commission, only three have been accepted and only one minor proposal implemented.

The review meeting will discuss the direct and indirect impacts of slum eviction on a number of areas including children's education, HIV and micro credit programmes.

On the other hand, there will be discussions on the current macro-economic situation, and the donors are finding that Bangladesh represents a "low base case" in this regard.

The slow export and industrial growth now reflects on a basic characteristics of the economy - lack of competitiveness in the global economy, donors say.

The increase in fiscal deficit and the ambitious non-tax revenue target for this fiscal year also figure in the meeting and IMF may suggest for additional measures in this respect.

They will suggest for a close watch on the country's external position although there is no immediate crisis looming.

Meanwhile, the local consultative group of the development partners met here Tuesday to decide on the agenda for discussion in the mid-term review.

According to sources, some donor officials are likely to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina separately to discuss the eviction issue.

The review meeting is a follow-up of the aid consortium meet held in Paris in April this year. The Tuesday's meeting also observed that there had been very little progress in various areas since the last annual meeting in Paris.

The review meeting will also want to know the result of a national assessment for Education for All by 2000.

They will also call for a thorough assessment of the arsenic problem, its magnitude and measures needed to tackle the impending disaster.

The donors will also call for transparency in spending, and the defence expenditure may also come up in this discussion.

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New Hopes for Peace in the Middle East

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No cases filed, no accuser found

10 alleged muggers lynched in Dhaka, Ctg in a month

By Shaikh Nazrul Islam

At least 10 people suspected as muggers were lynched in Dhaka and Chittagong in a month till September 3, police sources said.

Mob beating followed allegations of snatching of valuables and money from pedestrians. But in most of the incidents, it could not be found who made the allegation and no cases were filed.

In Dhaka, two alleged muggers were beaten to death by a mob near the south gate of Baitul Mukarram mosque on August 3. Identity of the victims aged about 30 could not be known.

Police said the incident took place when the two were mugging a pedestrian. But they could not trace the pedestrian and also failed to arrest any one in connection with the killings.

Another young man, beaten by a mob in Jurain area on August 12, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital the following day. According to police and witnesses, Abdul Rahman, 25, was suspected as a mugger and beaten on Jurain Medical Road.

The victim's father Abul Kalam lodged a case with Shyampur thana alleging that his son was killed by unidentified assailants while he was going to his (Rahman) sisters' residence.

Two other alleged muggers - Mintoo and Dulal - were lynched in North Jatrbari area on September 1.

Besides, a suspected mugger - Shaheen - was beaten to death on Hrishikesh Das Lane in the old city area on September 3.

His father Zahiruddin lodged a murder case with Sutrapur thana. He said that his son was mentally unsound and was a drug addict, but he was not a mugger.

In Chittagong, three young men died to mob beating at Hallsahar on August 6. Police identified two of the victims as Alamgir and Jahangir while the other remained unidentified.

Local people caught them when someone raised a hue and cry that they were dacoits. The mob took them to a local school ground, tied up their hands and legs and beat them to death.

Another man was lynched while allegedly trying to flee after snatching money from someone in old Chaktai area under Chandigan thana on August 30, the victim could not be identified.

191 EPI officials, staff not getting salary

By Naimul Haq

The officials and staff involved in the government's Extended Programme on Immunisation are not getting salary for the past two months, EPI sources said.

Of the 191 EPI officials and staff, 114 are posted at its headquarters in Dhaka and the rest are in districts.

"We have not received our salary since July and we had similar experience last year as well. There is no assurance from the government till now as to when it would disburse our salary. We are suffering badly," one official told this correspondent.

In this connection, another official pointed out that on completion of the five-year Fourth Population and Health Project (FPHP) in June last year, all its projects came under the Health and Population Sector Programme (HPSPP).

"The operation plans (OPs) under HPSPP have not yet been approved. Without OPs, funds for salary cannot be released from the finance ministry. It is not only EPI, a number of other development projects in the health sector are also hit by this problem," he said.

EPI is a development project funded by the government and donor agencies including the World Bank. Launched on the World Health Day on April 7, 1979, it is considered a 'successful preventive healthcare programme'. EPI manpower is also utilised on National Immunisation Days (NIDs), Sub-NIDs and for disease Surveillance of flaccid paralysis, measles and neonatal tetanus, he added.

To solve the problem faced by EPI officials and staff, a high-powered team had recommended bringing all of them under revenue budget, instead of development budget. The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) also endorsed it.

When contacted, high officials of the health ministry said since EPI's fourth phase is up to the year 2000, the transfer could not take place despite ECNEC's approval.

"When the fourth phase is over, EPI manpower and those of other development projects facing similar problems can be transferred," one official said.

EPI vaccination covers polio, measles, tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis and Bacillus Carimati Guirine (BCG).

The donors for EPI include Unicef, Japanese government, WHO, USAID, Rotary International, SIDA, CIDA, DFID, US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, SDC and Australian International Development Bureau.

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জেলা নির্বাচন অফিসার-৩ এর কার্যালয়

১০/১০, ইকবাল রোড, মোহাম্মদপুর

নং জেরনিংস-৩/ভোটারকার্ড/৮(৫)/৯৮-ছবি/৩২০

তারিখ: ০০-০৮-৯৯ইং/১৫-০৫-১৪০৬বাং

ভোটার আইডি কার্ড সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাইতেছে যে, জেলা নির্বাচন অফিস-৩, ঢাকা-এর আওতাধীন রমনা, তেজগাঁও, ধানমন্ডি, মোহাম্মদপুর, উত্তরা, গুলশান ও ক্যান্টনমেন্ট থানার যে সকল ভোটারগণ আইডি কার্ডের জন্য ছবি তুলিতে পারেন নাই, নিম্নবর্ণিত স্থায়ী ক্যাম্পসমূহে প্রতিদিন দুপুর ২.০০ ঘটিকা হইতে রাত্রি ৮.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত ছবি তোলা হইতেছে। শুক্রবার সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা হইতে রাত্রি ৮.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত ছবি তোলা হইতেছে। যাহারা ইতিপূর্বে ছবি তুলিয়াছেন তাহাদের পুনরায় ছবি তুলিবার প্রয়োজন নাই। ভোটারগণ ইচ্ছা করিলে স্ট্যান্ড সাইনবোর্ড (৩০ মিঃx২৪ মিঃ) এক কপি রবিন ছবি ক্যাম্পে জমা দিতে পারিবেন। স্থায়ী ক্যাম্পে ছবি তুলিবার এই কার্যক্রম আগামী ১৫-০৯-৯৯ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত চলিবে।

থানার নাম	স্থায়ী ক্যাম্পের নাম ও ঠিকানা	যাহাদের ছবি জেলা হইবে
মোহাম্মদপুর	৬/১, স্যার সৈয়দ রোড, থানা নির্বাচন অফিস	মোহাম্মদপুর থানার অবশিষ্ট সকল ভোটার।
তেজগাঁও	তেজগাঁও সরকারী পলিটেকনিক বালক উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়, ফার্মগেট	তেজগাঁও থানার সকল অবশিষ্ট সকল ভোটার।
ধানমন্ডি	ধানমন্ডি ১নং সরকারী প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়, কলাবাগান ২য় লেন	ধানমন্ডি থানার অবশিষ্ট সকল ভোটার।
রমনা	বোদেজা ঋতুন সরকারী প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়, বাংলা মটর	রমনা থানার অবশিষ্ট সকল ভোটার।
গুলশান	শাহজাদপুর সরকারী প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	গুলশান থানার অবশিষ্ট সকল ভোটার।
ক্যান্টনমেন্ট	মুসলিম মর্ডান একাডেমি	ক্যান্টনমেন্ট থানার অবশিষ্ট সকল ভোটার।
উত্তরা	নবাব হাবিবুল্লাহ আদর্শ উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়, আজমপুর	উত্তরা থানার অবশিষ্ট সকল ভোটার।

মোঃ শাহ আলম
জেলা নির্বাচন অফিসার
ঢাকা-৩ এবং রেজিষ্ট্রেশন অফিসার
ফোন-৯১১৩৪৯১

Agriculture Commission still sitting on its report

By Reaz Ahmad

Tenure extended again

The tenure of the Agriculture Commission has been extended once again on some grounds that do not seem logical, official sources said.

Now it has to complete its assignment by December this year.

The Commission finalised a report on development of agriculture in May and sought extension of its tenure on the plea of holding workshops for eliciting experts' views on its report.

Over four months have passed but no initiatives for holding of workshops are still in sight. The Commission is simply sitting on a very important report which deals with the future agricultural economy of the country," said a source involved in preparation of the report.

The Commission headed by the Prime Minister's Food and Agriculture Adviser AM Anisuzzaman was set up on November 9, 1996 with a mandate to submit a report on 'crop sector' within a year.

The others in the Commission are Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, Prof Anun Nishat, Dr SM Hasanuzzaman, Dr AMM Shawkat Ali, Dr Zahurul Karim, Shahidul Islam and Syed Ali Kabir.

Inclusion of non-crop sectors in its terms of reference later gave grounds for the Commission to take a longer a time for preparing the report. After two and a half years, it finalised a report in May but the agriculture ministry is still to get it," the source said.

"Now that the report is prepared but not disclosed or discussed, some policy decisions in agriculture sector taken recently were in sharp contrast with the Commission's recommendations," said a Commission member seeking anonymity.

In this connection, he referred to the government decision to hand over agricultural colleges to the education ministry and said, "We the members of the Commission are taken aback to see how our suggestion for keeping agriculture education under line ministry is being ignored."