

Lawyers urge action against terrorism, criminal activities

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Barrister Amirul Islam, convenor of Sammito Ainiabi Samonnoy Parishad yesterday strongly condemned recent activities by an "unholy clique" who are trying to destabilise the independence of the country and urged all concern to stand up to these forces.

Addressing a press conference at the end of the two-day conference of the parishad in the city he urged the authorities and law enforcing agencies to strongly deal with the crimes while expressing concern over the recent stop of violence in the name of religion and Fatwa.

Barrister Amirul Islam also condoled the death of police constable Badsha Miah and injury of others at the hands of fundamentalist terrorists and victims of train accidents and demanded compensation to their families.

BSS adds: In a declaration, adopted in the two-day long general meeting, the parishad said that certain identified quarters targeted the Supreme Court and Parliament to create a constitutional crisis on the eve of coming general elections.

On the same line, the defeated forces of 1971 including infamous

razzakers and al-badrs had taken to the street with all their madness killing people in the name of religion.

They urged the executive and the law enforcing agencies to take action against these criminal activities and terrorism with an iron hand.

Language movement hero Gaziul Huq, Sudhanshu Shekhar Haldar, Syed Ahmed, M A Salam Talukder, Syed Rezaur Rahman, Golam Arif Tipu and Abdullah Abu, among others, were present at the meeting.

The parishad noted with concern the audacity of declaration of death sentence against two High Court judges and calling them "murtad" by identified quarters under the shelter of the opposition alliance create of crisis involving the issue of the appointment of Supreme Court judges.

They said that the forces carrying out these nefarious activities and sabotages including killing of an on-duty policeman inside a mosque, uprooting train lines and killing people, giving death sentences to the judges of high seat of the judiciary were not the friends of the people. Their real identity is becoming clear to the people, they added.

Killing of marine turtles

FROM PAGE 12 reported killing of Ridley's at Himchari while those were hatching.

In early January, researchers found at least 25 dead Ridley's in about 200 square metres at Dublar Char island on the southern fringe of the Sundarbans coast.

The researchers led by Prof Anwarul Islam of the Dhaka University and comprising IUCN teams carried out the survey at Maranchar in Dublar Char during the fishing season at the end of December and in early January.

Their findings were startling. "All the carcasses were found on the sea beach and within 100 metres of fishermen's seasonal huts in the island. The main cause of death of these turtles was identified as incidental capture of the turtles during commercial fishing in the Bay", said a report by IUCN official AHM Ali Reza who was a member of the team.

"But they are subjected to death when trapped in fishing nets", the report said.

The fishermen in the coastal

waters of the Sundarbans use non-TED nets, in violation of international rules for protection of endangered marine turtles.

When fishermen come back to the coast and roll back the nets, they simply discard the dead turtles, most of which are Olive Ridley's, each weighing 45 to 70 kg.

The dead turtles were found either floating on the water near the fishermen's huts or simply abandoned on the beach, the report said.

Dr Ainun Nishat said the turtles come to Bangladesh coast travelling some 720 kms from the southwest to the southeast to lay eggs between December and March.

As these move to the coast, these get entangled in non-TED nets and die within one or one and a half hours due to suffocation", the report said.

The IUCN is planning to send a team again to the Sundarbans soon with booklets containing advice for fishermen not to kill turtles, to use nets having TED, save turtle eggs and nests from poachers and predators and to create public awareness.

Quarantined unto death?

FROM PAGE 1 Looking at his six-year-old daughter's picture hanging on the wall beside his bed, Woo said, "I wish I could see her again."

Woo was transferred to IDH on November 11, 1996 and was at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital from 14 to 31 October 1996 in the bed no 25 and ward no 11.

Tall and fat, the other victim, 19, Min Chaw (not his real name) who had been hospitalised at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital from 13 to 17 July 2000 was transferred to IDH on 20 July, 2000.

Chaw, an extremely jolly fellow, could not give details about his family or address, as he cannot speak either Bangla or Burmese.

The hospital doctors said both

the patients need treatment with expensive antibiotics and rich nutrition, but the government has no money to spend on them. The things they get from the hospital are a squalid room, poor diet and a little sympathy.

It is uncertain whether the government would ever take up the matter diplomatically. The charges the foreigners are supposed to face and how long are also not clear.

It is to be added here that a Thai AIDS patient, Kamfong, 38, died at the institute on October 10 last year after being admitted ten days back.

Another victim, a Bangladeshi national, Anwara, a 15-year old sex worker from Narayanganj was rehabilitated last year by CARE Bangladesh.

Contractor injured by miscreants dies at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A contractor, who was seriously injured by a gang of miscreants in the city's Demra area on Tuesday, succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Abu Sayeed, 25, son of Abdul Motalab of Dhalpur, Demra was beaten up by a gang of local miscreants led by Mamun in front of his residence.

He was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) on the day where he died yesterday morning.

A murder case was filed in Demra police accusing three persons. None, however, was arrested in connection with the murder till writing of this report last night.

Foreign aid

FROM PAGE 1 decisions are not based on any proper understanding of the working of the economy," he said.

Haider went on, "Recent developments suggest that the government and some of its agencies are trying for foreign assistance on relatively unfavourable terms compared to those the country has been receiving so far."

Professor Abul Barkat said every year black money amounting to Tk 30,000 crore is being generated and foreign aid is also linked with it.

Erratum

The name of Hira Lal Bala, Secretary, Disaster Management and Relief Ministry was inadvertently published as Azad Ruhul Amin in the Daily Star story "Govt plans what to do..." published in the front page of the daily on February 9. The error is regretted.

Hartal Tuesday

FROM PAGE 1 holding of a public meeting at local college ground there.

Chiefs and top ranking leaders, including the secretaries general of the four-party led by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will leave here for Brahmanbaria at 11 am today.

The meeting also discussed preparation for February 18 sit-in around the Secretariat. Sources said JP proposed to shift the programme, but BNP rejected it outright.

BNP leaders Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, M Morshed Khan, M Shamsul Islam, Anwar Zahid, Mirza Abbas and Sadeque Hossain Khoka, JP leaders Nazim Rahman Manjur, ABM Golam Mostafa, Mostafa Jamal Haider and Saifur Rahman, Jamaat leaders Ali Ahsan Mujahid, Abdul Qader Mollah and ATM Azharul Islam and Islami Oikya Jote leaders Moulana Mohiuddin and Ahmed Abdul Qader Bacchu attended the meeting.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the newly constructed Shooting Complex at the Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan (BKSP) premises at Savar yesterday.

All about boro huzur

FROM PAGE 1 run these institutions come from various donations. Boro huzur is now constructing a huge building to house the university.

Local people said boro huzur raises funds by tagging a symbolic price to any item and asking his audience to come forward and buy it. A source there said that people believe huzur's items on sale would not only bring them prosperity but also assure them a passage to heaven.

There are 162 government-affiliated madrassahs in the district where other subjects besides Arabic are also taught. These madrassahs are known as rivals of the kharizi madrassahs. Both types of madrassahs mushroomed over the last 20 years. But during the recent violent incidents in B'baria in which eight people were killed and hun-

dreds injured, the teachers and students of government madrassahs were learnt to have expressed solidarity with the kharizis.

Boro huzur first came to limelight about two years ago when he openly opposed NGO activities in B'baria. His followers foiled a grand NGO rally that was scheduled to be held at the town stadium in 1999.

Sources said that a section of his followers are closely involved with the Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ). During the recent incidents these political activists tried to use his name to attract support for the hartal and processions.

A local elderly person said that the entire madrassah network of Boro huzur has not only earned him "respectability" among thousands of devout parents but also put him in a

situation to command over thousands of young men studying in the madrassahs.

"In some kharizi madrassahs there are up to 500 students coming from poor, rural backgrounds. Without the kharizi madrassahs these children would probably grow up without any education whatsoever," said the elderly person.

Father of four sons and three daughters, boro huzur came to the Brahmanbaria town some 83 years ago as a madrassah teacher. He was born in Dashjana village under Bancharampur thana of the district.

While talking to a group of reporters at his residence on Thursday, boro huzur said he was not aware about any programme or hartal in Brahmanbaria or elsewhere in the country protesting arrest of religious leaders.

Newly constructed bridge

FROM PAGE 12 Tuesday last.

Traffic movement on Dhaka-Sylhet highway was suspended on January 31 when an overloaded container truck badly damaged the floating bridge. All heavy vehicles carrying goods and passengers were then diverted to an alternative road through Fenchuganj on their way to the capital, officials of the Roads and Highways Department (R&HD) said.

The engineers who repaired the damaged floating bridge however said it would not guarantee a 'risk-free' movement of passengers and goods. The concrete bridge must be repaired immediately, they stressed.

Local people have demanded replacement of the floating bridge and repair of the new bridge.

When contacted over telephone, Superintendent Engineer of R&HD (Sylhet Division) Mozammel Haq said, "Time has come for an early replacement of the 20-year old floating bridge. It was originally brought for use on the river Surma at Sylhet town when the permanent bridge on the river was being repaired in late 70s. Later it was shifted to Sadipur."

In Dhaka, R&HD officials told this correspondent that the Chief Engineer was getting repeated requests from Sylhet for a replacement of the floating bridge.

Additional Chief Engineer (Technical Service), of R&HD MA Sattar said, "We are trying hard to make the new bridge on the Kushiara operational. Necessary materials and equipment from Britain are likely to reach the country on

February 26." Mentionably, an expert team from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) had earlier identified 'design flaws' as the reasons for damage of the bridge built with British grant.

Malaysia signs defence accord with Pakistan

AFP, Islamabad

Malaysia on Saturday signed two agreements for the purchase of defence equipment from Pakistan, the official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) said.

The agreements came after Malaysian Defence Minister Najib Razak met with Pakistani military general Pervez Musharraf and discussed bilateral matters and defence cooperation.

A statement said "the agreements will strengthen the existing bilateral defence ties in the field of training and procurement."

It did not give details of the agreements inked by senior defence ministry officials of the two countries.

Earlier reports from Kuala Lumpur said Malaysia had agreed to buy missiles and other weapons worth 79.4 million ringgit (20.9 million dollars) from Pakistan.

The agreements relate to the purchases of an anti-tank weapon system and surface-to-air missiles, a Malaysian defence ministry statement carried by Bernama news agency said.

IOJ men used boro huzur's name to fan trouble

FROM PAGE 1 town.

Tension started mounting as police arrested two IOJ activists in a pre-emptive move on a rally.

The sadar thana of Brahmanbaria, situated near Jamia Islamia Yunusia, an Islamic university affiliated to 38 madrassahs and several thousand students with boro huzur as its principal, came under attack first. Within minutes, madrassah students started to throw brickbats on the security men at all spots.

Local administration gave two different versions on what had prompted law enforcers to open fire on the protesters.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Brahmanbaria Lutfur Rahman said that BDR first opened fire when one Major Nasim was hit in the head by a brickbat. He said seeing the officer bleeding profusely from his wounds, BDR men opened fire on the mob.

But Superintendent of Police (SP) Sarwar Alam Sarkar had a different story. He said that a lot of armed outsiders slipped into the processions and at one stage opened fire on the security men. He said when the security men were fired at they immediately retaliated with gunshots.

At the end of the carnage, eight people were dead and over 100,

including half a dozen security men. Sarkar said that on January 6, police fired 489 rounds from shotguns, 54 rounds from Chinese rifles and 20 rounds of bullets from machine guns. In addition, they lobbed a total of 43 tear gas cells. Most surprisingly BDR fired a total of only seven rounds.

Local people said that they had not witnessed anything like this since the War of Liberation.

"We could see how the police and the BDR were shooting down the protesters like birds. It was definitely a show of muscle power," said a young businessman.

Local people said that the IOJ called hartal bore a double significance in Brahmanbaria. Maulana Fazlul Haq Amini hailed from Brahmanbaria and had quite a few supporters in the area, particularly among some of the teachers and students of the Jamia Islamia Yunusia.

Sources said that boro huzur's radical opposition to NGO activities and the incidents of 1999, when NGO workers were attacked by his supporters and badly beaten up, drew more frantic activists into the latest spate of violence.

Among students and staff of the madrassahs and the Jamia, false juicy stories related to NGO activi-

ties are regularly circulated. A Jamia student showed this correspondent an academic certificate where the holder's mother's name was put first, instead of his father's. The student said that it was "unacceptable" in the eyes of his teachers.

"I have also heard that the NGOs were promoting 'live together' in their offices. The government is also trying to ban fatwa, which I think is against Islam," said the student.

Among the leaders of the Jamia, Sajedur Rahman, a teacher of Islamic thoughts admitted that there has been a "serious rift between the NGOs and the ulama-e-kiram, religious leaders of the area."

"The imam of our main mosque was the first person to declare Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman a martyr or a shaheed after he was killed in 1975," said Rahman.

About two kilometres away from the town centre, in the village of Bhajugarh boro huzur sat on a bed in his modest house. He said he did not know anything about who should have called a hartal. He said following arrests of Amini and Azizul Haq in Dhaka hundreds of people came to see him. But he sent them home and formed a 16-member committee to face the situation.

"I cannot move much due to old-

Docs urged to work sincerely for implementation of Nat'l Health Policy

UNB, Dhaka

Health Minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim yesterday called upon the doctors to work with sincerity and dedication for successful implementation of the National Health Policy.

He particularly advised the members of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) to work for the purpose with a view to reaching improved healthcare facilities to the doorsteps of the common people.

The minister was speaking as chief guest in a seminar on Implementation of National Health Policy organised by the BMA at its office.

Chaired by BMA president Prof Dr Rashid-e-Mahbub, the seminar was also addressed, among others, by BMA secretary general Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, Prof Moazzem Hossain and Dr Sharfuddin Ahmed.

The Health Minister said the government has already identified main problems of the health sector that hindered the development processes.

"Now the government has been developing the health infrastructure in rural areas to ensure primary health and family planning services to the rural people," he added.

He said the government has formulated the National Health Policy for ensuring improved healthcare for the people because getting better healthcare is a constitutional right of them.

Hackers try to put virus into Gonophone system

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A system administrator of Gonophone, a local Internet Service Provider (ISP), has foiled the attempt of two hackers, who have been trying to put 'Trojan Horse Virus' into the systems of various users.

They tried this with various users including the National Defence College and Bangladesh Armed Forces Cyber Cafe, said a press release.

The hackers, user ID Azad and AIMIT, have been given stiff warning.

The Gonophone administration has cautioned all users to maintain the confidentiality of their passwords and change them frequently. They also cautioned that their hardware and software is equipped to instantly detect any attempted malicious activity and that that the account holder shall remain fully responsible for any such illegal activity. Wherever possible, the offenders shall be prosecuted under the country's law.

"We have already initiated the process of expanding cooperation through introducing Dhaka-Colombo direct air flight," Pieris said.

He said Sri Lankan entrepreneurs would go for investment in Bangladesh in areas of tourism, hotels, food and beverage, glass manufacturing, information technology, diamond cutting and financial services like banking and insurance.

During the stay in Dhaka, the delegation is expected to call on the President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Finance Minister, Industries Minister and Law Minister.

Train derails

FROM PAGE 1 railway line.

Train communications between Chandpur and Chittagong remained suspended following the accident, third in last four days in the eastern zone of railways.

Two relief trains, one from Chittagong and another from Laksam, reached the spot and started rescue operation. "The rescue operation was going on till 10 pm," a railway official told UNB.

Printing of voters' list stutters

FROM PAGE 1

Press of Nandalal Datta Lane, Laxmibazar, Dhaka, in its latest letter to the EC Secretary on February 6 sought time extension and said it has been facing various problems in printing the voters' list.

It said the work was delayed due to Ramadan, holidays on the Victory Day, X-mas day and Eid-ul-Fitr, load-shedding, printing problems (as Textbook Board's printing work was going simultaneously) and the problem related to the software designated to the data process.

Although most of the officials termed the reasons lame excuses, the EC Secretariat allowed the firms for more time.

The fresh voters' list is full of inconsistencies and wrong information about individuals enrolled, it was alleged. The Election Commission also received complaints from many individuals that there were inconsistencies in basic information about voters.

Seeing mistakes, the Chief Election Commissioner blasted officials while visiting the Pabna-5

constituency during the recent by-election, held with the new list. By-elections in Pabna -5 and another constituency in Khulna were held with new voters' lists, prepared for the two constituencies under special arrangement.

Representatives from the European Union in a meeting with the Election Commission members emphasized preparation of a correct and impartial voters' list ahead of the next general election.

With 1.88 crore new voters, the number of voters in the country is 7,48,23,855, which is nearly 57.5 per cent of the population. The number of male voters is 3,85,30,414 and female voters 3,62,93,441, according to the new list.

There were 5, 59,66,384 voters in the previous list announced in 1995. The number rose to 6 crore in the revised list of 1998.

There will be scope for enrolment of voters in the new list, the officials said. Any eligible voter, not included in the list, can apply to the EC authorities for enrolment.

25 killed in Kashmir

FROM PAGE 12

Riaz Ahmed, a spokesman for the Alumar, told AFP six militants launched the attack. He said one was killed but five escaped.

A spokesman for the Laskher-e-Taiba said: "This operation is against the special operation group of the police who have unleashed ex-judicial killings of innocent Kashmiris."

The second attack happened at 3:00 a.m. (21:30 GMT Friday) in the village of Chawalwote, around 200 km northwest of the Kashmir winter capital Jammu. Brigadier General P.C. Das told AFP.

"Militants barged into three houses in Chawalwote village and shot eight adults living in those houses at point-blank range so that no one would be able to raise an alarm," said Das.

"Then they doused the huts with kerosene and set them ablaze," said Das, adding that seven children were inside the houses.

According to the army, the militants targeted the three families because they had men working on the village defence committee.

The government has set up around 500 village defence committees in Indian-held Kashmir. Members are given rifles and ammunition to defend their communities

from attacks by Muslim militants.

"The militants may have also thought that the men were army informers simply because they were on the committee," added Das.

The high-profile attacks come after the Indian government on January 23 extended its unilateral ceasefire in the region for another month.

They follow several other high-profile Muslim militant attacks since the Indian government suspended counter-insurgency operations in Kashmir on November 27.

In December militants gunned down three people inside the Red Fort in New Delhi, while in January three policemen and two civilians died in a suicide attack on Srinagar airport.

The Himalayan state of Kashmir is divided into Indian and Pakistani-held zones. India blames Pakistan for fuelling a Muslim insurgency in Indian-held Kashmir which has claimed more than 34,000 lives since 1989.

Pakistan denies the charge, saying it only offers moral and diplomatic support to what it views as the Kashmiris' legitimate struggle for self-determination.

Maya's son still at large

FROM PAGE 1

leading a gang of more than 20 "terrorists" with whose help he has been engaged in establishing supremacy in the area.

Earlier, Dipu Chowdhury along with some of his accomplices were made accused in a case filed with Uttara thana for attempting to murder and abduct the son of an Assistant Attorney General on June 6, 1999.

The case was filed on June 7, 1999. Police investigation failed to prove involvement of Dipu in the incident and later submitted the final report of the case.

IO Habib yesterday said that his investigation so far revealed that the killing of Taraj Uddin was sequel to a dispute over a piece of land.

According to sources, Taraj Uddin and his cousin Aleya Begum had long been locked a dispute over

ownership of about 80 decimal of land. Aleya Begum sought the help of Dipu's close associate Rana while expelled Jute League leader and alleged terrorist Mukul stood by Taraj Uddin.

DB police arrested Mukul a few days ago in connection with a smuggling case and the killing of Chitra League's city unit leader Akkasur Rahman Akhi. Mukul himself leads another group of "terrorists" in the area, local people alleged.

Last month, Dipu and his associates tried to forcibly occupy the land after Aleya gave Rana power of attorney for the land following a secret agreement, it is learnt.

On January 10, Taraj Uddin filed a General Diary with Uttara thana accusing Dipu and others. But under pressure from Dipu, Taraj Uddin later withdrew Dipu's name from the GD.

Khaleda briefs diplomats

FROM PAGE 1

Palestine Muhammad Shata Zarab decided that there would be no news briefing about the discussion.

But BNP leader M Morshed Khan MP, who was present at the briefing, told newsmen that BNP arranged the programme to give them their views as the government recently briefed them and gave its own version about the situation in the country.

He said the diplomats told the opposition leader that they are fully aware of the situation through newspapers.

Morshed Khan said Khaleda Zia briefed the diplomats about the current position of the 4-party alliance, justification of the anti-government movement and its ultimate goal. They were also briefed about the Opposition leaders' scheduled visit to Brahmanbaria and future course of action.

Rezaul Karim said diplomats from some Muslim countries could not attend the briefing because of their pre-occupations and because

Illegal arms

FROM PAGE 1 day evening. Other employees and owner Shahidul escaped during raid, he added.

Police quoting Naem said owner of the factory Shahidul Islam is a front ranking leader of Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh.

A case was filed with Rupsha thana. A combing operation has been launched in the entire district to arrest Shahidul Islam, owner of the illegal arms factory, OC of Rupsha thana said.

it was called hurriedly.

M Saifur Rahman, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, M Shamsul Islam and Reaz Rahman were also present at the briefing.

Pak peacekeeper held in Kenya for ivory smuggling