

Opposition MPs baton-charged

FROM PAGE 1
Exploded inside a room of a three-story building near the Kotwali...

They are Jewel, 22, and Mohammad Ali, 25, admitted to DMCH under police custody.

Jewel sustained injuries on his face and in the left eye and Ali in both his eyes. Jewel's condition was critical, hospital sources said.

Police also arrested another person - Nurul Amin - from the spot on charge of making bombs.

Police claimed that said, Jewel, Ali and Amin belonged to BNP's youth front Jaiyatabadi Jubo Dal.

Talking to newsmen, local people and some employees of a leather factory on the first floor of the building...

Two policemen - Sajedul Islam and Abdus Samad - were injured in the explosion.

The five BNP lawmakers who came under baton charge there were Joint Member of Parliament...

But leaders of Kotwali thana unit of BNP brushed aside the allegation. "We do not know them. They are not BNP workers."

One of the workers at the leather factory told The Daily Star that immediately after the explosion...

He said, the factory workers were witnessing a BNP procession led by Sadek Hossain Khoka passing through the North-South Road.

Disaster management
FROM PAGE 12
campaign on what to do before and after a tremor.

"We're preparing a booklet containing the tips which will be broadcast in radio and TV and published in newspapers," Kundu added.

He further said the authorities are contemplating to activate the Civil Defence network in association with the Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) volunteers to respond to quake emergency.

"We've attained the capability to respond to emergencies like cyclones and floods which occur frequently," he added.

He also said a network of 37,000 volunteers under the CPP could be activated within a short notice, helped by an elaborate network of radio links.

If the Civil Defence, Fire Service and other voluntary organisations could be networked and organised to meet the quake emergency, the country would be better prepared, he added.

A drill for better preparedness is also being planned, Kundu said.

Hartal
FROM PAGE 12
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EC invites parties to talks

FROM PAGE 1
listed the ruling Awami League, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and other nationally known parties...

The CEC informed that he had talked to many of the leaders - both in the ruling and in the opposition parties - in the last couple of days.

Guidelines are important for democracy and all the democratic nations followed such practices, the Commission argues.

The Commission said that the political party includes a group or combination of persons who operate within or outside the Parliament under a distinctive name and who hold themselves out for the purpose of propagating a political opinion or engaging in any other political activity.

The Commission earlier sent a proposal to the Ministry of Law for enactment of a law to regulate activities of political parties.

The proposal said: For the sake of good governance and for encouraging an environment of political parties themselves, it is worth serious consideration that the political leadership in the country arrives at a consensus at least to provide for a legal framework requiring registration of political parties with the Election Commission.

According to the proposed law, the EC has to maintain a register of political parties to register therein any political party that files with it

an application for registration signed by the Chief Executive of the body or association.

Nine basic information, including the name and address of the auditor of the association, a statement affirming the body or association's commitment to a free and fair election, and a copy of the last annual income and expenditure, are required to get a political party registered with the EC.

It noted that the total absence of any regulation allows political parties to use their unrestricted influence to raise funds and indulge in the use of these funds in any manner as they may deem fit.

Affluent persons and business firms contribute huge sums to political parties in the hope that if elected to power, the party would squarely return such favour.

The other proposals include increasing the limit of expenditure of a candidate in parliamentary polls to Tk five lakh from the existing three lakh, strengthening the election tribunals and restricting a candidate from contesting for more than two seats.

Former CEC Mohammad Abu Hena sent the proposals to the law ministry in 1999 for enactment of laws and constitutional amendments to some extent for the purpose. But, the proposals were shelved at the Law Reforms Commission and brought no result so far.

AL lawmaker

FROM PAGE 1
lashed in the newspapers. Moreover, the main culprits are still roaming freely and led processions on Wednesday and yesterday, he added.

The leaders observed that the AL lawmaker has tarnished the image of Bangladesh by leading the killings in broad daylight.

Bhuiyan demanded immediate arrest of Dr Iqbal and his gang of terrorists, killers of Sajal Chowdhury, Advocate Nurul Islam of Laxmipur, businessmen Shipu and Tarajuddin.

Addressing a post-hartal press briefing at 29 Minto Road, BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said that Tuesday's killing of opposition activists and common people by a ruling party MP and his armed cohorts greatly shocked the ordinary citizens and has served to present the country to the world as an uncivilised repressive state.

Bhuiyan said people of the country spontaneously observed the two-day hartal to protest the killings. He thanked the people for making the hartals a complete success.

He alleged that the government is still attacking the opposition all over the country. AL terrorists attacked opposition activists yesterday in different parts of the country, including Dhaka, Mymensingh, Tangail, Bhairab, Alamdanga and Sirajganj, he said.

The BNP secretary general observed that people from all walks of life have already started to take to the streets in support of the opposition's movement and that a massive out-governments movement is expected soon.

PSA turns a year old

FROM PAGE 1
Morshed Khan was once again charged along with 17 of those lawyers including Barrister Nazmul Huda MP.

Though armed goons from an Awami League procession led by Dr HBM Iqbal attacked the opposition procession and killed three activists last Tuesday, a PSA case was filed against Mirza Abbas and 17 others belonging to BNP Iqbal and his hired goons are remaining beyond legal action.

Before the enactment of PSA, the opposition as well as all human rights organisations termed it as a 'black law'. As it was absolutely non-bailable, the president initially declined to give his consent to the act. Later as the ruling party lawmakers relaxed the section of bail option, the president gave his consent.

Later in the first parliamentary session this year, the president's speech held that crime trend had declined due to the enactment of the law. Prime minister also made similar claims.

The PSA was enacted with an objective of making prompt arrest and trying criminals specifically involved in terrorism, destruction of public properties, damaging motor vehicles, extortion, mugging and similar crimes. Maximum punishment under this act is death penalty.

Under PSA cases the authorities must complete investigation within 30 days. However, if the magistrate permits, the time frame of investigation may be extended by another 15 days only conditionally.

Joint Secretary (Police) of Ministry of Home Affairs Yakub Ali also in charge of PSA Review Cell said, "As this law is very stringent, police must be very careful about framing a case under PSA."

Asked how much the PSA had been successful in attaining its objectives to uproot terrorism and violence, he said, "It is all too successful. Otherwise nobody could protect their vehicles or participate in tender bidding."

Among 2072 PSA cases, police framed charge sheet for 1313 cases under which 7484 persons were accused, gave final reports on 400 such cases, are still investigating 359 ones and trying 1041.

Of all the PSA cases, 624 cases were in the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) area. In Chittagong metropolitan area were 197 cases, in Khulna 160 and only 33 in Rajshahi.

Live bomb

FROM PAGE 12
were so sure that those were not powerful remote control or timing devices, a confident Mohsinuzzaman said. "It does not seem to be very dangerous."

"Besides, it is safe when an explosive is kept in the water. That is why we have still kept the bomb in the water in a big bucket," he explained.

The OC however assured that they would soon inform the army bomb experts.

Action against troublemakers

FROM PAGE 1
report against the identified terrorists who fired from the Iqbal-led procession.

A source said the prime minister warned that actions would also be taken against those party men who shelter these goons.

Discussion on the recent politics of violence, especially the role of HBM Iqbal MP in Tuesday's violence was the focal point of the meeting, inside sources said. Though the 67-member ALCWC meeting was heavily attended, a few leaders spoke on the occasion.

In the past, terrorist activities by some AL leaders were criticised by the ALCWC meetings. The ALCWC meeting yesterday observed that a gunshot from the procession led by Alhaj Moqbul Hossain killed Sajal Chowdhury in February 1999. Jewel, son of Kamal Mojumder MP, is the accused in the Shipu murder case; Dipu Chowdhury, son of Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, is the

main accused in the Tarajuddin murder case.

Referring to the arrest of the son of Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah, Hasina said, "I've taken steps against the son of my cousin, why wouldn't I take steps against other unruly persons (in the party)?"

She said, "In the last four and half years, we have painstakingly built a positive image of the party. We can not let this be destroyed by the acts of a few people."

She, however, asked top leaders of her party to see if Tuesday's violence in Iqbal's procession was an act of sabotage to bluish the party image.

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim supporting the prime minister's stand said, "None but Sheikh Hasina is indispensable in Awami League."

Commerce Minister Tofael Ahmed maintained that a certain quarter was trying to create anarchy in the country in a planned manner.

Local lads

FROM PAGE 1
defending champions Sri Lanka thrashed Oman by ten wickets and Pakistan, who finished runners-up on home soil in last year's inaugural edition, humbled Kuwait by 152 runs.

India, one of the four teams from Test-playing nations in Asia, are however yet to reach Dhaka. They were supposed to arrive in the city last night.

However, it was a perfect start for the hosts who wanted to make their mark alongside the Test cap aspiring young cricketers of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The home team, chasing a modest Nepalese total of 175 for nine in the stipulated 45 overs, raced on to score 176 for three in 32.5 overs. Shaiful led the successful chase with an unbeaten 82 off 109 balls.

Coming in to bat at number three after opener Nafis Iqbal fell for only six, the young right-hander from Khulna put on 92 runs with his more aggressive partner Mohammad Ashraf.

Ashraf, who hammered a brilliant hundred against the same team in Karachi last year, blasted a 47-ball 42. In a brutal display of stroke-making, the exciting right-handed opener smote seven

sweetly-timed fours. After hitting consecutive boundaries off Irfan, he missed the third completely and got bowled.

Shaiful clubbed nine boundaries in his undefeated knock that earned him the man-of-the-match award.

Although the Bangladesh batting was disciplined, the bowling was completely wayward. Their three seamers Mortaza, Sharif and Talha Jubair were guilty of contributing heavily to the 50 extras after skipper Nafis sent the opponents in.

Talha gave away 16 runs in his two erratic overs that yielded ten wickets.

The boys of the Himalayan Kingdom found a wily campaigner in Deepesh who notched a composed 78 off 120 balls.

Bangladesh will take on Singapore in their second Group B match at the Jagannath Hall ground today.

Earlier, State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader declared the 10-day meet open. BCB president Saber Hossain Chowdhury and former Indian captain Ravi Shastri, as an ICC (International Cricket Council) ambassador, also attended the opening ceremony.

Advertisement for 'মৃত্যু সংবাদ/কুলখানী' (Death News/Kul Khanee) featuring a portrait of a woman and text about a woman's death.

Advertisement for Pearl Restaurant, serving Thai, Chinese, Continental & Indian dishes.

Advertisement for Sajana An Exclusive Restaurant, serving full range of Indian dishes.

Advertisement for Santoor, an exclusive restaurant with a Symphony of Dining.

Advertisement for La Vinci restaurant, featuring authentic Italian and Indian food.

Crores in foreign funds

FROM PAGE 1
for spending several crores of taka without required authorisation from the NGO Bureau. In the process, some 'top foreign banks' have also been served with show-cause notices for violating the rules and releasing the foreign funds without an authorisation from the bureau.

"At the end of each year these NGOs are required to submit an audit report prepared by one of the 50 listed Chartered Accountancy firms, which we are by law compelled to accept," said the source.

Other sources said that a section of these accountancy firms 'specialised' in adjusting various 'financial irregularities.' The NGO Bureau is so poorly manned and equipped that unless there is a directive from the 'top' to investigate an alleged irregularity, it is happy with the auditors' report.

"It is impossible for the NGO Bureau to find out if one of these institutions has sacrificed 100 bulls during an Eid or has offered iftar to 5,000 people or fed 10,000 orphans, or the money has been handed over to one of the fundamentalist groups," said another source.

"These government lapses have not only fuelled fundamentalism, but also 'encouraged other groups in the same sector' to conduct various undesirable activities in the country," said a top official requesting anonymity.

According to Mizanur Rahman, Registrar of the Madrassah Education Board, there are 7,500 government-funded madrassahs in the country where an estimated 1.5

million students are enrolled. The government-funded madrassahs are known as alia madrassahs.

"In government madrassahs the curriculum includes all subjects like in Bangla medium or any other institutions and since 1985 and 1987 their qualifications are nationally recognised," Rahman explained.

"On the other hand, the quomi madrassahs have strictly Islamic curriculum and their graduates usually end up as workers in the Middle East or home tutors of Quran or imams. But they do not qualify for any government jobs, because their qualifications are not recognised," the Registrar said.

Rahman said that the quomi madrassahs depend almost entirely on donations. There are many Muslim countries, which offer them funds.

"During Ramadan and other religious festivals groups of people from quomi madrassahs travel to these countries to raise funds," he said.

Over the years these overseas connections have become more 'institutional,' he added.

The Bangladesh Quomi Madrassah Education Board (BQMEB) is situated at a modest rented flat in the city's Purana Paltan area. The BQMEB was created to update a 200-year old curriculum of the quomi madrassahs.

Shibbir Ahmed, who identified himself as the assistant controller, said that there were about 3,000 quomi madrassahs registered with the board. There is an equal number of quomi madrassahs in the country that do not register with the BQMEB. And there are several other boards working independently without any monitoring.

"Most of the quomi madrassahs are residential and students do not pay any charges. So the madrassah people have to raise money. At times they receive donations from abroad and they also travel abroad for collection," said Shibbir.

Shibbir said that the BQMEB has been watching the recent incidents involving fundamentalists. "The problem is BQMEB does not have any power to do anything about it."

"Our borders are virtually open. Anyone can smuggle in money, guns and 'skilled' manpower to fuel fundamentalism," said the police official adding that the government was aware of the situation and would soon crack down on these elements.

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Advertisement for BGMEA Institute of Fashion & Technology, including a recruitment table for staff positions like Accountant, Administrative Officer, etc.