

Heated debate in JS body meet over corruption in BTMC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP lawmaker Ehasnul Haq Milon walked out of a meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Textiles yesterday in protest against the remarks made by State Minister for Textiles A K M Jahangir.

The BNP lawmaker walked out after nearly half an hour of a heated debate over corruption in Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation.

The debate started off, when Milon charged the BTMC chairman with corruption and the state minister defended him, meeting sources said.

Describing his recent experience of visiting four BTMC-run mills in Chittagong, Milon told the meeting that the chairman of the corporation has misappropriated crores of taka

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Amnesty report reveals

corruption at all levels of govt, society rampant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Amnesty International (AI) has said 'rampant corruption at all levels of government and society continued to dash hopes' for improvement in the human rights situation in Bangladesh and 'to thwart efforts to tackle poverty and political instability.'

The UK-based human rights watchdog said this in its Report 2001 published across the world yesterday.

The report detected human rights violations in 49 countries. It also found that globalisation or spread of the free market economy and technological changes has led to enormous economic expansion.

In Bangladesh, the Public Safety Act 2000 was adopted amid concerns that some of its provisions breached international human rights standards and would allow the police to detain people without a warrant for a bribe or on politically motivated grounds, the AI said.

Police officers tortured people to extract money to ensure compliance with their own illegal activities as a favour to politicians in return for bribe and to obtain confessions. More than 50 people died in custody, reportedly due to torture, it went on.

Referring to Chittagong Hill Tracts, the AI report said, " There were continuing concerns about the slow pace of implementation of all provisions of the peace accord".

The government did not bring to justice those responsible for past human rights violations during the armed conflict, it added.

" Widespread and persistent reports of torture were routinely ignored by the authorities ... Police frequently attacked demonstrators and beat journalists reporting on the protests", the Amnesty observed.

It also said rape in custody continued to be reported and government action, as in the past, was only taken after a public outcry.

In quest of resolving traffic problems

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An organised citizens' group met at The Daily Star Office yesterday to work out new initiatives to resolve the existing traffic problems of the capital.

Co-organised by The Daily Star and Bangladesh Scouts, and attended by eminent citizens, the discussants at the meeting on "Traffic Problems of Dhaka City" decided to take it up with the 26 organisations involved in traffic management in the city.

The citizens' group comprised former civil servants, professionals and members of the Bangladesh Scouts.

They will have talks with the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia offers *munajat* at the grave of President Ziaur Rahman at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar on his 20th death anniversary yesterday.



Chaotic traffic near BRTC bus stand at Pallabi (left), pothole-studded roads at Senpara Parbata (centre) and overflowing trash containers sum up the day-to-day life of the city's Mirpur area.

Day in, day out with power & water crises, traffic jams

RAZIUR RAHMAN

Frequent power disruption, scarcity of water and dilapidated roads have made life miserable for people in the city's Mirpur area. Equally wretched are regular traffic jams at road-crossings, indiscriminate garbage dumping and poor drainage system. Besides, absence of footbridges at some busy roads not only causes traffic disorder but also exposes pedestrians to grave risk.

Residents of Agargaon, Shewrapara, Kazipara, Ibrahimpur, Senpara Parbata, Monipur, Paikpara, Barabagh, Pallabi and Mirpur Sections 1-10, however, identified frequent power disruption as the major irritant.

A tale of Mirpur in the city

"Sometimes we have to endure load shedding for up to four hours a day. Each time it lasts for at least an hour," said the owner of a laundry shop at Kazipara.

The Dhaka Electric Supply Company (DESCO), responsible for distributing over 115 megawatt of power among its one lakh-odd consumers, had to go for roughly 30MW load shedding on an average everyday since February 21 this year when a transformer of the Mirpur grid substation went out of order.

The transformer was replaced

early this month with an old one. However, the power situation hasn't improved that much, as areas under each of its five substations faces two to three megawatt of power shortage everyday. Residents of Kalyanpur and adjoining areas experience load shedding of an additional eight to 15 MW due to an overloaded transmission line.

The power crisis also causes water shortage in different parts of the area, since the pumps, which pull water to rooftop tanks from underground reservoirs, do not operate without electricity.

Parts of Agargaon, Kafur, Senpara, Shewrapara and Kazipara get inadequate water supply during summer. Inhabitants of Shewrapara and West Kazipara said that the water situation was at its worst for about two months starting from mid-April this year. The supply is yet to be normal as residents of Jamtola in Shewrapara still have to rise very early in the morning and stay up late to store water.

While visiting Kazipara, Shewrapara, Senpara Parbata, Barabagh, Monipur areas of Mirpur, this correspondent found most of the

narrow lanes in very poor condition. Besides, most roads do not have sufficient and functional drainage, for which water remains stagnant on the roads even after light drizzles. Leaks in the water supply pipes also contribute to the problem.

Joinal Abedin, a resident of Senpara Parbata, said, "Bad smell comes out of supply water as there are leaks and cracks in WASA pipes. The dirty water is going into the supply lines and causing serious pollution."

A number of residents of Senpara Parbata said that they have taken up the matter with Abdul Kader, the commissioner of Ward No. 14 of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC).

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Move for law to provide spl security to Hasina

Govt may face another round of agitation before leaving office

NAZMUL ASHRAF & REAZ AHMAD

The government is set to face another round of street agitation, probably the last one before it leaves office on July 13.

Its move to enact a law to provide special security to the outgoing prime minister tops the list of fresh issues that are likely to make the pre-political politics volatile in the coming weeks.

The BNP-led opposition has already threatened to revive street agitation if the government goes ahead with the planned legislation.

Besides, a section of primary

school teachers and government employees have announced to stage a sit-in in front of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban on June 18 to press home their 30-point demand. Islami Ain Bastobayan Parishad has, meantime, called a countrywide hartal on June 14 demanding release of two fundamentalist leaders facing charges of murder and rioting.

The joint programme of the teachers and government employees coincides with the coming parliament session, which means that public gathering in areas surrounding the parliament building will

come under a ban.

Ruling Awami League's student front Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) has also announced a march towards the parliament on June 11 to press the government to enact the proposed law. It also plans to seek President Shahabuddin Ahmad's cooperation for the purpose.

In the wake of a series of hartals that drew sharp criticism from within and outside, BNP recently assured the business community that it would not call hartal until the election unless it is compelled to.

Leaving its threat to launch a

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Plot to kill Hasina Govt takes up matter with Dutch authorities

UNB, Dhaka

The Bangladesh government has taken up with the Dutch authorities the matter of investigating a reported plot to assassinate Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Foreign Secretary Syed Muazzem Ali said yesterday.

"They are thoroughly investigating the matter," he told a questioner at a press briefing at the Foreign Office.

Recently some foreign intelligence reports stated that some condemned killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had meetings at a restaurant at Breda in Southern Holland and hatched up a plan with some secret services to make an attempt on the life of Sheikh Hasina.

Mystery shrouds death of girl

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mystery shrouds the death of a two-year-old girl at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH), Dhaka on Tuesday night, hospital sources said.

Sabrina Mirza Nupur, daughter of ATM Mizanur Rahman of Namapara, Khilkhet was admitted to the CMH in a critical condition Tuesday evening where she died at

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

News Analysis

Rough road ahead of Mamata

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Having quit the BJP-led ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and suffered a debacle in West Bengal assembly elections, Mamata Banerjee, chief of Trinamool Congress, is clearly at the crossroads of her political career. Her proposal for a meeting with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee has already touched off speculation that she might be on the way back to the NDA fold.

Pankaj Banerjee, the Trinamool spokesman, brushed aside dismissed such speculations though. In Kolkata, he said that Mamata had plan to submit a memorandum to the prime minister, which contains allegations of "gross irregularities" committed by the ruling Left Front during the West Bengal elections earlier last month. Meanwhile on Tuesday, Vajpayee ruled out Mamata's return to the ruling coalition at a press conference at his holiday resort.

But the political grapevine here refuses to believe that the agenda of Vajpayee-Mamata meeting would not discuss Trinamool's possible return to the NDA. Trinamool walked out in March this year in the wake of a media portal's expose of corruption in defence deals which showed former BJP chief Bangaru Laxman

accepting wads of currency notes from a fictitious arms dealer. Then she teamed up with Sonia Gandhi-led Congress in West Bengal assembly poll.

Earlier, she had resigned from the Vajpayee cabinet on a number of occasions following differences of opinion with the government only to be persuaded to retrace her step. All these have contributed to Mamata's image as a whimsical person. And now, her return to the NDA, if it materialises, is unlikely to

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Boy strangled allegedly by mother in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A two and a half years old boy was allegedly killed by his mother at a shelter in the city's Mohammadpur area early yesterday.

Milon, son of Bilkis Begum, was strangled at City RDW shelter home at Block-B road number 11 in the pisciculture housing.

Bilkis who worked as domestic help in several houses in the area went out for work as usual yesterday morning. But a woman of the same house recovered Milon's body from under a bed sheet.

Will journalist Tipu remain disabled?



The Daily Star - প্রথম আলো

Tipu Treatment Fund

Donate generously to this Fund Save Tipu from Disability

Send donations to: Savings Account No. 25002111 Dhaka Bank Ltd, Karwan Bazar Branch, Dhaka

Bangabandhu murder case

Operation of HC verdict stayed till June 26

BSS, Dhaka

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday stayed the operation of the Judgement of High Court Division in the Bangabandhu Murder Case till June 26.

The Court also directed the defence to submit a regular Leave Appeal by this period.

The Court further directed the Attorney General to submit to the court a medical report from a professor of Dhaka Medical College Hospital or Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University by June 4 as per the court order dated 03-05-2001 regarding the health condition of Maj (retd) Bazul Huda, a convict in the

Bangabandhu Murder Case.

Earlier, the counsel for Huda, Advocate Mahbubur Rahman submitted to the court a medical report asked by the court from a professor of the said hospitals. But the counsel submitted a report from associate and assistant professors which the court did not accept.

Advocate Mahbubur Rahman assisted by Advocate Abdus Subhan and Azra Ali moved the appeal on behalf of Huda and Attorney General Advocate Mahmudul Islam, Additional Attorney General Advocate Mahbubur Alam and Assistant Attorney General Advocate Sufia Khatun defended the state.



Traders line up out in the streets during a one-hour (from 12:00 noon to 1:00pm) shutdown in the city's Nawabpur area yesterday, demanding arrest and trial of the killers of Babul Mian, who was shot dead last Thursday.