

World Health Day

FROM PAGE 12
including a rally, a discussion meeting, and essay and painting competitions.

A colourful procession was brought out from the Jatiya Press Club in the morning. It ended at the Engineers' Institution after parading the main thoroughfares.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain led the street rally.

State Minister for Health Amanullah Aman, officials of the Health Ministry, representatives of the donor agencies, activists of NGOs and voluntary organisations and members of scouts took part in the rally.

The participants carried banners and placards inscribed with various slogans of the World Health Day.

A discussion meeting was held at the Engineers' Institution with Health Secretary Fazlur Rahman in

PDB official found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The death of a deputy programmer of the Power Development Board (PDB) is shrouded in mystery.

Idris Ali, 45, was found dead yesterday on the front porch of the fourth floor of the 30-storey Bangladesh Bank building.

In the morning, he left his Mughapara residence for his Motijheel office and came out of his office after an hour.

Family sources said he might have been murdered. A few days ago, he was abducted, they added.

The Bangladesh Bank employees found the body at noon and informed Motijheel Police Station.

Some of his colleagues said he was suffering from mental depression for the last few days. He was frustrated for not being promoted, as a note found in his pocket shows.

The incident took place between 11:30am and 12 noon, but his wife and daughter, a Dhaka University student, were not informed of the death until 5.00pm, family members complained.

The duty officer of the Motijheel Police Station said the man might have jumped from the rooftop of the building. Police recovered the body and sent it to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Rajjuddin Harun, a PDB director, filed a case with Motijheel Police Station in this regard.

Tk 7 lakh snatched in Rajshahi

BSS, Rajshahi

A gang of miscreants snatched away Taka seven lakh, three motorbikes and two mobile phone sets from three contractors from Sagarpara area under Boalia thana here Saturday night.

The contractors were identified as --Abul Hashem, 35, a resident of Baragram area, Shafique Ahmed, 32, and Nazrul Islam, 35, of Bheripara under Rajpara thana.

Police said the miscreants intercepted the contractors while they were passing the area riding three motorbikes. The miscreants stabbed Abul Hashem and Shafique severely and snatched away the money, their motorbikes and the mobile phone sets.

Police later recovered the snatched motorbike from the area.

Israel ignores Bush

FROM PAGE 1
since the Palestinian uprising began in September 2000.

Arafat remained pinned in his Ramallah headquarters while 200 armed gunmen inside Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, one of Christianity's holiest sites, were in the sixth day of a stand-off with Israeli troops.

Major General Dan Halutz, commander of the Israeli air force, said Operation Defensive Wall, as it is called, could not be rushed. "The armed forces need time, more time," he said.

On the ground the Israeli crack-down appeared to be achieving its goal with no suicide attacks since April 1. The offensive was launched two days after a suicide bomb attack in Netanya on the Jewish Passover holiday.

Israeli radio said the death toll from that bombing rose to 27 on Sunday when Sarah Levy, an 88-year survivor of the Nazi holocaust, succumbed to her wounds.

The army said that it has arrested 1,200 Palestinians, including 100 "terrorists" on a wanted list, and seized large quantities of bombs and other weapons in its campaign.

US officials said Bush made a personal phone call to Sharon on Saturday to press for quick action after saying at press conference with British Prime Minister Tony Blair that Israel should withdraw "without delay".

The Palestinian leadership said in a statement yesterday that Bush's failure to fix a firm date "encourages Sharon and gives him the green light to carry out further war crimes".

The Palestinians said the previous day that the ferocious assault

the chair.

Health Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain, State Minister for Health Amanullah Aman and WHO Representative Suniti Achariya, among others, spoke in the meeting.

Later, the Health Minister distributed prizes among the winners of the essay and painting competitions arranged on the occasion of World Health Day.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines Flying Services Association of Cabin Crew arranged a blood donation programme on the occasion.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin inaugurated the programme. Managing Director of Bangladesh Biman Air Commodore M Khasrul Alam and senior officers attended the programme.

Bushra murder Court issues warrant for arrest of Runu Kader

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Third Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka, yesterday accepted the naraji petition in Bushra Islam alias Phool murder case.

The court also issued a warrant for arrest of Runu Kader, wife of M A Kader, the main accused in the case.

Judge Sarker Abul Mansur passed the order following a naraji petition against the charge sheet submitted by the investigation officers (IOs) of the case on December 29, 2000.

In its order, the court mentioned that Runu's name was dropped from the charge sheet, although the charges brought against her were primarily proved.

The charges against Runu were found during the investigation but the investigation officers (IOs) dropped her name from the charge sheet, the court observed.

After scrutinising the case diary (CD) and documents, the court passed the order. The court also scrutinised the statements of the prosecution witnesses and found Runu guilty of charges.

Mosammat Laila Islam, complainant of the case, submitted a naraji petition on January last year as name of Runu Kader was dropped from the charge sheet by four investigation officers.

The court heard the petition on April 1 and gave the order yesterday.

The court also fixed April 23 for hearing on charge framing in the case.

Accused M A Kader, Kaniz Fatema Hena, Sheikh Shawkat Ahmed Ruhul and Sufia Begum were produced before the court during the hearing. Another accused Sheikh Kabir Ahmed has been absconding since the incident.

Advocate T M Akbar appeared for the state while Advocate Mahbub Ahmed and Moslemuddin for the accused.

Rushdhania Bushra Islam alias Phool, 18, a college student and daughter of a retired police officer, was raped and murdered at their Hazipara residence in the city's Rampura area on the night of July 1, 2000.

Later, victim's mother Laila Islam filed a murder case with Ramna thana on September 5, 2000 accusing M A Kader, his wife Runu Kader and four others.

Shihab murder

FROM PAGE 1

As directed by Raju, Liton grabbed Shihab from behind and Sabu pressed his mouth. Shihab fell on the floor. Nasim sat on his belly. Sayed held his legs tightly and Raju strangled him.

Later, they bought two sharp knives, a school bag and two shopping bags. They sliced the body into pieces and dumped those in three separate places in the city, Sayed said.

Meanwhile, Julekha Akther and her daughter Kankon Akther Kanok, arrested earlier for questioning in connection with the incident, were produced before the CMM's Court by detective police with a prayer for two days' remand.

After the hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Sirajul Haider placed them on two days' remand.

Interrogation of three other accused continued for the fifth day yesterday. They are on seven days' remand.

The committee would hold its third meeting on April 13 to discuss

the progresses made so far.

The service commission would have a seven-member body chaired by a judge of the Supreme Court Appellate Division. The members would include a justice from the High Court, law secretary, a member from the Judicial Service cadre, a member from the Public Service Commission, the dean of the Law Faculty, Dhaka University and an official from outside the judicial service. The president will appoint the service commission members.

The service commission will scrutinise and hold tests for newcomers in the judiciary service.

The president may seek opinion on judicial issues from the service commission.

The two other rules and regulations being drafted deal with Judicial Service and Pay Commission, and

the progress made so far.

The service commission would have a seven-member body chaired by a judge of the Supreme Court Appellate Division. The members would include a justice from the High Court, law secretary, a member from the Judicial Service cadre, a member from the Public Service Commission, the dean of the Law Faculty, Dhaka University and an official from outside the judicial service. The president will appoint the service commission members.

The service commission will scrutinise and hold tests for newcomers in the judiciary service.

The president may seek opinion on judicial issues from the service commission.

Sources said, in this manner, a maximum 50 per cent of the present magistrates might be absorbed in the judiciary.

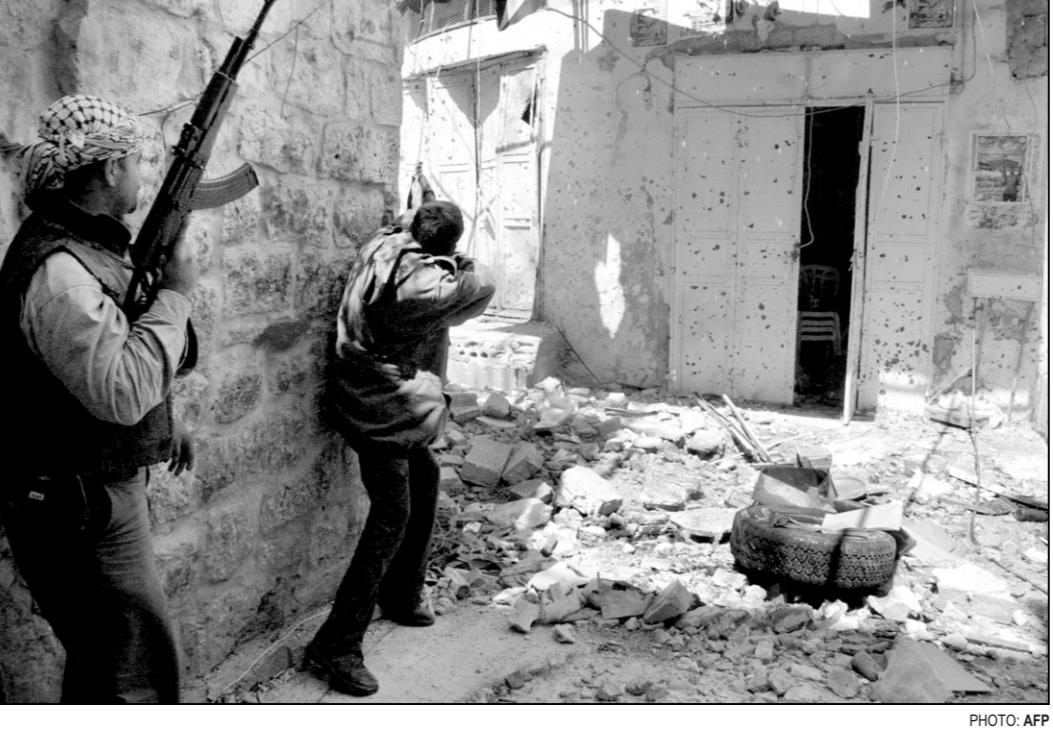


PHOTO: AFP

Palestinian gunmen exchange fire with Israeli troops during street battles in the Old City of Nablus yesterday. Four Palestinians, including three fighters, were killed, Palestinian security officials said.

AL: Tarnishing image

FROM PAGE 12

statement came following a recent cover story on Bangladesh published in the Hong Kong-based newsmagazine the Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER). The April 4 issue of FEER, which the government has already banned, said, "Rising fundamentalism and religious intolerance are threatening secularism and moderate Islam" in Bangladesh, adding that the country had "militant groups with links to international terrorist groups."

She noted that in the age of information technology, none could hide violation of human rights or any other wrongdoing from the eye of the world. "It is however now critical that we silence criticism by rebuilding the country's image," she added.

Hasina stressed the need for reestablishing rule of law, rejecting those who breed and believe in religious intolerance, reining in criminals and toll collectors regardless of their political affiliation, stopping political persecution and torture, bringing culprits to book and respecting the values of tolerance and democracy.

Referring to the killings, terrorists vying for positions in local government bodies and the listed 'top criminals' meeting with a government minister, she said if this trend continues "the country's image will be tarnished in all spheres and the people will rapidly lose confidence in the government."

The opposition leader also stated that, "governance seems to

have failed and is now almost absent. The recent consistent and repeated remarks by the finance minister that governance, respect for human rights as well as law and order have to be considerably improved in Bangladesh and is a pre-condition to any assistance from the donors, strongly supports this growing perception."

While stressing the need for united efforts in rebuilding the country's image abroad, Hasina found it unfortunate that, "till date the BNP-Jamaat government seems to have done everything it possibly can to divide the nation by politicising and undermining the critical institutions of the police and the civil service, by obstructing and denying the Awami League, the largest political party in the country, its most rudimentary political rights, and by tarnishing and doctoring even the history of our nation."

Referring to the killings, terrorists vying for positions in local government bodies and the listed 'top criminals' meeting with a government minister, she said if this trend continues "the country's image will be tarnished in all spheres and the people will rapidly lose confidence in the government."

The assistant judges would enjoy a window of opportunity to join magistracy depending on the Supreme Court's decision. Similarly, the present magistrates will enjoy a window of opportunity to join the judicial service, also depending on the Supreme Court's evaluation.

This window of opportunity would be open for one year after the service commission is formed.

Sources said, in this manner, a maximum 50 per cent of the present magistrates might be absorbed in the judiciary.

Judicial Service (administration). Though not finalised, it has been decided that the new judicial officer of the judiciary would be designated "Assistant Judge".

The assistant judges would enjoy a window of opportunity to join magistracy depending on the Supreme Court's decision. Similarly, the present magistrates will enjoy a window of opportunity to join the judicial service, also depending on the Supreme Court's evaluation.

This window of opportunity would be open for one year after the service commission is formed.

The government will set up one or more special tribunals in every district and the metropolises with

first class magistrates heading them.

Jatiya Party lawmaker GM Quader opposed the introduction of the law for its being a 'black' one. "The proposed law would be used to harass the opposition," he said, adding that fair execution of the existing laws could well help contain crimes.

In his statement on the bill's aims and objectives, the home minister said the law is needed to improve the law and order through quick trial of the criminals like terrorists, extortionists and muggers in the special court. Only speedy trials of the offenders would restore peace in public life, he argued.

The minister admitted that such serious crimes as extortion, mugging, snatching of tender papers and tender manipulation, threats and vandalism on vehicles were disrupting public life and that different sections of society were demanding quick trial of the criminals.

Car bomb kills 12 in Colombia

REUTERS, Bogota

At least 12 people were killed and 25 others injured when a powerful car bomb exploded early yesterday in a crowded street in southeastern Colombia, police said.

No armed group fighting in the country's 38-year old war has claimed responsibility for the bomb, which exploded around 1.10 am local time (0610 GMT) in a popular area packed with restaurants and nightclubs in the city of Villavicencio, some 40 miles (64 km) southeast of the capital Bogota.

"At the moment we have 12 people killed and 25 injured. This is indiscriminate terrorism," police colonel Jorge Alvaro Baron told Reuters by telephone.

Baron said the street was crowded with people enjoying a night out when the explosion occurred. The blast damaged several buildings, including three radio stations and shops.

Colombia is embroiled in a war pitting leftist rebels against state security forces and right-wing paramilitary outlaws. Efforts to end a war that claims the lives of 3,500 people every year collapsed last February after President Andres Pastrana broke off peace talks with FARC rebels.

Villavicencio is playing host this weekend for the tennis Davis Cup tournament between Colombia and Uruguay.

In January, a bicycle bomb blamed on FARC leftist rebels in Bogota killed six people and injured 14 others. Colombians go to the polls in May 26 to pick a new president. Independent candidate Alvaro Uribe, who is running a campaign on promises to crack down on rebels and restore law and order, is the front-runner, according to opinion polls.

New law : Hasina

FROM PAGE 1

opposition leader feared that only innocent citizens would be victimised under the proposed law.

She said the party in power will abuse the law to satisfy their personal grudge.

Her government while in power did not choose the path of revenge on its opponents, although the present government has been engaged in "Political persecution" since its assumption of power, she said.

"Bangladesh is an abode of peace and communal harmony. But because of this government religious harmony is being marred. Though the government tried to suppress it in the local press by issuing threats and intimidation, it would not be able to do it on foreign media."

Reaffirming her party's stand on peaceful coexistence of all religious faiths, Hasina said secularism does not mean a negation of religion.

"Pious people of Bangladesh were misguided through misinterpretation of Islam by traders in religion who are now engaged in

acts of terrorism."

Expressing deep concern at deterioration of law and order, Hasina said the home minister himself admitted in parliament that 1,075 people were murdered under the alliance's rule, but actual situation is "much more alarming" as all murder cases were not recorded.

Leaders of Mymensingh Ulema League Alhaj A K M Badruddoza, Hafiz Abul Hasim, and Sahmsul Alam Jahangir also spoke on the occasion. Awami League leaders Abdus Samad Azad and Sultan Mohammad Monsur Ahmed were present.

Later, leaders of Awami League Bandarban and Rangamati met the Awami League chief at her residence and discussed the ways to strengthen the party in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region. CHT leaders Depankar Talukder, Bir Bahadur, Ashutosh Barua, Abdur Rahim Chowdhury and Sahfigur Rahman, among others, were present.

Anti-crime bill

FROM PAGE 1

the offenders are caught in the act. In such a case,