

Outlawed parties

FROM PAGE 12
the directive of DIG Shahidur Rahman Bhuiyan following the killing of Bisha UP chairman Alhaj Mozammel Haq on September 10 at Atari.

On September 12, Rajshahi Metropolitan Police arrested Mahfuzur Rahman Juel, a 'commander' of outlaws, from the city's Padma residential area. On the night of September 13, police arrested alleged outlaw Babu from Nandigram in Bogra.

Commenting on the poor result of the drive, some police sources said that the Radhuniari police camp was attacked to divert law enforcers' attention from greater Rajshahi region where outlaws' groups have made their strongholds.

"By the time we brought under control most areas of greater Pabna (Pabna and Shirajganj), they (outlaws) got enough time to flee to another areas from Rajshahi region", commented a senior police official preferring anonymity.

Extra forces have also deployed and vigilance increased following fresh threats of bank robbery by outlaws, sources said.

But the DIG denied reports of threats of bank robbery and said, "We just alerted our forces".

The DIG claimed that that many of the arrested are members of the outlawed party but he could not give their number.

Meanwhile, higher authorities in police are thinking of withdrawing

police outposts from some 'remote and risky' areas. On the night of September 16, just after the Randhuniari incident, Simabari police camp at Sherpur in Bogra was withdrawn.

The officer-in-charge of Boalia thana in Rajshahi, Shahidul Haq, admitted that outlaws are well organised and have deep rooted network in the region.

In the rainy season, they take the opportunity of smooth roadway communication and lack of logistics of police in waterways, he said.

A doctor in Manda in Naogaon is reportedly organising the outlaws in northern districts. He frequently changes his identity and place.

According to reports, many of the outlaws in southern districts fled to remote villages in Chalan Beel and in char lands of Jamuna to avoid arrest during the tenure of Awami League government. They have become active again and are trying to build strongholds in Chalan Beel areas.

The Chalan Beel comprises parts of Natore, Pabna, Shirajganj and Naogaon districts. Some inaccessible areas of Chalan Beel have now turned into sanctuaries for outlaws.

At least 20 people including seven policemen were killed by outlaws in the six districts during last one year.

Most of outlaws have sophisticated firearms. They have female accomplices also. They frequently change their names and places.

SME investment

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facilitate sustainable development. An international team of experts is helping participants understand more about how to access new markets for craft products and build sustainable buyer relationships.

The new phase would support capacity building for private-sector development, SMEs in particular, reinforce industrial framework conditions of Asian business intermediaries and networking with European counterparts and improve dialogue with public administration and private sector.

Through such groundwork the new programme aims to contribute to creating an improved business environment offering sustainable trade opportunities between European and Asian business communities.

Anne said issues such as trade capacity, through trade diversification and technical assistance, and integration of Bangladesh in the global economy as well as deepening the regional economic co-operation had been earmarked in the European Country Strategy Paper for Bangladesh.

The European Commission is envisaging to contribute to the setting up of the Foreign Trade Institute proposed by the Ministry of

Anti-corruption body

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The commission would also have the power to assess of the bank balance and property of wife, children and other family members of a person accused of corruption.

The TIB also proposed changes to existing laws, saying the person accused of corruption should be arrested during submission of chargesheet and produced before the court. "The court may grant him bail on the merit of the charge."

Speakers at the workshop said an independent anti-corruption commission was necessary as the Bureau of Anti-corruption (BAC) has lost its credibility. The BAC is now in the grips of the political circle.

However, the government must be free of corruption before it forms an anti-corruption commission, they said.

Former cabinet secretary Mujibul Haq said the BAC is increasingly used to harass people.

President of the Workers Party Bangladesh Rashed Khan Menon blamed both the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the main opposition Awami League for not constituting an independent anti-corruption commission despite repeated pledge. "Both parties pledged to form the commission but once they came to power they did not keep the promise."

Regional cooperation

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oping the country's water management and formulating a water policy, Khaleda urged the local experts to give emphasis on evolving, developing and applying less-expensive homespun technologies.

She discouraged use of expensive technology for resolving water-management problem.

Justifying her suggestion the PM said many water-related problems could be solved through indigenous know-how and commoners take that course indeed.

Water Resources Planning Organisation (WARPO), a government institution, and BRAC has organised the five-day workshop at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

The Water Resources Ministry and the Asian Development Bank jointly sponsored the workshop supported by the Netherlands and Danish governments.

Around 300 water specialists are taking part in the workshop -- some 150 of them from foreign countries and international organisations. The countries include host Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Japan and Singapore.

Water Resources Minister LK

India to produce cruise missiles commercially by 2004

AFP, New Delhi

India will begin the commercial production of anti-ship cruise missiles by 2004, the Press Trust of India quoted officials as saying yesterday.

Sivathanu Pillai, chief of an India-Russia joint venture commercial project developing the system, said the supersonic Brahmos missile would be produced not only for India's defence forces but also for export.

The anti-ship missile's maiden test-flight took place in June 2001 and was launched again from a ship in April, Pillai said, adding after the two successive tests the production of the missile was in "full swing."

"Malaysia, South Africa and many other countries have shown a keen interest to go in for Brahmos missiles and the company has plans to start commercial production by 2004," the chief executive of the joint venture told PTI.

Industries in India and Russia were gearing up for the serial production of the Brahmos with many of the software systems, components and spares being supplied by private entrepreneurs of both the countries, the official said.

Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee last month said the Agni and the supersonic Brahmos will be soon inducted into the defence services.

Nine-shooter

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Haji Selim, former Awami League lawmaker from old part of the capital.

Police said he used to control 11 ghats in the old parts of the city. He would also serve notices of local arbitration and occupy lands in the Old City on behalf of local influentials in the old city. He would also.

Babul hogged the headlines when he was photographed in different dailies with a nine-shooter rifle, chasing pickets during a hartal in the city when Awami League (AL) was in power. Despite assurances from the high-ups at the time, he was not arrested.

The accused served as a caretaker at the Waiseghat residence of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal leader Noor-e-Alam Ziku. Since then 'Ziku' was used before his name. The accused then started working with AL leader Haji Selim's business house Madina Trading. Babul then started joining political rally and procession.

The accused comes from Daudkandi in Comilla though he was born and brought up in Keraniganj. He is married and father of three daughters and a son.

Fayez

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appointment letter within a couple of days.

Appointment of Prof. SMA Fayez as DU VC was almost finalised in first week of this month. But the process was delayed as some pro-BNP teachers belonging to the 'Noakhali group' opposed his appointment.

Prof. SMA Fayez joined Dhaka University in 1973 as a teacher after completing PhD. He was also chairman of the Public Service Commission (PSC) from 1993 to 1998.

The post of VC fell vacant on July 31 when Prof. Anwarullah Chowdhury resigned in the face of students' agitation following police atrocities on female students of Shamsunnaah Hall of the university.

Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof. AFM Yusuf Haider is serving as acting VC since then.

Bangladesh

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Trans-Tasmanian rival on Bangladesh.

It will be Bangladesh's third meeting against the Kiwis in one-day internationals. The whipping boys of international cricket had lost their previous two games without any fight. Bangladesh lost the first match by 161 runs in the Australasia Cup way back in 1989. New Zealand scored a mammoth 338 in that game.

Bangladesh lost their second match against New Zealand by six wickets in the 1999 England World Cup. They could manage to score 116 before being bowled out in 37.4 overs.

With a poor track record of only three wins in their 54 ODI appearances, Khaled Mashud's men only can expect a respectable defeat after being punished by Australia in their first match on September 19.

Bangladesh scored only 129 in that match that Australia overhauled in 20.4 overs and for the loss of only one wicket.

Bangladesh: (From) Khaled Mashud, Javed Omar, Al-Shahriar, Habibul Bashar, Tushar Imran, Alok Kapali, Khaled Mahmud, Mohammed Rafique, Fahim Muntasir, Monjurul Islam, Talha Jubair, Mohammad Ashraf, Taposh Baishya and Mazharul Huq.

Besieged Arafat HQ

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and surrender or they will blow up the offices on our heads," a Palestinian security official inside Arafat's offices told AFP.

An army spokeswoman confirmed that troops were calling everyone to leave the building ahead of an explosion, which was "part of an ongoing operation," but she refused to give further details.

Later, she retracted her statement.

Aides of the veteran 73-year-old leader earlier described the situation inside his headquarters as "very serious," with food and water scarce and the 250 people holed up there seeking safety after the building was hit by an Israeli tank round late Friday.

A Palestinian security source also inside the building said the army had laid wires around Arafat's office, and was expecting Israeli troops to enter the compound within the coming hours.

"The situation is one of complete destruction, and we are expecting

they will enter Arafat's office sometime soon," he told AFP by phone Saturday evening, saying the noise of explosions and bulldozers had not stopped since the morning.

Three loud explosions caused damage to Arafat's office earlier in the day as Israeli sappers demolished a nearby interior ministry block. After the explosions, an Israeli bulldozer pulled up alongside the office building, striking its walls several times with its blade before withdrawing.

Israeli troops had already destroyed an overhead walkway linking Arafat's office to an adjoining reception room.

Part of the reception hall was bulldozed Saturday and a semi-destroyed building that had been used as a prison was completely flattened by Israeli troops, the security source told AFP.

Meanwhile, the Israeli army yesterday cut off the electricity, water and telephone lines to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's

office, where he has been besieged for three days, a Palestinian official said.

"The Israeli army today cut off the water, electricity and phone lines to the Palestinian president," said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity, adding that the links had previously been cut but had then been restored.

A member of Arafat's entourage inside his embattled office confirmed that the power had been cut. "The air conditioning is no longer working," he told AFP by mobile phone.

The Israeli army has besieged Arafat's office since Thursday, razing every other building in the compound, after back-to-back suicide attacks which killed seven people, plus the two bombers.

Meanwhile, four Palestinians were killed by Israeli gunfire as protests erupted across the West Bank and Gaza Strip early yesterday in a show of support for Yasser Arafat.

Moudud: ad hoc judge

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can hear the case and six other judges of the appellate division cannot do so for technical reasons. Four of them earlier made it known to the chief justice that they would feel embarrassed to hear the case. The rest two sat in the High Court bench that delivered the verdict of the case. As such, they cannot hear the appeal now.

Against this backdrop, the chief justice wrote to the president about the current status of the case on September 18. Based on the letter, Moudud reportedly told newsmen on Thursday that the chief justice had requested appointment of an ad hoc judge -- a statement he now denies.

Asked how the judges could feel embarrassed even before having the case at hand, Moudud said he did not know the answer. "I am not sure whether judges feel embarrassed as political activists bring out processions wielding clubs against

court verdicts, and the leader of a particular political party brings charges that verdicts are delivered at the directives of a minister."

"The Awami League wants to get political mileage out of the case by delaying its disposal," he said. "They (Awami League) could have disposed of the case had they been sincere while in power."

Meanwhile, a constitutional expert, Dr M Zahir, told The Daily Star yesterday that appointment of any number of judges on ad hoc basis would not resolve the crisis.

"We have to find out why they (judges) feel embarrassed," he said. "The residence of a brother of a judge who sat in the High Court bench on the case was set afire by the mob. The Awami League government did not take any action in this regard, nor did the then chief justice let the judges act on their mettle."

The Bangabandhu Murder Case

has been sent to the backburner after a judge expressed his embarrassment to hear the leave-to-appeal in August last year.

The chief justice then requested appointment of a judge on an ad hoc basis, but the government ignored the plea. Later, four more judges also expressed embarrassment.

BUET

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Committee is likely to sit within a couple of days to decide on the date of BUET's reopening.

Earlier on June 8, BUET was closed for two months due to campus unrest following the death of Sabehur Nahar Sony, a female student of the university who was killed in the crossfire between two factions of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD). The university would open on August 11, only to be closed in less than a month on September 8.

Tight leash on NGOs

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the committee and the NGOs would be briefed on the guideline.

The NGOs would not be allowed to get involved in any political activities since "they are meant only for development work".

Meeting sources said the NGOs would be required to explain utilisation of foreign funds.

Regarding the NGOs involved in micro-credit and business activities, the committee suggested legal actions against those organisations collecting additional service charge from borrowers.

Their service charge would be fixed after consultation with the Bangladesh Bank. The NGOs would not be allowed to use development funds for business purposes without permission of the NGO affairs bureau.

The committee has recommended involvement of the local administration in NGO activities to ensure transparency and accountability. The deputy commissioners or the upazila nirbahi officers (UNOs) would hold monthly coordination meetings on the approved projects of the NGOs and send progress reports to the bureau.

Similarly, the union parishad chairmen would visit the NGO projects in their areas and file reports.

Until the revival of the upazila and zila parishads, the deputy commissioners and the UNOs would supervise the NGO projects.

The committee has also recom-

mended that the NGOs would be allowed to run their educational programmes only with the books and syllabuses of the education boards and the non-formal education directorate. The primary and mass education department may distribute the books to the NGO-run primary schools free.

The committee categorically said the Association of Development Agencies of Bangladesh (ADAB) has no legal basis and as such, it is not mandatory for NGOs to get its membership.

But there could be a body on coordination of the NGOs. However, all members of the organisation must be registered with the NGO bureau. The body would have an elected committee.

But this coordinating organisation would not be allowed to receive any foreign aid or donation under any circumstances for any project or micro-credit programme. Each NGO would have direct contact with the government and their activities would be run in consultation with the government.

The committee has recommended strict guidelines so that salaries, allowances and operating costs of the NGOs do not exceed a certain percentage of budgets.

It proposes legal action against any NGO for receiving foreign funds without government approval.

The committee will also recommend formulation of new laws so that property of local and foreign NGOs would be considered trust

property, and government permission would be needed to transfer and sell the property. The NGOs would have to submit a list of all moveable and immovable properties to the NGO bureau every year.

It decided to strictly implement the existing laws under which the NGOs are required to pay one per cent service charge while applying for permission for any foreign funds.

The committee observed that the service charge is not being collected for various reasons.

The NGOs would not be allowed to change their project areas, fields of activities and projects without permission of the government to ensure 'highest utilisation of limited resources'. The NGOs would have to clearly mention their programme components and activities, and funds and their utilisation.

The constitution and executive committee of each NGO must be approved by the government. The government would also formulate necessary policies about procurement by the NGOs.

With the exception of Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk, all other members of the committee -- Health Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain, Information Minister Tariqul Islam, Industries Minister MK Anwar, Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Mujahid and Director General of the NGO bureau HN Abul Kashem -- attended the meeting.

India in semifinal

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NatWest Trophy final at Lord's in July.

England skipper Nasser Hussain's fears about the Indian batting came true as he found that 11 fielders were not enough to check runs which flowed with amazing rapidly from Sehwal's bat.

Sehwal, 24, put India on course for an emphatic win with a 192-run stand with Ganguly, who was initially outscored by his junior partner before finishing the job with three sixes and 12 fours in his 19th century.

Sehwal toyed with the England attack with a wide range of attacking shots to reduce the rival bowlers and fielders to a state of helplessness during his second hundred.

Sehwal, who scored a 69-ball century against New Zealand at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground here last year, raced to his fifty off just 37 balls and the three-figure mark off 77.

He smashed 21 fours and one six before giving a return catch to left-arm spinner Ian Blackwell, but not before virtually reducing the match to a no-contest with his bold and clean hitting.

The fireworks began early in the innings as Sehwal punished pacer Andrew Caddick for three fours in an over. The Indian offered a difficult chance on three off Caddick, but the ball flew past second-slip Nick Knight.

Sehwal's pyrotechnics overshadowed slow half-centuries from England's Blackwell (82) and Knight (50).

Blackwell slammed a 68-ball 82 and Knight 50 as England overcame a horror start to reach a fighting total after electing to bat. They were struggling at 7-2 before being rallied by the left-handers.

The pair's impressive efforts were pushed into the background as Sehwal went on the rampage, much to the delight of a capacity crowd.

In contrast, England wobbled in the beginning before Knight stood the innings with a 73-run stand for the third wicket with Ronnie Irani (37) and Blackwell produced a flurry of shots late in the innings in his second match.

Blackwell, 24, showed a sound temperament in testing conditions to dominate the Indian attack as he shared a 104-run stand for the sixth wicket with veteran Alec Stewart (35).

Blackwell cracked three sixes and six fours before being caught short of the crease while coming back for the second run in the last over. England added 79 in the last 10 overs after being rattled by Nehra.

Tempers frayed as Zaheer exchanged a few words with the England captain, who appeared to have lost his cool before falling to a wild shot in the next over.

More polluters

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longer than we expected," he said.

A total of 895 out of the 1000, including 800 auto-rickshaws and 200 auto-tempo and auto-vans, yesterday collected the required sticker from the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA).

Although the ban aimed to stop air pollution in the city, the BRTA yesterday issued the stickers without taking into account fitness of the vehicles. "We have issued the stickers as per the list provided by the Oikya Parishad," said a BRTA official last night.

Communication Minister Barister Nazmul Huda told The Daily Star last night that he has asked the BRTA officials to issue stickers to the vehicles only after getting confirmation of fitness of the vehicles.

According to sources, the issue of fitness of the two-stroke three wheelers was also not taken into consideration while issuing stickers to the 5,500 vehicles earlier. BRTA officials issued the stickers accord-

ing to a list provided by the Oikya Parishad.

Acknowledging it, the communication minister said, "I have seen a number of auto-rickshaws emitting black smoke on city roads after September 1. And I have asked the BRTA not to issue stickers to those unfit vehicles this time."

But a number of auto-rickshaw drivers who got their stickers yesterday said the BRTA officials issued the sticker without examining the fitness.

On August 20, an agreement was signed between Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) and Dhaka Auto-tempo, Auto-rickshaw, Auto-Truck Malik-Sramik Oikya Parishad to ban 12,500 two-stroke three wheelers out of a total of 18,000 from September 1.

As per the agreement, 5,500 such vehicles were required to stick special BRTA stickers to the windshields from September 1. Besides, these three wheelers were painted white with a yellow stripe.

Khaleda, Hasina condemn

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other occupied Palestinian and Arab territories.

Dhaka called upon the international community, the members of the UN Security Council, specially the permanent members, to pressure Israel to immediately withdraw all its forces from Ramallah and other occupied Palestinian and Arab lands to create an atmosphere for restoration of the peace process.

Meanwhile, Awami League president and Leader of the Opposition in parliament Sheikh Hasina has condemned the assassination bid on Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and expressed her deep concern over the fresh wave of attacks on his Ramallah headquarters by the Israeli forces.

In a statement here yesterday, Sheikh Hasina said the racist Israeli rulers had turned Palestine into a "killing ground" with an aim to suppress the voice of the independence-loving heroic people of Palestine.

She said the Israeli rulers were forced to withdraw the siege on Yasser Arafat's headquarters in the face of united opposition and protest by the world opinion, Muslim Ummah and Arab countries. But she regretted that Israel again launched barbaric attack on Arafat's headquarters in a heinous attempt to kill

the Palestinian leader.

On behalf of the people of Bangladesh and her party, Hasina expressed total support to and solidarity with the just struggle for establishing independent Palestine and the brave declaration of Yasser Arafat not to bow to any pressure.

Expressing her deep concern over the safety and security of Yasser Arafat, the AL chief called upon the international community, including the Arab countries and the Muslim Ummah to come forward to protect the life of Yasser Arafat and stop successive attack on the Palestinian people with an objective to establish permanent peace in the middle east.

Shaheed Minar

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The meeting was informed that following the September 16 attack that left four policemen killed, 169 people were arrested for interrogation. Eleven of them were kept in custody while the rest were released.

Mannan Bhuiyan also told newsmen that yesterday's meeting took stock of overall law and order situation and asked all concerned to be extra cautious about incidents of violence during the upcoming Durga Puja.

Campus turmoil

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tion might lead to closure of the university. At Rajshahi University, the situation worsened when workers of the Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) attacked supporters of the Progressive Students Alliance (PSA), a forum of eight left-leaning student organisations, on August 28.

The PSA has since then been demonstrating on the campus in demand of the resignation of Proctor Nurul Ahsan, punishment to the ICS men and reforms of the Rajshahi University Act, 1973.

Talking to The Daily Star, academician Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury blamed partisan interest of the ruling parties for the current turmoil on the campus.

Unwanted intrusion of the politicians in the academic affairs has deteriorated the standard of education and destroyed generations of promising youths, he added.

However, instead of taking proper steps to address the crisis, the government appears busy accusing the opposition parties of sponsoring unrest in the educational institutions. Prof. Chowdhury said.

He observed that absence of students belonging to the elite families in the public universities has prompted the politicians to take little or no interest in these institu-

tions. Last year between July and September, indefinite strikes enforced by the JCD and ICS suspended academic activities of the country's major educational institutions including Dhaka University, Chittagong University, Rajshahi University, Jahangirnagar University, Shaheed Tajul Islam Science and Technology and Dhaka Medical College.

Outlaws

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commit crimes only to collect money.

Police sources however claimed that the outlawed Sarbaraha Party split in many groups in the last three years and many of the activists fled their respective areas following crackdown by law enforcers.

Golam Mostafa, DIG Barisal Range, said police are vigilant about activities of the outlaws.

It is alleged that local armed miscreants also commit crimes identifying themselves as members of Sarbaraha Party. Sometimes they also use political colour.

Sources also said that during the police crackdown in the south-western region of the country, many criminals fled to the southern region and took shelter at dens of Sarbaraha Party men.