

Journal of Bangladesh Studies launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Journal of Bangladesh Studies (JBS), a periodical addressing important development issues of the country, was launched in the city yesterday.

JBS is a peer-reviewed journal published by Bangladesh Development Initiative (BDI), a nonprofit and non-political corporation based in the USA, and the Association for Economic and Development Studies on Bangladesh (AEDSB), a think-tank based in Washington DC. The journal will be published twice a year.

JBS was first launched in the USA in 1998 and the hard copy of the journal's current issue was made available for the first time in Bangladesh yesterday under the authority of the East West University (EWU).

Speaking as chief guest at the journal's launching ceremony organised by the EWU at its Mohakhali campus, noted economist Prof. Wahiduddin Mahmud said JBS will provide a common platform for interaction between expatriate scholars and the country's policymakers, which could go a long way in solving Bangladesh's development-related problems.

Prof. Mahmud, who was advisor to the caretaker government in

1996, said such a platform of partnership between the expatriate scholars and professionals, and the country's intelligentsia including researchers, planners, teachers and students could open up many new fields of development before the country.

Addressing the ceremony, president of the university's Board of Directors and former governor of Bangladesh Bank Dr. Mohammed Farshuddin said, "Just as any development work without a theoretical framework cannot sustain, likewise any similar undertaking without a practical value is also bound to fail."

Through JBS, we want to disseminate the knowledge we consider to be of very practical value, he said.

Dr. Ahmed said the JBS puts into perspective the mainstream development issues in Bangladesh, and as such the country's scholars would be encouraged to provide their inputs in the journal.

Former EWU pro-VC Dr. Muhammad Musa presented the history of the journal at the function. JBS articles are solicited from professionals engaged in a variety of fields.

A number of academicians, university faculty members and distinguished persons were present at the launching ceremony yesterday.

Proshika slates attack on its offices

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Proshika, one of the leading non-government organisations (NGOs) in the country, yesterday condemned the police raids on its two offices in Satoria and Manikganj in the early hours of Monday.

In a written statement yesterday, Proshika expressed deep concern at the police raids on its Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC) at Koita in Satoria and an Area Development Centre (ADC) at Manikganj by a special police team from Dhaka together with Manikganj police at around 3:00am on Monday.

The Proshika statement said police took away important books, audio-tape cassettes, papers related to the Liberation War of 1971 and rehabilitation programme for freedom fighters and writings on secularism and fundamentalism from the two centres.

Termining the police action as 'continuation of the oppressive measures' by a section of anti-NGO elements in the government, Proshika expressed its total dismay and indignation over such repression of "its legitimate activities".

"Driven by vengeance, the anti-NGO elements are out to harass Proshika in various ways ever since the present alliance government came to power", the statement said, adding that Monday's raids on Proshika offices were the demonstration of their anger and enmity.

Proshika demanded immediate halt to such harassment and repression and expressed the hope that the quarters concerned would refrain from taking such vindictive steps against it.

Home ministry

FROM PAGE 12
Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Home Minister Atif Hossain Chowdhury, Information Minister Tariqul Islam, Livestock and Fisheries Minister Sadeque Hossain Khoka and State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar attended the meeting.

The AL and different other organisations have dismissed the probe report as politically biased and designed to undermine the opposition party.

Sources in yesterday's meeting said the government is determined to go ahead with the report and, if necessary, would take legal action against those responsible for the bomb attacks.

"The home ministry will consult with the law ministry in making recommendations. We may go for legal action if the recommendations make a solid ground for it," said one of the ministers.

The ministers who attended the meeting happened to be the members of the cabinet committee on law and order. The meeting was arranged after informal discussions at the Prime Minister's Office in the past few days.

Polythene

FROM PAGE 12
They also damaged three microbus, three auto-rickshaws and a rickshaw in front of the market. Additional police forces from the Lalbagh station went to the spot and also brought the situation under control.

Police arrested four people - Mohammad Ismail, Mohammad Jahangir Alam, Mohammad Hanif and Mohammad Imran Hossain.

A case was filed with Lalbagh Police Station in this regard.

Bappi

FROM PAGE 12
him. Bappi also said they would go to Jatrabari, Alfia Miah added.

The deposition further said that at about 5:30 pm, he (witness) had got a telephonic message from Jatrabari Staff Quarters, demanding a ransom of Tk 20 lakh for Bappi. If the demand was not met, Bappi's fate would be like that of Shihab Ahmed (a schoolboy abducted and killed in the city earlier), the caller warned. He then went to the staff quarters and waited there. As he did not find Bappi there, he sent some one to Shipon's house at Demra. Shipon's parents informed him that Bappi went out for a walk with Ripon, Zahid, Sanjit and Shipon (four accused).

"We looked for Bappi at various places till 10 pm but found him nowhere. Later, I filed an abduction case with Kotwali Police Station. Police then arrested Shipon's father Rafiqul Alam, Ripon and Zahid. They gave statements to the magistrate that they (Shipon, Ripon, Sanjit, Sankar and Sharif) had abducted Bappi, strangled him and dumped his body in the Shitalakhya river," Alfia Miah told the court.

The witness was then cross-examined by the defence lawyers. Bappi's decomposed body was recovered from the Shitalakhya at Kutubpur Gudara Ghat on August 14.

Investigation officer (IO) of the case submitted charge-sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM's) Court, Dhaka, against five persons including Shipon on August 21.

Accused Shipon, Ripon, Sanjit and Sankar, now in jail custody, were produced before the court yesterday. The other accused, Sharif, has been absconding since the incident.



Smoke billows from the house of Abdel Khalek al-Natsheh, a leader of the radical Islamic group Hamas who has been in Israeli custody for a month, after the Israeli army blew it up in the West Bank city of Hebron yesterday

Gujarat temple killers slayed

FROM PAGE 1
cially in Gandhinagar, after Tuesday's attack and ahead of a strike called for Thursday by Hindu rightwingers to protest what they claim is Pakistan's involvement in the attack.

"We do not anticipate any kind of backlash or trouble but we are also not ruling out any such possibility," said local police chief Pramod Kumar.

"Any general strike has the potential to create violence. All VIPs, holy shrines, government buildings and installations are being protected."

The militants had burst into the temple complex late Tuesday afternoon and lobbed grenades at devotees before spraying them with automatic gunfire.

The militants then took up positions on the terrace of the temple, where they fired on anyone down below trying to leave the complex.

Police and soldiers, however, managed to rescue hundreds of people by using other entrances into the complex.

Once all devotees had either been cleared from the area or had taken refuge in rooms inside the complex, the Black Cats, flown in from Delhi, were sent in before midnight.

Police Brigadier Raj Satopathy, who directed the operation, said the darkness had hampered the mission.

"We were in the light, so they could see us. They were in the bushes so we could not see them," the brigadier said.

"So we waited till the first ray of

the light and at 5:00 am we launched aggressively and in the next hour-and-a-half the operation was complete."

The Akshardham temple late Tuesday had resembled a battle zone, with rescuers stretching dead and injured to waiting ambulances while heavily armed police and soldiers flooded into the area.

By midnight, more than 600 worshippers had been rescued from the complex, officials said, adding some 75 were treated with gunshot or shrapnel injuries.

A high alert, meanwhile, was sounded in New Delhi and in the states of West Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu and security was stepped up at key Hindu temples countrywide, officials said.

The attack was also condemned by US President George W. Bush and leaders from Britain and elsewhere.

India's chief Muslim cleric Ahmed Bukhari warned the attack could again spark Hindu-Muslim violence in the strife-torn western state.

Some 1,000 people, mostly Muslims, died in riots that erupted in February and raged for three months in Gujarat.

The riots broke out after a Muslim mob on February 28 torched a train carrying Hindu activists, killing 58 people.

"Riots can start, there is a distinct possibility of an eruption because just three days ago we saw communal violence in Gujarat," Bukhari, the head of India's largest mosque said in New Delhi.

Political harassment

FROM PAGE 1
woman needs to be searched, police should try to take a woman witness from the neighbourhood.

On the night of September 18, law enforcement agencies raided the residences of AL president member Amir Hossain Amu, central leader Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, former Dhaka mayor and Dhaka city unit AL president Mohammad Hanif and two former AL MPs, Haji Md Selim and Habibur Rahman Mollah.

On the same night, they also raided 'Sabujmati,' a welfare organisation of Saber Hossain Chowdhury, political advisor to the opposition leader Sheikh Hasina, bifolded the security guard and vandalised the office. A group of 20-22 plainclothesmen raided the Sabujmati at Khilgaon at 2:30am.

Md Mir Hossain, a security man of the Smart Limited, who was on duty at the Sabujmati office, wanted to file a general diary (GD) with the Khilgaon Police Station the following day. But the police refused to accept his complaint.

Two days later, the guard filed a petition case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, accusing five police officers of the Khilgaon Police Station of Intimidation Officer-in-Charge (OIC) Md Imtiaz Rahman and 18-20 other unidentified persons of illegal entry and physical assaults.

In his petition case, Hossain said he and another guard, Selim, were assaulted as he could not give the policemen the keys to the locked office rooms. The plainclothesmen also damaged the furniture and computers inside the hall room on the second floor.

Earlier, plainclothesmen raided the residences of AL president member and former industries minister Tofail Ahmed and AL central leader Mukul Bose on September 11 and 15 respectively.

Raids were carried out on the residences of senior AL leaders and former ministers Tofail Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim, Motia Chowdhury and Saber Hossain Chowdhury on August 30.

The Eskaton residence of Amir Hossain Amu was raided on August 21 while the Kalabagan residence of former chief whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah and the Segun Bagicha residence of former minister Obaidul Kader were raided on July 2.

The Gulshan residence of Tofail was raided on June 27 while those of Amu and AL law secretary advocate Sahara Khatun were raided on April 4. The residence of Sahara's brother Md Yunus Mia was raided

too on April 19.

Police raided residences of AL publicity secretary Abdul Mannan at Sariakandi and Bogra Sadar on February 28 while raids were carried out thrice on the village home of AL office secretary Abdul Mannan Khan on December 23 last year and on January 5 and August 15 this year. Earlier, plainclothesmen raided a business office of AL lawmaker and popular actor Asaduzzaman Noor in Dhaka.

Besides, AL sources claimed that numerous police raids were carried out on the residences of many grassroots leaders and workers of the party throughout the country over the last 11 months.

The Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) permits any police officer to arrest a person without an order from the magistrate and without any warrant provided that the man in question commits a cognisable offence, or if a 'reasonable complaint' is made against him, or if there are reasons to suspect that he may commit crime.

But the law clearly explains that "by virtue of his office, a police officer may arrest a person under this section on reasonable suspicion. But it was not at all the intention of the law giver that the police

officer should at his own sweet will arrest anybody he likes, although he may be a peace loving citizen of the country. 'Reasonable suspicion' means a bona fide belief on the part of the police officer that an offence has been committed or is about to be committed".

India defeated South Africa by 10 runs in the day-night semifinal of the Champions Trophy cricket tournament at the Premadasa Stadium here on Wednesday.

India: 261 for nine in 50 overs (Sehwag 59; Y. Singh 62; Pollock 3-43)

South Africa: 251 for six in 50 overs (Gibbs 116; Kallis 97)

AFP, Colombo

Power supply to Natore, Rajshahi disrupted due to grid failure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, rajshahi

A 'major system failure' at the Harishpur Grid Station led to power failure in all the six upazilas of Natore and parts of Rajshahi for nearly 11 hours early yesterday.

Most of the business institutions, mills, factories could not operate due to the power failure while work at various banks and government offices were also disrupted.

The system failure occurred when two transformers short-circuited during heavy rain. Consequent fire burnt many connecting wires but no major damage was reported.

The power supply was suspended at around 3:00am. Senior engineers from Rajshahi rushed to the scene and managed to restore power supply within 2:48pm.

BTV DG made information secy-in-charge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed Nazmul Alam Siddiqi, director general of Bangladesh Television, secretary in-charge of the Ministry of Information, a highly placed source in the establishment ministry said.

Siddiqi replaced Information Secretary Mirza Tasadqu Hussain Beg. Beg has been transferred to the Planning Commission as a member, the source, who asked not to be named, said.

The government, however, did not appoint anybody for the post of the BTV director general.

Titas CBA leader killed

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Reza, son of Dr. Sahidullah and a resident of Madhya Bashabo, was the third among four brothers and two sisters. The victim is survived by two daughters. Reza is the younger brother of the incumbent president of the CBA of Titas, hospital sources said quoting his relatives.

The relatives said Reza's rivals might have hired gangsters to kill him. Reza had a rivalry with Habib and Shahnoor of the CBA. Habib also threatened Reza of dire consequences on Tuesday. Several employee and leaders of the CBA went to the DMCH morgue to see the body.

The duty officer of the Shyamrup Police Station said no case was filed till 10:00 last night.

Meanwhile, in another incident, a mobile team of the Kafrul Police Station gunned down an alleged criminal at Bhasantek in the city yesterday afternoon.

Police said the dead, Shah Alam, was accused in several cases, including one for murder, in the city and in Pirojpur. The mobile police team shot Alam at about 4:00pm and rushed him to the DMCH where the doctors declared him dead.

Police said they shot him as he started running.

In yet another incident, a woman strangled her husband at their Dholaikhal residence in the city yesterday evening.

British, 32, son of Mohan Rati

Dring

FROM PAGE 1
official of the passport office when contacted last night.

"As directed by the home ministry, we have informed him of the government's decision," said the official requesting anonymity.

Simon Dring was not available for comments till writing of the report late last night.

New vice-chancellor

FROM PAGE 12
The DU VC said after the submission of the final report, the syndicate, the highest decision making body of the university, would decide as per university rules.

Talking about the debate regarding the restriction on holding of programmes at the Central Shaheed Minar, Prof. Faiz said as per the existing rules prior permission is necessary to hold any programme there. He said the entrance of people is neither banned nor would the university authorities turn away any organisation if they applied for any programmes at the Shaheed Minar premises. The only condition is that the sanctity of the place should be maintained.

Ruling out any possible deferral of the decision to reopen the university, Prof. Faiz said the university would re-open on October 3, as decided earlier.

"I have met with all the provosts, house tutors and proctors and asked them to start arrangements to reopen the dormitories on September 29 for the convenience of the students," the DU VC said.

"And, after reopening, my first job as the vice-chancellor will be to restore a congenial atmosphere and to reduce prevailing session jams," he said.

Refuting any probable demonstration on the campus after once the university reopens, Prof. Faiz said, "I am very much optimistic that the students will return to their

classes instead of joining in any agitation as their demands have been met."

Prof. Faiz also said they were thinking about including extra curricular activities in the academic syllabus and thereby allow students to secure some extra marks.

"This will cause the students to take greater interest in sports, cultural functions, literary works and debate."

Though the new DU VC regretted the present state of student politics saying that it should be concerned with student issues, he is against a ban on it.

The DU VC pledged to hold polls of the Dhaka University Central Students Union (DUCSU) at a suitable time, while initiative would be taken to hold the convocation of the university regularly, he said, seeking cooperation of all.

Replying to a query on political appointment by the government, Prof. SMA Faiz said the chancellor appointed him as per the university ordinance and his academic excellence.

"I will be neutral in taking decision despite being in the highest office of the university," he said. "All students of the university are equal to me irrespective of their political affiliations and ideology."

He said all decisions on the affairs of the university would be taken after discussion with relevant bodies.

7 Christians

FROM PAGE 1
of race and religion."

"It was very active in voicing the grievances of people against injustices, be it an illegal eviction of poor from their homes or women suffering from violence or victims of any form of injustice."

Saldanha blamed Islamic militant supporters of the Taliban and al-Qaida, and condemned them for targeting a charity.

"The assailants must know that this welfare organisation had been working for human rights of all human beings in Pakistan much, much before the war against terrorism started in Afghanistan."

The attack is the fifth deadly strike on Christian targets since October, when gunmen sprayed worshippers in a Catholic Church in eastern Punjab province, killing 16 people.

Two other churches have been hit since then, including the foreign diplomat-filled Protestant International Church in the capital Islamabad on March 17, in which five people were killed.

The chapel of the Taxisia Christian Hospital west of Islamabad was attacked in August. Four nurses were killed with grenades.

Armed men stormed a Christian school for the children of Western aid workers in the Murree hills northeast of Islamabad, also in August, killing six Pakistanis.

The private Human Rights Commission blasted the government for failing to prevent "another outrageous manifestation of the near complete collapse of law and order in the country."

"This is a clear retaliation from al-Qaeda and pro-Taliban organisations," Christian rights leader Shahbaz Bhatti, who heads the All Pakistan Minorities Alliance, told AFP.

"If such attacks continue we may have to appeal to the international community for protection of our lives, churches, institutions and property in Pakistan."

The attacks on Christians have claimed at least 38 lives, including one attacker.

The committee on gas reserve in its report said the country has a net recoverable reserve of between 12.04 trillion cubic feet (TCF) and 15.55 TCF measured in May 2002.

On the other hand, the utilisation committee has said that there is no scope for gas export from the present reserve as the country may face crisis by 2015 without any new discovery. The committee based its conclusion on the proven reserve of 16 TCF gas.

However, the utilisation committee said limited gas could be exported from the IOC's share of incremental discoveries.

Under an export formula, the present production sharing contracts (PSCs) with the IOCs must be renegotiated and new deals should be signed with possible buyers.

Gas export

FROM PAGE 12
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Reshuffle rumble

FROM PAGE 1
senior colleagues and different intelligence agencies about the performance and overall activities of all the ministers.

As per the reports, she took the resignation letters from the 16 members of the council of ministers.

However, those who are likely to be dropped from the council may be given other responsibilities and the size of the 60-member jumbo cabinet may be trimmed to around 45.

Official sources said because of the wind of reshuffle, work at the Bangladesh Secretariat has almost come to a standstill. Even the routine works are getting stalled.

The ministers and the state ministers, whose resignation letters were taken by the PM, are not paying proper attention to their ministerial works, as they already know that their days are numbered.

According to sources, the panicky ministers and state ministers are regularly lobbying with the PMO, the Hawa Bhaban, senior ministers and influential party leaders.

Talking to The Daily Star, several policymakers of the ruling BNP stressed the need for immediate reshuffle in the cabinet as the PM has already collected the resigna-

9-shooter

FROM PAGE 12
statement of Babul. Babul, who is on a four-day police remand, was arrested from Islampur in the old city on Saturday by a team of Kotwali Police.

Police said Babul is facing several criminal charges including murder, extortion and possession of illegal firearms.

They said Babul used to control 11 ghats on the bank of Buriganga in the old city and occupied lands in the area on behalf of local influential people. He once served as a caretaker at the Waizhat residence of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal leader Noor-e-Alam Ziku; hence the name 'Ziku Babul'.