

Writ against Gram Sarkar

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the government to explain in a week why the formation of Gram Sarkar should not be declared unconstitutional.

The rule came upon a writ filed by the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust in the form of public interest litigation challenging two Sections of the Gram Sarkar Act, 2003.

A High Court bench comprising Justice ABM Khairul Huq and Justice Syed Shahidur Rahman set July 14 for hearing of the rule.

The government enacted the law on February 27 this year providing for Gram Sarkar, the lowest tier of local government.

Under the act, every ward of Union Parishad (UP) will be treated as a village, which will have a Gram Sarkar. The statutory body headed by the UP member will consist of 15 members selected by the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO). The UP chairman will act as its advisor.

The government plans to constitute Gram Sarkar in each village of the 40,392 wards in 4,488 UPs from August 2.

Dr Kamal Hossain appearing for the petitioner submitted that the act

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Alliance calls for legal action against Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ruling coalition leaders yesterday vowed to resist the Awami League sponsored 'anarchy, violence, destruction and anti-state activities'.

They said the main opposition is engaged in anti-state activities and wants to come to power through the path of subversion.

Addressing a huge public meeting at Muktangan, organised jointly by the four-party alliance partners, the leaders urged the prime minister to take legal and constitutional action against AL chief Sheikh Hasina for her anti-state statements and root out the AL-sponsored 'subversive and violent activities'.

"The Awami League does not believe in democracy and the party patronises terrorism both in theory and practice. It is desperate to make parliament ineffective and create anarchy to destabilise the country," said BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan.

Bhuiyan said Sheikh Hasina and her party do not believe in the parliamentary system and are trying to render it inoperative. "Hasina does not want to go by the rules and procedures and abuses the govern

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Dhaka won't allow territory for anti-Myanmar acts

Visiting FM told during bilateral talks

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Myanmar received a positive spurt with Dhaka's assurance to the visiting Myanmar foreign minister, U Win Aung, that Dhaka will not allow its territory for use by any power to harm Myanmar.

"Non-interference in the internal affairs of another country is our principled stand", said Foreign Secretary Shamsur M Choudhury while briefing journalists about the

talks held yesterday between the two foreign ministers in Dhaka.

The visit follows relentless pressures from the US and many Western nations on Myanmar to set free the captive pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and to improve human rights condition.

The foreign secretary maintained that Dhaka obtained commitments from the visiting Myanmar foreign minister to take back the stranded Rohingya refugees; to move ahead with the construction of the Dhaka-Yangon

highway; and to obtain Myanmar's diplomatic support for Bangladesh's membership in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

The foreign secretary also confirmed that the Myanmar FM handed over a letter to the Bangladesh PM on behalf of the Myanmar PM.

While the foreign secretary declined to disclose the content of the letter, The Daily Star has learnt that the letter sought assurance from Bangladesh that Bangladesh's land, air or sea will

not be allowed for use by any country for military purpose against Myanmar.

Dhaka and Yangon share common goals and interests in many regional issues and the relations between the two neighbours have mostly been on an even keel. The relationship was further cemented by the visit of the Myanmar PM to Dhaka and a return visit by the Bangladesh PM to Yangon in

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PHOTO: PID

Visiting Myanmar Foreign Minister U Win Aung meets Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Two-way trouble... Polybags have been banned but they still appear in widespread use. Here on the Buriganga river, women wash scores of these highly environmentally hostile bags retrieved from dumps, which in turn pollute the river already dogged by a plethora of problems.

Bogra ammo haul 975 more bullets recovered from Jogarpara

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Kahalu police, assisted by Dupchachia police and the paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), recovered 975 more bullets from the Jogarpara here yesterday.

The bullets were recovered in two separate operations, said Kahalu thana Officer-in-Charge Wahidur Rahman.

A bag containing 500 bullets was recovered at 10:00am from a pond of Raisuddin after pumping the water out. Again, 475 bullets were recovered from a ditch about a quarter kilometre away.

Bullets recovered so far from Bogra add up to 96,257. Police said the search for more ammunition and explosives will continue.

AL relief in Army HQ's disclosure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil yesterday expressed relief following the Army Headquarters clarification about the ammunition and explosives recovered in Bogra.

"If those were not produced in the country's lone ordnance factory, then where did they come from?" the opposition leader asked in a statement.

He also asked the government to disclose the source of the huge ammunition.

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Major blast cases lost in blame game

ZAYADUL AHSAN

Major bomb blasts and ammunition hauls in the last four years still stand unresolved and criminals go scot-free because of politicisation of the investigation process.

To date, no-one knows who actually masterminded the bomb attack on the CPB rally at Paltan Maidan or on the Mymensingh cinemas. Although the leading political parties levelled charges

against each other, no proof was actually provided by investigators.

About 100 innocent people were killed and 500 injured in the

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bloodbaths -- inflicted largely by bomb explosions. Some of the injured never recovered and became disabled and the rest are still traumatised.

The governments paid some compensation to the victims and their families, but could not complete even a single investigation into the bestial acts. The subversive activities are still cloaked in mystery.

The train of carnage scarred the spirit of the nation, striking with regular intervals. Ten concert-goers were killed in an explosion at a

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Flood situation dips further

Cry for food, water and medicine gets louder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With heavy onrush of water from the uplands flood situation in the northern region of the country continues to aggravate further.

Few lakh marooned people in Kurigram, Gaibandha, Bogra, Jamalpur, Serajganj, Pabna,

Lalmanirhaat and Tangail districts are facing acute food, medicine and drinking water problems. A number of flood protection embankments are under threat.

Swelling rivers yesterday gripped more areas of the country's central part. Flood Warning Centres (WFC) in Dhaka predicted deterioration of the situation in Manikganj,

Munshiganj and Narayanganj districts in the next few days.

They however said the situation in the districts of Sylhet, Sunamganj, Moulvi Bazar, Habiganj and Comilla are likely to improve.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia

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Gross disparity in govt spending on students

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

Gross disparity exists in government spending on each student to meet 'recurring cost' of different types of educational institutions, according to official statistics.

In fiscal 1999-2000, government spending on a student of cadet college was above 13 times that on each student of government college and 27 times of non-government college.

The allocation for each student of cadet college was Tk 56,537 against Tk 4,285 for government college and Tk 2,103 for non-government college.

Recurring cost on each student at cadet college is 17 times higher than government secondary school and more than 60 times higher than non-government secondary school students.

Non-government secondary schools received the lowest allocation of Tk 940 a student and government secondary schools Tk 3,288 a student.

Government spending on a student of cadet college, starting from class seven till higher secondary level, is over 20 per cent higher

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Per student (capita) recurring cost by type of institution (In Taka)

INSTITUTION	1990-91	1994-95	1999-2000
Govt primary school	499	665	1031
Govt secondary school	1940	2658	3288
Non-govt secondary school	706	707	940
Govt college	1952	2704	4285
Non-govt college	903	1197	2103
Govt madrassah	4639	5075	6259
Non-govt madrassah	897	1129	1146
Technical and vocational	13318	15058	16305
Teachers training college/institute	11052	14046	17377
Cadet college	40367	45571	56537
University (public)	19892	24676	36381