

## 7 M-79 rifles, 12 guns

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The seized arms included anti-tank mines, anti-personnel mines, ingredients to make explosives, M-16, M-79 and AK-47 rifles.

The operations by the joint forces however often fail to meet their desired ends due to the dual role of the informers, sources allege.

On September 21 last year, the BDR seized a huge cache of arms and ammunition in Thanchir Bolipara area but could not arrest the operatives.

An army team in a raid on Luline Para area seized huge arms but again could not arrest the criminals. They have so far arrested only two persons.

The first successful operation was conducted on August 26 at Luline Punarbason Para under Roranchhari Upazila. The security forces seized an M-16 rifle, 200 rifle bullets, two grenade launchers and 40 grenades, a locally made gun, a rocket launcher, three bullets, two digital walkie-talkie, an AK-47 rifle with 127 bullets, a foreign-made pistol and huge quantity of medicine.

The following day, the BDR in a drive in Techri area of Naikhonchhari Upazila seized a .303 rifle, 73 bullets, a .12 bore shot gun, three cartridges and three sets of army uniforms.

Tipped off, the paramilitary forces conducted a drive on September 18 in Doochhri Hatir Matha area of the Upazila and retrieved 310 grenades, five coiled electric cables, three solar

panels, 130 kilogram of plastic exposure, five packets of gun power, a packet of low-power explosives and two acid containers.

The seizure also included 14 chemical containers, a packet of white potash, 10 masks, 226 grenades, a coiled safely fuse insulator, a shot gun, a binocular, 61 bullets of M-16 rifles, 11 telephone circuits, a set of antenna and 40 battery connectors.

The BDR seized four revolvers, seven bullets, a small gun, a telescope with carrier, three khaki belts, three camp carriages and huge quantity of crops from Kulapungchhara area of Thanchi Upazila on September 21.

They retrieved a homemade single barrel gun, 45 cartridges, a kilogram of lead and two machetes from a hill area, five kilometres away from Lemuchhari BDR camp, on October 20.

The paramilitary forces on November 5 seized two AK-47 rifles, 18 magazines, 1,005 bullets, a Chinese 7.62mm pistol with 14 bullets and two magazines and 80 cartridges of .22 bore gun from Doochhri Upazila.

On December 30, 32 anti-tank mines, seven anti-personnel mines, six rocket launchers, 10 charged rocket launcher clip, a GF bomb and 18 charged GF bombs were retrieved from Lemuchhari Para of the district.

## People rejected

**FROM PAGE 12**  
the "repressive BNP-Jamaat" would not be able to continue for long.

The AL chief was addressing a rally jointly organised by Gazipur District unit and Tongi Pourasava Awami League at Telephone Shipa Sangstha ground yesterday afternoon.

The AL organised the rally to protest 'police atrocities' on AL leaders Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Ahsanullah Master MP and Akhteruzzaman during hartal hours last week.

Hasina said about 26,000 AL leaders and workers were killed during the last two and a half years of 'misrule of the alliance government.'

"The Khaleda-Nizami coalition came to power through vote rigging, not through people's mandate. If they would have come to power through people's mandate, they would not be repressive on the opposition," she said.

She observed that the coalition government has been closing down industries one after another and making labourers jobless.

## Clarification

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The actual position as per the existing Privatisation Act is that PC is the only body and not any other agency of the government that can privatise SOEs.

## Speedy Trial

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Law Minister Moudud Ahmed however dismissed the explanation. "This is a successful law and that is why this has been extended by two years," he noted, "we have not received any complaint that this law has been used against the opposition parties."

He pointed out that since enactment of the law, 4,154 cases have been filed accusing 19,331 persons, while 3,034 cases have been disposed of. Of the cases disposed of, 3,804 persons were punished in 1,607 cases. There are 580 on-trial cases while 142 cases are being investigated.

The Jatiya Sangsad on April 9 approved the law with a section of the opposition lawmakers walking out in protest.

The law provides for a special court to try offenders in a period ranging from 30 to 60 days. It suggests rigorous imprisonment of two to five years for crimes disrupting social peace.

Offences under the law include hindrance to normal air, rail, road and river traffic movement, vandalism on transport and public and private property, mugging, illicit toll collection, violence in public places, obstruction to tender bidding and works of government officers and employees and their relatives.

He threatened to vote with the opposition who were to present three censure motions against the later Monday.

Sharon's unilateral disengagement plan involves, among other things, an evacuation from 17 of the Gaza Strip's 21 Jewish settlements, possibly by this summer, and from isolated West Bank settlements.

## AL rejects US envoy's

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The AL leadership also told the US ambassador the government obstructed the party's International Mother Language Day programmes and beat up its leaders, lawmakers and workers during the recent peaceful hartals.

AL leaders present included Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak, Suranjit Sengupta, SAMS Kibria, Sajeda Chowdhury, Motia Chowdhury, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Sellim, Kazi Zafullah, Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and Syed Abul Hossain.

Jalil pointed out that his party had placed three simple demands -- conducting parliament as per rules of procedures, expunging the filthy words and an apology from a state minister for hurling abuses against the opposition leader. If the government is sincere about bringing the main opposition party back to parliament, it can easily meet these demands, he felt.

He mentioned the government met the Jatiya Party's (Ershad) demands that included apology from the communications minister in parliament. "But they (government) are totally indifferent to our demands and it shows their double standard."

## Saifur sceptical about neutral chief for anti-graft body

**President assents to bill**  
**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman wondered yesterday where to find a 'neutral' boss for anti-corruption commission in an era of political division.

"We don't have angels in the country. Where can we get a commissioner who would be considered neutral by all," he asked journalists at the planning ministry.

"Politicians even question about credibility of caretaker government members," he said.

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday assented to the Anti-Corruption Commission Bill 2004.

The bill, tabled in the first session of parliament in the current year, was passed on February 17 in absence of major opposition parties -- Awami League and Jatiya Party.

## Independent MP Moqbul Hossain joins BNP

**UNB, Dhaka**

Syed Moqbul Hossain, an independent member of parliament (MP) elected from Sylhet-6 constituency, has joined the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

Hossain met Prime Minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday and expressed solidarity with the ideology of the party.

## Rajuk staff

**FROM PAGE 12**  
including legal steps today against what they termed politically-motivated termination.

"We are going to take a legal course to get back our job. They terminated our service in a totally illegal and politically-motivated decision stemming from the government's intent to replace us with pro-government people," said a typist who said he lost his job for being an Awami League (AL) supporter.

The sacked employees alleged immediately after their sacking supporters of the ruling alliance were transferred to state, town planning and building approval sections, to give them illegal monetary benefits, especially bribes.

## Altaf blames

**FROM PAGE 1**  
the attackers of the internationally reputed lawyer on his way to attend a public meeting at Rangamati in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

The home minister said armed opposition activists accompanying Dr Kamal swooped on workers of the Sama Odhikar Andolon (Equal Rights Movement) opposed to the CHT Peace Treaty.

"The Sama Odhikar Andolon was enforcing a peaceful blockade programme demanding annulment of the so-called CHT Peace Treaty and resignation of (PCJSS leader) Santu Larma. On the other hand, Santu has been enforcing separate programmes demanding implementation of the peace treaty. Amid such a volatile situation, Gono Forum leader Dr Kamal with a large motorcade carrying anti-government activists tried to get past the blockade. As the general public resisted them, the armed opposition activists attacked them," Altaf said in his statement.

He also claimed that neither the government nor the ruling party had any link with the incident, adding that an investigation was underway.

Lawmaker Kader Siddiqui of Krishak Samik Janata League was so annoyed by the home minister's statement that he immediately staged a walkout in protest after terming the statement untrue.

"This is untrue. Dr Kamal was going there (Rangamati) in a single car and there was no motorcade. I am walking out in protest."

Earlier, formulating his point of order, Kader Siddiqui said miscreants attacked Dr Kamal and damaged his car on his way to Rangamati yesterday morning and that when he met Kamal at the Chittagong Press Club yesterday afternoon, the Gono Forum leader was weeping at the insult and violence meted out to him.

Siddiqui said a prime ministerial spokesperson contacted him over phone inquiring about Dr Kamal and told him (Siddiqui) that the prime minister had summoned the home minister and asked him to take immediate action regarding the attack on Dr Kamal.

At this point, BNP's Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, chairman of the CHT Development Board who allegedly instigated the attack on Dr Kamal, rushed towards the home minister and told him something as Siddiqui and the Speaker were arguing over the issue's merit as a point of order.

Later, Siddiqui also threatened to resign from the House "if the government failed to inform the parliament what actions were being taken against Dr Kamal's attackers."

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia was also present in the House but did not take the floor.

## PM orders

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Hossain.

They felt that adequate steps should have been taken to ensure safety of Kamal Hossain as his programme was announced earlier.

The leaders expressed dissatisfaction that the authorities concerned did not take necessary security measures even after the 'Sama Adhikar Andolon' threatened to resist Kamal's visit to Rangamati.

## U-19 WC Cricket

**FROM PAGE 1**  
to other contenders for the world title with emphatic wins.

Bangladesh, placed in Plate Group 2, reduced Canada to 36 for five but the North Americans recovered to 136 all out in 37.2 overs at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

The home side were unsettled by off-spinner Shaheed Keshvani who threatened to run through the Bangladesh batting with figures of five for 29. But Keshvani received little support from the other bowlers and the hosts reached the target in 34.5 overs.

England put on a terrific batting show against New Zealand in a Super League Group B encounter by amassing 306 for two with skipper Alastair Cook and number four Samit Patel notching hundreds.

The young Black Caps were never in the chase under lights at the Bangabandhu National Stadium and lost their last wicket on 209.

Group B's other fixture, played at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan, saw Pakistan thrash Zimbabwe by nine wickets.

After dismissing Zimbabwe for 141, captain Khalid Latif cracked 84 not out as Pakistan reached 143 in 30 overs.

In another Plate fixture at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong, Uganda replied with 209 to Ireland's 329 for nine.

## AL, SKSD agree

**FROM PAGE 12**  
secretary of the SKSD, echoed Jalil's view, saying, "The outst-governement movement has to be waged with the specific objective to bring a culture of healthy politics against the present trend of criminal activities, corruption, looting and communalism."

Both leaders said there would be more talks on the details of the planned anti-government movement on a common platform. Yesterday's dialogue was part of the AL's series of talks with like-minded political parties in a bid to forge a united platform to launch an outst-governement movement.

Apart from Jalil, other members on the AL delegation were Amir Hossain Amu, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Abdur Razzak, Suranjit Sengupta, Motia Chowdhury, Obaidul Kader and Akhteruzzaman.

Siddiqui Rahman was aided by SKSD officials including Kazi Hatem Ali and Mosaddek Hossain Swapon.

## Attack on Dr Kamal

**FROM PAGE 1**  
dropping the visit to Rangamati where he was supposed to address a rally of pro-peace Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS).

Gono Forum Presidium Member Pankaj Bhattacharya, CPB central leader Khagesh Kiron Talukder, Adibasi Adhikar Andolon Convenor Professor Mesbah Kamal and Dhaka University teachers professor Gobinda Chakrabarty and Akhtar Sobhan Masnur also accompanied Dr Kamal in the journey.

The attack came on the second day of a three-day road blockade enforced by the Adhikar Andolon, an outfit of Bangalee settlers in the CHT agitating for the realisation of its nine-point demand including scrap of the peace pact and removal of PCJSS chief Jotirindra Bodhipriya Larma from the chairmanship of CHT regional council.

**'PREMEDITATED ATTACK'**  
Talking to journalists at Chittagong Press Club, Dr Kamal pegged the attack as a 'premeditated attempt' on his life and asked Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to quit.

"She failed to perform her responsibility, she should tell the people and could quit," he said, adding, "There is no administration in the country."

"The goons came close to our minibuses, peered inside and attacked us after being confirmed about our identities," he said.

"The attack was launched neither to vandalise our vehicles nor to resist us from going to Rangamati, but to kill us."

Dr Kamal said the incident occurred at around 10:00am when the motorcade reached the Rubber Garden area, about 3 kilometres off Raozan upazila headquarters.

"The miscreants blocked our way with logs, searched our vehicles and then carried out the attack with sticks and bricks amid shouts and use of filthy words."

"They tried to block our return to Chittagong in the same way. But because of our driver's presence of mind we could escape the terrorists and save our lives," he said.

At a press conference on February 15, the Adhikar Andolon declared Dr Kamal, Larma, Deputy Minister for CHT Affairs Moni Swapan Dewan and Manik Lal Dewan 'unwarranted' in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and accused Dr Kamal of fueling incitements against Bangladesh's independence and sovereignty.

**WAVE OF PROTESTS**  
The attack on the motorcade of Dr Kamal sparked a wave of protests across the country, especially in Chittagong and Rangamati districts.

The PCJSS called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in Rangamati district for today and Chittagong Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury issued a seven-day ultimatum to the government demanding immediate arrest and trial of the guilty.

"If the demands are not met within the deadline, we'll call a hartal," the mayor announced at a hurriedly called rally at the Shaheed Minar in the port city.

The Gano Forum and a range of other political organisations brought out protest processions or condemned the attack.

**POLICE INACTION**  
Talking to journalists in Chittagong, Dr Kamal criticised the local administration for failing to ensure their security.

"I had talked to the deputy commissioner (DC) and superintendent of police (SP) of Chittagong yesterday (Sunday). They assured us of giving police protection after 10:00am, but we did not find any policeman around when we came under the attack," he alleged.

Dr Kamal said he was planning to file a complaint about the attack after discussion with other leaders who were with him.

"The case will be lodged accusing Khagrachhari MP Wadud Bhuiyan," Dr Kamal said, accusing him of mas-terminating the attack, a charge dismissed by Bhuiyan.

In an interview with the BBC Radio, Bhuiyan said: "No, there was no attack at all. They presented the incident to journalists in a different way. Their objective was unacceptable as they were going to join a rally called by Shantu Larma amid the road blockade."

Ruling BNP lawmaker Bhuiyan, locally known as the key backer of the Odhikar Andolon, distanced himself from the group, but added that he supported some demands of the organisation including cancellation of the CHT peace pact.

The PCJSS, a political outfit of the indigenous people of the CHT, signed the landmark peace pact with the government in 1997 that ended two decades of bloody bush war in the highlands.

**TENSION IN RANGAMATI**  
The attack on Dr Kamal's motorcade amid the blockade that disrupted life in Rangamati cutting off the district's road links with other areas stoked tension in Rangamati.

Law-enforcers guarded the hot spots amid stepped up security.

On Sunday, activists enforcing a road blockade obstructed a convoy of Moni Swapan at Mahalchhari of Khagrachhari district.

The deputy minister was forced to drop his three-day visit to Khagrachhari because of the blockade by the Adhikar Andolon.

## Cashier, guard, produced before court

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi**

Boalia police yesterday produced the three arrested in connection with Sunday's robbery at Janata Bank (JB) Corporate Office at Shaheb Bazar in Rajshahi before a magistrate's court.

Police sought 10 days' remand for each of cashier Abul Kalam Azad, security guard Abdul Majid and Abdul Huq who was held when the robbers were leaving the bank with the booty. The court hears the case today.

Meanwhile, police failed to recover the looted Tk 8 lakh till the writing of this report at 7:00 last evening.

Asst. Ali, sub-inspector of Boalia Police Station and investigation officer of the case, yesterday told reporters that the dacoity was an 'arranged drama' and that some bank officials and employees might have link to the looting.

## Tk 100cr subsidy likely for pvt hospitals in next budget

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The government plans a Tk 100 crore subsidy in the next budget for new private sector hospitals.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman at a meeting with the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (MCCI) yesterday said the subsidy would come in the form of rebate on land price and duty benefits on hospital machinery.

MCCI President Kutubuddin Ahmed told the minister that the service sector that contributes about 60 percent of the GDP needs more thrust.

He pointed out that over Tk 3,000 crore is spent every year by patients seeking treatment abroad. If the health sector gets soft loans and duty benefits, investment will increase and money flight will reduce, he stressed.

## PCJSS enforces

**FROM PAGE 1**  
President Jyotirindra Bodhipriyo Larma alias Shantu Larma vowed to mobilise greater political support for its demands at national and international levels.

Unless the demands are met forthwith, Larma said his organisation will continue its vigorous agitation programmes including road blockades after celebration of the Adibashi (indigenous) New Year and SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examinations.

PCJSS leaders also condemned yesterday's attack on the motorcade of Dr Kamal Hossain, president of Gono Forum, who was on his way to Rangamati from Chittagong to attend the public meeting of the main indigenous organisation.

## Tourists

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also lead an 11-member Indian team at the opening ceremony, sources said.

Bangladesh Naval Cadet Core and NGO activists will assist SFD officials and employees during the week-long tiger counting programme, SFD officials said.

According to a SFD report in 1993, tiger population in Bangladesh side of the Sundarbans forest was about 400.

A recent SFD survey report revealed on average 25 people die from tiger attacks annually and 20 tigers have been killed during the last five years.

The ministry also formed five monitoring and supervising committees for the enumeration project in 55 divisions of the mangrove forest, sources said.

A five-member team from Bangladesh joined a tiger enumeration programme in the Indian part of the 5,800 square km Sundarbans in January, they added.

## Plan to limit

**FROM PAGE 12**  
losses. Operators set call limit according to the deposit of subscribers and snap the connection when the limit is exceeded. Subscribers can have higher call limit by increasing their deposit.

"The proposed call limit will help the BTBT avoid unrealistic phone bills," a senior official at the BTBT told The Daily Star, requesting anonymity.

Such a move would not inconvenience general subscribers as most of them make calls judiciously, he added.

He said although the BTBT snaps connections of defaulting subscribers and issues notice for bill payment, most of them, especially in the pay phone business, do not clear their dues and instead get a new connection under a different name.

"It takes long to settle these types of unpaid telephone bill claims when we take them to court," he said.

The 5,000-minute call limit is reasonable for household use. "If necessary, subscribers who need to make more calls will raise their security deposit to have a higher call limit," the official added.

He said the BTBT will need to install a software at its exchanges to introduce the call limit system.

It phased in reduced call rates at Tk 7.50 a minute for the US, UK, Canada, Australia, Malaysia, Germany, Italy and France. Similar rates would soon be introduced for Singapore and Hong Kong.

### JB CASH LOOT

## Cashier, guard, produced before court

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## Govt back-pedals

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Officials of Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) however said the postponement was necessary as the required infrastructure including electronic traffic management system and the proposed rickshaw by-lanes from Newmarket to Dhanmondi Road 1 are not ready yet.

DTCB Executive Director Quamrul Islam Siddiqui had earlier said everything was ready for the ban to be implemented from tomorrow. He was unavailable for comment as he is on a tour abroad.

The stretches of roads that were supposed to have been made off-limits to rickshaws are Kalabagan intersection to Azimpur via Newmarket and Science Laboratory to College Road (next to Bangabazar) via Shahbag and the National Press Club.

About DTCB's repeated failure to implement the ban, an official of the agency referred this correspondent to Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, who is also the chairman of the DTCB.

Khoka said the decision has been postponed in view of the inadequate public transport on the two roads as well as due to some unfinished work on the electronic traffic management system.

He said the ban will be implemented after the work is finished, but was unable to give a specific date for that.

Bangladesh Transport Foundation (BTF), a non-government organisa-

## Hartal cannot be banned

**FROM PAGE 1**  
"In India, one of the provinces tried to ban hartal by enacting law but it could never be implemented," said Saifur.