

FM's India remarks

FROM PAGE 1 security and natural resources management and that it should be seen as such," said the spokesman of the foreign ministry.

The statement came following reporters' query on a statement by the official spokesperson of Indian ministry of external affairs and a day after the Bangladesh high commissioner to India was summoned by the Indian foreign secretary to express India's surprise and dismay over Morshed's remarks.

"Maintaining friendly relations with India is central to Bangladesh's foreign policy and Bangladesh remains committed to moving these relations forward through a continuous process of dialogue and meaningful cooperation at various levels to find mutually acceptable solutions to all outstanding issues," the foreign ministry stressed.

With a secretary-level bilateral meeting on border-related issues due next week and a Joint River Commission meet this week, Foreign Secretary Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury told BBC Radio last night they hoped Morshed's comments would not adversely affect those meetings.

On Tuesday, Morshed launched a broadside at India on security, economic and water sharing issues while addressing the opening session of a dialogue for young journalists of Bangladesh and India.

In his address, Morshed denied Indian allegations that 195 camps of Indian insurgents exist in Bangladesh, allegations that were renewed by two senior Indian ministers two weeks ago.

"The list of insurgent camps from their (Indian) side increases at every meeting between us. But they have not been able to provide a single telephone number or address of these camps," the foreign minister had told the function.

On the other hand, he said, "We have given phone numbers, fax numbers and office addresses of Bangladeshi insurgent groups like Bangabandhu Andolon, who are in India, and criminals who are hosted by some groups there, but they have not done anything about it."

He had also criticised non-tariff barriers against Bangladeshi exports to India though India enjoys huge trade surplus. He warned of similar measures against Indian goods exported to Bangladesh to maintain a "win-win" situation for both the countries.

On border problems, the foreign minister had accused India of offering discussions only after creating the issues.

Dr Kamal

FROM PAGE 12 He said the rule of law is now under threat as the police are harassing common people instead of taking action against the culprits.

Dr Kamal said people of the country struggled to establish their basic rights but successive governments have failed to meet the popular aspirations.

Corruption, black money and crimes have taken a deep root in the society as criminals get immunity if they belong to the ruling party.

"There are patriotic persons in the ruling party too. But they are sidelined as corrupt and black money holders dominate," the Gono Forum leader observed.

He said the people do not want a mere change of government rather they want qualitative change in governance.

"The alliance government has lost the right to govern as it has failed to deliver good governance for what people elected them," the Gono Forum leader observed.

The meeting was also attended by Gono Forum General Secretary Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Gono Forum leaders Mazful Islam Kamal, Sayedur Rahman Syed and Jahanara Begum.

PRY TEACHER APPOINTMENT

Indigenous people protest at quota violation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Hundreds of indigenous people of Bandarban district yesterday held a demonstration to protest against government's primary school teacher appointment in violation of existing quota for them.

They forwarded a memorandum to the prime minister demanding cancellation of the appointments the Bandarban Hill District Council recently finalised for the 103 vacant posts of assistant teachers with 88 non-tribal candidates and 15 indigenous candidates.

Through the Hill District Local Government Act of 1989 and the Peace Treaty of 1997 provide for giving priority to indigenous people in government appointment, the District Council has deprived them by violating the rules, they alleged in the memorandum.

Janasanghati Samity leader KS Mong Marma, U Nu Ching, Loyel David Bom, Mong Thoi Ching Headman, and Mong Pu Headman signed the memorandum among others.

'Extortionist' lynched in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Angry mob yesterday lynched an alleged extortionist Abdullah Al Mamun, 20, at Kollaghat in Khulna.

Officer in Charge Mosharef Hossain of Khula Police Station said Mamun along with his two accomplices went to AL Amin Bakery in the city to collect toll at arms point at 7:15 am yesterday when local people chased them and caught Mamun.

The other two extortionists managed to flee.

Mamun, son of Abdul Jalil Howladar of Tootpara Taltala lane, demanded earlier Tk 15,000 from the proprietor of the bakery as toll in the name of Janajuddho, a faction of Purba Bangla Communist Party, and gave death threat for failure to pay the sum by 8:00 am, the OC said.

Meanwhile, Abdul Jalil has alleged that his son succumbed to severe injuries at Khulna Medical College Hospital after a merciless beating by police and not by a mob.

The OC refuted the allegation saying that residents of Kollaghat made several attempts earlier to catch these extortionists.

Saifur orders ministry to cut back on lavish water project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman Thursday directed the water ministry and planning commission to reject a water management project rejected earlier for making extravagant financial demands for buying vehicles, air conditioners and consultancy fees.

The minister asked to cut the project costs by Tk 200 crore from the total Tk 954 crore. The directive came at an inter-ministerial meeting attended by secretaries of different ministries and planning commission high officials.

In June, Saifur rejected the water ministry proposal involving purchase of 416 motor vehicles, 62 photocopyers, 510 computers, 123 air conditioners, 102 slide projectors and 102 fax machines. The project also presented excessive costs in consultancy fees, training and other fields.

The finance minister asked to trim the amount of consultancy fees mainly for the retired engineers of the Water Development Board. The project showed about Tk 64 crore as consultancy fees.

He said the water ministry can increase the project cost if any investment-oriented components are added to the project.

The project was aimed at building and rehabilitating dams, sluice gates, dredging canals and constructing irrigation infrastructures in farmers' interests.

The World Bank will provide \$81.5 million, while the Netherlands will allocate \$34.9 million as grant for the project.

Saifur

FROM PAGE 1 "Enough security measures were taken for Wallich, but she left," he said.

Saifur said there were 5-6 incidents of explosion during the rule of past Awami League government, but no probe was done. Blasts are now occurring as a sequel to those explosions.

But now the incidents are being probed. "The government has formed a judicial commission and brought FBI and Interpol personnel for investigation, but Awami League (AL) declined to accept their investigations," the minister told his audience.

"We want to take the country forward while Awami League wants to push it backward," he said and cautioned that the AL would never be able to return to power if such situation continued.

8 jurnos

FROM PAGE 1 Dhaka University campus.

Witnesses said unruly JCD activists from a rally protesting alleged Indian conspiracy against Bangladesh carried out the attack on the newspersons. They also snatched away some photojournalists' cameras but returned those without films.

Six of the injured are photojournalists. They are Zia Islam of Prothom Alo, Amran Hossain of The Daily Star, Sharif and Sunon of Naya Diganta, Kajal of New Age, Hasan of Bhorer Kagoj. Others are Shahabul Haq Sabu, staff reporter of Ittefaq, and Mokarram Hossain Shubho, DU correspondent of Prothom Alo.

The activists of JCD, BNP's student front, first beat up the newspersons in front of main entrance to Arts Building, as photojournalists snapped their physical assault on a rally. Six opposition party's student organisations held the rally to protest the August 21 carnage.

The photojournalists again came under attack as they took snaps of JCD men, who were beating up an opposition woman activist near Antola on the campus.

Don't take tolerance

FROM PAGE 12 At the same time, she made it clear that the government would not tolerate "politics of destruction and anarchy".

The prime minister urged both print and electronic media to work for the welfare of the country and greater interest of the people, instead of taking stand against the people.

She called for a broad-based unity of professionals as well as all sections of people to advance the country as a dignified nation into international arena upholding the image of Bangladesh.

The delegation of professionals met the prime minister at her office to discuss the latest situation of the country and government steps. It included Prof MA Mazed, Prof MA Hadi, Former VC of Buet Prof Iqbal Mahmud, President of the Agriculturists' Association of Bangladesh Javed Iqbal, former VC of Khulna University Dr Golam Ali Fakir and President of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) ManwarulAzim.

Khaleda said her government always wants to make Bangladesh a strong state, enhancing capability as well as safeguarding the country's independence and sovereignty.

Briefly describing the government's activities to improve the law and order situation and development in various sectors, she said they took multifaceted steps, including 'operation clean heart', regional agreement against terrorism and the formation of the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB).

Blast near RU hall panics students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A powerful bomb exploded near the canteen of Shaheed Suhrawardi Hall of Rajshahi University Friday night, creating panic on the campus and among other educational institutions in the city.

Sources said the bomb went off in air over the roof of the canteen at around 10:30pm. No casualty was reported.

"The blast shook the hall," said a student, Rafiqul Islam. Many students of Suhrawardi and other nearby halls left the campus in panic soon after the blast and many others left in the morning.

RU Proctor Prof Shamsul Alam Sarkar and Assistant Commissioner of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police Wazed Ali rushed to the spot and collected evidence.

Police said a section exploded a cocktail to create panic on the campus. However, Wazed suspects some cadres blew up a bomb in the wake of tightened police vigilance after repeated blasts across the country.

Tension was prevailing. City educational institutions including Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology, Rajshahi Medical College, Polytechnic Institute have been asked to remain on high alert.

Police have been asked to beef up security measures at all educational institutions and in suspected areas of the city.

Opposition

FROM PAGE 1 The sitting will be adjourned today after adoption of the obituary reference in memory of Abdul Momin, the AL lawmaker who died on July 15. Lawmakers from across the benches will participate in a short discussion to condole his death.

The Jatiya Sangsad (Women Reserved Seats) Election bill will get top priority for passage in the session, sources said.

If the bill is passed in the session, elections to the reserved seats for women are likely to be held in the next session.

About 46 parliamentary standing committees are likely to be reconstituted in the session to include AL lawmakers in the bodies. The incorporation of main opposition lawmakers will give the vital parliamentary bodies full shape 14 months after their constitution.

MARCH TOWARDS JS The AL, left 11-party alliance, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and National Awami Party (NAP) will simultaneously march towards the Jatiya Sangsad Bhawan from different parts of the city.

The AL will gather at Russell Square in Dhanmondi at 3:00pm befogging kicking off the march.

The left coalition will march from Muktangan at 4:00pm while the JSD from the Zero Point at the same time.

BAN ON RALLY The DMP has already imposed a ban on procession, rally, demonstration, carrying of firearms and explosives in and around the Jatiya Sangsad Bhawan in Shere-e-Bangla Nagar from midnight last night.

Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 12 Bangladeshi workers are much worse than those of black workers in Namibia during the apartheid era," said Alpheus Muheua, vice president of the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW), the country's umbrella labour federation.

Muheua said the NUNW was trying to negotiate a solution, but it has threatened nationwide action if conditions for the Bangladeshis did not improve.

Khulna cops hunt for dead outlaws' arms cache

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khaleda said those who are attempting to hamper the investigation, instead of cooperation, want to foil democracy and weaken country's independence and sovereignty and hamper the economic advancement.

"And they are out to create panic through bomb attacks to hamper the normal economic activities," she said.

She said in the perspective of present world scenario, real image of the country should be built up thwarting the designs of those distorting the image.

The prime minister hoped that professionals would raise voice against any sort of anti-people and anti-country activities by any quarter.

HC cancels

FROM PAGE 12 Already been set free from jail. Justice Aziz and Justice Azad had granted bail to Ayub Ali Chairman, Mahfuzur Rahman, Abdul Mannan Shah and Fazal Sheikh Faisal, accused of killing five people at Bagra in Sreenagar upazila of Munshiganj district more than three years ago.

The government has transferred the case to the Speedy Trial Tribunal where the trial is going on. Sources said Azad is one of the 19 additional judges appointed in August, allegedly on political consideration. Before his appointment Azad as lawyer secured bail for Nannu Sikder, one of the accused in the same murder case, from the High Court on July 26 last.

Gujral, Asma Jahangir

FROM PAGE 1 minister of India, and Co-chair Asma Jahangir termed the "recent violent acts by religious extremists in Bangladesh" as a "serious threat to the political and economic stability of the country."

In fact, the entire region is reeling under conflicts and lack of democracy or poor governance, observed Gujral and Jahangir after a review meeting on the region's emerging human rights situation in New Delhi.

They also noted that "religious intolerance in all countries of the region continues to be a challenge."

Referring to the August 21 grenade attack on an opposition rally on Bangabandhu Avenue in Dhaka they said, "[i]t was a clear attempt at derailing democracy and putting an end to all liberal and secular discourses."

The SAHR chairs condemned the religious bigots for stifling the freedom of expression and continuously persecuting religious minorities as well as leaders of public opinion.

The Ahmadiya community has been targeted time and again despite a clear ruling of the High Court, which rejected a plea to declare them non-Muslims, they noted.

SAHR also is alarmed, it said, at the political deadlock in Nepal, and called upon the government of the country to immediately hold a comprehensive dialogue with all parties concerned and restore the democratic process.

Criticising the Maldives government for clamping down on its people's keen desire for democratic reforms, the SAHR leaders urged it to put in place political reforms so that a sustainable democratic process can be initiated.

As another extreme human rights infringement that needs immediate attention, the statement reported, "Pakistan continues to ignore the rule of law and there are increasing reports of arbitrary arrests of people on the justification of a counter-terrorist sweep."

"All democratic norms are being denied to the people and the country is sliding towards lawlessness," maintained SAHR about Pakistan and "warns that deviation from the due process and the rule of law will give rise to more terrorism rather than curb it."

The forum expressed concern over a draft bill banning all forms of religion conversion being presented in Sri Lanka parliament that it claimed would restrict the freedom of religion of all minority groups.

SAHR also blasted a recent incident in Indian state of Manipur where security forces allegedly raped and killed a woman, which it said is a cruel reminder to the South Asian society that lives of women have remained vulnerable and their integrity has been violated time and again with impunity.

Gujral and Jahangir said they were "seriously disturbed at the declining human rights situation in the region" and called upon the governments and civil society to find creative means for marginalising intolerant forces and strengthening democratic norms in South Asia.

Eight bullets

FROM PAGE 1 following leads from the them (Ahmudya and Minhaj) on Friday night. But Ahmudya's gang attacked us ensuing the crossfire," Kazi Emdad said.

Meanwhile, Ahmudya's body was handed over to General Secretary of Satkania Upazila BNP Nurul Kabir after post mortem at around 1:15pm yesterday. Kabir declined to comment on Ahmudya's death but expressed anger over alleged non-cooperation from police administration.

"The Chittagong police refused us permission to hold a namaj-e-juana at Laldighi Maidan," said Kabir. Satkania unit BNP President Advocate Mainul Haq Chowdhury Khokon told The Daily Star that they would not announce any protest programme.

"As a ruling party, right now we are not in a position to pronounce such programmes. But one thing I must say the way he died is very unfortunate. Still we won't accuse the Rab, as they are a disciplined force and go by certain rules," Mainul said adding probably, Ahmudya incurred wrath of some quarters with vested interest.

None of Ahmudya's relatives came to receive his body from the morgue yesterday. A faction of Satkania BNP yesterday demonstrated protesting the death of Ahmudya. They put up barricade on the Chittagong-Cox's Bazar Road but withdrew it within half an hour following police intervention.

Tension, however, ran high across the upazila from early in the morning yesterday. District administration deployed additional forces to maintain law and order.

Ahmudya, 30, the second of three sons of late Aziz Mishir, emerged as the kingpin of criminal underworld of South Chittagong in 1992 under patronage of Satkania Jamaat-e-Islami leadership, sources said.

Khulna cops hunt for dead outlaws' arms cache

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Gas crisis

FROM PAGE 1 Apart from the Raoozan plant, three units of Ghorasal plant and as many units of Ashuganj plant that generate 390 mw power closed two week ago because of the gas supply crisis, PDB sources said.

They said gas supply crisis caused 810 mw production shortfall. "As an alternate to gas, we are using petroleum to generate power in a couple of other power plants that has brought the shortfall down to about 550mw," said a PDB official.

The PDB needs 700 million cubic feet of gas a day for power generation, but it got only 520 million cubic feet last night.

UNB adds: Officials at Petrobangla said production in the Sangu field of Cairn Energy snapped at about 6:30pm on Friday because of a technical fault.

It could not be repaired immediately as the sea was very rough for inclement weather.

The latest glitch in Sangu gas field that supplies 130 million cubic feet of gas a day also paralysed the operation of Kafco Fertilizer Factory in Chittagong.

The repeated trips in the offshore gas field seriously annoyed the government. "We are concerned over repeated disruption in the gas field," State Minister for Energy AKM Mosharrat Hossain said.

The offshore field also saw similar glitches for hours in June and December 2003 and February and April this year.

Kenya

FROM PAGE 1 disrupted play twice on Friday but England took little time in polishing off their opponents, bowling Zimbabwe out for 147 in 39 overs.

Steve Harmison picked up three for 29 and Andrew Flintoff three for 11 with only captain Tatenda Taibu (40) frustrating England for any amount of time.

Cops

FROM PAGE 1 strengthen public security measures and held discussion on taking effective steps to contain the trend to destabilise through bomb threats.

It also decided to take up specific programmes in different upazilas to create awareness among the people about this trend so that they can provide advance information to law enforcers about bomb or criminals carrying explosives.

It directed police authorities of Dhaka to take effective steps for smooth observance of the forthcoming Durga Puja by the Hindus.

The meeting decided to form committee comprising government officials, public representatives and police officials at each puja mandap to ensure peaceful and friendly environment.

State Minister for Labour and Manpower Aman Ullah Aman, Dewan Muhammad Salah Uddin MP, DC and SP of Dhaka, OCs of Savar, Dhamrai, Keraniganj, Nawabganj and Dohar, officials of CID and SB attended the meeting.

Shibir factions

FROM PAGE 12 Bhagina Ramzan said Shibir cadre Shaheen of village Shahnagar and Jamal of village Kazirhat in violence-prone Fatikhchhari upazila possessed the M-16 rifles.

During interrogation, he admitted that Mozammel, cousin of top Shibir cadre Nasir bought the AK-47 rifle, Rab recovered from him from, from Union Parishad Chairman Gazaria in Ramu upazila of Cox's Bazar Nazrul.

The Rab also continued to quiz Jamai Faruk to unearth the den of criminals.

The elite force nabbed Bhagina Ramzan and Jamai Faruk with an AK-47 from village Idilpur in Fatikhchhari of the district at around 2pm on Friday. He is the second-in-command of Jamaat-Shibir-backed Nasir Bahini, a criminal gang based in Faticchhari and accused of a number of cases including five murders.

A case was lodged with Hathazari Police Station under the arms act.

JCD let loose terror

FROM PAGE 1 ransacked the office of Dhaka University Teachers Association (Duta) President Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique.

In the afternoon at around 4:30pm, in another attack in front of Jahurul Haque Hall, a group of JCD activists seriously wounded BCL hall unit president Mizan, general secretary Bablu, organising secretary Mithu and member Miran.

Sources said the JCD attack was made as per a decision its central committee took in a meeting Friday night to thwart at any cost the launching of a united anti-government student movement under the banner of 'Student Organisations against Criminal Activities and Fundamentalism'.

The six student bodies united in the combine are Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-backed BCL, Bangladesh Chhatra Moitree, Jatiya Chhatra Dhara, Jatiya Chhatra Oikya and Bangladesh Chhatra Samity.

Leaders of the opposition student combine in a meeting on September 6 decided to launch a united student movement to unseat the coalition government and to protest all bomb attacks including the August-21 grenade attack on an AL rally.

Yesterday's procession following a rally was the first public programme of the combine. The JCD central body on Friday also decided to bring in its cadres from different colleges and city units to use in yesterday's showdown, sources said.

According to the plan, thousands of JCD activists started to gather at Madhu's Canteen from about 10:00am and later assembled in a rally in front of the sculpture Aparajeyo Bangla. From there they took out a procession after the meeting, marching towards the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC).

The opposition combine on the other hand located its rally at Aamtola in front of the DU proctor's office, after which it too took out a procession.

Witness said the clash erupted at around 12:30pm as the two rival processions came face to face near the main gate of the Arts Faculty.

They said the JCD cadres launched the offence wielding iron rods and wooden clubs and hurling bricks at their opposition.

JCD sources said, in preparation to the assault, they had collected rods and bricks earlier.

After the clash, the JCD staged a brief rally where its leaders welcomed the action against the opposition combine. It would hold another rally today on the campus to keep up the congenial atmosphere, a JCD leader said.

Protesting the attacks, the combine at a press conference yesterday demanded arrest and punishment of the attackers within two days and called a countrywide student strike on September 14 to press home a six-point set of demand.

The demands include expulsion of attackers from the university, resignation of the DU proctor and punishment of the JCD cadres who attacked journalists and damaged the Duta office. The combine leaders also asked for removal of the officer-in-charge of Ramna Police Station and assistant commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, compensation for the wounded and peaceful cohabitation of students of all political affiliation at the DU dormitories.

The combine will stage also a demonstration today on the DU campus.

The Duta in a press release last night announced suspension of all classes at the university for 72 hours from today in protest of the attacks

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WTC agency

FROM PAGE 12 it was filing the lawsuit just one day before the three-year statute of limitations runs out.

"Our proposed action is in line with similar suits filed by other injured parties," the Port Authority said. Its statement did not say how much money it was seeking.

The suit specifically names four Saudi officials, saying they organised and controlled a network of financial institutions and charities that aided al-Qaeda for at least seven years before September 11.

The four are Prince Nayef bin Abdel Aziz, the interior minister; Prince Sultan bin Abdel Aziz, the defence minister; Prince Salman bin Abdel Aziz, the governor of Riyadh; and Prince Turki al-Faisal, the former intelligence chief, who is now ambassador in London.

Al-Qaeda was also named as a defendant, along with a number of Saudi corporate entities and charities.

Officials