

Rab won't raid kitchen markets anymore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) will not raid the kitchen markets to regulate the prices of commodities, a home ministry meeting in the face of criticism decided yesterday.

Elite forces like the Rab have been raised to fight crimes and nab criminals, not control prices or prohibit obscene films, the meeting was told.

However, the high-powered weekly meeting on law and order held at the ministry's conference room has made provisions for Rab to raid markets to arrest toll collectors and hoarders, sources said.

Meantime, the onion dealers of Khatungonj, business hub of the port city, who observed strike on Tuesday protesting raid by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), resumed their sales and other business

transactions yesterday, market sources said.

"The traders of Khatungonj agreed to resume their activities after we gave assurance that no further raids would be launched by Rab. The traders also agreed to sell onion and other goods at a reasonable rate on the basis of cost price," Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) President Amir

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Verdict fully free from pressure

Claims Moudud
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed yesterday categorically denied any government pressure to influence the verdict of jail killing case.

Talking to the BBC Bangla service last night Moudud said the court delivered the verdict on the basis of its own judgement without any pressure from any quarter.

The law minister also claimed that the government tried to assist the persecution process as far as possible.

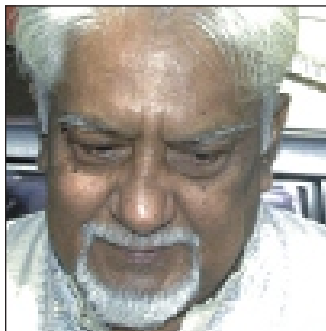
On the question of releasing a key accused, he said, "Should he (K M Obaidur Rahman) be punished just because he is a member of parliament?"

"If the court finds him (Obaidur

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THE FIVE RELIEVED OF JAIL KILLING CHARGES

Clockwise
KM Obaidur Rahman
Shah Moazzem Hossain
Maj Khairuzzaman
Taheruddin Thakur
Nurul Islam Manzoor



Long-drawn legal process still ahead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It is uncertain as to how much time will it take to execute the judgment in the long awaited Jail Killing Case, as experts hint at a potentially long period to have the judgment confirmed by higher court.

Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court while passing the judgment yesterday said all the proceedings of the case in regard to the three death convicts shall be sent to the High Court in seven days.

The death penalty awardees can appeal to the High Court in seven days, said the court.

The code of criminal procedure says when the Court of Sessions passes death sentence, the proceedings shall be submitted to the High Court Division and the sentence shall not be executed unless it is confirmed by the High Court.

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PHOTO: STAR

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain at his party office yesterday speaks to the press about the attack by BNP-backed hoodlums on a Rangpur dialogue on Tuesday while Bikalpadhara President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury looks on.

Fresh Indo-Pak peace talks from Dec14

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan and India have agreed on a schedule of eight bilateral meetings in the next two months including talks on nuclear confidence building measures, the foreign office said here yesterday.

Islamabad will host the meeting to discuss nuclear issues on December 14-15 which will raise the question of a draft agreement on advance information about missile tests, foreign office spokesman Masood Khan told a weekly briefing.

Pakistan and India, who conducted tit-for-tat nuclear tests in 1998, have been conducting periodic missile tests throughout a peace dialogue, which has been underway since January.

The first meeting on the schedule will focus on on narcotics control in New Delhi on November 29-30.

Talks on restarting a dormant rail link between the Indian city of Munnabao and the Pakistani southern border city of Khokhrapar will take place in Islamabad on December 2-3.

It will be followed by a meeting between the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency and the Indian Coast Guards on December 3-4 in New Delhi to establish communication links between them.

A meeting on starting a first bus service across the Line of Control in disputed Kashmir between Srinagar, the summer capital of restive Indian-administered Kashmir, and Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir will be held in New Delhi on December 7-8.

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Franklin strikes hosts down

SPORTS REPORTER

For the second successive day it was nightmarish start for Bangladesh in the first Test against New Zealand at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The home side who began on 165-6 added just 12 runs before being bundled out by the ninth over.

In a replay of Day One when the Tigers lost three wickets in the morning session the tail was mopped by left-arm James Franklin, who removed Manzarul Islam and Mohammad Rafique with the last two deliveries of his first over and then clean bowled number ten Tapash Baisya in the first ball of his second over to complete his first Test hatrick.

Franklin's hatrick was significant for a number of reasons. It was the second by a New Zealand bowler following off-spinner Peter Petherick against Pakistan in 1976-77 and he also emulated Pakistan bowling great Wasim Akram who achieved feat here six years ago in an Asian Test Championship against Sri Lanka. The young bowler finished with career-best 5-28.

Stand-in-captain Khaled

Mashud was left stranded on 23 not out after Tareq Aziz, having survived 22 balls without scoring, was dismissed by Jacob Oram and with that Bangladesh's innings folded at 177.

New Zealand closed on 207-5 but before the spin pair of Mohammad Rafique and Manzarul Islam hit back by sharing five wickets.

Oram (18 off 105 balls) and McCullum (48 off 75 balls) added 68 runs in an unbroken sixth wicket.

The Black Caps made a decent start against a toothless Bangladesh pace attack but as soon as the spinners came on, the complexion of the game changed.

Rafique made the first breakthrough in his third ball when he had opener Mark Richardson caught behind by Mashud for 15.

Top-scorer Matthew Sinclair, who made most of a life on 31 to score 76 off 173 balls, added 63 runs for the second wicket with Stephen Fleming but the middle-order lost its way after dismissal of the Kiwi skipper.

The elegant Fleming, having hit four boundaries in a 54-ball 29, began to walk after edging Manzarul to Mashud.

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Mob lynches 3 robbers in Sirajganj

UNB, Sirajganj

Three robbers were killed in mob beating on a night coach at Hatikamrul 'Gol Chatter' (roundabout) on the western side of the Jamuna Bridge early yesterday.

Two of the dead are Ayub Ali, 35, of Faridpur, and Wahab Ali, 32, of Pabna. The identity of the other could not be known.

Police said a gang of seven boarded the Naogaon-bound coach from Dhaka in the guise of passengers on Tuesday night. When the bus was crossing the 'Gol Chatter' at about 1:30am, the robbers took control of the vehicle and beat the driver, helper and supervisor. Later, they looted money in cash and other valuables from the passengers.

When the robbers were fleeing with the booty, the passengers caught three of the gang and beat them mercilessly.

On information, police rushed to the scene, rescued the three in critical condition and sent them to Sirajganj Sadar Hospital. The robbers succumbed to their injuries at the hospital at about 4:00am.

Police arrested an alleged robber, Jasim Hawlader, in Sirajganj town yesterday morning in connection with the bus robbery.

Run-down, old buses to be banned in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday decided to ban old and run-down buses in the capital and prevent the Dhaka bound inter-district buses from entering the metropolitan area.

An inter-ministerial meeting yesterday took the decisions to ease traffic congestion in the city.

The meeting was held at the communications ministry with communications minister Nazmul Huda in the chair.

The public transport including buses, mini-buses, cabs and auto-rickshaws that are more than 10 years old would be barred from plying the city streets. Those vehicles, however, would be allowed to ply outside the capital, according to the decisions.

Besides, buses not registered with Dhaka would be restricted to some bus terminals outside the capital.

Routines would be followed in case of buses transporting city

commuters from one terminal to another.

Mohakhali, Saidabad, and Gabtali bus terminals would be expanded for providing parking facilities to the buses from other parts of the country.

The government also identified 28 points in the capital to lessen traffic snarl-up especially during Ramadan and indiscriminate road crossing by the pedestrians.

Besides, the meeting discussed how to reduce the number of illegal rickshaws. A committee headed by Communications Secretary Shafiqul Islam, was assigned to work out possible measures in this regard and report within two weeks.

Dhaka City Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar, State Minister for Communications Salahuddin Ahmed, Communications Secretary Shafiqul Islam were present at the meeting.

Kumari Puja today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Hindus celebrate Kumari puja, worshipping of the virgin, at Puja Mandaps across the country today.

The Goddess Durga is worshipped in various forms during her stay on earth. Kumari puja is one.

A girl aged between six and 12, symbolising the kumari (virgin) form of Devi, is worshipped in front of the idol of Goddess Durga.

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Sehri-Iftar			
Ramadan	Oct	Sehri	Iftar
6	21		5-31
7	22	4-39	5-30

Prayer Timing		
October 21		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-38	4-44
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-31	5-36
Esha	7-15	7-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		

Ex-general sworn in as Indonesian president

Megawati skips inauguration ceremony

REUTERS, Jakarta

Former general Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono took office as Indonesia's first directly elected leader yesterday after sweeping to power by vowing faster job growth, a war on corruption and tough punishment for terrorists. A solemn-looking Yudhoyono was sworn in at parliament in front of the very legislators many expect will challenge

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Rab nabs 7 operatives of Bangla Bhai

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested seven top associates of Bangla Bhai, operations commander of Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh, with arms and explosives from Jagadishpur Bariahat village in Naldanga, Natore.

On information, the Rab raided the house of a quack, Shahadat Hossain, in Jagadishpur Bariahat

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PHOTO: STAR

New Zealand's hat-trick hero James Franklin appeals for a leg before decision against Bangladesh batsman Manjarul Islam Rana yesterday, the second day of the first Test at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.