

Tigers back on track

FROM PAGE 1 surpassing the previous best of 85... Saleh struck seven fours and a six for his fifth half-century before being spectacularly caught by Dion Ebrahim...

very first ball, having Matsikenyeri stumped by wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud... The visitors were soon reduced to 93-4 when Rogers, who followed up his 68 in the previous game with 51 off 81 balls with four boundaries...

Bangla Bhai

FROM PAGE 1 government officials, ruling coalition leaders and police high-ups have made contradicting statements about his existence... But talking to The Daily Star in May last year, JMB leaders themselves admitted they had been active underground for the last six years to establish a Taliban-like rule...

SP said, "Bangla Bhai's regime has ended. We now have complete control over the situation. We have isolated the Sarbaharas..." Talking to local journalists on Tuesday, Masud said: "I've never denied Bangla Bhai's existence; he is in the wanted list of police..."

"We don't know any Bangla or English Bhai... no Bhai (brother) is important to us. We've made a clear and clean order to arrest him," Babar said while briefing reporters after a meeting on law and order yesterday.

"I enrolled at Rajshahi University. But I registered with the college because of various complications," he said without explaining the complications.

The government is committed to arresting him but has failed to trace him, the minister said, seeking information on his whereabouts from people of all walks.

As Bangla Bhai was guarded about his school and college education, his senior leader Amir Mowlana Abdur Rahman, who was also present during the interview, said Bangla Bhai studied at Tarafsarta Senior Fazil Madrasa.

But asked by BBC radio to comment on government inaction in arresting Bangla Bhai, the minister said: "I oppose very strongly that our ministry has failed to take action, because we are still trying. How would we arrest anyone if he is absent physically or not available?"

The shell that exploded on September 6 last year at a house in Pirebazar adjacent to Jalalabad Cantonment was of the same size and kind as the present one. The next day another live shell was recovered from the same house.

In April of last year, the media started pouring out reports on JMB activities in the name of fighting Sarbaharas (outlaws), but failed to move the government to arrest the Bangla Bhai outfit.

Street urchins had found the shells lying abandoned in the cantonment firing range and brought them home to sell as scrap metal, according to their statement to a court.

A good number of journalists have interviewed Bangla Bhai, who introduced himself to them as Azizur Rahman. Although it was later learned that his real name is Omar Ali Litu, he also introduced himself as Siddiqui Islam while talking to The Daily Star in May of last year.

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The militants operated openly and continue to do so, while police were often seen near their meeting venues.

Commissioner Maniruzzaman Miah submitted before the meeting a draft organogram of 947 staff, in addition to a proposed set of commission rules.

After reports were published that Prime Minister (PM) Khaleda Zia ordered the arrest of Bangla Bhai and his operatives, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman and PM's political secretary Haris Choudhury admitted to the PM's order.

Commenting on the appointment of a secretary, the ACC chairman said, "We'll take a decision later as a writ petition filed in the High Court awaits disposal."

But local lawmakers, administration and local government bodies who supported JMB's cleansing of outlaws made it clear that the ruling parties had links with JMB's unlawful venture.

Asked why the commission had not taken any decisions at the meeting about several allegations of corruption, ACC Commissioner Maniruddin Ahmed said, "I don't think we need to hold a meeting for conducting the inquiries as these have been initiated after consultation with authorities concerned."

Despite strong concern in and outside the country against JMB operations, Bangla Bhai remained untouched. Police first denied his existence and, after he faded into hiding, said they did not find him.

Experts from the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) under the health directorate will send more samples, including blood, urine and throat swab of patients, to the CDC for further test.

Although Rajshahi division BNP lawmakers and Jamaat-e-Islami leaders denied any link with the JMB, Bangla Bhai carried out his extra-judicial acts without any challenge from the government's part.

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Well-placed sources said Bangla Bhai enjoyed support and assistance from local administration, with certain influential politicians masterminding the vigilante action from backstage.

Another court on Tuesday sentenced nine leaders and activists of Chhatra League and Jubo League to jail for setting fire to the district Jamaat office following the murder of the AL lawmaker.

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Cabinet body

FROM PAGE 12 why Nortel was dumped. It also found that the BTTB bypassed all procedures while closing a \$ 9.40 million deal with China National Machinery Equipment Import and Export Corporation (CMEC) to provide telecom gear under supplier's credit.

Purchase body to seek

FROM PAGE 12 opinion to settle the matter. The purchase committee yesterday also asked the Ministry of Shipping to float fresh tender for purchasing three gantry cranes for New Mooring container terminal.

Under this Tk 51.73 crore project, Japanese company Sumitomo is supposed to install the cranes and other container handling equipment.

Bhomra land port still locked

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira Export-import through Bhomra land port yesterday remained suspended for the eighth day, as Indian authorities stopped vehicular movement on the 11km-long Shojadanga-Basirhat road on their side for its reconstruction since January 19.

36 US soldiers killed

FROM PAGE 12 attacks targeting political groups and writings sites. CHOPPER CRASH US military transport helicopter crashed during sandstorms in Iraq's western desert yesterday, killing 31 people, all believed to be Marines, while insurgents killed five other American troops in the deadliest day for US forces since the Iraq war began, reports AP.

A Bush administration official said the cause of Wednesday's crash was not immediately known but that there was bad weather at the time. An Accuweather map of Iraq showed sandstorms in the western region of Iraq near the Jordanian border where the crash took place.

In June 1999, the then Awami League government had signed a \$ 211.85 million supplier's credit agreement with the CMEC. Accordingly, the BTTB had signed a \$ 202.89 million supplier's credit contract with the CMEC to provide 2,16,000 telephones at 58 district headquarters.

However, due to bureaucratic tangles the Chittagong Port authorities did not seek the purchase committee's approval within the project implementation deadline that expired recently. That is why the committee asked for re-tendering, sources said.

The committee also approved payment for transporting 51,800 metric tons of wheat under a Canadian grant.

Earlier, export-import through the land port remained suspended during October 18-27, as Shojadanga citizen's committee enforced a strike demanding reconstruction of the road.

It was also the deadliest day for US forces since the March 2003 invasion.

In Iraq's Anbar province, four US Marines were killed in fighting, the military said in a statement.

Later, the CMEC deal was revived and the telecom ministry has tabled it for the cabinet purchase committee's approval. The Cabinet Division in consultation with the finance minister has however sought explanation from the ministry about the legitimacy of this deal.

At the venues, Rab members are set to employ Auto-Human Detectors to scan individuals and keep track of suspicious movements of people.

Intelligence agencies will also tail suspicious individuals until clearance is received, with the watch to intensify after January 28th until the summit's end.

The reconstruction is expected to be complete today, according to reports received from Indian side.

The statement gave no further details, but WABC reporter Jim Dolan, who was embedded with the troops who were attacked, said the deaths came when insurgents ambushed a Marine convoy leaving the town of Haditha, hitting a vehicle with a rocket-propelled grenade.

Rebels pounded eight polling stations with rockets, mortar shells and bombs within a few hours in the same restive regions, Iraqi police and local officials said.

The final investigation report of this graft case alleged embezzlement of \$26.37 million in the CMEC contract. While the Bac was processing its charges, the BTTB initiated a \$9.40 million negotiated order for the CMEC.

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ZIA on Yellow

FROM PAGE 1 slated for February 6th and 7th, Saarc officials will begin arriving on January 31st for preparatory meetings, starting with the Saarc programming committee meetings on February 1st.

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Army suspects

FROM PAGE 12 the Jatra bombing, as a number of people injured in earlier bomb incidents in Dinajpur accused him his one of the attackers, sources said.

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