

Two cases filed

FROM PAGE 16 Amir Mahmudul Hasan Monttazi, Nayabe Amir Nur Hossain Nurani and 11 others for attacking the Ahmadiyyas in Jyotindranagar on the day.

The plaintiffs said they had earlier gone to Shyamnagar Police Station and submitted two separate FIR (first information report), but police declined to record the cases.

The IKNMB members from a procession on the day injured 50 Ahmadiyyas and looted several houses after hanging a signboard that branded the local Ahmadiyya Complex as a 'place of worship' and asked people not to mistake that for a mosque.

Plaintiff Saidul said the attackers injured Ferdousi, wife of his (Saidul) son Rafiqul Islam. Sheikh Alam in his case alleged that the attackers threatened to rape his daughter.

Another member of Ahmadiyya community, Ohidur Rahman, filed a case on April 19 against six people including Monttazi, Nurani and local Nabuwat leader Nur Hossain for attacking and injuring his wife Rahima Begum and looting their house.

Meanwhile, police yesterday confined local Ahmadiyya missionary Sheikh Abdul Wadud and Ahmadiyya member Altaf Hossain at Harnagar police camp for eight and a half hours.

Ahmadiyya leaders said the police intercepted the two Ahmadiyyas at around 9:00am when they were

Ex-Bac director Hannan sent back to army

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday sent back former director of Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) Lt Col Abdul Hannan Mridha, whose activities created controversies in the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), to the Armed Forces Division.

The status of Hannan, who had been working in the Bac on deputation, was a reserved employee of the government, yet he claimed himself to be ACC director (administration and establishment), a post that did not exist in the commission.

Despite a government warning of punishment for using non-existent post and involving former Bac staff in the commission, Hannan issued several office orders and notices arrogating to himself the position of ACC director that created resentment in the commission.

The anticorruption watchdog in January asked the government to withdraw five former Bac directors including Hannan, saying they were hampering ACC's work.

The establishment ministry yesterday in a notification said Lt Col Hannan has been sent to the Armed Forces Division for his next posting.

Dhaka, Delhi agree

FROM PAGE 1

Morshed Khan, a UNB report says Bangladesh and India have agreed to maintain good neighbourly relations through constructive engagement.

The expression of intent came when Morshed had meetings with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh separately in Jakarta on the sidelines of the just-concluded Afro-Asian Summit.

"Bangladesh is always committed to maintaining natural friendship and we both are working on that," Morshed told reporters at the foreign ministry yesterday.

Citing the Indian prime minister's desire, Morshed said the two foreign ministers are likely to sit together and take the steam out of the present irritants through negotiation.

Morshed, who led the Bangladesh delegation to the Afro-Asian Summit, also apprised Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of his talks with Asian and African leaders at the meet.

Another UNB report from Khagrachhari says: Tension escalated in Lachharipara frontier of the district yesterday as the BDR resisted a BSF attempt to erect barbed-wire fence.

According to sources, over 100 Indian construction workers gathered within 150 yards of Lachharipara border point early yesterday with BSF troops marching nearby.

The Indian workers continued their work despite a request by the BDR to stop erecting the fence. They however stopped working when the BDR jawans started blowing whistles.

Earlier on Monday, the BSF men tried to construct fence within 150 yards of Ramgarh-Kashibari-Lacharipara border several times but failed facing resistance from the BDR.

Meanwhile, our correspondent from Rangpur reports: The BSF did not hand over the bodies of two Bangladeshi nationals to the BDR until yesterday afternoon.

BDR of Lalmonirhat Battalion-19, and Dinajpur Battalion-14 separately sent strong protest letters to the BSF demanding return of the bodies. The BDR also urged their counterpart to stop killing innocent Bangladeshi citizens.

An official of BDR Rangpur Sector yesterday told The Daily Star correspondent that Indian police picked up the two bodies for performing autopsy. The BSF would hand over the bodies to BDR after

passing by the area. Police took them to the camp finding some leaflets in their bags.

Shyamnagar police said the government has banned such publications but the Ahmadiyya leaders in Dhaka said the leaflets were not on the list of banned publications.

"There is no reason to confine them since the leaflets were not among those banned. Moreover, the High Court in January stayed the ban for four months," said Towheedul Islam, an Ahmadiyya spokesman in Dhaka. Being informed of the confinement, Ahmadiyya leaders from their headquarters in Dhaka sent a fax copy of the High Court stay order to local Circle SP (Superintendent of Police) Ilias Sharif. Receiving the fax, police released the two Ahmadiyyas at 5:30pm.

However, Satkhira SP Abdur Rahim told The Daily Star that locals caught the two Ahmadiyyas with some books and handed them over to police. He said he ordered to release them.

22 die

FROM PAGE 1

upazila early yesterday, killing five people on the spot and injuring 42 others.

Police and witnesses said the bus crashed into the ditch after it was hit by a gas cylinder-laden truck from behind at about 4:00am.

Two of the dead are Anwar Hossain, 35, and Amal Roy, 53.

Fire Brigade personnel rescued the injured passengers and sent them to Tangail General Hospital.

Meanwhile, at least five people died in road accidents in the capital yesterday, according to our staff correspondent.

Sources at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) said Golam Rahman, 65, injured in a road crash in Mirpur Section-10 in the early hours Tuesday, died at the hospital in the morning.

Abdul Malek, 51, a security guard of Janata Bank Farashganj branch, died from his wounds at the DMCH at 10:00am yesterday. He was knocked over by an auto-rickshaw in front of Sonali Bank Head Office in Motijheel commercial area at around 9:00pm Monday.

A businessman, identified as Ali Ashraf, 32, died when a Gazipur-bound bus rammed his motorbike from behind near Joarshahara BRTC bus depot on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at about 1:30pm.

A 35-year-old woman was hit by a speeding vehicle while crossing Dhaka-Narayanganj highway near Matuwalli yesterday morning. She was rushed to the DMCH where the doctors declared her dead.

A contractor named Jahangir Alam, 35, was crushed under the wheels of a passenger bus near Rajlaxmi Complex in Uttara at about 10:00am.

autopsy, he hoped.

Uttam, a farmer of Chandrapur of Kaliganj upazila in Lalmonirhat district and Asrafu of Faripur village in Thakurgoan district were shot dead by the BSF on Sunday, the BDR said.

The families and relatives of Uttam and Ashrafu were passing days with anxieties since their bodies had been taken away by the Indian border guards.

The BDR and BSF kept tight vigil along the Lalmonirhat and Thukurgoan border following the killing of the two Bangladeshi nationals.

PM directs stern

FROM PAGE 1

remain in high alert, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan told journalists yesterday.

Meanwhile, the government yesterday formed a high powered three-member enquiry committee to investigate the attack on Bangladesh mission in Kuwait by expatriate Bangladeshi workers, reports BDNEWS.

The team comprising representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Home and Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment will visit Kuwait after getting detailed report from the Bangladesh embassy there, Khan said.

Kuwait's incident may put a negative impact on the labour market in the Middle East, foreign minister said, adding, "So far we have known the attackers were illegal workers."

About allegations that the embassy showed reluctance to solve Bangladeshi workers' problems, Khan said, "None filed any complaint in this regard."

Our staff correspondent adds: Bangladeshi workers in Nibraj Cleaning Company in Kuwait have started observing strike demanding payment of their arrears.

The workers alleged that the company did not pay them salaries for the last five months.

The strike is affecting normal activities in some hospitals, clinics and schools including major hospitals like Al Razi, Maternity, Chest and Sensitivity hospitals, according to a report published in the Kuwait Times newspaper.

Around three lakh Bangladeshis, mostly manual workers, are now working in Kuwait.

9 trade bodies slate couple of Indian dailies' reports

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nine leading trade bodies including the highest organisation of the country's chambers of commerce and industry yesterday expressed concern over "recent write-ups" on "terrorists' activities" in Bangladesh published in two Indian newspapers, which they said were based on misleading facts and ill motivation.

They said such reports may hamper economic cooperation between the two countries.

In a press release jointly issued by the trade-bodies they said two Indian dailies published news items "motivated to tarnish the image of Bangladesh" and called for immediate attention by the governments of the two countries.

The press release, however, did not mention the names of the Indian newspapers.

Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) President Abdul Awal Mintoo, Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Kutubuddin Ahmed, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Sayeeful Islam, Bangladesh Employers' Federation President M Anis Ud Dowla, Foreign Investors Chambers of Commerce and Industry President Mahbub Jamil, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association Acting President MA Salam, Bangladesh Textile Mills Association Chairman MA Awal, Bangladesh Jute Mills Association Chairman M Ali Behrouz Ispahani, and Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association Acting President Habibur Rahman jointly signed the press release.

They said regional cooperation has become the victim of political distrust and animosities among the two countries. "Even cooperation in non-controversial areas such as, poverty alleviation and environmental degradation, suffered set-back," they noted.

The press release said, "South Asian countries, having shared the same culture, are so cohesive that they do not require any outside elements to point out governance problems and terrorist threats."

"It is, therefore, in the South Asian countries' own interest that such issues do not upset the initiatives in the recent years to achieve economic and other initiatives for the welfare of the people," the signatories said.

EU okays

FROM PAGE 16

Canada has also announced it will slap additional 15 percent duties on a range of US products.

Washington was targeted by the sanctions because the US Congress failed to repeal the legislation -- named after Democratic Senator Robert Byrd -- before a deadline of December 27, 2003.

US companies gained about 561 million dollars (463 million euros) as a result of the law in 2001 and 2002, according to US figures.

But according to the EU commission, the Byrd Amendment -- full name the Continued Dumping and Subsidy Offset Act of 2000 -- has distributed over one billion dollars in annual payments since it first came into force.

The main recipients have been in the bearing, steel and other metal, household item and food sectors, it said last month.

It added that a "substantial" increase is foreseen for the next distribution that could start on October 1 this year if the law is not repealed. That payment alone could amount to 1.6 billion dollars, it warned.

Govt moves

FROM PAGE 1

urging the government officials to refrain from using public transport illegally. It warned of stern action against unauthorised use of public vehicles, the official said.

A report of the establishment ministry says 615 development projects were implemented from 1997 to 2004 under 43 ministries and divisions. A total of 26,651 vehicles were purchased for the projects but the ministries returned only 303 vehicles.

The purchased vehicles include 355 minibuses, 1,379 jeeps, 227 cars, 534 pick-ups, 190 trucks, 18 buses, 36 minibuses, 12,537 motorcycles and 11,375 others.

The ministries and divisions returned 27 minibuses, 129 jeeps, 79 cars, 23 pick-ups, one bus, one minibus and 39 motorcycles on completion of the projects.

The agriculture ministry is using the highest 12,322 vehicles while it returned only 17. The LGRD ministry is using 4,501 vehicles and returned 61. Primary and mass education ministry is using 2,829 vehicles and returned 56.

The parliamentary standing committee on establishment ministry in last January grilled the ministry's officials as they failed to submit a report on the vehicles. Finally the ministry on March 30 submitted a report.

The Anti-Corruption Commission, meanwhile, initiated an inquiry to find out the "missing" vehicles. It also issued letters to some ministries seeking information.

Drawn to tous

FROM PAGE 1

know how she will repay a loan with such high interest, but still she insists on going. "I am very poor. I want to go abroad to earn money," she said in her local dialect.

Monowara could not even name the agency to which she paid the money, as she waited at the Bureau of Manpower Export and Training (BMET) on the April 21 afternoon to attend a briefing session for job seekers abroad.

Like Monowara, as many as 500 people, most of them young, gather at the Bureau every day to receive training on working abroad. They are among what experts say are the ranks of those desperate to leave this country, either because they are jobless or not satisfied with the small earnings they receive from agricultural work or small-scale businesses.

"Though I earn money from agriculture work, I have a future, which is why I am going abroad," said Abdul Khaleque of Keraniganj in Dhaka. He paid Tk 1.60 lakh to a local agent for a working visa.

Noor Ahmed from Jessore echoed similar views. "I became frustrated over the situation in the country so I want to go to Jordan," he says, even though he has not lined up a job. Instead he hopes to find one when he arrives through his brother, who has lived there for several years.

Job seekers currently pay several lakh taka to secure work abroad, between Tk 1.50 lakh to 2.50 lakh for jobs in the Middle East, and as much as Tk seven lakh to migrate to Europe by air or by road.

More than one thousand people leave Bangladesh every day for foreign jobs through legal means. Several hundred more leave the country illegally, the source said. Last year, 2.72 lakh people migrated for overseas employment, the highest number in recent years. More than 60 per cent of them went to Saudi Arabia.

Desperation compels them to take great risks along the way, and many are ready to spend months in detention camps or to languish in

foreign jails, the source said. Officially around 2,500 Bangladeshis are now languishing in foreign jails. But unofficial sources said the number might be as high as 7,000.

In addition, migrants also run the risk of lifetime debt. Monowara, for example, may never be able to repay her loans.

"I am sure she will not be able to recover the money with such a poor salary because she will not be able to save more than 100 rials after food expenditures," said Ziaul Hasan, a Bangladeshi who worked in Saudi Arabia for the last six years.

"A Bangladeshi has to spend at least 300 rials per month for food in Saudi Arabia," said Hasan, a former electrician in the Kingdom.

According to official statistics a total of 39.24 lakh Bangladeshis are working abroad, 19.87 lakh in the Kingdom alone. Their remittances are a huge source of foreign exchange earnings, bringing the country a total of \$31.68 billion since 1976.

"Unemployment and lack of opportunities in the country are the main reasons which have made the younger generation desperate to leave the country," said A K M Shamsuddin, secretary in charge of the ministry of expatriate welfare and overseas employment.

"Besides, people want to become rich quickly, which prompts them to seek foreign jobs though many of them are not at all aware about the hardship or difficulties in getting a job abroad," said a high official of the BMET.

According to Shamsuddin, a lack of skills and knowledge about the language of the country concerned are the two major barriers for Bangladeshis seeking to secure foreign jobs.

"There is no bar for a Bangladeshi citizen to go anywhere in the world except Israel," said S M Wahid-uz-Zaman, director general of BMET. He said the bureau gives permission to every one who presents proper documentation for working abroad.

Opposition plans

FROM PAGE 16

they finalise the proposals.

The AL Central Working Committee will sit on May 12 where the issue of electoral reforms will top the meeting agenda, the party insiders said. The party leaders are now busy with the May 9 election to Chittagong City Corporation.

"The May 12 meeting of the Central Working Committee composed of all members of the Awami League central committee will discuss the issue for the first time," a senior policymaker of the party said "The leaders will give their opinions on a draft report on the caretaker government and EC reforms, which has been prepared by party advisers and based on their suggestions a concrete proposal will be finalised."

"Reforms proposal may take a new shape after the city corporation election if the ruling alliance attempts to rig the voting," he added.

The left 11-Party alliance and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal have drafted a set of proposals on the issues, but the opposition camp will make a common proposal on the basis of the drafts. The left-leaning parties will sit with AL President Sheikh Hasina shortly, once she returns to Dhaka from Rangpur, to devise a strategy for movement on the electoral reform issue.

"The Awami League will co-ordinate its reform proposals with other parties who have already made some proposals on the issue," AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil told The Daily Star.

President of the Workers Party of Bangladesh Rashed Khan Menon said they would focus on reforms to the caretaker government system and the EC in their next anti-government movement. Menon said they are trying to agree to a common set of proposal on the issue.

"We are hopeful about [having a final proposal] before May 22 when a new chief election commissioner takes office," Menon said on the possible date for finalisation of the proposals.

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad is scheduled to place his formula for the reforms today.

Senior leaders of the opposition parties believe it will be suicidal to go to the next national election under the existing caretaker provision and without getting the EC strengthened.

Indications are also there that the opposition parties may altogether sit out the next election should the BNP-led coalition government reject their demands. The AL and its allies have agreed to boycott the polls if the government rejects their demands.

"We are in informal talks with other opposition parties including Jatiya Party of Ershad for taking a similar decision," an AL presidium member said.

The opposition will closely watch the government move on appointment of a new chief election commissioner (CEC) when incumbent CEC MA Syed's term ends on May 22. The opposition parties in their draft reform proposals have asked the government to appoint a new CEC in consultation with the major political parties.

India test-fires multi-target missile

AFF, Bhubaneswar

India test-fired yesterday a multi-target missile on its eastern coast, defence ministry officials said.

The Trishul (Trident) missile was fired at 1:00 pm (0730 GMT) from the testing site in Chandipur, 200km northeast of the Orissa state capital Bhubaneswar, the officials said.

An official said the test, the ninth since 2003, was successful.

The surface-to-air missile is powered by solid fuel and can target aircraft and counter sea-skimming missiles.

It is one of five developed by India since 1983 and can deliver a 15-kilogramme (33-pound) warhead up to 15 kilometres (7.5 miles) away.

India last tested a missile in February while rival Pakistan conducted a test of a short-range, nuclear-capable missile on March 31.

The nuclear-armed neighbours routinely conduct missile tests despite a formal peace process begun in January 2004 to end their longstanding dispute over the Himalayan region of Kashmir, trigger of two of their three wars.

EC rejects

FROM PAGE 1

The rejection decision came when the EC Secretariat officials pointed out that the policy on poll observer does not allow an organisation, which does not have any previous experience, to function as poll observers.

Meeting sources said a senior official told the CEC that he personally knows some of the Bar Council leaders who have strong political bias.

The Bar Council appealed to the EC for permission to engage 86 of its members to observe the CCC polls.

A number of organisations have already applied to the EC for permission to observe the polls, but only those who observe polls regularly will be allowed to do the job, said sources.

Responding to an application by ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, the incumbent CCC Mayor and also a contender for the mayoral post, the EC has asked the home ministry to take necessary measures to ensure security for him.

Besides, it summoned the Chittagong Metropolitan Police commissioner to appear before the EC on April 30 to answer the allegations against him of partiality in discharging duties. The EC also asked the leaders of the Nagorik Committee who demanded withdrawal of the police commissioner, to appear before the EC with documents in support of their allegations.

The EC formed a one-member inquiry committee to probe the alleged rigging at the April 20 by-election in ward No 63 of Dhaka City Corporation. EC Deputy Secretary AKM Salimullah has been asked to submit the probe report in two weeks.

In the polls, local lawmaker's men allegedly captured the polling centres and attacked opposition candidate who later in protest boycotted the polls.

Meanwhile, the government yesterday announced public holiday for areas under Chittagong City Corporation on May 9, the election day.

All government, semi-government, autonomous, semi-autonomous and private offices, institutions and agencies in the CCC area will remain closed on that day so that the voters can cast their votes, said a handout yesterday.

Fuel station

FROM PAGE 16

and arrested four employees -- Shahadat, Jahid, Tanjir and Akash -- on charges of fraud. However, the owner, Gausuddin Khan, has gone into hiding.

A case has been filed with Mirpur Police Station.

About 25 buses and trucks in the early hours yesterday refuelled from the filling station, but after driving a kilometre or two the vehicles came to a stop.

On suspicion, the drivers ran a test on whether the 'fuel' lights, but it did not, police quoted one of the drivers, Didar Alam, as telling them. The drivers then informed Mirpur police of the matter.

The investigation officer of the case, Shajahan Miah of Mirpur police, said many drivers have complained to him that the filling station has been selling adulterated fuel for long.

The police have sent the arrestees to court with a five-day remand prayer for each of them.

Joy

FROM PAGE 16

he said while talking to reporters at the Bogra Parjatan Motel.

Joy said he is yet to take any decision about joining politics.

He said, however, "I will enter politics if people want."

Joy, grandson of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, did not give any response when asked whether he would contest the next general election.

Joy joined several rallies organised by the Awami League during his three-day visit to his ancestral home at Fatehpur village in Peerganj upazila of Rangpur along with his mother Sheikh Hasina.

BNP deputies demand

FROM PAGE 1

situencies," Mohammad Saidul Haq, the lone Awami League parliamentarian participating in the meeting, told the press. "The finance minister seemed to consider the proposal," he added.

Saifur on the other hand told the press soon after the meeting, "The MPs have one line of thinking and I have a different line. As the finance minister I have to take policy decisions for a sound monetary management. I cannot sacrifice...sound monetary management [for temporary political gains]."

About involving MPs in tax collection Saifur said, "The MPs all agree that if tax collection is not increased the development process will be stalled. They suggested forming committees, which would include them, so that they can help improve the situation."

Chairman of JS Standing Committee on Forest and Environment Ministry Nazimuddin Alam remarked, "The election is ahead. We need to bring the prices of essentials down or face consequences in the election." He also expressed the opinion that "there should be more subsidy for the agriculture sector and more allocations for road constructions."

"Due to corruption," Alam observed, "the tender process for any development work always slows down. This should be taken care of to ensure speedy implementation of projects."

Chairman of JS Standing Committee on Planning Commission Akbar Ali said, "About 40 percent of the government expenditure is wasted. Such wastage is especially rampant in the education sector."

"For example, in a union there are 12 madrasas where the number of teachers exceed the number of students. We have also seen a madrasa where there are only 10 to 12 students; and again most of them cannot even pass the exams," he added.

The chairman of the committee on establishment ministry, Shakhawat Hossain Bokul, quipped, "If stringent measures are not taken against corruption, the government policy on poverty reduction will not be successful. That's why the MPs are needed to be involved in the anti-corruption activities."

GM Siraj, chairman of the com-

Faizee

FROM PAGE 16

Bar Council cancelled Faizee's enrolment certificate for providing it with false information and failure to prove the allegation regarding his LLB certificate untrue.

The rally organised by Sammilito Ainjibi Samannay Parishad was held at the Supreme Court Ainjibi Samiti Bhaban. It gave reception to the newly elected office-bearers of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA).

"It will amount to dishonouring the court, if the word 'justice' is used before the name of Faizee," former law minister Abdul Matin Khasru said.

The ongoing protest of the SC lawyers will be pursued to restore people's confidence in the court, he added.

Former SCBA president Advocate Ozair Faruk said that despite having no qualifications for the job, Faizee by holding the office of additional judge is in fact indulging in a crime and undermining the court.

"Even people who are supporting Faizee in holding the office too are responsible for undermining the court," Faruk added.

"If recruiting judges on the basis of political consideration continues, the judiciary will soon experience a severe crisis," Barrister Tanya Amir said.

Vice Chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud, Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam, Barrister Shafiq Ahmed, Advocate Abdul Baset Majumder, the newly elected SCBA President Mahbubul Alam