

Delhi orders fresh investigation into 'Teheka scam'

AFP, New Delhi

The Indian government ordered a new probe yesterday into the so-called 'Teheka scam' in which top politicians and army brass were secretly filmed apparently taking bribes from reporters posing as arms dealers.

No end in sight to war on terror: Pak FM

AFP, Sydney

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri yesterday said that while his country had done much to smash the al-Qaeda network and destroy other militant groups, an end to the war against terror was not in sight.



Lawyers at the extended meeting of Bangladesh Bar Council yesterday lock in a heated debate over the demand for removal of Additional High Court Judge Faisal Mahmud Faizee.

200 hurt in Sreepur

FROM PAGE 1 worker, Yousuf Ali, 25, was seriously injured in the incident.

Discovering the body of their fellow garment worker lying on the road, around 4,000 garment workers turned unruly and, armed with sticks and brickbats, stood on roadsides along more than a kilometre of the highway and started attacking the running buses, private cars, trucks and vans, police said.

"We know very well that there is the feeling in the Islamic world that there is selectivity in the application of UN Security Council resolutions," he said.

Kasuri said Australia had faced indignation from the Muslim world when it led an intervention force in 1999 into East Timor, which had previously been controlled by the world's most populous Muslim nation Indonesia.

"Look at Indonesia, East Timor... I'm not going into the merits of it, but all over the Islamic world they said 'Oh here's a Christian minority, they want their rights, they are being given (them) by the UN'."

Kasuri reiterated the stance of President Pervez Musharraf, who has called on Muslim countries to conduct reforms to reduce the threat of terror and on the West to help resolve disputes justly so that terrorists are denied a breeding ground.

Kasuri, the first Pakistani foreign minister to visit since 1959, said ties between the nations were strong and Australia's Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and Prime Minister John Howard would visit his country this year.

Downer on Thursday announced the two nations would sign an agreement to improve counter-terrorist cooperation when Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf visits next month.

against them under the Special Trial Act was on the underway.

General Manager of the FS Sweater Factory Major (Retd) Moshir Rahman told newsmen that despite informing the police well ahead of the attack by the transport workers, the police did not come to save the factory. He also alleged that the transport workers attacked his factory in presence of policemen.

The police, however, denied the allegation.

PM opens IEB

FROM PAGE 16 before the next month, they added.

Meanwhile, Awami League (AL) chief and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina will also arrive in the port city tomorrow to address as the chief guest a rally in Laidighi Maidan that will precede a victory procession for AL backed Nagorik Committee mayoral candidate ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury.

Mohiuddin Chowdhury, also general secretary of Chittagong city AL, won the mayoral race for the third consecutive term, defeating BNP led 4-party alliance candidate Mir Nasir by a wide margin of over 90 thousand votes in the May 9 CCC polls.

Utpala Sen passes away

PTI, Kolkata

Eminent Bengali singer Utpala Sen, who sang for legendary music directors SD Burman, Pankaj Mullick and Raichand Baral, died at the SSKM Hospital in Kolkata yesterday. She was 81.

She is survived by a son. Family sources told the news agency that Utpala Sen was suffering from cancer and admitted to the hospital with respiratory problems.

She was the wife of Bengali singer Satinath Mukherjee who died in 1992.

Born in Dhaka, Sen sang on Dhaka radio and her first record hit the market in 1939. She shot to fame in 1941 with the song 'Ek hater mor pujar thala' under music director Sudhirlal Chakraborty.

Her songs number about 7,000.

BNP men

FROM PAGE 16

government for killing people without trial by involving the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in the name of 'crossfire'.

Advocate Giasuddin Kabul and Anisuddin Ahmed Sohel also addressed the meet.

INDIAN DEFENCE MINISTRY REPORT ON BANGLADESH

'Killings of opposition men, alleged support to rebels straining ties with neighbours'

AFP, New Delhi

An "alarming" rise in assassinations of opposition political figures in Bangladesh and Dhaka's alleged support to rebels in India are straining relations between the South Asian neighbours, India said yesterday.

The statements came in the defence ministry's annual report which placed Bangladesh among countries with which India has bilateral security problems.

The ministry also accused Dhaka of not addressing India's concerns over alleged arms smuggling from its soil to ethnic and tribal guerrilla groups battling for home-lands in six of India's seven strife-torn northeastern states.

Despite the seemingly strong language regarding Bangladesh, the report said India's security problems with the country were "lesser" in nature than with Pakistan with which it has fought three wars, two over the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir.

The Security and Environment report said India's ties with Pakistan have improved since November 2003 when the nuclear-armed rivals began a ceasefire along the Line of Control dividing Kashmir. But it said the problem of cross-border militant infiltration continued although at a lower level.

In its comments on Bangladesh, the report spoke of India's concern about what it said was the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in Bangladesh.

"It (Dhaka) has remained indifferent to the rising influence of political parties and organisations of funda-

mentalist and radical Islamist orientation in Bangladesh society and government," the defence ministry said.

"Political violence and assassinations against internal political opponents have risen alarmingly and gone unpunished, and there is no explanation for the large cache of arms and ammunition bound for the northeast of India detected in Chittagong in April 2004," it said.

The Indian ministry also said large-scale illegal migration of Bangladeshis to India was another irritant which needed to be eliminated.

"It (Bangladesh) has also been insensitive and unresponsive to India's concern regarding the presence of Indian insurgent groups from the northeastern states and Pakistani (military's) Inter-Services Intelligence on Bangladesh soil," it said.

The ministry's criticism of Bangladesh came amid a spate of skirmishes along the 4,095-kilometre border between the two nations. India is fencing the frontier in a bid to cut illegal migration by a quarter.

Indian troops and Bangladesh guerrillas fought side-by-side against Pakistan to secure the emergence of Bangladesh in 1971 as a separate nation.

But traditionally friendly relations between the two countries have come under pressure in recent years, especially since the election of the Islamic allied Bangladesh National Party.

Border skirmishes for which both sides trade blame have also marred ties.

Suicide attack kills 3

FROM PAGE 16

between Iraq's political and ethnic factions left a vacuum that was filled by one of the bloodiest periods since the March 2003 US-led invasion.

The cabinet will have to run the country as parliament drafts a permanent constitution and embattled security forces attempt to assert their authority.

US marines pressed on Friday with their largest military operation since the spectacular assault on the extremist enclave of Fallujah west of Baghdad last November.

"Operation Matador" was launched on May 7 in the Al-Qaim area, a Zarqawi stronghold near the Syrian border through which much of the insurgency's supply of arms and foreign fighters is believed to be smuggled in.

The US military said F-18 jets had taken out at least four gunmen during a mission in that area on Thursday.

The marines, who have some 1,000 men engaged in the operation, claim they killed more than 100 rebels over the past five days, although Zarqawi's network denied the losses in an Internet statement.

A top US general had admitted that his troops were encountering

tough resistance, although there was little independent information filtering through from the desert region.

The intensity of the fighting has forced several families to flee the area and the Iraqi Red Crescent said it was delivering assistance to the displaced.

Meanwhile, three US soldiers were killed in separate incidents in Iraq on Thursday, according to US military reports yesterday.

One was killed in east Baghdad when his vehicle was caught by a roadside bomb, the military said in a statement.

Another died in a bomb blast while on patrol near Samarra, 125km north of Baghdad.

And a third died in similar circumstances east of Musayib, about 60km south of Baghdad.

The latest deaths brought to 20 the number of US troops who have been killed since Saturday, one of the most deadly periods for US troops on the ground since the 2003 invasion.

The total number of US service-

AL forms body

FROM PAGE 16

proposals. AL advisory committee members Prof Shamsul Huda Harun placed the draft on reforms of the caretaker government system and Barrister Amir-Ul Islam on those of the Election Commission.

Some 20 leaders took part in the discussion and most of them suggested that chief advisor to the caretaker government should be appointed by consensus of all parties.

A draft proposal in the meeting recommended that a non-partisan and neutral person acceptable to all parties could be appointed the chief adviser, be he from any profession.

"The president will consult with all major political parties on appointment of the chief adviser," the proposal continued.

Besides, the proposal said, powers of the president and the chief of the interim government have to be defined clearly. Charge of the armed forces division should rest with the chief adviser and the armed forces should not be allowed magistracy.

In the parliamentary system, head of the state is a titular head. But it is not so during the rule of caretaker government," said the draft adding, "the president will act on the advice of the chief adviser."

It also said the caretaker government shall be accountable to the constitution and the people instead of the president.

It will discharge only the 'routine functions' and will not take any

'policy decision'. Besides, the president shall not issue any ordinance during or before the election on his own. "He will promulgate the ordinances only on consultation with major political parties," added the draft.

On strengthening the EC, another proposal said that the commission will have to have the jurisdiction to formulate its own budget. Instead of having employees deputed from the administration cadre, it should have the authority to appoint its staff to run the elections.

Hundreds

FROM PAGE 16

Assam shares a 272 kilometre long border with Bangladesh, much of it unfenced and Indian officials often claim that large scale infiltrations threaten the region's demographic profile.

There are no official estimates of the number of Bangladeshi migrants in Assam. However state governor Ajai Singh has reported up to 6,000 illegal infiltrators entering the region daily.

Dhaka denies allegations that it encourages people to enter India illegally.

The spat has often flared into violent clashes between border guards on both sides.

Hindu nationalists have previously called for illegal Bangladeshi immigrants to be expelled, but there was no indication who had published the leaflets, which were backed by messages on mobile telephones.

Cases in limbo

FROM PAGE 1 remained withheld, said Bogra Public Prosecutor AKM Saiful Islam. He said, "After the High Court rule, it's not possible for the court to record witness accounts."

Nearly two years ago, in June 2003, the police recovered about 84kg of explosives and about 100,000 bullets from a truck at Jograpara village under Kahuza upazila of Bogra and filed four cases.

A charge sheet was submitted in the cases on September 13, 2003 accusing six persons -- Syed Afkhar Rahman Pintu, Ashish Dev Barman, Atiqur Rahman Dulu, Anwara Khanam Bithi, Harunur Rashid Jalal and Altu Mia.

Hard job

FROM PAGE 1

attended the meet. The business leaders told Rocca Bangladesh is enjoying some sort of trade facilities from most of the developed countries including Canada, Australia and Japan and from the EU, but not from the US in the post-MFA era.

In reply, the US assistant secretary reportedly told them after the MFA phase-out, textile has become a burning issue in the US, where local industries themselves are facing trouble.

She put forward a number of recommendations for Bangladesh industry: diversification of Bangladesh's export basket and improving the service at Chittagong port to make the export items cost-competitive.

Her reaction to Dhaka's plea for duty free access came only days after the BGMEA completed a US tour to lobby for passage of "Tariff Relief Assistance for Developing Economies Act of 2005" bill, expected to allow the facility for Bangladesh.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan at separate meetings on Thursday also asked Rocca for the duty free access facility.

If the Trade Act 2005 is passed, it will extend the trade facility to 15 countries including five South Asian nations -- Bangladesh, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

As the president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) pointed out the positive approach of some US senators and congresspersons towards the Trade Act 2005, Rocca said it has to go through various procedures.



Residents of Ghoshpara in Rajshahi City demonstrate yesterday demanding a proper investigation of the rape and murder of Mili, a class-five student of PN School, and punishment to the culprits.

Korean EPZ

FROM PAGE 1 KEPMZ sources said they plan to set up a whole range of garments and textiles units plus electronics, software, scientific and optical tools, machine tools, automotive parts and other units there. To set up its infrastructure, Youngone will separately invest \$200 million.

PMO sources said that following recent press reports on the KEPMZ, and Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman's visit to South Korea in late March, the issue has been revived.

During his visit to Seoul in connection with an international seminar, Saifur met the Korean finance minister who inquired about the status of the KEPMZ. Saifur told him that he would discuss the matter with the prime minister soon, and he did it after his return home.

Since early 2002, the PMO formed several committees to look into irregularities in the KEPMZ and the Private EPZ Act framed during the AL rule. The first committee verbally asked the KEPMZ why it needed an area as huge as 2,500 acres and hinted that it could do away with 500 acres.

Finally in November 2003, a high-powered committee headed by the principal secretary recommended that there is no need to change the Private EPZ Act and said, "in the interest of national image and foreign investment," the KEPMZ should be allowed to function without any delay.

No follow-up action was however taken. "But considering the prospect of KEPMZ to bring in huge foreign direct investment, and relationship with Korea, the prime minister is now agreeable to awarding the licence," a PMO source said.

The PMO heads a Board of Governors to deal with private EPZ licensing under the Private EPZ Act. The board last met in April 2003.

The country's government-run five EPZs have 203 units with a total investment of 748 million dollars.

Mili murder

FROM PAGE 16

case. They formed a 'human chain' and brought out a procession in the morning.

The students will hold meetings, submit a memorandum to the authorities and put up posters to mobilise public opinion in support of their demand. They will go for other programmes including strike if the demands are not met in a week.

Announcing their programmes at a press conference on Thursday, the students mentioned that the criminals responsible for the tragic death of Joly, Hasina, Rulifa and Noor Banu in similar incidents earlier still elude police dragnet.

US to close

FROM PAGE 16 designed for the Cold War, must give way to the new demands of the war against extremism and other evolving 21st Century challenges," Rumsfeld said in a news release obtained by the AP.

Before closures or downsizings can take effect, the Defense Department's proposal must be approved or changed by a federal base closing commission, and then agreed to by Congress and President Bush, in a process that will run into the fall. In four previous rounds of closures starting in 1988, commissions have accepted 85 percent of bases the Pentagon recommended for closure or consolidation.

Among the major closures Rumsfeld seeks is Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota, home to 29 B-1B bombers, half the nation's fleet of the aircraft, and the state's second largest employer. That would deal a potential political setback to Republican freshman Sen. John Thune, who had claimed he could protect the base if elected during his campaign to defeat former Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle.

Rumsfeld also recommended closing the Naval Station in Pascagoula, Miss., which barely survived previous base closure rounds. The decision was a blow to Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., who had fought the 1995 round of closures. At stake are 844 military jobs and 112 civilian jobs.

Anti-Ahmadiyya

FROM PAGE 16 "Mayor Mohiuddin, from whatever party he is, is not loyal to America, rather he moved to protect the Chittagong port and that is why people voted for him," said IKMNB central leader Kazi Ataur Rahman.

He called upon Nizami to leave the post of Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami. US Ambassador Harry K Thomas's visit to the Ahmadiyya prayer centres and Nizami's speech that Jamaat has no link with IKMNB are tied with one line, he added.

"If anyone helps America to kill the people of this country, that is none but Jamaat-e-Islami," Mufti Abul Kashem said.

Criticising the media for propagating that IKMNB occupied Ahmadiyyas' prayer structures, Mufti Noor Hossain Nurani said, "If anyone can prove that we occupied their prayer halls, he will be given an award of Tk 50 lakh. Laying siege and occupation are not the same."

The Muslims will not fear to sacrifice their lives to realise their demands if the government does not declare the Ahmadiyyas non-Muslim by December 23 this year, he said.

IKMNB Secretary General Alhaji Nazmul Haque demanded that the government withdraw all the cases filed against them and pass a bill "Preservation of Dignity of Hazrat Mohammad" in parliament.

Presided over by Maolana Ruhul Amin, the rally was also addressed by central leaders Mufti Abur Razzak and Gazi Ataur Rahman.

The rally draped the streets adjoining Golap Shah Mazar, Purana Paltan and Nightingale intersections.

Injured Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 1

ambush. All of them were later helicoptered to Bunia.

Three of the Bangladeshi troopers suffered bullet injuries and the remaining three were wounded when their jeep turned turtle and fell into a roadside ditch.

The two other bullet-hit blue-berets are Corporal (Gunner) Md Saur Rahman and Private Shawkat Hossain. The three injured in the jeep crash are Sergeant (Fitter) Md Shamsur Rahman, Sergeant (Fitter) Md Rezaul Karim and Private DMT Md Golam Maola.

Maola sustained a head injury. He and Shawkat Hossain have been sent to a South African hospital yesterday for better treatment. According to ISPR, the rest of the wounded are out of danger.

Monuc troopers paid formal military honour to Nur yesterday evening. ISPR said all arrangements have been made to bring back his body home.

The death brings the number of peacekeepers killed in the DRC to 17 since 1998, the year the current UN force known by its French acronym Monuc was established in the former Belgian colony.

Lendu FRPI militia, one of the five ethnic armed groups in Ituri, is believed to have carried out the attack. UN in March said FRPI fighters had kidnapped hundreds of civilians from rival ethnic groups, decapitating some, torturing others and forcing some to work as porters or sex slaves.

A UN combat helicopter was called in and opened fire on the assailants, but no details on the rebel casualties were available from Monuc.

ISPR however said a number of militiamen were injured as the Bangladeshi soldiers counter-attacked. As of last night, helicopter gun-ships were carrying on the attack on the rebel militia, it added.

This was the second attack on UN peacekeepers from Bangladesh in the anarchic region. The first ambush on February 25 left nine Bangladeshi troopers dead, the worst single loss suffered by Monuc to date.

Following the February attack, UN Security Council unanimously voted in April to ban arms sales to

any recipient in the territory excepting the government army and police.

According to wire services, much of the Ituri district is still under the control of rebel warlords. Militias with backing from Uganda, Rwanda and the Congolese authorities have been doggedly fighting one another in a bid to control the gold and other minerals in the area.

Skirmishes between ethnic Hema UPC and Lendu FRPI militias since 1999 have left over 60,000 civilians killed in the area and forced around 100,000 people to take shelter in disease-infested camps, said wire services.

Monuc, with 16,700 peacekeepers including 1,300 Bangladeshis, is trying to oversee a peace accord, help demobilise rebel groups and assist the current government of President Joseph Kabila in establishing a broad-based democratic regime.

More than 9,000 militiamen including over 3,000 child-soldiers have been disarmed in Ituri under a UN programme launched in September last year and planned for completion in June.

Vandalism

FROM PAGE 16

in fishing nets. "To tackle the situation," Haque said, "a taskforce with representations from BIWTA, navy, coast-guard, local administration and the police should be formed immediately."

When contacted, a high official at the shipping ministry said they are concerned about the problem and have asked the local administrations to take stern action against those involved in the malpractice.

"Due to budgetary constraints," he said, "the shipping ministry is unable to solve many of its problems including the pilferage of navigational aids."

"The ministry does not have funds even to engage an adequate number of guards on a daily basis, although this is a must to contain such crimes," he said seeking anonymity.

CJ should step down

FROM PAGE 1

He went on, "We see a new practice in the Supreme Court that a judge is filing case seeking justice." The president should have sent the matter to the Supreme Judicial Council as the case was filed by a former additional judge (Abdus Salam Mamun), whose service was not confirmed by the government, he added.

Most of the speakers at the extended meeting demanded that Justice Faisal Mahmud Faizee should not continue as a judge as he has become 'controversial' and should quit immediately on ethical grounds, said Rokanuddin. Since there is a proceeding against Faizee at the council, the chief justice should have asked it about the matter, he thought.

But some of them pointed out that Faizee issue is a sub-judice matter.

Meanwhile, Jainul Abedin, law secretary of the ruling BNP, told reporters the executive committee of the Bar Council failed to organise the meeting yesterday.

He mentioned that Attorney General AJ Mohammad Ali, also ex-officio chairman of the council, issued a notice stating that as per the Bar Council Act, the vice chairman is not entitled to call such extended meeting.

Rokanuddin admitted that he received a note from the attorney general regarding the extended meeting and said it has become a practice for the last 15 years that the council vice chairman calls its meetings. He also said when he called the meeting, then attorney general Hasan Arif as ex-officio council chairman did not raise any

objection. Chairred by Rokanuddin, yesterday's meeting began at 9:20am at the conference room of the Bar Council. Amendment to the Civil Procedure of Code (CPC), corruption in the judiciary and Faizee issue were on the agenda.

Eleven out of 14 members of the council executive committee attended the meeting. They included Mahbube Alam, president of the Supreme Court Bar Association, Yusuf Hossain Humayun, Z I Khan Panna and Sahara Khatun.

Presidents and secretaries of the district Bar associations were invited to the meeting. Eighty-one representatives of the Bar associations attended it.

About 15 Bar representatives spoke at the meeting.

There was no electricity in the corrugated tin-roofed conference room. The council authorities contacted the Power Development Board (PDB) but the PDB authorities said it would not be possible to resume power supply before 1:00pm for 'technical' problems.

A group of lawyers demanded allowing them to speak first as it was too difficult for them to stay in the room due to unbearable heat. Some other lawyers opposed their demands.

Amid a pandemonium, Rokanuddin adjourned the meeting.

The next date of the meeting will be announced soon in consultation with the council executive body members, he said.