

Draft of new court

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lawyers, experts and professionals," Law Minister Moudud Ahmed said.

After formal consent of the cabinet, the draft will be finalised and sent to parliament and the parliament standing committee for final approval, he added.

Termining the new law "a revolutionary step" by the present government, the law minister said the initiative to formulate it was taken following the demands from different sections of people including the journalists as the existing law is incomplete and has become obsolete.

"There is no clear-cut definition of contempt of court in the existing law," Moudud said, adding that the provision of penalty in the new law will remain but the other clauses will be changed.

Under the existing law, the highest penalty for contempt of court is six months' imprisonment and fine of Tk 2,000.

To make the country's contempt of court law modern and realistic, the government has been examining the contempt of court laws of neighbouring countries India and Pakistan who enacted new contempt of court laws in 1976 and 1977.

Moudud also said that the informally discussed with many people particularly lawyers and experts regarding enactment of the new law.

The draft that contains detailed

definition of the contempt of court has pointed out when and where the contempt of court law will be applicable.

According to the draft, when the intentional act or word of a person directly or indirectly violates or disrespects any verdict, decree, orders, instructions, writ or summons of a court, it will be considered as a contempt of court.

Contempt of court will be applicable if the act of a person demeans the court or creates no-confidence among the people about the court or if anyone makes malicious statement about a judge or interferes, hampers, or creates barrier to the normal process of justice.

The contempt of court will not be applicable if a person makes correct statement or presents news about the activities of court in public interest with a clear heart.

The correct statement or news about the personal behaviour of a judge or the constructive criticism of the verdict on a public interest case, the appeal of which is yet to be dismissed will not be termed contempt of court.

If a person publishes an article or makes comments on the ongoing legal activities in the court with a clear heart, it will also not be construed as a contempt of court.

24-hour strike

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Journalists and newspaper workers and employees will also bring out procession and hold rallies on September 25 to press home their demands.

The programme was announced at a rally of the council at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday with Co-Convenor Gias Kamal Chowdhury in the chair. Co-Convenor Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury announced the programme.

Speakers at the rally condemned the government's dilly-dally over the implementation of the sixth wage board despite the cabinet decision.

They warned the newspaper owners against any conspiracy regarding the formation of the wage board.

The meeting was addressed among others by Co-Convenor of the council Fazole Imam, Member Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi, Joint Member Secretary Monzoarul Ahsan Bulbul, member Abul Hashem, Khairul Islam, Altaf Mahmood, Elahi Newaj Khan Saju, Shah Alamgir and Sardar Farid. Joint Member Secretary Md Motiur Rahman Talukder conducted the meeting.

Earlier, journalists and workers brought out a procession that paraded different roads in the city.

An extended meeting of the unit chiefs and deputy unit chiefs of different newspaper units, presidents and general secretaries of press union and employees' unions will be held on July 30 to make the August 1 strike a success.

Killing spree in 'crossfire'

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and the force was renamed Rab (Rapid Action Battalion) on April 14 last year.

Besides, the government had launched a special drive with different agencies of the police in every ward of the capital and another drive styled Operation Spider Web in the southwestern region in 2003 to net criminals. But both the drives were considered to have been largely ineffective.

The government formed Cobra in June, 2004, with members from Detective Branch (DB), Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Special Branch (SB), and Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) to work in the capital.

In yet another such move, Cheetah, consisting of DB men, hit the road on September 24 last year. As the Rab started actions in the name of 'crossfire' immediately after going into full-fledged operation in June, 2004, the police also sprang to similar actions. In a few months, they surpassed the Rab in 'dealing with criminals'.

The government earlier had given the army personnel indemnity from prosecution for killing 54 people during Operation Clean Heart, but no such measures has yet been adopted for the law enforcers responsible for the deaths of 378 people in 'crossfire', 'shootout' and 'encounter'.

While heart attack was cited wholesale as causes of death during Clean Heart, the law enforcers these days trot out the same old story of 'crossfire' where the victims get arrested and killed either in 'crossfire' or 'encounter' or 'shoot-out' during operations for recovering illegal firearms at deserted places, mostly in the small hours.

The police and Rab authorities send to newspaper offices the same press releases containing the same old story, with only names of the victims and recovered firearms changed.

The releases keep claiming that the victims had got shot and died while trying to flee during a gunfight between the law enforcers and the arrestees' accomplices. As the donors and international rights bodies press the government to stop extra-judicial killings, the government decided to blanket the killings with legal covers and announced that executive enquiries would be carried out into all the deaths during police and Rab operations.

But the Police Regulations of Bengal, which say firearms should not be used other than in emergency situations, oblige the authorities to conduct a full executive enquiry to justify the use of firearms.

Heads of police and Rab said that the executive enquiries so far did not find fault on the part of any of their members for any of the deaths in crossfire while rights bodies, legal experts, civil society, and opposition parties termed those enquiries mere eyewash.

They demanded an independent enquiry involving the judiciary and professional bodies, saying that executive probes into the extra-judicial killings are bound to be partial since the law enforcers are carrying out the acts with the go-ahead from the government.

For a permanent solution to arrest declining law and order, experts suggest bringing reforms in the police, raising their morale, keeping the judiciary above politicisation and influence from the executive, strengthening the lower courts, ending political patronisation of the criminals, ensuring justice in the trial of the criminals and testimony by the witnesses.

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Flooding in 35 upazilas worsens

FROM PAGE 1

suffering from acute scarcity of food and drinking water, and sanitation problems while little government aid has reached the flood victims.

Meanwhile, Dhaka, Brahmaputra and Jamuna and Gahot rivers are flowing above their danger marks at various points, Water Development Board (WDB) sources said.

The Karotoa also crossed the danger mark in Gaibandha.

The flood control embankments at 47 points in Rangpur, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Gaibandha, Nilphamari, Bogra and Sirajganj districts are now threatened by erosion of the major rivers, reports BSS quoting WDB officials.

The overall situation in Netrokona, Sherpur and Mymensingh districts that has witnessed flash floods is now improving, our Netrokona correspondent reports.

Continuous heavy downpour for four days has created water logging and flash floods in different areas of Barisal, Patuakhali and Barguna

districts and paralysed daily life, our Barisal correspondent reports.

In Barisal district, parts of Salta-Bagda embankment in different areas of Uzirpur and Aqailghara upazilas have been washed away.

High tide flowing on the downstream of the Meghna and its branches has over-flooded the river banks and is washing away shoals in different areas.

Water logging has gripped most of the Patuakhali town.

Newly transplanted Aman crops on about 50,000 acres have gone under water and fish worth cores of taka have been washed away in seven affected upazilas of the district.

Twelve hundred shrimp enclosures and over 5,000 ponds in the seven upazilas have been flooded, Patuakhali district fishery officials said.

At least 20,000 in Barguna Sadar, Amtali, Taltali, and Patharghata upazilas have been marooned and about 100 farms in these areas have been flooded.

Fresh areas of five upazilas in

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Gaibandha district have been submerged with sudden rise water level in all the rivers, our Gaibandha correspondent reports.

Fresh cracks developed at Bridge Bazar, Narayanpur, Kholabari, Goderhat and Kutipara along the town protection embankment.

Water level of the Jamuna is flowing above the danger level, reports our Bogra correspondent referring to the water board sources.

Gushing water is posing threat to the Jamuna embankment at Titparol, Chandonbaila, Sheorabari of Sariakandi and Dhunot upazilas and protection groin at different points, local people said.

Erosion of the Jamuna and Dhaleshari rivers has taken a serious turn, reports our Tangail correspondent.

At least 10,000 people who have rendered homeless due to the erosion have taken shelter on different flood control embankments and are passing their days under the open sky in utter misery.

15 suicide bombers

FROM PAGE 1

Iraqi war has declared is a new campaign to seize control of Baghdad.

By far the worst incident was the blast near a Shia mosque which caused devastation in the mixed Sunni and Shia town, in the centre of a violent area dubbed by US forces the "triangle of death."

A suicide bomber blew up a fuel truck near a crowded vegetable market outside the mosque. In addition to the 98 killed, hospital sources said 75 wounded were being treated, including 19 in a serious condition.

"This is a black day in the history of the town," Musayyib police chief Yas Khudayri said.

"After the bomb I went over there and found my son's head. I could not find his body," said Mohsen Jassim of his 18-year-old son.

On Sunday, angry crowds railed against the authorities outside buildings gutted by flame, while bulldozers swept aside the burned-out wreckage of cars.

"The police banned trucks from entering Musayyib, yet they let in a fuel tanker. This is crime! The police are all agents (of the insurgency)," shouted one man.

At a tense session in parliament, politicians assailed the government for failing to maintain security and called for local militia to be formed to replace failed police and soldiers.

"The plans of the interior and defence ministries to impose security in Iraq have failed to stop the terrorists. We need to bring back popular militias," senior parliamentarian Khudair al-Khuzairi told the chamber.

al-Qaeda in Iraq, which has urged hundreds of suicide bombers from across the Arab world to come to Iraq to wage holy war, has claimed responsibility for the latest bombing campaign and said more violence would follow, although it did not explicitly claim the Musayyib attack.

"The operation is continuing as planned and we warn the enemies of God of more to come. We ask our Muslim brothers around the world to pray for God to grant us victory," said an al-Qaeda Internet statement on Saturday.

Sunday began with three more suicide car bombs in the capital, police sources said. One attack, at a police checkpoint in the east of the city, killed three and wounded 14. The second, at a checkpoint in the south, killed one and wounded three. The third, near the former election commission headquarters, killed three and wounded two.

al-Qaeda had claimed responsibility for two attacks by late morning.

Iraq has often experienced several

5 Bangla Bhai men

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disclosing his name," said Aslam Iqbal, officer-in-charge of Boalia Police Station.

The arrestees demanded Tk 4 lakh from him a week ago, identifying themselves as operators of Bangla Bhai, but agreed to take Tk 1.5 lakh after negotiations.

Rubel collected the money in a polythene bag from the businessman in front of General Post Office.

Police followed the boy and arrested the extortionists when he was handing the money over to them in Dar Kharbona.

UK readies new laws

FROM PAGE 16
Europe sought to distinguish between Islam and terrorism, arguing for their community's increased integration, some Muslim intellectuals have mentioned their feeling of responsibility.

As the massive police investigation into the blast spread further across the globe, most British Sunday newspapers splashed the first image yet seen of the four bombers together across their frontpages.

Taken from the security camera at Luton station, north of London, it shows Hasib Hussain, 18, Shahzad Tanweer, 20, Mohammed Sidique Khan, 30 and Germaine Lindsay, 19, totting large rucksacks as they prepared to take a train to the capital on the morning of July 7.

"Together, the four bombers," read the Mail on Sunday headline next to the grainy picture.

London's Metropolitan Police released the photo in the hope of joggling the memory of potential witnesses as part of an inquiry which has now stretched to four continents.

Police have warned of possible further attacks, and on Saturday a British woman was among five people killed when a bomb destroyed a minibus in the Turkish seaside resort.

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan condemned the blast at Kusadası – particularly popular with British tourists – as a "terrorist attack", without blaming a specific group.

On Saturday, police formally named Khan and Lindsay – whose identities had already been widely reported – as the suspected perpetrators of two of the subway blasts. Hussain and Tanweer had previously been named.

Khan, Hussain and Tanweer were Britons with family roots in Pakistan, from the Leeds area in West Yorkshire, northern England, while Lindsay, a Jamaican immigrant to Britain, lived in Aylesbury, northwest of London.

A probe which has already taken investigators to Pakistan and Egypt has spread to Jamaica, with British officials confirming that local officers interviewed Lindsay's father, Nigel, at the request of London police.

Meanwhile, Israeli newspaper Maariv claimed Sunday that Khan had gone to Israel two years ago to help plan a suicide attack in Tel Aviv, in which a young British Muslim killed three people when he blew himself up in a bar.

According to a report in Britain's Sunday Times newspaper, the country's domestic intelligence agency MI5 opened a file on Khan last year but closed it after ruling that he posed no threat.

suicide attacks per day since the government took power in April. But US generals have said the situation was improving, with just six suicide car bombs countrywide last week, the fewest in nearly three months.

The sudden upsurge began on Friday, when 11 suicide car bombers struck US and Iraqi military targets throughout the capital and on the highway heading south.

Those attacks killed more than 32 people and wounded more than 100. On Saturday, apart from the Musayyib blast, strikes throughout Iraq killed at least 16 people, including three British soldiers in Amara in the south and one American soldier near Kirkuk in the north.

In Baghdad, tense Iraqi police officers – frequently the target of suicide bombers – have manned extra police checkpoints throughout the capital.

Friday's and Saturday's bombings followed a thwarted triple suicide attack at a gate to Baghdad's fortified Green Zone government compound on Thursday. A suicide car bomb on Wednesday near a US patrol killed 27 people, mostly children.

The US military has described the bombers as akin to "precision-guided" weapons and has made tackling them, and tracking down where the bombs are made, a top priority.

JS body

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the meeting that the arms and ammunition were shipped from Hong Kong and that more weapons were added to the consignment in Singapore before being brought to Bangladesh.

"We want to know about the security measures taken to prevent such arms smuggling in future," Shawkat told reporters after the meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsod Chhabin.

Committee Chairman Mahbubur Rahman told the reporters that they will discuss the matter at an upcoming meeting. "But we are not optimistic about how much we will be able to discuss due to shortage of time," he said.

The meeting also blamed the Directorate of Military Land and Cantonments for failure in recovering armed forces' land from illegal occupants.

Members of the committee observed that the right of the armed forces on their own land could not be established due to mismanagement, irresponsibility and negligence of the directorate.

Referring to the 100.26 acres of land in Dhakamot and Jowar Sahara, the members said the armed forces paid the money for acquiring the land and later the verdict of the cases also came in favour of them.

However, the directorate instead of establishing its right on the land went for negotiations and the people, who had already been paid, claimed 40 acres of land for them, the committee members noted.

"The payment had been made, the verdict was in favour of the armed forces. There was no necessity to go for discussion with the people who had received the payment," Mahub, also former army chief, said.

Killed for dowry

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Mirpur police recovered Camelia's body from her house on July 5 and sent it to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital morgue. For six days the body lied there until the morgue authorities handed it over to Anjuman on July 11, as no one came to claim or receive it.

The morgue is authorised to store a body for 48 hours, 72 hours in emergency case. But after that the authorities have no other way but to mark the body as an unidentified one and hand it over to Anjuman, morgue sources say.

According to Halima, Camelia married her lover Monir Hossain on April 22, 2002. She was then an HSC student at Shah Ali Women's College. On May 15, Monir took his wife, who was then carrying, to stay with his family.

Halima says Camelia's in-laws killed her and then hung the body from the ceiling to make it look like a suicide. "I don't believe my daughter can commit suicide, after she had gone through so much hardships and trials in life," she says with conviction.

"They tortured my girl for dowry, killed the embryo and threatened to kill her after she had filed a case against

Donors

FROM PAGE 1
judiciary a colonial inheritance, which ensures "certainty of expense but uncertainty of results". It called for judicial reforms and has asked the government to improve its overall performance.

The paper also advised for establishing an independent panel of eminent jurists and lawyers to hold broad consultations on judicial reform priorities and to recommend key actions.

In a chapter titled "Tackling Corruption", the paper noted that "Bangladesh still ranks low in global anti-corruption indices with its scores worsening in recent years." It asked the government to make the Anti-Corruption Commission truly operational and also came up with specific proposals including activating the civil society bodies that would raise voice against graft and monitor public finances.

The paper emphasised reform of public administration and recommended preparing a pay and employment policy consistent with macroeconomic stability and linking incentives to performance through decompressed pay scales.

The four donors account for 80 percent of Bangladesh's total foreign aid. Earlier they used to provide aid and set conditions individually. The joint strategy is aimed at harmonising the conditions and utilisation of aid and avoiding overlapping, which the donors believe would increase aid efficiency and effectiveness and eliminate duplication of aid efforts.

JCD men

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academic certificate. The attackers led by JU unit JCD Organising Secretary Robul Islam Robi and Tanjil, a second-year student of botany, also threatened three university correspondents with death.

However, Nur Siddiqui, Fuad Hossain and Emran Hossain Emon, JU correspondents of the Prothom Alo, the Aiker Kagoj and The Daily Star, were not present there.

The incident has triggered protests by journalists and cultural and political organisations on the campus.

JU correspondents of different newspapers and news agencies have given a seven-day ultimatum to the vice-chancellor demanding punishment of the JCD cadres involved in the incident.

They also broke pens in front of the administrative building at 1:30pm as a symbolic protest and took out a silent procession on the campus.

Progressive cultural and political organisations stage today a token sit-in on the administrative building premises at 10:00am, demanding security on the campus.

Monir's family." Halima recounts the trials of her daughter.

"Her in-laws then sent her to jail for three months in a false case, handed her over to police calling her a prostitute, sent her to a shelter home for the destitute and physically tortured her if she contacted me," she goes on.

After Camelia's death, her brother-in-law Shahrul alias Khokon filed a case of unnatural death (UD) with Mirpur Police Station, but he or any one else of his family never went to receive the body that resulted in her burial unnamed, unidentified.

"I'll find out the body of my daughter. I'll file case and plead to court for a fresh autopsy, if the last one has reported it as a suicide," Halima said on Saturday with a vengeance, as she fears her in-laws might have bribed or otherwise influenced the report.

Mirpur police said they were yet to get the post-mortem report.

Tru her words, Halima yesterday filed a murder case with the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka against four in-laws of Camelia and her husband Monir.

In three separate petitions, she also accused them of destroying evidence of the crime and sought court order to exhume Camelia's body and to re-conduct the autopsy.

The court fixed the date of hearing on the petition for exhumation today and ordered Mirpur police to merge the other petitions with the UD case.

PM opens

FROM PAGE 1

wholehearted cooperation. The prime minister unveiled the plaque of gas supply at Sillimpur in the town and pressed a switch to ignite the gas into flames.

Addressing the inaugural function, she said Bangladesh would have to be self-reliant in exploring and extracting newfound national resources like gas.

The country has to pay a big share of its gas as it still has to depend on foreigners for exploring and striking the underground resources.

"Moreover, we have to undergo various problems and complications," the premier told her audience.

Khaleda said no-one could stake a claim to the precious mineral resources of Bangladesh, and much of several difficulties could be averted if the country had that expertise.

Initially, only 561 subscribers – 541 domestic consumers, 19 government organisations and one commercial user – have got gas connection in the district.

Natural gas was discovered 50 years ago and it took as much time to reach Bogra, the prime minister said. Half a century has elapsed due to a lack of peace, stability and continuity of development process, she added.

She urged all to use gas economically to check wastage considering the value and utility of the national resource.

Khaleda expressed the hope supply of gas will open up new avenues of economic development in the underdeveloped northern areas.

The function was addressed, among others, by Energy Adviser Mahmudur Rahman and Whip and Bogra District Minister in-charge Rezaul Bari Dina.

Tk 64 lakh

FROM PAGE 16

at 11:00pm, the customs officials asked the Dubai-bound passenger of flight No. BG-005 about the foreign currency he was carrying with him.

As his answers did not satisfy the customs officials, they informed their superior officials and brought him to the customs hall, said a customs press release yesterday. Later, they collected his luggage and found 3,99,500 Saudi riyal worth Tk 63,92,000.

The customs seized the money under the Customs Act for smuggling and money laundering, and handed it over to the airport store-house.

ACC to report

FROM PAGE 1

and Campaign (ACRC) wing of the ACC headed by Commissioner Prof Maniruzzaman Miah took the decision at a meeting yesterday.

As part of a campaign against corruption, the ACRC will host a web site, where it will the assets of its staff, and also recommend the ACC to do the same.

"The ACC has the power to ask anyone to state his or her assets. We think before we do that we should make ourselves as transparent as possible and declare our own assets first," Miah told The Daily Star yesterday.

When asked why has the ACRC taken the decision instead of the ACC nucleus, Miah said, "We want to set an example through our wing. I believe all other ACC staff will do it but that should come after the commission takes the decision based on the wing's proposal."

The ACC Act dictates that the commission will file its reports and recommendations to the president. Accordingly, the ACRC is preparing three reports – one on the existing legal and framework defects to fight corruption and the remedial measures, the second to identify sources of corruption and to recommend actions to deal with them, and the third laying out an anti-corruption research plan.

"These reports will be voluminous and require a lot of research work. It will take time, but we shall do it on a priority basis," Miah added.

In this connection, the ACRC plans to exchange views with high officials of the National Board of Revenue, customs and income tax officials, police, staffs of the office of the auditor and comptroller general and the education ministry.

"We have chosen these organisations because most of the allegations of corruption come against them," Miah explained.

Opposition

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"This is a major development in the opposition camp as we have agreed to hold agitation programmes

against the government jointly and on a common platform," Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) President Hasanul Haq Inu told The Daily Star ending the meeting.

"We have mapped out strategies of agitation to make the government concede to the reforms proposals and in the first phase, we work to drum up people's support," Inu said.

The meeting held at the AL's Dhanmondi office also decided to hold similar mass contact programmes across the country after July 30 when AL chief Sheikh Hasina returns home after her US trip.

AL leaders Amir Hossain Amu, Tofail Ahmed, Abdul Jalil, Suranjit Sengupta and Obaidul Quader, 11-party leaders Rashed