

Lawyers declare

FROM PAGE 16
human chains, observing black day and exchanging views with professional bodies, to realise its 35-point demands for establishing "rule of law and spotless judiciary".

Announcing the programmes at a press conference in Dhaka, SASP convenor barrister M Amir-ul Islam said their demands will be realised through the change of the four-party alliance government.

The action programmes were announced as per the resolution of the Friday's grand rally of the lawyers.

Barrister Amir urged the people from all walks of life to forge unity on the basis of identical programmes of the lawyers and professional bodies.

The SASP convenor, who read out the written statement, said human chains will be formed on the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) premises every Wednesday and on all district bar premises every Thursday.

The other programmes include viewexchange and seminars with lawyers and professional bodies from August 15 to 21.

All bar associations will observe token hunger strike from 8:00am to 10:00am on August 17 demanding fair investigations into all the incidents of killings and grenade attacks.

The lawyers will observe black day through holding meetings, human chains and staging demonstrations on all bar premises on September 6.

Pardon

FROM PAGE 1
"Democracy does not recognise military trial as justice. Those who believe in rule of law do not have any respect for the court that provides no room for appealing against its judgement."

Asked why the government does not take steps against the constitutional provision for military court, he said two writ petitions regarding the matter are already pending with the High Court. "To take steps against the provision, we'll have to seek a solution from the Supreme Court."

He said Jhinta's name was not in the FIR and there were no witnesses against him.

"It's not that he was pardoned for his involvement with Jubo Dal. We would have pardoned any citizen, had he or she appealed to us," he said.

On the prompt arrangements made for Jhinta's mercy [10 days into his surrender], Moudud said, "The then president pardoned Abul Kalam Manik, another convict in the same case, 24 hours into his surrender in 1987, five and half years after the judgement."

One hour before he was to end his tenure, US President Gerald Rudolph Ford pardoned a convict sentenced to 75 years in prison, he mentioned.

While rumours about the law minister's resignation were going around throughout the day in and outside the Secretariat yesterday, the law minister met the PM at her office.

Reporters who thronged the law ministry found the staff of the ministry too were whispering about the matter. Some of them even queried the journalists whether the rumour was true.

As the pressmen entered the minister's room to know his reactions, Moudud shot down the rumours and also denied having met the PM, saying that he had not gone out of his office once he entered it.

But sources said Moudud met the PM sometime after noon yesterday.

CAAB warned

FROM PAGE 16
start crying for their family and children," he said, adding that they were not mentally stable and they often make erratic decisions.

The CAAB authorities, which issues licences to pilots following various tests, including psychological and physical tests, forwarded this letter to the Biman authorities for action since they felt that this matter falls more under Biman's jurisdiction than theirs.

Acting Managing Director of Biman, Mahmudur Rahman, while talking to The Daily Star Monday said, "We are investigating the allegations made by captain Eunus." "You must realise that there are many differences of opinion among the pilots. There are many groups. This letter could be one of the results of such groupings... it could have derived from a personal issue. Yet we are investigating into the matter," he added. "We can not just accept (an allegation for a fact) just because a (fellow) pilot has made some allegations."

He adds that before the CAAB finishes investigating into the DC10 disaster, it can not be said that Captain Selim was not fit for flying the airplane. "All of the crew of that flight have been grounded as per the rule. When the CAAB (upon the investigation) clears them, they will fly again," he added.

Biman and CAAB sources say due to the nature of the job and also political intervention in promotions, pilots in general suffer a lot of stress. One source points out that at least 30 percent of the Biman pilots have severe stress problems, which make them unreliable and dangerous till they are given treatment and vacations.

Biman has 126 regular and 13 on-contract pilots and 11 foreign

Barrister Amir said a group of identified criminals of BNP led by notorious Chhagir attacked the lawyers at Dhaka Bar Association on September 6, 2003.

In September and October, the central leaders of the SASP will visit the bar associations of the country and exchange views with the human rights organisations and like-minded political parties.

The SASP will observe "constitution day" on November 4 and hold meetings, seminars, views-exchange programmes, processions, demonstrations and human chains during the month.

SCBA President advocate Mahbubey Alam, former SCBA presidents barrister Shafique Ahmed, advocate Abdul Baset Majumder and barrister Ozair Farooq, SASP Member Secretary advocate Subrata Chowdhury, SCBA Secretary advocate M Enayetur Rahim, former SCBA secretary advocate Bashir Ahmed were also present at the press conference.

11 industrial

FROM PAGE 16
Industrial Area in Shyampur, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Mirpur Bscic Industrial Area and Tongi Industrial Area.

Legal action was taken against 11 units for violating Environment Conservation Act 1995 and Environment Conservation Rules 1997.

The drive will continue all over the country, said a press release.

Tk 255cr

FROM PAGE 1
Communications Minister Nazmul Huda and Education Minister Osman Farruk attended the meeting.

Cabinet secretary, secretaries concerned members of the Planning Commission and senior officials of different ministries were also present.

Five robber cops

FROM PAGE 16
officer) Abdul Bari and constables Shamsuzzaman, Korban Ali and Rafiqul Islam, and informers Shahadat Hossain, Mohammad Jasim and Mohammad Ripon.

Except for constable Rafiqul Islam, all the accused are now behind bars.

They snatched silver ornaments and extorted Tk 28,000 from Sohail Rana and Habib, employees of City Silver House, at Tanitbazar in Old Dhaka on July 21.

DB Sub-inspector Rezaul Hossain, also the investigation officer, submitted the charge sheet to the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka showing 20 people as prosecution witnesses.

The metropolitan magistrate accepted the charge sheet and issued warrant of arrest against Rafiqul and ordered attachment of his moveable property.

Suritola traders

FROM PAGE 16
arrest the criminals.

Police picked up a security guard named Jalal for questioning.

In a separate incident, Detective Branch of police arrested five alleged robbers from hotel 'New Saint Martin' at Moghbazir in the city with three revolvers and 12 bullets.

The five were preparing for robbery at a Mallbagh house, police said.

The arrestees are Mohammad Ali alias Angulkata Ali, 40, Akash, 26, Mainul, 25, Rois, 22, and Rafiq, 26.

14 hurt in intra-party clash at BNP confce

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

At least 14 people including a police officer were injured, four of them seriously, in a clash between two rival factions of the BNP in the city yesterday.

The clash occurred in presence of Khulna City Corporation Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman, lawmaker Ali Asgar Lobi, city unit BNP Secretary Nazrul Islam Manju, district unit Secretary Shafiqul Alam Mona and other leaders.

Police said slogans and counter slogans by rivals precipitated into a clash at Zia Hall where a conference of district and city units of J a t i y a b a d i S h a m a j i k Shangkritik Sangstha was on at 11:30am.

Supporters of the city mayor and the city unit secretary hurled bricks at all the leaders attending the conference, police said.

Police fired three blank shots and lobbed nine teargas shells when violence between the two factions flared up outside the venue. People fled in panic and vehicular movement on the adjoining roads was snarled for about an hour.

Eyewitnesses said Tayebur Rahman and Lobi were escorted by security forces to their houses when Manju's supporters were trying to attack them.

BNP leader Manju accused the mayor and the lawmaker of directing their men to attack his supporters, but the latter raised the same accusation against him.

Vice-president of city unit BNP Azizul Hasan Dulu, Jubo Dal leader Moniruzzaman Mintu, the officer-in-charge of Sonadanga Police Station, among others, were injured in the clash.

Leaders of both factions have demanded that the party high command should immediately expel the troublemakers.

India okays setting up of floodlights on Assam borders

UNB, *Dhaka*

The Indian home ministry has cleared a pilot project for installation of floodlights in all vulnerable areas on the Assam-Bangladesh border in an effort to boost anti-infiltration measures along the border.

The ministry also decided to send a team of experts to Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico to explore the feasibility of procuring sophisticated sensor systems used in America to prevent cross-border infiltration, an Indian media reported on Friday.

Quoting an official of the Border Security Force (BSF), the Friday Telegraph said the home ministry's sanction was based on an analysis of the situation. The report said foolproof surveillance along the vulnerable sections was impossible as Bangladeshi infiltrators and smugglers were sneaking in after dark.

The floodlights will cover a 126-km stretch that is most prone to infiltration. Assam shares a 262-km border with Bangladesh, of which 92 km is riverine.

Bangladesh has persistently denied that its nationals infiltrate into India.

According to a home ministry report, the second phase of construction of fencing along a 71.5-km stretch on the Assam-Bangladesh border is likely to be completed by early 2007.

To expedite the process, two more construction agencies, Engineering Projects (India) Ltd and National Projects Construction Corporation Ltd will be engaged, according to an Indian official quoted by the Telegraph.

Sircar accused

FROM PAGE 1
not take any initiative," committee member Shawkat Ali told The Daily Star referring to their discussion held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

The committee members, both from the ruling and opposition parties, observed that the speaker as the guardian of the parliament had failed to discharge his duties properly.

They also criticised the speaker's decision that asked the lawmakers to discuss with the law minister about placing any bill in parliament.

The parliamentary body in its separate reports submitted in parliament recommended placing 11 private members' bills to amend the constitution and four others bills. Earlier it had also given a deadline to the speaker urging him to allow private members to place any of the bills in the last parliamentary session.

But the speaker did not comply and suggested that the lawmakers discuss with the law minister on the issue.

Niko starts

FROM PAGE 1
about the burnt out well condition, the official added.

"If everything is okay, we'll start drilling the relief well 10 metres off the observation well," he said.

High officials from Petrobangla, Bapex, Niko and the energy ministry were present to inspect the drilling at 2:00pm.

Meantime, the Tengratila Dabi Aday Sangram Parishad today takes out a procession at Sunamganj district headquarters with a demand for scrapping the contract with Niko.

The platform will also hold a rally in the afternoon.

JCD cadres rule tender

FROM PAGE 1
and threatened of dire consequence if they did not agree to reach an understanding with them.

Abdul Bari Danny, a former central committee leader of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and now assistant literature and publication secretary of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal led the cadres.

Private secretary of Rashiduzzaman Millat MP and General Secretary of Islampur upazila BNP Bipul Lohani played an active role to make the negotiation. Dany has close contact with State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar, sources said.

The Daily Star correspondent saw Danny threatening an intending bidder with dire consequence for a possible disagreement with their terms.

An elderly man, who dropped the tender before the cadres had arrived, was called by the cadres to a nearby room and threatened. The man from AHB Fibre Limited said he did not know about the participation of the ruling party men in the tender bidding.

When this correspondent approached him to talk, he immediately left the place, giving a frightening look.

This correspondent also heard cadres threatening the intending bidders in the name of Shamim Talukder, a nephew of late Abdus Salam Talukder, former general secretary of ruling BNP, Shamim, chairman of Sharishabari Pourashava, was also present there.

Six policemen were present inside the room but they did not pay attention to the tension outside.

But when a mid-ranking leftist leader hailing from Jamalpur district along with Mohan Raihan, a poet, came to drop the offer ignoring the threat, the cadres allowed them to drop tender.

Asked, the cadres denied the allegation of barring others from dropping tender.

Rashiduzzaman Millat MP also participated in the tender on behalf of a company named Sourav Trading. Millat while talking to The Daily Star last night admitted that there was an attempt to reach an understanding on the tenders. But that attempt was foiled as some others participated in the tender ignoring the move for understanding.

He claimed that such understanding takes place in this type of tenders all over the world. He, however, denied creating any pressure on the intending bidders by his men.

When the officials opened the tender box, they found only a few tender bids. They were surprised to observe the small number of offers - only three to five in each group.

The leftist leader, who did not want to be named, was the highest bidder in a group. He told The Daily Star that the cadres did not dare to block him because they know his local and national level political connection.

Still, he is doubtful whether he would finally be able to win the bid as the ministry has other mechanism to reject a bidder who is not like-minded, he observed.

The company belonging to Rashiduzzaman stood second highest bidder in another group. He claimed that he offered more price than the estimated value of the land and property.

Golam Mustakim, a joint secretary of the jute ministry who opened the tender box said they will take the final decision later in the evaluation committee.

The government called tender for selling land and property of the BJC in districts as part of privatisation of public sector enterprises. A section of ruling party stalwarts are buying those land and property at very low prices.

For example, only two offers were received for a BJC godown at Motkhola on 2.83 acres of land. The highest bidder offered only Tk 23.10 lakh for the property.

Bangladesh-born

FROM PAGE 16
Upon arriving in America, he strove to learn the English language while adjusting to the busy and culturally different society.

He joined the Marine Corps in 2001 because of its discipline and its tradition that closely mirrored the practices of his beliefs.

Rahman was shocked to learn later in the year that the terrorists of the Sept. 11 attack announced that they were Sunni Muslims and that their faith had led them to attack.

"I was outraged by this ludicrous image that the insurgents portrayed about my faith," the native of Columbus, Ohio, said. "No one really feels the same way they feel."

Now Rahman is working to redeem his faith and putting his linguistic skills to good use while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

On missions, Rahman, in addition to being a rifleman, acts as linguist for his squad. As a linguist he informs the local community about the Marines' mission here and helps them understand that the service members are here to help them.

Graft cases against

FROM PAGE 1
said: "The government has a clear directive to vacate the stay orders for disposal of the cases."

"Judges have been tasked with dealing cases of a certain period and the pending cases are being disposed of gradually," he added.

But records contradict his claim and show cases against the VIPs have not made any progress.

A corruption case filed with Ramna Police Station on May 24, 1982 against former water resources minister Maj Gen M Majedul Haq now remains stayed due to a writ petition filed in 1997.

Another corruption case filed against former state minister for religious affairs Moulana MA Mannan is still under trial despite submission of charge-sheet.

The case was filed with Faridganj Police Station in Chandpur on December 21, 1988 and its charge-sheet was submitted 10 years later.

Although many top leaders of major political parties have more than one corruption case against their names, none of them faced any punishment.

The only exception is former military ruler HM Ershad who was jailed after the Supreme Court convicted him in the Janata Tower case.

After they step down, many frontline political leaders face charges of gross corruption by those who take over power.

There is a trend that the leaders, while in the opposition, demand punishment of the corrupt but themselves indulge in corruption when in power.

Before the fifth to eighth parliamentary elections, all major parties pledged to combat corruption and included the issue prominently in their manifestos.

Former bureaucrat AKM Mosharrar Hossain, who had faced several corruption charges filed by BNP government in 1991-92, became a minister of the current BNP-led coalition government. He recently had to resign due to a scandal.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed also faced several corruption charges filed by the BNP government during 1991-96 period. These cases are still pending.

After Ershad stepped down in 1990, the newly-elected BNP government filed dozens of cases against Ershad and his cabinet ministers during 1991-1996.

When Awami League (AL) took office, it filed cases against almost all ministers of the BNP government including Khaleda Zia. Similarly, the present coalition government filed many cases

Rally also condemns

FROM PAGE 16
to speak, but he was just overwhelmed with grief.

Later, protestors walked through the city in a long queue to the Westminster Cathedral to hold a funeral simultaneously with the one held in Brazil. A 30-foot Christ hung against a red cross, as the huge prayer room slowly filled up. The Church organ began playing and a strong smell of incense filled the air.

Bianca Jagger, wife of rock star Mic Jagger and also a world renowned advocate for human rights and now Council of Europe Goodwill Ambassador for the Fight against the Death Penalty, first spoke: "The death of Jean has many similarities to the death of Christ: both were innocent victims and died publicly. His death is not acceptable in a civilised society, and the policy to kill should be debated. We can't accept arrogant resort. The shoot-to-kill policy should not be implemented any longer," she said.

Professor Tariq Ramadan, an international Islamic thinker, then rose and said: "Police thought he (Jean) was a Muslim, a guilty Muslim. He was neither a Muslim, nor guilty. It's time to think who to blame for this. His loss is our loss in a free society."

Ramadan then recited from the Koran and said: "This is an Islamic message we are all brothers and sisters in humanity. We are born innocent. When an innocent is killed, it is the killing of humanity. Let's pray for our broader humanity."

As the church organ hummed again, somebody handed a Brazilian flag to the chief celebrant of the funeral, who held it up and waved it in the air as the hall burst into claps.

Right in front of the sanctuary a black and white photograph of Jean smiled, overexposed on a sunny London light, looking ethereal.

Rift in donor

FROM PAGE 1
The WB, on the other hand, argued that, being a multilateral donor agency, it cannot set political conditions for aid, sources said. However the bank said the bilateral donor countries could go ahead pinning those conditions to their aid to Bangladesh.

The LCG has finally sent its review and recommendations on the PRSP to the government, asking it to carry out the reforms excepting that of the caretaker government system

The LCG last month also went through a significant structural change. Since its inception in May 2000, WB country directors have been presiding over the group as well as its executive committee. WB country chief Fred Temple held the office from October 2000 to May 2003 and his successor Christine Wallich from June 2003 to May 2005.

But last month the LCG members decided to rotate the chair. Accordingly, USAID country chief Gene George now holds the presidency of LCG and its EC.

The LCG EC comprises six members -- three bilateral and three multilateral donors. Before June 2003, the EC had five members, one bilateral donor less than the current one.

The purpose of the EC is to steer LCG plenary meets, propose and prioritise agenda, and represent the LCG at meetings with government officials.

In another development this month, four donors have undertaken a joint initiative to devise a strategy for financing the PRSP programme. The members of this group -- WB, Asian Development Bank, UK Department for International Development and Japan -- claim to account for 80 percent of Bangladesh's foreign aid.

However, in its draft country assistance strategy, this newly formed group has not included any of the reform conditions.

Voter list

FROM PAGE 16
The commission this week will formally clarify whether the electoral laws will have to be amended to have a fresh voter list. "An Election Commission meeting will resolve the issue," Mohammad Ali said.

The voter lists of 1983, 1990, 1995, and 2000 were prepared without amending the laws.

About preparing voter list incorporating the voters' photographs, the officials said that it might not be possible due to time constraint.

With an increase in youth population, the number of enumerators this time will be one lakh more than that of the previous occasion, EC secretariat officials said.

Besides, the number of supervisors will also increase.

To prepare the voter list in 2000, a total of 2,67,374 enumerators, 67,898 supervisors, 490 revising authorities, 6107 assistant registration officers, and 83 registration officers were engaged.

It took over five months to have the roll ready.

The EC documents show that the first voter list was prepared in 1973 in four months with registered voters totalling 3.52 crore. The second one prepared in 1976 in four months listed over 3.83 crore voters, the third in 1983 in six months listed over 4.73 crore, the fourth in 1990 in five months listed over 6.19 crore. Over 5.59 crore people registered with the sixth electoral roll in 1995 over four months.

'10th planet' detected

FROM PAGE 16
point in its history. Neptune likely flung it into its highly-inclined 44-degree orbit.

It is currently 97 Earth-Sun distances away - more than twice Pluto's average distance from the Sun.

Its discoverers are Michael Brown of Caltech, Chad Trujillo of the Gemini Observatory in Hawaii, and David Rabinowitz of Yale University.

David Rabinowitz told the BBC News website: "It has been a remarkable day and a remarkable year. 2003 UB313 is probably larger than Pluto. It is fainter than Pluto, but three times farther away.

"Brought to the same distance from the Sun as Pluto, it would be brighter. So today, the world knows that Pluto is not unique. There are other Plutos, just farther out in the Solar System where they are a little

Bigots attack

FROM PAGE 1
phone that local union parishad (UP) chairman Shamim might be involved in the attack.

"A general diary (GD) was filed with Sharishabari Police Station, mentioning the names of six people, as police refused to take any case in this regard," he said.

Tahidul Islam, spokesman for the central Ahmadiyya mission, said the attack is part of the ongoing anti-Ahmadiyya campaign.

harder to find."

It was picked up using the Samuel Oschin Telescope at Palomar Observatory and the 8m Gemini North telescope on Mauna Kea.

Chad Trujillo told the BBC News website: "I feel extremely lucky to be part of a discovery as exciting as this. It's not every day that you find something Pluto-sized or larger!"

2 subcommittees

FROM PAGE 16

They also observed that a section of unscrupulous officials of Desa provide illegal connections causing huge losses due to theft of electricity. Other corrupt practices include under billing and meter tampering.

Through these corrupt practices these officials have been making brisk money, they noted.

The meeting also discussed the activities of Bangladesh Forest Industries Development Corporation (BFIDC).

Awami League lawmaker Faruk Khan raised the allegation of corruption against the organisation to which the officials of the BFIDC could not give any explanation.

The meeting decided to discuss the issue in detail at its next sitting.

Chairman of the committee Abdul Alim presided over the meeting.

UK cops quiz

FROM PAGE 16
attacks on July 21, two weeks after four bombers, all British Muslims, killed themselves and 52 other passengers in blasts on three underground trains and a bus in London.

On Friday, police swooped on a housing estate in west London, arresting two men who identified themselves as Ibrahim Muktar Said and Ramzi Mohammed.

They were forced to strip before their arrests to show they had no explosives strapped to them.

Italian police arrested a third man in Rome who was named as Hussain Osman. He will be extradited back to Britain, having left the country after the attacks.

Sky TV, citing police sources, said another man arrested in London on Friday was thought to

be a brother of Mohammed. A police spokesman declined to confirm the man's identity.

"We're treating all of the arrests as significant," the spokesman said on Saturday.

Police arrested Yasin Hassan Omar, suspected of trying to explode a bomb on the underground railway network, earlier this week.

Police sources said they believed they had rounded up all four men suspected of trying to explode bombs on the capital's transport system, images of whom were released to the public in recent days.

"The investigation ... is still continuing. It is dynamic and it is wide-ranging. There will be more very visible police activity," anti-terrorist police chief Peter Clarke told reporters late on Friday.

Creating new landless

FROM PAGE 16
the government plans to establish there.

The villagers burst into panic. Shell-shocked, they begged of Mostofazzur UP Chairman Shamsuddin Mondol to take pity on them, not to destroy their ancestral homes. Mondol's heart did melt but only after wrecking 60 houses.

Two days later, Taramoni came from Doshmile to Roshan's Baradal home. But her heart had not the flutter of a new bride. Instead, it was heavy with the grim reality of coming to stay at a demolished house, an uncertain address.

Like Roshan and Taramoni, 400 indigenous people, Hindus and Muslims of the village, where they had been living for over 60 years, lost their ancestral homes to the government's model village project. The village is in Parbatipur upazila of Dinajpur.

The eviction drive was part of a process to reclaim and requisition land for the Adarsha Gram project initiated in 1999.

Since June 22 the poor villagers have been living in the open under the sky without knowing whether they will ever get back their lands, their uniquely stylised houses made of mud and the fruit trees they have grown using