

Donors talk graft

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deprived of the World Bank's Development Support Credit.

He said the government will present before the donors its plans regarding the implementation of PRSPs, the country's development agenda for the next three years.

Saifur described the recent blasts as isolated incidents and said those do not reflect the overall law and order situation of the country.

Wallich said besides the public procurement law, public expenditure management, law and order situation, corruption, and issues of different sectional governance will be discussed in the meeting.

The World Bank country director told reporters after the meeting that issues like infrastructure development and power situation will also come up at the meeting.

Replying to a query, Wallich said this time proposed reforms in the Election Commission would not be discussed though it is an important issue. He said the matter would be discussed in a separate meeting with the government.

She also said this is for the first time that Bangladesh is co-ordinating a donors' meeting.

The World Bank will place a report on 'PRSP Forum: Bangladesh Update' at the meeting, ERD sources said.

The latest economic developments and challenges and implementation status of different reforms are likely to be included in the report.

The recent trend of rising inflation rate and depletion of forex reserve will also crop up in the report.

The importance of foreign aid has declined over the years, currently accounting for no more than 2 percent of GDP. The recent trend however shows that it is the grant part of foreign aid that has declined rapidly. Foreign grants now amount no more than \$250 million to \$300 million annually. Almost an equal amount comes through the NGO sector. It is the ongoing programme assistance of IMF and the WB that has helped maintain that soft loan part of foreign aid in the past 3-4 years.

The annual debt servicing liabilities is currently about \$600 million annually including interest and principal repayment, while new loans are to the tune of \$700-\$800 million.

Most of the new loans are thus in effect used up for repayment of past loans. That is why it is the moral duty of the government to see that the borrowed funds are not wasted and do not become a burden in future.

On the donors' meeting, noted economist Wahiduddin Mahmud said currently there are two distinct strands of thought shaping donors' attitude toward Bangladesh. There is the alleged wastage of aid resources due to corruption and poor project implementation about which the donors are genuinely concerned.

This is the reason, he said, why the donors are imposing increasingly stringent conditions for the disbursement of aid funds. On the other hand, Bangladesh's progress over the past decade and a half in certain social indicators such as child mortality reduction, birth control and female school enrolment has been truly remarkable by global standards.

Donors feel that they have a responsibility in sustaining this progress, he

said, adding that this is why in spite of all their grievances, aid is still coming though in reduced quantity. Bangladesh figures prominently in the prospect of achieving the global Millennium Development Goals the main focus of the global aid strategy.

In this effect, Bangladesh needs the donors as much as the donor agencies need Bangladesh. Moreover, although donors are concerned for genuine reasons about corruption, rise of terrorism and lack of good governance, there is not much they can do to bring about improvements in these areas unless there are home-grown initiatives and political commitments. The leverage of aid conditionalities alone may help to some extent in bringing about economic reforms, but not good governance.

Local and representatives of more than 30 countries and agencies including World Bank, ADB and IMF are expected to take part in the discussions with the government representatives and the members of the civil society.

All the working sessions will be held at the National Economic Council (NEC) Auditorium in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Separate keynote speeches will be presented from both the government and the donors' side in each working session. Donors will put questions in the general discussion and the government representatives will answer.

The agendas of the meeting include PRSP implementation, social development; empowering the poor and the vulnerable, enhancement of competitiveness for promoting trade, investment and private sector development, good governance, aid harmonisation and aid effectiveness.

Bangladesh will chair the forum in line with the principles of Paris Declaration that underlined ownership by the host country of the development programmes and co-ordination process.

PRSP forum meeting is the replacement version of previous Bangladesh Development Forum meeting.

Islamist outfit

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realise Islamic rule in the country. The deputy commissioner and Superintendent of Police AKM Shahidur Rahman confirmed about the letter that did not bear any name and address.

Moudud, Babar

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the ministers, were also manhandled, witnesses said.

The two ministers, lawmakers and police and Rab officials left the place as the situation went beyond control.

Wife of the slain judge, Reeta Pandey, her father Mukul Mukherjee, and other members of the bereaved family got furious when the two ministers visited their house in Kashipur Fisheries area of the city at about 1:45pm.

As the ministers expressed sympathy for them, they became more furious and at one stage started dragging the ministers and MPs.

Barisal City Mayor Mujibur Rahman Sarwar and lawmaker Moazzem Hossain Alal tried to calm them down but failed.

Lawmakers Zahiruddin Swapan and Ilben Bhutto were also present.

6 bombs blasted in Chuadanga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Criminals blasted six bombs in two separate incidents in Alamdanga and Jibonnagar upazilas under Chuadanga district on Sunday night.

A masked gang of about 15 entered the Madhabpur Bazar in Jibonnagar at about 12:00pm and looked for several traders of the market, police said.

Hearing from the night guard of the market that the traders they looked for had left for home, the gang blasted four bombs just in front of the establishments of those traders and left the place.

Another gang of 10 went to the Hatboalia Bazar in Alamdanga at about 8:45pm and ordered the people to leave.

As the market became deserted, they hurled two bombs in front of business establishments owned by Abdur Rashid Malitha and Alef Hossain, police said.

The blasts created deep holes on the spot.

Criminals belonging to outlawed parties might have blasted the bombs to create panic, police said.

Bomber

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out the attack fully aware that death is inevitable as he joined the suicide squad.

Mamun was also severely injured in the blast and gave the confessional statement before the first class magistrate of Barisal, Munim Hasan, at the Post-operative ward of Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital at 12:55pm yesterday.

Sources in the administration said his statement would be considered a declaration before death should he die from his injuries.

Mamun tried to detonate a bomb strapped on to his thighs while he was being taken to the hospital in an ambulance but the police foiled his attempt. He said he wore three trousers to cover it.

He said he came to Jhalakathi from Rajshahi some 10 to 12 days ago on instruction of the high command.

Karim, Moaz, and Rahim received him at the district bus terminal and took him to a rented house in Krishnakathi area in Jhalakathi town.

Mamun said he was briefed about the plan and the spot of the attack a day after and he started working on the execution of the plan.

He admitted that the two bombs were sent from outside Jhalakathi but did not disclose how the bombs were sent and who sent them.

Mamun, who sports long beard, said he kept his mentors informed of every step of the operation over mobile phone. He, however, did not divulge their identity. Law enforcers were preparing to move him to the Joint Interrogation Cell in Dhaka for questioning.

Mamun said he hails from Dasmari village of Matihar Police Station in Rajshahi. He studied up to class IX at Rajshahi Masjid Mission. He joined the JMB around four to five years ago and worked under the leadership of Mostafa, the JMB commander of Rajshahi region.

He said he never met Abdur Rahman, who he said was the top leader of banned JMB.

Govt turns

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The Arabic verses followed by interpretations in Bangla appear a last-ditch attempt by the government machinery to launch a counter-campaign against the violent religious fanaticism. The verses have been in print to ram home the fact that Islam does not sanction terrorist activities such as bombing and killing.

On the first page, quoting a verse from the Hadith that says he is the real Muslim from whose hands and mouth other Muslims are safe, the government says, "So, Islam does not endorse bombing or causing harm to others."

Citing a verse from the Quran that says Fitna or anarchy is worse than killing, the government on the second page of the compilation says, "So, bombing, killing and creating anarchy in the name of Islam is not compatible with the Quran and Sunnah."

Quoting another Quranic verse on the next page that says he who kills one illegally has actually killed the humanity, the government says, "So, Islam does not permit killing of people by bombing in the name of religion."

On the last page, referring to a verse from the Hadith that says follow the moderate way and do not take the extreme one; give people good news, do not frustrate them, the government says, "So, bombing or killing people in the name of Jihad cannot be the right path."

In the immediate aftermath of the countrywide serial bomb blasts on August 17, the government, apart from taking legal actions against the Islamist militants, decided at a meeting on October 4 to launch a countrywide campaign to counter the militants' brainwashing of innocent youths by exploiting their religious sentiment.

Emerging from that meeting, State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar had said "a kind of education" is luring these youths into joining Islamist militancy and carrying out subversive activities with an aim to establish "Islamic rule instead of people-made law".

Islam does not preach nor does it endorse bombing of innocent people to death but the people involved in the bombings do not have such knowledge, Babar had told journalists.

Islamic scholars or *alem-ulumas* have also said that Islam does not advocate or support the violent way in which the militants are advancing their agenda of establishing Islamic rule, he had told the meeting.

"So, we emphasise motivation of these people and have done detailed work on it," Babar said.

More money turns

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tax on the declared black money. The NBR officials are expecting about Tk 1,000 crore black money to be declared in the current fiscal.

NBR Chairman Khairuzzaman Choudhury said last week the black money holders should take the opportunity this year, otherwise they will not be able to escape the board's vigilant network or punitive actions.

Tracking down tax dodgers and black money holders is a continuous process, the NBR chairman said, preferring not to disclose the identities of the individuals or companies who are coming forward to declare their illegal money. "If you publish their identities, the remaining black money holders will be afraid to come to the NBR," he said.

Officials of the NBR said individuals may declare the amount of their illegal money after submitting their tax returns and the companies may declare the same at two different times, as some close their annual financial statements in June and some in January. Companies that closed their financial statements in June and have undeclared money are

declaring them in the current tax-filing season.

The legalised money laundering facility has been offered six times in the 34 years since the independence, lasting for eight years in total.

During these eight years only Tk 3,695 crore black money entered the legal economy, according to a comprehensive NBR estimate last June.

The amount of black money whitened in FY01 was Tk 1,000 crore. That year payment of 10 per cent income tax was required to avail the facility, while the normal tax rate was 20 per cent.

In FY03, the government withdrew all taxes on whitening of black money for the first time. The facility was made available for the next three fiscal years provided that 100 per cent of the declared amount was invested in industry or services sectors or the capital market.

The provision elicited declaration of only Tk 1,775 crore during the three fiscal years put together.

An independent study in 2004 put the size of the black economy at Tk 70,000 crore.

Bomber linked

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student wing. He was arrested soon after bombing two judges to death in Jhalakathi yesterday.

His father Lal Chand is a night guard of a multi-storey building belonging to BNP lawmaker Nadim Mustafa at Binodpur.

The RMP detectives in their yesterday's raid seized huge goods including several copies of Al Magajee, JMB's monthly magazine, and huge leaflets from their house.

Rajshahi police said they are certain about Mamun's involvement in the August 17 serial blasts across the country. He will be brought to Rajshahi showing him arrested in one of the blast cases.

Mamun is now receiving treatment at Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College and Hospital where he told reporters he belongs to the JMB.

He went to Jhalakathi from Rajshahi at the dictate of party leader Suman two weeks ago. He took shelter at Krishnakathi village under the supervision of local JMB leader Abdur Karim, he added.

Mamun, the eldest son of the family, studied up to class IX at Jamaat-run Masjid Mission Academy in Binodpur, where Jamaat has strong supremacy.

He worked as a labourer at Ruchita Biscuit Factory in Munshidanga in the city but quit the job two and a half years ago for a visit to Dhaka.

Ctg arms haul hearing

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The prime suspect of the case Hafizur Rahman alias Hafiz was brought to Chittagong for production before the court for the first time yesterday since his arrest in Dhaka last month.

The other accused who are now behind bars and the witnesses were also ready to appear in the court on schedule when Judge AKM Anwar Hossain announced the adjournment of the court.

Immediately after the adjournment of the hearing the magistrates including Chief Metropolitan Magistrate of Chittagong Sheikh Mobarak Hossain and the judges held a meeting with Chittagong Metropolitan Police Commissioner M Majedul Haq in the office of Metropolitan Sessions Judge AKM Anwar Hossain. The meeting decided to take necessary steps to increase security on and around the court premises.

The measures discussed include sending of letters to the ministries concerned asking them to ensure security of the judges and eviction of a large number of makeshift structures that have mushroomed all over the hill

of Parir Pahar on which the court building is situated.

First Additional Sessions Judge Md Shahjahan is to inform the CMP commissioner about the eviction after discussing the matter with the deputy commissioner of Chittagong, sources said.

Only five witnesses have been heard so far in the case since the hearing of the arms case began here on July 7. One of the witnesses heard was also declared 'hostile'.

Meanwhile, hearing of the arms smuggling case filed under the Special Powers Act, in connection with the same incident, is scheduled to begin today.

The same court on October 24 framed charges in the arms smuggling case against 44 persons including prime suspects Hafizur Rahman alias Hafiz, Din Mohammad, Abul Kashem Madhu, Hajee Sobhan and Hajee Yakub.

Eleven of the accused including Din Mohammad and Madhu are in hiding and 28 are on bail. Only five are now in jail. They are Saifuddin Ahmed, Firoze Ahmed, Saleh Jahur, Osman Mistri and Manir Ahmad.

City gets back

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movement of vehicles on the VIP road from Zia International Airport to Shahbag after 1:00pm yesterday.

Heavy rush of the people was seen in three major inter-district bus terminals -- Mohakhali, Sayedabad and Gabtoli -- as people started arriving from outside the capital.

City's largest wholesale kitchen market at Karwan Bazar, that had been closed for five days due to security reasons for the Saarc summit, also started coming back to life since last evening. The traders expect full resumption of business from today.

"I opened the shop at noon after 12 days as I went to my village home in Feni on November 2, hearing that the market would be closed on the occasion of Saarc summit," said Mohammad Jamal Uddin, a shop owner at Karwan Bazar.

Trading in the wholesale kitchen market drastically fell following the Eid-ul-Fitr in the first week of this month. The market's closure due to the Saarc summit added to the situation.

"We asked the suppliers to send as much goods as possible because all our godowns are empty following the two weeks' closure," said Mujibur Rahman, manager of Chowdhury Banijyalay in Karwan Bazar.

With fresh supply, the price of the essentials that had shot up during the last few days, also started becoming normal since yesterday afternoon.

The private business houses and

2 JMB men held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested two suspected Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) cadres in Sirajganj and Patuakhali and took one of them on a four-day remand.

Sirajganj police arrested Golam Mostafa, 32, inside the District Judge's Court premises with a CD, reports our Sirajganj Correspondent.

Police said Mostafa is a scout of JMB who went to the court for information to prepare an attack.

Meanwhile, lawyers of the district yesterday stayed off work to protest against the killing of two judges in Jhalakathi.

In Patuakhali, a team of Baufal Police station arrested JMB cadre Abu Zafar, 29, at his house in Nurainpur village in the early hours yesterday, reports our Patuakhali Correspondent.

Zafar is also a convicted felon sentenced to life in an arms case, police and court sources said.

He was hauled before a court, which remanded him for four days yesterday.

The arrestee told the police he along with 40 others had been arrested in connection with an arms haul in 1996. He jumped bail and was absconding since then.

The police suspect he has links to the countrywide bomb blasts on August 17.

Delhi seeks

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his government attaches "the greatest importance" to the "friendliest possible relations with Bangladesh."

The Indian premier said he did not see any clash of interest between India and Bangladesh.

Mannohan said he saw "no fundamental differences" in the interests of the two countries, and sought to assure Bangladesh that India does not "seek any kind of advantage that would constitute a negative factor for Bangladesh's development."

Expressing satisfaction with the bilateral talks that he had with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, Mannohan said he had conveyed to her that all problems - "either real or imagined" - could be resolved by the two sides sitting down and working together.

He also said the Bangladesh prime minister has responded very positively and told him that this was her vision as well.

Expounding on the warm meeting between the two heads of government, Mannohan said that he found the Bangladesh prime minister "very forthcoming" and that he had invited her to New Delhi for further talks, and that she had graciously accepted his invitation.

Plane fare

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After the meeting, the state minister told the journalists that Bangladesh Biman would carry about 18 thousand pilgrims, including the ballottees and non-ballottees, this year.

According to a decision, taken by the cabinet earlier, Biman will carry ballottee Hajj pilgrims at \$950 each.

He said Bangladesh Biman has to incur a loss of about Tk 23 crore if it carries both ballottee and non-ballottee Hajj pilgrims at \$ 950 per head.

The state minister also said though the number of non-ballottee pilgrims was not confirmed, it would not be more than 20 thousand.

The meeting gave the responsibility to the managing director of Biman to carry the extra pilgrims at \$ 1150 per head if the number of total Hajj pilgrims exceeds 18 thousand.

Mahmudul Haq Rubel MP, the finance secretary, the communications secretary, the civil aviation and tourism secretary, the managing director of Biman and chairman of Civil Aviation Authority were present.

Militants back

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Many leaders and activists of Awami League, parliament members, rallies of opposition parties, mosques, temples, fairs, foreign diplomats and even courts, also became targets of heinous bomb attacks. The country has turned into a safe haven of the communal terrorists, she said.

The AL chief said series of bomb blasts occurred in 500 places in 63 districts across the country on August 17. But the perpetrators of the bomb attacks are yet to be brought to book.

She said the government banned several militant outfits in the country to fool the people. But in reality, the militants are carrying out terrorist activities under the patronisation of the government.

She conveyed her deepest sympathy to the family members of the two slain judges and prayed for salvation of their departed souls.

The opposition leader urged people to be united against the bomb attackers and their godfathers.

Ministers

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The two ministers first visited the scene of the attack at Jhalakathi and then went on to Barisal from where they flew to Bhola.

Babar said those who carried out such a heinous attack in the name of Islam are the most despicable in the society. Islam never allows such activities, he added.

"Primarily the attackers are suspected to be members of JMB, but it is not yet possible to say anything for sure," he said.

PM condemns

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have already been arrested and directed the authorities concerned to arrest the rest of the gang.

She also asked the authorities to ensure proper treatment of those injured in the bomb attack.

Why judiciary target

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attacks, pointed out that the attackers did not target everybody associated with the judiciary, but mainly the judges. Since these militants do not believe in the existing judiciary, they are targeting the judges who deliver the verdicts. Attacks on the judges achieve two things simultaneously - spread fear among the people as well as shake up other organs of the state.

The militants who have been netted so far are mere foot soldiers or transporters of the bombs. "We may not find out the real motive for targeting the judiciary until we can catch the masterminds behind these attacks," a high-level investigation official said.

Intelligence agencies had taken the highest ever security measures on the occasion of Saarc Summit as any terrorist attack during the summit might heavily dent the country's image. They however had prior information from their network that the militants would not carry out any terrorist attack during the summit, said intelligence sources.

But the attack on the very first day after the summit ended, have worried them greatly. "Now we are looking for the breach in the countrywide special security measures that allowed such an attack," he added. Intelligence officials are now terribly apprehensive about the ability of the Islamic militants and are wondering if they could carry out such an attack during Saarc Summit if they wanted to.

The near-simultaneous bomb attacks across the country on August 17 were launched targeting government establishments, mainly the offices of local district administrations and the courts.

On October 3, the courts and the judges were targeted once again in Chandpur, Chittagong and Lakhimpur. Another bomb attack was carried out in the same month targeting a judge in Sylhet on October 18.

Yesterday's bomb attack in Jhalakathi although was not on the courts none the less was aimed at the members of the judiciary. The attack killed two judges.

Investigation has found out that all the attacks had been carried out by members of the outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB).

The bombers identified themselves as members of the JMB in their very first attack on August 17 as they left behind leaflets under the letterhead of JMB where they demanded that the government establishes Islamic rule or faces offensive from the JMB.

The leaflet said the JMB had urged the government twice earlier to establish Islamic Hukumat (Islamic order), but every time the government arrested their activists. However, the JMB did not resort to any retaliation, the leaflet claimed.

"But this is the third appeal from JMB," the group warned. "If the government does not establish Islamic laws in the country after this third warning and rather attacks the Muslims on charge of seeking Allah's laws or if it resorts to repression on Alem-Ulemas (Islamic clergy), the JMB would go for counter-offensive, Inshallah (may god willing)."

In the leaflet the militants also asked the bureaucrats and the judges to stop administrative and judicial activities under what they called evil laws of democracy, the constitution and the government that did not establish Islamic rule. "Make your lives worthwhile by gaining Allah's blessings by extending your all-out co-operation in establishing Islamic laws."

Renowned lawyers concerned at the recent spate of bomb attacks targeting

the judiciary believe that the militants want to destroy the country, as we know it, through destruction of the judiciary.

Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President Advocate Mahbubey Alam said in Afghanistan the Taliban had also attempted to destroy the established judiciary before capturing power. It is the same mentality that is instigating a particular group in Bangladesh to commit such atrocities.

Bangladesh Bar Council's Vice Chairman Rokonuddin Mahmud said the judiciary is the last resort of people and that is why the militants are trying to destroy it. None of the earlier bomb and grenade attacks has been properly investigated and the government has utterly failed in this, he said. He wondered how come such an attack was launched only a day after the summit had concluded since such an invincible security blanket was put into effect on the occasion of the summit. We, the lawyers, are on the side of the existing judiciary and it is the responsibility of the government to ensure security for everybody related to the judiciary.

Dr M Zahir said it is easier to attack the courts and the judges. "Subordinate judiciary has spread out all over the country. If the judiciary is destroyed or rendered ineffective, JMB's purpose of sabotaging the entire system of government will be attained. Without an effective judiciary no state can run, that is why they have targeted the judiciary first," he said.

Advocate Joynal Abedin, ruling BNP's law secretary, said the statements extracted from the arrested militants so far show that they believe in a different type of social system than the existing one. "They say they do not believe in the existing judiciary, they believe in Allah's justice. I do not think they can establish Islamic rule by bombing people, they are misleading people."

Former law minister, Advocate Abdul Matin Khasru, observed that the attempts to destroy the judiciary is a bad omen for the nation. "These acts are a part of an attempt to bring some undemocratic third force into power, which is an anti-liberation force and the country will be destroyed if it is in their hands."

JMB suicide

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the attack was a suicide one and he knew that he might have been killed.

Police high officials and lawmakers visited the scene, met the families of the dead and visited the injured at the hospitals.

After the incident, Law Minister Moudud Ahmed, State Minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar, Inspector General of Police Abdul Quayum, Director General of Rapid Action Battalion MA Aziz Sarkar and local lawmaker Israt Jahan Elen Bhutto flew to the district by a chopper.

Proceedings of courts across the country were suspended and lawyers brought out processions in protest at the gruesome killing. Situation in all the southern districts is said to be tense.

Earlier on October 3 and October 18, the JMB launched two bomb attacks on the judiciary, leaving four dead and at least 39 including two judges injured.

The banned outfit carried out an attack on the courtrooms Chandpur, Laximpur and Chittagong districts, killing the four