

Shantu places 6-pt demand to solve CHT problems

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Full implementation of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) peace accord is not possible without a secular and democratic government in the country, said Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Lama alias Shantu Lama, president of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS).

He was speaking at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday to mark the eighth anniversary of CHT peace accord signed on December 2, 1997.

It was organised by the PCJSS to press the demand for full implementation of the CHT peace accord.

At the press conference, Shantu Lama placed a six-point charter of demand to solve the problems prevailing in the hill region.

These included holding of national and local elections following separate voter lists of the permanent inhabit-

ants in the hill region, immediate withdrawal of temporary army camps and suspension of 'Operation Uttaran' conducted by the armed forces, activation of Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Commission and rehabilitation of all ethnic refugees.

He said, "Awami League government signed the accord but could not implement it fully. The present coalition government is working against the accord."

"Islamist militants have set up hideouts in the hill region. They have close links with their counterparts in Myanmar. These separatist militants have been providing training to Bangladeshi militants posing serious threat to the country," said Shantu Lama, a former guerrilla leader.

He said different vested quarters are now engaged in various activities in a bid to deprive the hill people of their rights.

These are intrusion of Bangali settlers in the hill region, encroachment of Adivasi lands, attempt to increase the number of Bangali settlers to soar vote banks, creation of division between the Bangali and Hilly people, and encroachment of lands for setting up of military camps, he added.

Shantu Lama alleged that Sama Adhikar Andolon, an organisation of the settlers, and United People's Democratic Front (UPDF), a terrorist outfit, have been carrying out anti-treaty activities with the assistance of the Armed Forces.

Jana Sanghati Samity General Secretary Laxmi Prasad Chakma,

Information and Publicity Secretary Mangal Kumar Chakma, Adivasi Forum leader Juhinal Khasia, Andrew Solemor, and Hill Women's Federation President Choitali Tripura were present at the press conference.

Musa Sadik receives death threat again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Renowned writer and war correspondent of Swadhin Bangla Betar Musa Sadik has received a death threat from the Jama'atul Mujahedin Bangladesh (JMB) for his book titled 'Bangladesh Wins Freedom' released recently.

Some unknown persons on Tuesday threatened to blow up his head through bomb blast.

On November 22, he lodged a general diary with Gulshan Police Station after he received a death threat on November 21 over the phone.

"You are still alive? You have no more time to live. Eat now whatever you would like to eat as your last food. Television will broadcast your death news soon," Musa Sadik quoted an unknown caller as saying to him.

Sadik also informed the Gulshan Police of the latest threat.

BSF alert at outposts after blasts

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Concerned over Tuesday's suicide bomb attacks in Bangladesh, Border Security Force (BSF) has alerted all the 181 outposts along the 856 km-long porous border in Tripura, Mizoram and Cachar district of Assam.

"We have also strengthened our guards on the border, intensified patrol and are keeping a close vigil along the international border so that no one can sneak into our territory for sabotage," BSF IG SK Dutta, who is in-charge of Tripura, Mizoram and Cachar, told reporters in Agartala yesterday.

The BSF and its Bangladesh counterpart Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) have been conducting coordinated patrolling along the Tripura, Mizoram and Cachar borders for the last four months, he said.

"The BSF will now launch coordinated operations on the border along with other security agencies," he said.

"Now we will share our intelligence inputs with officer-in-charge of any police station near the border and also with other security agencies and then simultaneously launch operations which would be an effective step towards making the border foolproof," the IG said.

DU exams postponed

DU CORRESPONDENT

All the courses and traditional (homeopathic) examinations of Dhaka University (DU), scheduled for today, have been postponed.

Fresh dates will be announced soon, said a DU press release yesterday.

Schedules of other examinations will remain unchanged.

Gazipur mourns blast victims

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courts or the bar association office yesterday. "We don't even know if the courts exist or not," said Advocate Sultan Uddin, president of Gazipur Bar Association. "We are mourning the dead and struggling to take proper care of the injured."

All the courts of the judges and magistrates gave a deserted look with only police guarding those. Some judges went to courts but did not do any duty.

JANAZA, BURIAL
Hundreds of people joined the funerals of the slain lawyers. The namaj-e-janaza of advocates Amzad Hossain and Golam Faruk was held at 10:15am and 2:15pm at Rajbari ground in the town.

Their bodies were first taken to the bar association office and then to the janaja venue.

Lawmakers, government officials, fellow lawyers, police officials, relatives, clients, and others attended the

janaza and paid their last respect to the dead in an emotional atmosphere.

The agitated lawyers however did not allow Agriculture Minister MK Anwar, also the district minister for Gazipur, to see the body of Golam Faruk at the bar association. He later attended the janaza.

Amzad was buried at his home village at Banua under Gazipur Sadar Police Station and Faruk at Iquria in Korihata in Kapasia upazila.

FAMILY TRAGEDY
Advocate Amzad's wife fainted Tuesday afternoon. She lost the lone bread-earner of her five-member family. She was wailing ceaselessly when this correspondent talked to her yesterday afternoon at her residence at South Chhayabithi in the town.

"He had been talking about the suicide bombers for the last several days and expressed his concern about the judiciary," she recalled. "I asked him not go to courts but he replied how to run the family if he stopped doing his

professional work."

The family members demanded punishment of the killers and blamed the government for its 'failure' to provide security to people.

"If they (government) would have deployed police as they have done now, my husband would have been alive now," she added.

CASE FILED
Sub-inspector (SI) Alamgir of Gazipur Sadar Police Station on Tuesday filed two cases -- one for murders and another under the Explosive Substances Act -- with Sadar Police Station against an unidentified dead in connection with the bomb attack.

In the FIR (first information report), Alamgir said there are symptoms that the JMB carried out the blast.

The unidentified person, whose body was found at the bombing spot, is a suspected member of JMB suicide squad and made the attack, the FIR said.

The complainant also mentioned

Mahbubul Alam Shahin, who was nabbed from Gazipur Sadar Hospital and now undergoing treatment under police custody, as a suspect in the blast.

2 JMB SUSPECTS ARRESTED
Gazipur police nabbed two persons -- Mohammad Ibrahim, 22, and Moulana Samsuzzaman, 43, -- as suspected JMB men from the town Tuesday night.

Police said Samsuzzaman is an assistant superintendent of a madrasa at Chawkbazar in the district town and cousin to a JMB member. JMB chief Abdur Rahman used to visit the madrasa.

Ibrahim, who hails from Gouripur in Netrakona, was nabbed from a slum in the town. He came to the town two days ago and his movement was suspicious, said police.



French Ambassador Jacques-Andre Costilhes with the members of the French delegation, French Economic Mission, French embassy, CCIFB and the cultural troupe at a 'Gala Evening' organised by the French-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry in the city recently.