

Iajuddin confined

FROM PAGE 20
District, upazila, thana and municipality units under the two districts attended the closed-door meeting at the party's Dhamondi office where senior AL leaders were present.

The coalition government is violating the constitution, Hasina said, adding that the government is trying to change the president ahead of the general elections to appoint a 'more loyal' president to get benefit during the term of the next caretaker government.

She said the ruling party ministers and MPs have looted public money worth thousands of crore taka and they are planning to use the money in the upcoming elections.

People should teach them a good lesson through ballot, she said.

As they [BNP-Jamaat alliance] know that they would not get vote in the next elections, they are not

accepting proposal for reforms in the caretaker government and the Election Commission, Hasina said, adding that her party's demonstration will continue until the government accepts the proposal for electoral reforms.

The ruling BNP, who had enforced 308 hartals including 96-hour non-stop hartal in the country when they were in opposition, are now speaking against hartal, she said.

Hasina urged the grassroots leaders to work together forgetting all personal and organisational feuds to ensure victory in the coming elections.

The local leaders submitted organisational reports along with lists of BNP-Jamaat men who resorted to torture and repression and filed false cases against the opposition men during the last four and a half years of the alliance government.

Jubok asked

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people not to make any transaction with it.

The central bank officials argued that the BB gave Jubok an exit to return all the money to people it has collected from them.

Referring to the case of Islamic Trade and Commerce Ltd (ITCL), another NGO running similar banking, the official explained that its depositors did not get their money back as the action was taken according to the Banking Companies Act.

However, Jubok said it has received the central bank order and already taken necessary steps to implement it.

"We would like to inform all our members, well-wishers, officials and workers that we have already made announcement that Jubok will follow the BB directive. We are also committed to implement it giving top priority to the interest of the organisation and its members," Jubok said in a statement signed by its director Syed Rashedul Huda Chowdhury.

Commenting on the issue, Khondokar Ibrahim Khaled, managing director of Pubali Bank Ltd and former deputy governor of the central bank, appreciated the BB action as a primary step. "But the central bank should go tough if Jubok fails to adjust its transactions," he said.

Earlier, a BB investigation found that Jubok and its sister concern Jubo Kamasangsthan Udyog have been collecting deposits through deposit books from and disbursing loans to its members and common people. But, receiving money from common people through deposit books is similar to collecting deposits by banks.

Besides, Jubo Kamasangsthan Udyog has been receiving loans from common people in exchange of a very high interest rate through agreements on non-judicial stamps, a report of the investigation said.

It pointed out that according to the Societies Registration Act, 1860, the activities of the two organisations are like banking activities and not in compliance with its section 20 sub-clause.

The report also said such banking-like activities are not only unethical but also risky for the members and clients of Jubok. If these activities cannot be stopped, Jubok's members and clients might face financial disasters, the report warned.

Sources said although Jubok started its operation in 1994 with only providing micro-credits to its members, it was registered with the Joint Stock Companies in 1997, and since then it has set up more than 20 business organisations.

It is now involved with businesses in telecommunications, housing and real estate development, tourism, health, ceramics, seafood, IT, pisciculture, nursery, agro-biotech industry, and capital management. The once small NGO has now become a big organisation with a capital of more than Tk 1,000 crore.

Two representatives of Jubok—Hossain AI Masum, chairman of Jubok Housing & Real Estate Development Ltd, and Sabih Ul Alam, director of Jubok Ceramic Industries Ltd—

recently joined the IFIC Bank as directors after purchasing a significant chunk of the bank's shares.

A BB investigation report earlier termed Jubok's collection of money from people "illegal banking". The organisation denied the allegation at a hearing before BB representatives.

The BB investigation report did not mention how much money Jubok had collected by then from its depositors. A Jubok report sent to the BB Micro-Finance Research and Reference Unit said it had collected Tk 37.78 crore until December 31, 2005.

The real amount of deposit, however, is much higher, sources said, adding that Jubok has already removed many papers and documents from its office.

The BB report said Jubok collected deposit promising benefits like a special bonus programme under which the depositor, be a Jubok member or not, can immediately draw a profit of Tk 20,000 after depositing Tk 1 lakh while the capital may be refunded after one year.

Udichi submits

FROM PAGE 20
Earlier, a Jessore court on June 28 acquitted all the 23 accused in the case on grounds of inadequacy of the investigation. The deadly blast occurred on March 7, 1999 left 10 killed and more than 100 injured.

After a rally at city's Mukangan, central committee of Udichi brought out a procession at around 11:00am. The procession bound for the home ministry was intercepted by the police at zero point.

Later, Professor Jatin Sarkar, president of Udichi, and Mahmud Selim, general secretary, submitted the memorandum to the office of the home minister.

The memorandum demanded that statements of the self-declared bombers like Mufli Hannan be taken into consideration.

It also stated that only 31 out of 67 witnesses were called to testify while many vital ones were left out. Still the case was declared lacking in witnesses.

"Like the honourable judge, we too think that the investigation of the case was inadequate. But instead of ordering a reinvestigation, a judgment based on an unfinished investigation has been passed," the statement read.

It said as most of the accused belong to the ruling party, the government's sincerity in having a just verdict had all along been very much questionable. Incomplete investigation done over a long period only added to the public doubt.

Besides, it says, recommendations of the judicial probe commission formed by the government further exposed the government's attitude towards the case.

The commission had advised that all the charge-sheeted accused be released and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, the then home minister Mohammed Nasim, the then Udichi president Hasan Imam and general secretary of Jessore Awami League be charged with orchestrating the blast.

N Korea warns UN

FROM PAGE 20
The material and technology that could be used in North Korea's missile and weapons of mass destruction programmes.

"We will be forced to take all-out countermeasures if sanctions are exercised," Han Song Ryol, deputy chief of North Korea's UN mission, said Wednesday, according to Japanese broadcaster TBS.

Han said the missile launches were part of a regular military drill, TBS reported.

China, the North's closest ally, and Russia, which has been trying to re-establish Soviet-era ties with Pyongyang, countered that they favor a weaker council statement without any threat of sanctions. Both countries hold veto power in the council, making sanctions unlikely.

China and Russia are clearly concerned that a UN demand for such measures would only make the current situation worse and delay a return to six-party talks. China and Russia are part of the talks along with North and South Korea, the United States and Japan.

Bush said Wednesday that the failure of North Korea's long-range missile test does not lessen the need to push the communist regime to give up its nuclear weapons programme.

"One thing we have learned is that the rocket didn't stay up for very long," Bush said about the Taepodong-2 missile that failed 42 seconds after liftoff Tuesday. "It tumbled into the sea."

"It doesn't diminish my desire to solve this problem," he said in Washington.

Bush spoke by phone to Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and they agreed to cooperate in pushing for a UN resolution to impose sanctions on North Korea, Japan's Kyodo news agency reported Thursday. The US president also spoke to South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun and they agreed to cooperate on the missile issue, a South Korean official said.

The failure of the Taepodong-2 missile, the object of intense international attention for more than a month, suggested a catastrophic failure of the rocket's first, or booster, stage. A working version of the intercontinental missile could potentially reach the United States with a light payload.

Voter list update

FROM PAGE 1
officer said. "In my district, only 86 forms were distributed while six of them were submitted," he added.

Irked by the commission's rigid position, the government on July 3 appointed Abdur Rashid Sarkar as the secretary of the EC Secretariat. Immediately after his appointment, Rashid started differing with the EC on its method for the updating task.

Meanwhile, the new secretary yesterday met the chief election commissioner (CEC) and said he would join the EC Secretariat next Sunday.

Earlier on Wednesday, he paid a courtesy call on the prime minister who assured him of full co-operation in preparing a flawless voter list.

Replying to a query about his plan regarding the voter list revision, Abdur Rashid yesterday told reporters, "Let me join first and then decide on the course of action."

Officials at the EC Secretariat said if the secretary keeps advocating for visiting door to door, the ongoing task will be hampered seriously.

"Field level officials have already lost interest in the job after hearing Rashid's comments. They now believe that the commission will change its stance and decide in favour of door-to-door visits," a district election officer told The Daily Star yesterday on condition of anonymity.

He said if the EC does not budge on the issue, it may not be possible to complete the ongoing task, as the people have not responded well in last six days.

There might be a conflict between the commission and its secretariat if the former does not change its decision, feared the election officer.

The EC Secretariat plans to assign its 90 officials to assist the assistant registration officers in carrying out the updating job in the capital from today, sources said.

Being informed, Rab members of Pabna camp raided and arrested Amjad at Tebaria village on Wednesday, Rab said.

Following his confessional statements, Rab members took him to the Tebaria village again at about 3:30am yesterday to capture his cohorts and recover arms.

But as soon as they entered into the village, unidentified criminals ambushed the law enforcers in a bid to snatch their leader Amjad. Rab also fired back in defence.

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2 killed in 'crossfire'

FROM PAGE 20
Purbo Banglar Communist Party (ML, Lal Pataka).

Acting on a tip-off, members of Rab-1 arrested Osman at Bahadur Shah Park of old Dhaka on Wednesday.

Following his confessional statement, a Rab-1 team raided Mohammadpur to nab Osman's accomplices and recover hidden arms and ammunition at about 3:45am yesterday, said a Rab press release.

As the team reached near the park Udayan Char at Iqbal Road, some unknown criminals opened fire on them forcing the law enforcers to retaliate.

Osman fell in the line of fire while trying to escape during the shootout, while the criminals retreated, the press release said, adding, that the doctors declared him dead when he was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Rab recovered a foreign pistol and three bullets from the spot.

Osman was also the chief co-ordinator of Dhaka's underworld, the Rab said.

Meanwhile, Osman's elder brother Humayun Kabir told the press that Rab arrested his brother when he came to appear before a court, claiming that Osman had been reformed. "All the cases filed against him were political and he quit his earlier life one year back after spending four years in prison," he added.

PABNA SHOOTOUT
PBPC (ML-Lal Pataka) leader Amjad Hossain was killed in 'crossfire' in Ataikula upazila of the district when his accomplices opened fire on Rab team triggering a gunfight.

Being informed, Rab members of Pabna camp raided and arrested Amjad at Tebaria village on Wednesday, Rab said.

Following his confessional statements, Rab members took him to the Tebaria village again at about 3:30am yesterday to capture his cohorts and recover arms.

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trying to flee during the shootout. His cohorts managed to escape.