

Dipjol's house

FROM PAGE 16

However, none of them was at home during the four-hour raid that started around 11:00pm.

Meanwhile, another brother of them was arrested by army men and handed over to the Mirpur police at around 9:00pm yesterday on charge of possessing illegal firearms.

Police said that the six firearms seized from Dipjol's house were in lawful possession, but there was no permission for 317 rifle bullets possessed by Dipjol and 69 pistol bullets kept by Shahadat. Another 188 bullets, which were possessed legally, were also seized.

The joint forces were also conducting a raid at Parbata Cinema in Mirpur, owned by Shahadat, yesterday evening.

Comprising army and policemen from Mirpur, Pallabi, Kafrul and Shahali police stations, the team encircled the five-storey building at Court Bari in Mirpur before starting the raid Monday night.

They seized a double barrel gun, a shotgun, one .22 bore rifle and an air gun and 317 rifle bullets and 89 cartridges of .22 bore gun from the first floor flat of Dipjol. Dipjol is the licensee of those firearms. The law enforcers then seized another .22 bore rifle, a shotgun, 99 rounds .22 bore rifle bullet and 69 rounds .32 bore pistol bullet from the second floor flat of Shahadat in the same building.

The seized firearms do not fall in the categories specified by the interim government for submitting firearms to the police stations concerned by January 5, police said.

Also a Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Ward Commissioner, Dipjol was a contender for BNP tickets in the upcoming parliamentary polls from Dhaka-11 constituency and campaigned for a long time. Failing to get

BNP nomination, he was contesting the polls as an independent candidate.

Assistant Sub-Inspector Asaduzzaman of Shahali Police Station filed two separate cases against Dipjol and Shahadat accusing them of possessing bullets illegally.

PARBATA CINEMA RAID

A team of army encircled Parbata Cinema from around 3:30pm yesterday.

The army was seen allowing the moviegoers to come out of the cinema hall after searching their bodies at around 6:45pm. The search was going on as of 8:10pm.

DIPJOL'S BROTHER ARRESTED

Afzal Hossain, another brother of Dipjol, was picked up by the army at Gabtoli area on charge of possessing illegal firearms and was handed over to the Mirpur police at around 9:00pm yesterday. Police sources said. No details could be learned as of 10:00pm lastnight.

5 more advisers

FROM PAGE 1

postponed the January 22 parliamentary election. The other advisers to the council of advisers headed by Tajuddin also resigned on that night, paving the way for full reconstitution of the council of advisers.

The interim government led by Dr Fakhruddin has primarily envisaged several agendas for holding credible elections: Correcting the voter list, introducing voter-identity cards and transparent ballot box in the polls.

The caretaker government and the Election Commission might also open dialogue with major political parties before setting the ball rolling once again for the election.

Regarding corruption, the adviser said the caretaker government (CG) will take a comprehensive and firm stance to combat this. The corrupt must know that they are not above law and will be caught sooner or later. "If one example (action against the corrupt) is set, I believe the corrupt will get the message."

He mentioned that the CG has already taken steps to catch some identified corrupt individuals, as evident in the past few days.

The CG does not intend to remain in office for long, the adviser said. "But if we are in office for long, we will have the opportunity to combat corruption."

"Corruption has played a major role in creating the current political crisis," said Tapan. "We will make all out efforts to capture the corrupt."

The CG and the Election Commission will also take steps to prevent corrupt people and black money holders from contesting the elections so that honest and competent individuals can represent the people, said Tapan.

JP asks army

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newspapers that are practising yellow journalism," Hawlader said at a press briefing at the party's Banani office.

An investigative report by Prothom Alo Editor Matur Rahman published on January 15 said the Awami League gave Ershad Tk 3.5 crore to get him in the grand alliance.

According to the report, the BNP also gave Ershad Tk 2 crore to get him in its alliance, but Ershad had to give back the money as he did not join the four-party alliance.

"They [Prothom Alo] have different objectives behind their reports against political parties and politicians," Hawlader said, adding that the daily wants to do "something different but they should clear their objective to the nation".

"I request the armed forces to shut a newspaper like this," he said.

JP leader Kazi Zafar Ahmed also described the Prothom Alo report as "false" and "baseless", saying it was an ill motivated report targeting the JP.

JP President member Ziauddin Babu said the Prothom Alo did not even publish the rejoinder they sent protesting the report.

EC moves

FROM PAGE 1

The fire broke out at a tin-roofed house at the workers' colony of the jute mill at around 4:15am and soon engulfed 25 adjacent houses. The victim, Nesar, was asleep at one of the houses during the incident.

Fire Service sources said the fire originated from an electric short circuit. They estimated the damage to property at about Tk 1.25 lakh.

Three fire fighting units from city's Agrabad Fire Station rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze after one and a half hours.

Mill worker

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BDR, BSF trade

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last night that locals have claimed that the two killed in the Hathkhola were Indian nationals.

Following the killing, the BSF started firing in the air to create panic among the Bangladeshi villagers and tried to collect the bodies lying 500 metres inside Bangladesh from the border.

They successfully recovered one of the bodies before 29 Battalion BDR men from Hathkhola outpost rushed to the spot and retaliated to BSF's intrusion into Bangladesh territory. The gunfire between BDR and BSF lasted for three hours and the sides exchanged over 600 shots.

Sources said sporadic fire continued into the afternoon until high-ranking officials of BDR and BSF talked over telephone, our Dinajpur correspondent reports.

The body of Subhas is still lying on the no-man's-land between Bangladesh and India.

Sources said a good number of villagers left their homes during the fighting and have not returned fearing further escalation of the situation.

A flag meeting of the two border guards was scheduled to be held at 5:30pm yesterday but it was cancelled as the BSF failed to show up.

Energy adviser

FROM PAGE 16

The European Union (EU) said preparation of national ID cards would take eight months, the adviser mentioned. "But I have spoken to our ambassador to China, who told me Chinese companies could prepare ID cards very quickly."

Tapan said, "The chief adviser has given me full responsibility of seeing how quickly we can do it (national ID cards) ... I have already asked the information and communication technology ministry to prepare a report within a week after discussions with the private sector."

He also said although it was rarely seen that the major political alliances came to a consensus on various issues, they hold the same views on holding of elections quickly.

But, Tapan noted, the preconditions for an election must be met if the polls are to be held. And these are national ID cards, correctly updated voter list and transparent ballot boxes.

There is no harm in taking a month or two to meet these requirements, he said.

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No plan to probe

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parliament in addition to creating a flawless voter list within the same period will not be possible.

The president's speech prompted the people to expect a flawless voter list from the caretaker government as well as identification and punishment of those responsible for making the list was becoming flawed.

Aziz also ignored the demands of opposition parties. Awami League was demanding that the voter list of 2000 be updated, instead of preparing a fresh one, to keep it above controversy.

The EC produced voter list's partisan and flawed nature became crystal clear when the commission fought against the High Court (HC) on the issue of updating the list. The HC finally issued a ruling that the EC should update the voter list created in 2000. But the EC ignored the ruling for nearly two weeks on the pretext of not receiving the order and started preparing the flawed list on January 1, 2006.

But, the EC did not stop there. It went to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court and filed an appeal against the HC verdict, which it lost.

Justice Latifur Rahman agreed to Khaleda's request after consulting with the then law adviser Barrister Ishaq Ahmed and others.

Meanwhile, Aziz gave rise to a crisis within the EC as the decision of creating a fresh voter list had been taken by him unilaterally ignoring other election commissioners.

After Aziz had gone on a leave and Mahfuzur Rahman took over as the acting CEC, he also refrained from publishing the draft voter list before and even after the announcement of the now defunct election schedule making the whole thing even more suspicious.

Nine bureaucrats of Khaleda's administration now face contempt charges for distorting the 12-point SC directive.

The SC has also issued contempt rule against a number of senior bureaucrats during the BNP-led coalition government's rule for not implementing the SC order in due time.

DU ignores rule

FROM PAGE 16

committee Prof Dr Md Abubakar Siddique of the Arabic department issued a 'note of dissent' against the committee's decision mentioning the selected candidates' simultaneous degrees.

According to the university ordinance, if any honours student studies at any other institution simultaneously, his or her university admission/degree is to be cancelled.

The selection committee's recommendations are now waiting to be finalised in the next Syndicate meeting later this week.

The selection committee excluded two candidates who obtained first-class first positions in both honours and masters. They are Arshadul Hasan (MA in 2004) and Zahirul Islam (MA in 2003). They received University Grants Commission Gold Medal in 2006 and 2005 respectively for achieving highest marks in the faculty.

On the other hand, among the selected candidates, Noor-e-Alam and Rafiqul Islam have one 'first-class second' position each.

Prof Siddique said he sent documents on selected candidates' simultaneous degrees to the chief of the selection committee,

"Primary sources were held on the voter ID card project," said an EC official wishing anonymity, adding, "The EC just looked into the previous files and paperwork of voter ID card project."

Emerging from an EC meeting, Acting CEC Mahfuzur Rahman told the reporters that they are reorganising their records as the elections have been postponed.

The acting CEC refused to talk about what was discussed in the meeting. He earlier told a number of reporters that the EC's efforts at holding talks with the major political parties are on.

Sources said the BSF troops of 116 Gobrabeel camp of India fired at least eight bullets killing Shahidul on the spot. They took away the body into Indian territory.

The 14 Battalion BDR officials claimed they strongly protested the killing and the abduction to BSF and have requested a flag meeting in this regard.

Meanwhile, BDR headquarters told The Daily Star last night that the BSF started unprovoked firing at Kuchkhali border outpost in Sathkhira around 7:30pm yesterday. The BDR retaliated in self-defence.

The firefight was continuing till the filing of this report.

In another incident, the BSF started firing near Baradi border outpost in Chuadanga on January 16 yesterday. The project was not approved.