

Wholesale arrest

FROM PAGE 1
law enforcement agencies to take steps for preventing recurrence of such an incident.

Sources said the committee stressed on proper transmission of decisions taken at higher levels of different security agencies regarding stopping of torture and rights violation by law enforcers to the thana level.

LIST OF CRIMINALS

The meeting asked law enforcement and intelligence agencies to cross-check names of criminal suspects and their godfathers which had appeared on the lists they had prepared earlier.

It asked the law enforcers to prepare a composite list later by properly verifying the names through checking those at local levels in a bid to minimise the risk of including innocent people's names. "Arresting criminal suspects according to the old list will not do," said Mainul.

The committee discussed the possibility of halting the practice of issuing anticipatory bail to identified criminal suspects, their godfathers and influential suspects during the anti-crime drive.

POLICING

Expressing satisfaction over the improvement in law and order situation, the committee asked law enforcement agencies to maintain the improvement and concentrate on implementing the emergency rules, said the sources.

The committee instructed law enforcers to arrest immediately the perpetrators of Saturday's bomb attack on a Rab vehicle at Gulistan in the capital.

It also talked about the status of investigation of former finance minister SAMS Kibria killing case.

The committee discussed Dhaka Metropolitan Police's traffic management system and the problem of beggars in the capital, especially on VIP roads, which according to several participants, is tarnishing the image of the country.

While discussing the backlog in adjudication of cases, the meeting participants were told that just 20 percent of the accused are successfully sentenced and the pace

of adjudication is very slow, said the sources.

REHABILITATION

While discussing the inhumane condition of the people, who were evicted from different slums and illegal structures during demolition drives in Dhaka, the meeting participants stressed the need for rehabilitating them at the earliest.

"Otherwise these poor people might soon become a threat to law and order," said a participant, according to the sources.

The government and non-government organisations (NGO) can work together to arrange tin-roofed huts for the evicted people on a plain land or on an open field, as was done earlier in Mirpur and at Dattapara in Tongi, according to a proposal placed at the meeting.

Talking about evicted street vendors, the meeting discussed a proposal for 'holiday markets' as an alternative.

"The hawkers may either be allowed to sit on an open field seven days a week or on some streets, which do not remain that much busy, for certain hours everyday," a meeting source said, quoting the proposal.

FERTILISER & DIESEL SMUGGLING, BORDER SITUATION

The meeting, while discussing smuggling of fertiliser and diesel out of the country, instructed Bangladesh Rifles and Coast Guard to put an end to the illegal trade.

The meeting discussed that the Indian Border Security Force had reinforced itself by adding another 25,000 personnel and set up modern sophisticated weapons including sniper rifles and radars along the border. The meeting expressed concern over the rising number of Bangladeshi nationals being killed on the border.

The home secretary, inspector general of police, and director generals of Rapid Action Battalion, National Security Intelligence, Directorate General of Forces Intelligence, Bangladesh Rifles, and Ansar were present at the meeting among other high officials of the agencies.

2,153 more

FROM PAGE 1
Jhenidah by the joint forces as well.

Meanwhile, the executive director of Sathkhira-based NGO Uttaran was sent to jail yesterday on one month's detention.

During the joint drive, police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested 2,004 people in 24 hours till 6:00pm yesterday. Among them, 18 were held under Arms Act, three under Explosive Substances Act, 41 were fugitive convicts, 1,016 had arrest warrants against them and 926 were picked up on other charges.

Besides, the army arrested 147 people, 41 of them are listed criminals, and 106 other accused, said a home ministry news release yesterday.

The army recovered 11 firearms while police and Rab did 15. The law enforcers also recovered 66 bullets and 14 homemade bombs during the drive.

The joint forces so far arrested over 30,650 people since they launched the anti-crime drive on January 12 -- the day after the state of emergency was imposed in the country.

Sohel Taj

FROM PAGE 1
Upset, Sohela told The Daily Star that he went to the DGFIO office and asked the officials about the reason for their action.

"All they told me was they had instructions from the high-ups," he said adding, "I will write to the chief adviser to the caretaker government tomorrow [today] to know why and on whose orders I've been prevented from visiting India."

He claimed that there is no arrest warrant against him and neither does he stand accused in any case for corruption or other criminal activities. He said he wondered why they should do this when he was to represent Bangladesh Awami League at the international event.

He alleged that the image of his family has been tarnished because of the incident. "Now who will be liable for damaging my family's reputation?" he asked.

"I've been harassed for nothing when the corrupt leaders, black money holders and godfathers belonging to the immediate past ruling alliance remain untouched," added the AL leader.

Also son of AL Presidium Member Syeda Zohra Tajuddin, he said he has informed AL President Sheikh Hasina of the matter immediately and she has expressed disappointment over the way he was treated.

Of the two-member AL delegation, the party's Women Affairs Secretary Dr Dipu Moni left for the Indian capital Saturday. The BNP delegation comprising Riaz Rahman and Enam Ahmed Chowdhury flew to India yesterday, said immigration sources.

Sathkhira editor

FROM PAGE 16
Sathkhira Chitra published from Sathkhira town. He came under attack at Pal Para intersection in the town.

Locals rescued Prof Anis in a critical condition and sent him to Sathkhira Sadar Hospital.

Police arrested the alleged assailants, Litu, younger brother of district Awami Swechhasebak League convenor Maroof Hasan Mithu, Bayezid and Abdus Sattar from Sultanpur area.

A case was filed with Sadar thana accusing Litu, Bayezid and two others.

Local journalists in a statement yesterday condemned the attack and demanded exemplary punishment to the criminals.

Protect HR

FROM PAGE 1
the arrestees.

She was talking to the reporters after meeting Law Adviser Mainul Hossain at his office in the morning.

"A lot of people in Bangladesh and we are concerned about the freedom of the press. I hope the government will expand the boundaries of press freedom," she said adding that the country enjoys a free and lively press that is the foundation of democracy.

On the next parliamentary election, Butenis said, "It is the responsibility of the government and the people of Bangladesh to fix the election date."

The US envoy said her government had raised the annual assistance to Bangladesh by 10 percent and there will be even more in the next fiscal year.

Earlier, Butenis had a meeting with Finance Adviser Dr Mirza Azizul Islam.

President Iajuddin Ahmed has recently promulgated a set of emergency rules designed to curb political and media rights.

The UK envoy Anwar Choudhury, who too met the finance adviser the same day, told journalists that they are always in favour of the press freedom and human rights in Bangladesh.

He said he hopes the government act to shield individual liberty as well as freedom of the media. "We'll continue to look at the issues," he added.

He said they had talked about issues of different ministries that concern the UK.

"We've discussed how to continue the existing projects so that their progress is not blocked," he said, replying to a query.

Mirza Azizul Islam said the United States and the United Kingdom have pledged continued support for the development of the country.

Each of them considers Bangladesh an important partner and wants it to have faster economic growth, he told reporters after meeting the envoys separately at his office.

Prof Yunus

FROM PAGE 1
of making hurry....We do not want to return to the path of conflict by making hurry."

He suggested that the Election Commission, the Public Service Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission must be purged of corruption and inefficiencies. "We want a permanent solution to the problems," he said.

Prof Yunus left for the Indian capital to attend the centenary of Mahatma Gandhi's 'Satyagraha' campaign and the opening of Grameen Trust India in Mumbai.

YUNUS TO RECEIVE ANOTHER AWARD

UNB says: Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus will receive the first Social Entrepreneur Award of the Year at Pepperdine School of Law in California, USA.

The Geoffrey Palmer Center for Social Entrepreneurship and the Law at the Pepperdine School of Law has selected him for the award.

Professor Janet Kerr, Associate Professor Melanie Howard and Kimberley Retts of the University of Pepperdine School of Law informed Prof Yunus about their selection at Grameen Bank head office in Dhaka on January 24.

Top management of Grameen Bank and heads of its sister concerns were present.

They talked about how social entrepreneurship is fast becoming one of the most popular areas of study for young people in Pepperdine, as they become increasingly interested in business which generates not just profit but also social good.

Grameen Bank is "the best example of social enterprise," they said.

Prof Yunus said that he was touched by the fact that Pepperdine had brought the award to Bangladesh. He talked about the importance of the relationship between law and the work of Grameen as the law represents one of the institutions that has "helped create the world we live in. To change the world, we would have to change the law".

An endowment fund would be created with the Nobel Peace Prize money won by Grameen Bank, the

proceeds from which would be used for establishing a Grameen Nobel Scholarship reserved for the children of

Grameen borrowers to enable them to study in institutions of higher learning not just in Bangladesh but in premier educational institutions around the world.

Prof Yunus proposed that one seat be reserved at the Pepperdine Law School for the son or daughter of a Grameen borrower who is interested in studying law, a proposal that was enthusiastically received by the representatives from the School at the US university.

More VoIP devices

FROM PAGE 16
about 3:10am at Banamala Road, the Rab intelligence unit members also arrested three for running the illegal business. They are -- Arifur Rahman, Hazrat Ali and Mohammad Sayeed.

The devices -- two pieces of quantum gateway equipment and 66 tellur devices -- were found packed in cartons, Rab officials said.

The Rab team caught Arifur Rahman first and later nabbed his two accomplices at the Banamala rail-crossing slum after chasing them down.

Arif had been operating the business for many years with the help of his brother Sharif who lives in Kuwait, Rab officials said.

A total of 13 unauthorised VoIP business centres -- 10 in the capital and three in Chittagong -- were busted by Rab from December 26 last year to January 26.

Illegal VoIP operators use the equipment to generate or terminate overseas calls by first turning voice calls into data, routing it over the Internet and then turning the data into voice again.

Unscrupulous businessmen use this method, also known as Internet Telephony, which bypasses BTB (Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board), the sole carrier for overseas calls in Bangladesh, and thus get away without paying huge revenue.

According to official data, the overall annual earning of BTB dropped sharply by Tk 267 crore during the last five years, as the immediate past alliance government did not take any actions against the illegal business.

Stand neutrally

FROM PAGE 1
aspirations."

The chief adviser said he has already mentioned the plan of action of the caretaker government in his maiden address to the nation.

He hoped that every officer and member of the armed forces would extend active cooperation and full support for implementing the plan of action.

Terming the armed forces as the symbol of national unity, independence and sovereignty as well as the people's aspirations, he said the armed forces can play pivotal role in forging national unity on public welfare, public interest and national issues.

Fakhruddin said that already the armed forces have played courageous, impartial and farsighted role at the present juncture and crisis of the country, which the nation would remember forever.

"So, you've to play an important role also in the future to ensure state security, social peace and discipline, and the democratic system of rule," he told officers of the army, the navy and the air force.

On reconstitution of the caretaker government, the chief adviser said had there been any election on January 22, it would not have been acceptable to people of this country as well as to the world community. It would have deepened the political crisis and long-lasting confrontation and violence would have been inevitable, he added.

Focusing on the situation that led to the state of emergency, Fakhruddin said the national unity, economic progress, social stability and security system were jeopardised. Besides, the situation was created for possible postponement of donors' cooperation and even activities of Bangladesh armed forces in the UN Peacekeeping Mission.

He said that after the promulgation of the state of emergency, the country and its people got rid of deep crisis and danger and got back relief and peaceful environment.

The head of the caretaker government categorically said that the nation cannot be hostage to limitless greed, illegal supremacy, corruption, black money, muscle power and criminality of a handful of persons.

The path of real welfare-oriented democracy cannot be blocked, he added.

"We all want the country to advance, country's all people live well in peace and happiness, maintaining a sound and safe life. We all also want that democracy is established on true foundations and that political violence and hostilities are banished," he told the meeting.

Fakhruddin pointed out that the beloved motherland is now faced with tough challenges. Today the greatest challenge is to uphold and consolidate the democratic system of governance through ensuring political and social stability, holding

CA updates

FROM PAGE 1
farmers and reduce the gas crisis.

"The caretaker government has already undertaken different programmes to face the situation in power sector," he said.

The chief adviser informed the president about strengthening relations with the neighbouring countries and the upcoming Saarc Summit.

President Iajuddin expressed satisfaction over the initiatives taken by the caretaker government of Dr Fakhruddin after taking the charge.

The president stressed the need for developing standard of education.

He also called upon all concerned to work "sincerely to build a beautiful and prosperous country".

3 'muggers'

FROM PAGE 16
Witnessing the incident, two people--Abdul Karim and Russel--chased the muggers and cried out for help. Locals came forward and managed to stop one of the auto-rickshaws. They beat up the three muggers to death on the spot.

The identity of the dead could not be known.

The other muggers, however, escaped the public wrath with the money.

Chandgaon police rushed to the spot and recovered the bodies, a locally made gun, a machete, and the auto-rickshaw.

Prothom Alo

FROM PAGE 16
Metropolitan Magistrate Selina Akhter passed the order after the case was filed with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM's) Court.

The two other defendants are Hanif Mahmud and Hassan Iman Rubel.

In his complaint, Siraj mentioned that the Prothom Alo published a news headlined "Mamun's khamba (electricity poles) business of Tk 100 crores from a fake addresses" on November 28 last year.

Seeking arrest warrants against the accused, he claimed the news of the daily was false, fabricated and concocted and it was run to tarnish Mamun's image in the society.

However, according to the law, only the person who has lost reputation, name and fame for newspaper reports or anyone's behaviour can file defamation cases.

On January 21, Siraj, on behalf of Mamun, filed a similar case with the CMM's court against the Jugantor editor, publisher and its proprietor for allegedly running a defamatory news item.

The court, however, ordered a judicial inquiry into the matter.

4 shops

FROM PAGE 16
The shop owners found two of the market's five security guards lying unconscious on the veranda of the market yesterday morning. The three other on-duty guards appointed a week ago have been missing since the incident.

The police and businessmen suspect that the three absconding guards have gone away with the booty.

The police took the two unconscious security guards--Mohammad Hanif and Anwar Hossain--to police station after their treatment at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital for interrogation.

The absconding security guards might have used some sedatives to make the two unconscious and make their way clear, the police said.

Quoting market owners, the police said the shop owners came to the market yesterday morning and found the two security guards lying unconscious.

"We rushed to our shops and found the locks of the four shops broken," Sub-Inspector Mainul Ahsan of Shyampur Police Station quoted a shop owner as saying.

The market was closed on Saturday.

On November 26 last year, security guards of Holland Centre Shopping Complex at Uttar Badda in the capital helped burglars in a heist of ornaments, cellular phone sets, accessories, and cash worth over Tk 86 lakh.

In the biggest ever heist of the country, burglars broke into four jewellery shops at Mascot Plaza at Uttara on December 6 and made off with stolen ornaments and cash worth about Tk 12.80 crore.

Federer

FROM PAGE 16
The 25-year-old joins American Bill Tilden in joint fifth on the all-time Grand Slam titles list and extends his winning run to 36 matches.

Among the growing list of statistics that back up the Swiss star's dominance of the game, he now becomes the first man to win a Grand Slam title without dropping a set since Bjorn Borg at the 1980 French Open.

He also becomes the first man to win three of the Grand Slam events on at least three occasions each.

And he is now one title away from joining Borg and Rod Laver on 11 Grand Slam tournament wins.

6 JMB men

FROM PAGE 1
inspector general (prisons), last evening.

Sources said the jail authorities expect to receive the copy of the president's decision soon and, if the president turns down the mercy petitions, the condemned six militants may be executed in March.

Maj Haider said Bangla Bhai, who has been kept in Kashimpur Jail, handed over a hand-written mercy petition to the jail's senior superintendent.

The militant kingpin, however, has not asked for the president's mercy in his three-and-a-half page letter; he has rather defended their activities by referring to different verses of the Quran and Hadith, sources said.

A jail official said, "Whether he appeals for mercy or not, whatever he has written in the letter would be considered as his mercy petition and we will send it to the president through the home ministry."

According to jail codes, the jail authorities are supposed to fix the execution date within 21-28 days after getting the copy of the Supreme Court (SC) order that rejects a convict's appeal. The execution date will have to be mentioned in the mercy petition sent to the home ministry for the president's consideration.

DIG (Prisons) Haider told The Daily Star last evening that they will send the mercy petitions of JMB chief Abdur Rahman, Bangla Bhai and suicide bomber Ittefak al Mamun today to the home ministry.

The jail authority yesterday sent the mercy petitions of Majlish-e-Shura (JMB's highest policymaking body) members Ataur Rahman Sunny, Abdul Awal and Khaled Saifullah to the president, he added.

Inspector General (Prisons) Brig Gen Zakir Hasan told The Daily Star, "Whatever date we initially fix for executing the condemned militants, we will have to wait for the president's decision."

If the president turns down the mercy petitions, the jail authorities will re-fix the date within 21-28 days from the date of receiving the copy of his decision, he said.

In the wake of a series of bombings by the JMB militants across the country, senior assistant judges Jagannath Pandey and Sohela Ahmed were killed in a suicide bomb attack at Purba Chadkati in Jhalakathi town on November 14, 2005.

Additional District and Sessions Judge of Jhalakathi Reza Tarik Ahmed sentenced the seven JMB men to death by hanging and acquitted one on May 29

Mass US protest

FROM PAGE 1
the women's peace organization CodePink, said the non-binding resolution passed by a powerful Senate committee Wednesday was not enough for the protesters.

The resolution calls the Bush plan "not in the national interest" and calls for "transfer, under an appropriately expedited timeline, responsibility for internal security and halting sectarian violence in Iraq to the government of Iraq and Iraqi security forces."

"It's good, but it's not enough," Benjamin said.

In a Newsweek poll published Saturday, Americans said Congress needed to get tougher in challenging Bush on Iraq policy.

Sixty-four percent said the legislature had not been assertive enough over Iraq, while 27 percent said it was.

Still, after the Senate panel resolution passed, supported by Democrats and some of Bush's fellow Republicans, the president on Friday reminded skeptics: "I'm the decision-maker."

On Saturday, White House spokesman Gordon Johndroe said Bush remained resolute.

"He understands that Americans want to see a conclusion to the war in Iraq and the new strategy is designed to do just that."

Also resolute was actress Jane Fonda, at her first anti-war demonstration since the Vietnam War. She branded the Bush government a "mean-spirited, vengeful administration."

"I haven't spoken at an anti-war rally for 34 years," said Fonda, whose 1972 Hanoi visit outraged many Americans and damaged her acting career.

"But silence is no longer an option," she told cheering protesters.

She said her daughter and two granddaughters were with her at the protest.

"I'm very proud that they're here, but I'm so sad that we still have to do this, that we did not learn the lessons from the Vietnam War," Fonda said.

Fonda led a roster of notables, including actors Susan Sarandon, Tim Robbins and civil rights leader Jesse Jackson.

"Keep hope alive. No more death. Keep hope alive. No more money. Keep hope alive. Bring the troops home," chanted Jackson, an

last year.

The High Court upheld the trial court's judgment on August 31 and the SC turned down the six imprisoned convicts' appeals in November last year. Jail authorities received the copy of the SC rejection order on November 21.

Our Barisal correspondent adds: Mukul Chandra Mukherjee, father-in-law of Jagannath Pandey, and other family members urged the president to reject the mercy petitions of the killer militants and demanded for immediate execution of their death sentences.

He also asked the government to ensure safety and security for the members of the victims' families.

Expressing satisfaction at the speedy trial and judgment of the case, Mukul said no excuse of human rights should come in the way of the killers' execution as they killed innocent persons. He also demanded that the execution be held in front of the victims' family members and at the place where they killed the two judges.

Mukul, however, said as the law does not allow this type of execution, at least the chance of presenting the killers before the media to reveal the names of their godfathers should be given.

Oriental Bank

FROM PAGE 16
the ACC to reply why the cases shall not be declared illegal. The court also directed the law enforcers not to arrest the petitioners and asked the petitioners to appear before the court on Thursday

Following request from the Oriental Bank authorities, the government yesterday deployed police at every branch of the bank and no unwanted incidents occurred during rush transaction hours.

Buriganga

FROM PAGE 1
structures as there are court stay orders against the rest.

The BIWTA authorities first started their eviction drive in 2001 when they demolished 443 structures.

They will conduct drive at Gabtali and Dipnagar today, at Nababchar and Kaliganga on 31 January and February 1, in Midford, Champatali and Postogola areas on February 4, in Alibahar, Dapa and Shyampur areas on February 5 and 6, and at Gabtali of Mirpur on February 7.

There will be no eviction drive on January 30 and February 2 and 3 as the days are government holidays, sources said.

African-American civil rights statesman.

Organizers of the umbrella group United for Peace and Justice said the rally drew 500,000 protesters. The same group organized anti-war protests in 2005.

'Suicide' blast

FROM PAGE 16
superintendent Raziq Khan, police said.

A senior security official said the bombing was most likely a suicide attack, adding that the severed legs of the suspected bomber were recovered from the site.

"There is no crater in the ground and it is possible that it was a suicide attack, but we cannot say that with authority at the moment," Sherpao said.

The investigators would look into whether the blast had any link to the ongoing military operation against pro-Taliban militants in tribal areas bordering Afghanistan, he said.

Provincial governor Ali Jan Aurakzai visited the injured victims of the blast in hospital and resolved to find the culprits.

"We resolve to unveil those who are challenging the writ of the government and who are the enemies of people," Aurakzai said, referring to a string of attacks against police in past three months.

The devastating blast left blood and limbs littered over the narrow street as emergency workers picked up the mutilated bodies.

"I was standing outside my house when the blast occurred and I was hit by shrapnel," a shocked witness, Mohammad Rahim, said at the city's Lady Reading hospital.

Authorities had already placed key cities, including Karachi and Peshawar, on high alert after Friday's hotel blast, while the United States and Britain warned their nationals to exercise caution.

Sherpao said that security had been stepped up in all major cities and towns across Pakistan.

"We are on state of high security alert and civil armed forces (paramilitary) would be called in if needed," Sherpao told AFP.

Interior ministry officials said no one had yet claimed responsibility for the Marriott attack.

Pakistan is under pressure to curb Taliban activity in its lawless tribal zone bordering Afghanistan.