

BSF agrees to take steps against border killings

Arms smuggling, cross-border crimes discussed at sector commander level meeting

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

A sector commander level meeting between Bangladesh Rifles and Indian Border Security Force (BSF) held here yesterday agreed to resolve 'major disputes through discussion and taking steps in time'.

The day-long meeting began at 10:00 am at the rest house of 9 Rifles Battalion at Mirpur in the district.

Sector Commander of 9 Rifles Battalion Lt. Col. NM Noor Islam pscg led the 13-member Bangladesh team while Sector Commander of Krishnangar BSF C Marandi led the 20- member Indian team.

The meeting was also attended by high official of both the border guards. They were Col. Anand Shing and Dr. Nalit Kumar of India and Lt. Col. Sayeed Alam, Maj. Ashraful Hossain and Maj.

Akhtaruzzaman of BDR.

Issues including killing of Bangladeshi nationals by BSF, alleged smuggling of explosives and firearms from India, sheltering miscreants and other border crimes dominated the talks, meeting sources said.

BDR raised the issues of killing of Bangladeshis and smuggling of explosives and firearms from India and sought BSF help to stop those. Indian officials agreed in principle to stop firing at Bangladeshis and take effective steps to stop smuggling of explosives and arms, the sources said.

BDR emphasised stopping killing of Bangladeshis by BSF.

At times, innocent Bangladeshis working in their fields near the border and cattle traders returning home at night are also killed, BDR told the meeting.

The two sides also discussed

smuggling of contrabands including drugs and liquor, reinstallation of demolished or stolen border pillars, survey of the disputed lands and raising barbed wire fence by BSF.

At the meeting, BSF alleged illegal entry of Bangladeshis into India during odd hours and urged BDR to check it.

The talks were held in a cordial atmosphere and BSF officials showed a positive attitude towards resolving the issues, said BDR Sector Commander Lt. Col. NM Noor Islam pscg.

"We urged our counterparts to show tolerance on different issues including civilian issues," he said.

According to sources, BSF killed at least 26 Bangladeshis and injured over 150 on the southwest-ern border in last six months from January 1.

BSF also abducted at least 60

Bangladeshis during the period.

Most of the Bangladeshi victims were cattle traders, killed by BSF when while returning home after buying cattle from India.

At least 62 Bangladeshis were killed last year on the southwestern border.

Smuggling was another cause for BSF to open fire, the sources said.

BDR sources said killings by BSF on the border increased after the August 17 countrywide bomb blasts in 2005.

BSF was put on 'high alert' and ordered to take 'any measures to stop sneaking of Islamist militants into India'.

Only eight Bangladeshis were killed by BSF between January 1 and August 17, 2005, the sources said.

Arrested Sunil sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Arrested alleged criminal Sunil Tripura of Panchhari upazila was sent to jail yesterday.

Sunil, leader of Bangladesh Tripura National Association (BTNA), was arrested by army on Tuesday form remote Prafulla Karbari Para. Police said he was involved in criminal activities for long in the Chittagong Hill Tract region. The army also recovered 5 five firearms from his possession.

BNP LEADERS IN KHULNA-3 TELL ASHRAF HOSSAIN

Reforms should be done under Khaleda's leadership

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

BNP leaders in the constituency of party joint secretary general Ashraf Hossain want reform in the party under the leadership of its chairperson Khaleda Zia.

It would be 'suicidal' if reforms are done keeping her away, they

told pro-reform party leader Ashraf Hossain during a view-exchange meeting at his Khalishpur residence in Khulna city Tuesday night.

The meeting continued till late night and most of the leaders of BNP committees in three upazilas under Khulna 3 constituency attended it, meeting sources said yesterday.

They were however unanimous on the need for reform, terming it a demand of time.

Yesterday, Ashraf appeared before the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate in a case filed against him by divisional T&T office in connection with Tk six lakh arrear bill. The court fixed August 7 for hearing.

The local BNP leaders, who are also party councilors, urged Ashraf not to create division in the party.

They urged him to prepare reform proposals through party council in presence of party chairperson once the ban on indoor politics is lifted.

Ashraf, a close aide of BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, arranged the view-exchange meeting with leaders of Khalishpur, Daulatpur and Khanjahan Ali upazill committees to know their opinion about the initiative to bring reforms in the party.

This correspondent talked to Daulatpur upazilla BNP president Sheikh Mosharaf Hossain, Khanjahan Ali upazilla committee president Mir Kaised Ali and Khalishpur upazialla president SM

Abdur Rahman who attended the meeting.

They said Ashraf Hossain could not convince them about the reform proposals that aimed at reorgagising the party minus Khaleda Zia.

General secretaries, joint secretaries and other office bearers of the three upazila committees in Khulna 3 constituency, from where Ashraf Hossain was elected a lawmaker twice, also attended the meeting.

They also told the meeting that they want to remove corrupt, opportunist, non-political elements and musclemen from the party to make it stronger and more democratic, but of course keeping Khaleda, meeting sources said.

"We advised him not to divide the party in the name of reform," a senior leader told this correspondent.

Replying local party leaders, Ashraf Hossain said Khaleda Zia is not the target of reform proposal, announced by the party secretary general.

"We prepared proposals to make the party more democratic and ensure transparency", a leader quoted Ashraf as telling the meeting.

"The aim is not to retain or drop somebody", he said.

Later, Ashraf told The Daily Star, "Party leaders of my constituency came to me to know about the present situation. I talked politics".

'Forget the past, give up sick mentality'

IGP inaugurates Barisal Kotwali model police station

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Muhammad yesterday inaugurated the Barisal Kotwali model police station with a call to the law enforcers to try to present themselves as servants of people, not a force.

People come police station to get service, not to beg mercy. So attitude of law enforcers must be changed. Now is the time for police to prove their worth, he said.

Police could not act properly in the past as too many godfathers always intervened at every stage of duty, the IGP said.

"You have to forget the past and give up the sick mentality of corruption. No corrupt person will go unpunished", he told a function after inaugurating the model police station.

The IGP stressing on good relationship with people because 'you can not work without their cooperation', he said.

Earlier on the day, IGP Noor Muhammad attended a meeting of police personnel at the auditorium of Barisal police lines as chief guest, where he said the government instructed him to prepare a proposal for increasing salaries and benefits of police force.

The IGP however acknowledged that police force in Barisal lack modern equipment and logistics. The problems are being addressed, he said.

He said he would issue official instruction to all police stations to give access to journalists and to

share information with them. This will help police in its anti-crime drive, he said.

Barisal Metropolitan Police Commissioner Khan Sayeed Hassan and DIG Aminul Islam also spoke on the occasion. High officials, members of the elite, freedom fighters and journalists also attended the function.

Barisal Kotwali Police Station is one of the 25 proposed model police stations in the country.

Equipment including two double-cabin pickups, furniture, CCTV worth Tk one core have reached and extension and renovation of the building has been completed at the cost of Tk 35 lakh.

BNP leader among 2 jailed for stealing govt wheat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A court in Patuakhali on Wednesday sentenced a BNP leader and a former Union Parishad chairman to 16 years rigorous imprisonment and fined them Tk 10,000 for misappropriating 37.93 tonnes of government wheat in 1992.

The convicts are BNP leader and UP chairman Mizanur Rahman Sikdar and Sohrab Howladar, project chairman and former member of Chhoto Beai Union Parishad in Patuakhali Sadar upazila.

Rajshahi BNP vice-president arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police yesterday arrested Nazrul Huda, Rajshahi district BNP vice president and a close aide of arrested Rajshahi city mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu.

Tipped off, a team of police raided the Shahid Bachchu Smriti Sangha, a youth club at Sonadighi crossing, and caught him.

Police said, Huda was accused in several criminal cases.

He was being interrogated at Boalia police station when the report was filing yesterday.

PROF TAHER MURDER Depositions of four more witnesses recorded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The court of Special Sessions Judge yesterday recorded depositions of four other witnesses in Rajshahi University professor Dr S Taher Ahmed murde case.

The witnesses who testified before the court were Yusuf Zamil Zumma, Nazmul Islam Liton, Manjurul Haq and Malek Mintu.

The court began trial of the case on Tuesday, when depositions of four witnesses and the plaintiff were recorded.

Depositions of 60 witnesses may be recorded in the case till July 12. Charges were framed against six accused after police submitted the charges sheet on March 18.

Prof. Taher's colleague Dr Mia Mohammad Mohiuddin, Rajshahi University unit Islami Chhatra Shibir president Mahbubul Alam Salehi and four others Zahangir, Salam, Nazmul and Azimuddin Munshi are the chargesheeted accused.

Prof Taher was murdered on February 1 on the campus. His body was recovered from a sewer behind his campus residence on February 3.



PHOTO: STAR

One of the many houses torn down by storm in Pabna Sadar upazila yesterday.

20 hurt in Pabna storm

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

At least 20 people were injured and 300 structures including mosques and educational institutions were leveled to the ground as a storm lashed two villages in Pabna Sadar upazila yesterday, making over 200 families homeless.

The storm that ploughed through Tatipara and Shadullahpur villages in Chartarapur union for a

few minutes at about 3 pm, blew away tin-shed houses, uprooted trees and power supply poles, snapping electricity.

Most of the victims who become homeless are under the open sky.

"Tatipara High School and several mosques have been totally damaged", said victim Darog Ali at Tatipara village.

Some of the injured people were

given first aid by local quacks, he said.

The victims told this correspondent yesterday evening that none from the local administration came to see the devastation.

Local Power Development Board official Md. Hassan Shahnewaj said it will take time to restore power supply as many poles were uprooted.

3X3

5X2

6X2

10X4