

Veteran Republicans warn Bush over Iraq

AFP, Washington

In the clearest sign yet of Republican anxiety over Iraq, two party elder statesmen have urged President George W Bush to begin pulling US troops out of the sectarian cross-fire by the end of the year.

A new blueprint by Senators Richard Lugar and John Warner was similar to plans from anti-war Democrats to yank soldiers out of the cauldron, with an important difference – it did not include a hard date for troop withdrawals to be completed.

Lugar and Warner released their plan Friday, a day after Bush rejected any changes to the war plan until US commander in Iraq General David Petraeus gives a definitive report on his troop "surge" strategy within two months.

"We are attempting to ensure that US military and diplomatic policy is prepared for change when the Petraeus report arrives in September," Lugar said.

"We are hopeful that regardless of where senators stand on surge versus withdrawal, they will find our amendment to be a constructive bipartisan attempt to prepare for whatever policy follows in the coming months."

The plan also calls on Congress to reauthorise Bush to conduct military operations in Iraq, and to replace the 2002 authority he was granted by

Govt okays

FROM PAGE 16

"After a thorough discussion, the Council of Advisers also approved a proposal for formulating the draft of Bar Council (temporary provision) Ordinance-2007 to incorporate provision for completing Bar Council election before December 31, 2007 as lawyers are facing various problems, including awarding certificates, in absence of the elected organisation of the lawyers," said the announcement.

The meeting was informed that the tenure of the elected bar council has already expired.

"As per provision of Article 8 of the Bar Council Order, holding Bar Council election by May 31 was mandatory. Holding the election was not possible in due time because of promulgation of a state of emergency in the country," the council was told.

The council also approved Memorandum and Articles of Association of Biman Bangladesh Airlines Limited as per Company Act of 1994 to transform Bangladesh Biman Corporation into Public Limited Company.

Approval was also given to the draft of Bangladesh Flag Vessels (protection) Ordinance (Amendment) Ordinance-2007 to make permanently effective the provision of general waiver according to the Bangladesh Flag Vessel (Protection) Ordinance 1982.

All advisers to the caretaker government, the cabinet secretary, chief adviser's press secretary and secretaries of the ministries concerned were present.

700 wkts for Murali

FROM PAGE 1

crowd celebrating local hero Muralidaran's success by beating drums and singing under brilliant sunshine.

The champion off-spinner became only the second bowler in history to take 700 Test wickets after taking six for 54 in the Bangladesh second innings to guide his side to their 50th victory, their tenth in succession against the Tigers.

It was the spin maestro's 20th ten-wicket haul and 60th five-for as he came nine wickets shy of breaking Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne's world record of 708 scalps. The 35-year-old, who captured 26 wickets in the series, was adjudged man of the match and the series too.

But he could have given some credit to Mohammad Ashraful's men, constantly boozed by the crowd, for making his job easier with terrible batting.

Sri Lanka declared their innings on overnight 500-4, leaving Bangladesh with a daunting task to score 369 and force their mighty opponents bat again. But the Tigers second essay lasted less than two sessions.

After a positive first session, where they lost two wickets for 106, Bangladesh's all-too-familiar collapse recurred as they lost their last eight wickets for only 70 runs.

Opener Javed Omar struggled

Sigma Huda

FROM PAGE 16

jail authorities had failed to arrange proper treatment for Sigma Huda following her arrest while in a bad physical condition on July 5. Sigma Huda surrendered to a special court on that day in connection with a bribery case against her and her husband was sent to jail.

"Since Sigma Huda came in jail on July 5, doctors and the prison authorities have been looking after her carefully," added Shamsul Haider.

Four accused female VIPs including Sigma Huda are now staying in a cell names Banalata in Dhaka Central Jail, the press briefing claimed.

The jail authorities also claimed that they had contacted the family physician of Sigma Huda and requested him to see her last night.

"If the doctor prescribes any necessary treatment, steps will be taken in accordance with that," said Shamsul Haider.

The briefing was held in front of the office room of the jail super of Dhaka Central Jail at 2:45pm. Four jail doctors were also present there.

Korean sweater

FROM PAGE 16

goods were burned down because the fire fighting units arrived late at the factory.

In response, Fire Service and Civil Defense officials said that the delay occurred because they were having trouble maneuvering their fire engines through the narrow alleys in the area. They also mentioned that two of the fire fighters, Selim and Shahidul Islam, were injured while trying to bring the blaze under control.

Quoting a security guard of the factory, police said that the factory shut down at 11:00pm on Friday and only three security guards were on duty outside the building.

The security guard said he notified some officials at the old building of the factory as soon as he noticed thick plumes of smoke rising from the ground floor of the new building at around 1:40am.

Factory officials said they lost sweaters made of fleece worth around Tk.4 lakh, raw materials and over 300 machines in the fire.

Factory officials visited the factory yesterday morning.

Police and fire brigade officials were unable to identify the cause of the fire.

Chandpur plant

FROM PAGE 16

stipulated timeframe under the Public Procurement Regulations (PPR) 2003.

As per PPR 2003, any implementing agency has to sign the contract with the selected contractor within 21 days from the issuance of the NOA. The PDB officials claimed that they failed to sign the contract within the stipulated timeframe because of the delay in getting necessary approval of the EC (Executive Committee of National Economic Council). They said the planning ministry also took more than a year to give its green signal.

The sources, however, said the delay was actually caused due to the unwillingness of a section of PDB officials in signing the contract with the contractor for unknown reasons.

Recently, PDB invited Harbin to sign the contract, but the company refused to do so, arguing that due to an inordinate delay by about 16 months, the cost of the equipment on the international market has significantly gone up.

The Chinese contractor set a condition that they can sign the contract only if the project cost is raised to \$ 66 million in place of earlier \$ 45 million on grounds of price escalation on the international market.

The sources said the latest condition of the contractor placed PDB in a dilemma, as the PPR 2003 does not permit such enhanced project cost. On the other hand, if the PDB goes for tendering of the project, the entire process will take another about one and a half years and also increase the project cost due to worldwide price-escalation.

In a recent development, PDB referred the issue to the power ministry for a final decision. But instead of giving its decision, the power ministry forwarded the matter to the Law Ministry seeking a legal opinion.

Sajeda

FROM PAGE 1

the name) not a distortion of history?" she posed the question.

Sajeda said that Hasina had purchased the frigate, as the country needed it. "But the irony of fate is that a case has been filed against her (Hasina) for that," she added.

She said that the movement and war that started under the leadership of Bangabandhu has not ended yet.

The AL leader observed that the caretaker government have come to rescue the nation and they have been doing some good work.

Sajeda, however, noted that the government is ignoring the person who had brought the independence of the country. "The present government is not taking any step to carry out the verdict of Bangabandhu murder case," she lamented.

About the allegation of corruption against her, the AL leader said that this kind of allegation has been brought to defame her.

DU TEACHERS BARRED FROM MEETING HASINA

The law enforcers yesterday barred a group of around 30 teachers of Dhaka University (DU) from entering Sudha Sadan, residence of Awami League (AL) president Sheikh Hasina, saying that they are under orders.

"We are angry and shocked at the government decision," Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, former president of Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta), told reporters at the entrance of Sudha Sadan.

"Since there is no Section 144 imposed and the country is not under military rule, then why the government is not allowing us (to meet her)," former DU vice-chancellor (VC) Prof AK Azad Chowdhury said.

They had come to greet the AL chief upon her becoming a grandmother, Prof Chowdhury added.

Blasting the government decision, the DU teachers said, "It is possible to meet even the detained persons but we were not allowed to meet Sheikh Hasina."

Sami told police that Salam and Parveen are her parents but she could not give out any further details, police said, adding that they are yet to find out Abdus Salam who had been missing since the incident.

BTTB network

FROM PAGE 1

percent were not getting proper services because of problems in a certain set of routers.

The other ISPs were getting proper services as there is no technical problem, he said. Other corporate clients were also getting steady services.

The ISPs have a total demand of 57 megabits per second (mbps).

Four BTTB experts were working to restore the network at the BTTB Moghbazar Submarine Cable Gateway and to find out why the network was affected. "For some unknown reasons, some of the routers are overloaded," said the source.

"The links are up, but there is data-packet loss. As a result, an ISP that has a demand of 12mbps is perhaps getting 4 to 5mbps," said the source.

The ISPAB claimed that BTTB was giving "special treatment" to three ISPs—including the Grameenphone—to continue uninterrupted Internet services. ISPAB protested this "special treatment".

The association pointed out that the Moghbazar gateway has only three engineers and even though the Internet service usage from there is heavy, there is no proper system of getting client services.

"To deal with any problem, one has to directly contact the engineers or the divisional engineers. This is not desirable. The ISP association has been demanding for long to increase the manpower at the gateway but there were no effective initiative," it said.

A BTTB high official refuted the ISPAB's allegation that three clients—including the Grameenphone—were getting special treatment.

"Sixty percent of the ISPs are unaffected—not just three ISPs. May be these 40 percent ISPs are big and serving a great number of users. They have to understand that the problem lies with equipment that are dedicated

to these 40 percent ISPs," he said, adding, "We cannot shut down service to Grameenphone to provide service to his LLB degree was false."

He said the problems of each ISP were being resolved one by one from yesterday afternoon.

"We hope that all network related problems will be resolved within this month," he said.

The BTTB is currently installing new routers and switches that would increase its present processing capacity by 200 times. The project will be completed within this month.

The BTTB's Internet backbone service is often under-performing because of bad network. "The old equipment had their limitations. Right now we are configuring our new network equipment and we are in a transitional phase," the official added.

Faizee filed the writ petition on March 19 challenging the gazette notification.

Following the petition, the HC stayed the enforcement of the gazette.

A source close to Faizee, meanwhile, said the controversial judge denied having 180 cases pending.

According to Faizee's claim, during his two years as an HC judge, he spent six months on vacation and was unable to sit on cases because of the media spotlight on his controversial appointment.

He said it was impossible for him to have conducted so many cases within such a short period.

Faizee took charge as an additional judge on August 23, 2004 and was made a permanent HC judge from August 2006.

Supreme Court Bar Association President Amir-Ul Islam told the press, "It should have happened a long time ago, because the position of a judge is simply not a 'job', it is a constitutional post."

He said, "One can only remain a judge with the trust of the people. So, even if he [Faizee] resigns now, he cannot evade the responsibility of his crimes."

Former Attorney General Barrister Rafique-ur Haq said, "Faizee should have resigned a long time ago. The image of the higher judiciary has already been tarnished because of him. But I thank him for finally coming to his senses."

Veteran constitution expert M Zahid said, "As a judge Faizee has insulted the position. Now after his resignation, all darkness surrounding the Supreme Court has cleared."

Senior lawyer Abul Nurul Islam said, "All verdicts made by Faizee should be reconsidered and criminal cases should be filed against him."

Our correspondent at Chittagong University (CU) reports: The CU authority is waiting for the verdict on the writ petition filed by Faizee to take the next course of action.

"If the verdict is in favour of the university syndicate, we will proceed for immediate implementation of the decisions taken in the March 3 syndicate meeting," CU Vice-Chancellor Prof M Badiul Alam said.

VoIP tools seized

FROM PAGE 16

The two arrested officials were handed over to Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC) by Rab. The two were identified as Rafiqul Islam, technical director, and Falzur Rahman, senior manager, of Bay Phones, a Public-Switched Telecom Network (PSTN) private operator in Chittagong.

Acting on a tip-off, the Rab team, led by officials and engineers of the BTRC, started examining equipment used by the phone company and found that the company had installed two extra "Excel switch" beside their normal phone network.

The investigation was conducted simultaneously at the head office of Bay Phones in the capital and its main switch room on Jamal Khan road in Chittagong.

Following information extracted from the officials of the company, the equipment pieces were recovered from Halishahar, Mogolbazar, GEC intersection, Lalkhan Bazar and Sarbaghat.

"The network system the phone company had for terminating calls was distinctive, sophisticated and modern," said Lt. Col. Asif Ahmed.

Rab conducted the raid as part of their ongoing drive against VoIP businesses that violate the Bangladesh Telecommunications Act 2001. The elite force started busting illegal VoIP centres in the capital in December last year.

Reformists mull

FROM PAGE 1

she does not consent to it," Bhuiyan said when asked why he feels the necessity of a requisition meeting.

A preparatory committee will be formed to organise the council. And as per party constitution, this committee will decide who will chair the council," the BNP secretary general said.

Sources mentioned that reformists leaders have already started collecting signatures of party councillors as part of preparations for a requisition meeting to take decision on holding party council without the participation of Khaleda.

Sources mentioned that reformists leaders have already started collecting signatures of party councillors as part of preparations for a requisition meeting to take decision on holding party council without the participation of Khaleda.

Mannan Bhuiyan reportedly made the remark after meeting Bhuiyan at his Gulshan residence on Friday.

"I have no links with his [Gayeshwar] comment. We did not even discuss the council though he supported our reform proposals," Bhuiyan said. He just told him that council would be held according to the party constitution, and there was no discussion on under whose leadership it would be held, he added.

Following information provided by the ward commissioner, a member of the elite force raided his residence in Mohammadpur and made the recovery.

He is an accused in seven cases filed with Mohammadpur Police station and had been absconding since state of emergency was declared in January.

Faizee

FROM PAGE 1

pending when Faizee filed a writ petition against the Chittagong University syndicate's charge that his LLB degree was false.

A meeting of the CU Syndicate on March 3 cancelled the certificates of around 2,000 LLB and other examinees, including Faizee, on charge of tampering with tabulation sheets. The CU authority published a gazette notification in this regard on March 11.

Faizee filed the writ petition on March 19 challenging the gazette notification.

Following the petition, the HC stayed the enforcement of the gazette.

A source close to Faizee, meanwhile, said the controversial judge denied having 180 cases pending.

According to Faizee's claim, during his two years