

Jamaat now denies

FROM PAGE 1
secretary general yesterday said, "The constitution does not support the demand since Islam is the state religion and 90 percent of the population are Muslims. Besides, there is no war criminal in the country now."

Referring to the charges against them, Mujahid said, "These are all false and ill-motivated." He said after the Liberation War the then government had identified 195 people as war criminals and all of them were members of the Pakistan army.

Asked what role his party played during the war, he evaded a direct answer and instead asked the journalists to find it out. "No-one should give a distorted picture of the past," observed Mujahid, also a former minister.

Jamaat, which was in the last government as part of the BNP-led four-party alliance, participated in the electoral reform talks amid different political parties calling for the EC not to allow any religion-based political party to register itself.

In response to the call, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda last month said though the war criminals should have been tried immediately after independence, successive governments did not move to bring them to trial.

Earlier on March 27, when some freedom fighters at a tea party demanded that the war criminals be prosecuted, Chief of Army Staff Gen Moen U Ahmed said he would bring up the issue at meetings with the government high-ups.

JAMAAT DOUBTS POLLS ON TIME
During the talks at the EC Secretariat conference room, Jamaat said due to slow pace of the voter roll preparation the commission might not be able to implement its electoral roadmap that aims to hold the long-stalled parliamentary polls by December next year.

It placed a five-point recommendation including the one for having the voter list prepared by June through increased involvement of the armed forces, teachers, and imams of local mosques.

It suggested bringing about a democratic climate by allaying fear among the political parties.

People want the election to be held as early as possible. The sooner the polls, the better it is for the nation, argued the Jamaat leaders.

In reply, the EC assured them that they would take measures to speed up enumeration and a voter list with photographs would be ready in time. **JAMAAT FOR INCREASED POLLS EXPENDITURE**

In its written proposals, Jamaat suggested that the EC raise the election expenditure ceiling for a candidate to Tk 25 lakh from present Tk 10 lakh.

"The election expenses are a major obstacle to honest candidates and political parties," the Jamaat secretary general noted adding that the EC should ensure that it is not.

The CEC said the EC wants to see the elections free from influence of money. "We have come up with the proposal for reducing the length of electioneering since it will bring down the expenditure," he said.

Jamaat also proposed setting the ceilings on donation to the political parties at Tk 10 lakh for an individual and Tk 50 lakh for an institution.

ACC finds

FROM PAGE 1
against Ruhul Amin as part of its investigation against graft suspects whose names have not appeared in the published lists.

Former Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) president Liakat Shikder yesterday submitted his wealth statement to the ACC, saying that he has a bank balance of Tk 5.

Four officials of Kamalapur ICD yard yesterday made their depositions to the commission in connection with the Gato graft case. They are Alauddin, Ape Mahmud, Nur Hossain and Rabiul Islam.

The ACC also approved submission of the charge sheet against former cashier of Bangladesh Agriculture Bank in connection with a case regarding wealth statement.

Maya, family charged

FROM PAGE 1
information in their wealth statements submitted to the ACC earlier.

Moreover, they earned Tk 6.29 crore illegally which was not mentioned in the wealth statements.

HASNAT CASE
Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court Judge Mohammad Azizul Haque issued arrest warrant against Hasnat after National Board of Revenue (NBR) Assistant Tax Commissioner Mohammad Saiful Azam filed the case for evading tax.

In his order, the judge mentioned that the charges brought against Hasnat under sections 164/165 of Income Tax Ordinance 1984 were found to be true.

Saiful Azam mentioned that Hasnat, chairman and adviser of Proden Textiles Ltd and Kanta Corporation (Pvt) Ltd, evaded tax on his income of Tk 11,557,358 in fiscal years from 2001 to 2007.

PINTU CASE
ACC Assistant Director Shaiful Alam, also the IO of the case, submitted charge sheet against Pintu in a case for misappropriating 15 pieces of corrugated iron (CI) sheets meant for government relief.

Rab members raided a house on Ashrafabad College Road at Kamrangirchar and seized 15 pieces of CI sheets from Rupa Mollah who received those from Pintu. Rab filed a case with Kamrangirchar Police Station against Pintu on April 2.

ANOTHER CHARGE SHEET
The same ACC official, also the IO of another case, pressed charges

According to the EC proposals, no individual would be allowed to contribute more than Tk 5 lakh in cash or assets or service to a single registered political party while the amount will be no more than Tk 25 lakh for a contributing institution or a business entity.

JAMAAT FOR SIMPLER REGISTRATION PROCESS

The party demanded that the commission simplify the political parties' registration by scrapping all criteria proposed to that end. It wants the EC to allow every party to register and then place them under observation during the next national election to see if they qualify for registration.

The Jamaat leaders said registration of a political party should be cancelled if it fails to obtain at least two percent of the total votes cast in the polls.

They also opposed elections to upazila parishad before the parliamentary polls.

Yaba menace

FROM PAGE 1
Though production of Yaba is banned round the globe, it is being manufactured illegally in Myanmar and Thailand.

Thailand is also facing a serious crisis as use of the drug and trade in it are rising at an alarming rate. If any one in that country is found with more than four or five Yaba tablets, he is shot, sources in law enforcement agencies mentioned.

Bangladesh could deal with Yaba crisis more effectively if the Myanmar government moves to stop its illegal production in that country and seal the route of smuggling, they say. Besides, vigilance by Bangladesh's border security force must be stepped up to combat this menace.

So far, Rab recovered around 1.5 lakh Yaba tablets with the largest cache weighing over 5 kg (equivalent to 1,300 lakh pieces of the tablet) seized yesterday.

When the drive was launched, Yaba was available through a drug dealer syndicate with price ranging from Tk 300 to Tk 400 per piece.

The crisis reached the present stage over the last four years. And it prompted guardians of some drug users and traders to seek assistance from Rab to save their addicted children.

A Rab official involved in the anti-Yaba drive said, "Social awareness against use of the drug, strict monitoring by guardians, rehabilitation programme for the addicted, and steps to ensure entertainment facilities for the youths are necessary to combat the menace."

Voter list

FROM PAGE 1
enumeration. This time it would be prepared through checking fingerprints of the voters and computer database," CEC Shamsul Huda said.

The CEC said that eligible Bangladesh expatriates would be enrolled as voters.

Asked about registering the stranded Pakistanis in voter list, Shamsul Huda said the matter is under the jurisdiction of the law ministry.

Replying to another question, the CEC said those who will turn 18 by next January will also be eligible as voters.

Prospective voters can enrol themselves in the local election office as well if they fail to register themselves in the camps, Shamsul Huda said adding that preparing voter list is a continuous process.

Maj Gen Shaiful Islam, military secretary (headquarters), Brig Gen Hakim Aziz, commander, 46 independent infantry brigade, Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka Iqbal Ahmed, District Commissioner, Dhaka Kamal Uddin, Lt Col AKM Nurul Huda were present at the meeting among others.

Chief of General Staff of Army Maj Gen Sina Ibn Jamali yesterday inaugurated the work of the pilot project for preparing voter list with photograph and national ID card at Dania in Shyampur of the city.

against Pintu and two others for misappropriating 375 pieces of CI sheets.

Joint forces seized 375 pieces of CI sheets from a state-owned community centre run by a committee comprising Pintu's close aides in the capital on March 19.

In the first information report, police mentioned that Pintu in collusion with the other accused used the CI sheets for the roof of the community centre without any administrative order.

Titas activities

FROM PAGE 1
against Titas of anti-people and anti-state activities, mismanagement in marketing gas and causing financial loss to the government through fraudulence in collecting revenue. They received reports from different grass roots level intelligence agencies and other sources, it added.

They also found mismanagement in gas transmission and distribution process, allegations of harassment of the subscribers, administrative and financial irregularities in the organisation and institutional and CBA related anomalies.

The Titas officials preferring anonymity said they have discussed how they will work in the organisation. The task force also sought cooperation of the officials to bring necessary reforms, they said adding that the task force would start its work in full swing from Sunday.

Border confce

FROM PAGE 20
subjects," said Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), the host side, in a release on the opening round's outcome.

Indian BSF chief AK Mitra said some 10 Bangladeshi terrorists who are implicated in cases in Kolkata court will be deported to Bangladesh.

Mitra, who is leading the Indian delegation to the BDR-BSF director general-level conference, stated this to reporters after a courtesy call on Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury.

A host of outstanding issues, including the killing of innocent Bangladeshis by the Indian border guards, came up for discussion in the conference.

The BSF Director General Mitra, is leading his country's 17-member delegation while BDR Director General Major General Shakil Ahmed heading an 18-member team.

The conference will conclude with the signing of Joint Records of Discussions on October 29.

Among the host of outstanding issues placed on the table for sorting out are the killing, kidnapping and detaining of Bangladeshi nationals, smuggling of illegal arms and ammo, explosives, drugs and phensidyl, trespasses and push-in of Bangla-speaking Indian nationals.

Besides, demarcation of land boundary, installation of border pillars at Berubari and Singpara Khudipara in Panchaghat district, completion of survey at under demarcated Muhurir Char, Dokhata and Lathula, hand-over of surveyed land at Naogaon for constructing border pillars, construction of defence infrastructures, roads, barbed-wire fencing and installations within 150 yards of the zero point will also come up for discussion.

BDR sources said BSF's obstruction to construction and repairing of roads and development works on Bangladesh side along the border as well as their obstruction to cultivation in adversely possessed lands in Uttarkul and Amalshil in Sylhet District will come up during the deliberations.

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Saarc home ministers

FROM PAGE 20
model of Interpol, the Indian bureaucrat said the ministers suggested enhanced coordination and networking between the police forces of the Saarc countries.

He said the meeting reviewed the implementation of Saarc Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism and the Additional Protocol to it and Saarc Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, recognising the need for "pro-active and sustained measures" and mutual cooperation to combat these menace.

Asked whether New Delhi raised at the meeting its allegations that Bangladesh and Pakistani elements were behind recent terror attacks in India, Gupta parried the question saying bilateral matters are not discussed at such meetings.

He said Saarc home ministers will meet in Islamabad in February next year, while Male will host the fourth such conference.

Gupta said the home ministers reaffirmed their commitment to a secure environment for facilitating economic growth, development and progress of the region.

He said the delegates emphasised that time has come to "cooperate and collaborate" with each other to get rid of terrorism,

terror financing, money laundering, drug trafficking and other organised crimes.

They also expressed satisfaction at the working of the institutional mechanisms within the ambit of the home ministries and urged enhanced coordination and networking among the police forces of the Saarc nations.

The ministers also discussed the Saarc 'Visa Scheme' and agreed to provide a special tenure-linked dispensation to the officials of the Saarc secretariat, he said.

Besides, it was agreed that retired Supreme Court judges and serving High Court judges should be included in the consolidated list of entitled persons.

The conference took the decision that the task force on women and children would send information to the Saarc secretariat when necessary.

The Saarc home ministers' meeting, chaired by Indian Home Minister Shivraj Patil, was preceded by a home-secretary level meeting Wednesday and Saarc Police chiefs' meeting on October 23.

Afghanistan attended the meeting for the first time after its induction into the regional forum.

Delwar makes

FROM PAGE 1
Kazi Rafiqul Islam, Abul Kalam, Shahjahan Chowdhury, Nurjahan Yasmeen, Shirin Sultana, Rehana Akhtar Ranu, Bilkis Jahan Shirin, Rasheda Begum Hira also attended Delwar Hossain's meeting.

Welcoming the former lawmakers, Delwar confidently said the party is united under the leadership of Khaleda Zia and there is no division among the rank and file.

Demanding the withdrawal of the ban on politics and the state of emergency, he urged the government to take immediate steps to control price hike of essentials and ensure sufficient fertiliser for the farmers.

The BNP secretary general also demanded immediate release of the party chief as well as other party leaders. He said Khaleda Zia expelled a few persons to save the party from breaking up before her arrest, as there was no other way.

He said they would set up a new workplace, only for holding press briefings, as the party's central office is locked.

Asked whether he would take any initiative for unity, he said he has no power to do anything without the approval of the party chief in this regard. "But the door is open; so any expelled leaders can return to the party following the party constitution," he said.

Nazrul Islam Khan, joint secretary general of BNP, said those who do not have respect for Khaleda Zia, cannot be with BNP politics, but unity is necessary to free the chairperson and for the welfare of the party as well as the country.

Former lawmaker Monirul Haque Chowdhury said there is no scope for anyone to challenge Khaleda Zia's leadership and the party will remain united under the leadership of the chairperson and the secretary general. "We also want to go forward keeping all with us," he added.

Abdul Momin Talukder said those who wanted to "minus Khaleda Zia" in the name of reforms are now trying to return to

the party under the leadership of Khaleda Zia.

Khaleda Zia will return to them if the law takes its own course, Gazi Shahjahan Jewel hoped adding that they have gathered at the secretary general's home to remove confusion created by a certain quarter.

Shahjahan Mia said their faith in Khaleda's leadership will prevail as she always took the right decision regarding the party.

"We could not gather in the past days due to some reasons and now we came here to remove all confusion and more lawmakers will come to the secretary general soon to express their solidarity with him," Moazzem Hossain Alal, former lawmaker and general secretary of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, said.

Earlier in May, Sobhan sent his first letter to the central bank and other commercial banks concerned, saying his client's money might be misplaced from the accounts of the East West Property.

The officials of Bashundhara Group also sent a letter to the finance ministry informing that the company is facing trouble because of not being able to operate its accounts.

Bangladesh Bank directed the banks to consider the criminal cases against businessmen objectively, not subjectively, with regard to loan classification, issuance of new loans and opening of LCs (letters of credit).

A business organisation and a person should be treated separately in terms of banking activities, the central bank said, adding that the banks should continue their relationship with customers irrespective of the charges against the owners.

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2 JMB men

FROM PAGE 1
Out of 15 prosecution witnesses, 14 were examined during the trial.

The DB pressed charges against four JMB militants in two cases filed in connection with the bomb blasts in Tejgaon area and near Dhaka Sheraton Hotel on August 17, 2005, our court correspondent reports.

The cases were filed with Tejgaon and Ramna police stations.

The DB dropped the names of Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami leader Mufti Abdul Hannan, Abu Taleb Ansari, assistant security officer of the parliament secretariat and 15 others from the charge sheet, as their involvement was not found during investigation.

The accused of the case filed with Ramna Police Station are JMB's central leader Hafez Enayetullah, Reazul Karim, Mohammad Tareq Iqbal and Abdullah Al Fattah.

All the accused were arrested and are in jail.

The IO prayed for discharging JMB Chief Abdur Rahman, its second-in-command Siddique Islam Bangla Bhai, JMB operations commander Ataur Rahman Sunny, Rahman's son-in-law Abdul Awal and five others, as they were executed.

Reazul Karim, Mohammad Tareq Iqbal and Abdullah Al Fattah are also accused in the case filed with Tejgaon Police Station.

After the cases were filed, Hannan, Taleb and others were shown arrested in this connection.

Workers in Kuwait

FROM PAGE 20
Labour Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, during the visit.

"It has now been decided that for some categories of workers such restrictions will be withdrawn," according to a report on the visit submitted to the adviser.

It further said the Kuwaiti government will consider ratification of the Technical Cooperation Agreement on Manpower signed between Bangladesh and Kuwait in 2000.

Kuwait also expressed its interest to sign a MoU with Bangladesh to ensure minimum salary for Bangladeshi workers.

No-confidence

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the case with the local police station on April 3.

In the case, he accused 10 people, including Salauddin and detained Padua Upazila Parishad Chairman Nasiruddin Selim, of physically assaulting and harassing him and stealing his livestock five years ago.

Ilia's lawyer BK Biswas claimed the case was placed under Emergency Power Rules.

He said he did not know how a final report could be made in such a way. The plaintiff filed the Naraji petition and sought