

Dhaka slates

FROM PAGE 1
stands firm with her friends in India at this hour of grief".

He conveyed his deepest sympathy to the bereaved families.

The chief adviser in a separate message to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, condemned the terrible terror strikes in Mumbai that left over 100 dead and around 300 others injured.

He expressed sympathy for the members of the bereaved families and prayed for an early recovery of those injured in the gun and bomb attacks.

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury has strongly condemned the Mumbai incidents.

In a message to his Indian counterpart Pranab Mukherjee, the foreign adviser said, "I condemn it as mindless acts of terror. I wish to underscore that terror can serve no purpose. Our hearts are with those innocent people who have been affected by these cowardly bombings."

SHEIKH HASINA

Awami League President and former prime minister Sheikh Hasina condemned the brutal gun and bomb attacks in Mumbai.

In a condolence message to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh yesterday, she termed the overnight gun attacks on civilians "cowardly" terrorist attacks.

The AL chief said these dastardly acts are repeatedly taking place to thwart peace and stability and also halt the advancement of democracy in the subcontinent.

She conveyed her sympathy to the bereaved families.

KHALEDA
BNP Chairperson and former prime minister Khaleda Zia has condemned the terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

In a statement, Khaleda expressed her profound shock at the loss of over 100 lives and deep sympathy for the bereaved families. She wished early recovery of the injured.

Khaleda's adviser and former foreign secretary Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury read out the statement at BNP's Gulshan office last night.

Our staff correspondent adds: Following terrible terror strikes in Mumbai of neighbouring India, the police headquarters in Dhaka yesterday asked the law enforcement and intelligence agencies to remain alert countrywide.

Besides, the members of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) have been asked to beef up border security while the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) issued red alert with shoot-at-sight order in the bordering

Huda

Power Rules (EPR).

The HC division bench comprised of Justice Md Arayesuddin and Justice Md Abu Tariq also upheld the trial court order that asked the government to confiscate Tk 2.40 crore taken by Huda as bribe.

The same court also dropped from its cause list another appeal of Huda against the trial court verdict in another case filed by the ACC under the EPR for not mentioning that the case was under the EPR.

Huda was sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment in the case for amassing illegal wealth and concealing information about it from the ACC.

On March 21 last year, the ACC filed the case with Dhammendi Police Station stating that Huda took Tk 2.40 crore bribe from Mir Zahir Hossain, owner of a construction firm, on different occasions in exchange for awarding him five government contracts for construction work including road renovation worth about Tk 30 crore.

Huda's wife Sigma was also charged in the case for aiding and abetting her husband in taking the bribe deposited to an account of Khorbor Otorale, a weekly newspaper owned by her. Later Tk 1 crore of the amount was transferred to the HSBC bank accounts of their daughters.

Later on August 27 last year, a special court on Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises awarded Huda seven years' rigorous imprisonment in this bribery case and Sigma to three years' imprisonment.

Both of them have filed appeals with the HC against the conviction order. Sigma was later released on bail.

Advocate Fazlul Karim appeared for Nazmul Huda in the case.

The joint forces arrested Nazmul Huda from his Dhammendi residence on February 4 last year on charges of corruption.

NEWS

DHAKA FRIDAY NOVEMBER 28, 2008

15

War heroes vow

FROM PAGE 16
through the loopholes of law. Rokeya Hasina Nill, daughter of martyred intellectual Prof Rashidul Hasan, said, "Every government since the country's independence assured us that they would bring the war criminals to book but has not done it."

The IGP said special security measures have been taken for the diplomatic zones, hotels, markets, and all the important places and establishments.

Replying to a question, he said, "So far, there is no information and apprehension of such attack in the country."

Sources said Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Special Branch (SB), Detective Branch (DB), all the seven divisional ranges and six metropolitan police headquarters have been asked to keep their forces on alert.

A huge number of personnel from different law enforcement agencies have been deployed at different strategic points. Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Naim Ahmed said they have already set up additional check posts across the city.

Lt Col Badrul Huda, BDR Commanding Officer in Jessor, said the border guards have been put on alert so that no one can cross the border illegally.

Aman freed

FROM PAGE 1
freed at about 8:00pm from the hospital where several hundred party men welcomed him.

On May 8 this year, a Dhaka court sentenced the former state minister to seven years' RI for extorting of Tk 10 lakh from a businessman in June 2004.

Besides, on June 21 last year, a special court dealing with graft cases sentenced him to 10 years' RI and three years' simple imprisonment, and fined him Tk 10 lakh in a case filed by the ACC.

Aman and his wife Sabera Aman, who is now on bail, are accused in several other cases.

RPO's proper use

FROM PAGE 16
Hafiz Uddin Khan said political parties did not follow the code of conduct in the past elections. He called for proper application of the RPO.

He said the legal experts should participate in the discussions on laws relating to the elections, as most of the people do not have any idea about the laws.

Tigers vs SA

FROM PAGE 16
grip when South Africa lost five wickets for 134 runs but wicket-keeper-batsman Boucher (102) joined Prince (115) to ease the pressure and confirmed a 107-run first innings lead before stumps were drawn for the day.

The pair added 223 runs for the sixth wicket as South Africa finished the day at 357 for 5 in reply to Bangladesh's first innings total of 250 runs. They beat the previous record of 200 runs set by Graeme Pollock and Tigers Lance against Australia in Durban in 1969-70.

Prince had some nervous moments before the left-hander hit his tenth Test hundred when he pulled Mashrafe Mortaza for a boundary.

Boucher reached his fifth Test hundred in the final over of the day when he cut Shahadat Hossain to point for four.

Earlier Bangladesh were well placed in the first two sessions after the home side resumed the day on 20 for one.

Right-arm pacer Mahbubul Alam gave the first breakthrough by removing dangerman Graeme Smith (27). The Proteas skipper played across the line only to be trapped leg-before by an excellent delivery as South Africa went to lunch with 97 for two on the board.

Bangladesh dominated the third session thanks to Shakib Al Hasan who picked up three wickets to put pressure on the home team before the sixth wicket pair got rid of the visitors.

Jacques Kallis (24) was the first victim of Shakib who uprooted the big man's off-stump to put an end to the 65-run stand Kallis set with Hashim Amla.

The home side got a real jolt when Shakib claimed two more wickets in one over. Amla (71 off 140 balls) gave a simple chance to short cover where Imrul Kayes made no mistake.

AB de Villiers was dismissed after just one delivery as the right-hander went down the track on his second ball only to become the first stumping of Moshfiqur Rahim in Test.

Meanwhile, Awami League (AL) picked almost all its candidates from grassroots panels, and criticised the EC's silence over BNP's violation of electoral laws. It accused the EC of 'favouring' a certain party by not enforcing the laws.

Mumbai massacre

FROM PAGE 1
Oberoi where a large fire had broken out on the upper floors.

About 100 people are still trapped in three buildings due to the strike carried out by the terrorists last night.

Preliminary investigations yesterday pointed to involvement of at least some Pakistani nationals in the serial terror attacks in Mumbai.

Intelligence sources say that foreign hand is fully evident in these attacks. They have arrested a Pakistan national from Chowpatty area in the city.

"There are indications that the perpetrators of the crime, who arrived in Mumbai by boats, are Pakistani nationals," authoritative sources said.

The indications are based on information gathered from captured terrorists, the sources said.

Maharashtra deputy chief minister RR Patil, who also holds the Home portfolio, said revealing detailed information on the terror strikes could prove detrimental at this juncture.

But Pakistan's defence minister on Thursday said his country had played no role in terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

According to sources, terrorists have demanded the release of prisoners, ransom. However, Ministry of Home Affairs has denied this saying that the terrorists did not make any demands.

Four Navy ships and choppers have launched search over Gujarat-Goa seas. Navy and Coast Guard are conducting joint search for the ship that may have carried the militants.

Credit cards with photos of militants have been seized by the Naval Commandos.

Naval commandos have seized grenades, AK 47 magazines, shells and knives from militants.

At least eight gunmen had been shot dead and one captured, police said. Around a dozen security personnel were also killed, including the head of Mumbai's anti-terror squad.

Early Thursday, state Home Secretary Bipin Shrimali said four suspects had been killed in two incidents in Mumbai when they tried to flee in cars, and Roy said four more gunmen were killed at the Taj Mahal. State Home Minister RR Patil said nine more were arrested. They declined to provide any further details.

At least 14 policemen have been killed across the city, including the head of the Maharashtra Anti-Terror Squad Hemant Karkare, who was shot three times.

Early Thursday, several European lawmakers were among those who barricaded themselves inside the Taj, a century-old seaside hotel complex and one of the city's best-known destinations.

"I was in the main lobby and there was all of a sudden a lot of firing outside," said Sajjad Karim, part of a delegation of European lawmakers visiting Mumbai ahead of a European Union-India summit.

In an audacious operation apparently tailored to gain maximum international attention, the militants had used small groups to attack at least eight other targets in India's financial hub, including the main railway station, a hospital and a restaurant popular with tourists.

Guests who escaped the hotels recounted how the gunmen had specifically tried to round up US and British citizens.

Singh said the attacks were clearly "well-planned and well-orchestrated" and warned a "neighbourhood" who provided a haven to anti-India militants that there would be a cost to pay.

An unknown group calling itself the Deccan Mujahideen claimed responsibility, with one gunman telling an Indian TV channel by phone that the outfit was of Indian origin and motivated by the treatment of Indian Muslims.

"Muslims in India should not be persecuted. We love this our country but when our mothers and sisters were being killed, where was everybody?" he said.

Some Indian officials pointed a finger at the Pakistani Lashkar-e-Taiba -- best known for an assault on the Indian parliament in 2001. A Lashkar spokesman denied any involvement.

Militant group Lashkar-i-Tayyiba, which is fighting Indian rule in Kashmir, on Thursday denied any involvement in the attacks.

Nine foreign nationals were among the dead -- including a Japanese businessman, an Australian, a German, a British and an Italian -- while Americans, French, Israelis and Canadians were said to be among those held or trapped.

Gunmen also seized the Mumbai headquarters of the ultra-orthodox Jewish outreach group Chabad Lubavitch. Indian commandos surrounded the building Thursday morning and witnesses said gunfire was heard from the building.

At least three top Indian police officers including the chief of the anti-terror squad were among those killed, said AN Roy, a top police official.

The attackers specifically targeted Britons and Americans at the hotels and restaurant, witnesses said.

Alex Chamberlain, a British

Emergency

FROM PAGE 16

The adviser welcomed the EU election observation mission and said that Bangladesh would return to its political tradition characterised by democracy, pluralism and liberalism.

Asked about the lifting of emergency, Iftekhar said the matter was discussed with Lambsdorff. "It will be lifted well ahead of the elections... a precise date of lifting (emergency) will be known soon."

The chief of EU election observation mission said they had discussed the upcoming elections and challenges that go along with it.

The main Bombay Stock Exchange, itself hit by a terror attack in 1993, was closed until further notice, as were shops, schools and businesses.

In the wake of the attacks, England's cricketers also abandoned their tour of India to return home.

A number of airlines cancelled flights to Mumbai yesterday after attacks across the city left more than 100 people killed and hundreds more injured, operators said.

Italy's flag-carrier Alitalia, which is in severe financial straits, cancelled all its flights to Mumbai until further notice, a spokeswoman said.

German airline Lufthansa said it had scrapped two flights to Mumbai due to leave Frankfurt and Munich on Thursday.

Prime Minister Singh said the aim had clearly been to spread panic by choosing high profile targets and "indiscriminately killing foreigners".

Witnesses said the gunmen had been very particular in their choice of hotel hostesses.

"They were very young, like boys really, wearing jeans and T-shirts," said one British guest at the Taj, Rakesh Patel, who was among a dozen people herded together by two heavily-armed men and taken to the hotel's upper floors.

"They said they wanted anyone with British and American passports and then they took us up the stairs. I think they wanted to take us to the roof," he said, adding that he and another hostage managed to escape on the 18th floor.

The United States and Britain led global condemnation, with Washington describing the attacks as "horrible", and US president-elect Barack Obama pledging to work with India to "root out and destroy terrorist networks".

The US State Department called the attacks "horrible" and US president-elect Barack Obama said they showed the need for the United States to work with other nations to "root out and destroy terrorist networks".

Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai said: "Terrorists are especially challenging South Asia. A vigorous response to counter these terrorist challenges requires an even more intensified regional cooperation and coordination in all aspects."

Nato Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer blasted the "despicable" raids.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said the violence was "totally unacceptable". The European Union expressed "horror and indignation" after European parliament members were caught up in the carnage.

Arab League Secretary General Amr Mussa and Egypt's opposition Muslim Brotherhood on Thursday denounced the "terrorist" attacks which left around 100 people dead in India's financial hub Mumbai.

Mussa, who heads the 22-member Arab League, said such "criminal and terrorist acts aggravate the vicious circle of violence and counter-violence," Egypt's state news agency MENA reported.

Some Indian officials claimed nearly 80 lives.

Another little-known Islamic group, the Islamic Security Force-Indian Mujahideen, claimed responsibility for serial blasts last month in India's northeast state of Assam that claimed nearly 80 lives.

Six weeks earlier, the capital New Delhi had been hit by a series of bombs in crowded markets that left more than 20 dead. Those blasts were claimed by a group calling itself the Indian Mujahideen.

A district judge of Sylhet on July 12 last year acquitted 20 accused as their names were dropped from the charge sheet. They were arrested after four.

Militant group Lashkar-i-Tayyiba, which is fighting Indian rule in Kashmir, on Thursday denied any involvement in the attacks.

Nine foreign nationals were among the dead -- including a Japanese businessman, an Australian, a German, a British and an Italian -- while Americans, French, Israelis and Canadians were said to be among those held or trapped.

According to Ernst & Young, Tk 6.33 lakh was misappropriated in 2005-2006 in a maintenance job in Bagerhat where money was paid without any work actually being done.

The audit report also mentioned misappropriation of Tk 15.44 lakh, Tk 35.22 lakh, Tk 6.24 lakh, Tk 12.88 lakh, Tk 44.97 lakh, Tk 4.21 lakh, Tk 112.17 lakh, Tk 61.28 lakh, Tk 20.65 lakh, Tk 61.44 lakh and Tk 90.24 lakh in road maintenance jobs in Madaripur, Natore, Bogra, Habiganj, Khagrachari, Chittagong, and Gazipur between 2000 and 2006 through various irregularities.

Supplementary charge sheets against Huji operative Abu Zandal were later filed in the cases.

The murder case is under trial at the Sylhet Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal while the Arms and Explosives case is under trial at the Court of Additional District and Session's Judge.

Many nomination hopefuls expressed frustration to reporters about the interview system.