

Fugitive BDR men

FROM PAGE 16
He also said the authorities have decided to publish books containing databases on the deserted BDR men to distribute among the upazila level law-enforcers so that they can identify them easily.

The commerce minister said this after the 4th meeting of the committee to coordinate the activities of the investigation into the mutiny.

BDR Director General Maj Gen Mainul Islam, Rab DG Hasan Mahmood Khandakar, CID Chief Additional Inspector General Shah Jaman Raj and other senior officials from various agencies were present at the meeting held at BDR headquarters.

A report on the deserted BDR men has already been prepared and after 60 days of their absconding it would be finalised as per the BDR rules, the minister said adding "The books would be published and distributed as part of the initiative to arrest the deserted BDR men."

Replying to a query on the process of the trial of the mutineers, Faruk Khan said, "The committee formed by the government would finalise the decision in this regard."

About involvement of outsiders in the mutiny, he said, "Earlier he said it was not a simple BDR revolution. It was an attempt to make obstacles to the activities of the government and development as well as to destroy the image of government and the armed forces."

Replying to a query on the progress of BDR reconstruction, he said a committee has been formed in this regard to

Daylight saving

FROM PAGE 1
some middle eastern countries use DST.

Top officials of power and energy divisions and Prime Minister's Adviser Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury attended the meeting.

BCL bodies

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unit-expired last year. The Chhatra League committees of Dhaka university halls were formed eight years ago.

The three-year-old Chhatra League central committee was formed with a two-year tenure on April 4, 2006. Mahmud Hasan Ripon was elected president and Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Roton was made general secretary.

They failed to hold a single general meeting even though they are supposed to hold one every year. They had however held a few emergency general meetings but most of the Chhatra League leaders did not even know when those were held.

Chhatra League central leaders alleged that Ripon and Roton themselves made most of the organisational decisions and they never bothered to inform others.

Ripon and Roton recently decided to impose a three-month ban on organisational activities of Chhatra League's Dhaka Medical College unit, following a factional clash on campus, over telephone, without informing anyone.

Chhatra League sources said organisational activities of Jahangirnagar University unit was also suspended without any kind of meeting.

Surprisingly, none of the Chhatra League leaders know how many members the Chhatra League central executive committee has or how many Chhatra League vice-presidents are there.

According to the Chhatra League constitution, the central executive committee should be a 201-member committee. However, the full list of committee members was never made public.

The president of Chhatra League does not even have the information.

Ripon told The Daily Star that they could not form fresh committees in most of the Chhatra League units since student politics had been banned during the tenure of the last caretaker government. He however said the organisation would be restructured shortly.

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina formed the Ripon-Roton committee with an age limit of 29. Her decision was met with criticism as some "more qualified" Chhatra League leaders were deprived of key positions.

review and justify the proposal submitted by the committee headed by the BDR DG.

About the progress of investigation into the BDR mutiny, the commerce minister said about 840 BDR men have been arrested along with evidences while 1200 types of evidences have been collected and 66 crime spots have been identified so far.

"Besides, many of them already have given their confessional statements", he said adding "Now the investigators are analysing their statements and the evidences collected from the crime scenes."

BCL men beat

FROM PAGE 16
men, including a former president of Sergeant Zahurul Haq Hall, a central committee vice-president, two activists of Surya Sen Hall and their followers, beat up some 12 to 15 contractors at Haji Mohammad Muhsin Hall playground when the contractors denied to hand over schedules of tender for two development works.

Yesterday was the last date for purchasing tender schedule of development two works--one worth Tk 7.5 Lakh in Muhsin Hall and another worth Tk 2.5 lakh at Shibbari on the campus, said a contractor on condition of anonymity.

"Where will we go? Please write our story so that the vice-chancellor notices it. Otherwise, we would not be able to submit our schedule on Monday," the contractor said.

Vice-Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique last night told The Daily Star they would take up all necessary security measures to ensure safe dropping of schedule today.

Campus sources said some former and incumbent BCL leaders and Juba League leaders directly negotiated a development worth Tk 24 crore in the last week of February on the DU campus.

Heated debate

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(BADC) into puppets.

Speaking on a call attention notice, Anwar said the incumbent agriculture minister in her speech earlier had claimed that prices of rice had increased inside the dedicated lane applying the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system," he said.

In reply to a query of another ruling party lawmaker, Abul Hossain said tender will be floated to build a subway in the city on the basis of build-operate-transfer (BOT) after completion of the survey and work will begin after finding suitable private entrepreneur.

The minister also said that construction of three expressways in the city will be completed within three years as per the Strategic Transport Planning (STP).

He said survey and construction work of east-west by-pass with east-west connecting road; flyover and expressways are starting as per the STP.

"Rajuk, Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) are working jointly before approving any new building, roads and housing project and therefore no parking will take place in front of houses, shops, markets and recreation centres," the minister added.

21 ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVE FOR RAILWAY
Replying to another question from ruling party lawmaker Nasimul Alam Chowdhury, the communications minister said tender has been floated to collect 10 meter-gauge locomotives for Bangladesh Railway from South Korea by 2011.

Besides, another 11 locomotives are expected to be collected by 2012 with the assistance of Japan International Co-operation Agency.

Returnees

FROM PAGE 1
agent took a lot of money from us."

The workers alleged that they got little assistance from Bangladesh High Commission in Kuala Lumpur.

Rubel said they went to Malaysia on March 22, 2007 but after working for just 35 days at a company they were fired because they did not have legal work permits.

Their recruiting agent Karim of Tangail Overseas managed to employ them elsewhere through the Bangladesh High Commission and a Malaysian agent. Karim took Tk 36,000 from each of them, the workers said.

President's speech

FROM PAGE 1
of yesterday's sitting but the opposition leader, who had joined the House on only two workdays since January 25, was absent.

Prior to resumption of the House proceedings yesterday afternoon, Speaker Abdul Hamid was informed that the opposition leader was not willing to speak on the thanks-giving motion.

"The leader of the House and opposition leader will speak on the thanks-giving motion on March 7. The resolution on thanks-giving motion will be passed on the day," Speaker Abdul Hamid told reporters yesterday at his office last evening.

Passage of the resolution had been deferred to honour the opposition leader, Hamid said, adding the current session will also be prorogued on that day.

When contacted Chief Whip Abdus Shahid told The Daily Star last evening passage of the resolution was deferred till Tuesday as the opposition leader expressed her unwillingness to speak on it yesterday.

Lajuddin Ahmed, the then president, delivered inaugural speech in the ninth parliament on January 25. The BNP-led opposition lawmakers led by the opposition leader boycotted the president's address accusing him of "violating the constitution" by failing to hold the January 22 parliamentary polls in 2007 although he assumed the office of the chief adviser to the caretaker government.

A number of lawmakers yesterday participated in the discussion on the thanks-giving motion on the president's address.

Mega plan

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"As part of making a digital Bangladesh, auto ticketing system would be introduced for the first time in country's transport history," he said.

Revealing the government's plan to reduce traffic jam, the communications minister said, "Survey to build subway and expressways will begin soon and work will start soon after completion of the survey."

"Like any other developed city in the world, special bus service will be introduced inside the dedicated lane applying the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system," he said.

Immediate past caretaker government had a plan to introduce BCS primary under the PSC but the present government has not yet taken any initiative in this regard.

"Most teachers at primary schools do not have adequate teaching skills. Teachers should be recruited through BCS examination for primary

Suicide bomber

FROM PAGE 16
his explosives Sunday at the entrance to a mosque in Chakwal city in Punjab province, about 50 miles (80 kilometres) south of Islamabad, during a religious congregation, said Nadim Hasan Asif, a top security official in Punjab.

He said the blast killed 22 people and injured more than 30.

"The suspected man was stopped at the entrance and pushed himself in and exploded," Asif said.

Chaudhry Nasrullah, the top health official in Chakwal, confirmed that 22 people were killed and that more than 50 were injured, a dozen of them critically. He appealed to the government to send helicopters to evacuate the most seriously wounded.

Local television footage showed pools of blood on the road in front of the mosque. Torn clothes and a pair of shoes also littered the ground. Police investigators were shown collecting evidence, not far from a car and four motorcycles that were damaged by the blast.

Meanwhile, Pakistani troops backed by helicopter gunships and jets killed at least 18 militants in a restive tribal region bordering Afghanistan, officials said yesterday.

The strikes launched on Saturday continued overnight in Mohmand, one of seven lawless tribal districts in north-western Pakistan, where Taliban militants are active.

"At least 18 militants were killed and 20 others wounded in a full-fledged military operation in Mohmand," a security official told AFP on condition of anonymity and another security official also confirmed the toll.

Metro rail scheme

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Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain assured the builders that the government will issue a letter of intent (LOI) as soon as possible after examining the existing rules and regulations regarding the matter. He also said the government will soon form a metro rail authority too.

The cabinet decided to provide the work of constructing the metro rail to the lowest bidder Contech Ltd under a build operate and transfer (BOT) deal on January 7 last year, but the company could not start construction as it has yet to get the LOI from the government.

According to the Contech plan, subway trains will operate on six routes with fares ranging from Tk 5 to Tk 25. It will take four and a half years to complete the project.

Initially, the company will lay tracks underground at a shallow depth of only 24 feet, with an option to lay more tracks further down.

In the first phase of construction, using the cut and cover method, the metro rail will operate on six routes

Primary education

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education may be extended up to class VIII as most of the five-year primary completed students usually forget much of what they had learnt within a few years," said Motahar Hossain, state minister for primary and mass education.

He added that a final examination will be introduced after completion of eight-year primary study to evaluate students.

The final examination might be held under a primary education board, which will also provide successful pupils with certificates, the state ministers said.

Most of the academicians say that primary education should be extended up to class VIII because five years of study is not enough for children to remember the skills of reading, writing and calculations.

Many recommendations have been made with a view to updating the existing primary education. Some are in favour of recruiting primary teachers through the public service commission (PSC).

Immediate past caretaker government had a plan to introduce BCS primary under the PSC but the present government has not yet taken any initiative in this regard.

"Most teachers at primary schools do not have adequate teaching skills. Teachers should be recruited through BCS examination for primary

2 bidi factories

FROM PAGE 16
Md Nazmul Haque, director of the Department of Environment, said over cellphone a letter was sent to the proprietor of Amena factory on March 12, 2007 to shift the factory from residential area in six months.

The factory authorities have yet to comply with that.

Students

FROM PAGE 16
Agitating students, however, withdrew their blockade at 1:00pm following assurance from local lawmaker Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin of meeting their demands.

Students alleged that their admission fee has been increased by Tk 505 this year and the authorities have introduced medical fee from this year though the college does not have any medical facility for students.

Even the students are asked to give around Tk 400 for paying salary to night guards of the college, a student alleged.

covering 52 kilometres of distance between Sayedabad and Gabtoli via Mohakhali, while another will run between Uttara and Mohakhali via the airport.

In the second phase, 4 branch lines will be laid, the first of which will run between Pallabi and IDB Bhaban of Agargaon via Mirpur Section 10, the second one will run from Shaymoli to Shabbagh via Jhigatola, the third one will connect Sayedabad with Bangla Motor via Komolapur and Moghbazar. The fourth will run between Gulistan and Sadarghat via the Judge Court.

There will be 50 stations in the 52-kilometre long metro railway system providing easy transport to 80 percent of the city residents, who will have access to a metro station within one kilometre of their residences and workplaces.

In its election manifesto Awami League (AL) pledged, among many other things, construction of a metro tunnel, and a circular railway in the capital to remove traffic jam and to solve other transport problems.

A similar meeting on March 25, however, failed to make any decision regarding the appointment of investigation officer and public prosecutor.

In reply to a question, the state minister said whatever risk is involved the government is committed to holding the trial since it is in Awami League's election manifesto and people gave the Awami League an overwhelming majority. It has become a national demand, he said.

Scrap UZ law

FROM PAGE 16
Good governance cannot be ensured if lawmakers take control of the law they make, he said.

Governance Advocacy Forum, an NGO, organised the press briefing.

Speakers observed that if the proposed recommendations are included in the bill meant to reintroduce the now-defunct Upazila Parishad Act 1998, the lawmakers will get more power as parishad advisers than they had enjoyed under the 1998 act.

The now-defunct Upazila Parishad Act 1998 says the lawmakers will be advisers of upazila parishads in their constituencies and the parishads will seek their suggestions, the speakers pointed out.

But in addition to reintroducing the previous provision, the parliamentary body has recommended inclusion of new provisions that make mandatory for the parishads to consult with the lawmakers before making any communication with the government, they said.

The parishads will also have to consult with the local lawmakers for preparing development plans before sending it to the government. They will have to send copies of minutes of their meetings to the lawmakers when they send those to the government, speakers said.

6 BCL men

FROM PAGE 1
Vice-chancellor Prof Sharif Enamul Kabir expelled the students.

At least 15 people were injured in a clash between two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) over establishing supremacy in the hall.

BRTC

FROM PAGE 16
Franchise pilot project will be introduced on Uttara-Azimpur route from April 14 to ease the traffic jam," said a ministry official.

Dhaka Transport Coordination Board has undertaken a study with World Bank assistance to introduce Bus Rapid Transit for easing traffic jam in the capital, said the sources.

Russell gives

FROM PAGE 16
He made his confessional statement to a Bhola magistrate under section 164 of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

Answering to a query during the confession he said expatriate Faisal was the owner of the madrasa-cum-orphanage and Russell did not know anything about militant activities there.

Rab arrested Russell from the orphanage at Bhola on March 24. The elite law-enforcing agency also recovered a huge volume of arms and ammunition from there.

War crime trial

FROM PAGE 1
"Appointment of an investigation officer is the first step towards kicking off the trial process," said State Minister for Law Quamrul Islam, adding that the investigation officer would be appointed in Wednesday's inter-ministerial meeting.

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Even the students are asked to give around Tk 400 for paying salary to night guards of the college, a student alleged.

The students told reporters that they could not raise their voice against any kind of irregularity at the college as teachers have threatened them of not giving proper marks in practical examinations.

N Korea launches

FROM PAGE 16
York, following a request from Japan that came just minutes after the launch.

"North Korea has ignored its international obligations, rejected unequivocal calls for restraint and further isolated itself from the community of nations," Obama said in Prague, urging Pyongyang to honor the UN resolutions and to refrain from further "provocative" actions.

China, Pyongyang's biggest source of economic aid and diplomatic support, urged all sides to maintain calm and exercise restraint. It offered to play a "constructive role," though some fear it could use its veto power to block a unified response to the launch at the Security Council.

North Korea says the launch of the "Kwangmyongsong-2" satellite was a peaceful bid to develop its space programme.

But the US, South Korea, Japan and others suspect the launch was a guise for testing the regime's long-range missile technology a worrying step toward eventually mounting a nuclear weapon on a missile capable of reaching Alaska and beyond.

They contend it violates a UN Security Council resolution barring the regime from ballistic missile activity, part of efforts to force North Korea to shelve its nuclear programme and halt long-range missile tests.

State Department spokesman Fred Lash called the launch a clear violation of Resolution 1718, adopted five days after North Korea carried out a nuclear weapons test in 2006. The US will "take appropriate steps to let North Korea know that it cannot threaten the safety and security of other countries with impunity," he said in Washington after the launch.

Japan's UN mission immediately requested a meeting of the 15-nation council Sunday, spokesman Yutaka Arima said. Mexico, which holds the 15-nation council's president this month, set the meeting for 3

pm EDT (1900 GMT), spokesman Marco Morales said.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said he regretted North Korea's move "against strong international appeal" at a time when nuclear disarmament talks involving six nations remain stalled.

"Given the volatility in the region, as well as a stalemate in interaction among the concerned parties, such a launch is not conducive to efforts to promote dialogue, regional peace and stability," Ban said in a statement from Paris.

The European Union "strongly" condemned the launch.

"These actions place additional strains on regional stability at a time when the unresolved nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula requires mutual confidence building," the EU's Czech presidency said in a statement.

At the United Nations, diplomats have begun discussing ways to affirm existing sanctions on North Korea. Envoys said permanent council members US, Britain and France are unlikely to secure agreement on new sanctions from veto holders Russia and China, North Korea's closest ally. They spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the discussions.

North Korea, which says its participation in a UN space treaty protects its right to send a satellite into orbit, took pains to alert international maritime and aviation authorities of the rocket's flight path, in marked contrast to 2006, when it carried out a surprise launch.

It was not immediately apparent if the rocket was mounted with a satellite as North Korea has claimed, Japan's chief Cabinet spokesman Takeo Kawamura said.

In Seoul, an unnamed government official told the Yonhap news agency the trajectory of the rocket suggests it was mounted with a satellite but said it was unclear whether it made it to orbit.

BCL men threaten

FROM PAGE 1
consider as their resignation letter if Hasina were not back.

Ripon and Roton did not sign the paper.

The five-hour long meeting ended without any decision. Later, the BCL central committee members went to Hasina's residence at Jamuna to inform her about their decision, the sources said, adding that Hasina told the BCL men that she would have a meeting with them this evening.

"Those of us who believe in the ideologies of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Sheikh Hasina will resign from Chhatra League if she [Hasina] does not come back as our organisational chief," said BCL Vice-President Abu Sayeed.

Hasina quit as the BCL's organisational chief on Saturday at an AL Presidium meeting and directed law enforcement agencies to take stern action against those involved in criminal activities, extortion and tender manipulation, no matter which organisation they belong to.

The student leaders yesterday blamed Ripon and Roton for failing to effectively lead the party and control frequent unrest at several educational

institutions after Awami League assumed power.

Referring to the recent clashes at different universities and educational institutions, many BCL leaders at the meeting criticised Ripon and Roton for not following their recommendations in dealing with the situation.

Meeting sources said they asked the president and general secretary to quit from their posts if they fail to bring back Hasina as their organisational guardian.

The two-year tenure of the Ripon-Roton committee expired on April 4 last year.

The agitating central leaders demanded replacing the expired committees of BCL with fresh ones at all universities within seven days and those at district levels within 10 days.

Earlier, Ripon told reporters on Dhaka University campus that Hasina did not take the decision because of the recent campus violence; rather she quit considering the Representation of the People Order, which asks a student body not to be directly involved with a political party.

BDR Mutiny

FROM PAGE 16
placed 24 BDR jawans and a civilian on a five-day remand for each to interrogate about the carnage.

Besides, 45 more jawans were shown arrested in the mutiny case and they were sent to jail after being produced before the court yesterday. Apart from them, Rab at Pilkhana headquarters arrested eight more BDR men yesterday.

The jawans who made confessional statements under the section 164 of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) are havildar Yusuf Ali, Abu Taher, sepoy Nafiz Kazi, Alim Reza and Shaiful Azam.

Following a petition submitted by investigation officer (IO) of the case Senior Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Abdul Kahar Akand of Criminal Investigation Department (CID), metropolitan magistrates Tofiqul Hasan, Zulfiqar Hayat, Abdur Rahim and AKM Emdadul Haque recorded their statements.

The jawans, nayek subedar Monoranjan Sarkar, havildar Momin Ali, lance nayek Badsha Alam, nayeks Abu Sayeed, Abul Kalam, sepoy Iqbal Hossain, Shahjahan Ali, Abdur Razzak, Masud Rana, Mohammad Mizan, Mojibur Rahman, Hadiul Islam, Jalal Uddin, Bulbul Hossain, Mohaddes Kazi, Tarapada Mondol, Mohammad Zia, Shaiful Islam, Shahjahan, Jahangir Aalam, Alam Ali, Abdur Rashid, Abdur Hossain, Akhter Hossain, and a civilian Abdullah Al Mamun are placed on remand.

A total of 155 BDR jawans have been placed on remand so far in the case.

Moreover, a total of 851 BDR jawans had been shown arrested in the case after it was filed with Lalbagh Police Station on February 28.

Meanwhile, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel arrested eight suspected BDR mutineers at BDR headquarters.

The were identified as Nayek Sheikh Mohammad Shahidur Rahman, Sepoy Sri Pulak Kanti Mallik, Mohammad Obaidul Islam, Zakir Hossain, Mohammad Riaz Ahmed, Mohammad Rajibul Hasan, Mohammad Fazlur Rahman and Mohammad Rofiqul Islam.