



MILITANT ATTACKS FEARED Police asked to beef up security at courts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The police headquarters yesterday directed all its units across the country to beef up security at all courts following intelligence reports that the courts might come under militant attacks.

The directive was issued in line with the law ministry's letter to the home ministry on Monday seeking stringent security measures on the Supreme Court (SC) premises and other courts.

Sources in the police headquarters said an intelligence agency apprehends the attacks as a private satellite TV channel telecast statement of a Majlis-e-Shura member of banned Islamist outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) recently.

"We have today (Tuesday) received a copy of the letter that the law ministry sent to the home ministry on Monday and ordered all our law enforcing units across the country to beef up security in the court areas," a top official of the police headquarters told The Daily Star.

Wishing anonymity, the

official said, "We have to reinforce the security alerts that we issued to all units in the country through two notices in October and November, 2005 following the nationwide synchronised bomb blasts by JMB."

The law ministry letter mentioned deaths of several people, including judges and lawyers, in militant attacks in the recent past.

It said the government should take foolproof security measures, including deployment of additional police at the courthouses.

Replying to a question, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad said, "Forces across the country have been told to remain alert as part of the routine work."

Talking to The Daily Star, Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police AKM Shahidul Hoque said security measures have already been beefed up in the city as a special drive is going on now.

Law enforcers stepped up security measures in the SC area yesterday. They were allowing people enter the SC premises after security checking.

PHOTO: STAR

Industries Minister Dilip Barua looks at photographs put on display at a photo exhibition organised as part of The Daily Star-Channel 1 joint initiative 'To the Prime Minister: Save Rivers, Save Dhaka' yesterday. Picture on the right shows folk singers performing songs on rivers at Shatayu Angan of Ramna Park in the city. (Story on Page 16)

Law Commission begins updating Int'l Crimes Act for trial of war criminals

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Law Commission has started scrutinising the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act 1973 in order to update it as the trial of war criminals who have committed offences against the humanity during the liberation war will be held under this law.

The commission, which is doing the job as per the reference of the law ministry, is expected to give its final recommendation to the government by June 20, sources said.

The trial of war criminals will start

after updating the act which will be published both in Bangla and English for maintaining international standard.

On June 6, Law Commission Chairman Justice MA Rashid told The Daily Star that his office has been examining the law and requested some senior lawyers and lawmakers for their opinions on the law.

After getting their opinions, the commission will give its final opinion on the act, he said.

As per the provisions of the existing law, the government will issue a notifi-

cation regarding the formation of a tribunal with a judge of the High Court as its chairman and two to four judges as its members to try the war criminals.

According to legal experts, after the formation of the tribunal, the government will file cases and submit the charge sheets against the war criminals.

The highest punishment under this law is death penalty, they said.

Earlier, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act 1973 should be updated to ensure fairness and transparency of the trial.

He said the trial of war criminals will be held in more acceptable, transparent and fair manner than the Nuremberg trials in Germany, because under this law, the accused can appoint lawyers to defend them during the trial and the convicts can appeal with the appellate court against their conviction.

The law minister said only those who were involved in the killings, arsons, rapes, lootings and offences against humanity during the liberation war will be brought under trial after carrying out investigations.

1,793 held on various charges

UNB, Dhaka

Police in separate raids arrested 1,793 people on various charges from across the country in the last 24 hours as of 6:00 am yesterday.

Twelve firearms, one bomb and 75 bullets were recovered during the drive, said a release of police headquarters.

Besides, 152 motorbikes without valid documents were seized during the drive and 412 cases were filed in this connection.

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