

## N Korea unwilling to give up nukes: Seoul

AP, Seoul

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak said yesterday that North Korea is showing no sign of giving up nuclear weapons, although the communist regime has made recent conciliatory gestures because UN sanctions against it are working.

In a joint interview with South Korea's Yonhap news agency and Japan's Kyodo news agency, the conservative Lee also accused the North of trying to win economic aid while holding on to atomic weapons.

He urged other members of the stalled six-nation talks with North Korea to "redouble efforts" to rid the North of nuclear weapons.

Lee's remarks came as the United States is preparing to accept North Korea's offer to hold direct talks, and they underline his deep scepticism about a neighbour that is abruptly taking a softer line following nuclear and missile tests just a few months ago.

"It appears to be true that North Korea is fairly embarrassed because of greater than expected real effects" of UN sanctions, Lee said, according to a published Yonhap transcript. Lee's office confirmed its contents.

"North Korea is using some conciliatory strategy toward the United States, South Korea and

Japan in order to get out of this crisis, but for now, North Korea is not showing any sincerity or sign that it will give up nuclear weapons," he said.

North Korea pulled out of talks with the US, South Korea, China, Russia and Japan in April, protesting international criticism of its launch of a rocket that other nations suspected was a test of long-range missile technology.

In May, it conducted a nuclear test that drew tough new UN sanctions on the North's weapons exports and financial dealings. The sanctions also allow inspections of suspect North Korean cargo in ports and on the high seas.

Amid the sanctions, the North has been taking conciliatory gestures, freeing detained American and South Korean citizens and pledging to resume suspended joint projects and family reunions with South Korea.

The North also has invited Washington's special envoy on North Korea, Stephen Bosworth, to visit Pyongyang for bilateral negotiations that would be the country's first nuclear talks since President Barack Obama took office. Over the weekend, the State Department said the US is preparing to accept the offer, but said the talks will be part of efforts to resume the six-nation negotiations.

## BDR trial finalised

FROM PAGE 1

Sources said the meeting decided to hold the trial of the mutineers under the BDR Act before trying them in speedy tribunal.

The law minister said the government has taken the decisions following the Supreme Court's opinion and observations on the presidential reference regarding the mode of the trial.

The Supreme Court categorically opined that the offences committed during the BDR mutiny cannot be tried under the army act, not even by issuing a notification to give the law retrospective effect.

BDR Director General Maj Gen Md Mainul Islam told The Daily Star that the border force has already set up a few courts of inquiry to determine the number of mutineers. The trial under the BDR laws will be started as soon as possible after finalising the number.

The BDR DG will preside over the trial in the BDR court as per the law of the force.

Yesterday's meeting was told that the trial of criminal offences has to be held on the basis of only one charge sheet and all accused have to be produced before the court at a time during the trial proceedings, which will be a tough task for the government.

Sources said the meeting discussed the issue of most arrested BDR jawans being accused of mutiny. Some of these arrested BDR personnel might be innocent and should be allowed to join their service, their release subject to trial, the meeting said.

After the meeting, the law minister told the press that the offences committed during the BDR mutiny will be classified on the basis of investigation report, which is now at the final stage.

The law minister said any accused found to have been involved in rebellion against the state during the BDR carnage will be tried on charge of sedition under the penal code.

The accused can appoint lawyers for self-defence, he said.

Asked if fair trial is possible under the BDR chief, Shafique Ahmed avoided a direct reply. He said the government will hold the trial of the BDR carnage following due legal process in a very transparent manner.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam, who was present at the meeting, told The Daily Star that the BDR personnel accused of mutiny will be tried at the stations where they committed the offence.

He said he or his representatives will assist the BDR in conducting the trials.

At least 73 people, including 57 army officers deputed at the paramilitary force, were killed in the February 25-26 bloody mutiny at Pilkhan.

Some 1,779 people have been arrested so far in connection with the mutiny case filed in Dhaka while 1,721 were arrested in connection with 40 cases filed for rebellion outside Dhaka.

Home Minister Sahara Khatun, State Minister for Law Qamrul Islam, State Minister for Home Affairs Shamsul Haque Tuku, additional attorneys general Murad Reza and AKM Zahirul Hoque, Law Secretary Kazi Habibul Awal, Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikdar, BDR chief Maj Gen Md Mainul Islam, Advocate General of the army headquarters Brig Gen Nur Mohammad, among others, were present at the meeting.

DELWAR

Talking to reporters at BNP's central office at Naya Paltan, the BNP leader said they think trial under the existing laws could warrant justice.

"BNP has demanded trans-

parent and neutral investigation into the BDR incident since the very beginning, but the government did not do that," Delwar said.

A conspiracy is being hatched to weaken the army and BDR and the government activities are part of this conspiracy, he said.

Asked about the decision to change the name and uniform of the BDR, he said whatever has happened centring BDR has had the government's influence. The BDR director general did not change the force's uniform without government's investigation.

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## Tough action

FROM PAGE 1

price of Tk 64, which was Tk 45 a month ago, according to TCB.

The government blamed unscrupulous traders for abnormal price hike of sugar. On the other hand, sugar refiners and traders continue to blame each other for the rise in sugar price.

The blame game is continuing but no step has so far been taken until yesterday in minimising sugar price at retail level.

Commerce Minister Faruk Khan has also echoed the premier in a recent programme and said the government will take action against both dishonest TCB dealers and businessmen who hoarded sugar for getting extra profits.

In a view-exchange meeting with the dealers of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) on its premises in the capital, Faruk Khan said, "The government has a intelligence report in hand with some details about sugar hoarding."

Earlier each TCB dealer, however, was distributed one tonne of sugar and one tonne of edible oil.

The minister also announced that each TCB dealer would be given three tonnes of sugar. Presently, a total of 216 TCB dealers are selling edible oil and sugar in Dhaka City Corporation areas, whereas some 1,200 dealers are engaged outside the capital.

The minister warned the TCB dealer not to indulge in immoral practice for making some extra bucks.

"We have received some allegations against TCB dealers. If the allegations are found true the government will cancel their dealerships," he said.

The minister said two ships have already been anchored at the Chittagong Port with 50 thousand tonnes of sugar, which will go to the market before Eid. Another 50 thousand tonnes will come after Eid, he added.

## Sugar swindle

FROM PAGE 1

Meantime, visits to the dealers on Monday and Tuesday confirmed that none of them brought the sugar to Kharagchhari.

The 12 government-appointed dealers are M/s Khaled Bepari, M/s Golum Muhammad Chowdhury, M/s G.N. Popular Store, M/s Saidul Hoq, M/s Shahid & Brothers, M/s Gius Uddin, M/s Al Osmani Bibido, M/s M/s Shamshul Alam, M/s Abdul Halim, M/s Hazi Muhammad Musa, M/s Mozaher and M/s Mokhtar Ahmed Enterprise.

One of the dealers Mohammad Osman admitted that they sold the sugar in front of the mill gates to avoid transportation cost.

Another dealer Moshamud Musa told The Daily Star that they had deposited Tk 1 lakh with BSFIC as security money but did not get sufficient allotment. Hence, he added, they sold the sugar on the spot instead of bringing it all the way to Kharagchhari.

Criticising Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her statement on the International Democracy Day, he said the Awami League had "killed democracy" after independence and Ziaur Rahman later restored multiparty democracy.

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## PM warns

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4:00pm on October 4.

Sheikh Hasina, also ruling Awami League (AL) president, urged people to keep vigil against recurrence of incidents like BDR mutiny to reverse the democratic strides. She also urged the people not to be misguided by any false campaign.

"While running the government and doing development works, we find continued obstacles in every step from the 'special quarter', benefited by undemocratic government, who earlier had captured power through undemocratic means. So, I urge the countrymen to be cautious so that the democratic trend continues," she told the parliament.

The prime minister was speaking at a discussion titled 'democracy and political tolerance' on the occasion of the International Day of Democracy.

Following an hour long discussion, the House passed a resolution by which Bangladesh will also observe the International Day of Democracy through holding a discussion in the parliament every year.

Inter-Parliamentary Union decided to observe September 15 of every year as International Day of Democracy in the context of a resolution adopted by the United Nations in 2007.

The International Day of Democracy was first observed in 2008 but Bangladesh could not observe the day as unelected caretaker government ruled the country during that time.

Referring to the sugar price, Sheikh Hasina told the House that a big conspiracy is going on regarding sugar price. Price of sugar is being raised though stock of sugar is available. "We are investigating the matter and action will be taken against those who are responsible for it," said the Leader of the House.

On plotting of the conspiracy, Sheikh Hasina said people who wanted to sit in power without election are still hatching conspiracy against her government.

Pointing out the two years of the past caretaker government, Hasina said, "Various formulas were floated during that time by those who would lose security money if contest any election."

She also disclosed in parliament that many proposals were given to her (Hasina) during that time including offering her the status of a prime minister without participating in elections, which she rejected.

Without mentioning any name, the prime minister said, those who wanted to capture power by creating new political parties are still continuing their activities to capture power.

"Those persons who had failed to float a new political party, exploit people, get huge interest from poor people and remain in disguise of good men wearing good dresses are still busy hatching a conspiracy

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## Manmohan

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"I would like to say frankly that we have not achieved as much success as we would have liked in containing this menace," he said.

India's Maoist insurgency, which started as a peasant uprising in 1967, has spread to 20 of the country's 29 states and claimed 580 lives so far this year.

The rebels say they are fighting for the rights of neglected tribespeople and landless farmers.