

Feeling of insecurity among ethnic people increases to all-time high

Says Nagorik Samaj report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Feeling of insecurity among indigenous people living in Rangamati and Khagrachhari have increased to all-time high as violence might occur in the area at any time, according to a report prepared by Manobatabadi Nagorik Samaj.

"With rumours spreading, tension between the feuding groups in Khagrachhari and Baghaihat has been mounting and it seems that bigger violence might occur at any moment," said the report.

Manobatabadi Nagorik Samaj, a platform for indigenous people including writers, politicians and intellectuals, published the report at a press conference at the National Press Club yesterday.

The report mentioned that firing by law enforcers led to deaths at Baghaihat in Rangamati and that the police remained inactive during the incidents of arson and looting.

"On the other hand, the police later arrested victims of the violence. As a result, local residents, specially the ethnic minorities, lost confidence in

the police," the report said.

Manobatabadi Nagorik Samaj prepared the report on the basis of interviews with indigenous people, Bangalees, political activists, police and district administration officials.

The report also mentioned irregularities in distribution of relief among the victims.

The organisation placed a ten-point recommendation, including appointment of impartial government officials in the district administration and law enforcement agencies and an end to the practice of transferring govern-

ment official to the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) as punishment.

Other demands include immediate implementation of CHT peace accord, withdrawal of unnecessary army camps and immediate investigation into the incident and arrest of the culprits.

Psychologist and litterateur Anwara Syed Haque read out a written statement at the press conference. Prof Syed Anwar Hossain, columnist Masuda Bhatti, journalist Saleem Samad, Jobaida Nasreen, Aditi Falguni and Bazlur Rashid were present.



Anwara Syed Haque speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On her left are Pankaj Bhattacharya, Prof Syed Anwar Hossain and Saleem Samad.



Four senior jurists, who were accorded a reception by the Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association on the occasion of their 50 years in legal profession, pose for photograph at the reception in the city yesterday. From left are Barrister Rafiqul Haque, AFM Mesbah Uddin, Khandaker Mahubuddin Ahmed, SM Rezaul Karim, former president Abdur Rahman Biswas and Bakhtiar Hossain.

BCL president harassed by party men

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) President Mahmud Hasan Ripon was harassed by a group of central leaders on Dhaka University campus yesterday for violating the constitution of the organisation.

The incident occurred on the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) premises at around 6:40pm when Ripon came out of the TSC auditorium after attending a discussion.

Abu Abbas Bhuiyan, mass education affairs secretary of BCL, intercepted Ripon at the main gate and sought clarification from Ripon regarding violation of the BCL constitution on several occasions recently, witnesses said.

However, Ripon said he was not at all interested to talk to Abbas on the spot.

During the reception, a number of central leaders, including Vice President Sujat Rahman, Organising Secretary Khairul Hasan Jewel and International Affairs Secretary Sohel Rana Mithu, stood cordoning Ripon and asking Ripon questions one after another, BCL sources said.

Later, BCL Dhaka University unit General Secretary Sajjad Sakib Badsha, Zahurul Haq Hall unit General Secretary Shamsul Kabir Rahat and some other leaders recovered Ripon from the grip of aggrieved leaders.

While leaving the spot, Ripon said, "You won't be able to do anything against me. Complain to Sheikh Hasina if you want."

ILLEGAL VOIP TRADE Dhaka Phone high-ups sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Phone Chairman ATM Hayatuzaman and four other top officials of the private land phone company who were arrested early yesterday on charges of illegal VoIP business were sent to jail the same day.

The other arrestees were Managing Director KM Shahidullah, General Manager (Technical) Harun Al Atahar, Senior Manager (Technical) Ekramul Huq and Senior Billing Manager Haripada Podder Ajit.

BTRC Junior Consultant Kawsar Ahmed produced the five before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate court seeking a seven-day remand for each of Harun Al Atahar, Ekramul Huq and Haripada Podder Ajit.

Magistrate Minhaz Um-Manira fixed today for the hearing of the remand prayer and ordered to send all the five to jail.

Stamp duty on transfer of land in rural areas up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The stamp duty on transfer of land and property in rural areas has been increased by one percentage point with a view to increasing revenue collections.

It was decided at a meeting of the cabinet with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair, which amended the Stamp Act 1899 increasing the rural level stamp duty.

Previously, the rate of stamp duty was two percent in rural areas and three percent in urban areas on the total value of the land or property during transfer.

"From now on, during the handover of land or property both in urban and rural areas, three percent stamp duty will have to be paid," Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad told reporters after the meeting.

The cabinet also approved The Jute (Amendment) Act 2010.

Several other issues like giving awards to politicians, philosophers, intellectuals and artists of various countries for their historic role in the War of Liberation in 1971, ratification of the Rome Statute of International Criminal Court, Amendment of the Income Tax Ordinance 1984 were sent back yesterday.

Army chief in Delhi to strengthen ties

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Chief of Army Staff General Md Abdul Mubeen is now on a six-day visit to India seeking to strengthen military relations.

During the visit, Gen Mubeen will hold discussion with Indian Defence Minister A K Antony, chiefs of three services and National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon, defence ministry officials said.

He will also visit important military training establishments and field formations in Jaipur, Ajmer and Kolkata.

The visit assumes special

significance in the light of improving military cooperation between the two countries in consonance with India's growing relationship with Bangladesh, the officials added.

Military-to-military cooperation between Bangladesh and Indian Armed Forces "encompasses exchange of high and medium-level visits, availing of training courses in each other's training institutions, witnessing of designed exercises by military observers from both sides, exchange of war veterans and sharing experience in disaster management," officials said.

Govt to make public joint communiqués with India

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday decided to make public the joint communiqués signed between Bangladesh and India during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to New Delhi in January.

Sources said the decision has been taken to stamp out confusions from the public mind over the deals and Memorandum of Understandings signed between the two countries.

They said the joint communiqués would be placed before the parliament as well as possible for discussion.

The decision came at a regular cabinet meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

DEROGATORY REMARKS ABOUT JOY Arrest warrant against Farroque

UNB, Dhaka

Two defamation suits were filed against Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Farroque in Chittagong and Shariatpur yesterday for making 'derogatory comments' about the prime minister's son Sajeb Wazed Joy.

After hearing the petitions, Shariatpur court issued an arrest warrant against Farroque while Chittagong court issued summons asking him to appear in the court on May 16.

In Shariatpur, district BCL President Alamgir Hossain Hawlader filed a Tk 100 crore defamation suit with the chief judicial magistrate court, while Saifuddin Ahmed, a central member of Jubo League, filed the other defamation suit with the Chittagong Metropolitan Magistrate court.

Elderly person dies while trying to board faulty lift

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An elderly person died after falling from the seventh floor through the passage of a lift while attempting to board the faulty elevator of Gulistan Shopping Complex on Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday.

The victim was identified as Abul Hossain, 70, a cloth trader of Islampur in the old part of the city. The accident took place at around 10:45am.

Paltan police said from Dhaka Medical College morgue leaders of Muktiyoddha Kalyan Trust tried to take away the body claiming that Abul was a war-maimed freedom fighter.

However, the victim's wife Umme Salma and other family members denied the claim and they did not hand over the body.

Nurul Alam made envoy to Oman

UNB, Dhaka

Nurul Alam Chowdhury has been appointed Bangladesh ambassador to Oman.

Nurul Alam was born in 1945 in Fatikchhari upazila of Chittagong. He was elected member of parliament in 1973 and 1986 with Awami League ticket, said a press release.

He holds a post-graduate degree in History from Chittagong University. He participated in the students' movement in 1969 and War of Liberation in 1971.

Ensure proper infrastructure facilities

President asks private universities

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged the private universities to ensure proper infrastructural facilities for their students alongside maintaining requisite standard of education.

"The universities must ensure proper educational environment with world-standard curriculum," he said while presiding over the first convocation of the International Business Administration and Information System (IBAIS) University at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid attended the convocation ceremony as

the special guest while Prof Dr Syed Monzoorul Islam spoke as the convocation speaker.

Zillur listed out important prerequisites for quality higher education, which include experienced faculties, ICT, library and laboratory facilities, necessary infrastructure, opportunities of sports and creative activities and tuition fees in keeping with socioeconomic condition.

Congratulating the new graduates the president urged them not to compromise on untruth and injustice and never forget about the motherland during their professional life either at home or abroad.

Prof Monzoorul Islam said more investment is needed in primary and

secondary education for ensuring quality education at the higher level.

"Education at the primary level is very weak," said the English teacher of DU, adding that there will be no strong base of higher education unless the primary level is founded on requisite standards.

A total of 417 students were conferred upon graduate and postgraduate degrees from different disciplines at the convocation while Tanjina Sultana received the Chancellor Gold Medal for her outstanding academic results.

Vice Chancellor Prof Khandkar Rezaul Rahman and President of the board of governors Prof Zakaria Lincoln also spoke on the occasion.

Names of top criminals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Sahara Khatun in the parliament yesterday disclosed an updated list of 42 top criminals.

The list, however, did not say anything about the whereabouts of 27 of them.

It said three top criminals are staying in India and one each in Canada and America while ten were arrested since 2000 to 2005 from India, Nepal and Bangladesh.

In response to lawmakers' queries, Sahara also placed another list of 73 fugitive criminals against whom red notices were issued.

Nine convicted killers of Bangabandhu, nine accused in August 21 grenade attack case and some of the listed top terrors are among others in the list of 73 fugitive criminals. The rest of the fugitives are accused in killing cases.

As many as 46 out of the 73 fugitive criminals might now stay in India and the others might stay in Pakistan, South Africa, Canada, UK, USA, Thailand, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Mozambique, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Singapore, Germany, Libya, Malta, Netherlands, Tunisia, Belgium, Switzerland, France, Italy, Lebanon,

Poland, China, Hong Kong and Kenya.

The home ministry's list did not say anything about the whereabouts of listed top criminals Kala Jahangir, Kazi Ataur Rahman Litu, Sadikur Rahman alias Hiru, Islam alias Bihari Munna, Nur Mohammad, Mr T Babu, Ashik alias Ashik Islam, Shahidullah alias Lebu Shahid, Suman, Towhiduzzaman Khan, Arif Hossain, Mia Delwar Hossain, Abul Kashed alias Hadi, Jasim alias Jasi, Dulal alias Motka Dulal, Golam Mostafa alias Pappu, Selim alias Sails, Munna alias Monu Mia, Mamun alias Mafizur Rahman, Rabi, Toki alias Toki Khan, Mamun, Kamrul Hasan alias Hannan, Shamim Ahmed alias Aga Shamim, Liakat, Zafar Ahmed alias Manik and Jabbar Munna.

The arrested ten top criminals are Titon, Sohel alias freedom Sohel, Harris Ahmed alias Hares, Khorshed Alam alias Rashed, Abbas alias Kamal Pasha alias Pasha, Arman, Mashur Rahman Kochi, Subrata Baine and Imamul Hossain alias Pichchi Helal.

According to the list, top criminals Tanvir Islam, Prokash Kumar Biswas and Molla Masud are hiding in India, Aminur Rasul Sagar alias Tokai Sagor in USA and Imam Hossain in Canada.



Zonta International, District 25, Area 2, organised a discussion at a city hotel on March 13 to celebrate the International Women's Day and Zonta Rose Day on Saturday, with State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury as the chief guest. Area Director Fahmida Karim, incoming Governor Nahid Moyeen, Dilruba Ahmed and other Zonta officials were present.

Shibir president retracts statement, blames media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Islami Chhatra Shibir President Rezaul Karim yesterday retracted his statement regarding the threat on the life of one lakh Awami League workers and blamed the media for 'distorting' his comments.

At a discussion on Sunday, he said any decision to ban Shibir would cost the lives of one lakh workers of the organisation and if it happens, one lakh workers of Awami League have to be ready to sacrifice their lives.

The Shibir president, however, yesterday criticised the media, saying that the newspapers are trying to mislead the nation by publishing false news against Shibir.

"Shibir is working to develop talents of students and promote moral values," he said at a meeting of presidents and general secretaries of thana units under Dhaka city, said a press release.

PRIVATE UNIVERSITY BILL 'Ministry misleads cabinet'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh (APUB) at a roundtable yesterday alleged that the cabinet has been provided with misleading information about private universities to have the private university bill approved.

"The Ministry of Education provided misleading information to the cabinet," said Prof M Alimullah Miyan, secretary general of APUB.

The bill has been formulated to create 'chaos' in the higher education sector and it would change the fundamental structure of private universities, if enacted, he said and urged the government not to ahead with the bill.

He also said the private universities should be run by the existing act with necessary amendments which is 'required and desirable' in consultation with the primary stakeholders.

APUB organised the roundtable titled 'Non-government initiatives in university education in Bangladesh' at the National Press Club in the city.

On March 2, the education ministry sent the Private University Bill to the parliament secretariat. The bill is now waiting for passage in parliament.

Presenting a paper, Prof Alimullah Miyan said the cabinet was informed that out of a total of 51 private universities, 48 have lost their time limit for temporary approval as of August 2009, but the statement was not correct, as there is no time limit for approval as per the existing law.

VOIP SCAM BTCL rules out Joy's involvement

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Limited (BTCL) yesterday outright rejected the allegation of involvement of Sajib Wazed Joy, son of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in illegal Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) business.

"Such allegation against him is completely baseless and false," BTCL chairman ASM Khabiruzzaman told BSS, expressing his utter surprise on how the opposition chief whip has got the imaginary information.

He challenged the statement of Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Farroque and said neither BTCL nor TeleTalk had ever been involved in VoIP, which is illegal in Bangladesh.

Bank official shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers yesterday shot a bank official and took away his bag at Nababpur road in the city yesterday afternoon.

The injured was identified as Porimol Chandra Biswas, 48, data entry supervisor of Agrani Bank head office.

Two unknown miscreants shot him in his throat and snatched a bag from him while he was walking by the Nababpur road around 5:15pm, witnesses said.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 12th death anniversary of AKM Fazlul Haq, a member of the Bangladesh Observer, says a press release.

A milad and doa mahfil will be held at his Sutrapur residence in the city and village home at Shubhapur Village in Feni after Asr prayers.

Md Aminul Islam

METRO DESK

Today is the second death anniversary of Advocate Md Aminul Islam, a member of the then East Pakistan Civil Service (Judicial), says a press release.

Qurankhwani and doa mahfil will be held at his Sherpur town residence 'Nirjhor' and 'Aftabia Madrasa' at his village.

DHAKA
T O D A Y

Workshop
Traidcraft Exchange and TARANGO will jointly organise an awareness raising workshop on 'Golden fibre: Sustainable livelihoods for jute growers and producers'. Venue: IDB Bhaban. Time: 10:00am.

Lecture
The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCAD), Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) will jointly organise a lecture on 'Emerging climate change issues: Gaps in research, policy and practices'. Venue: Hotel Sarina. Time: 6:00pm.

Workshop
Unnayan Shamannay and WBB Trust will jointly organise a workshop on tobacco economics. Venue: WINGS Centre. Time: 9:30am.

Roundtable
Shaptahik 2000 organises a roundtable titled 'The role of housing sector in establishing digital Bangladesh'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:30am.

Workshop
South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM) and Overseas Development Institute will jointly organise a workshop titled 'Measuring the economic impact of competition'. Venue: Brac Centre Inn. Time: 9:00am.

Seminar
Dhaka Ahsana Mission and Primary Education Directorate (PED) will jointly organise a seminar on 'Multi-grade approach in primary education: Sharing of experience on Unique and Rask projects'. Venue: PED conference hall. Time: 10:00am.