

It's worst genocide

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proposed regional taskforce, a taskforce proposed by Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, to combat religious extremism and terrorism.

The resolution also emphasized strict measures to check money laundering for what they said, "fundamentalist organisations across the world are using different NGOs, Banks and various financial institutions to finance militancy and terrorism through moneylaundering."

Building a domestic and regional secular humanist network by civil societies and governments across the world was also urged upon.

The conference also called upon Pakistan to take effective measures to curb and eliminate religious militancy, repeal anti-Ahmadiyya laws and blasphemy laws.

Earlier, during its inauguration, speakers from home and abroad urged all countries to form an inter-continental network based on secularism. "Religious fundamentalism in many forms and faces has become a great problem. There is no time to lose. With cooperation from all we must cut it out globally before it is too late. Otherwise humanism will be in jeopardy," said Prof Kabir Chowdhury, president of the advisory committee of Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee.

"If there are Muslim fundamentalists in Pakistan, there must be Hindu fundamentalists in India. If there is Hindu fundamentalists in India,

there is no way to resist Muslim fundamentalists in Bangladesh," said former speaker of India PA Sangma.

Former speaker of Nepal Daman Dhungana said that democracy couldn't be achieved without overcoming religious extremism.

"Individually it is tough to overcome this, but globally it can be done," he headed.

Prof Shafaraz Khan from Pakistan, Prof Maxim Dubayev from Russia, terrorism expert Chris Blackburn from UK, Cecilia Wikstrom, member of MEP, Sweden, Parvin Najfgholi Ardalan, human right activist from Iran and Attorney William Sloan also spoke in the inaugural session. Journalist Shahriar Kabir conducted the programme.

Speakers also discussed Jamaat-e-Islami's link with international terrorist organizations.

"Trial of war criminal is necessary for strengthening the foundation of democracy. It is a matter of great shame that collaborators were reinstated in Bangladesh politics," said Dr Peter Custers from The Netherlands in his speech during inaugural session.

He also mentioned that European countries politically support this effort of war crimes trial and suggested taking assistance from international lawyers.

"It's never too late for justice. Time is always now. It is always the right time to punish crime against humanity," said William Sloan.

Driver made sure

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they are now sure that Al Amin was present during the incident.

They are, however, uncertain whether Farzana died due to strangulation or taking of the pills. They are waiting for the autopsy report, which is due today.

Monirul said they were preparing to file a case against Al Amin in connection with stealing Farzana's minivan.

Farzana and her two children, 12-year-old Pabon and 10-year-old Payel, were found dead in their Jurain home on June 11.

Detective police have been interrogating Al Amin on a five-day remand and pharmacy employee Abdul Gaffar, who sold sedatives without prescription to Al Amin, on a two-day remand.

Pabon took the sedative-mixed water, which was prepared in a soft-drink bottle, and then her sister drank it after ablation. They died instantaneously, Al Amin told interrogators, adding that following the deaths of her two children, Farzana wrote down something on a chit and then took that water.

Sources quoting Al Amin said Farzana vomited and started groaning afterwards and then Al Amin pressed her mouth and nose with his hands to confirm her death.

Handwriting experts of CID will give their opinions today regarding the writings on chits and walls.

DC Monirul quoting Al Amin said Farzana around

eight days before her death requested pharmacy employee Gaffar to give 10 strips of sedatives to Al Amin saying she would be going to California on a long trip. She also bought the pots of paint that day.

DC Monirul said they quizzed at least 12 persons so far including a dentist.

Meanwhile, relatives of Farzana expressed concern over the investigation.

They said if the real culprits are not arrested soon, the direction of the investigation might change. Police are yet to arrest one of the accused in the case Farzana's husband Rashedul Kabir.

After recovery of the bodies, Farzana's mother Mazeda Begum filed a case with Kadamtoli Police Station against Rashedul, Rashed's second wife Razia Sultana Smriti, parents-in-law Shafiqul Kabir and Nur Banu and four other in-laws.

Mahmudur

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arrested him from the office following a fraud case filed by the daily's former publisher Hasmat Ali Hasu with Tejjagon industrial area police station.

Later, he was shown arrested in four other criminal cases and remanded for a total of eleven days.

The cases were filed on charges of obstructing police, his links with banned Hizb ut-Tahrir and sedition.

The Sessions Court will hear bail petitions in three other cases on June 23.

Pilkhana mutiny

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Newly appointed Director General of BDR Maj Gen Md Rafiqul Islam led the court.

Earlier, prosecutor of the case Lt Col Shamsur Rahman described charges against the accused and appealed for framing charges against them.

From 24 Rifles Battalion, 668 members were accused of the mutiny. Of them, Nayek Joynal Abedin died of cardiac arrest in May.

Joynal was exempted from the charges and the rest 667 were produced before court yesterday.

Col Aziz Ahmed, BDR sector commander of Dhaka, said the hearing would continue till June 23.

Of the accused, 14 members including Subedar Major Gofran Mallik were produced before the court in chain. It was a security measure as they were involved in offences like killings, dumping of bodies and looting, Col Aziz said.

"Gofran is the oldest among the accused; no offences were there in which he was not involved."

The court started around 11:00am with administering oath to the BDR DG as the new head of judges by the attorney general's representative.

The court continued till 4:15pm.

The Special Court-5 is one of the six courts formed after the bloody mutiny at the Pilkhana BDR headquarters that left 74 people including 57 army officials dead.

The mutiny was also spread to other places across the country.

Earlier on April 1, erstwhile BDR DG fixed the charge framing date in presence of the accused.

Two BDR officers of the rank of major and seven lawyers were present at the court as "friends of the accused".

While reading out the charges, the court said the accused did not obey the command of the late BDR DG and left the Darbar.

They looted the armoury, insulted the high ranking officers, did not inform the high officials about the mutiny, provoked the mutineers and fed incorrect information to journalists, it added.

According to the BDR law, maximum penalty for rebellion is seven years in jail.

Eight monitors, including two LCD, and two projectors were set in the court yesterday, although they were not used.

BDR officials said some video clippings would be showed to the court and the accused.

Knock down

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RAJUK Chairman Engineer Md Nurul Huda told BSS that they have identified over 5,000 illegal buildings, of which over 60 risky and faulty ones have already been demolished and the rest would be pulled down in phases.

Mohakhali zonal office of RAJUK identified and listed some 40 illegal buildings, owned by East West Property Development Limited, at Bashundhara Residential Area in the capital.

According to the list, the plot numbers of 40 illegal buildings are: Block-A 39, 40, 47, 277, 278, 283A, 284, 285A, 291, 292G, 292C, 288, 287A, 289, 292, 292A, 232 and 259.

Block-G 325, 326, 683, 684, 685, 712, 713, 714, 971, 968, 936, 1/A, convention centre, 15W and 648. Block-B 242, Block-F 776 and 778, Block-I 157, 178 and 182, Block-C 187.

Officials said there are more unauthorised buildings in Bashundhara Residential Area and actions are being planned against those.

Besides, the RAJUK yesterday issued notice to Bashundhara Development Limited for its River View Project, Hasnabad, South Keraniganj in the capital regarding unauthorised installations.

In the letter, RAJUK said its inspectors identified 13 unauthorised under-construction buildings at the River View Project--three seven-storied buildings, six six-storied buildings and three two-storied buildings at Blocks A and B while one six-storied at Block-C.

RAJUK issued the letter to Ahmed Akbar Sobhan, chairman, Bashundhara Group and others and asked them to reply the show cause notice within seven days.

Earlier, on December 31 last year, RAJUK issued a letter to the authorities of Bashundhara City Complex to pull down a portion of unauthorised construction.

In the letter, RAJUK asked them to remove 6.75 metres, out of existing 85.75 metres, of unauthorised portion from the 18-storied shopping mall at Panthapath. The approved height of the building was 79 metres.

In the Bashundhara Residential Area, a total of 305 acres, out of 1,247 acres land, got the RAJUK approval from 1986 to 1990 and the remaining land was given approval on certain conditions but Bashundhara did not maintain those conditions. As a result, officials said, the last caretaker government cancelled the approval of the remaining 942 acres.

BNP agitates

FROM PAGE 1
Shantinagar areas.

The protesters urged people to make the June 27 hartal successful.

Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, member of BNP standing committee, said the government is conspiring to reinstate a system like 'Bakshal' under cover of democracy.

He came down hard on the government for shutting down a private TV channel and a Bangla daily.

The BNP leader alleged that the government arrested Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of daily Amar Desh, unlawfully and tortured him while on remand.

He also demanded immediate release of all detained BNP leaders including Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu, Ehsanul Haque Milon and Abdus Salam Pintu.

Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka said the nationalist force has drawn new inspiration from the victory of the BNP-backed mayoral candidate in the Chittagong City Corporation polls.

He urged the government to lift the restriction on the publication of Amar Desh and refrain from interfering in the freedom of press.

BNP leaders Mirza Abbas, Rafiqul Islam Mia, Abdul Moyeen Khan, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, and Amanullah Aman, among others, were present at the rally.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at a grand rally at Paltan Maidan on May 19 announced the holding protest rallies across the country on June 17 to protest the government's repression on journalists and attempts to curb the freedom of press.

She also called a sit-in on June 9 and a dawn-to-dusk hartal on June 27.

The countrywide programmes on June 17 were deferred by two days because of the CCC polls.

Azad panel wins

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Ashraf, MP said yesterday.

Azad, managing director of Ha-Meem Group, came up with a full panel of 14 candidates from associations and 14 from chambers.

The election results also show that six directors under association group won from the Azad's rival panel led by Abu Alam Chowdhury, currently an FBCCI vice-president.

Only one director under chamber group of Dewan Sultan Ahmed-led panel won in the election.

However, the elected directors are scheduled to select a president and vice-presidents for the executive committee for 2010-12 tenure at its office today, said a senior official of the FBCCI.

According to the rules, voters elect 14 directors from association group and 14 directors from chamber group.

Later, the president and vice-presidents get selected from the elected and nominated directors to form the executive committee of the FBCCI.

A total of 16 directors--eight from association group and eight from chamber group--have already been nominated for leading the FBCCI for 2010-12 tenure.

This year, 58 candidates contested the election--20 from the chamber group and 38 from the association group. FBCCI members cast votes to elect 14 directors from each of the groups.

The number of voters was 351 under the chamber group and 1,340 under the association group. This is the eighth direct election, with the first held in 1994.

Of the total valid votes, 1,199 voters cast votes from the association group and 341 from the chamber group in the election, the FBCCI official said.

In the election, Abu Alam Chowdhury contested under

Fabiano

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was dismissed.

Brazil face Portugal in their final group match on Friday in Durban, while the Ivory Coast face North Korea in Nelspruit at the same time.

Ex-BNP minister

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there yesterday.

"I think if a parliamentary body summons someone, the person should appear before it for the sake of transparency," Siraj told reporters emerging from the committee meeting.

Shajahan is the first to respond to such call during the present government's rule.

Earlier, the parliamentary standing committee on public undertakings summoned former chief of Anti-Corruption Commission Lt Gen (ret'd) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury and two of its incumbent commissioners.

Former speaker Jamiruddin Sircar, his deputy Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui and former chief whipp Khandaker Delwar Hossain also were called by the all-party parliamentary probe body.

Despite repeated calls, none of them showed up. Rather, they questioned the parliamentary body's jurisdiction to summon them.

"It's a historic event in the history of parliament. We are pleased for his appearance," Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, chief of the parliament-

'Ganotantrik Parishad' (democratic council) with 14 candidates from the association group.

Delwar Hossain, a representative from Bangladesh Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Merchants Association, contested under Ganotantrik Beboasayee Oikya Parishad (Democratic Businessmen United Council) with eight candidates from the association group. But none could win from his panel.

Dewan Sultan Ahmed, a former FBCCI vice president and a representative of Laxmipur Chamber of Commerce and Industry, contested with six candidates from the chamber group.

Tea and coffee 'protect against heart disease'

BBC ONLINE

Drinking several cups of tea or coffee a day appears to protect against heart disease, a 13-year-long study from the Netherlands has found.

It adds to a growing body of evidence suggesting health benefits from the most popular hot drinks.

Those who drank more than six cups of tea a day cut their risk of heart disease by a third, the study of 40,000 people found.

Consuming between two to four coffees a day was also linked to a reduced risk.

While the protective effect ceased with more than four cups of coffee a day, even those who drank this much were no more likely to die of any cause, including stroke and cancer, than those who abstained.

The Dutch tend to drink coffee with a small amount of milk and black tea without. There have been conflicting reports as to whether milk substantially affects the polyphenols - believed to be the most beneficial substance in tea.

Coffee has properties which could in theory simultaneously increase and reduce risk - potentially raising cholesterol while battling the inflammatory damage associated with heart disease.

tary body, told reports.

He said the former minister submitted a written explanation to the committee and they will examine it, and if necessary, will ask him to come again.

At the meeting held at the Jatuya Sangsad Bhaban, Jute and Textile Minister Abdul Latif Siddiqui praised Siraj for the gesture.

"Different parliamentary bodies earlier summoned many individuals. But none of them showed up. We are delighted at your presence," Siddiqui told his predecessor.

The parliamentary body on April 4 at a meeting alleged that the jute ministry had sold the mill on 10.45 acres of land in Nikli, Kishoreganj at Tk 48.78 lakh while the market price was at least Tk 2.69 crore.

Siraj informed the committee that it was a government decision and he was not solely responsible for the sell-off.

"Now it is the jurisdiction of the parliamentary body to look into whether I was involved in selling the jute mill and its land," said Siraj.

The former jute minister was present at the meeting for around half an hour.

Cabinet okays

FROM PAGE 16
Of them, Diesel Plant Ltd is owned by the Bangladesh Army while Primordial Energy Ltd is a private concern and Aggretech AG a German company.

They will set up a 50MW rental power plant at the Pagla army camp in Narayanganj.

It will be run by diesel for three years. The PDB will purchase electricity from the joint venture for Tk 13.96 per unit and sell it at Tk 2.37. The plant will add power to the national grid in three months of signing the contract.

PDB told the committee that it would have to pay Tk 866 crore in three years for purchasing electricity. The amount includes Tk 575.80 crore in fuel price to be paid to Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC). The rental company will get Tk 290 crore.

Northern Power Solution Ltd will install a 50MW power plant run by furnace oil at Katakhal in Rajshahi for five years. The PDB will purchase power for Tk 7.78 per unit. The plant will supply power to the national grid in nine months

of signing the agreement.

The Power Division informed the committee that the PDB will have to pay Tk 831 crore for purchasing power in five years. The sum includes Tk 501 crore as fuel price to be paid to the BPC. The rental company will get Tk 330 crore.

APR Energy will set up a 40MW plant at Syedpur for three years. It will add electricity to the national grid in three months of signing the contract. The PDB has to pay the company Tk 14.38 for a unit of electricity.

The committee also approved the purchase of 14,339 tonnes of printing paper for Tk 127 crore for distributing free textbooks to students at the secondary level in the academic year 2011.

The education ministry proposal said about 9.23 crore copies of textbooks will be distributed among 79.61 lakh students in the academic year.

The committee also gave the nod to a proposal for procuring two cranes for Bangladesh Railway for Tk 71.46 crore.

JS body asks to free canals, solve city's water-logging

BSS, Dhaka

A meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives yesterday directed the deputy commissioner of Dhaka to evict all illegal structures from the grabbed canals to remove waterlogging from the city.

The meeting directed the authorities concerned to complete elections of all municipalities and union parishads by November 30, tenure of which has already been expired.

It recommended implementing the decision to set up new city corporations in Gazipur and Narayanganj districts.

The meeting also recommended repairing by June the city roads, dug by different agencies for utility services.

It suggested formulating Detailed Area Plans for other cities like Dhaka.

Committee Chairman Advocate Rahmat Ali presided over the meeting at Sangsad Bhaban while Committee Members State Minister for LGRD Jahangir Kabir Nanak, Whip Noor-e-Alam Chowdhury, Abul Khair Bhuiyan and AKM Mustafizur Rahman, among others, were present.

Mohiuddin

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reconstituted to get over the election debacle.

The high command in the capital shares their sentiment, said party insiders.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif said, "We will soon set about reconstituting the Chittagong city unit to overcome organisational deficiencies."

A couple of days back, AL General Secretary Syed Ashraf Islam spoke of similar plans.

Ahmed Hossain, the organising secretary who is in charge of looking after Chittagong AL affairs, said there are organisational weaknesses in the city AL. "We will soon discuss the matter at central working committee and take a decision."

Chittagong city AL committee was formed on June 26, 2006, with Mohiuddin as president and Enamul Haque Danu general secretary for a three-year term.

The duo was supposed to declare names of the remaining committee members within a month. But they announced names of only 19 who were loyal to Mohiuddin.

Since then, four years have gone, but the city AL has yet to have a full 71-member committee.

Over the years, many leaders of the present committee who were once very close to Mohiuddin had fallen out with him over different issues.

After the drubbing in the CCC polls, Mohiuddin has become isolated in Chittagong politics, said his close aides adding that they do not know how he would bounce back.

JS body

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Similarly, the parliamentary body also opposed to authorise UGC to intervene in fixing salaries of teachers and other staffs of private universities and their service rules.

The original bill proposed that every university will prepare salary structure and service rules for its teachers and staffs and will send it to UGC for approval.

But the parliamentary body has relaxed the provision and proposed that a university will only inform UGC about its salary structure and service rules.

During scrutiny of the bill, the parliamentary body met representatives of private universities who opposed many provisions of the bill.

Rashed Khan Menon, chief of the parliamentary body, said the parliamentary body is unanimously recommending that the House pass the bill with the amendments suggested by the committee.

The parliamentary body however proposed for increasing the quota from five percent to six percent for allowing children of freedom fighters and poor but meritorious students of remote areas to study at private universities free of cost.

It also proposed that without approval no private university, or branch of any foreign university or any study centre and tutorial centre, can go for advertisement in any form.

Zakat fund graft

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former Jamaat lawmaker Delwar Hossain Saydee on charges of misappropriating Zakat fund.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police has sent the case to the ACC, State Minister for Religious Affairs Shajahan Mia told the House yesterday.

On May 24, the Islamic Foundation filed the case with Sher-e-Banglanagar Police Station against four persons including Mosharraf Hossain and Saydee, the chief of the then parliamentary body of the ministry, for siphoning off Tk 1.28 crore from the government's Zakat fund.

The organisation on the day at a press conference at its Agargaon office declared that the accused had misappropriated the fund during 2004-05 and 2005-06 fiscal years.

While replying to lawmakers' queries, Shajahan also said the religious affairs ministry has taken action against

49 hajj agencies for their irregularities in 2009.

Of the agencies, he said the ministry cancelled licences and security deposits of three agencies. Security deposits of 37 agencies have been cancelled partially, and 11 of them had their licences suspended for different periods of time.

The ministry also suspended an agency's licence for an indefinite period, warned four agencies about their irregularities and registered allegation against four others.

In response to a query, the state minister said that the government will consider including its representatives in management committees of all religious institutions across the country to fight against militancy and stop irregularities.

Rid's toxic

FROM PAGE 16

Judge Mohammad Abdul Majid of the Drug Court set the date after receiving the advertisement published in two national Bangla dailies that asked Director Abdul Gani and pharmacists Mahbubul Islam and Enamul Haque to appear before the court by May 26.

But the officials did not comply with it.

Police earlier took more than eight months to submit a report before the Drug Court that the three accused were absconding.

Brahmanbaria police, however, on April 25 placed the report on execution of arrest warrants against the three.

Mizanur Rahman, managing director of the company and his wife Sheuly Rahman, also a director, were present in the court during yesterday's hearing. They were granted bail from different courts on different dates.

Earlier on May 26, the same court decided that the three absconding Rid Pharmaceuticals officials would be tried in absentia as they failed to appear before it within the deadline.

On August 11 last year, five officials of the company were charged with producing adulterated paracetamol syrup that caused death to 28 children across the country from June to August last year.

The Dhaka Drug Court issued arrest warrants against the five after Directorate of Drug Administration Superintendent Shafiqul Islam filed the case with it on the same day.

A total of four cases, including one in Brahmanbaria, were filed outside Dhaka in this connection.

Dhaka-Ctg

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Kosba upazila of the district along with locals put blockade at about 9:00am demanding inclusion of their college in the Monthly Payment Order.

They withdrew the blockade at about 12:30pm after getting assurances from Deputy Commissioner Abdul Mannan, Superintendent of Police Mukhlesur Rahman, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Ahmed Kabir and Upazila Chairman Ruhul Bakul.

During the blockade, rail communication remained suspended on four routes--Dhaka-Chittagong, Dhaka-Noakhali, Sylhet-Chittagong and Sylhet-Noakhali.

India seeks to fund

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But we want to increase our shares in the operation gradually," says a meeting source.

Emerging out of the meeting at the finance ministry, Finance Minister AMA Muhith told the press, "We have discussed the nitty-gritty [of the draft agreement and the power transmission line], how the contracts should be framed and the terms for the coal [plant]."

"We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding [MoU] with India. Now they have sent a draft agreement. We are scrutinising its terms," he added.

Answering to a question whether the cross-border power transmission line would be controlled by India, Economic Adviser to Prime Minister Dr Moshir Rahman told the press, "We have not seen anything like that in the documents that they sent."

The finance minister then clarified, "They [India] would do their part, we would do ours."

In April, the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB) floated a tender to set up a 40-kilometre transmission line in Bheramara with a high voltage sub-station at a cost of \$150 million.

The tender evaluation process is now in the final stage and PDB is expected to award the contract soon so that it can be completed within two years.