

Chavez says US, Colombia seek pretext for invasion

REUTERS

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez on Friday dismissed Colombian charges that he harboured leftist Colombian rebels as "a hoax" and pretext for a possible US-backed invasion of his oil-producing country.

A day after abruptly severing relations with the US ally Colombia over the accusations, the socialist Venezuelan leader condemned the government of outgoing Colombian President Alvaro Uribe as "an instrument of US imperialism".

Leftist Chavez's breaking of ties with Bogota has ratcheted up tensions between OPEC member Venezuela and US-supported Colombia in a volatile Andean region plagued by clashing ideologies, guerrilla armies and drug-trafficking.

Addressing a meeting in Caracas of trade unionists from the Americas, Chavez said the United States was targeting his revolutionary rule over top South American crude producer Venezuela, which remains a leading US oil supplier.

"Now Colombia is a great big Yankee base," he said, referring to a deal last year that allows US forces the use of Colombian military bases, a pact Chavez says poses a direct threat to his country. He survived a brief coup in 2002 and frequently denounces assassi-

Khaleda

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and conveyed her thanks to the Saudi king through the envoy, according to a source close to the meeting.

During the meeting, they discussed matters of bilateral interest between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia.

Khaleda Zia has been performing Umrah in the holy month of Ramadan since long.

DC conference

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directives properly," said an establishment ministry official.

He said the DCs would place with their various demands, which include promotions, transfers and visits abroad.

The ministers will also hold separate sittings with the DCs to give them directives on the steps taken by different ministries.

This is the second DC conference since the Awami League-led government assumed office in January 2009.

Prosecution gets

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A member of the investigation agency said they have recently submitted a report to the prosecution requesting it to file a petition with prayers to the tribunal to show the five detained Jamaat leaders arrested in the charges under the Act.

The report has been sent to the prosecution as the investigation agency has adequate materials about the Jamaat leaders' involvement in different war crimes related cases, he said.

"As the five Jamaat leaders are already in custody, it is needed to show them arrested under the Act," the investigator said.

Four cases have already been transferred to the Tribunal from Dhaka and Pirojpur courts against some of the accused including the five.

Earlier, the investigation agency had visited a number of war crime scenes and gathered information and collected documents.

The prosecution feels that the government has already arrested some war crime suspects in other cases and if they (suspects) are not kept confined at this moment, the trial proceedings against them could be hampered, he said.

All the cases, which have already been filed across the country on charges of committing crimes during the Liberation War, will be placed before the Tribunal for trial, as any other court cannot try such cases as per the International Crimes Tribunal (Amendment) Act, 1973, he added.

The sources say more names would be placed before the Tribunal gradually as per the materials on specific allegations seeking direction to arrest or detain them.

The government has recently sent a list of 40 people in the immigration offices of

nation plots he says are hatched by domestic enemies and supported by the US government.

The Venezuelan leader repeated his government's rejection of photos, videos and maps presented by Colombia to the Organization of American States to back its charges that Colombian guerrillas operate from camps inside Venezuela.

"All this hoax that here in Venezuela there are I don't know how many thousands of terrorists ... this lie is a perfect excuse to attempt an invasion of Venezuela," he said.

Such an attack would trigger "a 100-year war", Chavez said, adding: "May God protect us from such a war".

A family loses

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from several diseases.

"I just want punishment of those who killed my daughter, I don't want any compensation," Kalam, who is a street vendor, said.

Hasina, who fell unconscious two times looking at the photographs of her daughter, said Beauty was the third among her four daughters and always thought about the family.

Recently, beauty was thinking to quit Vertex Garments Ltd as her line in-charge Jharna Begum was torturing her, Hasina said.

Meanwhile, main accused in the case Jharna Begum, was taken on a three-day remand yesterday, officer-in-charge of Mirpur Police Station Kazi Wazed Ali told The Daily Star.

Earlier on Friday Beauty's father Kalam filed a murder case accusing five persons including Production Manager Mithu. Police have yet to arrest others.

Nazrul Islam Malum, factory manager of Vertex Garments, said the garment authority is also investigating whether the incident was a murder or a suicide, adding they too want justice and will assist police in the process.

Osman Gani Talukder, managing director of the factory, said the victim's family would get Tk one lakh in compensation from the group's insurance to which all the workers of the factory are entitled.

The factory that declared Friday and Saturday as general holidays will open today.

Meanwhile, Beauty was buried at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard on Friday.

COPS KILLING 2 more held, hunting continues

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Two more people were arrested yesterday in connection with killing of three policemen in Bera upazila of the district.

The arrestees are Abdur Rahim, 35, a village quack of Goalnagar Bazar of the district and Md Taju Khan, 30, of Shomejpur in Rajbari.

During the ongoing special drive the police arrested Rahim from his village residence, said Pabna Police Superintendent Md Jamil Ahmed.

He claimed that Rahim has link with the outlawed operations.

Meanwhile, Rajbari police arrested Taju Khan from Shomejpur village early Saturday following an intelligence report, said SM Aynul Bari, Rajbari Police Superintendent (SP).

The arrested Taju informed the policemen to come to the spot, where the killing happened, for selling wood, added SP.

Factory fined

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Locals complained to the DoE that the pollution caused their fish and crop production drop.

The industry has been polluting the area since it was set up in 2006 in Sonargao upazila of Narayanganj.

The owner of the factory built an effluent treatment plant (ETP) in June 2009 and took an environment clearance certificate but the authorities never used the plant to save money and kept on discharging liquid waste into the local wetlands and agricultural lands, said the DoE sources.

The factory dyes and washes around 10 tonnes of knit fabrics every day and discharges about 2.07 lakh cubic metres of toxic untreated waste, they added.

While conducting the drive, the DoE team tested samples of discharged water and found dissolved oxygen (DO) at a much lower level than the permissible level set by the government.

"The level of DO was so low that it was very harmful for the environment," said Munir Chowdhury, monitoring and enforcement director of the DoE, Dhaka.

The DoE authorities sent a notice to the company in November 2009 asking it to run the ETP properly and stop polluting the environment.

"But they paid no heed to us. So we fined them the amount and also directed them to clean the area," said Munir.

"This time if they don't do as we said, their electricity and gas connection will be snapped," he noted.

Fighting poverty

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percent of the indicators.

In terms of human lives, South Asia has the highest level of poverty in the world.

In Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal, the poor are deprived in case of more than half of the indicators on an average. In India, Bangladesh and Nepal deprivation in living standard is the highest contributor to poverty followed by health and education.

In education, Bangladesh is much better than India, Pakistan and Nepal. Only nine percent people of poor households have their children not attending schools in Bangladesh.

In South Asia, only Sri Lanka is ahead of Bangladesh on the education dimension, and on the health dimension Bangladesh is better than India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The MPI is based on statistics collected from different countries for different years. In case of Bangladesh, it was prepared on the basis of statistics of 2007, and it was compared with that of 2004.

The World Bank's (WB) senior economist Zahid Hossain said inspired by the work of Nobel Laureate economist Amartya Sen, the MPI was prepared. Sen has argued convincingly for a multi-dimensional approach to poverty as well as development.

Zahid also said MPI is not comparable with poverty assessment based on the Cost of Basic Needs (CBN) method, the \$1.25 a day criteria or the Human Development Index and the Human Poverty Index.

Govt to import

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buses through tender among Korean bus companies alone.

"Economic Relations Department (ERD) is now negotiating with the Korean authorities on the loan agreement," said a senior communications ministry official, adding that the tender will be floated once the agreement is inked.

Although the government has given the nod to buy buses from Korea, it did not decide as to whether the buses would be assembled here or in Korea.

Some communications ministry officials are in favour of importing assembled buses to ensure quality while others want importing only chassis of the buses arguing that building the bodies locally will create employment.

Moves are also afoot to expedite the process of buying the new buses from India, South Korea and China, said the officials.

However, getting new buses from those countries will require several more months, an official said, preferring not to be named.

"It is possible to add some 200 buses to the city's public transport within two to three months," Communications Secretary Md Mozammel Haque Khan told The Daily Star on Thursday, adding that it would take them nearly a year to bring all the 950 buses.

He also said the ministry is trying its best and hopefully public sufferings will ease once the new buses hit the streets. "The problem cannot be resolved overnight," he added.

According to Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) records, the number of roadworthy buses and minibuses that ply the city streets are 6,770 and 5,952 respec-

tively while 1,446 buses and 2,365 minibuses are unfit.

These unfit vehicles are not running on the city streets now to evade the ongoing drive against outdated vehicles, intensifying the city's existing transport crisis.

Earlier this year, the government got 10 million euros from Nordic Development Fund (NDF) with which Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) purchased 100 buses from China that cost about 3 million euros. The government is negotiating with the donors to buy 200 more buses with the remaining fund.

But communications ministry officials said it is still undecided whether new tender will be floated to buy buses from China or the same Chinese company that supplied the 100 buses should supply those at the same price.

Tehran

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Fusion is used in the hydrogen bomb, in which fissile material like that in a simple nuclear warhead launches the process by which atomic nuclei fuse together to release energy.

Iran has always rejected Western suspicions that its nuclear programme is aimed at developing a weapons capability.

In May, North Korea said it carried out a nuclear fusion reaction that could lead to an almost limitless supply of clean energy, a process that scientists have so far yet to achieve.

Physicists worldwide are striving to develop a nuclear fusion power plant, a project which the International Atomic Energy Agency terms "a great challenge."

Govt firm on DAP

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allowed to be turned into housing," he added.

Mannan however claimed that neither real estate nor land developers' association opposed the DAP in public.

He said sensible demand would be accepted while carrying out DAP. No business quarters will get a chance to deceive the innocent people by their unapproved housing projects.

Qazi Golam Nasir, general secretary of IAB, said in a keynote presentation that proper implementation of the building construction rules of 2008 is crucial to make Dhaka city liveable.

Development scope under the rules of 1996 and 2008 is almost the same but one significant difference is that the latter suggests keeping fifty percent open space of a big plot with vertical development of structure.

Architect Iqbal Habib, member secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, said the building rules and Bangladesh National Building Code are not being enforced accordingly.

A section of Rajuk officials are trying to misinterpret the

building rules, he said.

Actions will be taken against Rajuk officials if they deliberately misinterpret building construction rules, said the minister.

Owners of small plot face some problems with the present rules, Mannan said, adding that Rajuk has formed a committee to review the rules.

Khondker Showkat Hossain, secretary to the Ministry of Housing and Public Works, Md Nurul Huda, Rajuk chairman and Mubasshar Hussein, president of IAB, among others spoke while Engineer Md Abdul Awal, managing director of The Structural Engineers Limited, was the chair.

Rab men

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adding that the plain-clothes personnel were wearing Rab jackets.

Contacted, Captain of Rab-2 Abu Khaled Al Mamun said the pedestrian was drunk and attacked the cab driver for blowing the horn.

He said the Rab personnel slapped the man but they did not fracture his hand by beating him with sticks.

JS body leaders

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Minister Sheikh Hasina on Thursday said the special committee to amend the constitution would be reconstituted if BNP nominates a lawmaker for it.

Asked how BNP's lawmaker will be accommodated in the committee since the committee cannot be reconstituted when parliament is not in session, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, through her public relations officer, told The Daily Star that they are eagerly waiting to receive the opposition lawmaker's name.

"The special committee will invite the nominated BNP lawmaker to attend the meetings of the committee and it has the power to issue such invitations," Wares Hossain, Sajeda's public relations officer, told The Daily Star.

"In consultation with the prime minister, if necessary, a special session of the Jatiya Sangsad can also be called to reconstitute the special committee and incorporate the opposition lawmaker," said Wares Hossain quoting Sajeda.

Talking to The Daily Star, Suranjit Sengupta, co-chair of the committee, also said if the BNP nominates their representative, it would not be a problem for the opposition lawmaker to attend the committee meetings, as he or she will be able to attend them on special invitation.

standing committee member Moudud Ahmed at a press conference at his Motijheel office said, "BNP will join the committee when the government dissolves the current committee and reconstitutes it with an equal number of representatives from the treasury and the opposition benches.

Eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday said public opinion should be taken to incorporate their wishes in the constitution and to reach a national consensus on amending the sacred document.

He was talking to journalists after attending a workshop in Chittagong.

He said formation of the committee by the government should not get so much importance or create controversy. It should not be considered one party's decision.

"I will politely appeal that as a major political party BNP should take it as a national issue and should play proper role in this regard," he said.

Moudud Ahmed said his party would undo any amendment made when it assumes power next time unless the government reconstitutes the special committee according to their demand.

24 Allahr Dal members arrested in Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Police arrested 24 members including two leaders of Allahr Dal, an Islamist outfit, in Rother Bazar village under Sadar upazila of the district yesterday.

The arrestees were having a 'secret meeting' in the house of Haji Moinuddin, a member of the organisation, said Gaibandha Sadar thana police.

Police also seized some books on Islamic revolution during the drive.

The arrests were made following a tip-off from the villagers who objected to such meetings on every Saturday.

During primary interrogation, the arrestees confessed that they are active members of the outfit and followers of Matin Mehdi, the kingpin of the organisation, now facing death sentence in a court verdict, police said.

The Allahr Dal men will be produced before the court on Sunday with the prayer of a ten-day remand for each of them for further interrogation, said Gaibandha Superintendent of Police Mohammad Sahadat Hossain.

Earlier, police arrested nine members of the outfit from Sadullapur and Gobindaganj upazilas last month.

HOSPITAL TENDER

BCL men

sued over assault

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of Bangladesh Chhatra League leaders and activists of Mohammadpur thana unit yesterday assaulted some officials of Dhaka Shishu Hospital inside a meeting room and damaged chairs and tables.

The attackers forcibly entered the room when a board meeting was going on and demanded giving them all tenders without following any procedure, hospital sources said.

As some officials and staffers protested this, they beat up some of them.

Director of the Hospital Prof AR Khan filed a case with Sher-e-Banglanagar Police Station accusing around 15 people for the incident. They include BCL unit president Mesbah Uddin Mujib and his accomplices Shaheen, Zahidul Haq Babu and Mona.

Contacted at 12:30am today, Officer-in-Charge of the police station Riaz Hossain said they are yet to arrest anyone in this connection.

Dr Kamal

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that the court verdicts are ridding the constitution of controversial matters," he said.

The eminent jurist was talking to journalists after attending an advocacy workshop on "Improving City Governance and Private Sector Development" at Hotel Agrabad.

Asked about the government initiative to form a parliamentary committee in this regard, Dr Kamal said, "Formation of a committee by the government should not get so much importance or create controversy. It should not be considered as a party outlook."

Regarding BNP's stance on the issue, Dr Kamal said, "I will politely appeal that as a major political party BNP should take it as a national issue and should play proper role in this regard."

International Business Forum of Bangladesh organised the workshop in association with USAID and Progati.

Transparency International Bangladesh Chairman M Hafizuddin Khan, Chittagong City Corporation Mayor M Manjur Alam, BNP Vice-Chairman Abdullah Al Noman and Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industries Senior Vice-President MA Salam were special guests at the workshop in which newly-elected ward councillors and business leaders participated.

While presenting the keynote paper at the workshop, IBFF Research Director ABM Mafizur Rahman suggested reforms in the city corporation regulations and autonomy for all city corporations.

Dr Kamal urged the public representatives to listen to the needs of the citizens.

Hafizuddin Khan observed that the local government bodies including city corporations lack proper transparency.

Mayor Manjur Alam spoke for city corporations' working with different utility service providers, like Wasa, PDB, PWD, in a coordinated manner for smooth development of cities.

Dockers announce

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Rahman in a written statement alleged that the CPA authorities are yet to implement the decisions made regarding the demands in their various meetings with the ministries concerned.

He demanded immediate issuance of the office order regarding appointments of all dockworkers and categorisation of stevedoring staffs as per previous decisions.

Blaming an alleged "syndicate" of CPA officials and leaders from the ruling and opposition parties for the situation Mahfuzur said, "A deep resentment grew among the workers as the CPA has not yet met the demands."

He also warned of tougher movement if the demands are not met by August 4, 2010.

Vice-President of the dockers' federation Eskandar Miah, its joint secretaries Abdul Abad, Rashid Ahmed Chowdhury, Wahidullah Sarkar and Mir Nawshad Ali were also present at the press conference.

Contacted, CPA acting chairman and member (Ma-

rine and Harbour) Capt Sheikh Arif Mahmood said the process of reinstating the dockers who are medically fit is on.

"We have some procedures to follow before appointing workers or implementing the decisions taken so far to ensure their proper salaries and other facilities," he said.

The CPA had sent a letter to shipping ministry and awaiting its decision on opening labour department for the workers' welfare, said the acting chairman, adding that the existing and would-be berth operators should also be consulted in this regard.

"Many of the selected workers are already working under berth operators while CPA made arrangement for their medical treatment," said Capt Arif.

On the dockers' agitation programme he said, "Suspending port activities to press demand is unacceptable. Implementing all the decisions following proper procedure may take a little time."

Shibir plans

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Shakil, and Masum, nephew of Jamaat Aamir Ataur Rahman of Rajshahi city unit, over the last one year.

Huda and Shahadat were produced before a Dhaka Court with a ten-day remand prayer for each, while the others were remanded on different terms.

ADC Monir also said acting on the arrestees' information, law enforcers apprehended around 12 more Shibir cadres and leaders in Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna who were taking preparations to carry out simultaneous attacks in the cities.

Masum is not a Shibir member as he is not a student. But he used to lead armed attacks carried out by Shibir men and was asked to lead a certain team in the capital, the DB official claimed.

The official said Shibir cadres were coming mostly from Rajshahi, Bogra, Khulna, Thakurgaon and Chittagong.

Investigators say Shibir men gathering from different parts of the country are taking shelter at different Shibir-controlled messes and offices in the capital following arrests of Jamaat trio Motiur Rahman Nizami, Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed and

Contacted at 12:30am today, Officer-in-Charge of the police station Riaz Hossain said they are yet to arrest anyone in this connection.

Mass grave uncovered in Mexico

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

Authorities in Mexico uncovered the remains of at least 23 people on the outskirts of the country's third largest city in what authorities believe is a gangland body dump.

Investigators in Monterrey moved in to the area with heavy equipment to search more bodies at the rural site, after the bodies were found in several pits on Thursday.

Photographs from the site showed charred spots on the soil at the site, suggesting at least some of the bodies may have been burned before being buried.

"There are some that can be identified, but others are not in good condition and we will have to run DNA tests," Eduardo Saucedo, director of investigations of Nuevo Leon state prosecutors, said.

The pits will now be inspected for more bodies, he said.

RAMPANT KILLINGS It is not clear how the dumping-ground was discovered. Drug related killings have become increasingly common in Mexico in recent years, with cartel hit men known to use mass dumping sites to dispose of their victims.

In May, police in the central Mexico tourist town for Taxco found 55 bodies in an abandoned silver mine.

The Mexican government has taken a hard line against the drug cartels, launching a major offensive against them in 2006.

But the operation has had limited success, with almost 25,000 people being killed since the operations began.

Delwar Hossain Saydee. DB officials say the arrestees told them around seven names of Shibir cadres who are tasked with collecting explosives.

They, quoting the arrestees, add some central leaders of Jamaat and Shibir are coordinating the entire process of collecting arms and explosives.

The Jamaat and Shibir leaders, who are involved in the process, did not inform the cadres when and where the attack will be launched, they add.

Speaking anonymously, a mid-ranked DB official said several teams of detectives are out to arrest the cadres and leaders assigned to carry out subversive activities. Bu following the arrests made over the last few weeks, the operatives and leaders have shifted their shelters, he added.

The arrestees said the Jamaat and Shibir leaders adopted such strategies so that they can escape arrest.

Beacon Group Managing Director Shakhawat used to give financial aid for plotting, claim the interrogators.

Gujarat state

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constitution, certain formalities have to be fulfilled".

Shah's resignation came a day after Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) charged him with kidnapping and murder of alleged gangster Sohrawuddin Sheikh and his wife Kausar Bi in November 2005.

A Gujarat court on Saturday rejected Shah's anticipatory bail plea and he faces imminent arrest in the case. Shah had failed to appear before the CBI on Friday for interrogation for the second time.

The CBI, which filed the charge sheet on Friday before a court in Ahmedabad, has already sent teams for arresting him after he refused to appear before the investigating agency team by 1:00pm on Friday, the deadline for interrogation for the second time.

Attacking India's ruling Congress party, Modi said "the case against Shah was a revenge for its loss in the 2007 assembly polls when it had made Sohrawuddin a hero. This was a politically motivated action against Amit Shah and the BJP government in Gujarat to corner it and put obstacles in the development works it was carrying out".

"Shah is completely innocent and the charges against him are fabricated. The CBI is being misused by the Congress against its political rival," he said.

Shah has been named as an accused along with 14 others including some senior police officers on the charge sheet filed with the special CBI court.

Besides the murder charge, the other