

CPD says no to

FROM PAGE 20
rice even in aman season.
On inflation, he said monetary policy alone cannot contain it, and it needs to be addressed by a combination of policy measures.

Talking about the \$1 billion loan the IMF agreed to provide, he said the conditions tied to loan might slow down the economic growth of the country.

"The government could have looked for other avenues, like the World Bank," suggested Debapriya.

CPD believes that the IMF will tag other conditions, such as reduction of public expenditure and rise in tax collection, on the loan.

Debapriya said it has been proved in the last four years that Bangladesh can run without IMF loans.

"We don't understand why the government has decided to borrow from them (IMF). We want transparency in the deal," he noted.

After borrowing \$490 million from IMF's poverty reduction growth facilities scheme between 2004 and 2007, Bangladesh has moved to borrow around \$1 billion under ECF (extended credit facility) arrangement in the next four years.

CPD also criticised the government for its poor performance with the implementation of the public sector investment despite undertaking a bigger outlay for the current financial year.

"No effective initiative is seen to speed up implementation of annual development programme and projects under public-private partnership (PPP)," he said.

The think-tank also talked about the overheated stock market and falling remittance inflows, which it said can hurt the economy of the country.

The recent growth in the capital market is difficult to relate with the growth of the real economy of the country, CPD says and attributes it to the lack of investment opportunities in productive sectors.

"The capacity of Securities and Exchange Commission appears to be inadequate in regulating the market efficiently," it said citing example of frequent changes in the rules concerning margin loans. According to the policy organisation, there are lot of manipulations and anomalies in the market.

The policy organisation forecasts a rise in interest rate of bank loans given the

AL lawmaker

FROM PAGE 20
came under attack in Aliganj area around 1:30pm as they went to visit a disputed land.

However, the injuries were minor.

Kabari, parliament member from Narayanaganj-4 constituency, said a gang led by Kawsar Ahmed Palash, president of Fatullah unit Jatiya Sramik League, attacked her motorcade.

The gang members were carrying sharp weapons. They threw brickbats and fired shots, she said.

Nobody was reported bullet-hit.

Kabari said she had complaints that Palash illegally occupied a piece of land owned by Public Works Department.

Denying the allegations, Palash said Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation was in possession of the land and he took out a lease on the property from them.

Witnesses said supporters of Palash vandalised at least 10 vehicles on Dhaka-Fatullah-Narayanaganj old highway after the incident.

2 SC judges

FROM PAGE 20
Musa Khaled of the High Court Division sent their wealth reports to the CJ office, SC Registrar Ashraf Islam told The Daily Star.

He, however, could not give the details of the reports.

On Monday, Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque at a meeting urged all the judges of Appellate and HC divisions to submit their wealth statements to him for the sake of transparency of the judiciary.

A highly placed source in the apex court said the chief justice would decide the next course of action with the wealth reports after all judges submit their statements.

Earlier on December 30, Khairul submitted his wealth statement to President Zillur Rahman in a move expected to encourage other judges.

pressure of inflation.

On energy crisis, the CPD fellow said the sector continues to be neglected, and the government has chosen costly options to address the issue.

"We have to decide boldly to go for coal-based power plant."

Prof Mustafizur Rahman, executive director of CPD, delivered welcome address and answered queries of journalists.

White-rump

FROM PAGE 20
division.

This species is now seriously endangered in the country, forest officials said.

Kalomoy Chakma, who caught the female vulture on Sunday, said he used an indigenous trap to capture it from a nearby jungle at Champatali under Kawkhali upazila. He also catches other wild animals using the same trap.

Chittagong divisional forest officer Mohammed Subedar Islam said they will release the rare bird in Kaptai Natural Park within a few days. They are now feeding the large bird, as it became weak.

This species of vulture is easily identifiable. The overall black colour with greyish-black secondary and contrasting fluffy white ruff identify the perched bird. When the wings are spread, the white back and rump are visible. It makes nest up on trees.

White-rump vulture is one of the four species of vulture family. An adult vulture weighs up to eight kilograms. Normally it survives 10 to 15 years and up to 30 years in a cage.

It lays only one egg in a year. Usually they are seen at grazing fields and feed on dead cattle and other animal carcasses.

Grabbers

FROM PAGE 1

"If we want to remove illegal structures, we should remove all illegal commercial structures including those belonging to the Department of Forest, armed forces and political high-ups," said the Cox's Bazar DC describing the dire situation of the beach.

The DC said his office prepared a report on all incidents of encroachment and sent it to the higher authorities.

Demand for land on the beach shot up in recent years in the wake of a boom in tourism industry. To accommodate the incoming throng of tourists, hotels and restaurants are mushrooming on the beach violating the law.

During a recent visit a despairing situation was seen along the beach. Locals say if the government does not take immediate action, the beach is going to be a hectic place full of commercial activities in near future.

Work of setting up new structures was seen at many spots that apparently turned the beach into a construction site.

The encroachers are erecting makeshift structures on the sandy beach where water hits during high tide. Bricks and other materials were seen piled along the beach for further construction.

The government in 1999 announced the entire beach from Cox's Bazar to Teknaf as an "ecologically critical area". Accordingly, any activity that might change the existing character of the land and water or threaten local ecology was prohibited.

Asked, Muhammed Munir Chowdhury, director of Monitoring and Enforcement wing of the DoE, who led a special drive in Cox's Bazar, said, "The district administration has the responsibility to remove all illegal structures."

He added the DoE would conduct further drives to ensure an echo-friendly sea beach if the district administration failed to do their task.

Earlier, it was reported that about 12,000 out of 27,293 acres of forestland in the district was grabbed during the BNP-Jamaat alliance rule.

The forest officials say they filed 458 cases against 1,843 encroachers during that time.

Orders from courts came at different times to recover 912 acres of forestland -- 320 acres in Dhalgata, 200 in Charandip, 10 in Matarbari, 350 in Siradia and 32 acres in Lemshikhali.

But the matter virtually ended there as no further action was taken against any encroachment.

Mufti Izharul on 2-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Mufti Izharul Islam Chowdhury, president of an Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) faction, on a two-day remand in a case filed for abducting homeopathic physician Azizur Rahman in September 2003.

Metropolitan Magistrate Shamima Parvin passed the order after CID ASP Fazlul Kabir, also the IO, produced him before it with a 10-day remand prayer.

Earlier on Sunday, Izharul was shown arrested in the case.

Rab held Izharul at a madrasa at Lalkhan Bazar in Chittagong on December 16 last year for his alleged links with Huji.

Azizur, a resident of Mazar Road in Mirpur, had gone missing on September 4, 2003. His wife Farhana Reza Jui filed the abduction.

LAW ON RECKLESS DRIVING

HC against changes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain within three weeks why reduction in punishment for reckless driving should not be declared illegal and unconstitutional.

On October 10, 1985, the former government of HM Ershad brought amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) and the Penal Code. The amendment reduced the jail terms to three years from seven for reckless driving that kills and maims countless people.

An HC bench of Justice A H M Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik and Justice Sheikh Md Zakir Hossain yesterday issued the rule in response to a writ petition filed as public interest litigation.

Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh filed the petition earlier yesterday seeking HC directives on the government to cancel the amendments.

Due to the reduction in punishment, incidents of road accidents and death due to reckless driving have been on the rise, the petition stated.

If the amendments are cancelled seven years jail term would be upheld as the highest punishment for reckless driving, petitioner's counsel Advocate Manzill Murshid told The Daily Star.

Secretaries to the Cabinet Division, Secretariat of the President, the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Law, Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Parliament Secretariat have been made respondents to the rule.

FBCCI

FROM PAGE 20

President AK Azad yesterday.

The business leader's critical comments came referring to a newspaper report stating that a ruling party MP allegedly assaulted an executive engineer of Water Development Board (WDB) in Barisal on Monday.

Azad was addressing the inaugural programme of online VAT return submission at the Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh.

Citing the incident the FBCCI leader said, "He went to the WDB office to get a tender landed for his son. Later he faced people's wrath and had to leave the office under police protection."

The lawmakers get duty free cars and they do not attend parliament session, mentioned Azad adding, some MPs also set vehicles ablaze and burn to death common people the day before a hartal is called by their parties.

Criticising duty free cars for the lawmakers Azad said if anybody deserves the advantage, it should be the tax officials who collected highest amount of revenue.

Awami League lawmaker from Barisal-2 constituency Manirul Islam Moni entered the room of WDB Executive Engineer Harunur Rashid and allegedly assaulted him over a tender process.

Incensed, the contractors and staff of the office chased the MP and his men. They came out of the office under police protection.



Mita with bandaged stab wounds in National Medical College Hospital.

PHOTO: STAR

Girl stabbed

FROM PAGE 20

employed at the National Medical College Hospital (NMCH) in the ultra sonogram section.

According to sources, stalker Jamie Ahmed Mishuk along with one Asif waylaid their rickshaw around 2:00pm at Okkhoy Das Lane and assaulted Mita and her father.

He swooped on her with a knife leaving three deep gashes on her forehead and cheeks before fleeing the scene.

Mita was rushed to NMCH where she is currently undergoing treatment.

Mishuk, a cousin of her classmate Belayet, had been stalking her for the last 18 months, Mita told The Daily Star lying on her hospital bed. On some days he used to call her around 200 times, she claimed.

She used to work as a telephone operator in NMCH but the hospital authorities shifted her to another section to relieve her of hearing the repeated threats made by Mishuk, a tearful Mita said.

She changed her mobile phone at least nine times but he somehow got hold of

her new numbers, she added.

Nirmal Karmakar, her brother-in-law, said Mishuk's family even sent him off to Singapore seven months ago to cure him of his obsession but it was of no use. He continued badgering her with his calls and never stopped even for a day, he said.

When he returned to Dhaka last week the frequency and intensity of his threats increased, Mita said.

"He said if I did not agree to marry him he would pour acid on me and kill my entire family," she cried while talking to The Daily Star.

Since then, her father Nepal Chandra Dev, a retired NGO official, started escorting her every time she went outside her home.

Faruk Ahmed officer-in-charge of Gendaria Police Station, said they were trying to arrest Mishuk and the accomplice. Mita's mother, Rekha Rani, a former deputy director of Bangladesh Bank filed a case in this connection accusing Mishuk and his friend Asif.

JS sovereign

FROM PAGE 1

standing committee on it. So the judiciary too with regard to all its appointments is answerable to the parliamentary committee, he added.

Suranjit, chairman of the committee, made the observations at a press conference at the Jatiya Sangsad media centre.

Earlier on Monday, Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque at a meeting with the High Court judges said the Supreme Court would not send any representatives to any parliamentary bodies.

The judges at the meeting said the judiciary is an independent organ of the state and the SC is an independent institution as per the constitution.

So, they argued, the apex court is not obligated to respond to summons from a parliamentary body.

On November 29 last year, the House body on the law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry decided to ask the SC registrar to appear before it to clarify alleged irregularities in appointment of the district and sessions judge, Dhaka.

At the beginning of his briefing yesterday, Suranjit said he wanted to dispel the confusion created following Monday's discussion at the SC.

On summoning the SC registrar, he said, "We invite everyone with due respect to attend the committee's meeting."

"Now it is up to them [SC] if they will send any representatives to attend our meeting or not."

Once, he added, the registrar voluntarily attended the committee's meeting on the bill for raising salaries of the Supreme Court and High Court judges.

On the judges' discussion Monday, Suranjit said, "It was a mere administrative discussion. Neither the chief justice nor any other judge gave any verdict there. We did not hear anything about the discussion from the Supreme Court's spokesperson. It's you [media] who have created confusion through your varying reports."

In return for anonymity, a legal expert yesterday told The Daily Star that no parliament except the one in the United Kingdom is sovereign.

"Only the constitution of the republic is sovereign,

36 cops, Rab men awarded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 26 police and Rab men have been awarded with President Police Medal (PPM) while 10 others with Bangladesh Police Medal (BPM) for their courageous performance.

PPM awardees are Maj Md Rezaul Huq of Rab-2, Maj SM Kamruzzaman of Rab-10, Maj Md Ahsanul Kabir of Rab-1, Maj Sakawat Hossain of Rab-7, Syed Nurul Islam of DMP, ASP Farida Rubai of Rab headquarters, ASP Mohammad Jasim Uddin of Rab-7, Inspector Md Ismail, Inspector Md Rafiqul Islam, Inspector Md Yusuf Siddique, SI Md Monu Sohel Imtiaz of DMP, SI Md Parvez Islam of DMP, SI Md Alim Hossain Sikder of Narsingdi Model Police Station, ASI Md Zamirul Islam of SB, ASI Md Saiful Islam of Akhaura Police Station, Constable Md Hemayet Uddin of SB, Constable Sakawat Rabbani of Narsingdi Police Lines, Constable Sheikh Bahadur of Rab-7, AIG (Confidential and operation) Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun, Additional DC Md Mahub Alam of DB-South, Mohammad Mokhlesur Rahman of DB, AC Mohammad Golam Azad Khan of DB-South, ASP Md Fazlur Rahman of CID, ASP Md Helal Uddin of CID, Lt BN Md Foyez Al Karim of Rab-9, SI Nibaron Chandra Burman of DMP, SI Mazharul Islam of DMP and SI Sadip Kumer Das of CMP.

BPM awardees are Additional Inspector General of Police Mohammad Zaved Patwari, also chief of Special Branch, Md Mokhlesur Rahman, additional IGP (CID), DMP Commissioner Benazir Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner Md Monirul Islam of Detective Branch (South), DC Habibur Rahman, SSP Abdul Kahar Akand of CID, Rab's Intelligence wing Director Lt Col Ziaul Ahsan and Additional SP Md Jannatul Hasan.

In his deposition, Sayeed said the ACC directed him to launch an inquiry into allegations against Koko for his reported involvement in money laundering.

Following the direction, he made an inquiry into the allegations and found Koko's involvement in laundering money to Singapore. Later he submitted the probe report to the commission, which directed him to file a case against Koko.

Sayeed said he then filed the case with Kafrul police on March 17, 2009 on charge of laundering Tk 23 crore to Singapore.

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Trial on with Koko

FROM PAGE 1

elder son Tarique Rahman and Koko. Of those, the money laundering case against Koko is the first which has been put on hearing.

Koko and Saimon have been charged in the case with laundering of Tk 23 crore to Singapore.

As both Koko and Saimon are absconding, the court started the trial against them in absentia.

A Singapore court has also sentenced a Singaporean citizen who kept Koko's laundered money in his account.

According to Singapore newspaper The Straits Times report, the court on Monday convicted and fined businessman Lim Siew Cheng \$900,677 (\$\$1.2 million) for transferring Koko's \$3.17 lakh and holding the money in his personal account upon Koko's advice.

Besides, Tarique Rahman is also facing a money laundering case which was fixed for hearing yesterday in another Dhaka court for taking the charges into cognisance.

The Court of Senior Special Judge Md Zohurul Hoque yesterday deferred the hearing and fixed February 2 for it to take into cognisance the charges brought against BNP Senior Vice-Chairman Tarique Rahman and his business partner Giasuddin Al Mamun in the money laundering case.

Mohammad Mozammel Hossain, judge of the Special Judge's Court-3, started trial of the case against Koko through recording statement of complainant Mohammad Abu Sayeed, deputy director of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

After recording the complainant's statement, the judge fixed January 19 for next hearing and summoned four other witnesses to appear before the court on the scheduled date.

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Trader stabbed

FROM PAGE 1

Injured Bachchu Sarkar, 55, a security guard of Pegasus Sock Factory, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with injury to his left knee.

Sub-Inspector Anwar Hossain of Bangshal Police Station said, "The trader's body was found near a tin-roofed house of one Hossain Mollah on Bangshal Lane around 9:00am."

"The body bore multiple stab wounds and the veins of hands were cut," the SI added.

Sajid's younger brother, Mohammad Arman, said, "My brother went to sleep at home at night but in the morning he was not found."

Police sent the body to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Meanwhile, Bachchu Sarkar at hospital told reporters that as he opened the gate responding to a knocking around 1:30pm, a masked man fired three bullets, one of which hit him.

The attacker and his accomplices ran away immediately.

The factory owner, Mohammad Ehsan, earlier told police that some unidentified extortionists were demanding Tk 10 lakh from him over the past three months, said Officer-in-Charge Faruque Ahmed of Gendaria Police Station.

The OC said Ehsan had refused to pay the money, prompting attack by the extortionists.

accused had laundered money they received from China Harbour Engineering Company Ltd and Siemens for helping them win government contracts.

China Harbour got a Tk 351 crore contract to set up New Mooring Container Terminal and Siemens a Tk 239 crore contract to supply and install equipment for Teletalk, the state-owned mobile phone operator.

After an investigation into the matter, the ACC pressed charges against Koko and Saimon on November 12, 2009. Saimon's name was included in the charge sheet as his involvement with money laundering was found.

The same judge on November 30 last year framed charges against the duo in their absence and said the trial would continue in absentia.

Special Public Prosecutor Mosharraf Hossain Kajol appeared for the state.

CASE AGAINST TARIQUE Judge Mohammad Zohurul Haque of the Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after Tarique's lawyer sought adjournment of the hearing seeking time for preparation for it.

In the petition, Tarique's lawyer said the High Court had earlier rejected his client's writ filed to challenge legality of the charges. A leave to appeal petition was filed later with the Supreme Court that is now pending hearing, he added.

Mamun was produced before the court, while Tarique had gone abroad for treatment.

On July 6 last year the ACC pressed money laundering charges against Tarique and Mamun, accusing the two of laundering Tk 20.41 crore between 2003 and 2007.

According to the charge sheet, Tarique had realised the money in foreign currencies from different companies and organisations in exchange for the sums he had promised to win them contracts using his clout as son of the then prime minister Khaleda Zia.

TIB submits

FROM PAGE 1

submitted to the court. All other documents containing the litigants' perception of the judiciary were given in three compact disks, said TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzaman.

"The survey report will be found fully consistent if it is compared with the data maintaining the methodology we have used during our survey," he told The Daily Star.

Iftek