

3 AL leaders held

FROM PAGE 20
Police also arrested a local Jubo League leader and seven of his cohorts yesterday from Ghorasal in Narsingdi for assaulting a policeman and a contractor.

In Savar, police filed case against 150 named and unnamed local activists of AL and BCL following the incident Friday night.

The arrested were identified as AL activists Abdur Razzak, 30, Zahid, 32, and Sahadat, 35.

Sources in police said scores of AL activists attacked and vandalised Savar thana on Friday, assaulted and injured cops before snatching away upazila AL standing committee member and local Hawkers' League secretary Abdul Kader Molla, who was arrested allegedly for his criminal activities.

A case was filed against 17 named and 150 unnamed AL and BCL men yesterday and the three were picked up in a drive from different places of the town.

Our Narsingdi correspondent reports: Chanchal Mia, vice president of Ward No 7 unit Jubo League of Ghorasal Poursava, and his accomplices demanded Tk 1 lakh

toll from contractor Shakhawat Hossain when he went to Ghorasal bus stand area to look after a Roads and Highways Department work, said Atiqur Rahman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Palash Police Station.

Being refused, Chanchal and his men beat up Shakhawat. The gang also assaulted Assistant Sub-inspector (ASI) Ahsan Kabir, in-charge of Ghorasal police outpost, when he went to the spot, the OC said.

Later, several hundred locals vandalised a house where the extortionists took shelter and put up barricade on Narsingdi-Tongi road for an hour demanding arrest of the extortionists. As a result, a huge traffic jam was created on the route.

The locals withdrew the barricade around 10:00am after Polish Police Station assured them of exemplary punishment to the offenders. Later, police arrested all the eight including Chanchal from the area and filed two cases against them under speedy trial law.

Injured Shakhawat and ASI Kabir were admitted to a local private clinic for treatment.

Nipah kills 4

FROM PAGE 20
people and suggesting that they should not drink raw date juice, consume half eaten fruits and vegetables to not get exposed to the virus. People also should wash their hands with soap after coming in contact with patients.

Subodh Kumar Kundu, head of the visiting team and principal scientific officer of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), said if people take precautions now, the situation will be under control within two to three weeks since the incubation period of the virus is three weeks.

Swarna, 4, and Mahbub, 16, of Dakshin Goddimari village of Lalmonirhat, and Insan Ali and Monsur Ali, of Rangpur, have died in last 36 hours, reports our correspondent from Lalmonirhat.

The number of victims is more than what the government has declared as it is not counting the deaths at the private clinic or hospitals, reports our Rangpur correspondent.

For example, Insan Ali was shifted from RMCH to Islamic Community Hospital and he died there yesterday. But the team did not consider his case as a Nipah fatality.

Meanwhile, the local administration has declared all schools in Hatibandha upazila closed for six days from Saturday to control the spread of the disease.

Scientists said Nipah encephalitis is not a new disease in the country. As many as 10 districts have been affected by the disease since its first outbreak in 2001. The districts are Meherpur, Naogaon, Rajbari, Faridpur, Tangail, Thakurgaon, Kushtia, Manikganj, Rangpur and Lalmonirhat.

The outbreak in Faridpur in 2004 caused 27 deaths out of 36 affected people at that time. The disease usually shows up between December and May.

The government is running surveillance programme in the ten districts.

Jinnah

FROM PAGE 1
those on the Action Committee team, particularly Oli Ahad and Abdur Rahman Chowdhury, did not mince words in informing Jinnah that he had limited knowledge about the culture of the Bangalis. For his part, the governor general thought the students were being led astray by the enemies of Pakistan.

On the eve of his return to Karachi on 28 March, Jinnah spoke to the people of East Bengal over radio. Amazingly, he only repeated what he had earlier stated at the Race Course and the convocation. His speech was rather long, the focal point being his emphasis on the need for unity and discipline among all the units of the state of Pakistan. He did not let the opportunity go by for proffering some advice to Bangali students who, he suggested, should take what he called the right course to the future.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah's visit to East Bengal, with his pronouncements on the language question, considerably diminished his hitherto solid reputation as a unifying force for the people of Pakistan. A sense of alienation between him and the Bangalis set in immediately with his departure for Karachi. Jinnah's intransigence on the position of Bangla, however, emboldened Chief Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin to an extent that had earlier not been noticed. On April 6, contrary to his earlier promise of having the East Bengal Legislative Assembly pass a resolution calling for Bangla to be accepted as a state language for Pakistan, he only moved a resolution to the effect that Bangla be made the official language of East Bengal and that Bangla be the medium of instruction at all levels of education in Pakistan's majority province.

Jinnah died on September 11 1948. His loyal follower, Khwaja Nazimuddin, chief minister of East Bengal, succeeded him as Pakistan's second governor general.

War crimes trial

FROM PAGE 1
Toby's profile, available online, say that from 2004 to 2005 he was a legal consultant for the establishment of War Crimes Chamber Project in Bosnia and Herzegovina and he served as the first head of the Bosnian Criminal Defence Office. In late 2005, he was appointed as head of the prosecution section for war crimes.

In 2006, Toby was appointed as legal counsel to the chief prosecutor and head of the legal advisory section for war crimes, a position he held for three years.

It is also mentioned, "Internationally, Toby is currently advising on a number of matters before international tribunals. He is also currently advising the Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association on the Bangladesh International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973."

John's online profile say that between 2004 and 2009 John led the counsel team for one of Sierra Leone's most notorious rebel leaders, Augustine Gbao, in the RUF (Revolutionary United Front) trial at the special court of Sierra Leone. After one of the longest international criminal trials in history, Gbao was acquitted on more counts and received smaller sentences than any of his co-defendants.

Augustine Gbao was sentenced to 25 years for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Jamaat sources said their plan is to appoint all foreign lawyers from the UK. The sources, however, did not mention the budget for these

hires but did say, "We have to pay them". They plan to make them Jamaat's lawyers as well.

Currently six political leaders are in prison in connection with war crimes during 1971 when three million people were killed and over 200 thousand women were violated by the Pakistani occupation forces and their collaborators in Bangladesh.

Jamaat, widely known as an anti-liberation force, had collaborated with the Pakistani forces to foil Bangladesh's liberation efforts during the nine-month War of Independence.

Among the six detained alleged war criminals, five are top leaders of Jamaat. They are: Jamaat Ameer (chief) Motiur Rahman Nizami, Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammed Mojahid, Senior Assistant Secretary General M u h a m m a d Kamaruzzaman, and Assistant Secretary General Abdul Quader Molla.

When contacted, Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Abdur Razzak did not want to say anything specific about appointing foreign lawyers. He only said, "We intend to appoint foreign lawyers but nothing has been finalised yet."

Tajul Islam, counsel for the detained five Jamaat leaders, told The Daily Star correspondent that Steven, Toby and John have agreed to defend the Jamaat leaders.

After formal placement of charges against the alleged war criminals, the defence will get a certain period of time to prepare their defence. Tajul said during that preparatory time they want to conduct an investigation of

the charges the prosecution would file.

"We want Steven, Toby and John not only during the trial time but also to conduct our investigation soon after placement of formal charges because they have expertise in this regard," said Tajul.

The International Crimes Tribunal, set up to try the internationally defined crimes committed during Bangladesh's Liberation War, in its rules of procedure for probe, prosecution and trial has given conditional opportunity for appointing foreign counsels by the accused.

According to the rules of procedure, the tribunal may also allow a foreign counsel for either party, provided the lawyer has permission from Bangladesh Bar Council.

Tajul said Bangladesh Bar Council rules allow lawyers, who are enrolled with the council, to practice in courts of the country.

"We have prepared an application to submit before our Bar council seeking permission for Steven, Toby and John to work as counsels for the detained five Jamaat leaders. If the council doesn't give us permission, we are likely to go to the High Court for necessary directions in this regard," said Tajul.

On Toby's role in advising the SCBA, Supreme Court Bar Association President Khandker Mahbub Hossain said, "He is not advising us [SCBA]."

"We [SCBA] invited Toby to a seminar last year in Dhaka and at that time he gave his opinion and we give ours about the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act, 1973."

Steven too attended the seminar.

ULFA to hold

FROM PAGE 20
Asked whether ULFA's core demand of 'sovereignty for Assam' would be discussed, Choudhury avoiding a direct reply said, "We have decided to go for unconditional talks. Through talks, the process for resolution of Assam's problems will be started."

"Respecting the wishes of the people of Assam and the Jatiya Abhibartan (intellectuals), we have decided to go for talks," he added.

With ULFA yet to select its leaders who will take part in the talks with the government, Choudhury said adding "though ULFA's agenda for the meeting have not yet been worked out, it will have all the problems of Assam".

The decision to hold peace talks with the Centre was taken at ULFA's executive committee and general council meetings this week, he added.

ULFA has been waging insurgency for the last 31 years and many of its top leaders, including the outfit's Chairman Arabinda Rajkhowa, recently gave themselves up to Indian authorities at the border with Bangladesh with the help of Bangladesh authorities.

However, Paresh Baruah, the head of ULFA's armed wing, is still elusive.

ULFA Vice Chairman Pradip Gogoi denied there was a split in ULFA as Arabinda Rajkhowa and

Paresh Baruah were in frequent contact with each other.

"There is no division in ULFA. Paresh Baruah is still our commander-in-chief," Gogoi said.

ULFA 'foreign secretary' Sasadhar Choudhury also said Rajkhowa was in frequent touch with Baruah.

"There is only communication gap with some of our leaders and cadres. We have not been able to contact them to inform them about the resolution of our central executive committee and the general council to go for unconditional peace talks with the government," said Gogoi.

Choudhury said ULFA leaders and their cadres, now out on bail, will not participate in the coming assembly Assam legislature elections in Assam either by casting votes or campaigning.

"ULFA will have no connection with the elections. We will keep away from the polls. We will not vote as our names are not in the voters rolls," he said adding "We have been in the jungles for the last 31 years. Our names have been deleted from the voters list."

Asked if ULFA would be campaigning for any political party or candidate, Choudhury said, "We will totally keep away from the election process. None of our cadres will be participating in it."

'Lawful' owner

FROM PAGE 1
now-closed Uzala Match Factory, he claims when his ancestors bought the land to set up the match factory it was on the bank of the Buriganga; over the years it has gone into the river.

Visiting the spot recently, this correspondent, however, found the factory land is clearly marked off the river by a boundary wall. Just outside, mini-excavators were busy earth-filling.

Contacted, BIWTA Secretary Syed Monowar Hossain said the land is part of the Buriganga and can never belong to Shafiqur.

"He is a river-grabber with friends in every government." Monowar added explaining why they cannot do much against him.

Speaking anonymously, a resident of Shyampur said Shafiqur always tells the locals that he has inherited the land from his ancestors and he also has a court order to fill it up. And that is why he never faced any opposition.

According to the Environment Protection Act-1997, any installation within 50 yards of the river-bank is forbidden.

The Wetland and Open Space Conservation Act-2000 stipulates fines up to Tk 50,000 and jail terms up to five years for filling up wetlands.

However, successive governments have failed to enforce the laws.

All along the Buriganga from Shoilmachhi up to Fatullah and beyond, the shores and offshore areas

and at times the channel are registered in different individuals' names.

In some cases, the so-called owners have paid taxes for years and the encroached land was sold and resold to make it complicated for any drive to free the river.

SQ Chy

FROM PAGE 20
chest pain.

The BNP leader was taken to the BSMMU from Kashimpur jail at about 3:30pm after he had complained of chest pain and headache, said Salauddin's family members.

BSMMU Director Brig Gen Dr Abdul Majid Bhuiyan told The Daily Star that two professors and a medical officer tried to do a checkup on him. But Salauddin refused to undergo check-up saying he would not receive treatment at the hospital.

Salauddin's family members said he wants to be treated abroad.

The BNP leader was brought back to the Kashimpur jail at about 5:50pm.

Salauddin, detained with links to crimes against humanity during 1971 Liberation War, spent a few hours with his family members at Kashimpur jail and later the BSMMU.

A jail official said the BNP leader was taken to the BSMMU after he complained of chest pain in the morning.

His family members said they met him at Kashimpur jail in the morning after being informed of his illness. They later spent nearly two hours with him at the BSMMU.

BNP blushes

FROM PAGE 1
reduction of prices of essentials, and for protesting the share market scandal and filing of case against the chairperson.

He also ruled out the possibility of withdrawing hartal unless all their demands are met.

An influential group of BNP leaders however said the party should have called the hartal protesting the share market scam and killing of Felani by the Indian BSF on the border. But a powerful clique within the party mis-guided the chairperson.

"There are some people who always try to misguide the chairperson. This time they wanted to make her happy by persuading her to call hartal in protest against filing of the case," a senior leader told this correspondent, seeking anonymity.

Some other leaders however said the party had no alternative but to call hartal over the filing of case against its chairperson. "We have to throw tough programmes whenever such issues are created," another BNP leader said.

Contacted, party's Standing Committee Member Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman said people now want a movement against the government's failure to run the country.

Party insiders said Khaleida Zia wanted to announce the countrywide hartal programme just after the January 27 parliamentary by-election protesting rigging of vote in Brahmonbaria-3. But she was persuaded by some party leaders to change her decision as the party won the by-polls in Habiganj-1.

While conducting campaigns for tomorrow's hartal, BNP leaders are now focusing on share market scandal and Felani killing as key issues for the programme.

Chernobyl birds

FROM PAGE 20
The finding comes from a study of 550 birds belonging to 48 different species living in the region, published in the journal PLoS One.

Brain size was significantly smaller in yearlings compared to older birds. Smaller brain sizes are thought to be linked to reduced cognitive ability.

The discovery was made by a team of researchers from Norway, France and the US led by Professor Timothy Mousseau from the University of South Carolina, US, and Dr Anders Moller from the University of Paris-Sud, France.

HARMFUL LEGACY
In April 1986, reactor number four at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant exploded.

After the accident, traces of radioactive deposits were found in nearly every country in the northern hemisphere.

An exclusion has since been set up around the site of the accident.

However, scientists have been allowed inside to gauge the impact the radiation has had on the ecology of the region.

Last year Prof Moller and Prof published the

results of the largest wildlife census of its kind conducted in Chernobyl - which revealed that mammals are declining in the exclusion zone surrounding the nuclear power plant.

Insect diversity has also fallen, and previously, the same researchers found a way to predict which species there are likely to be most severely damaged by radioactive contamination, by evaluating how often they renew parts of their DNA.

In their latest study, the scientists used mist nets to collect birds from eight woodland sites around Chernobyl, which have seen a decline in the numbers of larger animals and small invertebrates living within.

After controlling for the differences between species, they found that the birds had brains 5 percent smaller on average compared to birds not exposed to background radiation.

The effect was most pronounced in younger birds, particularly those less than a year old.

That suggests that many bird embryos did not survive at all, due the negative effects of their developing brain.

4 Shibir men held in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gandaria police detained four activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) from the city's Dinanath Sen Road area last night for suspected anti-government activities.

Three of them are students of Jagannath University and the other is a Dhaka University student, police said.

Of the four, two were picked up from Dinanath Sen Road and two others from a house nearby.

Police recovered some books and leaflets from their possession and were examining those whether it contained any anti-state statement, Faruk Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Gandaria Police Station told The Daily Star.

Public holiday

FROM PAGE 20
of the mega event along with India and Sri Lanka, will organise the prestigious ceremony at Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the 14-nation contest through a colourful 135-minute function.

Bangladesh will host eight matches--six including two quarter-finals in Dhaka and two in Chittagong.

PM worried

FROM PAGE 20
The premier raised the question while addressing the inaugural function of 3-day 7th International Scientific Conference and Workshop on Urology at Sonargaon Hotel.

European School of Urology, Asian School of Urology and Bangladesh Association of Urological Surgeons jointly arranged the conference and the workshop marking the 3rd Asian-European School of Urology Course 2011.

The PM said the physicians must build their mentality to work in remote villages.

Reiterating the government's commitment to reach the quality healthcare facilities to the poor people, she said from today, urology treatment facilities are being extended to 12 medical college hospitals in Dhaka, Chittagong and 10 other districts.

"From now on, rural people will not require coming to Dhaka for urological medical services," Hasina said.

already created 150 posts for urologists and recruitment is on to replenish the posts, she said.

The premier said in the past, kidney and urology patients had to wait for many days to get treatment due to shortage of beds, human resources and infrastructure facilities in the hospitals.

After setting up kidney and urology hospital, she said people's sufferings were reduced significantly, Hasina remarked.

"Last BNP-Jamaat government did not increase human resources and other facilities in the hospital as a result thousands of patients were deprived of getting medical services from specialist physicians of the country," she said.

The premier said it will be possible to start operations of the planned 18,000 community health clinics by 2014.

Already, a total of 10,333 community health clinics have started operation across the country, she said.

She said the process is on to recruit 13,500 community

healthcare providers for the community health clinics and 32,000 3rd and 4th class employees at different hospitals and health complexes.

Besides, 1,420 first class, 62 second class and 1,182 third and fourth class jobs have been created while already 4,331 physicians, 1,747 nurses and 6,391 health assistants have been appointed, the premier mentioned.

Government medical colleges will be set up in Kushtia, Satkhira, Kishoreganj and Rangamati while permission has been given for establishing three medical colleges, three homeopathic colleges and over 40 medical assistant training schools and institutes of health technology at private initiatives, she added.

Prof AKM Anwarul Islam, president of Bangladesh Association of Urological Surgeons presided over the function while Health Minister Dr AFM Ruhul Haq, PM's Advisers Dr Syed Mudasser Ali and HT Imam, among others, addressed it.

Egypt ruling party

FROM PAGE 20
Leading Muslim Brotherhood member Mohammed Habib said: "It's an attempt to improve the image of the party but it does not dispense with the real aim of the revolution: bringing down the regime, starting with the resignation of President Mubarak."

"It is an attempt to choke the revolution and gain time."

Earlier, Mubarak met some of the new ministers, the state news agency said, in a clear rebuff to the hundreds of thousands of anti-government protesters who rallied at Tahrir Square in central Cairo for a 12th day.

"The status quo is simply not sustainable," Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told a security conference in Munich, referring to the situation in Egypt and the wider Middle East.

US special envoy for Egypt Frank Wisner, after demands said Mubarak "must stay in office to steer those changes."

Saboteurs blew up a gas pipeline in northern Egypt overnight, disrupting flows to Israel and also to Jordan, where protesters angered by economic hardship have been demanding a more democratic political system.

NEGOTIATIONS
Vice-President Omar Suleiman began meeting prominent independent and mainstream opposition figures, state television said, to try to work out how to ensure free and fair future presidential elections while sticking to the constitution.

But with some of the protesters insisting they wanted not just Mubarak but also his allies out straight away, it was unclear even that would be enough to end the crisis.

An Egyptian army commander was shouted down when he tried to persuade thousands of demonstrators at Tahrir Square to stop a protest that has stalled economic life in the capital.

"You all have the right to express yourselves but please save what is left of Egypt. Look around you," Hassan al-Roweny said through a loud speaker and standing on a podium.

The crowd responded with shouts that Mubarak should resign. Roweny then left, saying: "I will not speak amid such chants."

Western governments have expressed support for the protesters but were cautious about expecting too much too fast.

"That is what the government has said it is trying to do, that is what we are supporting, and hope to see it move as orderly but as expeditiously as possible under the circumstances," she said.

Mubarak said on Thursday that Egypt would descend into chaos if he gave in to protesters' demands and quit immediately.

He has styled himself as a bulwark against Islamist militancy and essential to maintaining a peace treaty Egypt signed with Israel in 1979.

With the unrest crippling the economy in the Arab world's most populous nation, some Egyptians want a return to normal.

Mubarak met the prime minister, the finance minister, the oil minister, the trade and industry minister and the central bank governor yesterday, the state news agency said.

In Tahrir Square, protesters occupying the usually busy intersection in the heart of the city said they were not giving up, despite continuing tensions with Mubarak loyalists who attacked them earlier in the week.

"We are not leaving the square until our demands are met," one of them shouted over a loudspeaker, after a relatively peaceful night where some sang patriotic songs and chanted poetry.

People rally

FROM PAGE 1
"Police have been deployed in the area and the situation is now under control," said Fazlur Rahman, sub-inspector of Narayanganj Sadar Police Station.

The resistance came after many villagers lost their houses and croplands to rapid erosion in the river banks, which is believed to be a result of unplanned dredging, locals said.

According to them, river-grabbers have been extracting sand illegally for months with assistance from some influential people.

It is also causing the river to change its course, complained villagers adding, the livelihoods of thousands in the region are at stake due to this illegal act.

Terming the extractors "sand terrorists", the villagers said many of them received death threats when they tried to protest.

The victims presented a memorandum to the district administration on January 5 and urged the authorities to take strict action against the illegal sand businesses.

"We informed the district deputy commissioner and police about the issue in the past but they remained indifferent," Alirtek union parishad Chairman Maitur Rahman told The Daily Star.