

Sarkozy

FROM PAGE 1

voluntary organisation established to promote microcredit activities of Grameen Bank and its affiliates, circulated the contents of the letter published in the French press yesterday.

"Please allow me to reiterate, once again, how much your model of a 'social business' bank, which has enabled poor people in your country to widely access credit, is admired and respected in France," Sarkozy wrote.

"This has actually done a lot for the prestige and reputation of Bangladesh across the globe: the world needs innovative projects to fight poverty and inequalities, and the creation of the Grameen Bank was an audacious initiative, which has been an ongoing source of inspiration for the international community," he said.

"I know the difficulties you are going through at the present moment. I trust the institutions of your country will find a fair resolution to these. The French government will closely monitor the situation and will definitely address the issue with Bangladeshi authorities over the next few days."

In the same letter, Sarkozy answered to Yunus' proposal to enlarge the composition of G20 group to allow more developing countries to participate in.

"Let me thank you for your proposal of enlarging the G20. As you know, I was in favour, as early as the first meeting of G20, of a broader opening to non-member countries, in particular those less economically advanced...With regards to your country, which you are warmly advocating for, we could consider having Bangladesh (together with other developing nations) participate in specific events organised by the G20 French Presidency, despite the fact we cannot extend an invitation to Cannes."

"I would be happy to welcome you personally to Paris again this year to continue the work of the G20 French Presidency on the issue of poverty and social exclusion, before the Cannes Summit of November 3-4," Sarkozy added.

PRODI FOR AMICABLE SOLUTION

Romano Prodi, former president of European Commission, has written to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, expressing hope she would be able to reach an amicable solution to Prof Muhammad Yunus issue.

In the letter, 71-year-old Prodi voiced support for the Nobel laureate and his visionary work in eradicating poverty from the country, reads a statement of the Grameen Bank.

The letter from the two-time former prime minister of Italy came as several governments including France and Spain have expressed concern about Yunus' removal by Bangladesh Bank from the position of Grameen Bank managing director.

Prodi said along with dedicated institutions like Grameen Bank and a visionary person like Yunus, the prime minister can definitely wipe out poverty from Bangladesh and set examples for the developing world.

He hoped the prime minister's intervention will lead to a solution and Bangladesh will move forward as a prosperous country, according to the statement.

War crimes

FROM PAGE 20
suspects under the custody of the investigation agency at a Dhamondi house in the capital.

They said the government allocated the house (No 405 (old) and 20/A (new) at Dhamondi Road 27) as a safe place for keeping Nizami and Mojahid in it during interrogation, and has issued a gazette notification in this regard.

Defence counsel Tajul Islam and Munshi Ahsan Kabir opposed the prayer terming the house insecure for their clients.

They added that there is no need for questioning the two.

Yunus loses plea

FROM PAGE 1

directors against the HC ruling.

It was not immediately known on what grounds the apex court dismissed Yunus' appeal.

Yunus, who was not in the court yesterday, told the staff at Grameen Bank headquarters that he respects the SC order.

"It's time for you to work with greater dedication to keep this institution effective," hetold around 300 staff members who gathered on the ground floor of the Grameen office at Mirpur in the capital. "You must not let this institution slide down."

Meanwhile, Grameen Chairman Khondaker Muzammel Huq told The Daily Star that he will call a meeting of the board of directors after receiving a certified copy of the court's order from Bangladesh office.

The ruling yesterday capped a month-long dispute between Yunus and the government over the right of the "banker to the poor" to continue as managing director of the bank.

Last month, the central bank removed 71-year-old Yunus from the post, saying he violated the bank's retirement regulation that requires an official to stand down at 60.

Yunus said his dismissal was illegal and that the government was trying to take control of the bank, which pioneered microlending to the poor to alleviate poverty.

His legal battle has caused concern worldwide and threatened to dampen relations between Bangladesh and the United States.

Robert Blake, US assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asian affairs, met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, government and opposition leaders and Yunus during a trip to Bangladesh last month.

He told reporters the US was "deeply troubled" by the developments and called for a compromise. He said if no compromise was reached, "I think it will have an effect on our bilateral relations."

A US embassy spokesperson in Dhaka yesterday said, "We remain concerned and hopeful that a compromise can be reached."

"We appreciate the efforts being made to achieve a resolution that is mutually satisfactory to all parties."

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam welcomed the SC ruling, saying this means Yunus can no longer hold the post.

Yunus' counsel Dr Kamal Hossain declined to make any comment.

Rokanuddin Mahmud, another counsel for Yunus, said he may continue as MD until Grameen board of directors appoints his

successor, as per the Bangladesh Bank's "removal letter".

The attorney general disagreed saying there was nothing like this in the letter.

Replying to a query, he said now that the top court has given its ruling on the issue, there is no scope for a compromise between Yunus and the government.

Earlier, Dr Kamal told the court that the BB removed Yunus without issuing a prior notice seeking his explanation, which is a violation of principles of natural justice.

He said Yunus was appointed the Grameen Bank MD with the BB approval in 1990. Besides, the central bank conducted audit at the Grameen at different times, but raised no question about Yunus' appointment and his holding office as MD.

There was no need for further approval regarding his appointment, he continued.

The HC had rejected the petitions without issuing any rule upon the government or BB to explain Yunus' sacking.

"We had placed before the High Court interpretation of law, relevant papers and information in support of the writ petitions, but the government placed no papers against the petitions," Kamal said.

Mahbubey Alam told the SC bench that the HC has rightly delivered the verdict after examining the relevant documents and hearing the arguments from both sides.

Dr Yunus cannot hold the office of MD, since his retirement age was over in 1999, he added.

Mahmudul Islam, Rokanuddin Mahmud, Sara Hossain and Mustafizur Rahman Khan assisted Dr Kamal Hossain, while Tawfiq Nawaz appeared for Bangladesh Bank.

His legal battle has caused concern worldwide and threatened to dampen relations between Bangladesh and the United States.

Robert Blake, US assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asian affairs, met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, government and opposition leaders and Yunus during a trip to Bangladesh last month.

He told reporters the US was "deeply troubled" by the developments and called for a compromise. He said if no compromise was reached, "I think it will have an effect on our bilateral relations."

A US embassy spokesperson in Dhaka yesterday said, "We remain concerned and hopeful that a compromise can be reached."

"We appreciate the efforts being made to achieve a resolution that is mutually satisfactory to all parties."

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam welcomed the SC ruling, saying this means Yunus can no longer hold the post.

Yunus' counsel Dr Kamal Hossain declined to make any comment.

Rokanuddin Mahmud, another counsel for Yunus, said he may continue as MD until Grameen board of directors appoints his

3 cops sued

FROM PAGE 20

Metropolitan Magistrate Abdul Qader recorded statement of the complainant and fixed today for order on the issue.

The complainant alleged that the accused on March 27, 2010, entered the residences of Ziaur Nahar and her son Arifur Rashid at Khilgaon Taltola and demanded Tk 5 lakh as extortion, of which they paid Tk 50,000. On March 30 this year, the same policemen asked for the same amount of money from the complainants and received Tk 18,000.

She alleged her daughter Lipi and Delwar are involved in anti-social activities and had been harassing her with threats and even set corrupt police personnel after her.

The complainant along with locals of the area had been trying to resist them.

Shokrana

FROM PAGE 20

against only three accused."

The committee reviewed the case for the third time yesterday.

Home ministry sources said the 13th meeting of the committee in April last year recommended for relieving two accused -- Kazi Kamal Uddin Ahmed and Md Mahibur Rahman -- of the charges.

The 18th meeting decided to drop charges against another accused, Parimal Kumar.

Both the meetings opined that the case against Shokrana should continue, a top ministry official said on condition of anonymity.

Bogra PP Abdul Matin told The Daily Star yesterday that he received two letters from the home ministry that recommended dropping charges against all the four accused.

According to him, the first letter in April last year asked him to take steps for withdrawing charges against Kamal and Mahibur. In October the same year, he received a second letter that recommended dropping charges against the two others -- Shokrana and Parimal.

Matin, however, could neither produce the second letter, nor give its date.

Joint forces on February 12, 2007 seized more than 18,000 sacks of pulses worth over Tk 5 crore from Shokrana's store.

Following the seizure, a case was filed against Shokrana and Parimal with Bogra Sadar Police Station.

In March the same year, Bogra police pressed charges against four people.

CASESWITHDRAWN

The committee yesterday recommended for withdrawing 49 cases out of 411 reviewed.

With this, the committee has so far recommended 7,031 cases, mostly against Awami League men, for withdrawal after reviewing 10,536 cases.

The committee will hold one more meeting, Quamrul Islam said.

Ivory Coast

FROM PAGE 20

run-off vote, and the UN certified the result.

Forces loyal to Mr Ouattara, a former International Monetary Fund economist, began a dramatic military offensive last week, sweeping in from the north and west.

US President Barack Obama has condemned the violence, saying it could have been averted if Mr Gbagbo had respected the election result.

"To end this violence and prevent more bloodshed, former President Gbagbo must stand down immediately," Mr Obama said in a statement.

Our correspondent, Andrew Harding, says news of the surrender talks has been circulating rapidly.

It has not been greeted with excitement but with a weary sense of relief, he says, as people ask why Mr Gbagbo had to put them through all this war and destruction.

Many civilians remain trapped in their homes.

Food, water and electricity are scarce in the city of about four million people after days of fighting.

Mr Gbagbo's army chief, Gen Philippe Mangou, told the AFP news agency his troops had stopped fighting.

"Following the bombardment by the French forces on some of our positions and certain strategic points in the city of Abidjan, we have ourselves stopped fighting and have asked the general commanding [Unoci] for a ceasefire," Gen Mangou said.

Gen Mangou deserted last week, but was said to have returned to the Gbagbo fold on Monday after an apparent change of heart.

On Monday, UN and French helicopters attacked several targets around Mr Gbagbo's compound. The UN said the raids were to attack civilians.

In an immediate press briefing, Amine claimed that police beat up his party leaders and activists when they went to hold the rally. He threatened to forge an anti-government movement if the government did not punish people responsible for the harassment of the leaders and activists of Islamic Law Implementation Committee.

Dispersed and chased, the activists took shelter in Baitul Mukarram mosque and started pelting police with brick chips.

According to party insiders, Jamaat leaders took the rally as a challenge as police earlier in the day barred supporters of Fazlul Huq Amine, chief of Islamic Oikya Jote, from holding no permission for the rally.

In an immediate press briefing, Amine claimed that police beat up his party leaders and activists when they went to hold the rally. He threatened to forge an anti-government movement if the government did not punish people responsible for the harassment of the leaders and activists of Islamic Law Implementation Committee.

Police charged truncheons to disperse Amine's supporters when they tried to gather there.

Deputy Commissioner Krishna Pada Roy of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Ramma Zone) said they barred the followers as Amine took no permission for the rally.

In an immediate press briefing, Amine claimed that police beat up his party leaders and activists when they went to hold the rally. He threatened to forge an anti-government movement if the government did not punish people responsible for the harassment of the leaders and activists of Islamic Law Implementation Committee.

Police charged truncheons to disperse Amine's supporters when they tried to gather there.

Deputy Commissioner Krishna Pada Roy of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Ramma Zone) said they barred the followers as Amine took no permission for the rally.

In an immediate press briefing, Amine claimed that police beat up his party leaders and activists when they went to hold the rally. He threatened to forge an anti-government movement if the government did not punish people responsible for the harassment of the leaders and activists of Islamic Law Implementation Committee.

Police charged truncheons to disperse Amine's supporters when they tried to gather there.

Deputy Commissioner Krishna Pada Roy of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Ramma Zone) said they barred the followers as Amine took no permission for the rally.

In an immediate press briefing, Amine claimed that police beat up his party leaders and activists when they went to hold the rally. He threatened to forge an anti-government movement if the government did not punish people responsible for the harassment of the leaders and activists of Islamic Law Implementation Committee.

Police charged truncheons to disperse Amine's supporters when they tried to gather there.

Deputy Commissioner Krishna Pada Roy of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Ramma Zone) said they barred the followers as Amine took no permission for the rally.

In an immediate press briefing, Amine claimed that police beat up his party leaders and activists when they went to hold the rally. He threatened to forge an anti-government movement if the government did not punish people responsible for the harassment of the leaders and activists of Islamic Law Implementation Committee.

Police charged truncheons to disperse Amine's supporters when they tried to gather there.

Deputy Commissioner Krishna Pada Roy of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Ramma Zone) said they barred the followers as Amine took no permission for the rally.

In an immediate press briefing, Amine claimed that police beat up his party leaders and activists when they went to hold the rally. He threatened to forge an anti-government movement if the government did not punish people responsible for the harassment of the leaders and activists of Islamic Law Implementation Committee.

Police charged truncheons to disperse Amine's supporters when they tried to gather there.

Deputy Commissioner Krishna Pada Roy of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Ramma Zone) said they barred the followers as Amine took no permission for the rally.

In an immediate press briefing, Amine claimed that police beat up his party leaders and activists when they went to hold the rally. He threatened to forge an anti-government movement if the government did not punish people responsible for the harassment of the leaders and activists of Islamic Law Implementation Committee.

Police charged truncheons to disperse Amine's supporters when they tried to gather there.

Deputy Commissioner Krishna Pada Roy of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Ramma Zone) said they barred the followers as Amine took no permission for the rally.

In an immediate press briefing, Amine claimed that police beat up his party leaders and activists when they went to hold the rally. He threatened to forge an anti-government movement if the government did not punish people responsible for the harassment of the leaders and activists of Islamic Law Implementation Committee.

Police charged truncheons to disperse Amine's supporters when they tried to gather there.

Deputy Commissioner Krishna Pada Roy of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Ramma Zone) said they barred the followers as Amine took no permission for the rally.

In an immediate press briefing, Amine claimed that police beat up his party leaders and activists when they went to hold the rally. He threatened to forge an anti-government movement if the government did not punish people responsible for the harassment of the leaders and activists of Islamic Law Implementation Committee.