

Rab told

FROM PAGE 1 should remain more cautious while conducting operations like the one at Fatullah," Maj Gen (ret) MA Salam, chief of the parliamentary standing committee on home ministry, said after a meeting of the committee at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Shuvo, a class-IX student of Pagla High School, died Tuesday night during a gunfight between Rab and drug peddlers near his home. Rab claimed to have arrested two people from the spot with home-made firearms.

"It was neither a battle-field nor a frontier area, it was a residential area. You [Rab] therefore should act carefully while firing shots, it does not matter if a criminal escapes taking that chance," MA Salam, also a ruling Awami League MP said.

"Saving the innocent is more important during such operations," Salam went on to say.

The House watchdog yesterday also discussed activities of the elite force, committee sources told The Daily Star.

Without mentioning the Limon incident, Salam said sometimes small incidents take place involving Rab which are unintended. "There are some misunderstandings and exaggeration," he said.

The committee chief, however, expressed satisfaction over the overall activities of Rab.

"More problems may appear with the expansion of Rab's activities. Therefore, we should be careful about it from now on," Salam said, adding that it is possible to resolve these problems through training.

He said the committee asked Rab high officials to be cautious so that no member of the elite force can misuse power for personal gains.

Muhith

FROM PAGE 20 could not be appointed in around last four decades in line with the constitutional provision due to negative culture of politics.

"To create a truly fair atmosphere, appointing the ombudsman is very important. But it is our bad luck that we could not appoint anyone to the post. The divided political trend is responsible for it," the minister said in response to independent lawmaker Fazlul Azim's remarks.

The 1972 constitution has introduced the provisions for the office of the ombudsman to investigate allegations of corruption and power abuse by any public authorities and recommend action, he said.

In line with the constitutional provision, a law was also enacted, he added.

Muhith decried the harmful political culture and said the political trend is so divided that it is difficult to find a man acceptable to all.

"Everyone should come forward to improve the negative culture of politics," he said.

During passage of the bill to repeal the office of tax ombudsman, the independent lawmaker suggested bringing necessary amendments to the Tax Ombudsman Act to remove loopholes instead of repealing it.

But the finance minister did not agree with the proposal saying there is no need to keep such post which does not have any authority.

Finally, the bill was passed in voice vote.

Suicide attack kills four Afghan civilians

AFP, Kabul

A suicide bomber targeting officials in eastern Afghanistan yesterday killed four civilians, a provincial spokesman said.

The blast occurred in Paktia province, which borders Pakistan. It was the second such bombing in the country yesterday.

"At around 3:30pm a suicide bomb blast in Sayid Karam district left four civilians dead," provincial spokesman Rohullah Samoon said.

BCL to choose

FROM PAGE 20 the organisation's rival groups often fighting over control of the campus or over tenderpapers.

The fighting upset AL President Sheikh Hasina so much that at one stage she refused to remain as the organising chief of BCL and warned actions against the troublemakers.

Even though Hasina is no longer the organising chief, her words are final in the factions-riddled organisation, sources close to it said.

She has asked AL president member Obauidul Quader MP to oversee the upcoming national council, said the sources.

BCL sources said Ripon and Rotan have announced the schedule of 27th national council directed by Hasina.

She is also expected to inaugurate the council at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

The announcement has been greeted by BCL activists with enthusiasm.

"We look forward to electing a new leadership to inject dynamism in the organisation," said Jafrul Shahriar Jewel, Assistant Secretary of BCL central committee.

The incumbent president and general secretary did not explain how the new leadership will be chosen.

"Everything will be done in accordance with the BCL constitution," said Rotan.

Illegal housing

FROM PAGE 1 In many cases, they have violated the town improvement act, master plan of Dhaka, environment conservation act and private housing rules.

They also demanded the authorities make sure that authorised developers display approvals for their housing projects.

The five organisations that jointly issued the notice are Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), Ain O Salish Kendra, Bangladesh Paribesh Andolan, Institute of Architects Bangladesh and Paribesh Banchao Andolan.

The notice was served upon the secretaries to housing ministry, environment and forest ministry, information ministry, director general of department of environment, chairman of Rajuk and president of Rehab.

The court on June 8 directed Rajuk to remove the 77 unauthorised housing projects and the police to stop their ads, earth-filling

Sumon caught

FROM PAGE 1

He alleged that Rumana got involved in an extra marital affair with Iranian national Navid Taher Dween during her stay in Canada on Commonwealth Scholarship at British Columbia University. Rumana swooped on him when he deleted her paramour from her Facebook friend list, he claimed, adding that he was just trying to protect himself.

"I am almost 80 percent visually impaired. When she attacked me my glasses fell down and I couldn't see anything. I don't know what happened later," Sumon claimed.

Replying to journalists, Sumon said, "I took care of our daughter when she was in Canada. I did not have the slightest idea that she had been cheating on me all this time."

He also placed an example of Rumana's cheating saying, "A few days after her return from Canada, we decided to commit suicide together and managed 192 sedatives for the purpose. While I took 110 tablets and landed in LabAid Hospital in a critical condition, she kept from living up to the plan."

At a city hospital a couple of days ago, Rumana told the media that her husband pushed his fingers into her eyes and then dragged her by hair on the floor. She also claimed that he gnawed on her nose, face and throat during the June 5 incident at her parents' house in Dhanmondi where they had been living for six years, since Rumana conceived her only

daughter. A case was filed against Sumon with Dhanmondi Police Station on June 6.

Rumana also alleged that her husband used to frequently assault her during their 10-year conjugal life. He beat her up several times on her return from Canada on May 12.

Sumon got furious when Rumana decided to continue her study in Canada, said Rumana on Monday, adding, "But I tolerated everything considering the future of my daughter."

Under the BCL constitution, the central committee is elected by councillors at the national council through secret ballots.

The age limit set for the aspiring leaders will be an issue at the national council.

In 2006, as the then organising chief of BCL, Sheikh Hasina decided that no one above 29 years of age will qualify to be an office bearer of the BCL central committee.

A section of BCL leaders favour relaxing the age limit as the incumbent committee elected for a two-year term has been functioning for five years.

"Many competent members will not be able to get into the central committee because of the age limit. That is mainly because the current committee stayed three years beyond its mandate," said an organising secretary of the party.

Others disagree with this idea.

"We want competent and efficient leadership, notwithstanding the age limit," said Abdullah Al Mamun, school affairs secretary of BCL.

BCL members are also divided on how the new leadership will be chosen. One group wants the AL high command to pick the new central committee, while another group favours voting at the national council.

3 sites chosen

FROM PAGE 1 Faridpur and Munshiganj districts for the airport," Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister GM Quader told BSS yesterday.

Earlier, the decision to set up the airport at Arial Beel in Munshiganj was scaped as a group of people of the area vehemently protested its construction arguing that the project would affect their croplands.

A team, comprising the head of Bangabandhu Airport Construction Cell and experts from Bangladesh Air Force, visited the sites last month and subsequently submitted a site selection survey report to the ministry, Quaders said.

"Presently, a pre-feasibility and comparative study is being carried out, which is expected to be completed and submitted to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a month," he said.

After getting approval from the premier, the ministry will appoint a consultant firm to conduct the main feasibility study, the minister said, adding, "We will float Request for Qualifications and Request for Proposals consecutively after completion of the feasibility study."

It will take nearly two years to complete all formalities to award the work order to a construction company for building the airport under public-private partnership (PPP), he said.

JS body happy

FROM PAGE 20 wholesale market to monitor the post-budget market situation.

ABM Abul Qasem, chief of the House body who led the team, told The Daily Star that the prices of essential commodities are under control and that prices have not increased after the budget proposal.

But buyers gave a completely different account.

"I bought one kg of sugar for Tk 64 from this shop, but the shopkeeper told me the prices of essential commodities are under control and that prices have not increased after the budget proposal."

Chairman of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk), Md Nurul Huda said they had asked Rehab and Bangladesh Land Developers Association (BLDA) to stop their members from undertaking any illegal housing projects.

"We will go for legal action against the companies of illegal housing projects once we receive the HC verdict," he said.

The list of housing projects declared illegal can be seen with this website link: http://www.thedailystar.net/supplements/2011/illegal_real_estate_project/illegal_real_estate_project.pdf

Commerce Secretary Ghulam Hussain quickly came to his rescue and said the government fixed the price six months ago.

"We will look into the matter. The government will re-fix the price of soybean oil after discussion with the business leaders," he said.

Qasem told reporters that their sellers were charging as per the price list but the two markets in Mohammadpur did not have any list. Although there was an outdated list in Karwan Bazar, prices on it was not visible.

He said the committee will submit a report on its visit to the commerce ministry.

Together

FROM PAGE 1 Awami League, the premier said.

After the verdict of the High Court, there is no scope to maintain the caretaker government system in its present form, Hasina said.

"Let us find a way out to make it legal when the Supreme Court has declared it illegal," she said.

Recalling the past when BNP had vehemently opposed introduction of caretaker system, the premier poked at Khaleda saying "I feel delighted when she, as the leader of the opposition, is now crying in favour of the caretaker government system."

"During her first tenure as premier, she [Khaleda] has told the nation that only mad and child are neutral. At that time we were in the movement to establish caretaker government system," Hasina said.

"Now the opposition leader is searching the mad and child for the caretaker government," she added.

Commerce Secretary Ghulam Hussain quickly came to his rescue and said the government fixed the price six months ago.

Caretaker must for two polls

FROM PAGE 1 The SC on May 10 declared caretaker government illegal but kept the option open for two more parliamentary polls under the system if the Sangsad endorses it. Even if parliament goes for caretaker system, it has to be remodelled as the SC wanted none from the judiciary to head an interim government.

Skipping the aspect of remodelling the system, Acting Secretary General of the party Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir flatly said the SC wanted holding the next two parliamentary polls under caretaker government.

"Now it is the responsibility of the prime minister and the ruling party to implement the court verdict, and they must do this."

Both the leaders were addressing participants in a demonstration, organised by Dhaka city unit of BNP in front of the party central office at Nayapaltan, protesting arrest and torture of opposition leaders during the 36-hour hartal on June 12 and 13, and

demanding release of the arrested leaders.

Mosharraf said they [opposition] will not allow holding any elections in the country under the political government, and it (government) will be forced to meet BNP's demand for a midterm election under a caretaker administration.

Following the SC verdict on 13th amendment to the constitution (concerning caretaker government), Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said there is no scope for continuing the caretaker system as the apex court declared it illegal.

But BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia said parliamentary elections must be held under a caretaker government, and her party will not participate in any elections under a political government.

The SC verdict said, "The Constitution (thirteenth amendment) Act 1996 (Act 1 of 1996) is prospectively declared void and ultra vires the Constitution."

It also said, "The election to

PSC for 2 deep-sea

FROM PAGE 20 against signing of the deal as the PSC, according to them, will make a scope of exporting 80 percent of gas, depriving Bangladesh of the much-needed energy.

The national committee to protect oil, gas, mineral resources, power and ports criticised the government for going ahead with the agreement.

But Monsur defended the agreement saying the criticism is on the basis of wrong information. "They claim that the company will export 80 percent of gas but they do not say under what circumstances the gas will be exported."

Gas export will be the third and last option. "When the company finds gas, it will first offer that to Petrobangla. If Petrobangla refuses to buy, it will try to sell the gas to any third party within the country."

If no buyers are found in the country, it is then allowed to go for gas export by turning the gas into liquefied natural gas (LNG). Bangladesh will also have a share in exports.

The chairman also said there is a major difference between the PSC to be signed under the Model PSC-2008 and the PSCs which have been signed with other foreign companies. He, however, did not elaborate.

A Petrobangla official said that as per the deal, the company has to pay tax whereas

Petrobangla used to pay tax in previous cases.

Monsur said Bangladesh cannot make any further delay in moving to explore its portion of the Bay of Bengal. Myanmar and India have already started exploring offshore blocks on their part of the Bay and they have been successful.

On May 23, the cabinet committee on economic affairs approved signing of an additional agreement with ConocoPhillips.

The company won two deep-sea blocks DS-08-10 and -11 at an off-shore block bidding floated by Petrobangla in 2008. In August 2009, the cabinet committee approved signing of a PSC on condition that oil and gas exploration will be restricted to undisputed areas.

The company had initially offered to invest \$442.63 million under four PSCs for eight blocks. As per a government policy, it was awarded the two blocks which, however, have some areas claimed by the neighbouring countries as their own.

When the cabinet committee approved the conditional deal in 2009, it also accommodated a demand of the company. ConocoPhillips demanded that when the maritime boundary issue is internationally resolved and Bangladesh's claim to the areas is established, the

Boy not killed by Rab

FROM PAGE 1 and even that was in the air after the cover of Rab personnel was blown and they were attacked.

"My nephews and their friend Badal were returning from a nearby shop and saw the drug peddlers fighting with Rab," Shovo's uncle Saiful Islam told The Daily Star over telephone.

Sohag, younger brother of Shuvo, got hit first in the waist. He was taken home yesterday after successful treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

"As soon as my sister appeared at the scene, Shuvo screamed that the criminals were carrying firearms. At this point local criminal Monir shot Shuvo from a close range," Saiful said quoting his sister and injured nephew.

The drug peddlers hit Badal with a sharp weapon. He also had bullet injuries, Saiful said.

Sources at Dhaka Medical College morgue, after the autopsy on Shuvo's body, said the shot was fired from a close range. The bullet entered through the chin area and exited.

Shuvo was laid to rest late last night in Shahibazar graveyard in Narayanganj.

However, the news of a boy getting killed during a Rab operation against drug peddlers sparked huge public resentment.

The district law and order committee came down heavily on Rab for conducting an undercover operation in a densely populated area. It said rather than going for the operation based on a single

source of information, Rab should have conducted a preliminary probe before to assess possible collateral damage.

The meeting demanded impartial investigation of the incident in which a Rab team from the capital conducted a drive in another area.

"Activities of some Rab officials are making the force controversial though the force is considered to be an elite force," said Narayanganj-5 lawmaker Nasim Osman at the meeting.

He also alleged that two Rab officials had been posted in the area before and they had warm relations with criminals and drug peddlers.

"Rab should inform the local police station before conducting raids in an area," said Narayanganj-2 constituency lawmaker Nazrul Islam Babu.

Local political leaders and civil society members also questioned the Rab operation.

President of Bangladesh Human Rights Commission of Narayanganj district Mahbubur Rahman said, "It must be ensured that only skilled Rab personnel are involved in such operations."

Regarding a Rab team from Dhaka conducting a sudden operation in a densely populated area elsewhere, Rab Intelligence Wing Director Lt Col Ziaul Ahsan said, "Rab can go anywhere in the country for conducting raids."

Replying to another query over justification of the gunfight in a densely populated area, he said, "The situation

the Tenth and the Eleventh Parliament may be held under the provision of the above mentioned Thirteenth amendment... for the safety of the people and safety of the state."

BNP leaders Nazrul Islam Khan, MK Anwar, Zainul Abidin Farroque and Amanullah Aman also spoke at the gathering of demonstrators with Sadeque Hossain Khoka, convener of the party's city committee, in the chair.

KHALEDA TO ADDRESS PRESS CONFERENCE
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will address a press conference at 6:00pm today at her Gulshan office to reflect her views on the country's present political situation, especially on the caretaker government issue.

Party insiders said the opposition leader may talk about the repeated call of the ruling party leaders to sit together and discuss the caretaker government issue.

Quader Molla

FROM PAGE 20 including crimes against humanity and genocide took place in Mirpur. But he claimed that another Quader Molla of the area was involved in it, not him," an investigator quoted Quader as saying.

Quader Molla, assistant secretary general of Jamaat, was quizzed at a "safe home" in city's Dhanmondi over war crimes charges.

Investigators questioned him from 10:00am to 5:00pm with one-hour lunch break. He was brought to the "safe home" from Dhaka Central Jail around 9:00am.

Briefing reporters after the interrogation, coordinator of the investigation agency M Sanaul Haq said they will be able to place the probe report on Quader Molla's involvement before the International Crimes Tribunal soon.

Police arrested him in July last year. On June 1 this year, the International Crimes Tribunal allowed the investigators to quiz him at the "safe home" for one day.

Sanaul Haq said they presented evidence supportive of Quader's involvement with war crimes during yesterday's interrogation.

Meanwhile, Quader's lawyer Farid Uddin Khan has termed the "safe home" a torture cell. Following the quizzing, Farid said the accused are tortured physically and mentally there.

However, he did not raise any specific allegation about torturing Quader Molla.

A number of Jamaat leaders on different occasions had said there was a civil war in 1971, not a Liberation War. They also claimed none of their leaders were involved with razakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams -- some auxiliary forces of the Pakistani army responsible for many atrocities during the war.

Five Jamaat and two BNP leaders are now detained in connection with war crimes.

Gen Masud

FROM PAGE 20 An official notification issued by the ministry of establishment yesterday said Masud has completed his 3-year contract of working with the foreign ministry, he has been sent to his original position.

Meanwhile, army sources said the general is due to retire this month.

A key player in the 1/11 incident, Masud was placed in the foreign ministry and was appointed to the Bangladesh High Commission in Canberra on June 8, 2008.

Masud was General Officer Commanding (GOC) of 9 Infantry Division at Savar when a state of emergency was declared across the country on January 11, 2007.

He was made chief coordinator of the National Coordination Committee of serious crimes and corruption and was shortly promoted to the position of lieutenant general and appointed to National Defence College on June 2, 2008.

In less than a week, he was removed from Bangladesh Army and placed in the Foreign Ministry.

Altar, Hafiz

FROM PAGE 20 Magistrate of Dhaka AHM Habibur Rahman Bhuiyan passed the order after police produced them before the court with a ten-day remand prayer.

Before starting the hearing the magistrate directed all lawyers and journalists, except five, to leave the courtroom. They forcibly re-entered the courtroom after a few minutes.

In the forwarding report, the investigation officer (IO) of the case mentioned that picketers had set fire to a vehicle as instructed by the two leaders.

However, the defence lawyers submitted petition for bail along with cancellation of the remand prayer, saying the case was part of a conspiracy to harass the opposition leaders.

After hearing both the sides, the magistrate cancelled the remand prayer and granted them bail in the case filed with Gulshan Police Station on June 11.

Following the order, former home minister and former water resources minister were released from the courtroom.

The same court on June 13 granted them bail in another case for setting fire to a vehicle on June 4 in the city's Mohakhali area.

The two were arrested in the capital last Sunday, during hartal hours.