

UN to replace K Rouge judge

AFP, Phnom Penh

UN chief Ban Ki-moon has said he will appoint a replacement for a Swiss judge who quit Cambodia's Khmer Rouge war crimes court amid a row with Phnom Penh about whether to pursue more suspects.

Laurent Kasper-Ansermet rocked the UN-backed tribunal in March when he became the second international judge in six months to resign over difficulties investigating two new cases strongly opposed by the Cambodian government.

The Swiss said he was then "blocked" at every turn by his Cambodian counterpart in his efforts to probe the potential cases, which involve five mid-level Khmer Rouge members accused of mass killings and forced labour under the regime's 1975-1979 reign.

Ban believes that it is "essential" that those cases "be brought back onto a positive course", spokesman Martin Nesirky said in a statement emailed to AFP late on Friday.

"The secretary general has decided, in this regard, to initiate a process for the selection of a new international co-investigating judge, and a new reserve international co-investigating judge."

Following the Swiss's shock resignation on March 19, observers said the UN would have to choose between pursuing the controversial cases with a new judge or pulling out of the troubled and perpetually cash-strapped court altogether.

Ban urged the Cambodian government to "extend full cooperation to the new judges", Nesirky added.

Rab says sorry

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yesterday called on DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique around 3:00pm at his office. They expressed 'sorrow' for the incident and promised that necessary measures would be taken against the accused.

The statement said Rab formed a three-member probe body. Investigation into the incident is near completion and the report is supposed to be submitted to the Rab chief by today.

Contacted, the DU VC said several Rab personnel met him and assured him of justice following the ongoing probe. "We are waiting to see their steps," he added.

On Wednesday afternoon, an altercation between the accused Rab driver and the teacher ensued after the latter requested the Rab personnel to move their parked van aside to avoid traffic jam on a

narrow lane in Dakkhinkhan. He found that the van was creating huge tailback in front of his residence.

But the accused driver did not pay heed to his repeated request and started beating him up even though he provided his identity, the teacher claimed.

He was later admitted to Pangu Hospital in Shyamoli with severe injuries to his forehead, chest and left elbow.

The teacher also claimed that Rab personnel Lt Alim Miah, who was present in the van at that time, threatened his wife with dire consequences if they had disclosed the matter to Rab's higher authorities or the media.

Saif Uddin yesterday told The Daily Star that he saw a physician and was yet to recover completely. He declined to comment further on the incident.

35 killed in 3 months No Yunus

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violation was prepared based on newspaper reports published in 12 national dailies, when most of the incidents saw a rise compared with the same period last year, said an ASK press release.

According to the report, 34 people -- 12 inmates and 22 detainees -- died in police custody, while the figure was 25 in the same period last year.

Two journalists were killed, 16 were falsely implicated and 34 others received death threats allegedly from ruling party men, government officials and criminals during the time while 74 journalists were tortured.

A total of 10 journalists were implicated in false cases and 15 others received death threats and 40 other newsmen assaulted physically in the same period last year.

As many as 38 people were killed in mob-beating this year while it was 33 last year. Angry mobs across the country took law in their hands due to lack of confidence in law, states the report.

A total of 13 people fell victim to enforced disap-

pearance allegedly by law enforcers and two bodies were recovered during the period, says the report.

Along the Indo-Bangla border areas, Indian BSF shot dead one person and eight persons were tortured to death when 35 were injured and 46 abducted.

Political violence accounted for the deaths of 13 people and injuries of 2,314 more, which were 14 and 1,413 last year. The administration imposed section 144 or ban on public gatherings for 50 times across the country.

Of the 201 women raped this year, 28 were killed after they were violated while two committed suicide failing to stand humiliation. The number of rape victims was 148 last year.

The report states that 145 women faced torture for dowry and of them, 74 were killed.

Eight domestic helps died "mysteriously" while three others succumbed to their injuries allegedly after being tortured by their employers during the first three months this year.

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any role in selecting his successor," said Finance Minister AMA Muhith.

He was talking to journalists at his secretariat office after a meeting with US Ambassador Dan W. Mozena.

The post of the MD fell vacant after Prof Yunus, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize along with Grameen Bank, was unceremoniously relieved of his duties at the microfinance institution in March last year. In May, he stepped down from the post in order to avert disruption in the Grameen Bank activities.

Mohammad Shahjahan is now serving as the acting MD of the bank.

"Delay has already been made regarding the appointment issue. There has been an election to the Grameen Bank board and it will now nominate the search committee," said the finance minister.

The United States had been showing interest in Grameen Bank for long, particularly on the issue of appointing its MD, said Muhith.

"Prof Yunus is a famous name. He has done a lot of things in America and won a number of awards there. The US wants a good search committee and an amicable settlement of the appointment issue," he said.

Muhith claimed he had tried to settle the issue amicably from the very beginning but Prof Yunus did not give the government the opportunity. "If he gives us the chance now it can be done in a satisfactory manner."

Emerging from the meeting with the finance minister, US Ambassador Mozena said the Grameen Bank issue was on the US-Bangladesh agenda. "I am encouraged that all parties want a strong effective Grameen Bank."

"I am very encouraged that a way will be found to make sure that Grameen Bank will be strong and will continue to bring hope to over eight million of the most vulnerable people in Bangladesh, almost all women, not entirely but almost all women," he said.

Teesta failure has indeed hurt ties

FROM PAGE 1

Following is the interview published by Indian daily The Statesman on Friday:

Do you think India's inability to sign the Teesta water sharing treaty has adversely affected bilateral ties?

I am still hopeful that both countries will sign the water treaty soon as there is still time for doing that. The fact that it was not signed last September, unfortunately caused our ties to suffer a setback. Reaching an accord on Teesta would not only help repair the damage done to our relations but also remove the confusion over the exchange of enclaves. I must admit your Prime Minister (Manmohan Singh) has been extremely sincere in improving bilateral ties and believe me, I am saying this honestly and from my personal knowledge.

What is your view of the recent utterances, widely considered as intemperate, made by Bangladesh's main Opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia?

Begum Zia is threatening to turn our government into a lame duck, a government that is inert and powerless. It is not expected that an opposition leader should make such irresponsible utterances about a government that had been democratically elected with an overwhelming majority. What kind of a principal opposition leader she is whose sole purpose is to undermine the effectiveness and efficacy of an elected government?

Begum Zia's purpose is to throw a spanner in the works so that reform measures initiated by us are stalled and my government is shown in a bad light. But we are not scared of her nefarious designs, machinations and threats. We are ready to deal with them squarely. We have the people with us and they will stand by us because of our pro-people policies and programmes. I am working for improving the lot of our people. I cannot be cowed down by such threats.

But you receive threats all the time...

The fact is that I live under the constant threat of assassination. Several attempts have been made on my life and on some occasions, I had a very close shave with death. Almost my entire family had been assassinated. You all know how an attempt was made to kill me when I had been interned by Bangladesh's caretaker government four years ago. An attempt was made to poison me. But I was saved by people's love for me. It is their love that sustains and protects me.

How did your military react to the failed coup in January, 2012?

The prestige and credibility of and respect for Bangladesh's men in uniform skyrocketed after the positive role they played to foil the coup. People are praising the military for its efforts to uphold democratic traditions. This is such a big departure from the past. This is yet another example

of how democracy is being encouraged to take roots. The days of using the military for fulfilling personal ambitions, for seizing power to banish democratic system and practices are over.

Do you see similar threats in future?

The army has made it known to all those harbouring ambitions of capturing power that it would not be a party to any of their future conspiracies and undemocratic game plan. The military stood its ground despite grave provocations from the Opposition, Islamic radicals and other interested quarters. The military, as a disciplined force, refused to walk into the trap that was laid for them. Indeed, army men laid bare the conspiracy by calling a Press conference, which is unprecedented. By doing this, the armed forces set an example, sent out the message that they would strengthen democracy at all cost and help build a solid foundation for it. This undoubtedly will help Bangladesh to look forward to the future with hope.

Large-scale attacks were recently mounted against religious minorities in Chittagong...

The attacks led by the opposition-led Islamic radicals comprised a calculated design with dual objectives of undermining my government's image and making the minorities feel more and more insecure. The opposition had a plan. It had hoped that the Chittagong episode would

inspire similar attacks on minorities across the country. Desperate efforts were made to execute this plan. But my government's firm handling of the situation prevented it from going out of hand.

It is alleged that trial of 1971 war criminals, including Jamaat-e-Islami leaders such as Ghulam Azam, Motiur Rahman Nizami and Delwar Hossain Sayedee, is moving slowly...

This is not true. On the contrary, the pace of trial by the war crimes tribunal is satisfactory. Of course, vested interests are trying to scuttle it by adopting a number of obstructionist methods. We are also being pressured to stop the trial. But we will not give up. No way can the war criminals avoid getting punished for committing crimes against humanity during the Bangladesh Liberation War. We had promised to conduct a fair trial of war criminals ahead of the 2008 parliamentary poll and we are trying wholeheartedly to honour that pledge.

What have been your government's key achievements since it assumed power in 2008?

The biggest achievement is that we did not allow the worldwide economic downturn to affect our economy in any way. Monga (famine-like situation during the lean months) is now a thing of the past. This is because Bangladesh has posted a phenomenal increase in grain production which has made the country self-sufficient in food. This has helped us bring the poorest of the poor under the food security net. Also, 4.5 lakh people got direct employment since we came to power. New job opportunities for another 68 lakh people have been created. This is reducing the high rate of unemployment in the country.

Since 2009, we have added 3,000 MW of power to the national grid that has significantly mitigated the power crisis. Despite global recession, we will post a GDP growth rate of 6.7 percent this year which we hope to raise to 7 percent by the next year. The basic needs of the people are being increasingly met -- the government periodically sells rice much below the market price to hold the price line. One of my poll pledges had been to digitise Bangladesh. It is for the people to decide how much have we succeeded in this direction.

But the most significant achievement of my government has been to root out terror from Bangladesh. The previous government had used terror as a state policy. This had given such a bad name to Bangladesh, so much so that the country, at one point of time, was being regarded as a rogue state. The country had faced a serious image problem then. But my government has systematically confronted and defeated terror groups and has rid the country of

the menace. I have repeatedly said that we would not allow our soil to be used by any terror group for launching attacks against any country. Also, there has been a significant improvement in our image because of our fight against corruption.

How do you propose to strengthen the country's democratic institutions?

The past practice of frequently imposing martial law without resolving issues democratically had created untold problems for the country. I am for the empowerment of people. Since we came to power, more than 5,000 elections have been held. These include parliamentary by-elections, municipal and rural polls. Each election has been fair and peaceful. What is more, violence, that used to be the permanent feature of past elections, has been totally absent. All religious and ethnic minorities have voted without fear or favour. In many elections, even heavy-weight Awami League candidates have lost to the Opposition by a huge margin. The current electoral roll is faultless though at one time it had 1.25 crore bogus voters. Election under the present dispensation is credible and enjoys the people's confidence.

Will the Awami League-led grand alliance contest the 2014 parliamentary poll as one like it had done in

2008? It seems leaders of some constituents such as HM Ershad of the Jatiya Party are not toeing the political line of the alliance. Also, it has been reported that Ershad recently took part in a road march with the express purpose of whipping up anti-India sentiment among Bangladeshis...

Why don't you ask Ershad what is he up to? In my opinion, none of the constituents has done anything to undermine the unity of the alliance. The grand alliance remains intact.

Your landmark visit to Tripura in January 2012 will be remembered for your impassioned expression of gratitude to the people of India for looking after lakhs of Bangladeshi refugees during the 1971 war. When do you plan to visit Kolkata?

(After a pause) Of course I would love to go to Kolkata but at a suitable time, at the right time. Certainly not before that. The Statesman House stood by me during my most trying times. I am sure it will remain by my side in my fight for the just cause and also in all my endeavour to uphold the ideals of the Liberation War. I must laud the positive role played by Dainik Statesman to uphold the cause of democracy in Bangladesh during 2007 and 2008 when I had been interned by the neutral caretaker government.

Summer dates

FROM PAGE 1

The winter weather helped electricity demand remain under control until late February.

Even though the PDB foresaw the demand surge from March, it could do little as it has been hard hit by financial constraints. It has to constantly supply imported fuel oil to various rental and public sector power plants. It decided to maintain around 5,200MW power generation.

This left around a 1,500MW demand-supply shortfall.

"But to cut the margin of load shedding, the PDB went for shutting down power supplies to industrial areas in the evening and reduce 700MW power demand and distribute the remaining 800MW load shedding in different areas of the country," said a competent power ministry source.

This measure has generated a lot of criticism as industrial shutdowns have resulted in loss of production which would affect export earnings.

The government has directed the power distribution companies to keep the ceiling of load shedding in an area to four hours. But in reality, these companies, Desco or DPDC, are suspending power supplies for six to eight hours daily in an area.

A top official explained the financial constraints of PDB, "We were given Tk 5,200 crore subsidy during this fiscal year. Already we have spent Tk 5,000 crore. Now if we want to run our full power generation capacity, we will need a monthly subsidy

of Tk 1,000 crore, which is not there. We have no option but to go for load shedding."

He said if state-owned company Petrobangla could ensure its committed gas supplies to power plants, it would be possible to generate 6,000MW without any extra financial burden on the PDB.

Citing an example, he said on March 22 during the Asia Cup cricket tournament, Petrobangla ensured maximum gas supplies to the power plants in a special arrangement, helping the PDB hit a record power generation of 6,065MW.

"Everybody loves to blast the PDB for the load shedding. The fact is we have the power generation capacity but due to differences in power generation cost and sales cost, we are dependent on subsidy. Once our sales costs reach breakeven, we will not depend on subsidy," he said, "People need to understand this."

The official also expressed his regrets that people are critical about power tariff hike when they are actually enjoying subsidised rates of around Tk 3 or Tk 4 per kilowatt hour. In remote places like Saint Martin's Island, poor people are spending Tk 30 for per kilowatt hour of solar power and they approached the PDB proposing that they were willing to pay Tk 15 per unit.

The PDB aims at increasing the bulk power sales rate to Tk 5 per unit by 2015 from the present rate of around Tk 4. At consumer level, power tariff increase has been proposed for different segments of consumers.

ADMISSION NOTICE

Session : 2012-2013

Play Group to A level

Admission forms will be available up to 15th May 2012
Admission Test for KG I to Grade XII : 26th May 2012
Interview : PG, Nursery : 27th to 31st May 2012

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ASIAN UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN

Corrigendum

Construction of Campus Center & Auditorium Buildings of Asian University for Women Campus at Pahartali, Chittagong

Reference: Invitation for Prequalification, Package No: AUV-CCP-12-00, dated 27/03/2012.

An inadvertent mistake was identified for which the following correction to the Invitation for Prequalification is being provided:

Paragraph	Amendment for	Amendment made
Second Paragraph: Floor area of the building to be constructed	...consists of a 3-storied Building having approximately 6500 square feet plinth area and 16,400 square feet floor area...	...consists of a 3-storied Building having approximately 6500 square meters plinth area and 16,400 square meters floor area...

All other information, terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

Project Director
Asian University for Women

BRAC University

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SUMMER 2012

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