

It's last chance to try war criminals: Ashraf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The tenure of the present government is probably the last chance to hold the trial of the war criminals, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashraful Islam said yesterday.

"The party is in power and may assume power in the future. But it won't be possible to try the war criminals then if the trial is not held this time," he said.

Ashraf, also general secretary of the ruling Awami League, urged all to keep united in favour of the war crimes trial until it completes.

The government has brought only a few war criminals to justice, he said.

The war criminals and the anti-liberation war forces have huge invisible power. They have power of money, arms, bombs and terrorism.

"They have also collaborators at both home and abroad, and these collaborators have been conspiring locally and internationally to foil the war crimes trial spending big money."

The AL spokesperson said he received e-mail from Europe, USA and Muslim Middle Eastern countries everyday about the plot to foil the trial.

"So everybody must be united for the trial until it is completed."

The AL leader made the call at a grassroots meeting of Awami Jubo League at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital.

Jubo League, AL's youth front, organised the meeting to prepare itself for according "Youth Reception" to Prime Minister and AL chief Sheikh Hasina for attaining maritime victory with Myanmar on April 18. Jubo League Acting Chairman Omar Faruk Chowdhury chaired the meeting.

Referring to the formation of Jubo League after the Liberation War, the LGRD minister criticised Hasanul Haque Inu's Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) saying that had the politics not divided through the formation of the JSD, the cruel incident of August 15, 1975, would not have taken place.

Inflation

FROM PAGE 20

He said wage rate increased at a faster pace than inflation and helped raise people's purchasing power. In March, wage rate increased by 12.63 percent, outpacing inflation by 2.53 percentage points.

Mollah said a bumper rice yield helped bring down inflation in March, as the weight of rice in the inflation basket is about one-fourth.

Bangladesh Bank's weekly report on the economic situation said price hike of essentials on the international market, and increase in energy tariffs and domestic demands had pushed up inflation.

Zaid Bakht, research director at Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), told The Daily Star that the rise in energy prices and high price of dollar largely pushed up non-food inflation.

He said prices of all imported items soared due to a rise in dollar price.

Bakht said the Bangladesh Bank's contractionary monetary policy failed to contain non-food inflation. The central bank has been discouraging import financing that has made imported items costlier.

Prices of both local and imported fruits will go up, as the National Board of Revenue has increased import duty on fruits, he said.

The BIDS research director also said it was unlikely that non-food inflation would fall in the future, as the government would increase energy and power tariffs further under pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Biman board

FROM PAGE 20

also recommended that the minister of this ministry be made Biman Bangladesh Airlines board chairman, removing Air Marshal (retd) Jamal Uddin Ahmed.

In its meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, the House watchdog brought allegations against incumbent Biman Board Chairman Jamal Uddin of contempt of the JS as he failed to show up before the committee yesterday.

"The existing Biman Board has failed to turn the national airliner into a profitable venture as aviation experts are not involved in it. The air-service men will not be able to operate Biman efficiently as they are not professionally sound," Mosharraf Hossain, chief of the committee, told The Daily Star after the meeting.

Biman pilots, officials and employees under the banner of 'Biman Bachao Oikya Parishad' have recently announced a 48-hour strike from April 16 demanding immediate resignation of Jamal Uddin and dissolving the present Board. They claim that due to the Board's inefficiency, the national flag carrier has incurred a loss of Tk 1,000 crore.

Mosharraf, also a ruling Awami League MP, said many members of the present Biman Board are "incompetent" to run the national flag carrier skillfully.

On Jamal Uddin's non-appearance before the JS body, he said the committee

has several times requested the Biman boss to attend the committee's meeting to discuss irregularities in operating the airliner which is causing a huge loss.

"Finally on Sunday, the committee in its meeting requested him [Jamal Uddin] to appear before the committee on Thursday [yesterday]. But, he did not turn up," Mosharraf said, adding, by refusing their request Jamal Uddin shows committed contempt of the House of the nation.

The committee will inform the issue to Speaker Abdul Hamid as well as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Mosharraf went on.

Asked about Biman board boss's allegation against some members of the JS body of gaining personal interests instead of Biman's, Mosharraf said, "Honourable prime minister may investigate the allegation."

"And we must resign as MP if the allegation is found valid," he said.

Biman was turned into a public limited company in 2007 to make it a profitable venture and to run it professionally avoiding political interference.

Surprisingly, within one year of turning into a public limited company, the crisis-ridden Biman saw profit after long years.

But the state airliner got back its poor look within a few months after the ruling AL assumed power in 2009.

He said the whole nation is facing damages due to their speculation."

He said Destiny is a land-based cooperative. "There are many such cooperatives scattered across the country. Their activities need to be clamped down."

"If we cannot clamp down on them, the prices of land will continue to shoot up, and one day it will collapse. Although the country's banking system is not directly linked with land, 80 to 90 percent of collaterals are land-based."

"If the quality of the collaterals is damaged then the banks' fundamentals will be shaken," he told The Daily Star.

Delhi win curtailed IPL match

SPORTS DESK

Thanks to a late cameo from all-rounder Irfan Pathan and a fine spell from bowler Morne Morkel, Delhi Daredevils overcame the Kolkata Knight Riders by eight wickets in the team's opening Indian Premier League (IPL) encounter at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata yesterday.

The match was reduced to a 12-overs-a-side affair after rain delayed the start by nearly three hours. Having won the toss, Delhi captain Virender Sehwag decided to field first and then managed to restrict Kolkata to 97 for 9 in twelve overs.

Chasing the modest target, Delhi got off to a solid start with Aaron Finch and Sehwag putting on 49 in 6.2 overs. But Kolkata, who did not pick Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan for the match, came back into the reckoning when Finch was bowled by Jacques Kallis for a 27-ball 30 and Sehwag followed in the next over, well caught at long on by Iqbal Abdulla off Rajat Bhatia for 20.

But man-of-the-match Pathan then weighed in with a match-turning performance, hitting a six off Kallis when the target was beginning to look distant, and then hitting two more maximums in the next over to bring the equation down to 11 from 12 balls. He finally finished it off with a four off the first ball of the last over, ending with 42 off 20 deliveries with the help of two boundaries and three sixes.

"It is not only applicable to Destiny-2000, but also to all cooperatives that are mobilising money," he said, adding that the central bank would also have to know whether these companies have the authority to raise money in this manner.

Ahmed, also the vice chairman of PRI, said, "What will happen to the depositors if these companies flee with the money collected?"

Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of PRI, said this type of companies are completely unregulated and they have no legal authority to raise deposits.

"From this sense, perhaps the company is involved in illegal activities."

He said companies like JUBOK and Destiny have invested a lot in land properties. "As a result, prices of land have gone up by 10 times. And

BSF tortures Bangladeshi

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Satkhira

A Bangladeshi national who went to India legally suffered brutal torture by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) on April 4.

BSF men tortured Gopal Chandra Roy near the Ghojadanga border in Basirhat police station of India opposite to Bhowm port of Satkhira.

Gopal, 40, son of Puranjan Roy of village Paikpara in Dehata upazila, went to India through Ghojadanga maintaining all the immigration formalities on March 29.

As soon as the victim reached a BSF camp on his way to Bangladesh on April 4, BSF men stopped and interrogated him. At one stage they beat him mercilessly with bamboo sticks and fractured his right leg at about 8:00pm.

The BSF men left him at Bhowm immigration point and the victim's relatives rescued him.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed the incident.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

Japan passes \$1.1 trillion budget

AFP, Tokyo

Japan passed a \$1.1 trillion budget yesterday, with about half the spending expected to be financed by new bonds that will add to Japan's massive debt mountain.

Although the opposition-controlled upper house of parliament voted down the budget earlier in the day, it was still passed after a draft was approved last month in Japan's lower chamber.

"The budget bill was enacted, based on the constitution," a parliamentary official said.

9 killed

FROM PAGE 20

the auto-rickshaw and they included its driver.

Seven of the dead were identified as Jotish Chandra Sheel, 60, Shahidul Islam, 55, Aminul Islam, 25, Abdul Malek, 22, Mizanur Rahman, 20, Rashedul Islam, 25, and bus helper Hira Mia, 25.

Among the injured, 15 passengers were admitted to Sirajganj General Hospital and Belkuchi Upazila Health Complex. Of them, the condition of five persons, including pregnant Rahima Khatun, 22, Yusuf Ali, 18, Tofazzal Hossain, 52, Sona Ullah Mia, 50, and Khalilur Rahman, 20, was critical, doctors at the Sirajganj hospital said.

The Karim Paribahan bus bound for Sirajganj from Enayetur rammed into the three-wheeler in Ambaria area about 4:00pm, said Belkuchi UNO Ananda Kumar Biswas and Abul Kalam Azad, officer-in-charge of Belkuchi Police Station.

The bus, skidding off the road, fell into a roadside ditch.

The road has become narrower due to repair work at this point, reports our correspondent, adding that the CNG-run auto-rickshaw was totally damaged. The driver of the bus was killed.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdul Latif Biswas visited the spot and asked the authorities concerned to ensure proper treatment of the injured.

A case was filed in this connection.

Our Rangamati correspondent reports the reason behind the accident was not clear but many witnesses said the vehicle had plunged into the roadside ditch as it lost control.

Army and police personnel and fire-fighters with the help of local people rescued the survivors and recovered the bodies.

However, they were yet to salvage the bus.

The bodies were sent to Rangamati General Hospital while 12 injured and in critical condition were sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

The scenario is more or less the same in other countries of South and South-West Asia, he said, calling for stronger and effective laws and policies on migration.

Traffic thrown

FROM PAGE 1

upazila, Satkhira.

The agitating students withdrew the blockade around 1:45pm following a home ministry assurance of a probe into the alleged incident and at the request of DU Vice-Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique.

At Mohakali, people who had been evicted from the Karail slum in government action were joined by those in fear of losing homes through a similar drive.

Police stopped traffic on the Gulshan-Mohakali link road and Kemal Ataturk Avenue, suspecting the slum dwellers could vandalise vehicles, Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Gulshan Police Station, told The Daily Star.

The ensuing tailback stretched several kilometres on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Navy Headquarters to Mohakali and Tajuddin Ahmed Sarani.

Traffic on all roads at Gulshan, Banani and Mohakali came to a standstill. The congestions had an impact on other city streets as well.

The scorching heat of April compounded the distress of commuters, including office-goers and students, who found themselves stuck on their way to their various destinations.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed the incident.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed the incident.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed the incident.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed the incident.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed the incident.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed the incident.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed the incident.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed the incident.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed the incident.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed the incident.

Border Guard Bangladesh of Satkhira protested the torture of Gopal.

He was admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Officer-in-charge Ali Ashraf of Bhowm immigration check post confirmed