

ATTACK ON BUDDHISTS, OTHER COMMUNAL VIOLENCE

Admin played silent role: Menon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The administration remained silent or even played proactive roles in favour of fundamentalist groups during different incidents of communal violence across the country, including the latest one in Ramu of Cox's Bazar, President of Workers' Party Rashed Khan Menon said yesterday.

The fundamentalist forces are implementing their conspiracies to create a communal divide in the country through using a section of government's administration in a very delicate and planned manner, he told the inaugural session of the two-day long 6th national council of Bangladesh Jubo Moitree, an organisation of the party's young supporters, at the capital's Institution of Engineers Bangladesh.

"As part of their conspiracies, somewhere Hindu households are affected; somewhere indigenous people are affected; and somewhere Buddhist households are affected," Menon said, speaking as chief guest at the programme.

The latest communal attack occurred on the night of September 29 in Ramu where a mob ravaged through 12 Buddhist temples and monasteries and more than 50 houses centring a Facebook photo "defaming the Holy Quran". The violence later spread to Ukhiya in Cox's Bazar and Patiya in

Chittagong.

Referring to stock market plunge, Hall-Mark scam and other incidents, he said, "Politics of criminalisation and corruption has gripped us. Although we joined the grand alliance with the hope for change, now we are stumbling repeatedly."

Workers' Party of Bangladesh is a major component of the Awami League-led ruling grand alliance.

Menon also stressed the need for greater unity of progressive forces to build strong resistance against communalism, fundamentalism and politics of corruption and criminalisation and urged the young generation to play a pioneering role.

Noted cultural personality Kamal Lohani, who inaugurated the council, said, "The souls of the anti-liberation forces are still dwelling in the bureaucrats and running their activities."

Adivasi leader Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma, also president of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), said a conspiracy was under way to eliminate the existence of indigenous people of the country.

Jubo Moitree Acting President Kishore Roy chaired the inaugural session of the council, while hundreds of leaders and activists of the organisation from across the country attended it.



Surgical gowns and bed sheets used in Dhaka Hospital, a private healthcare institution in Old Dhaka, are washed in an overwhelmingly polluted Buriganga and dried on its dirty bank. The photo was taken at Islambagh of Kamrangirchar yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

4 hurt in BCL factional clash at DU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least four activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) were injured early yesterday in a factional clash at Dhaka University's Salimullah Muslim Hall over establishing supremacy there.

The injured are Imran, second year student of History department, Mishkat, second year student of International Relations, Mahub, second year, Bangla, and Shamim, a masters student of Pali and Buddhist Studies, of the university.

Witnesses said Khan Sun Ahmed Saurav, BCL organising secretary hall unit, along with Forhad Hossain, religious affairs secretary, were locked in a brawl with Mehdi Hasan, another BCL organising secretary, and Sariful Islam Sagor, hall unit leader, over occupying a room in the hall.

Both the groups used sharp weapons, iron rods and cricket stumps.

After two hours, DU proctor and police calmed the situation.

TURAG RIVER POLLUTION

Remove waste or face action

DoE warns Gazipur municipality

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday directed authorities of Gazipur Municipality to remove wastes dumped at the west bank of the Turag River beside Tangail-Gazipur Highway in Bymail area within next fifteen days.

The DoE also warned that it would take legal actions if the municipal authorities fail to comply with the directive.

Mohammad Munir Chowdhury, director (enforcement) of DoE, issued the directive to the municipality's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Md Rakibul Hasan, said a press release.

Earlier on Wednesday, an enforcement team of DoE found that a huge amount of household waste including polythene was dumped on about two acres of land in the area causing threat to public health by emitting bad smell, polluting the environment and water of the river, the press release added.

The municipality's CEO Md Rakibul Hasan and Panel Mayor Md Akbar Hossain appeared at a hearing at the DoE's office in Dhaka. They assured of taking necessary steps to remove the waste within the fixed timeframe, it said.

The authorities of the municipality informed the DoE that the waste was dumped on the river bank due to lack of manpower and dump trucks, it added.

The municipality should take a project for recycling the waste, DoE Director Munir Chowdhury said.

Six killed in road accidents

METRO DESK

Six people were killed and two others injured in separate road accidents in Dhaka, Tangail, Sirajganj and Natore on Wednesday and yesterday.

Our staff correspondent reports, an unidentified youth was killed as a bus ran him over near Navana Tower on Gulshan-1 intersection in the capital yesterday.

The man, standing at the door of the bus, fell down onto the road as the driver braked the vehicle sharply. Later, the bus crushed him, said Rabiul Islam, sub-inspector of Gulshan Police Station, quoting witnesses.

Meanwhile, a rickshaw-van puller, Abbas, 40, was killed as an unidentified car ran him over around 3:30am at Rayerbagh in Jatrabari area yesterday.

Our Tangail correspondent reports, a Dhaka bound goods-laden truck from Dinajpur ran a youth over while he was crossing Dhaka-Tangail highway in Gorai area of Mirzapur upazila at about 11:00am, killing him on the spot, Gorai Highway Police said.

The deceased was Monir Hossain, 30, of

Gorai Kodalkata village in the upazila.

In another accident, a Dhaka bound passenger bus ran over an unidentified passer-by, aged around 42, on the highway in Khudirampur area of Tangail sadar upazila at around 2:30pm yesterday, killing him instantly.

In Sirajganj, an unidentified covered van driver was killed on the spot and two others were injured a truck from Dhaka collided head-on with the covered van at Kadda on the west approach road of Bangabandhu Bridge in sadar upazila yesterday noon.

The injured were admitted to Sirajganj General Hospital.

In Natore correspondent reports, an elderly woman died as a motorbike hit her in Nabinagar village of Lalpur upazila on Wednesday evening.

The deceased was Ambia Begum, 50, wife of Aksed Ali of the village.

Lalpur Police Station Officer-in-Charge Matiyar Rahman said the motorbike hit Ambia from behind while she was crossing the road in the area.

Ambia died on the way to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, he added.

Gun-toting BCL men roam free at RU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

At least four pro-Awami League Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leaders, who openly brandished firearms during the October 2 clash in Rajshahi University, were seen roaming freely on the campus right before police yesterday.

The clash, between pro-Jamaat-e-Islami Islamic Chhatra Shibir and BCL activists, left some 25 students injured, three of them bullet-hit.

The four are former vice president Akheruzzaman Takim and organising secretary SM Towhid Al Hossain Tuhin, expelled from BCL in July, and Deputy Library Affairs Secretary Nasim Ahmed Setu and Deputy Office Secretary Atikur Rahman.

They were caught on camera by photojournalists of newspapers and television channels while shooting with guns during the clash.

Students and teachers said the four were seen participating in a BCL demonstration on the campus around 11:00am yesterday.

Around five hours later, Rajshahi Metropolitan Police Additional Commissioner M Moniruzzaman said the four were "on the run" and police had no trace of them.

Police recorded only one case, filed by Tuhin with Motihar Police Station, against 21 Shibir activists by name and 100 others unnamed, for attacking a BCL procession and shooting BCL activists.

Moniruzzaman and Motihar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Anisur Rahman declined to comment on why cases were not filed against BCL activists.

The four said they were not ashamed of taking up firearms in self-defence.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Managing Director of Dutch-Bangla Bank KS Tabrez visits patients and inquires about them in Dhaka Eye Hospital where they were operated upon under an ongoing eye camp sponsored by the bank and supervised by the Bangladesh National Society for the Blind (BNSB). A total of 200 cataract patients will be operated during the camp. BNSB General Secretary Prof Khaleda Khanam and Managing Director Prof Mohiuddin Ahmed, among others, visited the patients on Wednesday.

KAPASIA BY-POLL

Returning officer trashes allegations of irregularities

RASHIDUL HASAN

The returning officer for the just held Kapasia by-poll has rejected all allegations of irregularities raised by the two defeated candidates.

He said no evidence was found in support of the allegations by independent candidate Afsaruddin Ahmad and Communist Party of Bangladesh backed Asadullah Badal, who were beaten by Awami League backed Simin Hossain Rimi by a huge margin.

"None of the 86 polling agents who worked for Afsaruddin Ahmad in the 102 voting centres did raise any allegations of irregularities in the voting," Mihir Sarwar Morshed, the returning officer, told The Daily Star on Wednesday.

In his written allegations, Afsaruddin, also uncle of Rimi, said the ruling party

cadres, especially Bangladesh Chhatra League activists, wearing police uniforms threatened the voters favouring him and polling agents not to come to the polling stations.

He also termed the September 30 election stage managed.

Refuting his claims, Mihir said several election monitoring and observer teams deployed by the Election Commission did not find any major flaws in the election, the first poll under the new EC.

Though CPB-backed Asadullah rejected the election, he did not cite any specific allegation of irregularities.

Rimi tallied 63,401 votes, while Afsaruddin and Asadullah received 26,349 and 1,428 votes respectively. The defeated candidates rejected the election 10-15 minutes before the voting ended at 4:00pm.

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