Displaced Iraqis return to their homes in West Mosul's Oreibi neighbourhood after government forces retook control of the area from the Islamic State (IS) group during the ongoing offensive against the jihadists yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Judiciary

FROM PAGE 1

HC declared unconstitutional the rules under which executive magistrates run mobile courts. It also observed that empowering executive magistrates with judicial powers is "a frontal attack on the independence of the judiciary and is violative of the theory of separation of powers".

On May 14, the government filed three separate provisional leave-to-appeal petitions with the SC seeking stay on the HC verdict.

Following the government petitions, the apex court the same day stayed the HC verdict and sent the petitions to its full bench for their hearing.

While moving the stay petitions, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told the court that 37 incidents of child marriage reportedly took place in Dinajpur in four days when the mobile courts were inoperative following the HC verdict.

However, the Child Marriage Restraint Act 2017 makes it mandatory for the local administration to take action to stop child marriage. According to Section-4 of the act, upon receiving information that a child marriage is taking place, the UNO, women affairs officers, social welfare officers and education officers, among other officials in the upazila, have to act to stop the marriage.

The attorney general also argued that adulteration of food and price hike of daily essentials would take place during the upcoming month of Ramadan and stalking and illegal extraction of sand would increase if mobile courts were not run.

During yesterday's hearing, the chief justice wanted to know how executive magistrates could try and punish offenders by running mobile courts and whether the attorney general wants to run a parallel court in the name of executive magistrate-led mobile court.

The attorney general said mobile courts need to be run for taking instant action against the offence and its immediate effect.

Writ petitioners' lawyer Barrister Hassan MS Azim opposed the government's stay petitions.

Victim's family

FROM PAGE 2

(DSCC) gave Tk 25 lakh and Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) the rest earlier this month, Deputy Attorney General Tapas Kumar Biswas told The Daily Star.

He said DSCC and Dhaka Wasa lawyers informed this to the High Court recently.

The bench of Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque and Justice Mohammad Ullah then disposed of a rule it issued earlier over the death of Shanu Miah, who is from Brahmanbaria's Kasba upazila, he added.

The HC had ordered the officer-in-charge of Paltan Police Station to file a case against six government officials and a contractor for their negligence in maintaining the manhole.

The officials filed an appeal and the SC's Appellate Division on March 30 cancelled the HC order and ordered the payout.

Nahid slates

FROM PAGE 2

Nahid said Tk 63.87 crore was provided as retirement benefits and welfare allowances to some 1,851 retired teachers and employees planning to perform hajj this year.

Since 2009, 51,874 non-government teachers and employees got Tk 2,063.50 crore as retirement benefits and welfare allowances, he said.

Ousted S Korean leader due to go on trial

AFP, *Seoul*

Ousted South Korean leader Park Geun-Hye is due to go on trial Tuesday over the spectacular corruption scandal that brought her down, the country's third former president to appear in the dock.

The fallen head of state will be taken from the detention centre where she is being held to Seoul Central District Court, setting the stage for the final act of the drama that has engulfed her.

As well as conservative Park and the multi-billionaire businessmen who allegedly bribed her, the controversy's cast list includes the daughter of a shaman, plastic surgeons, and an Asian Games gold medallist fencer turned male karaoke host, among others.

As revelation after revelation emerged last year, millions of people took to the streets to demand her removal, culminating in her impeachment by parliament and sacking this March by the country's top court.

Soon afterwards she was detained and indicted.

Her stunning downfall -- when she was elected in 2012 she secured the highest vote share of any candidate in the country's democratic era -- capped months of political upheaval in Asia's fourth-largest economy.

Teacher-student

FROM PAGE 1

Education ministry officials said the teacher-student ratio was an indicator of education quality. In crowded classrooms, it becomes difficult for students to take lessons while teachers get less time to spend on each student.

The number of students in the schools has been increasing every year and the authorities are struggling to provide them with the required number of teachers, they added.

DROPOUT

A significant number of girls, more than boys, dropped out of the secondary-level education last year though their enrolment figure was quite encouraging, the report said.

Some 42.19 percent of the girls, who took admission in grade 6, didn't complete their secondary education while 33.88 percent of the boys left school. Girls' enrolment in the secondary-level education was 73.10 percent last year while that of boys was 63.85 percent.

The report also pointed out some positive trends such as a gradual decrease in dropout rate over the years from 61.38 percent in 2008. The dropout rate came down to 38.30 percent last year from 40.29 percent in the previous year.

"Dropout is a waste [of resources]. Through different initiatives by the government, we have been able to reduce this waste successfully over the years," Shamsul Alam, chief of the Statistics Division of Banbeis, said while presenting the report.

Grade 10 students accounted for one third of those who dropped out. Almost an equal number of girls dropped out of school in grade 8.

"Marriage and social security are among the main reasons behind girls dropping out of school," Shamsul said, adding that a 2010 study found that most of the girls discontinue education from class 8.

The report also mentioned that the dropout rate at the primary level was 19.2 percent while the rate at the higher secondary level (class-XI and XII) was 20.08 percent last year.

To prepare the report, information was collected from 40,839 educational institutions across the country between September 20 and October 20 last year.

The total number of students from primary schools to universities in Bangladesh stood at 3.69 crore as of 2016 while the number of institutions was 1,67,454, the report said.

Another positive thing was that girls comprised 51.9 percent of the students at the secondary level in Bangladesh, the highest among E-9 nations that have over half of the global population as well as half of out-of-school children. The E-9 forum was formed to achieve the Unesco goal of education for all.

The other E-9 nations are Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan.

The report also showed that more than 11,000 educational institutions in Bangladesh are vulnerable to disasters like flood, cyclone, landslide, river erosion and salinity.

Kiwis win tri-series

FROM PAGE 1

at the start of the 19th over for 75, the innings went downhill fast.

Niall O'Brien followed in the next over and wickets fell steadily with all six Black Caps bowlers striking.

Only a last-wicket stand of 25 between Barry McCarthy and Peter Chase, the No 11 who hit a career-best 14, delayed the inevitable.

The strength of this New Zealand team is their batting, however, and while Latham led from the front with his third ODI century, from 109 balls with eight fours and four sixes, it was the even faster scoring around him from Luke Ronchi (35 from 31) and Neil Broom (38 off 42) that was so impressive.

When Latham was third out -- dismissed for 104 -- at the end of the 36th over, with the total on 212, the Ireland bowlers enjoyed their best spell, but the entry of Colin Munro changed all that. He thumped 44 off 15 balls with three fours and four sixes in a prolific 57-run stand with Mitchell Santner. In all 72 came off the last four overs.

It was a new look Black Caps side as they also welcomed back all-rounder Corey Anderson from the IPL -- although he was restricted to 20 off 24 balls with just one six -- while Adam Milne also made his first appearance of the series.

Ireland dropped the experienced Kevin O'Brien and Tim Murtagh but it yielded no improvement as they slumped to a 10th successive loss against a full member nation.

Latham was fortunate to reach his century as, 11 runs short he was caught at third man but, after the television umpire was consulted, bowler Craig Young was ruled to have over-stepped and a no-ball was called.

SCORES IN BRIEF:

NEW ZEALAND: 344 for 6 (Latham 104, Taylor 57, Munro 44; Young 2-82, Chase 2-69)

IRELAND: 154 all out in 39.3 overs (Porterfield 48, Wilson 30; Henry 3-36, Anderson 2-15, Kuggeleijn 2-17)

Result: New Zealand won by 190 runs.

Player-of-the-match: T Latham.

Egypt refers 48 to trial over IS church bombings

AFP, *Cairo*

Egyptian authorities have referred 48 suspected Islamic State group members to military trial over three deadly church bombings, the public prosecutor's office said in a statement yesterday.

Of the 48 suspects, 31 are in custody and 17 still at large, it said.

IS claimed responsibility for the three suicide attacks that targeted the churches in December and April.

A December 11 attack in the heart of Cairo on the Saint Peter and Saint Paul church, adjacent to the headquarters of Coptic Pope Tawadros II, killed 29 people.

One killed

FROM PAGE 1

Police Station, said both Kabir Steel Ltd and Khawja Ship-Breaking Yard were owned by Md Shahjahan. "That is probably why wrong company name was entered [into the hospital records]"

The accident took place around 12:10am, said Mangal Das under whom Sachindra was working.

The authority of Khawja Ship-Breaking Yard said the accident occurred on Saturday evening when workers were about to leave the place.

"We gave him primary treatment at our own medical facility and sent him to Chittagong Medical College Hospital as his condition deteriorated," Shahidul Islam, who identified himself as assistant officer (admin) of the yard, said on phone.

He refuted the allegation that employees worked night shifts without safety gears. But he could not answer to the question as to why the victim had suffered injuries to the head if he wore a helmet.

Md Shahjahan, owner of the ship-breaking yards, could not be reached by phone for comments.

Meanwhile, an unnatural death case has been filed in connection with the incident, according to police.

BNP

FROM PAGE 2

Wishing anonymity, the BNP leader also said the standing committee members discussed Saturday's raid. They believe the raid was a "provocation by the government" and it was aimed at spoiling the "election atmosphere" so that the BNP boycotts the next national polls like it did in 2014, he added.

Another standing committee member said the party will demand an explanation from the government for the police raid.

In a surprise move, police raided Khaleda's Gulshan office on Saturday to seize "materials for carrying out anti-state and subversive activities". They found nothing during the over-two-hour-long search.

"We did not get the things for which we carried out the search," Salahuddin, inspector (investigation) of Gulshan Police Station, told The Daily Star.

Don't make

FROM PAGE 2

Murad Reza also argued that the HC in its verdict did not explain how the basic structures of the constitution were violated by bringing the 16th amendment to it.

After concluding yesterday's proceedings, the SC fixed 11:30am today for resuming the hearing.

Hawks of streets

FROM PAGE 1

Saiful and 71 others with Shahbagh, Paltan and Motijheel police stations on February 9.

Called over the phone, Saiful said he was on bail and had nothing to do with extortion.

Informed that this correspondent saw and filmed him while collecting money, he said, "Meet me in person. I'm busy now." He then hung up.

Meanwhile, the vendors say they are being forced to pay Tk 100 for every 54 square inches of the footpath their goods occupied. The number of vendors in the area hovered around 100, they added.

It is an all too familiar picture in the 430-kilometre stretch of footpaths on 2,215 km roads in Dhaka north and south city corporations, found a study last year.

The study by Brac Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) found street vendors and hawkers paying around Tk 1,825 crore a year to different gangs.

It also observed that the amount was almost as big as the combined budget of Dhaka's two city corporations in 2015-16.

People like Saiful, known as the "linemen" are part of a network run by a section of political leaders, influential persons and members of law enforcers.

Bangladesh Hawkers Federation President MA Kashem said about one lakh street vendors of the capital were victims of extortion gangs. From Tk 100-Tk 500 were skimmed off their income on a daily basis.

ANOTHER AREA, SIMILAR PICTURE

Abdur Rob and Sree Babul briskly walk the streets from Gulistan Shopping Complex to Gulistan Bata Bazar in the evening.

They go to every street vendor on the 29 footpaths and streets on the way and collect money. The total sum is handed over to Mohammad Babul alias Sardar Babul, hawkers said.

Sardar himself collects money from the street between Gulistan Shopping Complex and Sundarban Square Market, said locals.

Sree Babul and Sardar Babul are both accused in the case DSCC filed over extortion.

The vendors allege that ruling party activists of the area as well as police get a handsome share of the illegal toll. Policemen at nearby Sergeant Ahad Police Box as well as Paltan Police Station also get a share.

The correspondent interviewed at least 10 traders in Motijheel and Gulistan. All of them requested anonymity and said similar things about unabated extortion.

Asked over phone, Sardar Babul admitted taking money from vendors and giving a share to police and local ruling party men. He explained that street vendors give him money to be able to run their businesses "smoothly".

"We give some of it to police because they work hard for 8-9 hours," he said.

POLICE NONCHALANT

Baser Molla, the ready-made garment seller, who was beaten up by Saiful and his men in front of Motijheel Ideal School, said police declined to record the case against Saiful and his cohorts when he went to Motijheel Police Station.

The allegation was refuted by Motijheel Police.

He later lodged the case with a magistrate's court, which directed the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) to investigate the matter.

Baser told The Daily Star that he and two witnesses of the incident gave statements about the incident to Emdadul Haque, who is investigating the case.

Contacted, Emdadul said, "I am still trying to find the accused."

Meanwhile, Saiful continues to extort. Locals said Saiful and several others beat up a sherbet seller, Hedayat, on April 13. The victim, who just arrived in the area with his mobile shop, was beaten up because he didn't pay Tk 5,000 demanded by Saiful.

The vendors also said Saiful and his men give about Tk 6,000 every day to Mahbubur Rahman Titu, a close aide to local Ward Councillor Maruf Ahmed Mansur.

Mahbubur refuted the allegation but the councillor said, "If he [Mahbubur] takes money, I will take action against him."

Asked about Saiful, he said, "I heard Saiful Molla is involved. I will take action."

Officer-in-Charge Omar Faruk of Motijheel Police Station claimed that Baser did not come to his office to file any case.

About the extortion near Ideal School, he said, "We have not received any complaints of extortion."

When his attention was drawn to the DSCC case filed with his police station, he only said, "Oh, I see!"

About the allegation of getting a share of the illegal toll, he said, "My firm answer is – I have no comment."

Asked about the allegation that Sergeant Ahad Police Box gets a share of the money, Assistant Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Motijheel Zone) Mozaharul Islam said, "Such things can be said against anyone." He then hung up the phone.

Similarly, the OC of Paltan Police Station Rafiqul Islam said the allegations are "baseless". Asked about the extortion case filed by the DSCC, he said it was being investigated.

ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF ROAD AND FOOTPATHS

Since the DSCC began evicting vendors and hawkers occupying footpaths and road space last year, different organisations mushroomed to protest the move.

"These organisations don't have registration. The extortionists formed these organisations to protect their source of income," said Abul Kashem, President of Bangladesh Hawkers' League.

Kashem added that he filed a case against these organisations with a labour court and it issued show cause notice asking why legal action will not be taken against them.

"We want the home minister's intervention," he said.

Echoing his view, hawkers and vendors who sit between Baitul Mokarram and General Post Office, said the groups that take money from them always protest when the city corporations attempt to free the roads and pavements.

Even DSCC Mayor Mohammad Sayeed Khokon on several occasions blamed some policemen and local ruling party men for extorting and perpetuating illegal occupation of footpaths and road space.

DMP Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia said hawkers and vendors occupy streets illegally. "If they are giving anything to anybody to secure their business, they can, but we don't have any knowledge of it."

Regarding allegations of policemen receiving a share, he said, "If anyone makes allegations to you, write whatever you can, I have nothing to say."

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said, "If anyone brings allegations, we'll scrutinise those and take necessary legal action against them [extortionists]."

Mercury

FROM PAGE 2

"There is a high possibility for children and elderly people to contract these diseases," Prof Abdullah, also the dean of Faculty of Medicine, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, said. Labourers who are working in this severe hot weather may suffer heat stroke, he said.

He advised people to stay hydrated, avoid roadside drinks and food, use mosquito nets at home and keep their surroundings clean.

He also advised the people to consult a doctor if anyone has been suffering from fever for more than three days.

Meet the Iraqi

FROM PAGE 2

when the US-backed Iraqi coalition began an operation to remove IS from nearby Mosul began in October last year, and the family of five has been living in a camp called Dibaga 2 ever since.

While life there is hard, and Hassan's parents have very little income, the family enjoys the novelty of being the closest thing Dibaga has to celebrities.

News cameras and microphones were thrust in the faces of families arriving at the camp back in the autumn - the first wave of more than 600,000 people who have been displaced by the fighting to date.

Hassan, wearing an AC Milan shirt, didn't hold back telling news crews how he felt seeing IS driven back.

"I could not rest, I felt tortured by Isis," he said, using a highly formal vocabulary which made him sound like an adult. "Kisses for [Iraqi Prime Minister Haider] al-Abadi!"

The interview delighted many across the country who lauded Hassan as possessing wit and wisdom beyond his years.

Clips quickly found their way onto YouTube, where various videos have notched up hundreds of thousands of shares between them - one autotuned song remix is currently on 12,000 views.

Since the original interview aired in October, visitors to Dibaga have sought the family out to meet the little boy in person. They take selfies, or their own videos with Hassan, asking him to repeat the words which made him famous.

In person the little boy is more shy than his huge internet presence would suggest. "It is strange being noticed by people around here," he said slowly.

In Dibaga Hassan has started school for the first time, and is getting to grips with reading and writing as eloquently as he speaks.

He doesn't have plans to go into a TV career or seek out more public attention - "But it is good to make people laugh and be happy," he adds. "Everyone should want to make other people happy."