

British inquiry to hear from boss of Kelly

AFP, London

A probe into the suspected suicide of a British arms expert who sparked off allegations that Prime Minister Tony Blair's office exaggerated the intelligence case for war on Iraq will hear on Thursday from his defence ministry boss.

Brian Wells, the dead scientist's boss, is expected to face a grilling over the defence ministry's role in outing David Kelly as the source for BBC claims that an intelligence dossier on Iraq's weapons capabilities was "sexed up" by the government.

Kelly, a former UN arms inspector in Iraq and biological weapons expert, was found dead with a slit wrist on July 18, a day after he went missing after leaving his home in southern England for a countryside walk.

On Wednesday the inquiry heard a taped conversation involving Kelly, in which the arms expert accused Blair's press office of latching on to uncorroborated intelligence to bolster its dossier on Iraq, published in September 2002.

The BBC's original allegation came in May. BBC defence correspondent Andrew Gilligan said on the Today radio programme a senior British official had told him the government's dossier on Iraq, published last September, was "sexed up" against the wishes of the intelligence services.

Gilligan also used a newspaper article in June to report that Blair's key aide and media chief, Alastair Campbell, was responsible for inserting in the Iraq dossier the headline claim that Saddam Hussein could launch weapons of mass destruction within 45 minutes.

The newspaper report was strongly denied by the government and sparked a furious row between the BBC, the world's largest broadcaster, and Blair's press office.

But the inquiry heard a tape recording on Wednesday of Kelly

telling another BBC journalist that the government had over-played the 45-minute claim.

"It was a statement that was made and it just got out of all proportion. They (the government) were desperate for information which could be used," Kelly told Susan Watts, the science editor of BBC television's Newsnight programme.

"They were pushing hard for information which could be released. That was one that popped up and it was seized on and it was unfortunate that it was," Kelly said on the tape, adding that he had been involved in the "whole process" of producing the dossier.

"(That) is why there is the argument between the intelligence services and (Blair's office) because things were picked up on and once they've picked up on it, you can't pull it back, that's the problem," Kelly said in the May 30 recording, played to the inquiry.

Watts also testified that senior BBC personnel had pressured her to back up Gilligan's report.

"I was most concerned that there was an attempt to mould (my reports) so that they were corroborative, which I felt was misguided and false," said Watts.

The inquiry heard that during one of several phone conversations with Watts, Kelly told her "he did not think the British had a definitive position on Iraq's exact capabilities".

Describing some of the claims made by British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw and US President George W. Bush about Iraq's weapons capabilities, Kelly told her: "It was spin".

Blair, who is currently on holiday in Barbados, and Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon, the minister in charge of Kelly's department, are expected to be summoned to give evidence before the inquiry closes.

Protect nat'l industries to save workers, urges JSD

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) yesterday called for a 'platform to protect national industries' to save workers' livelihood in a memorandum protesting the economic policies of the government, during a protest rally.

The protest rally was part of a daylong programme including a human chain and the presentation of memorandum resisting lay-off, lock-out, deregulation of national industries and the anti-worker policies implemented by the government.

"Shutting down industries has become a regular event for the government," said the JSD president, Hasanul Haq Inu, adding that "you may cut jobs, and shut down factories with the stroke of a pen but it cannot create industries."

Jatiya Shilpa Rakha Mancha should be formed in collaboration with the government, owners and labours, he added.

Meanwhile, Shirin Akhtar, president of Bangladesh Jatiya Sramik Jote, asked the workers to assemble in creating "one factory, one union, one country, one federation" to protect the national and workers' interests.

Inu was the chief guest at the meeting. Labour leaders Fatima Hossein, M A Berek and Kazi Siddiqur Rahman, among others, spoke on the occasion, while AlAzam Khan read out the memorandum.

JU teachers

FROM PAGE 12 and other academic activities, as the hall authorities refuse to sign clearance certificates. The students who applied for their honours and master's certificates are facing the same trouble, the university sources said.

The SSB hall employees cannot get their bills of daily needs, as the provost's signature is required.

Meanwhile, the JCD played a vital role in distributing the seats among the fresher at the dormitories, as the hall authorities went on a work abstention programme.

Stiglitz

FROM PAGE 1 did not increase investment and rather promoted economic instability in different countries.

On the IMF's wholesale campaign for privatisation, he asked why the developed nations do not go for privatisation of the atom bomb industry.

He maintained that mass-scale privatisation at the advice of the IMF only breeds corruption. The visiting economist, however, said privatisation could be a good tool for an economy if done in the right way.

The Southeast Asian countries could come out of their economic downturn because they did not follow the "Washington Consensus," he pointed out.

Shazneen case

FROM PAGE 1 treatement concerned gave his deposition on Shahid's confession before the tribunal, they added.

The counsels argued that different decisions and judgements of higher courts justify punishment of the co-accused in this case on the basis of Shahid's confessional statement.

Earlier, the tribunal recorded statements of 22 prosecution witnesses including the victim's father Latifur Rahman.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, the youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, Chairman of Transcom Ltd, was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence in the city on April 23, 1998.

Special public prosecutors (PPs) ABM Sharfuddin Khan Mukul, Mahbud Ahmed, Arfan Uddin Khan and Saima Khanam and Assistant PPA Anisur Rahman appeared for the state. Advocates Mosharrif Hossain Kajal, Mizanur Rahman and MA Kamrul Hasan Khan Aslam defended the accused.

DMCH

FROM PAGE 12 as Md. Hossain and claimed to be an employee of the emergency unit.

"I was asked to accompany the patient by the doctor with spectacles on ward No.30," he said.

An emergency unit worker, Sunnat, identified Hossain as "staff" from ward No.31.

Officials say the hospital is beset by crises caused by mismanagement, inefficiency and lack of government commitment.

In addition, staff shortages make it hard for workers to cope with the daily onrush of patients, which at more than 1,600 is double the hospital's capacity of 800 places.

Twelve wardboys work three shifts in a 24-hour period at the emergency unit. The workload for four boys a shift is too much.

That is why outsiders take advantage of the situation, admit hospital officials. "We just keep our eyes closed to what is happening all around."

The hospital has been operating like this for years despite repeated public complaints.

PM takes maiden trip

FROM PAGE 1 ing welcoming slogans.

The inaugural train, Silk City Express, with 12 bogies, departed from Rajshahi station at 1:35pm and arrived at Sardah at about 2:15pm.

Ministers, MPs, civil and military high officials, diplomats, local elite and personalities of various professions were on board the train for the jaunt.

The Silk City Express will go into commercial operation from today, a Railway official said.

The express is scheduled to depart from Rajshahi station at 6:00am and reach Joydevpur at 11:00am while the return train will depart Joydevpur at 6:00pm and arrive at Rajshahi at 11:00pm.

Passengers will be ferried from Joydevpur to Dhaka and Dhaka to Joydevpur on a shuttle train.

Addressing the inaugural function, the prime minister said the government has taken up programmes for comfortable and speedy rail communications between Dhaka and other important cities aiming to turn the capital city into a "nerve-centre" of the rail network.

Explaining the plans, she said two fully air-conditioned deluxe trains would run on the Dhaka-Sylhet and Dhaka-Chittagong routes under a scheme.

Steps have been taken to install rails from Chittagong to Cox's Bazar and Ramu to Gondum to link Bangladesh with Trans-Asian Railway network, she told the audience.

After Rajshahi-Dhaka direct rail communications, the prime minister said cross-Jamuna trains would soon run direct between Joydevpur

and Khulna, Lalmonirhat, Bogra and Dinajpur.

The new rail communications have been installed under the Jamuna Bridge Link Project. The project command area covers eight districts -- Gazipur, Tangail, Sirajganj, Pabna, Natore, Naogaon, Joydevpur and Dinajpur.

A consortium of international donors like ADB, OPEC Fund, France and Spain, and the government funded the Tk 1,744.3 crore JMB Railway-link project.

Eight new stations have been set up at Joydevpur, Mouchak, Mirzapur, Mohera, Tangail, Ibrahimabad, Saidabad, Sadanandapur and Ishwardy bypass along the dual-gauge tracks.

Contractor and consultant firms from France, India, Spain, Canada and Bangladesh were engaged in the project.

Khaleda in her speech thanked the friendly countries and development partners who extended financial and technical assistance for the megaproject.

She also thanked all the workers, staffs, engineers, contractors and consulting firms, from home and abroad, who contributed their merit, labour and skill to the project.

She informed the function that a Tk 600 crore project had been undertaken to construct 35km new rails on the eastern side of Jamuna Bridge for the people of Jamalpur-Mymensingh-Netrokona belt to get benefit from the multipurpose bridge, which bridged the gap between the two parts of the country.

And 66km tracks will be set up in the western zone to bring people of

Bogra, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat and Rangpur under the JMB rail network.

"A revolutionary change will take place in the rail communications on completion of these works," she said.

Khaleda underscored making train service attractive to ordinary passengers, traders and tourists from home and abroad.

She reminded that train services around the world are facing competition with other modes of transport. But the reality is that rail is still highly acceptable, everywhere, for dependable, safe and comfortable journey.

"I believe this glory can be restored to our railway in transporting passengers and goods with the efforts of all concerned," Khaleda said.

She asked the rail authorities to strictly curb corruption and raise the income of this sector.

She also asked them to check waste, grab and ruin of railway property, as she said a lot of railway assets were lying scattered in various places.

Earlier, the prime minister laid the foundation of Rajshahi new railway station building.

She also laid the foundation of Rajshahi Women's Polytechnic Institute.

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda, Post and Telecommunications Minister Aminul Huq, State Minister for Communications Salahuddin Ahmed and Rajshahi Mayor Mizanur Rahman also spoke at the inauguration.

Auto traffic signal lights in city by March next yr

UNB, Dhaka

The main thoroughfares of the capital will be fitted with automatic signal lights by March next to ease traffic jams at road crossings.

An agreement to this effect was signed between DUTP and ATS Technology (Hong Kong) Ltd at Nagar Bhaban yesterday.

Director of DUTP of the DCC MA Qaiyum and Zahir Siddique of ATS Technology signed the agreement for their respective sides.

The modern signal lights will be installed on 59 roads at a cost of over Tk 13 crore with financial assistance of the World Bank.

Under the DUTP, a central monitoring system for controlling the signals will be installed at Nagar Bhaban. Push buttons for road crossings and loop detectors for counting the number of vehicles and measuring their speed will also be installed on the road.

4 of family die from food poisoning

UNB, Faridpur

Four of a 13member family of village Keshrial under Boalmari Upazila died from food poisoning at the Faridpur Medical College Hospital in the early hours of yesterday.

The nine others also fell sick and were admitted to the hospital.

Survivors at the hospital said they all fell sick after taking beef with rice cake on Tuesday night and were admitted to local health complex.

As their condition deteriorated, they were shifted to the Faridpur Medical College Hospital on Wednesday night where Shahida Begum, 60, her son Badsha Mia, 38, grand daughter Nupur, 20, and grandson Tuhin, 8, died at around 3am, hospital sources said.

Tigers named

FROM PAGE 12

12th man in the inaugural Test against India. Alamgir, on the other hand, played one Test against Sri Lanka last year.

They are the two surprise inclusions of the new selection committee led by ex-national captain Faruque Ahmed.

Rajin takes the place of Al-Shahriar, who failed to live up to his potential in Australia. Alamgir earned his place at the expense of Tareq Aziz, who did not play a single match on the tour.

All-rounder Mushqur Rahman won a place in the stand-by list along with veteran paceman Hasibul Hossain and Tushar Imran. Both Tushar and Hasibul flew down under to feature in the one-day series.

Bangladesh will fly to Karachi tomorrow night. The first Test starts in the Pakistani port city on August 20.

SQUAD: Khaled Mahmud (captain), Habibul Bashar (vice-captain), Javed Omar, Hannan Sarkar, Sanwar Hossain, Rajin Saleh Alam, Mohammad Ashraf, Alok Kapali, Khaled Mashud, Mohammad Rafique, Monjurul Islam, Tapas Baishya, Alamgir Kabir, Anwar Hossain Munir and Mashrafe-bin-Mortuza.

Stand-by: Tushar Imran, Hasibul Hossain and Mushqur Rahman.

Officials: Dav Whatmore (Coach), Lt. Col. (ret'd) MA Latif (Manager), John Gloster (Physio), Dean Woodford (Fitness advisor) and Nasir Ahmed (Computer analyst).

Be friendlier to get more productive

Study observes

REUTERS, Washington

It may seem more professional to stay impersonal at work, but in fact friendlier employees are more productive, according to researchers at the University of Michigan.

A comparison of the American work ethic to approaches in other countries shows that keeping an emotional distance may not be the most effective way to get the job done, said Jeffrey Sanchez-Burks, a psychologist who led the study.

Friendly workers pay attention to indirect meanings, work well with other cultures and are perceived as trustworthy, Sanchez-Burks said.

An impersonal style blinds workers from noticing differences in style. They often fail to notice non-verbal communication, Sanchez-Burks said.

Writing in the August issue of the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Sanchez-Burks said he traded notes with colleagues at the University of Michigan, Seoul National University in Korea and the International Business University in Nanjing, China.

Sanchez-Burks ran several experiments, having students and employees in Fortune 500 firms act out work scenarios.

"An impersonal style tends to restrict the bandwidth of information a person attends to in the workplace," he said.

"What is literally said will be followed closely but information about the context in which the information is conveyed -- information often critical for task success and productivity -- is lost," he added.

Foreign workers

FROM PAGE 12

economic areas, such as the health sector, the impact of staff shortages if foreigners were restricted could be "serious".

Ng cited the role played by foreign nurses during the deadly Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) viral outbreak that battered Singapore from March to May this year.

"During the SARS crisis, no one would have blamed the foreign nurses if they had chosen to return to their home country. Instead, many foreign nurses stayed and risked their lives taking care of patients with SARS," he said.

Singapore, a tiny, trade-dependent city-state of 3.2 million citizens and permanent residents, relies on a large pool of foreign workers to staff its banks, hotels, factories and other firms.

Foreigners manage many top companies here, while labourers from China and Bangladesh are the mainstays of the construction industry.

Professionals, engineers and architects from Malaysia, the Philippines and other countries are also prominent.

But with the unemployment rate at near 20-year highs, there have been growing calls to review the open-door policy.

The debate was kick-started after two university economists released a study showing that four out of three jobs went to foreigners between 1997 and 2002.

The economists later said their figure was wrong but the admission failed to dampen frustration among locals.

Ng nevertheless reiterated government figures that from 1998 to 2002, nine out of the 10 new jobs created went to locals.

He added that Singapore's

"This type of miscommunication, like ships passing in the night, is further exacerbated in diverse organizations (domestically and internationally) because rarely are people with other cultural backgrounds as impersonal as mainstream Americans."

This impersonal attitude at work is rooted in Protestant beliefs of putting emotion aside at the office, Sanchez-Burks said in a telephone interview this week.

The American style of keeping things impersonal at the workplace is virtually confined to the United States, he said.

Workers in South Korea, Japan and India and especially Latin American countries place high importance on personal relationships at work, he said.

Sanchez-Burks said Latin Americans become friends with people they are doing business with first and then move onto the work while Americans work first and then become friends.

Sanchez-Burks does not argue that Americans are completely impersonal. In social settings, the researchers found Americans to be highly friendly.

The challenge is transferring that behavior into the workplace.

"For a very long time, (this impersonal work ethic) has been seen as essential to the success of Western business organizations. So it's difficult to accept that staying on task may actually be a barrier to productivity in today's global environment," Sanchez-Burks said.

economy was dependent on the economies of its global trading partners.

"Jobs will return when that economy picks up. They will not come from keeping foreign workers out," he said.

In the meantime, Ng told Singaporeans they could not afford to be choosy about the jobs they took.

Foreigners take about 200,000 jobs in the relatively low-paid manufacturing and services industries, with another 140,000 foreign maids and 150,000 construction workers.

"I encourage Singaporeans to take up these jobs. I appreciate that some of these jobs are not attractive because of lower pay or working conditions," he said.

"But we have to be realistic and Singaporeans need to adjust to market conditions too."

BCS test

FROM PAGE 1 that the students have to bear before the exam," the students asked.

They also threatened to launch a greater movement if their demands were not met immediately and announced demonstration programme on the DU campus Sunday.

Earlier, the students brought out a procession and held a rally at bat tala on the DU campus yesterday.

The 24th BCS preliminary test was taken Friday for the second time amid allegations of question paper leakage.

Eliza Zaman Supti, a student of political science at DU, read out the written statement and a number of BCS examinees were present at the press conference.

Jamuna rail link

FROM PAGE 1 with the Kamalapur Railway Station.

"Pressured by Rajshahi-Dhaka coach owners, the authorities could not launch the three proposed trains on the route. Now we have to see whether the timely movement of the train is ensured," said Jamat Khan, convener of Rajshahi Protection Movement Council.

Rajshahi Bar President Sayed Ekramur Rasul criticised the train schedule and he believes the train would never run on time.

Jamiul Ahsan Shipon, one of the first passengers of Silk City Express, said it was his "pleasure trip". But he said he would avoid the train in case of emergency, as he thinks train journey is time-consuming.

Mohammad Naser, teacher of Rajshahi University, welcomed the government move but questioned the authorities' sincerity in running the train on schedule.

The Rajshahi-Dhaka coach owners are a bit apprehensive that their business would be badly affected by the direct train service.

"We are already in trouble from a glut of buses on the route. The train service will deepen the problem,"

Arafat

FROM PAGE 1 condolences.

Arafat, surrounded by visitors sipping small cups of bitter black coffee, shook hands with the mourners as a loudspeaker played verses from the Quran, the Muslim holy book.

Israel began surrounding and battering Arafat's West Bank headquarters 1 1/2 years ago. Israel's position is that Arafat could leave to travel to Gaza or overseas, but may not be permitted to return.

"It's sad that her brother, who is the leader for all of us, is unable to participate in his sister's funeral," said one of the mourners, Abed Jazi. "Is it fair? ... But anyway (Arafat) is here in our hearts."

Ahmed Abdel Rahman, an Arafat aide, told The Associated Press in Ramallah that Arafat was saddened he couldn't go.

"I was with him when he learned about the death of his sister," Abdel Rahman added. "He was very upset, and felt great sorrow that he couldn't participate in the funeral and couldn't see her while she was ill."

After the crowds of mourners left, a handful of scouts from the youth wing of Arafat's Fatah movement gathered beside the grave. One of the teenage boys saluted and placed his other hand over his heart.

Two cops

FROM PAGE 12 the policemen before they could run away with the money.

Emran later filed a case with the Kotwali Police Station against the policemen and the driver.

said Shahidur Rashid, convener of Rajshahi Road Transport Group.

The rail authorities earlier decided to launch three trains but scrapped the plan reportedly upon an instruction from the higher authorities and under pressure from bus owners.

Refuting the allegation, AKM Rezaul Karim, director general of Bangladesh Railway, said the two other proposed trains would be launched after installation of a modern traffic signalling by December.

The train fare has been fixed at Tk 140 for Shobhon, Tk 165 Shobhon chair, Tk 290 Shobhon AC chair, Tk 280 first class, Tk 425 first class berth and Tk 630 air-conditioned berth.

Khaleda's birthday today

BSS, Dhaka

The 58th birth anniversary of BNP Chairperson and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will be observed today.

Though there will be no official programme, family members of the prime minister will observe the day in a homely atmosphere.

However, BNP and its front organisations will arrange various programmes on the occasion, party sources said yesterday.

Tungipara

FROM PAGE 1 AL leaders alleged that BNP cadre Wahidul Islam Prince led the activists, who prevented the AL men from proceeding to Tungipara.

Wahidul however denied the allegation. BNP activists said the vehicles carrying the AL leaders and activists were not allowed to cross the bridge as they did not pay tolls.

Press wings

FROM PAGE 1 A high-level meeting between the ministries of foreign affairs and information January this year emphasised strengthening the information and cultural wings of the missions and also took some decisions. But no progress has been made as yet in this regard.

A top official at the foreign ministry said their efforts to convince the government policymakers of the importance of press and cultural wings have yielded no result.

Sources recalled that during the Awami League rule, the foreign ministry had proposed opening press wings in the missions in eight countries in Europe, Middle East and South Asia. But the then government also failed to implement the proposal.