



Khurshid Jahan Haque, chairperson of Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), presides over the CWP business meeting as part of the 49th CPA conference at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in Dhaka yesterday.

Govt orders anti-corruption steps against two NGOs

SHAMEEM MAHMUD

The government is going to take legal actions against two out of five non-government organisations (NGO) foreign funds of which have been blocked for about two years allegedly for 'misusing funds' and having 'political links'.

"Our investigation found out that Bangladesh Nari Pragoti Sangha (BNPS) and PRIP Trust were at fault of misappropriating foreign funds. So, we have already directed related police stations to file corruption cases against the organisations," said Shahjahan Majumder, director general (DG) of the NGO Affairs Bureau under the Prime Minister's Office.

The Proshika, International Voluntary Services (IVS) and Centre for Development Services (CDS) are the three other NGOs that came under government investigation. The NGO bureau has decided to probe Proshika activities further and let CDS off the hook. It is still undecided how the IVS affair will be dealt with.

Top executives of the NGOs in question meanwhile said the government was up for harassing them in a bid to ruin their organisations.

Aroma Dutt, executive director of the blacklisted PRIP Trust, said: "We and our donors are totally in the dark about the finds of the investigation. The finds should be made

public before taking any action."

"If any irregularity was found in the probe report, the government should have notified me and shared the finds with our donors," she said.

The probe began in November 2001, and the NGO bureau sent a letter at the end of 2002 in which it did not mention anything about irregularities.

A top executive of the BNPS said they received a show cause notice early this year but it bore no mention of irregularities.

"After a 10-month investigation, the NGO bureau sent a show cause notice on January 19. We sent a r e p l y

Guerilla ambush in Baghdad kills 2 US soldiers

REUTERS, Baghdad

Guerillas killed two US soldiers and wounded four in an ambush in a Baghdad slum district where a suicide car bomb attack on a police station had earlier claimed at least 10 lives, the US Army said yesterday.

Locals in Baghdad's impoverished Sadr City, home to more than a million Shi'ites, said at least two Iraqis were killed in gunbattles with US troops, backed by helicopters, who scoured the neighbourhood after the ambush on Thursday night. Thousands of mourners marched through the district on Friday holding two coffins aloft and shouting: "No, no America!"

US Army spokesman Lieutenant Colonel George Krivo said the US

patrol was ambushed after being "lured in by a group of civilians requesting humanitarian assistance". Guerillas then opened fire on them, including with rocket-propelled grenades.

"The (troops) returned fire and got out of the kill zone. Unfortunately we took two killed and four wounded," Krivo said. "We believe it was a deliberate and planned ambush."

The violence further inflamed tensions in the volatile district following the most deadly bomb attack in Baghdad in weeks. Two suicide bombers crashed their car

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Cellphone sets worth Tk 9 lakh seized at ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs officers at Zia International Airport (ZIA) seized 115 mobile phone sets worth about Tk 9 lakh from a homecoming passenger yesterday.

A customs team led by Inspector Wazed Ali challenged the passenger, Sakib Ahmed, having passport no R-0873140 for his suspicious movement near the conveyer belt on his arrival at ZIA from Bangkok by a Thai Airways flight at noon.

Sakib was taken to the checking counter where the customs officers found the mobile phone sets in his luggage.

A departmental case was filed.

POLLUTION OF GULSHAN LAKE

Cleaners dumping hundreds of thousands of dead fish



PHOTO: STAR

Hundreds of fish float dead yesterday in the Gulshan Lake, polluted with toxic waste.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of thousands of fish, worth over Tk 1 crore, were found floating dead yesterday in the Gulshan Lake, polluted with toxic waste blamed on dyeing plants nearby.

About 20 small country boats were trawling the lake to clear the dead fish off the water, which spread wafts of smell in the diplomatic enclave in Baridhara.

Witnesses said the cleaners dumped hundreds of dead fish in the lakeside and are unprepared for hundreds of others dying by the minute from high toxicity.

Toxic pollution spread more to the Baridhara part of the lake, which is directly linked to sewers and other underground drains coming from industrial areas like Sewra and Kuril, sources said.

Locals said some fish traders collected some big fish from the lake early yesterday morning apparently for sale.

Officials of Bangladesh Fish Development Corporation (BFDC) and a fishing association, Gulshan Shoukhin Matshya Shikar Samabaya Samity, which jointly manage the lake, were present at the site supervising the clean-up, too slow for the severity of the situation.

Those engaged in the cleanliness drive said it would take some more days to remove all dead fish from the lake water, but environmentalists said the aquatic life forms in the lake were already threatened.

"This is not the first time it happened. We saw similar disasters in 2001 and 2002 and the cause might

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Arafat-Qorei face-off

AFP, Ramallah

The Palestinian leadership was plunged into its second major crisis in a month Thursday when new premier Ahmed Qorei and deputies refused to accept Yasser Arafat's installation of an emergency government as a fait accompli.

Qorei dramatically submitted his resignation to Arafat, sources said, after both he and deputies insisted the new government be formally

approved by parliament rather than merely ushered in by an Arafat presidential decree.

There was no word from Arafat's camp over whether the resignation had been accepted -- just two days after Qorei and six of his eight ministers took the oath of office in a ceremony presided over by Arafat.

However, top Arafat advisor Nabil Abu Rudeina told AFP later Thursday the Palestinian leader "continues to have confidence in

Abu Alaa as well as his cabinet."

He played down the differences as "normal internal problems."

And another source close to Arafat told AFP on condition of anonymity that "an arrangement will probably be found in the coming 24 hours" to iron out the differences.

Qorei was first nominated as prime minister by Arafat a month ago after his US-backed predecessor

Charges pressed against 13 in Sabita rape, murder case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Charges were pressed against 13 people in Sabita Rani rape and murder case.

Sabita Rani, mother of two children, was gangraped and killed by the accused at her father's house at village Baharbania in Morrelganj upazila of Bagerhat district on the night of June 4 this year.

Following a court order, the case was recorded with Morrelganj Police Station, accusing 13 people. Liton Sadial, elder brother of the victim, is complainant of the case.

The accused are Sayedul Mallick, president of Baharbania Union Jubo Dal, Mallick's three younger brothers Nuruzzaman, Nur Mohammad and Budho Mallick, Sakhawat, Tuku Khan, Gaffar Khan, Al Amin Farazi, Razzak Howlader, Rubel, Bahadur Khan, Khokon Talukdar and Tipu Sultan, brother-

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Oct 11		5-36 pm
Oct 12	5-54 am	

Prayer Timings		
October 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-00	5-25
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-46	5-51
Esha	7-30	8-00
Source: Islamic Foundation		