

60 Talibans killed in Afghan clashes

AFP, Kabul

Security forces in Afghanistan announced yesterday they had killed more than 60 Taliban in new clashes, as a British minister played down suggestions the nation's troops deployed here are overstretched.

The rebels were killed in separate incidents in southern Helmand province, where the bulk of a British deployment of about 4,500 troops is based and has come under fierce attack to mounting concern at home.

On Saturday, Nato-led and Afghan security forces backed by war planes killed 40 of the rebels in the province's Greshk district, the Afghan defence ministry said.

A rebel stronghold was also "totally" destroyed in the raid in which Afghan and foreign troops sustained no casualties, it added.

Security forces meanwhile captured 21 suspected Taliban combatants across insurgency-hit

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Manpower export to KL faces trouble again

PORIMOL PALMA

The manpower export to Malaysia seems to be in trouble again following some allegations against Bangladesh Recruiting Agencies (Baira) both at home and in the Southeast Asian country.

Operation of Baira office in Kuala Lumpur was suspended on orders from the Malaysian home ministry after a number of employers had accused Baira President MAH Salim of trying to influence them to issue more job orders in favour of his agency.

Meanwhile, some recruiting agencies here in Dhaka have complained to the government that Baira charges an additional Tk 30,000 per worker without giving any receipt, sources at Baira said.

As a result, manpower export to the country has yet to begin though it was scheduled to start by early

August.

MAH Salim MP is currently in Malaysia and could not be contacted for comments.

However, at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity late August, he denied the allegation that he had been charging more than the agreed amount for sending workers to the fast-developing country. Besides, he assured that the agencies will charge no more than Tk 84,000.

According to an agreement between Bangladesh and Malaysia, agencies will charge Tk 84,000 for each worker going to the latter, but the cost now is over Tk 1.5 lakh with additional 1,800 ringgits.

After the Malaysian government had lifted its embargo on worker export from Bangladesh, which was in force for about a decade, the association of the recruiting agencies was delegated to send manpower to that country.

But since then, allegations were rife against the Baira president and some ministers including State Minister for Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Lutfur Rahman Khan Azad of asking for part of the money realised from the workers illegally.

The state minister however dismissed the allegations and said his ministry will strictly monitor the process so that no agency can overcharge the workers.

Meanwhile, more than 10 thousand job offer letters have reached Baira, but none of the workers could be sent due to the dispute over migration cost.

A few lakh workers from across the country, on the other hand, have already submitted their passports to the recruiting agencies. And for this, the middlemen had charged them a pretty large sum.

"It may push the migration cost

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

OUTAGE Consumers lay siege to power office in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Consumers Right Protection Committee (CRPC) yesterday laid siege to an office of Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB) in Chittagong protesting against the ongoing power crisis.

During the siege programme, the agitators held a protest rally in front of the PGCB office at the city's Khulshi area, hoisted black flags and kept the main entrance of the office blocked since 11:00am.

The agitators gave a 10-day ultimatum to the authorities concerned to improve the power situation. "Otherwise, the city dwellers would do whatever it takes to rid themselves from the acute power crisis," they said.

Speakers at the rally said the power crisis is also hampering treatment of patients at different hospitals, nursing homes and clinics.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



Jubo League activists with kerosene lanterns in their hands lay siege to the Power Development Board office in Motijheel in the capital yesterday demanding uninterrupted power supply.

VAT ON SIM CARD SC rejects NBR plea for stay

UNB, Dhaka

The Supreme Court yesterday turned down the National Board of Revenue (NBR) plea for staying an HC judgment declaring "illegal" the NBR-imposed supplementary duty and VAT on mobile phone SIM card.

Passing the order, vacation chamber court of Justice MM Ruhul Amin asked the revenue board to maintain status quo.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8



A man climbs down the worn out stairs of a foot over-bridge in front of the Dhaka Polytechnic Institute at Tejgaon in the capital yesterday as the authorities concerned turn a blind eye to the bridge's repair needs.

Cops yet to find motive of attack on Prof Aftab

His condition stable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Doctors at Combined Military Hospital (CMH), Dhaka yesterday stated that the condition of former National University (NU) vice chancellor (VC) Prof Aftab Ahmad is stable and he is out of danger.

However, police could not discover the motive or arrest anyone as of yesterday evening for shooting Prof Aftab, who is also a

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

BSF kills 1

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) of Bansghata camp yesterday gunned down a Bangladeshi youth at Dhanyakhola border near Benapole land port.

Locals claimed the dead is Babu, 26, a resident of the same area. Bangladesh Rifles said that they heard of the incident, but they could not confirm the identity of the slain.

The BSF shot the youth two times while he was walking along the border at around 5:00am and later dragged the body into Indian territory, locals added.

They sent the body to Bongaon Hospital, sources said.

FLAG MEETING Nasaka returns 55 abducted Bangladeshis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Myanmar border security force Nasaka yesterday noon returned 55 Bangladeshis it had abducted earlier while Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) also returned 41 Rohingya to Nasaka.

The exchange followed a flag meeting between a nine-member BDR team led by BDR 23 Battalion Commander Lt Col AMM Kaysar and an eleven-member Nasaka team led by Assistant Director of Border Immigration U K Oung Theye held at Teknaf near the Bangladesh-Myanmar border the same day.

Nasaka personnel trespassed into Bangladesh territory and abducted the Bangladeshi citizens from near the Naff River in Teknaf upazila, BDR sources said.

They are from Naikhonchhari upazila in Bandarban, and Ukhiya and Teknaf upazilas in Cox's Bazar district.

Govt creates 2 more upazilas

UNB, Dhaka

The National Implementation Committee for Administrative Reorganisation (Nicar) yesterday approved eight proposals, including one creating two new upazilas in Faridpur and Rajbari districts.

The two new upazilas are Saltha carved out of Nagorkanda upazila of Faridpur and Kalukhali dividing Pangsha upazila of Rajbari district.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, also chairperson of the Nicar, chaired its 94th meeting at the International Conference Centre that approved the proposals.

The meeting approved another proposal for creation of five posts of judicial administrative officers in five districts under command areas of the 'Legal and Judicial Capacity Building Project' sponsored by the World Bank.

The judicial administrative officers from the judiciary service would monitor progress of

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Hasina slams govt for risking coastal people

AL walks out of JS again over Sircar's 'partisan' attitude

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday blasted the government for its failure to alert the people of the coastal belt about the recent devastating storm and for its negligence in recovering dead bodies and rescuing missing fishermen.

On a point of order in the parliament yesterday Sheikh Hasina also engaged in a debate with Health Minister Khandaker Mosharraf

Hossain and Law Minister Moudud Ahmed over the proposed electoral reforms and Saturday's debacle of the moon sighting committee regarding the Ramadan moon.

Following the debate Awami League (AL) lawmakers led by Sheikh Hasina staged a walkout protesting the 'partisan' attitude of Speaker Jamir Uddin Sircar, who ignored Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid's attempt to speak on a point of order.

In her speech Sheikh Hasina proposed formation of a parliamentary committee to monitor the search and rescue operations in coastal areas and also asked for proper investigation of why the government failed to alert the people despite getting the met office forecast earlier.

Denying the allegation Health Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain told the House that the government took all necessary

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Junta steps up graft probe against Thaksin

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's new military rulers rolled their tanks out of central Bangkok yesterday less than five days after a bloodless coup was greeted calmly in the capital.

Tanks posted outside an area of royal and government buildings moved out early Sunday as the military continued to consolidate control after the ouster of ex-premier Thaksin Shinawatra in last week's coup.

The generals at the weekend drew up a shortlist of four candidates to replace Thaksin and also prepared to step up a corruption probe against the divisive premier who remains in London.

The coup leaders shocked the world last Tuesday evening when they sent tanks and troops into Bangkok and took power in a move apparently welcomed by a majority of Thais for ending months of bitter political division.

Two rows of up to 10 tanks had remained in place around the Royal Plaza since the night of the coup but by Sunday only one remained, and it had mechanical problems.

"The situation is under control but we still maintain tanks in some locations in Bangkok," said junta spokesman Colonel Acar Tiproj.

In previous days, Thais and tourists gave flowers and posed for photos with the soldiers, their enthusiasm apparently undimmed by a series of repressive measures the regime has announced in televised decrees.

Junta leader General Sonthi Boonyaratglin last week justified Thailand's first putsch in 15 years by accusing billionaire-politician Thaksin of corruption and of insulting the king, an offence punishable by jail.

On Monday, nine graft-fighters will start investigating corruption claims against Thaksin and his government after the new regime political division.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Ershad sees no alternative to polls in time

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday said there is no alternative to holding election in time to ensure political stability in the country.

"Democracy must be flourished for the sake of country and the nation. So JP is taking preparations to participate in the coming election," he said addressing a function marking some political leaders' and workers' joining his party at the JP office at Banani.

The JP chairman expressed his deep shock at the loss of lives and property in recent storms in the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Sehri, Iftar timings			
Ramadan	Sept	Sehri	Iftar
1	25		5-56
2	26	4-29	5-54
3	27	4-29	5-53

Prayer Timing		
September 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-29	5-35
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-56	6-05
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation



An armed Rapid Action Battalion personnel stands guard yesterday at a temple in Narinda in the capital ahead of the Durga Puja while his co-worker watches the Durga idol being decorated.

Fugitive, outlaw killed in 'encounters'

STAR REPORT

A fugitive and a member of the outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) were killed in two separate 'encounters' with the law enforcement agencies in Moulvibazar and Khulna yesterday.

Our correspondent from Moulvibazar reports, a notorious criminal on the run was killed during an 'encounter' between their gangs and the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) at Kulaura upazila yesterday morning.

The dead was identified as Nurul Haq, son of late Mulfat Khan of village Rangirkul.

Rab 9 following a tip off raided Rangirkul village under Joychandi

union of Kulaura upazila in Moulvibazar district at about 7:00am yesterday where a gang of robbers were getting prepared to commit robbery, Rab said.

The criminals opened fire on Rab and Rab returned fire in defence. Nurul Haq died on the spot during the 'encounter', claimed Rab. Other members of the gang managed to escape.

Rab recovered a revolver and four bullets from the spot.

Lieutenant Colonel Mumen, commanding officer of Rab 9, confirmed the incident over telephone.

Moklesur Rahman, superintendent of police of Moulvibazar, also confirmed the incident and said

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Iraq war spawned terrorism, radicals

Says US intelligence report; 19 Iraqis killed in attacks

REUTERS, AFP, Washington/ Baghdad

The Iraq war gave birth to a new generation of Islamic radicals and the terrorist threat has grown since the September 11 attacks, according to a US intelligence report cited in The New York Times on Saturday.

A National Intelligence Estimate completed in April says Islamic radicalism has mushroomed worldwide and cites the Iraq war as a reason for the spread of jihad ideology, the newspaper reported.

"The estimate concludes that the radical Islamic movement has expanded from a core of al-Qaeda operatives and affiliated groups to include a new class of 'self-generating' cells inspired by al-Qaeda's leadership but without any direct connection to Osama bin Laden or his top lieutenants," the newspaper said.

The Times cited more than a dozen US government officials and outside experts with knowledge of the classified document.

It is the first formal appraisal of global terrorism by US intelligence agencies since the war began in March 2003 and represents a consensus view of the 16 US spy services.

"According to reports, this intelligence document should put the final nail in the coffin for

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7