

Project 'Litigon' comes under fire

Wildlife experts slam zoo's attempt to crossbreed lion with tiger

MORSHED ALI KHAN

The National Zoo at Mirpur has launched a controversial project to crossbreed an Indian lion with an Indian tiger. The project aims to produce a "show animal" called Litigon.

The Alipur Zoo in India has carried out a similar 'experiment,' said one zoo official. Had the male partner been a tiger, the infertile offspring would have been called a Tigron, he added.

However, the two felines, kept in a single cage, have so far had several rounds of violent encounters.

Meanwhile, wildlife experts have strongly criticised the crossbreeding project, terming it "unnecessary and aimless scheme against the nature".

"What Alipur zoo produced looked neither like a tiger nor a lion and the animal looked pale and deformed," said one wildlife expert, who has visited the Alipur Zoo.

Khasru Chowdhury, a wildlife expert and author of several

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



Exercise in futility? An Indian lion has been kept in a cage with an Indian tigress with a view to producing a cross-breed show animal called Litigon.

We want to resolve all issues with India through discussion: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh stands for resolving all issues including the border problem with India through discussion.

"We don't want any conflict, we want resolution of problems through discussion," she said at a meeting with foreign ministry officials at the ministry.

Referring to recent border clashes between BDR and BSF, the prime minister said when she took power, about 150 miles of border was undemarcated but now only 6.5-km border and enclaves remained to be settled.

She hoped that two task forces of the two countries would settle the unresolved issues.

About opposition criticism over the issue, Hasina said in such a national crisis all parties should get together, but unfortunately the opposition did not extend any cooperation, rather, the opposition and fundamentalist groups tried to

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Soccer stampede leaves 120 dead in Ghana

Worst tragedy ever in Africa; third in a month

REUTERS, Accra

Africa suffered its worst football disaster ever, and its third in a month, when at least 120 people were killed in a stampede at a soccer match in Ghana.

Spectators said the crowd stampeded when police fired teargas after fans hurled missiles near the end of a game on Wednesday between Accra team Hearts of Oak and arch-rivals Asante Kotoko from the central town of Kumasi.

"Some died of suffocation but the majority seem to have been killed by being crushed," said Brigadier Daniel Twum of the military hospital where most of the dead and injured were taken after the stampede.

President John Kufuor, clearly very shaken by the tragedy during a visit to the injured, told this news agency simply "this is really sad". One of his officials said Kufuor screamed when he first heard the news.

Kufuor summoned his cabinet for an emergency meeting later on Thursday and his aides said that a period of national mourning would be declared.

Twum said 102 dead were brought to the military hospital and officials at two other hospitals confirmed a further 18 dead. He said another 50 people had been injured, but most were not in a serious condition.

"All the victims will have to be identified, and then we

will do post mortems," Twum said.

Witnesses said that with Hearts of Oak leading 2-1 after two quick goals near the end of the game, Asante Kotoko fans began tearing up plastic chairs and throwing chunks onto the pitch. Police reacted by firing teargas into the packed stadium which has a capacity of 50,000.

"There was a mad rush out of the stadium," spectator Mohamed Anwar told Reuters.

"There was smoke and there was debris, and I counted at least 15 people lying on the floor in one part of the stadium. Some were injured and apparently some were dead.

"People who fell were lying on the floor. You could see that they were clearly dead."

Wails of anguish echoed around the stadium as scores of bodies piled up from Africa's third football disaster in the last month and the worst in its history.

On April 11, 43 soccer fans were crushed to death when fans tried to force their way into Johannesburg's huge Ellis Park stadium midway through a top South African league match.

At least seven people were killed and 51 seriously injured in an April 30 stampede in the Democratic Republic of Congo after police moved to break up rioting at a match in Lubumbashi.

Autonomy of electronic media Sayeed defends draft bills, blasts press

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Information Prof. Abu Sayeed has defended the draft laws seeking autonomy of the state-run radio and television, saying proper implementation of the laws would ensure the long-felt need.

Highlighting the key provisions in the proposed laws at a news conference at his office yesterday, the minister bitterly criticised newspaper reports, commentaries and editorials about the cabinet move, which he said were not authentic.

"The newspaper write-ups were

not based on facts. Most of the writers wrote without knowing what was there in the draft laws," a visibly perturbed Sayeed said. He also blasted others opposing the government move without knowing or understanding the issue well.

The laws were drafted in the light of the autonomy commission's report and on examination of the status of autonomous electronic media in seven countries, he informed reporters.

The information minister replied to every point so far raised in the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Nor'wester kills 4, injures 90 in 4 dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Severe nor'wester killed four persons and injured 90 others in Mymensingh, Sylhet, Sirajganj and Magura districts yesterday.

Three persons were killed in Mymensingh and the other in Sylhet.

The storm also caused damages to homesteads and standing crops in the districts.

Our Mymensingh correspondent reports: Three persons were killed in lightning and 20 others injured during a severe nor'wester that lashed six upazilas of the district yesterday morning.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Tk 900cr cell phone project BTTB asks for fresh bid

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

The Tk 900 crore Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) project to launch two lakh cellular phones takes a new twist as the state monopoly has asked for fresh bids.

The BTTB floated fresh tender for its two lakh GSM mobile phones on May 7. A pre-bid conference will be held on May 31.

The cancellation of the bid has surprised the bidders as the BTTB did not assign any reason to the bidders, who had deposited Tk 30 lakh as earnest money to take part in the bidding, an official of a bidding company said.

"How do we inform our home

office as the re-tender was floated to our sheer surprise?" the official asked preferring anonymity.

He, however, said BTTB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids partly or wholly without assigning any reason, but it is an internationally recognised norm to inform the participants beforehand.

"And how do we inform our government about the matter. We are required to let the government know of the developments since it is a turn-key and suppliers credit project which involves governments of respective bidders for fund generation," he said.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Treatment of Tipu begins in Bangkok

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The treatment of injured journalist Tipu Sultan has begun at Bumrungrad Hospital in Bangkok, Thailand.

Doctors said Tipu would have to undergo treatment for at least two weeks. According to primary assessments, he would need at least two surgical operations in his hands.

Tipu's relative told The Daily Star over phone yesterday that the team of specialists examining Tipu have instructed that he should be helped to move around instead of lying down, he added.

"The doctors said if all goes well, Tipu's treatment at the hospital should be over within two weeks. But when he goes back home, he would have to undergo long-term physiotherapy," he said.

The Bumrungrad Hospital authorities have offered Tipu a three-night stay and initial medical assessment free of cost.

Tipu was flown to Bangkok with a guardian last Tuesday for his treat

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Low-lying areas in Ctg inundated

Rains paralyse normal life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Torrential rain yesterday triggered flash flood in the low-lying areas of the port city, mounting sufferings of the residents of those areas.

Met office here recorded 184 mm rainfall in the past three days. It forecast more rains today and also in the next few days.

The downpour also caused a dislocation in delivery of goods to and from Chittagong port yesterday, port officials said.

Due to dislocation in delivery of goods, the port faced space problems at its yards and sheds as cargo continued to get dumped, the officials said.

Vice chairman of Bangladesh Master Stevedores Association (BMSA) Munirul Hoque Chowdhury told this correspondent that incessant rains had hampered loading and unloading work in the foreign cargo ships staying at Chittagong port.

"Besides, the stevedores are forced to pay double wages to the workers for working in the rains, Chowdhury said.

Chittagong airport sources said flight operation was delayed due to rains accompanied with gusty wind yesterday.

A schedule flight of Bangladesh Biman that left for Dhaka from Chittagong airport at 10-35 am yesterday was forced to return, sources added.

On the other hand, residents in the city's low-lying areas including Bahaddarhat, Chawkbazar, Sholakbahar, Halishahar, Nasirabad, Bibirhat and Chaktai, remained stranded till filing of this report at 5:45 pm yesterday.

Traffic on the city roads was thin due to torrential rain.



A toddler and his father, both clad in posters demanding eradication of aedes mosquito and elimination of dengue menace, staged a sit-in of sort in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

7 dengue victims hospitalised in a week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of dengue patients admitted to different city hospital rose to at least seven within a week till yesterday.

But the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) is yet to take any effective measure to prevent spread of the killer disease.

A study titled "Aedes Larval Survey in Dhaka" conducted in the city from August to October last year revealed that nearly 50 per cent of the people did not know that Aedes mosquito which carries dengue germ breeds in containers with water.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Jail killing case Prosecution witness cross-examined

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The second prosecution witness in the jail killing case, Mohammad Aminur Rahman, was cross-examined by defence lawyers in the Special Court adjacent to Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

The Judge, Ahmed Jamil Mostafa, adjourned the hearing till May 13. Rahman will be cross-examined again on that day.

The case concerned the killing of four national leaders - Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, captain Mansur Ali and AHM

Quamruzzaman - in Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975.

During the four and a half-hour cross-examination, Rahman said he was jailor at Dhaka Central Jail from 1975 to 1976 and retired as Deputy Inspector General (prison).

He told the court that as per a directive from the then government, some leaders including the four national leaders were detained at Dhaka Central Jail in August, 1975. Major Dalim, Major Rashid, Major Shahriar and Major Faruk from the Bangabhaban, on behalf of the then

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
May 11		6.32 pm
May 12	5-18 am	

Prayer Timings		
May 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	4-30	5-00
Juma	12-15	1-20
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-30	6-35
Esha	8-00	8-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		



The Daily Star - প্রথম আলো
Tipu Treatment Fund
Donate generously to this Fund
Save Tipu from Disability

Send donations to: Savings Account No. 25002111
Dhaka Bank Ltd, Karwan Bazar Branch, Dhaka