

US jets hit Iraqi targets south of Baghdad

REUTERS, Washington

US and British jets bombed two Iraqi surface-to-air missile sites south of the capital Baghdad after Iraqi forces fired on Western aircraft, a Pentagon spokesman said yesterday.

The planes hit targets near Qalat Sikur, about 130 miles south-east of Baghdad about 11:45 p.m. local time Thursday and Tallil, about 170 miles southeast of Baghdad at 12:30 a.m. yesterday, said the Defence Department.

The jets opened fire in response to Iraqi firing at Western aircraft monitoring one of the two so-called no-fly zones imposed on the coun-

try after the 1991 Gulf War, Lt. Col. Dave Lapan told Reuters.

"On an almost daily basis our aircraft are fired at by the Iraqis. Every time we fly we get shot at," said Lapan.

An assessment of the damage would take several days, he said.

The Pentagon said the latest attacks by Western warplanes brought to 32 the number of strikes in Iraq's southern zone so far this year. There have been 10 strikes in the north.

On Thursday U.S. officials said Western aircraft had destroyed a military radar at the civilian airport in Basra, home to key oil installations, that threatened their planes.

The frequency of Western strikes against Iraq has fluctuated over the decade since the Gulf War, but they have risen sharply in recent months as speculation has grown that the United States might launch an attack against Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

The United States accuses Iraq of developing chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. Iraq has offered to readmit UN arms inspectors, who pulled out in 1998 ahead of US and British bombing raids.

A US diplomat was due in Paris yesterday to begin efforts to win the support of France and Russia for a tough new UN resolution demanding that Iraq disarm.



PHOTO: AFP

A police officer wrestles with a protester during World Bank's annual shareholders meeting in Pershing Plaza, two blocks from the White House, in Washington, DC. Yesterday was the first of three days of protests against the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Three drown as boat capsizes in Netrokona

BSS, Netrokona

Three people were drowned when a mechanised boat capsized in a canal near Paskata village under Kalmakanda upazila here Thursday night.

The dead were identified as Reazuddin, 74, of village Damanda of Kalmakanda, and Zahera, 35, and Afroza, 3, of village Fulbaria of the same upazila.

Police said the Paskata-bound boat from Nazipur Bazar capsized in the canal due to strong current. Local people recovered the three bodies yesterday.

The bodies were sent to Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Boat carrying 800 capsizes off Senegal: 41 killed

REUTERS, Dakar

A boat carrying nearly 800 people capsized off the coast of Senegal and the West African country's government said yesterday that at least 41 of them had drowned.

Prime Minister Mame Madior Boye told a news conference there were 32 survivors according to a provisional count, but did not say what had happened to the 723 people apparently unaccounted for when Le Diola capsized late on Thursday night.

The boat was on its way from the southern city of Ziguinchor in the volatile Casamance province to Senegal's capital Dakar when disaster struck at 11 p.m. local time.

JCD activists

FROM PAGE 12

of eight men and went on the rampage. They also fired several rounds of gunshots. At least six persons -- Salam, Shawkat, Bidyut, Sultan, Najmul and Shahin -- sustained wounds from pellets. The rampaging group also snatched away about eight tolas of gold ornament from the centre at gunpoint.

The armed group also opened fire at the patrol police that rushed to the spot soon after the trouble began.

Police arrested one Rubel with a revolver from the spot while the others managed to escape. Shortly afterwards, police also caught two others -- Suman Das and Abul Khair -- from a nearby area and their involvement in the incident.

The process of filing cases was going on, police officials said.

Illegal terminal

FROM PAGE 1

The WASA managing director (south), DMP, Abu Musa Mohammad Fakrul Islam Khan told The Daily Star that his department failed to relocate the bus terminal due to non-cooperation of other departments.

"The DCC did not allot seven bighas of land near the Sayedabad bus terminal for a city terminal," he added.

The traffic department wrote to the DCC nine months ago about allotment of the land, but the DCC could not take any initiative, as there is a legal tussle between the DCC and the WASA over the ownership of the land.

Musa also said he earlier sought mayoral intervention in allotting the piece of land and met Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka twice.

Contacted, Chief Estate Officer (CEO) of the DCC AKM Fazluzzohza said the DCC could not construct the city terminal, as the WASA earlier filed a writ with the High Court against a DCC initiative to evict some WASA employees from the land.

Earlier, the DCC permitted the WASA to use the land. But playing on the opportunity, 16 WASA employees illegally started living there, setting up houses, the CEO explained.

Judge assaulted in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Narayanganj district and sessions judge Md Abul Monsur was beaten up by some transport workers in Mukhtarpur ferry ghat area yesterday morning.

The miscreants also robbed him of Tk 10,000.

Sources said Judge Abul Monsur went to Munshiganj by his official jeep in the morning. On his way back to Narayanganj at around 11:00am, a Dhaka-bound passenger bus (Dhaka-Metro-Ja-06-0047) at the Mukhtarpur ferry ghat hit his jeep and broke its bumper.

After crossing the river, the judge demanded compensation from the bus driver named Bahadur. At this, Bahadur along with some other transport workers suddenly attacked the judge and tore up his shirt. They also snatched Tk 10,000 from him.

Later, the judge informed the matter to police superintendent Shafiqul Islam where a case under the speedy trial act was lodged and later transferred to the Munshiganj Thana.

Police arrested Bahadur, the accused driver, and seized his bus Sardar Paribahan-1. The other attackers are also being hunted for, police said.

Sheikh Hasina

FROM PAGE 12

Awami League in a hostile political atmosphere.

She led her party in national movements against martial law and dictatorial regimes.

She was confined in Dhaka Cantonment in 1983, put under house arrest for two months in 1984 and confined again for three months in the following year and for one month in 1986.

She led AL to power in 1996 after 21 years.

Her party suffered a debacle in the last parliamentary polls held on October 1, 2001.

Called 'Daughter of Democracy', Hasina has authored quite a good number of books. She received many prestigious honorary degrees from various universities at home and abroad.

Saddam

FROM PAGE 12

gation proved the 65-year-old ruler allows at least three doubles to replace him at official appearances." ZDF said it was difficult to tell which were the doubles and which was the real Saddam Hussein. Minor details such as the size of the ears, hands and shape of the shoulders gave the lookalikes away, ZDF said.

"They have apparently undergone surgery to appear to look like the statesman," ZDF said. "The doubles have mastered Saddam's gestures and perfectly mimic Saddam, with only tiny details separating them from the real Saddam Hussein."

JUTA

FROM PAGE 12

"green signal" is available. All due elections of teachers' bodies would be held after the Pujja vacation.

It said the JUTA demand for removal of Proctor Enamullah Parvez was being considered and steps were being taken to create new posts for teachers appointed on temporary basis.

Police will be withdrawn from the campus once security is ensured. A committee has been formed to frame laws to check harassment of female students on the campus, the letter said.

The authorities concerned would be consulted regarding withdrawal of cases against some students, it said.

When the letter was read out at the JUTA meeting, many of the teachers alleged that the demands were "ignored" and the VC was "playing tricks".

The meeting plunged into chaos time and again after the three new demands were placed. Some 25 pro-BNP teachers led by Prof Abu Sayeed Khan protested the demand for deferral of Syndicate meeting till October 7 and walked out.

The JU authorities were tough on the JUTA demands since it began the movement in the first week of September. It changed the attitude after Education Minister Dr Osman Faruk held a meeting with the VC. The minister advised the VC and the agitating pro-BNP teachers to be accommodative, sources said.

Five other accused -- Khalil, Mofazzal Hossain, Doel, Enayet Chowdhury and Ripon -- had been absconding since the incident but they surrendered before the court during the trial of the case.

Khashru

FROM PAGE 12

Rahman," Khashru said at a press conference in the city.

He said Article 98 of the Constitution is very clear regarding appointment judges on ad hoc basis and there is no ambiguity in it.

He read out Article 98 and said, "We have an example of appointment of judge on ad hoc basis but the law minister is misinterpreting it. This is violation of the Constitution".

Khashru said the law minister should not confuse the people. "He is very experienced but is doing so, which is very much unethical and unexpected to us."

Referring to Moudud's statement that image of the SC would be tarnished if judges are appointed on ad hoc basis, Khoshru said this would rather enhance the image.

This is "intellectual dishonesty" and by trying to save the killers, Moudud is also "sharing the blame faced by them (killers)", Khashru said.

"In fact, he (Moudud) does not want that the killers are punished".

The AL leader urged the government to help the judiciary function smoothly and ensure rule of law. "This is a constitutional duty of a government."

Khashru also accused the law minister of playing a "tricky game" with the letter of the Chief Justice to the President. "We demanded that the letter be made public."

BUET

FROM PAGE 1

The agitation led the university to close on September 8 for the second time in four months.

The BUET authorities in a press release yesterday said they would consider withdrawal of suspension order on student unions and clubs a few weeks after the reopening.

The Dhaka University (DU) will reopen on October 3 after a closure of 67 days since July 28, with its residential halls opening tomorrow at 10:00am.

The newly appointed vice-chancellor of the DU, Prof. SMA Faiz, met with members of the Dhaka University Journalists Association (DUJA) at the vice-chancellor's residence yesterday.

At the meeting, Prof. Faiz promised that the university would take initiatives to improve the quality of food for resident students.

He sought cooperation of the DU-based reporters for a peaceful campus atmosphere. The DUJA members congratulated Prof. Faiz on his appointment as vice-chancellor.

Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof. AFM Yusuf Haider, Treasurer Prof. Syed Rashidul Hasan, acting Proctor ASM Atiqur Rahman and Assistant Proctor Asif Nazrul were present at the meeting.

City's playgrounds

FROM PAGE 12

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Ruling party men untouched

FROM PAGE 1

found involved."

Later, on receipt of the first probe report on August 20, the prime minister summoned party lawmaker Helaluzzaman Talukdar Lulu of Bogra at her office and rebuked him for his involvement in the scam.

The second probe report submitted to the prime minister on August 27, also named the BNP men involved in the scam. They included State Minister for Energy AKM Mosharraf Hossain and BNP lawmakers Helaluzzaman Talukdar Lulu of Bogra, Selim Reza Habib of Pabna, Mujibur Rahman of Kishoreganj, and Khuram Khan Chowdhury and Delwar Hussain Khan Dulu of Mymensingh. The name of Alamgir Kabir, APS to the food minister, was mentioned in the report.

The eight officials made OSD are food secretary Abdul Latif Mandal, DG of food directorate Abdus Sattar Mia, ADG Entajul Huque, food minister's PS Mohammad Mohsin, Regional Controller of Food (RCF) of Dhaka K A Rob, RCF of Rajshahi Fakhru Islam, Mymensingh District Controller of Food (DCF) Kamrul Hasan and Bogra DCF Nurul Afsar. Of them, Entajul Huque, K A Rob and Fakhru Islam were given forced retirement.

The wheat scam sparked a public uproar as it hit newspaper headlines in the last two months.

The irregularities took place during procurement of an additional

one lakh MT of wheat at a cost of Tk. 90 crore in late July when the 135-day procurement drive was closed and farmers had no stock.

Sources claimed that the extended procurement was actually launched for the benefit of some ruling party men and food officials.

The first probe body formed by the food ministry and led by a joint secretary found that at least 10 food officials and some ruling party men were behind the scam.

The other probe body formed at the prime minister's directive found involvement of more ruling party lawmakers in the scam involving about Tk. 30 crore.

Allegations have it that low quality Indian wheat was imported at Tk. 6,000 a ton and supplied to government silos at Tk. 9,000 a ton.

The low quality and Indian origin of the wheat were proved in sample tests at the Wheat Research Centre at Nashipur, Dinajpur.

Investigations by three teams of Awami League lawmakers also found that several ministers and ruling party lawmakers were involved in the scam. AL also blamed the prime minister for approving the additional purchase after completion of the procurement drive.

The government's actions sparing the ruling party men came as a great surprise to officials, sources said.

They were surprised that the

food minister's private secretary Mohammad Mohsin was made OSD though his name was not mentioned in any of the probe reports.

But the minister's APS Alamgir Kabir escaped punishment because he is a political appointee though one of the probe reports found him involved in the scam.

Mentionably, unlike many other official and judicial probe reports (like those on Dhaka University incident, gas export issue etc.), the government all through kept the wheat scam probe reports 'a top secret'.

Neither the reports were made public nor the officials involved in preparation of the reports talked to newsmen though the scam involved public money, sources pointed out.

Cab drivers

FROM PAGE 12

code.

The DC said five special check posts equipped with video-monitoring devices would be set up in the city to gather information about cab drivers and passengers.

Also, a special team comprising members of the Detective Branch of Police would be on the vigil to stop hijacking of taxicabs in the crime-prone Mirpur and other city areas. Cab drivers can also dial the DMP numbers above in case of any trouble.

They were arrested during raids following intelligence reports that the NGO was giving arms training to students in the name of Islamic education and were involved in trafficking of women and children.

The institute, housed in two five-storey buildings at Uttara has 60 students and nine teachers and provides free food and lodging to its students.

Funded by some Middle Eastern countries, it offers diploma in Islamic studies.

Hasina leaves

FROM PAGE 12

Kishoreganj on her way back to the capital on October 1.

An aide to Hasina told The Daily Star that the conferences would enable her to have close interactions with the grassroots-level leaders and workers before what is her vigorous anti-government movement, maybe early next year.

Delegates of all district and thana committees will attend the conferences. At each daylong conference, Hasina will deliver her inaugural speech and then listen to party workers before making her summing-up.

Nine-shooter

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, Babul was produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka yesterday upon completion of a four-day remand. Police petitioned for a remand of another five days, but the court granted two days.

Asked if Babul will be sent to the joint interrogation cell (JIC) again, the Kotwali OC has said it depends on the JIC.

Kotwali police arrested Babul at Islampur in Old Dhaka on Saturday on several criminal charges, including murder, extortion and illegal possession of firearms.

Sri Lanka crush Australia

FROM PAGE 1

bowlers, Chaminda Vaas and Pulasthi Gunaratne.

In the face of that onslaught, Sanath Jayasuriya threw the ball to part-time spinner Aravinda de Silva and he immediately snared Hayden, bowled charging down the pitch.

In the next over Gilchrist slogged Kumar Dharmasena's off-spin up in the air, Atapattu accepting the catch at extra-cover and from then on Australia lost their way completely.

De Silva bowled his ten overs straight through to take one for 16 in an impressive display but Australia also did little to help themselves.

Darren Lehmann (0) and Damien Martyn (2) were both run out, the victims of direct hits from Jayasuriya and Russel Arnold as the Sri Lankan players responded to the encouragement of a noisy full house.

With Ponting (3) lbw to Vaas after a referral to the third umpire and Bevan (12) caught at mid-wicket sweeping, Australia's top six were

blown away for only 97, two wickets going down in successive overs three times.

It took some dour defence from Warne (36) and Brett Lee (18) to see Australia to relative respectability as the pair added 46 for the eighth wicket. But Australia were still bowled out with eight balls left, Mutiah Muralitharan mopping up the tail and finish with three for 26.

If they were to have any chance Ponting's men needed early wickets but, although Glenn McGrath and Jason Gillespie went past the outside edges of openers Atapattu and Jayasuriya on more than one occasion, the breakthrough would not come.

Both players also took full toll of a wayward Brett Lee when he was introduced, the fast bowler conceding 23 runs in three overs.

Jayasuriya made 42 from 51 balls before Australia's main threat, Warne, bowled him with a straight top-spinner.

Fresh fighting in northern Afghanistan: 17 killed

REUTERS, Mazar-i-Sharif

At least 17 people have been killed and another 23 wounded in a fresh outbreak of fighting between forces of rival commanders in volatile northern Afghanistan, witnesses and travellers from the area said yesterday.

They said the fighting broke out at dawn on Thursday and was continuing late on Friday morning in the Dara-i-Suf region of Samangan province about 60 miles south of Mazar-i-Sharif, the key city in northern Afghanistan.

The fighting was between the forces of two Uzbek commanders loyal to Uzbek warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum and those of ethnic Tajik Ustad Atta Mohammad.

Dostum and Atta Mohammad are both key members of the central government of President Hamid Karzai, but their fighters have fought several bloody battles in various parts of the north since the fall of the fundamentalist Taliban regime last year.

Now Rouz, a traveler arriving from the area of the latest fighting, told Reuters that Baba Beg, Atta's top commander -- had captured three villages from his rival Almas in the twisting valley of Dara-i-Suf that lies on a dirt road from Mazar city.

"Most of the casualties were

inflicted on Almas's men," he said. "We could hear the sound of artillery in the distance when we left before lunch. Seventeen bodies have been counted so far and 23 have been wounded."

Authorities in Mazar-i-Sharif confirmed that there was fighting in Dara-i-Suf but declined to give details.

The fighting comes amid rising tensions between Dostum and Atta's men in the Alberz area near Mazar-i-Sharif's military and civil airport.

Officials from both sides have refused to comment about the tension, which has been caused by a disagreement over a demilitarisation plan for Mazar city.

Atta's Jamiat Islami faction controls most of Mazar-i-Sharif, which was Dostum's stronghold in the 1990s, after seizing it from the defeated Taliban regime late last year.

After several rounds of skirmishes in the past three weeks, Mazar had appeared more relaxed after Atta and Dostum reached an agreement to demilitarise the city.

After the agreement, several hundred armed men in civilian clothes left the city's government buildings, but they have since been replaced by armed soldiers in uniform from both factions.

Listed criminal Ainal Shaikh of Jessore held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Listed criminal Ainal Shaikh of Sharsa upazila of Jessore district was arrested on Thursday afternoon alongwith his five accomplices.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided a house where Ainal, 40, and his gangmen were hiding.

On the basis of their confessional statement, police later recovered a double barrel gun, a sawn-off rifle, three pistols, a home-made gun, a pipe gun, 10 cartridges, six rounds of rifle bullets and seven hand grenades.

According to OC Badrul Alam, Ainal was wanted in four murder cases. He allegedly killed BNP leader Noor Islam and activists of the same party Mozam and Ajjbar of Sharsa upazila in 1998 and 1999.

Besides, he formed an organised gang of criminals and smuggling syndicate, the OC said.

Seven Arabs

FROM PAGE 12

or their residences.

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Viqarunnisa dispute

FROM PAGE 12

land. Its price was shown at Tk 16 lakh against its present market value of over Tk 10 crore.

They also alleged that the university was registered as a joint stock company rather than a non-trading and non-profit educational institution.