

# Anthrax vaccines

FROM PAGE 1

The virus found in Yangchha is a soil-transmitted bacterium and it could have been found anywhere, he added. He, however, brushed aside a possible outbreak of the disease in the area.

Tapan said he met Dhaka Central Zoo authorities and necessary steps will be taken to check further spreading of Anthrax, also known as wool sorter's disease.

M Hafizur Rahman, deputy commissioner, Bandarban, said the area, where the elephant was buried, has been made off-limits to public. They also poured 60kg lime and other chemicals around the burial ground to keep the area clean.

Local administration is keeping in touch with officials concerned and continuously monitoring the situation, he added.

A team of veterinary doctors led by Dr Abdul Malek has been sent in the area with adequate vaccines to limit further expansion of the virus,

## ADB president

FROM PAGE 1

economic growth to help reduce poverty, said an ADB press release yesterday.

Chino will also inaugurate the new office building of ADB's Bangladesh Resident Mission (BRM) at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in Dhaka. Chino and Saifur Rahman laid the foundation stone for the building in October 2002.

ADB's latest country programme for Bangladesh focuses on fewer sectors to maximise development impact. It plans to lend Bangladesh US\$1.368 million in loans and \$14.7 million as technical assistance for 2004-2006.

## More rains

FROM PAGE 1

49mm rainfall. Heavy downpour might continue for another one or two days, Met office sources said.

Light to moderate rainfall was recorded in many places across the country. During the last 24 hours, Sirajganj experienced 85mm of rain, Chandpur 65mm, Lama 43mm, Comilla 41mm and Sylhet 37mm, it added.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre yesterday reported that river waters have risen at most points from 10cm to 147cm. All rivers except Ganges-Padma have seen rise in water level. Out of 85 monitoring centres, 44 registered rise, 13 recorded fall in water level while 28 remained steady.

Our Khulna correspondent reports: Most parts of the city reeled under water due to daylong heavy downpour while the port city experienced 62mm rainfall yesterday.

## Containers

FROM PAGE 1

The government also plans a four-track railway link on this route in the long term, the meeting was told.

The shipping ministry asked the CPA to build an additional rail track in the port area so that at least two trains can stand on the lines at a time instead of one now. The ministry already allocated two crore for take constructing the line, one source said.

The shipping secretary told journalists later construction of Pangao container terminal at Fatullah near Dhaka would help end container congestion at Chittagong port. The Pangao project is now under active consideration of the government, he added.

# Morshed blames

FROM PAGE 1

countries before the election, the minds of the voters changed following many developments in the global scenario," he said.

Bangladesh declared its candidature in March last year and by that time a war started in Iraq which caused new polarisation in the world politics, Morshed explained.

The war split the Middle East into many groups on many issues. "Each country takes its position in line with national self-interest and global scenario," he observed. "Still, Bangladesh will try to play its vital role in the organisation," he said.

"Even after the defeat, we have assured the newly elected secretary general of our full co-operation in performing his duty and upholding the causes of Muslim Ummah."

He also brushed aside the notion that vying for the post alongside Malaysia will strain bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Malaysia. "The foreign minister of Malaysia will come to Dhaka very soon to talk about strengthening bilateral issues," he told journalists responding to a query.

Asked whether manpower export to Malaysia stopped after Bangladesh threw its candidate for the OIC post, the foreign minister said Kuala Lumpur did not resume manpower recruitment from any of the countries with whom it signed Memorandum of Understanding recently.

Khan also ruled out any negative impact on Dhaka's relations with some important OIC members following the statement of defeated candidate Salauddin Quader Chowdhury that the pro-Israel lobby won the election.

"The statement made by the Salauddin Quader Chowdhury was completely his personal opinion which has nothing to do with the government or the state's stand in

sources said.

Abdul Mannan, deputy director of Bandarban livestock department, said forest officials delayed to inform them of the elephant's death.

Official sources said Salah Uddin Mahmud, director general of the Department of Livestock, will visit the area soon.

Bandarban District Parishad yesterday formed a two-member committee with civil surgeon and a district livestock official to look into the side-effects of the virus in the area, sources said.

The committee will also oversee measures taken by various government agencies and submit its report today (Sunday), they added.

Mohammad Ullah and Jasim Uddin, arrested on June 11 with elephant tusks, were sent to Bandarban jail, sources said.

Both will be tested to determine whether they are affected with the disease, sources said.

Anthrax is an acute infectious disease, often fatal, associated with animal contact caused by the spore-forming bacterium *Bacillus anthracis*. The disease most commonly affects hoofed mammals and can also infect humans.

## WPB is likely

FROM PAGE 12

criticising the top leadership, using the party's letterhead with personal phone numbers, and not attending the party office since June 14.

Saiful Huq did not attend the politburo meeting yesterday and The Daily Star could not reach him for comment. Earlier on Thursday, he claimed to The Daily Star they (rebels) were the ones to represent the real ideal of the WPB.

He also said a large number of party activists will join them but they will decide their next plan of action following the decision of the central committee meeting.

WPB President Rashed Khan Menon briefly commenting on the matter said last night, "The central committee meeting will decide what organisational steps should be taken against them."

## Outlaws

FROM PAGE 1

Hamidul (26) of Karpasdanga Kamarpur and Jamshed of Shibpur died on the spot. At least 25 others including two children were injured and of them, condition of four was stated to be critical.

## AL may

FROM PAGE 1

General Abul Mannan and newly elected BDB lawmaker Mahi B Chowdhury's meeting with AL President and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina at her Dhanmondi residence yesterday.

"The Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh leaders sought Awami League's support in the Dhaka-10 by-election as we are not contesting it," said AL leader Asaduzzaman Noor, who was present at the meeting.

"Sheikh Hasina told them a decision on the issue will be taken after discussing it at party forum soon," Noor added.

Abdul Mannan said, "The Awami League chief appreciated our struggle against the BNP-Jammat-led coalition government and said her party leaders and workers will also work for me, if necessary."

Hasina congratulated Mahi on his recent victory in the Munshiganj-1 by-election against the BNP candidate.

this regard."

He expressed his ignorance about the role of Israel or any force outside the OIC in determining who will be the next secretary general. "The Israel issue also never featured in any of our discussions," he claimed. Asked if the US had any role in the election, the foreign minister replied in the negative.

Explaining Bangladesh's debacle in the election, the foreign minister said there were many reasons for the defeat including some regional grouping in the organisation. There are at least three groupings in the OIC looking after the interests of Asian, African and Arab countries.

The recent Arab League conference possibly helped change the mind of many Arab countries in this regard. There were also many backstage parleys centring the election, the minister said without elaborating. Besides, the proximity of Turkey to the trouble point Middle East might have swung the Arab votes in Turkey's favour.

Morshed said this is for the first time that the process of democratisation of the OIC has initiated following the direct election for the post and Bangladesh can claim the credit for democratising the OIC by participating in the election.

Earlier, only some influential groups in the organisation played the decisive role, he said.

The foreign minister also declined to accept the suggestion that the recent visit of US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld ended in futility. Morshed said Rumsfeld never asked Bangladesh to send its soldiers to Iraq, as every country is capable of making its own decision.

Morshed is leaving Dhaka for China via Bangkok today to attend the ACD(Asian Cooperation Dialogue) Foreign Minister's meeting and is likely to return home on June 30.

## Robbers loot 55 shops in Banshkhali

UNB, Chittagong

Robbers looted Tk 13 lakh from 55 shops at a market in Banshkhali upazila on Friday night.

Police and witnesses said a gang of 16 robbers came to Miabazaar in two pick up vans at about 9:00pm and looted cash from the shops at gunpoint.

Sensing the presence of patrol police, the robbers left the market firing blank shots.

They also looted valuables and cash worth about Tk 8 lakh from 12 houses at Boruapara, 1.5 kilometre from the Miabazaar, at 10:00pm.

Separate cases were filed with Banshkhali Police Station.

## SQ Chy's remarks on Hasina exposes his perverted mentality: AL

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League Joint Secretary Obaidul Kader yesterday lambasted Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury, adviser on parliamentary affairs to the prime minister, for his outrageous remarks on Sheikh Hasina.

In a statement, he said by his remarks Chowdhury has manifested his perverted mentality, which might pollute politics and political environment.

About remarks on the AL lawmaker Suranjit Sengupta, Kader said Chowdhury exposed his serious communal attitude.

## British MPs

FROM PAGE 12

along the Gaza-Egypt border on Friday.

"They just reported the incident to us and as I said we will follow that up with the Israelis," the official told Reuters on Saturday. Asked whether it was Israeli soldiers who fired at the group he said: "I think it's too early to say."

Israel Radio quoted one of the parliamentarians, Baroness Northover, as saying that soldiers in an Israeli observation post opened machinegun fire at the group as they toured a neighbourhood of Rafah on Friday.

It quoted Baroness Northover of the Liberal Democrats as saying the shots continued when the group approached a United Nations vehicle that was escorting them around Rafah and that a bullet hit a nearby building.

An Israeli army spokesman said the military was looking into the report.

Israeli soldiers have been accused of firing at U.N. convoys and foreign diplomats touring flashpoint areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip several times since a Palestinian uprising began in September 2000.

Palestinian gunmen have also been accused of firing at diplomatic convoys. In March 2002, a Palestinian gunman killed two peacekeepers near the West Bank city of Hebron, according to a Turkish officer who survived the attack.

## 14 Nepali cops

FROM PAGE 12

In Monday's assault the policemen were on a search mission for Maoist hideouts in the insurgency-torn Nepalgunj district when their truck was blown up by underground explosives.

It was the deadliest attack in Nepal since King Gyanendra on June 3 swore back in Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, whom he had fired two years earlier and replaced with a hand-picked royalist government.

Deuba has appealed for new talks with the Maoists to end the conflict, which has also devastated Nepal's fragile tourism-dependent economy.

But the rebels have refused to accept the premier's legitimacy.

On Friday, however, he received a boost when Nepal's communist party said it would join his government.

The communists, who were the main opposition in parliament in 2002, urged other parties to join Deuba's government, which wants a broad coalition to negotiate with Maoist rebels.

All political parties in Nepal other than Deuba's own had until Friday refused to join the government until the king explicitly renounced any role larger than that of a constitutional monarch.

## 45 feared killed

FROM PAGE 12

(telecommunications) company Al-Atther was brought to Basra hospital after an attack on the road to Zubair," said Ismail Mulla, an official with the emergency services.

An Iraqi policeman assigned to protect oil installations and an oil worker were also killed in the attack, which happened about three kilometres (two miles) south of Basra at about 9:15am (0515 GMT), a local police officer said.

A US soldier was killed in a firefight with insurgents near the Iraqi city of Baquba, north of Baghdad, on Friday evening, a US military spokeswoman said.

"A 1st Infantry Division soldier died on June 18 after anti-Iraqi forces engaged his unit with small-arms fire at about 7:00pm (1500 GMT) near Baquba," she said yesterday.

(Reuters, AFP)

## First ever nat'l conference on disability held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Action on Disability and Development (ADD), a British-based organisation, yesterday organised a national conference for disabled people, first ever in Bangladesh, in the city with a call for ensuring basic human rights for the physically challenged population.

About 2500 disabled people from country's 23 districts took part in the daylong conference at Dhanmondi's Women Sports Complex.

Speaking at the conference, economist Ataur Rahman called for the incorporation of disabled people in the country's development process.

He said malnutrition in pregnant women is one of the major causes for children being born disabled.

Road accidents and various crimes, especially acid violence make a lot of people disabled across the country every year, he added.

Dr Rahman urged the commercial banks to come forward with credit facilities without any inter-

est and collateral for disabled people.

Editor of the Weekly 2000 Shahadat Chowdhury said disabled people, if given proper social assistance, could contribute significantly to the country's well-being.

"Our society shying away from accepting physically challenged people exposes nothing but its own disability," Shahadat said.

Speaking at the concluding session as the chief guest, adviser of the last caretaker government Rokia Afzal Rahman said physically challenged people must increase their confidence. She urged all to come to the aid of disabled people.

Journalist Ataus Samad observed that attitude of the entire society towards disabled population is not positive at all.

He said drama and movies that portray physically challenged people ill shouldn't be allowed to be screened.

"Medical science has shown that there's no problem in marriage between physically challenged people and the others," Samad said adding an education channel tailored to the needs of the disabled people should be introduced.

# DCCI, Ficci term budget

FROM PAGE 1

Tk 8,000 crore in FY2004-05, to be added to the Tk 58,090-crore total investment figure of the current fiscal. The target for FY06 is to increase investment by Tk 12,000 crore and for FY07 by Tk 16,000 crore.

As the rationale of the target, the Bol executive chairman cited 'the investment success' of the recent years. He said the country received double investment in the last three years compared to that in the previous three.

In their address, both the chamber chiefs praised the government for proposing increased facilities for the agriculture sector, but they also pointed out the budget's discouraging aspects to industry.

They felt the proposed 7.5-per cent import duty on raw materials and 25-per cent on finished goods, besides withdrawal of tax holiday, will make it tough for the

Bol to achieve its targets.

The Ficci president said the reduction of duty on finished goods from 30 percent to 25 percent would hurt the local industries and halt the growth of assembling industries, as imported finished goods would flood the market.

Jamil said all the economies developed in manufacturing sectors started growing with assembling industry and, after gaining the necessary technical know-how and expertise, they went for manufacturing.

In his speech the DCCI president demanded continuation of tax holiday, as he said, "withdrawal of tax holiday will discourage new investment."

Fazle Hasan also pointed at poor law and order, and inadequate infrastructure and utility facilities as the other major hindrances to boosting investment.

# Waste extravaganza

FROM PAGE 1

The Water Development Board (WDB) in the proposal sought to spend Tk 38.21 crore or four per cent of the total project cost on buying 416 motor cars in 'a show of officials' obsession with luxury'.

It also wanted to dedicate two percent of the project cost or Tk 14.70 crore to buying 62 photocopy machines, four heavy-duty photocopies, two colour photocopies, 510 computers, 123 air-conditioners, 102 slide projectors, 13 multimedia projects, 102 fax machines and 12 laptops.

The WDB proposed to employ 508 officials and employees under the project in what the planning ministry officials saw was unrealistically huge manpower as water resources ministry staff could carry out most task.

The project, seen by many as the use of a sledgehammer to crack a nut, also wanted to spend Tk 29.07 crore on 125 man months of foreign consultants, and another Tk 77.49 crore on 4,852 man months of local consultants.

The WDB wanted to bankroll 2.27 percent or Tk 21.71 crore for construction of buildings and four percent or Tk 41.04 crore for training of officials and employees.

The project, generous in funding unnecessary and inflated components, showed reservation about its most vital component - Tk 67.61 crore agriculture support service and deleted it from the WDB proposal.

"Some engineers and water ministry officials wanted to make personal gains by inflating the project cost," said a planning ministry official, adding: "My ministry is not going to allow this kind of built-in corruption."

The communists, who were the main opposition in parliament in 2002, urged other parties to join Deuba's government, which wants a broad coalition to negotiate with Maoist rebels.

All political parties in Nepal other than Deuba's own had until Friday refused to join the government until the king explicitly renounced any role larger than that of a constitutional monarch.

## 45 feared killed

FROM PAGE 12

(telecommunications) company Al-Atther was brought to Basra hospital after an attack on the road to Zubair," said Ismail Mulla, an official with the emergency services.

An Iraqi policeman assigned to protect oil installations and an oil worker were also killed in the attack, which happened about three kilometres (two miles) south of Basra at about 9:15am (0515 GMT), a local police officer said.

A US soldier was killed in a firefight with insurgents near the Iraqi city of Baquba, north of Baghdad, on Friday evening, a US military spokeswoman said.

"A 1st Infantry Division soldier died on June 18 after anti-Iraqi forces engaged his unit with small-arms fire at about 7:00pm (1500 GMT) near Baquba," she said yesterday.

(Reuters, AFP)

## Sundarbans

FROM PAGE 12

the forest at some point is sure to be destroyed. "So, we are planning for alternative employment for the stakeholders whose livelihood depends on this forest," Tariquul who hails from a district close to the Sundarbans announced.

"Whatever we introduce -- micro-credit or VGF -- for the stakeholders dependent on the Sundarbans, we have to ensure that it goes to the genuine recipients," he added.

The forest minister said the bio-diversity conservation project the ADB had launched was suspended due to management complications and conflicts. "We are now trying to resume the project. But, this time we want to reform the infrastructure and rearrange the management system first, to assure a proper project implementation."

Meeting sources said the ADB-funded SBCP was aimed at safeguarding the mangrove forest's environmental integrity and biodiversity; but before being suspended around 30 percent of the US\$ 77-million project fund was spent with almost zero achievement.

Citing his experience during project work, an SBCP consultant said, though the project caused losses for the forest department, poor stakeholders and laymen in the Sundarbans, a section of government officials, forest robbers and influential locals have gained all from it.

Sketching the current state of the Sundarbans Reserve Forest, the consultant said it is decaying, and the situation will further aggravate if the local stakeholders' dependence on it for their livelihood continues.

According to meeting sources, the Mef secretary, while narrating his surprise visit to a project site, said he found the project accountant did not know even how to prepare a balance sheet.

The project director however laid the blame for the project's suspension on foreign consultants, saying they had always given false impressions about the rate of project implementation.

Prof Ainun Nishat of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), who was present at the meeting, told The Daily Star that the government at present is redesigning the suspended SBCP. To him the government moves appear to be very positive, as "it wants to replace the existing policy of resource mobilisation from the Sundarbans with a more pro-bio-diversity policy."

"There is no alternative to building separate infrastructure and management for conserving the Sundarbans' bio-diversity, as it is not possible with the existing ones," Ainun said.

He said the current mandate of the forest department is to enhance revenue collection from all forests, including the Sundarbans; but the meeting has decided to change this policy and make it pro-conservation.

On suspension of the \$77-million ADB project, Ainun said there were objections from both the government and the donor sides against different aspects of the SBCP. The forest department, local NGOs and various stakeholders also complained that the project design was faulty.

The yesterday's meeting has asked the project consultants to work out a conservation-oriented management system for the Sundarbans that would be able to address its problems adequately.

## 30 crocodiles

FROM PAGE 1

donate the crocodiles as gifts to the FRI.

"It is a costly gift from the crocodile bank. It is a gesture of goodwill and friendly relations between the two countries as the gift costs over Tk 1 crore if counted in Bangladeshi currency," Moklesur added.

"We lobbied to get these crocodiles as gifts for the past two years. After the Indian government gave the green signal, the authorities of crocodile bank invited us to receive the gifts for our safari park and zoo," he said.

"We will release the crocodiles here for breeding. We have five acres of natural lake in the safari park in Dulahazara where the crocodiles will start a new life."

The safari park was developed in 1998 over 2,300 acres of land in Dulahazara with potentials for a natural lake and forests.

Forest officials said two elephants were released in the safari park last week and three more are expected to be released shortly to enrich the park.

"We have developed a sanctuary of 400 acres of land for the elephants only inside the safari park for their comfortable stay," said Tapan Dey, project director of the park.

He said the elephants used for timber extraction in Rangamati hill district by Bangladesh Forest Industries Development Corporation (BFIDC) were brought to the safari park on the basis of departmental transfer.

"But the elephants will have enough food here and they can feel a bit relaxed now as they are no more required to join timber extraction work here," Tapan added.

Moreover, a pair of tigers and another of lions are expected to be brought to the safari park from Dhaka zoo soon, the officials said.

# Saudi says chief

FROM PAGE 1

assassinations and kidnappings" was one of four gunmen shot dead Friday night, said an interior ministry statement read on state television.

The four "were besieged in a gas station in the Al-Malaz district in Riyadh by security forces, and a heavy exchange of fire" ensued, it said.

The television showed photos of the bloodied dead bodies of Muqrin and the other slain militants.

The statement and footage came after a communique in the name of al-Qaeda was posted on an Islamist website denying that the network's Saudi chief had been killed.

"Following the lies... about the death of Abdul Aziz al-Muqrin, we affirm that such allegations, spread by the tyrants in Saudi Arabia, are intended to undermine the morale of the Mujahadeen on the Arabian peninsula," said the communique posted on the site <http://alsaha.fares.net>.

The statement, whose authenticity could not be ascertained, said another more detailed communique would be released.

Muqrin's death was first reported by security men at the scene of Friday night's gunbattle in the center of the Saudi capital.

The ministry identified the other slain gunmen as Faisal bin Abdul Rahman al-Dakheel, a militant on a top-wanted list who appeared in footage on websites showing the killing of an American resident.

It did not name the US national, but appeared to be referring to video footage of the killing of Robert Jacobs, a Riyadh resident who worked for the Vinnell Corp that helps train the Saudi National Guard.

The third was named as Turki bin Fuhaid al-Mutairi, one of three gunmen who escaped after a shooting and hostage-taking rampage that left 22 people dead in the eastern oil city of Al-Khobar last month.

The fourth was Ibrahim bin Abdullah al-Draheim, who helped plan the bombing of a residential compound in Riyadh last November and committed "other crimes," the ministry said.

A security man was also killed in the clash and two were wounded, the interior ministry said.

Twelve militants suspected of involvement in the attacks on Westerners were arrested, but their names would not be divulged in the interest of the investigation, the ministry said.

The statement said security forces seized three cars, one of which was used in the June 6 shooting attack on a BBC crew in Riyadh that left an Irish cameraman dead and a British journalist critically wounded.

They also seized machine guns, pistols, ammunition, three rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 16 pipe bombs, 10 hand grenades, documents, a large number of CDs, in addition to 132,800 riyals (35,400 dollars) and another 2,900 dollars in US currency.

The death of Johnson, who worked with aerospace giant Lockheed Martin, triggered a wave

of anger and revulsion in the United States with officials from President George W. Bush down vowing to avenge it.

The killers are "trying to intimidate America. They're trying to shake our will. They're trying to get us to retreat from the world," Bush said in the northwestern US state of Washington.

"America will not retreat, America will not be intimidated by these kinds of extremist thugs," Bush vowed. "We must pursue these people and bring them to justice before they hurt other Americans."

A statement accompanying the Internet photos said Johnson had been beheaded by Mujahadeen guerrillas from the Fallujah Squad, a reference to the Iraqi city that has been a hotbed of resistance to the US occupation.

It said the group "slaughtered the American prisoner Paul Marshall Johnson after the ultimatum set by the Mujahadeen to the tyrants of the Saudi government expired."

The kidnappers had given the Saudi government a 72-hour ultimatum to release hundreds of militants detained here.