

China strike two golds

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bullseye to deprive Russia's Lioubov Galkina of victory with the last shot in the women's 10-metre air rifle final.

"It's an unbelievable feeling to win gold," Du said.

Within four hours, Wang Yifu produced a similarly nerveless performance to strike gold in the men's 10m Air Pistol event.

Despite winning gold at the 1992 Olympics, Wang had earned the reputation as a serial choker after twice being pipped for first place in the 1996 and 2000 Games.

But the veteran Chinese shooter was not to be denied for a third time, scoring high with his last shot to finish with a total of 690 points, fractionally ahead of Mikhail Nestruev as Russia were again left with the silver medal.

China therefore made the perfect start in their quest to repeat their performance of the 2000 Sydney Olympics when they finished third in the medals' table with 28 golds.

American phenomenon Phelps, 19, eased through his Olympic opener in the swimming pool, launching his drive for a record-equaling seven gold medals by posting the fastest qualifying time in the 400m individual medley.

While Phelps dominated his event, Australian superstar Ian Thorpe conceded top qualifying spot in the 400m freestyle to compatriot Grant Hackett.

"I was pretty confident, it's the way I wanted to qualify," said Thorpe, who won three gold medals at the Sydney Games and has a chance to win six.

Japan's double world champion Kosuke Kitajima made a sensational start, setting an Olympic record of 1min 0.03sec in the 100-metre breaststroke

Environment ministry restarts projects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Environment and Forest has decided to start immediate implementation of various projects under it to create job opportunity for the flood-hit people as part of post-flood rehabilitation programmes.

It has also decided to disburse Tk 27 crore among people engaged in participatory afforestation.

The decisions were taken yesterday at an emergency meeting at the ministry chaired by Tariqul Islam, minister for environment and forest.

The minister asked officials concerned to disburse the funds among the target people and launch the projects without delay. He warned of tough action against any officials and staff for any irregularities and corruption in discharging their duties, meeting sources said.

State Minister Jafrul Islam Chowdhury was also present at the meeting, attended by the secretary of the ministry, chief conservator of forest, four deputy conservators and all the 13 conservators of forest, and 61 divisional forest officers.

The image of the forest department is completely ruined due to corruption of a section of dishonest forest officials, the minister said. There are also allegations that some officials help land grabbers to encroach upon forestlands, he mentioned.

The minister also said a section of officials allegedly advised land grabbers to file cases against each other through some understanding, claiming ownership of forestlands and in several cases these fake claimants managed to get the lands.

Tariqul ordered effective steps to recover the forestlands devoured by land grabbers and action against the corrupt officials.

The meeting was informed that the current floods caused a huge damage to forest property like nurseries and roadside trees.

The minister asked forest officials to go for fresh plantation of saplings and building nurseries.

4 killed

FROM PAGE 12

upazila headquarters, at around 4:00pm.

As the passengers rushed to leave the boat, the roof collapsed. Idris Ali, 42, a kabiraj (indigenous physician) of Majikhola village in Doarabazar, died on the spot and seven were missing, while the rest swam ashore.

Police yesterday rescued the bodies of Anwara Begum, 30, wife of Dulu Miah, her son Dulal Ahmed, 5, and daughter Tahmina, 2, from near the spot. The family of Chatibazar village in Companyganj was returning home.

Biman identities

FROM PAGE 12

Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin in the chair.

"Biman crossed all its previous records by carrying 15,43,491 passengers and earning Tk 1952.31 crore in the last fiscal year," the minister said, terming Bangladesh Biman a profitable concern now.

The meeting was apprised that Biman saved about Tk 10 crore from insurance premiums during last two years. It also saved Tk 217 crore from 12 sectors through austerity.

The minister hoped that Biman would also be able to earn Tk 78 lakh annually through technical handling of foreign airlines.

Among others, Secretary of the ministry Akther Hossain Khan, Joint Secretary Shahab Ullah, Biman's Managing Director M Mahmudul Rahman, executive directors and other high officials attended the meeting.

6 political leaders

FROM PAGE 1
Islam is also in the surveillance list.

The rest are a district-level and a city-level leader of main opposition AL and one belonging to its youth wing, Juba League.

Law enforcers did not ask the six anything, the source said, adding none of them is even aware of the watch.

The Friday's meeting issued sharp directive to maintain absolute secrecy in the vigilance so that the political leaders can never sense it.

But, while the investigators are hunting for clues, they are yet to act on the allegation brought by local AL.

leader Nunu Miah, arrested in connection to the August-7 grenade attack, of local BNP legislator Ilias Ali's involvement in the blasts.

According to the source, Ali's name is not on the watch list and the investigators are not at all willing to verify the allegation.

TRANSFERS

The authorities suspended Sylhet Superintendent of Police (SP) Shahadat Hossain three days after the May 21 grenade blast at Hazrat Shahjalal Shrine that killed three and injured 75 others including Bangladeshi-born British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury. The then Kotwali Police Station OC S A Newaji was also transferred a few days later, replaced by OC of South Surma Police Station Shafiqur Rahman Mukul.

But Mukul was sent back yesterday to South Surma Police Station and OC of Boro Lekha Police Station of Moulavibazar Mahbubur Rahman took over as the new OC of Kotwali.

Humayun Azad

FROM PAGE 1
death is natural or not, he said.

"Prof Azad was found dead in his Munich apartment by a member of the German PEN Centre when he did not come to an appointment with the PEN member," a German embassy press release said on Friday.

Azad went to Germany on August 8 on a fellowship from PEN International and intended to do several months of research on romantic German writer Heinrich Heine.

Bangladesh Chhatra League, student wing of the Awami League, Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-backed Chhatra League, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, Bangladesh Chhatra Moitree and the Manchi staged separate processions and rallies on the campus.

They demanded an international probe into the death of Azad, a staunch feminist and a fearless critic of fundamentalism and human rights violations, saying they smelt a foul play in the death.

Azad Mancha submitted a memorandum to the vice-chancellor of the university, demanding accurate information on the death in 24 hours.

A range of other organisations voicing the same demand includes Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesh Chhatra Kendra and Bangladesh Samajniki Nari Moitree.

The director general of the consular and welfare wing of the foreign ministry called Azad's family by phone yesterday and told them the author's body would be flown home according to their wish.

The family said they would take a decision after discussing the issue among themselves.

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Hasina slates Khaleda

FROM PAGE 12
programmes to observe "national mourning day" by AL.

The AL chief said the alliance government has been killing political leaders and workers, intellectuals and journalists across the country to tighten its grip on power to carry on with looting the country.

On assassination of Bangabandhu, Hasina, the slain leader's eldest daughter, said the defeated forces and conspirators of 1971 killed Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to take revenge of their disgraceful defeat in the Liberation War.

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By observing the fake birthday on

this mourning day, she (Khaleda) proves that she too had been involved in the murder," Hasina added.

AL Advisory Committee Member Abul Maal Abdul Muhit was the keynote speaker at the programme. Among others, senior AL leaders Zillur Rahman, Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzaq, Tofail Ahmed, Abdul Jalil, Supreme Court Bar Association President Barrister Rokan Uddin Mahmud, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal leader Hasanul Huq Inu and Jatiya Party (JP) leader Sheikh Shahidul Islam spoke at the programme.

UNB adds: Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will not celebrate her 60th birthday today. Instead, she will fly to Patuakhali and Barisal today to visit flood-hit areas and distribute relief materials among the flood victims, according to sources at the Prime Minister's Office.

took up arms after Tutsi paratroopers assassinated the country's first democratically elected president, a Hutu. Burundi's Tutsi minority has effectively run the country for all but a few months since independence in 1962.

Burundian President Dominique Ndayize visited the camp Saturday and described the massacre as "a shame" and asked the Congolese government to assist in investigations.

"What I can say is that it is Burundi which has been attacked. The attackers killed innocent refugees who sought refuge in Burundi," Ndayize said. The rebels "declared that they attacked a military camp and that the soldiers died in this camp but I saw no soldier's body except those of young children, women and old persons."

The bloodbath in the camp came after gunmen attacked a Burundian army position about a half-mile away.

"These guys were armed with grenades, machetes, and automatic weapons. While the attack was going on they were beating drums," said Fernando del Mundo, a spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva.

Pasteur Habimana, spokesman for the National Liberation Forces, justified the assault on the camp by saying Burundian soldiers were hiding there after the attack on the post.

"We were also attacked by armed Banyamulenge militiamen who lived in this camp," he said. "The camp was a genuine Banyamulenge militiamen headquarters."

Habimana earlier said the victims were killed by Burundian soldiers who fled into the refugee camp to escape the rebel assault.

Aspokesman for the Burundian army could not be immediately reached for comment.

The National Liberation Forces is the last main rebel movement fighting the government in Burundi's 10-year-old civil war, which has killed some 260,000 people.

War broke out in 1993, when Hutus and political moderates from the Hutu majority were killed in the 100-day slaughter organized by the extremist Hutu government then in power.

The massacre will further complicate UN efforts to encourage Congolese refugees to return home, said M'Hamed Ladjouzi, head of the UN mission in Congo's troubled North Kivu province.

"This is a setback in our efforts to ensure security here," Ladjouzi said. "We are trying to find out who did this. Their aim is to complicate the situation. Obviously, they did this to stop all the efforts the international community is making."

The place where the explosion took place at about 6:30 pm is also adjacent to Moti Masjid (mosque) at Sir Iqbal Road, and yards away from Khulna Press Club and Khulna office of the Dhaka daily, Jugantor.

Zahid said the bomb exploded as it came under his foot while he was passing through the area.

Senior officials of Khulna Metropolitan Police visited the spot after the blast, the latest in a series of the last few months.

One hurt in Khulna bomb blast

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

One person was critically injured in a powerful bomb explosion here yesterday evening behind the residence of slain city Awami League president Manjurul Islam.

The blast blew off the right leg of Zahid Sheikh, 30, a day labourer, and also caused other injuries. He was admitted to Khulna General Hospital.

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They were being trained to kill Pakistani leaders, with Islamabad airport and the nearby Chaklala airbase being picked out as assassination venues, intelligence officials have said.

Security forces stood alert in all cities and guarded key government installations, airports, railway stations and bus terminals.

A spokesman of southern Sindh province told AFP the movements of ministers and advisors were restricted after information from arrested militants that they could be target of attacks.

"There was credible information that three to four ministers could be attacked by terrorists in (southern port city of) Karachi," Sindh government spokesman Salahuddin Haider said.

The search body for the anti-corruption commission has short-listed six persons to select the commissioners from.

The chairman of the body, Justice M A Aziz, along with his colleagues submitted the list Thursday to President Iajuddin Ahmad.

The president will choose one from the short-list as chairman and two as members of the commission.