

Problems of poor can be solved locally
Says Prof Yunus

UNB, Mumbai

Nobel Peace Prize winner Prof Muhammad Yunus has said villagers can find solution to their problems from own resources.

"They don't need any resource or advice from outside. Problems can be solved locally," he said while giving a talk on the 'Role of micro-credit in achieving MDGs' on Mumbai University campus yesterday.

Terming poverty as the artificial imposition on the poor, he said each of us has unlimited potentiality. "Seeds of poverty is lying in the concepts, when we can pull them out the world will be free from poverty."

The Nobel laureate said his micro-credit programme for the women was a protest to the conventional banking system, which does not give loans to the poor women.

Criticising those who consider the poor people not creditworthy, he said: "I want to ask them: 'Are

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Baghdad blast kills 102

US loses another helicopter

AGENCIES, Baghdad

At least 102 people were killed and 215 wounded yesterday in the biggest attack so far this year in Iraq when a suicide truck bomb slammed into the central Baghdad district of Al-Sadr.

A suicide truck bomb exploded near the Sadr market, in central Baghdad on the east bank of the Tigris River. "At least 102 people were killed and 215 wounded," the source said.

The blast sent a long plume of thick grey smoke up into the air just before dusk, a time when markets are usually crowded with shoppers out for food ahead of the night-time curfew.

A US Army helicopter crashed Friday in a hail of gunfire north of Baghdad, police and witnesses said

the fourth lost in Iraq in the last two weeks.

The US command said two crew members were killed, and the top US general conceded that insurgent ground fire has become more effective.

An al-Qaeda-affiliated group claimed responsibility and said its fighters had "new ways" to attack American planes.

A brief US military statement gave no reason for the crash and did not identify the type of aircraft. A Pentagon official said it was an Apache attack helicopter, which carries two crew members.

The US military announced the deaths of six more troops in Iraq on Friday, including two killed by Sunni Arab insurgents in their stronghold of Al-Anbar province, west of the capital Baghdad.

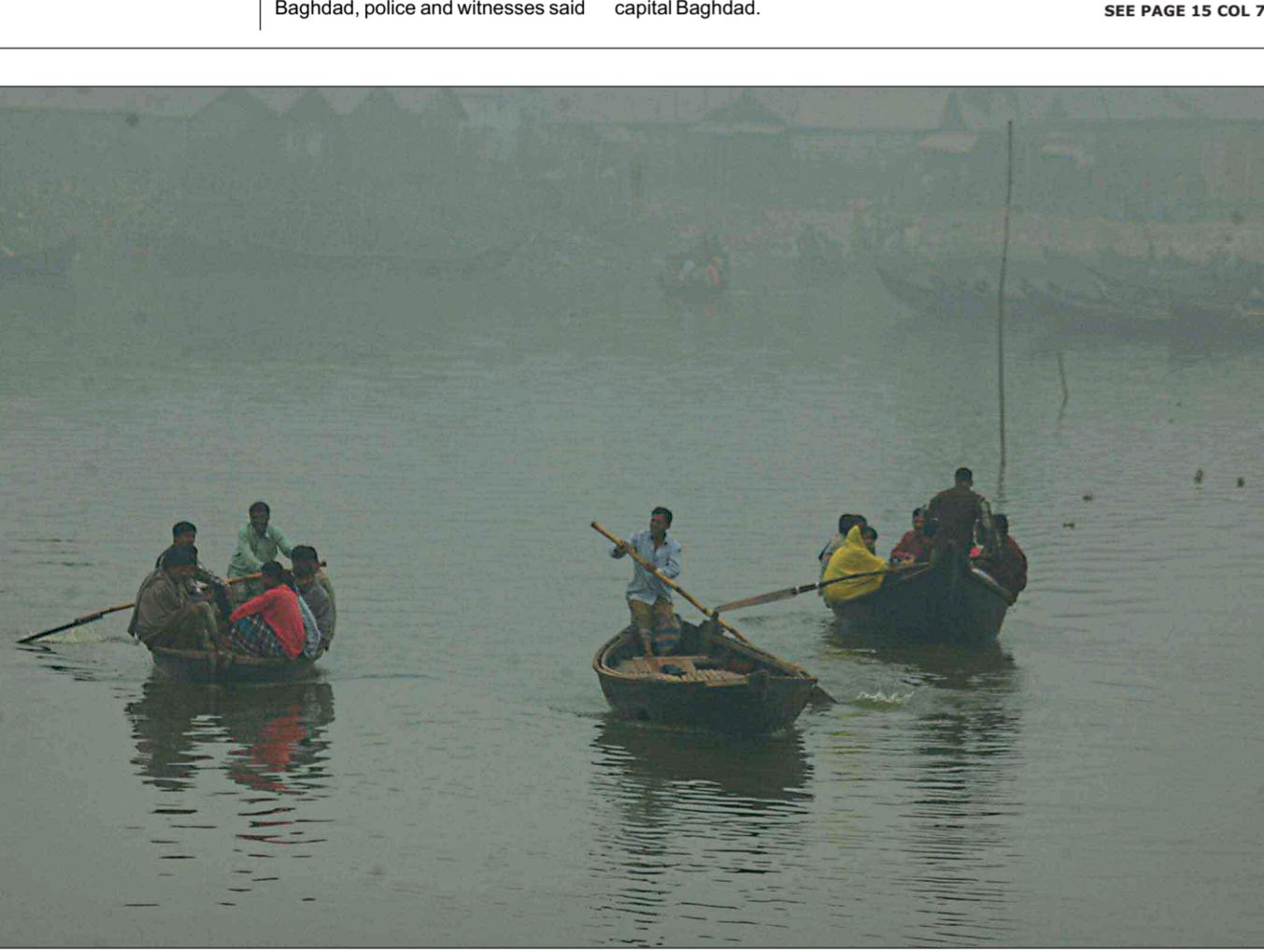
A marine and a soldier died from wounds received due to "enemy action" during combat operations in Al-Anbar on Thursday, while another marine died from a heart attack in the province the same day, a statement said.

It corrected an earlier statement that had given the day of all three deaths as Friday.

Earlier, the US military announced the deaths of three soldiers in two separate traffic accidents on Thursday.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to release the information. Another Apache crashed Sunday during heavy fighting with a Shia cult near Najaf, also killing two soldiers.

Iraqi police and witnesses said SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



Amid dense fog, people head for their workplaces in the city from Korail in Mohakhali area yesterday.

Road crashes kill 11, injure 30

UNB, Dhaka

Eleven people died and 30 others were injured in road accidents in Goalando and Narsingdi yesterday morning.

A Faridpur-bound passenger bus from Goalando skidded off Doulatdia-Khulna road and fell into a ditch near Mogbuler Dokan intersection at around 8:30am, killing five people on the spot and injuring 32 others.

Of the injured, one died at Faridpur Medical College Hospital (FMCH) and the other at upazila health complex.

Five of the dead were identified

as Ayesha Begum, 40, her daughter Khaleeda, 7, Kabir Molla, 38, Abed Molla, 40 and Jabbar, 42. Identity of the remaining two could not be known.

Police and locals said the bus plunged into the roadside ditch after its driver "lost control over the steering".

The injured passengers are undergoing treatment at the health complex. Police seized the bus, but its driver and helper managed to flee.

In Narsingdi, four people died in two road accidents in Shibpur upazila.

Police and witnesses said three people died as a bus overturned

after a collision with another bus on Dhaka-Monohordi road at C&B Bazar in Shibpur upazila at about 8:00am.

The dead are as Syed Hossain, 40, Mokhles Mia, 30, and Joban Mia, 35.

Police recovered the bodies and sent them Narsingdi Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

In another accident, an unidentified boy, aged about 12, was killed when a speeding bus ran over him at Shibpur bus-stand at about 7:00am.

The drivers of both the killer buses managed to escape after the accidents.

KUAKATA MURDER

Husband hired killers of Tania

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Zahid Hasan Jewel, arrested on charge of killing his schoolteacher wife in Kuakata on January 27, gave a confessional statement to a magistrate here yesterday.

In the statement given under Section 164, Zahid, 35, of Khilgaon, Dhaka said that he planned to murder Tahmina Sharmin Tania, 28, as he was having an illicit affair with

his cousin and wanted to get rid of his wife. He hired three professional killers in Dhaka to do the job during their trip to Kuakata.

According to the plan, one of the hired killers Abdul Hossain accompanied the couple and their 10-month-old son Zayman to Kuakata as their driver. The two other killers came separately and joined the couple when they started for

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Patuakhali

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Surveying a newly captured eastern rebel stronghold, Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse yesterday vowed to tame the Tamil Tiger rebels and liberate civilians, but said the door remained open to resume peace talks.

Visiting troops in this parched corner of northeast Sri Lanka -- where the ravages of weeks of artillery battles have blended with the destruction wrought by the 2004 tsunami -- Rajapakse called on the Tigers to lay down arms, an idea the rebels laugh off.

Apparently emboldened by the capture of this coastal swathe of

jungle and lagoon in Sri Lanka's far north east, the government has vowed to destroy the rebels' military machine, and analysts fear a new episode of a two-decade civil war will escalate.

"We have to tame the Tigers," Rajapakse told Reuters as he toured the former rebel-controlled town of Vakarai around 225 km northeast of Colombo to meet troops and inspect captured rebel artillery guns and mortar bombs.

"But there are two ways of liberating civilians in Tiger areas. We have offered a political solution. We don't want a military solution."

"This is high time they should

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The Roads and Highways department bulldozes an illegally built office of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, youth wing of BNP, at Taltala in Mohakhali in the capital yesterday.

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Tigers open Zim series today

TV coverage uncertain
SPORTS REPORTER

Experienced bowler Mohammad Sharif is set to make an international comeback after five years when Bangladesh play the first one-day of the four-match series against Zimbabwe at the Harare Sports Club ground today.

The 22-year-old medium pacer from Narayanganj, who has recently recovered from long multiple groin injuries, played his last one-day international against Pakistan in Dhaka in January 2002.

Sharif has been included in the 12-member team for the opening match which will kick off at 1:30pm Bangladesh time.

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U-turn prohibited at Sonargaon intersection

UNB, Dhaka

Taking U and right turns by vehicles coming from both Bangla Motors and Farmgate have been restricted at Sonargaon crossing in the city.

A DMP release yesterday said only the vehicles coming from the Sundarbans Hotel side via Sonargaon link road will be allowed to go towards FDC and Rainbow crossing by taking a right turn at Sonargaon crossing.

The FDC-bound vehicles coming from Bangla Motors have been requested to use Sonargaon link road by taking a left turn at Bangla Motor crossing.

Passers-by have been requested to use the foot over bridge and Karwan Bazar underpass for crossing roads at Farmgate police box crossing and Sonargaon crossing.

Ekushey Book Fair buzzing with visitors

DU CORRESPONDENT

Amar Ekushey Book Fair saw a lively third day yesterday as a huge number of visitors thronged the fair with the sales picking up.

Different publication houses brought out a total of 86 books of various genres yesterday, according to the Bangla Academy public relations office. Of them, 24 are novels while 15 contained poems, five short stories and eight

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A crowd of devotees taking water for ablution before prayers at Biswa Ijtema at Tongi on the outskirts of the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

No contractual appointment in foreign ministry from now on

UNB, Dhaka

The caretaker government has decided not to appoint any person in any tier on contract or renew contracts in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

An official announcement said the decision was taken in a meeting of the committee of advisers on administrative affairs on January 29 with Chief Adviser Fakhrudin Ahmed in the chair.

The foreign ministry has been asked to take "quick and effective step to cancel any contractual job if it is deemed necessary in public interest".

The ministry has also been instructed to fill up the vacant posts to maintain continuity in the functioning of foreign affairs and ensure good coordination.

BDR, BSF trade gunshots on Satkhira border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) on Friday night traded heavy gunfire across the border areas under three Satkhira upazilas with no casualty reported.

According to sources, BSF personnel of Tarali and Daharkanda camps under Swarupnagar Police

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Hamas, Fatah ignore truce in Gaza

Hamas kidnaps 40 security officials after 25 were killed in fighting

AP, AFP, Gaza City

Fatah and Hamas clashed at Cabinet ministries, universities and security headquarters yesterday in defiance of a truce that was to have come into effect.

Fatah-affiliated security officials said nothing was stolen or destroyed, and denied al-Aqha's assertion that gunmen opened fire from the building's rooftops.

Twelve people were wounded by late morning, hospital officials said, and Fatah said Hamas had kidnapped 40 of its security officials at roadblocks after internece fighting killed 25 people in just 24 hours.

The ceasefire agreement was announced late Friday on the deadliest single day of battles between the two sides, who have been locked in a violent power struggle since the Islamic militant Hamas ousted Fatah from power last year.

Palestinian officials said the deal was approved by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah and Hamas' supreme leader, Khaled Mashaal. But the ceasefire the second announced this week showed no signs of taking hold.

Gunbattles raged across Gaza after the truce was announced, continuing through the night and early Saturday. With no casualties reported overnight, some Gazans, who had spent the previous two days huddled at home for safety, were emboldened to leave their houses to go to work.

But confrontations soon heated up in Gaza City, the coastal strip's largest town. Fatah gunmen

stormed the Agriculture Ministry, ransacking offices and stealing computers, servers and official documents, said Agriculture Minister Mohammed al-Aqha.

Fatah-affiliated security officials said nothing was stolen or destroyed, and denied al-Aqha's assertion that gunmen opened fire from the building's rooftops.

Officials at the Hamas-run Communications and Postal Ministry said Fatah gunmen fired two rocket-propelled grenades at the building. Gunbattles also erupted around the Interior Ministry, which Hamas controls, and the Fatah-dominated National Security headquarters.

Universities also continued to be the site of clashes. Armed men at Islamic University, a Hamas stronghold, traded fire with Fatah fighters who took up position on the rooftop of nearby al-Azhar University and surrounding buildings. University workers ran for cover as gunshots pierced the air.