

Rebel Kurds declare cease-fire in Turkey

AP, Ankara, Turkey

Kurdish separatists declared a "unilateral cease-fire" in attacks against Turkey yesterday and said they were ready for peace negotiations, but the group maintained the right to defend itself.

The statement came as the Turkish military has intensified operations against the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party, also known as PKK, in the country's southeast, at the border with Iraq. The guerrillas have been fighting for autonomy in Turkey for more than two decades.

"We are renewing our declaration to halt attacks against the Turkish army," Abdul Rahman Chaderchi, the PKK official in charge of foreign affairs, said in northern Iraq, where the rebels have several bases.

"We want peace and we are ready for negotiations, but if Turkey decides to attack our bases inside Turkey or inside Iraqi Kurdistan, then this unilateral cease-fire will be meaningless. If we are attacked, we will fight back and we have the ability to confront any Turkish aggression," he added.

Turkish troops have massed at the frontier and shelled Iraqi territory while pursuing rebels, drawing criticism from the Iraqi government and raising fears that the conflict could draw in its NATO ally, the United States.

The Turkish government had no immediate response to the PKK statement, but has ignored several past cease-fires declared by the group, ruling out negotiations with "terrorists."

It was unclear if the rebel announcement reflected a desire to ease pressure from the Turkish armed forces, or was a public relations effort to portray the rebels as peace-seeking, and the

military as the aggressor. The rebels might also want to give Kurdish candidates in Turkish parliamentary elections next month a chance to make gains at the polls without being accused of links to rebel violence.

The PKK has accused the Turkish military of engineering the collapse of a unilateral rebel cease-fire declared on Oct. 1, 2006.

Turkey's prime minister said Tuesday that the country needs to focus on fighting the PKK inside its borders amid a debate over whether Turkey should pursue rebels in a cross-border operation into northern Iraq.

"There are 500 terrorists in Iraq; there are 5,000 terrorists inside Turkey. Has terrorism inside Turkey ended for us to think about an operation in northern Iraq?" Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan told reporters.

Rebels of the PKK have bases in the mountainous north of Iraq.

Turkey's army chief has said an incursion into northern Iraq is necessary, but said he needed political approval to act. The government pledged to hunt down rebels, but Erdogan has not called for the parliamentary approval required for a cross-border operation.

PKK guerrillas took up arms in 1984, and tens of thousands of people have died in the conflict. The United States and European Union brand the PKK a terrorist organization.

NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, in Turkey on Tuesday, said the alliance hoped Turkey's conflict with the PKK could be resolved "with the maximum of restraint."

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Viqarunnisa

FROM PAGE 1
School, Dhanmondi, Motijheel Govt Boys' High School, Dhanmondi Govt Boys High School, Holy Cross Girls High School and A K High School, Demra.

A total of 564 of Viqarunnisa Noon School obtained GPA-5 out of 750 examinees, while out of 857 examinees, 527 students bagged GPA-5 from Ideal School and College.

The number of other GPA-5 achievers are: 314 from Monipur High School, 281 from Rajuk Uttara Model School and College, 259 from Motijheel Model High School, 178 from Dhaka Residential Model College, 172 from Govt Laboratory High School, 171 from Motijheel Govt Boys' High School, 149 from Dhanmondi Govt Boys' High School, 149 from Holy Cross Girls' High School and 131 from A K High School.

Meanwhile, Collegiate School Chittagong, Dr Khashtagir Govt Girls High School and Chittagong Govt High School took the first three places under Chittagong board in terms of students securing GPA-5.

A total of 265 students got GPA-5 from Collegiate School out of 395 examinees, 197 obtained GPA-5 from Khashtagir School out of 332 students while 171 out of 265 secured GPA-5 from Chittagong Govt High School.

Under Rajshahi Education Board, the first three institutions in terms of achieving GPA-5 are Cantonment Public School and College, Bogra-171, Cantonment Public School and College, Rangpur-144 and Rangpur Zila School-139.

In terms of GPA-5, the first, second and third institutions under Sylhet Education Board are: Blue Bird High School Sylhet-74, Sylhet Govt Pilot High School-64 and Sylhet Cadet College-47.

Barisal Govt Girls' High School, Barisal Cadet College and Barisal Zila School took the first three places securing GPA-5 by 74, 45 and 43 respectively under Barisal board.

The top three GPA-5 securing institutions under Madrasa Education Board are Tamirul Millat Kamil Madrasa Demra, Dhaka, Tamirul Millat Kamil Madrasa, Tongi and Jameya-e-Kashemita, Narsingdi. The number of GPA-5 students are 85, 76 and 56 respectively.

Double Mooring Collegiate School in Chittagong bagged 265 GPA-5s while Khashtagir Govt Girls High School 197.

A total of 255 students from Comilla Zila School secured GPA 5 under Comilla Board while Faizunnesa Govt Girls High School received 129 GPA-5s.

No examinees passed the exams from 248 educational institutions across the country. In 2006, the number of such institutions with zero pass rate was 193 while 424 in 2005 and 548 in 2004.

The results of SSC, SSC (Vocational) and Dakhi examinations under all the nine education boards were made public yesterday at 3:00 pm in a press conference at Dhaka Education Board.

At the conference, M Mamtaul Islam, the education secretary, said the percentage of successful students slightly went down this year due to last year's over a month-long strike observed by teachers and staff of non-government schools.

He added that as per a government

earlier, after disembarking from the plane at Shah Amanat Airport, the chief adviser drove straight to Lebu Bagan in Hathazari where Chittagong GOC Major General Sina Ibne Jamali briefed him about the aftermath of Monday's landslides that killed more than 100 people.

Communications Adviser Major General (retd) MA Matin, Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Mokhlesur Rahman and senior civil and military officials were present.

The CA went to Jahangir Line High School in Chittagong Cantonment where an army relief center has been set up. Some 501 injured people from Lebu Bagan, Kacharigona and Workshop areas were brought to the center for treatment. Of them, 47 seriously injured people were sent to Chittagong Combined Military Hospital (CMH).

He distributed rice, biscuit, saree, lungi and money in cash among the affected people at the relief center.

Later, the CA visited Kacharigona and talked to the affected people. He went round the area, consoled the family members of the landslide victims and assured them of all possible help.

After visiting the injured at the CMH, the CA visited another landslide spot in Kusumabagh area and distributed relief materials and money in cash among the affected people.

The CA returned to the capital at 2:50pm.

Illegal VoIP

FROM PAGE 1
through those having Internet Service Provider (ISP) license.

Besides, the former state minister said, when Babu had smuggled a huge consignment of cigarettes into the country, the then finance minister had played a mere onlooker's role.

Babu told the interrogators that each of those in the VoIP business would earn between Tk 4 crore and Tk 5 crore. He claimed that he raised the issue before Khaleda Zia at least 50 times and urged her either to stop the illegal business or legalise it by issuing licence. Each time she assured that she would look into the matter later but it never came true.

Tanque himself made sure no actions were taken against the VoIP operators.

Babu also contended that not a single sector was free of corruption during the BNP-Jamaat-led alliance

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100 houses

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Sazim, a resident of Saikatpara told The Daily Star.

A brick wall, put up by the district administration earlier to protect the localities from mudslides, broke down leaving the families residing in the areas at grave risk, the locals said.

The district administration has been evacuating families from those localities.

Zahedul Islam of Saikatpara said that they could not leave the house, as they have nowhere to go. Almost half of their house got buried under mud and the front door has been blocked as mud has piled up against it.

"We have made an alternative path breaking down the grill of the window," he said adding that many of their neighbours have moved out.

Sarjin, a student of Kalatoli primary school, said that all her family members have taken shelter in a single room as other rooms have become unfit for living.

Mazedul Karim, a student of Ramu College, said that their whole house was buried under mud.

Following a visit to the affected areas, Professor Sharmin Reshma, an environment protection activist of the town said, "the way the mud is coming down it would affect the hotel and motel zone of the town soon." She urged the authorities to take immediate steps.

The new deputy commissioner (DC) of Cox's Bazar Sazzadul Hasan told The Daily Star that a committee has been formed, led by ADC General Arifur Rahman Apu, for taking necessary measures.

Zahiruddin, a private firm manager living on road No. 26, said they had to stay inside for hours as the rainwater started to recede at around 5:00am but miseries continued as the houses were still littered with soaked sand and furniture, and the air reeked of waste matter.

Many houses were waist-deep in water that caused damage to furniture and household appliances.

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Besides, another hill near the town's City College has developed large cracks, which may collapse any moment repeating the Chittagong mudslide tragedy, locals fear.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Sayeed Mahmud Belal told The Daily Star that the authorities had already moved some families from the City College area following the incident.

57pc pass in SSC

FROM PAGE 1
5,313 from Chittagong Board, 641 from Barisal Board, 713 from Sylhet Board, 6,889 from Madrasah Board and 25 from Technical Education Board.

As many as 10,24,537 students -- 5,51,255 boys and 4,73,282 girls -- appeared in this year's SSC exams under nine educational boards and 5,97,955 of them -- 3,35,443 boys and 2,62,512 girls -- passed.

Pass rate for boys is 60.85 and for girls is 55.47 against 64.27 and 59.75 last year.

The results of SSC exams under seven secondary and higher secondary educational boards -- Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Comilla, Jessor, Barisal, Sylhet as well as SSC (Vocational) exams under Technical Education Board (TETB) and Dakhi exams under Madrasah Education Board were published yesterday.

The examinations began on March 8 and ended in the first week of April 2007. Only 330 examinees secured GPA-5 in 2002 when the GPA system of grading was introduced at secondary level for the first time.

Like the previous years, schools in urban areas, particularly those in metropolitan cities, dominated in securing GPA-5 this year.

Among the top ten GPA-5 securing schools, nine are in the capital under Dhaka Education Board, six in Chittagong sadar under Chittagong Board, seven in Comilla sadar under Comilla Board, ten in Khulna, Jessor, Kushtia, sadars under Jessor Board and six in Sylhet Board.

A highest of 564 students from Viqarunnisa Noon School secured GPA 5 followed by Ideal School and College with 527 GPA 5 receivers. Monipur High School in Mirpur succeeded getting 314 GPA-5s.

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According to the grading system introduced in 2003, the GPA 5 holders, popularly known as "A+" holders, have to obtain marks above the 80th percentile.

In Madrasah Board, 6,889 students achieved GPA 5 this year while in Technical Education Board the number was only 25. In 2005, 6,086 madrasah students obtained GPA 5 and only 20 students from vocational schools obtained the highest grade.

The same year, the number of highest GPA achievers was 17,294 while it was 9,886 in 2004.

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confined in jail custody until the investigation completes, police added.

Selim Prodhan, chairman of Japan Bangladesh Group, filed the case on May 31 accusing Mamun and two of his associates for extorting Tk 8.4 crore from him at different dates between December 8, 2001 and December 20, 2006.

The two other accused-- Rajib Sirajpu and Kawser Zaman Bappi--have been absconding.

Mamun had earlier been remanded for 50 days in different cases.

SALMAN CASE

New Market police yesterday submitted charge sheets to the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate in connection with two cheating cases filed against Salman F Rahman and his brother Ahmed Sohel Fashir Rahman.

Of them, Salman is now jail custody while his brother is still at large. The investigation officers (IOs) prayed for issuance of arrest warrant against Fashir Rahman.

The cases were filed on March 19 with New Market Police Station against Salman and his brother for cheating with two people in buying two plots from their Sun City Project.

The joint forces also recovered a shotgun, a rifle, a pistol, a Brazil-made revolver, two magazines and 297 bullets from his (Babar) Gulshan residence.

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