

Rescue operations go on after disaster



1. Army personnel continue rescue drive in Chittagong Cantonment area for the second consecutive day 2. In Cox's Bazar, people clearing houses as mud swept down on those from hills cut for a housing project of the district administration at Kolatoli 3. In Chittagong, relatives of the victims of mudslide from hills wailing for their near and dear ones 4. Army rescue operation in Chittagong continued for the second day 5. Navy's rescue drive at Shantibagh in Halishahar 6. Navy distributes relief among waterlogged people at Shantibag.

Butenis for lifting ban on indoor politics

UNB, Dhaka

US Ambassador Patricia Butenis has urged the caretaker government to lift the ban on indoor politics so that the parties can contribute to the electoral reforms.

"Longer the ban is kept in place, the more difficult it would be to enact reforms, it is as simple as that," she told reporters after a meeting with Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Matiur Rahman Nizami at Sonargaon Hotel yesterday.

Butenis said political parties are the main ingredients of election and democratic process. "I once again would ask the government to withdraw the ban in the interest of political reforms and assisting the Election Commission for electoral reforms."

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Nadim Mostafa, wife sued for cheating

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Former BNP lawmaker Nadim Mostafa and his wife Nurun Nahar Parul were yesterday sued for misappropriating Tk 10.5 lakh and issuing a false bank cheque.

Brick-kiln owner Ali Hossain in Natore lodged the case with the Court of First Class Magistrate Arif Pasha.

Accepting the case, the magistrate asked the officer-in-charge (OC) of Natore Sadar Police Station to take necessary actions in this regard.

Ali Hossain alleged that Nadim Mostafa, also a contractor, bought bricks worth Tk 12.5 lakh from his brickfield in 2004 and 2005 and paid only Tk 2lakh.

As he mounted pressure on

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Verdict in gold smuggling case against Ershad deferred again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The verdict of the gold smuggling case filed against former president and Jatiya Party (JP) Chairman HM Ershad was deferred for the sixth time yesterday.

The newly joined judge Mohamamd Abul Bashar of the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court said he would hear again arguments of the case as he knew nothing about the case. He fixed July 15 for hearing on the arguments.

Ershad along with his party leaders and activists were present in the court during the hearing.

The gold smuggling case was filed with Cantonment Police

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Low quality foreign university branches 'selling' degrees

SURANJITH DEABNATH

Due to a lack of specific rules and regulations, no action has been taken yet against 56 branches of foreign universities in the capital and in four other cities, which were declared illegal by the University Grants Commission (UGC) because of allegations of selling different degrees without imparting any quality education.

However, around 20 to 25 thousand students of those institutions, who pay around Tk 75 crore annually in tuition fees, are now very uncertain about their academic future because of the UGC declaration.

Due to a lack of specific rules, the caretaker government is not taking any stern action against those educational institutes either, UGC and education ministry sources said. Meanwhile, taking the opportunity, those allegedly masquerading educational institutes are continuing to post advertisements for attracting students, although some of them were found to have their

signboards removed while continuing to operate otherwise despite the UGC declaration.

UGC, the apex regulatory body overseeing private and public universities, published a list of 56 foreign university campuses through posting advertisements in different daily newspapers in the second week of May, where the commission claimed that the listed institutes are operating without valid documents of government permission or approval.

In the advertisement, the UGC mentioned that according to the Private University Act 1992 and Amendment Act 1998, no private university can be established or operated, or no graduation or post-graduation, diploma or certificate courses can be offered, or no degree, diploma or certificate can be issued in the country under the auspices of any foreign university without specific permissions from the government.

The advertisement signed by Acting Director of UGC M Khaled, also called upon students and their

Babar, Mamun sent to jail after remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Detained former state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar and Giasuddin Al Mamun, close friend of BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, were sent to jail yesterday on completion of their remands.

New Market police yesterday pressed charges against Awami League (AL) leader and chairman of Shinepukur Holdings Limited Salman F Rahman and his brother Ahmed Sohul Fashir Rahman in two cheating cases.

Gulshan police produced Babar before the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Quamrunnahr at 4.15pm on completion of his three-day remand in connection with an arms case.

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Tarique granted division in jail

UNB, Dhaka

Detained BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman was yesterday given division in Dhaka Central Jail.

DIG (Prison) Major Shamsul Haider told the news agency that Tarique Rahman, who had been staying in jail as an ordinary prisoner since his arrest in March, was given division after receiving the High Court order.

On June 7, the High Court upon an application ordered the jail authorities to comply with the lower court's previous order relating to the division for Tarique.

Tarique Rahman, eldest son of former prime minister Khaleda Zia, is facing a number of criminal cases.

Ex-minister Zia owns Tk 11cr properties

Wealth report placed to ACC

UNB, Dhaka

Former state minister Ziaul Haque Zia, one of the 21 corruption suspects served with notices on May 29, submitted his wealth statement to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday.

In the statement, Zia claimed that he possesses wealth worth about Tk 11 crore in addition to nearly 5.5 bigas land.

Although the deadline to submit wealth statements within seven working days expired, eight of the summoned corruption suspects, including Ziaul Haque, applied for time extension.

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Deadly fighting drives Gaza closer to civil war

Mortar shells slam into Hamas PM's home, 18 killed in fighting

AFP, Gaza City

Hamas fighters armed with guns and rocket launchers besieged two Fatah security headquarters yesterday as deadly clashes threatened to topple the government and drive Gaza closer to civil war.

Gunmen from the radical Islamist movement ambushed two seats of the Fatah loyalist national security - in Gaza City and Jabaliya provoking clashes with those holed up inside.

Security officials and witnesses at the scene reported heavy fighting but were unable to give immediate reports of any casualties.

The attack came after mortar shells slammed into prime minister Ismail Haniya's home and the seafront compound of president Mahmud Abbas in the latest bout of fighting that has killed 18 people in 24 hours.

The apparently no-holds barred conflict threatens the very foundations of a Hamas-Fatah coalition that took office less than three months ago in a bid to halt the feuding that has killed nearly 180

people since December.

Abbas's office called for an immediate ceasefire but accused leaders in Hamas of plotting a coup and leading Gaza toward civil war while his secular Fatah faction warned it could pull out of the shaky, Hamas-led government.

"All the information and all the facts point to a faction, to which political and military leaders of Hamas belong, who are plotting a coup against Palestinian legitimacy," the presidency said.

It charged that the Hamas leaders in question were "pushing the homeland towards the throes of a dreadful civil war" and issued a plea on behalf of Abbas for an immediate ceasefire and serious dialogue.

Fatah announced that the party's central committee was examining whether it should remain in government and slammed Hamas for "looking to annihilate the Palestinian Authority and create a republic of hate and death" in Gaza.

Haniya's office weighed in with a statement charging that "parties linked to enemies tried to bring down the national unity government militarily."

Defying the latest Egyptian-brokered ceasefire, Gaza plunged into renewed violence five days ago just weeks after a bout of strife left 54 people killed when tempers boiled over how to implement a flagship government security plan.

Palestinian civilians covered in their homes as shooting and explosions reverberated through the streets outside.

"Since early morning we have heard explosions and shooting. We can't go and buy any food, we can't stand in front of the windows, all our children are in one bedroom. The situation is very bad," said Adnan, a doctor in Gaza City.

A national security officer was killed in the central Gaza Strip on Tuesday after Hamas fighters encircled two camps of the Fatah-loyalist force, bringing to at least 18 the number of Palestinians killed since Monday.

And for the first time since the latest violence began, troubles spread to the occupied West Bank where Hamas official and

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7 Afghan cops killed in gunfight with US troops

Two dozens Taliban killed in air raids, attacks

AFP, Jalalabad

Seven policemen were killed in a gun battle with US soldiers after troops attacked their post in eastern Afghanistan following a "misunderstanding," government officials said Tuesday.

The US-led coalition said however its soldiers had come under fire first while trying to conduct a raid against a suspected Taliban safe house in the eastern province of Nangarhar.

The deaths come amid mounting anger among Afghans about the number of civilians killed in military operations against the Taliban, which has stepped up an al-Qaeda-backed campaign against the government and its allies.

The gunfight erupted at midnight Monday and the US troops called in air power, Afghan officials said.

"As the result of a misunderstanding, the coalition forces attacked a police post in Nangarhar

province in which seven police were martyred and another five were wounded," interior ministry spokesman Zemarai Bashary said.

"It is not clear what the coalition forces were attacking, if they confused the police post with Taliban or what," he told AFP in the capital Kabul.

The ministry sent a delegation to investigate, Bashary said.

A provincial police commander expressed anger about the deadly incident in Khogyani district, about 30km southwest of the provincial capital Jalalabad.

"They attacked us from ground and air," said provincial police official Nasir Ahmad Safi, identifying the soldiers as Americans.

"They killed seven police brutally," he said, alleging the bodies of the dead each had around 20 bullet wounds. "Unless the criminals are

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US 'war on terror' suffers yet another judicial setback

AFP, Washington

The US government's "war on terror" suffered a new legal setback Monday when judges ruled that an alleged al-Qaeda sleeper agent could not be held without charge on US soil.

The federal appeals court in the Virginia state capital Richmond, one of the country's most conservative courts, ordered the release from military detention of Qatari national Ali Saleh Kahlah al-Marri, 41.

Marri does not have to be set free. He can be tried on criminal charges in a civilian court, or be deported, the panel of three judges ruled in a split two-one decision.

"But the government cannot subject al-Marri to indefinite military detention," the majority opinion said.

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Prayer Timing		
June 13		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-50	6-55
Esha	8-15	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		