

CARTOON ISSUE
'Unrest after
apology is
politically
motivated'
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different secular political organisations yesterday expressed their concerns at the 'conspiracy' being hatched to destabilise the country following the publication of a cartoon strip in the weekly satirical magazine *Alapin* of the daily *Prothom Alo*.

Some Islamist political organisations however condemned the publication of the cartoon, demanding arrests of the editor and the publisher of the newspaper.

The secular organisations said staging demonstrations even after the editor of the daily apologised repeatedly and actions were taken by both the government and the newspaper management, underlines that the brewing unrest regarding the issue is being fuelled by political motivations.

The Communist Party of Bangladesh said the newspaper authorities admitted to their mistake and apologised unconditionally while the cartoonist was

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Eid issue of
'Saptahik 2000'
confiscated

BSS, Dhaka

The government has confiscated the Eid issue (September 21, 2007) of 'Saptahik 2000'.

The Eid issue of the weekly Bangla magazine has been confiscated as it contains an autobiographical write-up titled "Sutanati Samachar" that hurts religious sentiment of the people, an official said yesterday.

The action has been taken under section 99(Ka) of the Criminal Procedure Code-1898.

The handout said the government has prohibited marketing, sale, complete or partial re-print, publication or preservation of the Eid issue of 'Saptahik 2000'.

The government has ordered the seizure of all copies of the issue.

Get Prayer times from Wardi Menu
Iftaar Sehri
5.58 PM 4.28 AM

WARDI

Sehri, Iftar timing

Ramadan	Sep	Sehri	Iftar
9	22		5.58
10	23	4.28	5.57
11	24	4.28	5.57

Prayer Timing

September 22

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4.28	4.38
Zohr	12.45	1.15
Asr	4.30	4.45
Maghrib	5.58	6.13
Esha	7.30	8.00

Source: Islamic Foundation

'Save bio-diversity of St Martin's Island'

Environmentalists call to stop its use for commercial tourism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing deep concern over gradual destruction of the biodiversity of Saint Martin's Island, environmentalists yesterday demanded that the government take effective steps to make it a 'marine protected area' based on scientific research and stop its use for commercial tourism.

The environmentalists spoke at a seminar in the city on "Saint Martin's Island is on the verge of destruction: what is the way to save it?" organised by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolok (Bapa).

The government should consider if the entire island could be brought under conservation schemes, speakers said.

People from other areas are buying land and constructing build-

ings in the island threatening its biodiversity, they pointed out at the seminar held at Women's Voluntary Association auditorium at Dhanmondi.

"We destroy our natural resources like hills, forests and rivers in various ways without realising the consequences of destruction of bio-diversity. We must be careful that we do not destroy Saint Martin's Island in the name of eco-tourism," said Bapa President Prof Muzaffer Ahmed.

Legal and administrative steps

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Protesters remove police barricade at Shahbagh intersection in the capital yesterday in their bid to reach the office of daily *Prothom Alo* at Karwan Bazar. Story on page 1.

Heavy fighting, bomb blasts kill 82 in Afghanistan

AP, AFP, Kabul

A bomb attack yesterday against a convoy of French troops killed one soldier and injured many Afghans near the blast, while heavy fighting in southern Afghanistan killed about 75 Taliban fighters and six civilians, officials said.

The attack in western Kabul blew the windows out of a civilian bus and set at least one vehicle on fire. At least six civilians were in serious condition, and many others had lesser injuries, said Zormai Rasa, the local police chief.

Nato warplanes killed six Afghan civilians, most of them women and children, in an air strike during a battle with Taliban fighters in southern Afghanistan, a district governor told AFP Friday.

Heavy fighting in the south,

meanwhile, killed around 75 Taliban militants during the last 48 hours, the US-led coalition said. Six civilians were also killed in the attack in the southern province of Helmand but it did not say how many died.

Isaf said the civilians were killed Wednesday but the district governor said they died Thursday. Despite the confusion, the incident appeared to be same, as both said it had taken place in Gereshk district.

District governor Abdul Manaf told AFP Taliban fighters had been sheltering among villagers, who were being used as "human shields."

"The Nato forces called for air support. At this time the Taliban had fled the area and due to aerial bombing six civilians, mostly

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Rab to crack down on extortionists on the highways

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) will crack down on illegal toll collectors on the highways during Ramadan and upcoming Eid.

The intelligence wing members of the elite force have already started work to identify the points on highways where extortionists used to collect tolls from goods carrying truck and covered van, Rab officials said on Thursday.

They will also set up checkpoints at the entry and exit points of the city and will check vehicles to ensure security. Moreover, Rab members will patrol either on motorbike or on foot at different city places, which usually witness traffic jam, to stop snatching.

On the eve of Eid, the uniformed and intelligence wing members of the elite force will be deployed at bus and railway stations, launch terminals and the adjacent areas to arrest extortionists and muggers. They will also launch a clampdown on black marketeers at different ticket counters to ensure that the

AMMO HAUL
Police hunt on to capture the culprits

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police are conducting drives at Bakukura village and in the forests of Jhenaiagati frontier upazila of Sherpur district, in a bid to capture the people involved with the stockpiling of huge amount of ammunition that Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) recovered over the past few days.

Officer-in-charge (OC) of Jhenaiagati Police Station Shahjahan Kabir told The Daily Star that they are trying their best to find clues about people behind the scenes.

A police team led by investigation officer (IO) of the case Sub-inspector Akkas Ali is staying at the village to verify the statements of Russell, the OC added.

During two separate drives recently, a squad of BDR recovered 39,100 bullets, including 29,100 pistol bullets and 10,000 rifle bullets, and three magazines of sub-machine gun (SMG) at Bakukura and at the forest of Gazni in Jhenaiagati.

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4 JMB men arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) arrested four suspected members of Banned Islamist outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) at Balarhat of Phulbari upazila in Kurigram yesterday as they were trying to cross the border into India.

A BDR patrol team arrested them at Balarhat village around 11:00am yesterday.

The arrestees are Zillur Rahman, 20, Lal Miah, 22, Saidul Islam, 18, and Alamgir, 22. They are allegedly madrasa students and residents of Ichhamoti village of Ulipur upazila in Kurigram.

They were handed over to Phulbari police. Phulbari police arrested them under section 54 and sent them to Kurigram jail.

Depression over Bay

UNB, Dhaka

The well marked low over west central Bay and adjoining northwest Bay intensified into a depression.

It was centred about 715-km southwest of Chittagong port, 660-km southwest of Cox's Bazar port and 585-km south-southwest of Mongla port at 9:00am yesterday, a Met Office bulletin said.

It is likely to intensify further and move in a northwesterly direction. Squally weather may affect the maritime ports, the bulletin said.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to hoist local cautionary signal number three.

All fishing boats and trawlers over the north Bay and deep sea have been advised to come close to the coast and proceed with caution until further notice.



The Lifebuoy Friendship Hospital, a floating hospital, is anchored near a char in the Jamuna in Gaibandha to serve poor char dwellers with healthcare.

Helping fight deluge, diseases on chars

PINAKI ROY,
back from Gaibandha char areas

Yunus Ali, who moved to Shidhar char in the Jamuna from flood-affected Kachir char just a month ago, now spends his days in safety listening to the radio seated at the shop of Motiur Rahman.

Yunus came here along with his nine-member family when erosion of the Jamuna bank

reached his home yard. He was only able to save the bamboo structure and corrugated tin of his house before setting out for a new pasture.

"I talked to one of my relatives living here and came here since most chars in the region were inundated at that time. This place is good—floodwater could not reach this part of Shidhar char as dwellers had constructed earth plinths," he said.

Friendship is working with the people of different chars in the Jamuna who do not have any stable economic base and live in khas land. Working mainly in health, education and income-generating programmes, Friendship has already become very popular among the char people.

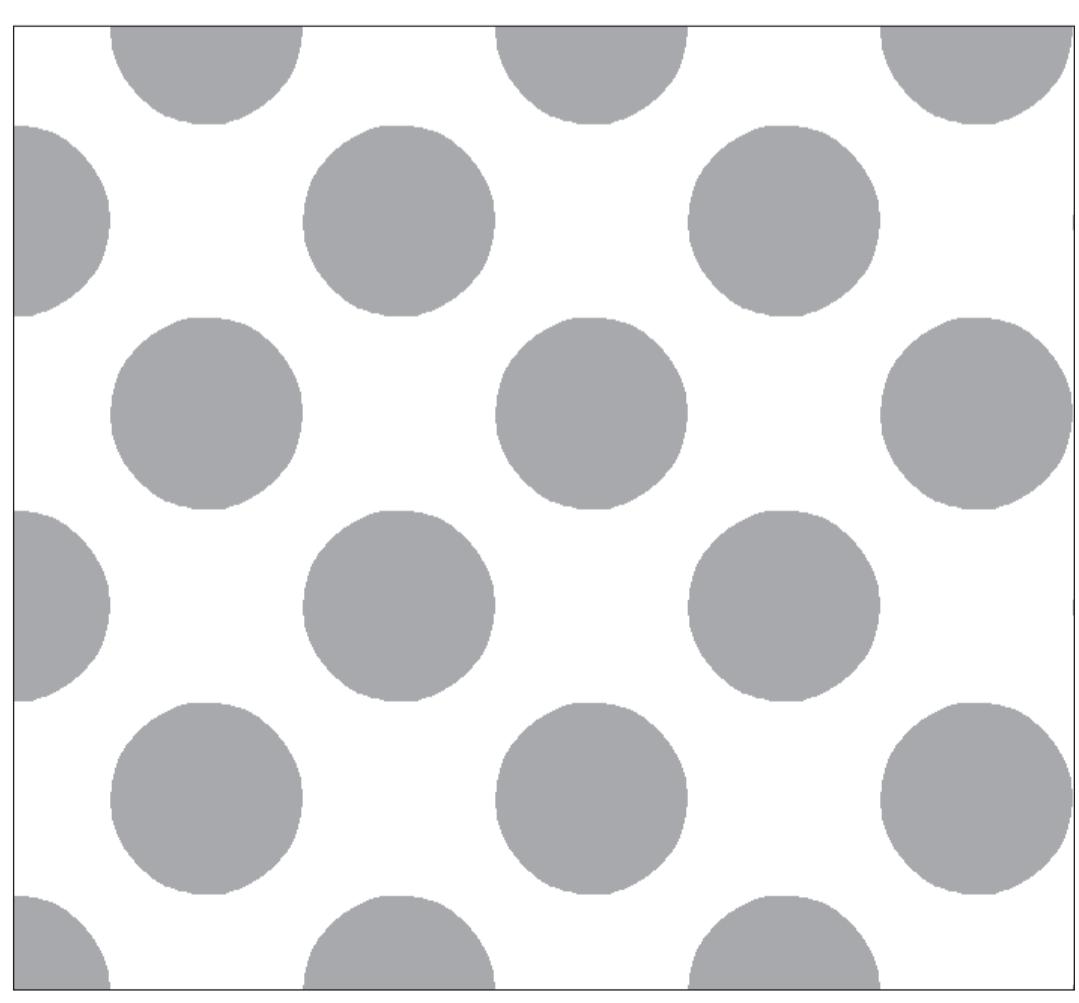
Starting with a floating hospital, Friendship first went to a Jamuna char in 2001. Foreign and local physicians and surgeons treated 2,230 people that year. Up to September this year, as many as 2,65,847 people have received treatment at Friendship's small but well-equipped floating hospital.

"Poor people from far away come at the Lifebuoy-Friendship floating hospital because of its

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People of a char in the Jamuna in Gaibandha build homes on an oval-shaped earth-filled plinth to protect the houses from floodwater.



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