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HR Watch slams mass arrests

AFP, *Dhaka*

Human Rights Watch yesterday called for Bangladesh's emergency government to charge or release thousands of people it has detained in the past eight days.

At least 10,000 people -- many of whom have ties to the country's two main political parties -- have been arrested since May 28.

Police say the operation is expected to last one month and is aimed at improving security ahead of the country's scheduled return to democracy with elections due by the end of the year.

The main parties -- the Awami League and BNP -- say the arrests are part of a political crackdown by the emergency government, which has already detained both parties' leaders.

New York-based Human Rights Watch described the arrests as

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UN summit vows to halve hunger, boost food output

AFP, *Rome*

A UN summit vowed Thursday to halve global hunger by 2015 and take "urgent" action over the global food crisis, but only after going into overtime at a fractious summit in Rome.

In a final declaration at the gathering -- which saw some 6.5 billion dollars (4.1 bln euros) pledged, but which exposed strains notably over biofuels -- world leaders also agreed to boost food production in poor countries.

"We are convinced that the international community needs to take urgent and coordinated action to combat the negative impacts of soaring prices on the world's most vulnerable countries and populations," it said.

The summit was an "important first step" but not sufficient to tackle the global food crisis, British charity Oxfam said.

Oxfam Chief Executive Barbara Stocking said in a statement that while leaders of the world's richest countries had "acknowledged the importance of aid to agriculture", the global food crisis needed "a wide-ranging plan to resolve it."

"As the world's most powerful countries, they must provide more money to deal with the immediate impact of the current crisis but also tackle some of the contributing causes by ending compulsory biofuels targets and providing more long term aid for agriculture," she said.

"The current crisis illustrates starkly that what we need is not business as usual but deep reform of the international trading system," she said.

The declaration was criticised even before it was formally agreed, with Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini calling it "disappointing."

The text was "unfortunately very watered down with respect to the initial ambitions," he said, cited by the ANSA news agency.

Reaffirming a UN goal despite the current crisis -- in which soaring prices have sparked famine and food riots around the world -- the summit vowed to cut "by half the number of undernourished people by no later than 2015."

"There is ... an urgent need to help developing countries and countries in transition expand agriculture and food production and to increase investment (from) both public and private sources," the statement added.

The declaration was finalised only after wrangling went down to the wire at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) headquarters in Rome, with biofuels and trade barriers among the most contentious points.

Biofuel development is promoted notably in Brazil and the

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PHOTO: STAR

Pakistan cricket team arrives at the VIP terminal of Zia International Airport in the capital yesterday to play in a three-nation ODI tournament starting tomorrow.

13 find home in nature reserve

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Moulvibazar*

Thirteen wild animals and birds, including four rare monkeys, were released into the Lawachhara Reserve Forest in Moulvibazar's Kamalganj upazila on World Environment Day Thursday.

The wild critters had been caught by locals in last two months as they strayed into households on the jungle's outskirts in search of food.

Sitesh Ranjan Dev, an amateur local environmentalist, collected the animals and birds -- four slowloris, three civets, one fishing cat, one kak dhanesh (Asian hornbill), two red jungle fowls, one python and one monkey -- from the locals.

He treated them for injuries

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The caged monkey and the fishing cat caught by locals in the last two months were released in Lawachhara Reserve Forest in Moulvibazar. The animals reportedly left the forest due to scarcity of food.

Pak cricketers arrive

SPORTS REPORTER

Shoaib Malik-led Pakistan became the first team arrived in the capital yesterday to play the three-nation Kitply Cup.

Pakistan came here without two frontline bowlers in Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammed Asif, who is in detention in Dubai for allegedly carrying contraband substances.

The weeklong day-night tournament will kick off with the match between hosts Bangladesh and Pakistan at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur tomorrow and on the same day, India arrive here.

After arriving late on Friday morning, the Pakistan side practised in the afternoon in Mirpur where captain Shoaib Malik attended an official press conference prior to warm-up in the Mirpur venue. They found wet outfield and a covered pitch following a spell of rain, which is the biggest threat for the tournament.

Allrounder Shahid Afridi talked

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Tigers bomb Lankan buses: 23 killed

AFP, *Colombo*

At least 23 people were killed and 67 wounded in Sri Lanka Friday in two Tamil Tiger bomb attacks on public buses packed with civilians, officials said.

A crowded state-run bus travelling just south of Colombo was peppered with red-hot shrapnel from a powerful fragmentation mine placed on the roadside.

"Twenty-one people have been killed, eight of them are women," police spokesman Ranjith Gunasekera told AFP. At least 47 people were injured and admitted to the nearby hospitals.

Hours later, the rebels set off a bomb inside a bus in the central district of Kandy, killing two people and wounding 20. Police said they were holding a suspect in connection with the attack.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for both "cowardly attacks."

Survivors of the morning explosion said the bus was knocked sideways by the force of the explosion.

"I was standing in the middle of the bus when there was a loud noise and the whole bus toppled to the side," said 21-year-old office worker Shanika Priyadharshani while being bandaged up in hospital.

"I blacked out for a while. There was black smoke, people were dead around me. I shouted for help and someone pulled me out," she told AFP.

The defence ministry immediately sealed off the area, although no arrests have been reported. Police did, however, discover and diffuse another Claymore-type mine near the scene of the blast.

Sri Lanka's President Mahinda

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Bogra AL man found dead 3 hours after abduction

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Bogra*

A local leader of Awami League (AL) was found dead three hours after his abduction at Makor Khola village under Sherpur upazila on Thursday night.

Locals said a gang of miscreants picked up Abdul Majid, 35, joint secretary of Mirzapur Union AL, at gunpoint from Arishal area while he was returning home from Mirzapur Bazar in a rickshaw at around 8:00pm.

The rickshawpuller, Mokhles, said a gang of six tied Majid's legs and hands with ropes and took him to an area nearby.

Majid's body was found in a cropland at around 11:00 pm. On information, police rushed to the spot and recovered the body.

A murder case was filed with Sherpur Police Station. Sub-Inspector Ilias Ali, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, suspects the miscreants might have strangled Majid.

2 robbers beaten to death in Faridpur

UNB, *Faridpur*

Two robbers were beaten to death by the villagers at Naya Kanti village under Bhanga upazila of the district early yesterday.

Police and witnesses said a gang of about 16 robbers stormed into the house of Hatem Matabbar at the village at around 2:00am and looted Tk 50,000 in cash and gold ornaments.

The gang stabbed Hatem as he refused to help them enter the nearby houses of his brothers.

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Prayer Timing

June 7

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-45	6-50
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

China keen to strengthen ties with S Asian states

REZAUL KARIM, *back from China*

China is keen to develop economic and regional cooperation with the Saarc member countries on the basis of five principles of peaceful coexistence and continue support for economic and social development of South Asian countries.

"China and South Asia are linked by mountains and rivers with a time-honoured history of friendly exchanges. We are eager to build an amicable, tranquil and prosperous neighbourhood and want to see a peaceful, stable and prosperous South Asia," said Chinese Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs He Yafei.

Talking to a reporters' delegation from Saarc countries recently, he said China is also ready to continuously deepen friendly cooperative relations of long-term stability and orientation towards the future with all South Asian countries based on the spirit of equality, mutual trust and win-win cooperation.

He said the South Asian countries are a very important part of the international system. China will continue to offer support and assistance with no political strings attached within its ability for economic and social development of these countries and share development experience with them for common development, Yafei added.

Twenty-one journalists of print and electronic media from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka visited different places in China, including the Olympic venues in Beijing and Shanghai, at the invitation of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs during May 19-31.

The delegation travelled to Beijing, Shenzhen, Shanghai and Kunming and had a series of interactions with high government officials, Olympic officials, leading businessmen, economists and common people.

On Saarc-China relations, Yafei noted that China participated in the last Saarc summit as an observer and proposed projects, including training of diplomats, poverty alleviation and promoting trade with South Asian countries, which were appreciated by the Saarc member states.

Yafei said that the volume of trade with the Saarc countries reached $50 billion, registering a sharp increase by 45 percent. "We are looking for people-to-people

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Newsmen concerned at media control

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sangbadik-Sramik-Karmachari Oikya Parishad, an organisation of journalists and media employees, yesterday expressed grave concern over the 'chaotic and fearful state' stemming from the emergency rules in the country's media sector.

Media controls in recent times have broken all previous records, forcing journalists to perform their duties amid risks to uphold their professional dignity, the parishad leaders said in a press release following a meeting at the National Press Club.

Stating that although freedom of expression as guaranteed in our constitution is infringed by several other provisions, it said the imposition of the state of emergency has denied that very right.

The situation is so grave that

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HC MAKES INSTALLATION MANDATORY IN MARCH

Motor vehicle owners yet to be notified of speed limiters

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The government is yet to notify the motor vehicle owners about the installation of speed limiters in their vehicles, which has been made mandatory by the High Court (HC) in March.

In a judgment dated March 10, the HC directed the authorities concerned to take steps to install "speed governor seals" in all modes of public by March 10, 2009 to control speed and reduce road accidents in the country.

The court also directed the government to publish a notification in newspapers asking all motor vehicle owners to install the speed governor seal on their vehicles and saying they would be punished for failure.

Advocate Manzill Murshed, an intervener in the hearing of a suo moto rule, told The Daily Star yesterday that although about three months have passed since the judgment, the authorities have not yet published any notification asking vehicle owners to install speed limiters in their vehicles.

In its judgment, the HC said selling and purchasing of motor vehicles without speed limiters would be declared illegal after March 10, 2009.

If any motor vehicle owner fails to install the speed limiter in their vehicles by that time, they will be fined Tk 200 for each day since expiry of the deadline and Tk 400 for each day since the date of first fine.

As per the eighth schedule of the Motor Vehicle Ordinance 1983, the maximum speed for light vehicles like private cars is set at 113km per hour (kmph), passenger vehicles like buses and minibuses at 56kmph, heavy vehicles like lorries at 40kmph and fire brigade vehicles at 48kmph.

Advocate Manzill said the traffic police would monitor the speed of vehicles.

A minibus knocked down Sadia Afrin Suchi, a first year student of

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PHOTO: STAR

This recent photo shows the excavated portion of a doorway to a room found 3-4 metres under the 1500-year-old Vasu Bihar in Bogra.

Intact brick wall beneath Vasu Bihar dug out

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU, *from Bogra*

In a major breakthrough, archaeologists dug out an intact brick wall built on a concrete floor beneath the 1500-year-old Vasu Bihar in Bogra that suggests there existed archaeological excellence even before the days of the monastery.

The new findings along with some other artefacts date back to the pre-Pal era, said Nahid Sultana, leader of a government archaeological excavation team.

"We think a university campus lie buried there. Maybe the Pala dynasty built the Vasu Bihar on the structure knowingly or unknowingly," she told The Daily Star yesterday.

However, the team had to wrap up the excavation due to fund constraints in January putting more such discoveries into uncertainty.

The team, which began its dig

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The Daily Star Coming out tomorrow - Star Campus
Linking Young Minds Together
The Daily Star offers campus based weekly magazine 'Star Campus' - the ultimate magazine for the young generation - a common platform for the college and university students and academicians - to share their ideas, thoughts, dreams, opinions and views.
Star Campus is an endeavour to bring into the center stage the visionary aspects of our college and university students, alongside their lifestyle, cultural trends and their multidimensional talents.
Star Campus is a magazine broadly based on campus life! It contains articles, academic news, achievements, travelogues, interviews, book reviews, quiz, milestones, academic tips, profiles of educational institutes, cultural and extra-curricular activities in campus, jokes, cartoons, photographs and much more. This is a magazine Of the Students, By the Students and For the Students.
Star Campus helps link young minds together.

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