

LIKE LONDON, BANGLADESH CAN BE BUILT ON GRADE 500 STEEL

BSRM Xtreme
the next generation steel

Offers available at
TRANSCOM DIGITAL
Your Trusted Electronics Retailer

Swine flu could return with a vengeance

Warns WHO; Mexico claims containing the epidemic

AFP, Mexico City

The World Health Organisation chief warned yesterday that swine flu could return with a vengeance despite Mexico's President Felipe Calderon insisting his country has contained the epidemic.

WHO chief Margaret Chan said in a newspaper interview that a second wave of the virus "would be the biggest of all outbreaks the world has faced in the 21st century", puncturing optimism emanating from the outbreak's epicentre.

Diplomatic damage from the epidemic also reverberated with China denying it had discriminated against Mexican nationals after dozens were

placed under quarantine over the weekend despite showing no signs of the flu.

Twenty-five people have died from swine flu, according to the WHO which estimates there are nearly 900 cases in 20 countries. All but one of the deaths has been in Mexico.

Calderon said Mexico had managed "to contain the epidemic" and was now "in a position to overcome" the A(H1N1) virus.

Mexico's Health Minister Jose Angel Cordova said the epidemic peaked between April 23 and 28 and was "in its phase of decline".

But Chan said the end of the flu season in the northern hemisphere meant that

while any initial outbreak could be milder, a second wave could be more lethal, reflecting a pattern seen with the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic that killed up to 50 million people. "We hope the virus fizzles out, because if it doesn't we are heading for a big outbreak," Chan told the Financial Times, adding it could re-emerge in the months ahead "with a vengeance".

"I'm not predicting the pandemic will blow up, but if I miss it and we don't prepare, I fail. I'd rather over-prepare than not prepare."

The UN agency last week raised its alert level to five, one a scale of one to six.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

BCL men go for 'change'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Some leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) have set up a sculpture of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Shahnewaz Hostel of Dhaka University (DU) by removing a 31-year old sculpture made by a freedom fighter.

Mani Mandal, a freelance artist, made the now removed sculpture of a former female student of DU's fine arts faculty 'Shelly' in 1977 with his own fund.

Mandal also a former student of the fine arts faculty said he found his creation removed to ground and Bangabandhu's sculpture on its spot on May 1 when he went to visit the hostel.

"I asked some senior students and a house tutor of the hostel about the incident. The house tutor told me that he was not aware of the removal of my creation," Mandal who took part in the liberation war under sector nine told The Daily Star yesterday.

"I am a great fan of Bangabandhu and joined the liberation war being inspired by his voice. Of course there can be a sculpture of Bangabandhu on the hostel premise. But why it replaces my creation?" artist Mandal asked.

Sources said BCL activists Navo and Rano removed the sculpture in the last week of April as per direction of BCL

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5



Removing 31-year old sculpture 'Shelly', made by a freedom fighter, a group of leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League recently put the statue of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Shahnewaz Hostel of Dhaka University.

PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Family of Bangladeshi victim OK

Says Mexican minister

AFP, Mexico City

Mexican Health Minister Jose Angel Cordova said Sunday he had visited the family of a Bangladeshi man who was one of Mexico's 19 swine flu fatalities and found them all to be free from infection.

Cordova told a news conference that the man lived with 10 relatives and friends at the same address in the capital Mexico City.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

JESSORE UDICHI BLASTS Fresh probe yet to start; CID awaits ministry step

SHARIFUL ISLAM

An official move to reinvestigate the deadly attack on an Udichi programme in Jessore is yet to be made, although detained militant linchpin Mufti Abdul Hannan admitted Harkatul Jihad al Islami's (Huji) involvement in it.

Officials in Criminal Investigation Department (CID) say they have written to the law ministry a couple of days ago seeking steps to obtain a court order for fresh investigation.

Ten people were killed and over 100 injured in that grisly attack on March 6, 1999.

"We're already unofficially carrying out

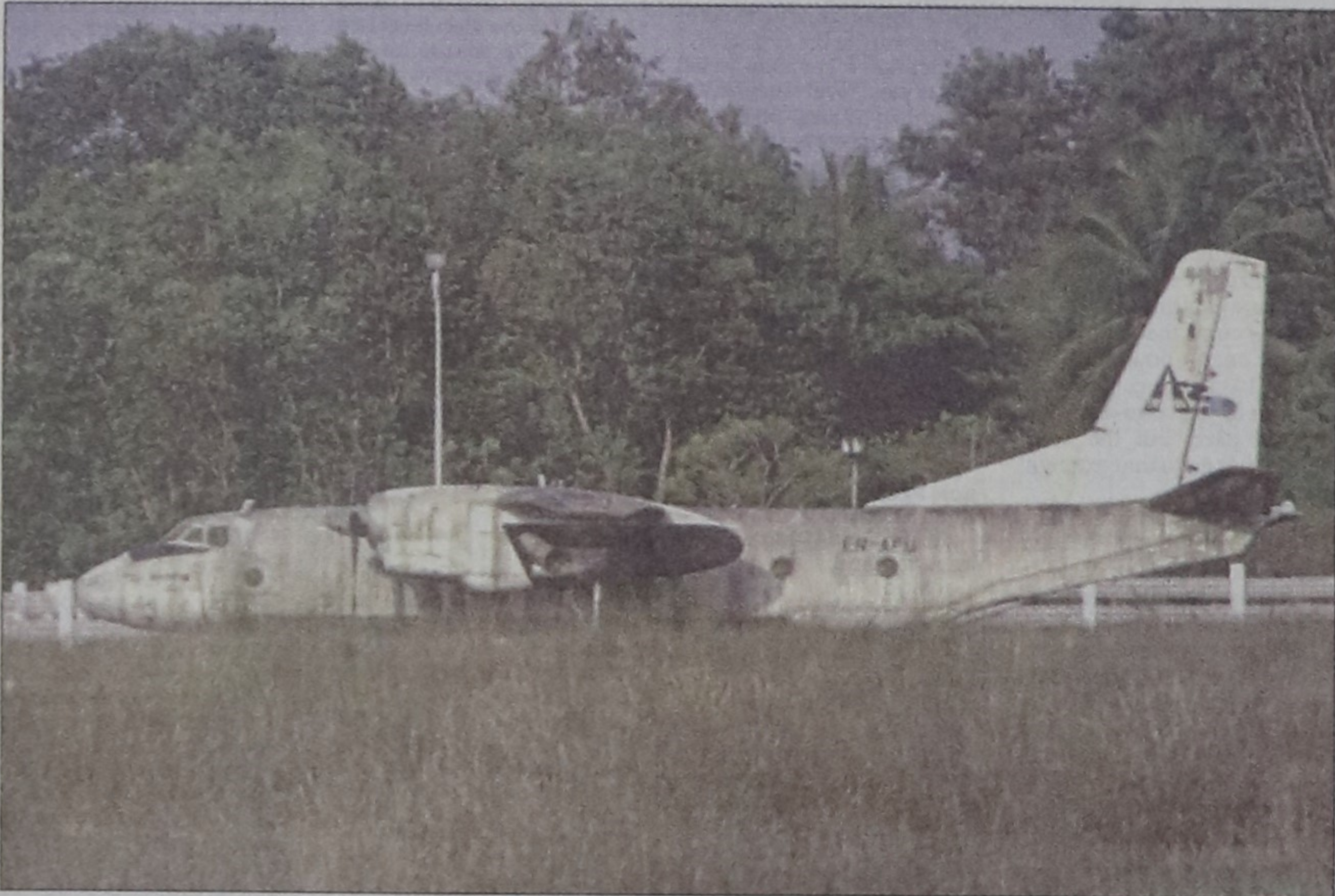
investigation into the mayhem and waiting for the court permission," says a top CID official asking not to be identified.

CID ASP in Jessore Abdul Quyyum Sikder told The Daily Star yesterday they have started collecting witnesses' accounts and already shown Hannan arrested in the case.

The CID sources add they need court permission for fresh investigation as the Jessore Special Court acquitted all the accused in the two cases on June 28, 2006.

Huji operations commander Mufti Hannan in his confessional statement also revealed he

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



A Russia-made cargo plane has been left like this at Cox's Bazar airport for the last four years.

COX'S BAZAR AIRPORT Two foreign aircraft lying abandoned

Hired for shrimp fry transport in 2004-05, Ukraine-based owners didn't respond to notice

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Cox's Bazar Airport authorities are facing problem, as two Russian-made cargo aircraft have been lying inoperative in the airport for long.

Sources said normal activities of the airport are being hampered as the planes are lying in the apron of the airport. The aircraft cannot be auctioned either for certain complexities.

The two planes have lost working capacity due to lying abandoned for long. The airport authorities also cannot remove the planes in the face of mysterious silence on the part of their owners.

Sources concerned said the two Russian-made cargo aircraft were brought to Cox's Bazar in June 2004 and June 2005 mainly to transport shrimp fries. Two Bangladeshi firms--

Aero Technology (ATL) and Super Aero--hired the two cargo aircraft from two firms of Ukraine.

From the beginning one plane was used for carrying shrimp fries. But the plane did not fly from 2005 after four technicians, including its pilot, took wine at a hotel in the district town and died of intoxication.

However, another aircraft could not be put on service due to lack of necessary permission and papers.

At present one plane is lying in the apron of the airport while another in a nearby vacant space.

Manager of the Airport Mahmud Akhter Hossain confirmed it and told The Daily Star though the foreign owners of the two planes

SEE PAGE 2 COL 8

6 robbers held with 7 firearms

CU CORRESPONDENT

Six robbers were arrested with seven firearms and 22 rounds of bullet from Dohazari under Chandanish upazila in Chittagong yesterday.

The arrestees were identified as Khalek, 19, Minnat Ali, 24, Nazrul, 28, Alamgir, 22, Shahabuddin, 22, and Shahadat, 30.

Acting on a tip off, a squad from Chandanish Police Station raided a Chittagong-bound passengers' bus from Cox's Bazar at Dohazari at around 5:00am and arrested them.

Police also recovered three light guns (LGs), four locally-made rifles, 22 rounds of bullets and two lethal weapons from their possession.

Nur Mohammad, officer-in-charge of Chandanish Police Station, said the robbers were fleeing by bus after committing robbery at Bar Ghona under Satkania upazila.

Pak peace deal under fire amid attacks

Seven militants, one soldier killed in clashes

AP, Islamabad

Clashes in a northwestern region covered by an increasingly fragile peace pact killed seven militants and one soldier yesterday, authorities said, adding to strains on an agreement seen in the West as a capitulation to extremists.

Washington has said it wants Pakistan to fight the militants, not talk to them, and is unlikely to mourn the three-month-old deal in the Malakand region if it breaks down. Still, many in the staunchly Islamic region have welcomed the pause in hostilities even though it did not lead to the eviction of the Taliban.

The deal will feature in talks between Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari and President Barack Obama later this week in Washington where Zardari is also expected to ask for more money to help his country's battered economy and under-equipped security forces.

Under the deal, the government agreed to impose Islamic law in the districts that make up Malakand in hopes that the militants would lay down their arms. But the Taliban in Swat, the movement's stronghold, did not lay down their weapons and were emboldened, soon entering

the adjacent Buner district to impose their harsh brand of Islam.

The proximity of Buner to the capital of Islamabad raised alarms domestically and abroad. Pakistan's military went on the offensive over the past week to drive the Taliban out. On Monday, security forces killed seven insurgents in an attack on a hide-out there, the military said in a statement, bringing to almost 90 the number of insurgents slain since the operations began. Thousands of civilians have fled the region.

The military have so far not extended their campaign into Swat, saying the deal still held there.

But in violence in the former tourist region Monday, militants killed one soldier and injured two others in an attack on a convoy, the statement said.

Taliban spokesman Muslim Khan claimed responsibility, saying the attack was in response to the alleged strengthening of military positions in the region in violation of the peace deal.

"Why do you think we should remain silent if they come heavy on us?... We will attack them too," he told The Associated Press.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Delwar hints at demand for mid-term polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday said demand for mid term elections might be raised if the present situation continues.

"We will seriously think about snap polls if the government keeps shifting blame on our shoulder for its failure to run the country," he said while talking to newsmen after offering fatiha at late President Ziaur Rahman's grave on the occasion of 2nd founding anniversary of 1980s Student Leaders Forum, an organisation of former Chhatra Dal leaders.

The government could not start any task to fulfil its electoral pledges to deal with the crises like power, water and gas shortage, he said, adding that government is showing its failure in every sector.

Replying a query, Delwar said, "This (mid term election) has not yet been discussed in our party forum but if the government keeps on shifting its failures on BNP's shoulder, then we'll consider it seriously."

Earlier on Saturday BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at a rally at Paltan asked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to quit before time runs out if her government cannot resolve electricity, water and gas crises.

Delwar also reiterated Khaleda Zia's allegation regarding militancy in what she said there was no militant in the country as

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Bangladesh reveal T20 WC squad

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Monday announced a 15-member squad for the ICC World Twenty20 with young batting prospects Shamsur Rahman and Mohammad Mithun earning call-ups for the first time.

Besides, left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak made a comeback to the national team after he was banned for suspect action. Razzak was suspended in November last year for a suspect bowling action, but was subsequently cleared by the International Cricket Council.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Prayer Timing		
May 5		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-31	6-35
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Kuet shut after students clash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (Kuet) has been announced closed till May 30 following severe clashes between two groups of students on the campus yesterday.

Students of all five residential halls of the university, were asked to vacate their dormitories by 8:00pm.

The clashes that originated from a cultural function on Sunday night have left 25 people--19 students, three journalists and three police constables--injured.

Two of the injured students, yet unidentified, were admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Corrigendum

In the first line of the second para of the advertisement titled 'Congratulations' courtesy - Unimed Limited, The Spondon Limited, Orient Export Import Co. Limited, printed on page 16 (back page) of this daily on April 30, the starting alphabet 's' was inadvertently dropped from the word "successfully" due to technical error. The inconvenience thus created is regretted.