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ANTI-ENCROACHMENT DRIVE 4 big structures on Shitalakhya knocked down

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On the eighth day of the ongoing eviction drive against encroachers, portions of four big structures on the Shitalakhya at Narayanganj were pulled down yesterday.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and Narayanganj district administration jointly carried out the drive.

Meanwhile, BIWTA and Dhaka district administration will launch a similar drive against river grabbers in the river Turag at Amin Bazar in Dhaka this morning.

On-duty Executive Magistrate Abul Kashem of Narayanganj said, "We resumed the drive with demolition of four large-sized structures simultaneously."

The officials on Tuesday had to make fresh marking on a six-storey Chand Flour Mills, as the earlier marking to denote encroachment was altered to evade demolition.

Abdul Matin, chairman of Alirek Union Parishad and owner of Chand Flour Mills earlier sought two days from authorities to pull down the structure himself.

The time ended yesterday and now the authorities will serve a fresh notice upon the mill owner, Executive Magistrate Abdul Hai said.

Another six-storey residential building owned by Khair Uddin Mollah, also the owner of Mollah Salt, was illegally constructed on the river.



PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6 A section of the Bikrampur Salt Factory in Narayanganj that encroached upon the Shitalakhya is torn down during BIWTA's eviction drive yesterday.

Take strong steps to get due share

JS body asks ministry
about water of
common rivers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary standing committee on public undertakings yesterday asked the water resources ministry to take firm steps so that Bangladesh gets its fair share of water from rivers that flow into the country through India and Myanmar.

The committee also expressed its dissatisfaction over "irregularities and inconsistencies" in the accounts of expenditure of Water Development Board.

The committee directed the Water Development Board to submit its expenditure reports of the last four years after having its expenditure audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office.

"We asked them to come up with the reports of the last four years. They had submitted expenditure report of one year. We rejected the report as

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Govt asked to review money whitening provision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should review some provisions in the proposed budget, including the issue of whitening money that would discourage the sincere taxpayers as well as weaken the tax policy, speakers told a roundtable yesterday.

They suggested that the tax for legalising undisclosed money should be increased up to 25 percent and the given three-years' opportunity for that should be reduced.

Shushashoner Jonno Pracharavijan (Supro) organised the discussion titled 'Budget review 2009-10: agriculture, food autarky and

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Outsiders 'instigating' unrest at Barapukuria

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinaipur

A cloud of uncertainty is gathering over the Tk 1,600 crore Barapukuria coalmine as increasing interference by groups outside the mine is triggering unrest among workers, officials claim.

They said several stints of workers' strike and violent protests to realise irrational demands have already inflicted a loss of Tk 10 crore on the mine during 2008-2009 fiscal year.

According to official sources, the coal extraction cost of the mine increased about 30 percent as miners instigated by outsiders realised their demands through several protests. Those demands include doubling and tripling the daily wages.

The costly coal project of Petrobangla at Parbatipur upazila of Dinaipur ushers in hope for the nation in the energy sector as domestic gas production is gradually diminishing which eventually might hamper power generation.

"But if such political interferences and external disturbances are not stopped immediately then the mine will be destroyed," said a high official of Barapukuria Coal Mine Company Ltd (BCMCL).

The BCMCL sources identify three factors that are hindering the congenial atmosphere of the BCMCL area. These are: influence of external pressure groups, the Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA) and the Underground Bangladeshi Miners Association.

Sources said coal extraction depends entirely on miners but now the miners take all steps under the influence of Nuruzzaman, a local leader of a group. Nuruzzaman played a key role in the 2006 Phulbari unrest.

They alleged that Nuruzzaman is using Bangladeshi miners to gain popularity. He is now planning to run for mayor in Phulbari this year.

On the surface it seems the protests are staged by the mine's CBA led by Abul Kashem.

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None will be spared if involved in wrongdoing Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"None will be spared... everyone will be held accountable for their wrongdoings," said Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday.

She said anybody including law enforcers and her party activists found guilty of crimes would face trial.

The minister made the remark when asked to comment on the murder case filed against 10 Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel in connection with the killings of

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NAT'L ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

No meeting in more than a decade

RASHIDUL HASAN

The national environment committee headed by the prime minister to deal with environment issues did not hold a single meeting in more than a decade, a parliamentary sub-committee disclosed yesterday, and urged the national committee to sit immediately.

Although environmental disasters occurred repeatedly, the highest level body formed to oversee environmental issues and give necessary directives did not sit in the last 11 years, said Saber Hossain Chowdhury, chief of House sub-committee, while briefing journalists at the media centre of parliament.

The national committee comprised of ministers for industries, environment and other high-ups held its last meeting in between 1997 and 1998.

The House body at its first meeting yesterday held Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) and different industries responsible for pollution of rivers.

It asked high officials of the DCC and Wasa, and also the chairman of Rajuk to be present at its next meeting on June 24 to discuss how to tackle river pollution.

The sub-committee also asked owners of industries located in the city and its adjacent areas to attend the meeting as industrial waste greatly pollutes rivers.

Saber said 10-11 lakh tonnes of waste is generated in the capital every day, but Wasa is able to treat only 10 percent of the waste and the rest is dumped into rivers severely polluting them.

The DCC also has very limited capacity to treat over five lakh tonnes of solid waste

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Group leader Musa Ibrahim, a sub-editor of The Daily Star, and Tawhid Hossain hold the Bangladesh flag along with other climbers at the peak of Annapurna IV, which they conquered without supplementary oxygen.

PHOTO: STAR

Bangladeshis conquer Mt Annapurna IV

MUSA IBRAHIM,
from Chame, Nepal

It was 11:54am Nepalese time on June 14. Two Bangladesh mountaineers achieved a feat many compatriots dreamt of. Musa Ibrahim and Tawhid Hossain conquered the Mt Annapurna IV, a Himalayan peak at the height of 24,682ft, as first Bangladeshis without supplementary oxygen after tremendous hardship.

They were accompanied by Nepalese climber Sarin Prakash Pradhan. All three are members of the North Alpine Club Bangladesh (NACB).

There was shivering cold with 2-3 degrees Celsius, mighty wind, continuous

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

Use solar power in educational instts, mosques

Suggests PM for easing pressure
on national power grid

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister (PM) Sheikh Hasina yesterday suggested introducing solar-panel system in the educational institutions and mosques in the cities to reduce pressure on the national power grid.

She stressed the need for expanding the use of electricity from the alternative source to cities while talking to the representatives of various banks and institutions who came to her office to donate to the PM's relief fund for the victims of cyclone Aila.

The PM noted that natural calamities are increasing in Bangladesh because of global warming and blamed on excessive emission of greenhouse gases mainly in the developed countries.

About the government's relief and rehabilitation programmes, Hasina said just after getting the forecast of cyclone Aila she had ordered the ministries and departments concerned and the MPs to stand by the people with all types of necessary supports.

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Akhtar Hamid freed on bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,
Rajshahi

Former deputy speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiki was yesterday released on bail from Naogaon jail in connection with a sedition case.

The Court of District and Sessions Judge M Habibur Rahman granted him bail in the sedition case early in the day.

A crowd of party-men and relatives at the jail gate greeted BNP bigwig Hamid with flowers when he was released

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OnlinePoll

Law minister has said if the Election Commission could function independently and actively, there would be no need for caretaker government. Do you agree with him?

Yes (46.8%)
No (51.6%)
No Comments (1.6%)

Total votes: 740

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think EC's decision to send letter to Parliament Secretariat, asking it to scrap the membership of BNP MP SQ Chowdhury for suppressing his educational information to the commission was right?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing

	June 18	
	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

Troops sent to tackle violence in West Bengal

6 CPI-M workers killed
AFP, Kolkata

India deployed troops to West Bengal yesterday to tackle an upsurge in Maoist violence after days of clashes between tribal villagers and police.

India's home minister said more than 1,100 central forces had been sent to the eastern state over the last few days, with more on standby to quell attacks against the state's ruling Communists, six of whose workers have been

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POST-POLL UNREST IN IRAN Opposition protests despite crackdown

AFP, Tehran

Iran's opposition stepped up its challenge to the Islamic regime yesterday holding another rally even as the authorities intensified a crackdown on the media to try to contain the biggest crisis since the 1979 revolution.

Tens of thousands of supporters of defeated presidential candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi took part in what was billed as a "silent" protest rally, marching through central Tehran, witnesses said.

Wearing green wrist- and head-bands in the colour of Mousavi's campaign, the demonstrators carried placards accusing re-elected President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of having

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Wreckage of BAF aircraft recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

After two days' effort till yesterday afternoon, Bangladesh Navy divers recovered three parts of the training aircraft of Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) that crashed in Karnaphuli estuary Tuesday.

The Navy divers launched recovery operation immediately after the crash. They recovered a small part of the wreckage that afternoon while two more yesterday morning, sources said.

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28 Taliban killed in Pakistan offensive

AFP, Islamabad

Tribesmen seeking to avenge a deadly mosque bombing killed six Taliban in northwest Pakistan yesterday, while 22 suspected rebels died in an ongoing military offensive, the army and police said.

Pakistan's security forces are locked in a seven-week battle to expel Islamist extremists from three northwest districts, a push informally joined by thousands of local tribesmen in Upper Dir district this month.

As many as 3,000 villagers took up arms in early June, forming a militia -- known locally as a lashkar -- after 38 people were killed in a

suicide bombing at a mosque in the district, which was blamed on the Taliban.

"According to information we received, the tribal lashkar have killed six Taliban and destroyed their hideouts," Ijaz Ahmad, district police chief in Upper Dir, told AFP by telephone.

"Some 3,000 armed tribesmen calling themselves tribal lashkar have launched an operation in the area. A total of 25 militants have been killed so far while some 12 to 13 were wounded in the tribal offensive," he added.

Local residents said about 20 militant hideouts have been destroyed and dozens of houses

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