

## BDR INTELLIGENCE FAILURE

## Sahara warns of action against those responsible

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Admitting the intelligence failure that led to the BDR carnage at Pikhana, Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday said the government is investigating those responsible for the failure.

She said not only the BDR carnage, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other four national leaders were also killed due to the failure of the intelligence agencies.

"Even the August 21 incident in front of Awami League central office at Bangabandhu Avenue took place because of intelligence failure," Sahara

told reporters after a meeting of the cabinet committee on law and order at the home ministry.

Asked if the officials of the intelligence agencies gave any explanation in the meeting for their failure, Sahara said they didn't ask for any explanation from the intelligence agencies for their failure. She said they would check who played what role.

The committee discussed progress of the investigation into the February 25-26 BDR mutiny. Sahara said a total of 41 cases have so far been filed across the country in connection with the carnage at BDR headquarters and other places.

At the meeting, BDR officials once again proposed to hold the trial of BDR mutiny culprits under the Army Act to

speed up the trial process.

A proposal has been submitted to the home ministry in this regard and later sent to the law ministry for opinions, it said.

The law minister has, however, been saying that the decision under which law the mutineers to be tried would be taken after completion of the investigation.

Briefing newsmen about the outcome of the meeting, Sahara said the committee widely discussed the country's overall law and order situation and has found an improvement in this regard. "But we are not satisfied with the situation, it should further be improved," she added.

She said the law enforcement agencies cannot perform

their duties for lack of adequate manpower and logistic support. She asked the ministries concerned to take necessary steps to resolve the manpower and transport problems of the agencies.

LGRD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam, Law Minister Shaifque Ahmed, Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad, State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Tajul Islam, Cabinet Secretary M Abdul Aziz, Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikdar, IGP Nur Mohammad, Rab DG Khandakar Mahmud Hasan, BDR DG Major General Mainul Islam, and high officials from different intelligence agencies, Armed Forces Division and coast guards were present at the meeting.

## Abdul Karim made principal secy to PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed Bridge Division Secretary Md Abdul Karim as principal secretary to the prime minister.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) confirmed the appointment to The Daily Star last night. This vital post at the PMO had been lying vacant since the Awami League government assumed office.

Abdul Karim was the secretary of the home ministry during the immediate past caretaker government.

The Awami League government transferred him to the Bridge Division on March 8.

Earlier, he also served as secretary to the commerce ministry and fisheries and livestock ministry and as the chairman of the National Revenue Board.

## ROBBERY AT AMIN JEWELLERS

## Tk 1cr gold ornaments looted

Claim authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of Amin Jewellers claimed that robbers looted gold ornaments worth over Tk 1.07 crore during the robbery at its outlet in the city's DCC Market at Gulshan on Tuesday afternoon.

Meanwhile, the two robbers -- Babul Sheikh and Mohammad Selim -- who were caught red handed were placed on a three-day remand yesterday.

Shahjahan Mollah, manager of the Gulshan branch of Amin Jewellers, filed a robbery case with Gulshan police station on Tuesday night, stating that some 10 or 12 robbers looted 4,782 grams of gold ornaments.

Officer-in-charge Kamrul Alam of Gulshan Police Station yesterday said the two robbers were produced in a 'Dhaka court with a prayer for 10-day remand, but the court placed them on a three-day remand.

He said the police are now interrogating the two robbers.

## IUT Nat'l Debating Tournament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

IUT National Debating Tournament 2009 will begin on Islamic University of Technology (IUT) campus in Gazipur tomorrow, says press release.

IUT Debating Society is organising the event while Star Campus, a weekly publication of The Daily Star, is the media partner and ABC Radio is the radio partner of the event.

The preliminary rounds of the debate will take place on June 26 and 27 on the IUT campus while the semifinals and final will take place at the Hotel Sarina at Banani in the city.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

## Dhaka seeks int'l aid for vulnerable nations

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh proposed for UN recognition to a new group of Climatically Vulnerable Nations for fast tracking international assistance to them as global climate change is subjecting them to environmental havoc.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Hasan Mahmud, who is attending a two-day Global Humanitarian Forum

2009 on climate change challenges in Geneva, made the proposal while addressing the forum on Tuesday.

He said effective disaster management was saving life and property in Bangladesh.

The minister mentioned that the government's disaster management strategy is focusing more on risk reduction, community empowerment and early warning.

"This is paying dividends as

seen in the effective response when cyclone Aila struck the country recently," he told the meet.

Dr Hasan said although the LDCs produce less than one percent of greenhouse gases it is they and the island states who would be affected first and worst.

As climate change increases the frequency and intensity of natural hazards, the number of displaced people will be on the rise, he said.

## 'Forge movement against Tipaimukh dam project'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called on all to forge a movement against the Indian plan to construct Tipaimukh dam as, they said, it would wreak havoc on the environment, biodiversity and ecology of Bangladesh.

Criticising the Awami League government for its 'weak-kneed attitude' towards India regarding this issue, they said the recent speeches of some of the ministers and ruling party leaders appear to be reflections of the Indian views.

Nagorik Forum, a pro-BNP Jamaat organisation, organised the discussion at the National Press Club, with Abdullahi Masud, chairman of the forum, in the chair.

Environment and water expert Dr SI Khan presented a keynote paper at the programme, while Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, Maj Gen (ret'd) Ruhul Alam Chowdhury, Shafiqul Alam

Prodhan and Sadek Khan, among others, spoke.

SI Khan said the movement against the dam has to be stepped up to inform the world of the possible dire consequences of the Tipaimukh dam project.

All the countrymen should take part in this movement and raise their voice to 'Save river, Save country, Save Bangladesh', he added.

"Pressure on India will have to be mounted with the help of our friendly countries to safeguard the country's interest," he said, adding that parliament should adopt a unanimous motion so that Bangladesh can receive water according to the international laws.

The speakers said India is hatching a conspiracy to put Bangladesh under increasing pressure through building the Tipaimukh dam.

They also alleged that the present government has failed to protect the country's interest with regard to the Tipaimukh issue.

## WEALTH STATEMENT Opposition chief whip gets bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abedin Farroque in a case filed against him for failing to submit his wealth statement to the now defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC) in due time.

Judge Golam Mortuza Majumder of the Special Court for Dhaka Division passed the order after Zainul along with his lawyers appeared before the court and sought bail in the case, even though an arrest warrant was issued in November 2002.

Moving the bail petition, lawyers told the court that their client's bail was cancelled on November 11, 2002 and he could not obtain bail due to his business and unknown reasons. Moreover, their client sought apology to the court and would not misuse the privilege of bail in future if the court granted bail to him, lawyers said.

On the other hand, the prosecution opposed the bail petition saying that the accused misused the privilege of bail.

After hearing both the sides, the judge granted bail to the accused upon a bond of Tk 50,000 with two guarantors each.

According to the prosecution, a BAC official filed a case against Zainul on January 19, 2000 with Mirpur Police Station on charges of failing to submit his wealth statement. The BAC sent a notice on May 26, 1999 to Zainul to submit his wealth statement.

Following the case, Zainul got bail from the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka on June 26 in 2001. But his bail was cancelled and an arrest warrant was issued against him on November 11 in 2002.

## Qulkhwani

METRO DESK

Qulkhwani of Syed Fazlur Rahman Quadery (Shaiya), son of late Syed Aarif

Quadery, will be held at his residence tomorrow (Friday), says a press release.

Quadery was killed in a road accident at Shibchar, Madaripur, on June 23 at the age of 26. He recently graduated from Independent University of Bangladesh.

He left behind his mother and one sister.



PHOTO: STAR

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) stages a demonstration in front of the BNP central office at Naya Paltan in the city yesterday, demanding withdrawal of Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty for his 'derogatory' comments on Bangladeshi water experts.

## Hijra panic grips city dwellers

ALPHA ARZU

City dwellers remain in a state of panic nowadays due to frequent attacks of hermaphrodite (hijras) populace who suddenly come to the houses or make attacks on individuals at different signal points for money or other goods.

Hijras attacked Shamima Akhter, mother of a two-month-old son, at her Gulshan residence where she lives with her husband.

She said, "I went to the veranda after hearing shouting of my guard around 11:00am yesterday and found some five to six hijras beat up my guard as he refused to allow them to the house."

"I got panicked and called my husband, who was also harassed by the group of hijras. They demanded Tk 5,000 for our kid's welfare, otherwise they would kidnap my son," said Shamima.

## 'Recover land of Mirpur graveyard from grabbers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Save Environment Movement, an organisation fighting to protect the environment, yesterday demanded immediate recovery of land of the Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard from the clutches of land grabbers.

The leaders of the organisation formed a human chain on the Faculty of Fine Arts premises to press home their demands.

They said a group of unscrupulous local musclemen are illegally occupying part of the land belonging to the graveyard.

The graveyard should be held in high esteem as it is the last resting place of nationally and internationally famous personalities as well as brave sons of the country, they said, adding that the place is historically significant as it bears testimony to the glorious chapter in the country's history.

They also underscored the importance of saving heritage sites, open spaces, water bodies and other sensitive places across the country.

Chairman of the organisation Abu Naser Khan, sculptor Hamiduzzaman Khan, engineer Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah, Chairman of Nirapod Foundation Ibnul Sayeed Rana, Secretary General of Citizen's Rights Movement Tushar Rehman and President of Save The People Foundation Sheikh Altaful Islam participated in the programme.

The dotting mother also said, "We finally paid them Tk 2000 after much hard bargaining. We have already decided to change our house from this area as they (hijras) frequently come."

Runu Ahmed, mother of a newborn, of Sector-13 at Uttara Model Town said, "I've been observing some hijras moving around our house in the last few days. On Friday, when my husband and father-in-law went to the mosque for Juma prayers, they entered the house skipping the wall."

"It was horrible as my mother-in-law was sick, and I just cured after my delivery 10 days before. So, we got panicked and called the police, who rescued us by paying Tk 500 on that day," said Runu, wife of Jewel Ahmed, a high official of a private phone company.

The couple explained how they had fallen victim to the ennuhs second time just after three days. This time they (hijras) were saying with more offensiveness: "Police never do anything against us, and as you called police on Friday, you would have to pay more Tk 1000 and the grand total is Tk 6000 today."

After an hour's bargaining, the family got relief of the harassment after the intervention of the Rapid Action Battalion, who came to the place after getting a phone call from their neighbour, said Runu.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) ABM Zakir Hossain of Uttara Model Police Station told The Daily Star, "Earlier, we received at least 15 calls each day. The number is on the decrease now."

"We have met the hijras

several times and offered 300 hijras jobs at a time at a garment factory, but they refused to work, he said.

About 150 hijras live in different slums at Uttara, the OC said, adding, "Hijras ensured us at a meeting that they would not charge the exorbitant amount. The amount was fixed between Tk 200 and Tk 500, which was Tk 2000 and Tk 5000 earlier."

"People now get panicked instead of showing kindness to them for their attacking and offensive behaviour," said Zakir.

Hijras also attacked the commuters at different signal points where cars and other vehicle stopped for few minutes, said a victim, who recently lost a mobile phone and a wallet from his own car at Mohakhali.

"Suddenly, they come to the car and try to enter the vehicle by force or start to scold in very offensive language and gesture," said the victim.

The hijras also attack the different construction firms who are constructing the new building. They come to the project site and demanded money, otherwise they take construction materials, including rod, wood and others, which also cost Tk 1000 to Tk 2000, said Mahmudul Hasan Prince, site manager of Nandan Kanon Developers.

Kachi, a hijra community leader of Uttara, told this correspondent, "We are human by born, not by sexual identity; but people always neglect us to live in a society or a family. So, we have to find new ways to survive."



## Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over all the six divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 7:50pm today and rises at 6:13am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 38.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 24.5 degrees Celsius at Dinajpur.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	34.8	29.2	66	73
Chittagong	32.7	26.8	69	90
Rajshahi	38.0	28.6	68	76
Khulna	35.5	28.7	78	64
Barisal	34.8	28.2	66	68
Sylhet	32.3	25.2	85	84
Cox's Bazar	34.2	25.8	63	66

## VIQARUNNISA NOON SCHOOL

## 'No plan to shut down Dhanmondi branch'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the backdrop of a human chain formed by guardians and students, the authorities of Viqarunnisa Noon School yesterday said they have no plan to close the Dhanmondi Branch.

"We never said we have any plan to close it or to shift it to the main branch," said Rokeya Akhter, acting principal of the school, while talking to The Daily Star in the evening.

"The house owner has verbally told us that he will not renew the agreement for next year though we renew the agreement every year," she added.

Rokeya alleged that the house owner is creating problems as he does not carry out the maintenance work of the building.

She said the governing body will decide about the matter and the issue will be discussed in the upcoming meeting of the governing body on Sunday.

At the human chain formed under a platform named Guardian Forum, the guardians said they have been paying infrastructure development fees every year but the school authorities did not build any permanent building for them.

They said the number of students in two shifts is about 2,000 and they want a permanent infrastructure for the students.

## Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Veteran journalist Avinoy Kumar Das passed away at the Pan Pacific Hospital in the city on June 23 at the age of 63, says a press release.

He left behind his wife and only daughter.

He was cremated at the Postogola Crematorium. He worked for the Banglar Bani, Cinema, Azad and the Chitrabangla.

Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) President Shah Alamgir and General Secretary Omar Faruq condoled his death.

## Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 16th death anniversary of Alhaj Dr Nazir Ahmed Biswas, former

president of Chuadanga District Awami League, founder vice-chairman of Bangladesh Red Crescent society and close associate of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, says a press release.

Relatives and admirers are requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

## Md Nazir Hossain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 8th death anniversary of Md Nazir Hossain, a social worker of Najira

Bazar lane in Old Town, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his residence after Asr prayers.

## Tannery relocation

FROM PAGE 1

Referring to a verdict delivered in 2001, the High Court Tuesday ordered relocation of the tanneries within February 28 next year and asked to shut down the tanneries that fail to move.

Saber said 3,000 tonnes of solid waste and 2.5 lakh tonnes of liquid waste generated by tanneries every month have been dumped into the rivers without any treatment.

"Under such dreadful circumstances, we are going to recommend immediate legal actions against tanneries causing serious environment pollution. If necessary, the tanneries should be shut down as per the law," Saber asserted.

He said the sub-committee was informed by the industries ministry that at least 18 months will be required to relocate the tanneries while the High Court ordered to do the job in the next eight months.

The officials of the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) supervising the relocation of the tanneries also informed the committee about the legal and financial complexities of the relocation.

They said the tender process to set up the central ETP at Savar at a cost of around Tk 400 crore was yet to complete as one bidder filed a case with a court.

About financial complexities, the officials said as per the initial Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the government and

the tanners association, the government was supposed to bear the expenditure for setting up the central ETP.

The MoU was reviewed during the last caretaker government that incorporated a new provision asking the tanners association to repay the cost in the next 20 years, the BSCIC officials said.

The owners, however, refused to share the cost saying most of them are not capable of paying for the central ETP.

In defence of taking stern actions against industries polluting the environment, Saber, also ruling Awami League lawmaker, said as per a report of the World Bank prepared in 2006, the country lost four percent of GDP due to environment pollution every year.

Besides, a study of department of environment disclosed around 10,000 people died on various diseases caused by pollution.

"Which one is important to us--saving lives or saving employment?" Saber said replying to a query whether many would lose jobs if tanneries were closed down.

At the meeting of the parliamentary sub-committee, officials of the BIWTA said a 10-feet layer of polythene has formed on the Buriganga riverbed between Sadarghat and Mitford and it is not possible to dredge the river there using conventional dredging machines.

"Special equipment are needed to dredge the river. Experts can say the nature of the special equipment," Saber said.

The parliamentary sub-committee observed that nobody is sincerely caring for the rivers as many are engaged with other jobs. The land ministry is the owner of the rivers, BIWTA of shipping ministry looks after the managerial job, and environment ministry oversees the environmental aspect, he said.

"We feel the need to set up a single river authority that will take all responsibilities for the rivers," Saber asserted.

As per the sub-committee's earlier suggestion, he said the BIWTA wrote to the law ministry seeking their opinion about treating the offence of encroaching rivers as criminal offence with stern punishment, instead of civil offence.

Sub-committee member Ghyasuddin Ahmed proposed formation of a river police unit to fight the encroachments.

ENVIRONMENT POLLUTERS The parliamentary body held Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk) and Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) responsible for environment and river pollution along with different industries. And the three organisations cannot perform their duties according to the people's expectation, it said.

About the DCC, Saber said the local government body does not know how much waste is being generated every day in the city.

"We came to know that 7,000 tonnes of waste is generated every day in the city and it is supposed to dump the waste at two points in

the capital. But the employees of the DCC do not dump them at the specified spots to steal fuel of garbage trucks," Sabersaid.

On Rajuk, the parliamentary body observed that the organisation is not interested in supervising the construction of buildings to ensure that the buildings are being built as per design, rather officials of Rajuk are very interested in development work.

Saber said the government's moral duty is to make sure that its own organisations are not polluting the environment.

"Had the government organisations protected public interests, then the public interest litigation would not have been filed with the High Court," Sabersaid.

He said the parliamentary body would also seek experts' opinion and hold public hearing before preparing recommendations to save rivers from pollution.

LAND SECRETARY Annoyed by the absence of the land secretary, the parliamentary body yesterday decided to issue a notice upon him asking him to explain his failure to show up at the meeting despite being asked to attend.

The sub-committee asked Land Secretary Delwar Hossain to attend the committee's meeting yesterday at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Talking to The Daily Star over telephone sub-committee member Ekabbar Hossain said the committee asked the Parliament Secretariat to send a letter to Delwar asking him to explain his failure to attend the meeting.