

Mysteries pile on country

Influenced criminal investigations leave major cases like Aug 21 conjuring, unsolved; analysts seek strong body to unearth the truth

Govt to appeal against 2 Huji men's bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The government will formally submit petitions on August 23 seeking cancellation of the bails granted to two Harkatul Jihad (Huji) members in connection with the August 21 grenade attack cases.

Meanwhile, detained former deputy minister and BNP leader Abdus Salam Pintu yesterday filed a bail petition with the High Court (HC) in

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK and SHARIFUL ISLAM

Political and security analysts advise setting up a new, strong investigation body to unravel the mysteries behind the major terrorist attacks as the existing agencies keep failing to do that.

They came up with the suggestion while talking to The Daily Star on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the August 21 grenade attack yesterday.

The probe into the grenade blasts had been politicised like that into many other terror strikes, which had the nation on edge all too often over the



This file photo of August 21, 2004 shows an unexploded grenade next to abandoned sandals and a body on Bangabandhu Avenue.

Doomed to a life of misery

KAILASH SARKAR

Rashida Akter Ruma lives in a single room in Chankarpool with her two daughters whom she is unable to send to school any longer.

Badly injured during the August 21 grenade attack in 2004, this Awami League activist, is now dependent on the charity of a distant aunt who has given her shelter.

Rashida, a widow, has been stranded here for the last two

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DU VIOLENCE 2007

JS body sees govt agencies' instigation

Asks for dropping 10 pending cases against teachers, students

RASHIDUL HASAN

Several government agencies were involved in instigating and fuelling the August 2007 violence on Dhaka University campus involving army personnel and students during the last caretaker regime, observed a parliamentary committee yesterday.

The parliamentary standing committee on education which is probing the incident also said the immediate past caretaker government cannot deny its responsibility for the incident, as several civilian and army officials of the then administration were involved in it.

The House committee also asked the authority concerned to withdraw 10 pending cases filed against DU teachers and

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WHO alerts Bangladesh over China plague

MAHUBA ZANNAT

World Health Organisation (WHO) warned Bangladesh and other South East Asian countries about the pneumonic plague that had recently hit China.

As it is a public health emergency of international concern and China is not far from Bangladesh, WHO warned Bangladesh to take cautionary steps to control the spread of pneumonic plague, said the government officials.

WHO, in a letter to the health ministry, suggested building capacity in the sea ports as the infected rodents might enter into the country through imported items.

The most recent outbreak of the disease in China began in August this year in Ziketan Town located in Qinghai Province. The town

was sealed off and three people have died so far as a result of the disease.

Rodents and fleas are the reservoirs of pneumonic plague and from the infected rodents and fleas the disease spreads to human.

Pneumonic plague is spread through the air and can be passed from person to person through coughing, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). It is triggered by the same bacteria as bubonic plague, which killed an estimated 25 million people in Europe during the Middle Ages.

"The pneumonic plague is a bacterial disease and more contagious than bubonic (which infects the glands) plague. It soon turns into epidemic form if it starts to spread from human to human," said Director of the

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Swine flu cases shoot up to 87

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of swine flu cases in the country shoots up to 87, as more infected people were detected under the surveillance programme yesterday.

At an inter-ministerial meeting at the health ministry, government sources said 32 among the infected have completely been cured by this time and the rest are undergoing follow up treatment.

Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque said the swine flu situation might worsen, as it is causing lives in India.

"But people need not panic because the government has enough preparedness and is ready to tackle the threat with adequate anti-viral drugs," he said, adding that Bangladesh has a stock of 32 lakh Oseltamivir (anti viral drug) to treat the patients and is capable of manufacturing the drug.

He further said members of Pandemic Influenza

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Blockade halts life in CHT

STAR REPORT

Roads and waterways communications between the three hill districts and other parts of the country were suspended yesterday due to a dawn-to-dusk blockade enforced by Parbatya Bangalee Chhatra Parishad (PBCP).

The PBCP, a wing of Samo Odhikar Andolan, a platform of Bangalee settlers fighting for equal rights in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), called the blockade protesting the pull-out of temporary army camps from the hill districts.

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TROOPS PULLOUT FROM CHT HC gives govt the go-ahead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court rejected yesterday two separate supplementary petitions seeking a ban on the army pullout from Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), clearing the way for the government to redeploy troops of 35 CHT camps.

The court passed the orders after being satisfied with the documents, submissions and arguments placed on behalf of the government opposing the petitions filed by a pro-Jamaat-Islami lawyer and a Bangalee settler in CHT.

The court observed in the orders that the current phase of troop replacement/relocation/redeployment within the CHT region is a tactical exercise that has been done on several occasions over the last nine years or so and it is a continuous process.

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Crackdown soon to stop killings in Southwest

Police, Rab prepare to contain outlawed groups' resurgence

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) will launch a joint drive soon in 10 southwestern districts amidst a rapid slide in law and order marked by unbridled killings in the recent months.

At a view exchange meeting with a cross section of people in Kushtia yesterday, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad and Rab Director General (DG) Hassan Mahmood Khandker spoke of the joint drive plan without giving any timeframe.

They also urged the law enforcement

agencies to take the steps necessary to bring the situation in southwestern region under control.

Khulna range of police arranged the meeting after the recent spate in killings in 10 districts of Khulna division that saw 228 people killed since January this year including 150 by the so-called outlawed parties.

Local people including public representatives, political party leaders and activists, businessmen, social workers, NGO activists, human right activists, teachers, students, leaders of community policing forum and journalists attended

the meeting.

High officials of police and Rab in Khulna division were also present at the meeting held at Kushtia Municipal Auditorium.

In his speech, the IGP ordered the law enforcement agencies to arrest all those involved in crimes.

"Necessary backing in this regard will be given so that no one can create any hindrance," Nur Mohammad said.

The police chief said criminals are tarnishing the image of police. When any crime takes place anywhere, police are

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Wasa takes 3 schemes to reduce Ctg water crisis

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD, Chittagong

Chittagong Water and Sewerage Authority has decided to implement the Karnaphuli Water Supply Project to ease the acute water crisis in the port city.

In addition to it, it has taken up an initiative to revive Madunaghat and Mohora water supply projects.

The estimated capacity of Karnaphuli Water Supply Project is 136 million litres per day, and it is 45 and 90 million litres per day for the other two projects mentioned.

Chittagong Wasa has the capability to provide only 190 million litres of water per day against a demand of 500 million litres a day.

"We will add water to the tune of 271 million litres per day for supply with the implementation of these projects within the tenure of the present government," said Engineer AKM

Fazlullah, chairman of Chittagong Wasa.

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecne) approved the Karnaphuli project involving Tk 962.9 crore in May 2006 after a feasibility study in 1998.

In accordance with the agreement signed by the government of Bangladesh and Japan Bank for International Cooperation on June 29, 2006, JBIC was to provide Tk 693.57 crore while the government Tk 269.32 crore.

However, the project could not go ahead due to the complication over acquisition of 31.5 acres of land for the plant.

Fazlullah told The Daily Star that they have given Tk 8 crore to the District Administration to acquire land in a month.

The Wasa will invite tender to appoint contractor within this year to get it completed by the middle of 2012, he said.

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Both ways of Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue grind to a standstill yesterday as high number of vehicles and poor driving and parking trigger gridlocks.

PHOTO: SHAFIQU ALAM

Special drive against unfit vehicles starts today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will launch a special drive in the city today in a bid to ease the worsening traffic congestion by seizing unfit, unlicensed and old vehicles plying the roads.

Mobile courts will hit the city streets as part of the crackdown to drive out all illegal modes of transport from roads and to bring order in the traffic movement during Ramadan when the traffic situation takes a grave turn.

An 11-member committee headed by additional secretary of the communications ministry Shafiq Alam Mehdi was formed yesterday during a meeting to supervise the operation of mobile courts and other activities for improving the traffic situation.

"The mobile courts will not spare anybody, even the government officials or public representatives," Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain told journalists after presiding over the meeting at the ministry.

He said motor vehicles and rickshaws do not follow the traffic rules and ply in a chaotic manner, causing congestion. "Our first priority is to improve the nagging traffic situation by driving out unfit and unlicensed vehicles," he added.

Abul Hossain could not say how many mobile courts

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