

## Save tigers of subcontinent

### Indian environmentalists to seek Bangladesh's help

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
New Delhi

India will seek cooperation from Bangladesh and other neighbouring countries to help preserve the dwindling tiger population in the subcontinent.

"We will take up tiger poaching at a bilateral level with the neighbouring countries, particularly those touching the tiger reserves on the border areas of West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh where a few big cats are left in the wild," said Rajesh Gopal, member secretary of National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).

He said unless there is a collective initiative to save tigers, it would not be possible to protect the endangered animal.

China has, however, given a lukewarm response to the issue of tiger poaching and India is now banking on other

neighbouring countries having a population of the big cats to curb trade in parts and skins of the animal.

Body parts of tigers are of great demand in China for traditional medicine for cure of number of ailments.

Around 3,000 tigers are left in the world with India having nearly 1,300 in the wild.

Meanwhile, India is forming a special force to save tigers from poachers at the world famous Jim Corbett Tiger Reserve in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand.

After studying the impact of the force in securing the 160-odd tiger population in the Corbett Park, the project would be replicated in other national parks, said Uttarakhand's Chief Minister, a garment worker at Karwan Bazar yesterday afternoon.

Ethnic people who live in the vicinity of the Corbett Park would be a part of the special force to guard the tigers.

## City malls

FROM PAGE 1

The streets were quite free until yesterday afternoon as many remained at home to observe Jumatul Wida, the last Juma in the holy month of Ramadan.

But the streets saw a surge of traffic in the afternoon with tailbacks mainly on Mirpur Road and Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in front of top shopping arcades like New Market, Gausia and Bashundhara Shopping Complex.

Alamgir, who went shopping with his family, said he had little time for shopping before. "Besides, I knew that shopping malls will be comparatively less crowded on Friday and Saturday," he said.

Traders said besides clothes, many were buying Atar (perfume), caps, gift items, and cosmetics for their relatives. Many of the low-income groups, including readymade garment workers and rickshaw pullers also joined the shopping frenzy yesterday.

"My holiday begins from Saturday [today] but I left the factory earlier today [yesterday] to buy things for my family members," said Nasima Akter, a garment worker at Karwan Bazar yesterday afternoon.

"My wage is not much but with that I will shop for all. My parents expect something, don't they? I will buy a lungi, a sari, two shirts, a dress for me and some cosmetics," said Nasima of Kurigram.

Those staying in Dhaka during Eid also exhaled a sigh of relief yesterday hoping the streets would be less congested for at least two weeks with the mass exodus of homegoers.

"Yes, we shall enjoy Eid. We shall also enjoy the streets free of traffic jams," said Hridoy, a student of Tejgaon College at Farm Gate.

## Rangpur Zoo

FROM PAGE 1

Rangpur Zoo during the vacation of Eid-ul-Fitr.

The other animals are a Royal Bengal Tiger, a sambar deer and two olive baboons. Of them, the sambar deer has fallen sick at the Rangpur Zoo, sources said.

On September 11, the Curator of Rangpur Zoo Dr Ruhul Amin with Abul Hossain came to Dhaka and completed arrangements for taking the animals.

The waterbuck might have been infected with germs while they were being carried on an open truck, officials of Rangpur Zoo suspected.

Ruhul Amin, however, refuted the allegation and said, "What can one do if its death is written in the stars."

The autopsy report will unravel the actual reason, he added.

Usually, animals from one zoo to another are carried on the assigned vehicles of zoo, which are safe, Rangpur Zoo officials said.

## Probe finds

FROM PAGE 1

urged Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation (BSFIC) Chairman Ronojit Kumar Biswas for taking legal actions against the sugar swindlers.

Following news published in The Daily Star on September 16, the deputy commissioner formed several upazila level committees headed by upazila nirbahi officers of eight upazilas in the district to investigate the sugar swindling issues.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (general) Mohammad Sala Uddin confirmed that recommendation letters were sent to the secretaries of industries ministry and commerce ministry, and also to Chittagong divisional commissioner yesterday morning.

The ADC told the correspondent that all the sugar swindlers are to face harsh punishment. BSFIC might scrap the deal or cancel the licences if necessary, he added.

Sugar allocated for Khagrachhari never reached its destination as the government-assigned dealers sold it at the mill gates in Kushtia and Chuadanga violating dealership contract.

## Crackdown

FROM PAGE 1

Station Road, said KCC Mayor Talukder Abdul Khaleque who led the joint drive on Thursday.

The team also seized 5,000 bags of sugar from Shahjalil Baniya Bhandar owned by Md Idris Mian and another 2,000 bags from RK Roy Traders owned by Uttam Kumar Roy.

According to the mayor, the three businessmen imported sugar and later hoarded it to create artificial crisis with a motive to make huge profits. Besides, most of the TCB listed dealers sold their sugar to hoarders without putting it on open market sale, the mayor alleged.

On Wednesday evening, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police seized 20,000 bags of sugar from the godowns of three businessmen at Khulna Bazar and Station Road.

## Nato calls for new partnership with Russia

AFP, Brussels

Nato Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen called for a new partnership with Russia in a major speech seeking "practical cooperation" with Moscow on global defence issues.

Outlining his vision of a harmonised global defence architecture, the former Danish premier's remarks came the day after US President Barack Obama's decision to pull back from a plan to install an anti-missile shield and radar in eastern Europe.

"Nato wants Russia to be a real stakeholder in European and international security," Rasmussen said at the western alliance's Brussels HQ. "We need Russia as a partner in resolving the great issues of our time."

As Rasmussen was speaking, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin praised as "correct and brave" Washington's decision to shelve former president George W. Bush's plans.

The US, Nato and Russia should consider linking missile defence systems, Rasmussen said, offering to embrace Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's ideas for a joint-up security arrangement stretching from the Far East to the west coast of America.

"I believe that a Nato-Russia dialogue could provide real added value. We must all aim for a Euro-Atlantic security architecture in which Russia sees herself reflected," he stressed.

Studying how to tackle the proliferation of ballistic missile technology is in "Nato and Russia's fundamental strategic interest," he added. "We should explore the potential for linking the US, Nato and Russia missile defence systems at an appropriate time," he said.

Calling for a joint review with Russia of global security challenges, he said: "I would like to see Nato and Russia agree to carry out a joint review of the new 21st century security challenges to serve as a firm basis for our future cooperation."

"I believe that Nato and Russia should immediately look to reinforce our practical cooperation in all the areas where we agree we face the same risks and threats to our security -- and there are many of those areas," Rasmussen added.

Saying he was aware that Nato-Russia relations "can quickly become hostage to domestic politics," Rasmussen admitted that his proposals will require "considerable political will."

The change comes at a time when Cold War-style western reflexes have been on edge following Russia's short war with US ally Georgia, tense posturing over efforts to bring Ukraine into Nato's sphere of influence and fears for energy security given Moscow's vast oil and gas reserves.

Poland and the Czech Republic -- where parts of the missile shield were to be based -- officially put a brave face on Obama's decision, saying it did not signal any deterioration in ties with Washington.

## Rajshahi 'landless'

FROM PAGE 1

last May following recommendations of the Upazila Committee for leasing khas lands, headed by the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO).

Razzak has now begun to erect a two-story building on the land. He allegedly forced a landless bicycle mechanic Govinda, who used to run his workshop at one corner, to leave the place or pay him Tk 50,000 as toll.

Govinda has been running the repair shop in a tin-shed facility for long. "How come the authorities sanction government land to the rich when we are the real landless people," he said.

Razzak inherits five bighas of land of his family and owns Mollah Food and Oil Ltd, an oilseed grinding mill and co-owns Padma Agro and Fisheries Ltd, a fish feed factory. He also owns a motorised local vehicle.

Asked, Abdur Razzak said, "My father possesses some land, not me. I am a genuine landless man and the chairman of the Upazila Bittohene (have-nots) Samity."

He, however, admits owning industries, but denied the allegation of demanding toll from the bicycle repairman.

Asked how such an affluent person got lease of khas land meant for the landless, Bagmara Assistant Commissioner (AC) of land Abdur Rahim said Razzak must have hidden facts in his application.

The authorities leased out lands to a total of 23 landless

persons.

The union council chairman first recommended Razzak and then his application was forwarded by the upazila committee, said the AC land who is also the member secretary of the body.

Bagmara UNO SM Nazim Uddin said, "The lease was approved prior to my joining here. We are investigating the matter to see if any irregularities occurred during sanctioning of the lands."

Contacted, Goalkandi Union Council Chairman Alamgir Hossain said he recommended Razzak, as the latter does not have any land of his own. Hossain, however, remained silent when asked about Razzak's financial standing.

## Jumatul Wida

FROM PAGE 1

The largest Jumatul Wida congregation was held at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque in the capital. Thousands of devotees took part in the congregation and sought blessings of Allah for peace of the departed souls of their near and dear ones and also for the peace and prosperity of the Muslim Ummah.

Special arrangements were made to accommodate the devotees at mosques in different parts of the city.

At many places, the devotees even offered prayers on roads adjacent to mosques.

Khatibs and ulema delivered sermons highlighting the significance of Jumatul Wida.

## Asst judges

FROM PAGE 16

ment after carrying out medical tests and police verifications of the candidates, the sources said, adding that the appointment will be completed within a month.

Meanwhile, the law ministry in a requisition letter has asked the BJSC authorities to select qualified candidates for the appointment of 101 assistant judges through holding necessary tests and examinations.

Sources said only the entry level judicial officials are appointed to the post of assistant judges while the other tiers are filled through promotion and added that about 400 posts of the lower court judges have remained vacant for more than seven years affecting people seeking justice.

The process of appointments of 207 new judges began in November, 2008 when the number of vacant posts of assistant judges was the same, an official concerned said.

The executive magistrates earlier discharging judicial

functions were absorbed in the administrative posts after separation of the magistracy through the separation of judiciary from the executive, sources added.

Besides, some of the judges either left the jobs or have been transferred to other services on deputation creating vacancies in the judiciary.

In May last year, the army backed caretaker government appointed 394 assistant judges to courts across the country following separation of the judiciary.

## CNG-run

FROM PAGE 1

Trans Millennium Company Ltd Manager Bankim Chandra told reporters that they had 25 CNG-run AC buses running on Motijheel-Dhamrai route and 23 buses were in the depot yesterday while the other two were at a filling station.

Officer-in-Charge ABM Narir Ullah of Savar Police Station told The Daily Star that the bus operator was yet to file any case in this connection.

## 12 coalminers killed in gas explosion

AFP, Warsaw

Twelve miners were killed yesterday in a methane explosion at the Wujek-Slask coal mine in southern Poland, said a spokeswoman for the country's mines authority.

"Twelve coal miners are dead and 15 are in serious condition," Edyta Tomaszewska told AFP via telephone. A total of 30 miners were hospitalised after the blast, which ripped through the mine in Ruda Slaska-Kochlowice, she added.

Wujek-Slask mine spokesman Andrzej Bielecki said around 40 miners were underground in the area when the blast occurred 1,050 meters (nearly 3,500 feet) below the surface.

Twenty-nine escaped to the surface while the remainder were evacuated by mine rescue workers, Bielecki said.

The death toll could rise further as several miners sustained serious burns, he said.

"There are no more people in the accident zone, rescuers are on site. The fire has been brought under control," he added.

Poland's Interior Minister Grzegorz Schetyna was due to arrive at the accident site later Friday.

Friday's lethal explosion was the worst in Polish mines since the death of 23 miners in November 2006 in a methane blast at the Halemba mine in the same southern Polish community of Ruda Slaska.

Several mine managers are on trial in connection with the disaster.

Poland's most recent mine accident involved the death of six miners in a methane explosion at the Borynia mine in southern Poland in June 2008.

## Lightning

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health complex in critical condition.

Police and witnesses said a streak of thunderbolt struck the house of Sobhan at about 2:30pm when the victims were staying inside.

Local upazila nirbahi officer visited the spot.

## Operations

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The increased bonus will be Tk 4,000, 5,000 and 6,000 for three categories.

But still the handling operation could not be resumed as the lacing workers abstained from work since 8:00am yesterday, sources said.

The lacing workers, who are also engaged by the berth operators in stuffing and unstuffing of containers, suspended their work demanding immediate payment of their Eid bonus.

The lacing workers joined work after the berth operators in a meeting in presence of CPA chairman and other officials assured them of paying Tk 3500 payment as Eid bonus.

With both the stevedoring staffs and the lacing workers joining work, the handling operation resumed at the port at around 2:00pm.

However, CPA officials said that the handling operations at Chittagong port actually remained suspended for some fourteen hours since there were no port activities from Thursday 4:00pm to 8:00am yesterday on the occasion of Lailatul Qadr.

## Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 16

Ghafari Nazir, 27, and the Saudi driver of the bus, reported the Arab News yesterday.

The victims were taken to King Abdul Aziz Hospital at Mahjer, Al-Thaghr Hospital under Ministry of Health, King Fahd Hospital and National Guard Hospital, said Dr Sami Badawood, health affairs director in Jeddah.

Col Muhammad Al-Qahtani, Jeddah traffic director, said the accident took place as a bus of Saudi Arabian Public Transport Company (SAPTCO) rammed into a water tanker near the Jeddah checkpoint.

The bus was carrying pilgrims of Arab and Asian nationalities, and it was returning from Makkah after the devotees offered prayer on 27th night of the Ramadan.

Saudi Arabia has one of the highest rates of traffic accident in the world. According to official statistics, an accident takes place in a minute on Saudi roads.

In addition to speed, the other major factors that have contributed to the rising rate of accidents are violation of traffic rules, fatigue and in some cases poor driving capabilities.

## Merck, Wellcome to develop vaccines for poor countries

AFP, New York

US pharmaceutical giant Merck and British research charity Wellcome Trust on Thursday announced a joint venture to develop "affordable" vaccines for poor countries.

Merck & Co. and Wellcome Trust said the non-profit joint venture, to be based in India, is "the first-of-its-kind research and development (R&D) joint venture with a not-for-profit mission to focus on developing affordable vaccines to prevent diseases that commonly affect low-income countries."

In addition to developing vaccines for unmet needs, the R&D partnership, MSD Wellcome Trust Hilleman Laboratories, will seek to optimise existing vaccines, they said in a joint statement.

"The heart of this concept is the creation of a sustainable R&D organisation that operates like a business, but with a not-for-profit operating model, to address the vaccine needs of low-income countries," they said.

The kind of programmes under consideration include developing vaccines that do not require refrigeration, and a vaccine against Group A streptococci which causes more than 500,000 deaths per year worldwide.

Merck and the Wellcome Trust said they would invest equally in the joint venture, making a combined cash contribution of 90 million pounds (roughly 130 million dollars) over the next seven years.

According to the partners, their joint venture marks the first time a research charity and a pharmaceutical company have teamed up to form a separate entity with equally shared funding and decision-making rights.

The site in India has not yet been identified, they said, but Hilleman Laboratories will support a staff of approximately 60 researchers and developers and is expected to be operational in 2010.

## Highway

FROM PAGE 16

police, in the name of checking vehicles, are often involved in immoral and unethical practices that ultimately malign the reputation of highway police.

After road accidents, the police stations concerned record the cases but very often wrecks and bodies are left on the spots for a long time, he said, adding: "It happens as it is not yet determined which wing of the police will handle the matter."

Assistant Inspector General (AIG) Shah Golam Mahmud for his role during the tumultuous days of Bangladesh's War of Independence.

She also recalled the role of US Congress played for the restoration of democracy in Bangladesh through free, fair and credible election of last December.

Earlier in the day, Dipu Monir had a meeting with the editorial board of the reputed newspaper The Washington Times.

She exchanged views on various development activities in Bangladesh and also the relations between Bangladesh and the US.

Sajeeb Wazed, adviser to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, high government officials, academia, experts in South Asia, members of the print and electronic media, students, investors and businessmen and officials of Bangladesh embassy attended the discussion.

With the amount 11 highway police stations in eastern region, eight in western region and 31 outposts will be set up, he said.

When asked, DIG Hossain said they are trying to develop infrastructures and go for buying logistics in the first phase and then they will try to increase manpower.

The highway police sources said, with the poor logistic support and inadequate manpower they can hardly discharge their duties.

## Suicide attack

FROM PAGE 16

the new moon after the fasting month of Ramadan.

Bodies lay on the road and casualties were trapped under the debris from shops that caved in after the blast when the bomber rammed a jeep packed with 150 kilograms (330 pounds) of explosives into another vehicle, police said.

Sohail Ahmad, a shopkeeper in the market whose left leg was broken in the attack, told AFP that he blacked out.

"I was standing in front of my shop when all of a sudden, a car blew up outside a restaurant. I went unconscious. I don't remember anything else. When I came round, I was in hospital," Ahmad said from his hospital bed.

Police spokesman Fazal Naeem in nearby Kohat said 33 people were killed and 56 others were wounded.

"There are 33 dead and more than 50 injured. Twenty-five have been identified while the rest are in a very bad condition. The bodies have been completely damaged," said a North West Frontier Province police spokesman.

Police said the bomber came from the nearby Orakzai, the tribal district home of Pakistan's new Taliban chief Hakimullah Mehsud who has vowed to avenge the death of his predecessor Baitullah Mehsud, who was killed in a US drone strike.

"This is a Shia-dominated area and we cannot rule out the possibility that this was a sectarian-motivated attack," said police officer Ali Hasan.

Soon after the blast, Shia youths took control of the bazaar and attacked two police vehicles with sticks and chanted slogans condemning the Taliban and the Pakistani government, witnesses said.

Taliban and al-Qaeda rebels fled Afghanistan after the 2001 US-led invasion, carving out boltholes and training camps in Pakistan's remote mountains.

Pakistan helicopters attacked rebel hideouts in Khyber and Orakzai on Friday, killing 13 militants and destroying two hideouts, the paramilitary Frontier Corps said in a statement.

The United States says Islamist fighters are hiding in the Pakistani mountains near the Afghan border, plotting attacks on Western targets and crossing the porous frontier to attack foreign troops in Afghanistan.

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## Tough time

FROM PAGE 1

Many passengers at bus counters at Gabtoli alleged that they were charged additional Tk 100 to Tk 150 for a ticket for long routes.

They usually charge Tk 200 for a trip to Khulna from Gabtoli but this time they charged Tk 330 for a ticket," said passenger Anisul Islam.

Satkira-bound passenger Saiful Azam said he had to pay additional Tk 170 for a ticket against a regular fare of Tk 250.

The operators of buses running on Dhaka-Faridpur route also charged around Tk 80 to Tk 100 more than the usual fare.

However, many bus operators denied charging passengers extra money. They claimed that they charged fares in line with the government-fixed rate.

All bus counters hung fare charts signed by the representative of Bangladesh Bus-Truck Owners' Association.

Meanwhile, railway passengers were seen purchasing standing tickets at Kamalapur Rail Station as most tickets had already been sold out.

Northern districts-bound Ekota Express, like the previous day, made a two-hour delay to reach Kamalapur Rail Station yesterday.

MA Jinnah, manager of Kamalapur Rail Station, told The Daily Star, "Like the previous years, we have made special seating arrangement for home-bound people by adding several compartments to almost all trains."

A correspondent from Madaripur adds: Hundreds of homebound people crowded the ferry stations at both Mawa and Kewrakandi that link the capital with 23 South and Southwestern districts.

Meanwhile, movements of

## Israel warns of impending attack in India

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel said on Thursday it had concrete information of plans by the same group that carried out the 2008 Mumbai attacks to hit Western and Israeli targets in India.

"The terrorist group that carried out the serious Mumbai attack in India is planning to carry out a number of attacks across India, particularly against concentrations of Western or Israeli tourists," warned a statement from Israel's counterterrorism unit.

India blames the Pakistani-based Lashkar-e-Taiba for the November attacks in which 10 gunmen killed at least 188 people and wounded more than 300, in a three-day rampage through Mumbai.

Among the targets hit was a Jewish centre run by the ultra-Orthodox Lubavitch movement. Thursday's statement warned the impending attacks could target other Lubavitch centres in India.

The statement said the travel warning was based on "a concrete, very serious threat."

India is one of the most popular destinations for young Israelis and thousands of backpackers visit the country every year.

The warning called on Israeli travellers to stay away from crowded places and the disputed Kashmir region.