

US missiles from drone kill 8 militants in Pakistan

AFP, Peshawar

Eight militants were killed in a US missile strike in northwest Pakistan yesterday, security officials said, in the third such attack on the Taliban's tribal strongholds in 24 hours.

The unmanned drone targeted the lawless region of North Waziristan, a Taliban bolthole where Washington says Islamist fighters are hiding out and plotting attacks on Western troops stationed in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Northwest Pakistan is seeing a surge in US strikes, with seven reported this month as the United States tries to stem the flow of militants waging a deadly insurgency against about 100,000 foreign troops stationed across the border.

"It was a US drone attack which targeted a compound in Norak area in North Waziristan," a security official in the region said.

"The death toll in the strike is eight militants including three Arabs, one Uzbek, one Chechen and three local militants," he added.

Another security official confirmed the attack and toll, telling AFP that Taliban rebels were holding a meeting in the compound about 25 kilometres (15 miles) east of district hub Miranshah at the time of the attack.

"It is not clear if there was any high-value target," he said. On Tuesday, two successive

strikes from the pilotless spy planes in South and North Waziristan killed a total of 12 militants.

The first strike killed five rebels at the compound of a low-level Taliban commander in South Waziristan's Sara Rogha, a stronghold of former Pakistani Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud, who was killed in a US drone strike in August.

Hours later, more missiles pounded militants associated with an al-Qaeda-linked network in North Waziristan, apparently killing seven Afghan Taliban at a house on the outskirts of Miranshah.

The US military does not, as a rule, confirm drone attacks, but its armed forces and the Central Intelligence Agency operating in Afghanistan are the only forces that deploy pilotless drones in the region.

The fatalities are impossible to verify independently because the targets are deep in Taliban-controlled territory.

Islamabad publicly opposes the US missile attacks, with 60 such strikes killing more than 580 people since August 2008.

But the Pakistani government welcomed the death of Taliban warlord Mehsud on August 5.

Rahimullah Yusufzai, an expert on the tribal areas, said that the spike in US missile attacks could show increased cooperation between the two nations.

Criminal

FROM PAGE 16

Bheramara upazila, a top leader of 'Panna Bahini'.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-12 raided a roadside garden at Faizullahpur where some criminals were holding a meeting around 3:00am.

Sensing the presence of Rab, the miscreants opened fire prompting the law enforcers to retaliate that ensued a gunfight.

Asha died on the spot but his cohorts managed to flee the scene.

Rab recovered one rifle, seven bullets, four bombs and two knives from there.

Asha was accused in 13 cases, including nine for murder, police said adding that he went into hiding after his top aide Panna was killed in an 'encounter' in 2008.

He returned to the area recently and was trying to reorganise the gang, police said.

Rid owner

FROM PAGE 1

Rid Pharma Ltd, its directors Begum Sheuli Rahman and Md Abdul Gani and pharmacists Md Mahbubul Islam and Md Anamul Haque.

Rid Pharma's factory at Nandanpur in Brahmanbaria was sealed on July 22 following a directive from Bangladesh Drug Administration.

Three more cases were filed on August 10 against Rid Pharma Ltd in Dhaka, Narayanganj and Sylhet.

Robber

FROM PAGE 16

Following their suspicious movement, local people chased and stopped four of them along with the auto rickshaws and beat them up leaving Harun dead on the spot and three others injured.

Meanwhile, five cops were injured in the same mob attack as they tried to resist the mob.

The injured cops were sub-inspectors Musa Mian, Ramij Ahmed and Arifur Rahman, assistant sub-inspectors Shamim and Nayek Abu Bakkar Siddique of Banskhali Police Station.

Of them, seriously injured Abu Bakar was sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital for treatment while the body of Harun was also sent there for autopsy.

Two single-barrel guns and seven bullets were recovered from their possession, police said.

The arrested robbers were quizzed at the police station.

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Jhau plundering

FROM PAGE 16

committee formed to probe into the felling of Jhau trees on Teknaf beach has already visited the spot, talked to different quarters concerned and prepared a list of the persons involved with the crime. The list of the persons involved includes leaders and workers of ruling AL, Jubo League and opposition BNP.

According to the first information report (FIR), about 200 to 300 workers led by some leaders and workers of ruling party entered the Jhau garden developed by the forest department on about 260 acres land including 50 acres in Katabunia, Kachubunia and Khurer Mukh under Sabrang mouja and felled 17,500 Jhau trees between September 5 and 10. They also took away the trees, the FIR said.

The forest department created the Jhau garden in 1995. On May 20, 1999 the government declared the area as environmentally endangered and banned cutting trees, change of land use and construction of embankment there.

The FIR also mentioned break-up of compensation demanded for different types of loss caused to the Jhau garden.

Teknaf upazila Jubo League General Secretary and Sabrang Union Parishad member Noor Hossain has been made the main accused in the case. Besides, more than 50 leaders, workers and supporters of the ruling party including Noor Hossain's elder brother and Khair Hossain have also been accused in the case.

Other accused in the case include Teknaf upazila BNP Organising Secretary and Sabrang UP member Sultan Ahmed and former member Foyezur Rahman.

BNP leader Sultan Ahmed said, "I was involved with the movement to save the Jhau garden all along. Now they have accused me in Jhau garden destruction case. The masterminds of the Jhau tree

cutting conspiratorially included my name in the case."

AL leader Zahed Hossain said a vested quarter has accused him and his two brothers in the Jhau tree felling case to tarnish the image of the government. He claimed that no one of them was involved with destruction of the Jhau garden.

On September 9, about 200 miscreants cut some 20,000 Jhau trees on 250 acres government land of Teknaf beach. A stir was created when different national dailies including The Prothom Alo and The Daily Star published reports along with pictures on this crime. Prime minister Sheikh Hasina ordered arrest of those involved with destruction of Jhau trees.

A three-member investigation committee led by Chittagong Divisional Commissioner MN Siddiqui visited Teknaf sea beach on September 20. The divisional commissioner ordered the forest officials concerned to prepare a list of those involved with the felling of Jhau trees and file compensation case.

Divisional Forest Officer MA Khaleque said four forest officials including local forest range officer Golam Mostafa have already been suspended for their failure to save the Jhau garden. The forest guards have been alerted so that the miscreants cannot cut the remaining Jhau garden there.

Deputy Commissioner Gias Uddin Ahmed said the 260 acres of land on which the Jhau garden has been destroyed is now under the control of Land Administration.

Police Superintendent Md Sakawat Hossain said the forest department officials conducted an enquiry and later filed a case against the accused. Police will arrest the accused to implement PM's order, the SP added.

Teknaf thana police has already arrested 14 persons involved with cutting of the Jhau trees.

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Sugar price

FROM PAGE 1

It placed nine recommendations including cancellation of the licences of two importers—Joint Trading Corporation and Sheikh Brothers, filing criminal cases against those involved in the manipulation in sugar market and selling of seized sugar in open market as per the government rate.

The probe committee formed to investigate the abnormal price hike of sugar submitted its report at about 5:00pm to the deputy commissioner for sending it to the commerce ministry.

Earlier, head of the committee and Additional Deputy Commissioner (Education & Development) Safina Begum briefed this to journalists at her office.

During the investigation, the committee collected the lists of DOs and found too much irregularities in this regard.

According to the list of Joint Trading Corporation, it had sold 67,460 sacks of sugar to 19 traders in between August 24 and Sept 10.

Of the sacks of sugar, 43,200 were sold to Abdul Wadud and his shop Nawaz Trading while 7,200 to Bagdad Trading of Khulna, 5,400 sacks to Mohammad Mahbub of Khulna, 2,088 to Chattrar Rangan Khundu and 2,880 to Raju Ahmad of Nawapara. The rest of the sacks are yet to be delivered.

One of the committee members said the investigation found that a big amount of sugar was sold to Abdul Wadud, who is the brother of Abdul Wahab, one of the owners of Joint Trading Corporation.

Rab, police, NSI personnel raided three warehouses belonging to Joint Trading Corporation and Sheikh Brothers in Nawapara on Saturday midnight and seized 74,380 sacks of sugar.

BDR jawan

FROM PAGE 16

Hospital sources said Khayer was brought to the CMCH with severe chest pain at about 2:30am where the doctors declared him dead.

This is the third death case of BDR jawns this week.

On Monday, Nayek Nurul Amin, 48, of Patuakhali, died at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital while another BDR jawan Shawkat Osman, 28, died at Mitford Hospital on Sunday night.

DCC engineer

FROM PAGE 16

after the DCC chief engineer's staff officer filed a general diary with Shabbagh Police Station on Sunday in this regard.

Farukh threatened DCC Chief Engineer Brig Gen Abdul Quadir showing off a pistol during a discussion about his promotion on September 27.

After receiving a complaint from the chief engineer, DCC Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka suspended Farukh.

Erratum

In a report headlined "DCC hamstrung by lawsuits" carried in our paper on September 30, it was inadvertently written that "Quadir would be handed over to the Shabbagh police....." The name would be Farukh. We regret the mistake.

BNP pulls

FROM PAGE 1

said at a press briefing at the Gulshan office of party chairperson.

The BSMU authorities on Monday sacked 10 professors and one associate professor, saying that they were not appointed lawfully during the BNP regime.

Mosharraf, also a former health minister, demanded investigation into all irregularities at BSMU from its inception.

"Several hundred doctors have been transferred in last nine months ignoring rules and regulations. Health service is almost damaged due to posting of junior and inefficient doctors in place of experienced persons," he said.

Rejecting the allegation of appointment of doctors on partisan basis during the BNP-Jamaat regime, he said those 11 doctors got appointment according to the rules and procedures of the university.

Mosharraf alleged that the government has also removed experienced doctors from Dhaka Medical College Hospital, National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease and Chest Diseases Hospital.

He said it is the responsibility of the government to ensure health service for the people. "I hope the government will play a neutral and responsible role in this regard."

He also protested the arrest of former state minister Amanullah Aman.

Party leaders Nazrul Islam Khan, Selima Rahman, Mirza Abbas, Rizvi Ahmed and Mizanur Rahman Sinha, among others, were present.

DCC in hibernation

FROM PAGE 16

He mentioned that every day there are around 12 dengue patients in two private city hospitals with which he is linked.

Prof Kaniz Mawla, head of medicine department at Holy Family Hospital, said, "Incidence of dengue is considerably high this year."

On an average, around 15 dengue patients stay admitted to this hospital every day with five to six fresh admissions daily since the end of July.

Ades mosquitoes thrive in clean stagnant water under the air conditioners, in rejected tyres, flower vases and coconut shells.

DCC men do not have access to Ades mosquito-breeding spots inside private houses, the mayor pointed out.

Contacted, Chief Health Officer of the DCC Brig Gen Shawkat Ali said allegations of inadequate larvae killing drive are genuine. "We cannot have any tangible performance in any locality of the densely populated city due to inadequate manpower and required equipment."

The DCC has a total of 600

spray men to cover its 90 wards and Uttara model Town.

Many of the wetlands and other mosquito breeding grounds in the capital are owned by Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk), Public Works Department, Roads and Highways Department, Film Development Corporation, Railway and Dhaka University, sources mentioned.

"We issued a public notice several days back requesting the agencies and institutions concerned to clean up these mosquito breeding grounds," said Shawkat. "We have also drafted letters requesting them again."

The DCC's budgetary allocation for anti-mosquito drives this fiscal year is Tk16 crore. It was Tk 15 crore last year, said Shawkat.

"We have not yet procured larvicide this year as we have a 3,000-litre stock of it procured last year," he said.

Replying to a question, Khoka said larvicide can be procured easily from the government-owned petroleum companies Padma, Meghna and Jmuna.

75 killed

FROM PAGE 1

Rahmat Triyono said, adding the agency did not release a tsunami alert.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii however issued a tsunami watch for Indonesia, Malaysia, India and Thailand, but later cancelled it.

"Up to now we haven't been able to reach Padang, communications have been cut," Triyono said amid fears the death toll could rise sharply.

The quake was felt in the capital Jakarta, 940 kilometres away, and sent frightened office workers streaming out of buildings in nearby Singapore and the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur.

"The shaking was the worst I