

Genie cure

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Seriously burned Rabbi was first taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital and later shifted to the DMCH burn unit on October 24.

Dr Samanta Lal Sen, project director of the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit, told The Daily Star around 40 percent of the boy's lower part was burned. Excessive heat and direct fire had caused serious damage to his body.

Amena Khatun, grandmother of the boy, said, "Wahed told us that Rabbi's headache would be healed if the genie was ousted. He also said the genie would flee because of fire."

Rabbi was first taken to RMCH in the first week of October when he had the headache. Seeing no improvement his family took him to the quack in Sripur village in Bagmara.

Wahed put the boy on the ground and dug a two-foot-deep circling him, on the yard in front of his house. He poured fuel into the pit and put the boy onto it tying him with a banana tree. Then his assistant set fire to

the fuel," she added.
Terrified by that day's experience, Amena burst into tears when she was talking to this correspondent.

"The quack ordered his assistant to hold Rabbi in the fire as long as he (quack) prostrated. My grandson was screaming in pain. But the quack did not allow anybody to touch him saying it was the genie, not Rabbi, that was screaming," Amena continued.

"After a long time the assistant got Rabbi out of the fire. The assistant also suffered burns during the process," she said.
Rabbi's father Md Kawzar, a rickshaw-van puller, filed a case with Bagmara police against Wahed on October 21.

He told The Daily Star the quack had taken Tk 2,000 from them saying he would cure Rabbi.

Harun-ur-Rashid, officer-in-charge of Bagmara police station, said yesterday evening they had arrested Wahed and his assistant and taken the quack on two-day remand.

Stalkers jailed, arrested in several dists

STAR REPORT

A mobile court, led by Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Md Abdur Rajjak, punished two alleged stalkers for teasing school going girls at Santhia upazila yesterday, reports our Pabna correspondent.

Of the accused, Rahul Kumar Sutradhar, 19, of the upazila's Tolot village, was sentenced to four months imprisonment, while Tarek Hossain, 24, of Baghabari village in Sirajganje district, was sentenced to 15 days imprisonment and fined Tk 5,000.

Police and UNO sources said the accused were arrested from the front of Aftab Nagar School yesterday afternoon, where the two were harassing the schoolgirls.

Our correspondent from Kurigram reports, Bhurungamari Police yesterday arrested the alleged murderer of an elderly man who died while protesting the stalking of his granddaughter.

The accused Mostafa, 20, son of Nur Islam of Noleya village, was alleged for strangling Abdus Sobhan, 74, when he (Abdus) protested against the stalking of 14-year old Rujina Akter Rupa.

Abdus's nephew Majnu filed a murder case in this regard, mainly accusing Ripon, 24, son of Kayzar Ali, and Mostafa along with four others.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) Md Kafil Uddin of Bhurungamari Police Station said, "Three of the six accused in the murder have been arrested so far.

Our Satkhira correspondent reports, a case was filed yesterday with Tala Police station accusing Bulu Begum, her son Rabiul Islam, 22, and his accomplice Mizan Sheikh, 19, for allegedly stalking a madrasa student.

The victim's father Abdur Rashid Gazi filed the case accusing the three of harassing his daughter Parvin Akter on her way to the madrasa early yesterday and for injuring his wife when she went to help Parvin.

Police so far arrested Bulu Begum in the case.

'Mugger' killed

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intervened in the middle of a mugging incident hearing the cry for help while a gang of muggers was looting a rickshaw passenger around 1:20am.

Sensing danger, the criminals opened fire on the elite force, which forced the Rab-4 personnel to retaliate, triggering a 'gunfight', the official said.

At one stage, the muggers, except one who was bullet hit, managed to flee the scene, he added.

Later, the Rab personnel caught the alleged one with the above-mentioned pistol with bullets.

He was rushed to a nearby health complex where on duty doctors declared him dead, said the official.

Threat over

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official residence in the city on November 18.

Ramna police on Sunday recorded a General Diary (GD) in this connection and asked Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission to trace the number of the land phone used in the act and provide its call records.

Son of the chief justice received a phone call on Sunday afternoon, read the GD filed by Shiblee Noman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Ramna Police Station.

The caller warned him and also asked to inform his father "not to cross the limit, otherwise the chief justice will have to face dire consequences," stated the GD.

Ramna OC filed the GD after the chief justice's family members informed him about the threat.

Police are yet to detect the callers and the phone number, said Krishnapada Roy, deputy commissioner of Ramna division.

Law enforcers are on the hunt for the persons accused in Molotov cocktail-hurling incident, he added.

Two Molotov cocktails exploded inside the chief justice's residence around 8:30pm on November 18.

Ramna police filed a case implicating four leaders and a son of another leader of the main opposition BNP.

The accused are Moazzem Hossain Alal, president of BNP's youth front Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal; Habib-un-Nobi Khan Soheli, president of the party's volunteers' front Jatiyatabadi Svecchhasebak Dal; Barrister Nasir Uddin Asim, BNP chairperson's human rights affairs secretary; Sultan Sалауддин Tuku, president of BNP-backed student organisation Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal; and Akhter Hamid Paban, son of BNP Secretary General Khandakar Delwar Hossain.

Police suspect the two incidents are correlated.

Khaleda contests

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the same court.

After a brief hearing, Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division Justice SK Sinha yesterday sent the petitions to the full bench for hearings on November 29.

With the latest two, the BNP chief now has four petitions with the Appellate Division in connection with the disputed Shaheed Mainul Road residence, all of which will be heard by the full bench on November 29, as the previously filed two petitions had already been scheduled to be heard on that day.

One of the prior two petitions is for a leave to appeal against a High Court Division verdict which on October 13 upheld the government notice asking her to vacate the cantonment house. The same verdict also allowed Khaleda 30 days to vacate the house.

The other prior petition seeks a stay order on that HC verdict.

Yesterday's contempt of court petition was filed by Khaleda's lawyers against government officials concerned and the Cantonment Board, on grounds that they had "evicted" her from the disputed house on November 13 despite the fact that an appeal from her was pending with the apex court.

Respondents to the contempt of court petition are -- Defence Secretary Khondoker Asaduzzaman; Cabinet Secretary Md Abdul Aziz; Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder; Director of the Directorate of Military Land and Dhaka Cantonment Mortuza Ahmed, and its Deputy Director Md Shafiqul Ahmed; Military Estates Officer SM Imdadul Haque; Chairman of Dhaka Cantonment Board Brig Gen Tanvir Hasan; and Director of

PM urges

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type, is vitally important for finding ways and means of protecting tigers around the world.

Hasina said all the 13 Tiger Range countries are strongly represented here displaying their commitment to protecting this beautiful animal.

She also recognised that in support of the noble efforts of these countries, the World Bank, the Global Environment Facility, the Smithsonian Institute, and other important organisations already launched in 2008 "The Global Tiger Initiative" to double the world tiger population by 2022.

It could also be the beginning of a new era of saving other species and replenishing the Mother Earth with all its natural wonders, she said.

"Let us not forget that human civilisations are a product of a global ecological balance with all species coexisting in harmony and providing resources and essentials vital for our own survival and progress," the premier said.

The PM also requested all not to forget that every species, particularly those endangered as the tiger, is important for its own defined role in the world's ecological system.

"Indeed, all species, including the tiger as well as us, are all linked in a mysterious, miraculous chain," she said.

Hasina described tigers as one of the most majestic and awe inspiring creatures that ever roamed on the face of the planet.

"It is a tragedy that the population of this beautiful animal, over the past century, has been reduced from over 100 thousand to a mere 3,700 worldwide now," she said.

The premier said the cause of its depletion, of course, lies with indiscriminate industrialisation, and unplanned human population growth, which have forced human beings to transgress and encroach on the natural wildlife habitat of the tigers and all other such species.

Moreover, she noted that the growing demand for various body parts of tigers for superstitious cures and usage, their heads and skins for decorating homes have led to their end.

Bangladesh, with 440 Royal Bengal Tigers, has one of its largest populations. Their home is the Sundarbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world with a unique bio-climatic zone covering an area of 6,017 sq km, in southwest of Bangladesh.

As the Royal Bengal Tiger is Bangladesh's national animal, the government has approved a Bangladesh Tiger Action Plan; enacted "Bangladesh Wildlife Conservation Act 2010" with 12 years jail sentence for tiger poaching, and life sentence for second time offence.

She said the government has also approved "Protocol on Conservation of Royal Bengal Tigers of the Sundarbans between Bangladesh and India" to improve cross border wildlife crime control, capacity building, share scientific research, etc.

Hasina said her government approved the WB assisted

Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Shahinul Islam.

The petition stated that the respondents' action to evict Khaleda from the residence disregarded the image, prestige, dignity, and standing of the apex court, which is tantamount to contempt of court, for which they are liable to be punished under law.

It also said their action to "forcibly oust" the petitioner from "her residence" without waiting at least till the hearing date of November 29, was to frustrate and nullify the jurisdiction of the apex court.

The other petition submitted yesterday sought from the court a mandatory injunction on the property which would allow Khaleda to return there. The same petition also sought a status quo on the property so the government authorities could not change or alter the nature and character of the premises of the residence till hearing of the leave to appeal petition.

The respondents to this petition are the defence secretary, cabinet secretary, director of the military land and cantonment directorate, military land administrator of the central circle of Dhaka Cantonment, and the military estates officer of the same.

One of Khaleda's lawyers in the case, Barrister Moudud Ahmed, told reporters that there is an Appellate Division decision barring the government from interfering with any matter of a case which is pending with a court.

Meanwhile, Acting Attorney General MK Rahman told The Daily Star that "relevant authorities" took into possession the disputed cantonment residence after the expiry of the 30-day period given by the HC to Khaleda to vacate the house.

regional project on "Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection" among Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and India.

Besides, the present government has created 76 Tiger Reserve Teams and two Tiger Immobilisation Teams in villages around the Sundarbans to mitigate tiger-human encounters, and held the "Global Tiger Day" on 29 July 2010, for awareness about the animals' predicament, she said.

Later, the prime minister addressed a joint press conference with Vladimir Putin, Nepalese Premier Madhav Kumar Nepal, Laos Prime Minister Bouasone Boupavanh and World Bank President Robert Zoellick.

There, she thanked the Russian prime minister for organising such important summit.

Strike at CNG

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secretary general of the CNG Filling Station and Conversion Workshop Owners Association Zakir Hossain Nayan.

The association decided to postpone the strike programme after a meeting with Petrobangla officials led by its Chairman Hossain Mansur.

The postponement comes after the earlier deadline expires tomorrow.

Senior officials of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company and Energy Division and the association leaders including its President Shafiqul Islam Kamal attended the meeting held at the Petrobangla Building in the capital.

Nayan told The Daily Star that they had given time twice stretching over 50 days to the state minister for power and energy to meet their demands that also include withdrawal of the government order for six-hour closure of the filling stations and installation of electronic volume meters at the CNG pumps.

They also demand the government reduce the energy regulatory commission's license fee to Tk 5,000 from Tk 100,000, re-fix annual renewal fee at Tk 1,000 and exempt the CNG pumps from taking the Environment Department's no objection certificates.

"This is the last that we are giving time to the government. The Petrobangla officials assured us that the issues will be settled once the prime minister comes from abroad," Nayan said.

CNG station owners said one of the their main demands is still unresolved as they have been forced to keep their stations closed from 3:00pm to 9:00pm daily since August 16 in compliance with a government order.

Currently, there are 582 CNG refuelling stations and 170 conversion workshops across the country.

Local govt

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Shushashoner Jonney Nagorik (Shujan), a citizen rights organisation, at Jatiya Press Club. Prof Mozaffer Ahmad, president of Shujan, chaired the roundtable.

The AL lawmaker also revealed the government move to divide Dhaka City Corporation into two parts for which legal process is being taken care of. He, however, did not give any details to that end.

The speakers at the roundtable demanded all local government elections to be held as early as possible. The said the ruling Awami League in their electoral pledges stressed the need for strengthening local government bodies but after assuming power they were acting against it.

M Hafizuddin Khan, chairman of Transparency International Bangladesh and vice-president of Shujan, blasted the government for delaying the city corporation and local government elections.

"Instead of strengthening the local government bodies, the government is establishing prime minister-based government system," said Khan.

Local government expert Prof Tofail Ahmed also criticised the government for acting against the local government as did its predecessors.

Prof Mozaffer Ahmed said the time has come to hold the local government elections without any delay.

The parliament on April 6, 2009 passed the bill to revive the Upazila Parishad Act 1998 allowing lawmakers control over the crucial tier of the local government bodies. The lawmakers applauded the revival of the act while proposal for amending it got toned down due to fierce opposition by the MPs.

WB funds

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The assurance came when the WB chief called on the premier at her cottage yesterday morning, on the sidelines of the on going Tiger Summit in St Petersburg.

Thanking the WB president, Hasina told him that construction of the Padma Bridge will have to start soon, saying it was her party's electoral commitment.

She requested Zoellick to release the WB's pledged funds soon, so that construction of the bridge can start before the arrival of the monsoon season.

The WB has pledged to provide \$1.5 billion out of the total project cost of \$3.9 billion for the Padma Multipurpose Bridge.

During the meeting, Bangladesh's socio-economic and infrastructure development, as well as climate change and its adverse impacts on Bangladesh were discussed.

The PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad briefed newsmen after the meeting.

The WB president appreciated Bangladesh's performances in disaster management, macroeconomic management and the concept of Digital Bangladesh, alongside programmes to implement the vision.

He also praised the government's various steps in facing up to the adverse impacts of climate change.

Zoellick also lauded Sheikh Hasina's pragmatic leadership.

The premier informed the WB president about her government's different steps to face climate change, particularly recovering the navigability of its rivers, by undertaking capital dredging projects.

She also mentioned highlights of her government's 134 projects to face climate change. On electricity, Hasina told the WB president that Bangladesh is trying to overcome the electricity crisis through regional cooperation.

Besides, she informed Zoellick that the present government has installed some power plants, with more to be set up.

On Agriculture, Hasina informed Zoellick that since assuming power, the government has given subsidies to the agriculture sector, and as a result, food production has increased. She said Bangladesh is advancing fast towards attaining universal food security.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, State Minister for Environment and Forest Hasan Mahmud and Ambassador at large M Ziauddin were present at the meeting.

It's 3G time

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Telenor is the majority shareholder in Grameenphone, the country's largest mobile operator.

Baksaas, also chief executive officer of the Norway-based company, stressed the need for an investment-friendly regulatory framework.

He said it is important that the telecom operators participate in the upcoming licence renewal process.

"Back during the 1990s, the government here issued the licences with a very negligible rate of fees, and the telecom industry in the following years experienced a boom in its penetration and coverage", he continued.

"Keeping that in mind, the regulators should come to negotiate with the operators regarding the licence renewal and in offering the 3G spectrum solutions.

"Looking into Bangladesh, this country has a huge investment potential but the platform for investment also needs to be understood," Baksaas said.

"Given the huge investment that has already been done, licence renewal is something the international investors are looking forward to and it must also be made to ensure rapid 3G roll-out."

The Telenor chief, however, sees no possibility of the latest 4G technology being introduced here anytime soon.

"Technology is an evolutionary process. So, once you have a rich 2G platform, you can move forward to 3G, and once you have a rich 3G platform, you can move forward to 4G.

"Surely, in Bangladesh, we cannot leapfrog to 4G from 3G technology because it requires far too long time until the broad market is ready for 4G. Make 3G an enriched platform with wide and deep services with good coverage in both rural and city areas," he said.

Highlighting further growth areas for the operators, Baksaas pointed to the need for greater

Hasina talks

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Hasina said more than 40 percent power plants in Bangladesh had been constructed by the assistance of the Russian government.

She also expressed her willingness to sign a long-term agreement on food grains and fertiliser.

Putin said the issues of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant and long-term agreement on food grains and fertiliser would be discussed at the earliest.

Hasina invited the Russian premier to visit Bangladesh. Putin accepted the invitation.

The prime minister paid glowing tributes to the 40 Russian soldiers who died while de-mining the Chittagong Port after Liberation war, 1971.

Hasina expressed her gratitude to the Russian government for their support during the war.

She also sought cooperation from the Russian government for training of the defence personnel and in gas exploration. Hasina said Russia and Bangladesh are working together against terrorism.

William, Kate

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Prince Charles and Diana nearly three decades ago.

"The venue has long associations with the royal family -- it is in many ways the royal family's church -- and of course with Prince William personally," said Jamie Lowther-Pinkerton, private secretary to the prince.

The imposing gothic abbey has been the British monarchy's coronation church for centuries. Queen Elizabeth II also married Prince Philip at the abbey in 1947.

The date and venue were revealed just under a week after the second-in-line to the throne officially revealed his engagement, capping a romance that began at St Andrews University in Scotland nearly eight years earlier.

In what the prince said was a way of giving a posthumous role to his mother who died in a car crash in Paris 13 years ago, he also revealed that he had given Kate his mother's diamond and sapphire engagement ring.

The wedding has given Britain a boost as it battens down the economic hatches ahead of harsh budget cuts aimed at cutting the country's huge deficit, and with its armed forces mired in a tenth year of war in Afghanistan.

Mindful of the economic circumstances, Lowther-Pinkerton said the costs of the wedding would be paid for by the royal family and Middleton's parents.

"All parties involved in the wedding, not least Prince William and Miss Middleton, want to ensure that a balance is struck between an enjoyable day and the current economic situation," he said.

"To that end the royal family and the Middleton family will pay for the wedding."

internet penetration as access to broadband in the country is fairly low.

"The introduction of 3G would also help this cause by facilitating multidimensional benefits in terms of accessing information, education, health and financing facilities," he said.

Oddvar Hesjedal, CEO of Grameenphone, said, "Although, the 3G technology would be introduced in Bangladesh at a later time, we would offer the latest version and services at a low price to assure the greater accessibility and affordability of the common people."

The world's leading mobile operator, Telenor now operates in 11 countries with 195 million subscribers. Its subsidiary Grameenphone has around 44 percent share of the local telecom subscriber base.

Stampede kills

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disaster and ordered an investigation as television footage showed relatives weeping over bodies of the dead piled one on top of the other.

"This is the biggest tragedy in more than 31 years after the Pol Pot regime," he said, referring to the Khmer Rouge, whose agrarian revolution from 1975-1979 killed an estimated 1.7 million people in Cambodia under the command of Pol Pot.

He declared Thursday a day of mourning.

The narrow bridge connects Phnom Penh to the man-made Diamond Island, also known as Koh Pich, a commercial park that opened this year. Private interests, along with municipal and national authorities, organised events including a music performance and trade fair as part of the annual Bon Om Touk water festival.

Government spokesman Phay Siphon said some people crossed over a larger vehicle bridge on the opposite end of the island. Many of those people attempted to leave by walking back to the mainland over the pedestrian bridge, where they ran into revellers crossing in the opposite direction.

He said police were unable to control the large crowd. "We deployed a lot, but couldn't respond quickly," he said.

The tragedy raised questions about why so many people were allowed to enter such a confined space.

Ahead of the festival, authorities predicted about 2-million people would flock to Phnom Penh, nearly doubling the city's population. Revellers traditionally gather on the riverfront to take part in festivities such as dragon boat races and fireworks.

Organisers should have foreseen the danger of holding events for the first time on an island with such limited access, said Yim Sovann, spokesman for the opposition Sam Rainsy Party.

Hun Sen ruled out terrorism as a cause for the catastrophe, which took place on the third and final day of the festival, the biggest carnival in a city that was for years starved of entertainment as it recovered from years of war and isolation.

sparked calls for William and Kate to ascend directly to the throne -- leapfrogging his less popular father Prince Charles and his second wife Camilla a constitutionally problematic arrangement.

Four newspaper polls at the weekend showed that a majority of Britons would like to see him become king when Queen Elizabeth II dies and thought that he would be a better monarch than the 62-year-old Charles.

Amid an outpouring of national mourning in Britain after her death, Diana's funeral was held at Westminster Abbey, with pictures of William and his younger brother Harry sadly watching her coffin beamed around the world.

The shadow of Diana, her famously unhappy marriage and her ceaseless pursuit by the media -- photographers were chasing her at the time of her death -- has hung over her son and his relationship with Kate from the beginning.

William has reportedly taken steps to prepare his fiancée to deal with the glare of the media, as well as with the formality of royal life which Kate at a press conference last week admitted were "quite daunting."

The then-Lady Diana Spencer married William's father Prince Charles at St Paul's Cathedral in July 1981 in a ceremony that drew hundreds of thousands of people into the streets.

But they divorced in 1996 amid admissions of adultery on both sides -- in Charles' case with Camilla.

Public support for the wedding has, however, not extended into a desire for it to receive public funding, with a poll at the weekend found that 82 percent of people said the royals should cover the cost of the event.