

## Four troops killed in attack on Thai school

AFP, Narathiwat

More than a dozen suspected Muslim insurgents attacked a school in southern Thailand yesterday, killing four soldiers and seriously wounding one child, police said.

About 18 gunmen dressed as paramilitaries opened fire on soldiers waiting to escort teachers home in Narathiwat, one of three southern provinces near the border with Malaysia that have suffered nearly eight years of conflict.

Police said one Muslim student, believed to be aged seven, was hit by a stray bullet in the incident, the latest in a series of increasingly brazen attacks by the shadowy militants.

More than 140 teachers have been killed in near daily attacks since insurgents launched an uprising in early 2004, claiming the lives of more than 4,800 people, both Muslims and Buddhists.

## Mamata wins

FROM PAGE 20

Sunday last and the counting yesterday.

The margin of her victory is much higher than by what her party and cabinet colleague Subrata Bakshi had won from the same constituency in April-May when the state had voted for all the 294 assembly seats. The election brought Mamata-led Trinamool Congress-Congress party alliance to power ending 34 years of Left Front rule.

This was the first time that Mamata had contested for and won an assembly seat since making her debut in electoral politics in 1984 when she had pulled off the giant-killing act of defeating former Marxist veteran Somnath Chatterjee from Jadavpur.

The Bhawanipore assembly-by-poll was necessitated following the resignation of Bakshi as legislator to enable Mamata to contest from the seat and enter the assembly within six months of becoming the chief minister as mandated under the Indian Constitution. Mamata took over as chief minister on May 20 this year.

While the victory of Mamata was never in doubt, what was the real point of interest was the margin of the win.

## ISPR clarifies

FROM PAGE 20

reports on the unpleasant incident involving tourists and army personnel on Cox's Bazar beach on September 24.

The ISPR claimed that the news reports were incomplete and exaggerated.

It said an initial probe found that some army members were playing volleyball on Kolatoli beach at about 11:15 am and the ball accidentally hit a woman, who was bathing in the sea.

An army member approached the woman, regretted the incident and returned to his position with the ball. But the woman's brother Hanif Mia got angry about it and hurled abuse at the army members.

At one stage of altercation, Hanif slapped an army member across the face. The army man punched Hanif landing him on the ground.

Hanif was taken to nearby Fuad Al Khatib Hospital for first aid with the help of police.

The matter was later settled in presence of Cox's Bazar police officers, and the tourists involved in the incident did not file any complaint or case.

Some newspapers wrongly reported that the army members harassed the woman and beat up police personnel.

The army has formed a committee to enquire into the incident and take action accordingly.

The ISPR requested all concerned to confirm the authenticity of any news involving the army before publishing it.

## Jagannath shut

FROM PAGE 1

then met the chairmen of 28 departments when the decision to close the university was made. There will be no classes or exams from today but offices will remain open.

In the last four days, only exams were held in the university.

Prof Mezbahuddin said, "As the situation is not under control, we decided to close the university in advance." The institution was supposed to be closed for Durga Puja holidays on October 4.

He said a vested quarter has been trying to mislead the students to destabilise the institution and take advantage of the situation. All teachers and employees of the university have the same demands as the students do, he added.

## 15 university

FROM PAGE 1

University correspondents of different media houses who are also members of a faction of Jagannath University Journalists' Association.

Kotwali police filed a case against around 400 students including the 15 journalists, several leaders of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Islami Chhatra Shibir. Shabbagh police filed the other case accusing around 500 students including Chhatra Dal and Shibir leaders.

A faction of the journalists' association yesterday formed a human chain and held a rally on campus demanding that the names of those 15 journalists, who are also students of Jagannath University, be dropped from the case.

Police, however, say that they have evidence of their involvement in vandalism.

Mohsin Bepari, president of the executive committee of the faction and the Jagannath University correspondent of BSS, told The Daily Star that their rival faction of the association influenced police into implicating the 15 journal-

Golam Mawla Bhuiyan, convener of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, JNU unit, told The Daily Star, "We have no right to stop a movement launched by general students. Rather, we should support them to realise the demands for the university's sake as well as its students."

During the four-day movement, students clashed with law enforcers and vandalised around 50 vehicles in the capital. Police filed two cases with Kotwali and Shabbagh police stations accusing around 900 students, including 15 JNU correspondents of different media houses and top leaders of JNU unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Islami Chhatra Shibir, of vandalism on September 25.

ists. He denied the allegation of journalists taking part in vandalism and said they were there as journalists doing their jobs.

Kotwali Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mohammad Salauddin told The Daily Star that the journalists and leaders of Chhatra Dal and Shibir were implicated based on evidence and proof. "We have photographs and footage in our hands which show them vandalising properties," the OC said.

However, Jagannath University Proctor Ashok Kumer Saha said yesterday, "We would talk to the police high-ups about withdrawing the cases filed in connection with the violence during the students' movement."

Kotwali OC said, "Legally we have no right to withdraw any case. After investigation, we can submit a charge sheet against people involved or a final report if they are found innocent."

He, however, said they would consider the initiative of the Jagannath University considering the overall situation.

## Caretaker govt

FROM PAGE 1

government. This proves that it is possible to hold general elections under an independent Election Commission," said Awami League General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam.

Speaking at a press conference at Awami League President Sheikh Hasina's political office in Dhanmondi, he said the EC will be made stronger by amending some laws. He said his party agrees with the commission's proposal to appoint election commissioners through a search committee.

A proposal in this regard will be placed in the next parliament session, he said.

Ashraf said past records and the verdict of the country's highest court prove that there is no need for the caretaker government system. "So the next general election will be held under a strengthened Election Commission and we hope all political parties will participate in it and it will be an example to all in the world."

Awami League organised the press conference yesterday apparently to respond to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's speech delivered at a grand rally Tuesday.

Ashraf, also the LGRD minister, said Opposition Leader Khaleda tried to mislead people through her speech. He claimed that the rally was organised to protect the two corrupt sons of Khaleda and to foil the trials of war criminals. The Awami League general secretary said it is a shame that a former prime minister's sons have been proved corrupt.

"If anyone thinks that they can obstruct the war-crimes trial by not contesting in polls, their dreams will not realise," he said

pointing to Khaleda's threat to boycott the elections.

On the caretaker government system, he said there is no such system in any country in the world. He asked if the leader of the opposition had forgotten what the last caretaker government had done during its reign.

"How you [Khaleda] and present Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina were arrested? How your two sons and businessmen were arrested and tortured? Did you forget the entire time? Do you want a similar caretaker government back again?" he said.

Ashraf said when the Awami League was agitating for a non-party caretaker government in 1996, Khaleda said there is no neutral persons except "the insane and children". Where will she get a neutral person now, he asked.

On Khaleda's accusation that the law and order is now worse, Ashraf said the situation during the last BNP-Jamaat government was appalling. He said grenades were hurled on an Awami League rally, minorities were killed, bombs were blasted simultaneously at 500 spots, lawyers and judges were murdered, and several hundreds people were slayed in the name of Operation Clean Heart.

He dismissed the BNP's allegation that the government prevented opposition men from joining Tuesday's rally.

Referring to Khaleda's remark on removing the word Bismillah (absolute trust and full faith in Allah) from the constitution, Ashraf said the constitution has Bismillah in the preamble. "BNP has been using religion for politics to rob state money..." Ashraf claimed.

## Navy to buy

FROM PAGE 20

The navy entered into a contract with RUAG Aerospace Services of Germany on June 23 to procure the Dornier 228NG planes, which will be delivered in two years' time.

The jet is a modernised version of old Dornier used in Germany, Japan and Norway and is suited to detect oil slicks and carry out environmental research with sophisticated sensors.

Officials requesting anonymity said as per the deal the bodies of the aircraft would be manufactured by RUAG in Germany. However, the engines, surveillance radar and other major equipment would be produced in the USA.

According to the RUAG website, the deal includes comprehensive training of pilots and ground crew and aircraft maintenance on location. The manufacturer will also ensure supply of spare parts and maintenance for 15 years.

Highly placed sources said the navy had to pick the third lowest bidder to procure the jets, as the two better bidders failed to produce an export guarantee (a government assurance for export) on time.

Earlier, the navy missed a procurement deadline in the last fiscal year due to a similar situation.

The naval force meanwhile purchased two maritime helicopters from Italy in mid-June for routine surveillance, search and rescue. The choppers are attached to BNS Bangabandhu--a frigate with helipad and hanger facilities.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to launch the naval aviation service by the end of this year.

## 5 killed

FROM PAGE 1

assistant marketing officer of the state-run automobile assembling industry; Tofail Ahmed, 32, assistant accountant; Badal Barua, 50, master technician; Ahsan Ullah, 46, a fourth-class employee, and Morshed Alam, 35, the driver of the jeep, died on the spot.

Injured security guards Abdul Berek, 52, and Khayer Hossain, 65, were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital. Their condition was critical, said Majed Sultan, assistant registrar of CMCH.

Blaming the absence of signalmen for the accident, Pragati officials said they (signalmen) often skip duties at the crossing.

Iqbal Hossain, a local boy, however, said the bar on the east side of the level crossing, in which direction the jeep was coming, was not there.

Nurul Gani, a staff of PIL, said the seven were going to Janata Bank, Shitakunda branch, to withdraw cash as the payment of the PIL staff was supposed to be made yesterday.

Meanwhile, the railway authorities formed three separate committees, each comprised of four members, to investigate the accident.

The probe committees, led by Divisional Traffic Officer Zakir Hossain and Chief Operating Superintendent (COS) Belal Uddin, were given three days for report submission. Another committee led by Additional COS (east) Syed Jahurul Islam has to submit a report within 24 hours, railway officials said.

Jahurul said that as per the motor vehicle act 1983, a driver should "first stop then observe and cross the level," but the driver of the jeep did not follow the rules.

He said, "The jeep driver might have thought he could cross the track before the train came."

He, however, admitted that the east gate of the crossing was open as there was no bar.

OC Abu Taher Khan of Chittagong Railway Police Station said police were also investigating the accident. "If we find negligence of anybody we will take appropriate measures."

PIL General Manager Abul Khaer Sardar told The Daily Star that they have also formed a probe committee. After receiving the committee's report, they will give their reaction, he said.

## Hannan submitted

FROM PAGE 1

The judge however asked the bench assistant of the court to keep the papers in the case file.

Tuesday was fixed for charge framing hearing in the case, but the court deferred the hearing date.

After completion of the court proceedings when the judge was about to leave the courtroom, Hannan's lawyer Lutfur Rahman Sheikh placed some papers before the judge.

Among the papers, nine pages gave a description of torture on Hannan during his remand and prayed for withdrawal of his additional statement where he had implicated BNP leaders Tarique Rahman, Lutfuzzaman Babar, and Harris Chowdhury, Jamaat-e-Islami leader Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, and others in the grenade attack with the aim of killing Sheikh Hasina.

At the end of the nine-page application, the name of Hannan was hand written. But there was no other required signature of the authorities of the jail or the court.

Another paper that was submitted along with the nine pages was not signed by Advocate Lutfur but his name was written at the bottom of the paper where he mentioned in a line that Hannan wants to withdraw

his additional confessional statement.

Some legal experts said any detained accused must take permission from the jail authorities or the court before submitting any petition in connection with a case.

Advocate Syed Rezaur Rahman, chief prosecutor in the case, told The Daily Star that if any detained accused wants to submit any petition, he or she must submit it through the jail authorities.

But Hannan's petition was submitted on his behalf without any authorisation from the jail authorities, he added.

He said Hannan could seek permission from the tribunal for submission of the petition, but he did not do that either. So the petition has no legal basis, he said.

Hannan's counsel Lutfur Rahman Sheikh however said his client filed the petition properly. But, he did not give any satisfactory answer to the question about whether Hannan signed the petition.

Court sources confirmed yesterday that no legal procedure was followed in submitting the petition.

Hannan first gave a confessional statement on November 1, 2007 disclosing Hujji's involvement in the grisly grenade attack on August 21, 2004 on an Awami League rally.

## Khaleda makes Jamaat smile

FROM PAGE 1

abroad, she said.

BNP distanced itself from its main ally Jamaat since the debate in the December 2008 parliamentary election. It had a lukewarm response when the government cracked down on the Jamaat leaders.

Since the crackdown in the middle of last year, five senior leaders of Jamaat including its chief Motiur Rahman Nizami and Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, and BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury were arrested.

The embattled Jamaat then turned to BNP for launching a joint movement. But BNP did not respond, and Khaleda reportedly refused to meet Jamaat leaders.

In a change of mind, BNP agreed to hold Tuesday's rally under the banner of four-party alliance. Jamaat being a major component of the alliance, its leaders shared the same podium with BNP leaders for the first time since the last parliamentary polls.

"What Khaleda Zia said on Tuesday about the trial of war crimes is our victory as well of the people," Jamaat lawmaker ANM Shamsul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday.

Shamsul, also chief of Chittagong city unit of the party, said Khaleda's speech supporting Jamaat's views on the war crimes tribunal will boost the morale of his

party men.

From now on, the alliance will jointly fight the AL-led government, he said.

Shafiqur Rahman, acting secretary general of Jamaat, recently told The Daily Star, "Jamaat wants to wage agitation jointly with BNP to use the later as a shield to protect our leaders and activists from the government's actions."

Contacted yesterday, two members of the BNP national standing committee explained the party's latest stance on Jamaat and war crimes trial.

"We have been observing the government move regarding the trial of war criminals. Now we are convinced that the trial is nothing but the government's strategy to destroy Jamaat and the unity of Islamic forces," said MK Anwar.

The BNP chief's speech was in line with the party's changed stance, he said.

BNP's new position, however, disappointed Maj Gen (ret) KM Safiullah and Major (ret) Rafiqul Islam, two war heroes campaigning for the trial of war criminals.

"Khaleda Zia made a historic mistake by supporting Jamaat leaders who committed war crimes during the Liberation War," Safiullah, also a former army chief, told The Daily Star.

He said the government will face more challenges to the trial as BNP has publicly

opposed it.

Rafiqul Islam, also an AL lawmaker, criticised the government for the delay in the trial process. "People may become sceptical about the trial process due to the delay," he said.

Asked about Khaleda's comment on the International Crimes Tribunal, Akbar Ali Khan, a former caretaker government adviser, said, "This sort of statement is unwanted before completion of the trial process."

"It's a premature statement that will politicise the trial process," said Akbar, who is also a freedom fighter.

Khaleda's support for Jamaat leaders has also been criticised by MA Hasan, chairperson of War Crimes Facts Finding Committee.

"This will certainly create obstacles to the war crimes trial process," he said. "She has thrown a challenge to the tribunal."

## 8 die

FROM PAGE 1

of village Kamlabaz under Jamalganj; Ritu Dutta, seven, daughter of Satya Ranjan Dutta and Puja Dutta, nine months old, daughter of Sankar Dutta of Jhanjail village under Tahripur upazila.

The identity of woman, aged around 40, could not be immediately identified.

The local authorities paid the victim's families Tk 5,000 for each death.

## Criminals kill

FROM PAGE 20

eight people injured. The gang took away gold jewellery and Tk 3 lakh before leaving the house.

Police reached the spot around 10:00am and recovered the body of Ilias.

Five of the injured -- Shahidullah, 35, Ali Hossain, 30, Makbul Hossain, 35, Ahsan Ullah, 25, and Nazim Uddin, 40, -- were admitted to Gafargaon Upazila Health Complex.

Saddam Hossain, younger brother of the deceased, said his brother had political enmity with some locals. He, however, did not mention any name.

Agang of robbers beat Ilias mercilessly two years ago. Police arrested the robbers who are now out on bail, added Saddam.

Ilias worked as a personal security assistant to lawmaker Giasuddin Ahmed for about three months after the last general election.

## Police boxes

FROM PAGE 20

Tuesday night and early Wednesday, he added.

The Daily Star on August 1 ran an investigative story revealing how several advertising agencies in connivance with some police officials started setting up unauthorised police boxes on pavements and roadsides to rent out space on those for commercial advertisement.

As many as 350 police boxes have been illegally built in the capital in the last three years with a "noble" excuse that on-duty traffic police could use those for shelter from heat and rain.

To the utter dismay of Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (Desa) and Dhaka Electric Supply Company (Desco), most of these police boxes were illegally connected to overhead power cables with hooks -- a method used by many slum dwellers for stealing electricity in urban areas. Both Desa and Desco are suffering from perennial shortage of power.

Conservancy officials of DCC said they faced resistance from some angry police officials during the demolition drive. "In Panthapath we found three electric fans and lights were fitted in the box," said one official.

Bipan Kumar mentioned that the drive will continue till all the boxes are removed.

## Toxic ship

FROM PAGE 20

The Department of Environment, confirmed the departure of the ship imported by Cosco Shipping, a subsidiary of Beijing-based China Ocean Shipping Company. The company did not obtain the No Objection Certificate from the authorities.

Formerly known as MV Humber and MV Cast Otter, the Asia Union was detected with at least 79 "deficiencies" since 2010 at different ports. It reportedly contains hazardous substances including asbestos, polychlorinated biphenyl, toxic paints and chemical residues that have adverse effects on humans, wildlife and the environment.

The Daily Star on Friday reported the imminent arrival of the ship, whose movement is monitored by international maritime watchdogs.

As soon as the ship reported its arrival at 3:30am on Monday, the port authorities ordered it to stay out of the port, which is 5.5 nautical miles (nearly 10km) from Patenga, Captain Nazmul Alam, deputy conservator of Chittagong port, told The Daily Star.

Sources in the ship breaking industry said most of the importers do not comply with the law because they can manage the authorities.

India, China, Pakistan and Bangladesh are the leading ship breaking countries in Asia. Bangladesh is considered a dumping ground for toxic ships for its lax laws.

The authorities granted dismantling more than 100 ships in ship breaking yards in Sitakunda since the High Court on March 7 conditionally relaxed restrictions on purchase of ships for dismantling.

## Overseas job brokers

FROM PAGE 20

abroad can put his/her personal information, curriculum vitae, national ID number, birth certificate or passport number and photo on the websites --

www.bmet.gov.bd or www.bmet.org.bd. Instantly, the system will verify online the passport or national ID number. If verification online is not possible, the site will give a message. In such a case, the person concerned has to go to the nearest District Employment and Manpower Office along with necessary documents within seven days for verification, bureau officials said.

On completion of verification, the job seeker will be given a password, which will be used to pay Tk 88 to BMET through Teletalk mobile phone, and to download the registration card as a proof of getting registered. The data of the jobseekers will be maintained by BMET, which will have connectivity with the Bangladesh missions abroad.

Foreign employers willing to recruit Bangladeshis workers will have access to required information about them subject to obtaining a password from the Bangladesh missions.

"On selection of candidates, employers will directly approach the Bangladesh missions for recruitment," said Nurul Islam.

Under this system, middlemen will be eliminated from the process, he added.

When private recruiting agencies will manage jobs abroad, they will seek information about the job seekers from BMET.

Side by side with the online registration, the present system of registration of workers for overseas jobs will continue. Moreover, registration of aspirant migrants through the deputy commissioner's offices will start soon, BMET officials mentioned.

All these are aimed to ensure that job seekers go through a disciplined and transparent process, and are not defrauded and exploited, Nurul Islam said.

Contacted, Refugee and Migratory Movements

Research Unit Executive Director Prof CR Abrar hailed the government step, and said it now needs to critically analyse why such database did not work previously.

## Tax return

FROM PAGE 20

bank on Thursday and keeps the money receipt, he can submit the income tax return on Friday or Saturday as the NBR offices will remain open on the holidays.

Meanwhile, various business groups including the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry demanded a month's extension of the time.

No decision was taken in this regard until yesterday, said NBR officials. The deadline may be extended for seven days, which the NBR will decide after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina returns home.

Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to return today after attending the 66th UN General Assembly in New York.