

Pakistan battle kills '1 soldier, 25 insurgents'

AFP, Peshawar

Dozens of militants ambushed Pakistani troops yesterday, killing a soldier and sparking clashes that left up to 25 insurgents dead in the Taliban-infested tribal badlands, officials said.

Members of the Frontier Corps paramilitary were attacked while driving through the Mamuzai area of Orakzai, the stronghold of Hakimullah Meshud, the leader of the nebulous Pakistani Taliban faction.

The were ambushed at around 7:30am and ensuing clashes lasted around 40 minutes, the official said.

Home financiers

FROM PAGE 20

Although realtors complain about lean periods, the loan providers said there is no dearth of applications.

“The demand for financing has increased substantially,” said Rahaman. He however could not give any statistics.

“Many developers, particularly reputed firms, are still doing pretty good business,” said Eusuf. “Those who have trust-issues, are facing the setback.”

The loan recovery rate is good -- over 98 percent for both the lenders.

Police yet to

FROM PAGE 20

Gazipur on Thursday, a day after he was abducted from the capital's Mohammadpur area.

“We have collected the call list of Nazmul's cell phone to ascertain whether he was kidnapped from Mohammadpur or somewhere else,” Anwar Hossain, sub-inspector of Mohammadpur Police Station, said yesterday.

SI Anwar is investigating the kidnapping incident as a General Diary was lodged with the police station.

As the body was recovered from an area under Joydevpur Police Station, a murder case in this connection might be lodged there, Anwar added.

Meanwhile, a S Kamruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Joydevpur Police Station, said “We contacted with Nazmul's family in Jhikorgachha for the sake of investigation. They informed us that they are now busy with burial and will contact us later.”

Nazmul's eldest son Sadman Alvi Rifat told The Daily Star over the phone from Jhikorgachha that his father was buried yesterday afternoon, and they were not in a state to contact the police for filing cases.

OC Kamruzzaman said they were carrying out investigation but none was detained in connection with the killing.

War heroes

FROM PAGE 1

wheel chairs and educational materials at the function. The 10 freedom fighters were also honoured in the programme attended, among others, by teachers, cultural activists and local representatives.

The freedom fighters urged all, including their comrades of the Liberation War, to come forward and work for the development of the special-needs children to ensure their freedom.

Abducted girl

FROM PAGE 20

Family sources said Shrabanti used to live at her grandfather's house close to her school.

On Monday she took an examination at the school. On her way back home, family relative Kalim Uddin along with some other youths forcibly took her to a microbus and fled the scene.

Later the abductors phoned her family members and demanded Tk 6 lakh as ransom. Around 6:30am yesterday police recovered the body tied in a sack. Talking to The Daily Star, victim's father Rabiul Islam said he could not meet the ransom demand as he is a poor man. He demanded exemplary punishment to the killers.

Law enforcers suspect terrorists killed Shrabanti and dumped her body under the bridge on Thursday night.

A case was filed with Jhenaidah Sadar Police Station in this regard.

18 kids aspiring

FROM PAGE 1

three groups -- A, B and C. The draw of group A and C will be held on December 26 while of group-B the following day.

The written test for group-A will be held tomorrow while for group-B on December 19 and group-C on December 20. Every school will arrange the test in its own facilities.

The list of schools under group A, B and C are incorporated at the end of this report.

Between December 5 and 13, a total of 69,767 forms had been sold against 7,551 seats in 24 public schools of the capital, said Prof Shafiqur Rahman, director of DSHE.

Each form was sold at Tk 100, he said, adding that last year the number of forms sold stood at 72,416.

Outside Dhaka, the district committees, upazila committees and school managing committees of state-run schools will conduct the lottery as per their own schedules.

The lottery system for admission was introduced last year in the government high schools that have the elementary level. A few private schools in the capital had already been practising the system.

On Thursday, the government brought the admission to Class-I in all private schools under the lottery scheme. However, for enrolment in Class-II to -IX in public or private schools, students have to sit for a 100-mark written test on Bangla, English and Mathematics.

Viqarunnisa Noon School, a private school, will hold the admission lottery today from 8:00am. Likewise, Motijheel Ideal School will also hold the draw today for the first time.

The other private schools

in the capital have already finished distribution of forms and interviews to verify students' age. They will hold their admission lotteries on December 18 and 19.

Group-A Govt Laboratory School, Mirpur Govt High School, Motijheel Govt Girls' High School, Khilgaon Govt High School, Islamia Govt High School, Nawabpur Govt High School, Mohammadpur Govt High School and New Govt Girls' High School.

Group-B Motijheel Govt Boys' High School, Narinda Govt High School, Govt Muslim High School, Banglabazar Govt Girls' High School, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Govt Boys' High School, Govt Bigyan College High School, Dhanmondi Govt Girls' High School and Dhanmondi Kamrunnessa Govt Girls' High School.

Group-C Dhanmondi Govt Boys' High School, Armanitola Govt High School, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Govt Girls' High School, Tikatuli Kamrunnessa Govt Girls' High School, Tejgaon Govt Girls' High School, Dhaka Collegiate School, Gonobhaban Govt High School and Tejgaon Govt High School.

GRADES	FORMS SOLD
I	27,934
II	8,613
III	9,163
IV	2,981
V	2,899
VI	10,818
VII	1,839
VIII	2,146
IX	3,374
Total	69,767

5 abducted

FROM PAGE 1

seven bodies amid allegations that some of them had been picked up by plain-clothes personnel of law enforcement agencies.

Fishermen in Barguna on December 11 came across at least seven bodies floating in the deep sea, about 160 km southeast of Pathorghata upazila in the district.

Meanwhile, family members of the Faridpur victims at a press conference on Thursday said they were frustrated at the police failure in rescuing their boys. They demanded that the police “act faster”.

Rafiqul Islam, nephew of Rubel Kha, said at the press conference that one Nirob of Algardia village under Nagarkanda upazila called Sobhan over the phone around 2:30pm on December 6, asking him to go to Maligram Bazar.

As Sobhan along with Rubel, Belayet and Fayeze reached there, the gang hustled the four in a microbus.

Informed by Fayeze over the phone, Kiyum, accompanied by Asad Sikder, rushed to the scene to rescue them, Rafiqul added.

But they, too, were forced in the microbus, Asad, who was dropped near Bakhunda on Dhaka-Barisal highway two hours later, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Aged around 35, the six kidnappers, including the driver, were wearing black coats, Asad said, adding that the microbus drove towards Faridpur town.

On picking them up, he said, the abductors blindfolded all but him. When he protested and demanded to be released, the kidnappers punched him in the face and other parts of the body.

Asad, a rural medical practitioner, claimed the kidnappers freed him as he pleaded for his life.

Rubel's mother Rashida Begum told reporters that the abductors demanded Tk 10 lakh in ransom for the five, which they could not manage.

Dadon Fakir, officer-in-charge of Bhanga Police Station, said the missing youths might be members of local groups that cheat people over the phone, and that they might have been kidnapped by rival groups.

Victims' family members, however, said their boys were

never involved with those groups.

Locally known as “Welcome Party”, members of these groups call people identifying themselves as officials of mobile phone operators. They then tell the receiver that he has won a lottery. But to get the prize money, he should send a certain amount of money to a certain mobile number.

On receiving the money, the gang, which has been operating in the area for several years, sells the SIM card to telephone recharge shops, police said.

Contacted for comments about the abduction, Additional Superintendent of Police of Faridpur Bijoy Basak said, “We've names of four people, including Nirob, who might be involved in the abduction. We're trying our best to arrest them.”

Jyoti world's

FROM PAGE 20

AFP: “She's 62.8 centimetres. She was measured three times over the last 24 hours as height can vary slightly according to the time of day.

“Doctors measured her in our presence at three different times, both standing up and lying down. We took an average.”

Amge, who is currently also the world's shortest teenager, wept with joy as she was presented with a certificate watched by her father, Kisan, 55, and mother, Ranjana, 50.

The teenager, wearing a traditional sari, said: “I'm very happy to get this record.”

Molloy said he was honoured to witness the record: “It's such a symbolic record and one of the most popular.

“I've worked at Guinness World Records for eight years and I feel quite proud that I was the one to oversee the presentation of the certificate.”

Amge, who has a form of dwarfism called achondroplasia that has restricted her height to that of an average four-month-old baby girl, has just finished her high school exams.

She has expressed hopes of becoming a Bollywood actress, her father said.

The previous holder of the world's shortest living woman title was 69.49-centimetre-tall (two foot, three inch) Bridgette Jordan, from the US state of Illinois, Molloy said.

Administrator

FROM PAGE 1

“The appointment of district council administrators is absolutely undemocratic and unconstitutional. Local government bodies have to be run by elected representatives, but the government violated this constitutional provision,” he told newsmen after placing floral wreaths at the grave of party founder late president Ziaur Rahman.

The government has already violated the constitution by splitting Dhaka City Corporation into two and appointing administrators to the corporations, mentioned Fakhrul adding, it has repeated the same thing regarding the district councils.

“The nation is observing the Victory Day today [Friday] and taking oath to establish democracy in the country by ending the present suffocating situation,” noted the BNP leader.

He also alleged that BNP chairperson's motorcade to the National Memorial was halted for a long time. “The leader of the opposition could not pay respects to the martyrs properly due to the mismanagement of the authorities.”

Senior BNP leaders led by Chairperson Khaleda Zia placed floral wreaths at the grave of Zia and offered Fateha.

Earlier the party chief paid homage to the martyrs of Liberation War at the National Memorial at Savar. Leaders and activists of the party's front and associate bodies were also present.

The government on Thursday appointed 61 district council administrators, most of whom are local leaders of the ruling Awami League.

McKinsey

FROM PAGE 1

consultant for many of the world's influential businesses and institutions, has done a case study that reviews Bangladesh's garment growth formula. It predicts that the country's apparel exports will double by 2015 and nearly triple within a 10-year horizon. The report, prepared in collaboration with the Bangladesh German Chamber of Commerce and Industry and made available exclusively to The Daily Star, explores what it takes to be the next big destination for global buyers. Watch out for the full report on Monday.

People join

FROM PAGE 1

formed on the Court Road of the city as part of a series of demonstrations.

Jui's husband Rafiqul Islam, 25, an expatriate worker in the UAE, hacked off her right hand with a machete on December 4 as she wanted to pursue studies defying her husband's objections.

Rafiqul is now behind bars.

Jui, a college student, was taken to her Narsingdi home after receiving treatment in the capital's Orthopaedic Hospital.

Meantime, Narsingdi lawmaker Nurul Islam Hira yesterday visited Jui's residence to express his sympathy and gave Tk 10,000 to the ill-fated girl.

Hundreds of people are thronging Jui's residence every day to express empathy with her.

Gaddafi's

FROM PAGE 20

Mobile phone footage showed both alive after their capture. The former Libyan leader was seen being mocked, beaten and abused before he died, in what NTC officials said was crossfire.

The UN Security Council referred Gaddafi's crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators to the ICC in February and authorized military intervention to protect civilians in March. The ICC indicted Gaddafi, his son Saif al-Islam and the former intelligence chief for war crimes.

Saif al-Islam is now in the custody of the Libyan authorities who have said they plan to try in him in Libya instead of handing him over to The Hague-based ICC. Moreno-Ocampo has said this was possible.

Moreno-Ocampo has also said he was investigating allegations that the anti-Gaddafi forces and Nato were also guilty of war crimes during the civil war.

3 Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 20

including attempt to murder and obstructing public servants in discharging their duties besides offences under the Arms Act and the Foreigners Act.

“The prosecution has been successful in establishing and proving its case beyond any shadow of doubt for commission of offences under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, the Arms Act, the Foreigners Act and also under the Explosive Substances Act by accused Sagir for which offences these accused persons are held guilty and convicted,” the court said.

According to the prosecution, on a tip off that three

illegal Bangladeshi immigrants were to visit a South Delhi area to commit a crime, the police had constituted a team to nab them.

As the police team waited at a check post, it found the trio coming on a motorcycle, said the prosecution, adding that the three opened fire on law enforcers when police tried to intercept them.

The prosecution said Sagir also pulled out a hand grenade from his pocket and tried to remove its pin to hurl at the police officials.

But the officials subdued and arrested the three, police said, adding that their statements also disclosed that they were involved in other crimes

The report

FROM PAGE 1

Yesterday as Bangladesh celebrated the 40th anniversary of Victory Day the BBC ran a special story by Mark Dummett on Anthony's article.

The report “Bangladesh War: The article that changed the history”, drew attention of The Daily Star.

In “Genocide”, Anthony, born July 10, 1928 in Goa and educated in Karachi, wrote about his experience during the ten-day tour to Bangladesh in 1971.

After driving all foreign journalists, Pakistan army arranged the tour for eight Pakistani journalists for spreading the propaganda that peace was returning to Bangladesh following military intervention.

All the invited journalists, except for Anthony, helped spread the propaganda as set by Pakistan military.

Anthony's writing has become one of the evidences of military atrocities during the Liberation War and the role of collaborators like Ghulam Azam, against whom the prosecution has placed 52 war crimes charges to the International Crimes Tribunal.

Major Iftikhar went on describing how after much searching in Hajiganj he had discovered twelve Hindus hiding in a house on the outskirts of the town.

He was one of several officers assigned to “kill and burn missions” across the East Pakistan. “Now Major Iftikhar was on the second part of his mission: burn,” reports Anthony.

Mainly accompanied by Rathor, Anthony talked with a number of senior military and civil officers in Dhaka and Comilla during the tour and escaped to London from Pakistan to get his article published in The Sunday Times.

“We are determined to cleanse East Pakistan once and for all of the threat of secession, even if it means killing of two million people and ruling the pro-vince as a colony for 30 years,” Anthony quoted senior military and civil officers in Dhaka and Comilla as saying.

“For six days as I travelled with the officers of the 9th Division headquarters at Comilla I witnessed at close quarters the extent of the killing. I saw Hindus, hunted from village to village and door to door, shot off-hand after a cursory “short-arm inspection” showed they were uncircumcised. I have heard the screams of men bludgeoned to death in the compound of the Circuit House (civil administrative headquarters) in Comilla.”

Anthony described how all the killing and arson were

carried out in cold blood by the Pakistan military.

This was genocide conducted with amazing casualness, he wrote. “Sitting in the office of Major Agha, Martial Law Administrator of Comilla city, on the morning of April 19, I saw the off-hand manner in which sentences were meted out.”

“On April 18 Chandpur was deserted. No people, no boats. Barely one per cent of the population had remained. The rest, particularly the Hindus who constituted nearly half the population, had fled,” wrote Anthony.

The Sunday Times article also described how fake rallies were arranged in one incident by Lieutenant Javed of the 39 Baluch, who gave a bearded old man 20 minutes to gather a crowd and speak on camera asserting that military has saved Pakistan. The gathering was also asked to stage the scene of procession chanting slogans like “Pakistan Zindabad!”

“I think that in reality there is no contradiction in the Government's East Bengal policy. East Bengal is being colonized,” he wrote after giving details how fast the 25,000 Pakistan military was brought to Bangladesh by Air with the determination to eliminate all enemy.

“This is not an arbitrary opinion of mine. The facts speak for themselves.”

He also explained how Bangalee officers were also being weeded out of sensitive positions in the civil and foreign services. “All are currently being subjected to the most exhaustive screening.”

The article said for several weeks president Yahiya Khan and Lt-Gen Tikka Khan had been trying to get support from East Pakistan collaborators.

“The support forthcoming so far has been from people like Moulvi Farid Ahmad, a Bengali lawyer in Dacca, Fazlul Quadeer Chaudhary and Professor Ghulam Azam, of the Jamat Islami, all of whom were soundly beaten in the General Elections last December.

“Bengalis look with scorn on the few who collaborate. Farid Ahmad and Fazlul Quadeer Chaudhury are painfully aware of this. Farid Ahmad makes a point of keeping his windows shuttered and only those who have been scrutinised and recognised through a peephole in the front door are allowed into the house.”

Major works of Anthony include The Rape of Bangladesh (1972) and Bangladesh: A Legacy of Blood (1986). He broke the news in 1979 that Pakistan has devel-

in Delhi and Haryana states.

During the trial, the accused admitted they were citizens of Bangladesh but claimed false implication by the police.

The court, however, said the witnesses in the case were reliable. “During the course of cross examination of the material witnesses, the defence counsel did not even give any suggestion as to why they were falsely deposing against the accused.”

“There is absolutely no material or evidence on record to show that the prosecution witnesses had any reason to falsely implicate the accused,” the judges said.

oped nuclear weapons.

This valiant journalist passed away in 1986.

In Bangladesh, of course, he is remembered more fondly, and his article is still displayed in the country's Liberation War Museum, says BBC.

“This was one of the most significant articles written on the war. It came out when our country was cut off, and helped inform the world of what was going on here,” says Mofidul Huq, a trustee of the museum.

“His mother always told him to stand up and speak the truth and be counted,” Anthony's widow, Yvonne Mascarenhas, recalled. “He used to tell me, put a mountain before me and I'll climb it. He was never daunted.”

Cost of living

FROM PAGE 20

“I used to take tea with some snacks twice a day in a shop near my office. But to balance my income and expenses, I have recently stopped this daily habit,” he said.

He does not eat any food at the office now, except his homemade lunch.

Traders in the city's kitchen markets cited the hike in fuel prices as the reason for daily essentials getting costlier.

The rise in petroleum prices has had a knock-on effect on the prices of essentials as the transportation costs for goods have increased significantly.

Edible oil refiners have hiked the price of a five-litre bottle by Tk 10, said Abu Bakkar, a salesman at Altaf Store of Chawkbazar kitchen market.

The prices of different varieties of rice have also increased by Tk 2 per kilogramme, he added.

Abdul Aziz, a vegetable trader, said the price of almost every vegetable has increased by Tk 2 to Tk3 per kg after the fuel price hike.

According to Chittagong University teacher Dr Mainul Islam, installation of quick rental power plants -- run on diesel and furnace oil -- is putting pressure on the country's economy.

The government imports petroleum at a higher rate, but sells it to the plants at a much cheaper rate, pointed out the teacher of economics.

He suggested the government should cut import taxes on diesel and kerosene to check the price spiral of essentials.

On November 10, the government increased the fuel prices by Tk 5 a litre to reduce subsidy on imports of petroleum products.

Petrol now sells for Tk 86 per litre, octane Tk 89, diesel Tk 56, kerosene Tk 56, and furnace oil Tk 55.

Amir Hossain Amu

FROM PAGE 1

“When they saw that people rejected Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia's call for stopping the war crimes trial, they hatched a new conspiracy to mislead people about the trial and their 1971 atrocities.”

The issue of war crimes that Jamaat committed in 1971 must be settled by legal means, said Amu, an organiser of the Liberation War.

Harun-Ar-Rashid

FROM PAGE 1

“Many people were killed many women humiliated and many lost family members at their hands in 1971. How can we forgive them [Jamaat leaders] on their behalf!”

If Jamaat men had offered apology in 1972 or '73 the victims and their families could have considered it, said Harun, a veteran freedom fighter and secretary general of Sector Commanders' Forum.

“Now they are asking for forgiveness as they have their back against the wall with the start of war crimes trial,” he said, adding that the trial must be held.

Menon

FROM PAGE 1

them or not,” said Workers' Party President Menon.

Jamaat leader Ghulam Azam audaciously said they did not do any wrong during the Liberation War, and now they are offering apology. “So, what is their official stance?” asked Menon, also a lawmaker.

Sultana Kamal

FROM PAGE 1

“It is another crime to ask the people whom they tortured and repressed to forget the past without apologising to them.”

Jamaat had never sought clemency or admitted their crimes committed in 1971, said Sultana Kamal, also former adviser to a caretaker government.

Perpetrators of crimes such as murder, rape, looting and arson during the Liberation War must be tried. “We do not think that revenge is the driving force behind the trial. Rather, it must be held to heal the wounds.”

Priyabhashini

FROM PAGE 1

years, said Ferdousi Priyabhashini, a victim and survivor of 1971 war crimes.

They took the lives of 30 lakh people, and violated hundreds of women, burnt village after village, and trampled on human rights by every means possible.

“Allah will not forgive them, let alone humans,” said Ferdousi, a noted sculptor.

If they really want people to forgive them, why didn't they ask for it in these years? she questioned.

There is no scope for forgetting or forgiving them, she said.

“Who will forgive them? I don't think anyone has the right to forgive them for what they did in the past.”

Dr MA Hasan

FROM PAGE 1