

UN chief pledges combat troops to DR Congo

AFP, Kigali

UN chief Ban Ki-moon pledged yesterday that UN troops will be in place within "one or two months" to battle armed rebels in the Democratic Republic of Congo's volatile east, as he toured the flashpoint city of Goma.

Ban's visit came after three days of sometimes deadly fighting between rebels and government forces that ended a precarious calm spell in the mineral-rich east of the country, an area gripped by conflict for more than two decades.

The latest bout of fighting near Goma, which was briefly seized by the M23 rebel group in an armed uprising last year despite the presence of a large UN peacekeeping force, has sent thousands of people fleeing.

But the Congolese army and rebel forces said the situation on the ground on Thursday was calm.

Ban later travelled to Kigali, capital of neighbouring Rwanda, a nation that plays a key role in the region, and has been accused by the UN of backing M23 fighters, claims it denies.

Ban had said earlier this week that deployment of a UN intervention force made up of about 3,000 African troops should be accelerated in view of the fresh unrest.

On Thursday, the UN chief gave a firmer deadline, saying: "It will arrive (in) about one or two months."

The force made up of Tanzanian, Malawian and South African soldiers was approved by the UN Security Council in March as its first ever "offensive" peacekeeping brigade.

It will join the 17,000-strong peacekeeping force -- the biggest currently deployed in the world by the UN -- already in place in DR Congo, but it will have an additional mandate of fighting and disarming the rebels.

The latest unrest was unleashed barely a week after the first troops from the UN "offensive" brigade arrived in the east, an area rich in minerals including gold and coltan, which is used in cell phones and other electronic equipment.

EU warns

FROM PAGE 1

They expect an investigation to be considered if Bangladesh is found to be in serious and systematic violation of the principles laid down in these conventions.

Following the recent fires and building collapse at factories in Bangladesh, the MEPs called for justice for victims and EU action to prevent similar events in future.

They want the Commission to promote responsible business conduct among EU companies operating abroad and ensure strict compliance with all legal obligations in the areas of human rights, labour and the environment, according to the EU parliament website.

The resolution insists that those responsible for the collapse of the Rana Plaza, the Tazreen factory fire or any other fire should be brought to justice, that the victims should have full access to the justice system, and that a financial compensation plan should be established.

MEPs recognise the importance of the recently finalised Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh between the trade unions, NGOs and some 40 multinational textile retailers and call on all other relevant textile brands to support this effort.

The action plan adopted in early May with a view to reforming the labour laws is also a welcome measure, say MEPs.

However, they want the government and the relevant judicial authorities to investigate allegations that the national building regulations were not implemented due to collusion between corrupt officials and landlords seeking to reduce their costs.



The Objet1000, a top of the line 3D printer from stratasys, makes a wheel.

The magic of 3D printing

LIVESCIENCE.COM

The cost of 3D printing has long kept the technology in a select few hands, but all that is changing as 3D printing blossoms into a full-fledged trend.

This June, Staples will start retailing a consumer 3D printer, the Cube 3D Printer, for \$1,299 -- not cheap, but not out of reach of the dedicated techie, either.

A working gun

Last year, Cody Wilson, a radical libertarian/anarchist from the University of Texas' law school, announced plans for printing a gun.

In early March, Wilson and his team achieved their dream, successfully testing the "Liberator" on a Texas firing range. Except for a

firing pin made from a metal nail, the gun is made from plastic pieces printed on an \$8,000 Stratasy Dimension SST 3D printer. The gun successfully shot a .380 caliber bullet, but exploded when its creators tried to modify it to shoot a larger 5.7x28 rifle cartridge.

A make-it-yourself violin

DIY violin-maker Alex Davies used 3D printing to make a plastic form for the violin's body, which he and his team then covered in newspaper and glue. A piece of cardboard made the neck and some picture-hanging wire served for strings.

A dead king's face

After discovering the skeleton of long-lost King Richard III under a parking lot in Leicester, England, archaeologists turned over

the skull measurements to facial reconstruction expert Caroline Wilkinson of the University of Dundee. Wilkinson and her colleagues sculpted computerised flesh to computerised bone and then 3D printed the resulting bust -- a life-like look at a man dead more than 500 years.

Human stem cells

Don't expect to see this in Staples anytime soon, but scientists have developed a 3D printer for stem cells.

The device works by creating uniform droplets of living embryonic stem cells, which are the cells present in early development that are capable of differentiating into any type of tissue. The printer is so gentle that it can squirt out as few as five cells at a time without dam-

aging them.

A bionic ear

The bionic ear, made from calf cells, a polymer gel and silver nanoparticles, can pick up radio signals beyond the range of human hearing.

To make the ear, the researchers printed the gel into an approximate ear shape and cultured the calf cells on that matrix to create something appropriately biological.

Your very own fetus

Japanese company Fasotec can take magnetic resonance images (MRI) of a developing fetus in the womb and convert them into a 3D-printed paper-weight of your fetus in white plastic, surrounded by a clear plastic tummy.

Five climbers feared dead on Nepal mountain

AFP, Kathmandu

Five climbers, including the first Hungarian to scale Mount Everest, are missing and feared dead on Nepal's treacherous Kangchenjunga mountain, tourism officials said yesterday.

The climbers -- two from Hungary, two from Nepal and one from South Korea -- went missing on Monday afternoon as they attempted to climb the 8,586-metre (28,169-foot) peak, the officials said.

"We are not sure what caused their disappearance -- it could be an avalanche or a fall," Dipendra Paudel, an official at Nepal's tourism ministry, told AFP.

Kangchenjunga, which lies to the east of the world's tallest peak, Mount Everest, is the world's third-highest

Strawberry

FROM PAGE 20

"Farmers in the area used to cultivate tobacco on 5-7 hectares of land, but after seeing Faruk's success, most are now eager to grow strawberries," said Kazi Ramij Ahmed, plant production officer of Rangunia upazila agriculture office.

Gauri Bhattacharjee, Caritas field officer in Rangunia, echoed Ahmed's view.

"Some farmers approached us for assistance. We expect at least 15 of them will switch to strawberry cultivation this year."

Meanwhile, James Gomes, regional director of Chittagong, told The Daily Star that they had long been encouraging farmers to grow vegetables and farm fish, instead of cultivating tobacco.

"Faruk's success has made our job a biteasier."

According to upazila agriculture offices in Chittagong, there are success stories like that of Faruk in the district, which have inspired many farmers to try their luck in strawberry cultivation this year.

Income rises

FROM PAGE 20

The income this time has come from agricultural land, house rent, shrimp enclosures, Khaleque's remuneration as the KCC mayor, his wife's remuneration and allowances as an MP.

The value of Khaleque and his wife's property, both movable and immovable, was worth around Tk 95.85 lakh in 2008.

The property included cash, money deposited with his and his wife's bank accounts, money investment in 'sanchoyapatra' and fixed deposit.

In 2013, the value of movable property of Khaleque and of his wife has stood at around Tk 4.9 crore, and immovable properties worth around Tk 4.62 crore.

The movable property includes money deposited with Khaleque and his wife's bank accounts, money invested in stock market, money fixed deposited with his and his wife's bank accounts and interest from postal fixed deposit.

While the immovable property includes some 23 bighas of agricultural land obtained from his father, five-storey building, money invested in the shrimp enclosure and money shown as instalment for Razuk Purbachal project against a piece of land.

Moreover, the couple has three cars, 25 tolas of gold, valuable furniture, electronic goods.

Justifying the increases in income and property over the years, Khaleque, also Khulna city unit Awami League president and the ruling 14-party alliance-backed mayoral candidate, recently told The Daily Star that it was legal and his business had increased.

On the other side, the BNP-led 18-party alliance-backed candidate Moniruzzaman Mony's annual income has decreased to Tk 2 lakh in 2013 from Tk 8 lakh in 2008, according to the affidavits submitted to local EC.

Contacted, Moniruzzaman Mony said his income had decreased as he had been counting losses in his business for the last four years.

mountain and straddles Nepal's border with India.

The climbers were last seen at a level of 7,800 metres, Paudel said.

"There is a very slim chance of their survival," he said.

The missing men were

identified by Nepalese tourism authorities as Zsolt Eross, 45 and Peter Kiss, 27, of Hungary, South Korean Park Nam-Su, 47, and two Nepalese guides Bibash Gurung, 24, and Pho Dorchi Sherpa, 23.

Khaleda warns

FROM PAGE 1

on the formation of an election-time non-partisan neutral government, which will hold a free and fair election in which all parties will take part.

The BNP national standing committee, the highest policymaking body of the main opposition party, made the appeal last night through a press release.

In response to ruling party claims that the BNP was engaged in a conspiracy to oust the government by using Hefajat-e Islam on May 5, the BNP standing committee said, "the BNP does not believe in hatching conspiracies to oust a government or in any violent activities."

"With the silly excuse that the government might fall if Hefajat-e Islam was allowed to continue with its programme until the next morning [May 6], a barbaric crackdown was carried out against its followers late at night [early May 6] which the BNP standing committee cannot support."

On May 5, Hefajat held a rally at Shapla Chattar in the capital. Following daylong violence in the area, law enforcers moved in after midnight and dispersed the agitating Hefajat men. Hefajat Secretary General Junaid Babunagari in a confessional statement recently said the BNP had funded the agitation programme to topple the government.

The BNP committee yesterday observed that the govern-

ment wanted to wipe out democracy through an undeclared introduction of one party rule in the country.

"And to achieve this [the government] have snatched away the democratic right to hold rallies and meetings through a foggy and illegal order for an indefinite period," said the press release signed by the BNP chairperson's adviser Shamsuzzaman Dudu.

With BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in the chair, the national standing committee had sat for a meeting Wednesday night at the opposition leader's Gulshan office.

KHOKA DENIES

BNP Vice-Chairman Sadeque Hossain Khoka yesterday dismissed allegations of his having facilitated the Hefajat-e Islam rally on May 5 in Dhaka city.

In a press statement, Khoka said Hefajat's Secretary General Junaid Babunagari's "so-called confessional statement" linking him and the BNP-led 18-party alliance to the Islamist group was entirely false and concocted.

He claimed that the opposition alliance had no organisational or idealistic connection with Hefajat. "No one in the party was liaising with them [Hefajat]," he further said.

"I'm not personally acquainted with Babunagari. I have only seen him in the media," said Khoka, the former mayor of Dhaka city corporation.

Govt plans to filter

FROM PAGE 1

vendors last month through its website. Nearly two dozen companies have submitted their offers for the job.

Through the expression of interest, BTRC seeks a solution to keep Bangladesh safe from harmful internet content and material that threaten national unity and solidarity, and are derogatory to religious beliefs, or are obscene, indecent and morally inappropriate.

A BTRC official claimed that the move was being made to prevent online propaganda using religious sentiments, false pictures and news to trigger unrest in the country.

In the last few months, the Jamaat-e-Islami and the pro-Jamaat student body Islami Chhatra Shibir's online propaganda successfully instigated countrywide violence, the official said, adding that such filtering would be able to prevent such ploys.

However, the move actually stemmed from search-engine giant Google's refusal to take down the trailer of a religiously sensitive film from its website Youtube.com. Bangladesh even asked Google to install a mirror server for Bangladesh nine months ago so that such videos could be filtered out.

BTRC Chairman Sunil

Kanti Bose said when Google refused to set up a mirror server to block Bangladeshis from accessing the much talked about film clip of "Innocence of Muslims" that criticised the prophet Mohammad (pbuh), the government had to block Youtube.

At that point, the BTRC took the initiative to set up a filtering system.

Bose admitted that the Internet Safety Solution could become a tool of any non-democratic or autocratic government to take away freedom of speech.

He said, "The BTRC will not allow misuse."

He claimed that all data would not be monitored. "It will not harm the free flow of internet," he added.

Internet technology expert Sabir Ahmed Sumon said one can use safety solutions for good and bad purposes. And of course, it will hamper a free flow of internet, he said.

Another expert noted that it would be a costly filtering system which might affect common users and not those who spread propaganda. "People [who spread propaganda] always find a way of overcoming restrictions," he said.

Govt to bring Khaled's body

FROM PAGE 20

28,000 feet above sea level, where mountaineer Khaled died," he said while talking to The Daily Star at around 10:00pm yesterday.

"We hope to bring the body to Kathmandu on May 30 or 31, and later it will be sent to Bangladesh. The government will bear all the expenses," Hossen added.

The country's first Mount Everest conqueror Musa Ibrahim last night said two Bangladesh mountaineers - Reaz Ahmed and Mir Shamsul Alam Babu -- had already reached Kathmandu to coordinate the task of bringing Khaled's body back to Dhaka.

Musa and Khaled's elder brother Shakhwat Hossain said officials at the Bangladesh Embassy in Nepal had contacted them and informed them about the government initiative to bring the body back.

Khaled died on Monday while descending from the highest peak of the world.

Meanwhile, at a memo-

rial meeting yesterday, family members of Khaled demanded state recognition of his becoming the fifth Bangladeshi to conquer Everest.

"We demand that the government recognise Khaled as a Mount Everest conqueror," said Shakhwat Hossain, adding that he had died after completing his mission to the summit of Everest.

Various mountaineering organisations, including the Everest Academy, North Alpine Club Bangladesh and Dhaka University Mountaineering and Adventure Club jointly organised the remembrance meeting at the Russian Cultural Centre in the capital.

Addressing the meeting, several co-mountaineers and friends of Sajal said he had died a victor's death on Everest, which Khaled had said was a holy place.

They also prayed for the salvation of the departed soul of Khaled.