

Sons receive award for Humayun

PM distributes nat'l film award

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the filmmakers to tell the stories of the country's glorious Liberation War, brave acts and sacrifices of the war heroes.

"We have some demands. We want to see our films depicting the sacrifices and achievements of the nation in the great Liberation War," she told a function at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Information ministry organised the programme to distribute the National Film Award-2012 among the winners.

The PM hoped that the national film awards would encourage creative, talented and patriotic filmmakers, singers and artists to come forward in making healthy films in the country. She asked filmmakers to produce life oriented movies.

The government has announced the films and their related activities as an industry, while the 3rd of April has been declared as the National Film Day to make the people interested in the film issue, she mentioned.

Hasina stressed the need for using latest and modern technology in making films and said her government would provide all out cooperation and support to this end.

She announced that she will bear all the medical expenses of ailing eminent actor Khalil Ullah Khan for the rest of his life.

Chaired by Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu, the function was attended, among others, by Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Ministry AKM Rahmatullah.

The prime minister handed over the awards to 23 film artistes and technicians in 24 categories for their outstanding performances. She also witnessed a colourful cultural programme presented by eminent artists of the country.

The recipients of the National Film Award-2012 are: Lifetime achievement - Khalil Ullah Khan, best movie - Uttarer Sur, best producer - Faridur Reza Sagar, best director- Humayun Ahmed (Ghetuputra Kamola), best story writer - Humayun Ahmed (Ghetuputra Kamola), best script writer - Redwan Rony (Chorabali), best screenplay - Humayun Ahmed (Ghetuputra Kamola), best actor - Shakib Khan (Khodar Pore Ma), best actress - Joya Ahsan (Chorabali), best supporting actor - ATM Shamsujjaman (Chorabali), best supporting actress - Lucy (Uttarer Sur), best villain - Shahiduzzaman Selim (Chorabali), best music director - Imon Saha (Ghetuputra Kamola), best composer - Imon Saha (Pita), best lyricist - Milton Khondokar (Khodar Pore Ma), Best Playback Singer (Male) - Palash (Khodar Pore Ma), best playback singer (female) - Runa Laila (Tumi Asbe Bole), best makeup man - Khalilur Rahman (Ghetuputra Kamola), best photographer - Mahfuzur Rahman Khan (Ghetuputra Kamola), best costume designer - S M Moinuddin Fuad (Ghetuputra Kamola), best sound engineer - Ripon Naag (Chorabali), best editor - Salimullah Soli (Ghetuputra Kamola) and best art direction - Kolontor and Uttom Guho (Raja Surjo Kha).

Criminals target

FROM PAGE 16

"I stopped my motorbike, and they surrounded me, held a gun to my head and asked me to hand over the money," said Gias.

The youths made off with the money via Motijheel TNT colony on their getaway motorbike, he said.

"I was going to Motijheel to deposit the money because it was Saturday and most banks are closed. On weekdays, I deposit the money at the branches closest to my home," said Gias.

He alleged that the mugging was planned since his trips to the bank was routine.

At least three such agents of a bKash distributor were mugged last month.

On April 13, Enamul Islam was stabbed and Tk 8.5 lakh was snatched away from him in Bashabo just as he was getting on to a rickshaw.

On the same day, Rana Mia, 22, was ambushed and mugged in Turag while he was collecting money from retailers.

A few days before that, another distributor was shot right in front of a bank in Mirpur and Tk 10 lakh was taken away.

In February in Barisal, muggers shot an agent and took Tk 60 lakh.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over the best director award to the sons of late Humayun Ahmed during the National Film Award 2012 ceremony at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre yesterday.

Borders 'essential' to any Mideast peace deal: US

AFP, Washington

US Secretary of State John Kerry believes sketching the borders of a future Palestinian state and agreeing to security arrangements for Israel will be "essential" if peace talks resume, the top US negotiator has said.

In his first public comments since negotiations collapsed last month, Martin Indyk candidly described the behind-the-scenes atmosphere between Israelis and Palestinians and voiced hopes the talks would resume soon.

Speaking late Thursday at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy think tank, Indyk said although the two sides both showed "flexibility" it was clear they "do not feel the pressing need to make the gut-wrenching compromises necessary to achieve peace."

In the end despite nine months of "serious and intensive negotiations," Indyk said it was "easier for the Palestinians to sign conventions and appeal to international bodies in their supposed pursuit of justice."

"It is easier for Israeli politicians to avoid tension in the governing coalition and for the Israeli people to maintain the current comfortable status quo," said Indyk, a former US ambassador to Israel.

"If we, the US, are the only party that has a sense of urgency, these negotiations will not succeed."

Should the peace talks resume however, Kerry believes both sides

must work on the future contours of a Palestinian state and security arrangements for Israel alongside the other core issues such as refugees and Jerusalem.

Indyk pointed to "unprecedented" work by General John Allen on how to secure Israel's security, as well as a willingness by the Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas to put the security of a future Palestinian state in US hands to overcome Israeli distrust.

"Once a border is agreed each party would be free to build in its own state," Indyk argued, highlighting the tensions caused during the past months by announcements of Israeli plans for more than 12,800 new settlements in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem.

The top US negotiator, who spent hours locked in rooms pouring over documents, voiced concern that the settlement movement could one day "drive Israel into an irreversible binational reality."

A "binational" state -- as opposed to a two-state solution -- would enshrine the current status quo in which Jews and Arabs live in one state, with many demographers predicting that in only a few years the number of Palestinians will surpass the Jewish population.

"Rampant settlement activity -- especially in the midst of negotiations -- doesn't just undermine Palestinian trust in the purpose of the negotiations; it can undermine Israel's Jewish future," Indyk warned.

US urges Pakistan to probe lawyer's killing

AFP, Washington

The United States Friday called on Pakistan to investigate the killing of a lawyer shot dead for defending a university lecturer accused of blasphemy under strict laws against defaming Islam.

"We were deeply saddened by the murder of Rashid Rehman, an attorney and human rights defender in Pakistan," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters.

"We encourage Pakistani authorities, as we have in similar cases in Pakistan and around the world, to swiftly investigate this crime and bring to justice those responsible."

Gunmen stormed Rehman's office late Wednesday and started firing indiscriminately, killing him and injuring two others, in the latest high-profile killing linked to Pakistan's controversial blasphemy laws.

DMCH doctor beaten up

FROM PAGE 16

stopped them and asked whether they were doctors at the DMCH. Being sure of their identities, the attackers swooped on the physicians with hockey sticks, added the OC.

Mominul suffered injuries in his head and legs while his colleagues managed to escape the attack.

Protesting the assault, the interns staged demonstrations around 11:30pm and demanded removal of hospital Director Brig Gen Mostafizur Rahman.

Psaki spoke as Deputy Secretary of State Bill Burns was visiting Pakistan Friday at what he said was a "moment of opportunity" in US-Pakistan ties.

Burns met with Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif as well as other top ministers and advisors and General Raheel Sharif, the new head of the nation's powerful army.

"After some difficult years, our relationship is on a positive trajectory -- a trajectory we hope to not only maintain, but accelerate," Burns said in a statement.

Washington supported the prime minister's bid "to reestablish authority over all Pakistani territory in whatever way Pakistan deems appropriate."

And the US wanted to "especially urge him to sustain pressure on militant groups, deny them a safe-haven, and prevent cross-border attacks," Burns said.

The agitation disrupted emergency medical services at the hospital for about 10 minutes, mentioned Sirajul.

The demonstrators alleged that the director failed to take action following a clash between the interns and students of Shahidullah Hall of Dhaka University on May 6 over using an elevator.

Dr Mushfiqur Rahman, deputy director of the DMCH, said they were trying to negotiate with the agitating interns to resolve the issue.

Landslide kills 3 of a family

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Three members of a family were killed as a large chunk of earth from a rain-soaked hill fell on a house in Borolekha upazila of Moulvibazar early yesterday.

Police recovered the bodies of Rajesh Bauri, 35, his wife Manjures Bauri, 30, and their one-year-old daughter Sima Bauri from Shahbajpur Tea Garden in the morning.

Rajesh and Manju, both tea garden workers, used to live in Shahbajpur

garden.

Tofail Ahmed, superintendent of police in Moulvibazar, said the landslide happened anytime after the torrential rain began in the district around 8:00pm on Friday.

Meanwhile, at least 24 houses of Purba Satchhari village in Sadar upazila went into the Manu river during the heavy rains.

Some electric poles were also damaged, disrupting electricity in some parts of the district.

Govt should go, says BNP

FROM PAGE 1

achieve narrow political interests, BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said it was rather the government that was trying to hide the administration's involvement with the incident.

"Many abductions and killings have happened across the country since the Awami League government came to power through 2008 election. Many people fell victim to forced disappearances. Narayanganj incident is one of them," Fakhrul told reporters after paying tributes to late president Ziaur Rahman at his grave in the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

Meanwhile, the BNP standing committee last night decided that the party will hold a rally in the capital's Demra on May 17 protesting the gruesome seven murder in Narayanganj. BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will address the rally.

Fakhrul claimed that as the Narayanganj incident was at the forefront of people's mind, the government was trying desperately to hush up this sensational incident.

The government, he added, at first should investigate the alleged involvement of a minister's relative and some lawmakers in the gruesome killings. Without naming the minister and lawmakers, Fakhrul said their involvement with the incident is now clear.

Not a lost case

FROM PAGE 1

Steele said he found most of his highly-placed officers inefficient, and the Biman Board sometimes interfered even in minor issues.

It was not easy to work for Biman with a civil service unwilling to work, said the former managing director.

Steele also couldn't cut down Biman's losses in the current fiscal year.

The losses rose to Tk 148 crore (\$19 million) in the first eight months till February of fiscal 2013-14, exceeding the expected loss of Tk 94 crore (\$12 million) for the fiscal year.

The reason for the soaring losses is a drop in outgoing and inbound passengers from Middle East countries, including the UAE, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, where manpower recruitment remained almost stalled, said Biman officials.

The national carrier also saw a sharp decline in inbound international passengers from November last year to January due to political unrest in the country.

Biman suffered a loss of around Tk

78 crore (\$10 million) in only two months from November to December, Steele told The Daily Star.

Besides, the airline has been incurring losses on the Dhaka-Yangon and Dhaka-Hong Kong routes, and the newly opened Dhaka-Frankfurt route.

It also suffered losses on the Dhaka-Delhi route for around a year, but managed to turn it profitable in March.

The national flag carrier had set a target of around Tk 2,611 crore in revenue from passengers from July last year to February this year.

But it could earn Tk 1,868 crore in the eight months, while the amount was Tk 2,282 crore during the same period of fiscal 2012-13.

Biman officials said the situation started improving from February, as more passengers started travelling to Saudi Arabia to perform Umrah.

As the airline's peak summer season started from March, Steele hoped Biman would get close to their expected loss by the end of the current fiscal year in June.

Local admins act on two Star reports

STAR REPORT

Following reports published in The Daily Star, local administration in Nilphamari and Jhalakathi yesterday stepped out to save the specially-abled child who used to be kept buried from waist down all day, and detained a man who used children as horse jockeys.

The upazila nirbahi officer of Nilphamari Sadar along with the officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station visited the parents of five-year-old Noimi at Badiar More village. As prescribed by a local quack Kabiraj (herbal medical practitioner), the parents used to keep her in a waist deep hole to cure her of physical imparity.

The Daily Star published a report headlined "Living in a hole..." Quack prescribes inhuman treatment for 5-year-old child" on its front page yesterday on this inhuman incident which had been going on for around over three and a half years.

UNO Sabet Ali persuaded the child's parents not to keep her in the hole and got the hole filled.

He assured the parents of all possible help from his part to cure the child through modern and scientific treatment.

The UNO also directed his officials to take steps to ensure that the child gets the government's disability allowances.

Besides, the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) at Savar in Dhaka and Major (rtd) Kamrul, who runs a welfare association in Dhaka, also contacted The Daily Star, expressing their eagerness to help the child, presumably suffering from cerebral palsy.

In Jhalakathi, police arrested a man while he was using children as jockeys for his horses at a race in Labubunia of Rajapur on Friday evening.

On information, a team of police raided the race site and detained Nannu Sikder, said Md Masduzzaman, officer-in-charge of Rajapur Police Station.

The Daily Star on Thursday published a report titled "Horse jockeys at home: Children used illegally in Jhalakathi race" stating how children are being used in this hazardous business in complete violation of laws.

'Guilty' 13 to get

FROM PAGE 16

probe the fraud allegations. The committee, led by Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Zillar Rahman, submitted its report to the minister on Thursday.

The probe body held former state minister for liberation war affairs AB Tajul Islam and 12 others of the ministry responsible for the cheating. It, however, did not recommend any punishment for the officials.

The government, said the report, incurred a loss of around Tk 7.04 crore for making and purchasing of the below par shields. The shields made of wood, gold and silver hardly had any precious metals in them.

Asked what action will be taken against the former state minister, Mozammel Haque said he will talk to the former state minister.

Among the 12 government employees are Liberation War Affairs Secretary Mizanur Rahman, former secretary KH Masud Siddique, Additional Secretary Golam Mustafa, Joint Secretary Abul Quasem Talukdar, Deputy Secretary Enamul Quader Khan and Senior Assistant Secretary Babul Mia.

Golam Mustafa and Babul Mia have been made officer on special duty (OSD), while Abul Quasem Talukdar was made OSD over issuance of fake freedom fighter certificates.

The government honoured 338 foreign friends and organisations with shields and certificates for their outstanding contributions to the Liberation War in 1971.

Graft everywhere

FROM PAGE 16

come to him with money in "the pockets of their punjabis" to bribe him into including their institutions in the MPO, he said.

During the rule of the four-party alliance, once some people of Delawar Hossain Sayedee's constituency came to Bhuiyan with bribes for the job, he continued.

"I rebuked them and drove them out of my room."

The next day, however, Sayedee himself came to his office and told him that the madrasa in question had to be incorporated in the MPO even if it violated the law since it was his election pledge, Bhuiyan continued.

In an area of 10,000 people, one school and one madrasa can be included in the MPO. However, there were already more madrasas in Sayedee's area than necessary. Even then Sayedee wanted another to be in the MPO.

"During inspections, I found a madrasa there which has 17 teachers and staffs but the number of students was less than 17," he said.

The secretary, however, did not mention whether the madrasa was included in the MPO in the end.