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The ex-French president detained for questioning over power abuse
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Funny forest guarding

Ill-equipped, highly inadequate number of guards face a mission impossible

PINAKI ROY
The country's precious forest resources remain largely unprotected due to an acute shortage of manpower and logistic support. Around 1.52 million hectares of forests are being protected by only 1,859 guards, meaning each guard has to watch over an area equivalent to 30 Ramna parks (68.5 acres). As these guards cannot cover such a vast area, the forest department has placed 1,254 boatmen as guards in different outposts.

Even then, a guard has to cover an area the size of 18 Ramna parks. The forest department has around 2,500 firearms for the guards. Ironically, most of the guards do not even have the training to operate these. So, they carry out their duties on foot, armed with bamboo sticks mostly, officials said. As a result, illegal loggers and poachers are stealing trees and killing wildlife at will, and most of the forests, including the Sundarbans, Saatchhari and those in



Argentina needed another Midas touch from Lionel Messi (L) to cross the Round of 16 hurdle against Switzerland. This time the Albiceleste superstar made the vital assist for Di Maria to score the 118th minute winner at Corinthians Arena in Sao Paulo yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



MONEY WHITENING SCOPE

Muhith trashes media reports

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday said media reports on continuation of the scope for whitening black money through investment in real estate were "utter nonsense". "Yes, and I have stuck to my guns. It is rubbish that you have printed ... totally rubbish ... I have not given anything," said a peeved Muhith in response to queries on the scope for legalising black money in real estate. The minister said there was no black money and no scope for whitening black money in the country. It was not him but the income tax law that provides the privilege on condition that one pays the fine.

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MOVE TO GAG PRESS

Govt to revive black law?

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The government contemplates restoring a controversial provision of the Printing Presses and Publication Act, 1973 which would authorise district magistrates to cancel declarations of newspapers for publishing anti-state news or news hurting religious sentiments. Known as a black law in the media, it was used for shutting down many newspapers until the caretaker government headed by Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed scrapped the provision in 1991 following a movement by journalists. Recently, the information ministry formed a committee to review laws related to printing and publishing and recommend necessary changes to make them suited to the times.

The committee, which includes a member from the district administration, so far has held two meetings discussing ways of reinstating the controversial section of the 1973 act, committee sources said. Following the meetings, the deputy commissioner of Dhaka sent a recommendation to the Cabinet Division to restore the provision. The recommendation will be discussed at the three-day DC conference beginning on July 8. A committee member, seeking anonymity, said they might also recommend incorporating a new section in the 1973 act, instead of reinstating of the repelled one. Interestingly, Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu has claimed he had no knowledge of the issue.

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Argentina leave it late

AFP, Sao Paulo
Angel Di Maria's extra-time winner kept Argentina's World Cup dream alive on Tuesday as they scrambled into the quarter-finals with a dramatic 1-0 win over Switzerland. Argentina had failed to muster much by way of chances but just two minutes before the penalty shoot-out, Lionel Messi picked out Di Maria for his priceless strike.

The game started cagily but the closely guarded Messi carved Argentina's first opening when he glided into the box and crossed behind the defence. Messi's glorious flick of the boot left two defenders standing on the right wing but there were nothing more than half-chances in the first 20 minutes.

Belgium beat USA 2-1 to set up a quarterfinal clash with Argentina

Switzerland nearly grabbed an equaliser at the death when Blerim Dzemal's header cannoned off the foot of the post and he sent the rebound wide of the goal. The final result was greeted with an ecstatic roar by the Argentine-dominated crowd as the Albiceleste headed for a last-eight clash with Belgium or USA, who play later. Although cruel for the Swiss, it provided a memorable swansong for their celebrated coach Ottmar Hitzfeld, who is quitting football and learned of his brother's death not long before the match.

It was Switzerland who nearly scored when Shaqiri wriggled into the box and found Granit Xhaka, whose solid shot was blocked on the line by goalkeeper Sergio Romero. Switzerland had an even better chance when Josip Drmic found himself one-on-one with Sergio Romero. But his attempted chip was painfully gentle and lobbed gently into Romero's hands. Soon after the break, Drmic let another golden chance slip when Shaqiri picked him out in the box, but this time

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