

Hasina sees Khaleda's link to BDR mutiny

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday alleged that BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia was involved in the BDR mutiny as she had "fled her house during the mutiny and went underground."

She suspected that Tarique Rahman might also be involved in the February 2009 mutiny as "he had called more than 50 times from London during that time."

The PM was speaking at a programme at her office marking the distribution of financial assistance among the sick, insolvent and injured journalists as well as the family members of some late newsmen.

"The BDR mutiny had started around 9:30am, but the BNP chairperson fled her cantonment house around 7:30am. Why did she leave her house and go underground?" questioned the premier.

Tarique Rahman, added the PM, on that day around midnight London time had "called 40-45 persons". "What was the mystery behind too many phone calls on that day?"

The BNP is still talking about the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Woman kills

FROM PAGE 16
morning before finally delivering a killer blow with her sickle.

"The leopard lunged at me many times and we fought for a long time," she told the channel from her hospital bed in the northern state of Uttarakhand, her arms bandaged and a livid scar across her right cheek.

"I got hold of my sickle and fought with it. That's when the leopard was killed," said the woman, named as Kamla Devi.

Devi, who was having a few years ago, told the Hindustan Times daily she was "terrified" when the leopard attacked, but was determined not to succumb.

"I gathered my courage to fight back. I promised myself that this is not my last day here," she told the paper.

She told AFP from hospital in Srinagar town that she grabbed the ear of the attacking leopard with her right hand and kept swinging at the animal with the sickle in her left.

Hearing Devi's screams for help, villagers of Rudraprayag district came running but the leopard was dead by the time they reached her, witness Jagdish Singh said.

Doctor Rakesh Rawat said Devi's injuries, which include fractured hands and deep cuts on her body, were not life threatening and she was recovering.

Leopard attacks are relatively common in rural areas of India, although it is rare for the leopard to come off worse.

In 2009 a nine-year-old boy in the same state fought off a leopard that had attacked his sister.

The animals are increasingly venturing into populated areas as their habitat becomes depleted.

Conservation group WWF called for better management of forests and other habitats for India's leopard population, which numbered 1,150 at a 2011 census.

Test Vitamin A

FROM PAGE 16
The court came up with the order following a report published in the Bangla daily Kaler Kantho yesterday with the headline "Ebaro onumodonhin A capsule shishuder mukhe (Unapproved A capsules to be administered to children again)".

According to the report, the government in 2012 imported 10 crore of two types (blue and red) of vitamin A capsules and distributed those among children free of cost. But those capsules had not been tested.

Being fed with vitamin A capsules, several children in different parts of the country fell sick, which raised questions about the standards of the capsules.

The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) this year have made a move to collect 3.65 crore vitamin A capsules, the report says.

Referring to the report, judges said children were in a vulnerable situation, and the state was responsible for protecting their lives.

Many children had died after consuming adulterated paracetamol syrup, it said, adding that such incidents would not have taken place had the state machinery taken preventive measures.

Clinical test of vitamin A capsules is mandatory as per the relevant law, judges said.

In the rule, the HC asked the government to explain in four weeks why its move to distribute vitamin A capsules without any clinical test should not be declared illegal.

The health secretary, director general of DGHS and director of the central medicine storage department have been made respondents to the rule.

The court fixed October 20 for giving a further order on this issue.



The BIWTA yesterday removes the soil a grabber had dumped in the Turag at Dhour near Ashulia to occupy the river.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

PM's caution goes in vain

FROM PAGE 1
Officials said some influential land developers had reached an underhand deal with the housing minister, Rajuk Chairman GM Jainal Abedin Bhuiyan, its board member Sheikh Abdul Mannan and town planner Sirajul Islam to secure the approval.

An eight-member technical committee led by Sheikh Abdul Mannan first recommended the destructive plan and then secured the ministerial committee's approval, said official sources.

Rajuk town planner Sirajul Islam is the member secretary of the technical committee.

But the housing minister dismissed the charge that there was a covert deal with land developers. "An Awami League minister cannot enter into any underhand deal."

Filling up of flood flow zones is prohibited in the wetland conservation law passed during the previous tenure of the Hasina government.

Planner-architect Khandaker M Ansar Hossain, who was involved in formulating the DAP as a technical expert, said floodplains were crucial for carrying and containing upstream flood water and conserving environment.

Filling them up will cause severe floods and paralyse normal life and

livelihood of city people. It will block the drainage and transport system, affect human health and prevent groundwater replenishment, he added.

The destruction of the flood zones will badly affect the environment and ecological system, including flora and fauna, displace local communities, break supply chain of crops, vegetables and fish and expedite earthquakes, putting human settlements in danger, said a former top town planner of Rajuk.

Of the approved housing projects, four were proposed by East West Property Development. Three of them are in Keraniganj -- Riverview, Bashundhara Riverview Dakhina and Bashundhara City View -- and one in Savar.

Riverview is proposed on approximately 2,500 acres of flood flow zones, Dakhina on 700 acres and Bashundhara City View on 550 acres. The Savar project on 2,000 acres of flood flow zones is in Birulia, Pipulia, Sarulia, Uttar Kaundia, Bara Kakar, Uttar Ulumora and Chhoto Oalia moujas.

Three schemes of Bangladesh Development Company are South Town proposed on some 1,100 acres of flood flow zone in Keraniganj, East Town on 400 acres of agricultural land

in Madanpur in Narayanganj and North Town on 100 acres of flood flow zone in Tongi.

Eastern Maya Kanon of Eastern Housing is proposed on around 800 acres of flood flow zone in Bilamalia mouja in Savar, where a similar housing scheme, Modhumoti Model Town, was declared illegal by the High Court.

Probashi Polli project proposed on 90 acres of flood flow zone and developed by land filling the Nagda river at Narayankul in Gazipur has also got approval.

In early June, the same ministerial committee endorsed the filling up of extensive flood flow zones in Rugganj and by the Turag river to facilitate *Jolshiri Abashan* for the army and Prottyasha Housing for retired government officials.

None of these projects are allowed under the relevant laws. The High Court in June 2011 declared 77 such projects in and around the capital illegal and asked the government to scrap those and remove all the illegal structures from there.

Asked about the approval, Environment Minister Anwar Hossain Manju, who is a member of the ministerial committee on the DAP, said, "I came out of the meeting soon after it began, as I could sense what was going

to happen there."

Water Resources Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud too left the meeting immediately, he claimed.

Rajuk town planner Sirajul Islam said they recommended housing schemes on flood flow zones as those were already filled up and were no longer flood flow zones. "Besides, there was pressure from the higher authorities."

He, however, denied favouring land developers.

Asked about the alleged underhand deal, Rajuk board member Sheikh Abdul Mannan said, "This is the first time I'm hearing about the deal."

On recommending filling up the designated flood zones, he said, "We may have some failures in this regard."

After repeated calls and several text messages, Rajuk Chairman GM Jainal Abedin Bhuiyan just sent a text message, saying: "In a meeting."

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, said altering the nature of land this way -- like turning a hill into a river or a river into a highland -- is absolutely illegal.

Neither the Town Improvement Act nor the wetland conservation law empowers the technical committee or the ministerial committee to do it, she added.

43 infected with anthrax

Reveal tests in 2 districts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty-three people have been infected with anthrax, a bacterial disease that spreads from cattle, in five villages in Sirajganj and Tangail districts.

On information, medical teams of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) visited the villages Tuesday and found them infected with the disease following tests.

The infected villagers have already been given drugs and there is nothing to worry, IEDCR Director Professor Mahmudur Rahman said yesterday, adding that the medical teams had collected samples from the patients for further tests.

Among the 43 patients, 20 belong to Char Nandigati village under Ullapara upazila in Sirajganj.

A sick cow was slaughtered in the village few days ago, reports our Pabna correspondent.

The other affected villagers are from Koijuri village under Shahzadpur upazila in the same district and Tangail's Ambaria village under Madhupur upazila and Sandalpur village under Dhanbari upazila.

Robber killed in 'shootout'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A robber gang leader was killed in a "shootout" with police in the district's Chatkhil upazila early yesterday.

Khorshed Alam, 42, was chief of "Khorshed Bahini" and son of Abdur Rashid of Badolkot village in the upazila.

Khorshed stood accused in at least 30 criminal cases, including robbery and attacking policemen, according to Chatkhil police.

SM Ashrafuzzaman, additional superintendent of Noakhali police, said acting on secret information, police detained Khorshed from Rugganj in Narayanganj on Monday.

Nasim Uddin, acting officer-in-charge of Chatkhil Police Station, said as per his confessional statement, police along with Khorshed went to a brickfield near Palla Bazaar to recover firearms around 3:00am.

When police reached the brickfield, Khorshed's accomplices started firing at the law enforcers who also returned fire, triggering a "gunfight" between police and the gang.

Khorshed was shot dead on the spot. Police also recovered three arms

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

BCL men fight in presence of AL MP

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

At least 10 Chhatra League activists were injured in a factional clash in the presence of AL lawmaker Jebunnesa Afroz in Barisal city last night over establishing supremacy.

Witnesses said two factions, one led by Jasim Uddin, president of BCL city unit, and the other by Moin Tushar, former joint convener of BCL's BM College unit, were locked in an altercation over beating up of a

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Cops hunt

FROM PAGE 16
Tongi and Ashulia on the outskirts of the capital to arrest a woman who is suspected to have stolen the baby.

The victim's mother Ranu identified the woman from a CCTV footage. Posing as an attendant of an imaginary patient, the woman on August 21 had offered services to Ranu as she was struggling to nurse the twins.

The woman disappeared with one of the infants around 7:30am. The DMCH authorities on the same day filed a case with Shahbagh Police Station in this connection.

"We've collected the cell phone number of the suspect from the hospital authorities. The woman is frequently changing her location in Tongi, Ashulia and Mirpur," mentioned Ferdous, who is also the investigating officer in the case.

Following media reports that the theft had occurred at the DMCH when the CCTV cameras there were not in use, hospital staff were seen setting the cameras in proper positions yesterday.

Meanwhile, tipped off by local people, police yesterday rounded up a woman from Goalghat area in the capital's Wari and recovered a baby boy from her, said Tapan Chandra Saha, officer-in-charge of Wari Police Station.

During interrogation, the detainee confessed to police about buying the baby from his mother for Tk 20,000 on August 18.

A woman from Companiganj in the area was also brought into the police station after the detainee claimed that she had bought the baby from the former to adopt him. The woman admitted selling the baby to the detainee for Tk 20,000.

Dhaka division

FROM PAGE 1
Bangladesh 2010 released yesterday jointly by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), World Bank and United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

The poverty maps, the third of their kind since 2004, were unveiled to facilitate policy makers to identify and monitor pockets of affluence and poverty so that they can better plan resource allocations for faster and more effective poverty alleviation.

"The reason for such large concentration of the poor in these two divisions is the concentration of economic activities ... Poor people migrate to these two divisions looking for work," Zahid Hussain, lead economist of WB in Bangladesh, told The Daily Star after the launch of the survey results.

This migration has, however, created congestion, choking up development of the regions, he observed.

"So it is vital to address the reasons of internal migration," he said, suggesting infrastructure development, empowerment of local government and decentralisation of economic activities to discourage the migration trend.

Over the past one and a half decades, Bangladesh has made significant improvement in poverty reduction, thanks to steady economic growth. Currently, 31.5 percent of a total of 15.68 crore people live below the poverty line. The percentage was 48.9 percent in 2000, according to the BBS.

However, the reduction in poverty did not happen evenly in all the regions, mainly because of unequal economic development.

The Poverty Maps 2010 show that the northern division of Rangpur and southern division of Barisal have the highest poverty incidences at 42 percent and 38.3 percent respectively whereas Chittagong and Sylhet have the lowest at 26.1 percent and 25.1 percent. These figures show the number of poor among every 100 people of these regions.

The maps also show that 10 upazilas of Dhaka division have 55 percent or higher poverty rate while it is less than 4

percent in 10 other upazilas.

In the division, Dhaka district has the lowest poverty incidence, while Shariatpur has the highest.

In Chittagong division, 50 percent or higher poverty rate was found in six upazilas whereas the incidence was below 4 percent in the six others.

While Sylhet is amongst the country's most well-off regions, over 50 percent of the population of Gowainghat upazila live in poverty. Similarly, three upazilas in Khulna division have a poverty rate of 50 percent or above.

In Rangpur division, the incidence of poverty in seven upazilas is more than twice the national average (30.7 percent). Kurigram has been identified as the poorest district in the country with around 63 people among every 100 living in poverty.

Kushtia, on the other hand, is the richest district with 96.4 percent people living above the poverty line.

Of 544 upazilas of the country, 51 upazilas have 50 percent or higher incidence of poverty while 95 have 15 per-

Life stirs in Gaza

FROM PAGE 16
Maariv newspaper.

Some said the two sides agreed to halt their fire out of exhaustion after seven weeks of fighting that claimed the lives of 2,143 Palestinians and 70 on the Israeli side.

Under the deal, Israel will ease restrictions on the entry of goods, humanitarian aid and construction materials into Gaza, and expand the offshore area open to Palestinian fishermen to six nautical miles.

But talks on Hamas demands for a port and an airport and the release of prisoners, as well as Israel's calls to disarm militant groups, are delayed until negotiators return to Cairo within the coming month.

Even ahead of the Cairo talks, Israel staked out a firm stance on how it will approach the upcoming negotiations.

"There will be no port, no airport and no entry of materials that could be used to produce rockets or build tunnels," said deputy foreign minister Tzahi HaNegbi, a close associate of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"That will be our position which we will present at the negotiations in Cairo,"

he told public radio.

Israel has consistently linked Gaza's reconstruction with its demilitarisation, with former national security adviser Yaakov Amidror saying Hamas must choose between its desire to see Gaza rebuilt and its desire to re-arm.

"Either they will give up reconstruction, or if they want it, they have to give up the dream of being a military force on the ground," he told journalists.

Israeli officials were quick to portray the ceasefire as a resounding success which ended in both military and political defeat for Hamas.

"For years Hamas has prepared a number of very big operations for a war against Israel, involving rockets, tunnels and terror attacks and all of these met a crushing response from the IDF (army)," said Netanyahu's spokesman Liran Dan. "Hamas started this (war) with a clear declaration that it wouldn't stop without an end to the blockade, a port and an airport," he told army radio.

"It didn't get anything that it wanted." But Hamas too claimed victory, saying it caused Israel heavy losses, in a reference to the 64 soldiers killed in the fighting in its biggest military loss since 2006.

HC for judicial inquiry

FROM PAGE 16
The magistrate has to submit the probe report to the HC in four weeks.

In the rule, the court asked the authorities concerned of the government and DMCH to explain in four weeks as to why appropriate legal action should not be taken against them for their failure to protect the baby.

Secretary to the Ministry of Health, director general of Directorate General of Health Services, director of DMCH, head of its ward from where the child has been stolen, and its registrar have been made respondents to the rule.

The HC bench fixed October 20 for passing further order on this issue.

The court came up with the order and rule following a report published in The Daily Star under the headline "Baby stealing at DMCH: Culprit fled as CCTV went off" yesterday.

None of the 53 CCTV cameras at the hospital was in use when a baby was stolen on August 21, said the report.

The server station for the cameras remained shut for almost 12 hours from around 9:00pm on August 20, according to hospital employees. And

the baby went missing around 7:30am on August 21, according to the report.

On August 20, Runa Aktar gave birth to twin boys around 5:00am at the hospital.

A woman posing as an attendant of a patient offered her services to Runa as the new mother was having difficulty nursing the twins, the report said.

Citing The Daily Star report, the HC yesterday observed that the child has the right to be protected by the state, but it has failed in this regard.

Two more children went missing from the DMCH during the tenure of its incumbent director Brigadier General Mustafizur Rahman, but no effective action was taken over those incidents.

Mentioning the reported incidents of death of around 2,700 children between late 80s and early 90s due to toxic paracetamol syrup, the court said the state machinery has failed to protect the children and to prevent adulteration of paracetamol syrup.

The HC extended thanks to The Daily Star reporters Shaheen Mollah and Emran Hossain for the investigative report.