

8 more officials

FROM PAGE 1

Earlier, the ACC probed such certificate forgery by three secretaries, one ex-secretary and one joint secretary and found irregularities and violation of Muktijoddha Council Act-2002 in issuing the five with freedom fighter certificates.

Upon receiving the probe report from the ACC on September 8, the liberation war affairs ministry revoked the certificates of Health Secretary Niaz Uddin Mia, Public Service Commission Secretary AKM Amir Hossain, ex-liberation war affairs secretary KH Masud Siddiqui (now OSD), and ex-joint secretary to the ministry Abul Kashem Talukder (now OSD).

The certificate of Molla Waheeduzzaman, former secretary at Prime Minister's Office and now chairman of Privatisation Commission, has been suspended.

The government this year so far has revoked freedom fighter certificates of 182 government officials.

Some public servants obtained fake certificates after the government increased the retirement age of freedom fighters from 57 years to 60 in two phases.

Around 11,000 freedom fighters are now in government service.

'PERFECT' CRIME GONE WRONG

A cow, which went through a fattening regime ahead of the last Eid, is now up for sale at a throwaway price in Nilphamari. It was given the so-called vitamins available in the market and steroids for good measure. But a media campaign on the bad effects of consuming beef of drugged and fattened cows ruined it for some cow fattening farms. Ahead of Eid, people walked by those heavy and large cows and bought the ones they thought were not drugged. A large number of fattened cattle went back to the farm unsold. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



Latif faces another arrest order

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Another arrest warrant for Abdul Latif Siddique has been issued by a Dhaka court in a case filed for hurting Muslims' religious sentiments.

Metropolitan Magistrate Meher Nigar Suchona yesterday passed the order as Latif, who has been sacked from the Posts and Telecommunications and ICT ministry recently, failed to appear before it as per its order issued on October 2.

The warrant was issued four days after another metropolitan magistrate had ordered Latif's arrest in a case lodged over the same issue.

Yesterday, the court came up with the order after complainant Abu Bakkar Siddique, vice-president of Ulema League, submitted a petition seeking Latif's arrest as he failed to comply with the court order.

The court also asked officers-in-charge of Kalihati Police Station in Tangail and Paltan Police Station in the capital to submit reports by November 27 on the execution of arrest order.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

33 killed as 2 buses collide

FROM PAGE 1

With a hand broken, she was undergoing treatment at a local hospital in Bonpara, BBC Bangla reports.

Another survivor Shahinur Islam, who was going to Rajshahi on the Keya Paribahan bus to take the RU admission tests, described another factor that, if true, might have contributed to so many deaths in the accident.

"On impact, some passengers were thrown out the vehicles. Right then, a speeding bus coming from Natore direction rolled over the people, lying on the road," Shahinur, a resident of Kaliakoir in Manikganj's Singair, told The Daily Star while undergoing treatment at Bonpara's Amin Hospital.

Both the buses, carrying around 70 passengers, veered off the road on impact. The battered local bus plunged into the Chalan Beel and the Keya Paribahan bus into a ditch on the other side, according to witnesses.

Fire service personnel and police rushed to the spot, about 25 kilometres off Natore town, and pulled the buses out of the water with the help of locals. Many bodies were trapped inside the wreckage of the buses.

At least 37 injured were immediately taken to different hospitals and clinics in Rajshahi, Bogra and Natore. Conditions of some of them were critical.

A local named Mostafa said four

of a family known to him were among the dead.

Traffic movement on the highway remained suspended for around an hour following the accident, causing tailbacks on both sides of the road that connects a number of northern districts, including Rajshahi city, to the capital.

A three-member committee headed by Additional District Magistrate Mohammad Ali of Natore has been formed to probe the incident and asked to submit its report in three days.

On July 11 in 2011, a truck crashed and flipped over into a roadside ditch in Chittagong, killing 42 children and two others.

As many as 1,261 people have died in road accidents so far this year with 159 casualties, including yesterday's victims, this month alone, according to The Daily Star reports. The actual number is likely to be much higher.

IDENTITY OF THE DEAD

Thirty-one of the victims have been identified. They are:

Labu, 30; Arifa, 45; Rahman, 55; Alal Sheikh, 55; Kohir, 35; Bablu, 45; Sohrab, 45; Quddus, 66; Rabbel, 55; Ebad Ali, 65; Aynal, 55; Rahamat, 50; Jamal, 40; Jofer Ali, 55; Rahman Moni, 25; Azadul Bari, 32; Sharif; Tofazzal; Kismat; Alam Sheikh; Jaan Mohammad; Atahar Ali; Krishnapada;

Rezaul Karim; Hafizur Rahman; Haji Abul Khair; Sheba; Jamal Uddin; Jannatul Ferdousi; Shoilen Tilak; and Hanif Sheikh;

COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS

Meanwhile, the government announced a decision to bear treatment expenses of the injured and provide Tk 1 lakh compensation for each of the bereaved families.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader made the announcement while visiting the accident spot around 12:30 last night.

The decision was taken following the prime minister's directive, he said before setting off to meet the families of the dead from Sidhuli village.

PRESIDENT, PM, BNP CHIEF MOURN

President Abdul Hamid expressed deep shock at the loss of lives in the road accident.

In a condolence message yesterday, he prayed for eternal peace of the departed souls, reports UNB.

In a separate message, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed her condolences to the bereaved families and directed the authorities concerned to ensure proper treatment of the injured.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, in a message, too expressed sympathy to the victims' families.

'Spare parts'

FROM PAGE 16

cell to the size of a fingertip and was able to carry out many of the functions associated with digesting and absorbing food, scientists said.

It is the latest evidence supporting the idea that whole organs, composed of a complex arrangement of specialised tissues, could be made inside a patient's body by exploiting the inherent power of living cells to organise themselves into a fully functioning structure.

In addition to growing human organs from scratch, scientists believe that the technology will produce better laboratory models of diseased tissue for testing drugs, which could speed up the development of new medicines, as well as offering alternatives to animal testing.

The study began by using genetic engineering to convert human skin and blood cells into a type of embryonic-like stem cells called induced pluripotent stem cells.

The stem cells were bathed in growth factors to trigger their conversion to intestinal cells before being transplanted into the kidney capsule of a mouse, where they were fed by a blood supply.

Six to eight weeks following transplantation, the ball of cells was bigger than a mouse kidney and had matured into almost all of the major tissue types found in a fully developed human intestine.

Mugger or enemy?

FROM PAGE 1

sought help from some influential people of Keraniganj. Enraged, SI Anwar summoned my brother to Taltola and shot him twice from close range in the wee hours yesterday."

Two years back, Alam was a chauffeur at Mohammadpur Police Station. SI Anwar was posted at the police station back then, Mostafa added.

Contacted, the police official denied all the allegations.

He claimed they had information that some "muggers" were gathering at Taltola to carry out mugging. As he and his team reached the area, the "muggers" started firing on them, prompting police to retaliate.

At one stage, the criminals started falling back and police found injured Alam lying on the ground, he said.

SI Anwar admitted that he knew the couple and Alam used to drive a car at Mohammadpur Police Station. Police

gave him the job to use him as a source to nab other muggers, he claimed.

He added that Alam's wife in 2012 came to Mohammadpur Police Station and filed a case against her husband for torturing her.

The Daily Star could not contact the wife.

According to family members, the couple has a two-year-old daughter, who lives with her mother in Keraniganj. Shah Alam too lives in Keraniganj but in a separate house.

Before the "separation", the couple used to live at a house in Mohammadpur's Bashbari, they added. The owner of a tailor shop adjacent to the house said a police officer often visited the house.

Biplab Kumar Sarkar, deputy commissioner (Tejgaon division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, told The Daily Star they will form a probe committee to look into the matter.



Shah Alam

Nigeria Ebola-free

FROM PAGE 16

originated in forest bats is the worst on record.

It has killed 4,546 people across the three most-affected countries, Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone and travelers have from the region have infected two people in Texas and one in Madrid.

It was imported to Nigeria when Liberian-American diplomat Patrick Sawyer collapsed at the main international airport in Lagos on July 20.

Airport staff were unprepared and the government had not set up any hospital isolation unit, so he was able to infect several people, including health workers in the hospital where he was taken, some of whom had to restrain him to keep him there.

Lagos, the commercial hub of Africa's most populous nation, largest economy and leading energy producer, would have been an ideal springboard for Ebola to spread across the country.

"Nigeria was not really prepared for the outbreak, but the swift response from the federal government, state governments (and) international organizations ... was essential," said Samuel Matoka, Ebola operations manager in Nigeria for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, which was involved in managing the outbreak, said officials and volunteers reached more than 26,000 households of people living around the contacts of the Ebola patients.

Senegal also declared itself Ebola-free, where one case was imported from Guinea, on Friday.

'STAND YOUR GROUND'

Adadevoh, doctor on call at the First Consultants hospital in Lagos where Sawyer was brought, prevented the dying man from spreading it further, Benjamin Ohiaeri, a doctor there who survived the disease, told Reuters.

Ebola is much more contagious once symptoms become severe.

"We agreed that the thing to do was not to let him out of the hospital,"

NIGERIA DECLARED FREE OF EBOLA

Global toll 4,555 dead As of Oct 14 9,216 cases



Ohiaeri said, even after he became aggressive and demanded to be set free.

"If we had let him out, within 24 hours of being here, he would have contacted and infected a lot more people."

Sawyer was reported only to have malaria, Ohiaeri said. But Adadevoh noticed he had bloodshot eyes and was passing blood in his urine -- telltale signs of hemorrhagic fever. She left instructions by his bed that under no circumstances should anyone let him leave.

At one point, Sawyer ripped off his intravenous tube and a nurse had to put it back, according to a source close to the hospital staff. She later got infected and died. Sawyer then became aggressive and had to be physically restrained.

Ohiaeri said a Liberian government official on the phone had even threatened negative consequences if they did not release Sawyer, saying that holding him was tantamount to kidnapping.

"The lesson there is: stand your ground," he said.

Once the hospital contacted the ministries of health in the state of Lagos and the federal ministry in Abuja, authorities quickly set up and equipped an isolation unit.

Lagos state governor Babatunde Fashola rushed back from a pilgrimage to Mecca to handle the crisis, Ohiaeri said.

Nigeria used an existing health surveillance system for Polio for contact tracing, so was able to trace and isolate Sawyer's primary and secondary contacts quickly. Mobile technology meant live updates could be made to the contact list.

"Everyone played their part. We're so proud," Ohiaeri said.

IFRC's Matoka said contact tracing of suspected cases was key to preventing the disease from spreading into communities where it would have been harder to control.

"It was effective in identifying all suspected cases and keeping watch on them before they developed symptoms and infect other people. We were able to remove people from communities once they showed symptoms and (before they) infect many others," he said.

Even when the virus found its way to the oil hub of Port Harcourt in the southeast, authorities were able to quickly contain it, an example WHO said others should be able to follow.

"If a country like Nigeria, hampered by serious security problems, can do this ... any country in the world experiencing an imported

case can hold onward transmission to just a handful of cases," WHO Director Margaret Chan said in a statement.

For the three impoverished countries at the epicenter of the crisis it is a different matter. According to consultancy DaMina Advisors, Nigeria has one doctor per 2,879 people compared with one per 86,275 in Liberia.

Nigeria's success in preventing the spread of the disease contrasts with its slower and more fractious response to crises such as the kidnapping in April of more than 200 girls still being held by Islamist militant group Boko Haram.

"The approach to Ebola was pragmatic, patriotic and non-partisan," said Lagos-based political analyst and lawyer Emekanka Onyebuchi.

"They put the nation first and this is what we should have done in other areas, like the (kidnapped) girls."

The cooperation between the central government in Nigeria and the opposition-led administration in Lagos state contrasts with the United States, where bickering between Republican and Democrat lawmakers over Ebola has eroded public trust.

Alex Okoh, Nigeria's director of Port health services, said the lesson the United States and other countries can learn from Nigeria is to "put aside the political barriers and focus on the issues at hand".

Officials hope such success stories will change the way the West, where many are currently in the grip of a panic about a disease brought to their shores from "Africa", sees the crisis.

"There is focus on the worst-case scenarios, which again perpetuate the wrong, negative image of Africa as opposed to looking at some of the areas where there has been success," said Abdul Tejan-Cole, a Sierra Leonean who is executive director of the Open Society Initiative for West Africa.

Southwest may turn

FROM PAGE 1

Ganges in 1975, the flow of the river to Bangladesh reduced by around 90 percent, said Prof SI Khan.

Urging the government to protest India's plan, both the experts said Bangladesh should be a party to the UN Watercourse Convention.

The Farakka barrage alone diverted around 40,000 cusec of water from the Ganges to the Hoogly river, reducing the flow of the Ganges downstream known as the Padma in Bangladesh.

The sudden fall in water level caused massive siltation at the mouth of the Gorai, one of the distributaries of the Ganges, and the Padma near Kushtia.

Further diversion of water would affect Gorai's distributaries, including the Kumar, the Kalindi and the Dakua, which have been in a terrible state due to the Farakka barrage.

The reduction in flow of these rivers has been affecting the Sundarbans, and India's new move would eventually destroy the mangrove forest, fear experts.

Salinity has already reached 100 kilometres inwards the coast in the southwestern region. Farmers there cannot produce high-yielding variety of rice in more than one lakh hectares of coastal land. They produce only one variety of rice once a year during the rainy season.

It is causing a negative impact on the region's food security as well as on the farmers' economic condition.

Indian experts, environmentalists and even a Bihar minister have protested the central government's decision to build the barrages.

According to a Times of India report on September 27, State Water Resources Minister Vijay Kumar Choudhary expressed reservations about the Centre's decision to construct barrages across the Ganges.

"Stating that the construction of the barrages across the river would be dangerous for its life, Choudhary said already shoals (stretches of sand

between the river banks) have been formed due to construction of Farakka barrage," reported the Indian newspaper.

"Bihar government has neither been informed about it nor consulted on the matter, even as 450km of the Ganga passes through the state. Already, foreign consultants have been sounded to prepare a detailed project report (DPR) on the proposed Allahabad-Haldia waterway," said the report quoting the Bihar minister.

Indian Finance Minister Arun Jaitley described the 1,620-km national waterway project-1 as "Jal Marg Vikas" in the recent Budget speech and allocated 4,200 crore rupees for it.

In June, the Indian government gave the World Bank a proposal for financing the project. The proposal was based on a study by Danish Hydrological Institute.

The WB responded in July with an offer to provide technical assistance for the initial study, whose outcome would decide investments on the project, says a report by Gopal Krishna of Ganga Protection Committee, a citizens' platform.

"It is quite disturbing that the government has initiated the project without learning the lesson from the failure of the Farakka barrage," mentions the report.

The impact on the entire transboundary Ganges basin must be examined to comprehend the cumulative environmental impact of the proposed project keeping in mind the experience with 2,240-metre-long Farakka barrage, it added.

Leading Indian water expert Rajendra Singh also criticised the Indian government's plan, according to another report on the website of Zee News on August 18.

He cautioned the Indian government over its plan to build barrages, saying it would be disastrous for both Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and for the millions of people living along the Ganges.