



PHOTO: STAR

Forest officials yesterday recovered about 200 pond herons at Paribagh in the capital. The birds had been captured and brought to the capital for sale.

# Illegal, yet on sale

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forest officials yesterday in a drive recovered around 200 pond herons from the capital's Paribagh and arrested one person from the spot for the illegal trade of the wild bird.

A joint team of officials of the Wildlife Management and Nature Conservation Division and Wildlife Crime Control Unit of the forest department along with law enforcers conducted the raid.

The birds were released at the National Botanical Garden in Mirpur later in the afternoon.

Acting on a tip off, the officials conducted a raid on an alley near a CNG filling station at Paribagh around 11:00am and recovered 195 pond herons, locally known as kani bok. Police arrested Mohammed Kayes with the birds from the spot, said Ashim Mallik, inspector of the Wildlife Crime Control Unit.

Kayes, 26, a resident of Bangla Motor, had been involved in the trading of wild birds for long, said Ashim, adding that the offender bought the birds from a wholesale chicken market near Tejgaon Railway Station.

Hailing from Rajshahi, Kayes told The Daily Star that he along with his trading partner Humayun Kabir of Mymensingh was involved in the illegal trade for years.

They sell those birds at prices ranging from Tk 250 to Tk 400 a pair mainly to the city dwellers, he added.

Forest officials said those birds were captured from different wetlands across the country using traps.

Traders sell herons and egrets mainly for meat, said Ashim.

A mobile court led by Sarowar Alam, executive magistrate of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, sentenced Kayes to one year's imprisonment.

## Generators

FROM PAGE 1 Bangabhaban and the Gono Bhaban was restored but it lasted only a few minutes.

The parliament building too was run on electricity produced through generators.

However, no such alternative means of power supply were taken for the staff quarters of the Bangabhaban, the Gono Bhaban and the parliament.

Supply of electricity to the three most important installations of the country was restored around 8:00pm.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia too tasted the fallouts of the blackout during her Natore tour yesterday. She passed about an hour at Natore Circuit House amid alternative power supply. Generators were used to make sure her loudspeakers work during a rally at the NS College ground there.

Addressing the rally, Khaleda did not spare the chance to criticise her political archrival Sheikh Hasina over the latter's claim of having brought about significant improvement in the power sector since she took the helm of the country in 2009.

"Where is electricity generated from your quick rental power plants?" Khaleda teased the PM.

In November 2007, cyclone Sidr damaged the country's electricity distribution system, causing blackout across the country for over 12 hours.

## Bang, it works!

FROM PAGE 16 tumour pressing down on her optic nerve.

But at 24 years old, Reid knelt down to kiss her guide dog Ami goodnight - and hit her head.

She went to bed as normal, but the next morning woke up and could see again.

"Nobody knows what happened or can explain it," Reid, who is now 38, told Daily Mail Australia.

"I can't really find words to describe how it felt - amazing, fantastic. You can imagine not being able to see and then you can, you can't really describe that. To see the world again visually is a gift."

She explains one shock she got when she got her sight back was seeing her brother for the first time after 13 years.

"He was a man... with a goatee and everything. My brother's a man," Reid said. "When I saw my mum, I was like: 'You look the same but older.' I turned into a woman and my brother turned into a man."

Next month it will be 14 years since Reid had her sight restored. The incident happened in the year 2000, but Reid, who is now a mother, is telling her story now to raise awareness for Blind Week in New Zealand.

## Woman killed

FROM PAGE 16 boiler, said Mohammad Abu Zafar, officer-in-charge of Ashuganj Police Station.

The injured were sent to Dhaka for treatment, the police official added.

# Kerry meets Palestinian negotiator tomorrow

AFP, Washington

Amid tense ties between Israel and the United States, top US diplomat John Kerry will meet the chief Palestinian negotiator tomorrow to discuss how to advance the frozen peace process.

Kerry will welcome a Palestinian delegation, lead by Saeb Erakat, to the State Department for discussions on "the way forward" in a Middle East peace deal and the situation in the Gaza Strip, State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters Friday.

Kerry would also discuss "lowering tensions in Jerusalem" with the Palestinian team, Psaki said.

Clashes erupted in the West Bank Friday after weekly Muslim prayers while security forces deployed heavily around Jerusalem's flashpoint Al-Aqsa mosque which reopened following the killing of a Palestinian by police.

Al-Aqsa, in the Old City, and adja-

cent neighborhoods have seen months of violence, and the mosque compound has been a rallying point for Palestinian resistance to perceived Jewish attempts to take control of it.

During the unrest Thursday, Israel ordered a rare closure of the mosque compound, sacred to both Muslims and Jews, but the area reopened Friday.

Earlier this week, top US officials were forced onto the defensive after a magazine published scathing anonymous comments from someone in their ranks describing the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as a coward.

Kerry denounced the comments as "disgraceful, unacceptable and damaging," saying they did not represent the views of President Barack Obama or his cabinet.

But the report was yet another blow to turbulent US-Israel ties, which have seriously frayed since Kerry's bid to broker a peace treaty collapsed in April.

# Brazil poll revives class divide

AFP, Brasilia

Leftist President Dilma Rousseff's reelection in Brazil has exposed a deeply divided country, reviving the old wounds of class struggle.

Last week's vote showed huge support for the incumbent in the impoverished northeast, where millions receive benefits from huge welfare programs Rousseff's Workers Party (PT) has rolled out over the past decade.

The programs have helped lift out of extreme poverty some 40 million people, who formed the bedrock of Rousseff's support as she saw off business world favorite Aécio Neves.

In the south, many of those who backed Neves to end 12 years of PT rule are expressing anger at northern voters, many of them welfare recipients, for

Rousseff's narrow win.

"I'm preparing to leave for Orlando, where my father lives. I've tried to help them, these poor imbeciles, these idiots who voted for Dilma," complained one voter, Deborah Albuquerque, in a video that went viral on social media.

"But they are too dumb and are going to be dependent on the Bolsa Familia (a family stipend for poor families) and Bolsa 'Misery' for the rest of their lives," she wailed.

The battle between two bitterly opposed camps is still being played out over social media, a week after the election, as everyone from politicians to footballers, journalists and members of divided families cheer and boo Rousseff and Neves as one might a football team.

# Chemical depot

FROM PAGE 16

a warehouse of EXIM Bank on the second, and a bachelors' mess on the fifth floor.

"After closing our shops in the evening, we were chatting at a roadside tea stall around 8:45pm. There was a huge crowd on the road. Suddenly, a rickshaw puller shouted 'fire, fire,'" added Siraj.

Looking at the building, shop owners noticed thick smoke billowing out of the fourth floor.

Power supply was back in the area around 15 minutes later. Firefighting units reached the spot at almost the same time and started fighting the blaze.

Local businessman Nurul Amin said the gutted warehouse is owned by Taher Molla, an importer and supplier of painting chemicals.

Talking to The Daily Star, witness

Iqbal said, "I along with few others tried to enter the building to douse the flames. As we approached the stairs, we heard some blasts like gun fire. We were scared and decided not to enter the building."

Brig Gen Ali Ahmed Khan, director general of FSCD, said they found some materials and containers on the adjacent road and suspected that there might have been a huge quantity of flammable materials in the warehouse.

Firefighters completed searching the spot around 1:40am today and found nobody in there.

A three-member probe committee, led by a deputy director of FSCD, has been formed. The committee has been asked to submit its report to the fire service department within seven working days, added Ali Ahmed Khan.

# Mir Quasem's verdict

FROM PAGE 1

Asked whether it would be possible to deliver the verdict today after a massive power outage in the country a day before, he said there are all-time generator facilities for the tribunals.

Farman Ali, senior jail superintendent at Dhaka Central Jail, last night said Quasem was in sound health.

Considered one of the top financiers of Jamaat, Quasem faces 14 charges, including murder in Chittagong city between November and December 16, 1971.

The ICT-2 on Thursday fixed Sunday for delivering the judgment, around six months after the completion of his trial. On May 4, the court concluded hearing the closing arguments in Quasem's case and kept it awaiting verdict.

The prosecution sought capital punishment for 62-year-old Quasem, a member of Jamaat's central executive council, claiming that they had been able to prove 12 out of 14 charges. The defence, however, sought his acquittal saying the prosecution couldn't prove

any of the charges.

According to the prosecution, Quasem, president of Jamaat's then student wing Islami Chhatra Sangha (ICS) Chittagong town unit, colluded with the Pakistan army, Jamaat, and other anti-liberation forces and formed Al-Badr force in the port city in 1971.

Several Al-Badr camps were set up in Chittagong under Quasem's leadership for torturing and killing pro-liberation people. The accused also had links with the Pak army and was directly involved in crimes like abduction, torture and murder in 1971, the prosecution said.

The prosecution produced 24 witnesses, mostly victims, and documents before the tribunal to prove the charges. It, however, could not produce any witness in support of two charges.

Quasem's counsels said their client was indeed involved with the ICS in 1971, but had nothing to do with the Al-Badr or any torture camp. The defence produced three witnesses to prove their claim.

# ME to open door

FROM PAGE 16

have all the electricity she (PM) claimed to have generated through rental power plants gone.

The BNP chief called upon people to take all-out preparations for waging a tough movement. "I won't tell you now when to take to the street. I will make an announcement at the right time."

On the PM's remark that BNP has lost its ground, she said this mammoth rally has proved that BNP is in a strong position.

Blasting the government for its "increasing repressive acts", Khaleda said, "Many termed the government autocratic, but I want to say a new

Hitler has emerged here and it is killing people; making them disappear like Hitler did and running the country whimsically."

The government, she added, depends "only on repressive acts, filing false cases and harassing opposition leaders and activists" to be in power.

## JAMAAT'S THREAT

Speaking at the rally, Jamaat-e-Islami Naye-e-Ameer Mojibur Rahman threatened that the party will enforce non-stop hartal if any other of its leaders, including Mir Quasem Ali, is handed punishment by the war crimes tribunals for committing crimes against humanity.

# 3 cops arrested in city

Rab, DMP give contradictory versions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion claimed to have arrested five persons, including three cops, yesterday near the capital's Kuril flyover allegedly for abducting a person.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police, however, contradicted Rab's claim saying they arrested the cops allegedly for extorting money from a person.

Meanwhile, in a separate incident, two assistant sub-inspectors of Airport Police Station were suspended yesterday for their supposed misconduct with a foreign national.

The arrested cops from Kuril are Assistant Sub-inspectors Sirajul Islam, 35, and Kaisar Ahmed, 34, and Constable Abdur Rahman, 45, of Bhatara Police Station.

Rab officials said they also arrested Asaduzzaman, a driver, and Brishti alias Borsha, 20, during the raid.

According to Rab, the victim is Shahjahan Shamsu of Khilkhet.

Lt Col Tuhin Mohammad Masud, commanding officer of Rab-1, said victim's nephew Abu Jafar informed them that his uncle had been abducted and the abductors demanded Tk 2 lakh over the phone for his release.

"As per our instructions, Jafar contacted the abductors and agreed to give them Tk 1 lakh. A Rab team along with Jafar then conducted a raid and found six persons - the victim, three cops, the driver and the woman - inside a microbus near Kuril flyover around 1:15am."

"They [the arrestees] were about to take the money from Jafar," said the Rab official.

The constable was in uniform while one of the ASIs was wearing police trousers and boot, added Masud.

After talking with the police high officials, the Rab men handed the arrestees over to Bhatara police.

After receiving threats from the abductors, Jafar lodged a general diary with Khilkhet Police Station on Friday night and also notified us, said the Rab-1 CO.

Meanwhile, DMP officials claimed that they had arrested the cops when the culprits were trying to extort money from the victim at that place.

Masudur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media and public relations) of DMP, said the Gulshan division police raided the area and arrested the three policemen.

A Rab team also arrived in the spot

in the meantime, he said.

Jafar filed an extortion case with Bhatara Police Station yesterday, said police.

Lutfal Kabir, deputy commissioner (Gulshan division) of DMP, said police detained the three offenders from Kuril around 1:15am as they were trying to extort Tk 1 lakh from a person.

However, neither Jafar nor the victim could be reached for comments.

Meanwhile, Tuhin and Abdullah, assistant sub-inspectors of Airport Police Station, were suspended after the duo, along with an Ansar member, searched a Pakistani national at the entrance of the airport and took away Rupee 15,000 from him, said Shah Alam, officer-in-charge of the police station.

"The arrested cops were not on duty at that time and were in plain clothes," said the OC, adding that they took actions against the duo after receiving complaints from witnesses.

The Ansar authorities were informed of its member's misconduct, Shah Alam added.

The OC, however, could not give the flight details of the Pakistani national named Iqbal.

# Europe won't recognise vote in eastern Ukraine

Merkel tells Putin

REUTERS, Berlin

German Chancellor Angela Merkel told Russian President Vladimir Putin on the phone that Sunday's planned elections in eastern Ukraine were illegitimate and would not be recognised by European leaders, a Berlin government spokesman said on Friday.

Merkel and Putin held a joint telephone conversation with French President Francois Hollande and Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, Merkel's spokesman Georg Streiter said at a government news conference.

He said in the call there were diverging opinions on Sunday's "so-called elections" in the self-proclaimed people's republics of Donetsk and Luhansk.

"Merkel and Hollande underlined that there can only be a ballot in line with Ukrainian law," he said, adding

that the vote would violate an agreement endorsed by Russia and further complicate efforts to end the crisis in eastern Ukraine.

"The German government will not recognise these illegitimate elections," Merkel's spokesman said. European leaders were united on this issue and had agreed on this at a summit last week in Brussels.

Over 3,700 people have been killed in fighting in eastern Ukraine, where pro-Moscow rebels seek union with Russia. A ceasefire has been in force since September but there have been isolated flareups of fighting.

A 12-point protocol, issued after talks in early September in the Belarusian capital of Minsk involving Russia, Ukraine, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and separatist leaders, foresees the holding of "early local elections" in the east in

accordance with Ukrainian legislation.

The Ukrainian leadership sees this as part of efforts to de-centralise power in the east to give people there greater say in running their own affairs - a strategy aimed at blunting calls for autonomy. It wants to hold these elections in December.

In Washington, a spokeswoman for the White House National Security Council said the United States would not recognise any results from the vote.

"We also caution Russia against using any such illegitimate vote as a pretext to insert additional troops and military equipment into Ukraine, particularly in light of recent indications that the Russian military is moving forces back to the border along separatist-controlled areas of eastern Ukraine," spokeswoman Bernadette Meehan added in a statement.

# Iran nuclear talks to go into high gear

AFP, Washington

Global powers wrestling to hammer out a ground-breaking deal with Iran to curb its nuclear ambitions are moving complex talks into high gear with a "critical" three weeks left for an accord.

The main players -- US Secretary of State John Kerry, his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif and outgoing EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton -- will crisscross the globe ahead of the November 24 deadline seeking to narrow the gaps.

Ashton will first meet in Vienna on November 7 with political directors from the so-called P5+1 grouping -- Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States as well as Germany -- her spokesman Michael Mann said.

She will then fly to Oman to meet with Kerry and Zarif in closed meetings, in the country that first hosted secret talks between old foes Iran and the United States.

Those meetings between the two nations, which still do not have diplomatic ties, are credited with bringing Tehran back to the start-up negotiations.

Kerry has warned the coming weeks will finally reveal whether the Islamic Republic is truly prepared to make the tough decisions needed to curb its suspect nuclear program and win a lifting of international sanctions.

"We have critical weeks ahead of us," Kerry told PBS television.

"The stakes for the world are enormous. I hope the Iranians will not get stuck in a tree of their own mak-

ing, on one demand or another, in order to try to find a way together.

"I'm hopeful, but it's a very tough negotiation."

Any historic accord would aim to ease fears, after a decade of rising tensions, that Tehran might develop nuclear weapons under the guise of its civilian atomic program.

In return for reducing the scope of its activities and allowing closer UN inspections, Iran, which denies wanting the bomb, wants painful UN and Western sanctions lifted which have crippled its economy.

Months of intense negotiations, including between Kerry and Zarif in mid-October in Vienna, have made some progress but appear deadlocked on the key issues of uranium enrichment and the pace of any sanctions relief.