# Nepal pleads for funds

"This is the crisis that we have never imagined will happen," Mahat said.

Nepal is overwhelmed and it cannot fight it alone. About a third of Nepal's 30 million people have been affected by the quake, with 1.4 million in need of food assistance.

The death toll from the 7.8magnitude quake on April 25 currently stands at 7,056. More than 15,000 people have been injured.

"There are still villages where we know that all houses have been destroyed, but have not yet been able to reach. The aftershocks have not receded, and we expect the final casualty numbers to climb much higher," the minister said.

Fourteen of the 75 districts of Nepal have been declared crisis-hit, which account for 20 percent of the country's population, and have about 1.2 million households.

Nearly 300,000 houses have either been completely or partially destroyed. This unprecedented calamity has struck the country just eight months after massive floods and landslides swept away dozens of villages in the midwestern Nepal rendering more than 5,000 families homeless who are still waiting to be rehabilitated.

When the last comparable earthquake occurred in 1934, there was hardly any modern building or road, school or motorised vehicle. The pace of help rehabilitate these victims. In the transformation in Nepal in the years after the 1934 earthquake has been remarkable. The nation that jumped from a medieval kingdom into a nationstate of the 21st century in about half a century now stands in ruins.

"Thousands of people have been evacuated and they need medical treatment. We need medical help. People lost their legs, broke their backs and suffered head injuries. They need immediate surgeries. We need more medical supplies," the Nepalese finance minister told reporters. "Many people are without food.

Those in remote areas are not getting anything. Those places are inaccessible. Roads are bad. We need helicopters to take foods to those areas, but the capacity of helicopters is limited."

"More than 10,000 government buildings have been destroyed and it requires a lot of money to rebuild them. World heritage sites have been destroyed. Reconstruction requires a huge amount of fund."

As an initial effort, Nepal has set up a \$2 billion national reconstruction fund, with the government putting in \$200 million immediately, Mahat said.

"We are counting on the generous support from our development partners to help us in this task. The amounts I just stated are in addition to about \$500 million needed for immediate humanitarian assistance during the rescue and relief efforts."

The earthquake threatened to set Nepal back in development efforts. After a decade-long insurgency and political instability, the Himalayan nation had just begun gearing up for a higher trajectory of economic growth.

Over the past year, Nepal made a transformative leap in the energy sector by signing a power trade deal with India and contracts to develop mammoth hydroelectric plants that would put the country on a course to increase electricity generation by 10 times in a decade.

"We have also been working on the next generation of economic reforms, enacting or revising about 40 policies, acts, and regulations. We expected this hard work to pay off with higher growth, but this momentum is now about to be disrupted," Mahat said.

It is likely that progress in the social sector such as cuts in infant mortality and access to improved sources of water and sanitation may come to a halt. Tens of thousands of people who had just crossed the poverty line run the risk of falling back into absolute poverty.

Nepal's Millennium Development Goals' indicators could suffer a setback, according to the minister.

Nepal is struggling to provide shel-

ter to about half a million people. The monsoons are coming in less than two months. Pre-monsoon rains are already slowing rescue and rehabilitation efforts. "We are getting complaints from

the victims they need shelters. They need roofs over their heads. They need tarpaulins and tents because the monsoon is coming. So I asked the international community to provide those materials," the finance minister said.

"It will be another disaster if we can't provide tents and other supplies over the next week or so."

"We need long-term assistance to next two or three years, we have to provide low-cost housing to the survivors." Nepal's economy was already slow-

ing before the earthquake struck. The ADB had forecast the country's economic growth for the year ending July 15 at 4.6 percent, down from 5.2 percent in the year earlier. Mahat said much of the economy

was wiped away by the quake, but cautioned it was too early to make an assessment of the economic impact.

Still, dismal details are aplenty. The housing industry has been hit badly with assets destroyed. It will take years for the sector to regain the confidence of consumers.

After the bubble burst in the real estate sector five years ago, it was slowly beginning to revive, but will now stall with some businesses possibly going bankrupt, Mahat said.

The fast-maturing banking sector has had an important role in supporting the real estate sector; now its profits are likely to decline. Much of Nepal's tourist attractions are in central Nepal, and tourism could slow down.

Communications and electrical industries have also suffered damage. Industrial supply chains have been weakened, and prospects for the revival of manufacturing have dimmed in the immediate run. Up to 10 hydroelectric plants generating about 90 megawatts of electricity have shut down temporarily.

Looking forward, Mahat made a solemn pledge: "We will rebuild our country. We will rebuild it better. We will come out of this crisis stronger."

"But to support our resolve we will need the goodwill of our development

The ADB as a long-term development partner last month signed \$3 million in grants to finance relief efforts in Nepal. It will be followed by up to \$200 million in additional resources for projects in the first phase of rehabilitation in the South Asian country.

Rahman said primary information

for the report was collected from

national English and Bangla dailies

and journalists from different districts

The 28-page report also noted that

journalists and online activists faced

40 incidents of serious injuries, 62

minor assaults and 17 arrests but not a

single conviction could be found for

Tahmina called on the government

to establish a specialised mechanism

to provide protection for journalists

and investigate attacks on freedom of

expression overseen by an independ-

support their staff when they come

under attack or face legal harassment,"

she said, adding that media houses

should adopt equality policy and

develop a complaint mechanism for

Three killed as

American coast

Three people were killed, one is miss-

strong waves

lash Latin

the beach of Acapulco.

AFP, Panama City

violence against journalist.

of the country.

ent body.

female journalists.

# Hard time for media

23 percent were carried out by police, Detective Branch of police and special forces such as Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), 33.69 percent by leaders and activists of ruling party and 11 percent by government officials, reads the

report. In 2014, 17 journalists and online activists were arrested and 13 of them were arrested under the Information and Communication Technology Act,

"In 2014, we recorded 68 cases of harassment, which was 31.92% of the overall number of violations. The harassment was carried out in a variety of ways: (i) vexatious cases; (ii) contempt proceedings drawn by courts; (iii) criminal defamation; and (iv) arrest under the Information and Communications Technology Act 2006 (as amended in 2013). Apart from being effective tools for harassment, all of these generate fear and lead to self-

censorship," says the report. "Last year, four journalists were killed," Tahmina said. "They were Shah Alam Mollah, Sardar Nipul, Delwar Hossain and GM Babar Ali."

Mollah, a reporter of fortnightly Aparadh Daman, was allegedly killed by personnel of Uttara West Police Station in Dhaka. Nipul, a reporter of a local newspaper Daily Mathabhanga in Chuadanaga, was allegedly killed by local political activists. Hossain, Narayanganj correspondent of the Daily Samachar, was allegedly killed

by land grabbers. Babar Ali, Khulna bureau chief of the daily Amar Desh, died under mys-

Country-Report-2014-(2).pdf.

ing and hundreds had to evacuate after strong waves lashed the Pacific coast of Latin American countries from Mexico to Chile.

# leader hurt in 'encounter'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A Jubo Dal leader was hit by bullet in the leg during an "encounter" between police and his cohorts in Bogra town early yesterday. The injured, Masudur Rana Masud,

38, is the president of Bogra town unit of the youth front of BNP. Police arrested Masud, also councillor of ward-15 of Bogra municipal-

Choto Kumira around 2:30am. A locally made firearm, three bullets and 22 crude bombs were recovered from his possession, police said.

ity, from his father-in-law's house at

As police started for the Sadar Police Station with Masud fifteen minutes later, eight to 10 cohorts of the Jubo Dal leader attacked the law enforcers.

They blasted four to five crude bombs in a bid to snatch Masud, said Gaziur Rahman, assistant superintendent of Bogra police. Police retaliated with five gunshots

to foil the mission. One of the bullets hit Masud's left leg, he said, adding that police constable Mostakim sustained injuries in the blast. Masud, an accused in 34 criminal

cases, was admitted to Shaheed Ziaur

Rahman Medical College and Hospital. Talking with The Daily Star, his wife Rehana Begum alleged that

police planned to kill her husband. "He [Masud] was on the run because of the cases file against him. Police caught him and tried to kill him because of his political link," she

Police filed two cases, one under the Arms Act, against Masud in connection with yesterday's incident.

### Dead zones

FROM PAGE 16

said.

A paper, published in Biogeosciences, describes 100-mile-long eddies of swirling water spinning their way across the Atlantic for months at a

The group of researchers led by Dr Johannes Karstensen have suggested that: 'the eddies propagate westward, at about four to five kilometres day, from their generation region off the West African coast into the open ocean.'

Dead zones are usually found in shallow bodies of water, such as lakes and shallow coastlines.

However, the swirling movement of the eddies found in the Atlantic ensures that no water can escape, so the oxygen supply is quickly used up. "The fast rotation of the eddies

makes it very difficult to exchange oxygen across the boundary between the rotating current and the surrounding ocean. "Moreover, the circulation creates a

very shallow layer - of a few tens of meters - on top of the swirling water that supports intense plant growth," according to Karstensen.

This in turn leads to faster oxygen depletion in the eddy, as the algal bloom eats into supplies.

Damage to animal life aside, Karstensen anticipates that the dead zones could impact the people of

Cape Verde. "Given that the few dead zones we observed propagated less than 100 kilometres north of the Cape Verde archipelago, it is not unlikely that an open-ocean dead zone will hit the

islands at some point," he said. "This could cause the coast to be flooded with low-oxygen water, which may put severe stress on the coastal ecosystems and may even provoke fish kills and the die-off of other marine life."

## BNP plans

AL leaders Engineer Mosharraf Hossain and Chittagong South Unit AL President Moslem Uddin Ahmed, central leaders of the party, parliament members and a number of newly elected councillors of "We also urge media houses to Chittagong City Corporation were also present.

> Congratulating Nasir for being elected as the mayor of Chittagong, Hasina hoped that he would work for city people with devotion to fulfil the expectation of the people.

The PM also extended her thanks to the people of Chittagong for electing the candidate backed by the pro-liberation force, saying that the election has enhanced the responsibility of the party leaders and workers.

She said Chittagong as the commercial capital of the country was very important after capital, Dhaka. Hasina assured the newly elected

mayor and councillors that she would give all support for development of the port city and resolve the

during the recent city corporation polls.

# Pintu dies in jail

FROM PAGE 1

told this correspondent that Pintu had suffered cardiac arrest and the jail authorities delayed bringing in him.

Meanwhile, BNP chief Khaleda Zia and Pintu's family termed it a murder. Pintu was serving life-term for his

involvement in the BDR carnage in Pilkhana on February 25-26, 2009, which left 57 army officers killed. He was moved to the Rajshahi jail on April 20 from Narayanganj jail. He left behind his wife and two sons

-- one studying at the University of Toronto and another at Scholastica school in Dhaka. Doctors at RMCH brought allega-

tions of negligence against the jail authorities. The allegations were denied by the jail authorities and State Minister for Home Affairs Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal. Rois Uddin claimed that Pintu, who

had been suffering from different ailments, including heart diseases, hypertension and diabetes, had died 20 minutes before he was taken to the hospital.

Following Pintu's death, Rois, in presence of the media, blamed the jail authorities for bringing him in late. Superintendent Shafiqul Islam

Khan of the Rajshahi jail, who was present there, was silent then. Talking to The Daily Star, Rois said following a request from the jail

Pintu's medical check-up on May 2 but was denied access to Pintu. Pintu was undergoing treatment at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University when he was in

Narayanganj jail. April 25 was the date for his next check-up, doctors and family members said. On security grounds and the long distance, Rajshahi jail authorities decided to treat him at RMCH and he

jail sources said. Jail Superintendent Shafiqul claimed that they had taken Pintu to the RMCH immediately after he complained of severe chest pain at 11:45am. Talking to The Daily Star, he refuted all allegations of negligence.

was taken to the hospital on April 26,

He explained that they had

requested the RMCH authorities on April 23 for sending doctors to the jail by April 25.

As no doctors went to the jail, the authorities took Pintu to the RMCH the following day.

On the allegation of Rois that he was not allowed to see Pintu inside the jail, Shafiqul said, "We have already treated Pintu at the RMCH [on Apr 26] and there was no need to treat him further."

that he was in "good condition" when the two talked on Saturday last. "We were always in touch with him

about his health," added Shafiqul.

taken to the hospital dead, Shafiqul said, "If we had taken him dead to the hospital, then why had the emergency medical officer sent him to the cardiology department? "They even admitted him [Pintu] to

Ward-32."

Pintu had earned the trust of the BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman and became general secretary and later president of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, the pro-BNP student body.

from then Dhaka-8 constituency.

He had filed for nomination to run authorities, he had gone to the jail for nation was cancelled.

"IT WAS A MURDER"

Family members of Pintu alleged that he was killed in a planned way in jail.

der," Hosne Ara, Pintu's mother told Pintu's brother Rintu said, "The

High Court had ordered the jail authorities to treat him at a specialised hospital. Despite that, my brother was taken to Rajshahi from Narayanganj jail on April 20. He was not treated there." "HASINA, OTHERS INVOLVED"

ising secretary Pintu.

"killing" of her party's assistant organ-

ensure that the key issue--illegal migra-

tion confronting the state--is

addressed adequately. Illegal migra-

BJP Assam unit by surprise which has

opposed the LBA tooth and nail. While

Modi had apparently hoped to win over

BJP Assam unit and he had met party

lawmakers from that state in that effort,

what seems to have muddied the waters

is the opposition from BJP's ideological

fountainhead RSS against including

opposing it. Now when she has come

on board, BJP has excluded Assam

whose government was already on

board on the issue. We will not allow

mentation in India is between

Congress and BJP, the tussle over Teesta

water-sharing treaty saw Congress

pitted against West Bengal Chief

Minister Mamata Banerjee, a stand to

A consensus in India on Teesta deal

has eluded in the last four years and the

question now is that will the LBA

implementation will go the same way?

The previous Congress government

failed to deliver on Teesta and LBA but

will the BJP government succeed

Success for Modi will be in perfect sync

with his professed foreign policy of

So, it is not just Modi government's

parliamentary agenda of pushing

through the LBA bill which faces chal-

Iwo women

piece of land, said Biplob, adding that

when a group of people, led by Lal Mia,

captured the land and attempted to

build a new house there Saturday after-

noon, a scuffle started as Rahima and

with Lal Mia's group which included

some women mercilessly beating

Rahima and Nasima until they fainted.

defended the brutal attack and said,

"Rahima and Nasima illegally entered

defend ourselves as they threatened to

commit suicide for harassing us."

our land and opposed us."

under control.

Sheuly Akter, sister of Lal Mia,

She also said, "We tied them to

It all soon turned into a violent fight

Nasima appeared there to stop them.

Rizia, a witness of the incident, said

the land was adjacent to their houses.

neighbourhood first.

FROM PAGE 16

which she has stuck till today.

If the domestic row over LBA imple-

"Earlier, the bill could not be

Assam in LBA implementation.

this," he said.

However, Modi's remarks had taken

tion is an emotive issue in Assam.

been murdered and a trial of this killing must be held. Hasina and others involved in the murder will not be spared," she said while exchanging greetings with the Buddhist community members on the occasion of Bouddha Purnima at her Gulshan office.

She questioned why the jail authorities "had not followed the court order to ensure Pintu's treatment". "Nothing happens without

Hasina's order. Pintu was taken to Rajshahi jail from Dhaka at her behest. Hasina is responsible for the killing, she said. Describing him as a dedicated and

her grave shock at the death of Pintu and conveyed her sympathy to the bereaved family members.

allowed to enter. Will you call them She said Pintu was a lawmaker but

namaz-e-janaza to be held at the South On the missing BNP joint secretary

said the law enforcers had picked him

up. "We want to know where

Salahuddin is? Return him to his family unharmed. None will be spared if anything happens to him," she warned. "We cannot sit idle when our leaders and activists are being killed one after another. We want peace, democracy, development and people's secu-

rity. The government must ensure those. Otherwise, people will decide which path to take, peaceful or violent, to get rid of this repressive killer and lady Hitler." She called upon people to unite and

Referring to the recently held city

polls, Khaleda said massive rigging She said Chief Election

Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad was worthless and blind.

## Land deal caught territory for Assam but said he would

at a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee of Rajya Sabha. Sources said Congress has made it clear to the government that it will oppose the bill unless Assam is included in LBA.

A constitution amendment bill to

operationalise the LBA is expected to be placed in the Rajya Sabha next week. The amendment bill was first tabled by the erstwhile Congress-led government in 2013. "How can you keep Assam out of it?

The (Congress) government of Assam was in favour of the bill. Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi had even accompanied Prime Minister Manmohan brought because Mamata Banerjee was Singh when he had visited Bangladesh in September, 2011 to sign an enabling agreement to implement LBA when Congress-led UPA was in power in India.

"This is weird that even as the government of the state is in favour of the agreement, it is being kept out because the opposition party (BJP in Assam) there does not want it," a senior Congress functionary said.

Indian Parliamentary Affairs Minister M Venkaiah Naidu had said on Wednesday that the bill may be placed in Rajya Sabha on May 5, the first day of the last week of the budget session, with the important change of excluding Assam.

One leading Indian daily (The Hindu) reported quoting unnamed sources that the Indian cabinet has cleared a revised draft of the constitution amendment bill keeping Assam out.

The fact that the government wants to keep Assam out of the ambit of bil has been confirmed by two federal Indian ministers, including Minister Naidu.

BJP lacks a majority in Rajya Sabha and the support of Congress is crucial for the bill's passage. Congress has many more members than the ruling BJP in the upper House of parliament. BJP's desire to exclude Assam from

LBA is prompted by its electoral calculations as it goes to fresh legislature polls early next year when the party hopes to come to power by ending Congress's 15-year rule in the state. Out of 14 Lok Sabha seats in Assam,

BJP had won seven and clocked up over 36 percent votes in the 2014 general elections while Congress had won only three seats. This, along with antiincumbency against Congress, has generated optimism in BJP about coming to power in the state. The BJP unit in Assam has opposed

the exchange of enclaves between Bangladesh and India involving the territory of Assam since the party fears LBA implementation will hit its electoral prospects there. Prime Minister Narendra Modi

hard-selling it at a rally in Assam in December last year. At that time, Modi had acknowledged that LBA might lead to loss of duced both parties before the court.

He became a lawmaker in 2001

for mayor in the April 28 Dhaka South City Corporation polls but his nomi-

"I want fair trial of my son's mur-

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia last night alleged that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was involved in the

"I want to clearly state that Pintu has

# AL activist shot dead

ruling Awami League activist at Dakkhin Badda in the capital last

30, was also a former vice-president of pro-AL student body Chhatra League's Badda unit. Some four to five men stormed a

on a group of people who were playing cards there, said police, quoting wit-

25, were shot. Rahin was declared dead on arrival at Dhaka Medical College Hospital

in cattle-market business in Badda area during the Eid-ul-Azha last year. He

involvement in the trade. A police official, wishing not to be named, said he might have been killed following a business feud involving some local Jubo League and Swecchasebak League men. Both the

organisations are pro-AL. Meanwhile, police yesterday found a blood-stained body of a female inside a suitcase abandoned in a bus at

lenge but his neighbourhood policy Gabtoli. Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of

> Chittagong around 6:00pm. The body bore several marks of stab wounds and was sent to Dhaka Medical College for autopsy, added the

# Japan eyes 'large-scale' cooperation

AFP, Havana

Kishida said Saturday that Tokyo wants to launch "large-scale cooperation" with Havana to support the island's reforms. In the first visit to Cuba by a

Japanese foreign minister, Kishida also met with President Raul Castro to discuss "the positive direction" of their ties, a government statement read out on state television said.

He claimed that Pintu had told him

tested party man, Khaleda expressed Binning Rois's claim that Pintu was

> "We have heard that a doctor went to the jail to treat him but he was not human beings?" she said.

> the authorities were not allowing his Plaza of the parliament as customary. general Salahuddin Ahmed, Khaleda

take to the streets peacefully to lodge their protest against the government.

and capturing of polling stations by the ruling party cadres have proved their decision to boycott the January-5 national election was the right one.

in city STAFF CORRESPONDENT Unidentified assailants shot dead a

The dead, Mofazzal Hossain Rahin,

room of "Jagarany Sangsad" club in Badda around 8:45pm and opened fire

Rahin and another youth, Modhu,

around 9:15pm, said police. Modhu was admitted to Apollo Hospital. He was shot in one of his legs. MA Jalil, officer-in-charge of Badda Police Station, said Rahin was involved

was planning to continue with his

Darus Salam Police Station, said on information they retrieved the body from the bus that had come from

OC.

# with Cuba

Japan's Foreign Minister Fumio Section 144 was imposed on the land by the court to bring the situation

### Police detained Ensab Ali who himself appeared keen to push waterlogging problem of the city. rushed to the police station to file a through the LBA implementation The prime minister said the BNP complaint. Later police also arrested without any change and he had tried In Panama, one person was swept Lal Mia and Kashem. was not on the streets during their terious circumstances. The report can be accessed at away by strong waves that prompted Asked why Ensab was arrested since movement, and the party workers an alert from authorities on Saturday, http://www.article19.org/data/files/m his wife was the victim, police said no were not seen in the polling centers while in Mexico a man drowned on edialibrary/37946/Bangladesh-FoEcomplaint was filed yet, so they pro-