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Nepal pleads for funds

Quake wipes out half of its economy

ARUN DEVNATH

Nepalese Finance Minister Ram Sharan Mahat yesterday used a gathering of 3,000 people from around the world in Baku to plead for global help as his earthquake-ravaged nation struggles to raise funds for rebuilding.

"It is with great pain and sadness that I stand before you to present the case of my country which now remains devastated. The massive earthquake has resulted in incalculable human loss and suffering, with millions of people rendered homeless. The scale of destruction of physical and social infrastructure is immense with hardly any school or health post intact in the most affected districts," he said.

As desperation grows among the survivors in Nepal, Asia's second poorest country, Mahat said he is grateful to the nations that dispatched assistance and relief materials, but it is a massive task to put the country back on track.

The cost to rebuild Nepal after its most devastating earthquake in eight decades will exceed \$10 billion and take years, Mahat said at the annual meetings of the Asian Development Bank in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, where he was invited to speak by ADB President Takehiko Nakao to highlight his country's plight.

His reconstruction estimate is equivalent to about half of Nepal's \$20 billion economy.

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Pigeons fly past a Nepalese man walking through the rubble of Durbar Square, a Unesco world heritage site, badly damaged by the April 25 earthquake in Kathmandu. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

BNP plans to make polls questionable

Says PM as Ctg mayor-elect Nasir meets her

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said the BNP, being "failed" to wage movement and win the city corporation elections, has drawn out a plan to make the polls questionable and is propagating for diplomatic pressure on the government on this particular issue.

"But Awami League didn't make any mistake or offence for which the government should bow to any diplomatic pressure," she said, welcoming mayor-elect of Chittagong City Corporation AZM Nasir Uddin at the Gono Bhaban last night.

Nasir along with his wife and two children and leaders and workers of the AL and its associate organisations of Chittagong went to the Gono Bhaban to meet Hasina.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Hard time for media

Bangladeshi journos, online activists faced 213 attacks in 2014, mostly by state machinery, says ARTICLE 19, intl media watchdog

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

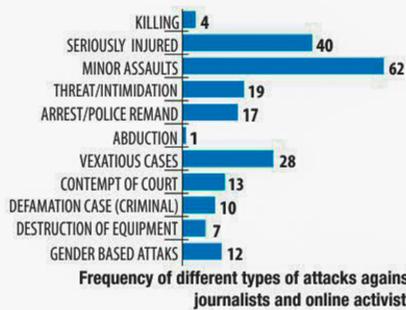
Law enforcement agencies and ruling party activists carried out 56.68 percent of the total attacks on journalists and online activists in Bangladesh last year, says a report by a UK-based organisation.

The total number of legal proceedings against journalists and online activists has also risen since last year, according to the report prepared by ARTICLE 19, an international organisation promoting freedom of expression and information.

Tahmina Rahman, director of the organisation's Bangladesh and South Asia chapter, presented the report yesterday at the Dhaka Reporter's Unity on the occasion of the World Press Freedom Day.

Out of the 213 attacks on journalists and online activists last year,

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NEWS ANALYSIS

Land deal caught in BJP-Congress row

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA

After the failure to ink the treaty of the Teesta river water-sharing, another major showpiece of India-Bangladesh relations, the land boundary deal, appears to have been caught up in the domestic political tussle between India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and main opposition Congress.

It began with the news that the BJP-led government wants to keep the northeastern state of Assam out of the purview of imple-

mentation of the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA). A constitution amendment bill needs to be passed in both Houses of Parliament -- Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha -- for the LBA to be implemented because it involves exchange of land between the two countries.

Congress has already opposed the government's move to keep Assam out of the implementation of the Land Boundary Agreement. The party has conveyed its stand

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Two women tortured over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhalakathi

Two women were beaten up brutally for about an hour after they were tied up with two separate trees Saturday afternoon in East Rajapur village under Rajapur upazila, said Rajapur Police.

Both were unconscious when they were rescued by Police. They were rushed to Rajapur Health complex but later they were sent to Sher-E-Bangla Medical College in Barisal in critical condition, said Sub-Inspector Biplob Mistri.

The injured were, Rahima Begum, wife of Ensab Ali, and Nasima Begum, Ensab's sister-in-law.

The Daily Star obtained some mobile video footage of the incident, which shows five to six men and three to four women attacking Rahima and Nasima.

Witnesses claimed Rahima and Nasima were sexually harassed too.

There is a dispute between Ensab Ali and Lal Mia of the village centring a

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MG!

After the 2008 national polls, the recent city corporation election is the fairest in the country's history.

WAR CRIMES RESEARCHER
SHAHRIAR KABIR
AT A DISCUSSION MARKING THE BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF JAHANARA IMAM



A devotee prays at the Dharmarajik Bouddha Bihar in Kamalapur in the capital yesterday on the occasion of Bouddha Purnima.

PHOTO: STAR



Dead zones found in Atlantic Ocean

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Swathes of oxygen-deprived water up to 100 miles long, unable to sustain any form of animal life, have been found in the Atlantic, scientists have said.

Researchers of the GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel in Germany discovered the unexpectedly low oxygen environments several hundred kilometres off the coast of West Africa.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

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Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN	4-15	12-45	4-45	6-31	8-00
JAMAAT	4-50	1-15	5-00	6-35	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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Kamal Hossain: 01681014920