

Nature's Uttara

FROM PAGE 2
A report would be submitted to the deputy commissioner of Nature within three working days, mentioning who are responsible for cutting the trees and how many trees and branches were cut down. Razzuq, also the acting deputy commissioner of Nature, said while talking to local journalists.

Razzuq added that they would implement all the decisions made by the Uttara Gonobhban management committee within a short time.

Abdullah earlier said he valued 230 cubic feet of dead branches of different trees for the tender. The probe committee listed all the felled trees, he said yesterday.

Four others of the probe committee are: Additional Superintendent of Police in Nature Khairul Islam, Nature Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Jesmin Akter Banu, Nezarat Deputy Collector of Nature Aninda Mondal and Company Commander of Ra-5 in Nature Anwar Hossain.

The Public Works Department floated a tender and gave a work order to cut branches of dead trees to a bidder for only Tk 18,400. Although the tender was for cutting branches of dead trees, a large number of trees was cut down.

Shamara Gonobhban, once the royal palace of the maharajas of Dighapata in Nature, is now functioning as the provisional official residence of the head of government in the northern region.

Meanwhile, the Uttara Gonobhban management committee members and their families from the Uttara Gonobhban as they had been living there for long illegally. Later, one of the caretaker and his family were allowed to stay there. Aninda, also the member secretary of the Uttara Gonobhban management committee, said they permitted caretaker Abul Kashem and his family to live on the Gonobhban compound for five to seven more days on the request of local lawmaker Shaiful Islam Shimal.

HC hears role

FROM PAGE 2
Lawyers Zainul Abedin, AM Aminuddin and Prabin Neogi to appear with their expert opinions on the matter.

The bench passed the order after SC lawyer Baduzzaman Tafader placed a copy of the letter before the court on Wednesday. The order, the ACC on March 2 sent a letter to the SC's registrar general's office asking for documents regarding the service, salaries and relevant benefits received by Justice Joynt for conducting an enquiry about his wealth.

In response, the SC administrator sent the letter, signed by Additional Registrar of the Appellate Division of the SC Arun Chakraborty, to the ACC saying that if action was taken against the former judge, the verdicts he had delivered would become questionable.

Probe negligence

FROM PAGE 2
Action should not be taken against service for failing to deliver medical services to the exporting mother and her child for necessary order.

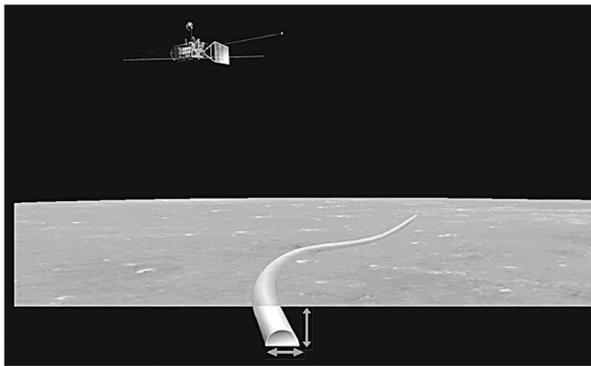
The court also asked the authorities to show causes as to why they should not be directed to compensate Parvin.

The health secretary, social welfare secretary, women and child development secretary, director of Department of Health Services, directors of DMCH and Salimullah Medical College Hospital, superintendent of Azimpur Maternity, deputy commissioner and superintendent of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society of Lalbagh Police Station have been made respondents.

The HC bench of Justice Quazi Reza-Ul-Haque and Justice Mohammad Ullah came up with the order and rule following the petition in the media, including the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, IJG and the Asian Gas, lawyer ABM Altar Hossain, who was present in the courtroom, told The Daily Star.

The court fixed November 5 for passing further orders on the issue. The court also directed the government to be observed that Parvin was not provided with medical services despite approaching three hospitals as she reportedly could not pay Tk 1,500, which was very regrettable and this incident was a black spot on a democratic country.

He also said the government should be more conscious so that this type of negligence never recurred.



This handout provided by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency yesterday shows an artist's impression of a tunnel-like cavity under the moon found from the data of Japan's lunar orbiter Kaguya. Scientists at Japan's space agency have discovered a huge moon cave that could one day house a base that would shelter astronauts from dangerous radiation and wild temperature swings, officials said.

Graft charges false

FROM PAGE 1
fabricated and full of contradictions." She also said the allegations of misappropriation of money in the cases were false and intended to harass her.

Earlier in February, the BNP chief began giving her statement in self-defense, but the court on October 12 issued the arrest warrant voiding her statement submitted until then. The arrest warrant was issued in response to a petition filed by the state seeking such a warrant for her going to London without the court's permission.

Handled by her party's senior leaders and lawyers, Khaleda yesterday surrendered at the mahkisht court of the special judge at the city's Bakshibazar around 11:50 am.

In July 2008, the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Zia Orphanage Trust grant case with Ramna Police Station accusing Khaleda, her eldest son Tarique, and four others of misappropriating over Tk 210 crore that had come as grants from a foreign bank for orphans.

Three years later, the ACC filed the Zia Charitable Trust graft case with Tezgaon police, accusing four people, including Khaleda, of abusing power to raise funds for the trust from unknown sources.

Delivering her statement for about an hour yesterday, Khaleda sought permission from the court to give the rest part of her statement in the next hearing at the court then set on October 26.

SCUFFLE OF KHALEDA'S LAWYERS
Immediately after the BNP chief left the court area around 1:30pm, her lawyers started jostling to get centre stage before television cameras during a media briefing.

Pushing and shoving each other on the court premises then turned into

scuffles, resulting in tearing off of clothes of pro-BNP lawyer. The incident occurred when President of Dhaka Bar Association Khoshdel Alam, a lawyer of Khaleda, and his associates began arguing with her another lawyer Mirza Al Mahmud regarding taking position during the briefing.

Lawyers were seen punching each other and hurling insults. A female lawyer was also seen attacking her fellow colleague. The situation came under control in a couple of minutes following intervention of senior lawyers.

KHALEDA'S SELF-DEFENCE
Khaleda said there was no fair and normal atmosphere in the country at present suitable for getting justice. Judiciary and judges cannot carry out their job independently and normally due to the ruling quarter's various kinds of interference and influence.

"Judges have to depend on the government's will" regarding delivering verdicts, decisions and ruling, she said.

Referring to the chief justice's remarks that the judges are not independent, Khaleda said people therefore were concerned about getting justice.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been interfering in the cases' proceedings by making defamatory remarks against her, she added.

Pointing to several corruption cases against Hasina, the BNP chief said Hasina's close relative Sheikh Fazil Khatun Selim and Awami League's present General Secretary Obaidul Quader had spoken vehemently of corruption and misappropriation of money against Hasina during interrogations.

"But those cases were withdrawn and settled one after another after Hasina came to power [in 2009]," Khaleda said.

PayPal Xoom launched

FROM PAGE 1
PayPal, the world's largest online-based payment system.

PayPal account holders from abroad can now send up to \$10,000 to Bangladesh at a time using PayPal wallet. A transaction up to \$1,000 will cost only \$ 4.99, but transactions worth over \$1,000 will be free of charge.

People can primarily receive the service from nine commercial banks, including Sonali, Rupali, Agrani, ITDC, Pubali and Cross Islamic banks.

The Xoom is PayPal's cross-border payment service. Although Xoom was a separate company earlier, PayPal bought it in 2015.

The PayPal's Xoom service will now be "inbound", meaning money sent from abroad could be drawn in Bangladesh, but no one will be able to send money abroad.

Using this service, Bangladeshi expatriates will be able to send money home within a few hours while those involved in freelancing and outsourcing will also enjoy the facility.

About criticism of the PayPal's service, the PM's adviser said, "There's some criticisms that PayPal is not being able to deliver services fully as it is now not possible to send money abroad. It's not the failure of PayPal, rather the law of the Bangladesh Bank doesn't permit it to send money abroad."

Joy said the incumbent Awami League government has kept the country's economy "slightly isolated" so that it is not affected by the global recession.

"Our policy is that money won't be sent abroad freely. But it was our government which raised the ceiling of carrying foreign currency to \$10,000 for an individual while travelling abroad."

About the government's future plan in this regard, he said there would be no such bar on movement of currency once the country's economy is developed.

US drone strike

FROM PAGE 2
associates of Khorasani were also killed in the strike," he added.

Two US drone strikes on Monday along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan killed at least 26 people including fighters from the Haqqani network which is allied to the Afghan Taliban.

The US has increased pressure on Pakistan in recent months to crack down on the Haqqanis, who have earned a fearsome reputation for their vicious attacks on NATO troops and Afghan installations over the years.

The use of US drones has dwindled dramatically in recent years in Pakistan, where the strikes have proven extremely controversial with the public and rights groups.

Australia govt vows to pursue citizenship crackdown

AFP, Sydney
Australia's conservative government yesterday vowed to pursue efforts to tighten the country's citizenship requirements after parliament refused to approve the crackdown.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull proposed the tougher rules in April, adding stringent English-language tests and a quadrupling of the residency requirement for citizenship applicants from one to four years.

The move came against a background of growing populist pressure in Australia and a resurgence of the anti-immigration One Nation party led by Pauline Hanson.

But the opposition Labor Party and other critics blocked the legislation in the upper house Senate, where a deadline for adoption passed on Wednesday.

Criticism of the bill focused mainly on the requirement that new citizens would need to show university-level English proficiency - something Labor said amounted to a "White Australia" policy by discriminating against immigrants from non-English-speaking nations.

Opponents also chided Turnbull for describing the new law as putting "Australian values" at the heart of the citizenship process.

Mysterious

FROM PAGE 2
unknown, gates are known to the Bedouins as "Works of the Old Men".

But the structures found by Kennedy are unlike any before them. Varying greatly in size, the longest measures more than half a kilometre while the shortest is just 13 metres. And the space between gates varies from miles apart to "almost touching".

Other structures built by the "Old Men" include "kites", which archaeologists say are stone structures used to catch migratory birds. These are often found on top of gates found in other areas of the Middle East.

"It is impossible at the moment to date these gates except relatively. I have argued in the article that they are the earliest of the so-called 'Works of the Old Men', the stone-built structures found widely in Arabia from northern Syria to Saudi Arabia, and especially common in the lava fields," Kennedy told Newsweek.

"The works known as Kites, which are certainly animal traps, may be as old as 9,000 years before present in some cases and there is one example of a kite overlooking a gate. So Gates may be up to or more than 9,000 years old, which takes one back to the Neolithic."

Many of the gates found by Kennedy are set on ancient lava domes - the eroded remains of lava flows. Although the volcanoes are inactive, some gates bear traces of lava, providing another potential way of dating them.

The study will appear in the upcoming issue of Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy.

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Back to 'rat theory'

FROM PAGE 1
might be further corruption in the repair works of the roads and embankments in the affected region, and called on the government to engage people in the work to check it.

"Because they [locals] know that if the projects fail, they will have to suffer... Build culverts and drains wherever necessary on and along the roads. Don't repair roads for this day. Do a study to find out why a particular road is damaged every year. And then take measures accordingly," he said.

The water resources minister, however, blamed the locals living on the embankments for the damage of the dams.

"Rats are attracted to these households and create holes on the dams. A small hole in a dam could damage an embankment badly," he said.

He made the same claim soon after the embankments gave in during the flashfloods in the haor areas in Sylhet region in March-April.

"The minister said, 'We were considering repairing the dam to minimise the impact of climate change.'"

Debaripha Bhattacharya, distinguished fellow at the CPD, said there should be a new approach to tackle flood.

If the agriculture is not developed, infrastructure is not redesigned and administration not upgraded in line with the modern demand, flood-inflicted damages will remain to be a big concern, he noted.

Zafar Sadique and Estaque Bari, both senior research associates at the CPD,

gave a brief presentation on their research titled Flood 2017: Assessing Damage and Post-Flood Management.

The financial cost of this year's monsoon flood was likely to be about 0.35 to 0.44 percent of the estimated GDP of 2017-18 fiscal.

The government estimated 74 per cent GDP growth for the fiscal 2017-18. The research found around 16.7 lakh people and 10.3 lakh households in low-lying areas and haor of six districts were affected by the flash flood in March-April, inflicting a loss of about Tk 3,300 crore.

There is late August, the monsoon flood affected 82 lakh people of 32 districts.

It will cost about Tk 2,600 crore for repairing and rebuilding the houses and another Tk 4,500 crore will be required to repair and rebuild roads, culverts and embankments damaged.

The study found the government reliefs were timely but inadequate.

Mia Hossain, a former UN manager who was present at the programme, said the government relief for the flood victims was not sufficient.

According to the study, a number of embankments were damaged due to poor maintenance.

Dhirendra Debnath Shambhu, president of parliamentarian standing committee on relief and disaster management, and Engineer Mahfizur Rahman, director general of Bangladesh Water Development Board, among others, spoke on the occasion.

US lawmakers

FROM PAGE 2
suspend invitations" to the commander-in-chief of the Myanmar armed forces and other senior military officers and will review all practical defence cooperation.

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson Tuesday said he held the military leadership in Myanmar responsible for the current refugee crisis affecting Rohingyas of that country.

On the same day, EU's new ambassador to Bangladesh, Peter Teirink presented her credentials to President Abul Hamid in Dhaka.

"It's a symbolic measure but I think it's an important one and a significant message to Myanmar," Teirink said in response to queries over the EU resolution.

During her interaction with diplomatic correspondents in Dhaka, she said the EU wanted to see Myanmar's response to appeals from the international community to resolve the crisis before taking any tough action like imposing economic embargo.

The EU foreign ministers' council also warned that it would consider "additional measures" like economic embargo if the situation did not improve in Rohingya.

Asked what kind of improvement the EU was expecting, Ambassador Schmidt said, "The most immediate priorities for the government is to ensure a cessation of all violence in northern Rakhine State and full access for all humanitarian aid workers."

Schmidt would not say what additional measures would be taken if there is no improvement. "This is not the time to speculate about what additional measures could be taken by the European Union if the situation does not improve."

As the EU's second largest development cooperation partner in Asia, Myanmar enjoys advantageous relations with the bloc. Myanmar has been on the 2014-2020, and has quota- and duty-free access to more than 500 million consumers in the European market.

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Balance of power shifts in Iraq's multi-ethnic Kirkuk

AFP, Kirkuk
The return of Kirkuk to Iraqi control, the balance of power appears to have shifted between the Kurds and the majority city to the delight of its Turkmen residents.

"Before we could publicly declare that we are returning to the city, we first need to take control again," said Omar Najaf, 23.

Three weeks before, the disputed city of Kirkuk had been left by the Ottoman citadel. Omar Hussein has been slow for the few shops that have opened but he is aware that normalcy is returning.

Three days before he was sent for schools to reopen in the wake of the upheaval on Sunday as Iraqi forces entered the city.

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