

Palestinian detainees ill-treated

Says UN official

REUTERS, Geneva

A UN human rights official yesterday accused Israel of mistreating Palestinian detainees in Gaza, saying he had met men who had described being held for weeks, beaten and blindfolded, with some released in diapers.

Ajith Sunghay, a UN human rights official in Gaza, told reporters it was not clear exactly how many men had been detained by Israel since it began its military operation in Gaza on October 7.

"These are men who were detained by the Israeli security forces in unknown locations for between 30 to 55 days," Sunghay told reporters in Geneva by video link from Gaza.

He said he had just met released detainees in the besieged enclave. "There are reports of men who are subsequently released, but only in diapers... in this cold weather," he added.



Mourners carry the body of one of the Palestinians, who were killed during a day-long Israeli raid, in a refugee camp in Tulkarm in the occupied West Bank yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Russian oil depot on fire after Ukraine drone attack

AFP, Kyiv

Ukraine said it was behind a drone strike that sparked a huge inferno at an oil depot in western Russia yesterday, the latest in a series of escalating cross-border attacks.

The strike is the second on a Russian oil depot in as many days, part of what Kyiv has called "fair" retaliation for Moscow's strikes on Ukrainian energy infrastructure.

Yesterday's strike targeted a Rosneft oil storage facility about 50 kilometres from the Ukrainian border, in the Russian town of Klinty.

It was carried out by the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence, a Ukrainian security source confirmed to AFP.

Nearly 20,000 babies born into Gaza war 'hell': UN

AFP, Geneva

The United Nations said yesterday that thousands of babies had been born in conditions "beyond belief" in Gaza since the Israeli offensive began more than three months ago.

Spokeswoman Tess Ingram, back from a recent visit to the Gaza Strip, described mothers bleeding to death and one nurse who had performed emergency caesareans on six dead women.

Nearly 20,000 babies have been born into the offensive that began on October 7, according to the UN children's agency Unicef.

"That's a baby born into this horrendous war every 10 minutes," Ingram told reporters in Geneva via video link from Oman.

"Becoming a mother should be a time for celebration. In Gaza, it's another child delivered into hell."

She stressed the need for urgent international action.

"Seeing newborn babies suffer, while some mothers bleed to death, should keep us all awake at night."

Israel's relentless air and ground offensive has killed at least 24,762 Palestinians,

around 70 percent of them women, children and adolescents, according to figures from the Hamas-run health ministry.

Ingram described "heartbreaking" meetings with women caught up in the chaos.

One woman, Mashaal, was pregnant when her house was hit and her husband buried



under the rubble for several days, and her baby stopped moving.

"She says she is sure now, about a month later, that the baby is dead," Ingram said. But, she added: "She is still waiting for medical care."

Mashaal had told her it was best "a baby

isn't born into this nightmare", she said.

Ingram also told the story of a nurse named Webda, who said she had performed emergency caesareans on six dead women in the last eight weeks.

"Mothers face unimaginable challenges in accessing adequate medical care, nutrition, and protection before, during and after giving birth," Ingram said. "The situation of pregnant women and newborns in the Gaza Strip is beyond belief, and it demands intensified and immediate actions."

Ingram pointed out that the Emirati Hospital in Rafah was now catering to the vast majority of pregnant women in Gaza.

"Struggling with overcrowded conditions and limited resources, staff are forced to discharge mothers within three hours of a caesarean," she said.

"These conditions put mothers at risk from miscarriages, stillbirths, preterm labour, maternal mortality and emotional trauma." Pregnant and breastfeeding women and infants were living in "inhumane" conditions, including makeshift shelters, with poor nutrition and unsafe water, she said.

This, she warned, was "putting approximately 135,000 children under two at risk of severe malnutrition".

India, Maldives discuss troops withdrawal from island

NDTV ONLINE

India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday met his Maldivian counterpart Moosa Zameer in the Ugandan capital city of Kampala and the two leaders had a "frank conversation" on ties between the two countries. The meeting between Jaishankar and Zameer came amid an ease in the Maldives' bilateral ties with India. Jaishankar is in Kampala to represent India at the two-day summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). "Met Maldives FM @MoosaZameer today in Kampala. A frank conversation on India-Maldives ties. Also discussed NAM related issues," Jaishankar posted on X, sharing a photograph of the meeting. In a post on X, Zameer said it was a pleasure to meet Jaishankar in the margins of the NAM Summit. "We exchanged views on the ongoing high-level discussions on the withdrawal of Indian military personnel, as well as expediting the completion of ongoing development projects in the Maldives, and cooperation within SAARC and NAM," he wrote. "We are committed to further strengthening and expanding our cooperation," the Maldivian minister wrote. He also posted a photograph of the meeting. The India-Maldives ties came under some stress as Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu said that he will keep his election promise of evicting Indian military personnel from his country.

ALBERTA EXTORTION RING Canada police suspect India link

REUTERS, Ottawa

Police in Canada are investigating a series of extortions and related crimes that they believe are orchestrated by a suspect in India and involve criminals in Edmonton, Alberta, targeting the region's affluent South Asian people. In what Edmonton Police described as a new trend in Canada, victims typically receive a WhatsApp message along with a request for compensation for the victims' safety. There have been similar incidents reported in British Columbia and Ontario, though police said there was no evidence to suggest those incidents are related to the ones in the Edmonton area. Edmonton Police said they so far have reports of 27 incidents between October and January, including extortions, arson, and drive-by shootings, and asked others who may have been targeted to come forward. "At this time, we believe the series has been committed by a group of local individuals being directed by a suspect in India," Edmonton police inspector Lance Parker told reporters. Police have arrested six young males in connection with the arson and firearms offenses, Parker said. No injuries have been reported from the shootings, though a firefighter was injured in one of the arsons, at least C\$9 million (\$6.7 million) in property damage had been recorded.

Road crashes claim nine more lives

FROM PAGE 12

The accident took place around 2:15am when he was returning home after his duty. The truck driver drove away after the incident.

Sajib is survived by his wife and son. Inspector Md Bachchu Mia, in charge of DMCH police outpost, said the body was kept at the morgue for autopsy.

In Feni, a woman was killed after being run over by an unidentified vehicle on the Dhaka-Chattoogram Highway in Sadar upazila's Muhuriganj area.

Bulu Biswas, 35, a resident of Kakoirkhopa village under Madaripur's Rajoir upazila, went missing from her home around two years ago, reports a correspondent.

Fazilpur (Muhuriganj) Highway Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Rashed Khan Chowdhury said locals took her to Feni Sadar Hospital, where on-duty doctors declared her dead.

After we identified the victim after running her fingerprint through the database, we informed her family, the OC added.

Her brother Chinmoy Biswas

stayed one day, around two years ago, Bulu left home alone and did not return.

"We looked for her at every possible location including all our relatives' houses. But we never found her, until now," said Chinmoy.

In Munshiganj, Abhijit Haldar, a master's student at Jagannath University, was killed in a motorcycle accident on his way to Mawa in Sreenagar upazila.

Ananya Halder Antu, another student of the university who was with him, was seriously injured and admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Abhijit is a master's student of the 2017-18 academic year, at JnU's biochemistry and molecular biology department.

The seriously injured student, Antu, is a student of the 2019-20 academic year, currently studying 4th year of honours in the Institute of Education and Research (IER) department at JnU.

Dr. Mostafa Kamal, proctor of the university, confirmed the matter to UNB.

Cold spell likely to linger on

FROM PAGE 12

to moderate fog elsewhere across the country from midnight to dawn, he added.

Transports by air, river, and road will experience less disruption in navigation as the density of fog decreases, Nazmul also said.

The lowest temperature in the country, 9.7 degrees Celsius, was recorded in Tentulia yesterday, and no other district experienced a cold wave.

"Some parts of Rangpur division may face cold waves on Saturday, but chances of cold waves in other parts of the country are low," Nazmul said.

In Dhaka, the lowest temperature was recorded at 15 degrees Celsius yesterday, according to the Met office.

In Kurigram and Lalmonirhat,

the northern border districts nearest the Himalayas have been miserable due to continuous cold waves since January 8.

Subal Chandra Sarkar, in charge of Kurigram's Rajarhat Agricultural Meteorological Observatory, told The Daily Star that the minimum temperature was recorded at 10.1 degrees Celsius at 9:00am but the lowest temperature was recorded at 9 degrees Celsius on Thursday morning.

Daily activities were disrupted as many preferred staying in and refrained from leaving their homes without any emergency.

Day labourer Soleman Ali, 58, of Char Jatrapur area on the bank of Brahmaputra River in Kurigram Sadar upazila, said his family did not have enough winter clothes and they

stayed warm by lighting makeshift campfires.

Farmer Mahidul Islam, 48, a farmer of Char Gokunda on the bank of the Teesta River in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, said he went to the maize field at 9:00am to irrigate the field yesterday but could not stay there even for half an hour due to the cold.

"The sudden outbreak of cold has made our life miserable," he added.

Lalmonirhat Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Ullah said the government-allocated blankets were being distributed among the cold-hit people.

Besides, various non-governmental organisations, institutions, and individuals are also distributing blankets among the cold-hit distressed people, he added.

BPL 10 off to a promising start

FROM PAGE 12

elected to bowl against defending champions Comilla Victorians after winning the toss which was not that surprising considering the pattern in the previous edition of the tournament where teams that won the toss opted to bowl first in nine out of the 12 day games in Dhaka.

The success rate in this strategy, however, was far from a 100 percent one with the toss winners going on to win five out of the nine games last year.

Dhaka pacer Taskin Ahmed tested the Comilla openers -- newly appointed captain Liton Das and the person he took over from, Imrul Kayes, early on.

The slowness of the surface also came into the equation as Comilla produced 44 in the Powerplay for the loss of one wicket.

Imrul and Towhid Hridoy then got things going for Comilla with a 107-run partnership but the duo failed to

accelerate in the final overs.

Taskin picked up both batters in the 19th over and then Shoriful Islam claimed a hat-trick in the last three deliveries of the innings to restrict Comilla to 143 for six.

Dhaka opener Mohammad Naim and Danushka Gunathilaka took the attack to Comilla early on, smashing 56 runs in the Powerplay.

Naim's 40-ball 52 and Gunathilaka's 42-ball 41 in a 101-run opening stand set up the chase for Dhaka, and even though there were some hiccups for the newest franchise in the tournament, they got across the line.

Chaturanga de Silva hit Mustafizur Rahman for a six to take the score 147 for five, sealing the win with three balls to spare.

"When I batted, I felt the wicket was good. It was a bit of a challenge to face pacers but it wasn't very difficult to face spin. I think if the top-order contributed a bit more with 10 to 20

runs it would have been better but it was a fighting score," said the losing captain.

Comilla, however, are not too disheartened by the early setback as they had previously started the BPL with three losses but ended the tournament as back-to-back champions.

The trend of bowling second continued in the second match of the day where Chattogram Challengers chased down Sylhet Strikers' 177 with seven wickets in hand and nine balls to spare.

Zakir Hasan's unbeaten 70 off 43 deliveries and useful contribution from openers Najmul Hossain Shanto (36) and Mohammad Mithun (40) had seen Sylhet, the beaten finalists of last year, post a challenging total of 177 for two.

But an unbeaten 131-run stand in the fourth wicket between Shahadat Hossain (57*) and Najibullah Zadran (61*) saw Chattogram cruise to victory despite some early blows.

14 storied
Ready
FULL COMMERCIAL
BUILDING SALE
@NEW ESKATON
TOTAL SPACES **68,483 sq. ft.**
PARKING **28 nos.**

for more info
09666 77 33 44
sel.com.bd