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UN PEACEKEEPERS Allegations of rights abuse may result in their return

Says UN spokesperson after DW documentary

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

If allegations of human rights abuse against a UN peacekeeper are substantiated, it results in non-deployment or even repatriation, said a spokesperson for the UN secretary general.

Spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric made the remarks at a press briefing in New York on Wednesday when his attention was drawn to a DW investigative documentary.

The documentary says Bangladesh and Sri Lanka sent to UN missions some officers implicated in human rights violations, such as torture and extrajudicial killings.

Dujarric said that over the years, there have been cases where they were informed of allegations of past human rights violations committed by uniformed personnel from a small number of countries.

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FIDDLERS BY THE SEA

A male fiddler crab flaunting his most prized possession – his one big claw – as he wanders a beach in Teknaf. Found in mangroves, salt marshes and sandy beaches in many regions, including the Indo-Pacific, the fiddler crab is one of the over 100 species that live can both on land and in the sea. Only the males have the one big claw, which they use to woo the females and fight off other dominant males. In fact, the big claw can be regenerated if they are lost in battle. The females select their male mates according to the size of the big claw and how well they use it. The males use the small claw for feeding and the movement of the smaller claw from the ground to the mouth looks as if the animal were playing the larger claw like a fiddle, thus the name.

PHOTO: TIMU HOSSAIN

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ALLOCATION FOR TREES DNCC couldn't spend even half the money in last eight years

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Dhaka North City Corporation could utilise less than half the allocated funds for tree plantation in the last eight years, depriving the dwellers of the mega city of some much-needed greenery.

It allocated Tk 20.50 crore for this purpose from 2015-2016 to 2022-2023 fiscal years. However, the DNCC's environment wing could spend only Tk 8.64 crore or 43 percent of the total allocation, DNCC documents show.

The city corporation failed to spend a single taka out of its allocated Tk 2 crore in 2021-2022 fiscal year. It could use half of the same amount allocated in 2022-2023 fiscal year.

BUDGET ALLOCATION AND EXPENDITURE SINCE 2016 (IN TAKA)

FISCAL YEAR	ALLOCATION	MONEY SPENT
FY 23	2cr	1.04cr
FY22	2cr	0
FY21	50 lakh	70 lakh
FY20	2cr	1.65cr
FY19	1cr	2cr
FY18	5cr	50 lakh
FY17	5cr	1.75cr
FY16	3cr	1cr
TOTAL	20.5cr	8.64cr

DNCC officials said they could not use the funds as there were not enough spaces for planting trees under its 196.22 sq km jurisdiction since 2015.

Meanwhile, the budget for tree plantation came down to nearly half in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 fiscal years. The DNCC allocated Tk 2.50 crore in the two fiscal years. Of the amount, Tk 2.35 crore was spent, according to the documents.

For the four fiscal years from 2015-2016 to 2018-2019, the DNCC allocated Tk 14 crore for tree plantation. During this period, it could use only Tk 5.25 crore for this purpose.

Talking to The Daily Star, Ward-310

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Russian attack on Kharkiv kills seven

REUTERS, Kharkiv

Russia pounded Kharkiv with missiles yesterday, killing seven people inside a printing house, and President Volodymyr Zelensky chided Ukraine's western allies for not providing enough military support to rebuff Russian attacks.

The attack damaged transport and municipal infrastructure and destroyed a printing house, causing a fire, the mayor of Kharkiv and the region's governor said. Another 24 people were wounded in the attacks.

Smoke poured from one of the printwork buildings and the smell of burning wood filled the air as rescuers hauled bodies in plastic bags out of the building, a Reuters correspondent on the scene reported.

"This is a purely civilian site, it is a printworks that prints books," regional

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Israeli forces push deeper into Gaza's north, south

35 Palestinians killed in aerial, ground bombardments

REUTERS, Cairo

Israeli forces killed 35 Palestinians in aerial and ground bombardments across the Gaza Strip yesterday and battled in close combat with Hamas members in areas of the southern city of Rafah, health officials and Hamas media said.

Israeli tanks advanced in Rafah's southeast, edged towards the city's western district of Yibna and continued to operate in three eastern suburbs, residents said.

"The occupation (Israeli forces) is trying to move further to the west, they are on the edge of Yibna, which is densely populated. They didn't invade it yet," one resident said, asking not to be named.

"We hear explosions and we see black smoke coming up from the areas where the army has invaded. It was

another very difficult night," he told Reuters via a chat app.

Simultaneous Israeli assaults on the northern and southern edges of Gaza this month have caused a new exodus of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fleeing their homes, and have cut off the main access routes for aid, raising the risk of famine.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) will rule today on South Africa's request to order a halt to Israel's Rafah offensive in Gaza, it said yesterday.

Last week, South Africa had asked the ICJ, also known as the World Court, to order a halt to Israel's offensive in Gaza, and in Rafah in particular, to ensure the survival of the Palestinian people.

Israel said it was ready to resume stalled talks on a truce and hostage

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Murshedy fined in FIFA's new sanctions

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) senior vice-president Abdus Salam Murshedy has been fined by FIFA's adjudicatory chamber of the Ethics Committee for breaching article 14 (general duties) of the FIFA Code of Ethics.

The world governing body of football announced in a statement yesterday that Murshedy, who is also the chairman of the BFF Finance Committee, has to pay a fine amounting to more than BDT 12 lakh (CHF 10,000).

In addition, three former BFF officials, including general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag, have been banned from all football-related activities in different terms. Shohag has been banned for three years and ordered to pay a fine amounting to more

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USA humiliate Tigers to clinch historic series

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh suffered yet another humiliating defeat as hosts USA made history by clinching their maiden T20I series against a Test-playing nation with a six-run win over the Tigers in the second T20I in Houston on Thursday.

The fact that this was Bangladesh's 100th loss in the format – the first team to reach this unwanted feat – only compounds the Tigers' miseries ahead of the T20 World Cup next month.

Following a five-wicket win in the first game, USA embarrassed Bangladesh, a side 10 places above them in T20I rankings, by restricting the visitors to 138 in 19.3 overs in chase of a 145-run target in the second game yesterday to seal the three-match series 2-0.

Bangladesh failed to get the 26 needed off the last four overs, losing their final five wickets for just 19 runs during this phase – a state of play that clearly

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PHOTO: AFP

Palestinian women mourn as they identify victims at the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir al-Balah following Israeli bombardment yesterday.

Scientists say they can make zero-emission cement

AFP, Paris

Researchers on Wednesday said they were a step closer to solving one of the trickiest problems in tackling climate change – how to keep making cement despite its enormous carbon footprint.

In a world first, engineers from Britain's University of Cambridge have shown that cement can be recycled without the same steep cost to the environment as making it from scratch.

Cement binds concrete together but the whitish powder is highly carbon-intensive to produce, with the sector generating more than triple the emissions of global air

travel. Demand for concrete – already the most widely used construction material on Earth – is soaring, but the notoriously polluting industry has struggled to produce it in a less harmful way to the climate.

The team at Cambridge believes it has a solution, pioneering a method that tweaks an existing process for steel manufacturing to produce recycled cement without the associated CO2 pollution.

