



(From left) Children carry placards; writers stage a token hunger strike; construction workers express their anger at US President George W Bush (effigy); and members of an Islamist organisation take to streets in Dhaka yesterday to protest the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq.

killed and 19 others, including five SSC

examinees, were injured when a passen-

ger bus fell into a road side ditch at the

Kathalia-Bhandaria road yesterday

Witnesses said the Bandaria-bound

bus from Kathalia with about 50 passen-

gers on board met the accident near

Kathalia cinema hall, killing Miraz, 18, a

first year student of Kathalia degree

college, on the spot and injuring 19

Police and family sources said the

The dead were identified as Pushpa

The seriously injured Shukumar and

The truck fled the scene after the

DHAKA

Programme

The inaugural function of the World Health Day Programme will be held with Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain as chief quest. Venue: Osmani Memorial auditorium. Time: 10.00am.

Blood donation

Dhaka International University organises a voluntary blood donation programme marking its eighth founding anniversary. Venue: University campus. Time: 10.00am

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen a film titled 'Three Kings'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm

Discussion

5.00pm.

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy organises a discussion in memory of noted dramatist Nurul Momen on the 9.00am. occasion of his 13th death anniversary. Venue: Academy premises. Time:

Anti-war rally

Anti War Young Society will hold a rally and take out a procession to protest the 10.00am Anglo-American invasion of Iraq. Venue: Muktangon, Ramna. Time: 4.00pm.

United rally Oikya Prochesta organises a united rally in protest against the US-led war on Irag with Gono Forum President Dr

Burnt US tanks

FROM PAGE 1 BBC correspondent Rageh Omaar said Baghdadis feel tired of the war days

Kamal Hossain as chief guest. Venue: Paltan Maidan. Time: 3.00pm.

Peace procession Bangladesh Christian Association will take out a peace procession to protest the Anglo-American aggression against Iraq. Venue: Church Community Centre, Tejkunipara. Time: 4.30pm.

Human chain

Siddheswari College will form a human chain and hold a meeting to protest the US-led war on Iraq and killing of innocent people by coalition forces. Venue: In front of the college. Time: 11.00am.

Workshop

The Association for Law Research and Human Rights organises a workshop on 'Journalism and Laws related to Human **Rights' with Shipping Minister** Akbar Hossain as chief quest. Venue: National Press Club. Time:

Discussion

Swasthya Andolon (Health Movement)

organises a discussion marking the World Health Day. Venue: Narigrantha Prabartana, Mohammadpur, Time:

Seminar

Bangladesh Kindergarten Association organises a seminar on the issuing of trade license by the city corporation to private educational institutions. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3.00pm

Ever so slowly, the suburbs

Jeeps and clouds of thick blue exhaust fumes. The more modern T-82s, the last of the Soviet-made fleet of battle tanks, sat hull down around Jordan Square with a clutch of BMP armoured vehicles.

The Americans were coming. The Americans were claiming to be in the inner suburbs of Baghdad which was untrue; indeed, the story was designed, I'm sure, to provoke panic and vulnerability among the Iraqis. True or false, the stories failed.

Across vast fields of sand and dirt and palm groves, I saw batteries of Sam-6 anti-aircraft missiles and multiple Katyusha rocket launchers awaiting the American advance. The soldiers around them looked relaxed, some smoking cigarettes in the shade of the palm trees or sipping fruit juice

brought to them by the residents of Qadisiya whose homes heaven help them were now in the firing line. But then there was the white-

painted Japanese pick-up truck that pulled out in front of my car. At first, I thought the soldiers on the back were sleeping, covered in blankets to keep

them warm. Yet I had opened my car window to keep cool this early summer morning and I realised that all the soldiers -- there must have been 15 of them in the little truck -- were lying on top of each other, all with

2 night guards of bidi factory murdered in Bagerhat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

upazila of Khulna district and slaugh-

Police recovered the bodies yester-

Proprietor of Sonali Bidi Factory

Sunil Kumar Saha could not be con-

tacted for his reaction to the killing.

Alleged snatcher

beaten to death

An alleged snatcher was killed in mob

beating at Bezora under Majhira upazila

The deceased was identified as

Sources said some villagers beat up

Being informed by the locals, police

rescued injured Sobhan and rushed him

to Bogra Mohammad Ali Hospital where

he succumbed to his injuries at 7:30 am.

the murder till 7pm yesterday.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Raozan, by a gang of criminals.

Raozan on Saturday night.

A Jubo Dal leader was shot dead at

The victim, Nizam Uddin, 23, had

They took the victim to a nearby

been abducted in the afternoon from

his village home at Mohammadpur,

had taken away Tk 10 thousand from

rushed to the spot with Tk 20 thou-

Nizam dead before Rahim could try to

victim

shot dead

in Raozan

th e

free him.

Jubo Dal leader

No case was filed in connection with

Sobhan when he went to Bezora Bridge

Abdus Sobhan, 30, son of Korban Ali of

Vatkandi village under Bogra sadar

day morning and sent them to KMCH

Iragis in civilian clothes have also Two night guards of a bidi factory was murdered in Mollahat upazila of thrown a bomb into a building where Bagerhat district on Saturday night. According to police, armed cadres

about 11:30 pm

tered them

for autopsy.

in Bogra

of Bogra vesterday.

area at about 6am.

upazila.

A CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

their heavy black military boots dangling over the tailboard. The two soldiers on the vehicles sat with their feet wedged between the corpses. So did America's first victims of the day go to their eternal rest.

"Today, we attack," the Minister of Information, Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf, was to announced an hour later, and he reeled off a list of Iraqi "victories" to sustain his country's morale. Seven British and American tanks destroyed around Basra, four American personnel carriers and an American aircraft destroyed near Baghdad. At the airport, the Iraqis confronted the enemy and slaugh tered them". Or so we were told.

Well, an Iraqi friend of mine who ives near the airport told me that he had seen a tank on fire, a tank with a black "V" sign painted on its armour. The "V" is the American symbol of "friendly force", intended to warn their pilots from bombing their own soldiers by mistake. So this must have been an American tank.

But Sahaf's optimism got the better of him. Yes, he told journalists in Baghdad, Doura was safe, Qadisiya was safe. Yarmouk was safe. "Go and look for yourselves," he challenged. Ministry of Information officials were ashen-faced. And when foreign correspondents were bussed off on this over-confident adventure, they

FROM PAGE 12

The tele-density still remains a little over plan to increase it to 4 per cent by 2010.

phases -- 12 and 20 per cent. Sri Lanka transformed its state owned telecom into a holding company

were turned back at the Yarmoul hospital and the ministry buses firmly ordered to carry reporters back to their hotel

around the shell-embraced suburbs proved one thing yesterday: that the Iragis up till dusk at least were preparing to fight the invaders. I found their 155mm artillery around the centre of the city, close to the rail lines. One artillery piece was even hauled up Abu Nawas Street beside the Tigris by a truck whose soldiers

held up their rifles and shouted their support for Saddam Hussein. And all day, the air raids continued. It gets confusing, amid the dust and smoke, all these new targets and

new pockets of ruination. Was the grev-powdered rubble in Karada a building yesterday, or was it struck last week? The central telephone exchange had taken another hit. So had the communications centre in Yarmouk. And then I noticed, along the front line where the Iraqi soldiers were preparing to become heroes or "martyrs" or survivors the last an infinitely preferable outcome to the

sanest of soldiers how small craters had been punched into the flowerbeds on the central reservations. Ever so slowly, the suburbs of

Baghdad were being turned into battlefields

the World Bank, for corporatisation of

the state-owned telecom to ensure a

The committee decided to sit again

BTTB restructuring

on April 13.

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1 per cent while the government has a Pakistan had transformed its stateowned telephone company into a government-owned company by offloading 32 per cent shares in two

JUTA announces fresh agitation programme

The Jahangirnagar University Teachers' Association (IUTA) has announced fresh agitation programme demanding resignation of VC, Pro-VC and Treasurer of the university.

The programme was taken at a meeting of the JUTA executive committee on the campus yesterday.

According to the programme, JUTA will stage a sit-in in front of the administrative building on April 9, press conference on April 10 and protest rally on April 12.

JUTA sources said the next programme will be taken up at an executive committee meeting on April

Meanwhile, the JU Employees Association and Employees Union have jointly called a 3-day strike beginning today to press home their demands.

Armed bus

FROM PAGE 1 "coalition's battle for the hearts and minds of Iraqis," and have increasingly been telling of furious encounters with Arabs from outside of Iraq.

"Some of these fighters come from Sudan, Egypt, other places and we have killed a number of them and captured a number of them," Brigadier General Vincent Brooks told a briefing yesterday at Central Command at Oatar.

While Brooks went on to say, in the now-rote American fashion, that there was evidence of military "training activities" inside Iraq that increased the likelihood of links between Iraq and "terrorist organisations," the simplest explanation for this activity is that the most idealistic and outraged of Arab citizens, dismayed at the reaction of their governments, have decided to take up arms against an invader they g outside all inte

Liberation War are to join the group,

said President of repatriated freedom

fighters of Palestine Liberation

lipped when asked how these fighters

Organisation Ziaul Kabir Dulu.

would be dispatched off to Iraq.

Crisis looms

FROM PAGE 1

Muslim world.

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Road accidents kill 6 in three districts

noon.

others.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six people, including a college student, were killed and 39 others injured in separate road accidents in Jhenidah, Pirojpur and Mymensingh districts vesterday and on Saturday night.

Our Ihenidah Correspondent reports: Two persons were killed and 15 others injured when a Dhaka-bound bus collided head on with a Khulnabound truck near Jhenidah Police Lines yesterday morning.

Local people rescued the injured and The dead were identified as bus sent them to Bhandaria hospital. passenger Ranajit Kumar of Barobazar In Mymensingh, three people were area under Khulna city and helper of the killed and five others injured, two of truck, Sahidul Islam of Jamua village in them seriously, in a road accident on the Morelganj upazila under Bagerhat Mymensingh-Tangail road Saturday district. Both died on the spot. night, according to BSS.

Of the injured, Qamrul Islam of Gobra village, Maniruzzaman of victims, a mother and her daughter, Gopinathpur in Gopalganj, Alauddin were killed on the spot when a tempo in Ahmed of Gotial in Uzirpur upazila which they were travelling, collided under Barisal district, Manik of head on with a speedy truck coming Khalispur in Khulna, Nazrul Islam of from opposite direction at Talky in Khulna city area and Suman, Kamala Madhupur upazila. and Sahidul Islam of Kaliganj upazila in Jhenidah district were admitted to and her daughter Joshna and Anjana.

Jhenidah Sadar Hospital. A case was filed with Jhenidah police tempo driver Dulal were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. station. The bodies were sent to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital morgue for Three others were released after first autopsy. Police seized both the vehicles. aid According to Our Barisal Correspondent, a college student was

Russian envoy's convoy

accident

FROM PAGE 1 harsh way", the spokesman said, adding that it demanded "they take all

injured," the witness told Interfax. "We bandaged the wounded, left a car behind and kept going. But then possible measures to ensure the around 15 kilometres from Baghdad security of Russian citizens." we came upon a jeep convoy," he said. "We stopped so as not to provoke

President Vladimir Putin has been informed of the incident, his spokesman Boris Gromov said The US Central Command in Qatar And if the history of liberation said it was looking into reports that its struggles against such conduct is any troops were the ones who attacked the guide, the British and the Americans Russian diplomatic convoy. can only expect more such busloads of Titorenko left Baghdad for Arabs and Muslims, with more young Damascus early Sunday as US troops women, to leave to join a battle that is going to leave a lasting mark on the advanced on the Iraqi capital. He was due to fly to Moscow later Sunday. A witness told Interfax news agency from Baghdad that around 25 Suicide squad people -- mostly Russian journalists -were driving in the convoy, which he Once the registration is over said came under attack twice. Mujaheden would be chosen from the "In Baghdad, everything went list. All kinds of training including that calmly. When we left the city, we saw of arms would be provided They would that there was fighting up ahead, so we also be equipped with necessary decided to turn around and eight knowledge on Iraq and fighting tactics. kilometers from Baghdad, we came More than 5,000 trained people under fire. Several people were who had fought the Palestine

level playing ground for both the private and public operators. The World Bank has offered technical and financial assistance in this regard, sources said.

Anti-war rally

JU CORRESPONDENT But an earlier 35-minute journey

without power that entered its 18th day yesterday. They don't like the idea of US or British troops rolling down their city. Iraq still claims to be in control of

Saddam International Airport and the US forces say they control 95 per cent of

Iragi Information Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf said 50 US soldiers were killed and six tanks destroyed in the fight over the airport. US claimed 2,000 Iraqi fighters were killed since American troops attacked Baghdad's outskirts

The US said 79 of its soldiers have been killed since the invasion began. The Red Cross said Baghdad hospi-

tals were struggling to cope with the wounded and the situation in the city was becoming desperate.

The Iraqi government issued a ban tion saying that he is very much alive. on travel in or out of the city between 6:00pm and 6:00am.

UKTROOPS STORM BASRA Hundreds of British tanks and armoured personnel carriers are pour ing into the southern Iraqi city of Basra. The 7th Armoured Brigade, the

Desert Rats, stormed the city with several thousand troops in an attempt to

take it over and secure it. Three units, the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, Royal Fusiliers and the Black Watch. have advanced into the city, meeting only "isolated pockets" of resistance, correspondents say. The airport has also been secured.

Later, US commandos also launched an attack on Basra. But Iraq said Basra is still under its control and Republican Guard troops are fighting a fierce battle there.

OTHER MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS The US military says further fighting is expected in Karbala, about 60 kilometres (37 miles) south of Baghdad; the American advance into the town, to stop Iraqi paramilitaries from threatening supply lines which stretch hundreds of kilometres up from southern Iraq, was halted on Saturday

TARGET "CHEMICAL" ALI Early on Saturday, British forces

marines were taking cover.

attacked a Baath party building where the Iraqi commander known as "Chemical Ali", who is in charge of the south of the country, was believed to be hiding. The building which Ali Hassan al-

Majid had reportedly been seen entering was hit by both two air strikes and artillery

On Sunday US Central Command spokesman Jim Wilkinson said the bodies of al-Majid's bodyguards had been found in the building.

The BBC's Caroline Wyatt, with the British troops, also said sources had suggested there was "good reason" to think he may have been killed, "and that would be very, very significant". But Iraq brushed aside the sugges

Woman dies from burn injuries in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj A young woman died from burn

iniuries at her father's home in Chanmari area of Fatullah Police Station Saturday noon. She was allegedly set afire by her

husband and in-laws in her father-inlaw's house in a village in Panchagarh district on March 29. According to sources, Soma Akter was married to one Mujibur Rahman

Sabuj four years ago and she used to live in her father-in-law's house at village Nitypara in Atwar Police Station under Panchagarh district. Her husband and in-laws started to

torture her for dowry from the very beginning. On March 29, 2003, husband Sabui, brother in laws Manik, Jobadul, Tarigul and Hamidul beat her mercilessly. At one stage, Kulsum, wife of Tariqul, incited her in-laws to set

Soma afire. Sabuj and his brothers set her ablaze. The neighbours took her to a local hospital with severe burn injuries. She was later shifted to the Rangpur Medical College Hospital and finally to

the DMCH. She was released from the

hospital and finally died at her father's

home on Saturday.

and distributed 11 per cent shares of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist among the workers and employees.

Party (PBCP) abducted Phul Mia "There are several models in front of Shikder, 40, and Hemayet Kazi, 45, us but we are looking for a unique model night guards of Sonali Bidi Factory suitable for the BTTB," said Post and while they were on duty at the factory at Telec-ommunication Secretary Faruq Ahmed Siddiqui. The outlaws took the two to Charkushlia village under Terokhada

The committee, which had been given a three-month time to complete its task, expressed doubt that it would not be able to complete the task within the stipulated time. However, some of the committee members remained optimistic.

Another official however said that it No case was lodged till vesterday would require years to assess the BTTB's assets.

> An internationally reputed audit firm would be commissioned to carry out the assessment job of the BTTB.

Presided over by MoPT Minister Barrister Aminul Hoque, the meeting was attended among others by State Minister for Energy AKM Mosharrof Hossain, Executive Chairman of Board of Investment (BOI) Mahmudur Rahman and Prof. Abul Kasem, head of the Dep-artment of Computer Science and Electronics.

The government is under pressure from donors, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and

Govt asks officials

FROM PAGE 12

Thursdays when it functions from 9am to 2pm.

Dr Husain, top civil servant, in the circular asked all secretaries to strictly implement the order in their ministries and divisions immediately.

"It is witnessed that a section of high officials do not attend their office in time and come to office much late. Some of them are very irregular in their offices and it is very difficult to understand when they come and leave office," the circular said.

"This sort of irregular arrival and departure is contrary to the government office rules ---- it is unwarranted -----," the circular, distributed among all secretariat staff, read

brick-field leaving a note, demanding a The cabinet secretary said it was ransom of Tk one lakh. Earlier, they desirable that office chiefs and high officials would attend work in time Nizam's elder brother Abdur Rahim and encourage their subordinates to follow them. sand, but the miscreants had shot

If they do so, it will leave a positive impact on establishing good govertional norms and practices.

trial of Bush and Blair at the International War Tribunal and cancellation of UN membership of US and Britain for violating the UN Charter.

Briefly addressing the rally, Mohiuddin called for raising a Mujahid Bahini (militia) to stand beside the Iraqi people and fight the Anglo-American forces.

He also urged the people to keep calm and demonstrate their ange through peaceful protests.

The religious leaders told the rally that the invasion is only to capture Iraq's oil resources.

The rich civilisation, cultural heritage and centuries-old historical sites in Iraq have been endangered by Bush and Blair, they said.

Moulana Jalaluddin Al-Qaderi Allama Haroon Ismabadai, Allama Sultan Jowk Nadvi, Hindu religious leader Samiron Chakraborty, Buddhist monk Jinobodhi Bhikku and Christian leader Joseph Jiban Gomez also addressed the rally. Local leaders of Awami League

Jatiya Samajtantric Dal (JSD) Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), BSD and different professional groups joined the rally.

Dr Khandakar Azharul Huq, managing director of Dhaka WASA, urged India not to take any unilateral decision on the international rivers.

He, however, said that Bangladesh nance, enhancing dynamism and should not follow a confrontational restoring discipline in state activities. water-sharing policy towards India.

He said the government had Among others, Advocate Goutam Chakraborty, state minister for water declared Tuesdays as 'no meeting resources, JL Ijermans, ambassador of day' at the secretariat and asked the Royal Netherlands in Dhaka, Dr HR Khan, vice-chairman of Bangladesh Water Partnership, and Shamsuddin Ahmed, chairman of MNSD spoke on the occasion.

Friendly fire

FROM PAGE 1 own people. They've killed a lot of ordinary characters. I've counted 10 or 12 bodies around us, so there are Americans dead.

"This was a really bad own goal by the Americans. We don't know how many Americans are dead," Simpson said.

"This is just a scene from hell here, all the vehicles on fire. There's bodies burning around me, there's bodies lying around, there's bits of bodies on the ground," he added.

leading up to the start of the bombing campaign on March 20.

Health pipeline

The organisers remained tight FROM PAGE 1

plan with indicators and dates for completion of the agreed reform agenda or an alternative reform agenda which will achieve the objectives of HPSP with an action plan, indicators and dates for completion, satisfactory to IDA and its co-

financiers is received by April 30." It also said that disbursement of funds for essential commodities would remain unaffected.

A key development partner when contacted said that the suspension indicates that the donors and IDA would not take part in future health programmes in Bangladesh. He said, The government has violated agreement which is a serious concern. Agreed reform in the health sector is a must for development, but the ministry is going back to where it was about five years ago. So the future vision of the government is not well under-

stood. Health Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain is not concerned about the action of the IDA and its cofinanciers saying 'In the last five years the IDA and other donors have not made any significant contribution to the sector'.

When contacted he said he did not see the content of the letter yet, but said that the decision would not hurt the government.

"We are in the process of preparing a budget for the next phase of the

i and we sent a car flag to show who we were, but then we came under fire again," he told Interfax.

"Two more people were hurt -thank God no one was killed.

"Then the jeeps left, we got on to the main road and now the main thing is to get to a hospital," he added.

Russia, one of the most fervent opponents to the US-led war, had kept its Baghdad embassy operational with a skeleton staff after withdrawing all non-essential personnel in the days

Russia protested loudly last week when the building was nearly hit by USbombs

health programme. If we need funds we would send a formal request but I don't see any problem if they suspend disbursement of such a small amount (referring to \$123 million)."

Regarding the unification he said, "The unification process started wrongly. It should have been topdown but it originated from upazila and above which is hampering all activities in the sector. We are making some changes to bring reform in the sector.

The minister also said that if there is shortage of funds, the government would have its own strategy to finance major projects in the sector. He further said that he did not agree with some of the reforms and action plans as agreed by the previous government in HPSP, like 'unnecessary' expenditure for hiring foreign consultants.

"We would go by our needs not theirs. So if we require their assistance we would make a formal request but we would not be forced to abide by

their dictates," the minister added. Until June 2002, HPSP spending, starting in July 1998, stands at \$1.6 billion out of a total of \$2.1 billion for HPSP (1998 June 2003). The development partners and IDA committed a total of \$800 million as pool funds, while other donors like CIDA, German overseas aid agencies, UN agencies committed \$200 million. The rest would come from the government's

own funds.

officials and employees to stay the whole working hours at work for the benefit of individual government service recipients and institutions. But Dr Husain pointed out that the order was not being implemented satisfactorily. "If necessary, only secretaries will

tion on Tuesdays," he added. There is a rule for all officials and

tity cards at the secretariat, but flout ing the rule is widespread, another official said.

As a result, it is very difficult to visitors, he added.

mandatory for lower rung employees, but none cares, he said

be allowed to go outside for inspec-

employees that they hang their iden-

identify who are staff and who are Wearing of uniform and shoes are