

Dr Kamal blasts govt's stance on Iraq

Invasion grave 'threat to world order, UN'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Internationally known lawyer and Gano Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday said the US-led invasion of Iraq has posed a serious threat to the world democratic order, United Nations and the humanity.

He criticised the government's stance on the war. Bangladesh earned independence through war but the government could not initiate a unified move against the unjust war, he said.

He was addressing a public meeting at Sher-e-Bangla Park at Panchagarh town, organised by Oikya Procheta (unity move), an alliance of some small political parties including Gano Forum.

Dr Kamal demanded an immediate end to the war. Besides deaths and destruction in Iraq, the war is affecting the world economy including that of Bangladesh, he said.

Expressing despair over what he

Gas explosion kills one at Sitakunda shipyard

BSS, Ctg

One person was killed and three others were injured when a gas cylinder exploded at a shipyard at Shetalpur in Sitakunda thana yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Md Sagor, 19. The identity of the injured could not be known immediately. They were admitted to hospital.

When contacted Sitakunda thana could not confirm the incident.

called negative politics of political parties in the country, he said the government has made the parliament ineffective by turning it into a one party show.

Neither the ruling nor the major opposition party thinks that it has a responsibility to the people.

Many educational institutes have been closed following chaotic situations on campuses and the society has become hostage to terrorists and toll collectors, he said.

Among others, Gano Forum leaders Advocate Jahurul Islam, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and Pankaj Bhattachahriya addressed the public meeting, chaired by local Oikya Procheta leader Rezaul Islam.

Train derails in Netrokona: 12 injured

BSS, Netrokona

At least 12 passengers received injuries when a passenger train derailed at Rajur bazar near the outer signal of the Netrokona Court Station yesterday.

Railway sources said two bogies of the Netrokona-bound 263-up train from Mohanganj went off the track at about 11:50 am, disrupting train service between Netrokona and Mohanganj for about four hours.

The injured passengers were given first aid.

The train communication resumed at about 4:00 pm after the bogies were removed from the track.

13 chargesheeted in Jubo League leader Hanif murder case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Thirteen people have been chargesheeted in Jubo League leader Hanif murder case.

The chargesheet was submitted to court yesterday by Sub Inspector Ajmal Hossain of Khulna police station.

Of the chargesheeted accused, five are now in jail while the rest eight still at large.

Jubo League leader Mohammad Hanif was gunned down at 10 am on June 5, 2001 in front of his house at Bagmara main road under Khulna thana.

Nine out of 13 accused are supporters of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

RAT nets six

FROM PAGE 12
Six gangsters were arrested with firearms and ammunition.

Injured RAT members Rokunuzzaman Chowdhury, 28, and Sheikh Shadi, 27, were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital while alleged gangsters Badsa Miah, Kawsar Islam and Abdul Malek to Savar Health Complex.

The incident took place when a RAT team went to Barodeshi village to arrest criminals. Sensing the presence of the force, criminals shot at them triggering the firefight.

The RAT members overpowered the gang and arrested five persons that also included Malek, Shafiqul and Abul Kalam Azad and recovered two pistols, one revolver and 135 bullets from them.

The detainees are members of the Mozam and Mintu drug syndicate that took shelter at Savar following the removal of the BNP slum in the capital.

A case was filed.

Ban on women

FROM PAGE 12
Rashid Khan Monno is convener of the committee, which includes law minister Moudud Ahmed, foreign minister M Morsheed Khan, home minister Altf Hossain Chowdhury.

The meeting would also discuss reducing migration cost of workers going abroad, checking harassment of expatriates at airport and steps to expand employment market abroad.



PHOTO: STAR

President of Women Entrepreneurs Association, Bangladesh Rokia A Rahman, second from left, attends a reception meeting, also joined by Advocate Salma Ali, first from left, Supreme Court lawyer Rebeka Sultana, third from left, and MCCI Secretary General CK Haider, fourth from left, among others, in Chittagong yesterday.

Bangladeshi buds

FROM PAGE 12

The Global Campaign for Education (GCE), a coalition of non-government organisations (NGOs) and teachers unions across the world organised the lesson. In Bangladesh, the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPEA) sponsored it.

Earlier, 28,801 students took part in a language lesson at a time in the United Kingdom last year in an attempt to create a Guinness World Record.

In Dhaka, thousands of children gathered at the Central Shaheed Minar at 10:00am yesterday to participate in the programme. A large number of teachers and guardians also came to the venue with placards that read 'Create equal opportunity for girl child'.

The programme would create a positive attitude among all sections of people for education of girls and women, organisers claimed.

Seventy million girls are still out of school across the globe and 550 million women - nearly one in every

five - are illiterate.

The main objective of the GCE's third Global Week of Action from April 6 to 13 is to stress immediate steps to widen the scope for education of women and girls.

"We need your support. If the majority of us demand it, governments will have to take positive steps to get girls in schools," an organiser said.

Education of girls and women is crucial as it leads directly to better family health, economic growth and lower rates of child mortality and malnutrition, organisers said. And the 'single biggest mistake of our times' has been to deny them the right to read and write -- the means to build a better life, they added.

Meanwhile, at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000, world leaders agreed to get as many girls as boys in schools by 2005. But with only two years to go, they are well short of their target. Without prompt action, they will fail to achieve it.

One to die

FROM PAGE 12

alleged that at about 8.45am on October 7, 2002, Sadeq along with another person went to the victim's 14/6 Zigatola residence and wanted to talk to him (victim) about a civil suit. The victim told him (Sadeq) to come in the afternoon. But when the victim with his two daughters Monisha Ghotak, 18, Kajol Ghotak, 14, and his junior colleague Advocate Zahurul Islam, 29, were leaving for his workplace, Sadeq and his accomplice threw acid on them. As a result, his daughters and his junior sustained minor injuries but his eyes were damaged permanently.

Later, Advocate Nirmal Roy Chowdhury, another junior of the victim, filed a case accusing Sadeq and four others under the Acid Control Act.

The investigating officer of the case submitted the charge sheet against Sadeq on January 4, and the court framed charges against him on January 8.

Twelve prosecution witnesses were cross-examined during the trial.

District Public Prosecutor Mohsin Miah appeared for the state, while advocate ABM Sharfuddin Khan Mukul defended the accused.

Outlaws kill two in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Underground party members allegedly killed two people in separate incidents at Tebunia Badalpara and Saradangi villages in the early hours yesterday.

The victims were identified as Md Alauddin, 50, a farmer of Tebunia Badal Para village under Sadar upazila and Md Babu, 30, a day labourer of Saradangi under Atakula upazila.

Police said a group of the outlawed underground party members attacked Alauddin in front of his family members at about 2:00 am yesterday. They chopped him and later shot him to death.

Police suspect the killing may have occurred because of previous enmity.

In a separate incident another group of outlawed party members dragged away Babu from his house at Saradangi and slaughtered him with a sharp knife.

Local people alleged that in spite of there being a police camp beside Babu's house, they didn't come to rescue him.

Police said Babu was a member of the party and that he was killed because of intra-party feud.

Two separate cases were lodged with the local police stations.

Saifur

FROM PAGE 12

health problems with population issues that, in some cases, resulted in adverse impact on the population problem, he said.

The minister, however, said the government would try to convince the donors that the reassessment decision was correct, as the health infrastructure in Bangladesh is one of the finest in South Asia. "Only (problem is that) we give less attention."

The donors' fund was for institutional development and policy related, and was not for the delivery of health services, he explained, adding that the fund for 65-70 components of the programme was mostly for the consultancy services.

Around 200 physicians, including six from India and Thailand, are participating in the 11th national conference of the "Society of Otolaryngologist and Head Neck Surgeons of Bangladesh."

Referring to WHO figures, the inaugural session of the conference was informed that the rate of ENT patients in Bangladesh would be more than the global rate of 1:1000 (one per thousand).

There are only around 250 ENT surgeons in Bangladesh for its huge population.

Local ENT surgeons claimed 90 per cent success in operations, which began only one or two years back at an average cost of Tk 20,000 to Tk 25,000 in 4-5 private hospitals. The treatment is, however, free in the government-run Dhaka Medical College Hospital and Salimullah Medical College Hospital.

State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Amanullah Aman, Health Secretary Mohammad Fazlur Rahman, Society president Prof M Alauddin and general secretary Prof Mohammad Abdullah addressed the inaugural session.

Dispute in Ctg over lease of trade fair gate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Supporters of two parties were locked in a dispute yesterday morning over taking lease of the gate of the International Trade Fair for the extended period.

Following the dispute, sale of tickets remained suspended for over three hours and hundreds of people entered the fair venue at the polo-ground through the open and unprotected gate. It created a chaotic situation in and around the place.

The trouble began when the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), organiser of the fair, leased out the gate to a new party, Shahabuddin Decorators, for the extended 3 days, dropping the previous lessee, Prime Builders Association.

Normalcy was restored when police arrived at the fair venue. CCCI leased out the gate to a new party (Shahabuddin Decorators) as Prime Builders did not agree to pay Tk 6 lakh for the extended three days.



(From left) Leaders and activists of the Jatiyatabadi Mohila Dal form a human chain in front of the High Court; members of the Child Advocacy Group shout slogans; garment owners and workers from Keraniganj march toward the Paltan Maidan; and members of Ektu Bashi of Mohila Angon, Ramna Park, stage a rally in protest against the US-led invasion of Iraq in Dhaka yesterday.

JUTA postpones programme

JU CORRESPONDENT

The Jahangirnagar University Teachers Association (JUTA) has postponed its work abstention and other programmes, taking into account the concern and anxieties of the admission seekers.

The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of JUTA Tuesday night with its president Prof Aminul Islam in the chair.

PM: Admin

FROM PAGE 1

During discussion on food production, the meeting observed that the slogan of attaining "self-sufficiency in food" during the past regime left an adverse effect on many counts.

"Country's food situation needs to be reevaluated because the slogan restricted foreign assistance on many occasions," the meeting was told. Problems in export, Chittagong Port situation, accommodation, lack of commonrooms for conferences and cafeteria in the Secretariat, and remittance from expatriate Bangladeshis came up for discussion.

The prime minister reminded the top officials of the importance of the current financial quarter as it is the time for completing last year's works and also planning the future programmes for the budget.

She said country's priorities have to be set within available resources, checking all sorts of extravagance.

The meeting was informed that after ICT, "biotechnology" would be the next thrust sector of the government.

Nearly 25 secretaries participated in the three-hour brainstorming over the performance of the administration.

Housewife raped allegedly by BNP men in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A young housewife was raped and stabbed allegedly by the ruling party activists at Mohor village in Tanore upazila in the district on Tuesday night.

Family members of the victim said BNP activists Abdul Matin and his accomplice Golam Rabbani entered her house by breaking open the door at around 10:00 pm in her husband's absence.

They raped her at dagger point and stabbed her when she tried to raise an alarm. A village doctor treated her locally.

A case was filed with the Tanore Police Station accusing the pair, but none of them was arrested.

The victim's family alleged that the accused blocked her medical check-up using political influence. They are moving freely in the locality before the eyes of police, they said.

Officer-in-charge of Tanore police station, however, denied the allegations and said they were trying to arrest the accused.

Top criminal of Adamjee arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Police arrested 'Dhakaiya' Jalal, a top criminal of Adamjee area, yesterday.

Jalal, 35, was wanted in 13 cases including murder and extortion, police said.

4 killed, 50 hurt in Barisal road mishap

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Four people were killed and 50 others injured in a road accident at Kashipur on Barisal-Burghata road yesterday morning.

According to witnesses, a Barisal bound passenger bus from Burghata rammaged a roadside tree as it tried to avert a head on collision with a truck coming from opposite direction at Kashipur intersection at around 9:30 am.

The dead were identified as Hannan Mridha, 40, of Gournadi; Dhiren Choudhury, 50, of Mollapara, Agailjaha; Shaiful, 35 of Gurnadi and Salim Malkar, 35 of Kashabpur, Bauphal.

Of the injured, 15 were admitted to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital while the rest released after first aid.

Our N'ganj Correspondent reports: One person was killed and four others, including an official of the Red Crescent Society, were injured in a road accident on the Dhaka-Chittagong, Highway yesterday.

The accident occurred in the afternoon when a Pajero jeep of the Red Crescent Society collided head on with a truck in Keodhala area under Bandar thana, killing the driver on the spot.

The jeep was totally damaged.

The injured were admitted to a local clinic and later shifted to DMCH. Police seized the truck, but its driver, however, managed to flee.

No case was lodged till filing of this report at 7:00 pm.

Baghdad slips from Saddam's grip

FROM PAGE 1

were ransacked, as were military installations and research institutions. Government computers, furniture and even military jeeps were taken from sites around the city.

US marines helped bring down a giant statue of Saddam in a central square of Baghdad to the applause of Iraqis standing below. The statue toppled when a rope tied to it was hooked up to a military vehicle that backed away.

US troops advanced on central Baghdad from the southwest of the city. Other units steadily expanded their reach, opening a new northern corridor in Baghdad. They secured a military airport, a prison and set fire to Republican Guard barracks.

US marines seized what they described as a headquarters of Saddam's secret police in Baghdad, a Reuters correspondent who entered the building reported.

Sean Maguire said the deserted Directorate of General Security (DGS) in the east of the capital was seized yesterday morning. The site was being looted by locals when the marines arrived, he said. The building housed the political directorate of the DGS, tasked with investigating political crimes, said US forces.

The offices looked as if they had fallen into disuse. Some rooms were filled with files, some contained gas masks and other equipment. The site appeared to be made up mainly of administrative offices rather than a jail complex, Maguire said.

From the southeast, marines secured routes inside the city and pursued small, roving bands of Iraqis armed with rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons. In one neighbourhood, numerous civilians flashed

thumbs-ups to the US troops.

Unconfirmed reports said residents among the heavily-armed population of the quarter had fought one of the Fedayeen Saddam militia men before arrival of the US troops overnight.

In other parts of the capital, Baghdadis tore up a giant portrait of Saddam, men brandished Kalashnikov rifles as they signalled their delight at the regime crumbling.

Looters on the loose

Rampaging looters attacked symbols of Saddam's power. Iraqis were filmed carrying looted chairs, sacks of grain and other supplies on their backs. In Saddam City, Baghdad's teeming Shiite suburb, people were seen breaking into shops and homes to steal furniture, food, electrical equipment and carpets.

In the north of the capital, citizens rampaged through the interior and irrigation ministries, gutting the offices, reporters said.

Sporadic shooting

In central Baghdad, an Iraqi grenade landed near US tanks at a presidential compound on the western bank of the Tigris River. A Reuters reporter said it seemed to come from near the Palestine Hotel used by journalists covering the war.

A British military spokesman said the battle for Baghdad had switched from attacks on military and "regime" targets to a phase of close fighting with local pockets of resistance.

"In pockets I believe there is organised force. A lot of it appears to be local initiative," Group Captain Al Lockwood said.

Humanitarian fears

Thousands of civilians yesterday continued to pour out of Baghdad in buses and pick-up trucks, most of them

heading north.

The toll on Iraqi civilians four days after US forces first penetrated the outskirts of Baghdad is unknown. But the World Health Organisation said the capital's hospitals were running out of supplies to treat burns, shrapnel wounds and spinal injuries caused by the fighting.

In the north

US special forces and Kurdish peshmarga fighters seized a strategic hilltop near the major Iraqi-held city of Mosul early yesterday.

But coalition rescue teams were searching for the two-man crew of an American fighter jet downed near the northern Iraqi stronghold of Tikrit, the hometown of Saddam, a possible both-hole should choose to flee the capital.

In the south

British forces have appointed a local sheikh to take leadership of Basra, where looting threatened to run out of control. Militarily, they were consolidating new positions around Basra following their furthest incursion north.

Officials said the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Regiment had reached Al Qurnah -- said to be the site of the biblical Garden of Eden and the birthplace of mankind -- after crossing the River Euphrates.

The troops were welcomed by cheering crowds of local people in the area, populated by Ma'dan, marsh Arabs.

Meanwhile, British forces in Iraq's second city were continuing efforts to restore law and order after impoverished Iraqis ripped apart the city's buildings during chaotic scenes of looting.

Mystery shrouds

FROM PAGE 1

face at some point or people close to him will talk about him as either dead or alive and that information will be picked up by Western intelligence services, US officials say.

More difficult would be finding remains in the rubble to identify, given the severity of the strike and the fact that US forces did not have control of that district immediately after the strikes, officials say.

It was the second strike that targeted Saddam and his sons, the first one bombed a residential compound on the outskirts of Baghdad on March 19.

Meanwhile, US warplanes struck Iraqi positions around Tikrit north of Baghdad, the birthplace of Saddam Hussein, a senior US military spokesman said yesterday.

"Over the last 24 hours what you have are continuing airstrikes against Iraqi military targets in the area of Tikrit as well as against regime leadership targets," Navy Captain Frank Thorp said at US Central Command's forward planning base here.

Thorp said US forces "continue to move north" from the Iraqi capital and described Tikrit, 200 kilometers north of Baghdad, as "first and foremost the

Dhaka: Iraq

FROM PAGE 1

of Iraqi citizens.

The foreign minister expressed shock and serious concern over the killing of three media people in Iraq during the allied bombardment. He called upon all concerned to ensure safety of media men through whom people around the world come to know the facts.

next large metropolis in the country as well as recognised to be a very important city for the regime."

A senior US commander in the war on Iraq, Brigadier General Vincent Brooks, on Tuesday said US forces were keeping up the pressure on Tikrit to prevent Iraqi units loyal to Saddam Hussein from reaching the president's hometown.

Summer diseases

FROM PAGE 12

a doctor."

"As far as the contagious diseases are concerned, the infected patients should be kept in isolation from the uninfected ones because these diseases like diarrhoea, cholera, viral fever and chicken pox can spread by through open air, cough of the patient and contaminated water," Chief Physician of Cholera Hospital Dr Md Abdus Salam said regarding prevention of the seasonal diseases.

Dr. Salam also said the diarrhoeal diseases appear in hot weather because the food gets contaminated with the bacteria in the heat. People drink water much more than in the other season and with this the chances of bacterial contamination get higher.

"To keep these diseases at bay, people should eat fresh food, drink boiled water and be clean and careful. The germs cannot live if the water and food are boiled. In case of children they should be breast fed which is completely secure."

According to sources, more than 100,000 people were treated for diarrhoea and dysentery at the Cholera Hospital last season.