

## DHAKA TODAY

### Conference

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, a daylong conference of mass media will be held with renowned lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain as chief guest. Venue: LGED Bhaban, Agargaon. Time: 9.30am.

### Consultation

Society for International and Human Development organises a consultation to prepare for a national seminar on forest and plantation. Venue: WVA auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 9.00am.

### Coin exhibition

Nuismatic Society of Bangladesh organises a seminar on numismatics and a daylong exhibition of ancient and modern coins. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 9.00am.

### BCDIC discussion

Bangladesh Centre for Development, Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) organises a discussion marking the World Press Freedom Day. Venue: CIRDP seminar room, Topkhana Road. Time: 10.00am.

### Seminar

Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) organises a seminar on 'Safe Water and Sanitation: Emerging Challenges in Bangladesh' with LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan as chief guest. Venue: DAM auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 10.00am.

### Symposium

The inaugural session of a 2-day symposium on 'Bangladesh Science and Technology Vision 2021', organised by Bangladesh Academy of Science, will be held with Science, Information and Communication Technology Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan as chief guest. Venue: Pharmacy Department auditorium of Dhaka University. Time: 10.00am.

### Chhayanaut programme

Chhayanaut organises a programme to pay homage to poet Jasim Uddin on the occasion of his birth centenary celebration. Venue: Shoukat Osman auditorium of Central Public Library, Shahbagh. Time: 7.00pm.

### Discussion

Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmla Committee organises a discussion on the occasion of the 75th birth

anniversary of Shaheed Janani Jahannara Imam. Venue: WVA auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 4.00pm.

### Training course

The inaugural ceremony of the training course on oceanography, organised by National Oceanographic and Maritime Institute, will be held with DU Vice Chancellor Dr SMA Faiz as chief guest. Venue: SPARRSO auditorium, Agargaon. Time: 5.00pm.

### BSIS meeting

A general meeting of the Bangladesh Society for International Studies (BSIS) will be held. Venue: Office of the chairperson of Department of International Relations, Dhaka University. Time: 3.00pm.

### ISAB meeting

A general meeting of the International Studies Association of Bangladesh (ISAB) will be held. Venue: Office of the chairperson of Department of International Relations, Dhaka University. Time: 4.00pm.

### Film show

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

## DHAKA TOMORROW

### Film show

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

### Roundtable

Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA) organises a roundtable on 'Oil and Security in the 21st century: Impact on Bangladesh' with State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources AKM Mosharraf Hossain as chief guest. Venue: BILIA auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 11.00am.

### Workshop

Bangladesh Power Development Board in cooperation with Institute of Water Modeling organises a workshop on 'Optimisation of Kapitai Dam Release' with State Minister for Power Iqbal Hossain Mahmud as chief guest. Venue: BRAC Centre INN, Mohakhali. Time: 9.30am.

## Corruption

### Another executive of ITCL arrested

UNB, Tangail

Another executive of Islamic Trade and Commerce Limited (ITCL) was arrested from the capital's Dhanmondi area in the early hours of Thursday.

Anwar Hossain, director of ITCL whose operations were declared illegal by the Bangladesh Bank, was given a five-day remand when produced before a magistrate's court at Tangail yesterday.

Six officials and employees of ITCL, including its Managing Director and General Manager, were arrested on July 15, 2002 from Tangail.

Several cases of corruption and embezzlement of money have also been filed against the officials and employees of ITCL.

## Five murders

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opened a hail of bullets on Khorshed Alam, 25, killing him on the spot.

Alam, son of Salauddin Ahmed of Nakhhalpara in the city, took seven bullets in different parts of his body. Police sent the body to DMCH for autopsy.

The motive for the killing could not be known immediately.

In another incident, a chicken trader was beaten to death by unknown miscreants at Khanthalbagan on Thursday night.

Witnesses said a group of youths went to the shop of Noor Islam at Khanthalbagan Bazar, bought a hen but wanted to pay for it later.

As the shopkeeper turned down their offer, the youths beat him up indiscriminately, sending him into a coma.

Locals rushed him to the Comfort Hospital on the Green Road, where doctors pronounced him dead on arrival.

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## Tremor

FROM PAGE 1

west of the country in 1999, killing some 20,000 people. Films high death toll was blamed for the high death toll on that occasion.

The government and rescue services, including the military, faced severe criticism then over their slow and ineffectual reaction to the disaster. Since then rescue operations have been revised but not put to any serious test.

Meanwhile, Turkish police fired in the air on yesterday to scatter an angry crowd demanding more help from authorities after an earthquake that killed more than 100 people, including about 40 children in a boarding school.

Working through the night, rescue workers dug into the floodlit wreckage of the school dormitory to try to reach scores more children still buried since the quake on Thursday morning.

They paused only occasionally as a survivor was lifted on a stretcher or a body recovered. Parents kept vigil, swathed in blankets before fires at the site of the catastrophe.

Anger in the southeastern city of Bingol, set in a poor and mountainous region, bubbled to the surface in the morning when more than 1,000 people marched on the governor's office. Many in the mainly Kurdish town, fearing aftershocks from the quake that shattered dozens of houses, had spent a chilly night in the open or in makeshift shelters of plastic sheeting.

Chanting "Resign, Resign!" and shaking their fists, a crowd gathered before the governor's office demanding tents and food.

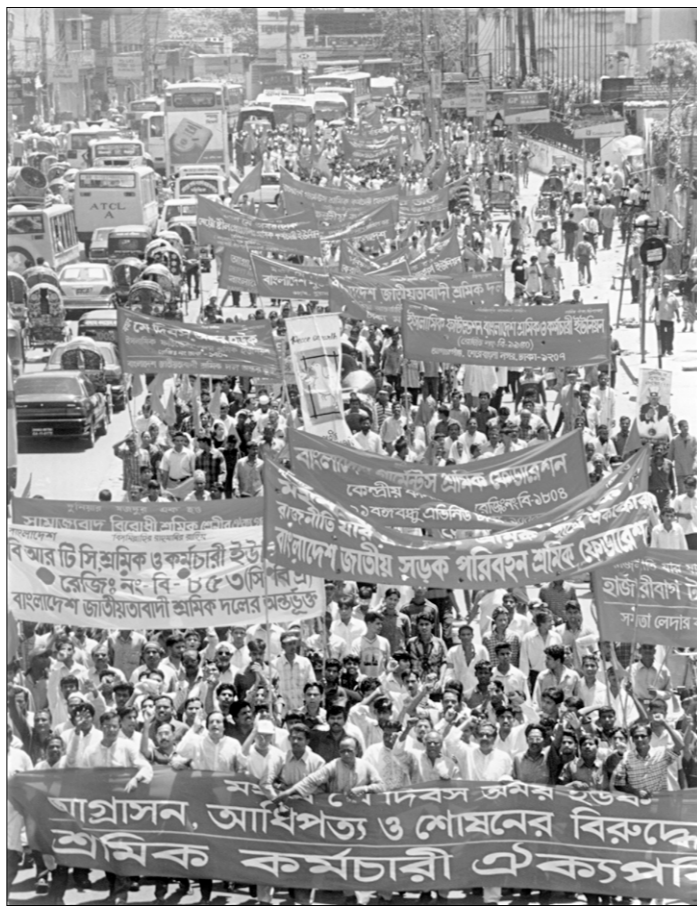
## Tikrit

FROM PAGE 12

us, but to occupy and take our wealth and kill us," said Mohammed Farhan, who is in charge of city security.

One of the US soldiers deployed in Fallujah died Thursday, but not in hostilities. Army officials said the soldier from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment - whose name was not released - drowned when a tank plunged into a canal.

In another incident Thursday, an Apache helicopter destroyed a truck after a US drone aircraft spotted four men loading ammunition onto the vehicle on the east side of the Tigris River. The four Iraqis were killed, according to Col. Don Campbell of the 4th Infantry Division's 1st Brigade.



Members of the Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad lead a procession of workers and employees in Dhaka on May Day (Thursday) with calls for an end to injustice and exploitation of labour.

## PM for political consensus

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president of Bangladesh Employers' Federation Iftekhah Alam spoke on behalf of the labourers and employers at the function, which was also attended by ministers, diplomats, politicians and senior government officials.

The prime minister said she believes that a disciplined and dedicated workforce conscious of their rights can materialise development efforts.

Referring to the elimination of economic boundaries in different regions of the world and increasing competition in global market, the prime minister reminded that Bangladesh was not aloof from this process of globalisation.

"We have to concentrate on attracting large-scale local and foreign investment through increasing production and creating a congenial investment environment," she added.

She also called upon the trade unions to take up worker welfare programmes in line with the country's labour laws.

The prime minister also underscored the responsibility of the labour leaders in incorporating the women workforce in development

of the country without any discrimination in wages or benefits. "National progress is not possible keeping the womenfolk, who constitute nearly half of the population, out of the development process."

The day was observed across the country as elsewhere in the world with a renewed pledge to establish workers' rights.

Political parties and various socio-cultural and labour organisations brought out processions and held discussions in the city marking the day.

Labour and Employment Ministry took a colourful procession led by State Minister for Labour and Employment Lutfor Rahman Khan. The participants carried placards, banners and festoons and chanted slogans for the rights of workers.

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) jointly organised a discussion meeting at the Jatija Press Club.

Speakers at the meeting called upon the government to implement the 7-point demand announced by Sangbadik Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad.

## Tk 50 lakh goods seized at ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs seized gold, medicine, cigarette and cell phone sets worth over Tk 50 lakh at Zia International Airport yesterday.

Tipped off, a customs team followed a Biman employee coming out of a Biman flight from London via Dubai, about 14 hours after it landed at the ZIA. Sensing trouble, the employee fled, leaving a packet under a boarding bridge.

Thirty-one gold bars weighing four kilograms and worth over Tk 25 lakh were recovered from the packet.

Medicine and cigarettes worth about Tk 13 lakh were recovered from the luggage of four passengers.

Besides, more than 160 cell phone sets and other goods were found in three bags of a passenger, Golam Hossain.

Departmental cases were filed in connection with the incidents.

## Dialogue

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among the speakers.

The second session on information and communication technology will begin at 11:30 am. Dr Rafiqul Islam, head of Computer Science and Engineering department at Khulna University will preside and Prof. Nausher Ali, director of Bangladesh Institute of Technology, Khulna, will be chief guest. The discussants would include research fellow of the CPD Dr Ananya Raihan.

Mayor of Khulna City Corporation Shaikh Tayebur Rahman will attend as chief guest the third session on empowerment of women beginning at 2:00 pm. Begum Ferdousi Ali, Editor of Daily Tribune and Managing Editor of Danik Purbanchal, will be in the chair and Dr Kanij Siddiqui of North -South University, Dhaka, will be among the speakers.

Executive Director of the CPD) Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya will deliver the inaugural speech at the first session.

## Three Iraqi officials in custody

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Huwaysh was listed as No. 16 and the 10 of hearts on the coalition's list of the 55 most-wanted figures from Saddam's regime and Maruf was No. 42 and the nine of diamonds.

Huwaysh was also a deputy prime minister and his ministry also served as Iraq's chief weapons acquisition agency.

Marouf was the only Kurd in the Baath hierarchy. He was appointed as one of Iraq's two vice presidents in 1975, but the position is seen largely as a gesture to the Kurdish minority and he had little real power.

Born into a prominent family in Kurd-dominated northern Iraq in 1924, Marouf joined the Baath Party in 1968 and has held several ministerial posts. He has also served as ambassador to Italy, Malta and Albania.

The statement came several hours after the US military in Baghdad said that a man said to be a close confidant of Saddam was under arrest Friday after being taken into custody in the Iraqi capital.

The announcement at the US Army's V Corps headquarters said Mizban Khadr Hadi, a member of

## 'Free country from pernicious politics'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Eminent lawyer Dr. Kamal Hossain has said that efforts should be made to free the country from pernicious politics.

He was addressing as chief guest at a meeting with the representatives of civil society, organised by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) at Chittagong Press Club yesterday afternoon.

Giving a grim picture of the current political situation, Dr. Kamal said, "There is no honest politics in the country now. It is fake politics, it is politics for making money."

"We want to shun the dirty politics which has no place for moral values," he added. "Those who came to power taking oath to protect the constitutional rights of the people are themselves violating the law."

Dr. Kamal called for forging a greater unity among people to fight against all wrong doings and injustice.

Presided over by Advocate Shubash Chandra Lala, the meeting was addressed among others by Advocate Sultana Kamal, executive director of Law and Arbitration Centre, Abu Sufian, president of Chittagong Press Club, Mujibur Rahman, general secretary of Chittagong Bar Council and Advocate Rana Dasgupta.

Jatija Party arranged a discussion meeting at the UNC Jute Mills

Adarsha School playground in Narsingdi district. Party chief HM

ErsHAD was present at the meeting as the chief guest.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Jatija Party (Monju), Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad, Bangladesh Jatija Sramik Jote, Bangladesh Trade Union Sangha, Jatija Bidyut Sramik League, Jatija Garments Sramik Federation, Bangladesh Textile and Garments Workers League and Bangladesh Ganopuro Karmachari Union also organised similar programmes.

Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar aired special programmes while national dailies published special supplements on the occasion.

## SARS: Quarantine hospital set up at ZIA

UNB, Dhaka

The government has set up a quarantine hospital at Zia International Airport compound for quick

isolation of suspected SARS patients coming from abroad, Health Ministry officials said Thursday.

The 20-bed quarantine cell at the Cargo Village of ZIA will operate round the clock with 22 doctors, 28 nurses and eight pharmacists.

The government also selected pathological laboratories of BSMMU, Dhaka Combined Military Hospital and ICDDR at Mohakhali to carry out various tests related to SARS.

The strong measures to combat the deadly pneumonia-like disease came after SARS patients were identified in Kolkata in the close-door neighbourhood.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Dr Khondokar Mosharraf Hossain has said the government will further strengthen surveillance and monitoring at air, land and seaport entry points.

"We are lucky but still in high risk zone as SARS cases have been identified in the neighbouring country," he told reporters at the airport on his return from Male.

charge of the party's Farmers' Central Office.

Hadi was reportedly extremely close to Saddam and has been one of his advisers, especially on Shiite affairs, since the early 1980s.

He has been a minister without portfolio since June 1982 and before that was governor of Najaf. He was decorated by Saddam for his services during the 1991 Gulf War and the month-long Shiite rebellion that followed Iraq's defeat.

V Corps headquarters, based near Baghdad's airport, had no further details.

## Biman's ATP

FROM PAGE 1

about three and a half years. But five other aircraft were grounded as those were damaged in a storm on April 22.

The damaged planes included three airbuses, a Boeing and a F-28.

The Boeing has rejoined the fleet after repair and the rest four are under repair.

## Predators list

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Compaoré, economic adviser and brother of the president of Burkina Faso, have also been included.

The list also includes Than Shwe, head of Myanmar government, and Hu Jintao, president of China.

The Paris-based organisation rated the parliament leader of Colombia, Carlos Castano, and Colombian guerrilla leaders, Manuel Marulanda and Nicolas Rodriguez Bautista. Long serving Cuban President Fidel Castro also figures in the list.

The RSF termed that democracy is the loser each time governments stand in the way of the right to inform and be informed, a right that it is their duty to uphold.

AFP adds: Freedom of the press hit new lows in 2002, the watchdog group said in the report, with the number of journalists assaulted or threatened doubling since 2001.

"Press freedom is not guaranteed in more than half of the world's countries, so we must continue to be vigilant in 2003," says the report.

While the number of journalists killed went down from 31 in 2001 to 25 in 2002, the number of reporters detained went up by 40 per cent and twice as many were physically attacked or threatened than in 2001, the group says.

Over the course of the year, "at least 1,420 journalists were beaten, abducted, charged by the police, harassed or threatened with being killed," the organisation notes.

The RSF also alleges that at least half "were murdered by regime henchmen, armed groups, organ-

## BNP leader

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at Holy Family Hospital yesterday.

When the driver opened a window, the assailants beat him up and snatched his gold chain.

"They soon smashed a window shield and beat me up indiscriminately," the BNP leader said. The miscreants also robbed his mobile phone.

Salam said his political rivals might be behind the attack, but could not give motive for it.

His condition is improving after he was operated upon at the hospital soon after the incident.

Doctors said Salam's condition was very critical on Thursday night when he bled profusely.

Tejgaon police last night said they were not aware of the incident and no case was filed.

## Indo-Pak ties

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dramatic announcement.

He did not clarify whether Jamali, too, had agreed to upgrade Pakistan's diplomatic mission here but officials said the status of embassies are changed always on a mutual basis.

The announcement follows Vajpayee's offer of a "hand of friendship" to Pakistan on April 18 during a tour of Kashmir, which prompted Jamali's phone call on Monday, and ahead of a visit to South Asia next week by trouble-shooting US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage.

The Indian media was yesterday awash with speculation that following its successes in Iraq, Washington was now turning its attention to other global trouble spots, including Kashmir.

Indian officials have denied the US is behind the latest push and the State Department yesterday moved to quash a report that Washington had set a deadline for India and Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir dispute.

While Pakistan did not immediately react to Vajpayee's statement yesterday, reports in Islamabad earlier in the day said President Pervez Musharraf had hailed fresh peace overtures between Pakistan and India as a "new beginning."

Musharraf said he detected a new attitude from New Delhi following Vajpayee's olive branch offer in Kashmir of dialogue last month.

In his parliamentary address yesterday, Vajpayee repeated the comments he made in Kashmir that India wanted peace with its neighbours.

"We are committed to the improvement of relations with Pakistan and are willing to grasp every opportunity for doing so."

He added his customary rider, however.

"We have repeatedly expressed the need to create a conducive atmosphere for a sustained dialogue which necessarily requires an end to cross-border terrorism and the dismantling of its infrastructure."

Diplomatic ties and air links between India and Pakistan were snapped following an attack on India's parliament in December 2001 by gunmen New Delhi claims were sponsored by Islamabad.

India lifted the overnight ban last June after acknowledging a reduction in infiltration of Islamic militants into Kashmir, but this measure has remained in abeyance because Pakistan made no reciprocal gesture.

Vajpayee yesterday rejected Pakistan's demand for international mediation to resolve the dispute over Kashmir.

"There are people here and

ised crime figures or agents of powerful interests the victims angered".

Asia proved to be the most dangerous continent for journalists -- with 11 killed there in 2002 -- and the most repressive, with the highest number of reporters attacked, threatened, arrested, imprisoned and censored.

The situation in Africa revealed some rays of hope, with Benin, Botswana, Cape Verde, Mali, Mauritius and South Africa lauded for being particularly respectful of the rights of journalists.

The RSF added some new names to the list, which includes 42 heads of state, ministers, armed guerrilla groups and security forces accused of targeting reporters.

New faces in the "who's who" of press enemies include Nepal's King Gyanendra, Liberian President Charles Taylor, Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

In a statement, the RSF called early figures for 2003 "worrying". Since the start of the US-led war in Iraq on March 20, more than a dozen journalists have been killed.

## 4 killed, 20 hurt in Ctg bus mishap

UNB, Chittagong

Four people were killed on the spot and 20 others injured when a bus overturned on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway early yesterday as its driver fainted and lost control of the vehicle.

Police said the driver Saifuddin, 42, of the Dhaka-bound 'Saudia chair coach' was among those who died in the accident near Borotakia Bazar in Mirersaraipuzala.

"The driver fainted hearing a blast of thunder nearby and the coach crashed on the road," said a spot report.

The three other dead are passengers Shahabuddin, 52, Golam Kibria, 48, and an unidentified man.

Three of the injured were reportedly in critical condition. They were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital and the local health complex.

A case was filed with Mirersaraipuzala police station.

## Journalist abducted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

President of Sitakunda Press Club and correspondent of Bengali daily the Ittefaq, Atahar Siddique Choudhury Khosru, was reportedly abducted by criminals on Wednesday night.

Sources said, the journalist was abducted while he was going to a relative's house at Maderbari from Dewanhat area in the city at around 10.00pm.

Whereabouts of the abducted journalist could not be learnt till yesterday evening, neither did anybody contact the family members of the victim.

Khosru's elder brother Alamgir filed a General Diary (GD) with Double Mooring Police Station in this connection.

Khosru was abducted once before on June 16, 2001 for his report on the activities of criminals in Sitakunda. He was rescued in a critical condition after long 14 days.

## Hasina

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ruption and plunder."