

Blair hits the rock as probe into Kelly's death begins

Hoon to take blame as 'fall guy'

AFP, London
British Prime Minister Tony Blair faces the gravest test of his political career today as a judicial inquiry begins investigating the death of David Kelly, the scientist central to claims Blair's government exaggerated the case for war in Iraq.

Royal Courts of Justice in central London to give evidence that could potentially damage Blair's reputation beyond repair.
Among those due to be called before senior judge Lord Brian Hutton, heading the inquiry, are a string of government officials, ministers and -- eventually -- Blair himself.
Already yesterday, an unofficial



Tony Blair



David Kelly



Geoff Hoon

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Strike to compound DU session jam

SHAMEEM MAHMUD

Dhaka University (DU) students are going to face another spate of session jams due to the weeklong strike at the university till August 7 enforced by the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL).
"Over 25,000 students may face academic clogging of at least two to three months due to the unscheduled closure that paralysed the university. Classes and examinations had to be rescheduled, which has a trickle-down effect," said a senior DU official.
Session jams delay publication of results and compound accommo-

dation problem at the halls, he mentioned.
The DU students are already about two years behind their academic sessions.
Controller of Examinations of the university Mohammad Abdul Latif said, "Thirty-one scheduled examinations of different departments and institutes of the university were postponed because of the six-day strike and classes were also affected. It will take time to reschedule those."
Students of the DU lost at least 557 days of the last 13 academic sessions and seven days in the current session that began on July 1

because of unscheduled closures.
Besides the scheduled vacation of about 90 days a year, the university remained closed for more than 42 days a year on an average due to students' strike, hartal and such other grounds.
During the autocratic rule of HM Ershad, the DU remained closed for 474 days from 1980-81 academic session to 1989-90 session.
The last session (2002-03) witnessed 72 days of unscheduled closure, including 67 days for the Shamsunnahar Hall incident.
The academic session 1991-92 had 94 lost academic days, the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

No salaries yet for top EC officials

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Key election officials did not get their salaries for July until yesterday as both the election commission (EC) and the comptroller and auditor general's office (CAG) stand firm to their positions.
Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Syed and election commissioners Safur Rahman, M Muneef Ali and A K Mohammad Ali face audit objections to drawing salaries and pensions of previous jobs simultaneously what the CAG's office sees as a violation of the service rule.
The CAG's office has asked the election officials to deposit to the exchequer the pensions drawn by them up to June to be able to get salaries of the current jobs.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

3 tremors jolt Borkol

Study fears strong quakes in Ctg region

MONIRUL ALAM, Rangamati

A series of three aftershocks rattled Arabunia in Rangamati district yesterday, stirring panic in a region reeling under frequent jolts since a moderate tremor on July 27.
Arabunia is closer to Kolabunia in Borkol upazila which according to the find of a study disclosed yesterday sits on an epicentre.
Kolabunia took the strongest shakes by the July tremor.
The first aftershock hit at 4:10am followed by the second at 2:12pm and a third at 4:43pm amid driving rain, high winds and lightning which have been battering the region since Friday, locals said.
The hilly terrain of Borkol upazila is witnessing fatal landslides in the

wake of the moderate quake that locals say loosened hilltop stones and giant piles of mud.
Some 50 families fled their home from the south part of Arabunia village for fear of mudslides, villager and political activist Mohammed Ali said.
Some 20 tribal families have shifted their homes to Longdu upazila, a neighbouring upazila, said villagers Aoshuk Kumar and Phool Mohan Chakma.
About 400 tribal and non-tribal families live in Arabunia, locals said.
Deputy Commissioner of Rangamati Dr Zafar Ahmed Khan said two quakes hit the region on Thursday.
Meanwhile, a five-member unofficial taskforce has come up

with a 20-point recommendations and a 10-point technical observation after a daylong survey in Borkol upazila on August 8.
They said the epicentre of the tremor lurked 11 km below the ground in Kolabunia and all 10 upazilas of Rangamati district ran the risk of strong tremors.
"It is not a new topic, the Chittagong Hill Tracts was marked vulnerable to quakes during the British rule," said Dr Jahangir Alam, chief of the taskforce, at the deputy commissioner's office yesterday.
The Bangladesh Institute of Technology (BIT) in Chittagong of which Jahangir is the chief conducted the post-quake study.
He held violation of the building

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

AL, JP rattle sabre over gas export bid

UNB, Dhaka

Major opposition parties have expressed their dismay at the reported government move to export gas through pipeline.
State Minister for Energy A K M Mosharraf Hossain told newsmen on Friday that a decision on gas export might be reached at a meeting to be chaired by the prime minister on August 17.
Top leaders of Awami League and Jatiya Party (Ershad) said only surplus gas should be exported after meeting domestic need while Jatiya Party (Manju) is dead against export under any circumstances.
Main opposition Awami League has threatened an all-out movement along with other political parties if the government eventually decides

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4



PHOTO: PBD

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday lays the foundation stone of an 80 megawatt gas turbine power plant in Tongi.

Razzak Ali may quit mission job

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Shaikh Razzak Ali is likely to resign shortly as High Commissioner of Bangladesh to the UK, sources close to his family said yesterday.
They added that his resignation is just a matter of time as he had at least two important meetings with the BNP high command and some senior central leaders.
The former speaker, who was appointed high commissioner on contract, has reportedly expressed his reluctance to resume his ambassadorial job due to some 'unavoid'

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



PHOTO: STAR

General students of Dhaka University rally on the campus yesterday demanding cancellation of the 24th BCS examinations as question papers were allegedly leaked.

Thieves bore gas lines to pilfer Tk 1 lakh condensate a day

STAR REPORT

Aided by some policemen and gas pipeline operators, thieves are pilfering liquid gas condensate worth Tk 1 lakh a day by boring holes in gas pipelines.
The Gas Transmission Company Ltd. (GTCL) has found out that up to 10,000 litres of condensate a day are being pilfered by boring holes and installing valves in the pipelines in Ashuganj in Brahmanbaria.
The GTCL sealed one such leakage last week and found a half-sunken boat with 36 drums full of condensate in Brahmanbaria four days ago. "Thieves use this condensate to adulterate petroleum prod-

ucts, especially kerosene," said a GTCL official. "A litre of condensate is officially sold at Tk 10."
"Such theft needs technical knowledge common thieves do not know of," said the official, "and we believe the Brahmanbaria Sadar police are abetting these thieves in the act because they refused to take a case against the thieves for four days till we exerted influence on them."
Bangladesh produces about 4,000 barrels of condensate a day and 3,000 barrels are produced by three gas fields in Sylhet and the remainder by other gas fields of the country. The gas from Sylhet is

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

PSC to defend charges as protests continue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) would strongly defend the allegation of question paper leakage of the 24th Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) preliminary test that was taken for the second time Friday.
"The PSC chairman and its members are not convinced of the claim," said a BPSC member yesterday.
The chairman will hold a meeting with the BPSC members in a couple of days to discuss the matter, he added.
Meanwhile, ZN Tahmidia Begum, BPSC chairman, refused to comment on the issue and said she would give her opinion after a meeting with the BPSC members.
In an interview with a Bangla daily on Sunday, Tahmidia brushed aside the alleged leakage of question papers and described it as a conspiracy.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Petrobangla to seek ministry's help to solve gas crisis

BSS, Dhaka

Petrobangla will seek guidelines and a decision from the energy ministry to solve the ongoing gas crisis that began last week, official sources said yesterday.
Director (operation) of Petrobangla Dr Ismail yesterday held a meeting with all chiefs of production and marketing companies, GTCL and BAPEX to find ways to solve the crisis which might continue unless industrial supply was cut, said an official of Petrobangla.
The official said thousands of households are facing difficulty during cooking as the gas shortage stands at over 20 million cubic feet with a current supply of 1260mmcft against a demand of over 1,280mmcft.
The demand is so high that there is no alternative to reducing power supply either to fertiliser factories or Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB), two major gas consumers, a senior official was quoted as saying at the meeting held at Petrocentre.
Proposals were also made to reduce gas supply to brick fields to meet the demand for domestic consumption, sources said.

Renaming of Quamaruzzaman College kicks up protests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Name of the Shaheed AHM Quamaruzzaman College was changed into Housing Estate College recently, drawing wrath from Rajshahi Awami League (AL) and different socio-cultural organisations.
Family members of Quamaruzzaman, one of the four national leaders slain in jail in 1975, alleged the college governing body chairman and Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu changed the name last month.
But the secretive re-naming

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Wisdom dawns on DCC

35 parks to be passed on to private hands

ABDUL KADER

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) plans to hand around 35 parks to private organisations to ensure their proper maintenance, DCC officials said.
It has dawned upon the DCC that it is unable to maintain the parks and so wants to give the task to the private sector, the officials said.
"We have talked the issue with environmentalists who suggested private sector involvement," said DCC Chief Engineer Dr Golam Quadeer M Chowdhury.
DCC Chief Estate Officer AKM Fazluzzoha said, "DCC properly takes care of the Shishu Park at Shabbagh out of 47 parks, while three parks at Shyamoli, Gulshan

and Sayedabad have been leased out to private organisations."
The rest are also supposed to be looked after by the DCC, but these have slid into degradation.
"We have drafted a proposal in discussion with the DCC for proper maintenance of the parks by private organisations," said Prof. Abdullah Abu Sayeed, an educationist and environmentalist.
The DCC would float tenders seeking offers from private firms for maintenance of the parks. At the same time, the corporation would solicit some reputed organisations to take the responsibility.
The parks would be fenced and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Frigate scam case Ex-navy chief, three others get bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Former navy chief real admiral (ret'd) M Nurul Islam and three other former navy officials accused in the frigate purchase graft case were granted bail yesterday after they surrendered to the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court.
The three others are former assistant chief of staff (operation) of Bangladesh Navy commodore (ret'd) A K M Azad, former director (naval plan) commodore (ret'd) Haroon-or-Rashid and commodore (ret'd) M Shahabuddin.
Judge Mohammad Motiur Rahman set the bail upon a security bond of Tk 1 lakh for each of the four

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Physician shot allegedly by business partner

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A physician was shot allegedly by his business partner at Bangladesh Modernised (BDM) Hospital premises at Mohammadpur Saturday night.
The attackers left the spot leaving Dr Amjad Hossain in a pool of blood at around 11:30pm.
Dr Amjad was talking with one of his partners Mosharraf Hossain when their other partner Omar Farooq Dipu reached there with a number of young men in a jeep, Mosharraf said.
As one of the men started beating up Mosharraf, Amjad tried to save him. But an enraged Dipu brought out a sawed-off gun and fired once, alleged the partners.
At least 14 pellets hit his legs. Amjad was taken to Al-raji hospital at Farmgate and was later shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.
Amjad filed a case with the Mohammadpur Police Station the same night.
When contacted, duty officer SI Nur Alam said six outsiders were arrested from the BDM Hospital.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Aug 11		6-37 pm
Aug 12	5-32 am	

Prayer Timings		
August 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-45	6-50
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation