

'Bangladesh better remain an example for Islamic world'

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

The United States has said that it would like to see Bangladesh remain a moderate democratic country as an example for the rest of the Islamic world.

Talking with leaders of Indian industry here Thursday on the situation in South Asia, US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca said, "In Bangladesh, we seek a country that overcomes poverty and consistently remains a moderate democratic Muslim polity as an example for the rest of the Islamic world."

She recalled US Secretary of State Colin Powell's words that "Bangladesh's democracy, Bangladesh's

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10 Iraqi security men killed in US firing

AFP, Fallujah

Ten Iraqi security personnel were killed and five injured by US troops in the flashpoint town of Fallujah early yesterday in the second friendly-fire incident here in two days, police chief Qahtan Adnan Hamad said.

The dead were all members of the auxiliary Facilities Protection Services, while the injured were Iraqi policemen, he said.

The 15 had given chase in two vehicles after gunmen in a BMW opened fire on the governorate headquarters in the town centre, district patrol chief Lieutenant Colonel Jalal Sabri said.

When they reached the Jordanian Red Crescent hospital to the north of the town, they ran into US soldiers who opened fire on them, he said.

The injured policemen were all

being treated in the hospital yesterday, an AFP correspondent said.

Hospital staff said several of the US rounds had hit the hospital.

Angry crowds of Fallujah residents gathered outside both the governorate and police headquarters to protest the deaths. They came just two days after US troops killed one Iraqi policeman and wounded

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2 US soldiers killed, 7 hurt in Iraq raid

REUTERS, Baghdad

Two US soldiers were killed and another seven wounded during a pre-dawn raid in the heartland of anti-American resistance to the occupation of Iraq, the US military said yesterday.

The latest casualties came during an exchange of gunfire in Ramadi, a town 100-km west of Baghdad in the "Sunni Triangle" where support for deposed president Saddam Hussein is strongest.

Another report adds: A roadside bomb destroyed a US military Humvee west of Baghdad yesterday, wounding three Americans, witnesses said.

They said the Humvee was driving in a convoy on a road outside the town of Falluja, 50-km west of the Iraqi capital, when the bomb exploded.

The wounded soldiers were evacuated from the scene, the witnesses said. A Reuters photograph

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Unite to rescue nation from corrupt govt

Hasina tells city rally

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged people to join a mass procession on September 15 and a nationwide shutdown on September 25 to symbolise a vote of no-confidence in the coalition rule.

"Let's get together to rescue the nation from the corrupt and criminal regime, and establish a people's government," she told a big public rally at Basabo's Shaheed Alauddin Park in the city.

Hasina renewed her allegation against the prime minister and her family of illegally siphoning off

money from the country and setting up businesses abroad by closing down local industries. Besides, the government has abandoned all pro-people projects, she further alleged.

"With the blessings of Allah, every penny of people's money misappropriated by them would be brought back to the country," the AL chief told her cheering supporters.

She also accused Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of killing democracy and making parliament non-functional to perpetrate an autocratic rule.

The opposition leader alleged that the sacred floor of parliament

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5 robbers killed in gunfight with police in Noakhali

UNB, Noakhali

Five robbers were killed and 12 others injured during a gunfight between police and robbers at a village under Char Jabbar Police Station of Noakhali yesterday.

Four of the dead were identified as Montaj, 28, Tasir, 30, Najir, 22 and Abdullah, 19. The identity of another could not be known.

The clash followed the arrest of two accomplices of notorious robber Shafi at the village. Shafi along with his 300 men attacked the village, set ablaze seven houses and beat up some villagers.

When a police team reached the spot, the robbers opened fire on them. Police returned fire, leaving the five dead and injuring 12 others.

Shafi and other members of his gang managed to flee the scene. An uneasy calm was prevailing in the area following the incident.

Slow pace of book printing, results delay BOU graduation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first batch of students of the Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Social Science (BSS) degree programmes under Bangladesh Open University (BOU) will take at least a year longer to graduate due to delay in publication of books and evaluation of examination papers.

Initiated in 2000, the three-year courses divided into six semesters were scheduled to finish this year, but students allege only three semesters have so far been completed.

"We were supposed to graduate this year but session jams created due to delay in publication of books and results will delay our graduation," said Zakir Ahmed, a 4th semester student.

"We got into the programme with great aspirations to graduate in time, but our hopes have been shredded by the apathy of the BOU authorities in publication of books and exam results," said Aatur Rahman, another 4th semester BOU

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PHOTO: STAR

Leaders and activists of Bangladesh Environment Movement demonstrate in Dhaka yesterday against earth-filling in Ashulia lowlands and encroachment on water-bodies.

Rootless in own backyard

Odyssey of a displaced highlander

PINAKI ROY back from Khagrachhari

Kripachandra Chakma returned home to Dighinala in Khagrachhari district from a refugee camp in the northeastern Indian state of Tripura in 1997. But his refugee life is still dragging on, in an unceasing odyssey over a decade.

The landmark Chittagong Hill Tracts peace agreement between the government and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) in 1997 gave Kripachandra and people from 12,000 other families a chance to return home.

They trekked the inhospitable

CHT highlands into Tripura leaving behind their homes and relatives to escape the dogged bush war at its height in the hope of peace.

But Kripachandra's homecoming was not as happy as many others. He found his homestead and farmland in the capture of Bangalee settlers and his bid to recover them is still on, 11 years into his prolonged struggle.

Now he lives as a refugee on his own land where the non-tribal settlers have thrown up a school, Kobakhali Uttar Primary School, along with nine other families.

"I want to get back my land. I cannot bear this wretched life any

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Correction

In the back page story of The Daily Star's Thursday edition headlined, "Home ministry media cell recast", it was inadvertently written that Shamsuddoha Shoeb was a journalist of the Daily Manavzamin. In fact, Shoeb was a former editorial staff with the daily. We regret the error.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 13		6-05 pm
Sept 14	5-44 am	

Prayer Timings		
September 13		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-33	5-00
Maghrib	6-13	6-17
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation



PHOTO: STAR

Indian Film celebrity Soumitra Chatterjee receives Tonatuni Award 2003 from President Iajuddin Ahmed at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in Dhaka yesterday.

Tonatuni Festival opens

BSS, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday urged all to work together for building a peaceful society for children.

He formally launched a five-day "Tonatuni Festival-2003" in Osmani Memorial Auditorium in Dhaka organised by Tonatuni, a juvenile cultural organisation.

The function was also addressed by Selima Rahman, state minister for cultural affairs, Momtaj Jasimuddin, wife of eminent poet Jasimuddin, Sandwip Ray, son of noted Indian filmmaker Satyajit Ray, Tonatuni managing director Mahbubur Rahman Joyal presided.

The president distributed 'Tonatuni Awards' among 17 senior artistes and juveniles. The function was followed by a cultural show.

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One stop utility bill payment in wings

REZAUL KARIM

The government has decided to introduce "One Stop Utility Bill Payment System" to remove the hassle, waste of time and harassment of subscribers.

Currently, subscribers pay bills for four utility services -- telephone, power, gas and water -- to separate banks running between branches

and waiting in long queues for hours on end.

The system would be launched in Dhaka, likely next month, and will be copied across the country in phases.

Officials said the decision followed the Public Administration Reforms Commission's suggestion for payment of all utility service bills to the selected branches of the

state-owned Sonali, Rupali, Agrani and Janata banks.

They said the cabinet approved a similar proposal on August 17, 1999 and an official notification was issued on December 14 the same year for its implementation. But the proposal could not be realised for some preconditions by the banks.

The banks demanded Tk 5 in

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Three youths wounded in crossfire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three young men suffered bullet injuries in crossfire between two criminal gangs at East Rajabazar in Tejgaon Thursday night.

Mohammad Jashim alias Sumon, 17, and Humayun Kabir, 22, of East Rajabazar and Masum Shikder, 17, of Kazipara sustained bullet wounds in their legs and are now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Police and locals said the gangs --

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