

10 JCD men hurt in clash at DU hall

DU CORRESPONDENTS

At least 10 leaders and activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) were injured in a clash between two rival factions of the ruling BNP's student wing at Haji Mohammad Mohsin Hall of Dhaka University on Friday night.

The rivals also ransacked at least five rooms at the hall and set fire one room.

The clash originated from occupation of a hall room by a JCD activist, hall sources said.

Four of the injured -- JCD central leader Anwarul Haque Royal, Ekramul Kabir Badal, Shafiqul Islam and Jakaria Mamun -- were admitted to a private hospital.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

GP plans fixed phone link for pre-paid customers

STAR REPORT

GrameenPhone (GP) plans to launch a new prepaid package, enabling subscribers to make calls to and receive from fixed phone network, sources said.

The package, likely to be named Easy Prepaid Gold, will hit the market as Eid package.

The outgoing call charge to fixed phone will be Tk 6 plus the BTB charge and VAT while the incoming charge from fixed phone will be a flat Tk 2 per minute. There will be no charge on incoming calls from mobile phones.

The initial subscription charge of SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

US closes mission in KSA

UK citizens in Bahrain on alert

REUTERS, Riyadh

Washington's decision to shut its embassy in Saudi Arabia was based on fresh information about militants' plans in the kingdom and followed a call to target Western "crusaders," diplomats said yesterday.

The US embassy in Riyadh and its consulates in the coastal cities of Jeddah and Dhahran were all closed on Saturday -- a working day in the Gulf -- after what the United States said was credible information "terrorists" were about to strike.

Its warning to US citizens in the kingdom followed raids in which SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

SL PM takes time to all-party govt call

REUTERS, Colombo

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe may take several days before responding to the president's call for an all-party government to resolve the island's political crisis, a spokesman said yesterday.

The call for a new government is part of a power struggle that began when President Chandrika Kumaratunga's sacked three cabinet ministers and suspended parliament this week, threatening a peace process with Tamil rebels.

"There will be no immediate response. The prime minister met the cabinet before the president's speech and will have to meet them again," government spokesman Gairuka Perusinghe told Reuters.

"It might take two or three days," he said.

Kumaratunga delivered a hard-hitting television address on Friday in

which she said a grave threat to national security had forced her hand.

She asked Wickremesinghe to join her in a unity government -- an idea that has surfaced repeatedly over the past decade but has never been attempted because of deep policy and personal differences between the main parties.

"I call upon all parties in parliament...to join me to form a grand alliance...with the objective of forming a government of national reconciliation," she said.

Kumaratunga spoke hours after Wickremesinghe received a jubilant welcome after returning from the United States, where he received fresh backing for his peace plans from President Bush.

Tens of thousands of well-wishers lined the highway from the airport chanting his name, dancing and waving banners as his convoy traveled at a walking pace into the capital.

While he was away, Kuma-ratunga,

who has bitterly criticized his handling of peace moves with the rebels, sacked the ministers and suspended parliament until November 19, plunging the island into crisis.

"Parliament must re-assemble. It is the only body with a mandate for negotiations," Wickremesinghe said.

The crisis has been looming since Wickremesinghe won parliamentary elections in late 2001, campaigning on a platform of peace talks with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), defeating Kumaratunga's party.

The Norwegian embassy said Deputy Foreign Minister Vidar Helgesen would go ahead with a visit from Monday aimed at paving the way for resuming direct talks between the rebels and the government after they stalled in April.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



Two policemen struggle to save the motorcycle ridden by two muggers yesterday after it was set on fire by a mob that caught the miscreants in the act and beat them up on Green Road in the capital.

PHOTO: STAR

Mob beats up mugger at Green Road

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mob yesterday beat up an alleged snatcher who attempted to snatch money from a businessman at Green Road in Dhammondi.

Yusuf, 35, and two of his accomplices in a motorcycle held the rickshaw of the businessman at gunpoint at around 11:00am.

"The three tried to snatch Tk 1 lakh from the businessman," the duty officer of Dhammondi Police Station said quoting witnesses.

The businessman raised an alarm and locals chased the snatchers. Of the three, Yusuf was caught with the motorcycle and a revolver with five bullets. Locals set the motorcycle ablaze.

Police rushed Yusuf to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

AES, UK firm want change in plant sale deal

SHARIEF KHAN

After initialling an agreement with the government over the sale of two major power plants, US company AES and British firm CDC want to change some legal words that go completely against the spirit of the negotiations.

Sources said both the energy ministry and Power Development Board (PDB) have expressed reservations about the AES and CDC's reverse gear.

"CDC is apparently trying to avoid the obligations it earlier agreed to," said the project management unit of the energy ministry on Sunday, giving its opinion on the issue.

Although the existing agreements with the AES over the 450 MW Meghnaghat and the 360 MW Haripur power plants do not allow sale of the plants in the first eight years of operation, the government agreed to the company's plea to allow it to sell them to the CDC on certain conditions.

Following 10 months of lobbying and negotiations by the two foreign companies, the AES, CDC and the PDB last month initialled a supplementary agreement containing terms and conditions of the government giving its consent to sale of the power plants.

This draft was sent to the energy ministry on September 30 for

approval. The salient features of the agreement are: Allowing the PDB to relocate a discharge channel in the Meghnaghat site at its own cost except for costs associated with potential changes within the project premises. The ownership of a grid interconnection facility of the Meghnaghat site will be transferred to the PDB. The PDB will no longer purchase power from the two plants on a priority basis.

But on October 7, in a letter to the energy ministry the CDC proposed a new draft seeking to change some words saying these will not have any 'material impact' on the agreement.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



Garment workers demonstrate in front of the Bangladesh Textile Manufacturing Corporation (BTMC) building, also housing the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), demanding payment of salary and bonuses.

PHOTO: STAR

Two shot dead after seizing control of Philippines airport

AFP, Manila

Police stormed Manila airport's control tower Saturday shooting dead a retired senior aviation official and an ex-navy officer to end a bizarre pre-dawn siege staged to protest alleged government corruption.

Panfilo Villaruel, head of the Philippine Air Transport Office in the 1990s, was killed with former navy lieutenant Ricardo Gatchalian as aviation police regained control of the tower at 3:00 am (1900 GMT SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Khulna OC closed over release of top smuggler

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Officer-in-charge (OC) of Khulna Police Station Shafiqul Azam Swapan was closed to Boyra Police Lines at 7:30pm yesterday, following the submission of the probe report by Additional Police Commissioner Sajjad Ali.

Sajjad submitted the report to the Khulna Metropolitan Police commissioner, suggesting immediate withdrawal of the OC.

The OC has been stand-released. He has also been accused of being delinquent.

Shafiqul arrested listed smuggler

Shamsul Alam Shamsu Sunday night and released him Monday morning.

Mustafizur Rahman, the police commissioner, formed a committee at the instruction of Inspector General of Police Shahudul Huq to probe the allegation that Shafiqul forced Shamsu to pay Tk 3 lakh for his release.

The probe body could not prove the exchange of money, but it found that Shafiqul arrested and released Shamsu at his will.

Sources said a lawmaker of the ruling BNP intervened during the investigation, asking the police commissioner not to be rigid in the case.



A magistrate yesterday impresses upon the driver of a car fined by the mobile court while police and BDR forces stand guard in Bijoy Nagar in Dhaka.

PHOTO: STAR

Constitutional safeguards being violated, says Dr Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Constitutional provisions to safeguard people's fundamental rights are being frequently violated, legal expert Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday said.

"Although the constitution is to safeguard people's lives and property, this does not happen in practice," said Dr Kamal, who is also president of Gano Forum, at an iftar party organised by Oikya Prachesta.

Terrorism, extortion, politicking and tender grabbing have been institutionalised, he added.

"In such circumstances, it has SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Sehri, Iftar timings			
Ramadan	Nov	Sehri	Iftar
13	9		5-18
14	10	4-48	5-18

  

Prayer Timings		
November 9		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-47	5-02
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-19	5-24
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

M-16 haul Cops asked to detain ship, nab crew

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Khulna Range Abdul Aziz Sarker has asked Chittagong Metropolitan Police to detain national flag carrier MV Banga Lanka and take its crew into custody following Thursday night's recovery of three M-16 rifles and 169 cartridges from the vessel at Mongla Port.

The DIG said a message has been officially sent to the CMP headquarters.

Meanwhile, Mongla Sea Customs has filed a departmental case against the vessel owner, HRC Shipping Lines.

Customs sources said the process is on to hand over the arms to Mongla police.

The sophisticated arms and ammunition were seized Thursday midnight by Mongla Sea Customs from the bonded locker of MV Banga Lanka.

"We cannot specify when the arms and ammunition will be handed over to police," said SEE PAGE 11 COL 7