

AL smells a rat

Gives 24-hour ultimatum to nab criminals, demands judicial probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong Awami League leaders yesterday smelt the hands of terrorists with international links and the goons of Bangladesh Nationalist Party in Banshkhali bloodbath. Rejecting the government version that robbers incinerated 11 of a family of 12 in Banshkhali, they demanded a judicial probe, gave a 24-hour ultimatum to arrest the criminals and unveiled a four-day programme to protest the massacre. They claimed cadres of the BNP-led four-party alliance masterminded the carnage as part of a blueprint to force the minority communities out of Bangladesh.

Banshkhali caught in haiku of horror

ABDULLAH -AL MAHMUD, back from Banshkhali, Chittagong

The scene is grim. The charred bodies of 11 people of a Hindu family were still lying in the burnt-out remains of their house yesterday. Relatives of the victims, torched alive allegedly by a gang of robbers in an outlying village on the Banshkhali coast, 30 miles off Chittagong city early Wednesday, were still sobbing out the litany of loss. The cremation of the bodies, kept for other relatives to take the last glimpse, will be held at about 10:30am today. The overnight arson attack left Bimalendra Shushil to live with none of

his family: the grisly massacre killed his father Tejendra Lal Shushil, nine others of his family and a relative. Bimal, a village physician, said the robbers forced their way into his two-storey mud house but failed to go upstairs as he locked the wooden staircase door, blocking the entry. Angered, the robbers set the house alight, said Bimal who escaped with severe ankle injuries and is being treated at a city clinic. "I could only see smoke curling up. I thought it was from short-circuit," said 50-year-old Shachindra Shushil, a relative. "We got to know the house was burning when the plumes of smoke

surrounded the whole area. We tried to help the victims after the robbers left, but we could not. We didn't find any way into the house to rescue them. We were just helpless onlookers," said Shachin, still in a daze. Pulin Shushil, another relative, said, "They had no enmity with others. I simply can't believe it." Local Union Parishad Chairman Ahsan Ullah said the family was on a friendly terms with all in the neighbourhood. Police blamed the carnage on a gang of criminals, based in Dongra. The forest-rimmed coastal

White House evacuated on false alert

AP, Washington

At least part of the White House was evacuated yesterday after a false radar reading mistakenly indicated that a plane flew within five miles of restricted airspace around the complex, officials said. "It's a false radar target," said William Shumann, Federal Aviation Administration spokesman. "When the NORAD fighters got to the location of the alleged violation, they found nothing." The North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, is the command

Brick-kilns get more time to keep polluting air

PINAKI ROY

Brick-kiln owners appear to have won their campaign to soften government attempts to limit the effect of kiln emissions on human health. The environment and forest ministry has already extended for another year the time in which owners must ensure that chimneys are 120 feet high. It accepted arguments -- made by brick kiln owners in the ruling alliance,

according to ministry officials -- that owners needed more time to raise Tk 10-12 lakh needed for construction of a tall chimney. Environment and Forest Minister Shajahan Siraj told a seminar recently that 60 to 70 per cent of kilns had built high chimneys and that the ministry would ensure that all kilns complied with the order in a year. Now the government is drawing



Nine killed in Manikganj, Narsingdi accidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nine people were killed and 29 others injured in separate road accidents in Manikganj and Narsingdi yesterday. Of them, seven were killed in two road accidents in Manikganj and the rest in Narsingdi. Our Manikganj Correspondent reports that the first accident

Milk turns dearer as Eid nears

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Cashing in on an increase in demand for milk due to short supply during the month of Ramadan, traders have pushed the prices up by more than 15 per cent. Usually, one litre of Milk Vita is sold at Tk 26, but now it is being sold at Tk 30. The price of a half litre pack has been raised to Tk 16 from Tk 14. According to traders, demand for liquid milk has gone up substantially during Ramadan. But supply is not on the increase, which has pushed the prices up, they added. "Suppliers charge extra before the Eid-ul-Fitr and we are bound to pay that to keep selling liquid milk," said a shop owner at Mirpur yesterday. When asked, an official of the Milk Vita Cooperatives Ltd., said the com-

pany is able to meet normal demand in Dhaka, Sylhet and Chittagong, which is around 2.5 lakh tonne a day. But the demand goes up to around 3.5 lakh litre a day only in Dhaka city and 50,000 in Sylhet and Chittagong during Ramadan, he said. It is not possible for the company to meet the increased demands that last only for one month, he added. "The demand will go up further ahead of the Eid, making the situation worse," the official observed. Meanwhile, farmers, who supply milk to the cooperatives, have threatened to go on a strike, as the scheduled election to the executive committee could not be held last week. If the election is not held shortly and the farmers stop the supply, Milk Vita will face a serious problem, cooperative sources said.



Passengers crowd onto the platform at Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday as thousands of Dhaka residents began heading home to celebrate the Eid-ul-Fitr.

DU dean polls campaign gathers pace

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University teachers have geared up political activities ahead of the dean elections in seven faculties on December 11. Candidates of two rival teachers' groups, ruling BNP-Jamaat-backed White and opposition Awami League-backed Blue panels, have begun their election campaign in full throttle. Both panels have organised Iftar parties and discussions as part of the campaign. The white panel teachers in their desperate attempt to grasp all posts

Jumatul Wida today

BSS, Dhaka

Jumatul Wida, the last Juma prayers of the holy month of Ramadan, will be observed today across the country. Imams at all mosques will recite from khutba and formally say "Al Wida, Al Wida, Ya Shahra Ramadan" (Good Bye, Good Bye, the Holy month of Ramadan). After prayers, devotees will offer munajat, for salvation of the departed souls of their near and dear ones and also for peace and prosperity of the Muslim ummah. Hundreds of Muslim devotees will take part in a large congregation to be held at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque and will say their prayers seeking divine blessings of the Almighty.

PM condemns Turkey attacks

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has condemned the bomb blast in the Turkish city of Istanbul that killed a large number of innocent people. In a statement yesterday, she said Bangladesh strongly opposed terrorism in any form in any part of the world. The PM expressed her deep sympathy for the members of the victims' families and prayed for eternal peace of the departed souls.

Iraq rides over violence

6 killed in car blasts, policeman shot dead, 10 insurgents die in US counter-attack

AGENCIES, Kirkuk

A suicide bomber killed at least four people in Iraq's northern oil centre yesterday just hours after two more died in a car bombing in western Iraq, as insurgents hit back following a US

onslaught. A schoolmistress and two pupils were among those confirmed dead after the bomber blew up a pickup truck crammed with explosives at a check-point near the offices of the two main Kurdish factions in Kirkuk. Another 37 people were wounded, seven of them critically, said the director general of Kirkuk General Hospital, Hashem Mohammed. Most were children attending a local school with both primary and secondary classes, he added. Chief of police Sherku Shaker said

the target was the adjacent offices of the two main Kurdish factions, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdistan Democratic Party, but the pick-up was stopped 200 metres (yards) away. An estimated 200 kilograms (440 pounds) of explosives were crammed into the vehicle which was completely destroyed, he said. On Wednesday night, a car bomb blast struck the offices of a US-appointed local council in Ramadi, west of Baghdad. Local officials said

JS body for strong state media to counter 'info terrorism'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deputies of the ruling coalition leader Bangladesh Nationalist Party yesterday demanded strengthening of the news service of the state-run media to counter what they said was widespread information terrorism. The demand to harness Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television (BTV) came at a meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on the information ministry

Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Nov	Sehri	Iftar
25	21		5-15
26	22	4-54	5-15

Prayer Timings

November 21		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-54	5-10
Juma	12-15	1-20
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-15	5-25
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

