



Milosevic found dead in his prison cell

AP, Amsterdam
Slobodan Milosevic, the former Yugoslav leader who orchestrated the Balkan wars of the 1990s and was on trial for war crimes, was found dead in his prison cell near The Hague, the UN tribunal said yesterday.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Bodies of lorry driver, helper recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the decomposed bodies of a lorry driver and his assistant at Shyampur area in the city yesterday.

Police said criminals had strangled driver Alauddin, 30, and Shakil, 18, before putting their bodies inside the lorry.

Locals yesterday informed the police as stench seemed to be coming from the vehicle. The bodies were found at the front seats of the vehicle.

Locals also said the vehicle, loaded with tyres, had been parked

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Top defaulters dodge loan recovery drive

NCBs recover 15pc of target set for them while success rate for other defaulters 86pc

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) last year recovered only 15.32 percent of their cash recovery target from the top 20 loan defaulters but their recovery of cash was 86 percent of the target from other defaulters.

This was disclosed at a meeting between Bangladesh Bank (BB) Governor Salehuddin Ahmed and other high officials and the NCBs on Thursday.

The governor reprimanded the NCBs for poor performance and the NCBs defended themselves saying that most of the top defaulters are very powerful. Besides asserting undue influence about defaulted loans, the top defaulters resorted to court to stop the NCBs from taking appropriate actions.

The BB noted that the NCBs have also failed to reduce operating expenses as set in the memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the central bank.

Sonali and Janata banks also failed to control credit growth but Agrani and Rupali banks succeeded in this field.

As cash recovery from other classified loans was good, percentage of total outstanding loans from these four banks reduced last year from the previous year's.

The four NCBs last year committed to the BB that they would recover Tk 232 crore from their top 20 defaulters but they could

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

30 killed in Pak raid on militants

AP, Islamabad

Pakistani soldiers backed by helicopter gunships killed about 30 militants in an attack on their hideout near the Afghan border, a military spokesman said yesterday.

The spokesman, Gen. Shaulat Sultan, would not reveal the identities or nationalities of those killed late Friday near the town of Miran Shah, the scene of repeated clashes between security forces and militants in the past week.

He told The Associated Press the attack was launched using "authen-

tic intelligence, and according to our information about 30 miscreants, who included foreigners, were killed."

No security forces were hurt and all those present at the hideout were killed, he said, adding the raid blew up a large cache of weapons.

An intelligence official in the region said the targeted compound belonged to a pro-Taliban cleric, Maulvi Sadiq Noor, although it was not clear whether he was there at the time. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

The official said security forces were looking for more foreigners believed to be hiding in North Waziristan, a semi-autonomous border region that includes Miran Shah.

Noor and other pro-Taliban tribesmen have been targeted since earlier this week when their armed men captured government buildings following a military attack on an al-Qaeda hideout near Miran Shah. Over 100 suspects and eight soldiers were killed in the fighting.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

REFORM DEMAND Opposition hems in EC today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 14-party opposition alliance starts fresh agitation for its reforms agenda today by laying siege to the Election Commission (EC) Secretariat in Dhaka amid uncertainty over a dialogue with the ruling alliance on the issue.

Since Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina placed in parliament the reform proposals on February 12, demonstrations for reforms in the caretaker government

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Jamal Uddin laid to rest

Family gets threat over murder case
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An anonymous caller yesterday threatened the family of slain Chittagong business tycoon and BNP leader Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury not to move further with the murder case.

"At around 9:30am, I received a phone call, threatening us of dire consequences if we moved ahead with my father's murder case," Chowdhury's son Reza Liton, eldest son of Jamal Uddin, told this yesterday evening.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

BNP lawmaker Mutalib Akhand passes away

UNB, Dhaka

BNP lawmaker from Gaibandha-4 Abdul Mutalib Akhand died of a massive heart attack in Dubai yesterday.

He went to Dubai on Friday to attend a conference, family sources said.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia expressed her deep shock at the death of Mutalib Akhand. In a condolence message, the prime minister recalled his contribution to national politics.

She conveyed her profound

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Sri Lanka complete whitewash

BISHWAJIT ROY, from Bogra

Sri Lanka completed a series whitewash with a ten-wicket victory against Bangladesh but not before the visitors were frustrated by rain on the fourth day of the second and final Test at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium here yesterday.

The islanders, needing only 43 runs to win, were held hostages for seven hours by the unexpected first shower of this season before sunshine late in the afternoon allowed them to complete the formalities.

Resuming the day on 77 for no

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Nurul Islam Sarkar, top four posters, sentenced to death for murdering Awami League lawmaker Ahsanullah Master, declares himself a chairman candidate in the Tongi Municipality election. He is now in jail.

He spared none

Vendor assaulted for playing folk songs; youth beaten up for falling in love

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

An ice-cream seller in Bagmara, Rajshahi was drawing attention of the public playing folk songs on a cassette player on April 1, 2004. Bangla Bhai called and asked him why he was playing anti-Islamic songs. Giving the old vendor no time to reply, Bangla Bhai kicked him and asked his men to beat up the "informer of outlaws".

This is a snapshot of how Bangla Bhai started his 'promised operations' to cleanse the country's north-west region of outlaws. In a few weeks' time, he turned to establish a self-styled Islamic rule and started

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

extorting money besides killing those who crossed him.

Bangla Bhai-led Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) extorted huge money from local people terming the extortion zakat and usr [Islamic donations from income and produced crop].

A good number of Bangla Bhai adherents have become rich after they joined the JMJB and many of them are still on the prowl.

His men forced women to stay indoors and wear veils, shut down all cinemas, and extorted huge sums from villagers, who according to them, were not following Islamic rules.

9 members of fake mobile court held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested nine members of a fake mobile court at Mirpur in the city yesterday.

Saiful Alam Bhuiyan led a team of nine men and raided Mongol Bakery on Mazar Road around 1:00pm.

He claimed to be a magistrate and fined the bakery authorities Tk 1 lakh as the documents and environment were not up to the mark.

However, the authorities got suspicious as the 'magistrate' reduced the fine to Tk 1,000 and the 'court' had no law enforcers.

Informed by the employees, Rab-4 personnel rushed to the bakery and arrested the nine. The Rab also seized a microbus, a camera, a

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Frame nat'l policy to save biodiversity

Environmentalists ask govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing deep concern over the continuous encroachment on the wetlands, leading economists and environmentalists said the government must formulate a national policy and the political parties should include the issue in their electoral manifesto to save biodiversity and aquaculture of the country.

The wetlands that cover about 30 percent of the total land of the country, especially the haors in the north-eastern part, are losing their natural features mostly due to leasing system and over irrigation to grow hybrid rice, they said at a seminar on Haor Management in the north-eastern part of Bangladesh.

At the seminar jointly organised by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Nagorik Sanghati, Bapa President Prof Muzaffer Ahmed said due to successive governments' inaction most of the wetlands are losing their natural resources that might cause environmental disaster in near future.

"An environment-friendly and people-oriented plan should be formulated soon and even the political parties should make commitments to implement it," he said, adding that innovative ways are to be found for diversified cultivation in the haor areas.

Presenting the keynote paper, engineer M Inamul Haque, director general of Bangladesh Haor and Wetland Development Board, said these haors are very significant even on international consideration for their huge natural resources, but are managed in a disorganised manner.

The wetlands, considered to be the fishing hub of the country, were the major source of income for a large fishermen community, but now have turned into a cultivable land through too much irrigation in the name of food production, said Inamul Haque.

"As a result we are deprived of huge water resources and facilities of water supply for irrigation and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



PHOTO: STAR

Branches of a tree have been sawn off to build a frame for billboard next to the Department of Public Health Engineering head office in Karkrail in the city.

India engaged in illicit nuke activities

Claims US think-tank

AFP, Washington

A US think tank has questioned India's nuclear non-proliferation record, saying it had uncovered illicit Indian government nuclear procurement from Europe that leaked sensitive atomic technology.

US President George W. Bush has used India's so-called untarnished non-proliferation record as a basis for sealing a civilian nuclear deal with New Delhi last week.

But the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS), a private group in Washington, said in a report Friday that it "has uncovered a well-developed, active, and secret Indian programme to outfit its uranium enrichment programme and circumvent other countries' export control efforts."

Uranium enrichment is used as

fuel for nuclear reactors but can -- in highly refined form -- be the fissile core of an atom bomb.

"Indian procurement methods for its nuclear programme leak sensitive nuclear technology," said the report, co-authored by ISIS President David Albright, a former UN nuclear inspector.

When asked by AFP from where the Indian government made the illegal procurements, Albright said, "Certainly from the supplier states from Europe and could be from other places too."

He declined however to elaborate. "We sculptured that comment in the report very carefully," he said.

US and Indian officials claim

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

MAGSAYSAY AWARD Matiur donates prize money to charity funds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Editor of the Prothom Alo Matiur Rahman donated his Ramon Magsaysay Award money to the Prothom Alo funds for acid victims, the anti-drug movement and the oppressed journalists of the country, says a press release.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Prayer Timing		
March 12		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-05	5-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-12	6-15
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation