

Shanta's case against cops dismissed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday dismissed the case of Shahin Sultana Shanta, victim of police brutality during a protest programme of the 14-party opposition alliance on March 12.

Judge Kaniz Akhter Nasrina Khanam of the Fourth Special Tribunal for Women and Children Repression dismissed the case, saying allegations brought against two deputy commissioners of police, a constable and 14 other unnamed cops were not proved.

But primary investigation of a judicial inquiry commission found evidence of torture by police, who were also widely filmed by the media on that day.

"Such activities of police are a punishable crime under Bangladesh Penal Code," Metropolitan Magistrate Shafiq Anwar, who headed the one-member commission, said in his report, which was submitted before the tribunal.

It could have been appropriate for the police to arrest her and send to the court, but that was not done, said the report.

Two days after the police excesses on Road No 27 in

PM for joint tourism effort in S Asia

Saarc tourism ministers' meet ends

UNB, Cox's Bazar

The Prime Minister and Saarc Chairperson Khaleda Zia has called for joint efforts to make South Asia a common tourist destination by pooling resources, ensuring human resource development and facilitating travels and connectivity in the region.

"South Asia has been a melting pot of diverse culture. Each country has its unique charm and when combined the experience to a tourist can be nothing less than captivating," she said inaugurating the 2nd South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Tourism Ministers' Conference at Hotel Seagull in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

Pakistan Tourism Minister Nilufar Bakhtiar, Sri Lankan Deputy Minister for Tourism Arjuna

Ranatunga, the Maldives Deputy Minister for Tourism Abdul Hamid Zakaria, Bhutan's Deputy Minister for National Environment Commission Dasho Nado Rinchen, Bangladesh State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mirza Fakrul Islam Alamgir and Saarc secretary general Chenkyab Dorji spoke at the inaugural function.

Indian High Commissioner Veena Sikri read out the statement of the Indian tourism minister.

Calling 2006 "South Asia Tourism Year," Khaleda said, "Indeed, the magic is all there in South Asia waiting to be explored by the tourists."

She emphasised on charting out yearlong activities to attract tourists from all over the world, establish direct air links among the Saarc countries, cooperation in human resource development and active

role of the private sector to promote tourism both intra-regionally and internationally.

Khaleda said the tourism conference takes place at an important juncture of Saarc's progress towards greater regional cooperation.

She said the 13th Saarc summit in Dhaka clearly resolved that the third decade of Saarc would be one of implementation, which means all decisions should be realistic and practicable touching the lives of South Asians and bringing out visible changes all around.

She urged the tourism ministers to have a hard look at the implementation status of their earlier decisions taken in the area of tourism development.

The prime minister said over the years, the South Asian leadership

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia speaks at the inauguration of the Second Meeting of Saarc Tourism Ministers at Cox's Bazar yesterday.

Saarc environment ministers meet in Dhaka May 24

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will place a five-point proposal in accordance with the 'Green South Asia Programme' at the Saarc (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) environment ministers' meet in Dhaka beginning on Wednesday.

Ministers of the seven-country South Asian bloc will make deliberations to chalk out a joint work plan for regional ecological balance and tackling environmental hazards during the seventh such conference.

Finance minister M Saifur Rahman will inaugurate the meeting at Hotel Sonargaon to be attended by the environment ministers of all Saarc states except Nepal.

Prior to the ministers' meeting, the Saarc Technical Committee for Environment and Forest will sit today in a second meeting. Their recommendations will be tabled at the meeting of the senior Saarc environment officials tomorrow for preparing the ground for the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Myanmar won't explore within Bangladesh waters

Foreign secy tells of Yangon assurance

UNB, Dhaka

Myanmar authorities have assured Bangladesh that they would never encroach on Bangladesh's territorial waters, saying that they believe in good neighbourly relations as the two countries have agreed on a number of issues of cooperation.

The assurance was given to Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin during his visit to Yangon where he held the first formal foreign secretary-level consultations with Myanmar Deputy Foreign Minister U Kyaw Thu on May 19.

"They (Myanmar) do not believe they have made any encroachment...They assured that they will never encroach on Bangladesh's territorial waters at any point of time," Hemayet told newsmen at the foreign ministry yesterday on his return from Yangon.

Bangladesh earlier had lodged protests to both Myanmar and India against exploring hydrocarbon into Bangladesh's maritime

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



Restaurant owners and workers vandalise a police vehicle at Tophkhana Road yesterday protesting frequent check on their food items by mobile court.

President asked to sack CEC within a week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League-led (AL) 14-party opposition combine yesterday asked the president to sack chief election commissioner (CEC) and two other 'politically' appointed election commissioners within a week.

They also asked the president to appoint acceptable persons in the EC in order to ensure a free and fair election.

Gathered at Shanir Akhra to address a rally for protesting the ongoing water, electricity and gas crises, and spiralling prices of essentials, the opposition leaders termed the draft voter list 'fake' and demanded cancellation of it.

They also vowed to resist any election in the country without the cancellation of the voter list and implementation of the reforms in the caretaker government and the EC.

They were addressing a rally at Shanir Akhra as part of their agitation programmes in the capital protesting against the ongoing

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

HYGIENE DRIVE

Hotel staff attack mobile court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of a Dhaka City Corporation mobile court led by Magistrate Tapan Kumar Biswas came under attack by restaurant employees as the court was conducting a hygiene drive on Tophkhana Road in the capital yesterday.

This is the second attack on the same mobile court team in one month during hygiene drives in the city.

Following raids on the Café Baghdad, Hotel Modhurima and Hotel Tourist on the Tophkhana Road, nearly a hundred rowdy employees started chanting slogans against the mobile court men and chased them.

They damaged a police pickup van and threw brickbats at the police and BDR men, injuring a couple of them.

The magistrate, law enforcers, and reporters and photographers took shelter inside Gafur Tower.

"They often come and charge huge fine. We can not run business due to their drive," said a restaurant manager in the area.

"The team realised several thousand taka from here about a week ago," said a restaurant staff requesting anonymity.

Magistrate Tapan Kumar, however, said the court never fined any restaurant without any reason.

"The condition of the kitchens of those restaurants is very unhygienic and so, I fined Tk 1 lakh to one and Tk 30,000 to another," the magistrate said, adding, "Anybody could go and see how filthy the condition of their kitchen and food preservation system is."

As the mobile team fined Hotel Madhurima for its dirty environment and other faults, the furious employees carrying bamboo sticks chased the mobile court officials and law enforcers, he said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

IU closes academic work until June 10

STAR REPORT

Islamic University authorities yesterday closed all academic activities including classes and examinations of the institution till June 10 and asked the students to leave their residential halls by today.

Administrative functions of the university will, however, continue.

A meeting presided over by Treasurer Prof Anwarul Karim, where deans, proctors, student advisors, provosts and high officials of the university attended, took the decision, while Vice-chancellor Prof Rafiqul Islam has been absent since Thursday.

The decision to close the university has been taken in the wake of agitation launched by ruling BNP's student wing Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) for not awarding jobs in the university to their liking.

On Thursday, a syndicate meeting of the university approved appointment of 88 persons including six officials and 82 third and fourth class employees -- all

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Militants attack Cong rally in Kashmir

Eight killed, Al-Mansoorian, Lashkar-e-Taiba claim responsibility

REUTERS, Srinagar

Eight people including two militants were killed and 20 wounded when a gunfight broke out at a rally in the heart of Indian Kashmir's main city yesterday, police and witnesses said.

Police said militants, one of them in police uniform, sneaked into a gathering of hundreds of Congress Party supporters in Srinagar and opened fire.

"We eliminated two militants," A.P. Maheshwari, Inspector

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Judges take a swipe at law ministry

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Judges of the lower courts yesterday accused the law ministry of suppressing them in various ways.

Judges from across the country expressed their deep dissatisfaction during an extended meeting of Bangladesh Judicial Service Association (BJSA) held at the Judges Conference Room of Dhaka District Court yesterday.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Bombs rock Iraq as new cabinet meets

20 people killed in violence

AFP, Baghdad

At least 20 people were killed in insurgent violence yesterday, 13 of them in a Baghdad restaurant bombing, as Iraq's new national unity government met on its first full day in office.

Another 18 people were wounded when the blast ripped

through the crowded diner in the upmarket Karada district, highlighting the importance of plans set out by Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki for a special security force for the capital.

"We have a plan, we agreed on this plan even before this meeting, this plan will start with protecting

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Prayer Timing		
May 22		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-40	6-45
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation