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Matiur's remains to be flown in today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After 35 years of independence, the remains of Birsreshtho M Matiur Rahman, one of the most valiant martyrs of the liberation war in 1971, are coming home today from Masroor Air Force Base in Pakistan. A special flight of Biman Bangladesh is scheduled to reach Zia International Airport at 10:15pm today carrying a special coffin containing Matiur's remains. A six-member team of the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs went to Pakistan to bring back the remains.

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At the airport, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will receive the remains of the martyr with the highest state honour.

Milly Rahman, widow of Matiur Rahman, and Tuhin Matiur Haider, their daughter will be present at the airport at that time.

"Finally he is coming back to the soil of the country. This is very important as he sacrificed his life for this soil," Milly Rahman told The Daily Star in a voice choked with emotion. "This is a very important event for us and hard to believe that it is happening at last," she added.

Sources with the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs

Blast injures JCD cadre while making bomb at RU

RU CORRESPONDENT

A Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) cadre of Rajshahi University (RU) unit was critically injured in an explosion while making a bomb in his Nawab Abdul Latif Hall room early yesterday.

Convening committee member of RU JCD, student wing of ruling BNP, and master final year student of accounting Shafin Ahmed was admitted to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital (RMCH) with wounds caused by splinters.

Sources said Shafin, accused of different charges in at least 15 cases, stockpiled bombs in his room ostensibly for use during reopening of the varsity in the end of June.

A police team led by Assistant Commissioner Rezaul Hasan of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police rushed to the spot. They recovered six powerful live bombs, two foreign-made revolvers and bomb making materials, including sulphur, stone chips, gunpowder and iron balls, from his room.

The law enforcers also seized some bottles of foreign wine and pensidyl. They sealed the room.

Three other accused of bomb making—Ahsan Habib, Shohag and

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2 Africans held for links to currency forgery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch of police arrested two Africans at Pallabi in the capital early yesterday for their alleged involvement in making and trading in forged foreign currencies.

The two foreigners -- William Obeng, 35, of Ghana, and Tankam Christian, 36, of Cameroon -- were arrested at fast food shop Foods and Flavours in Pallabi Section -11 with two fake notes of US\$ 100 and dollar-making materials following information from the shop owner, police said.

The arrestees were put on a three-day remand after they were produced before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate with a seven-day remand prayer yesterday.

Owner of the fast food shop Abdul Mujib Chowdhury in a first information report (FIR) filed with Pallabi Police Station yesterday said he got introduced with a foreigner on June 20 when he along

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Four Bangladeshis killed in BSF firing

STAR REPORT

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) killed three Bangladeshis cattle traders from Sathkira and injured another one in a village of 24 Parganas district in West Bengal on Thursday night while a housewife wounded in BSF firing in Chapainawabganj died yesterday morning.

According to Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) sources, the BSF men opened fire on the Bangladeshis cattle traders at Ghojadanga, a bordering village about 500 yards inside the Indian territory at Basirhat of 24 Parganas, at about 10:00pm while they were returning back home from India.

Manirul Islam, 24, son of Sirajul Islam, and Mokammel Haque, 19, son of Abdul Aziz of Mahmudpur village, and Khokon,

20, son of Shahidul Islam of Gayeshpur village in sadar upazila of Sathkira district died on the spot.

According to a report received here from across the border, the BSF took away the dead bodies and injured Mostaque, 24, of Mahmudpur, was admitted to Basirhat hospital in a critical condition.

Soon after the incident, the BDR sent a letter to the BSF protesting the killing and asking it to hand over the dead bodies by holding a flagmeeting.

When contacted, Major Humayun, second-in-command of 41 Rifles Battalion, confirmed the incident.

A tense situation is prevailing in the bordering areas.

BSS reports: The Bangladesh housewife who died after being hit

by a bullet fired by the BSF was identified as Kulsum of Polladanga.

BDR sources said BSF men of Charrenuka camp in India unexpectedly started indiscriminate firing towards Bangladesh territory. A bullet hit Kulsum when she was closing a window of her house.

She was rushed to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital where she succumbed to her injuries.

According to the BDR, the BSF fired 50 gunshots and in reply the BDR also fired 25 shots.

UNB adds from Jessore: Four Bangladeshis youths were critically injured in BSF firing in Bagachhara frontier area in Sarsha upazila early yesterday.

The injured were identified as

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BNP looking for 'more loyal' president

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

The ruling party BNP is looking for a new president as its policymakers are convinced that the health of President Iajuddin Ahmed will not allow him to continue.

Sources in the BNP said though many of its policymakers prefer the Acting President Jamiruddin Sircar for the post, a number of people in the high command want to pick 'a more loyal person' for the job.

"The coming period is very crucial when the president will have to absorb a lot of pressure," a senior BNP leader told The Daily Star preferring anonymity. He said, "The health of President Iajuddin Ahmed is not good. He may face troubled times in future during the

caretaker government when the Awami League led alliance will put pressures on him," the leader added.

Meanwhile, Mokhlesur Rahman Chowdhury, press secretary to the president, yesterday told The Daily Star Iajuddin Ahmed will return to the Bangabhaban today and stay in full rest for the next 15 days as physicians advised him. "Physicians will advise him on his next course of action to better health after reviewing his health after 15 days," he added.

A BNP source said its policymakers want to give this 15-day time to the president to prepare himself mentally for stepping down.

On the other hand, Acting

Speaker Akhter Hamid Siddique met Prime Minister Khaleda Zia on Thursday. There was a meeting held at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on the same day between the prime minister and her senior colleagues over the current health condition of the president and the political situation.

Prior to meeting with her senior party colleagues, Khaleda discussed the matter with Industries Minister Monjur Rahman Nizami, also the chief of Jamaat-e-Islami, BNP's main ally in the government.

Family sources of the president said now there are no major programmes for the president, so he can easily have rest until the physicians' next review.

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PHOTO: STAR

Activists of Khatme Nabuwat Movement Bangladesh vandalise vehicles near Zia International Airport after police charged batons to disperse the bigots who tried to offer Asr prayers on the highway blocking traffic yesterday.

POLICE FOIL ANTI-AHMADIYYA SIEGE PLAN Zealots call for hartal, vow to shut down ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Religious bigots yesterday announced a weeklong programme including dawn to dusk hartals in northern Dhaka on Sunday and Monday and a shut down of Zia International Airport on Thursday to force the government to declare Hazrat Mohammad (pbuh) as the last prophet in the ongoing parliament session.

Khatme Nabuwat Andolon Bangladesh (KNAB) yesterday made the announcement after it had failed to lay a siege to an Ahmadiyya mosque at Naddapara of Uttara in the capital as a continuation of its three-year long movement to force the government to declare the Ahmadiyyas non-Muslims.

The demand for a government declaration of Muhammad as the

last prophet is an attempt by the zealots to create a legal basis for their main demand.

Noor Hossain Nurani, amir of KNAB, told The Daily Star, "After the bill is passed we will go to the High Court asking it to scrutinise the religious texts of the Qadianis and ask the court to declare them non-Muslims. Later we will mount such a pressure on the government that it will find no other way but to declare the Qadianis non-Muslims."

Police however charged batons to disperse the bigots when they tried to offer their Asr prayers on Airport Road by blocking traffic. The police action left 20 people injured. The anti-Ahmadiyyas, however, claimed around 200 of their activists were injured including nine critically.

The zealots vandalised two buses creating panic among the

commuters and disrupting traffic for several minutes. They also tried to hang a signboard on the Ahmadiyya mosque which read 'a place of worship for non-Muslim Qadianis', which the law enforcers foiled.

The amir of KNAB, later declared the weeklong programme, which includes a rally today in front of airport police box at 4:00pm protesting the police attack. The announced hartals will be carried out in Khilkhet, Uttara, Airport, Turag, and Tongi, five northern thanas of the capital city.

"No more peaceful programmes as the government did not pay heed to us even after laying seven sieges Qadianis (Ahmadiyyas) communities across the country in the last two and a half years," said Nurani.

"We are now ready to shed

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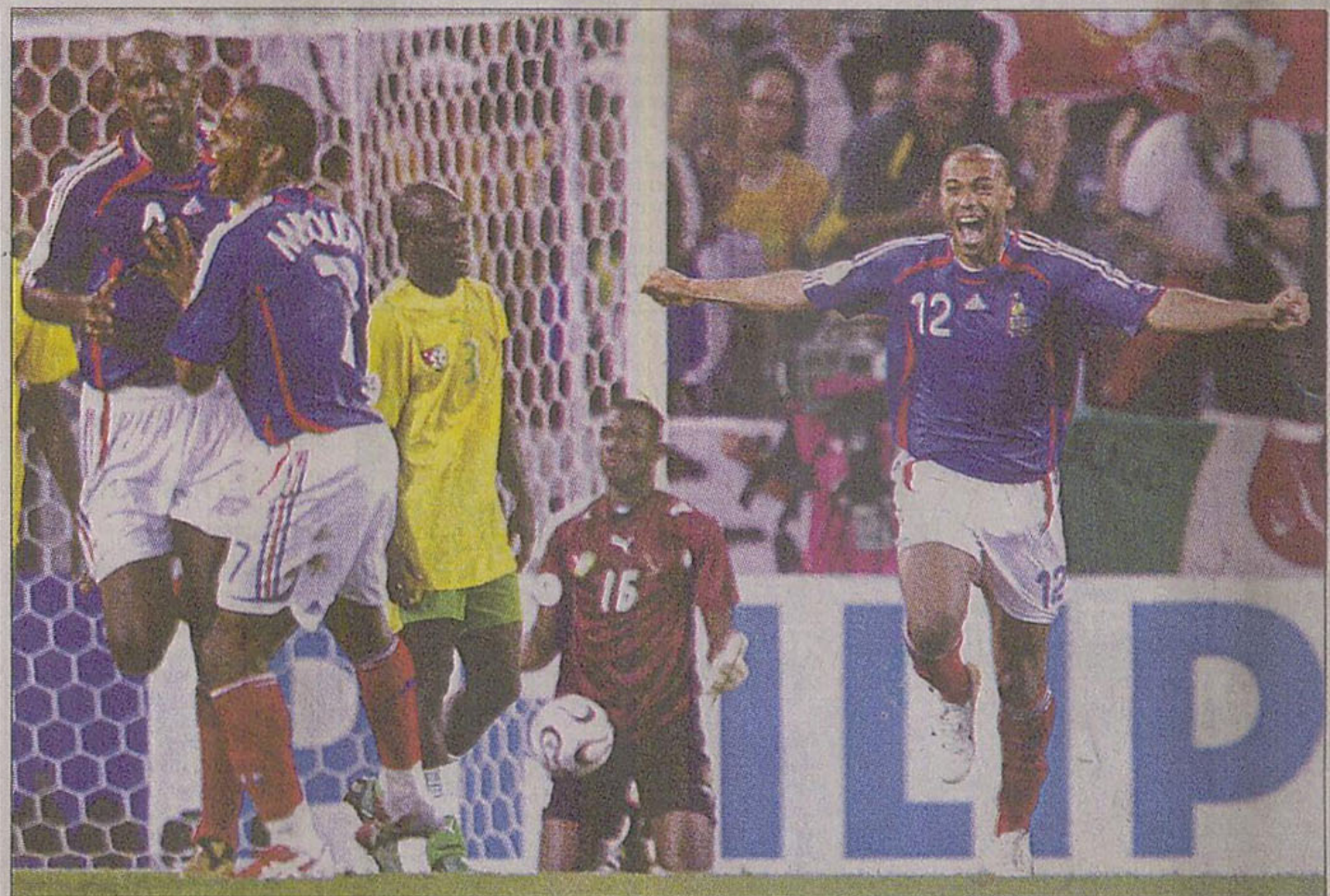


PHOTO: AFP

French forward Thierry Henry (R) jubilates after fellow midfielder Patrick Vieira's (L) opening goal against Togo in their Group G match at Cologne stadium yesterday.

Hasina won't receive award in Kolkata Returns tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition in parliament Sheikh Hasina is not going to Kolkata to receive the Mother Teresa Lifetime Achievement Award today.

Hasina's Political Secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury told BBC Bangla Service last night that she will not join the award giving ceremony in Kolkata today as she has a meeting with Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Atal Behari Vajpayee and former Indian prime minister IK Gujral in Delhi.

"But we will contact the organisation later and fix a date for receiving the award," he said.

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Govt pry school teachers start fast-unto-death in city today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers of government primary schools will start hunger strike until death at Muktangan in the capital today demanding elimination of the 'wage discrimination'.

Around 1,80,000 government primary teachers under the banner of Bangladesh Primary Teachers Association started strike in 37,000 government primary schools across the country on June 17 demanding realisation of their 21-point demand including elimination of wage discrimination.

Some 10,565 teachers of 3,778 community primary schools across the country have been observing indefinite strike since June 18 demanding nationalisation of their jobs.

Several hundred teachers under the banner of Bangladesh Community Primary Teachers Association are also observing

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Procession, rally mark AL's 57th founding anniversary

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League (AL) brought out a colourful procession in the city yesterday marking the 57th founding anniversary of the party.

Addressing a brief pre-procession rally at the Suhrawardy Uddyan, top AL leaders vowed to establish a democratic, non-communal Bangladesh by ousting the BNP-Jamaat alliance government.

Acting president of AL Zillur Rahman told the rally that the alliance government is "hatching conspiracy" to destroy the country's democracy, communal harmony and the achievements of the liberation war.

He said, "We will establish a democratic Bangladesh under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina after

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Vieira inspires France

AFP, Cologne

Man of the match Patrick Vieira helped lift France into the last 16 with a 2-0 win over Togo in their concluding World Cup Group G fixture here on Friday.

The Juventus midfielder celebrated his 30th birthday in towering style, putting the 1998 champions into an early second half lead, then setting up Thierry Henry for

the second as France slew the demons of 2002.

Raymond Domenech's side, missing suspended Zinedine Zidane, were facing a second successive first round exit and went into this must-win game seeking their first World Cup victory since the 3-0 triumph over Brazil eight years ago.

Fighting for their World Cup lives Les Bleus were unable to

convert a hatful of first half chances, largely thanks to the heroics of one man -- Kossi Agassa in the Togo goal.

Agassa, who plays his club football for newly demoted French side Metz, got an early sign that he was in for a busy night when he had to tip a David Trezeguet header over the bar.

Vieira's Juve teammate, team

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TEAM	TIME	VENUE
Germany v Sweden	8:50 pm	Munich
Argentina v Mexico	12:50 am (Sunday)	Leipzig

Round of 16 match-ups

Germany v Sweden
Argentina v Mexico
England v Ecuador
Portugal v Netherlands
Italy v Australia
Switzerland v Ukraine
Brazil v Ghana
Spain v France

win exciting prizes!! see inside for details

Korea crash to Switzerland

AFP, Hanover

Switzerland swept into the last 16 of the World Cup at the expense of South Korea with a controversial 2-0 victory over the 2002 semifinalists in Group G here on Thursday.

Arsenal defender Philippe Senderos put Switzerland ahead in the first half before striker Alexander Frei killed the hopes of the Koreans with a hotly disputed goal in the 77th minute.

The Korean defence stopped after the assistant referee flagged Frei offside but the striker slid the

ball home and was delighted when Argentine referee Horacio Elizondo allowed the goal to stand despite furious protests from the whole South Korean team.

The Swiss topped the group while South Korea were sent packing.

Switzerland, who reached the second round in their last appearance in the World Cup finals 12 years ago, will play Ukraine with France taking on Spain.

Coach Dick Advocaat sprung a surprise by handing 20-year-old striker Park Chu-Young his World

Cup debut.

The former Asian Youth Player of the Year was in the starting line-up ahead of hotshot Ahn Jung-Hwan, who scored the winner against Togo in the opening match.

South Korean goalkeeper and captain Lee Woon-Jae, one of the heroes in 2002, was making his 100th appearance for the national team.

Switzerland's influential midfielder Daniel Gygyax was ruled out of the clash with badly bruised stomach muscles with Hakan

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Go door to door for voter list update

Nagorik Committee's open letter to CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nagorik Committee, a citizens' group of noted personalities of the country, yesterday sent an open letter to Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz urging him to take steps for door to door visits for updating the voter list.

"Otherwise, you (MA Aziz) may be found guilty in the history," members of the committee said in the letter.

The letter said the method for revising a voter list should be the same as the method followed for preparing a fresh voter list. "Neither it is possible nor acceptable if the voter list is prepared or revised without visiting every house," the signatories said.

According to the constitution, a caretaker government is scheduled

to resume office in late October for holding the national election and all necessary revisions on the voter list have to be completed before that, the letter said.

"The Election Commission (EC) and you as its chief will be responsible for any controversy regarding the voter list and if it is not accepted by all quarters," the letter cautioned adding that such a situation may create a constitutional crisis in the country.

The letter expressed fear that many people eligible for being registered as voters are likely to remain out of the list because of the new EC decision, as most of the people in Bangladesh are illiterate and they are not accustomed to go to election offices to register their names.

The signatories said instead of

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CEC's steps may create crisis: Nazmul Huda

UNB, Dhaka

Communications Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda yesterday said the decisions being taken by Chief Election Commissioner Justice MA Aziz regarding the voter list might create a political crisis ahead of the elections.

"I believe he's not a man without conscience, he'll take his decisions considering the present circumstances and the nation's interest will get the top priority," Huda said on a private TV channel replying to a question about the CEC's resignation.

Huda said the CEC could be removed through the Supreme Judicial Council on the basis of a complaint. The Supreme Judicial Council may refer it to the president.

He said any citizen can request the president seeking the CEC's removal. But he said his party has not taken any such decision.

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