

Shia gunmen kill 42 in Baghdad rampage

AFP, Baghdad

Roving bands of masked gunmen went on a rampage yesterday in a predominantly Sunni Baghdad neighbourhood, killing at least 42 Sunni Arabs in a gruesome sectarian attack despite a massive security crackdown, witnesses said.

They said gunmen began killing people after setting up fake checkpoints in the neighbourhood of Jihad and also raiding people's homes.

"They also went into certain Sunni houses and killed everyone inside," a witness who declined to be named told AFP.

"Outside the mosque I saw the bodies of 10 men, all shot in the head, and they showed severe signs of torture," said Sheikh Abdel Samad al-Obeidi, imam of the Sunni Fakhri Shanshal mosque in the neighbourhood, which was bombed on Friday killing two. "I blame the

Mehdi Army militiamen for this killing - it is all in the open now," he added, referring to the armed group linked to radical Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr.

He also accused police commandos, who have checkpoints in the area, of being "complicit in the crime for turning a blind eye".

In the runup to Sunday's rampage, Sunni and Shia holy places were increasingly targeted in ongoing civil strife in Baghdad, with the Shia Fatima Zahra mosque being bombed on Saturday.

In past months there have been more and more sectarian-linked attacks in the capital's neighbourhoods.

Sheikh Mahmud al-Sudani, the imam of the Shia mosque, told AFP the attacks were carried out by relatives of Shias who had been killed or driven out of the predominantly Sunni neighbourhood in

PM for promoting honest, efficient officers in army

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday stressed the need for selection of honest, efficient, patriotic and professional officers for promotion to the senior level of the army.

"The army not only carries out defence responsibilities in the present-day world. The area of their responsibilities has enlarged and multidimensionality added," she said inaugurating the meeting of 'Army Selection Board 2006' at the Army Headquarters in Dhaka.

"You will give promotion to the officers on the basis of their seniority, efficiency, eligibility and merit following the set guidelines," she told the army high-ups attending the meeting.

The prime minister, who is also holds the portfolio of defence ministry, hoped that the selection board members will take decisions on promotion after minute analysis of overall qualifications of each officer on the basis of justice and



PHOTO: STAR

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Patricia Butenis meets the family members of late Awami League leader Shah AMS Kibria yesterday at Kibria's Dhanmondi house in the capital.

HC VERDICT Children must be tried in juvenile court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) in a verdict yesterday said if the accused is a child under the Children Act, 1974, they must be tried in a juvenile court and not any other court irrespective of the offence alleged.

The judgment came in the death reference case of 14-year-old Raushan Mondol alias Hashem. He was charged with rape and murder and sentenced to death by the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal, Jhenidah.

The HC division bench of Justice Md Iman Ali and Justice AKM Fazlur Rahman also declared the trial by the Jhenidah court void ab initio, thereby setting aside its judgment.

The bench further said that no circumstantial evidence could be found to connect the child accused of the offence and the confessional statement taken in police custody is also not voluntary.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Teachers, staff strike continues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Most non-government high schools, colleges and madrasas remained closed yesterday as the teachers' and employees' indefinite strike continued yesterday.

Thirty-four organisations of non-government high school, college and madrasa teachers and employees under four platforms yesterday observed the indefinite strike at the educational institutes crippling studies of around 1.5 crore students across the country.

Around 30,000 institutions were either closed or the teachers refrained from taking classes yesterday. Teachers and employees of these educational institutes vowed to continue their strike until their demands were met.

Their demands include 100 per cent basic salary from the government exchequer, hike in the house rent, medical allowance, festival allowance in full, and implementation of the recommendations by

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Bangladesh a success story in reproductive health

UNFPA country representative tells *The Daily Star*

MONJUR MAHMUD

Bangladesh has been a success story in population and reproductive health programme looking at the socio-economic and demographic indicators but it still has to go a long way, observed Suneeta Mukherjee, UNFPA country representative.

"We don't need unwanted pregnancy and it is one of the major problems confronting Bangladesh. People are not getting the right contraceptive at the right time and the country is short of contraceptive," said Suneeta in an exclusive interview with *The Daily Star*.

Bangladesh is the densely populated country in the world and its population will be about 17 crore in 2015. Population will stabilise in 2050 when there will be nearly 24 crore people and it also depends on



Suneeta Mukherjee

how good the interventions are, she observed.

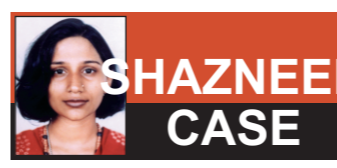
The country has made considerable progress in various socio-economic, health and demographic indicators but it has been an inter-

rupted success story, she said adding that maternal mortality rate is still very high with 12,000 women dying from complications of pregnancy and childbirth annually.

Bangladesh has to target the poor because they are voiceless and having higher total fertility rate (TFR), maternal mortality and higher incidence of maternal and child malnutrition, Suneeta said on the eve of the World Population Day to be observed on July 11 across the globe.

Explaining, she said total fertility rate among the poor has been double and the figure is 2.4 for the rich population while 4.2 in case of the poor. Women get married at an early age due to low income and lack of access to income security for them, and thus enter into

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



SHAZNEER CASE

Delivery of verdict resumes today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court Death Reference Bench on Shazneer murder case resumes delivering its verdict today regarding the appeal of the convicts against the lower court's death penalty.

The bench comprising Justices Ali Asgar Khan and Emdadul Haque will today analyse the statements of four of the 22 prosecution witnesses and the lower court judgement.

The witnesses are Fakhruzzaman, head of law at Transcom Group, Metropolitan Magistrate Maksudur Rahman Patwari, recording officer Enamul Haq and Shahidur Rahman.

The bench will later deliver its

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

US envoy worried at political violence

Meets Kibria family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The US Ambassador in Dhaka Patricia A Butenis yesterday expressed deep concern over the political violence in the country, and inadequacy of investigation into those saying that the guilty should be brought to justice to stop further such killings.

"She [the ambassador] also expressed concern over political violence ahead of the next elections," Reza Kibria, son of slain Awami League (AL) leader Shah AMS Kibria, told a press briefing.

Referring to the US Congressmen's concern about the inadequacy of the progress made in the investigation and prosecution in the murder case of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria, Patricia Butenis told journalists, "This is a special case that should be looked into seriously."

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



AS Mahmud's 72nd birthday today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 72nd birth anniversary of AS Mahmud, founding managing director of the Mediaworld Limited and the first publisher of *The Daily Star*.

He was also the founder chairman and CEO of the now defunct Ekushey Television (ETV) Limited, the first private television channel

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

150 killed in Siberian airplane crash

AP, Moscow

A Russian passenger plane ran off the runway on landing early yesterday, hit a concrete barrier and burst into flames, a government spokeswoman said. About 150 people were reported killed in the crash in the Siberian city of Irkutsk.

The Sibir Airbus A-310 was carrying 200 people - a crew of eight

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

A SUCCESS STORY...Receiving training from an NGO, Abdul Matin started farming bees at Srinagar on the outskirts of Dhaka in 2003. Matin is now a self-sufficient farmer selling honey.

Babar asks for list of wanted criminals in 7 days

UNB, Dhaka

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfuzzaman Babar yesterday asked the law enforcement agencies to prepare within seven days a list of the wanted criminals and runaway convicts of sensational cases while there are fears that they might make a comeback to create disturbance during the interim reign of caretaker government.

The state minister who chaired a meeting of the Law and Order Committee held at his ministry after a gap of three months also gave instructions for retrial of the Udichi concert bombing case to try and punish the real perpetrators, as a court in Jessore recently acquitted all the accused.

In the wake of reckless drug

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Prayer Timing		
July 10		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-10	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-55	7-00
Esha	8-17	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation