

JUDGES KILLING CASE
Hearing of death reference to start Aug 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The hearing on the death reference of Jhalakathi judges killing case will begin on August 1 before the High Court (HC).
A lower court had sentenced seven accused to death including Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) kingpin Abdul Rahman and his deputy Siddiqul Islam Bangla Bhai in the judges killing case.
The death reference bench of the HC yesterday fixed the date of the case granting government's prayer, which was moved by the attorney general (AG) office.
On July 11, the AG office placed the prayer for the hearing on the case before the HC death reference bench of Justice Ali Asgar Khan and Emdadul Haque on completion of the paper book [history] of the case.
The bench had asked the attorney general's office to bring up the

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Pakistan in large-scale nuclear expansion

New reactor being built to produce plutonium for making 40 to 50 bombs

REUTERS, Washington

Pakistan is building a reactor that could produce enough plutonium for 40 to 50 nuclear weapons in what would be a major expansion of its nuclear programme and an intensified arms race in South Asia, a report showed yesterday.
Satellite photos show what appears to be the construction site for a larger nuclear reactor adjacent to Pakistan's only plutonium production reactor, according to an analysis by nuclear experts at the Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security.
The assessment, initially reported by The Washington Post,

was posted on the institute's Web site.
The analysts concluded that the diameter of the structure's metal shell suggests a very large reactor "operating in excess of 1,000 megawatts thermal," according to the report.
"Such a reactor could produce over 200 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium per year, assuming it operates at full power a modest 220 days per year," the technical assessment said. "At 4 to 5 kilograms of plutonium per weapon, this stock would allow the production of over 40 to 50 nuclear weapons a year."
Pakistan currently is capable of

producing about 10 kilograms of plutonium a year, enough for about two warheads, The Washington Post said.
Construction of the new reactor in Khushab apparently began sometime after March 2000. But the report's authors said Pakistan does not appear to be moving quickly to finish the reactor, and cited possible shortages of necessary reactor components or weapons production infrastructure.
"India is likely aware of this reactor construction in Khushab," the institute's David Albright and Paul Brannan wrote. "Has this influenced India to increase its own

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Meherpur Govt College closed sine die after violent clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Meherpur Government College was declared closed sine die yesterday after a clash between students and transport workers that left at least 45 injured.
The clash ensued at about 10.30am following an altercation between the college students travelling on a bus and the bus conductor over fare.
When the bus reached Meherpur Government College, the students stopped the bus. Some other students joined them to beat up the driver and the conductor.
The angry students also damaged the bus.
Soon after the incident, about 100 transport workers rushed to the college and locked in a clash on the college compound.

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Swadhin Bangla Garment Sramik Karmachari Federation brings out a procession in the city yesterday demanding a minimum wage of Tk 3,000 and implementation of all agreements signed among the workers, government and the owners.

PHOTO: STAR

RU classes not held for student strike

RU CORRESPONDENT

Classes and examinations at Rajshahi University (RU) could not be held yesterday as students of the Department of Marketing observed strike on the campus demanding cancellation of the selection of a 'controversial' candidate as a teacher of the department.
The marketing students under the banner of General Students Council also locked the administrative building for several hours and observed a two-hour sit-in programme in front of the vice chancellor's residence from 1:00pm.
The students withdrew their sit-in programme after Vice-chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain agreed to meet their demand.
Vehicles including university buses did not ply while university shops and post office remained closed during the strike.
Presence of students on the campus was also thin.
At a rally in front of the central library at around 12:00pm, the students warned of indefinite strike on the campus if the university authorities failed to cancel the selection of Bakhtier Rana, who was earlier sacked from a university in Chittagong for immoral activities.

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PHOTO: STAR

Trailers of rigs are parked on the Biswa Road near Mugdapara in the capital creating traffic congestion. The photo was taken around midnight Sunday.

20-year-old loses 5 yrs for delayed justice

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A 20-year-old lost five years of youth in confinement due to negligence of court staff and finally received release order yesterday.
Judge Kamaluzzaman of the trial court yesterday directed the jail authorities to release Mohammad Jahangir, son of late Idris of Sakhipur under Kaliakoir in Gazipur district, following a petition filed by the defence lawyer on July 19.
Jahangir was arrested under the Public Safety Act (PSA) on suspicion of involvement in the attack on one Alauddin of Namapara slum in the city's Sutrapur area on June 14, 2001 and has been detained in jail ever since.
After the arrest, he was placed on a one-day remand for interrogation and sent to Dhaka Central Jail after being produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka.
After an investigation into the case, the investigation officer (IO) Sub-Inspector (SI) Mainuddin dropped the names of Jahangir and four others from the charge sheet as the charge brought against them were not proved.
The IO pressed charges against one Omar Faruq and 11 others on

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Prisons break rule to collect fund from visitors

SHAMIM ASHRAF

Prison authorities at each jail are collecting money from visitors for a newly constituted "common fund" despite a strong prohibition in this regard from the home ministry and the previous prisons administration.
There are allegations that money from the prisons' earnings from different other sources also goes to this fund.
Former inspector general (IG) (prisons) Brigadier General Zillur Rahman issued orders on November 11, 2003 strictly prohibiting collection of money from visitors, saying it tarnishes the image of the Prisons Directorate.
To stop harassment to visitors, he ordered to stop collecting Tk 2 for the fund of the prison mosques.
"The prisons authorities will not collect any money from the visitors in any circumstance," according to the order.
Earlier on October 26, 1990, the then IG Prisons Abdul Matin issued orders to stop collecting money from visitors in the name of contribution for the prison-run schools

and mosques or any other purpose, terming it illegal.
He warned prison officials and employees that legal steps would be initiated against them if evidence is found for their involvement in any such illegal activities.
The home ministry also prohibited collection of money from the visitors.
But the jail authorities have continued the practice by collecting Tk 2 from each visitor.
Incumbent IG Prisons Brigadier General Zakir Hossain admitted the fact but said they do not take it as fees.
"We do the visitors a service by supplying a printed form for meeting the inmates," he told The Daily Star, adding that the prohibition on collecting money from visitors is still in effect.
Earlier, corrupt jail guards used to charge Tk 20-40 from each visitor for writing the inmates' names on slips, he said. "Isn't it better that the visitors now do not have to pay so much money to others?" the IG said.
Although the money thus

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ADB ON TATA INVESTMENT
Economic sense, not politics should dictate decision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pointing to the government's hesitancy about the Tata investment proposal, Asian Development Bank (ADB) Country Director Hua Du said yesterday the government should consider the economic benefits of such investment rather than politics.
People want to see politicians take decisions considering economic benefits of the country, not on political consideration, Hua Du said while addressing a meet-the-press programme at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium.

She quoted Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman in a newspaper as clarifying the government's stance about the Indian industrial giant's investment saying the government would not take any decision before the next elections.
Hua Du said reviewing Tata's last proposal the ADB has found that the gas price offered by the Indian conglomerate is higher than what the government gets from existing foreign investors in Bangladesh.
She said Bangladesh has the potential to become a "middle-income" country by 2020 if the

current growth trends prevail and the advantage of its unique geographical location could be seized.
"Bangladesh, after all, is the hub of the sub-region and its gateway to global markets," she added.
The ADB chief in Bangladesh also suggested the government to develop regional economic cooperation with the neighbouring countries, including India, by keeping politics out of any economic decision.
Referring to the long-standing political conflict between India and China, Hua Du said despite the

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PCJSS member killed in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Armed activists of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) gunned down a supporter of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) in remote Longudu upazila of the district on Saturday, said a delayed report yesterday evening.
The victim was identified as Prabhat Chakma, 50, son of late Durjoy Chakma of Barkalak village in Kaptai Lake area, some 65km off the district headquarters.
A band of seven or eight anti-peace accord activists came to the victim's house around 9:00am on Saturday and shot him at point-blank range while he was going to

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India, Pakistan officials to hold talks in Dhaka

REUTERS, New Delhi

Indian and Pakistani officials plan to hold discussions in Bangladesh next week, the first meeting between the two sides after New Delhi put off peace talks over the Mumbai bomb blasts, an Indian official said yesterday.
The talks between Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran and his Pakistani counterpart Riaz Mohammad Khan - bureaucrats who head the respective foreign ministries - would be held on the sidelines of a South Asian conference, the foreign ministry official said.
The talks between the bureau-

crats was expected to be followed by a meeting between the Pakistani foreign minister and India's junior foreign minister, he said. The meetings are expected to be held between July 31 and Aug. 2, he added.
"It's a good opportunity for the two sides to meet without it looking like formal talks," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "It will allow us to press Pakistan to live up to the commitments it has made to end terrorism."
New Delhi put off talks between Saran and Khan, due last week, after suspicion over the July 11

Mumbai train bombings fell on Islamist militants based in Pakistan.
Pakistan has denied any involvement in the bombings, in which more than 180 people were killed. Islamabad expressed dismay at the decision to put off the talks and said the peace process should not be linked to the bomb attacks.
Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf appealed to India to avoid a "blame game" over the bombings and called New Delhi's decision to delay peace talks a victory for terrorists.

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Amnesty accuses Jordan of torturing for US

AP, London

Security agents in Jordan are torturing terrorism suspects on behalf of the United States in hopes of forcing confessions, the human rights watchdog Amnesty International contended in a new report Monday.
The report said its investigators had identified about 10 suspected cases of men subjected to rendition from US custody to interrogation centres in Jordan, a close US ally in the Middle East.
"Jordan appears to be a central hub in a global complex of secret detention centres operated by the US in coordination with foreign intelligence agencies," said Malcolm Smart, director of

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Iran stays defiant on uranium enrichment

AFP, Tehran

Iran reiterated yesterday it will not halt sensitive uranium enrichment work - which is at the centre of fears the country could acquire nuclear weapons - to resolve a standoff with the West.
"We are ready to discuss anything in negotiations ... (but) we will not accept any preconditions," government spokesman Gholam Hossein Elham told reporters.
"Negotiations should respect everyone's rights and be pursued with equality and understanding," he said, adding that a halt to enrichment would put Iran in a state of "inequity".
The comments came as a draft resolution was being circulated in the UN Security Council, which

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PHOTO: STAR

A child walks on the street as the pavement is occupied by construction materials. The photo was taken at Sat Masjid Road in Dhanmondi in the capital yesterday.

BDR, BSF trade fire on Satkhira border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) traded gunfire at bordering Ghona in Sadar upazila of the district early yesterday.
The 24 Parganas of West Bengal under BSF of West Bengal opened fire on BDR personnel of Bhomra Camp at around 2:00am, forcing the Bangladesh paramilitary force to return fire, said sources.
Major Humayun, second in command of 41 rifles battalion, said BSF men fired eight shots while the BDR replied with 12 shots.
However, no casualties were reported.

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Nepal scraps spl military guards for royal palace

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's government yesterday scrapped a special military guard for the royal palace in a continued effort to curb King Gyanendra's powers, a minister said.
"The cabinet meeting on Monday scrapped the Principal Military Secretariat that has been providing security to the king and other royal members," said Dilendra Prasad Badu, minister for Information and Communications.
The military secretariat has been stationed inside the

Narayanhiti Royal Palace as a special detail for the king and royal family members.
"The arrangements of security of the monarch will be the responsibility of the government from now on," Badu said.
The move to scrap the royal guard has been preceded by other tough measures against the monarch who was forced to give up absolute power following bloody street protests in April.
In its first budget presented

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India tests surface-to-air missiles

AFP, Bhubaneswar

India tested two surface-to-air Trishul missiles in the eastern state of Orissa, a day after a similar launch from the site, defence officials said.
The Trishul (Trident) tests come after New Delhi's nuclear-capable

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Prayer Timing		
July 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-20	4-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-50	6-55
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation