

**MILITANT CASE
HC verdict on
death reference
not delivered**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) verdict in the death reference case of seven militants, including Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) chief Abdur Rahman and his deputy Siddiqui Islam Bangla Bhai, was scheduled for yesterday but it could not be delivered as the serial did not come.

A death reference bench of the HC comprising Justice Ali Asgar Khan and Justice Emdadul Haque on August 23 fixed yesterday for delivering the verdict and it was also in the yesterday's cause list as item number 127 of the bench.

The High Court (HC) is likely to deliver today the verdict in the death reference of seven militants, who were awarded death sentence by the Jhalakathi District

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Iraq launches fierce offensives on Shias

At least 50 people, 8 US soldiers killed

AP, Baghdad

Violence in Iraq left at least 50 people dead yesterday in a suicide car bombing and clashes between Shia militia and Iraqi security forces, a brutal contradiction of the prime minister's claim that bloodshed was decreasing.

The deaths followed a day of bombings and shootings on Sunday, when more than 60 people were killed across the country, from the northern city of Kirkuk to the capital Baghdad and down to the south in Basra. The dead included eight American soldiers, one of the deadliest weekends for the US military in recent months.

In the city of Diwaniyah, gunbattles between Iraqi forces and militiamen of the Mahdi Army loyal to radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr left at least 34 people dead and about 70 wounded, Iraqi officials said.

The fighting broke out late Sunday night when Iraqi soldiers conducted raids in three neighbourhoods to flush out the militiamen and seize weapons, said army Capt. Fatik Aied.

He said the fighting continued Monday.

Dr. Mohammed Abdul-Muhsen of the city's general hospital said 34 bodies were brought in 25 Iraqi soldiers, seven civilians and two

militiamen. He said at least 70 people were injured, but could not immediately give a breakdown.

Fatik said the militiamen were using rocket-propelled grenades and automatic assault rifles. At least 10 militiamen had been arrested, he said.

Diwaniyah, 130km south of Baghdad, is a Shia-dominated city where the influence of Mahdi Army has been gradually increasing. It already runs a virtual parallel government in Sadr City, a slum in eastern Baghdad.

But the government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, a Shia, has found it difficult to rein in

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Mourning day observed to protest killings in Phulbari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The mourning day, called by the Oil-Gas-Mineral Resources-Electricity-Port Protection Committee, was observed yesterday across the country where people paid tribute to the seven people who perished as law enforcers opened fire on a demonstrating in Phulbari coalmine area in Dinajpur on Saturday.

The committee will organise countrywide agitation programmes today and observe a half-day countrywide hartal tomorrow demanding immediate cancellation of Phulbari open-pit coalmine project and expulsion of Asia Energy Corporation (AEC), the UK based company operating the Phulbari coalmine project, from the country.

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Phulbari flare-up



1. Policemen removing the barricade set up by demonstrators at Phulbari yesterday. 2. Agitated locals with iron rods and sticks in their hands block a road with police helplessly standing close to them. 3. Police escort landlords facing public wrath for renting their buildings to Asia Energy officials. 4. Protesters bring down a tree and an electric pole to barricade a road. 5. A house torched by the mob branding its owner as an agent of Asia Energy. 6. Demonstrators put logs on rail tracks to stop movement of trains through Phulbari.



Locked rooms of Dhaka University Arts Faculty building. Student organisations observed a strike yesterday to protest killings in Phulbari coalmine area on Saturday.

Annan in Beirut to shore up truce

AFP, Beirut/ Berlin

UN chief Kofi Annan arrived in Beirut yesterday for talks on the deployment of UN peacekeepers to southern Lebanon where a fragile peace is in place following Israel's blitz against Hezbollah militants.

"This is a very critical time for Lebanon, and I think it's important that I come here myself to discuss with the Lebanese authorities the aftermath of the war," Annan said after landing amid tight security.

Before touching down, Annan asked to fly over Beirut's southern suburbs that were heavily bombed by Israel during the month-long war, according to a military official at the airport.

Annan, on the first leg of a Middle East tour, was to meet Prime Minister Fuad Siniora and parliament speaker Nabih Berri -- a close ally of Shia militant group

Hezbollah -- among other politicians.

He was expected to press Lebanese leaders to heed calls to better police the border with Syria to prevent suspected arms smuggling to Hezbollah from Shia Iran.

He was also likely to stress that Lebanon, rather than the United Nations, must ensure the militant group abides by the Security Council truce that came into force on August 14, and refrains from any operations in the border area.

A Lebanese source said at the weekend that Annan would underscore the need for "only the armed presence of Lebanese and Unifil (UN Interim Force in Lebanon) soldiers" in Hezbollah's longtime stronghold in the south.

His visit comes as Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said his fighters would not oppose UN

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**4 COPS MURDER
Suspect killed in 'crossfire'**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A suspect in the Chowbaria police murder was killed in 'crossfire' during a shootout between outlaws and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Shingra upazila of Natore yesterday.

Joban Ali, son of Khalilur Rahman of Bias village in the upazila was a member of the outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP), says a Rab press release. He was involved in five murders, including the four policemen murder in Chowbaria on Friday, the statement said quoting intelligence information.

Tipped of about armed outlaws' presence at Ratoil village, a patrolling team of Rab went to the spot to

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**NAGORIK COMMITTEE MEET
Stress on equitable society for growth**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leading economists, researchers and civil society members yesterday underscored the need for ensuring an equitable and inclusive society for building a participatory democracy and said failure to do so will not only constrict the growth potential but also threaten the sustainability of democracy.

They called for bringing about a structural change in the society and for taking initiatives for formulating



policies and strengthening different public institutions to eliminate poverty and achieve higher economic growth.

They were speaking at the eighth expert group consultation meeting on 'Vision 2021 for

Bangladesh: Goal 8: To be a more inclusive and equitable society' organised by Nagorik Committee 2006 in Cirdap auditorium in Dhaka. Sultana Kamal, executive director of Ain O Salish Kendro chaired the meeting.

Professor Rehman Sobhan, convener of Nagorik Committee 2006, underscored the need for taking initiatives to bring about a structural change in the society.

"We are far from an equitable

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**PHULBARI KILLING
Student strike observed peacefully**

DU CORRESPONDENT

A countrywide student strike called by several student organisations was observed yesterday at the educational institutions across the country protesting the killings at Phulbari coalmine.

Different student organisations including alliance of opposition-backed student organisations Chhatra Sangram Parishad and alliance of left-leaning student bodies Progotishil Chhatra Jote (PCJ) called the strike after at least five people were killed by the law enforcement agencies at Phulbari in Dinajpur district on August 26.

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100 injured as AL men clash with cops

UNB, Keraniganj

Over 100 Awami League (AL) leaders and workers were injured in a clash with police on the Dhaka-Mawa highway in South Keraniganj yesterday following the arrest of a party leader.

A team of Keraniganj police arrested Awami League leader Shahin Ahmed at Elephant Road in the city at about 9:00am along with one pistol, one revolver and four bullets.

Shahin, AL Dhaka district working committee member and joint convener of Keraniganj unit of the party, was then taken to Keraniganj Police Station at noon.

When the news of his arrest spread in the area, AL leaders and workers took to the street and put barricades on the highway in front

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A mobile court fines Gastrolover Hospital and Research Institute on Green Road in the capital Tk 60,000 yesterday for keeping date-expired drugs and failing to show trade licence.

ETV equipment not returned despite verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's first private terrestrial television channel Ekushey Television (ETV), which was closed four years ago, is yet to get back its transmission equipment even after a High Court verdict for doing so.

On this day in 2002, the government closed the ETV's broadcast

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Prayer Timing		
August 29		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-33	6-36
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation