

PROF TAHER KILLING Mastermind suspect out on HC bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Prof Mia Muhammad Mohiuddin, suspected of masterminding the killing of Rajshahi University (RU) teacher Prof S Taher Ahmed, was released from Rajshahi Central Jail

Tigers complete Zim-wash

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh completed a clean sweep against Zimbabwe but not before they recovered from middle-order jitters to record an exciting three-wicket victory in the fifth and final one-day match at the

Mugger lynched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An alleged mugger died yesterday after being severely beaten up by an angry mob at Jatrabari in the capital on Friday night.

The dead was identified as Arif Khan, 25. Two other muggers also sustained injury during the beating. They are Shahidullah, 23 and Babu, 25.

Sources said that the criminals

Prayer Timing table for December 10 with columns for Azan and prayer times for Fajr, Zohr, Asr, Maghrib, and Esha.

KARNAPHULI HYDROPOWER UNITS Lobby out to make govt take inflated loans

SHARIER KHAN

Under the influence of a vested interest lobby of BNP leaders, the government is taking Tk 300 crore loans for the rehabilitation of three Karnaphuli hydropower units while two such brand new power units could be set up with the same amount of money.

A full-scale rehabilitation of these three plants should not cost more than Tk 110 crore but these plants do not need such rehabilitation, sources pointed out.

A senior official claimed that

rehabilitation of the three plants would actually require around Tk 40 crore to 50 crore. He alleged that of the remaining money, a substantial chunk would go to a controversial bureaucrat of the power ministry, leaders at the 'alternative centre of power' of the immediate past government and election fund of the BNP.

The official pointed out that as part of the reshuffling of administration under the caretaker government, power secretary ANH Akhtar Hossain was transferred to a different ministry last month but

within 24 hours of the transfer, he was brought back to the power ministry. Akhtar was promoted as secretary from the rank of deputy secretary by the previous alliance government within a period of less than a year in violation of rules. His career does not have any achievements to justify such promotion or reinstatement in his secretarial position in the power ministry.

At present, setting up a brand new 50 megawatt hydropower plant costs between Tk 150 crore and Tk 170 crore.

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Endorse UN convention to fight graft UNDP urges Dhaka

UNB, Dhaka

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) viewed that endorsing the UN convention against corruption would accelerate Bangladesh's fight against corruption and enhance the country's image.

A six-month study conducted by the UNDP highlighted the urgency of acknowledging the convention against corruption. The UN development agency conducted the study among various Bangladeshi target audiences during this period.

Already 148 countries have

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Black money, muscle power 2 major hurdles

Seminar suggests for effective parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Elimination of the use of black money and muscle power in general elections is the most crucial instrument for establishing an effective parliament that can

ensure transparency and accountability of the government, said politicians and civil society members at a seminar in the capital yesterday.

Once their use is stopped, honest and competent people can

be elected to make parliament and its committees active, which can contribute to combating corruption in the ministries and other wings of the government, they noted.

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Moscow hospital fire kills 45 women

AP, Moscow

A fire broke out in a women's ward of a Moscow drug treatment hospital early Saturday, killing 45 women trapped by barred windows and a locked gate, officials said.

Russia's chief fire inspector, Yuri Nenashev, said he was "90 percent certain" that the fire was caused by arson. But Moscow city prosecutor Yuri Syomin said investigators were looking into other possibilities, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported.

The fire erupted in a wooden cabinet in a kitchen at one end of a corridor on the hospital's second floor a factor that led to suspicions of arson and the only possible exit was blocked by a locked gate,

Nenashev said. The barred windows were also locked.

All 45 women were already dead by the time firefighters arrived, said Alexander Chupriyanov, the deputy emergency situations minister.

"Judging by the placement of the bodies, they really tried to get out," he said.

About 160 people were evacuated from the five-story Hospital No. 17 in southern Moscow, said Moscow Fire Department spokesman Yevgeny Boblyov. But he accused hospital workers of not reacting to the fire sooner and evacuating people more quickly.

Most victims died of asphyxiation, while some died of burns,

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US Congress okays Indian nuke deal

REUTERS, Washington

The US Congress early yesterday took a major step toward permitting the sale of American-made nuclear reactors and fuel to India by giving final approval to a White House-backed bill.

The Senate approved the measure unanimously following its passage late on Friday by the House of Representatives, 330-59. It now goes to President George W. Bush for his signature.

The Bush administration and its allies contend that civil nuclear commerce to expand electricity generation in India will foster a broad range of ties with the world's largest democracy -- a rising South

Asian power -- and open up billions of dollars in trade for US companies.

Critics decried the bill as a historic mistake that would undermine US efforts to curb the spread of nuclear weapons.

Other critical approvals -- by Congress a second time, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group -- are needed before the agreement can take effect. That will not happen before some time next year.

Republican Rep. Henry of Illinois, chairman of the House International Relations Committee, voiced hope the

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