

# 34 die of diarrhoea in greater Barisal

BARISAL, Apr 8: Diarrhoea claimed 34 lives and affected about 2,000 people, mostly children, during the last five days in five southern districts of Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola, Bogura and Pirojpur, reports UNB.

According to district civil surgeons, 23 people died of diarrhoea in Barisal, five in Bhola, five in Patuakhali and one in Pirojpur. The number of people affected are: Barisal 112, Bhola 243, Patuakhali 205, Pirojpur 73 and Bogura 72.

Unofficial sources, however, said the death toll was much higher than admitted by the officials.

# Arafat survives

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Arafat's office, which said 12 people were on the plane, did not confirm there was a crash.

Arab east Jerusalem exploded with celebration on hearing the report of Arafat's survival. Thousands of Palestinians hugged, shouted and clapped. One main street was almost carpeted with candy thrown in jubilation.

Similar festivities broke out in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and at PLO refugee camps in southern Lebanon.

But reflecting the divisions within the PLO, reaction was muted in Palestinian camps in

# Arafat in Tripoli

TUNIS, Apr 8: PLO leader Yasser Arafat arrived today in Tripoli after his plane made an emergency landing Tuesday in the Libyan desert, the official Palestinian news agency Wafa reported, says AFP.

Arafat was expected to travel later to Tunis to chair a meeting of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's central council, according to Palestinian officials.

# Beirut and northern Lebanon that are controlled by pro-Syrian guerrilla factions.

The loss of Arafat, the PLO's undisputed leader for 23 years, would have struck a serious blow to the organization's cohesion and could have seriously damaged the chances for success of US-brokered Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Before Arafat was reported found, Sari Musselbeh, a member of the advisory committee of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, said the loss of Arafat would "raise a very serious question about the process, whether it will be possible to continue it."

There just won't be anybody with the same strength, the same position with the same commitment," Musselbeh said from his West Bank home.

# Diesel stock

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19,68,500 litres of diesel was sold Tuesday from the Baghabari depot, the main source of supply in the northern zone. Two lakh litres were sold from Rangpur and Chilmari depots Tuesday.

Three companies had sold 80 lakh litres of diesel from Baghabari, and Chilmari depots from March 29 to April 3.

There was 32 lakh litres of oil in stock on April 7 in these depots. In the meantime, 27 lakh litres had reached these depots by ships. Under this process, regular supply of oil has been ensured by 20 ships to these depots, the Press Note added.

During the recent Eid holidays, 57.74 litres of diesel had been sent to Baghabari depot from Godnail-Fatullah. Twenty one lakh litres were sold from Baghabari from April 1 to 3. In addition 5.97 lakh litres were sold from Daulatpur depot for the Northern zone. On April 7, the stock position was 30.46 lakh litres. Five tankers with 27 lakh litres of diesel left Tuesday. Besides, additional 16 litres of white kerosene and two lakh litres of petrol were supplied during the same period.

# Hasina expresses great relief

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina Wednesday expressed her "great relief" at the safety of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat whose plane made a crash landing over Libyan territory on Tuesday, reports BSS.

"We are greatly relieved and extremely gratified to hear about your safety," she said in a message to Chairman Arafat.

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Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam  
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Prime Minister Begum Khaleida Zia addressing the Nationalist Lawyers Forum in the city yesterday. —PID photo

# Farooq Sobhan tipped as envoy to Delhi

By Staff Correspondent

Ambassador Farooq Sobhan, now an Additional Secretary at the Foreign Office, is being sent to New Delhi as Dhaka's envoy, sources said yesterday.

Although an official announcement is yet to come, the Government policymakers have approved his appointment to the Delhi job.

The post of Bangladesh's High Commissioner to India has been lying vacant since Faruk Ahmed Chowdhury's retirement last January.

Sobhan, a former Ambassador in Beijing, is likely to be given the rank of Secretary, according to the sources.

# Blast in Indian ammunition factory: 10 killed

NEW DELHI, Apr 8: A powerful explosion ripped through an ammunition factory in western India Wednesday, killing 10 workers and devastating the plant, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported, reports AFP.

The blast triggered a major blaze in a section of the factory in Khadki, a cantonment town near the city of Pune in Maharashtra state, the news agency said.

Ten employees were killed on the spot, three were injured and hospitalised and some 200 others were trapped under heaps of rubble as the roof of the building collapsed, PTI quoted fire brigade sources as saying.

# Polls in UK today

LONDON, Apr 8: In 13 years, Britain's Labour Party has gone from the brink of collapse to the threshold of victory in a general election on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Along the way, it jettisoned hardline socialist agenda which split the party and plunged a strike-torn nation into economic crisis under the last Labour government in the 1970s.

Led by Neil Kinnock, 50, a coalminer's son who was once a left-winger but has mellowed into pragmatism, Labour is now a modern Social Democratic Party promising to redistribute wealth within a market economy.

Accused of changing his principles as often as his suits, Kinnock took over in 1983 to frame policies to reach beyond Labour's declining power base among industrial workers and appeal to an expanding middle class.

# JP ready for talks with BNP on burning issues

Jatiya Party leader Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, MP, said Wednesday his party was ready for talks with the government party on the burning issues facing the nation.

Talking to UNB, Chowdhury said his party would concentrate on the issues like 'Gano-Adalat' and Rohingya refugees in the coming parliament session, besides the question of release of HM Ershad.

JP is the second major opposition party in the present parliament with 35 seats in its command.

Its parliamentary party is to meet at Sangsad Bhaban on Saturday at 7 pm to decide the party's role in the summer session beginning April 12.

In reply to a question, he said "I've no knowledge of any talks between BNP and JP... but our doors are open for any discussion."

"We shall not fear to negotiate but shall never negotiate out of fear," he said quoting American President John F. Kennedy.

He denied any contact with Awami League or Jamaat on the current political issues.

Chowdhury, however, said JP would take 'pro-people' stand on Golam Azam and Indemnity Ordinance.

# New strategy to fight Tigers

COLOMBO, Apr 8: The Sri Lankan government has given armed forces commanders direct control of operations against Tamil separatists and stripped the central Joint Operations Command (JOC) of its powers, military analysts said today, reports Reuter.

The campaign will now come under the direct control of the commanders of the army, navy and air force and the police chief, the analysts said.

The change in policy had probably been prompted by the government's lack of progress over the past three months in the anti-guerrilla campaign, they added. Government forces have also suffered heavy casualties in recent rebel ambushes.

The new policy was spelt out in a presidential directive issued on March 26.

The JOC is headed by General Hamilton Wanasinghe, a retired army commander, who was appointed general officer commanding joint operations, and put in sole charge of battlefield troops last year.

The Tamils have spent nine years waging their separatist campaign in the North and East of the country.

The commanders and the inspector-general shall collectively plan, formulate, decide and carry out anti-terrorist operations, and be responsible for the same," the directive said, adding that the JOC would remain in a purely advisory capacity.

Military analysts said northern armed services officers were in Colombo for discussions with their respective commanders on the changes.

The military controls much of the East but many areas in the North are run by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam guerrilla group.

# 15 injured as minibus catches fire

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 8: Fifteen persons sustained burn injuries when a minibus, on its way from Dhaka to Adamjee, caught fire at Shiddhirganj this afternoon.

The fire originated in the engine of the bus and later engulfed the entire vehicle.

According to witnesses, most of the passengers managed to come out of the bus while the driver, along with 14 passengers, including two women, were trapped inside.

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A procession was brought out in the city yesterday to mark Eid —Star photo

# Myanmar troops fire on Thai planes

MAE SOT (Thailand), Apr 8: Myanmar soldiers opened fire on two Thai fighter planes patrolling the border near anti-Yanlong guerrilla bases today, a Thai army source said, reports Reuter.

The F-5Es were watching for Myanmar troops trying to cross the Moei river, which forms the border, to attack Karen ethnic guerrillas from the rear.

The planes were not hit by the small arms fire, which came from a Myanmar base at Myawaddi across the river from this Thai town, the source said.

The Myanmar claimed the planes violated their air space.

The Thais on Monday turned back about 1,000 Myanmar troops trying to cross the river, a Karen official said.

Myanmar troops and Thai border forces have clashed several times inside Thailand since the Myanmar began an offensive in January to capture the Karen headquarters

# More judges

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conspirators who were out to foil the existing peace and discipline.

Begum Khaleida Zia urged the member of Lawyers Forum to extend cooperation to the present government to implement its various programmes. She said her government had already fulfilled some of its election pledges.

She said the BNP government would make relentless efforts for the welfare of people. She said the objective of the BNP government was to attain self-reliance in all sectors to make the hard-earned democracy meaningful.

Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia, Education Minister Barrister Jamrudin Sircar, State Minister for Law and Justice Barrister Aminul Haque, State Minister for Finance Mojibur Rahman, convener of the forum Justice T H Khan, member secretary of the convening committee Khandakar Abdul Wadud, Public Prosecutor Razaq Khan and senior advocates Fazlur Rahman Khan, Makbul Hossain Kabir and Mujibur Rahman also spoke.

Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia said BNP had come to power with people's mandate and it was committed to establish rule of law.

Barrister Sircar said rule of law was pre-requisite for democracy.

Social Welfare and Women Affairs Minister Tariqul Islam was also present.

# Captured BSF men handed over to India

TIHAKURGAON, Apr 8: Two Indian Border Security Force (BSF) personnel caught by villagers in Panchagarh district Tuesday were today handed over to the authorities of India, reports UNB.

The two BSF jawans crossed the border Tuesday afternoon and tried to rape a woman tending cows at the frontier village Baxipara official sources said.

Hundreds of villagers gheraoed the intruders after the woman had raised a hue and cry and held the Indian border guards, reportedly along with an SLR, a sub-machinegun, a field telephone set, a binocular and ammunition.

A BDR patrol rescued the BSF men from the villagers' wrath and brought them to an outpost.

After a flag meeting between BDR and BSF this morning the BSF men along with their arms and ammunition were handed over to the Indian authorities at 2.30 pm, BDR sources said.

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# JCD-BCL clash

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days, disrupting normal life in the city, reports UNB.

About 500 rounds of bullets were fired during chase and counter chase between both groups which took place mainly in the Commerce College, Agrabad and Mogutuli areas.

Gunshots were heard from 4 to 6 pm Tuesday and 12 to 3.30 pm today, eye witnesses said.

# The Midnight File

## Kashmir militants attack police station : 3 killed

JAMMU (India), Apr 8: Muslim militants fighting for Kashmir's secession from India attacked a police station in the troubled state, killing three policemen, police said today. Guerrillas hurled bombs and opened fire on the Chhatroo Police Station in Doda district late Tuesday, leaving three other policemen injured, Inspector General of Police SS Wazir said here in the winter capital of Kashmir, reports AFP.

## Albania to remove red star from national flag

TIRANA, Apr 8: Albania's parliament has voted to remove the red star from the national flag and military camps. Parliament voted on Tuesday night in favour of scrapping communist symbols. It was the first law to be passed since the anti-communist Democratic Party won a landslide victory last month in the Balkan state's first multiparty parliamentary election, reports Reuter.

## France to suspend N-tests in South Pacific

PARIS, Apr 8: France has decided to suspend nuclear tests in the South Pacific. Prime Minister Pierre Berégovoy told parliament here today. Berégovoy said the order had come from President Francois Mitterrand, reports AFP.

## 20-minute overseas call

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never take this up in their offices.

Some callers inform that bills of such overseas calls not below Taka 1000 each are often added to the bills of ISD subscribers.

Meanwhile the T & T has been showing great efficiency in the last three days so far as the International Subscriber Dialling (ISD) and overseas trunk booking are concerned.

A publisher whose relative has gone to Bangkok for treatment complained to The Daily Star of the irritation and embarrassment that he had gone through during the last three days.

## Nepal: 30 held

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Nepal Communist Party-Unity Center, a coalition of four extreme left political parties supported mostly by lower middle class and unemployed youths.

An AFP report adds: Nepalese authorities arrested 30 people overnight Wednesday for violating a nighttime curfew imposed after clashes between police and mourners of a man shot during earlier protests, a police source said, reports AFP.

The 10-hour curfew in Kathmandu and nearby Patan town was lifted at 5:00 am Wednesday (2315 GMT Tuesday), although highly placed sources, who requested anonymity, said the overnight curfew could continue for several days.

Local authorities imposed the ban amid clashes after security forces moved in to break up a silent funeral procession for a victim of protests Monday, during which police shot dead seven people and injured 40, by official count.

Security forces were armed with shoot-to-kill orders in case of curfew violations, but the police sources reported no casualties overnight.

People have installed ISD line spending a lot of money for a trouble-free and prompt service. But the kind of service that the T&T is doing out to its subscribers is far below normal expectations.

The next day, Tuesday, he tried 152 and 162 again. Both the numbers gave him the recorded message.

It is beyond one's comprehension how a line can be busy for such a long time. It is unlikely that the Bangkok line was out of order or there were disturbances in the line. But one can not get the right answer because the recorded message all through told the subscriber that "All the channels are busy now".

## Hit by bullets

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High School, was shot dead when two rival groups clashed at Mirpur Section-I yesterday afternoon.

Babul was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Ashraf, 25, sustained bullet injury when two local rival groups clashed at K P Saha road yesterday evening. He was admitted to Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital (SSMCH).

Ashik, 20, was admitted to SSMCH with bullet injuries. Sutrapur police said some local young men shot gunfire at him near his residence at Faridabad yesterday evening. Police said the incident was sequel to a previous quarrel between two groups in the area.

## Politics turns poison for her

NEW DELHI, Apr 8: A fire-brand Hindu woman MP has decided to quit politics and become a recluse after being allegedly harassed by party bigwigs, newspapers here reported today, reports AFP.

Uma Bharati was quoted as saying in a letter to the president of her Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that she was finding it difficult to remain in the party or attend parliament.

Bharati could not be reached for comment, and a spokesman for the pro-Hindu BJP (Indian people's party), the main opposition in parliament, said he was not aware of the MP's letter to party chief Murli Manohar Joshi.

Her letter was front-paged by several newspapers here.

Bharati is one of the strongest supporters of the Hindu fundamentalist campaign to construct a temple for the Hindu god Rama on the site of a 16th century mosque in the northern town of Ayodhya.

A politician from the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, which is governed by the BJP, Bharati always sports saffron -- and is widely referred to as 'sanyasin' or nun.

The media has also called her a 'sexy sanyasin' in the past, a tag she has resented.

She accused a coterie in the BJP in Madhya Pradesh of promoting sycophancy, branding her ambitious, preventing development projects in her constituency and levelling 'false and disgusting allegations' against her.

"I seek your permission to spend some time in meditation and penance in the company of sages," the letter said, adding she was thinking of becoming a recluse.

The BJP is a well-knit party where dissent is not unknown but rare.

## Dhaka-Khulna air link likely

From Our Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Apr 8: Government is planning to extend Biman air service to Khulna city after construction of an air strip near Khulna-Mongla highway by mid 1994.

This was disclosed by the State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan at the opening ceremony of a newly-constructed passenger terminal at Khulna on Wednesday.

The minister said that a study team will visit the city and will submit its feasibility report to the government very soon.

The team will study the viability of pressing into service STAL type aircraft with the capacity of 20 passengers, the minister added.

Linking Khulna directly with the capital with STAL (short take-off and landing) type aircraft will make the journey easier for a majority of the passengers of Jessore-Dhaka route.

The proposed air linking of Khulna with Dhaka will meet the growing demands from passengers in view of the importance of Mongla Port and the newly-established Export Processing Zone at Mongla.