

## ABAR SHUMAN

## Shuman Chattapadya's Concert in aid of Liberation War Museum

- Feb. 7: Sheraton Winter Garden 6:00 pm
  - Feb. 9: Mirpur Indoor Stadium 4:00 pm
  - Feb. 12: National Museum Shahbag 6:00 pm
  - Feb. 14: National Museum Shahbag 6:00 pm
- Tickets available at: Dolce Vita Gelato (Banani, Dhanmondi & Panthopath); Sagor Publishers (Baily Road); Boi Patro (Aziz Super Market); Mohammedia Dry Cleaner (Mirpur & Pollobi); Calcutta Dry Cleaners (Shamoli) & Liberation War Museum Ticket Counter.
- Get your tickets now to avoid disappointment.  
All Tickets include 15% VAT. (Reg. # 4599633)
- COURTESY PHILIPS

## Girl raped in Ctg: 3 held

CHITTAGONG, Feb 2: A 10-year-old girl was violated by miscreants at Chaktai Chalpatti in Chandganj thana of the city this morning, reports UNB.

Police said a day-labourer of Rubul Rice Mill of the area took the girl to a nearby residence and violated her repeatedly.

She was admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

Police arrested three day-labourers — Muslem Uddin, 30, Abu Naser, 31, and Zahurul Islam, 28 — in this connection.

## 10 hurt in armed gang attack in Keraniganj

By Staff Correspondent

At least ten people were injured when an armed gang attacked them at Konder Char under Keraniganj thana yesterday morning.

The victims were identified as Korfunnesa, 35, Khalek, 25, Sultan, 16, Mohiuddin, 13, Chowdhury, 12, and Dalim, 8.

All the victims sustained bullet wounds when the members of the 'Rab bahini' opened fire on them.

The injured were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in critical condition.

According to the statement of one of the victims, Korfunnesa, the incident occurred when some of the victims went to a field to harvest paddy.

## ZIA authorities

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ties were violating the court order for maintenance of status quo.

Contacted by telephone last night, Director of ZIA, Wing Commander Sheikh Aminur Rahman told The Daily Star that they had not yet received any copy of the court order. He also expressed his ignorance about the barricade.

## UNHCR

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Myanmar officials. UNHCR officials declined to comment on the outcome of the team's Myanmar visit. Nor would they disclose anything on yesterday's meeting at Home Ministry.

Some 20,750 Rohingyas are living at Nayapara and Kutupalong camps in Cox's Bazar, the remains of about 250,000 Rohingyas, the ethnic Arakanese Muslims who fled to escape persecution back home in 1992.

Most refugees have gone home under the auspices of the UNHCR. But extremist elements seized control of two camps where refugees rioted staging demonstrations, declining to go back last year before expiry of clearance for 7,000 refugees eligible to return by July.

"We have discussed the issues related to repatriation of the remaining refugees. We want them to go back. We have urged the UNHCR to help negotiate with the Myanmar authorities to resume the repatriation, revalidating the clearance of the 7,000 and the remaining others," one official preferring anonymity told The Daily Star after the talks.

The UNHCR officials visited the two camps at Nayapara and Kutupalong on Sunday and held talks with local officials.

## \$50 m project

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The NAMIC will also look into the management, interpretation and dissemination of all relevant data on hydrogeology, water quality, health, socio-economic and technical information necessary for the Project Management Unit (PMU) to devise strategy and design action plans.

Meanwhile, a UNICEF-funded \$50,000 dollar emergency programme to provide safe water in about 200 worst affected villages is already in progress.

The sources said, work on a \$800,000 dollar project to carry out geological and hydrogeological studies on the origin of arsenic contamination of ground water is expected to start by July, after a delay of about four months.

## Municipal ward

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proved a shipping ministry proposal for conducting a survey of engine driven riverine transports including mechanised boats and motor launches and their registration. The ministry is likely to propose enactment of law in near future to implement the Cabinet decision in this regard, shipping ministry sources said.

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Large crowds continued to throng the Shishu Park in the city yesterday, three days after the Eid-ul-Fitr festival. —Star photo

## Philippine plane with 104 aboard missing

MANILA, Feb 2: A passenger plane with 104 people on board was declared missing after failing to land in the southern Philippine city of Cagayan de Oro, officials said today, reports AP.

The twin-engine Cebu Pacific Air DC-9 aircraft was carrying 99 passengers and five crew, airline general manager Diego Garrido said.

The plane's last radio contact was with the Cagayan de Oro airport tower at 10:43 am (0248 GMT), 15 minutes before it was due to land, Garrido said.

In that radio call, the pilot said he was at an altitude of 11,500 feet and was starting to descend, Garrido said. He did not report any trouble with the plane, Garrido said.

Air transport officials said the plane's path from that point to the airport would have taken

it over a mountainous area with peaks ranging from 7,300 feet to 8,000 feet. Much of the remote region is sparsely populated.

A year ago to the day, a small plane crashed in the same airport, killing both pilots, shortly after presidential candidate Renato de Villa alighted at a previous stop. The accident was blamed on pilot error.

Officials said they were checking all airports and cities near the Cebu Pacific plane's

route to see if it had made an emergency landing, but so far had found nothing. Poor communications in the area were hampering the search, they said.

Air force spokesman Col Jose Mendoza said four helicopters and two light planes were searching for the missing aircraft.

Weather in the area at the time was clear with scattered clouds, transport officials said.

## Bangabandhu murder

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While asked by a defence counsel that before going to Bangabandhu from the radio station he had gone to the army headquarters where he had discussed with the top army officers the next course of action following the August 15 occurrence, the witness replied in the negative and said, "I did not go there on that day."

General (ret'd) Khalil refused the suggestion by the defence counsel that he knew about the August 15 massacre beforehand and he was one of the beneficiaries of that change-over.

## 2 housewives

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body from the bedroom. The body was found with injury marks around the neck.

The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Faruk was arrested and a case was filed.

Meanwhile, Sabujbagh police said, a housewife, identified as Rekha Begum, in her mid-thirties, was found dead in a toilet at Araf Clinic at Madhya Bashabo at about 2 am yesterday.

Police said, when Rekha went to the toilet, her husband Abdul Latif, said to be mentally ill, followed her, locked the door of the toilet from inside and allegedly strangled her.

Employees of the clinic told police that the couple had arrived on the same day from Tangail for Latif's treatment.

Rekha's body was found with marks of injury in the neck and head. A towel was also found near the body. Police suspected that the towel may have been used for the alleged murder.

Abdul Latif was arrested from the clinic. The body was sent to DMCH for autopsy.

## Chetia to be taken to court

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Chetia's possession, the FIR said. Two Bangladeshi passports and one South African passport, all bearing Chetia's photographs were recovered from his possession, the FIR said.

One of these Bangladeshi passports was issued on June 13, 1995 in which Chetia was identified as George William Balart son of John Balart, a resident of Tahipur thana under Sunamganj district.

The other passport was issued on June 1, 1996 in which Chetia was identified as David Golmar son of Andrew Golmar, also a resident of Tahipur under Sunamganj district, the FIR said.

BBC reported last night that a top guerrilla commander of ULFA, Captain Atul Gohal, was killed in an encounter with the Indian Security Forces in north Assam yesterday.

The BBC also said, Paresh Barua, ULFA Commander in Chief, has written letters to the Editors of influential newspapers in Bangladesh urging them to "expose RAW activities in Bangladesh."

"Bangladesh government has fallen into a RAW trap by arresting Anup Chetia. This may affect the traditional relationship between the people of Bangladesh and the people of the North-East India," the letter quoted Barua as saying.

Currencies of 16 different countries including US, UK, France, Singapore, India and Pakistan were recovered from

## Inderfurth urges India, Pakistan

## Exercise restraint in N-programme

NEW DELHI, Feb 2: A senior US official today urged arch-foes India and Pakistan to exercise restraint in their nuclear and missile programmes, and warned that a resumption of nuclear tests would have serious consequences, reports Reuter.

Rick Inderfurth, Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, said in an interview with the Indian weekly Outlook that Washington respected every nation's right to determine its own security needs.

But commenting on the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party's nuclear ambitions, he said the United States maintained that South Asian programmes for nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles ran counter to the hopes of the international community and could be destabilising.

"We continue to urge India, as well as Pakistan, to exercise restraint in its nuclear and missile programmes," he said.

## Under-trial prisoner dies at DMCH

By Staff Correspondent

An under-trial prisoner died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in the early hours of yesterday. Identified as Sayed Ali, 60, the ailing prisoner was admitted to the hospital on Thursday last.

Police could not provide further details.

## 4 security men at Mongla Port suspended

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Feb 2: Four security men of Mongla Port Authority (MPA) have been placed under suspension today for their alleged involvement in a theft in the Mechanical and Engineering Department recently.

They are security Inspector Abdul Kalam Azad and security guards Aminul Islam, Abu Bakar and Manu Mia.

## BJP expects 15 per cent of Muslim votes

LUCKNOW, Feb 2: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) today said it hoped to get five per cent to 15 per cent of Muslim votes in the Lok Sabha polls, reports PTI.

The shift of Muslim votes to BJP fold was evident from the fact that "they are understanding us better", BJP Vice-President Sunder Singh Bhandari told reporters here.

A large number of Muslim workers and senior leaders from different parties have joined the BJP during last one year and they are helping us to popularise the party's policies and programmes, he said.

Referring to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh's decision to withdraw cases against "karsewaks" (volunteers) associated with the Ram Janambhumi movement, Bhandari said "there is not a single case of cognizable offence which was to be decided by judicial process."

Numbering about 25, these cases are mostly of political vendetta against the BJP workers and karsewaks," he said.

When a newsman drew his attention to tremendous response Sonia Gandhi was receiving in her public meetings, he said "I doubt it would have any material effect on the poll outcome."

"We are aware of the crowd psychology and the Indian mentality which likes new faces," he said.

Retracting his party's stand that the Bhoru documents should be made public, he said Sonia Gandhi is more interested in this because she apprehends if BJP comes to power at centre, she would not be able to exert any influence on the government."

## BGMEA

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Highlighting the contributions of the garment sector in expanding export earning, the Minister said the export growth was 22 per cent in the first six months of the current fiscal.

He said the government has valued the suggestions of the exporters of all sectors, particularly the garments exporters, to increase export.

"We are giving various incentives and ready to give more to boost export."

The BGMEA Executive Committee, led by its President Mostafa Golam Qudus, appreciated the government decision for devaluation of taka against the US dollar and said it will have a good impact on export expansion.

## Indonesian FM

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Dhaka is likely to seek more export from Bangladesh to reduce the trade gap between the two countries.

Bangladesh exports mainly jute, tea, leather, textile fabrics and glassware, but the balance of trade is in favour of Indonesia. Bangladesh's export to Indonesia was only 2.66 million US dollars during July-December, 1997.

The Indonesian Foreign Minister will also call on President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

opinion polls ahead of elections to be held from February 16 to March 7, favours the development of a nuclear deterrent and has called for a nuclear arms programme to counter Pakistan's reported acquisition of a long-range missile type.

Pakistan, which often voices concern about India's medium-range Prithvi missile programme, has denied western reports that it has a facility to make Chinese M-11 missiles.

Both India and Pakistan deny having nuclear weapons but actively pursue atomic energy programmes, western experts say the two, which have gone to war three times since 1947, already have nuclear arms or are capable of assembling them swiftly.

## 3 arrested with heroin

Drug and Narcotics Control officials arrested three persons from Pallabi area of the city with 750 grams of heroin, reports BSS.

The three are Abul Hossain of Natore, Mukhlesur Rahman of Naogaon and Mohammad Mosharrif Hossain of Noakhali. They were arrested from a house at Mirpur Section 12.

The arrested are the members of a gang of international traffickers.

## Three killed in road accidents

Three people were killed in two road accidents yesterday — One in Cox's Bazar and the other in Narsingdi, report agencies.

In Cox's Bazar, a yarn trader was killed and four of his family members were injured when a microbus in which they were travelling met with the accident at Ramu bypass crossing.

The dead was identified as Md Faruque Chowdhury, 32, of Masdar in Narayanganj.

The injured — Sadia Afrin, 21, Poly, 8, Rony, 6, Shakhawat Hossain, 28, and the driver — were admitted to Ramu Thana Health Complex.

In the other incident, two women were killed and at least 25 injured when two buses collided head-on at Marjal bus stand in Narsingdi.

The two women were identified as Aseyia Begum, 18, and Ayesha Begum, 25.

The injured were admitted to different hospitals at Narsingdi, Bhairab and Belabo.

## New proposal

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began on October 22. Since Tullow appears to be financially "not sound" to carry out its proposals in these two blocks, the government has been trying to find a "big" partner for it.

In December, Malaysian company Petronas and US company Mobil jointly accepted the government's offer to talk with Tullow regarding partnership in both the blocks.

However, the government changed its position when Chevron-Texaco came in to sit with Tullow over Block 9 and suggested Petronas-Mobil to discuss Block 11 only.

Oil giant Shell and its partner Cairn also kept its door open for partnership in both the blocks.

Sources said that while the whole negotiation process was being delayed due to the government's "stubborn" attempt to find Tullow a partner, growing interest by other big companies has now put Tullow in a strong position.

Meanwhile, sources said that a lobby having very high level political connection was offering different companies its "service to confirm other blocks in exchange of commission." According to a source, it was being suggested to different foreign companies to contact certain political appointees of the government to get their desired block.

## Myanmar refugee

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allegation of negligence. "We are running short of funds that made it difficult for us to raise their subsistence allowance," he said.

Probably Pho Hla will get some lump sum amount that may help him to procure a sewing machine for his wife, he said. The Myanmar refugee said his wife knows some tailoring work and a cash grant may help him jumpstart his stalled life under a programme to help the refugees become self-reliant.

He fled to Dhaka in 1988 when he found his life as a pro-democracy activist under siege from the Yangon military junta who crushed the dissidents' resistance.

The family was left behind. Ma Pu Sein joined him last year with Aung Zaw. But three other children were left under care of his parents.

He had to leave as the Myanmar army drafted her for working on a road construction job without pay, living in barracks where food and medicines are scarce, Pho Hla said.

As he spoke, curious crowds gathered along with police who rushed fearing the dissidents might stage some kind of demonstration.

Other refugees were also around, at least five of them keeping watch on the proceedings. Aung Win, in dark glasses, described himself a pro-democracy activist. He said he was not fasting, but sympathises with Pho Hla's desperate bid to get more money.