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Atrai murders, CID to submit charge-sheet by next week

The CID will submit the chargesheet in Atrai killing case by next week, official sources said in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

A senior official of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) said that the investigation into the killing of Atrai thana Awami League President Siddiqur Rahman alias Raja and Convenor of Jatiya Srainik League Arun Kumar Sarkar has already been completed. The CID is now preparing the chargesheet of the case.

"We have so far arrested nine people including Alamgir Kabir, MP, for their alleged involvement in the killing. Most of the arrested have confessed their guilt to police and the magistrate under Section 161 and 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC)," the official said preferring anonymity.

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Dr Kamal says Caretaker govt not enough for fair polls

By Staff Correspondent

Dr Kamal Hossain of Gano Forum believes that a caretaker government is not a complete answer to the problems of holding free and fair elections in the country.

Stressing the need for electoral reforms, he says the nation has to stop the influence of money and muscle in the polling process.

Dr Kamal made the observations while deliberating on "Evaluation of Democracy in Bangladesh" in the city yesterday. American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh organised the talk.

"Just a caretaker government is not the answer to the problems of holding free and fair elections. We need an electoral reform to make sure that money and muscle do not play any decisive role in the polling process," he told a select audience.

Analysing various phases of the evolution of democratic process in the country since the

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Opposition may defer April 29 programme

The opposition is likely to defer the mass procession programme from April 29 to May 3 due to public holiday.

The liaison committee will finalise the fresh date in a couple of days.

BNP sources told UNB last night that they have decided to shift the mass procession to May 3 as April 29 is a government holiday on account of Bouddha Purnima.

Mass procession in the capital, cities and district headquarters was planned to protest the power-water-gas crises, terrorism, deteriorating law and order, high price of essentials, unemployment, declining production in mills and factories and overall failure of the government.

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Prayer Timings
April 21

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:30	4:35
Zohr	12:45	1:20
Asr	4:45	4:55
Maghrib	6:25	6:30
Esha	7:30	7:35

Source: Islamic Foundation

Donors at Paris agree to continue 'normal flow' of aid

Slow pace of reforms faces strong criticism

The two-day Bangladesh Development Forum in Paris praised the government "for dealing with the massive floods" of last year but "expressed serious concerns" about the slow pace of policy and institutional reforms.

The Forum, formerly known as Bangladesh Aid Group Meeting, ended yesterday with pledges to help the country speed up reforms "in order to achieve further progress in reducing the massive poverty."

"The development partners however stressed that improvements in governance would be the key to most of the required reforms," said a news release from the World Bank, the co-ordinator of the annual meeting.

"Development partners were unified in views that the development effectiveness of aid in Bangladesh is dependent on good governance that in turn depends on effectively managed, transparent and accountable institutions."

"More needs to be done to speed up the process of decentralisation, reduce corruption, and improve further the law and order situation."

"The critical importance of political consensus for accelerating the pace of reforms in general, and for improving governance in particular, was underlined."

The government promised to push ahead reforms in all areas - administration, judiciary, financial sector, banking system, local government, education and health, said Bangladesh



Congress President Sonia Gandhi (R) chats with CPI-M senior leader Jyoti Basu during a meeting at her residence in New Delhi yesterday. — AFP photo

Sonia invited to form govt

NEW DELHI, Apr 20: Indian President KR Narayanan today invited Sonia Gandhi, leader of the main opposition Congress Party, for talks on the formation of a new government, reports Reuters.

The President's consultations with political personalities and parties on the subject of an alternative government will commence with a meeting proposed to be held tomorrow, April 21, with Sonia Gandhi...

The statement said the president would meet leaders of concerned parties, groups and individuals "over the next couple of days in order to secure a viable alternative, consistent with established constitutional practice and norms of parliamentary democracy."

It said the President, after the fall of the Bharatiya Janata Party-led government last week, had consulted legal and constitutional experts.

"He also received suggestions in the form of letters from individuals, political parties and groups including the BJP and its alliance partners," the statement said.

Earlier, the Congress Party today started getting letters of support from different political parties in its efforts to form an alternative government led by Sonia Gandhi, according to BSS.

The Congress received a shot in the arm when a Telegu Desam Party (TDP) member of Lok Sabha, S Vijayarama Raju, told newsmen at the Congress head-

Shafi murder Judicial statement of SI Shajahan not recorded

By Staff Correspondent

SI Shajahan, one of the arrested in the Jalal Ahmed Shafi murder case, was sent to the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

Meanwhile, CID yesterday interrogated three Sub Inspectors — Jahid, Akbar and Musibur — of transferred AC Baten's team.

CID was also interrogating the remanded three — Inspector Zia, havildar Belal and constable Rob till last night.

CID has so far arrested five

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Eyes of absconding accused gouged out in Munshiganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 20: Some unidentified persons gouged out eyes of an absconding accused wanted in connection with the killing of a Jatiya Party leader at Kalinagar under Serajdikhan police station of Munshiganj today.

According to witnesses, a group of youths went to the village home of Ali Hossain and beat him mercilessly and at one stage they gouged out his eyes. Later, the victim was brought to the Islamia Eye Hospital in the city.

Ali Hossain was accused of killing JP leader Abdul Halim who was stabbed to death on Monday.

Four major power plants need immediate overhauling

By Sharier Khan

held on April 28.

As per schedule, Ashuganj plants needed to be shut down for overhauling in a synchronised manner after each of the units operated for 50,000 hours. But these are now running for over 90,000 hours each.

"These units are still generating nearly 80 per cent of their production capacity because the German-built machinery are very dependable," said one source. "But that does not make them invulnerable. In fact, they are at a very risky state now."

On the other hand, the Raozan 210 MW first unit is the worst power plant ever built in the country, the source pointed out. Built by China, it could never reach optimum production level as it had over 475 technical flaws when handed over to the Power Development Board in 1992. It also has a record of frequent shut downs due to technical flaws. With all its problems, the plant now needs overhauling as per sched-

Beximco directors have lost their seats on bank boards, court told

Star Report

AB Bank lawyer Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud yesterday told a High Court division bench that four Beximco directors had already lost their seats on the boards of AB and IFIC banks through the application of Articles of Association and Bank Companies Act.

The four Beximco directors — Sohail F Rahman, Salman F Rahman, MA Quasem and Iqbal Ahmed — two of whom are directors of AB Bank and two of IFIC Bank — had been served with notices under the banking law after they had failed to repay the loans. They had been told that they would lose their seats on the board if they did not clear the debts.

The Beximco directors had filed a writ petition challenging

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NA move to strip Benazir of her membership

ISLAMABAD, Apr 20: Parliament today began a formal process to unseat former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and her husband after they were found guilty of corruption, AFP quoting officials said.

Benazir currently in London, is the leader of the Opposition in the 217-member National Assembly or lower house while her jailed husband Asif Ali Zardari is a member of the 87-member Senate.

A special court last week sentenced both to five years' imprisonment, fined them 8.6 million dollars and disqualified them from holding any public office.

Formal notice of the verdict was received today by the Speaker of the National Assembly Iftikhar Ismail and Senate chairman Wasim Sajjad.

Under the rules they are required to pass the notice to the chief election commissioner, who will then strip the couple of their membership of parliament.

A two-judge accountability bench of the Lahore High Court convicted the two on charges of receiving millions of dollars in kickbacks from a Swiss firm for a 1994 pre-shipment trade cargo inspection contract.

Benazir has denied any wrongdoing and described her conviction as politically motivated, accusing Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of a witchhunt to eliminate her from politics. The government has refuted the allegations.

Demonstrations were planned across the country later today by Benazir's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) to protest the conviction.

AP adds: Hundreds of policemen guarded the grand white marble Parliament buildings here today stopping supporters of Benazir from holding anti-government demonstrations.

In frontier provincial capital of Peshawar, police fired tear gas at several hundred of Benazir's protesting supporters.

At least 22 people were arrested, said police some of whom attacked the demonstra-



Benazir Bhutto

1996 scamsters blamed Stock prices hit new lows

By M Shamsur Rahman

Dhaka and Chittagong share price indexes plummeted to new depths generating widespread apprehension among the brokers and causing some of them to shut business till the stock markets revived.

Most market operators believed that the accused in the 1996 share scam were pulling the strings.

DSE All Shares Price Index plunged to an astounding 63-month low.

The DSE index declined to 484 points at 1:00pm equalling that on January 20, 1994. The index later recovered 2.62 points to close at 486.62 points yesterday. The index lost a total of 11.77 points from the previous day's closing.

The declining share prices pulled the index of the Chit-

tagong bourse to an all time low of 209.46 points yesterday from 214.29 points on the previous day.

Brokers and traders are attributing the slide to scamsters of 1996 who, according to them, are bringing down the market by performing syndicate operations. "Their intention is to create pressure on the government to withdraw cases against them."

"They are making more money than that in 1996," said one. "They are taking advantage of the loopholes which were not attended when automated trading was launched."

He added that four to five of the members form a syndicate and transact among themselves on a particular day a certain

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Helmet wasn't bullet-proof and mortars didn't work

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Apr 20: Naik Lakutullah died of bullet wound in his head because the helmet he used was not bullet-proof.

Six people, including a BDR member were killed when BSF opened fire at Jamalpur under Daulatpur thana here yesterday.

Journalists who visited the spot today saw the helmet. It was pierced by the bullet. The commanding officer admitted that the helmet was not bullet-proof.

It was also revealed that most of the mortar shells which the BDR fired did not work, because those were very old.

BDR sources said BSF has sent a protest note and both the sides are on high alert. Both BSF and BDR have agreed to hold a flag meeting at 10 am tomorrow. BDR earlier sent a protest note to Indian side, they said.

Meanwhile, women and children of the bordering village who left their villages last night started coming back to their respective homes, according to Deputy Commissioner of Kushtia, who visited the Jamalpur village and BOP this morning.

Injured persons admitted in Kushtia General Hospital were undergoing treatment and recovering, according to hospital sources. Two of the critically injured have been shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital today.

About 40 others were released from Daulatpur Thana Health complex today after ur-

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BSF firing Dhaka lodges protest with Delhi

Bangladesh yesterday lodged a protest with India over the killing of six people in BSF firing along Jamalpur Border Observation Post (BOP) in Kushtia district on Monday, reports BSS.

At least six people, including a BDR personnel, were killed and several others injured in the incident as BSF opened fire along Jamalpur BOP on Monday.

A spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) told reporters yesterday that the Deputy High Commissioner of India, Pinaki R Chakraborty, was called in to the foreign ministry yesterday and Bangladesh's protest over the incident was lodged.

Alimul Haq, Bangladesh Deputy High Commissioner in

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Khaleda concerned at Kushtia killings by BSF

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday expressed deep concern over the killing of six people by BSF in Kushtia and blamed government's 'subservient' policy towards India for encouraging such provocative acts, reports UNB.

She in a statement said after assumption of power by this government, such killings and repression along the border are on the rise.

"BSF activities indicate that they give a damn to the sovereignty of Bangladesh and its people," said the BNP chairperson about attitude of the neighbours.

In past few years, she alleged, the Indian Border Security Force had kidnapped and killed a number of Bangladeshi nationals, but the government failed to lodge strong protests against such incidents.

"Present government has opened the border, Indian smuggled goods and drugs have flooded the country, Indian phenidil has destroyed the lives of lakhs of Bangladeshi youths."

Contractor shot dead, 2 held in city

By Staff Correspondent

A contractor was gunned down in the city's Naya Paltan area late Monday night.

The dead was identified as Kamal Hossain Patwari, 30, son of Abul Patwari, a resident of Shantinagar area, police and human sources said. Police suspected that Kamal was murdered as a sequel to previous enmity with some of his friends.

Hospital sources said, the incident took place when Kamal, a contractor of Public Health Engineering Department was entering a business firm in Naya Paltan area at about 10.30 pm.

Police arrested two FIR-maned accused, identified as Shamim and Sentu.

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Caution Notice for Intending Buyers of Flats

Through Finance Act, 1997 Land Development Firms & Building Construction Firms (So.10.00) have been included in the jurisdiction of VAT. Due to this inclusion it is mandatory for all land development & building construction firms to be registered at respective area basis VAT Department Office.

- There is provision for depositing net 1.98 per cent amount of sale price in case of sold flat of building or building itself as VAT in govt account by the building construction firm.
- Be sure whether the firm from which you have purchased flat is registered under VAT Act or not. If necessary, collect its registration number & verify from the nearest VAT office. It may be noted that at the time of purchasing flat, the firms are realising the VAT payable to govt account on sale price from your paid advance or instalment amounts. But, to ensure whether this VAT is deposited to proper govt account or not, you as a conscious citizen must demand the VAT challan from the selling firm at the time of payment. Otherwise, the responsibility of paying VAT will rest with you.
- For further detailed information, if any in this regard the undermentioned address & telephone nos may be contacted.

Phone: **Mobara Khanam**
First Secretary: 9330662/213 Second Secretary (VAT)
Second Secretary: 405198, 838120-6/306 National Board of Revenue, Dhaka
Phone: 412212

National Board of Revenue
DFP-7870-15/4 G-685