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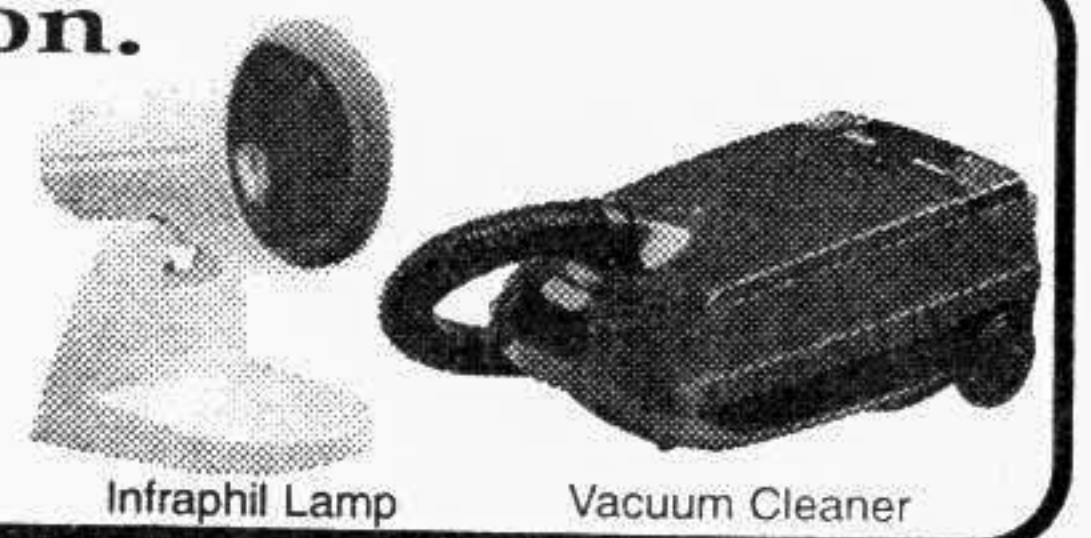
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Hillary says he would be glad to share credit with Mallory

WELLINGTON, May 4: Forty-five years after conquering Mount Everest, Sir Edmund Hillary said today he would be glad to share credit for reaching the summit with George Mallory, who may have made it in 1924, reports AP.

Members of an expedition have found the body of Mallory near the peak. Eight climbers have been looking for the bodies of the Englishmen, who disappeared in 1924, and a camera that could contain pictures proving they reached the summit 29 years before Hillary and Sherpa guide Tenzing Norgay.

They found the body Saturday but haven't yet found the camera or evidence to prove they had reached the summit. The body was found about 600 meters from the windblown 8,848-meter summit.

Hillary said today he doubted Mallory and Irvine, who were not using oxygen, reached the top.

"We simply of course have no idea as to whether he was overcome at that altitude, which could easily happen, or that he had in fact carried on, reached the summit and then fallen on the descent."

"My feeling perhaps is that, well, I think it's more likely that he probably did not reach the summit. But who knows?" Hillary said from Auckland in a telephone interview with an Australian radio station.

"It's one thing to reach the top, but to complete the job you've got to get (back) to the bottom," Hillary told the Dominion, a Wellington, New Zealand newspaper.

"For 45 years I've been accepted as the hero sort of stuff, so I wouldn't feel too terrible if he had his special spell as well."

"I've always regarded him with great admiration as the original hero of Everest."



AFP file photo of Mount Everest conquerors Edmund Hillary (R) and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay (L) at London's Heathrow airport on their arrival from the expedition on July 3, 1953.

Special drive 14,568 held, 210 arms recovered so far

By Staff Correspondent A total of 14,568 people were arrested during the last 12 days of countrywide special joint operation by police, BDR and Ansar, according to police.

Besides, 210 illegal firearms, 38 sharp weapons and 1032 bullets were recovered during the operation.

The special operation began on April 25 as per directive of the Home Minister Mohammad Nasim. Special emphasis has been given on 10 districts of the southern zone during the operation, police sources said.

Power disruption

From Page 1 circuit of Haripur-Siddhirganj transmission line broke down in Siddhirganj at around 1.55 pm and fell on the forth circuit of the same line. So, power supply through these two lines and the Haripur-Maniknagar second circuit and the Haripur-Siddhirganj second circuit was disrupted.

"As a result, power supply to areas under Ulan, Dhanmudi, Bangabhaban and Maniknagar substations were disrupted," the press release said.

"Power supply to Ulan, Bashundhara, Dhanmudi and Bangabhaban substations was restored within 70 minutes of this incident through an alternative arrangement from Tongi transmission line," it added.

The Haripur-Maniknagar second circuit line was repaired and re-started at about 3 pm. PDB technicians then started restoring the Haripur-Siddhirganj first circuit line, it said.

"It is expected that the affected lines will be fully restored by tonight," the press release noted.

"Till the time, load-shedding in Dhaka and its adjacent areas may increase."

Our Narayananganj correspondent reports that the 33 KV transmission line broke down due to careless manoeuvring of crane the of a wheat carrying barge.

The Chittagong bound barge, "Queen" came from Siddhirganj silo and was loading wheat on its way. When it was passing by the 33 KV line, the crane hit the cable and tore it, snapping power supply to Khanpur area under Narayananganj Sadar and Madanganj area under Bandar thana.

Officials and engineers of PDB and DESA rushed to the spot and started restoration work. They said it will take about 48 hours.

The best of times

From Page 1 No one seemed to take note of the callous use of precious electricity.

Not only did the advertising signs glitter, but also the community centres where lights portrayed the glamour of the ceremonies inside.

Bright mercury lights at street junctions also burnt at places where there was power supply uncut.

The city fathers had been wise to install the lights to provide a clear view of the street corners so that traffic could pass smoothly even though many of the streets not far away were missing them.

All these were going on despite the nation-wide power cuts and frequent failures.

Officially, the shops and markets are to down their shutters at 7pm. Bill boards with powerful lights and neon signs are not to flash in the evening. Nor the lighting decorations at social gatherings and weddings are to be there.

But no one takes the trouble of enforcing the austerity measures to stop wastage of power when the parts of the city remain in darkness for hours together after the oppressive afternoon heat.

A bit of prudent use of electricity, keeping the consumption to the minimum, could save a lot, experts say. But no one seems to be paying any attention to that.



The students of the Eden University College held a cultural function on the campus yesterday welcoming the freshers and the Bangla New Year. - Star photo

PM: Patience

From Page 1 said the government is trying hard to improve law and order through stringent measures.

The government is trying its best to ensure security of public life by establishing peace in the society, she said. The premier is currently cooperating from all quarters for eliminating terrorism from the society.

It is possible to remove terrorism from the society if the opposition parties do not give protection to terrorists and if they cooperate with the government, in this regard, she said.

She alleged that the opposition leader is spreading lies saying price of rice is increasing. There was a bumper harvest of Boro and IRR1 this year. The government has successfully tackled the post-flood situation by giving food aid to more than two crore people, Hasina said.

Power plant

From Page 1 Power Development Board (PDB) had purchased a power plant of same configuration from a French company at a cost of 25 million dollars, some 22 million dollars less than the price of RPC's generators. PDB is currently installing the generators at Shahjibazar.

"It is true that the total cost of PDB's Shahjibazar plant will be lower than RPC's Mysensing project because all infrastructure facilities including transmission lines are already there at Shahjibazar. At Mysensing, RPC has to develop infrastructure for the project," the source said.

"Moreover, the RPC has no studies on the infrastructure facilities to be built for the second phase yet. The Energy Ministry has confidently instructed REB and RPC to sign the second phase contract with the same company within three weeks," he noted.

The second phase has been scheduled to be completed within 15 months of signing the agreement, the source added.

REB will raise the equity portion of the project's finance by increasing its shares in the RPC and the number of rural electrification associations, which are its subscribers. The loan portion of the project cost will be arranged through credit from commercial banks or donors.

The government has however emphasised arranging the credit from commercial banks for implementation of the project "urgently".

"This is clearly unfair," commented a source. "A committee with representatives from REB, RPC and PDB was formed earlier to study these projects first. But the study has not yet been completed. The PDB representative in the committee strongly opposed this because the second phase is costlier than any other similar project."

Low turnout marks bypolls

From Page 1 observed the EC who, accompanied by a group of Dhaka-based reporters, visited as many as nine polling centres.

"The voters turnout would be around about 30 per cent."

The voters, even the election agents of the candidates at different polling centres, expressed the same view. "People lost traditional enthusiasm about elections due to the fact that the opposition parties have boycotted the polls," said Shakhawat Hossain, a polling agent of Prof. Mannan at the Amjhipur Primary School centre. Hazrat Ali, polling agent of Hisabuddin, nodded his approval in front of the Election Commissioner.

The polling agents complained that names of 264 voters of the area were not printed in the official voters list. "So far, one of the 264 voters came to cast his vote. But we had to refuse him as the list does not contain his name," said one of the agents to the Election Commissioner.

In the afternoon, both the Deputy Commissioner of Meherpur Kamrul Islam, who was also the Returning Officer for the by-election, and the Superintendent of Police Jahangir Hossain predicted that the voters turnout would be a little

more than 30 per cent. None of them was, however, ready to admit that the low-turn out was a result of opposition boycott of the polls.

During the election, or the opposition hartal for that matter, no mechanised vehicles were seen in the streets, while most shops in the town were closed. But both the DC and the SP refused to accept that there was any hartal observed in the area.

Earlier in the morning, the Election Commissioner visited two centres - Mission Primary School centre and Dighirpur Primary School centre - between 10.45 and 11.00. The voters' turnout at that time was not more than 12 per cent.

Out of the second centre, the SP was heard asking his subordinates over wireless set to make sure that the BTM men could shoot "some voters standing in a queue" in the next centre - the Hannanganj Primary School centre.

But the police officials concerned failed to implement the idea, as the number of the voters present in the centre at that time was too small to form a queue.

In the centre - Hannanganj Primary School - 400 votes out of the 4080 were cast at 11:15 in the morning. The polling officers at one of the booths of the centre received not a single voter until 11:05 am. "More than 400 voters from Basantapur and Rannagar villages are supposed to cast their votes in this booth. But none of them has so far appeared," said Mostafizur Rahman, assistant presiding officer of the centre at 11:20 am.

Then the SP became rather desperate and was successful.

When the EC team, accompanied by EC Additional Secretary Aziz Ahmed Chowdhury and Khulna Divisional Commissioner and Meherpur DC, stopped for while at the rest house in the historic Mujib Na-

gar, the SP utilised the time to manage some voters for a queue.

Meantime, Presiding Officer of the Mujibnagar centre told reporters that roughly 500 votes out of the 3300 were cast until noon. As soon as the EC team had left the place and the BTV camera gone, the people in the queue dispersed.

At Sonapur Primary School centre, 250 votes out of a total of 1965 were cast till 12:45 pm. The picture was almost similar at the Ballapur Primary School centre. Until 1:00 pm, 550 votes out of 2637 were cast at the centre.

The scene at the Anandabas Primary School centre was no different. Until 1:35 pm, 251 votes out of 2701 were cast at the polling station.

The presiding officer of the centre told reporters and the EC team that the first voter appeared at the centre an hour after the voting in the constituency was started at 8:00 in the morning.

In the Amjhipur Primary School centre, 951 votes were cast until 3:20 pm, while the total number of voters in the centre was 3186.

In the Kalachandpur Primary School centre, 253 votes out of a total of 900 were cast at the time of closing the voting at 4:00 in the afternoon.

AL nominee wins

From Page 1 Humayun Kabir Arzu (Independent) polled 379 votes. Mostaim Billah -Jayuya Party (Monju) candidate who stayed away from the polls a couple days before the election, got 174 votes and Krishak Mohammad Sadek of Krishak Sramik Mukti Andolon bagged 79 votes.

The seat fell vacant following the death of BNP legislator Ahmed Ali on February 13 this year.

SC accepts

From Page 1 the Returning Officer's decision not to allocate a plot.

On the same day, Moidul Islam obtained an order of stay of HC judgement.

The Appellate Division on May 4 extended the order of stay till May 2 and fixed for hearing of the petition for leave to appeal.

Barrister Rafique-ul Hoque moved for Moidul Islam, while Advocate-on-Record Sharifuddin Chakladar represented Mostaim Billah.

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Stock traders frustrated

From Page 1 eign funds which could rescue the market from the current situation."

When pointed out that it was a matter being decided by court, he said that the Constitution of the country gave the President the power to grant general mercy.

The demonstrators said that brokers and dealers were still manipulating the market as they did in 1996 to raise share prices to an unusual level.

Trading at the exchange, however, remained unaffected yesterday.

The latest demonstration by the investors was triggered by a massive fall in share prices Monday that pulled the key composite index down by 1.91 per cent to 462.57 points.

Earlier, in the morning the agitating investors shut the main gate of the exchange for several hours and chanted slogans against chairman Rakibur Rahman, whom they blamed for price manipulations during the 1996 crash of the market, along with other brokers.

Meanwhile, the DSE chairman called a meeting of the general members on Saturday to review the current market

situation. The decision came after around 30 general members went to DSE boardroom and demanded an EGM.

Reviewing the present market situation, setting rules, DSE resources and manpower and information leakage from the IT department are on the list of the meeting agenda, DSE sources said.

The rebel brokers said that the small group of influential brokers pushed most general members to the sidelines.

They are losing clients everyday. We earn our bread from this market. If this situation continues then we may be seen begging on the streets. Everybody in this market is not corrupt. It is because of few members that we are losing businesses," said one frustrated member.

"What they did in 1996 was the slaughter of the innocent and what they are doing now is a massacre," the member said. "We will not remain quiet anymore."

One of the DSE councillors told this correspondent that he had decided to refrain from attending board meetings anymore. He said the management has been captive in the hands of

the influential quarters. "People are calling DSE a gamblers den. And I don't want to be part of the council which has failed to tackle the situation," the councillor said.

He also accused the DSE of doing nothing about a court order directing the bourse authorities to "maintain a status quo" on the election. Elections to four Council seats were due December 22 last.

In another development, the senior officials of SEC, the capital market watchdog, held meetings yesterday to review the market situation.

Sources said that the regulators directed the DSE to withdraw the option of "counter party identification" from the computer system which enabled

the traders to identify the brokers' work stations from where the sell or buy orders were coming.

SEC sources said that the option enabled members to form "unholy syndicate" to manipulate prices of stock of their choice. They said that removal of the option would help reduce manipulation as the members would not be able to identify the selling broker.

Gold seized at Ctg Airport

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, May 4: Customs officials seized 600 tolas of gold worth about Tk 36 lakh at Chittagong Airport brought by two passengers from Dubai this morning.

Customs officials searched the bodies of the two passengers and recovered 60 gold bars, weighing 10 tola each.

They were later handed over to Bandar police.

Trial in NY

From Page 1 clear that he would not marry her.

Mohsin, a computer technician from Bangladesh, has been charged with attempted murder and assault. He sat with an impassionate expression on his face during the arguments, which lasted for a little more than an hour. He faces up to 25 years in jail if convicted.

The case has attracted a great deal of attention from South Asian women's organisations, particularly the New York-based Sakhi for South Asian Women. Several Sakhi members were on hand at the hearing and are expected to stay throughout the trial.

Drug controllers

From Page 1

uct, one is multinational and the rest four are local companies.

An official of a multinational company told The Daily Star yesterday that it would not be possible for the local companies to produce any data regarding bio-equivalence study although the multinational one would be able to do so.

"DDA has so far done very little to maintain quality, safety and efficacy of essential drugs. But in this case, it must be congratulated," he said.

The bio-equivalence study, essential for any potent drug, was not done by these local companies before marketing their products, the official said.

"If DDA can implement this and include the names of other different essential drugs, the move will benefit the people."

DDA issued the letter late last month and asked the companies to submit the data within seven days.

"The pharmaceutical business is a potential sector in the country but lack of proper regulation has thrown the industry into a mess," the official said.

AJM clash

From Page 1

Sohel were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Traffic movement on the Dhaka-Denra Road was disrupted for about three hours till 12 noon due to the clash.

It is alleged that police remained idle during the clash. However, they arrested four persons from the spot. The arrested are Swapon, Rana, Halim Biswas and Swapon.

Tension has been prevailing in Sonamiah Math gate, Natun Bazar, South Uttarpara and Madhapara areas.

Advertisement for Sonaali Bank (সোনালী ব্যাংক) with details of branches, services, and contact information.