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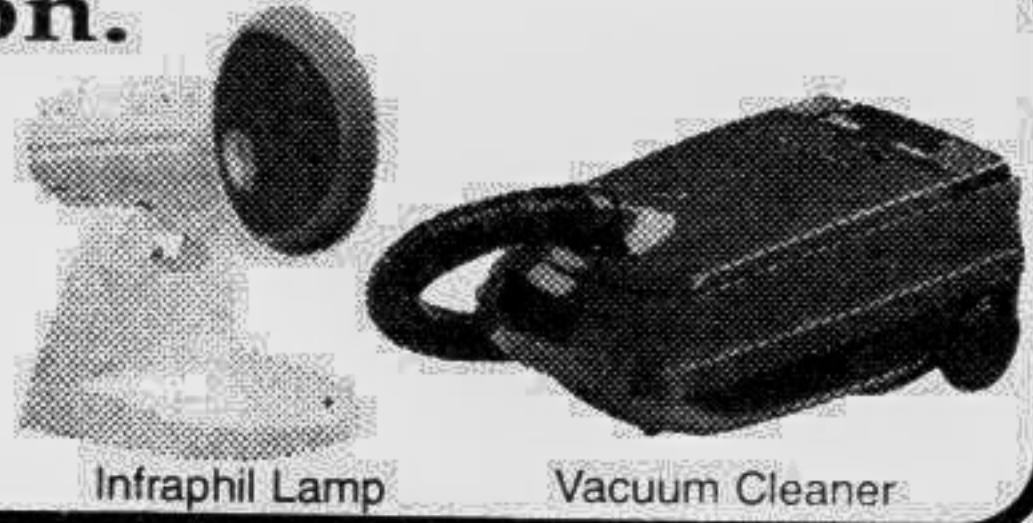
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## Obituary

### 'Godfather' author Mario Puzo passes away

NEW YORK, July 3: Mario Puzo, who won two Oscars for his adaptation of his best-selling novel "The Godfather" and romanticised the Mafia with his depiction of the fiercely loyal and honour-bound Corleone family, died of heart failure Friday. He was 78, reports AP.

The son of Italian immigrants, who wrote seven other novels and assorted Hollywood screenplays, died in his home on Long Island. He had just completed "Omerta," the third book in his Mafia trilogy, said Neil Olson, his literary agent.

Puzo was an obscure if critically acclaimed novelist when he sat down at his vintage manual typewriter in the late 1960s, determined to write a blockbuster that would pull him out of debt.

He succeeded.

"The Godfather," published in 1969, sold 21 million copies worldwide and introduced the world to his Corleone family, who mingled old-world Sicilian values with new-world American violence.

Puzo and director Francis Ford Coppola co-wrote the screenplays for "The Godfather" and two sequels; they earned Academy Awards in 1972 and 1974 for their work, and the first two films became American cinematic classics.

The Corleones were brought to life on screen by Marlon Brando as Don Vito Corleone, with James Caan, Al Pacino and John Cazale playing his sons Sonny, Michael and Fredo. In the sequel, Robert De Niro played the young Don. The two movies won a combined nine Oscars, including two for best picture.

Puzo was born Oct. 15, 1920, in Manhattan's Hell's Kitchen, the son of illiterate Italian immigrants. His father deserted a wife and seven children when

Puzo was 12, and the young boy took a job with the New York Central Railroad.

By age 16, Puzo had decided to become a writer — but World War II interrupted. After serving in Germany, Puzo came home and began writing pulp stories for men's magazines.

He published his first novel, "The Dark Arena," in 1955. He spent nine years on his next book "The Fortunate Pilgrim".

"The Godfather" is not as good as the preceding two (novels), he once said bluntly. "I wrote it to make money."

The "Godfather" arrived in 1969 and exploded to the top of the best-seller lists. After its success, Puzo was often asked if he had ties to organised crime — and his answer was always no.

"It might have been preferable to be in the Mafia," he said in 1996. "I'm glad I'm a writer, but it's hard work. Nobody likes to work hard."

His Oscar-winning work on the "Godfather" series led to other screenplays, including two Superman movies, "The Cotton Club," and "Christopher Columbus".

Puzo's other books included "Fool's Die," a 1978 effort on casinos; the No. 1 best-seller "The Sicilian" in 1984; "The Fourth K," a futuristic political thriller about a fictional member of the Kennedy family, in 1992; and "The Last Don" in 1996, a return to his favourite topic, the Mafia.

"The Last Don" became another runaway best seller and was the basis for a highly rated television miniseries. It was also the second book in his Mafia trilogy.

Puzo spent the last three years on "Omerta," about a mob family on the brink of legitimacy. "Omerta" is the word for the mob's code of silence; the book is due out in July 2000.



Garo students staged a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding trial of those who allegedly raped and killed a girl from Garo tribe in Mymensingh recently. —Star photo

## Labina murder

### Garo students submit memo to Home Minister

By DU Correspondent

Bangladesh Garo Chhatra Sangathan (BGCS), a platform of Garo tribal students, brought out a procession in the city yesterday and submitted a memorandum to Home Minister Mohammad Nasim, demanding immediate arrest and trial of the killers of Labina Hawul.

Labina, 18, a girl from Garo tribe, was allegedly raped and killed at the Veterinary Training Institute (VTI) in Mymensingh on June 24. She was working as a domestic help at the VTI principal's residence.

The BGCS also held a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar following the procession.

Addressing the rally, leaders of BGCS and other tribal organisations blamed VTI Principal Dr. Parash Chandra Sarker, his two sons and brother Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sarker for the incident.

They also alleged that the victim's family was being threatened by the killers and demanded exemplary punishment of those involved in the rape and killing.

Presided over by BGCS city unit president Uzzal Azim, the rally was addressed by, among others, Shagata Chisim, Nikhil Mankhin, Prodip Schu, Tapon Champong, Nipun Sangma, Sanjhi Drong, Kabita Chakma, Denish Marandi and Bintarmoi Dhamai.

Several other tribal organisations supported the agitation. These include Tribal Welfare Association, Garo Women's Association, Garo Adibashi Sangrami Oikya Parishad, Jatiya Adibashi Samannay Committee, Garo Students' Union and Bangladesh Indigenous Youth Association.

**Men's fertility declines in late thirties**

LONDON, July 3: New research claims to have proved that men's fertility declines in their late thirties, AFP quoting Britain's independent newspaper reported today.

Scientists presented their findings at the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology's annual conference in Tours, France, said the paper.

These show that after the age of 39 men's sperm begins to deteriorate at a slow rate. Any partner, regardless of her age, would have less chance getting pregnant by a man aged over 39, the paper said.

Men are seven per cent less likely with each advancing year to help produce a perfect fertilised egg, it added.

If a poor-quality embryo results, the woman has a greater chance of miscarriage, it added.

While much attention in medical circles has focused on a decline in female fertility after the age of 30, the paper said this is the first clinical evidence to show that male age has an effect on the chances of becoming pregnant.

**Opposition**

From Page 1  
Liaison committee sources, however, said that the routes of the planned road march have been primarily selected.

BNP will march towards Mymensingh, Jaintia towards Champainawabganj while IOJ march will head for Chittagong.

Jatiya Party could not give their clear decision as their chairman HM Ershad is now in Saudi Arabia, meeting sources said.

The liaison meeting, chaired by JP leader Golam Mostafa, was attended by Anwar Zahid of BNP, Kazi Firoz Rashid of JP, Mohammad Quamaruzzaman, Kader Molah of Jaintia and ARM Abdul Matin of IOJ.

Meanwhile, BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday had a meeting with the district and central leaders of Gazipur, Mymensingh North and South units, Jamalpur, Netrokona, Sherpur and Khishoreganj to discuss the road march and organisational matter.

Some 14 million students attend colleges in the United States, so roughly 450,000 students own guns based on that percentage, he said.

## Flood situation improves

Flood situation has improved following recession of waters, officials said, reports BSS.

The flood waters, which inundated the low-lying areas in Sylhet, Sunamganj, Kushtia and Kogram districts started receding, district administration sources said.

Officials at the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) said that most of the major rivers of three of the country's four river basins, registered further rise yesterday due to rains.

## Mig-27 crashes in Rajasthan

NEW DELHI, July 3: A Mig-27 fighter jet of the Indian Air Force (IAF) crashed during take-off in the northwestern state of Rajasthan, killing the pilot, an IAF spokesman said today, reports Reuters.

It was a fatal accident during a routine sortie. The fighter crashed within its take-off path within the airfield area," the spokesman told the agency by telephone.

The accident occurred at around 8:30 am (0300 GMT) on Friday after the aircraft developed a technical snag. The crash killed Flight Lieutenant Deepak Sharma, he said.

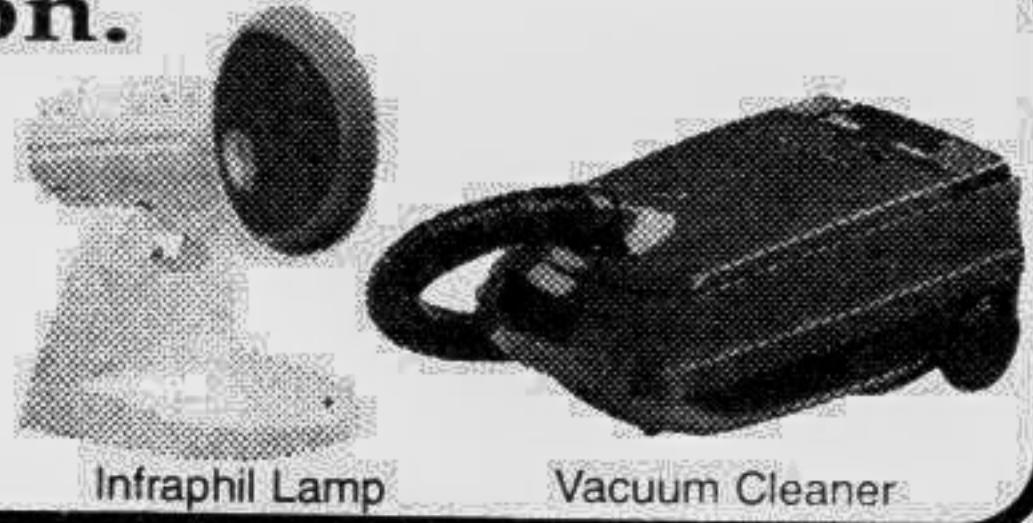
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Secret exchange of emissaries

## India refusing dialogue on Kashmir, says Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, July 3: Pakistan said today India had refused to hold dialogue even after a secret exchange of emissaries by the two sides aimed at ending their current stand-off in the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir, reports Reuters.

"It rejects all dialogue as of now, as of today or yesterday," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said at a news briefing. But he said Pakistan would continue its diplomatic efforts for a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

The spokesman said India had not yet agreed to a meeting of the directors-general of military operations (DGMOs) of the two sides — a proposal which the Pakistani emissary, former Foreign Secretary Niaz Naik, had proposed last month to ease tensions and the India's public response was that it did not want dialogue.

Asked when the DGMOs could meet, the spokesman, Tariq Altaf, said: "Whenever India is ready." He said Naik had sought "some clarifications" from Indian leaders about a three-point formula Islamabad had proposed last month to ease tensions and the India's public response was that it did not want dialogue.

"So I will say I am cautiously hopeful. I can't say that I am optimistic at the moment."

The US Ambassador to Pakistan, William B. Milam, said in remarks published today he hoped tension between India and Pakistan over Kashmir would be defused soon.

"... We would like to see not only the situation defused but would very much like to see the Lahore process revived because we believe this holds the key to an eventual resolution of problems in South Asia," Milam was quoted by The News Daily as saying. A Paris report says, Aziz said for UN mediation in the Kashmir conflict with India in an interview published today in the Liberation daily.

"There are huge human rights violations going on in the part of Kashmir occupied by India," said Aziz, demanding that the Delhi authorities "allow a UN envoy in to verify the claims."

"It is paradoxical to refuse all mediation and to tell everyone 'we are being attacked'. In our view the Indians are using an alibi to suppress all opposition in Kashmir," the minister added.

"India is accepting neither mediation nor observers. I hope that they will come to accept them, because otherwise the situation could spiral out of control. That's the danger which we want to avoid," said Aziz, quizzed on the risk posed by the two feuding nations' possession of the nuclear bomb.

## WB on power project

From Page 1  
of Bangladesh (PGCB) fully operational before the WB agrees on the credit.

The Power Cell in the Energy Ministry is already making a policy plan for the power sector. "Why should we include a World Bank consultant? Another consultant means another area of disagreement and we don't want to start formulating the plan all over again," said another official.

"We are not yet sure when the PGCB could be made fully operational. We are working on it. Tagging PGCB with the World Bank credit is not a realistic idea."

"Our government would rather ignore the World Bank and seek credit from other sources. It is true that World Bank's opinion regarding us influences other donors, but we should try alternative sources. The government is getting suppliers' credit offer for the power sector from different countries. We need a good policy for the suppliers' credit to ensure low project costs," the official said.

Though the power tariff of major private sector projects like the Meghnaghat and Haripur plants would leave a great profit margin for PDB or DESA, such projects would put heavy pressure on the foreign exchange reserve as payments would be made in dollars. That is why WB discourages fresh projects in the private sector.

The World Bank took this clear-cut stand as the government tried to implement a crash programme under which it sought private investment for setting up 500 MW capacity plants. The government ultimately had to withdraw the crash programme from donors.

Talking to this correspondent, some inmates at Tanbaza brothel urged the government to make an arrangement for burial of sex workers. "As human beings, can't we expect a decent burial after a lifelong repression and social vilification?" asked a sex worker.

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"There is no denying that today every Indian is keen on teaching Pakistan a lesson," said Thakre, whose Hindu nationalist party leads the caretaker coalition government.

## BJP chief wants recapture of Kashmir

LUCKNOW (India), July 3: The head of India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said today the country should focus on evicting infiltrators from Kashmir with the ultimate aim of recapturing Kashmiri territory under Pakistani control, reported Reuters.

"Not only me, as the BJP chief, but it was the unanimous resolve of the entire parliament to take back that one third part of Kashmir that was under illegal occupation of Pakistan," Kushabhan Thakre said.

"But right now our sole focus is on ensuring the ouster of Pakistani infiltrators from the Indian soil," he told a news conference in the northern city of Lucknow.

"There is no denying that today every Indian is keen on teaching Pakistan a lesson," said Thakre, whose Hindu nationalist party leads the caretaker coalition government.

## 24 black holes at centre of galaxy!

TOKYO, July 3: A group of Japanese scientists say they have discovered 24 black holes at the centre of the galaxy, contrary to the widely accepted theory that there is only one, reports AFP.

The scientists, led by Hiroshi Oya, space physics professor at Tohoku University in northern Japan, said they discovered the 24 black holes by analysing radio waves from outer space for 15 years, the reports said.

The holes exist in clusters, with the two most powerful in the centre of the galaxy orbiting at very high speed and affecting each other like a double star, the Yomiuri Shimbun today quoted Oya as saying.

## DMCH in shambles

From Page 1  
instruments should be sterilised by autoclave machine (high pressure steam used to disinfect) before use," said a doctor of the department.

Another source said that at least Tk 10 crore was allocated recently for renovation of the hospital and procurement of small instruments for different departments. But the department has not received any instruments they asked for, to date.

Many doctors at the hospital alleged that deputy director of the hospital Dr. Babar Hossain misappropri