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8 ISI agents held in India

CALCUTTA, Sept 18: Eight ISI agents were arrested by West Bengal police during simultaneous operations in Delhi, Orissa and Calcutta in the last two days. State Home (police) Minister Buddhadev Bhattacharjee said on Friday, reports PTL.

Bhattacharjee told newsmen here that the police operations were based on the statements made by one Ahmed Ali, arrested from Dum Dum area, near Calcutta on Wednesday, with the central intelligence providing logistic support.

The minister said the police gathered enough evidence to prove that these Pakistani agents were engaged in collecting defence secrets.

He said that of the eight, four were arrested from the city, two from the missile range at Chandipur in Orissa and one from Delhi.

Five of the arrested, he said, were produced in the Sub-divisional Judicial Magistrate's Court, Barrackpore, which remanded them to police custody till September 30.

Khaleda for transparency in use of foreign aid

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia has said it is very urgent to examine whether foreign aid and grants given for the benefit of the people are being properly utilised.

"It is very urgent to examine this because the aid and grants come from foreign countries and organisations purely to meet the people's needs and for their welfare. Accountability and transparency in this respect is a must."

The Leader of the Opposition in Parliament said this when outgoing UNDP Resident Representative in Dhaka David Locoew made a farewell call on her at her official residence yesterday.

Briefing newsmen, Begum Zia's adviser M Resal Karma said Locoew shared her views on proper utilisation of foreign aid and grants.

The former prime minister said corruption and lack of transparency in all activities of the government, including utilisation of foreign aid, have frustrated the people.

Massive corruption, misrule and famine marked Awami League rule immediately after independence and the situation is similar this time also, she said.

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Death in accident

Angry people block traffic at Sitakunda, damage 30 trucks

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Sept 18: Angry people damaged about 30 trucks and put up barricade on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Sitakunda after the death of a young man in a road accident this morning, police and witnesses said.

The victim, Kamal Uddin, 32, died on the spot when a truck hit him at 9 am. Protesting the death, the local people put up barricade on the highway disrupting traffic for two hours.

Later, police rushed to the spot and removed the barricade.

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Street level political activism of destruction and violence

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Prayer Timings

September 19		
Fajr	4:30	5:00
Juma	12:15	1:30
Asr	4:30	4:45
Maghrib	6:15	6:18
Esha	7:45	8:15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Kashmiris keep away in third phase

42 killed as India sees a violent voting day

NEW DELHI, Sept 18: Land mine explosions, fighting at polling booths and clashes between security forces and election boycotters killed 42 people today in a violent voting day to select India's next parliament, reports AP.

Thirty-three of the dead were policemen, soldiers and election workers killed when land mines exploded under the vehicles carrying them to duty at polling stations in Bihar, according to UN Panjiar, home commissioner for the eastern state.

Despite the violence, voter turnout for the third phase of the month-long elections was a high 53 per cent, the independent Election Commission said, despite election-related deaths in four of the five states where voting took place. Balloting had been sluggish early, but picked up before polls closed at 5 pm (1130gmt).

Tens of thousands of security forces were posted to guard voting booths in Bihar and in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, where leftist groups had declared anti-election campaigns and called boycotts. Police were given shoot-on-sight orders in Bihar to prevent private militias or guerrillas from terrorising voters, seizing ballot boxes or stuffing them.

"But we weren't prepared for anything like this," said Panjiar.

The voter turnout for Bihar was 57.5 per cent.

It was 61 per cent in Andhra Pradesh, where United News of India said a party worker was killed by a rival group and three people were injured in a land mine blast. Police fired in the air to drive away supporters of two parties when they grabbed ballot papers from a booth in the village of Kayuru.

Polling stations, roads and shops were deserted in Kashmir as separatists enforced a strike and voting boycott across the region.

But the election commission reported a 27 per cent turnout

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Exit poll BNP coalition heading for majority

NEW DELHI, Sept 18: India's ruling coalition is heading for a comfortable parliamentary majority in ongoing federal elections, an exit poll on state-run Doordarshan television said today, reports AP.

Pollster GVL Narasimha Rao predicted Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party was likely to win 191 of the 344 seats, where voting has been held so far in the three rounds of balloting. This would be a gain of 23 seats over its tally in the previous election in 1998, Rao said.

Main opposition leader Sonia Gandhi's Congress party would win 126 seats, a gain of eight seats over its tally last year, he said.

Vajpayee's coalition has so far won 45 per cent of all votes polled and the Congress Party just 21 per cent, said Rao who conducted the poll. The margin of error is 2 per cent.

The exit poll was in 26 constituencies across four states, he said.

Three-wheelers banned in Kathmandu

KATHMANDU, Sept 18: The Nepali government is waging war on smoke-belching, three-wheel taxis blamed for rising pollution levels in Kathmandu, keeping tourists away and causing increasing health problems, reports AFP.

From today a ban goes into force barring the vehicles from

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presents a gift to the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan at the Commemoration of the 25th anniversary of Bangladesh's admission to the United Nations at UN headquarters, New York, on Friday.

—AFP photo

Restructure UN, make it more effective: PM

Silver Jubilee of Bangladesh's admission to UN

NEW YORK, Sept 18: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said Dhaka looks for an effective, efficient and revitalised United Nations through necessary restructuring of the world body to face the challenges confronting humankind, reports UNB.

"We see the United Nations as an organisation we cannot do without... Bangladesh has always been supportive of the renewal of the United Nations," she said here today addressing a commemorative event marking the 25th anniversary of Bangladesh's admission to the United Nations at ECOSOC chamber of the UN.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, and UN General Assembly president and Foreign Minister of Namibia Dr Theo Ben Gurib also addressed the Silver Jubilee celebrations.

"For me, it is a day of mixed emotions," the prime minister said, mentioning the country's independence leader's address to the UN General Assembly this month 25 years ago.

"The day is very significant for the people of Bangladesh as 25 years ago Bangladesh got the UN membership under the leadership of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman," she said.

She conveyed greetings to the nations on this special occasion and hoped that Bangladesh would hold its head high with dignity and honour in the comity of nations.

The UN secretary general recalled the heroic role of the

country's founding father. Mentioning the role of Bangladesh in peacekeeping missions, Annan said UN is grateful to Bangladesh for her contribution. Bangladesh made commendable contribution in peacekeeping and many other fields.

The UN chief executive also lauded Bangladesh for achieving progress in education, democracy, human rights and development of poor people, and hoped the country would achieve peace and progress.

UNGA president Dr Theo Ben Gurib congratulated the government and people of Bangladesh for their excellent achievements. He recalled with gratitude the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for charismatic leadership to gain independence of Bangladesh.

"Bangabandhu was a true leader, he fearlessly led his nation and the people to independence," Gurib said.

He said Bangladesh contributed its forces to oversee the independence of Namibia. "Our two countries are also active participants in other world bodies like Commonwealth and NAM."

Appreciating the UN's support to Bangladesh during the War of Liberation, the prime minister said: "When we were fighting for our independence and one in every ten Bangladesh people was a refugee, the United Nations provided humanitarian assistance to the innocent victims of

a war that was forced on us." Hasina said involvement of the United Nations made a difference in every aspect of life in Bangladesh. Its support has been crucial to improve the lives of millions in Bangladesh against so many odds and obstacles.

Praising the UN activities in the country, she said the imprint of the United Nations and multilateral cooperation were visible in different sectors ranging from education to sanitation, women empowerment and rights of the child to health care, human rights to poverty alleviation.

"In international relations, the United Nations has made our voice count," the prime minister said. "For developing countries like Bangladesh the UN provides a forum to highlight our concerns and further international cooperation to address our needs."

Hasina said Bangladesh had contributed to reform efforts of the Secretary General and issues relating to peacekeeping, development, women and children, human rights, participation of civil society, population and development, strengthening of the operational activities, budgetary and financial matters of the world body.

Hasina also mentioned the country's active contribution to the UN peacekeeping operations around the world and said: "We are the second largest troops contributor. Our defence personnel have held the United Nations

See Page 12 Col 1

Cruel mother slaughters 4 daughters while asleep

From Our Correspondent MYMENSINGH, Sept 18: A cruel mother has slaughtered her four minor daughters after a quarrel with her husband.

Rashida, 38, slaughtered Taslima, 8, Aklima, 7, Kulsum, 4, and Sabina, 2, one after another while they were asleep and torched their house Friday night.

Police said the quarrel took place after she was reportedly divorced by her husband, Abdul Khaleque earlier in the night.

The incident took place at Khodabakshpur village under Iswarganj thana.

Local people rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze. They recovered the charred bodies from inside the house.

On information, police rushed to the spot and sent the bodies to hospital for autopsy. Rashida and Khaleq were taken into custody.

Police-BNP clash at Feni: One shot dead

FENI, Sept 18: An unidentified young man was shot dead during a gunfight between police and BNP activists at Chandpur village in Dagonbhuiyan thana, today, reports UNB.

Local sources said the clash erupted when a contingent of 200 policemen, led by Additional SP Golam Rasul, went to raid Chandpur village, a stronghold of BNP, at about 4 pm.

During the clash, a bullet hit the young man at about 5:30 pm. He died on the spot. The body was brought to Dagonbhuiyan thana.

Police said BNP activists first opened fire on them when they went on a special drive to nab miscreants.

District Police Super Monwar Hossain said BNP men gunned down the unidentified pedestrian aged about 28.

But district Judge Dal President Syed Mizan said that police had killed the young man.

Hartal: 3 held for arson

By Staff Correspondent

Three persons were arrested in the city on Friday for allegedly setting fire to a young man at Dholaihar in Demra during the last day of opposition-called three-day hartal that ended Wednesday.

The arrested are Jalal alias Samrat, Anwar and Nazim alias Ratan. Demra police said the arrested confessed their involvement in the attack and added that they were produced before the court yesterday. The three were scheduled to give judicial confessional statement the same day.

A gang of eight men allegedly beat up Sakhawati Hossain Mondal, 25, an employee of Polar Ice cream factory at Tejgaon in the city, on Dholaihar main road before dousing him with kerosene and setting fire to him.

At the time Sakhawati was going to a relative's house to inform that his elder brother had returned from abroad.

Sakhawati was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital with serious burn injuries in his hands and back.

DU expels 2 students

By DU Correspondent

The Dhaka University authorities yesterday expelled two students of Sir A. Rahman Hall for beating up a student of the same residential hall on September 15.

A press release said the action was taken following a report of the probe committee on the incident.

Of the two, Abul Amin, an honours third year student of Political Science department (Roll No. 219-207) has been expelled from the hall permanently.

SM Mohiuddin, honours second year student of Institute of Education and Research (Roll No. 9835) and a resident of room number 301 of the hall has been expelled from the hall for three months.

The hall authorities also fined the victim, Belayet Hossain who is an LL.M final year student (Roll No. 90) and a resident of room number 310, with Tk 25 and gave him a verbal warning, the release added.

Schoolboy freed on ransom

By DU Correspondent

A schoolboy was allegedly kidnapped by some unidentified gunmen in front of Dhaka University Teachers' Club in the city yesterday evening.

However, the boy was released on ransom, family sources said.

No case has been lodged in this regard till filing of the report late last night.

The abductors held the 16-year old boy hostage for about three hours at a residential hall of the university. The boy could

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Deadly parasite invades Zoo

Trypanosoma detected in two tigers

By Staff Correspondent

Dhaka Zoo officials are baffled by the presence of a rare and deadly blood parasite --- Trypanosoma --- in two Royal Bengal Tigers at the zoo.

The parasite was detected for the first time in the two tigers by testing blood samples.

At least two of the tigers --- a male and a female in the same cage --- are now believed to be infected with the parasite.

The parasite which was eradicated from the African continent long ago, later emerged in the Indian Sub-continent, according to Dr Arshad Haroon Toosey, an internationally known veterinarian and an IUCN expert, now here. He came here on an invitation by the IUCN to look into the problems of the zoo.

Findings of the blood test prompted the unprepared zoo officials to launch a desperate search for medicines, some of which were at last found in Chittagong.

In a bid to contain the deadly infection, vets yesterday injected all the fifteen tigers with an 'anti-protosol drug com-

pound' called Quinapyrimine Sulphate chloride.

Dr Toosey, who is also Director of Lahore Zoo, told The Daily Star that the two tigers showing symptoms of Trypanosoma belonged to the same family of three tigers which died at the end of last month.

"We do not take chances after the two tigers showed symptoms of the infection. All the tigers have been given the injection which contain both preventive and curative compounds," said Dr Toosey. "The problem has been brought under control with the medicine but the same shots have to be repeated after two months."

The veterinarian who was invited by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) after his name was recommended by the Royal College of Veterinary Sciences in England, said that the infection possibly spread through biting flies or cattle fodder.

Dr Toosey also pointed out that Dhaka Zoo lacked some vital things including those used

for restraining and catching animals.

"Proper tranquilisers for big animals are not available and the one currently used --- Catamine --- can not properly tranquillise a big animal like the Royal Bengal Tiger," he said.

But Dr Munirul Haq Veterinary Surgeon at the zoo contradicted the observations made by Dr Toosey and some other zoo officials. DR Haq said, one of the tigers --- one year old Sharmila --- is about to die and a black bear has also fallen sick but it is being taken care of.

"How can you work at a place when the Director General himself is a near-ignorant man," Haq complained about the Director General of Livestock Directorate.

Visiting foreign guests recently suggested that as a vet, I should have internet connection to learn more about other zoos. But the whole idea was shrugged off by the DG who insisted that digital telephone connection was needed to initiate things including those used

See Page 12 Col 8

Tale of Jyotsna

From Hossain Seraj

MAGURA, Sept 18: Justice delayed is justice denied. Jyotsna, 38, wife of Sheikh Abdul Aziz alias 'Teko' Aziz, who was shot dead allegedly by 'terrorist' Ershad Shikdar about four years ago, is still deprived of justice.

Daughter of late Zimbat Ali of village Parnanduali of Magura Sadar, Jyotsna was married to Teko Aziz, son of Abdul Mojib Sheikh of village Shailpura under Rupsha thana in Khulna district about 23 years ago. She is now a mother of four children.

According to the confessional statement of Noor-e-Alam, bodyguard of Ershad Shikdar, Teko Aziz was shot dead allegedly by Ershad Shikdar over business rivalry in Khulna.

After the murder, Jyotsna left Khulna with her children as she was threatened by Ershad Shikdar and his accomplices, according to Jyotsna's family sources.

They said, Ershad came to Khulna from Barisal in search of a job and was employed in the fish godown of Teko Aziz.

In course of time, Ershad turned into an extortionist and

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Hasrat Jaipuri passes away

MUMBAI, Sept 18: Well-known film lyricist Hasrat Jaipuri, whose soulful and memorable songs cast a magical influence on cinegoers and music lovers, died here yesterday following kidney failure. He was 77, reports PTL.

Hasrat, who was ailing for the last two years, was admitted to the holy family hospital last Tuesday after a fall at his 'G-hazal Villa' residence in Juhu. The end came at 1800 hours yesterday evening, family sources said.

The lad from Jaipur, who ventured out to Mumbai in 1948 to make a mark in Bollywood when the medium of cinema was going up, got his first break

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Spl team to question Ershad Shikdar

Human skull, more bones recovered from river

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Sept 18: Divers today recovered a human skull and seven bones from the bed of river Bhairab.

This is for the first time that a human skull has been recovered since the search began in the river bed to recover remains of the victims of murders committed by 'terrorist' Ershad Shikdar.

Ershad is likely to be placed on remand in Khulna tomorrow for interrogation by a special team of police officials who were never in Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP).

This decision has been taken to ensure transparency in interrogation, a KMP source said today.

The human skull, bones, torn clothes, cement cakes, nylon ropes and empty plastic bags of fertilizer will be preserved and produced as evidences in the murder cases filed against him, said DG (South) Mazharul Huq, who is heading a four-member team of investigators.

An official of KMP said the search under the supervision of

the Khulna Metropolitan Police will continue tomorrow.

Navy divers will also conduct search in ponds, ditches, drains and bushes adjacent to Ghat No 4 and 5 tomorrow, following confessional statements of Ershad's accomplices now in custody.

Search will also be conducted at Ershad's village home in Madarkhola under Nalchiti thana in Jhalakathi district, sources said.

Meanwhile, wife of late Kalu Sarder today filed a case with Kotwali thana in connection with her husband's killing, naming Ershad Shikdar as the principal accused. Kalu Sarder was hacked to death in June last year and the body was dumped into the river, police said.

Charge sheet will be framed against Ershad and some of his accomplices tomorrow in connection with the murder of Panna on October 17, 1997 in Khalishpur. Panna was one of the witnesses to the murder of ward commissioner and AL

See Page 12 Col 3

Environmental court soon

'Noise pollution much above permissible level'

The government would soon set up an environmental court to deal with all sorts of pollution, reports UNB.

Environment and Forest Secretary Syed Marghub Morshed said this while speaking at a seminar at the National Institute for Preventive and Social Medicine (NIPSOM) in the city yesterday.

"Constitution of the court is now under process," he said giving emphasis on formulating an environmental agenda and collective efforts to address the problem.

Sundar Jibon, a voluntary

organisation, organised the seminar on 'Noise pollution in Dhaka city and its consequences'.

Country Director of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Prof Imun Nishat and Bangladesh Observer Editor Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury addressed the seminar as special guests. Sundar Jibon, President ZBM Bakht and Secretary Sirajul Islam Mollah also spoke on the occasion.

ENT specialist and researcher of the National Center

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One of the two Royal Bengal Tigers believed to be infected with deadly parasite, Trypanosoma, at the Dhaka zoo.

—Star photo