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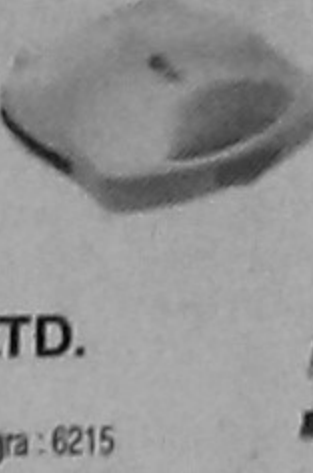
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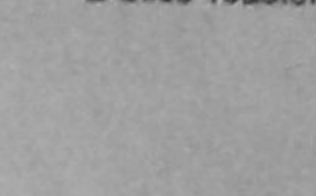
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AL will do better in next polls: Hasina

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said Awami League will do better this time than it did in '96 election, reports UNB. She said her government's achievements both at home and abroad will help Awami League to return to office for the second time. 'I'm sure people will recognize it and the results of the next election will be far better than that of '96, Inshallah.' The Prime Minister made the remarks when a 24-member newly elected executive committee of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) led by its president Dr Rashide-Mahub and general secretary Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin called on her at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday. In an oblique reference to Khaleda Zia's prediction about winning 269 seats by the allied opposition, Hasina said: 'That arithmetic would not work during the polling.' When BMA leaders expressed concern over the unity of BNP, AL, JP, Jamaat and IOJ, the Prime Minister said those who are now united were always united in the past and there is nothing to be worried about. About the power-sharing plan of the BNP-led alliance, AL Hasina said: 'If they install anti-liberation Golam Azam in power, then it would be suicidal for the freedom fighters and the nation as well.' She called for a greater unity of pro-liberation and democratic forces to foil the evil de-



Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman (second from left) administers oath of office to the newly-elected mayor and ward commissioners of Chittagong City Corporation at LGED Bhaban in the city yesterday. —Star photo

Ctg hartal

From Page 1 hury, Farid Ahmed Chowdhury, Kafil Uddin Khan, Nurul Huda (Lalu), Mohammad Abu Taher, Mohammad Anwar Hossain, Mohammad Yakub, Mamunur Rashid Mamun, SM Alamgir, Alhaj Manjurul Alam Manju, Sheikh Shahjahan, Aslam Hossain, Mohammad Hossain Hiron, Mohammad Giasuddin, Syed Golam Haider Mintoo, Mohammad Shahidul Alam, Mohammad Ishaq, SM Shahidullah, Alhaj Peyer Mohammad, Abdul Naser, Abdul Malek, Alhaj ASM Jafar, Sirajul Islam, Fayed Ahmed, Mohammad Hossain, Jalal Uddin Ahmed, Nazrul Islam Bahadur, Mohammad Ali Box, Haji Mohammad Abu Jafar, Tarek Sohlaiman Selim, ASM Shahabuddin, M Zahurul Alam Dovash, Mohammad Jalal Uddin, Haji Nurul Hoq, Mohammad Saiful Alam Chowdhury, Haji Mohammad Zakaria, Nurul Alam, Mohammad Aslam, Alhaj Shaheque Ahmed and Saleh Ahmed Chowdhury.

Meghnaghat Power Project Energy Ministry's move to resolve PDB-AES conflict

The Energy Ministry has taken initiative to resolve the conflict between PDB and American firm AES over the project site for Meghnaghat power plant, reports UNB. According to ministry sources, the top officials of the ministry have already held talks with the Power Development Board to get their version on the tussle. 'We have talked with the PDB and we are going to talk with the AES,' said an official of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources yesterday. The ministry's move came when the US firm sought Energy Ministry's intervention to end the conflict. The AES as repeatedly declined to take over the project site as it was so poorly prepared that installation of machinery would be impossible. It also complained that the site was not shielded against earthquake risks. PDB dismissed AES allegations of poor development of the site and again asked the US company to take over it and start installation work of the power plant, scheduled to be completed by February 2, 2002. Meanwhile, the Power Development Board has got into another conflict with the Bureau of Research, Testing and Consultancy (BRTC) of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) over technical conclusion of the Meghnaghat plant site. The 7-member BRTC, BUET team conducted a technical survey of the project site at the request of the AES. The PDB in a letter to the BUET Vice Chancellor accused the consultancy of allowing 'AES to use its good name to mitigate the just stand taken by BPDB.' In separate letter, PDB also proposed the names of four professors who should be included to decide on the matter for assuring 'a fair and credible resolution.' Sharply reacting to the letters, the Chairman of the Civil Engineering Department of the BUET, under which the BRTC attitudinal in this respect. In response to the BUET letter, the BPDB wrote again on April 30 accusing the Head of the Civil Engineering Department of having a 'mala fide intention and unholy play with the contractor (AES).' Meanwhile, the Power Development Board is yet to serve its final notice to the AES to take over the site for setting up the Meghnaghat Power Plant or face termination of the contract.

Next govt to be govt of unity: Khaleda

GAZIPUR, May 2: Leader of the Opposition in parliament Khaleda Zia said the next government will be the 'government of unity and patriotic' people, reports BSS. The Awami League has presented the people with candle and darkness in the year 2000. We will present the people employment, economic development, prosperity and honour in future, Khaleda said while addressing a May Day rally at Chandana High School ground here yesterday. The BNP chief said future government will ensure fair prices of the peasants and protect the interests of the workers and reopen all closed mills and factories. In an oblique reference to the Awami League, she alleged that the party had gone to power through 'intrigues'. But this time all paths of intrigues will be stopped, she added. Rejecting AL criticism of BNP for alliance with 'rajakars and autocrats', she said the government's accusations were designed to destroy the unity and mislead the people. 'The opposition have forged unity to remove the government working against the country. And the current opposition unity will continue', she said. She also gave a vote analysis claiming to have 80 per cent support for the opposition alliance and the rest 20 per cent to the ruling party. Being perplexed by the opposition unity and the people's anti-government sentiments, Khaleda said the ruling party was trying to break the unity. But the government's move to break unity will not succeed, she added. She said the Awami League will not be allowed to return to power in future and the process of dislodging the government will have to be accelerated to save the country from further damage. Presided over by AKM Moliuddin, the rally was addressed by BNP leaders including Abdul

JCD President Sohel released

By DU Correspondent Habib-un-Nabi Sohel, president of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), was released on Monday from Dhaka Central Jail. He was arrested from a procession in front of BNP central office at Naya Paltan on December 17, 1999. The procession was brought out protesting conferment of honorary doctorate degree on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by the Dhaka University. Leaders of BNP and JCD received Sohel at jail gate. Among others, Sadek Hossain Khoka, Amanullah Aman, Barkatullah Bulu, Najmuddin Alam, Khairul Kabir Khokon, Munshi Baziul Basit Anju, Monwar Hossain Rana, SM Nuruzzaman were present at the jail gate. Meanwhile, Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu, General Secretary of JCD, was released a few days ago. He was also arrested from the same procession. The released JCD leaders placed wreaths at the major of late President Ziaur Rahman on Monday morning.

2727 more examinees expelled on 4th day

By Staff Correspondent A total of 2727 examinees were expelled for cheating in different examination centres under Dhaka, Jessore, Rajshahi, Chittagong and Comilla education boards on the fourth day of HSC examinations yesterday. The candidates sat for test on Bengali 2nd paper. According to Dhaka Education Board officials, a total of 451 examinees were expelled from different centres in 16 districts. Of them, two were expelled in Dhaka city, 12 in Gazipur, five in Narayanganj, 21 in Narsingdi, nine in Munshiganj, six in Manikganj, 58 in Tangail, 69 in Mymensingh, 156 in Jamalpur, six in Sherpur, nine in Kishoreganj, 51 in Netrokona, 11 in Faridpur, eight in Gopalganj, 22 in Madaripur and six in Shariatpur. Jessore Education Board officials said, a total of 258 examinees were expelled from different centres in 15 districts. Of them, 21 examinees were expelled in Patuakhali, three in Barguna, 21 in Pirojpur, 23 in Bhola, seven in Jhalakathi, 24 in Khulna, 13 in Bagerhat, seven in Satkhira, 51 in Kustha, five in Chuadanga, 24 in Meherpur, 30 in Jessore, one in Narail, 23 in Jhenidha, and four in Magura. No report was available from Barisal district due to the disruption in telecommunication network. Our Chittagong office re-

Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam's birthday today

The 71st birth day of Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam will be observed in the country today, reports BSS. Mukti Joddher Chetona Bastabayan O Ekattorer Ghatok Dalai Nirmul Jatiya Samannoy Committee has chalked out an elaborate programme to observe the day. The organisation will take oath to strengthen the movement demanding trial of Golam Azam and other war criminals in a special tribunal and for banning communal politics, says a press release. The programmes include garlanding the portrait of Shaheed Janani at 8 am at her home, unveiling the plaque of the road named after Shaheed Janani by Mayor Mohammad Hanif at 11 am at the intersection of Elephant Road (Bata Crossing). A juvenile procession be brought out from the Central Shaheed Minar at 3 pm, opening of exhibition of photographs and posters at the TSC at 4 pm, placing of wreaths at the portrait of Shaheed Janani by different organisations and discussion meeting at TSC at 4.30 pm.

West Bengal minister dies from burn injuries

CALCUTTA, May 2: West Bengal Commerce and Industry Minister Bidyut Ganguly died early yesterday following burn injuries at the state-run SKM Hospital, according to State Health Minister Partha Dey, reports PTI. Dry told PTI that Ganguly was rushed to the hospital last night from his Bhatpara residence in North 24 Parganas district in a critical condition with 95 per cent burns. Ganguly, 64, was elected to the West Bengal Assembly from the Bhatpara Assembly constituency in 1991 and was inducted into the Jyoti Basu cabinet as commerce and industry minister. A juvenile procession be brought out from the Central Shaheed Minar at 3 pm, opening of exhibition of photographs and posters at the TSC at 4 pm, placing of wreaths at the portrait of Shaheed Janani by different organisations and discussion meeting at TSC at 4.30 pm.

Pvt university teacher mugged on VIP road

By Staff Correspondent A group of muggers took away Tk 5400 from Harun Rashid Khan, assistant professor of a private university in the city at about 8:20 pm last night. The incident took place in front of Walsow Tower on VIP Road, the victim said, adding that his autorickshaw was stuck in a traffic jam. The group comprising four teenage boys came to Khan and snatched the money at knife-point. When Khan rushed to a mobile police team waiting in a police van about 100 yards off the place of occurrence, they refused to help him citing other pre-occupations. Ramna police station also refused to lodge the case over phone Khan said adding that they asked him to go to the thana.

Cyclone, flash floods likely this month

After having fairly a favourable weather in April, the country may face natural calamity like cyclone and flash floods this month, reports UNB. Met office forecast yesterday that 'a couple of depression might form over the Bay of Bengal in May and one of them is likely to turn into cyclone.' 'Also this month, one or two spells of flash floods may occur in the greater Sylhet, Mymensingh, Chittagong and Chittagong Hill Tracts areas,' the forecast says. On the other hand, 'moderate heat wave' will sweep Rajshahi division and the region of Jessore, Satkhira and Kushtia during the month. The predictions came from the monthly meeting of Expert Committee of Storm Warning Centre at the Met Office yesterday. After reviewing data, weather map, regression of climate and Analogue Model and Satellite picture, the committee observed that southern wind flowing 10,000 ft above Bangladesh and the Indian Ocean remained comparatively warm. Under the influence of the monsoon, rainfall more than normal may occur across the country. Moderate to heavy kabaisakhi nor'wester is likely to sweep Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and northern region of Khulna division.

Triple murder at Azimpur: 5 chargesheet

By Staff Correspondent Five people were chargesheeted in a triple murder case yesterday. The murder was committed last year at Azimpur under Lalbagh thana in the city. Sajeedunnessa, 57, wife of Abul Hasem, her daughter, 27, and her son Swapno, 20, were murdered by their relatives over a property dispute, said the CID which submitted its charge sheet after four months of investigation. Inspector Elias Mian, the investigation officer in the case, submitted the charge sheet while ASP Abdul Kahar Akand supervised the case. Partially decomposed bodies of the victims were recovered by Lalbagh police on November 21, 1999, according to reports. The CID started investigating into the case on December 7 and submitted the six-page charge sheet which identified Ahmed Hossain, Abdus Satter, Mohamed Dulal Mian, Mohammed Nasir Uddin, Syed Obaidul Akber as accused. Of the total accused, three were arrested while two — Dulal and Nasir — are absconding.

Shikdar, Faruque & Lashkar shifted to Khulna jail

From Staff Correspondent KHULNA, May 2: Ershad Shikdar has again been shifted to Khulna District Jail along with 'Jama' Faruque and Li-aquat Lashkar. This is the fourth time for Shikdar and third for Lashkar to have been shifted from Jessore Central Jail reportedly for security reason. KMP authorities have taken tight security measures in and around the district jail restricting their movement. Shikdar's bodyguard, who has also been shifted to Jessore Central Jail from Kushtia District Jail. He is being given protection and some facilities which the general prisoners do not normally enjoy. Although named in FIRs as accused, Noor-e-Alam was acquitted by the Special Court of Zainal and Khalid Murder cases for helping police in detection and investigation by making judicial confessions under Section 164. He has been made government approver in all the murder cases so far recorded with different police stations against Shikdar and most of his armed cadres. Meanwhile, the ruling party and all its front organisations have again demanded arrest of Shikdar's armed cadres still at large and recovery of all his firearms and ammunition. The non-recovery of Shikdar's firearms and arrest of the keepers of those will undermine the real spirit so far applied by police and the press in successfully detecting and investigating the murder cases, said leaders of the ruling and opposition parties.

Mahbubul Alam Tara gets bail in corruption case

From Our Correspondent Feni, May 2: District Additional Judge Golam Rabbani today granted bail to former BNP Whip and president of Jatiyatabadi Krishak Dal Central Committee Mahbubul Alam Tara in a corruption case. Feni District Anti Corruption office filed a corruption case against Tara and three others for selling 100 MT of fertiliser out of Feni in 1997.

ETV to telecast live four matches from Male

Ekushey Television will telecast four matches, including three of Bangladesh and the final, of the 4-nation Golden Jubilee Football Tournament live from Male, reports UNB. The private TV channel already telecast the 1st match between Bangladesh and India yesterday afternoon. The remaining two matches of Bangladesh will be held on May 4 and 7 and the final on May 10. As the matches will start at 5 pm Bangladesh time, the ETV will open at 4:45 pm instead of 7 pm on those days. Other programmes will, however, remain unchanged, said an ETV press release.

Flash flood in Sylhet region: Rivers cross danger mark

From Our Correspondent MOULVI BAZAR, May 2: River Monu is flowing 1.63 cm above danger mark. The river was flowing at 18.70 cm at Railway Bridge at 6 pm today. Breach developed at Monu River Flood Control Embankment in Malikuna area under Kamarchak of Rajnagar upazila. Water is entering through this breach which flooded many villages. Adampur, Islampur and Patan Uzhur union under Kamalgonj thana went under water because of old breaches. Rain added to the miseries of the people. Rainfall was recorded at 48 mm today. BSS adds: At least 15,000 people were affected and standing crops on about one lakh acres went under water in four districts of Sylhet division due to flashflood triggered by torrential rains for the last five days. The haors and low-lying farmlands in Sylhet, Sunamganj, Habiganj and Moulvibazar have been swamped by the floods. The flood control embankment at Malikuna in Kamarchak under Rajnagar Upazila has been damaged, inundating 15,000 people, the local union parishad chairman said. The Surma, Kushiara and Manu rivers are flowing above their danger levels. Hilly waters have already entered Companiganj, Balaganj, Kamalgonj areas, local people said.

Girl gangraped in Tangail

From Our Correspondent TANGAIL, May 2: An eight-year-old girl was gangraped here today, police and hospital sources said. The victim was rescued by some local people from near Park Bazar at about 11:45 am and taken to Tangail General Hospital. Noting the victim, a hospital source said, some unidentified people forcibly took her to the Park Bazar field while going to market and raped her. She is a daughter of a local rikshaw-puller.

Alleged mugger beaten to death

By Staff Correspondent A mob beat to death an alleged mugger at Guntighar in the city's Demra yesterday afternoon. The identity of the dead could not be known immediately. However, the injured were identified as Jewel, Mobarrah and Lablu. Police rescued and sent them to Dhaka Medical Hospital. See page 11 col 7

Ships collide at Ctg port

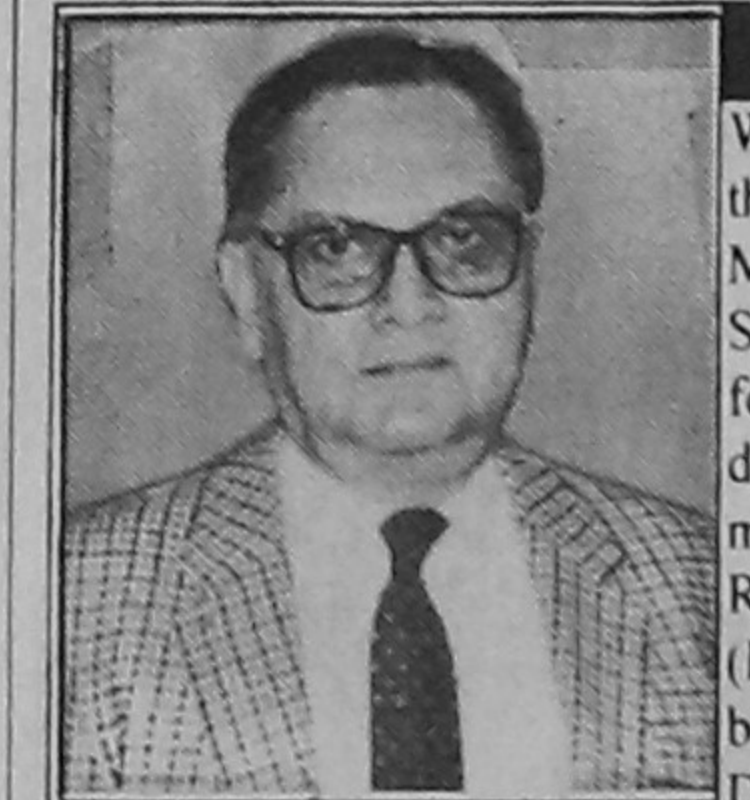
CHITTAGONG, May 2: Two foreign ships collided at the outer anchorage of the port today causing damage to both the vessels, port sources said, reports UNB. The collision took place between a Liberian wheat-laden ship and a North Korean ship carrying cement. A tugboat rescued the vessels after one-and-a-half hour.

HC suspends confiscation of Sharif's property

KARACHI, May 2: A Pakistani High Court today suspended the fine and confiscation of property imposed on former prime minister Nawaz Sharif pending an appeal against his conviction and life sentence for hijacking and terrorism, reports AFP. The two-judge bench adjourned the case until May 9. Justices Abdul Ghani Sheikh and S.A. Rabbani of the Sindh High Court said they would also decide whether to admit a prosecution appeal seeking the death penalty for Sharif at the hearing. Sharif, ousted in a military coup on October 12, was convicted of attempting to prevent a commercial plane carrying army chief General Pervez Musharraf and 198 passengers from landing at Karachi on the day of the coup. The plane landed after the army took control of the airport and within hours Musharraf seized power. Sharif, a wealthy industrialist, was sentenced to life imprisonment by an anti-terrorism court on April 6, and fined 500,000 rupees. All his property was confiscated and he was ordered to pay two million rupees in compensation to the passengers. The court acquitted six co-defendants in the case, including Sharif's brother Shahbaz, but they remain in custody in connection with corruption charges. The prosecution has moved an appeal against the acquittals which will also come up for hearing on May 9, court officials said. Tuesday's decision was welcomed by Sharif's lawyers and leaders of his Pakistan Muslim League (PML). 'It is a relief for us and for the family. And now we are hoping and praying for his release,' a PML leader, Ejaz Shaif, told reporters after conveying the news to Sharif's wife Kulsoom Nawaz. 'It is a good decision. Nawaz Sharif is confident like us that we will get justice,' said lawyer Salim Zia. The two-judge bench however dismissed Sharif's application for leave to appear in the high court during the appeal proceedings. Sharif's lawyer Azizullah Sheikh had told the court that 'some aspects of the case are very sensitive which only the appellant can submit to the court in person, and he may be allowed to be present on every date of hearing of the appeal.' The bench also rejected Sharif's request to meet his party colleagues in jail and denied permission to install an air conditioner in his prison cell.

5 ministers

From Page 1 Abdus Samad Azad, Home Minister Mohammad Nasim, State Minister for Shipping Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, State Minister for Planning Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and Mukul Bose, Relief and Social Welfare Secretary of the ruling party. While filing the complaint, Golam Kibria told police that he had furnished all necessary documents including video films on the incident.



OBITUARY

We express our profound shock at the sad and untimely demise of Major General Abdul Manar Siddique (Retired), Ex-Minister and former Director of our company who died of cardiac failure on Tuesday morning at 7.30 a.m. at Birala Heart Research Center, Calcutta (Ennailahi ..... Rajuon). He left behind wife, one son and two Daughters and a host of friends, relatives and well wishers to mourn his death. He was 65. We on behalf of Phoenix Leasing Company Ltd. pray for salvation of the departed soul and express our deep condolence to his bereaved family. Phoenix Leasing Company Limited Shadinata Bhaban (1st floor) 88, Motiheel C/A, Dhaka - 1000, Ph: 9569007 Editor: Mahfuz Anam Published by the Editor from Transcraft Ltd, 229, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208 on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52 Motiheel C.A., Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: 19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215. Telephone Numbers: 8124944, 8124955, 8124966, Fax: 8125155, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Internet edition address: http://www.dailystar.com and Email address: dstare@bangla.net