

Gas export Dhaka disagrees with Vajpayee's claim

Bangladesh's stance on the crucial issue of gas export is unchanged, said state minister for foreign affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury apparently disagreeing with the Indian prime minister's claim that Dhaka and Delhi are at advanced stage of gas talks.

Asked to comment on Indian premier Atal Behari Vajpayee's remarks in parliament, Chowdhury said, "I can't be drawn into making a comment on a reported observation by prime minister of another country."

He, however, said the government has an "open position" on this.

"Our prime minister clearly articulated that a decision on this matter would be taken after careful consideration of national interests, one of which is at least 50 years' reserves to meet the needs of future generation," he told UNB.

On Thursday, Vajpayee told Lok Shava that India is in advance stage of talks with Bangladesh on importing its natural gas.

He said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is very keen on the proposal and there could be some agreement with Bangladesh.

Woes of 300 telephone subscribers

By Raziur Rahman

Three hundred telephone subscribers in the city's Pallabi area have been deprived of service for the last 10 days due to inter-organisational tangles.

The telephones under Mirpur exchange are not operating since March 26 due to faults in underground cables in Pallabi area, an engineer at the exchange said seeking anonymity.

The authorities concerned could not take steps for repair of the cable as Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) is yet to give permission for digging the pavement of a road, needed for this.

"We submitted application at the local office of DCC soon after the subscribers complained," the engineer said. Nagar Bhaban officials say they need the opinion of the local office to give permission while the local office says first they need permission from the Nagar Bhaban.

Sources at the exchange said they need to dig a 15 to 20 feet stretch of a pavement. The exchange authorities clearly mentioned in their application to

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Our new numbers

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May	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
6	5:20 a.m.	6:30 p.m.
7	5:20 a.m.	6:30 p.m.

Prayer Timings

May 5	Azhan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:15	4:45
Zohr	1:00	1:30
Asr	5:00	5:15
Maghrib	6:30	6:33
Esha	8:00	8:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

CU expels 4 BCL, one Shibir activists

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, May 5: Chittagong University Syndicate today expelled five students — four BCL activists and one Shibir activist — for their involvement in campus violence on May 15 and December 19 last year.

The Syndicate took the decision on the basis of reports submitted by the probe body. The 10-hour meeting ended at 8 pm. However there was no decision regarding reopening the university.

The expelled BCL men are Mir Mezbah of Accounting Department, Humayun Kabir alias Himu Bangalee and Nurunnabi Azmal of Marine Science Department and Chowdhury Tauvir of English Department. The Shibir activist is Md Mobashwer of Philosophy Department.

They were expelled on disciplinary grounds, meeting sources said.

Shibir activist Zober was killed on the campus on May 15 last year and another two Shibir activists — Mahmudul Harun and Rahimuddin — were killed in a gun battle on the campus between the activists of Shibir and BCL on December 19.

The Syndicate meeting also decided to lodge two separate cases with Hathazari thana in connection with the two violent incidents.

The Syndicate also declared that the present ban on all political activities, including processions, rallies on the campus will remain in force till further order.

The CU authorities called upon all student organisations of the university to help maintain congenial academic atmosphere on the campus. The authorities sought cooperation of all including guardians, teachers and employees of the university in this regard.

Earlier, some BCL activists laid a siege to the administrative building while the Syndicate meeting was going on. They urged the Syndicate not to punish their activists. They also submitted a memorandum to the Syndicate before withdrawing the siege programme at around noon.

Chittagong University remained closed since December 19 last year, making fate of 14000 students uncertain.

'Love Bug' wreaks havoc Fall-out in Bangladesh still unknown

As the world is stung on Thursday by a "love" bug, a computer virus which affected more than one million computer files across the world, the extent of damage in Bangladesh is yet to be known, report agencies.

The virus, which spread Thursday as an "ILOVEYOU" cyber greeting, reportedly started in Manila, quickly ripping across Asia, Europe and North and South America.

Analysts believe it caused the most damage in the United States, where some 970,000 computer files were affected.

Trend Micro, an anti-virus reserved company, estimated at 1915 GMT Thursday that some 1.27 million computer files were infected worldwide by the "ILOVEYOU" virus. Outside the United States, Europe had some

167,000 computer files damaged, South America 22,000, Africa 17,000, Asia 12,000 and Australia 7,600.

"We alerted all about the bug. But so far we have had no report of any ravage," said Abdullah H Kafi, president of Bangladesh Computer Society told UNB as the alarm bell rang worldwide.

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He didn't rule out the possibility of the "ILOVEYOU" virus infecting computer files invading through e-mail and chat rooms in the country.

But we can't say right now how much damage is done since today is Friday, and all government and private offices and establishments are closed.

The "Love Bug" wreaked havoc on computer systems

worldwide on Thursday, shutting down e-mail systems at major companies and penetrating the Pentagon, the Central Intelligence Agency and Britain's parliament.

It was being called the fastest-moving and most widespread computer virus ever, affecting computers around the world at brokerages, food companies, media, auto and technology giants as well as universities and even medical institutions.

'Love' virus may change to 'Joke'

The "Love Bug" computer virus has given birth to a new variant that entices users to open an e-mail with the word "Joke" in the subject line that unleashes yet another virus masquerading as a "Very Funny" attachment.

US business software firm Computer Associates International Inc warned on Thursday that the "ILOVEYOU" "worm" might have morphed into another virus in an effort to trick computer users into opening it.

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Beware of fake ISPs

Don't receive any password offered by telephone callers in the name of Internet Service Provider (ISP) you subscribe to, says Grameen CyberNet.

It all is fraudulent. The callers are not anyone belonging to the ISPs. Once they get the password, the callers will be using it entailing huge bill on the bamboozled customer, reports UNB.

In recent times, many Internet users are getting calls asking about their passwords and offering new open-sesame by the callers who identify themselves as ISP officials.

The country's leading ISP, Grameen CyberNet, this week issued an alert notice to all of its subscribers to be aware about the fraudulence after it received such allegations.

"During the last few days some of our valued customers are getting calls from strangers asking them about their passwords and also offering new password," said the Grameen alert notice.

"Please do not talk to them, don't give them your password or take their password. They are neither Grameen CyberNet employees nor have they been authorised by Grameen CyberNet to do so," it said.

Tk 1 lakh bounty for Bdmall hacker

By Staff Correspondent

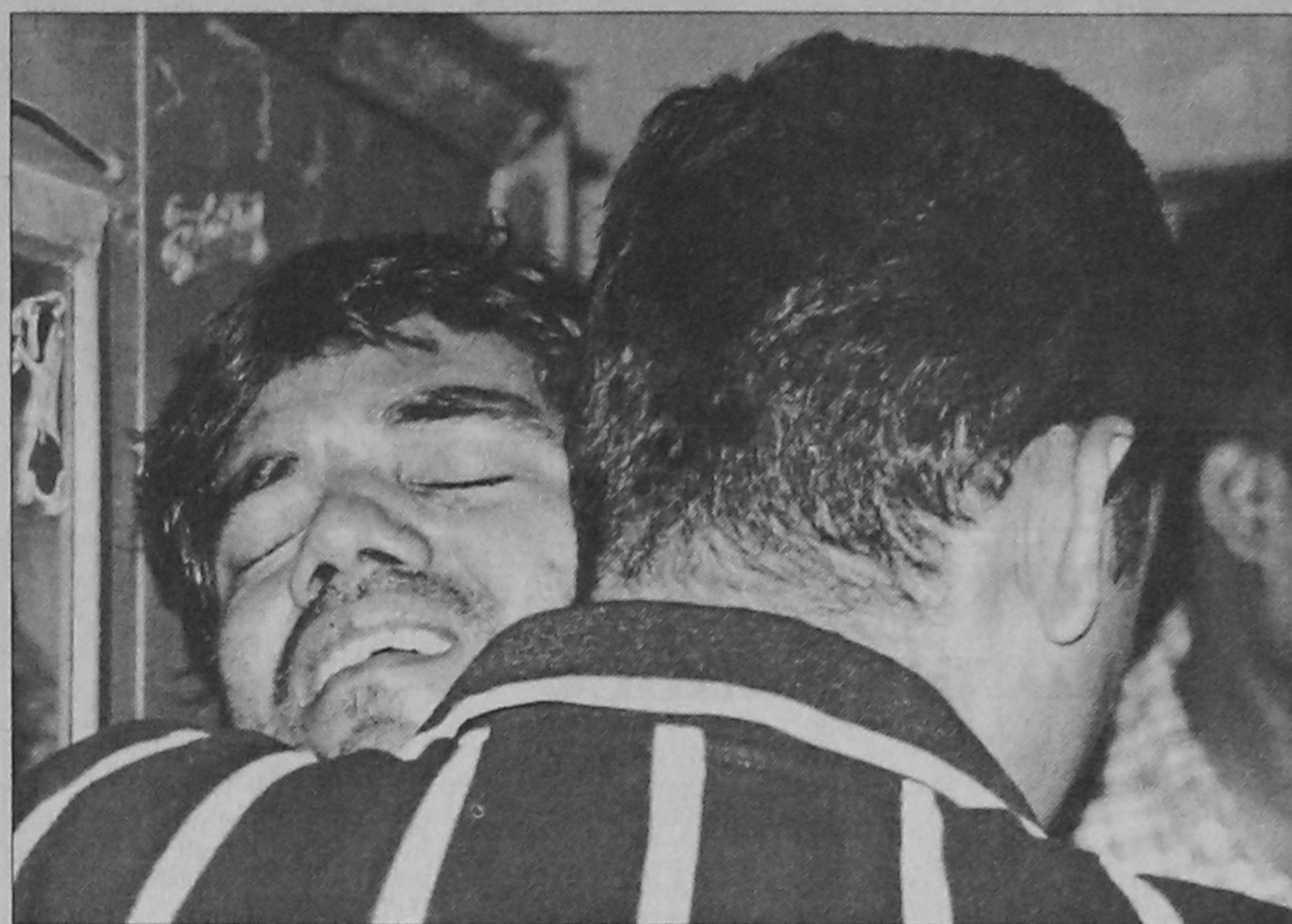
Brac Bdmall Limited has announced a one lakh taka award for identifying the hackers who hacked its domain for the second time in the span of four days.

The announcement came at a meeting of the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) on Wednesday. The meeting, titled 'ISP security and Development', was convened by the ISP forum and chaired by the Advisor of the Software Export Committee, Professor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury.

The country's leading ISPs, who attended the meeting, expressed concern over the recent domain hacking.

Brac Bdmall representative

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Brothers of Rebel and Jewel wail after hearing the news of murders yesterday.

— Star photo

2 brothers shot dead

By Staff Correspondent

Two brothers were called out of their Mohammadpur residence in the city one after another within fifteen minutes, taken to separate places in a car and murdered by a professional killer yesterday morning, said police.

"The two brothers — Ashfaq Hossain Jewel, 28 and Mohammad Ali Rebel, 24 — were shot dead by a professional killer, Kamal Pasha, an FIR-listed accused in another murder case," OC of Mohammadpur thana Abdur Rashid told The Daily Star.

The victims are sons of Syed Amjad Hossain, former Editor of monthly Detective, a police publication, and a resident of Kazi Nazrul Islam Road.

Kamal Pasha is a brother-in-law of Babul, acting general secretary of Mohammadpur thana Awami League. Sources said Babul is a brother-in-law of Alhaj Mokbul Hossain, ruling party MP from Dhanmondi-Mohammadpur constituency in the city.

When contacted, Mokbul denied it. "He (Babul) is not my relative. He is a party worker", Mokbul said.

Driver of the car, Mahbub, 23, was picked up in an abnormal condition and the car was seized. He is being interrogated.

The alleged killer

By Staff Correspondent

Kamal Pasha, the alleged professional killer who murdered two brothers at Mohammadpur in the city yesterday, is the brother-in-law of Babul, acting general secretary of Mohammadpur thana Awami League, sources said.

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More than 100 murdered in city in last 4 months

By Shaikh Nazrul Islam

More than 100 people were murdered in the city in the last four months, indicating a rising trend in killings, but police could not make any headway in nabbing the killers in most of the cases.

According to police record, 35 people were killed last month against 25 in the previous month. The number was 27 in February and 13 in January. Some killings remained unreported.

The most sensational incidents were killing of joint-secretary Nikunja Bihari Devnath by muggers near Jagannath Hall of the Dhaka University on January 11 and murder of three youths at Rasulbagh in Gulshan area on April 5. Chowdhury Zahir Uddin Babar, Selim and Russel were murdered in a rivalry over influence in the area.

Police Sergeant Ahad was killed in December last year while he was trying to nab some muggers in Motijheel Commercial Area.

Despite some arrests, police are still unable to nab the killers.

The murder of Nikunja Bihari led to a reshuffle in the city's police command including transfer of the DMP Commissioner. The new Commissioner ordered police to "shoot-

on-sight" muggers. But mugging and other crimes are on the rise.

Rather, police involvement in crimes showed a rising trend. Nine policemen were suspended in the city in one week for 'criminal activity and negligence of duty', the records showed.

Two minor brothers — Ariful Islam Nayan and Nazmul Islam Raju — were strangled allegedly by their uncle at their Monipur residence in Mirpur on April 3. Their mother Ayesha Akther was arrested for her alleged involvement in the killings but the uncle, Shahid, is absconding.

Young man shot dead in city

By Staff Correspondent

Miscreants shot dead a young man in the city's Dakkhingao under Sabujbagh police station yesterday afternoon.

The dead was identified as Shaheeb Ali, 18, son of Sham-suddin of South Madar Tek in Sabujbagh area.

The reason behind the killing could not be ascertained

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police said.

Police suspect that family feud resulted the murders since the killer was a regular visitor to that house.

Amjad Hossain has filed a case with Mohammadpur thana, accusing Kamal Pasha of the murders.

Pasha arrived at Kazi Nazrul Islam Road in an auto-rickshaw at about 7:30 am, took over a parked car and ordered his driver on gun point to follow his instruction. Driver Mahbub was waiting with the car for Dr Mobarak Ali in front of his residence.

Pasha forced Mahbub to take the car in front of Amjad Hossain's residence and then started calling Jewel by name.

Rebel came out of the second floor of the building. Pasha asked him to get in and then took him near Kishorey School at Mohammadpur, only 300

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Ransom for hijacked autorickshaw

By Morshed Ali Khan

Autorickshaw driver Solaiman was sitting idly in his three wheeler at Agargaon Road in the city at around 7-30 pm on Monday.

"Do you want to go to Dhaka Medical?" a young man asked politely.

As the two agreed on a fare, the young man said, "Move in this direction, please. We will have to pick up a patient."

Solaiman did so. After a few minutes, they arrived at an isolated corner of Agargaon area. Within seconds, four men turned up, pointed a gun at Solaiman and asked him to get off his vehicle. The gang took control of the autorickshaw and vanished in the alleyways, leaving its driver helpless and bewildered.

Solaiman immediately informed owner of the vehicle, Rahman (not his real name), about this. Rahman went to Tejgaon police station to file a case.

"What can we do? We are filled with fear," he said.

Judgement in Fatik Murder Case May 14

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, May 5: Judgement in Advocate Fatik murder case will be delivered on May 14 by the Additional District and Sessions judge of the Special Court. The court is trying all the murder cases against Ershad Ali Shikdar and his armed cadres.

Six out of eight FIR-named accused in the case including Shikdar faced the trial which took 47 days to complete. Thirty-nine prosecution witnesses were examined.

Three of the six arrested accused have already been sentenced to death in Zainal and Khalid murder cases.

They are Ershad Shikdar, Jamai Faruque and Liaquat Lashkar.

Two accused — Shikdar's wife Khodeja and Ayub Munshi — are still at large.

Advocate Jahangir Alam Fatik, a young lawyer of Khulna Bar, was brutally killed on April 6, 1998 in the ice factory at the Skid Ghat river post. Later, his dead body was dumped into Bhairab river along fish landing ghat.

Advocate Fatik was killed by Shikdar for having extramarital affair with Khodeja Begum, said Noor-e-Alam in his judicial confession recorded under 164 in the CMM's Court on September 1, 1999.

Sadik Abdullah yet to vacate ground floor

By Staff Correspondent

Chief Whip's son Sadik Abdullah is yet to vacate the ground floor of the seven-storied building he had allegedly occupied, Shahjahan Begum, sister of the building's owner said last night.

Sadik allegedly occupied the sixth floor flat and the ground floor of the building at Lake Circus in Dhanmondi area since July last year, she said.

He vacated the sixth floor flat on Thursday and was supposed to vacate the ground floor yesterday, she said.

"None came to remove belongings of Sadik from the ground floor yesterday," Shahjahan Begum said.

When contacted, Sadik Abdullah's family said the ground floor will be vacated today.

Shikdar's armed cadre Bhutto arrested

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, May 5: Bhutto, 32, one of the armed cadres of Ershad Shikdar was arrested by Khalishpur thana police on Thursday night from CSD godown area.

He was arrested in connection with a case recorded with Khalishpur thana on May 2, 2000.

According to police, Bhutto was also wanted in labour leader Siraj murder case. Police arrested him while he was severely beating the complainant of this murder case near CSD godown.

Police said 'Jamai' Farooq and Nasir Khan told them that Bhutto is one of the five people who used to keep illegal firearms of Ershad Shikdar. He was staying in the house of Awami League Leader Kazi Asgar Ali alias Tara Kazi, younger brother of Kazi Sikan-dar Ali Dalim MP of the ruling party.

Apart from several other criminal cases pending with Khalishpur thana, Tara Kazi was acquitted by special court in Khalid murder case on April 30. His daughter has been married to the eldest son of Ershad Shikdar.

Next 'doomsday' in 2002

LOS ANGELES, May 5: All five bright planets, the sun and the crescent moon were tightly grouped together in the sky for what it was a rare celestial event, reports AP.

Astronomers say Friday's planetary pileup was the tightest alignment of Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and the moon since 1962. On May 17, the 'still-unblocked' planets will bunch up even closer, though the moon will have moved away by then.

Star gazers must wait two more years before another grand grouping takes place, said John Mosley, an astronomer at Griffith Observatory.

"May 2002 will involve all five planets plus the moon," he said. "It will be similar to the one happening now, except you'll be able to see it."

The alignment has been in the works for over a month. In early April, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn were close together in the evening sky and outside the sun's glare. Now, all five planets

visible to the naked eye are on the opposite side of the sun from Earth.

Planetary alignments occur when three or more celestial objects move into positions so that a straight line could be drawn through their centers. But the definition is a bit loose: Planets that appear close together in the sky are considered aligned.

For centuries, doomsayers have predicted the end of the world whenever an unusual alignment occurs. But astronomers say the planet has never reacted to such an event.

One book, ominously titled '5/5/2000: Ice, The Ultimate Disaster,' predicts the alignment and increased solar activity will trigger a chain of events that will cause the Earth's crust to slide and poles to shift.

"It would be a geological Armageddon," author Richard Noone said last month. "You'd have volcanism going on globally. Earthquakes beyond the scale anything Richter ever

dreamed of. Tsunamis hundreds of feet high, sweeping hundreds of miles inland."

Mosley dismisses the prediction and has included a quote from Noone's book to open a debunking planetarium show titled 'Cosmic Catastrophe.'

"If this were true, it would have happened already," he said.

Noone, who moved his family to safety in Georgia, did not return a telephone message Thursday, but in a news release seemed to be backing away from the claim that a pole shift was imminent.

"Careful modeling would be necessary to predict how often in the past this has occurred and what the likelihood of it happening soon might be," he said. "Unfortunately, we don't understand enough about the various independent and inter-related influences which might be involved to make any such meaningful predictions."