

VOL. X NO. 120 REGD. NO. DA 781

www.dailystarnews.com

DHAKA SATURDAY MAY 20, 2000

3rd Millennium

JAISTHA 6, 1407 BS

SAFAR 15, 1421 HIJRI

16 PAGES PRICE : TAKA 6.00

Schoolboy beaten to death by fellow students

By Staff correspondent

A 12-year-old school student was beaten to death allegedly by fellow students just on the plea that he had taken away some mangoes from their dormitory.

The tragic incident took place Wednesday night at Matrichhaya Pre-cadet School at Madhubagan in the city, police said yesterday.

Abu Bayazid Mohammed Unnud, a residential student of class six, was called out of his room by Nayon, Rumi Azim, Kawshar, all students of class ten, sources at Dhaka Medical College Hospital said quoting the victim's relatives.

They charged him that he had stolen some mangoes from their room. When Bayzid denied, they beat him severely and left him in the staircase in an unconscious state, the sources said.

The body was recovered from the staircase of the dormitory on the next day (Thursday) police said.

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Biman's F-28 still stuck up in Calcutta

By Special Correspondent

Bangladesh Biman F-28 aircraft is stuck up at Calcutta airport since May 16 due to trouble in its hydraulic system after landing there, Biman sources said.

It left Dhaka for Chittagong on May 16 and from there it flew to Calcutta.

A team of 15 engineers and technicians were flown to Calcutta so far. But they were unable to set things right till yesterday.

Passengers who booked for the return flight to Chittagong and Dhaka were brought back by other flights.

Earlier this month, another F-28 developed trouble in its hydraulic system, aborting its flight shortly after take-off from Dhaka.

Both the aircraft were pur-

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Vajpayee to go online, to reply to questions

NEW DELHI, May 19: Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee will go online for the first time next week to chat and reply to questions posted on the Internet, India Today magazine said today, reports AFP.

Content editor of the India Today Group Online site, Samar Halankar, told AFP that the event was a coup of sorts.

"We had been trying to get him for weeks but we finally succeeded," Halankar said, adding that Vajpayee's one-hour chat would take place on Thursday between 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. (18:00 to 19:00 BST).

"We launched these celebrity chats two months ago and we usually get between 800 and 1,000 questions," said Halankar. "In five days we have already got 850 questions for the prime minister and the number is going to grow."

Our new numbers

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May Sun Rises Sun Sets
20 6-37 pm
21 5-13 am

Prayer Timings

May 20		
Azan	Jamaat	
Fajr 4-15	4-45	
Zohr 1-00	1-30	
Asr 5-00	5-15	
Maghrib 6-38	6-40	
Esha 8-00	8-30	

Source: Islamic Foundation

The Daily Star

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Under the banner of political parties

Illegal offices mushrooming again on public lands

By Raziur Rahman

Encroachers under the banner of different political parties, their front organisations and various clubs have again occupied public land and pavements by setting up their 'offices' in different parts of the city.

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) with the help of police had demolished a large number of such 'offices' during a special drive in October 1998.

Such 'offices' of the ruling Awami League and the main opposition BNP and their front bodies could be seen all over the city before the drive.

Now most of these illegally set up 'offices' belong to the ruling party and its front organisations. Bangladesh Awami Sechcha Sebak League's Fulbaria Railway Colony unit has set up its large 'office' inside

Osmani Udyan. There are at least two other such offices in and around the Udyan, located very close to the Nagar Bhaban.

Encroachers under the banner of Dhaka City Awami Juba League, Ward No 56 Unit, are yet to remove the signboard of their 'office' near the BIRDEM Hospital.

The unauthorised structure was partially removed following a report in The Daily Star in this connection.

There are now only a few such 'offices' which belong to BNP and its front bodies. A semi pucca office of BNP and Juba Dal has occupied public land at Karwanbazar. Two other 'offices' of the party were seen at Armanitola and Azimpur.

Besides, there are a number of such illegal makeshift offices

with signboards of local clubs.

An investigation showed that most of these clubs are mainly used by young activists of opposition parties. Two such club offices are located at Malibagh Chowdhurypara and one near Agargaon Officer's Colony.

When contacted, an official of Estate Department of DCC preferring anonymity told this correspondent that following the Mayor's 'special order', a large number of such offices were demolished with the help of police in October 1998. But DCC has 'no permanent team and no permanent mechanism' to demolish these structures immediately.

When visiting an 'office' with the signboard of Dhaka Mahanagar Bangabandhu Sainik League on the pavement just under the over bridge near Fulbaria Bus Stand, this correspondent found some policemen taking rest inside it recently.



A new front organization! An unauthorised construction sprang up under a footbridge at Fulbaria in the name of an unheard of front organisation of the ruling party.

—Star photo



Poachers with the cub.

Baby leopard rescued

By Special Correspondent

A baby leopard was rescued by Detective Branch Police from a house at Elephant Road near Hatirpool in the city yesterday.

Police sent it to Dhaka Zoo and detained the three alleged poachers -- Abdul Kader, 40, Ansar Ali, 30 and Zahir Hosain, 27.

A police press release said that the three alleged poachers "trapped the baby leopard in the Sundarbans and brought it to Dhaka to sell it to a circus party."

Hunting, trapping and trading on leopard is prohibited in Bangladesh and other countries of the world as the animal has become almost extinct. A few are occasionally seen in hills in Sylhet along the northeastern Indian border.

Leopard is not available in the Sundarbans, the last retreat of Royal Bengal Tiger. The king

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Appointment of CEC PM will send name to President in a couple of days

The Awami League Presidium at a meeting last night suggested Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to go ahead with nominating a Chief Election Commissioner soon as per constitutional provision since all doors are closed for a negotiated settlement of the issue.

A reliable source told UNB that the Prime Minister might send a name for the office of CEC to the President in a day or two. As per constitution, the President will act on advice of the Prime Minister.

The source said the new CEC may be from among some retired bureaucrats.

Presidium members who met at Ganobhaban had elaborated discussion on BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia's public statement in Kurigram rejecting

ing dialogue with the government on appointing a CEC.

The meeting observed that Khaleda Zia, through her statement, made it clear that she did not want appointment of a new CEC through discussion.

"Rather, she wants the matter to linger for her own political gain."

Her public statement, the Presidium felt, blocked all the avenues for discussion.

The source said the ruling party Presidium members discussed several names for a possible important post. Names of several former bureaucrats are learnt to be on the card.

The office of CEC vacant with the resignation of Mohammad Abu Hena on May 8, after a long leave.

Cobra venom worth Tk 3 cr seized at Ctg

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, May 19: Police in special raid seized two pounds of powdered venom of cobra snake worth about taka three crore from a house in port area last night.

During the raid, launched on receipt of secret information, police also seized 400 grams of heroin worth about taka two lakh from the same house at Adarshapara at 7:30 pm.

Police said the snake poison was found inside a packet with a label of France based Red Dragon Company.

Both venom and heroin were found under a cot in the house of one Md Yunus, police said.

During the presence of police, Yunus and his family members fled the house.

Port thana police said cases were lodged against Yunus under Narcotics Control Act and Special Powers Act.

Sec 144 to avert violence in Khagrachhari

From Our Correspondent
KHAGRACHHARI, May 19: The district administration has imposed Section 144 in Khagrachhari municipal area from 6 am to 6 pm tomorrow to avert violence as the two rival factions of Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP) announced programmes for rallies at the same venue and time on the day.

Addressing a public meeting at Bharat Chandra High School ground at Kanchan under Rupganj thana in Narayanganj district yesterday, Bhuiyan said the programme mounted here as the pro and anti-CHT Peace Accord groups earlier announced programmes to hold rallies at the Upazila Ground. The faction supporting the peace accord belongs to Jana Sanghati Samity. The other opposing the accord belongs to the United People's Democratic Front.

The programmes were announced to mark the 11th founding anniversary of the PCP (Hill Students Council).

The administration held three rounds of meetings separately with the rival groups in the last one week to defuse tension. It suggested the leaders to hold their rallies outside the municipal area, but there was no response yet, administration sources said.

'Govt out to plant its own man as CEC'

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has said the government is 'conspiring over appointment of a new Chief Election Commissioner and trying to select its own man' for the vital constitutional post.

"Stand release of the Election Commission Secretary and

Larma to address PCP rally at DU today

By Staff Correspondent

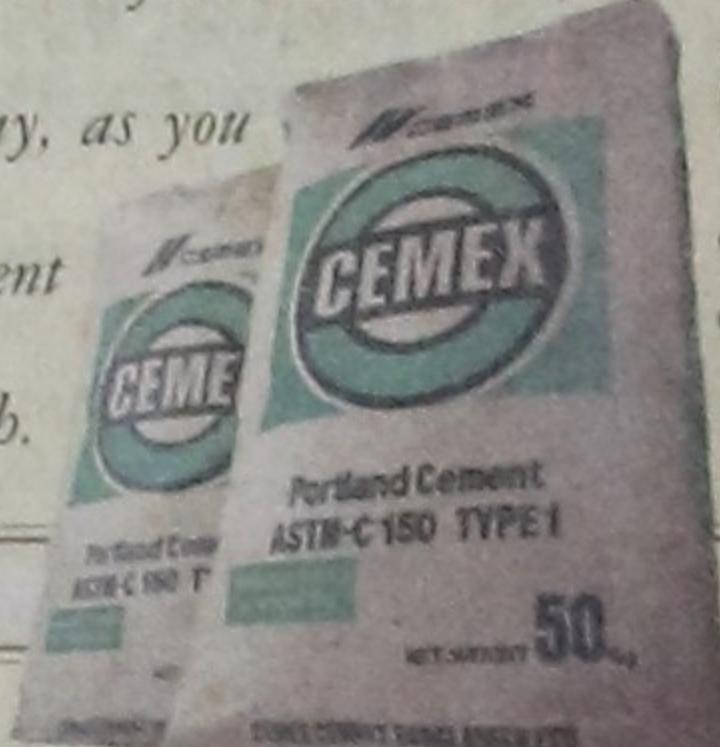
Chairman of CHT Regional Council Jyotiendriyo Bodhipriyo Larma alias Shantu Larma will address a rally of hill students on Dhaka University campus today.

See page 11 col 3

Pillar of Strength

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— AFP photo

An unidentified hooded gunman stands guard behind the gate to parliament yesterday in Suva after seven armed men seized the prime minister and his cabinet in a bloodless coup. Coup leader George Speight, also named Ratu Timoci Silatolu (inset) as interim PM.