

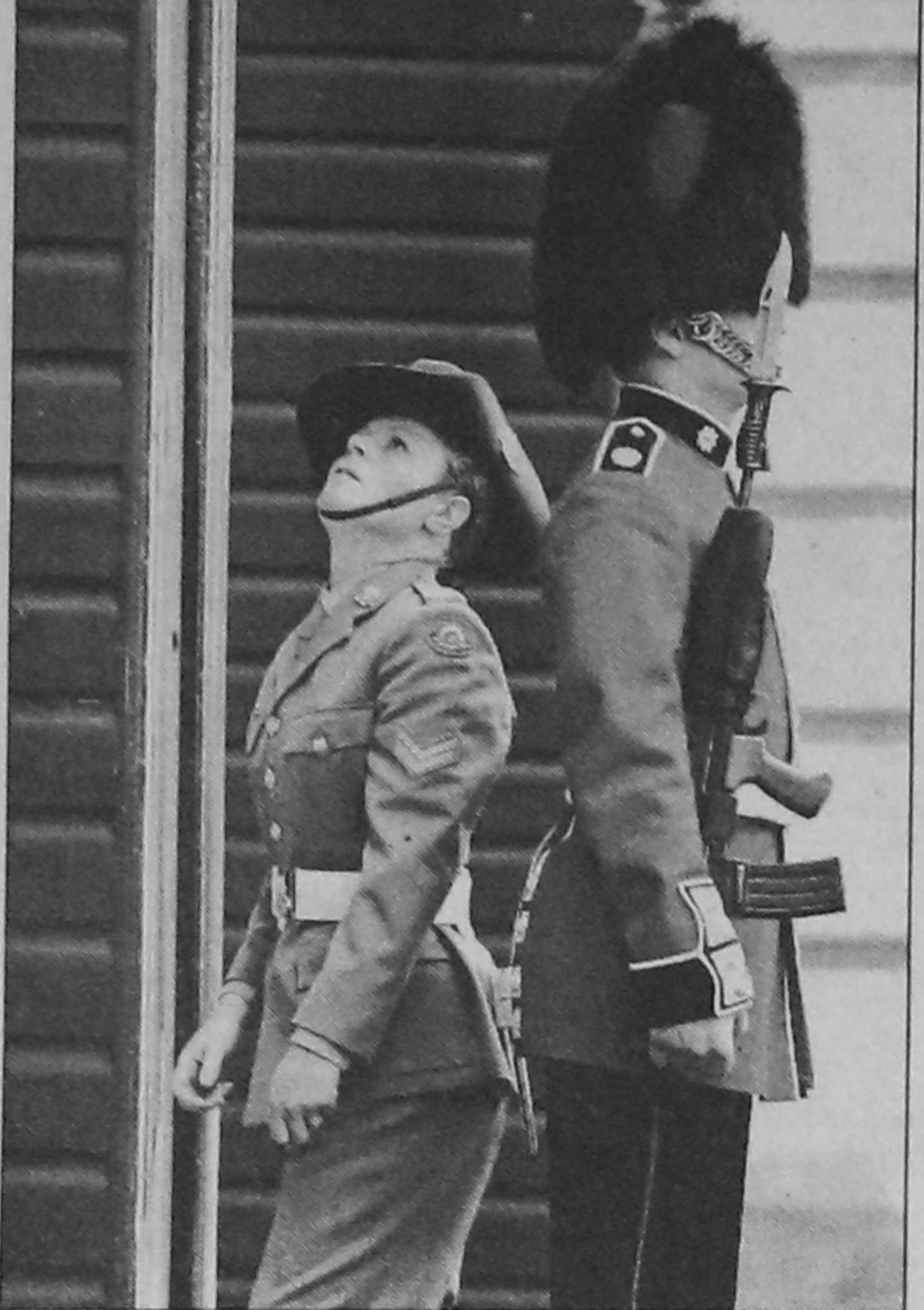
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Bernadette Taylor (L) inspects a sentry box outside Buckingham Palace yesterday. Four women from the Australian Federation Guard, part of a 150-strong contingent of Australian soldiers took up the Queen's Guard yesterday. It's the first time in the history of the Household Division that women have taken up sentry duty. —AFP Photo

### Missing Indonesian ship No sign of vessel or survivors

MANADO, Indonesia, July 1: The air and sea search resumed for a ferryboat missing in a remote corner of eastern Indonesia today. However, hopes were fading for the almost 500 people aboard as no sign of the vessel or survivors has been found for the past two days, reports AP.

Three Indonesian navy ships, a surveillance plane, a helicopter and a flotilla of private vessels have been searching for the wooden-hulled Cahaya Bahari off the northeast tip of Sulawesi Island since Thursday.

"There is still nothing, it is a real mystery for us," said Cmdr Djoko Sudarman, who is heading the search and rescue operation.

Contact with the ship was lost Thursday soon after its captain radioed that it was taking on water in stormy seas about 2,300 kilometres north-east of Indonesia's capital, Jakarta.

Local maritime officials reported that the ferry had been overloaded with almost twice the number of passengers it had been licensed to carry and they presume it capsized soon after the radio distress call.

However, searchers are puzzled as to why they have not located some debris or other signs of a sinking.

Sudarman said the search would continue through until tomorrow.

The ferry had been on a 320-kilometre voyage to Manado in the Maluku from the Maluku Islands, a corner of the Indonesian archipelago where violence between Muslims and Christians has killed almost 3,000 people of both faiths in the past 18 months.

Many aboard were frightened refugees from Duma, a Christian village in the Maluku where more than 100 people were killed in an attack by Muslim fighters on June 19.

Scores of relatives of the missing continued to gather at Manado's rundown docks waiting for news.

### 2 accused in murder case stabbed to death in Meherpur

MEHERPUR, July 1: Two youths accused in a murder case were stabbed to death at village Paranpur in Mujibnagar upazila of the district in the early hours today, reports UNB.

Police said bodies of Israil, 30, and Nayeab Ali, 30, were found in the morning at a field in the village, 3-km off the district town.

They were the main accused in Hatem Kota murder case. Hatem was slaughtered in the same village on June 23.

Police said Kashed Ali, 35, of Charulia in Damurhuda upazila was also found with critical stab injuries along with the bodies.

Kashed, who was accused in another murder case, was released from jail on bail last week. He is now undergoing treatment in Meherpur Sadar Hospital.

Police said today's double murder might have links with Hatem Kota murder over establishing supremacy in the area. A case was filed with Sadar police.

Some 22 people were killed in the district in last six months, police said.

### Transport strike

From page 1

When they expressed dissatisfaction over police role, the OC of Ramgarh without assigning any reasons seized a Khagrachhari-bound bus at 2 pm on Friday.

He forced the passengers to get down and arrested driver Nurul Amin, conductor Selamat Ullah and helper Chan Mia.

General secretary of Feni-Khagrachhari Bus Owners' Association Mafizullah said as per rule police used to start patrol from 7 am, "but on Friday they began their duties at 9:30 am."

### Discord delays Public Call Centre project

By Mustak Hossain

The Public Call Centre (PCC) project of Bangladesh Telephone and Telegraph Board (BTB) is yet to be implemented as Bangladesh Telecom Babosayee Samity (BTBS) has refused to take licence under BTB's terms, sources concerned said.

"The PCC is yet to see day light due to bureaucratic tangle and lack of a proper policy," Vice President of BTBS Farid Ali Khan said.

Telephone subscribers have to bear high call charge till the PCC project is implemented, many of them said.

The government decided to allow PCC with 'spot billing machine' to stop illegal telephone-fax business and create jobs for unemployed youths, an official of the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication (MOPST) said.

The BTBS, a forum of those in telephone-fax business, said it is not possible to continue this business with only 15 per cent commission.

Leaders of the forum termed BTB's decision to allow 15 per cent commission 'double standard' since it has allowed Telephone Shilpa Sangstha (TSS) 40 per cent commission for card phone service which involved zero manpower. BTBS needs to employ manpower for PCC.

"So our demand for 40 per cent commission is very much logical," Khan said.

He said they have also demanded fixation of local call unit at three minutes instead of five minutes and exemption of first five seconds for ISD calls and counting of every five seconds as call unit.

Besides, they wanted bank guarantee of Tk. 10,000 for every call centre instead of every telephone set, permission for service charge of 10 per cent instead of five per cent for NWD and ISD phone call.

Khan further said they sought loans of Tk one lakh to three lakh for establishing PCC and transfer of all telephone sets used in PCC without fees.

The MOPST in consultation with BTB decided to allow 'pay phone on commission basis'.

BTB agreed to allow PCC side by side with its Public Call Office (PCO) to increase public access to telephone facilities and 'regularise illegal phone-fax business' in the country, a senior official said.

It directed that all PCCs must have licence and must install 'spot billing machine'.

BTB would allow 15 per cent deduction from their bills after payment of its line rent, VAT and other charges.

In the new budget, import duty on spot billing machine has been reduced to five per cent from 25 per cent.

BTB has asked those concerned to have licence within three months. Otherwise it would disconnect all telephone lines used in fax-phone business.

It has disconnected several hundred lines of private phone-fax business in the capital 'without any prior notice', BTBS leaders alleged.

"BTB is pressuring us to buy spot billing machine before getting licence but it is not realistic," Khan said.

The MOPST's proposal regarding re-fixation of tariff for spot billing has been lying with the Finance Ministry since November last year, one source said.

### Torture victim Julekha's son stabbed

By Staff Correspondent

Some miscreants yesterday stabbed the youngest son of Julekha Mridha who along with her family members was allegedly tortured and harassed by police recently.

The stab victim is Mahbubul Huq Rubel, 16, police and his family members said.

Earlier, Julekha, a middle aged house wife from Khilgaon area in the city, at a press conference on June 22 accused police personnel of entering her residence and arresting her and her husband and also torturing her family members on the night of June 17.

The couple was released on bail on June 19.

Julekha filed an FIR with Khilgaon thana accusing six persons of stabbing her son with a motive to murder.



AFP file photo dated 29 May 2000 shows 10 Iranian Jews, convicted yesterday of spying for Israel, during the final hearing of their trial at the revolutionary court of Shiraz. Ten out of 13 Iranian Jews, as well as two Muslims, were given jail sentences totalling up to 13 years, while the remaining three Jews were acquitted.

### Ten jews Strong quake shakes Japan: one killed

From page 1

lawyer Shirzad Rahmani announced the sentence then became hysterical. Other Jews on the scene protested vigorously.

Amiri said on radio Tehran earlier that the sentences would be "fair" and "unaffected by political pressure", and their severity would depend on the offences of each defendant. Judge Sadeq Nurani would also take into account the fact that they had cooperated with the court.

Amiri rejected foreign criticism of the trial, notably an allegation Friday by the US State Department that it did not meet international norms.

Nasser attacked Amiri for giving some details of the sentences to the official media before revealing them to the defence.

"We know nothing precise about the Muslims who were sentenced or acquitted. The Muslims were protected, not the Jews," he charged.

TOKYO, July 1: One man was killed in a landslide after a powerful earthquake measuring 6.4 on the open-ended Richter scale rocked central Japan today, police said, reports AFP.

The tremor struck at 4:02 p.m. (1302 BST) with its epicentre located off Niijima and Kozushima islands, about 150 km southwest of Tokyo, the Meteorological Agency said.

"The man in Kozushima died at 5:15 p.m.," said an official with the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department.

"We do not know his name or age."

The man died in hospital on Kozushima after he was pulled out from the wreckage of his car under a landslide triggered by the quake, the official said.

There were no immediate reports of further injuries or damage to property.

One man walked away uninjured when his car was buried on Niijima, Jiji Press news agency said.

The tremor was first recorded as measuring 6.1 on the Richter scale but was later revised up. Meteorological Agency official Naoya Mikami told a news conference.

It was centred 10 km beneath the seabed around the islands, which are just northwest of Miyakejima volcanic island where thousands of residents temporarily evacuated their homes this week.

The quake, which was felt as a slight tremor in central Tokyo, caused rockfalls on both Niijima and Kozushima and buried at least four cars, police said.

"We have detected three landslides and three cars were buried" on Kozushima, said a Tokyo police official.



Opposition leader Khaleda Zia addressing an inter-city meeting on 'Environment and Literacy' organised by Rotary International at Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday. —Star photo

### Multan merchants use guns to stop tax officials

MULTAN, July 1: Merchants engaged gunfire with the police and shuttered their shops today in an attempt to stop tax officials from recording business transactions in this central Pakistani city, reports AP.

More than 700 merchants, many of them armed with automatic weapons, took to the streets in central Multan — nearly 300 miles south of Islamabad — shouting slogans against the government's drive to document businesses and private residential properties.

They threw stones at the police, burned tires and fired scores of gunshots in the air to prevent tax officials from entering the Chowk Bazar. At least two policemen were seriously injured after being hit by bricks, doctors said.

"We won't allow documentation of businesses," protesters shouted. "Down with the tax survey."

The police retaliated with tear gas and fired assault rifles in the air. Streets were littered with bricks and the air was thick with black plumes of smoke and tear gas.

Several protesters were arrested.

Since May 27, thousands of tax officials, accompanied by soldiers, are going from door-to-door in Pakistan's 13 major cities distributing the tax survey forms.

The move triggered nationwide protests and strikes earlier this month. But merchants called off protests in most cities and agreed to the tax survey after reaching an agreement with the government.

Merchants in Multan, however, are still fiercely oppose the move, fearing that the information would be misused by the corrupt tax officials.

In Pakistan, where corruption is rampant, tax officials are often accused of graft and penalizing those who refuse to pay bribes. The government has promised to clamp down on corruption and last month fired more than 1,000 tax officials accused of corruption.

Saying that's not enough, merchants demand reforms in tax laws and the tax department. They also say that the scheme is impractical because many people are unable to fill out the complicated tax forms. The literacy rate is barely 40 per cent in Pakistan.

But the nine-month-old military government has refused to budge, saying that the tax survey is vital to boost the country's revenues and broaden the tax base.

Successive governments have tried and failed to register businesses and tax payers. Only 1.2 million people are tax payers in Pakistan out of a population of 140 million, which the government says is "shameful."

### England win a thriller

Sports Reporter

Lord's got a fitting celebration of its centenary Test when England pulled off a sensational two-wicket win against the West Indies in the second match last night.

The hosts, needing 188 to level the five-match series, found an unlikely hero in Dominic Cork who saw his side through partnering a nervous number ten batsman Darren Gough. Cork remained unbeaten on 33. Courtney Walsh almost made the series 2-0 in favour of the Caribbeans with a magnificent six-wicket haul.

### Gasoline at city's pump houses lead free

Gasoline dispensed at pumps in Dhaka city has been free of lead, says the World Bank, reports UNB.

Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission carried out the test at the pumps and found that lead level was within the acceptable limit. Eastern Refinery Limited (ELR) laboratory confirmed that it is lead-free.

Just a year ago, on July 1, 1999, the government executed the landmark decision of providing only unleaded gasoline, said a World Bank press release.

By going lead free virtually overnight, Bangladesh has become a model for other countries in the developing world that are working to eliminate the harmful pollutant from gasoline, the release said.

Jiten Dra Shah, World Bank's Senior Environmental Engineer, said, "As lessons from Bangladesh's experience demonstrate, conversion to leaded gasoline could, in principle, be carried out rapidly in other countries."

Lead is a major environmental health hazard. Exposure to even low levels has been found to have adverse impact on public health, and particularly on the intellectual development of children.

### CEC's remarks emanate from his imagination: Mannan Bhuiyan

BNP criticised Chief Election Commissioner M A Sved yesterday for his irresponsible and misleading remarks about participation of opposition parties in elections, reports UNB.

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said the CEC's remarks had emanated from his imagination.

On Thursday, Chief Election Commissioner M A Sved confidently told newsmen that opposition parties would take part in all elections under the present Election Commission.

Bhuiyan said the fictitious and irresponsible statement of the CEC proved that they are engaged in implementing the blueprint of the government.

He alleged that government is hatching a conspiracy to hold election keeping the opposition out of the race by politicising the Election Commission and making the EC a subservient institution.

"Because, they (ruling party) know it very well that they would not win the next election if it is held in a free, fair and neutral manner," Bhuiyan said.

The BNP secretary general warned that people will resist the government's conspiracy and remove the failure and corrupt government.

### Wimbledon brief results

LONDON, July 1 (AFP): Singles results from the sixth day of Wimbledon here on Saturday (x denotes seeding):

**Women's singles: 3rd round**  
Lindsay Davenport (USA x2) bt Paola Suarez (Arg) 6-4, 6-2  
Arantxa Sanchez Vicario (Spa x9) bt Sandra Nacuk (Yug) 3-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-2  
Venus Williams (USA x5) bt Nathalie Dechy (Fra) 6-0, 7-6 (7/4)  
Magui Serna (Spa) bt Miriam Oremans (Ned) 4-6, 6-4, 6-4  
Monica Seles (USA x6) bt Sarah Pitkowski (Fra) 6-0, 6-3  
Lilia Osterloh (USA) bt Patricia Wartusch (Aut) 4-6, 6-2, 8-6

**Men's singles: 3rd round**  
Pete Sampras (USA x1) bt Justin Gimelstob (USA) 2-6, 6-4, 6-2, 6-2  
Patrick Rafter (Aus x12) bt Rainer Schuttler (Ger) 6-2, 7-6 (7/2), 6-3  
Marc Rosset (Swi) bt Tommy Haas (Ger) 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, 6-9, 7-6 (7/5)  
David Prinosil (Ger) bt Martin Damm (Cze) 7-6 (7/2), 3-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-4  
Alexander Popp (Ger) bt Gustavo Kuerten (Bra x4) 7-6 (8/6), 6-2, 6-1

### Students of Agri College block traffic, damage vehicles in city

By Staff Correspondent

Students of Agriculture College at Farmgate put up a barricade on the road near the college and damaged at least 12 vehicles yesterday morning, witnesses said.

Police said the students brought out a procession from the campus in the morning and blocked the traffic on the road demanding upgradation of their college into a university.

Police later chased the students and removed the barricade.

None was arrested in this connection, police said.

### Grocer murdered in Rajshahi

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, July 1: A 50-year-old man was tortured to death last night for allegedly raping a middle-aged woman at Kashadanga in the city.

The victim was identified as Shukur Ali, 50, a grocer.

Police recovered the body from Adariapara this morning. Monwara Begum, wife of the victim, filed a case accusing seven people.

Police said, some people tortured Shukur Ali alleging that he had raped the woman on Thursday last.

They took him to an unknown place, confined in a room and tortured him to death.

They later left the body beside Chapanawabganj-Rajshahi rail line at Adariapara, police said.

None was arrested in this connection till writing of this report at 7 pm today.

### Sailing of Maltese ship from Ctg port uncertain

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 1: Sailing of a Maltese ship from Chittagong port has become uncertain as it was detained here following an admiralty suit, port sources said.

Four parties including bunker oil and spares supplier filed the suit against the Maltese vessel anchored at jetty no 12 of Chittagong port.

As a result, the ship MV Norbulk Koak could not sail on June 28, port sources said. The ship loaded with imported clinker from Indonesia arrived here on June 8.

### Kashmir autonomy Cong asks PM to clarify govt's stand

NEW DELHI, July 1: Congress yesterday asked Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to clarify the NDA government's stand on the greater autonomy resolution passed by the Jammu and Kashmir assembly, reports PTI.

Alleging that the government has no (no) stand or policy on Jammu and Kashmir, party spokesman Anil Shastri told reporters while Vajpayee was willing to discuss the matter in the cabinet. Home Minister L K Advani favours parliament to debate the matter.

He also sought to know from the Prime Minister what he was going to discuss in the wake of the resolution and what would be its parameters.

**Our heartiest greetings at the inauguration of Distillery Road Gandaria Branch of The Loyeds Insurance Co. Ltd. Supreme Group 62-63, Motijheel C/A., Dhaka.**

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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