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NOTICE

Due to last-minute technical difficulties, today's issue of The Daily Star on Friday will be 16 pages, instead of 20 pages. We regret the inconvenience it may cause to our readers.

Management

Prayer Timings

February 2

	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	5-30	6-10
Juma	12-15	1-20
Asr	4-015	4-30
Maghrib	5-40	5-45
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

11-party procession attacked Hazari's men on hunt for Tipu's parents

State minister allegedly leads marauding anti-hartal activists

STAR REPORT

Two top leaders of the 11-party alliance were assaulted and at least nine people including two women were injured as pro-hartal pickets came under attacks from anti-hartal activists in the city during the countrywide shutdown called by it yesterday.

Alliance leaders alleged that Mofazzal Chowdhury Maya, Minister of State for Shipping and General Secretary of the City Awami League, led the attacks on pro-hartal pickets and processionists at Zero Point, Paltan Crossing and Topkhana Road between 10 am and 11 am.

The state minister, however, refuted the allegation and told The Daily Star last night, "Some third force might have done this." He however did not specify the 'third force'.

Witnesses said that some youths from a procession led by Maya swooped on the pro-hartal pickets without any provocation.

General Secretary of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Mujahidul Islam Selim told The Daily Star that despite his request to Maya, anti-hartal activists made the attacks and also threw brickbats on him.

The hartal was otherwise peaceful in the capital. In Narayanganj, President of CPB's town unit Shibnath Chakrabarty was injured when anti-hartal activists attacked and fired shots on a group of pro-hartal pickets for obstructing movement of trains at Chashara station. The attackers were allegedly led by ruling party lawmaker Shamim Osman.

Meanwhile, a brief press release issued from the Police Headquarters last night said that no major incident took place during yesterday's countrywide hartal. In some districts, hartal was not observed. It, however, did not provide a list of those districts.

According to reports from our district correspondents, hartal was observed by and large peacefully.

The 11-party alliance called the hartal protesting rise of terrorism and fundamentalism, corruption and plunder of national wealth by the rulers and price hike of essentials. The call was given in December last. Later, the alliance added to its demands the trial of those involved in the bomb explosion at the January 20 rally of CPB at Paltan Maidan in the city.

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State Minister for Shipping Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya brushes aside Mujahidul Islam Selim's plea to intervene after anti-hartal activists swooped on an 11-party procession near Paltan crossing in city yesterday.

START REPORT

Armed gangs of Joyanal Hazari accompanied by police are now hunting for relatives of UNB's Feni correspondent Tipu Sultan, particularly his parents, who have gone into hiding fearing reprisal.

Sources said the gangs equipped with firearms went to Tipu's village home at Sonapur, less than two kilometres from Feni town, Wednesday evening and looked for his parents.

They asked the villagers about Tipu's parents and how they could reach them. As none could say anything about them, the gangs asked the villagers to tell Tipu's parents that Hazari had asked them to meet him immediately. Uniformed policemen were seen with the gangs

during the 'raid'.

Tipu, a young journalist who won the UNB Best Correspondent's Award last year, was mercilessly beaten by armed men reportedly belonging to the Godfather of Feni, Joyanal Hazari, an MP from ruling Awami League.

Sources in Feni alleged that the terrorists, under a new platform "Class Committee" and direct patronage of Joyanal Hazari, have turned the district into a terror zone, ruthlessly persecuting or killing anyone opposed to or even criticising the godfather.

They said despite overwhelming evidences of his involvement in various crimes including killings, Hazari

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Ershad rushed to hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jailed former president HM Ershad was rushed to the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases yesterday in the city with chest complications.

He was taken to the Coronary Care Unit immediately after his admission to the hospital at 4 in the afternoon, party and jail sources said.

Prison authorities said Ershad was hospitalised following advice of physicians at Dhaka Central Jail

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Sumon knew it all...

... but says he wasn't at the club when Mohsin, Saem were killed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The principal accused in the Sutrapur double murder case in the city, Rabid Hasan Sumon, has admitted he knew that his accomplices had picked up Mohsin and Saem and were torturing them at the Sutrapur Rifle Club, DB police sources said.

He however claimed that he was not present at the club when the two youths were killed there.

Sumon and Sharif Ahmed Sharif, another accused in the case, were interrogated together at the DB office at Minto Road in the city yesterday.

Both were on remand.

Sumon told the interrogators that during the killings, he was staying at

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Commentary

Views can be many, but there can be only one fact

MAHFUZ ANAM

We can be just as sarcastic, taunting, vicious and vitriolic in our reply as the Prime Minister was in her falsely based accusation against us on the floor of the parliament. However, we will, as is our habit, be most respectful and dignified befitting our paper as well as the person and the office of the Prime Minister.

The first point that needs to be established is WHO asked the question regarding the President's resignation? The Prime Minister claims we did, and we say that we did not. People have the "Right to Know" who is right. This particular incident happened in the latest press conference of the Prime Minister. More than 30 journalists were present along with Bangladesh Radio, BTV, ETV and perhaps foreign TV media also. So why not ask these people. Why not call the Dinkal reporter Mukhlesur Rahman and ask him whether or not he asked the question. It is as simple as asking just one

person. Another way would be to see the video footage of the session and settle the question.

It is customary that when an accusation turns out to be false, an apology is extended to the 'victim.' But then we would be living in a fool's paradise if we were to expect something even remotely similar. That right we forsake. But then there is the point of historical record. The Prime Minister's speech will now form part of the proceedings of the Parliament in which this falsehood will remain for all the future generations. So can we, as a mark of respect for history, for the truth and for the Parliament itself, expect that this record will be set right?

What we find extremely worrisome is that the Prime Minister made a wrong statement in the Parliament six days after the event. So what did her press office do in the meantime? What the press office failed to do, her other office should have corrected. Or was this deliberately fed to her to poison the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Jt inspection team visits Naaf river site, meets today

UNB, Cox's Bazar

A meeting between Bangladesh and Myanmar on the dispute over construction of dam across the river Naaf is delayed by another day as the local side reached here, five hours behind the schedule.

Teams of the two countries yesterday conducted a joint investigation on the site where Myanmar was building a dam violating an agreement.

The negotiators from the two sides will meet today at 10 am at Koanchibaung in Myanmar to sort out the problems and defuse the tensions on the frontier triggered by an exchange of fire between Nasaka

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Beware commuters

Tempo passengers falling prey to organised muggers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tempo passengers in the city are increasingly becoming easy targets of organised gangs of muggers operating allegedly in connivance with a section tempo drivers and helpers.

Several mugging incidents in the last two days in Mahakhali, Gulshan, Banani, Farm Gate and New Market areas indicate that the gangs resort to the same tactics in all cases.

The gangs comprising about five or more each usually start their activities in the evening rush hours. Members of a gang board a tempo, occupy most of the seats in it and keeps on waiting. As soon as three or four passengers get in, the tempo starts moving towards its destina-

tion. When it reaches a 'suitable place', passengers are robbed and forced out of the vehicle.

Gulshan police received three reports of similar mugging incidents in Mahakhali and Chairmanbari areas. In one incident, a traffic policeman and a victim caught three muggers along with the tempo. The three youths and the vehicle were taken to Gulshan thana. But the victim did not go there. In the

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Biman employee files PSA case against three armymen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladesh Biman employee filed a complaint case under the Public Safety Act (PSA) in the CMM's court on Tuesday against three military personnel for harassing him in November last year.

According to plaintiff Motiur Rahman, he went to Kachukhet Bazar on November 24 last year at

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