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# three services

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday visited the headquarters of Army, Navy and Air Force where she was briefed about the joint exercises of the three services.

The joint exercises dubbed "Bajramushthi" (Thunder Fist) are being conducted in different parts of the country between April 8 and 11 to demonstrate the military might of the combined forces.

This is a command post exercise of the three forces in which the headquarters of the defence forces, different formations and brigade headquarters are taking part in the mock war.

A demo war is being fought by the three forces in the exercises and through this they are examining their strategies to keep themselves up to date on fighting skills, sources in the armed forces said.

During the briefing, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the present government had taken a number of steps for modernisation SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

#### UPDF men gun down policeman in Rangamati

BSS, Rangamati

A gang of armed activists, belonging to United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF) gunned down a police havildar at Poyapara in Kaukhali Upazila of the district on Monday

According to police sources, a gang of 10-15 armed activists of UPDF gunned down Asman Ali, 35, while he was on his way to the barrack after havildar duty.

Kaukhali Thana Police rounded up two persons, Ripon Chakma, 22, and Dhanapati Sarkar, 40, of village Poyapara of the same upazila suspecting their involvement in the killing.

The victim was taken to Kaukhali Upazila Health Complex where the doctor on duty declared him dead, police sources said.

A case was lodged with Kaukhali Thana Police in this connection.

#### BSP concern over attack on newspapers, journalists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President of the Bangladesh Sangbadpatra Parishad (BSP) Kazi Shahed Ahmed expressed concern over the recent attacks on newspapers and journalists.

Condemning the incidents, he demanded exemplary punishment to the criminals.

In a statement last night, the BSP president said both pro-and antihartal groups zeroed in on newspapers and journalists.

He cited a number of recent incidents where newspaperscarrying vehicles and on-duty journalists were attacked during hartalhours.

Shahed said a number of journalists were injured, newspaperscarrying vehicles were set ablaze and damaged on the first day of 72hour hartal called by the four-party opposition alliance.

He also urged all concerned not to attack newspapers and journalists anymore in the future.

#### NASAKA takes away two trawlers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

AP, New Delhi

since 1993.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was quoted as say-

ing that the Taliban rulers in Afghanistan would figure

prominently in his talks with Iranian leaders before

hope to discuss substantive areas of bilateral coopera-

hope to take our relationship forward in the cyber tech-

He is making the first prime ministerial visit to Iran

Afghanistan of training, funding, supporting and partic-

ipating in terrorism in Kashmir, India's only Muslim

majority state, which borders Pakistan. The Indian army

has frequently said Afghanis are among the guerrillas

who stage attacks in the Himalayan region, which is

claimed by both India and Pakistan and has been the

Iran also has backed self determination for the officials said.

"We have together fought colonialisation and now

leaving yesterday for a four-day visit to Tehran.

was quoted as saying by United News of India.

nology field," Vajpayee said.

cause of two of their wars.

Myanmar border force NASAKA early yesterday hijacked two Bangladeshi fishing trawlers after opening fire on the vessels and

injuring five fishermen. Locals said two trawlers belonging to Moktar Ahmed and Farid Alam of Purba Para in Saint Martin Island went to the Bay of Bengal on Monday night for fishing. There, NASAKA members who entered Bangladesh territorial waters fired on the trawlers injuring five fishermen. They also pushed off another 13 fishermen into the deep sea

before taking the trawlers away. The five fishermen with bullet injuries are: Nurul Amin, 25, Fazal Ahmad, 22, Jafar Alam, 24, Dudu Miah, 40, and Rafiq Ahmed, 21. They were admitted to the Teknaf Upazila Health Complex.

# PM briefed about Hartals add to miseries it exercises of of boro cultivators

REAZ AHMAD

Long duration hartals are affecting irrigation of boro fields and prospect of a good harvest of the paddy this season by disrupting supply of

Poor rainfall till now has added to the problem as farmers they have to depend wholly on irrigation.

Official sources said, boro growers are now facing difficulties due to hartal-caused dislocation in supply of diesel and consequent rise in prices of the fuel, badly needed to keep irrigation pumps operative.

Diesel price has shot up due to the Opposition-called 72-hour countrywide hartal now, a 60-hour shutdown five days before the present one and reports that a 96-hour hartal is likely next week.

Farmers in different areas of the

Non-students and identified terror-

ists belonging to both Bangladesh

Chhatra League (BCL) and

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) are

again becoming active on the Dhaka

University campus as the two rival

student organisations are now busy

Leaders of the Awami League-

backed BCL and pro-BNP JCD are

allowing this although these ele-

ments had masterminded many

violent activities on the campus,

damaging the academic atmo-

strength on the campus and resist

This unhealthy trend began early

JCD's fresh bid to regain its position.

tion demands for resignation of the

A good number of armed activ-

positions on the campus.

sphere in the past.

insiders said.

STAR REPORT

country, particularly the northern region, now have to spend more for irrigating their boro fields.

Officials in the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), who earlier spoke of a bumper boro harvest this season, are now not that optimistic about it.

rain is also not encouraging for boro farmers. They saw little possibility of enough rainfall shortly, which could bring relief to the farmers.

Weather experts' forecast about

surface water have dried up and many more are about to be so, requirement level, experts noted. aggravating the irrigation problem.

not getting enough ground water as the water level has gone down over

BCL & JCD backed terrorists

becoming active at DU again

regularly. Many of them have

already taken shelter at different

ous gunshots from almost all the

residential halls on the night of

March 25 and on the following night

Independence and National Day.

This was virtually a show of their

BCL however feel the necessity of

'more strength'. "We won't be able

to keep the halls under control if you

fail to provide us manpower and

Hemayet Hossain, who went into

hiding after his photograph while

brandishing a firearm was pub-

pus last week and was seen partici-

Iranian Vice President Hassan Habibi (R) and Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee review the guard of honour

in Tehran yesterday. Vajpayee arrived in Iran on the first visit by an Indian premier to the Islamic republic in seven

Vajpayee to discuss Taliban

"Yes, we will definitely discuss the issue," Vajpayee renegade Taliban troops. The two countries came close

The Indian government accuses the Taliban rulers in Indian goods to Central Asia through Iran's southwest-

said, answering reporters' questions at the airport. "I to war after Iran sent thousands of troops to its eastern

tion, as well as focus on regional and global issues," he following intervention by the United Nations.

issue with Iranian leaders

Despite 'instruction' from high

pating in BCL programmes.

Many of the hall unit leaders of

strength, campus sources said.

strengthen itself.

strengthening their respective apparently in celebration of the

BCL is using them to bolster its arms," one of them was heard telling

last month with the developments lished in various national dailies on

in political arena centring opposi- December 17, returned to the cam- 1998.

a central leader.

residential halls so that JCD cannot

The armed cadres fired numer-

ists of BCL now visit the campus officials, police 'could not arrest'

the years, experts said.

Besides, frequent disruption in power supply has posed a problem for farmers using power pumps for irrigation.

According to an estimate by the Agriculture Ministry, boro paddy is being cultivated in 3.7 million hectares of land in the country this season and production target is 10 million metric tones (MT).

The country produced 24.3 million MT of foodgrains against a Due to the long dry spell since net annual requirement of 21.3 November last year, many rivers, million MT in 1999-2000. Taking canals, ponds and other sources of into count 10-12 per cent usual crop loss, net production stood at the

Production of rice in the year was In many areas, farmers are also 0.7 million MT more than the requirement but wheat production fell 0.7 million MT short of the need.

Hemayet who also masterminded

various criminal activities at Ziaur

Ratan and Tomi known for terrorist

activities on the campus in the past

and some other terrorists have also

terrorists belonging JCD were seen

visiting the campus but were not

staying at the dormitories, fearing

reprisal by their rivals who are now

dominant on the campus and at the

violence-free for the last few years.

Besides some stray incidents, a gun

battle between two rival groups of

JCD in July last year left two outsid-

ers dead and a BCL leader was killed

on the campus in a gunfight

between JCD and BCL in March,

ousting ICD activists and thereby

BCL 'occupied' each of the halls,

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

The university has been almost

On the other hand, identified

started coming again.

dormitories.

Muslim-dominated population of Kashmir, and has

routinely condemned India for crackdowns in the state.

militia that rules most of Afghanistan have always been

uneasy, but in 1998 they plummeted following the killing

of seven Iranian diplomats and an Iranian journalist by

border with Afghanistan. The tension was defused

During Vajpayee's visit, India and Iran will sign agree-

The two countries are also expected to sign a customs

A joint committee set up by the two countries is

Vajpayee was to address the Majli, or Iranian

Parliament, meet with Iranian President Mohammad

Khatami, and visit the ancient city of Shiraz, Indian

expected to complete soon a feasibility study for laying

an undersea pipeline to bring the Iranian gas to India.

ments to boost trade and cooperation in the fields of

hydrocarbons, non-conventional energy and informa-

cooperation agreement and discuss a trade route for

tion technology, the government said Monday.

ern port city of Bandar Abbas.

Relations between Iran and the Taliban religious

Three others Babul Talukder,

Rahman Hall and on the campus.

#### **BNP** claims moral victory over AL govt STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP leaders yesterday claimed moral victory over the incumbent government, saying its bid to foil the 72-hour hartal has failed in the face of spontaneous public support to

the opposition movement. Addressing a rally in front of the party's central office at Naya Paltan in the afternoon, they claimed that the government's decision to keep offices open on the weekends pointed to success of the hartal.

The government is clinically dead, as the entire administration has collapsed with no one abiding by its orders, they told the rally, presided over by City BNP President Sadeque Hossain Khoka MP.

If needs be, the opposition alliance would call non-stop hartal, even for a month, to compel the "subservient, autocratic, fascist and incompetent" government to resign, the leaders said as they hailed the people for making the first two days of hartal a grand suc-

In his speech, Khoka told the party activists that good days were ahead of BNP and asked them to expedite the movement through actively participating in the street programmes.

BNP does not need to know where Ershad is going with his plough, the election symbol of Jatiya Party, he said.

Major (Retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed said the in nearly five years of its rule AL turned the Jatiya Sangsad into its party office and police into its party

The rally was addressed, among others by Shahjahan Omar, ZA Khan, Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, party MPs Shamsuzzaman Dudu, Fazlur Rahman Patal, Amanullah Aman, Zainal Abedin Faruque Mujibur rahman Sarwar, Ehsanul Haq Milon and Nazimuddin Alam, BNP leaders Chowdhury Alam, Rezvi Ahmed and JCD leader Manjur-e-Elahi.

#### Acid victim dies at **DMCH**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bishnu Moy Sur, 30, died from acid burns at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) at about 5 p.m. yesterday.

His younger brother Supon Moy Sur, 28, also suffered serious burns. Sources said miscreants threw acid on the two brothers when they were sleeping on the rooftop of their

Bazaar at about 5:00 a.m. In a critical condition, both were sent to the DMCH where Bishnu succumbed to his injuries.

three-storey building at Shankhari

Father of the victims Joy Sangkar Sur said his neighbours attacked his sons as a sequel to enmity over their

The sources said Joy Sangkar had a feud over a piece of land and got a court order in November last year. Joy filed a case with the Kotwali police in this connection.

#### Arms factory unearthed in Cox's Bazar

UNB, Cox's Bazar

Police on Monday night unearthed an arms factory in the cave of a hill in Moheshkhali Island, recovered large quantities of arms manufacturing materials and arrested a man and a woman from there.

raided Jhiri Hill in Kalaramchhora union found the den and arrested | day. Bazal Ahmed, 40, and Sayera Khatun, 45. On interrogation, Bazal and

Sayera revealed to the police some sensational information saying their brisk business started in view of the ensuing national election.

Abu Taher, a fugitive sentenced to life by the court, is the team leader with a 15 year's experience in making firearms. Consignments of arms manufactured in the underground factory go to different parts of the country. The last one was delivered on Monday.

Sayera told the police that many arms are kept in salt fields and shrimp enclosures in the island. All of them are residents of

Moheshkhali. Police recovered from the den materials including drill machine, hacksaw blades, hammers, iron pipes, pistol pipes, butts, plates and SEE PAGE 11 COL 6 | springs.



Paltan Maidan in the city yesterday.

#### Khaleda spoiled possibility of an early election AL leaders tell BCL rally in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

AL leaders at a rally in the city's Paltan Maidan yesterday blamed BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia for destroying the possibility of an early election saying the general election would be held in time as per constitutional provisions and not as per opposition's demand.

Addressing the BCL-organised grand rally, the leaders ruled out an early resignation against the backdrop of an opposition boycott of the parliament. They said AL would hand over power to a caretaker government only on July 13 unless the opposition returns to the parliament and discusses the early election issue with the Prime Minister.

Addressing as chief guest, AL general secretary and Local Government and Cooperative Minister Zillur Rahman termed Khaleda's demand for the government's early resignation as a political game. "The opposition leader does not believe in democracy and election," he

said, urging the BNP chief to spare the common people the sufferings of hartal and save the country's economy. Zillur said BNP would suffer a massive defeat in the election under a non-

party caretaker government and called upon the BCL to remain alert against BNP's conspiracy to foil a fair election. Food Minister and AL presidium member Amir Hossain Amu said that

fundamentalist, communal and defeated forces had again joined hands to destroy the country's hard-earned democracy through terrorist activities in thenameofhartal Terming the BCL rally very timely at such a crisis period of the country, he

said BNP would not be able to oust the AL even if it called hartal every day. He urged the opposition leader to follow the constitution and wait for the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

## Will journalist Tipu remain disabled? The Baily Star- saux sign

Tipu Treatment Fund Donate generously to this Fund

Save Tipu from Disability

Send donations to: Savings Account No. 25002111 Dhaka Bank Ltd, Karwan Bazar Branch, Dhaka

### Biman offcials assault passenger for protesting flight delay

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladeshi born British citizen was assaulted on board a flight from Bangkok to Dhaka and illegally confined by some Biman officials at the Zia International Airport Monday night as he protested "unexplained delay of the scheduled flight" and "misbehavior" of Biman A team led by OC Amirul Alam officials at Bangkok airport on Sunday, the victim alleged vester-

> Neelu Hasnat, a freelancer journalist was abused by Biman's First Officer Rahman as he protested the unexplained and mysterious delay of more than four hours of the flight-- BG 061. Biman officials even failed to inform the waiting passengers why the flight was delayed on April 8.

When Hasnat wanted to know the cause of the delay, First Officer Rahman told him that it was normal with any other airlines. Biman officials even did not offer the passengers any refreshment.

As an altercation broke out, the First Officer threatened Hasnat of "dire consequences when they land at ZIA".

The aircraft was declared "technically unfit" to carry passengers. The passengers were taken to a Hotel in Bangkok. On April 9, the aircraft returned to Dhaka with the

passengers after it underwent

repair.

Soon after the BG 087 flight took off, a relative of Rahman approached Hasnat inside the plane and started assaulting him, the victimalleged. Hasnat sought help from the

Chief Purser, Zarina, but she did not pay any heed. He tried to contract the captain but failed despite repeated attempts. All along the Rahman, Chairman of Transcom SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

#### Jubo Dal leader stabbed to death in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Straiganj

Unidentified elements stabbed to death a Jubo Dal leader at Gala bazar in Gala Union under Shahjadpur thana in the district

The victim was identified as Abul

Witnesses said the gang stabbed him fatally at about 12:30pm.

He was rushed to Sirajganj General Hospital where he died at

about 8:30pm. The reason behind the killing

could not be known. A murder case was filed with Shahjadpur thana in this connec-

#### Alleged robber shot dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An alleged robber, Abdur Rashid, 28, was shot dead while his gang was running away after committing dacoity at a residence in the city's Maghbazar area yesterday morning.

Sources said a gang of robbers appeared in front of the residence of Deputy Secretary of Ministry of Law Mahbubur Rahman at about 10:00 a.m. yesterday. They pressed the calling bell masquerading as local

They confined the family members when one of the maids of the house opened the entrance door. Another maid Helena managed to enter the bathroom and cried out for

The gang shot Kamal, a guard of that residence, when the local people chased them.

When the robbers were decamping after looting 21 tolas of gold ornaments, Tk 10,000 and a camera, one Rafiquzzaman from the neighbouring house opened fire on the robbers and wounded Rashid.

Rashid asked a rickshaw puller to take him away from the area.

The unidentified rickshaw puller left him in front of the Kazal Medical and left the spot. The victim was taken to the clinic where he was declared dead. The Khilgaon Police recovered the body.

Later, one Jahanara Begum, appeared at the Khilgaon Police Station and identified him as Abdur Rashid. She said her husband, an auto-rickshaw driver, was not involved in any criminal activities.

The Ramna Police said one officer went to the spot to investigate the matter, but no case has been filed until last night. The body was sent to the Dhaka

Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

#### Shazneen Case adjourned till Apr 24

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka yesterday adjourned the proceedings of the Shazneen Rape Case till April 24 following a time prayer by the prosecution lawyers.

Judge, Mohammad Shah Alam

Miah adjourned the proceedings as

the accused in the case were not produced in the court and complainant Mojibur Rahman did not turn up due to hartal. Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, the youngest daughter of Latifur

group, was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence on April 23. Latifur Rahman filed a murder case with Gulshan thana on April 24, 1998, accusing Shahidul Islam alias

Shahid, a domestic help at his house. Mojibur Rahman had filed a rape case with Gulshan thana after six months' investigation into the

murder case. Shahidul Islam is the principal accused in the case while contractor

Hasan is the alleged mastermind. Special PP A B M Sharfuddin Khan Mukul and Mahbub Ahmed appeared for the state while Advocate Mosarraf Hossain Kajol,

Saika Ferdous and M A Kamrul Hasan Khan Aslam for the accused. The murder case, pending with the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka was earlier stayed by an order of the

remain valid till disposal of the rape The trial of the rape case began at

Supreme Court. The order will

EDITOR: MAHFUZ ANAM-Published by the Editor from Transcraft Ltd., 229 Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208 on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd. 52 Motijheel C.A., Dhaka-1205, 8124966, Fax: 8125155, GPO Box No: 3257, www. dailystamews.com, E-mail: dstar@bangla.net, dseditor@gononet.com