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Journalist murder 4 PBCP men arrested at Dumuria

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna. Dumuria police yesterday arrested four persons in connection with journalist Nahar Ali murder. The arrested were identified as Goshtha Bihari, 30, Nagendra Mondol, 23, Dipankar Mondol, 28, and Nepal Mondol, 31.

Inqilab reporter assaulted in Khulna

UNB, Khulna. A journalist was assaulted allegedly by Awami League activists at Picture Palace Crossing in the city yesterday. Police said Muniruddin Ahmed, staff reporter of the daily Inqilab, Khulna office, came under attack while he was performing his professional duty in the area.

Meanwhile, city BNP at a rally condemned the attack and demanded exemplary punishment to those involved in the incident. On the other hand, Awami League and its youth front Jubo League declared Muniruddin Ahmed persona non grata in the city for his alleged indecent remarks about Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

One gets life-term for killing girl in Bagerhat

UNB, Bagerhat. A court here on Monday awarded a man life-term rigorous imprisonment for murdering a girl. Additional District and Sessions Judge M Aftabuddin also fined the convict, Rabiul Sardar, Tk 5,000, in default, to suffer an additional six months' RL.

According to the prosecution, Rabiul, hailing from village Joymonirkhol in Mongla upazila, strangled his 9-year-old cousin, Lovely on October 7, 1996. In another judgement on Monday the same court awarded eight people 10 years' RL each in a launch dacoity case.

The convicts are: Zakir Hossain, Harun Hossain, Rafiqul Alam, Jahangir, Alamgir, Mahedev Biswas, Shahidul Alam and Jalal Hossain. The prosecution said the convicts committed piracy in 'ML Al-Ansari' launch on December 3, 1997.

9 JCD leaders & workers get 4yrs' RI in Rajshahi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi. Nine leaders and activists of BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) were sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment and fined Tk 10,000 each.

Judge of the tribunal dealing with cases under Public Safety Act Narendra Chandra Das gave the verdict on Sunday.

According to the proceedings of the case, the accused along with their associates ransacked the local Awami League office, beat Chhatra League upazila unit president Shariful Islam and snatched his wrist watch on May 20, last year. Bagha upazila AL president Abdus Samad filed a case in Bagha thana the same day under Public Safety Act against 24 leaders and activists of the JCD.

Police submitted charge sheet against them and the judge found nine of them guilty after examining the witnesses. Fifteen were acquitted of the charges.

The convicts are Shahidul Islam, Selim Arif, Shahhaj, Siddique, Badsha, Rabiul, Scuzzaman Russel and Latif.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina handing over a cheque to the family of one of the three BDR men, killed during skirmishes with Indian Border Security Forces at the Roumari frontier on April 18, at her office yesterday.

Roumari incident PM's cheque for BDR families

BSS, Dhaka. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate a new ferry service over the river Meghna connecting Harinaghat river port of Chandpur with Alubazar port of Shariatpur today. The commissioning of the ferry service will open up a new vista in the country's communications network as it would reduce the distance between the Chittagong Sea port with Mongla port by 130 kilometers. Talking to BSS, the Minister of State for Shipping Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Bir Bikram, said the Chandpur-Shariatpur ferry service project was taken up at the initiative of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for easing the traffic pressure on the Dhaka city as well as opening a new route connecting the south-eastern region with the southern districts.

He said Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) has taken a five-year project at a cost of Tk 6 crore for dredging and construction of landing platforms. Maya said under this project, two row-row ferries would be procured with assistance from government of the Netherlands at a cost of Tk 109 SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Attack on Ctg newsmen Mamun moves freely but police say 'absconding'

NURUL ALAM, Chittagong. Resentment is growing among people in the port city due to police inaction after assault of two journalists of daily Purbakone by Mamunur Rashid Mamun, a cadre of Jubo League, youth front of ruling Awami League. The two newsmen were assaulted at the newspaper office on the night of April 18. Police are yet to arrest Mamun though a case was filed against him with Panchlaish thana under the Public Safety Act (PSA) in this connection. There are also about two dozen criminal cases and warrants of arrest against him, sources concerned said. Mamun, a Ward Commissioner, moved freely and had visited Chittagong Circuit House several times to meet a minister who was blamed by residents for allegedly sheltering him, the sources claimed. But in police record, Mamun was shown as 'absconding'. The sources claimed that he was not arrested from the Circuit House as 'green signal' was not received from Dhaka. Interestingly, police got 'green signal' on April 22 (Sunday), the day he left for Dhaka, a source in the police administration said. On the night of April 22, CMP police made 'raids' at his residence and at his 'special room' at 'Harbour View', a posh hotel near GEC crossing but could not arrest any of his armed cadres. Police however said hunt is on and messages have been sent to Dhaka to arrest Mamun. It is alleged that the hotel room is under his possession. He meets his cadres and other people there. A few days ago, Mamun created trouble at a posh club in the city at the end of a cultural function attended by Indian film star Mamata Kulkarni. A large SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



A constable covers the body of the housemaid, recovered yesterday from the Khilgaon residence of an officer of the Detective Branch.

Shell hopes to complete South Sangu drilling next month

STAR REPORT. Shell Oil is expected to complete work in the troubled South Sangu gasfield in the Bay of Bengal in mid-May, more than one year behind schedule. Sources said the company currently slowed down its drilling work, as it reached the 'unpredictable' high-pressure zone. It has reached a depth of 3700 metres and now looks forward to hitting the prime target of 4600 metres in mid-May. Shell expects to discover oil at that depth, the sources informed. After beginning the South Sangu drilling with a budget of 11.5 million dollars in late 1999 with a target to complete it by three months, Shell discovered an extension of the Sangu gasfield in January 2000. Until early April, it continued drilling there hoping to strike an oil field. At that time, due to technical and unprecedented geological difficulties, the drilling string of Shell's rig got stuck. As a result, Shell had to abandon the expensive string. "It is now drilling a well parallel to the abandoned original well. The new 'relief' well is only 12 to 15 inches away from the original well that was sealed off at a depth of 2000 metres to avert accident," said the source. "This is a crucial time for the operation, as the two wells are close to each other. A hasty operation would increase the risk of breaking into the original well and cause an explosion. That's why Shell is proceeding very slowly," the source added. Shell started re-drilling the gas field in an alternative way in mid-2000 and expected to complete it within a few months. The new drilling does not cost Petrobangla anything additional, as the whole drilling operation was insured. South Sangu is the first operation of Shell Oil in Bangladesh after it acquired 50 per cent of Cairn's interests in the country in 1999, including the gas-producing offshore Sangu gas field.

Contraband items seized at Bhomra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna. Sathkira police seized contraband items worth over Tk 2.50 crore from Bhomra Land Port on Sunday. The contraband goods were found for Dhaka in two trucks. According to police, the seized goods are 12,000 kilograms of Indian three-piece instead of 2,400 kg loincloth as declared earlier. Police said, some customs officials are involved in the smuggling. They said that the goods were imported by Messrs M&S Traders of East Jurrain, Dhaka by forged documents.

Khaleda tells govt Quit instead of 'instigating' anarchy

UNB, Dhaka. Opposition leader Khaleda Zia yesterday asked the government to quit immediately dissolving parliament instead of instigating anarchy in the country. "Hand over power to a caretaker administration forthwith conceding popular demand, shunning conspiracy, killings and fascist action," she said to the government while hailing people for observing hartal for a second consecutive day. The BNP chief accused the government of letting loose "state terrorism and perpetrating killings." She observed that the government became desperate in the face of mass movement and was "killing people frequently like birds." Khaleda alleged the government was also harassing opposition leaders and workers by arrest, repression and filing false cases. In her statement, the former SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Pro-democracy rally in Karachi banned

REUTERS, Karachi. Pakistan's military rulers warned political leaders yesterday not to travel to the southern city of Karachi for a banned pro-democracy rally on May 1, saying that if they did they would be arrested. "We are not going to allow other political leaders to travel to Karachi to take part in the rally and if they defy that order we're going to arrest them," Brigadier Mukhtar Sheikh, Sindh provincial interior minister, told Reuters. "We will not allow the rally because political rallies are banned in the country and we fear that politicians are going to exploit the situation," he added. Karachi is the Sindh provincial capital and Pakistan's largest city. Opposition politicians earlier said that they would still attempt to hold the rally, part of a campaign to demand the military government step down and restore democracy, and that they had sought official permission.

Mystery shrouds death of maid at DB man's house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT. Mystery shrouds the death of a housemaid at the Khilgaon residence of a sub-inspector of Detective Branch of police in the city yesterday. Body of the victim -- Tahera Banu, 20, -- was found hanging from a ceiling fan at the drawing room of the house yesterday morning. She was clad in salwar and kameez. Police recovered the body and sent it to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy. Tahera, divorcee, was working as a housemaid at the residence of Rawshan Mostafa, a sub-inspector of Detective Branch. She was the daughter of one Taleb Uddin of Bashgari in Bogra district. Local people alleged that they several times heard a woman crying on the fourth floor of the house. But police claimed that Tahera was mentally ill and attempted to commit suicide earlier. Police, however, could not substantiate their claim. An Unnatural Death Case was filed with Khilgaon police station in this regard.



A couple of rickshaws inside an alleyway at Naya Paltan (left), a charred passenger bus at Mahakhali and explosions elsewhere in the city marked the second day yesterday of the 3-day shutdown, called by the four-party opposition alliance.

Koizumi poised to become next PM

AP, Tokyo. Dealing a blow to Japan's political elite, maverick reformer Junichiro Koizumi defeated a former premier to win the ruling party presidency yesterday, guaranteeing his election as the next prime minister. The 293-155 vote by party members over former Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto capped a stunning upset by Koizumi, who was hoisted to the pinnacle of the Liberal Democratic Party by an overwhelming show of support by rank-and-file members in the primaries. The election of Koizumi reflected growing public disgust with the political establishment and the sour economy, and the LDP's desperate attempt to revamp its stick-in-the-mud image ahead of upper house Parliamentary elections this summer. "This election was held against an unprecedented headwind," Koizumi said in accepting the post. "I promised to change the party and SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Jayalalitha barred from contesting election

AP, Madras. A popular southern Indian politician appealing a corruption conviction was prohibited yesterday from running for the Tamil Nadu state assembly and rioting broke out. Jayaram Jayalalitha, a former movie star, had filed nomination papers to run in four assembly districts and election officers in three of the areas rejected applications that had been filed by her or her party members. Indian law prohibits people convicted of a crime that carries a sentence of more than two years in prison from running for office. Legal opinion had been divided, however, on whether the ban would be applied to Jayalalitha. Her three-year sentence in a land deal corruption case, stemming from her previous term as the state's highest elected official, has been suspended while she appeals her conviction. Her supporters rioted when she was convicted. Shops and buses were damaged in Madras, the state capital, shortly after Tuesday's news that she would not be allowed to seek office from two constituencies. Indian law allows politicians to run from more than one district, and one more election officer was still to be heard from. K S Jaya, the election officer for Krishnagiri constituency, made a simple announcement yesterday, saying, "Ms. Jayalalitha's nominations have been rejected under the powers bestowed in me by the 1997 Directive of the Election Commission."

Islamabad should sign CTBT: Benazir

REUTERS, Karachi. Pakistan's exiled former premier Benazir Bhutto said yesterday Islamabad should sign the global pact banning nuclear weapons tests. Bhutto told Reuters in an email interview received via her media office in Islamabad that Pakistan should have signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1998 after it declared itself a nuclear power. When asked if Pakistan should sign the CTBT, Bhutto said: "Yes, better late than never." India and Pakistan declared SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Pak national held in Mymensingh

BSS, Mymensingh. Police arrested one Pakistani national on Sunday at Mawna Square under Sreepur upazila on charges of his alleged involvement in a fraud. Police said the arrested person had claimed to be Nur Hossain of Model Colony of Karachi although he could not produce any passport to verify that. Police said, Nur Hossain came from Pakistan with his family on March 24. He took Taka 30,000 from a businessman of Patgudam area of Mymensingh to bring him dollars in exchange. But he did not return the dollar to the businessman. Sreepur police arrested him when he was trying to flee the area and later handed him over to Mymensingh police. A case was registered with Kotwali police in this connection. He was remanded in custody for three days when police produced him before the court.

Will journalist Tipu remain disabled? The Daily Star - প্রথম আলো 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

ANNOUNCEMENT. A memorial discussion meeting will be held on Late Tawfiq Aziz Khan, former Executive Editor, The Daily Star. Senior journalists of this country will speak on the occasion. Venue: VIP Lounge, National Press Club, Topkhana Road, Dhaka. Date: Thursday, 26 April, 2001 Time: 4 pm. ALL ARE INVITED TO ATTEND