

## PM calls on President

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called on President Shabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban and exchanged views with him on various issues of public interest.

The PM told the President that she welcomed the proposals of the European Commission to send a team of observers for monitoring the forthcoming general election in Bangladesh.

A Bangabhaban release said she also apprised the President of the outcome of her visit to London and Brussels that was "fruitful and positive."

The Prime Minister visited Brussels to attend the UN conference on LDCs and as a spokesperson placed a four-point proposal seeking debt waiver, increased aid from the rich nations and special measures to improve economic status of the 49 least developed countries of the world.

During her stay in UK, she had asked the heads of Bangladesh missions in Europe to project the concept of nonparty caretaker government to the European leaders, which has been adopted for ensuring free and fair election in Bangladesh.

She also had asked the mission chiefs to pursue economic diplomacy of her government for attracting more investment in Bangladesh and exporting skilled manpower.

The President appreciated Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her effective role in the UN conference on the Least Developed Countries.

## Trader chopped, robbed of Tk 1.5 lakh at Rampura

BSS, Dhaka

A young trader was chopped and robbed of Taka 1.50,000 in the city's Rampura area yesterday, police said.

Quoting local people they said a gang of miscreants waylaid one Saidur Rahman alias Khokon, 30, owner of Fatema Trade and Dyeing Industries Limited of Wapda Road area at about 11 am when he was returning home.

The miscreants chopped him with sharp weapons and took away Tk 1.5 lakh.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in a critical condition.

Family sources of the trader said the gang, hired allegedly by one Kamal Hossain alias Azad, attacked Khokon.

A case was registered with Khilgaon police in this connection, but none was arrested till filing of this report at 8 pm yesterday.

## Cop killed as gun accidentally goes off in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A police constable was killed when a 303 rifle he was carrying accidentally went off in Fatikchhari upazila of Chittagong district yesterday.

The constable was identified as Abdus Sattar, 42, of Datmara Police Camp in Fatikchhari.

The incident occurred at about 7:30 am when Sattar pressed the trigger of the gun by mistake. A bullet came out of the gun and pierced his belly.

He was first taken to Nazirhat Health Complex and then shifted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where he died at about 10:45 am.

## Terrorists loot garments factory in N'ganj

UNB, N'ganj

Armed terrorists broke open the gate and looted cash, cloths and valuable from Seema Neatwear & Dyeing Factory at Jaikuri in Siddhirganj thana in the early hours of yesterday.

Witnesses said about 35 terrorists entered the factory at 2 am, beat up the employees and confined 28 of them in a room. They looted Tk 44,000 in cash, 1200-kg cloths and other valuables.

Police recovered the cloths while these were being unloaded from a truck at the wholesale market in the town yesterday afternoon and arrested Abdul Matin, owner of the truck, who hails from Siddhirganj.

## Case against Murshed Khan HC asks PSA Tribunal, Ctg to send documents

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered the PSA Tribunal, Chittagong to send all documents of the case against BNP MP M. Murshed Khan to the court.

A Division Bench of the HC comprising Justice MA Aziz and Justice Shamsul Huda gave the order upon a prayer by Murshed Khan's lawyer Rokanuddin Mahmud during hearing on Khan's writ challenging validity of the PSA (Public Safety Act).

In the PSA case filed by Chittagong police, Khan has been

charged with looting Tk 45,000 from a sweetmeat shop and overturning a pan of halim there, (a snack for iftar) on December 25 last year.

Rokanuddin told the court that Section 10 of the PSA was not applicable in the case. An accused can be charged under Section 10 for creating panic and damaging shops and property leading to stoppage of movement of vehicles on streets. Nothing of that sort happened during the said incident for which Khan has been charged, he argued.

According to police, he was murdered in the orchard of busi-

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## PBCP cadre slaughtered in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

An armed cadre of the Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) was slaughtered at Maheshwarapasha under Daulatpur thana on Monday night.

The victim was identified as Nurul Islam, 28, son of Abdul Hamid of Shaikhpura village under Terokhada thana of Khulna district.

He was an armed cadre of "Rashid group" of Purbo Banglar Communist Party. But he severed his relations with PBCP last month and became a police informer since then, Terokhada thana OC said.

According to police, he was murdered in the orchard of busi-

## 'Bir Pratik' Ounderland passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister Abus Samad Azad yesterday expressed shock at the death of W A S Ounderland, Bir Pratik, the only foreigner decorated with the gallantry award for his valiant role in the Bangladesh Liberation War.

Bangladesh High Commissioner in Australia has been instructed to attend the funerals of the freedom fighter in Perth, where he died on Friday.

In line with the Bangladesh government's policy to accord full honour to all freedom fighters, it has

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Tipu under treatment in Bangkok

## Tipu to undergo another operation today

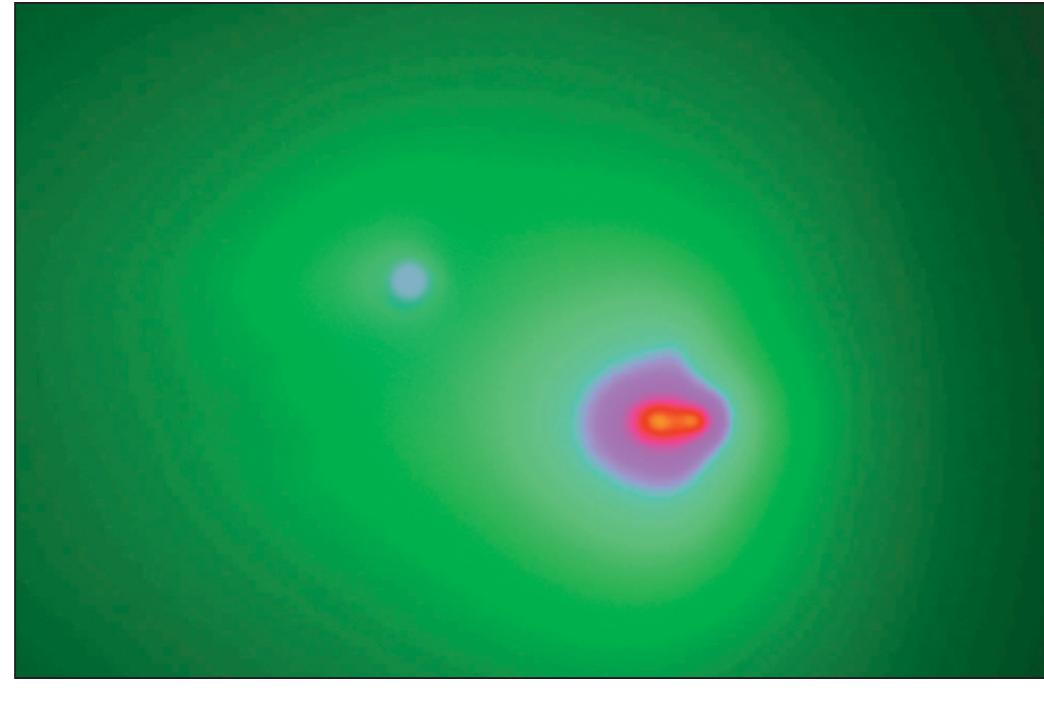
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalist Tipu Sultan, severely injured by terrorists in Feni, will undergo another operation on his right hand at the Bumrunggrad Hospital in Bangkok this morning.

On May 15, both of his hands were operated upon. But as the condition of his right wrist still remains critical, a medical board at a meeting yesterday decided to operate upon his right hand again.

Doctors said they would be able to confirm after operation whether Tipu's right hand would function properly. Tipu left Dhaka for Bangkok on May 8. Earlier, he

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### Death of a comet

This image released on May 18 by the European Southern Observatory (ESO) shows a colour-enhanced image of the splitting comet C/2001 A2, or LINEAR. The red spot contains two nuclei while a third trails at left. LINEAR split less than a month ago and last week one of those pieces divided again. The three main nuclei are less than 62 million miles from the Earth and can be seen with unaided eye in the Southern Hemisphere.

## DCC to involve NGO to force rickshaws use the lanes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) is going to launch another project to force rickshaws use the lanes.

DCC sources said the project to 'redress its own mistake' may involve an NGO, which will deploy volunteers on street corners to divert rickshaws into the lanes.

The DCC came under fire after it took up the Tk one crore rickshaw lane project without any planning whatsoever. At all the places in the city, these rickshaw lanes have increased suffering of people. The lanes have narrowed the already congested roads, creating chaos.

Most of the rickshaw lanes are now being used as car parking areas, rickshaw garage, dumping sites for construction materials and for other purposes. At some places, WASA has dug roads for laying new water pipes.

"We would have dismantled all these lanes but that would have embarrassed the policy makers. Now we are trying to find a remedy to the man-made chaos," said a top official of DCC requesting anonymity.

DCC officials said the decision to demarcate rickshaw lanes was taken at a meeting of a high level committee to ease traffic jam in the city. 'Experts' from the army and the traffic department of police 'highly endorsed' the idea of separate rickshaw lanes and asked DCC representatives at the meeting to take immediate steps to implement it.

Cash constrained DCC had to divert funds from its graveyard development account to its Engineering Section for launching the project to ease traffic congestion in the city.

DCC sources said that the Mayor Mohammad Hanif expressed his annoyance with the traffic department following reports in different dailies on the useless rickshaw lanes. The traffic department officials also expressed their annoyance saying that the lanes aggravated the traffic jam at some places.

Dhaka Urban Transport Project officials, who are now implementing several projects at busy intersections, also expressed their surprise at creation of rickshaw lanes. They were not even informed about the decision, they told this correspondent.

## Venezuelan president due today

UNB, Dhaka

Venezuelan President Hugo Rafael Chavez Frias arrives in Dhaka today (Wednesday).

Bangladesh is giving importance to the brief visit of the Venezuelan President, who arrived at 1 pm, officials said.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will receive the leader of the oil-rich country at the airport.

Hugo Rafael Chavez Frias, coming from Iran via Bombay, will be the second South American President here after Peruvian President Fuji Mori who visited Bangladesh in 1998.

Frias will lead an 8-member official delegation comprising his son Hugo Chavez Colmenares, Foreign Minister Luis Alfonso Davila, Planning Minister Prof Jorge Giodani and Science and Technology Minister Dr Carlos Genatios.

His entourage would include high officials and people from trade and commerce of the important OPEC country.

The Venezuelan President earlier had met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at UN Millennium Summit in New York last year and expressed his interest to visit Bangladesh.

## UP member shot dead in Narsingdi

UNB, Narsingdi

Gunmen shot dead a member of Danga Union Parishad in Polash upazila on Monday night.

Witnesses and police said terrorists entered the UP office at 9 pm and shot Nurul Islam, 40, point blank. He was rushed to a nearby doctor who declared him dead.

Police took the body at night and sent to sadar hospital yesterday (Tuesday) morning for autopsy.

Sources said Nurul Islam was killed for helping police arresting the terrorists in the area.

## Mugger shot dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One of the two muggers was shot dead when they tried to snatch valuables from two businessmen at Tipu Sultan Road in the city's Shatrupur area on late Monday.

The incident took place when two businessmen Taj Mohammad and Sukkur were going to Tipu Sultan Road from Kaptan Bazar in a rickshaw. The muggers stopped their rickshaw near Chapra Mosque at about 10:15 pm and asked them to handover their valuables. At one stage, one of the two muggers hit Taj Mohammad in his head with a pistol.

The young man was murdered with a sharp weapon, police said. There were marks of injuries in his throat.

Police sent the body to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with Uttara police.

point blank. He died on the spot.

The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with Shatrupur police station in this connection.

In another incident, Uttara police recovered a body of an unidentified man aged about 35 from under the Chamur bridge at about 11:00 pm on Monday.

The young man was murdered with a sharp weapon, police said. There were marks of injuries in his throat.

Police sent the body to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with Uttara police.

## Boral murder Bail prayer of Alamgir rejected

UNB, Bagerhat

A court here yesterday rejected the bail petition of Alamgir Siddique, the main accused in advocate Kalidas Boral murder case.

Magistrate Polash Kanti Bora also asked for producing Alamgir before the court from the hajat of Dhaka Central Jail.

Alamgir, expelled from Chitolmari Jubo League, was sent to jail hajat after CMM of Dhaka had rejected his bail petition on May 17.

## BNP's countrywide demonstrations today

BSS, Dhaka

The main opposition BNP will stage demonstrations today across the country to protest against "killing of opposition activists, their arrests, and harassment through implication in false cases, and plundering of national resources by ruling party leaders in the name of various projects. Dissolution of the 'ineffective parliament' and handing over power to a caretaker government are also included in the demands, a BNP press release said yesterday.



An example of DCC's indifference to maintenance of roads and alleyways... a rickshaw-puller makes his way through the muddy and stinky street near the Janata Tower at Karwan Bazar in the city.

## Tremor jolts Ctg city, Khagrachhari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An earthquake rocked the port city early yesterday morning, met office and seismic observatory sources said.

The tremor, measured 4.8 in Richter Scale with its epicentre 169 km off Chittagong, hit the city at around 5:38 am and lasted 19 seconds, sources said.

However, no report of damage was received from anywhere, police said.

The panic-stricken residents came out of their houses during the earthquake, witnesses said.

Our Khagrachhari Correspondent reports : A mild earthquake was felt in the district town yesterday morning.

A number of people came out of their houses during the quake that lasted about 10 seconds.

## Gas blast kills Bangladeshi in Bahrain

AFP, Manama

An explosion caused by a gas leak at a market restaurant killed a Bangladeshi worker and injured 23 other passers-by in Bahrain, witnesses and officials said yesterday.

The popular snack bar was shut when the blast occurred Monday night, but the souk (market) in Jid Hafs, 10 kilometres west of Manama was packed, the witnesses said.

Fifteen of the wounded were Bahrainis, including a baby girl, the interior ministry said in a statement. Five Indians and three Bangladeshis were also hurt by flying debris.

An air-conditioner severed the dead man's head as the force of the explosion ripped open two garage-sized doors and damaged nearby vehicles.

Investigations were continuing but the leak was believed to be accidental.