

## Buddhadev terms media

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some of those who crossed over had played roles in terrorist acts during the last government's tenure. That is why they are running away now."

Four members of the parliament belonging to Trinamul Congress met the Home Minister LK Advani and asked him to take steps to stop the 'torture on minority community' in Bangladesh. The Home Minister said that the Indian Government was keeping a watch on the situation and would take steps to stop the intrusion.

Meanwhile, the Deputy High Commissioner of the Bangladesh in Kolkata, Mohammed Tahuid Hossain said Thursday that attacks on minorities in Bangladesh have stopped.

Talking to reporters Hossain said that there were no attacks during the last week and added that some newspapers in West Bengal was publishing disproportionate reports. He said that, the situation was new perfectly normal.

When asked whether there was

tension between India and Bangladesh on the issue Hossain said that he did not know of any tensions.

Our correspondent in New Delhi adds: As part of BJP's drive across India to mobilise public opinion against "atrocities" on minorities in Bangladesh, the party's leaders in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh said that New Delhi should lodge a strong protest with Dhaka on the issue.

The BJP leaders, along with leaders of the party's spiritual mentor the RSS, met Andhra Pradesh Governor C Rangarajan and submitted a memorandum which said that "the violation of human rights and attacks on religious minorities in Bangladesh should be raised at all international fora."

The BJP General Secretary Maya Singh said in a statement since BNP came to power in the country the "persecution of Hindus in Bangladesh has started in full swing."

## Only morning cheers

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considered as the twin-tower of the Zimbabwe batting-- fell cheaply.

The partnership also changed the complexion of the game, which at one stage promised an exciting prospect for the hosts after Zimbabwe, resuming the day on 20 for two in reply to Bangladesh's meagre 107 in the first innings, lost three quick wickets in the morning session.

Second day morning looked as bright as the sunshine for the home team when debutant tearaway Masrafe-bin-Murtaza Kowshik removed both overnight batsmen Stuart Carlisle and Grant Flower with his raw pace.

Grant could add four runs to his previous score of six before becoming the first Test victim of the 19-year-old fast bowler from Narail. He unconvincingly played an outswinger in the second slip to Al-Shahriar.

Carlisle edged an express delivery from Kowshik to wicketkeeper Khaled Masood after scoring 33 off 63 balls that included four boundaries.

The sparse holiday crowd roared back into life when left-arm spinner Enamul Hoque dismissed danger man Andy Flower. Rated one of the bests in the world, Andy danced down the wicket to hit the balding spinner out of the park. But he was intelligently deceived by the

flight and was clean bowled for 28.

Bangladesh's success story however ended at that point when Wishart and Marillier teamed up to take the match away from the home side.

Former Zimbabwean captain Heath Streak, who has turned into a useful lower-order batsman, consolidated the visitor's lead by putting on 89 runs for the undefeated ninth wicket with Travis Friend.

Streak scored 57, his eighth fifty, while his partner helped himself to a career-best 38.

"It was a disappointing start. But Wishart and Marillier led the fightback brilliantly. Test cricket is all about building partnerships and they did it well after our top-order failed," said Brian Murphy, the Zimbabwe captain.

"We want to bat only once and score as many runs as possible tomorrow morning," he added.

When Murphy has made his intention clear for inflicting an innings defeat, his counterpart Naimur Rahman feels that the match is not yet over.

"The wicket has now become batting-friendly than the first day, and I'm hopeful that we will do better in the second innings," he said.

The match is scheduled to resume at 9.45am today.

## Outlawed parties out to raise heads

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lure them to normal life by surrendering illegal arms.

Responding to the amnesty, more than 500 outlawed, mostly aged and inactive, surrendered their arms. This initially created a visibly peaceful atmosphere in the entire region.

"The AL had relieved us from a nightmarish confinement by the outlaws, but now apprehension has again mounted," an elderly man of Satkhira told this correspondent referring to some recent incidents.

However, some leaders of the outlawed parties are still in jail to face trial while most others who got bail earlier have now returned to their clandestine life.

"Taking advantage of good relations with the ruling party, some of the groups are preparing to launch their activities again. They have given anonymous letters to some persons demanding toll," an inhabitant of violence prone Kushtia told The Daily Star. He said their demand must be met, other-

wise one has to face dire consequences.

Giving details of locations of extremists in Kushtia, another young man having indirect connection with the outlaws said more than 500 armed cadres in six groups are active now in Kushtia district. Seeking anonymity, he said they are in Osmanpur, Enaetpur and areas in the south-western bank of Gorai river in Khokshah upazila; Bagram, Koya and Pantee in Kumarkhali Upazila; Durbachara, Jhaudia, Abdalpur, Harinarayanpur, Dahagola, Bhadania, Patikabari and Haripur in Sadar upazila; Aambaria, Malihat, Isalmari, Majhirhat, Ammla, Haringati, Halsha in Mirpur upazila and Bahadurpur, Kazir Hata and Faridpur in Bheramara upazila.

The locals said these groups have served 'notices' to 14 local Awami League leaders asking them to pay toll. Of them, five filed GD (general daily) with Bheramara police station on October 21 after receiving the 'notices'. They include Ismail Hossain and Abdul

## No Bangladeshi killed in UN chopper crash

UNB, Dhaka

No Bangladeshi soldier was killed or injured in the United Nations (UN) helicopter crash in Sierra Leone on Thursday, an ISPR handout said yesterday.

An MI-8 helicopter belonging to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) crashed on Thursday killing seven passengers and three helicopter crew.

There was no Bangladeshi soldier on board the helicopter, the ISPR handout said.

## Delhi confce

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Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka which came into being with a convention in July, last year. The underlying philosophy of SAHR is to ensure dignity and human rights of individuals in the region.

Former Indian prime minister I K Gujral, United Nations human rights high commissioner Mary Robinson and Nobel laureate professor Amartya Sen will also address the conference.

## Northern Alliance forces

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Earlier yesterday, fighting was heavy between opposition and Taliban forces around Mazar-e-Sharif, with the two sides giving conflicting accounts. The Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press quoted an unidentified Taliban spokesman as saying that troops repulsed two opposition attacks on the city Friday.

Alliance officials said they are counting on wholesale defections among Taliban forces in and around Mazar-e-Sharif and an uprising by the city's residents to avoid bloody house-to-house fighting. Taliban commanders, however, have said the morale of their troops is high.

Elsewhere, U.S. jets and B-52 bombers repeatedly hit Taliban targets overnight and early yesterday north of Kabul and around Kandahar, the southern city that is

## Three protesters killed in Pakistan

AP, Islamabad

Islamic fundamentalists staged a nationwide strike yesterday to protest President Pervez Musharraf's pro-US policies in Afghanistan, bringing many parts of the country to a halt. Three protesters were killed in a clash in the central city of DG Khan.

The Afghan Defence Council, an alliance of 35 Islamic groups, organised the strike to denounce Musharraf and to express support for Afghanistan's ruling Taliban movement.

"After today's successful strike Musharraf has no right to remain in power and he should step down," Maulana Samiul Haq, head of council, said in the northwestern city of Peshawar.

Haq told several thousand demonstrators that if Musharraf did not end Pakistan's support, "we will launch civil disobedience movement." Haq runs an Islamic seminary near Peshawar where many in the current Taliban leadership went to school, when they were war refugees in Pakistan.

## Where child marriage

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Lalmohon Upazila, almost every Hindu family have a child couple.

Tripti Rani Das, hardly 13, at Nishi Kanta Dasher Bari showed all signs of malnutrition. She looked pale. The adult-size saree she wore hung over her body. Her mother-in-law Radha Rani said that her son Jagannath was also as young as Tripti. She was married because her parents did not feel secure as youths in the area were constantly teasing her on way to school.

Many adult women of hardly 25 have children as old as 12, which show that child marriage is prevalent in the areas for long.

"Here you cannot find many female children in higher classes at schools because there is no security for them. If the child is fair complexioned, the problem is multiplied for the parents," said Narayan Das, a school teacher. With the post election atrocities on the Hindu community across Bhola district, many have already left for unknown destinations. Those who have clung to their homes and lands have been thrown into more uncertainty.

Narayan said the increasing practice of child marriage among neighbours and friends is 'a demonstration of fear'. By getting their children married, many families grow bonds and relationships with one another, which give them a feeling of togetherness.

"On top of that, superstition and traditional practices are also influencing both the Hindus and the Muslims to get their children married before puberty. For

instance, if the mother of a child had been married at a tender age, the family starts eyeing the child as soon as she is 10," Narayan said. The Bangla saying that a woman becomes elderly at the age of 20 (kuritye boori) is widely believed in the villages. There is no programme at the schools or with the local governments to discourage this practice."

## Unite to rid city

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Novelist Imdadul Huq Milon and Country Director of Hunger Project Badul Alam among others spoke on the occasion.

A cross section of people including members of civil society, students and cultural activists attended the rally carrying placards with calls for environmental awareness.

Association For Environment and Human Resources Development (AFEHRD) staged a drama at the venue. Later, a procession was brought out.

## Annan

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service of humanity in a bigger way. Dr Iftekhar mentioned some constraints faced by the country in its trading such as market access for ready made garments and sought UN assistance in this regard. He also conveyed to the Secretary General warm greetings from Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Foreign Minister Dr AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury.

## City's posh

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gering levels. Such price has now reportedly skyrocketed to Tk 1 crore for a sizeable plot in the open market which compares with the highly exorbitant ruling price of land in Tokyo. This trend gives an indication as to how viable commercial enterprises in the posh areas built on such costly lands are regarded by real estate builders.

All in all, the total picture emerging from the gradual erosion of the residential character of these select residential zones reflects the many ill-effects of the metropolitan city. If the commercial trend in residential areas continues unabated, with no corresponding growth of peaceful residential areas in well-planned city suburbs enjoying satisfactory communication facilities for commuting to the city centre, the livability of the city as a whole may be at stake.

## 5064 chocolate bombs recovered from hotel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna thana police have recovered 5064 Indian chocolate bombs from a residential hotel Khulna Boarding and arrested Dulal Bhuiyan, 45, a notorious smuggler.

Police raided the hotel at Khulna bazar on Thursday and recovered the bombs from room no. 11.

Police said Dulal is an accused in twosmugglingcases.

## Extortionists beat forest officer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Shib Prasad Das, 42, Deputy Ranger of Kobadak Range office of Forest Department, was beaten up by a group of youngmen on Thursday in front of judges' court.

According to witnesses, the youngmen belonging to ruling party demanded Tk one lakh as toll from the forest officer few days

## Hasina

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"This is the picture of the constituency from where the home minister was made MP, and it was the common picture everywhere to make Awami League suffer defeat," she told her audience.

Termining the home minister 'vote dacoit', the former prime minister said that he had now started threatening on one hand and saving the terrors on the other.

"Terrorists are freed following phone calls, if not by the home minister, then by his wife. This is the way they are patronising the terrorists," she said.

Giving a vivid picture of repression on her party supporters and minorities, with some 500 women allegedly raped, Hasina made a call for resisting what she said the terrorist government.

"This government will not last long, they should not be allowed to continue, because they are against the people. Build up a united resistance," she urged the people.

## Satkhira AL

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Fazul Huq's younger brother Khaja, 30, along with his associates attacked Jaglu Haider in presence of Suranjit Sengupta, police and witnesses said.

Both the factions used sticks during the clash and damaged the podium and microphone.

Suranjit Sen said the incident was most unfortunate and disgraceful. They have not only insulted me but also the party chief Sheikh Hasina, he added.

According to presidents and secretaries of seven thana committees of Satkhira Awami League, the clash began when they blamed each other during their speeches for polls debacle on October 1.

Suranjit Sen and Talukdar Khaleque were escorted to Satkhira Circuit House by police only ten minutes after the meeting began.

## Rejoinder

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Following is the verbatim of the rejoinder:

You have mentioned an ISP by the name of Spectra which allegedly participates in illegal voice termination. However, in your article, it is also stated repeatedly that 'ISPs' are in the business of voice termination, implying that all ISPs are actually illegal voice providers. This not true and we strongly protest this portion of the news.

All ISPs have had their phone lines unfairly changed to one way receiving lines only. This means ISPs are not allowed to generate any calls. This was done without any notice to the ISPs and every line including PABX and fax was converted into one way receiving line only. If any call is generated, a trace will remain on that operator's bill. By simply reviewing the operator's phone bill, BTTB can identify

the suspected illegal call operators.

The Association does not recognise ISPs such as Spectra that allegedly participate in call termination. To the best of our knowledge no illegal voice provider is a member of the Association. ISPs in the Association are trying to do honest business and are victimised by the false impression that ISPs are stealing the countries revenue, which is not true. The ISP Association is ready to defend its honesty and help the government to uproot the unscrupulous voice terminators.

**Our reply**  
In our news item "Shady telecom business robs country of crores a month" we did not mention anywhere that all the ISPs are involved in illegal call termination business. We mentioned that some of the ISPs are involved and we have also given a few names, which are allegedly involved.

## Gas: 'Hasty' decision

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"The way the government is dealing with the Unocal proposal gives one the impression that the whole decision is being imposed," said an industry insider. "On the contrary, it is us who should decide the terms and conditions in gas export. This is a democratic country and such a crucial issue should be dealt with full transparency and public support."

An Unocal expert, on the other hand, says that the ball is in the government's court and no-one was imposing the decision. "Yes, Unocal's proposal involves Petrobangla's share of Bibiyana's gas," he said. "We have now submitted our proposal and Petrobangla will have its say."

He added that in November 2000, a year back, Unocal had submitted its plans and studies to the government on marketing of the Bibiyana gas. It argued the local market growth was too slow to justify development of the gas field and that pipeline export of gas to India would be the most profitable option.

"Unfortunately, the government did not work on it. It had adequate time to go through our plans," the Unocal expert observed.

Petrobangla experts, meanwhile, have individually done some calculations on gas exports. But officially, the government took no move to study gas market options including pipeline gas exports -- an issue being hammered since 1998 by the international oil companies and lately by the US government.

A section of the Awami League and BNP politicians, bureaucrats,

local experts and industry lobbyists have also been promoting pipeline gas export as a profitable option to ensure payment of gas purchase to oil companies under the production sharing contract (PSC).

At the same time, there had been opposition from local experts on the ground that the country still had too little gas for even its own development and that the problems of gas purchase under the PSC would continue to worsen as the focus of the government should fall on streamlining financial management.

One of the main hindrances to pipeline gas export is that the current PSCs do not allow such gas export.

Unocal says the production sharing contract for Block-12 (Bibiyan) signed on November 6, 2000 "provides the right, subject to contract conditions, to export gas in the form of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and if LNG is not feasible, to devise an 'acceptable alternate plan'."

The other hindrance is the low proven gas reserve of the country that stands at 11.23 TCF (including Bibiyana's gas).

Unocal argues that Bangladesh has the potential to discover 61 TCF of gas. However, Petrobangla is unwilling to decide on gas export assuming that more gas finds will eventually be made.

According to the Unocal projection, the pipeline project would give the country "an estimated US\$3.7 billion in total revenue over a 20-year project life and US\$500 to US\$700 million in immediate foreign direct investment."

## WTO meet opens

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emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, who said success in Doha would "give a badly needed stimulus to the world economy."

"The world is looking forward to a new round that will give prominence to development, consolidate the principles of justice and equity and open wide the doors of every market to the commodities of the less developed countries," he said.

Guarded by army troops in response to heightened terrorism fears, delegates from the 142-member WTO will try to overcome policy differences to decide on what should and should not be included in a new round.

Their last such initiative, in Seattle in 1999, fell apart when ministers proved unable to overcome disagreements and left the city with nothing to show for their efforts.

This time around the stakes is far higher for the global economy. The United States, Germany and Japan are all plunging toward recession, a slide exacerbated by the September 11 suicide attacks in

New York and Washington.

"The world economy needs the signal of confidence in open markets and commitment to international cooperation which agreement here will deliver," Moore said, noting that the volume of world merchandise trade was likely to grow a paltry one to two percent this year after 12 percent in 2000.

Yet despite the urgency in the current situation, ministers are approaching the Doha conference at sharp odds on some of the very issues that derailed the Seattle gathering.

The United States and the European Union remain at loggerheads over agricultural export subsidies, the European Union and developing countries disagree on the inclusion of environmental safeguards in trade pacts and poorer nations are clamouring for greater access to markets in the industrialised world.

Moore earlier this week bluntly warned that a rich-poor divide on an emotional public health issue the availability of generic drugs in countries grappling with AIDS could scuttle the Doha conference.

## Noor Hossain Day

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gave separate messages yesterday recalling Noor Hossain's sacrifice for the cause of democracy.

The President in his message paid tribute to Hossain and prayed for salvation of all the martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the democracy movement.

Paying glowing tributes to the martyrs, Khaleda Zia called upon all to make the democracy and independence more meaningful by building a country free from terrorism and corruption.

Awami League general secretary Zillur Rahman in a statement yesterday urged the people to observe the day as 'Ganotantra Mukti Dibash'.

To mark the occasion, AL will place wreaths at Shaheed Noor Hossain Square (Zero Point) in the city at 8 in the morning today.

Different socio-cultural organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day.

## 3 new income tax

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new officials were appointed while some others transferred to man the new zones.

With these, the total number of income tax zones in the country now stands at 18.

The World Bank had been supporting expansion of the income tax network in the country for further mobilisation of the internal resources.

# Story of Shefali and Joyonti

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kilometres away.

At around 8 PM, the source agreed to show us the way to Dashkandi, but he insisted that no way his identity could be revealed. From a safe distance, he led The Daily Star team of four on two motorbikes to a small place by the metal road. The team then had to take an earthen road on its own amid paddy fields and thick vegetation towards Dashkandi. The source had then vanished.

After about five kilometres on the treacherous road, the team arrived at Dashkandi. Half a dozen young men equipped with battery operated torches kept vigil in the village. They said there was tension in the area but the local BNP leader had been very sympathetic to the Hindu community there.

A shy Shefali appeared on her crutches amid a small crowd of men, women and children. Nearby, a maulana (Islamic scholar) was delivering a speech on a loud speaker on the occasion of Shab-e-Barat. "I do not remember what happened to me later, I remember all my body ached terribly, I could not move my hands after those men grabbed me in the turmeric field, I remember two men taking away my nakphool (nose ring)," she said, looking down. Shefali did not know where to go from her relative's house in Dashkandi. She said she would wait for her husband to decide about that.

The following morning, the night guard of the Dak Bungalow,

where The Daily Star team was staying, said that about 15 masked men had come looking for members of the Star team. They left the place warning that the team should not look for any other victims belonging to the minority community.

Dr Shahidul Islam at Char Fasson Hospital said that the country's existing laws help rapists rather than victims. The victim of rape has to prove that she was raped. This is difficult without any eyewitness. This helps the rapists, in most cases, go free.

"Shefali was hospitalised with multiple injuries, including human bites, over various parts of her body, unable to move her right hand. She could not talk or eat for about a week and she was traumatised," Islam said looking at the official report of the hospital.

When asked if she was tested for rape, Islam cited the law. He said as per the law of the land, the attending doctor cannot test a patient till there was a specific complaint, lodged through proper channels of the administrative set up. "In Shefali's case, she was unconscious when she was brought to the hospital by a villager," he said.

"We need a demand from either the police or the court of justice or a formal complaint from the victim or her relative to carry out a test to determine if the person was raped or not. Then just before the test, she must be identified by a police official of the respective thana," Islam continued. "Then the test must be carried out in daylight and

in the presence of a responsible female member of the society or a female nurse."

So Shefali was never tested for rape, and as such there is, till date, no charge of rape against her assailants. In fact there is no charge of any sort against the perpetrators, he said.

## Story of Joyonti

Joyonti, 18, wife of Shuvash Majhi, a carpenter by profession, was in labour pain inside her hut at Jahajmara village in Gazaria under No.7 West Char Umed Union of Lalmohon upazila in the afternoon of October 2. Suddenly, all her neighbours started to flee the village as about 60 young men, armed with machetes, sticks and knives arrived from the Gazaria market area and went on a rampage, shouting "dirty" slogans. In acute pain to deliver her first baby, Joyonti was aided by a village midwife and her mother-in-law Mukti Rani.

"I could hear those men shouting and breaking open our neighbours' doors, but three of us were helpless because Joyonti was having labour pain and the birth of her baby was imminent," said Mukti Rani.

As the mob neared Joyonti's house, situated at the far end of the village, the midwife became terrified and refused to stay any longer. As the attackers came nearer, the midwife left Joyonti and ran away from the house. "As I cried and cried and held Joyonti tight, the

men entered our kitchen and started slashing our bamboo wall with machetes," Mukti Rani continued.

By then, the baby boy was born. Mukti said she wrapped it with her saree. Not bothering to detach the umbilical cord, Mukti broke open the bamboo fence in the corner of the room and dragged Joyonti through it and ran toward the paddy field nearby.

"Joyonti could not run as she was in pain, but I pushed her hard through the field, holding the baby in one hand till we reached a higher ground," Mukti said in tears.

It was there that the family found a razor blade to detach the cord. Joyonti said they waited under a tree till nine p.m. and then returned home after some neighbours told them that the attackers had gone. The new born boy was named Sangram, the Bangla word for struggle.

Almost all Hindu houses in Jahajmara village was looted during the October 2 onslaught. Exactly one month after the incident, all the houses bore clear evidence of destruction. Hindu temples were found ransacked or totally destroyed. The remaining inmates were terrified. Many women said that a number of families had already left for Dhaka and other places. "After the attacks, there were newspaper reports and the government sent some officials to investigate, but the investigators were not shown these houses or temples," said a young man at the house of Modhu Lal Biswas.

Elderly men and Women said that although there was no renewed attacks on their community since October 2, the same perpetrators along with others have "formed a committee" to raise protection money from every Hindu family in the area