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Kabul falls as Taliban flee

At a glance

- 4 **100 Taliban recruits killed in Mazar-e-Sharif, says UN.**
- 4 **Looting in Kabul.**
- 4 **Pakistan demands UN-backed forces in Kabul.**
- 4 **Laden, Mullah Omar 'safe and sound', IRNA told.**
- 4 **Mullah Omar reportedly flees to Pakistan.**
- 4 **Rabbani plans to return to Afghanistan.**

AP, Kabul

Afghan opposition fighters rolled into Kabul yesterday after Taliban troops slipped away under cover of darkness, abandoning the capital without a fight.

Heavily armed alliance troops roamed the city, hunting Taliban stragglers and their Arab, Pakistani and Chechen allies from Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida movement. At least five Pakistanis and two Arabs were slain.

Taliban spiritual leader Mullah Mohammad Omar and Laden, the prime suspect in the September 11 terror attacks on the United States, are "safe and sound," a Taliban official told the IRNA news agency in Tehran yesterday.

The unidentified official said "Omar, Osama bin Laden and other top militia officials" are "safe and sound".

"In line with Omar's directive," the Taliban forces have moved "to the South," IRNA cited the official as saying.

RIA Novosti, however, quoted a Northern Alliance official as saying in Tajikistan that Mullah Omar has fled Afghanistan for Pakistan.

US President George W Bush had urged the opposition to stay out of the capital until a new, broad-based government could be formed to replace the Taliban. But alliance officials said the unexpected Taliban evacuation made it necessary for them to enter the city to maintain public order.

Pakistan yesterday called for the demilitarisation of the Afghan capital Kabul, which was captured by the northern alliance, a movement long at odds with the Pakistanis.

"It is our hope that calm prevails and bloodshed is avoided. Pakistan holds to the view that the alliance forces must not occupy Kabul," Foreign Ministry spokesman Aziz Ahmed Khan said.

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Northern Alliance soldiers shout "Allahu Akbar" and salute as they drive into Kabul after capturing the Afghan capital yesterday. Thousands of refugees from the Afghan capital and troops wait for permission (centre) to enter the northern outskirts of the city and an Afghan soldier of the Northern Alliance guards the gate of the foreign ministry office after the fall of the Taliban.

Oath-taking today Heated debate as B Chy joins JS session

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President-elect AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury attended the current session of the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, triggering a debate in the House.

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar repeatedly said Chowdhury was still a member of parliament and therefore, had every right to attend and even speak in the House unless he was sworn in as the new president.

"Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury is the president-elect and not the

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ADP trimmed by Tk 1082.85cr

Two block accounts worth Tk 600cr untouched

INAM AHMED

The Planning Commission has trimmed annual development programme (ADP) for the current fiscal by Tk 1082.55 crore at the end of a two-week pruning.

State Minister for Finance and Planning Major General (ret) Anwarul Kabir Talukdar verbally approved the reduction in ADP outlay on Monday, sources in the

Planning Commission said.

Although the government started the pruning exercise with a view to slashing the ADP by 10 per cent or around Tk 1900 crore, the commission eventually managed a shed over five per cent cut.

Mysteriously, the government did not touch two vital heads - Tk 140 crore unallocated block amount and Tk 500 crore block amount - both regarded as good grounds to be obliterated from the ADP without touching any real projects.

Sources believe that politics has once again played the trick in this regard, as the government feels that funds from such block accounts can be easily diverted to politically motivated projects.

The government could easily have saved more than Tk 600 crore by trimming these two.

After taking over, the new government felt that it was in cash-strapped and needed to save money to reduce deficit and heavy

government borrowing.

Fragile foreign exchange reserve was also a reality for which the government wanted to reduce import pressure by slashing the ADP.

Moreover, it was said that the ADP contained many questionable projects with low priority that needed to be scrutinised.

The planning commission reviewed some 1,383 projects having Tk 8,989.02 crore investments and then cut outlays for 495 projects.

A maximum 89 projects were pruned from the communications ministry followed by 79 projects from physical planning and water supply wing of the Planning Commission, 58 from agriculture ministry, 48 from education and religious affairs ministry and 38 each from sports and science and technology ministries.

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A young man, carrying a revolver, chases his rivals at Jagannath Hall while two others aim their weapons from their positions at Zahurul Haq Hall as gunshots rocked the Dhaka University yesterday.

Gun shots, bomb blasts rock DU: JCD captures 2 halls

DU CORRESPONDENT

At least 15 people were hurt during a gunfight between the activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) on the Dhaka University campus yesterday.

During the incident, the BNP's student wing JCD recaptured Jagannath Hall and Sergeant Zahurul Haq Hall.

Campus sources and eyewitnesses said gun shots and bomb blasts rocked the campus at around 11:00 a.m. when the JCD forced their way into the Jagannath Hall after the BCL men refused to leave the hall by 11:00 a.m. on the former's insistence.

Tension erupted on the campus when a group of BCL leaders and activists led by its acting President Beg Shahin Jahan recaptured Jagannath Hall and ousted JCD men early yesterday morning. Earlier on October 2, the JCD had taken control of the hall on October 2.

Immediately after the BCL take-over, the JCD men regrouped and asked the BCL leaders and activists to

leave the hall. With the BCL men not obliging, cadres of the JCD, reportedly led by its President Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu, stormed into the hall firing and exploding crackers indiscriminately. The BCL returned the fire triggering a one-and-a-half-hour long gunfight. Eventually, the BCL men were driven out of the hall with the help of police, campus sources said.

At least 100 rounds of bullets were fired and 15 crackers blasted during the clash.

One of the injured, Sanjeeb Kumar, 20 and a third year honours student of Sanskrit and Pali languages, was struck by a bullet in the right leg. He was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The other injured persons, who were treated at the DMCH, are Shuvo Mitro, 27, Polash Podder, 26, Pallab Madhu, 22, Tapon Baroi, 23, Zakir Hosain, 24, Akmal Hossain Babu, 27, Togor, 27, Abul Hossain, 23, Raju, 22, Dulal, 24, Mehedi, 26, and Mizan, 24, a passer-by.

Residents of Jagannath Hall alleged that hundreds of JCD activists from old part of the city, who were not

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Our readers, our letter writers and us
Column: Straight From The Heart
Afsan Chowdhury

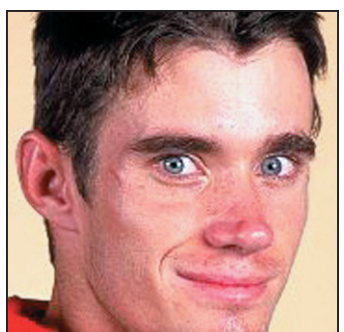
Supplement 8

One page supplement on World Diabetes Day

Ctg Test from tomorrow: Murphy's tour over

HASAN MASOOD, from Chittagong

Zimbabwe will be without their captain Brian Murphy when they take on the hosts in the second Test of the Coca-Cola Series, starting at the MA Aziz Stadium on Thursday.



Brian Murphy

Murphy stayed back in Dhaka with a hair line fracture on his left wrist that he suffered during practice on the third of the first Test in Dhaka. The leg-spinner was expected to fly back home on Tuesday night.

Stuart Carlisle has been made captain for rest of the series, manager Babu Muhammad Memon announced last night after discussing with the Zimbabwe Cricket Union.

Meanwhile, after four days of incessant drizzle that cast a gloomy prospect on the first ever Test in the port city, nature seems to have started to smile upon the Chittagonians as there was no rain here yesterday.

And most importantly there were enough sun light throughout the day

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