

## Shibir banners set on fire at DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

Activists of left leaning student organisations tore and set fire to some banners of Jamaat-e-Islami-backed Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) on Dhaka University campus yesterday.

Following this, ICS activists along with some Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) workers chased the left leaning activists near Aparajya Bangla. An activist of JCD, who set the banners afire when asked by left leaning activists, was beaten and injured during the incident, Campus sources said.

JCD leaders later brought the situation under control.

ICS activists hung the banners on Thursday night, welcoming appli

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

## Two listed terrorists held in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested two listed terrorists in the city yesterday.

The arrested terrorists were identified as Babar alias 'Petkata' Babar, 33, and Zakir, 35.

Detectives arrested Babar from Chowdhury Nagar area under Bayezid Bostami thana and Zakir from Askarabad under Doublemooring thana.

Babar was wanted in five criminal cases while Zakir in one, police said.

## 2 arrested for snatching Tk 7 lakh in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested two persons from BRTC bus station area in the city yesterday for their alleged involvement in snatching Tk 7 lakh from the employees of a fruit godown on Thursday.

The arrested persons are Mohammad Tazul Islam alias Mamun, 32, and Akter Hossain, 27.

Tazul was arrested from Alkaram Lane while Akter from a hotel at Reazuddin Bazar.

Both were reportedly involved in criminal activities in BRTC bus station area.

# Pakistan needs to take further action: Powell

### Vajpayee offered 3-pt formula to ease tension

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

The United States yesterday said Pakistan was required to take "further action" with regard to India's demands for ending cross-border terrorism before dialogue between the two countries could resume.

Winding up a two-day visit to India after talks with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh and National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra, US Secretary of State Colin Powell told a press conference here that "I think we are on a path which will lead to restoration of dialogue and confidence-building activities but it will take further action (by Pakistan) before we can travel along that path aggressively."

Powell, on a mission seeking to calm military and political tensions between India and Pakistan, said he was "very encouraged" by his talks with Indian leaders. "I leave here very encouraged that we can

find a solution to this troubling situation."

He said "we exchanged a number of ideas as to how we can move forward." Asked specifically about the ideas, Powell said he had suggested to Vajpayee a three-point formula to help de-escalate Indo-Pak tensions: first, the two countries reduce the level of rhetoric against each other; second, the diplomatic sanctions taken by the two countries against each other after the Dec 13 attack on Indian Parliament could be re-examined and third, de-escalation of military build-up on both sides of the border.

Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh, who was also present at the press conference, said the central thought shared by the Prime Minister with Powell was earliest restoration of confidence between India and Pakistan. "Once the confidence is restored, everything else will fall in place," he added.

Singh said confidence could be built if Pakistan

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



PHOTO: STAR

These plastic cases, thought to be containing smuggled foreign made firearms, were later found to be empty.

## Mystery 'unveiled' Plastic cases, not firearms

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The 'mysterious boxes' seized from a ship at Chittagong Port on Thursday were found to contain only plastic cases for foreign-made firearms claimed to have been imported as accessories for a shooting club.

The boxes, numbering 117, were opened here yesterday at 10 in the morning in the presence of officials of all departments concerned including CMP, DB, DSB, NSI, and the customs and port authority concerned.

The detective branch of CMP (Chittagong Metropolitan Police) seized the boxes imported from the USA from jetty no. 13 of the port on Thursday evening as the 3 ft by 2 ft boxes with pictures of cases for shotguns, pistols and revolvers aroused their suspicion.

The boxes had caused quite a stir apparently because such a consignment is the first of its kind in the country, giving rise to widespread speculations about illegally imported firearms in them, although they clearly read to be containing plastic cases.

All the boxes were later cleared, as their contents were proven to be legally imported 'plastic accessories'.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

ASM NURUNNABI

Dhaka City's horrendous traffic is an everyday phenomenon characteristic of the metropolis with the deadweight of the city traffic assuming two nightmarish aspects, one in the early part of the night and the other from around midnight.

Earlier in the night, the staggering number of rickshaws plying the city is a pervasive factor in creating the numbing traffic jams all over. This situation is made worse by the fact that these rickshaws do not have any light neither do they carry any lantern or anything to alert passing vehicles of their presence. The traffic police also don't seem to insist on any such requirements.

Against the backdrop of the acute space constraint on the city roads with the burgeoning addition of vehicles of all descriptions juxtaposed with the unbridled proliferation of rickshaws, all pushing for a space to squeeze through, it is easy to understand that ensuring road safety is a hard

## DOWN TO EARTH

# City's mind-boggling nocturnal traffic scenario

proposition.

The worst feature of the road scenario, some observers believe, is that vehicles of varying speed buses, trucks, cars, auto-rickshaws, rickshaws, rickshaws, pushcarts all ply on the same road, making traffic management a living nightmare.

The disagreement between authorities concerned over traffic management is another point to ponder. In the existing complex system of road management, some responsibilities lie with the Roads and Highways Department and some with the Dhaka City Corporation. It is alleged that the two bodies hardly agree over any

issues of importance.

The city's traffic scenario begins to change dramatically as midnight approaches. When the traffic policemen leave their stations by 11pm, the city roads, particularly the major thoroughfares, become free for all. Such roads especially those connecting other districts, resemble racetracks as soon as the traffic policemen leave. Drivers of heavy vehicles like trucks, buses and pick-ups race each other through the same arterial roads like the Airport Road leading to Tongi and beyond, and the road to Aricha at breakneck speed.

We are well aware of the tragic accidents involving speeding

trucks and cars that have occurred at such hours in the recent past costing valuable lives. Unfortunately, city's traffic authorities have not paid enough attention for controlling these nightriders speeding away in their vehicles from midnight onwards.

The absence of effective monitoring during these hours provides incentive for such dangerous activities. Hence the overriding importance of instituting an alert network of policemen equipped with modern instruments of rapid communication in the interest of road safety and also for crime control cannot be overstressed.

## PM opens Natun Kuri contest

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday had a delightful evening among tiny tots at the Bangladesh Television Bhaban inaugurating children's cultural competition Natun Kuri-2002.

Addressing the inaugural function at the BTV Bhaban auditorium, broadcast live, Khaleda Zia called upon the budding talents to groom themselves up as worthy citizens to efficiently lead the country in future.

"Let the message of truth and purity be inscribed in your clean slate hearts," the Prime Minister advised the enthusiastic children at the colourful function attended by a large number of young artistes, ministers, members of parliament, guardians and senior officials.

Referring to the prevailing problems in society and the sufferings of the poor, the Prime Minister said, "We cannot lag behind like this forever. We have to overcome the dilemmas and remove the sufferings. We have to overcome our unhappiness and brighten our future."

Khaleda Zia reminded that the Natun Kuri competition, initiated during Shaheed president Zia's period in 1976, was aimed at the blossoming of latent talents.

## Nitol programme begins

# CNG-run three-wheelers in exchange for 2-stroke ones

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Nitol, a leading transport company, yesterday launched a programme for exchange of two-stroke engine auto-rickshaws with four-stroke engine auto-rickshaws run with petrol or compressed natural gas (CNG) at a competitive price.

Launching the new vehicle at a ceremony at a city hotel, Matlub Ahmed, Chairman of Nitol Group, said it will help reduce air pollution in the city.

Nitol's new CNG-run vehicle -- TuK Tuk --sourced in Thailand is based on Japanese technology. The company is negotiating with Canadian companies for installation of CNG kits when it starts manufacturing the vehicle in the country with the help of Thai investors.

Communication Minister Nazmul Huda handed over papers to five buyers of CNG-run vehicles.

Auto-rickshaw driver Anisur Rahman was the first man to trade-off his 12-year old smoke-emitting two-stroke Bajaj auto-rickshaw, gaining a rebate of Tk 25,000 on the price of Tk 179,000 of the CNG-run vehicle. He will pay Tk 125 per day

through a bank to clear the payment, Matlub said.

The Nitol chairman said Tk 500 crore would be required to barter some 50,000 two-stroke engine auto-rickshaws operating in Dhaka city. Nitol has mobilised Tk 100 crore for the scheme from local and foreign leasing companies, bankers and investors he said and urged the government to help implement the scheme by reducing duties and other taxes on import of four-stroke engine auto-rickshaws.

He also announced that his company would start manufacturing a cheaper car named 'Sabara' (for all), based on the Indian TATA company's 1400 CC Indica V2, which would run on CNG and cost Tk 485,000.

The function was also addressed Law Minister Maudud Ahmed, Minister for Environment and Forests Shahjahan Siraj, Canadian High Commissioner David C Preston, Giasuddin Ahmed MP and Ms Selima Ahmed, President of Women Chamber of Commerce and Industries.

Matlub Ahmed also said some 300 old buses and trucks have already entered the country from India, which are adding to the air pollution.

He offered private sector help in operation of BRTC buses on a profit-sharing basis, construct of modern bus terminals on a built operate and transfer (BOT) basis in Dhaka city as well as development of roads.

Welcoming Nitol's introduction of the pollution-free vehicle and trade-off scheme, Nazmul Huda

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

|        | Sun Rises | Sun Sets |
|--------|-----------|----------|
| Jan 19 |           | 5-35 pm  |
| Jan 20 | 6-43 am   |          |

  

| Prayer Timings |       |        |
|----------------|-------|--------|
| Jan 19         |       |        |
|                | Azan  | Jamaat |
| Fajr           | 5-40  | 6-10   |
| Zohr           | 12-45 | 1-15   |
| Asr            | 4-00  | 4-15   |
| Maghrib        | 5-39  | 5-45   |
| Esha           | 7-15  | 7-45   |

Source: Islamic Foundation

## Leg pain due to long flight may be dangerous

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mild to severe pain in legs during or after long flights, as felt by many, is usually due to 'cramp in the calf muscle.'

But it can also be due to thrombosis or blood clotting in deep veins (DVT) of legs through which as much as 85 per cent of blood in the body passes on its way back to the heart, experts said at a roundtable in the city yesterday.

Chief Medical Officer of the Biman Moinuddin Ahmed, in a key note paper at the roundtable on 'Economy Class Syndrome - the silent killer', said "DVT develops most commonly where the blood vessels are constricted because the knees are kept bent for several hours, preventing the blood from returning to the heart and causing congestion."

He went on, "The blood forms a clot, known as thrombus which lessens blood circulation in the legs even more and this is what actually causes the pain. The thrombus generally dissolves again as soon as the passenger gets down and can move again. The pain disappears after the passenger starts walking."

Occasionally, however, the clot does not dissolve and it passes through the vein into the right side of the heart and then into the lungs, where it blocks circulation in the small blood vessels known as pulmonary arteries, experts said.

If the clot breaks up into smaller fragments called emboli on its way into the lungs, it can block several blood vessels there. The result is life

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

## Production in KNM remains suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, KHULNA

Workers at the Khulna Newsprint Mill (KNM) continued their agitation yesterday against what they said the government plan to privatise the mill.

Production in KNM was suspended last week for the fourth time in last three months due to severe fund crisis.

Over 1000 employees and workers of the mill submitted a memorandum to the DC of Khulna on Sunday protesting the privatisation move.

They demanded payment of arrear salaries and wages and removal of all bottlenecks in the way of its smooth running.

The mill has no money to buy fuel to continue production, its authorities said. It requires at least 6,000 litres of furnace oil daily, which sells at Tk 12.50 per litre now against Tk 6.50 few days back, they said.

The state-owned KNM has been fighting for existence for the last five years only due to severe crisis of running capital. Low output and high production cost are among the manifold problems which have virtually thrown the mill on the verge of closure. It lacks funds for payment of salaries and wages, said a high official.

The mill is now burdened with a debt of nearly Tk 400 crore in loans, unpaid bills and other dues. It owes over Tk 25 crore to three oil companies, Tk 17 crore to Sundarbans Forest Division, Tk 70 crore to Sonali Bank, Tk 95 crore BCIC and Tk 38 crore to some of BCIC's sister concerns.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6