

## 5 heads of govt meet Khaleda

QUEENSLAND, UNB

Heads of government from five Commonwealth countries yesterday met Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her Hyatt Regency hotel and discussed bilateral issues.

The leaders from Canada, New Zealand, Australia, the UK and South Africa hold talks with her on the sidelines of the CHOGM conference.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who is attending the four-day Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in this resort city, leaves here for Sydney today.

She is likely to address in Sydney Bangladeshis living in Australia.

## Land broker gunned down in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified armed gang gunned down a land broker in front of his residence at Baitul Aman Housing at North Abador in the city's Mohammadpur area yesterday morning.

Abu Hasan Salauddin, 45, was shot in the head and chest as he was about to get in a taxicab in front of his house at about 11:00am.

The gang of four came in a yellow cab and shot Hasan. Fatally injured Hasan was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the on-duty doctors declared him dead.

Police after primary investigations said Hasan might have been killed following a row over a building, 'Torongo Complex', at Mirpur in the city with his rival, Suruj Miah.

Suruj died three years ago and his sons filed a civil suit against Hasan over the property. Hasan was on his way to the court to attend the hearing of the case when the assailants killed him.

Hasan is survived by two sons and a daughter.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Mar 5		6-03 pm
Mar 6	6-17 am	

Prayer Timings		
Mar 5		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	6-07	6-12
Esha	7-30	8-00
Source: Islamic Foundation		



PHOTO: STAR

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia pets a koala at a barbecue dinner for the heads of delegations and their spouses hosted by Australian Prime Minister John Howard and his wife Janette at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Cooloom, Australia yesterday.

## Dhaka re-elected C'wealth body member

BSS, Cooloom

Bangladesh has been re-elected member of the re-constituted eight-member Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG).

Re-election of Bangladesh to the CMAG was made yesterday by the Commonwealth heads of governments along with Australia, Botswana and Nigeria. The new entrants into the group are India, Bahamas, Malta and Samoa.

Briefing newsmen, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan said the re-election of Bangladesh to the body was a recognition of the country's contributions towards upholding the Harare principles including consolidation of the roots of democracy across the Commonwealth.

The term of the CMAG is two years.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia drew attention of the Commonwealth leaders with her effective deliberations and suggestions on terrorism, economy and politics, the foreign minister said. All the suggestions and points have been incorporated in the Cooloom Communique 2002.

Khan said most of the leaders appreciated and supported the proposals and deliberations made by Khaleda.

In this respect, he said New Zealand quoted Khaleda's state

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## Hartal, rallies, processions in Khulna

# Complainant of Harun murder case allegedly threatened

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A half-day hartal, rallies and processions in the city yesterday vented public anger and protests against the killing of journalist Harun-ar-Rashid while police allegedly resorted to a 'go slow' policy in probing the incident.

"There is no doubt that he was killed by outlaws", a high-ranking police official told this correspondent.

But the OC of Khalishpur thana who is the investigation officer (IO) of the case is going slow in detecting the killers who belong to the Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP), sources alleged. The IO could not make any breakthrough in the investigation till yesterday.

PBCP outlaw Aslam, arrested in connection with the case, was not taken on remand. The two others -- Humayun Kabir and Nuruzzaman Sohel -- were taken on three days' remand on Sunday. They all are residents of Pabla of Daulatpur.

The sources alleged that their arrest, made on Sunday, was an "eye wash" to "twist the truth and damage the merit of the case".

The complainant of the case is feeling insecure as he is reported to have received threats to withdraw the case. But when asked, the OC termed the allegation a "blatant lie".

Home Minister Atif Hossain Chowdhury is expected in Khulna today. He will visit the slain journalist's residence and meet his family, sources in the ruling party said.

Harun, crime reporter of the Daily Purbanchal, was gunned by unidentified assailants near Nasaria Madrassa at Mujgunni under Khalishpur thana Sunday evening.

"We are investigating the case on the basis of three clues", the OC said not ruling out any conspiracy by vested quarters to keep the south-western zone in a state of lawlessness with help of outlaws.

"The second clue we are checking and re-checking is that Harun incurred displeasure of PBCP outlaws of his Deara and Pabla areas under Daulatpur thana by writing against their terrorist activities, extortion, rape and

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## 13 unlucky for Lok Sabha

PTI, New Delhi

Number 13 appears to be jinxed for the lower house of Indian parliament as Speaker GMC Balayogi is the 13th member of the 13th Lok Sabha to die.

Balayogi died in a helicopter crash on Sunday bringing the number of members of the current House who had passed away to 13.

Veteran CPI leader Geeta Mukherjee was the first member of the 13th Lok Sabha to die on March 4, 2000.

Other members of the current Lok Sabha who passed away were Rajesh Pilot, Jitendra Prasad, Nisha Amarsinh Chaudhury, Madhavrao Scindia and MV Chandrashekhara Murthy (Congress).

PR Kumaramangalam, Shyam Lal Bansiwai and Vaid Vishnu Datt (all BJP), Indrajit Gupta (CPI), Phoolan Devi (Samajwadi Party) and Samar Choudhury (CPI-M).

The terrorist attack on Parliament also took place on the 13th of December last year.

AFP says the body of Balayogi was flown to New Delhi yesterday

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## Speaker vs ex-speaker

### Debate on parliament rules

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former speaker Abdul Hamid has accused his successor Jamiruddin Sircar of violating the parliamentary rules by allowing a minister to issue a general statement, interrupting the question-answer session on Sunday.

"The relevant rule does not permit the speaker to allow any lawmaker, not even the House leader, to issue any statement in suspension of the one-hour mandatory question-answer session," Hamid, now the deputy leader of the opposition, told reporters yesterday.

Speaker Sircar Sunday allowed Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman to issue an official statement on the communal violence in India punctuating the question-answer. The speaker's action evoked sharp protests even from the treasury bench, and several lawmakers including three ministers termed the practice unprecedented.

Speaking at a news conference at his parliament office, former speaker Hamid equally blamed

Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui, who defended the speaker instead of correcting the illegal action by the chair.

Contradicting the deputy speaker, Hamid argued that the chair may exercise his prerogative in dealing with issues not covered by the rules. "But the rule on the question-answer session is clear and has no ambiguity," he said, blaming the speaker for often flouting the parliamentary rules, practices and conventions.

The deputy opposition leader also accused the treasury bench of dictating the speaker and said such behaviour is an insult to the chair.

To a question, he admitted that such "violation of rules" could be checked had the main opposition party been in the House.

"The treasury bench is protesting beyond-the-rules actions in its own fashion. But reactions would have been different had the main opposi

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# Quitting LDC won't be wise, warns MCCI

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) has observed that jumping the least developed country (LDC) status at this juncture of the economy would be too risky for the country.

The leading business body made the observation in the editorial of its monthly newsletter after Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman on several occasions said that the country should no longer belong to the LDC as the status is not dignified.

"Bangladesh does not yet qualify for graduation from the list of LDCs. The risks associated with the graduation decision are too many to be ignored," the MCCI's Chamber News said in its March issue.

"We strongly feel that graduation from the list of LDCs at this juncture will not be advisable for Bangladesh. Instead, it will nullify the potential benefits the country is entitled to as an LDC," it said.

Basically the United Nations (UN) designates a country as LDC on the basis of three criteria. Those are: 1) Low income measured by per capita GDP, 2) Weak human resources measured by a composite index based on life expectancy at birth, per capita calorie intake, combined primary and secondary school enrolment and adult literacy and 3) Low level of economic diversification measured by a composite index based on the share of manufacturing in the GDP, the share of labour force in industry, annual per capita commercial energy consumption and an index of export concentration.

"A country qualifies to be included in the list of the LDCs if it meets inclusion thresholds on all three criteria, but it qualifies for graduation from the list if it meets graduation thresholds on any two of the three criteria"

the MCCI said.

"At present, the inclusion threshold is a per capita GDP of US\$ 800 and the threshold for graduation is per capita GDP of US\$ 900. On the basis of this, Bangladesh does not qualify for graduation," the MCCI said.

The country crossed the threshold limit in life expectancy at birth and adult literacy, but is yet to satisfy the conditions of per capita calorie intake, which is currently even below the LDC average. At present, the average calorie intake in the country is 2050 calorie compared with the LDC average of 2167 calorie and the overall developed country average of 2663 calorie.

At the same time, the gross school enrolment ratio in the country is 69 per cent in primary level and 21 per cent in secondary level as against the developing country average of 100 per cent and 65 per cent respectively.

And in the economic diversification criteria, the country fares rather badly. "The current 18 per cent share of manufacturing in the GDP is, of course, above the average of 12 per cent for all the LDCs, but it is well below the overall developing country average," the MCCI mentioned.

Moreover, it said, "The 18 per cent share of manufacturing in the GDP does not depict a true picture of the level of the country's industrialisation, because much of it involves simple processing activities as in the readymade garment industry."

The low-level of per capita annual energy consumption (just 108 kg of coal equivalent compared with 808 kg for other developing countries) also reflects the low-level of industrialisation, felt the MCCI.

As an LDC the country has enjoyed many benefits and privileges from the multilateral and bilateral donors

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## Taheruddin Thakur gets bail in murder case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday granted bail to Taher Uddin Thakur.

Judge Ahmed Jamil Mostafa granted bail in one of the two murder cases.

The court passed the order upon a bond of Tk 50,000 with two guarantors.

In its order, the court said that the charges brought in the FIR (First Information Report) of the case against Taher Uddin Thakur were not proved. Moreover, the complainant of the case did not mention his name in the FIR. So, the petition for bail is granted.

Advocate ABM Sharfuddin Khan Mukul and Shahin Iqbal Sabu submitted two separate criminal appeals on February 5, seeking bail from the Session Judge's Court after the rejection order of the CMM's Court, Dhaka.

Later, the judge heard the appeals on Sunday and gave the order yesterday.

The CMM's Court on November 10 last year rejected the bail petition of Thakur.

It was alleged that Col (dismissed) Syed Farooqur Rahman and eight others on August 15, 1975

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PHOTO: STAR

After the alleged rape and suicide of 13-year-old Fahima, angry people at Tallarbagh in Mirpur brought out a procession demanding punishment to the rapists while her mother (inset) grieves the death.

## Haji Selim gets bail in criminal case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday granted bail to former Awami League MP Haji Mohammad Selim, an accused in a criminal case.

Judge Ahmed Jamil Mostafa passed the order upon a bond of Tk 30,000 with two guarantors.

However, Selim would not be released from the Dhaka Central Jail as his bail prayer in the Shamsul Haq Shanti murder case was rejected on February 18.

In its order, the court mentioned that the charges brought against Selim were not primarily proved. So, the petition for bail is granted.

Advocate Pran Nath submitted a criminal appeal on February 13, seeking bail from the Judge's Court after the rejection order of the CMM's Court, Dhaka. Later, the judge heard the appeal on Sunday and gave the order yesterday.

It was alleged that Mohammad Yunus Miah of Lalbagh in the city on

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## 'Ensure people's role, protect environment to ensure growth'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Mass awareness and environment friendly policies are a must for sustainable development.

Besides, people's involvement in policy framing and ensuring their participation in development projects can expedite the process.

This was the view of speakers at a daylong workshop on "People's Consultation on Sustainable Development, National Assessment Report on WSSD, Bangladesh," at Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) auditorium here yesterday.

The Ministry of Forest and Environment, the divisional authorities, the Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) and the Civil Society jointly organised the workshop in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The speakers recommended

introducing a law for preservation of common property proper and optimum use of the national resources as well protection of the environment.

They also underlined the need for proper implementation of the already existing laws by the authorities concerned and cooperation of the masses in this regard.

The workshop was organised as part of the process of preparing a country paper to be presented at the Johannesburg Summit on sustainable development in August next.

State minister for Forest and Environment Jafrul Islam Chowdhury inaugurated the workshop -- the fourth in a series of six such moots to be held in the country ahead of the global summit.

The previous three workshops

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## Nasim taken to unknown place, alleges AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League yesterday alleged that AFM Bahauddin Nasim, special assistant to AL President Sheikh Hasina, was taken to an unknown place on Sunday night and was tortured during interrogation.

The AL presidium brought the allegation at a meeting at the party's central office in the city yesterday with senior presidium member Abdus Samad Azad in the chair.

The meeting demanded of the authorities concerned to immediately disclose Nasim's whereabouts and release him.

Nasim was picked up from the Zia International Airport on February 4 prior to flying off to the US and was later put on a 10-day remand.

According to CID sources, Nasim is being interrogated by the Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC) in Dhaka.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of Jagannath University College went on a rampage in the city yesterday, smashing windshields of cars (left) to protest shifting of BA (Hons) exam centre to Titumir College. Police were posted at the college gate (right) following the incident.