



BDR personnel roam the city while policemen check a microbus, a rickshaw passenger yesterday during the on-going crackdown on criminals.

Two killed in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two persons were killed in separate incidents in the city on Monday night.

One of them was identified as Abdul Halim, 40, a resident of 602, West Nakhla para. He was a driver of a businessman, Abdul alias Aziz.

Police said unidentified miscreants gunned down Halim in front of Chhondo Cinema Hall at Farm Gate at around 12:00am.

Sources said the victim gave Tk 90,000 to Aziz on May 1 to buy a car for him. On Saturday, his wife went to meet Aziz at his residence at Lake Circus in Kalabagan area to inquire about the car.

An unknown caller yesterday told his wife that her husband was lying in front of Chhonda Cinema hall. Police recovered the body and sent it to the hospital.

In Banani, police recovered an unidentified body bearing marks of injuries in his head and other parts from Jhilpar at around 12:30am.

The body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

India, US begin first joint war games

Rocca in Delhi, may visit Islamabad today in a bid to defuse growing tension

AP, New Delhi

The first joint military exercises between India and the United States are under way, as part of expanding cooperation since the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington.

Some 200 American soldiers from the Special Operations Forces at the US Pacific Command in Honolulu began the exercises Saturday near Agra, the US Embassy said.

"Today, not far from Agra, Indian paratroopers and American special operations forces are participating in their largest-ever joint army and air exercise since India's independence," said Christina Rocca, US assistant secretary of state for South Asia.

Rocca was in the Indian capital yesterday in an effort to defuse escalating tensions between nuclear rivals India and Pakistan.

The Indian 50th Parachute Battalion contributed 200 troops to the exercise, which will include parachute jumping and weapons training, the India Defense Ministry said.

"The specific goal of the exercise is to conduct joint parachute training and mutual familiarisation with small arms," Rocca said. "But the larger, long-term goal is much more ambitious and is based on strategic, diplomatic and political cooperation as well as sound economic ties."

India was one of the first countries to offer logistical and operational support to the United States after the Sept 11 terrorist attacks on

the Pentagon and World Trade Center.

Washington is anxious over growing reports that New Delhi has lost patience with Islamabad and is considering taking action along the border. As the Himalayan snows melt, there has been a steady stream of attacks in Kashmir by Pakistan-based Islamic militants.

New Delhi believes that Washington should do more to force Pakistan to rein in the extremists and push Islamabad to hand over suspected terrorists who are on India's most-wanted list.

Rocca, expected to visit Islamabad today, thanked India for its quick offer of help after the September terrorists attacks.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Frequent power failure adds to miseries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a hot spell now sweeping the country, frequent power failure added to miseries of the city dwellers yesterday and sources attributed power supply disruption to 'overloading' of the distribution system of Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA).

The worst hit areas included Kamalapur, Basahbo, Sabujbagh, Mohammadpur, Karwan Bazar and Maghbazar.

Normal work in many offices in busy commercial areas was badly affected as their generators could not bear the heavy extra load in such a situation.

"DESA was compelled to shed about 50 megawatt of power as its distribution system was overloaded due to increased use," a DESA official at its control room told this correspondent last night.

It was able to supply a little over 1100 MW against a 'registered' demand for more than 1200 mw, he added.

Meanwhile, officials of the Power

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Govt warns 12 insurance cos

Pay VAT by June 15 or offices will be locked

RAFIQ HASAN

The government has asked 12 general insurance companies to pay Tk 21.32 crore in evaded Value Added Tax (VAT) by June 15 and warned that if they fail to do so, their offices would be locked.

The ultimatum was given at a review meeting on VAT collection at the finance ministry yesterday.

State Minister for Finance Shah Mohammad Abul Hossain chaired the meeting.

He resented VAT evasion by the insurance companies and asked the NBR officials to expedite VAT collection drive.

The state minister turned down the insurance companies' request for allowing payment of the evaded VAT in installments and waiving of two per cent fine for non-payment of it in the month following their premium

income.

The meeting was attended by Chairman of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) Dr Shoaib Ahmed, NBR member (VAT) Fakhruddin, VAT commissioner Zahurul Huq, Controller of Insurance Habibullah and senior officials of the 12 insurance companies.

Earlier, an NBR investigation found that the 12 companies evaded a total of Tk 25.40 crore in VAT during the period 1998-2001.

The customs and VAT authorities issued show cause notices on them following the probe.

After getting demand notices, the companies paid Tk 4.18 crore so far. The companies and their evaded amounts are: Provati Insurance Company -- Tk 2.64 crore, Northern Insurance Company -- Tk 4.02 crore, Federal Insurance Company-- Tk 1.08 crore, Rupali

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

AL awaits Hasina's return to decide on joining JS

REAZ AHMAD

Main opposition Awami League will decide on crucial issues like joining the parliament, responding to government's dialogue offer and taking disciplinary actions against party renegades once party President Sheikh Hasina returns home.

Now on the last leg of her month-long private tour to the USA and UK, Hasina is scheduled to return home on May 23, party sources said. She would then chair two important meetings at the end of the month -- one of the AL Central Working Committee (ALCWC) and the other of the AL Parliamentary Party (ALPP).

These forums would make a final decision on whether the party would join the budget session of the parliament billed for June 4.

The Awami League has stayed

off parliament proceedings for 56 days and should it abstain from the parliament for 34 more days the 58 seats of the AL MPs will fall vacant.

Coming out from an earlier meeting of ALCWC, held on May 7, acting AL President Abdus Samad Azad had said to newsmen, "We'll make a final decision in this regard (joining the parliament) upon the return of the leader (Sheikh Hasina)."

Meanwhile, as Hasina is touring the USA and UK to raise funds to help people back home who have been tortured and repressed allegedly by the seven-month old government of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, her party received another dialogue offer from the government early this week.

BNP Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan made the offer for dialogue

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



Rawshan Jamil passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Renowned drama and dance artiste Rawshan Jamil died at Bangladesh Medical College Hospital in the city at 7.22 am yesterday. She was 71.

Rawshan Jamil was admitted to the hospital on April 8 with kidney failure.

She left behind two sons three daughters and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn her death.

Born in 1932, Rawshan married renowned dance artiste Gouhar Jamil in 1952. During her chequered career she took part in more than 300 dramas and 100 films.

She was the director of Jago Lalitakala, a musical school.

The namaj-e-janaza for Rawshan Jamil was held at Dhanmondi Lake mosque. She was buried at Banani graveyard.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

7 hurt as Shibir attacks BCU meeting at IU

IU CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

At least seven leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU) were injured when Shibir cadres attacked their meeting on Islamic University (IU) campus yesterday.

According to the sources, a group of Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS) cadres suddenly attacked the BCU meeting on Muktabangla Premises on the plea of removing a poster from proctor office.

The injured BCU men are Biplob Shah president of BCU, IU unit, Monowar Hossain, secretary of BCU IU unit, Zahid Mamun, Anisuzzaman, Doyal, Sumita and Badsha.

The injured were given treatment immediately in the IU medical center. But the injured BCU unit president and secretary were shifted to Kushtia General Hospital as their condition deteriorated.

The ICS IU unit president denied their involvement in the attack.

Bangladesh Chhatra Union Islamic University unit submitted a memorandum to the VC demanding punitive action against the Shibir cadres.

Fire at DMC

STAFF REPORTER

Fire broke out at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday evening following an electrical short-circuit.

According to the authority of the hospital, the main electric circuit board on the second floor of the hospital located near the newly built wards 37, 38, 29 and 40 caught fire at about 7:15pm.

However, there was no casualty. Nurses on duty rushed to the spot and tried to douse it. Later, the hospital electricians arrived and doused the fire within a few minutes. Fire brigade men also arrived soon after dousing of the fire.

Int'l consultant gives opinion on Shell, Petrobangla dispute

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An international consultant gave its opinion on Monday to settle a dispute between Petrobangla and Shell Oil over a claim by Shell that Petrobangla owes it US\$38 million.

The opinion came after a month of delay.

However, both Shell and Petrobangla officials declined to make any comment saying that the texts of the opinion were 'yet to be interpreted'.

Chairman of Petrobangla Syed Sajedul Karim said, "We cannot comment on it because this needs to be sent to our legal consultant for interpretation."

A Petrobangla source said the opinion seems to have favoured both Shell Oil and Petrobangla in some way or the other. Petrobangla may have to pay a portion of the amount Shell's claimed, he said without elaborating.

A Shell high official said, "It would not be wise to comment on the consultant's opinion right now. We are scrutinising it."

However if any of the disputing parties find the consultant's opinion unacceptable, they may go for legal arbitration, sources said. But the Petrobangla chairman said, "We are hoping that this issue would be settled amicably."

The two parties sought the opinion of the Houston-based consul

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



PHOTO: RASHED MAHMUD

Agitated Chittagong University (CU) students ransacked the office of Sholoshahar railway station (right) following derailment of shuttle train near the station yesterday.

Spl polio vaccination drive from August

NAIMUL HAQ

A special drive to immunise children against polio will begin this August in the 'high-risk' areas, especially those close to Indian borders.

On May 6, the National Immunisation Day committee, chaired by Health Minister Dr Khondoker Mosharrar Hossain, decided on holding Sub-National Immunisation Days (SNIDs) to cover all districts in Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and some districts of Rajshahi Division. In addition, all city corporations and major municipalities will also come under the special polio vaccination campaign, officials at the health ministry said yesterday.

"This is part of the global initiative to eradicate polio," said an official of the extended programme of immunisation (EPI).

The drive will target 42 districts, four city corporations and 91 municipalities. The first Sub-National Immunisation Day will be on August 10 and the second on September 14, this year. Next year, the regular National Immunisation Day will be on January 18 and March 1.

"The risk of importation of wild

poliovirus from India is very high. Bangladesh still remains at a risk of polio transmission, although the country has not identified wild polio since August 22, 2000," Dr David Sniadack, WHO consultant in Bangladesh told The Daily Star yesterday.

Dr Sniadack also said, "SNIDs will be extended depending on what epidemiological situation is in the coming year."

All children under five should be vaccinated on the immunisation days even if they have been previously vaccinated.

Last year, India identified 268 cases of wild polio and this year so far 38. The areas in Bihar where the cases were identified are only 50km off the Bangladesh border.

The campaign will require 40 million doses of polio vaccines to complete. However, there is a shortfall of 1.35 million dollars to pay for the vaccines. The WHO and Unicef are looking for additional donors to meet the need.

Polio is the most serious disease

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Next Indian president Will there be contest on a consensus?

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Will there be a contest or a consensus for the next President of India?

With a little over two months left for incumbent K R Narayanan's five-year term to be over, political circles in the Indian capital are already abuzz with speculations over his successor.

Given the fact that the scale of the electoral college for Presidential elections consisting of members of both Houses of Parliament and state legislatures is almost evenly poised between the ruling BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the opposition, it seemed till the other day that both sides will opt for a consensus and not contest for the top constitutional post.

Neither side appeared disposed towards taking a risk for a showdown and an embarrassment.

Besides, the strain in relations between BJP and one of its key allies Telugu Desam Party (TDP) on the handling of communal violence in Gujarat had tended to give the impression that BJP might not be willing to force its own choice for the post of President.

The NDA has majority in Lok Sabha, lower house of Parliament, while the opposition in Rajya Sabha, the upper house. The BJP has majority in legislatures in just two states on its own strength and shares power with its regional allies in two more.

On the other hand, the main opposition Congress, Left parties and RJD has majority in at least 17 states. But the arithmetic has changed with BJP firming up an alliance with Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) to secure majority in India's biggest legislature (403 members) in the most populous state of Uttar Pradesh and apparently mending fences with TDP which does not appear to be in a mood the NDA boat in near future.

Besides, the NDA seems certain to garner the support of Nationalist

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

5 hurt as shuttle train derails Agitated CU students go on the rampage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

At least five students of Chittagong University (CU) were injured when four compartments of a shuttle train (131-up) derailed in Hamzarbag area under Panchlaish thana in the city yesterday morning.

Following the accident students of the university went on the rampage in Sholoshahar and adjoining areas. They attacked and ransacked Sholoshahar railway station, injuring its master Golam Kabir and points-man Mafizur Rahman. They also damaged at least five autorickshaws and later put up barricades on the roads in those areas.

Another group of students attacked two university buses carrying teachers at gate no.2 in Sholoshahar area at the same time.

Three CU teachers were reportedly injured in the attack. They are Dr. Moinul Islam of Economics, Mahibul Aziz of Bangla and Prof. Nazrul Islam of Statistics departments.

The injured students are Hasanuzzaman Murad of Management, Parvez of Finance, Amin of Bangla and Ruma and Bahar of Law departments.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Two graft cases Ex-PSC chairman, four others chargesheeted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Former chairman of the Public Service Commission (PSC) Prof Mohammad Mostafa Chowdhury and four others have been chargesheeted in two graft cases.

In the first case, the four others are former PSC member Mohammad Forhad Hossain Khan, former PSC Controller of Examinations Kabirul Alam Khan, former PSC director Sharfuddin Ahmed Khan and assistant commissioner Ashok Kumar Bishwas.

In the second case, the four others are former PSC member Mohammad Forhad Hossain Khan, former PSC Controller of Examinations Kabirul Alam Khan, former PSC director Sharfuddin Ahmed Khan and district co-operative officer Mohammad Nabirul Islam.

The Investigation Officers of the graft cases submitted the

chargesheets to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka yesterday.

In the first case filed with Kafur police station it has been alleged that four of the accused were

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Criminal held with arms in Chittagong

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

One criminal was arrested with five firearms and ammunition in the city in the early hours of yesterday.

A team of detectives raided Panwalapara under Double Mooring thana at about 3.30 am and arrested one Basir alias Iqbal, 27. They recovered 4 guns, 1 LG, 27 bullets and cartridges from his possession.