

South African first lady Mbeki arrives tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

South African First Lady Zanele Mbeki will arrive in Dhaka tomorrow on a three-day visit.

She will lead a high-level team from SA to see the microcredit activities of Pali Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF).

Director General of National Treasury Maria Ramos and South African High Commissioner to India Nkoana Mashabane will accompany the First Lady.

They will observe the role of PKSF in microcredit operations, microcredit-financed income generating activities (IGA) and their success in poverty alleviation efforts in Bangladesh.

PKSF, a non-profit organisation set up by the government, extends support for microcredit and capacity building of both government and non-government partner organisations.

AL activist killed in clash with BNP in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

An Awami League activist was killed and 10 others injured in a clash between AL and BNP at village Charpara under Sadar upazila yesterday.

The clash began when BNP men swooped on the AL activists who were going to attend a party meeting at house in the village.

Both sides clashed for an hour using lethal weapons.

AL activist Sajjad Hossain, 29, son of Anwar Ali, was hit by an iron rod. He succumbed to injuries on way to Sadar hospital. The injured were admitted to the hospital.

Police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. They arrested 25 persons from the spot.

Teenage boy shot in city

UNB, Dhaka

A teenage boy was critically injured as unidentified miscreants opened fire on him at city's RK Mission Road yesterday.

Hospital sources said two unidentified youths sprayed bullets on Emrul Islam Tipu, 15, while he was playing cricket at a field near his house at about 3 pm.

He was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). The reason behind the attack could not be known.

In another incident, an employee of a madrassah was stabbed by miscreants at Nurjahan Road in city's Mohammadpur yesterday noon.

He was rushed to the DMCH and later shifted to Pangu Hospital.

KPM CBA leader held with arms

BSS, Rangamati

Police arrested a leader of Collective Bargaining Agent of the Karnaphuli Paper Mills (KPM) Limited during a raid Friday evening.

Police recovered arms and ammunition from the residence of the arrested KPM employees union leader Mohammad Shahjahan in presence of the Zone Commander of Bangladesh Rifles of Kaptai Special Zone, Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of Police of the district and Kaptai Upazila Nirbahi Officer.

Police also picked up five more workers of KPM from the spot for interrogation during the raid.

A case was lodged with Kaptai Police Station in this connection.

| | Sun Rises | Sun Sets |
|--------|-----------|----------|
| May 19 | | 6:36 pm |
| May 20 | 5-14 am | |

Prayer Timings

May 19

| | Azan | Jamaat |
|---------|-------|--------|
| Fajr | 4-30 | 5-00 |
| Zohr | 12-45 | 1-15 |
| Asr | 5-00 | 5-15 |
| Maghrib | 6-40 | 6-44 |
| Esha | 8-00 | 8-30 |

Source: Islamic Foundation



PHOTO: STAR

Not a harta day... city dwellers stayed off the roads yesterday due to the heat wave. This picture was taken from the Gulistan roundabout at noon.

All-party effort envisaged to curb rising crimes

NAZMUL ASHRAF

The government plans to form all-party committees to prop up its fight against crimes across the country.

Members of Parliament (MPs) will head the proposed committees to be formed in all the 300 constituencies of the Jatiya Sangsad, according to sources.

The idea of all-party committees has been conceived following a series of meetings the ruling BNP policymakers held on law and order in the past few days, sources involved in the process said yesterday.

Besides launching a crackdown on crimes in the capital, the BNP policymakers continued to consult party leaders including ministers and MPs, and the relevant officials to thrash out effective ways to arrest the fast worsening law and order.

Curbing crimes was one of the major election commitments of the BNP-led ruling coalition.

"The move to involve all political parties at the grassroots level has been taken since anti-crime drives have always failed due to political patronisation of the criminals," said an influential minister, requesting anonymity.

He said the proposed committees would basically assist the law enforcement agencies to perform better by launching a social movement against crimes at the local level.

They would also act as watchdogs of the police and other law enforcers

and recommend measures to the Cabinet Sub-committee on Law and Order, he added.

Reports have it that a section of the BNP leadership has asked the alleged criminals belonging to the party to go into hiding to avoid arrest during the ongoing anti-crime drive that began a week ago.

The joint drive by the police and paramilitary BDR has so far failed to net the top criminals and seize any significant amount of illegal arms.

Another government policymaker noted that the plan for all-party committees would be finalised once Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is back home. "The proposed committees may be formed by the parliament or through a negotiation with the opposition outside the House," he said.

Speaking on condition that he not be named, the policymaker added that a dialogue with the opposition parties would be opened soon.

According to the plan, the proposed committees would try to settle local disputes and alert the criminals before going for any legal action. Each MP-led committee would involve local leaders of all the political parties of a constituency.

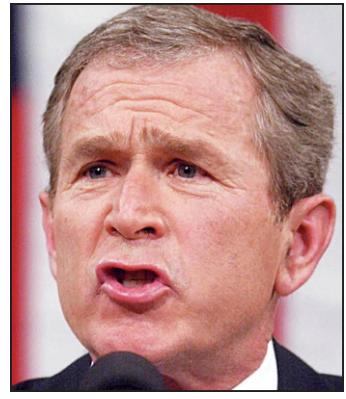
Local elite and officers-in-charge of police stations may also join the proposed committees. Such committees may also be expanded up to the upazila and union levels.

A recent meeting of the MPs in the capital with BNP Secretary General and

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Bush denies failure to respond to warnings

AFP, Washington



US President George W. Bush on Friday rejected charges he failed to respond adequately to intelligence warnings of potential terrorist attacks prior to September 11.

Bush opponents in Congress have called for an investigation after his administration acknowledged the president had received warnings in August that terrorists may be planning to hijack US passenger planes.

"The American people know this about me, and my national security team, and my administration: Had I known that the enemy was going to use airplanes to kill on that fateful morning, I would have done everything in my power to protect the American people," Bush said.

The administration was also forced to defend not responding to a report, released two years before hijackers plunged four airliners into US targets, that warned terrorists might be planning just such an attack on federal facilities.

"Suicide bomber(s) belonging to al-Qaida's

Martyrdom Battalion could crash-land an aircraft packed with high explosives (C-4 and semtex) into the Pentagon, the headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency, or the White House," the September 1999 report, called "Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism: Who Becomes a Terrorist and Why?" warned.

The report, prepared by the research division of the Library of Congress, outlines the motivations of modern terrorism and profiles those likely to carry it out, calling Islamic fundamentalist groups like al-Qaeda "the most dangerous type."

The report "did not come to the attention of this administration when we took office on January 20," White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said.

The information "did not raise enough alarms with anybody... the people in 1999 didn't see this and bring it to anybody's attention," he said. "People on (Capitol Hill) didn't, and as I indicated, the White House didn't."

Fleischer warned Democrats from seeking political

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on the report's findings.

Police sources said the trouble began about 9:30 PM following an assault on a student of the university by a video shopkeeper at nearby Madina Market.

Shopkeeper Raihan and the student, Indrajit were bargaining over price of a CD. At one stage, Raihan beat up Indrajit.

Hearing the news, a large number of students rushed to the spot and ransacked the video shop.

On information, police reached the spot and tried to bring the situation under control. But the agitating students started hurling brick chips at the police. Police fired teargas shells and blank shots, leaving assistant proctors Munim Joarder and Mursheed Zaman injured. They were admitted to a local hospital.

Police Sub-inspector Nurul Islam and two constables were also injured in the pitched battle.

Police have been deployed at Madina Market and to varsity gate as tension mounted in and around the varsity.

Police filed a case against 300 students of the university in connection with the incident.

Immediately after the incident, Madina Market Shop Owners' Association in a meeting condemned the incident. The association also suspended the membership of the shop owner.

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