

Wife murdered allegedly for dowry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An 18-year-old housewife was killed allegedly by her husband for dowry at Nazira Bazaar in the city Thursday. Sources said Faisal Mia beat up his wife Rashida Begum Wednesday night upon her refusal to bring him money from the Mitford Hospital Thursday morning. Rafiqul Matbar, Rashida's father, alleged that Faisal smothered his daughter. Faisal fled home after the incident. Three persons were injured in separate incidents in the city yesterday. Md. Khaleq, 45, son of Dilu Mia of Probhatibagh in Khilgaon, was stabbed by Yunus and Sharif over enmity. He was admitted to the Pangu Hospital. A labourer named Rustam sustained burns in a cracker-blast at Eskaton at about 2.00pm. Rustam, son of Abdul Gani, was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Shamsul, 45, a butcher at the Khilgaon rail-crossing bazaar, was stabbed by another butcher. He was admitted to the DMCH.

UP member shot dead

UNB, Chittagong

A Union Parishad (UP) member was shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Rauzan upazila just after Juma prayers yesterday. The dead was identified as Mohammad Amin, 40, a member of ward 6 in Pahartali union of the upazila. Police and witnesses said three youths came in an auto-rickshaw and sprayed bullets on Mohammad Amin from an automatic gun, leaving him fatally injured. Witnesses said Amin came under attack while he was returning home from a mosque at Sheikhpura. He was rushed to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital where he died half an hour after admission. Motive behind the killing could not be known immediately. SP Matiur Rahman went to the spot and

45 shops, houses gutted at Bandarban

UNB, Bandarban

At least 45 shops, houses and a residential hotel were gutted in a fire at Bandarban bazar yesterday noon. Fire Brigade sources said the fire originated at noon from an oven and soon engulfed the adjacent shops and houses.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 21		5-56 pm
Sept 22	5-47 am	

Prayer Timings		
Sept 21		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-40	5-15
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-06	6-10
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation



UNDER SIEGE: Police obstruct a Central Shaheed Minar-bound procession of the Sammita Sangskritik Jote (left) and another procession of Udichi (middle) in front of the Shishu Academy in the capital against a criminals' attack on Udichi hunger-strikers at Puthia in Rajshahi; and policemen put up barbed-wire fences (right) on a road leading to the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday.

Food-aided programmes WFP cautions against use of putrid wheat

REAZ AHMAD

The government has directed field level silo managers and food officials to step up vigilance against use of putrid or substandard wheat in food-aided development programmes. The directive followed a recent letter to the food ministry from the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) cautioning against distribution of such wheat among thousands of beneficiaries of the WFP-managed food-aided rural development programmes. In addition to reinforced government vigilance, the WFP itself would monitor distribution of wheat among the beneficiaries by forming 40 teams to check distribution of poor quality wheat this year, official sources said. They pointed out that the recent wheat purchase irregularities in the

country led to apprehension among then donors that beneficiaries of the food-aided programmes might be given poor quality wheat. A senior food official told The Daily Star yesterday the WFP took the move amidst donors' apprehension following widespread media reports of government procuring low-grade Indian wheat instead of home-grown wheat in this year's internal procurement drive. Bangladesh is likely to get four lakh tonnes of wheat from donors in the current fiscal year (2002-03) and most of it would be channelled through the WFP for rural maintenance programme (RMP) and vulnerable group development (VGD) programme. The country already received around 50,000 tonnes of wheat from Australia and Canada this month. When ships carrying donors' wheat arrives at ports, usually the

consignments are unloaded and stocked at public granaries managed by the food ministry across the country. In the process, the consignments mixed up with the government-procured wheat stocked at the silos. When the WFP wants to channel wheat to the beneficiaries of the VGD and the RMP programmes -- mostly poor rural women -- it is sanctioned from the nearest silos. Meanwhile, in the wake of alleged purchase of putrid imported wheat under the government's internal wheat procurement drive earlier last month, the disaster management and relief ministry had also cautioned the food ministry against distribution of such food grains under the post-flood relief and development programmes. The relief ministry is now carrying out gratuitous relief (GR) and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

US may attack Iraq in Feb

AFP, Washington

US military planners are focusing on February as the best time to launch a war against Iraq and would count on defecting Iraqi units to topple President Saddam Hussein, The Washington Times reported yesterday. The newspaper, which quotes unnamed senior defense officials, said the planners would also seek to design a build-up of forces that would take weeks, rather than months, to assemble. It took the US six months to build up the required troops before the 1991 Gulf War. Troops would be more widely dispersed so as not to create large base camps that could be more easily targeted by mobile Scud missiles, The Times said, adding that the Pentagon had not yet adopted a final blueprint. The paper said the US military also was looking at ways to hit as many targets from the air as possible in the opening days of the military campaign. Commanders would depend on Tomahawk cruise missiles and B-2

bombers. It would commit 10 to 16 of the stealth aircraft, each of which can drop more than a dozen heavy satellite-guided bombs on different targets, The Times said. Once Iraq's estimated 60-plus surface-to-air missile sites were destroyed, B-52 and B-1 bombers would join the war, also dropping precision-guided weapons on critical command centres and known headquarters, it said. The bombers would fly from the United States, the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia and an air base in Fairford, Britain. The daily said much of the debate centred on the size of the US force, which could range from 75,000 to 250,000 soldiers. General Tommy Franks, who heads the Central Command and would run the war, advocates a relatively large ground presence,

the Time said. Vice President Richard Cheney and Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz are said to favour a smaller force, while Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld advocates a medium-strength force, it said. US President George W. Bush insists he has not yet decided whether to launch military action against Iraq. While the United States has relied heavily on anti-Taliban fighters in its war in Afghanistan, in Iraq, it would rely on defectors and dissidents within Saddam's army, the paper said, quoting two senior officials. AP adds: US Congress is promising a quick vote on President Bush's request for authority to use military force against Iraq, moving toward a show of unity to back up

the president's effort to gain support on Iraq from Russia and other wary nations. Leaders from both parties welcomed a draft proposal Bush offered Thursday in which Congress would authorize the president to "use all means," including military force, to defend U.S. national security interests against the threat posed by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Senate Republican leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., said both the House and Senate could vote on the resolution as early as the first week in October before lawmakers go home to campaign for the Nov. 5 election. He said lawmakers would review the president's proposal over the weekend, but "I'm perfectly happy with the language." Senate Majority Leader Tom

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

3 alleged PBCP men, police informant killed in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Three alleged cadres of the outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) and another person were killed and seven villagers severely injured in two related incidents of shooting and mob beating at Fakirhat and Rupsha upazilas here yesterday. The dead were identified as Atiar Rahman, 32, an employee at Fakirhat bus stand and also reportedly a police informant, and three PBCP cadres -- Abdur Rahman, 30, Badal, 32, and Rahmat, 30. According to eyewitnesses and police, three armed cadres of PBCP abducted Atiar Rahman from Fakirhat bus stand of Bagerhat district at 7:30am yesterday and subsequently shot him dead.

After killing Atiar, the PBCP cadres took a baby taxi to Khajadanga village under Rupsha upazila. At about 8:30am, people of Khajadanga village came to know about Atiar's murder and chased after the three PBCP men. During the chase, the PBCP cadres fired indiscriminately on the villagers, injuring seven of them severely. At one stage, people of neighbouring Satbaria and Gabkhali villages also came out from all sides and joined the chase. Soon, the villagers caught the three men and beat them to death on the spot. Two firearms and five rounds of ammunition were recovered from the possession of the dead men. The seven injured villagers were

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Road accidents kill 9 in 3 dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least nine people were killed and 17 others injured in separate road accidents in Comilla, Chittagong and Dhaka yesterday and Thursday night of them, four members of a family were killed in Comilla, three in Chittagong and the rest two in Savar, Dhaka. In Comilla, four of a family were killed and two others injured when a jeep skidded off the road and fell into a canal on Matlab-Pennai road at Noyar bazar in Daudkandi upazila Thursday night, according to UNB. Police said the accident occurred at about 11 pm when Tapan Chandra Poddar, managing director of Prime Insurance Co, along with his family members were going to their village home in Daudkandi from Dhaka in a Pajero jeep.

The dead were identified as Bina Poddar, 32, wife of Tapan Poddar, his son Abir Poddar, 5, brother Dipak Poddar, 30, and sister Nomit Poddar, 27. They died on the spot. Tapan Poddar and another unidentified man were sent to Dhaka with critical condition. Police seized the jeep. A case was filed with local police. BSS adds: Three people were killed in two separate road mishaps under Doublemooring and Khulshi police stations in the port city yesterday. MA Kashem, headmaster of Sonagazi High School in Noakhali, was crushed under the wheels of a bus near Kadamtali bus terminal while passing through the area at noon.

SEE PAGE 11 COL