

Businessman shot dead in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A businessman was shot dead by unidentified assailants on Khulna-Jessore road here in the early hours of yesterday.

The victim was identified as Deb Kumar Kundu, 32, of village Alka in Phultala upazila.

According to locals and police, a gang of eight called Kundu out of his house at around 2 a.m.

They took Kundu to Khulna-Jessore road and shot him point blank. He died on the spot.

Police recovered the body from Khulna-Jessore road at 7 a.m. and sent it to hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police said Kundu might have been killed by armed cadres of Purbo Banglar Communist Party. He helped police in operation against PBCP at Phultala upazila, they said.

Victim's brother Rajkumar Kundu filed a murder case with Phultala thana.

Deaf & dumb girl raped in Bagerhat

UNB, Bagerhat

A disabled girl was raped Friday night in the same Orabonia village in Rampal upazila where sexual and physical assault on Chhabi Rani Mondal about two months ago had triggered criticism of the government.

Ramani Sarkar, 13, a deaf and dumb girl was raped allegedly by Jinnat Sardar, a neighbour.

Her mother Phuli Sarkar yesterday filed a case with Rampal Police accusing Jinnat. Police took the victim into safe custody for her security and medical examination.

After preliminary investigation police said Jinnat, who has business relation with Ramani's brother Kishore Sarkar, used to frequently visit their house. On Friday night, he took Ramani to an adjacent house and raped her.

Jinnat is now absconding.

Miscreants beat up doctor, cut his tendons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Miscreants severely beat a doctor and cut tendons of his left leg at Kholamora launch ghat in Keraniganj near the city yesterday, sources said.

Both hands of the victim-- Dr. Habib-- were fractured as the miscreants hit him with hammers.

The miscreants attacked him when he reached the ghat on his way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

He was admitted to DMCH and was being treated at the doctors' cabin.

Dr. Habib is also a member of the central committee of Bangladesh

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Mild tremor jolts Ctg again

UNB, Dhaka

A mild earthquake measuring 4.13 on Richter Scale jolted Chittagong at 1:37pm yesterday. The quake lasted 22 seconds.

The tremor's epicenter was 203 km away from the port city and its intensity was light, Meteorological Department said.

There were no reports of any damage or casualties.

This was the 31st earthquake of this year in the Chittagong region. The last one occurred on September 26.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Oct 6	4-45	5-10
Oct 7	5-52 am	

Prayer Timings		
Oct 6		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-52	5-58
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Implement election pledges, Khaleda asks party MPs

UNB, Dhaka

With the first anniversary of BNP's comeback to power only a few days away, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia started consultation with her party MPs for review of the overall situation, particularly development activities, in their respective areas.

She also gave the lawmakers guidelines for involving people in implementation of various commitments of the government and BNP's election pledges to the people.

Some 20 MPs from different

areas, including Dinajpur, Joypurhat, Nawabganj, Natore, Sirajganj, Pabna, Meherpur, Chuadanga, Sherpur, Netrakona, Dhaka and Narsingdi, were present in the review meeting that lasted over an hour at the Prime Minister's office yesterday afternoon.

After the discussions, Prime Minister's Political Secretary-1 Haris Chowdhury, who was present in the meeting, told newsmen that such consultation between the PM and party MPs that started off yesterday is a "continuous process and would go on regularly".

The next talk with MPs would be

held on October 9, he said, adding that the meeting is likely to focus on progress in local development activities in the year that goes by under the BNP-led coalition government.

Development and construction works of schools, colleges, roads, bridges, culverts and other commitments of the government came up for discussion.

BNP Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP, State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman

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PHOTO: PID

BNP lawmakers called on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday to review development activities in their respective areas. Some 20 MPs attended the meeting.

Deuba govt sacked for 'incompetence' King to suspend next month's polls

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's King Gyanendra has stunned the nation by sacking caretaker Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and the cabinet and taking temporary executive power.

Gyanendra, speaking on state-run television and radio late Friday, also declared he would suspend national elections scheduled for next month.

He said he will announce a new prime minister in five days' time but did not give a time frame for new polls.

The king said he had sacked Deuba because he was not qualified to preside over the elections,

which were scheduled to start on November 13.

"I dismiss the unqualified prime minister and suspend the November 13 elections," Gyanendra said in his address.

There was a visible police presence on the streets of the capital yesterday to prevent any trouble following Gyanendra's announcement.

But the only demonstration was by around two hundred people who gathered in central Kathmandu and shouted slogans in support of the king.

Deuba's sacking came after he met Gyanendra on Thursday to request that the elections be postponed for one year because of the

Maoist rebellion that has claimed more than 3,000 lives during the past 12 months.

Gyanendra, a constitutional monarch whose role is supposedly largely ceremonial, said he would take political power in the country until he nominated a new prime minister next week.

He said the army and police "will continue to maintain law and order in the country" and appealed to the people of Nepal to support his actions.

"I will uphold the parliamentary democratic system of Nepal. I seek the co-operation of the people."

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'American Taliban' Lindh jailed for 20 years

AFP, Alexandria

A US court on Friday jailed "American Taliban" John Walker Lindh for 20 years for being a warrior for the hardline Muslim militia in Afghanistan, brought down after last year's September 11 attacks.

The 21-year-old convert to Islam was imprisoned after tearfully expressing remorse to the court and insisting "I did not go to fight against America."

Judge T S Ellis accepted an agreement under which Lindh pleaded guilty in return for the 20-year sentence and helping the US investigation of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network, responsible for the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington.

Lindh, one of many bedraggled Taliban fighters captured in Afghanistan last November, was



John Walker Lindh

also ordered to serve six years of probation after the prison term.

He pleaded guilty to one charge of helping the Taliban and one of carrying an assault rifle and grenades while fighting with the extremist regime forced out of

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AL leader murdered in Chuadanga

UNB, Chuadanga

A local leader of Awami League was murdered at Bhangbari village in Alamdanga upazila Friday night.

Locals said five masked gunmen fired three shots in the head of Momraj Hossain, 45, point-blank at about 9:00pm when he was tutoring his seven-year-old daughter Tumpa at his house. They also stabbed him to ensure his death.

The assailants also hit Tumpa with a sharp weapon when she tried to resist them. Three fingers of the little girl were severed. She was hospitalised.

The reason behind the killing could not be known immediately.

District Awami League brought out a procession in the town yesterday with the body of the slain leader. They demanded immediate arrest of the killers.

Second ODI today Green mamba awaits Bangladesh

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will be desperately looking to end their batting blues when they take on South Africa in the second one-day match at Willowmoore Park in Benoni today.

The match will start at 2pm BST. Bangladesh Television will telecast the 50-over contest live.

South Africa lead the three-match series 1-0 after winning the first game by 168 runs at North West Stadium in Potchefstroom on Thursday.

Chasing a formidable 301-8, Bangladesh were dismissed for 133 in 41.5 overs.

The fragile Bangladesh batting were demolished by the South African pace duo of Allan Donald and Makhaya Ntini in the first game, where the whipping boys of international cricket were at one stage reeling on 26 for five. The tail of the visitors however wagged thankfully as they could avoid their lowest ever score.

The prospect is still not inspiring at the looks of the green top of Willowmoore Park. Groundsman Heinrich Putter however said that there would be much less grass on it for the match.

"Not an unplayable green mamba, but a little bit of movement to reward good bowling. The pitch will have enough bounce to make the Bangladesh batsmen dance around a bit. I predict they would not get more than 150 should they bat first," read an Internet report quoting Heinrich.

TEAMS

BANGLADESH (from): Khaled Mashud (captain), Habibul Bashar, Al Shahrir, Tushar Imram, Khaled Mahmud, Monjurul Islam, Talha Jubair, Mohammad Rafique, Taposh Baisya, Alok Kapali, Javed Omar.

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Jute mills workers call hartal in Khulna today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna Zonal Unit of Jute Mills Action Committee has called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the city today to press home their seven-point demand.

The demands include cancellation of decision to sell Daulatpur Jute Mills, re-opening of Khulna Newsprint Mills, cancellation of tenders invited for privatising state-owned People's, Star and Eastern Jute Mills, payment of arrear wages and reintroduction of subsidy in all Jute Mills.

Khulna district units of Awami League, CPB and JSD, Khulna Nagarik Samaj and Greater Khulna Development Action Co-ordination Committee have extended support to the day-long shutdown.

Meetings were held in front of all jute mills of Khulna-Jessore industrial belt yesterday morning. Addressing the meetings, the leaders of "Patkal Sangram Parishad" have threatened tougher movement if demands are not fully met.

Security measures have been stepped up in the city apprehending untoward incidents during today's hartal.

Rule of law, democracy now at stake: Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Denouncing Friday's incident at the Barisal Circuit House where deputy leader of the opposition was kept under siege allegedly by BNP men, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday called on the people to resist this "fascist and killer" government.

"None is safe under the rule of this fascist government. Country's constitution, the rule of law, human rights and above all democracy are now at stake," Hasina said in a statement condemning the ruling party for the incident.

An anarchic situation is prevailing in the country with the collapse of law and order, the leader of the opposition said alleging that a reign of terror was unleashed in Barisal by the ruling party cadres.

Hasina called on the people to get united against "this fascist" government to protect the country, human values, democracy, the rule of law, public life and property and the chastity of women and girl children.

She asked the government to immediately arrest the criminals involved in the "heinous incident" in Barisal and give them exemplary punishment.

Hasina alleged that the BNP men confined Deputy

Leader of the Opposition advocate Abdul Hamid at Barisal Circuit House, and assaulted Awami League leaders and workers creating a horrifying situation in the town.

She said BNP kept attacking its political opponents as part of its politics of vengeance since capturing power through a "rigged election" on Oct 1, 2001.

"When the deputy leader of the opposition and MPs can be held hostage by the ruling party cadres, then it's easy to guess what could be the fate of the common people," she said.

The opposition leader said children are being killed every day by criminals. "Political leaders, businessmen minorities and even musallis (devotees) are not being spared."

She said this government has established a fascist rule by blocking every way of lodging protest, arresting hundreds of opposition workers and imposing ban on processions and rallies.

This government is launching attacks on its opponents with an aim to eliminate Awami League from this country, but this is not possible, she asserted.

"This anti-people alliance government is playing

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US wins Blix backing for new resolution

UNSC still remains divided

AFP, Washington

The US bid to secure a tough new UN resolution to disarm Iraq has won the backing of the world body's chief arms inspector, but officials admit they still lack enough support in the Security Council.

Congress was poised to grant George W. Bush approval for a pre-emptive strike against Iraq, ahead of a speech by the US president tomorrow in which he will outline reasons for seeking military action against Baghdad.

The president hoped Monday's speech would sway detractors in

Congress and among the public at large, his spokesman said.

"The country will benefit from an opportunity to hear the president reflect on the reasons that (President) Saddam Hussein is such a clear threat to the United States," Ari Fleischer said.

The House of Representatives agreed Wednesday to give Bush broad authority to use military force against Iraq.

And after the US Senate debated the issue Friday, supporters were confident the resolution would be approved in the coming week, most likely Wednesday or Thursday.

UN Secretary of State Colin Powell and national security advisor Condoleezza Rice discussed moves toward sending a new disarmament mission to Iraq with chief UN arms inspector Hans Blix.

The United States does not want inspectors to return until a new resolution is passed by the Security Council setting out stringent conditions and warning Saddam that he would face action if he does not comply.

"I think the security council resolution that is now being discussed is one that I think I would

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Intrusion of plane into W Bengal denied

Dhaka to extend trade accord with Delhi

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh has agreed to extend its trade agreement with India by four months following request from New Delhi pending a new accord.

Acting Foreign Secretary (FS) Anwarul Alam at a press briefing yesterday said the agreement that expired on October 3 would be extended with retrospective effect.

He said Bangladesh had proposed for a joint secretary-level meeting to be followed by commerce secretary-level talks to discuss in detail a new trade agreement.

Meanwhile, Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka has been summoned today by the Foreign Office to convey Bangladesh's concern over a media report broadcast by an Indian TV channel and published both in Indian and Bangladeshi newspapers regarding intrusion of a Bangladeshi aircraft into Indian airspace. Yesterday's newspapers carried the news item.

The Foreign Ministry yesterday denied any

Bangladeshi aircraft having violated Indian airspace and dismissed the media report as a blatant lie.

He said French news agency AFP's Kolkata source alleged that an unidentified aircraft coming from Bangladesh had crossed over into the Indian territories in northwestern West Bengal and dropped various packets into a pond.

The Foreign Ministry official said that Indian Air Force also denied intrusion of any aircraft into Indian airspace.

"Instructions have been sent to Bangladesh Mission in India to urge the media to exercise caution prior to publishing such false and baseless reports," Anwarul Alam told newsmen.

The acting FS also requested the local media to crosscheck with the Foreign Ministry such news of high diplomatic import.

To a question, he said Bangladesh lodged protest with India about recent killings of Bangladeshis in the border by Indian Border Security Force BSF.

Murder of ward commissioners Eight produced in courts, remanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The eight persons arrested on Friday in connection with the killing of three DCC ward commissioners were produced in two courts yesterday in the murder cases.

They were also produced in another court in connection with an arms case, which was lodged against them after their arrest.

The eight are Sheikh Russel alias Jhontu Russel, Ayub, Syed Shahidul Islam Titu, Raihan Uddin Mukul, Mohammad Shahidul Islam Bashir, Khaled-bin-Mostafa alias Titu, Rashed Miah and Pardeshi.

Of the eight, four Sheikh Russel alias Jhontu Russel, Ayub, Syed Shahidul Islam Titu, and Pardeshi -- were produced before the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Nurul Karim

Majumder in ward commissioner KM Ahmed Raju murder case.

Police sought seven days' remand. The court granted three days' remand.

Later, Sheikh Russel alias Jhontu Russel, Ayub, Syed Shahidul Islam Titu and Raihan Uddin Mukul were produced before the court of Khandaker Atiar Rahman in ward commissioner Saurur Rahman Newton murder case.

Police sought ten days' remand. The court granted two days' remand.

All the eight were also produced before the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Abul Kashem in the arms case with a prayer for seven days' remand. The court granted three days' remand.

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Probe report on zookeeper's death submitted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The three-member committee inquiring into the death of Ismail Hossain Howlader, a zookeeper of the Dhaka Zoo, yesterday submitted its report to the Department of Livestock Services.

The major findings of the report said the death of the zookeeper occurred due to the victim's carelessness as he did not take any prior measures to save himself from the bears' attack.

Yesterday, the committee handed over the report to the Director General of the livestock department Md. Nurul Islam.

The report will be submitted to the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock today.

The prime task of the inquiry committee was to find out the circumstances prior to the incident and the role of the zoo authorities in

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