



## Attackers now threatening Habib's family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police are yet to arrest the attackers of a medical student, who is also a member of the central committee of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), for beating him up on his way home at Kholamora Ghat, Keraniganj on Saturday.

Moreover, the attackers, allegedly activists of the ruling BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, are threatening the victim's family with dire consequences if they pursued the case. They have also engaged several people at different points of Keraniganj to monitor the movement of the leaders and activists of Awami League, of which the BCL is the student wing.

Some 20 activists of Jubo Dal led allegedly by organising secretary of Keraniganj thana Jubo Dal Hamid intercepted Habibur Rahman

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## Acid attack on 12-yr-old girl in Ctg: 4 held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Panchlaish thana police arrested four miscreants for throwing acid on a girl on Monday night.

The victim, Baby Akhter, 12, daughter of one Humayun Kabir, was admitted to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) in a critical condition.

Police said the incident occurred at around 11:30 pm at Muktiyoddha Colony near Hillview Residential Area of West Sholoshahar under Panchlaish thana.

A gang of miscreants stormed into the house of Humayun Kabir breaking open the door, threw acid on his sleeping girl and fled away.

Both eyes of Baby Akhter were damaged in the attack.

Abu Taher, the victim's elder brother, filed a case the same night accusing ten people.

Police later arrested the four named Morshed, 45, Abdul Karim, 50, Zakir Hossain, 18, and Siraj Miah, 48 from the colony.

## Launch passengers stabbed, looted near Bhola

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Twelve people were stabbed and Tk 50,000 in cash and goods worth several lakh taka were looted from passenger launch M V Sagar King on its way to Bhola on Monday.

Six among the injured were sent to the Bhola Sadar Hospital. They are Babul, 25, Altaf, 30, Monirul, 35, Bishu Dutta, 35, Amal Chandra Das, 30, and Yusuf, 21.

The launch set out for Bhola from Barisal at 5.30 in the afternoon without any security guards, said police and commuters. While it was crossing the river Kalabadar at around 7.00 in the evening, 15 to 20 robbers who were on board the launch in the guise of passengers attacked others. Two of them forced the master and the engine man at gunpoint to operate the launch according to their direction. They robbed the people and left the launch by a trawler waiting at Chandramohan area.

Two of the robbers posed as policemen, the passengers complained. A case was filed with the Bhola Police Station, sources said.

|        | Sun Rises | Sun Sets |
|--------|-----------|----------|
| Oct 9  |           | 5-38 pm  |
| Oct 10 | 5-53 am   |          |

| Prayer Timings |       |        |
|----------------|-------|--------|
| Oct 9          |       |        |
|                | Azan  | Jamaat |
| Fajr           | 4-45  | 5-15   |
| Zohr           | 12-45 | 1-15   |
| Asr            | 4-30  | 4-45   |
| Maghrib        | 5-45  | 5-50   |
| Esha           | 7-45  | 8-15   |

Source: Islamic Foundation

# Toying with literacy figures

## CAMPE study doesn't tally with govt claim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty per cent children aged between six and 10 are deprived of primary education, despite significant investment in the education sector in the last 10 years.

There is no difference in adult literacy rates between the six districts the government has declared 'free from illiteracy' and the rest of the country. However, enrolment rate of the six districts is significantly higher than the rest, reveals a recent survey.

The literacy rate of people aged over 15 years is 42 per cent, which is less than the government-announced rate of 66 per cent in 2002, said the survey by the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE).

The survey report was launched yesterday at a programme at the auditorium of the IDB Bhaban. The CAMPE worked on the survey since 1998 across the country to assess the status of primary education.

ANM Eusuf, advisor to the CAMPE, chaired the function while CAMPE Director Rasheda K Choudhury welcomed the guests. State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milan was special guest while UNESCO Country Representative Wolf Gang Vollmann took part in the discussion.

The survey revealed that 20 per cent children aged between six and 10 do not get enrolled in schools, while one-fourth of the students drop out before completion of five years.

Illiteracy of parents plays a major role in non-enrolment of children while accommodation crisis is another reason as the classrooms can accommodate only 60 per cent of total students.

There is geographical disparity in enrolment in primary schools, the report said, adding that while enrolment in rural areas of Sylhet division is 76 per cent, it is 91 per cent in Khulna division.

While the national enrolment rate is 80 per cent, the rate is less than 50

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PHOTO: STAR

A potter gives the final touch to the image of Goddess Durga ahead of the largest Hindu festival at a temple in the city yesterday.

## Extensive security measures taken for Durga Puja

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has taken extensive security measures to ensure smooth celebrations of the Durga Puja.

All-out security measures have been ordered in view of the incidents of violence at the Puja Mandap (arena) across the country last year, official sources said.

Official estimates put the number of Puja Mandap across the country at 13,000, up from 12,398 last year. In the capital, it is 311, up from 299 last year.

Meanwhile, the government has already distributed around Tk 4.50 crore for Durga Puja celebrations.

Additional funds are ready for disbursement, if needs arise, the officials said.

A source at the Prime Minister's Office said the prime minister has ordered all MPs, ministers in charge of different districts, whips, chief whip, members of the council of ministers as well as party leaders at all levels to visit Puja Mandap in their respective areas.

All MPs have been asked to remain at their respective constituencies during the Puja from October 12-15, the source added.

According to home ministry sources, police have already been deployed and extra forces will be deployed during the festival. There will also be patrol police teams in all city, district and thana areas.

Instructions have been given to police and law enforcing agencies to guard against any criminal attacks or any sort of disturbance or violence around the Puja Mandap, they added.

Certain quarters are trying to instigate violence at the Puja Mandap with a view to discrediting the government, they said.

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## Persecution of religious minorities US flak for Bangladesh, India, Pakistan

AFP, Washington

South Asian countries, particularly India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, have come in for censure from the US State Department for ignoring the persecution of religious minorities.

The department's International Religious Freedom Report found the Indian government "sometimes not acting effectively to counter societal attacks against religious minorities".

It also found "attempts by state and local governments to limit religious freedom" of minorities.

This failure was due "in part from

the legal constraints inherent in the country's federal structure, and in part from the law enforcement and justice systems, which at times are ineffective," the report said.

"Tensions between Muslims and Hindus, and between Hindus and Christians, continued... attacks on religious minorities occurred in several states, which brought into question the government's ability to prevent sectarian and religious violence," said the report, released on Monday.

In Pakistan, the report said, "discriminatory religious laws" added to an "atmosphere of religious intolerance, which contributed

to acts of violence" directed against minorities.

Though the Pakistani government does not encourage sectarian violence, the report said there were instances where the administration failed to intervene in cases of violence directed at minority religious groups, particularly the Muslim minority Shiite community.

"The lack of an adequate government response contributed to an atmosphere of impunity for acts of violence and intimidation against religious minorities," the report said.

There was no estimate of the

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## AL will record govt 'misdeeds' in last one year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition Awami League will come up with an account of the 'bad governance' by the BNP-led alliance government during its first year in power, party sources said.

The alliance government completed one year in power tomorrow.

To highlight its achievements, BNP chief and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will address the nation tomorrow on the national hook-up, and the alliance will hold a public rally at the city's Paltan Maidan on October 12.

Tomorrow, Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposite in Parliament Sheikh Hasina will address to a select gathering at Hotel Sheraton where she will portray the governments 'misrule'.

On October 20, AL will hold a public rally at Paltan Maidan to counter the alliance government's statements on its achievements.

While Khaleda Zia will highlight her government's achievements

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## Last ODI today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh take on mighty South Africa in the last of their three-match one-day series in Kimberley today.

The day-night affair is scheduled to start at 6:30 pm (BST) with Bangladesh Television providing live coverage of the 50-over contest. South Africa, led by Shaun Pollock, have already taken series by thoroughly outplaying the Khaled Mashud and Company in the previous two one-dayers.

Bangladesh lost by 168 runs in Potchefstroom on October 3 and were thrashed by ten wickets in Benoni on October 6.

According to the news from South Africa, there will be some changes in the Bangladesh team. Fit-again vice-captain Habibur Bashar, who missed the first two

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PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Downy Kashphul on the earth and drifts of white clouds outlining the blue sky evoke memories of autumn, a season of mellowness.

## BTTB to tighten grips on int'l gateway

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

The state-owned Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) plans to tighten its grip on international gateway.

The implementation of the move by the BTTB will come as a contrast to the global practice of deregulating the telecom sector.

The BTTB -- a monopoly on international calls both by landline phone subscribers and cellular phone users -- is thinking of setting up another international trunk exchange (ITX), said sources in the industry.

The BTTB controls the international gateway and compelled cellular phone subscribers to use its ITX for overseas calls, which, the sources think, could be taken over by the private sector.

Encouraged by a jump in revenues from international calls and growing demand by ISD callers, the BTTB will enhance its capacity by

building another ITX, a BTTB high official told The Daily Star yesterday.

Recently, the BTTB has invited tenders for an international gateway exchange of 10,500 circuits to be built at Mohakhali Satellite Earth Station, the official said.

The number of international calls has risen significantly upon reduction of international call charges early this year, he said.

"Growing overseas business relations and increasing flow of job opportunities of Bangladeshis abroad have encouraged the BTTB to increase its ITX capacity," said the official on condition of anonymity.

The ISD callers have been facing problems due to a huge congestion at the ITX, which spirals out of control during Hajj.

The present capacity of the ITX with 3,936 working international circuits is not enough to cater to the

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## Chinese embassy reacts to press reports

UNB, Dhaka.

The Chinese embassy here strongly reacted to the visit of a Taiwanese business delegation to Bangladesh and reaffirmed its stand that "Taiwan is an inalienable part of China."

In a statement yesterday, the embassy expressed its "disappointment" following yesterday's press reports about "Taiwan Trade Delegation's visit to Bangladesh".

It noted the press reports that mentioned that "so-called Vice-Economic Affairs Minister of Taiwan Chii Ming Yiin" led the Taiwanese delegation received by FBCCI, and that FBCCI was keen to have "meaningful cooperation between the two countries."

The statement said the Chinese Embassy is seriously concerned and strongly opposes those "irresponsible" reports, which, "in no way contributes to the existing friendly relations between China and Bangladesh."

"The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China is the only legal government of the whole of China and its legal representative in the

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Raymond Davis Jr

Masatoshi Koshiba

Riccardo Giacconi

## Nobel for physics goes to trio of astrophysicists

AFP, Stockholm

A trio of astrophysicists were awarded the 2002 Nobel Prize for Physics yesterday for unlocking the secrets of the sun's nuclear furnace and exposing the invisible X-ray energy that washes through the universe.

Raymond Davis Jr of the United States and Masatoshi Koshiba of Japan won a half of the prize and Italian-born

Riccardo Giacconi of the United States the other half. Their work, the Nobel jury declared, has "changed the way we look upon the universe".

"A new fantastic zoo of important and strange celestial bodies has been discovered and studied. Today the universe seems much more remarkable than we believed 50 years ago."

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