15 hurt as rival groups clash in Narsingdi

UNB, Narsingdi

Fifteen people were injured in a clash between two rival groups of people in Roypura upazila yester-

Police said the clash erupted between the supporters of two prospective UP chairman candidates -- Nawab Mia and Abdul Awal Talukder -- at Beer Charmodhua in the morning over establishing supremacy ahead of the UP election.

during the trouble, witnesses said. Two of the injured -- Kazi Iqbal and Tajul Islam -- were admitted to sadar hospital.

Canada's no to **FARC** asylum seekers

AFP, Ottawa

Canada - reacting to a Colombian lawmaker's suggestion - said yesterday that it would not accept members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia as part of a prisoner exchange.

"We haven't been approached," Foreign Ministry spokesman Patrick Riel said of the proposal by William Velez, president of Colombia's House of Representatives.

Riel said Canada has a policy of not admitting anyone involved in terrorism or human rights violations. The rebel group, known by the Spanish acronym FARC, is one of three Colombian groups listed as human rights violators by the United

Velez speculated Wednesday that France, Canada and Spain might take in some FARC rebels as part of an overall prisoner-exchange agreement between the rebel group and the Bogota government.

Five Tibetans nabbed in Sino crackdown

AFP, Washington

Five Tibetans were arrested after 400 Chinese troops swept into a traditionally Tibetan area of western activists said yesterday.

People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops arrived in Kandze, Śichuań province, on October 18, and a day later, five Tibetans were arrested, the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) said.

The group said troops were called in after an investigation by Kandze police into a series of prayer ceremonies for Tibet's spiritual leader mostly held in February, the time of the traditional Tibetan New

"Despite what looks like a thaw in Sino-Tibetan relations at the diplomatic level, the religious tolerance situation in Tibet hasn't improved.' said John Ackerly, president of ICT.

"In September, Chinese authorities hosted the Dalai Lama's chief negotiator, in October they cracked down on Tibetans who prayed for the Dalai Lama's health," said Ackerly.

Those detained were identified as Shamba Tsangpo, 37, a Communist party member and Chinese government employee; Namoval, 35: Kavo Dogha, 55:

Tsering Doriee, 49; and Jampal, 40. Tibetans held a series of long-life prayer ceremonies for the Dalai Lama following reports in January that he was in ill health.

Kandze is in the Kham area of what Tibetans refer to as their tradition land, which has been assumed by China into Sichuan

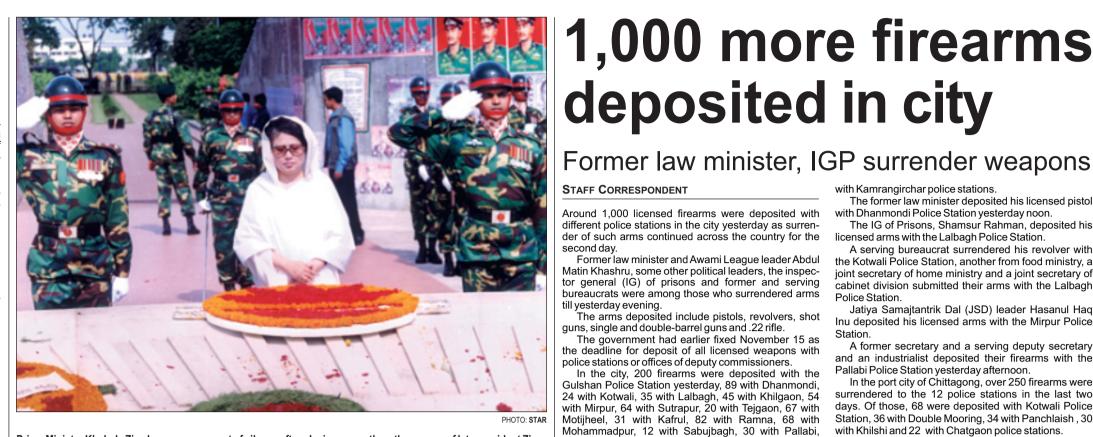
China has ruled Tibet in an often brutal fashion since 1951. The Dalai Lama fled Tibet after an abortive uprising in 1959 and established a

government-in-exile in India. Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari, the Dalai

Lama's envoy to the United States, SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets	
Nov 8		5-16 pm	
Nov 9	6-08 am		
Prayer Timings			
Nov 8			

Prayer Timings			
Nov 8			
	Azan	Jamaat	
Fajr	4-47	4-57	
Juma	12-15	1-20	
Asr	4-00	4-15	
Maghrib	5-19	5-30	
Esha	7-30	8-00	
Source: Islamic Foundation			



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia observes a moment of silence after placing a wreath on the mazaar of late president Ziaur Rahman to mark the National Revolution and Solidarity Day yesterday.

Corporatisation

Corporatisation of the Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB)

remains a far cry in absence of relevant laws, well-defined job description for

telecom network, providing more people access to landlines. Fixed tele-

phone line per 100 people in Bangladesh is now 0.34, lowest in South Asia. It

accountability to either the state or the customers", said a World Bank policy

brief on telecom reforms in the country. "It lacks financial and operational

autonomy and has been unable to meet the demand and to provide quality

Experts say corporatisation of the BTTB will lead to expansion of its

The BTTB "continues to operate under a protective regime, with little

Sources in the telecom industry say the non-corporate structure of the

The state-owned enterprise, which deposits revenue directly to the

government exchequer, does not have the authority to spend money at will,

a BTTB high official said. "The BTTB is not independent commercially. It

needs to be restructured to sustain in a competitive environment." The BTTB

with a personnel strength of 16,100 has so far installed just over 6.5 lakh

employees in 1997, has so far supplied more than 7.0 lakh mobile phones to

subscribers all over the country. Four other private operators have together

Authorities believe that the BTTB should first be transformed into a state-

The telecommunication policy, which brought into being the Bangladesh

The policy contemplates a liberalised telecommunications sector, allow-

However, private entrepreneurs strongly believe that neither competition

"Uneven competition will not help the information and communication

Every government suffers from a dilemma whether to corporatise the

He dismissed the claim that BTTB employees were inefficient, saying

BTTB or not as it "is a certain source for revenue, depositing to government

exchequer on an average Tk 1,400 crore every year," said BTTB high offi-

poor salary structure and lack of perks were a major reason why they could

not perform to their potentials. "Just look at the people who have left the

BTTB and joined private mobile phone companies. They have proved their

nor dynamism is possible unless the BTTB is made a commercial entity.

technology (ICT) sector to flourish," an ICT ministry source said.

Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), is in favour of com-

In contrast, GrameenPhone, which began its journey with only 72

fixed phones all over the country since its inception 31 years ago.

its personnel and systematic accounts of its assets and liabilities

is 1.13 in Nepal, 2.65 in India, 2.21 in Pakistan and 3.64 in Sri Lanka.

a far cry

BTTB is a major impediment to profitability.

have supplied over 10 lakh mobile phones.

mercialisation or corporatisation of the BTTB.

ing private investment, dynamism and competitive edge.

owned company and then corporatised.

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

Prof. Yunus made of BTTB remains UNAIDS envoy

Professor Dr Mohammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank, has been appointed Ambassador for the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) to help fight the AIDS epidemic, especially among the poor.

As a champion of the fight against poverty, Professor Yunus will help bring the message of HIV/AIDS prevention and care to many of the world's neediest people, said a UNAIDS press release received here from Geneva yester-

day.
"Through the Grameen Bank, Professor Yunus has helped lift people out of poverty and give them a chance to control their own lives, bringing self-sufficiency to millions of poor families," said Dr Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS.

"Micro-credit focuses on women and the most disadvantaged, two groups that are also highly vulnerable when it comes to the spread and impact of AIDS," he added.

As ambassador, Prof Mohammad Yunus's work will also involve country visits to advocate for comprehensive and early intervention in HIV/AIDS programmes, the release said.

The advocacy will help UNAIDS document best practice in the region, encourage the private sector to invest in HIV prevention programmes, promote the involvement of civil society in the fight against AIDS, and represent UNAIDS at key national and international events.

In reaction Prof Yunus said, "The spread of HIV/AIDS erodes much of the hard-gained development of our people. The quest for development SEE PAGE 11 COL 1 Jamalpur. A local leader of Jativa Party (JP)

Police and witnesses said the Wednesday

Former law minister and Awami League leader Abdul

The arms deposited include pistols, revolvers, shot

The government had earlier fixed November 15 as

In the city, 200 firearms were deposited with the

nine each with Cantonment and Demra, 23 with

Hajaribagh, 31 with Badda, 12 with Shyampur and one

7:30pm when a microbus carrying the JP leader and his copassengers skidded off the Sutalori Bridge after crashing into the guardrail of the bridge.

Rahman was rushed to the

after admission.

UNB from Jamalpur says some 30 passengers were injured when a Dhaka-bound minibus fell into a roadside ditch near Sharifpur bazaar on Jamalpur-Mymensingh road Wednesday afternoon.

The sources said police are now

Police claimed that when they

trying to 'arrange some witnesses'

from among police sources, who are

took Faruq to Osmany Hostel at

about 12:20am on Wednesday,

crackers were hurled at them and

Faruq tried to escape. Police opened

fire, hitting Kala Farug in the left leg, it

was claimed. Injured, he was taken

to the National Orthopaedic Hospital

(Pongu hospital) where he

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

known as criminals in the locality.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred when the driver of the bus lost control of the vehicle while steering the bus out of the way of a truck coming from the opposite direction.

Of the injured passengers, 22 were admitted to Jamalpur General Hospital while three others were sent to the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital in critical condition. rescue workers of Fire Service said

Police seized the bus but its driver and helper fled the scene immediately after the accident.

1,000 more firearms Plane crash in Indonesia kills 5

with Kamrangirchar police stations

Police Station.

Kala Faruq's cohorts

after Kala Faruq's death in police

Faruq 'died', a high official at the

police control room in the city told

The Daily Star over telephone yes-

any witness to testify that crackers

were hurled and shots fired at the

police team which took Kala Faruk to

Osmany Hostel at Textile College in

Tejgaon at about 12:20am

Wednesday to nab his accomplices.

Till yesterday, police could not get

Police are now probing how Kala

fear similar fate

The former law minister deposited his licensed pistol

The IG of Prisons, Shamsur Rahman, deposited his

A serving bureaucrat surrendered his revolver with

the Kotwali Police Station, another from food ministry, a

joint secretary of home ministry and a joint secretary of

cabinet division submitted their arms with the Lalbagh

Inu deposited his licensed arms with the Mirpur Police

and an industrialist deposited their firearms with the

surrendered to the 12 police stations in the last two

days. Of those, 68 were deposited with Kotwali Police

Station, 36 with Double Mooring, 34 with Panchlaish, 30

with Khilshi and 22 with Chatgaon police stations.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leader Hasanul Haq

A former secretary and a serving deputy secretary

In the port city of Chittagong, over 250 firearms were

In Barisal, a total of 28 firearms and 1288 bullets

with Dhanmondi Police Station yesterday noon.

licensed arms with the Lalbagh Police Station.

Pallabi Police Station yesterday afternoon

AFP, Jakarta

Five people were killed yesterday when a plane crashed shortly after takeoff in Indonesia's Borneo island, an official said.

The propeller plane, carrying seven people including the crew, crashed soon after taking off from Tarakan airport in East Kalimantan province, an airport official told AFP.

"The plane was seen offbalance after taking off and it fell after trying to return to the airport to land. So far five people including the pilot have died and their bodies have been taken to the state hospital," said the official, Usman.

One other passenger is in a coma, he said, adding that all those aboard the plane were

He said the Britten-Norman Islander aircraft, operated by Dirgantara Air Service, was carrying a cargo of food in addition to the passengers and was on its way to Longbawan in the northwest of the

"We think that the crash is caused by engine failure," Usman

It was the second crash in less than four months of a Britten-Norman aircraft on the route from Tarakan island to Longbawan. Nine people died in mid-July when a plane operated by another local airline crashed into a mountain.

The Britten-Norman Islander is a British-built twin-engine commuter and light cargo plane first produced

Ershad thinks slain suspect might not be Kala Faroog

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday denied having any link with alleged top terror Kala Farooq who was killed in police firing after his arrest on Monday, but said he knew Abdur Rashid.

Abdur Rashid is the name that was in the passport the slain suspect was holding while he was was arrested from the plane.

Talking to some reporters at his Baridhara office yesterday afternoon, Ershad said Rashid sought nomination of Jatiya Party for Comilla-9 constituency, but the party refused him as he was a newcomer and gave the ticket to Saifuddin Selim

"Rashid left Jatiya Party as his nomination was refused but kept in touch with me and used to call me Baba (father)," Ershad said, and expressed his doubt as to whether Abdur Rashid was Kala Farook as dubbed by police.

"I knew Rashid as a big businessman and he used to like me. as many others do, and I visited his house last September at his invitation and blessed his newborn child," said the JP chief.

The former president wondered how suddenly Rashid became Kala Faroog and if he was such a notorious criminal, then how he could fly to Bangkok a few months ago on the same passport.

About the killing, Ershad said, "There are many questions haunting people's mind about his killing." and termed the killing mysterious. "If he had been alive, many unknown things might have come

Condemning the killing, Ershad said, "Everyone has the right to get justice...The killing might have been orchestrated."

To a question about the ongoing army operation, the ex-army chief said army was called out as the government failed to tackle the law and order situation, but said "the situation has improved with operation of the army".

Now people are wondering what will happen after withdrawal of the army, he said, adding: "If the present situation continued, then normalcy would return as army operation has brought down illegal toll collection, anarchy and crimes."

"We can now hope for a better governance," said the former military ruler, adding: "Prime Minister Khaleda Zia deserves appreciation for such a decision." About deterioration of law and

order, Ershad said if a certain party had not given shelter to criminals. law and order would not have deteriorated. He. however. declined to answer further queries about army operation.

Five killed, 30 hurt in Faridpur bus mishap

UNB, Faridpur

STAR REPORT

close to Kala Faruq.

Frightened and living in hideouts,

accomplices of top criminal Abdur

Rashid alias Kala Faruq are now

counting days apprehending arrest

to face the same fate like their 'boss',

according to sources who were

Most of them were in the 'good

book' of a section of policemen due

to Kala Faruq's connection with

some 'politically influential people'.

But the whole equation has changed

At least five people were killed and 30 others injured in a fatal road accident on Khulna-Dhaka highway at Amirabad in Sadar upazila early

accident took place when a Dhakabound night coach from Satkhira fell into a roadside ditch, killing the five people on the spot. Three of the deceased were

identified as Saidur Rahman, 27, of Satkhira, Abdul Latif, 35, of Jessore and Abdur Razzak of Faridour. The bodies were taken to

Faridpur Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy. Twenty-two of the injured were

admitted to Faridour Medical College Hospital while four to Sadar Hospital.

Earlier on Wednesday, one person was killed and some 33 others injured in two separate accidents in Jhalakathi and

was killed and three persons were injured in an accident on Barisal-Jhalakati road at Sutalori on The dead was identified as local

unit organising secretary of JP Mohammad Mujibur Rahman. The accident took place at about

Jhalakati Hospital where he died

Free Willy in winter home

AP, Halsa, Norway

day, Keiko the killer whale arrived at his new winter home in a remote Norwegian bay that his trainers hope will attract more wildlife and fewer people. His keepers kept the move secret

After a playful, 90-minute swim yester-

until the last minute, hoping to avoid the publicity that has surrounded the six-ton orca since he swam to a Norwegian fjord after being released off the coast of Iceland earlier this year. Keiko swam alongside a blue boat

stacked with boxes of frozen herring to Taknes Bay, where fishing grounds are rich and wild orcas are thought to be plentiful. Occasionally darting beneath the

boat. Keiko waved his distinctly curved dorsal fin, responded to hand signals from a trainer and snapped up fish that were thrown to him. A handful of residents greeted him

with a welcome sign and a painting of a killer whale, but the hordes of fans and media his trainers feared were absent. 'It's so great to be here," said Colin Baird, Keiko's trainer

The star of the "Free Willy" films was released in his native waters off the coast of Iceland in July, after more than

two decades in captivity. His awkward foravs in the wild and lack of social skills among other orcas have caused his handlers to wonder if the people-loving cetacean will ever bond with his own The head of the Humane Society of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

the United States, Paul G. Irwin, who was on the boat, said the ultimate goal remains returning Keiko to the wild, but its likely he'll seek the best of both worlds "He is at liberty to do as he chooses,"

Irwin said. "The most predictable future for Keiko is in fact for him to interact with wild orcas while continuing to maintain a way-station relationship with his han-The September arrival of Keiko,

whose name means "lucky one" in Japanese, was one of the biggest things to ever happen in Halsa, a village of about 1,800 people on the fjord that

adopted the slogan "Do like Keiko. Pick Hundreds of fans swam with him, petted him and climbed on his back until Norwegian authorities imposed a ban on approaching him. Even after that, Keiko came close to shore in response

to an eight-year-old girl's harmonica

serenade, mimicking a scene from one

of his movies

Baird and Norwegian fisheries officials spent weeks searching for a winter home for the orca before settling on Taknes Bay, which is six miles from Skaalvik fjord and still in Halsa a village about 250 miles northwest of the capital. Baird said the new location is more

remote and harder to reach and the water does not freeze in the winter, so they can lead Keiko out into the ocean to meet wild orcas that normally pass by in January. To prepare for the move, the team

brought in a large dock, place buovs to mark his area. find boats and repair an old house to use as a base. Authorities in this Scandinavian

nation of 4.5 million have endorsed the project, as long as Keiko, about 25 years old, is not penned in or captured, does not come in conflict with other maritime interests and is not commercially exploited. Norway is the only country that

allows commercial whale hunts, but only for minke whales. Killer whales are a protected species.

Keiko, the killer whale who was the star of the film Free Willy, is seen in Halsa, Norway, yesterday. Keiko is being moved to the more isolated Taknes Bav. Norway on yesterday.

PHOTO: INTERNET

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