

# US warns Niger

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Niger government had never had discussions with Iraq about uranium, and called on British Prime Minister Tony Blair to produce the "evidence" he claims to have to confirm that Iraq sought uranium from Niger.

US officials denied that there had been any attempt to "gag" the Niger government, the Telegraph said.

But the Niger official said that Washington's warning was likely to be heeded.

"Mr Cohen did not spell it out but everybody in Niger knows what the consequences of upsetting America or Britain would be. We are the world's second-poorest country and we depend on international aid to survive."

On a visit to Washington last month, Blair maintained the accuracy of British intelligence on Iraq's alleged purchase of nuclear material from Niger, saying "we know for sure" that it bought 270 tons of the material from the African country in the 1980s.

Iraq's attempt to procure nuclear material from Niger has become the focus of a political fire in both the US and Britain after the Central Intelligence Agency publicly acknowledged the allegation should never have been in US President George W Bush's State of the Union address in January.

That link was cited as one justification for the US-British invasion of Iraq.

Cohen's intervention in Niger suggested that Washington was keen to draw a line under the "uranium from Africa" affair, the Telegraph said, but added it had also learned that senior US soldiers were in Iraq last week to

investigate movements of Niger's uranium.

## Hill factions

**FROM PAGE 12**  
Additional forces were sent to the area and they were yet to report back, military sources said.

The gunbattle started at Krishnamachhara area at about 12:30pm and continued for an hour, sources said.

The next string of shooting took places in Hatimara area at around 6:00pm and at Ramhoripara at midnight, sources added.

The gunfights followed Friday's UPDF press conference at Kutukchhori, sources suspected, where the UPDF blamed the PCJSS for killing 87 of its activists in the last four years.

On July 26, three were killed and another injured in a shootout between the rival groups at Jurappapara in the upazila.

## Pandemonium

**FROM PAGE 12**  
Abdur Rashid.

It all started when Sakhawat Hossain snatched the microphone from Masudur Rahman as he was addressing the meeting.

Suruj Ali in his speech left the court boycott issue to the individual lawyer to decide whether or not to participate in the programme.

He urged the lawyers to maintain law and order in the court.

# Man gets life for killing wife

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal.

A person was sentenced to life term rigorous imprisonment (RI) with a fine of Tk 10,000 by the Barisal district judge's court for murdering his wife. He is to serve one more year in prison should he fail to pay the fine.

Shahin Mollah, a resident of Baherchar Khudrokati in Babuganj upazila of Barisal, beat up Kanchi Begum, his wife, on June 5, 2001. She was taken to Barisal Medical College Hospital where she died on June 6.

The charge sheet against Shahin was submitted on July 31, 2001. District Judge of Barisal Sudhendu Kumar Biswas announced the verdict.

In another judgement, the Speedy Trial Tribunal, Barisal, sentenced Sultan Ahmed, supervisor of ferry division of Bhola Rails and Highways office, to five years RI with Tk 5,000 fine or more six months of RI for storing foreign liquors.

## Dinajpur clash

**FROM PAGE 12**  
heads of smuggled Indian cattle.

They were caught by Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel Saturday night.

When police rushed to the spot to remove the barricade holding up traffic on the busy highway, the crowd started throwing bricksbats at them.

Police charged baton, but failing to bring the situation under control after several hours of struggle, they opened fire.

Major Asad of Dinajpur Sadar BDR said the six arrestees had been released by afternoon yesterday.

Additional police forces were deployed in and around the Raniganj Bazar to avert further untoward incidents.

## Shazneen case

**FROM PAGE 12**  
asked some 'denial' questions from statements of five prosecution witnesses.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, the youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, chairman of Transcom Ltd., was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence on April 23, 1998.

Special public prosecutors ABM Sharfuddin Khan Mukul and Arfan Uddin Khan appeared for the state while Advocate Mosharrat Hossain Kajol, Advocate MA Kamrul Hasan Khan Aslam and Advocate Mizanur Rahman defended the accused.

## Tigers

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45.1 overs.

Australia in reply lost opener Andrew Symonds for seven to make the score 17 for one before Martyn dominated a 131-run stand for the second wicket with opener Michael Bevan who made 40 not out.

Martyn, who missed the West Indies tour as his fractures healed and made zero not out on Saturday, completed the equal ninth-fastest half-century in one-day international off 22 balls.

If his hundred had come in another 10 balls or less it would have been the fourth-fastest in one-day international history.

Earlier, Bangladesh openers Hannan Sarkar and Javed Omar got their side off to a good start and the pair put on 37 in 14 overs.

But after they departed in quick succession the Tigers soon slumped to 86-5.

Habibul Bashar contributed 31 before some late hitting from Alok Kapali saw him top-score with 34 and push the score close to 150.

(Scoreboard on page 13)

## 52 killed

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injuries and "many have been referred to hospitals in Gilgit," Khan said.

"The casualties continued to pour in until late this morning," he said, adding that the facility was not properly equipped to handle the situation.

"It was an unprecedented big disaster in the area."

The casualty medical officer said an emergency had been declared at the hospital and authorities had rushed in life-saving drugs and equipment.

"The situation has now stabilised," he said.

Khan said some casualties had also been admitted to a local rural hospital but he had no figures on whether there had been any fatalities there.

## PM: Quake

**FROM PAGE 12**  
ing that a strong volunteer corps has already been formed to face earthquakes. They will be given proper training, he added.

Khaleda also suggested introducing auto-shut mechanism at power, water and gas supply stations during any natural disaster to reduce the extent of damage.

She further stressed the need for building wider roads having emergency lanes so that fire service and rescue vehicles could move easily during any emergency.

Khaleda laid importance on exchange of earthquake information and experience at regional and international levels.



PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia presides over a high-level meeting at her office yesterday on the possible risk of earthquakes and preparedness to face post-quake situation.

# S Africa win Lord's Test

STAR SPORT MONITOR

South Africa won the second Test against England at Lord's by an innings and 92 runs on the fourth day yesterday.

England finished their second innings on 417 in reply to South Africa's record 682 for six declared.

Before the end came for Michael Vaughan's men, Andrew Flintoff treated the packed crowd with a breathtaking display of hitting. The burly Lancastrian all-rounder smashed 142 off 146 balls before becoming the final wicket to fall.

His power-packed knock contained five huge sixes and 18 fours.

He was finally stumped off leg-spinner Paul Adams to hand Vaughan his first defeat as England captain and give the Proteas a 1-0 lead in the five-Test series.

Fast bowler Makhaya Ntini became the first South African to take 10 wickets at Lord's. He shared the man-of-the-match award with captain Graeme Smith, who made a mammoth 259.

The third Test starts at Trent Bridge on August 14.

## BDR Major

**FROM PAGE 1**  
(against the major) accordingly at the local level," he said, requesting anonymity.

Locals say the team swooped on the area at about 8:00am without any specific information and ransacked the furniture and other valuables of the Shaikh Bari.

As Major Shabbir protested against such an unruly behaviour, they clubbed him severely although he showed his identity card.

They clubbed Rizia Begum, 105, and Rokeya Begum, 60, dragging them out of their house. They are now undergoing treatment at a local hospital.

Monir, Anwar, Selim and Badal, sons of Rokeya, were also injured in the incident.

Twenty-six people including the four sons of Rokeya Begum were picked up from that area and later handed over to the Khalishpur Police Station.

Major Shabbir refused to make any comment on the incident.

The Khulna sector BDR commander, chief of the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence of Khulna and local police commissioner rushed to the scene on hearing the news. They held a closed-door meeting at the Platinum Jubilee Jute Mills rest house at Khalishpur to discuss the situation.

On the same day, three people were beaten up by the joint forces in another incident at the Sonadanga Police Station. The injured were admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital with injuries.

Police and witnesses said an officer of the BDR went to the police station and asked Phul Mia, Faruque and Laitu to accompany him to the Sonadanga bus terminal to help arrest criminals and extortionists.

As they refused his request, the officer beat them up savagely.

# Hasina chargesheeted

**FROM PAGE 1**

Originally, the case was filed against five people. But commodore (retd) M Shahbuddin was later included in the chargesheet during the process of investigation.

After preliminary investigation, BAC inspector Mir Mohammad Joyanal Abedin Shiblee filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station on August 7 last year accusing the six people for misappropriation of public money and misuse of power in purchasing the DW 2000H frigate from the Daewoo Cooperation of South Korea at a price higher than quoted by the lowest bidder.

The case alleged that the accused influenced the award of contract to the Daewoo Comapny, which inflicted a loss of Taka 511.17.09.823.15 to the national exchequer. The loss included Tk 447 crore as letter of credit (LC) money, Tk 1,23,47,403.48 as 0.25 per cent of commission collection and Tk 17,45,51,345 as commission for opening the LC.

It said among nine firms that had submitted 24 quotations for the frigate deal, M/S Bometec Pla of China was the lowest bidder with a price of 68 million dollars.

M/s Daewoo Corporation of South Korea, which was the fourth lowest bidder quoting 99.97 million dollars, was awarded the contract to supply the "unproven design frigate."

As a result, the country suffered a loss of Tk 511.17 crore of public money in the deal, the BAC officer said.

In the chargesheet, the BAC official said former finance secretary Dr Akbar Ali Khan had raised justified objection against buying the frigate from the Daewoo Corporation considering the socio-economic condition of the country and the money allocated for the navy.

Without considering the justified objection, the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina directed the authorities concerned to buy the frigate, said the official.

He said the chargesheet was submitted to the court under Section

409/418/109 of the Bangladesh Penal Code (PBC) and Section 5 (2) of the Anti-Corruption Act of 1947.

### AL reaction

The Awami League yesterday accused the government of framing false graft charges against opposition leader Sheikh Hasina to malign her before the public and vowed to fight the legal battle to prove her innocence in the frigate purchase deal.

In an instant reaction to the latest development, AL general secretary Abdul Jalil said, "this charge has been framed just to malign the opposition leader publicly and harass her politically."

"We'll fight the legal battle to its last and prove that we're right in frigate purchase. There was no dearth of transparency in frigate purchase," claimed Jalil.

Contradicting the allegation of losses caused to the state due to the deal, Jalil said, "rather, we saved money for the state."

# India finds rape of Bangladeshi woman by BSF men false

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A probe by the Indian authorities found false the report of rape of a Bangladeshi woman by the Border Security Force (BSF) personnel.

On March 13, 2003, state-owned news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha reported that a tensed situation was prevailing along the Kurigram border following the rape of Zohra Begum, a mentally retarded Bangladeshi woman. Several national dailies carried the report the following day.

"The allegation has been examined by the authorities in India and found to be false," an Indian High Commission press release said yesterday.

According to the report, Zohra strayed in West Garo Hills district of India on March 9, 2003 where locals spotted her near a church.

They informed the nearby BSF post about the matter, the press statement said.

As it was too late to contact the BDR authorities that day, the BSF arranged sojourn for Zohra at former president of Kalaichar village Ram Chandra Das's house where she spent the night with his wife and daughter, the press release continued.

The following day, the BSF handed her over to the BDR in presence of Ram Chandra and Chand Mian, secretary of Kalaichar school management committee, the statement said.

Some of the Bangladeshis including Fazlur Rahman Bepari, Union Parishad (UP) member, Jahangir Bepari, ex-UP member, and Abdul Rahman, chieftain of Balaimari village of Kurigram, were also present when she was handed over to the BDR, the press release added.

# 2 murdered in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Two persons were murdered in separate incidents in Pabna yesterday.

In Pabna Sadar Upazila, one person was hacked to death by some alleged miscreants.

Police said the victim, Nurjan Hossain, 35, from Dhopakatha, might have been killed due to previous enmity.

A gang of armed miscreants called Nurjan Hossain out of his sister-in-law's wedding ceremony and took him to a nearby sugarcane field where they hacked him and cut the tendon of his hands and legs before leaving the spot, police sources said.

Nurjan was rushed to Pabna General Hospital on that night where he succumbed to his injuries.

A case has been filed in this regard but none was arrested.

Meanwhile, some extremists slaughtered to death another person on Saturday in Kaligram village under Vulbaria union of Ataikula thana.

Police said a gang of armed extremists came to the house of Halim Sheikh, 45, and called him out of his house and hacked him.

The criminals ensured his death by slaughtering him.

Police also said that Halim was also a member of an extremists' group and several cases have been filed against him and that he had been absconding for six months.

Police said the killing might have been a sequel to the internal feud of a local extremists' group.

A case has been filed with the Ataikula Police Station in this regard and one person has been arrested in this connection.

## Rejoinder

**FROM PAGE 12**  
organisation is not involved in smuggling of arms and explosives into the country and trying to incite religious fanaticism among people, it added.

"Hizbut Tawheed has no hostility towards any particular organisation like Jamaat-e-Islami. But we strongly protest the use of Islam for political gains by any organisation and for financial gains by religious organisation and mullahs," it added.

## One nabbed

**FROM PAGE 1**  
also made a seizure list in presence of the witnesses.

Soon after the incident, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (Prosecution) and Officer-in-charge of the Kotwali Police Station came to the place of occurrence and interrogated the arrestee.

Later on, Harun was handed over to the Kotwali police and an arms case was filed.

He will be produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka today with a remand prayer for interrogation, police sources said.

While he was interrogated, Harun replied that he came to the court premises to meet an accused in many criminal cases, including six murder cases. He did it as per a directive from a godfather.

After the incident, judges, lawyers and litigants became afraid and sought protection from the government.

## Gram Sarkar

**FROM PAGE 1**  
and Cooperatives Ministry said the authorities asked all concerned to add pace to the constitution of the units of Gram Sarkar, the lowest tier of local government and auxiliary to the union parishad (UP).

"The government has no plan to extend the deadline. We are determined to complete the process within the 45-day schedule," said a high official of the ministry.

At least 1,000 units have to be formed a day to give shape to 40,392 units, one in as many wards under 4,488 UPs across Bangladesh.

Officials expected that the Gram Sarkar formation process would gather pace by the weekend as district and upazila administrations chalked out schedules.

# Tremor terror

**FROM PAGE 12**

tremor. She went to a doctor in the upazila headquarters who could not find out the reasons for the burns and refused to treat her.

He advised Halima to go to the district headquarters. "How can I go there without a penny," she said.

Halima's hut collapsed in the quake forcing her to join the homeless in the primary school shelter along with her daughters.

Four other children of the area Afrina, 4, Moina, 4, Azad, 3, and a unknown one also suffered burns in the quake.

"They all go untreated as there is no doctor at the local Aimachhara union health complex," a local said.

Manik Chakma and Tarani Kumar Chakma of Orjanchhori village in Bhushanchhara union said all mud houses in the village and in the neighborhood collapsed.

He, however, could not give the figure. "Nobody, neither the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) nor the DC, visited us," Manik said.

The exact number of the quake-

# Wife of Tawfiq Aziz Khan laid to rest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Suraiya Begum, wife of the late Tawfiq Aziz Khan, former executive editor of The Daily Star, was laid to rest at Banani graveyard yesterday.

Her namaj-e-janaza was held at the Dhaka University Mosque after Zohr prayers which the vice-chancellor, teachers, students, officials and staff of the university attended. Then the students of information science and library management placed wreaths on her coffin as a mark of respect.

Suraiya, an associate professor at the Department of Information Science and Library Management of Dhaka University, died of cardiac arrest at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) Hospital on Saturday night at 52.

She was admitted to a city clinic on Thursday evening with severe pain in the chest and was shifted to the hospital on Friday afternoon after her condition deteriorated. She passed away at about 8.30pm on Saturday.

Suraiya joined Dhaka University in 1984 as a lecturer and contributed a lot for the development of the country's library sector. She was the member of Rotary Inner Wheel Club, Institute of Library and Information Management (ILIM) and Gonounnayan Gronthagar. She was a life long member of the Library Association of Bangladesh and Bangladesh Asiatic Society.

A doa mahfil will be held on Wednesday at her residence at 278/2, Elephant Road, Dhaka and a similar mahfil and a condolence meeting will be organised at Dhaka University by the teachers and students of her department on August 10.

## Four to die

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Hasina, daughter of Naushad Ali Master of Bhabanipur village of Shyampur union under Shibganj upazila, was raped and burnt to death by pouring kerosene on her body on the night of March 5, 1999.

Hasina's elder brother Monirul Islam filed a case with Shibganj thana accusing six persons under the Section of 9(4) and 14 of the Women and Children Repression and Prevention Act of 1995 on March 6, a day after the murder.

However, CID official Satya Ranjan Roy submitted the chargesheet to the court accusing the eight persons on April 12, 2000.

Advocate Mahfuzur Rahman Sentu, Advocate Solaiman Bishu, Advocate Saiful Islam Reza, Advocate Anwar Hossain Dolar and Advocate Zobdul Hoque and Advocate Hamidul Hoque appeared for the state while Advocate Sultanul Islam Moni, Advocate Sadrul Amin, Advocate Golam Kabir and Advocate Golam Arif Tipu stood for the convicts.

## Razzak's return

**FROM PAGE 12**  
government, but hastened to add that he was on leave and would go back to London to resume his duties as high commissioner.

During the days he spent in Khulna, Razzak avoided talking about politics and family sources said the lone purpose of his visit was to take rest.

The former speaker said he would again come to Khulna before returning to London.

hit families is not yet known. The deputy commissioner's office said they put only 260 families on a list of victims in Kolabunia.

DC Dr Jafar Ahmed Khan said three tonnes of food grains and Tk 10,000 were distributed among the people affected.

Red Crescent Society also distributed relief, he said.

## JU campus

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Johnny of international relations department and Rupom of history department from their room of Saidam Salam Barkat hall at around 2:00am yesterday.

Some BCL activists were also ousted from Meer Musharrarf hall yesterday, sources said.

"The JCD activists are ousting our activists and it is not possible for them to stay on the campus," said Jebin, president of the BCL's JU unit.

Parvez Mallick, president of the JCD of JU unit, refuted the allegations.

# Law takes backseat

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Bogra until March this year.

Law enforcers arrested a number of racketeers and unearthed sources of forged notes, but little progress was made in the cases filed. None was punished rightly, said a central bank official.

Making or circulating fake notes is a criminal offence for which a person may be sentenced to death under the Bangladesh Penal Code and the Special Powers Act, 1974.

Fake notes are mainly coming from a neighbouring country and also made locally using multicolour photocopyers. The locally made fake notes are inferior in quality and can be identified if seen carefully, an official said.

"The problem is not new and not only in Bangladesh. There are many countries facing such a problem. The question is how the problem is addressed. The problem could be under control if the law-enforcement agencies were active," said a top official of the CMA.

Headed by the general manager of the CMA and represented by officials of different ministries, a committee is in place to chalk out an action plan to address the fake note problem.

All district towns have similar committees. In the districts where the BB does not have its branch, Sonali Bank works as coordinator of such committees. A BB official said the role of such committees is in

name only. However, he added, the central bank continues its efforts to make people aware of how a fake note can be identified besides improving the security features of new notes.

Shopkeepers in Dhanmondi, Motijheel, Mirpur, Karwan Bazar and some other city areas said they get fake notes, mostly 500 and 100 taka ones, from many customers.

"Sometimes, I can identify fake notes. But the quality of some fake notes seems good and it is very difficult to identify those," a shopkeeper said.

## Freedom

**FROM PAGE 1**  
bleeding heart when the cold, stoned face of Rumi kept her eyes closed upon everything. He broke down in tears. Mother Monwara Begum fainted several times.

"I demand capital punishment to those who harried my daughter to death," Kalam said in a broken voice.

Neighbours alleged that one of the culprits, Azam, had a criminal track record. Following Rumi's suicide, the family members of Azam and Nazim went into hiding. UP Chairman Abdus Salam Talukder, who called the arbitration, also was not available for comments.