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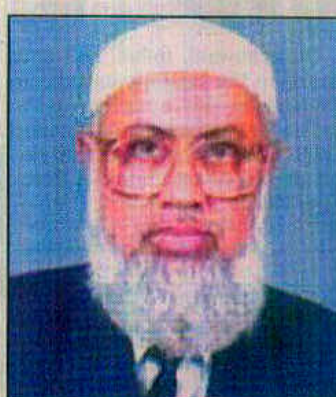
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Khulna city AL chief gunned down, violence erupts

Outlaws claim responsibility; BNP lawmaker's house vandalised, city office ransacked; cars smashed



Monjurul Imam

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Khulna city Awami League President Monjurul Imam was killed in a spray of bullets and bomb blasts by assailants in Khulna city yesterday, sparking a wave of violent protests.

The unknown rickshaw-puller, who was pedalling advocate Monjurul to work at about 10:15am, also died in the blasts. Advocate Bijon Bilhari Mondol, accompanying Monjurul to court on the same rickshaw, was grievously injured in the fire that came between the explosions.

In a faxed message to local newspapers, Purbo Banglar Communist Party (Janajuddha) claimed responsibility for the killing of the AL leader, branding him as a 'class enemy'.

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Hartal on Thursday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) has called a countrywide dawn to dusk hartal on August 28 to protest the killing of Advocate Monjurul Imam, a member of the party advisory council and president of the Khulna city unit.

A meeting of the AL central working committee yesterday took the decision to enforce the 6:00am to 6:00pm shutdown blaming the BNP-backed criminals for the killing. The meeting was held with senior party leader Abdus Samad Azad in the

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PHOTO: AFP

Indian policemen inspect the scene at Zaveri Bazar in Bombay after two powerful explosions hit the city yesterday, killing at least 47 people and injuring over 100.

Twin blasts cause Mumbai carnage

47 killed, 100 injured as bomb-laden taxis go off

AFP, Mumbai

Two bombs hidden in taxis yesterday exploded in front of a Hindu temple and a busy tourist spot in India's commercial capital Mumbai, killing at least 47 people and leaving over 100 injured.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the car bombings which occurred seven minutes apart during the lunch-hour rush at the Temple of Mumbadevi and a square in front of the Gateway of India monument.

Witnesses said dazed survivors with blood streaming from wounds ran for cover after the explosions. Scores of injured were ferried to hospitals which sent out appeals for emergency supplies of blood.

Mangled cars, trails of blood and shattered glass littered the area in front of the Gateway of India, a giant arch in the southern harbour which is one of India's most famous colonial buildings and is popular with tourists.

Pakistan, repeatedly accused by India of sponsoring "terrorist

attacks" including an attack on parliament in December 2001 which brought the countries close to war, immediately condemned the bombings.

"We deplore these attacks and we sympathise with the victims and their families," Pakistani foreign ministry spokesman Masood Khan said.

The blasts came minutes after archaeologists issued a report from the flashpoint city of Ayodhya which said a grand Hindu temple had been found below the surface of a mosque

razed by Hindu zealots in 1992 in northern India. (Detailed story on Page 9)

The destruction of the temple sparked Hindu-Muslim riots which left thousands dead, and while officials did not immediately link the report to the blasts, sensitive areas in India were put on high alert.

State Health Minister Digvijay Khanvilkar confirmed at least 29 deaths, but hospital sources put the death toll at 44. Police said over 100 people were injured.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Top cops made OSD for rescue failure

No sign of abducted Jamal even after IGP's deadline expires

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday took drastic actions against three high police officials in Chittagong for their failure to cut crimes, especially to rescue magnate Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury even after 31 days of abduction.

The government also deployed

army to rescue Jamal in Fatikchhari where he is believed to be in captivity.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) Commissioner Shahidullah Khan, Additional Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Chittagong Division of police Naim Ahmed and Superintendent of Police (SP) of Chittagong district Motiur

Rahman were made officers on special duty (OSD).

State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar told The Daily Star that the officials failed to carry out their responsibility satisfactorily.

"We have demanded explanation from them why they failed to

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Spiralling political killings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political killing has risen sharply across the country. In the first six months of the year, 195 people were killed and 2,675 injured in attacks on political activists, according to a report by Odhikar, a coalition of human rights organisations.

According to the Odhikar report circulated to the press, an Awami League leader, Akher Hossain, 38, was killed by his rivals at Sripur, Pabna, on August 22.

Abdul Kader, 22, an activist of the Awami League, was shot dead at Fatullah, Narayanganj, allegedly by Juba Dal cadres on August 15.

A student of Chittagong

University was killed by stray bullets that pierced through a wooden door when an armed gang fired from outside at Raozan on August 15. The student, Omar Farooq, was killed as the attackers fired on his brother-in-law, Moslem Uddin, general secretary of the Raozan upazila AL unit.

President of the Kapasia Juba League unit, Jalal Uddin Sarker, 30, was slain by his political rivals on August 17.

Former Juba Dal activist, Mohammad Barkat Ullah, 35, was shot dead at Sat Masjid Ghat, Mohammadpur on August 18.

Abu Zafar Mohammad Hossain, a BNP activist, was shot dead in front

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Free market access, movement of natural persons included in Cancun revised draft

MONJUR MAHMUD

Two major issues of the Dhaka Declaration -- duty- and quota-free market access and movement of natural persons -- have been included in the revised draft of the fifth Cancun ministerial meeting.

Besides, the issue of flexible and simplified rules of origin has also been included in the revised draft, commerce ministry sources said.

"The issues have been included, but there is no clear statement about them. Even then, the draft is now better than before," said a high official of the commerce ministry.

The WTO Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Commerce sat at its

conference room yesterday to discuss different issues of the revised text. With Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury in the chair, representatives from different ministries, experts and business leaders were present at the meeting.

"These issues will be discussed at the Cancun meeting. But it is not clear whether there will be any decision," said a chamber leader who attended the meeting.

The advisory committee also decided that Bangladesh, in line with the LDCs, will not accept inclusion of any new issue in the trade talks as the rich nations did not fulfil their earlier commitments.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Congratulation



We, on behalf of the Chairman, Directors, Management Authority and Employees of all levels in The Premier Bank Limited express our heartfelt congratulation to our honourable Director & Chairman of Bely Group of Industries, eminent industrialist and philanthropist **Alhaj Abul Kashem** on his being accorded The Prime Minister Award for the second time by the honourable Prime Minister of The Peoples Republic of Bangladesh **Begum Khaleda Zia** on the occasion of Fish Week 2003 as an acknowledgement of his dynamic contribution towards shrimp production in the country.

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