

## First clashes between US army, Kurd rebels in Iraq

American military policeman dies in attacks

AFP, Ankara

US troops and local Kurdish fighters have clashed with Turkish Kurd rebels hiding in northern Iraq, Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul said yesterday.

Media reports said a local Kurdish fighter was killed in the fighting.

The clashes, which Gul said took place on Sunday, are the first known armed confrontation between US forces and the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK, also known as KADEK) since the United States occupied Iraq.

Turkey has repeatedly called on the United States to move against the PKK guerrillas, who have set up bases in a mountainous region of north-eastern Iraq.

"Not only US soldiers, but also peshmergas clashed with the PKK," Gul told reporters, referring to fighters from Kurdish groups in northern Iraq who are allied with Washington.

"Several American helicopters were also involved," he said.

Turkey had recently expressed frustration over what it saw as US reluctance to purge northern Iraq of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

# Home ministry cell orders swift probe into 7 sensational murder cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The home ministry monitoring cell yesterday ordered a quick disposal of seven sensational murder cases after proper investigation.

The directive came from a meeting at the home ministry, with State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar in the chair.

Quick investigations were ordered into the killings of Zakir in Chittagong, Madan Gopal Goswami in Khagrachhari, police informer Safi Ahmed Jalal, Abdul Kader and Sultana Khan Panni in Dhaka, Dr Aftab in Sylhet and monk Gyanjyoti murder in Raozan.

The state minister inquired about the latest on the cases from investigation officers and ordered hastening the disposal of the cases.

Cabinet Secretary Sa'dat Hussain, Attorney General AF Hassan Ariff, Home Secretary Omar Farooq and Inspector General of Police Shahudul Haque, among others, were present.

The cell pegged 209 cases as sensitive: 35 of them were transferred to the Speedy Trial Tribunal, 73 are with other courts, 31 were disposed of, 49 are under investigation and 10 were given final reports as charges were not proved.

The Speedy Trial Act has dealt with 253 of 513 cases since October 24, 2002, in which 201 people were convicted and 52 cleared of charges, meeting sources said.

Sixty people were given death penalty and 166 sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for 20 years, 110 for 10 to 20 years and 86 for one to 10 years.



PHOTO: ANSUR RAHMAN

A bamboo fence still marks out plots on the Buriganga river in a sign of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority's failure to clear all illegal structures off the riverbanks to save the lifeline of Dhaka city.

## Alliance govt faces split over power share

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the backdrop of polarisation triggered by the Awami League (AL) in the opposition political camp, the ruling BNP-led four-party alliance is facing an apparent split as two of its allies have started boycotting government programmes over the crucial issue of power sharing.

Highly placed sources said discontent was brewing up in the ruling coalition as a faction of Islami Oikya Jote (IO) and Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP) have not yet been included in any government forum although two years have gone by.

"We are yet to formally quit the alliance and have stopped attending social or political programmes of the BNP-Jamaat government, but I think the days are not very far when we will have to part company with the alliance," said an influential BJP leader on condition of anonymity.

Leaders of the two alliance partners did not attend the Iftar parties hosted recently by the president and the prime minister.

A BNP policymaker admitted that relations with the two parties were becoming estranged and it

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

# Dengue back in Ctg to claim one life

NURUL ALAM, Ctg

The dreaded dengue is back in the port city, already claiming one life and attacking many more, after a major outbreak about two years ago.

A young housewife died of dengue at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) on Sunday and five other dengue patients including a doctor are under treatment, hospital sources said.

A number of dengue patients were reportedly admitted to private hospitals and clinics and many visited private medical practitioners for treatment.

The 101-member dengue taskforce formed by Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) two years ago and the dengue surveillance committee at the CMCH are still to take steps to face the situation.

Chittagong Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury heads the taskforce and former head of community medicine at the CMCH Prof Sultanul Alam is its convenor.

The mayor said he is aware of the spread of dengue. "I am going to activate the task force to take preventive steps and create public awareness. We will hold a meeting soon to draw up a strategy to counter the menace," he said.

Moreover, spraying of insecticides at breeding grounds for mosquitoes will be geared up, he added.

Sultanul Alam said dengue spread with the proliferation of aedes mosquitoes in stagnant waters following recent rains in the city.

Deputy Civil Surgeon of Chittagong Khurshid Jamil said he received reports about admission of dengue patients in hospitals and clinics. But necessary steps are yet to be taken, he admitted.

Health superintendent at the civil surgeon's office Abul Hossain said health offices, hospitals, clinics and health complexes have been asked to provide reports on dengue patients.

## Charges pressed against seven ex-cops for mugging

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Charges were pressed against seven former policemen of Khilgaon Police Station and an Ansar member after it was proved that they mugged two businessmen at Meradia, Goran on October 31.

Inspector Salahuddin of Khilgaon Police Station, the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet to the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka yesterday, 10 days after the incident.

Of the seven policemen who stand accused of mugging, Sub-Inspector (SI) Shahjahan Sabuj and constables Habibur Rahman, Abul Khair Mollah and Mohammad Faruq are absconding.

The four others -- SI Shamsul Haque, constables Mohammad Azhar and Helal Uddin and Ansar Mohammad Azad Hossain, are now in Dhaka Central Jail.

The IO sought court order to confiscate the property of the fugitive policemen and a warrant of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

# Saarc information ministers meet in Delhi today

## Guideline for satellite TV programmes, free movement of media men to top agenda

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

A guideline on satellite television programmes, free movement of media persons and a regional media fund feature high on agenda of the third Saarc information ministers' conference to be held in New Delhi today.

In the run-up to the two-day ministerial meet, information secretaries of the seven member-countries met in Delhi yesterday to finalise the agenda and review the progress in implementation of proposals.

Bangladesh Information Minister

Tariqul Islam arrived in Delhi yesterday afternoon to take part in the meet, also to be attended by his counterparts from Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee will inaugurate the ministerial conference and slightly deferred his departure for a three-nation tour.

Top of the information ministers' agenda is the model guideline on transnational satellite broadcast in the region, which stipulates that programmes must avoid anything

derogatory to any member-country or its ethnic group.

The guideline details the content of the programme and advertisements to be aired on satellite channels and says news coverage must be "accurate and impartial" in dealing with controversial issues involving the members of Saarc (South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation).

It also suggests that programmes should not include anything portraying the member-countries in a twisted light, avoid anything that

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

# Fiji villagers plan to apologise for past cannibalism

AFP, SUVA

A leading Methodist cleric has criticised plans for a village to apologise for killing and eating a missionary 137 years ago, the Fiji Times reported Wednesday.

"Everything has been done and all forgiven and forgotten," said former church head Josateki Koroi.

Methodist Thomas Baker was killed in 1867 in the village of Navatusila in the interior of Fiji's main island of Viti Levu.

Nine descendants of Baker were due in from Canberra Wednesday for a ceremony in the village on November 13.

Koroi said the ceremony did not include any members of the Methodist Church. The reconciliation service is being planned by the Assembly of Christian Churches, a conservative pro-government grouping.

Koroi said he did not know why the group wanted to have the service and seek forgiveness.

The Methodist Church in Fiji had sought forgiveness from Baker's family a long time ago and to commemorate this solemn ceremony, a hall at Davuilevu, outside Suva was named after Thomas Baker.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6



PHOTO: AFP

Fijian villagers in the mountains of Viti Levu yesterday prepare for a November 13 ceremony, where they will apologise to the family of a missionary killed in 1867 by cannibals, believing it will lift a curse the incident brought upon them.

## 3-man JS body trims down to 1, blames press for price hike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body formed to find the reasons for price hike of essentials has blamed it on 'negative press reports' even though two of the three-member committee have expressed their inability to work.

After the two members became inactive, the convenor alone is now working on the assignment.

The three-member sub-committee formed last week now seeks time beyond the one-week deadline it was given to file its report. The deadline ends today.

BNP lawmaker LK Siddiqui, a member of the sub-committee, declined to work. Talking to The Daily Star he said he was unwilling to be a member of the sub-committee. "But they requested me just to be there in the probe body," he added.

The other member, BNP lawmaker Mohammad Younus, said he did not know anything about the committee's work.

Asked about the findings of the probe body, Monirul Hoque Chowdhury, convenor of the sub-committee, said, "I find media propaganda the main reason behind the abnormal price spike."

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

# Iran suspends uranium enrichment

## Letter sent to IAEA accepting tougher inspections

AP, Moscow

A top Iranian official said yesterday that his country had suspended its enrichment of uranium and sent a letter to the UN nuclear watchdog accepting additional inspections of its nuclear facilities.

"Before your government, I officially announce that we are giving the International Atomic Energy Agency a letter agreeing with the additional protocol today," Hasan Rowhani, the head of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said before a Kremlin meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"From today, we are temporarily suspending our process of uranium enrichment."

Rowhani's statements were aimed at eliminating suspicions that Iran is developing nuclear weapons. The protocol appended to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty would allow IAEA inspectors to perform snap inspec-

tions and otherwise extend their probe of Iranian nuclear activities that had previously been off-limits.

Enriching uranium is a process that creates fuel for nuclear plants but also can be used to build weapons. Tehran says it has enriched uranium only to non-weapons levels, as part of purely peaceful nuclear programs meant to produce power as its oil stocks decline.

Iran had pledged in recent weeks to allow unfettered inspections and suspend enrichment, but the time frame was unclear.

The United States accuses Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons and has pressed for the IAEA to declare Iran in violation of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Washington has urged Moscow to freeze its \$800 million deal to help build Iran's first nuclear power reactor, saying it could help Iran

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

## Relief graft to be dealt with severely: PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday warned that tougher action would be taken if anyone was found involved in corruption or irregularities in the distribution and allocation of relief materials in the 'Monga affected' districts in country's northwestern region.

While reviewing the monga situation in the weekly regular cabinet meeting, she also instructed the Disaster Management and Relief Minister and Minister in Charge of the districts to keep in close touch so that no irregularities or negligence take place in the distribution of relief.

Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf briefed the cabinet about the current state of the monga as well as the progress of the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

## Students again besiege JU VC, proctor

University closed from Nov 15 to Dec 18

JU CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of students besieged the vice-chancellor and proctor in front of the administrative building at Jahangirnagar University (JU) for an hour yesterday, the third day of demonstrations against the ongoing academic deadlock.

The students also submitted a memorandum to the VC demanding resumption of classes and examinations by December 14.

VC Prof Josim Uddin Ahmad and Proctor Dr Moshir Rahman were besieged by the agitating students from 12:30pm to 1:30pm in front of the administrative building, as the authorities did not take any initiative to end the stalemate till yesterday, the 27th day of an

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4



## Comedian Hashmat no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Film director and actor Hashmat died at BIRDEM hospital in the city yesterday. He was 72.

He was suffering from diabetes and kidney ailments.

Some of the films directed by Hashmat are 'Swapna Diye Ghera', 'Ekhono Akash Nil', 'Haba Hahmat' and 'Madhumita'. He is survived by his wife, three sons and two daughters.

The namaz-e-janaza for Hashmat was held at Lalkuthi Jame Mosque in Mirpur after Zohr prayers. Later, he was laid to rest at the Azimpur graveyard.

Bangladesh Film Directors' Association has expressed deep shock at the death of Hashmat.

Sehri, Iftar timings			
Ramadan	Nov	Sehri	Iftar
15	11		5-18
16	12	4-49	5-17

  

Prayer Timings		
November 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-49	5-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-18	5-24
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation