

UN wants more peacekeepers from Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka

Under-Secretary General for the UN Peacekeeping Operations Jean Marie Guehenno yesterday discussed Bangladesh's commitment to policing peace in different troubled pockets of the world.

"Commitment of Bangladesh is very important in the present context," the UN official said at a press conference at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel in the evening.

Hinting at the needs for future deployment of UN peacekeepers in Ivory Coast, Sudan and Burundi, Guehenno said more demands will be made and that is why Bangladesh's willingness for sending troops is so important.

Guehenno, who met Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office in the afternoon, said, "Formal discussion to this end will begin soon."

During the meeting, the prime minister told the UN executive that the peacekeeping units of the UN

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia presents an award to a policeman, left, and policemen march past, right, at the inauguration of Police Week 2004 at the Rajarbagh Police Lines parade grounds yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

Police asked to do duties with no fear or favour

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday asked police to do their duties without fear or favour to help build a violence-free, disciplined society.

"We want to see police much closer to the common people, we want to see total peace and discipline in public life," she said.

The prime minister was speaking at the inaugural function of the 'Police Week-2004' at Rajarbagh Police Lines parade ground. Ministers, MPs, chiefs of the three services, diplomats, high civil and military officials and elite were

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

6 more cities come under reduced call rate for US, Canada

BTTB to include more destinations soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Land phone subscribers of Chittagong, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Khulna, Noakhali and Bogra will also be able to call the USA and Canada at Tk 7.50 a minute from now on, Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB)

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

US declares PoW status for Saddam

Red Cross wants to see Iraq's ex-president

REUTERS, Washington

The United States has formally declared Saddam Hussein, held by US forces since his December 13 capture, an enemy prisoner of war, the Pentagon said Friday, and the International Committee of the Red Cross asked to see Iraq's former president as soon as possible.

The Pentagon's first official statement about the 66-year-old captive's legal status means Saddam is due a host of rights

spelled out by the Geneva Convention on treatment of prisoners of war.

"Saddam's status is that he is an enemy prisoner of war. The lawyers have determined that," chief Pentagon spokesman Lawrence Di Rita told reporters late on Friday, adding Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was informed of the determination earlier in the day.

The treaty requires that the International Committee of the Red Cross have access to POWs.

Christophe Girod, the senior ICRC official in Washington, said the organisation was speaking with US officials in Baghdad about gaining access to Saddam to check the conditions in which he is being held.

The Geneva Convention requires that POWs receive humane treatment, including not being subjected to intimidation or insult and not being turned into a public curiosity.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

'ILLEGAL' GAS CONSUMPTION

Jamuna asks JS body chief to prove allegation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jamuna group yesterday threatened the chairman of a parliamentary body with legal actions should he fail to prove his allegations of illegal gas consumption against the company, drawing fire from the committee.

Nurul Islam Babul, chairman of the Jamuna Group, in a letter gave a seven-day ultimatum to Shahidul Islam, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the energy and mineral resources ministry, to prove the charges.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Reporter receives death threat from BNP leader

Another escapes bomb attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A journalist here narrowly escaped an attempt on his life Thursday night while another in Bagerhat was given an explicit death threat allegedly by a BNP leader there on Friday.

Saiful Islam Bablu, 30, crime reporter of Dainik Loksamaj of Jessore, narrowly escaped an attempt on his life when a powerful bomb hurled by three men on a motorcycle missed him by a few yards and exploded on impact, sources said.

The incident happened at around 10:00pm Thursday, a quarter kilometre from Bablu's house at Amdabad under Rupsha Police Station, soon after he left home on his motorbike.

Bablu is stationed at the Khulna office of the newspaper owned by Information Minister Tariqul Islam.

A general diary was filed with Rupsha Police Station.

In Bagerhat, Joint Secretary of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Bank executive held on charge of killing wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested Azam Reza yesterday evening at a place near Azimpur cemetery on charge of killing his wife Jayanti Munshi Reza alias Kochi, 38.

Police had been on the look out for Azam, an executive vice president of Dhaka Bank, since the post-mortem report on Jayanti confirmed yesterday that she was killed.

Police recovered the hanging body of Jayanti, a teacher of Australian International School, from their Banani house Friday afternoon.

A three-member team, led by Prof Akhteruzzaman, head of the Forensic Department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), conducted the autopsy yesterday and sent the report to Gulshan Police Station.

A member of the team said Jayanti had died of brain haemorrhage caused by a hit at the back of her head. Marks of torture were also found on her body. Jayanti was hung from the ceiling fan after her death. The forensic team found a

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

INSURGENCY

BDR, BSF agree to bust camps

BSS/PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Director General of the Border Security Force (BSF) of India Ajay Raj Sharma on Friday said New Delhi would get anti-Bangladesh terrorists, insurgents and criminals and bust their camps in India.

BDR Director General Major General Jahangir Alam Chowdhury handed over to Sharma a list of 39 anti-Bangladesh separatists' camps which Dhaka alleges are in

West Bengal and Tripura states of India.

Sharma too gave Choudhury a list of 194 anti-India terrorist training camps and 100 prominent Indian insurgents based in various locations of Bangladesh and sought Dhaka's cooperation in dismantling the camps.

The BDR chief denied the existence of camps in Bangladesh and both sides "resolved to act

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



PHOTO: STAR

Veteran revolutionary Binod Bihari Chowdhury photographed amid flowers at his 94th birth anniversary celebrations yesterday in Chittagong.

A salute to a rebel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

People here yesterday celebrated the 94th birth anniversary of veteran revolutionary Binod Bihari Chowdhury, a close aide of Masterda Surya Sen.

Presented with bouquets of fragrant flowers, the renowned personality wished to live many more years to work for humanity and human rights.

"I don't grieve for my past or present. Nothing except the ongoing abuse of human rights irritates me these days," said the veteran revolutionary, looking still agile like a youth.

People and well-wishers from all strata started turning up with flowers at his 120, Momin Road house in the city since early morning. Binod and his wife Biva Chowdhury, who

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

UPDF denies having camps in India

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) yesterday in a press release described the allegations made by the director general of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) of the UPDF's running insurgency camps in India as imaginary, false and politically motivated.

"The UPDF is a democratic political party that has been directing the struggle for autonomy of the Chittagong Hill Tracts through systematic means and with support and assistance of the people," the press release said.

It ruled out the existence of any insurgent camp run by the UPDF in

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Instil civic values in students to achieve good governance

Ramos tells AIUB convocation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fidel V Ramos, former president of the Philippines, yesterday stressed incorporating civic values in education to produce moral human beings with a view to establishing good governance.

"You may import goods and technology from abroad but you can't import good governance," he said while addressing a press conference at the American International University, Bangladesh (AIUB) at Banani in the city.

Ramos, who is on a five-day visit here, also spoke at the convocation of the AIUB as special guest.

He said Bangladesh-Philippines

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Prayer Timings		
January 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-45	6-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-36	5-41
Esha	7-15	7-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		

EPI employees threaten strike for salary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 280 employees engaged in the Extended Programme of Immunisation (EPI) and Child Health have threatened to go on an indefinite strike if their demands are not met immediately.

Their demands include payment of outstanding salary from August last year and placing of their jobs under revenue budget instead of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

ANTI-POVERTY LOAN

IMF clears \$74m in 2nd tranche

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) cleared Friday a credit of \$74 million as the second tranche of Poverty Reduction Growth Facilities (PRGF) for Bangladesh following fulfilment of a set of conditions.

The PRGF is a concessional facility of the IMF for low-income countries. The fund approved the \$517 million PRGF for Bangladesh at 0.5 percent interest in June last year to be disbursed in seven half-

yearly instalments of about \$74 million each, subject to fulfilment of a string of conditions in each phase by the government.

The second instalment was scheduled to be approved by December 17 last, which was deferred, as the government could not fulfil one of the conditions -- lower the interest rates on government savings certificates -- in time. The government introduced new rates for the certificates from January 1 last.

Other major tasks that had to be carried out for getting the second tranche include withdrawal of letter of credit margin for imports, restructuring of 1,000 large taxpayers' units of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and continuation of the ongoing NCB (nationalised commercial bank) reform programme.

To avail of the third tranche of PRGF, scheduled to be approved by the IMF Executive Board by June 15,

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7