

AL's Laxmipur leader Taher gets life for killing one

UNB, Chittagong

The Speedy Trial Tribunal, Chittagong division, yesterday awarded death sentence to two Laxmipur BCL men and life imprisonment to five others, including district Awami League (AL) leader Abu Taher, on charge of killing BNP leader Kamaluddin four years ago.

Judge M Hasan Imam handed down the death sentence to Salauddin Tipu, district BCL activist and son of former pourashaba chairman and AL district president Abu Taher, and district BCL activist Abdul Jabbar.

The four others who awarded life imprisonment are Taher's eldest son AHM Biplob, AL activist A b u l

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

HC stays freeze on Mannan's bank accounts

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court (HC) yesterday stayed operation of the deputy commissioner of taxes (DCT) notice that had asked three banks i

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Prayer Timings		
March 21		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-55	5-
30 Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-16	6-20
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

ARMS TRAFFICKING

Is Naikkhyangchhari a transit point?

MANIRUL ISLAM MANU, Bandarban

The recent hauls of an increasing number of arms in Naikkhyangchhari in southern Bandarban have sparked alarm among the locals on whether the upazila is gradually becoming a safe route for arms trafficking by terrorists and smugglers.

In February alone, seven USA-made M-79 rifles, three M-16 rifles with 12 additional barrels and 451 bullets and eight locally made guns were recovered from the border

area of the upazila.

Between September and December last year, 1,354 bullets in addition to two AK-47 rifles, two .303 rifles, two shot guns, one Chinese 7.62mm pistol, a locally made single-barrel gun, 536 hand grenades, 32 anti-tank mines, seven anti-personnel mines, six 40mm rocket launchers, 10 charge rocket-launcher shells and 19 GF bombs were seized in the upazila.

Joint security forces led by the army recovered those arms in operations in Dochhori Hatir Matha area on September 18,

Lemuchhari Hill on October 20, Dochhori on November 5 and Lemuchhari Para on December 30.

A huge quantity of explosives and raw materials for firearms and explosives were also recovered during the raids. Those include 130kg of plastic explosive, two containers of acid, 14 containers of various chemicals, one packet of white potash, one packet of low-explosive, one kg of lead, two packets of lead balls, 14 pieces in parts of rocket-launcher, five coils of electric

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

Workers Party of Bangladesh stages a procession in Dhaka yesterday condemning the US invasion of Iraq on the first anniversary of the war.

Left parties, HR groups denounce Iraq invasion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Left-leaning political parties, rights groups, cultural organisations and civil society bodies yesterday denounced the invasion of Iraq by US-led coalition forces a year ago and occupation of it till now.

They brought out processions in the capital and held rallies at Muktagong and other places to demand immediate withdrawal of the coalition troops from Iraq and trial of the US president and British prime minister as 'war criminals'.

Some left-leaning parties also accused the ruling alliance in Bangladesh and 'pro-alliance elite' of supporting the invasion a

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Pak forces detain 100 al-Qaeda suspects

AP, Wana

Pakistan's military has arrested more than 100 suspects in a five-day assault on militants holed up in mud fortresses along the border where al-Qaeda No. 2 Ayman al Zawahri is believed trapped, a commander said Saturday.

Those detained included foreign fighters and the local Pashtun tribesmen who have been sheltering them, said Lt. Gen. Safdar Hussain, who is in charge of the

sweep. Hussain said 400 to 500 militants are believed to still be fighting from within the heavily fortified compounds, using mortars, AK-47s, rockets and hand-grenades in a face-off with troops.

"These people have been here for a long, long time. They are extremely professional fighters," he said. "They have tremendous patience before they open fire."

The military showed journalists 40 prisoners, all blindfolded and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

BSF kills 1 in C'nawabganj

UNN, C'nawabganj

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi citizen in Shibganj upazila early yesterday.

A Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) source said a BSF team of Shwashani camp entered Kakmari village through Ajmatpur border at 5:00am and sprayed bullets on Kausar Ahmed, 22, while he was working in his crop field. Kausar died instantly.

The BSF men took away the body of Kausar, son of Shahjahan, to India, said Commander of the Sixth Rifle Battalion Lieutenant Col. Shahiduddin Khan.

BDR strongly protested the incident and asked its Indian counterpart to return the body.

A company commander-level flag meeting between BDR and BSF was going on till the filing of this report at 5:45pm.

Power crisis continues to worsen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The present power crisis continues to deteriorate with a supply shortfall of over 600mw recorded yesterday.

The demand leaped to 3,465mw yesterday from Friday's 3,300mw, sources at the Power Development Board said. The target power generation of plants across the country was 2,812mw yesterday.

The largest power plant AES 450mw Meghnaghat remained shut

from Tuesday due to technical glitch. The plant is expected to resume operation within a couple of days.

Another major plant, the Ghorashal 210mw unit yesterday got back to operation after a three-day's break. But its presence could not be felt against the soaring demand yesterday.

But power experts said that real supply shortfall is much higher than

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Taiwan president reelected

Opponent challenges razor-thin result

REUTERS, Taipei

Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian won reelection yesterday, a day after he was hit by gunfire from a would-be assassin, in the closest such election in the island's history and in a result almost certain to anger China.

Ten thousand supporters gathered outside Chen's Taipei campaign headquarters, waving the green banners of his Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and setting off a storm of firecrackers when news broke that Chen had taken an unbeatable lead.

"We won. It's by about 50,000 votes," said a senior DPP source who declined to be identified.

However, Nationalist Party opponent Lien Chan swiftly challenged the razor-thin result, describing the election as unfair and invalid and saying he would ask for a recount.

"We want to raise a motion to declare the election invalid," Lien, head of the Nationalist Party, told a cheering crowd of thousands at his campaign headquarters.

"We ask the central election

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4