



The Daily Star



REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XIV No. 78

DHAKA TUESDAY APRIL 6, 2004

COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

www.thedailystar.net

CHAITRA 23, 1410 BS

SAFAR 15, 1425 HURI

16 PAGES PLUS STAR LIFESTYLE PRICE: Tk 10.00

New clues hint at new suspects

Seizure list excludes BNP leader's car left on the jetty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Investigation has taken a dramatic turn with latest clues hinting at some coalition leaders' involvement in country's largest arms smuggling in Chittagong on Friday.

They suspect the ruling alliance leaders, including a stalwart, were in

charge of handling the deadly consignment of rockets, rocket launchers, submachine-guns, AK-47 rifles and bullets after its delivery at high sea from a cargo vessel bound for Chittagong port.

Customs officials said they were examining the documents of three vessels—two fishing trawlers and a

ship owned by a top BNP leader -- for being involved in the latest smuggling of the arms cache.

Intelligence agents alleged a local BNP legislator's brother, who was accused of part in the abduction of magnate Jamaluddin Ahmed, played the key role in the transport of the cache after its delivery off

Chittagong coast.

He is accused of running a giant smuggling syndicate on Anwara and Patiya coasts in collusion with law enforcement agencies. They also alleged labour leader Dil Mohammad employed workers at Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Limited

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

CTG ARMS HAUL Home secy heads probe, CMP DC excluded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A committee headed by Home Secretary Omar Farooq yesterday opened an investigation into the smuggling of 10 truckloads of fire-arms and ammunition, three days after joint forces seized the largest ever weapons cache in Chittagong.

The committee was scaled down to five members as Deputy Commissioner (port) Abdullahil Baki of Chittagong Metropolitan Police was excluded from the list of investigators in the wake of his controversial role in Friday's arms bust.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Jamaat MP's nephew, others held with AK-47 after gunbattle

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested four criminals, including a Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker's nephew, and seized an AK-47 assault rifle and other arms after a gunbattle in an outlying hilly village in Chittagong yesterday.

Sub-Inspector Shahdara Khan and Assistant Sub-Inspector Hafi and an operative known as Sagir suffered bullet wounds in the gunfight that rocked the village predominantly of Jamaat adherents in Saitania upazila, 48 kilometres off the port city.

Among the arrestees, Mohammad Monzur identified himself as the nephew of Shahjahan Chowdhury, local lawmaker of the ruling coalition partner Jamaat-e-Islami, sources said.

The firefight came at about 11:00am three days after joint forces seized the largest ever arms haul in Chittagong on Friday exposing the region as an easy route for gunrunning.

"Police cordoned a hilltop garden on secret information and the area reverberated with a hail of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Lightning kills four in Kurigram

BSS, Rangpur

Four people, including a father and his daughter, were killed, while five others suffered serious burns being struck by lightning during a nor'wester Sunday morning.

The victims are Lal Miah, 35, his daughter Nazma Khatun, 14, of Fuluarchar village, China Begun, 35, wife of Raham Ali, of Dakshin Tapur Char village, and Sober Ali, 39, of Ghughumari village.

Locals said the nor'wester, a tropical seasonal storm, cut a swathe through a vast area of Bondober Union Parishad under Roumari upazila in Kurigram, ravaging Bororice in 100 acres of land and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Govt may open int'l probe, says Bhuiyan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling BNP secretary general and LGRD and cooperatives minister yesterday said the government might open an international probe into the arms haul if domestic investigation failed to find any clue.

However, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan hoped the high-powered probe body comprising the specialists of the army and members of different intelligence agencies will solve the riddles behind the largest ever gunrunning.

While talking to the BBC radio last night, Mannan said, "At first we have to complete the inquiry by our own staff."

On the government and opposition blaming each other for having link to the arms haul, he said general public has an apprehension

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



PHOTO: STAR

Women stage a dance sequence at the amphitheatre by Dhanmondi lake at a colourful function of spring celebrations yesterday.

Street politics set to heat up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The political situation is apparently heading for a confrontational course as both the ruling and opposition parties are determined to go on with street agitation to mobilise public opinion in their favour ahead of the April 30 deadline of the main opposition Awami League (AL) for unseating the government.

As part of its ongoing oust-government agitation, the AL will announce an array of programmes after its two-day hartal from tomorrow, party insiders said.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

59 including 8 GIs die in Iraq violence

AGENCIES, Baghdad

US helicopters yesterday blasted targets in Baghdad in an intensifying showdown with Shia Muslim radicals resisting America's postwar plans for Iraq.

Supporters of cleric Moqtada-al Sadr rioted in Baghdad and four other Iraqi cities, sparking fighting that killed at least 50 Iraqis, eight US

troops and a Salvadoran soldier, in the worst unrest since the spasm of looting and arson immediately after the fall of Saddam Hussein.

The fiercest battle took place Sunday in the streets of Sadr City, Baghdad's largest Shia neighbourhood, where Shia militiamen fired from rooftops and behind buildings at US troops, killing seven Americans. At least 28 Iraqis were

killed in the fighting, a doctor at one local hospital said Monday.

In fighting in the holy city of Najaf Sunday, two soldiers -- a Salvadoran and an American -- died and at least nine other soldiers were wounded, the Spanish Defence Ministry said. Twenty-two Iraqis died and more than 200 were wounded, said Falah Mohammed, director of the Najaf

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Pak troops closing in on Laden?

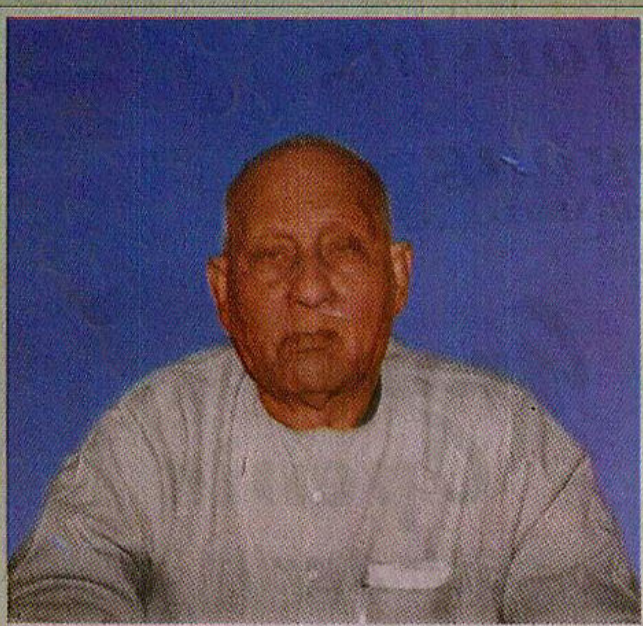
REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistani forces are closing in on a remote corner of rugged mountains and forest-clad gorges on the Afghan frontier where some people believe Osama bin Laden could be hiding.

The Shawal valley on the border in Pakistan's North Waziristan tribal area has long been a no-go area for Pakistani troops, where Pashtun tribes have ruled without interference for generations and fugitives

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

6th death anniversary



The 6th of April 2004 is the 6th death anniversary of **Abdul Khaleque Khan**, founder Chairman of Opsonin Group of Industries and our beloved guardian. He is the first Bengali Industrialist who played a pioneering role in developing the pharmaceutical industry of Bangladesh.

His enthusiasm, foresight, wisdom, innovative abilities, devotion, hard work and commitment for national growth has made Opsonin one of the leading Pharmaceutical Company in the nation. His long and eventful working life is an eternal source of inspiration for our progress.

We pray for the salvation of his departed soul. May almighty Allah bless him with Jannatul Ferdous.



Management & Staff
Opsonin Group of Industries

PRICE HIKE

Parliamentary probe in wilderness

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary sub-committee tasked with finding out the reasons for price spiral of essentials five months ago is dragging its feet on the probe, while the main body is not sitting in meetings in a parody of parliamentary rules.

The parliamentary standing committee on the commerce ministry formed the sub-committee on

November 5 and asked it to come up with a report in seven days rejecting a ministry report that highlighted its limitations to control market prices.

But the main committee, yet to sit in a meeting since December 31 in violation of the rules of procedure that requires such committees on ministries to meet at least once a month, now appears reluctant to discuss the issue.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Yuvraj, Gul shine on Day One

REUTERS, Lahore

Yuvraj Singh struck a swashbuckling maiden Test century on Monday to help India reach a fighting 287 on the first day of the second Test

against Pakistan. The 22-year-old's explosive 112, including 15 fours and two sixes, revived India after they were left reeling at 147 for seven through a

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



GrameenPhone

From your GP Mobile
write **CRIC** and send SMS to **2777**
In return SMS you will receive the latest cricket related information

*Charge applicable

By
Using disposable syringe
Ensuring safe blood
transfusion
Following religious
injunctions
&
Living with
social bondage

You can prevent **AIDS**



Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited
YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER