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KEPZ chief bullet-hit, Fu Wang man killed

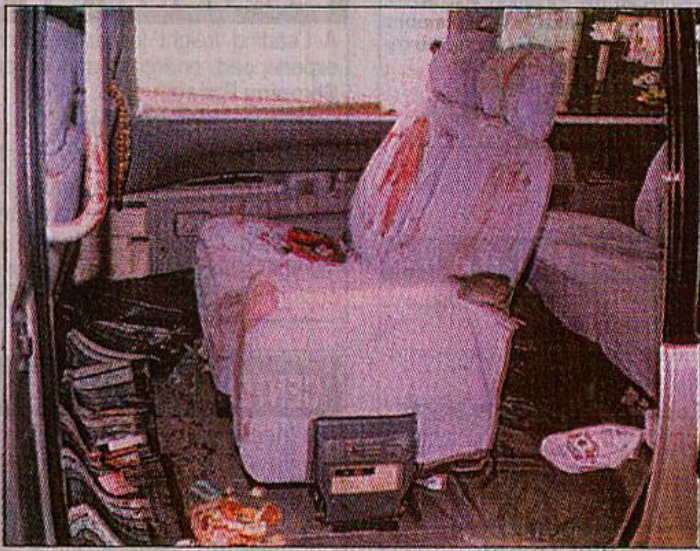
Twin armed attacks send shock waves in Chittagong

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Unknown assailants gunned down an official of a Taiwanese food company and critically wounded the managing director of Korean Export Processing Zone (KEPZ) also an ex-naval commodore in twin armed attacks in Chittagong yesterday, sending shock waves in the city.

Police said the attackers killed Md Babul Hossain, 28, accounts officer of Fu Wang Foods, and looted Tk 3 lakh which he was going to deposit with a bank. Four hours earlier, Golam Rabbani, managing director of the KEPZ, was critically hit by bullet in the throat when attackers waylaid his microbus at

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Bloodstained seats of the microbus carrying ex-navy commodore Golam Rabbani, who was critically injured by gunmen in an ambush at Chittagong's Muradpur yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

JS body asks Wasa to supply smell-free water

BSS, Dhaka

A parliament standing committee yesterday asked Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa), Dhaka to make effective arrangements for supply of safe, odourless water to city dwellers.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Ministry at a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) Bhaban also directed the Wasa to cut down its systems loss.

The JS body was told that the Wasa had a 55 percent systems loss last year, two percent less than that of previous fiscal.

It instructed the water supply authority to settle its 635 audit objections involving Tk 1,033.19 crore.

From 1996 to 2003, 185 cases were filed against Wasa employees while 18 Wasa staff were sacked and 147 were awarded punishments, a meeting source said.

Committee Chairman Abdul Mannan Talukder chaired the meeting while members LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Alamgir Haider Khan and Begum Raushan Ershad attended the meeting.

Sporadic battles mar Fallujah ceasefire

US Apache helicopter shot down west of Baghdad, two crew killed

AGENCIES, Baghdad

Gunmen shot down a US attack helicopter during fighting in western Baghdad yesterday, killing its two crew, the US army said.

Insurgents and Marines called a ceasefire in the besieged city of Fallujah, though the fragile peace was shaken by a gunbattle that wounded two Americans.

A pall of black smoke rose on Baghdad's western edge where a military spokesman said the AH-64 Apache helicopter was downed by ground fire in the morning. More helicopters circled overhead, while US troops closed off the main highway -- a key supply route into the capital.

Heavy firing was heard, and tanks and Humvees moved into the area,

near the suburb of Abu Ghraib, where masked gunmen have wreaked havoc for the past three days, attacking fuel convoys and blowing up tanker trucks. Insurgents kidnapped an American civilian and killed a US soldier in the area Friday.

The captors of the American hostage, Thomas Hammil, a Mississippi native who works for a US contractor in Iraq, threatened to kill and burn him unless US troops end their assault on Fallujah by 6 a.m. Sunday (0200 GMT). The deadline passed with no word on Hammil's fate.

Civilians streamed out of Fallujah yesterday after a truce halted a week of fighting between US forces and rebels in which hundreds of Iraqis died.

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AL threatens to lay siege to PM's house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) Joint General Secretary Obaidul Kader yesterday threatened to lay siege to the cantonment residence of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia if the ruling BNP besieges Sudha Sadan, the Dhanmondi house of Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina.

The AL leader in a statement expressed surprise at BNP stalwarts' declaration to lay siege to Sudha Sadan that came as a challenge to AL front organisations' threat to hem in Hawa Bhaban, dubbed as BNP's alternative powerhouse.

The AL is scheduled to lay siege to Hawa Bhaban on April 21, demanding its closure down for what it said was the seat of unbridled corruption.

Kader claimed that Hawa Bhaban was neither a political party office nor a research centre. "It's a centre of extra-constitutional power from where the ruling alliance harbours criminals," he alleged.

He described the anti-BNP programme as an effort to save people from what he said was the dual rule of the coalition -- one by Khaleda and the other by her son Tarique Rahman.

Masked men shoot Mirpur trader point blank to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified assailants gunned down two people including a garment by-products trader and injured a 12-year-old boy in separate incidents in Mirpur and Badda yesterday.

In yet another incident in Mirpur, a mob gouged an eye out of an alleged mugger yesterday after a gang of four went to a rice mill to collect tolls.

Six masked criminals stormed into the garment by-products outlet of Badal Mian, 45, at Mirpur Katakapar Byaboshayee Samity Market near Mirpur Circle -10 shortly before 2:00pm and shot Badal thrice in the head and chest, said a nearby shopkeeper giving an

eyewitness account.

The gunmen fired two blank shots and sped away by a microbus parked some 50 yards off the market, where unknown criminals shot and injured Emdad, a trader from Bangabazar Market, about two weeks ago.

The victim was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) only to be declared dead on arrival.

The victim's family however has no idea of the motive for the killing. Police though believe business disputes may be a plausible reason. No case has been lodged and police could make no arrest till 7:00pm.

General Secretary of Mirpur Katakapar Byaboshayee Samity Market Monsur Ahmed Mallik said

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Portrait Display Chief whip for new law instead of constitution amendment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A senior ruling BNP lawmaker yesterday favoured an ordinary law instead of a constitutional amendment to display the portraits of a president and the prime minister in government offices.

The newfound stand of Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain came after weeks of opposition uproar over the proposed 14th amendment to the constitution that includes displaying the portraits in government, semi-government and autonomous offices and foreign missions abroad.

"It is not necessary to amend the constitution to make the provision. It is possible through an ordinary law," Delwar, also a member of the parliamentary standing committee

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BURIGANGA ENCROACHMENT 157 structures demolished

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and Dhaka district administration in a joint drive have demolished 157 illegal structures on the bank of the river Buriganga in last two days.

The five-day drive launched on Saturday aims to save the city's lifeline from regular encroachment by influential people. The demolished structures include some permanent markets and residential houses.

Eighty-seven structures were demolished yesterday in Haslai Mouja in Kamrangir Char and Char Raghunathpur in Keraniganj in presence of two platoons of police and ansars, according to sources in

the BIWTA.

Thousands of people, mainly workers and day-labourers, were also evicted from their houses in the densely populated areas. Many house owners showed stay orders from court in a bid to stave off demolition of their structures, but to no avail. Shipping Secretary Ismail Zabiullah and BIWTA high officials oversaw yesterday's drive.

The BIWTA listed 620 illegal structures for demolition and 30 of them are in the Narayanganj district. The drive will continue today and for next two days.

The BIWTA officials said last night a flood-protection dam would be constructed on the land recovered through demolition.

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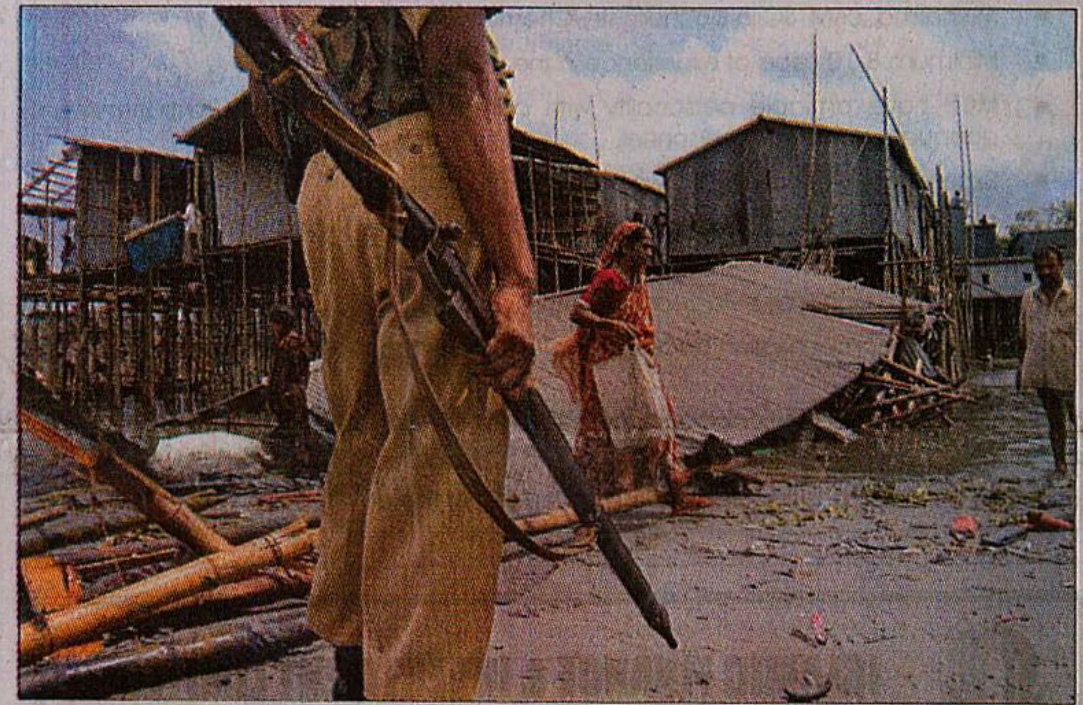


PHOTO: STAR

A policeman stands guard in front of razed dwellings on the bank of the Buriganga river at Kamrangirchar where Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority demolished 157 illegal structures during an eviction drive yesterday.

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FM concerned at civilian deaths in Iraq

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan yesterday expressed concern over the growing civilian casualties in Iraq and urged both the coalition forces and Iraqi insurgents to exercise restraint to avert civilian deaths.

He was speaking to the journalists at the Zia International Airport on his return from Turkey.

Describing Iraq as a 'battle ground', the minister said the withdrawal of American forces was no remedy for the problems in Iraq, rather it would lead to a civil war in the wake of current crisis situation.

Morshed also said that the responsibility to restore peace and maintain Iraq's national integrity and sovereignty rests with all parties concerned.

US State Department's hints that

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Strike in all educational institutions today

Student bodies demand arrest of MP Saidee

DU CORRESPONDENT

Three student organisations enforce a countrywide strike in the educational institutions today demanding arrest and punishment of the Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Delwar Hossain Saidee for what they said was inciting the February 27 attack on writer Humayun Azad.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the main opposition Awami League (AL), the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD)-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Bangladesh Chhatra Moitri (BCM) are staging today's strike.

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