

Coalition, Shia militants trade fire in Karbala

Sadr threatens suicide attacks

AFP, Karbala

US-led coalition troops and Shia militiamen traded fire in the central holy city of Karbala yesterday, an AFP correspondent said.

Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, the coalition added. "Only Iraqi security forces and the coalition are entitled to govern Iraq until the people elect their government," it said, in an operation similar to airdrops during last year's US-led invasion urging the Iraqi army not to fight.

Meanswhile, a Sunni Muslim leader warned yesterday that the US-led coalition would face an uprising throughout Iraq if its forces attack the flashpoint city of Fallujah, which has been besieged by US marines since April 5.

Vajpayee vows

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The prime minister said the government has decided make available Rs 74 crore for students of madrassas and to recruit two lakh Urdu teachers to promote the language.

Mulayam Singh Yadav as the 'messiah' of Muslims alleging that Samajwadi Party was trying for votes along communal lines, thereby violating the model of conduct set by the poll watchdog for elections.

Reopen laid off factories, stop privatisation

Trade union leaders demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A federation of trade unions at a rally yesterday afternoon asked the government to reopen all laid off industries including Rangpur Sugar Mills and stop privatisation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs).



Participants of a city rally organised by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon yesterday hold banners and placards to demand cancellation of a government decision to fill up low-lying areas in Dhaka.

Dark secrets

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ment of child sex workers in Dhaka City. He added that it takes a lot of time to earn the confidence of street children to get them to willingly reveal their ordeal to the NGO workers.

name of household work. He took her to a place near the Mirpur zoo that seemed like a police camp. "They (policemen) confined me for 15 days and gave me food only when I agreed to having physical relations with them," she said.

Project workers said children between the ages of nine and 16 are most vulnerable. Once they are put through repeated sexual abuse, it becomes very hard to bring them back to normal life. It starts with occasional exploitation but gradually the children become professional sex workers.

They made her drink some red-coloured liquid (some sort of "love potion") from small bottles that looked like cough syrup. "They said if I drank the syrup, I wouldn't feel hungry, which was not at all true. Now I understand the drink was meant to induce people into doing bad things."

2 killed in accident

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went with over Tk 5,000 to buy electrical goods. Farhad died on the spot while Sajjad died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Hospital sources said they found Tk 5, 651 in the pocket of Farhad.

district yesterday. A speeding bus rammed into a bus parked on the road at Anjhrhat in Patiya upazila at noon, killing its driver Rafiq, 25, and helper Mozammel, 32, on the spot, witnesses said.

Lawmaker's staff

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masks put up a barricade with two cars at Bhuighar in Fatullah at about 8:30pm Thursday. They forced Zitu and Aziz into one car while Ali in the other.

Thabo Mbeki reelected South African president

AFP, Johannesburg

President Thabo Mbeki, who was re-elected to the top post by members of parliament yesterday, has dedicated his entire life to the anti-apartheid struggle and to rebuilding a new multi-racial South Africa.

Rift in left parties

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alliance that encouraged any unity with greater progressive and democratic forces. The Gonoforum didn't have to form another platform. "Word of Manik underlines the differences: "We told our friends in the 11-party alliance to play a leading role in our new platform. Everyone except for the BSD refused."

N Korea train blast

FROM PAGE 1 admitted the blast had taken place by accepting help from the Red Cross and United Nations agencies. North Korea declared a state of emergency after the blast that occurred hours after leader Kim Jong-Il passed through the station in his armoured private train on his return from China, Yonhap said.

20pc of forestland

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practice grabbers have employed for years in collusion with dishonest forest officials to encroach upon forest land. The grabbers first obtain fake land ownership documents by bribing forest officials. Then they have their accomplices file court cases to claim ownership of the same land. Once the court rules, the property goes to either party, creating a legal impediment to the forest department's land reclamation initiatives, he said.

Saudi forces

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authorities in December in the wake of a wave of suicide bombings targeting residential compounds which killed 52 people in Riyadh in May and November last year and were blamed on al-Qaeda sympathisers. But the police source at the Jeddah site told AFP two figures on that list, naming the pair as Mustafa Ibrahim Mubarak and Ahmad Abdurrahman al-Fadi, both Saudis.

Save Hatirjhil

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conservation. The rally was also addressed by Bapa General Secretary Abu Naser Khan and Joint Secretary General Mahidur Haque Khan, Dr Nuruddin of Seba, Zakir Hossain of Nagorik Uddog, Member-Secretary of Buriganga Bachao Andolon Mihir Biswas, coordinator of Biswa Sahitya Kendra Golam Kibria and Alamgir Kabir of Green Forest.

Extremist terror

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political parties have stressed recovery of illegal arms and explosives to ensure their safety. "We do not favour the use of illegal arms in politics," said Nazrul Islam Manju, secretary of city BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party).

Rain disrupts

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total of 53 millimetres (mm) of rain was recorded in Dhaka city yesterday. The highest rainfall recorded in the country was 63 mm in Majdee Court in Noakhali.

Floods rage

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Sujatpur and marooned villagers in 48 of the 77 unions in Habiganj. The rush of floodwaters forced minibuses off Sylhet-Jakiganj Road as it went under water. The Sylhet-Beanibazar Road remained snapped for the fourth straight day, leaving hundreds of passengers in trouble. Road links with the Companyganj upazila headquarters snapped four days ago after breaches opened on a bridge.