

Abducted policeman released in Demra

UNB, Narayanganj  
Unknown criminals released an abducted police constable of Narayanganj at Demra in the capital only after keeping his shotgun and 20 bullets.

Confirming the incident, Fatulla police said a patrol team led by Havilder Jahangir intercepted a Narayanganj-bound private car at Pagla in the early hours.

In a bid to search the vehicle, Constable Hasan shoved himself inside it. Passengers of the car pulled him inside and sped away with the policeman, police said.

As the car quickly drove to Narayanganj, three other members of the team looked on without firing a shot at the criminals.

Hours later, the criminals threw Hasan at Rayerbagh in Demra, about 10 kms away from Pagla. They also snatched away his shotgun and ammunition.

ADB plans S Asian transport network

Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal to be connected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is planning a project to help strengthen the regional network of roads connecting Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, and Nepal, through a technical assistance (TA) grant approved for \$800,000.

The planned project would develop further the West Bengal transport corridor, which runs from Haldia port off the Bay of Bengal to as far as the state of Assam, according to an ADB release yesterday.

The corridor is of strategic importance to the economic development of northeast India and the neighbor-

ing countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal. It is also the transport backbone of West Bengal, the major trade route for India's northeastern states and neighboring Bhutan and Nepal, and provides important links with Bangladesh, the release added.

ADB approved in 2001 a \$210 million loan to upgrade the West Bengal corridor, including about 340km of national highway north from Barasat, and two state highways providing connections to the Bangladesh border.

To complete the upgrading of the corridor, a bypass is needed between Barasat and the Belgharia

Expressway.

The planned project, in the pipeline for 2004, will also develop a complementary economic and social infrastructure to support the economic growth that will result from improved transport efficiency.

"The West Bengal corridor needs upgrading to national highway standard if it is to realize its full economic potential," says Tyrrell Duncan, an ADB senior transport economist.

"The improvements will support growth in subregional trade and investment to promote economic growth and poverty reduction."

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PHOTO: AP

Hundreds of Iraqi women gather in front of the Abu Ghraib prison with a demand to see their loved ones after the release of pictures showing prisoners being outrageously abused by their US captors.

Miladunnabi observed

BSS, Dhaka

Eid-e-Miladunnabi, marking the birth of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM), was observed on Monday across the country as elsewhere in the Muslim world.

On this day, the 12th of Rabiul Awal of the Hijri calendar, Prophet Muhammad (SM) was born with divine blessings and messages of peace for the mankind. He also passed away the same day.

A number of organisations staged rallies and took out colourful processions in the capital in observance of the day. President, prime minister and the leader of the opposition in parliament greeted the countrymen on the occasion. The day was a public holiday.

Discussion and milad mahfil were organised at different mosques, shrines. Political parties, socio-cultural organisations and the Jatiya Press Club also organised discussion and miald on the occasion.



PHOTO: AKM MOHSIN

Heritage lost

King Rajendra's court at the 300-year-old archeological site at Jaintapur in Sylhet is falling apart due to lack of preservation initiatives.

DOMESTIC HELP TORTURE

Doctor couple sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The physician couple, arrested on Sunday on charge of torturing their 10-year-old domestic help, was sent to Dhaka Central Jail on Monday.

Ramna police held Dr ABM Jamal of Mitford hospital and his wife Dr Fatema Doza of Dhaka Medical College Hospital from their Paribagh house and also rescued Mostakina with bruises on her body and raw facial wounds from hot electric iron.

They filed a case under the Special Act for Prevention of Women and Children Repression 2000 the same day and produced the couple before the Court of Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza.

The court ordered to send them to jail. The magistrate also recorded the judicial statement of victim Mostakina.

In the statement, the victim said the couple used to torture her for minor mistakes. Dr Fatema rubbed a hot electric iron on her left cheek as she burnt a shirt during ironing on Sunday, she added.

"The lady used to claw me across the face or poke me with whatever she could find even for my minor mistakes," the domestic help said.

Recording her statement, the court ordered to send her to safe custody.

"Once one is found guilty of such act, he or she may be awarded seven to 14 years of imprisonment," said a lawyer.

Abuse probes include other Iraq 'prisons'

Seven US soldiers reprimanded

AGENCIES, Washington

US officials are conducting at least six separate investigations of alleged mistreatment of Iraqi detainees at a prison in Baghdad amid indications that abuse of detainees, including humiliating treatment and beatings, may have occurred at other US facilities.

An official told The Associated Press on Monday that seven US soldiers had been reprimanded in the alleged abuse of Iraqi detainees at the notorious Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad. Six other US military police face criminal charges.

An investigation was continuing at Abu Ghraib, which came to attention last week when CBS's "60 Minutes II" broadcast images allegedly showing Iraqis stripped naked, hooded and being tormented by their US captors.

But officials told NBC News that at least five other investigations were under way to determine

whether similar mistreatment was taking place at other US facilities and could be a symptom of a larger systemic problem.

In an interview with NBC News, a former Iraqi prisoner at a separate detention centre said he was held down by six US soldiers, who he said beat the bottoms of his feet with steel rods.

The former prisoner, who spoke only on condition that he not be identified, said that he had cheered the ouster of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein but that after his treatment at the hands of his US captors, he considered the Americans to be as bad as "10 Saddams."

Lawrence Di Rita, a spokesman for the Defence Department, acknowledged that five military investigations had been launched as a result of the Abu Ghraib cases.

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Four GIs, 20 civilians die in restive Iraq

AP, Najaf, Iraq

Shia militiamen fired several mortar shells at a US base in Najaf early yesterday and at a city hall guarded by Bulgarian troops in another Shia city. Elsewhere, four US soldiers died after their Humvee overturned during a combat patrol, the US Army said.

The sporadic overnight shelling of the US base in Najaf followed intense attacks Monday by militiamen loyal to radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, who pounded the base with mortars and fired rifles and machine guns. No US soldiers were killed in either attack. US officers estimate about 20 Iraqis were killed by US retaliatory fire.

In Karbala, 50 miles north of Najaf, the city hall and the police headquarters, which are guarded by Bulgarian soldiers, came under

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Prayer Timings

May 5		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-34	6-38
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Israel blocks entrance to Arafat's HQ

AFP, Ramallah

Israeli military jeeps sealed off the entrances to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's headquarters in the West Bank town of Ramallah overnight Monday, a Palestinian official told AFP.

"The soldiers, travelling in 15 jeeps, approached the president's HQ and blocked the three entrances to the building," said Arafat advisor Nabil Abu Rudeina.

He expressed the fear that the move was "in preparation for an attack on the president," without giving any details.

Israeli military sources said that the troops were conducting "routine arrests" in Ramallah.

"These operations have nothing

to do with Yasser Arafat's headquarters, which we have no intention of entering," a military source said.

Last month Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon issued a threat against Arafat.

"I promised (US) President George W. Bush three years ago not to attack Arafat, but I am no longer bound by that promise, and (Arafat) no longer has immunity," Sharon said then.

His threat provoked a wave of protest worldwide.

The United States swiftly warned Sharon to keep his promise not to harm the Palestinian leader.

Israel's Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and two other ministers then denied there were any plans to target Arafat.

Back from tiger's jaw

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Salkhira

He fought incredibly against mighty Royal Bengal Tiger for half an hour and survived as his fellows joined him to force the man-eater to retreat.

Abdul Wahab Moral, 40, son of Nur Ali Moral of village Kurikanmia in Assassuni upazila went to Jhhara Canal at Hogradora area in the Sundarbans with eleven fellow fishermen on Monday. All of a sudden, a Royal Bengal Tiger attacked him. The others ran away leaving Wahab to grapple with the tiger. However, as the fishermen returned equipped with some weapons in his aid, the tiger yielded.

A seriously wounded Wahab was immediately taken to the Shyamnagar upazila health complex. Hospital sources said he was fighting for his life.

Ershad Shikder threatens to stop taking food

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

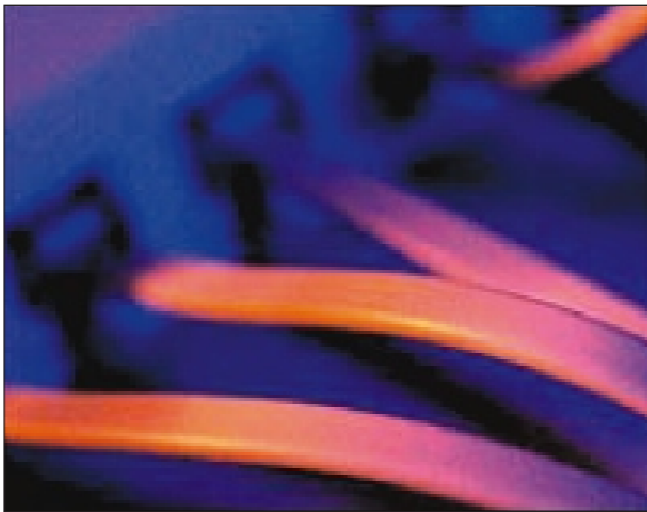
Notorious criminal Ershad Shikder, who will be hanged on May 10, yesterday threatened to stop eating from this evening if the jail authorities did not let him know the outcome of his mercy petition.

The infamous gangland boss of Khulna placed the petition before President Iajuddin Ahmed to evade death penalty.

Jail sources said a deputy jailer has been specially assigned to keep Ershad in the dark about his execution

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Sasser net worm hits millions



BBC ONLINE

The Sasser worm is continuing to cause disruption for large numbers of Windows PC users.

The first version of the malicious program was discovered on May 1 and since then has spread widely across the internet.

Some security experts estimate it has infected more than a million PCs and knocked out many computer systems.

Unlike more recent viruses, Sasser does not travel by e-mail instead it makes its way around the internet unaided.

Indian election moves into 4th lap today

Opinion polls show BJP inching closer to majority

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India's gigantic election campaign enters the home stretch today covering 83 parliamentary constituencies, with opinion polls giving ruling BJP-National Democratic

Alliance (NDA) a slight edge over Congress-led combine.

While NDTV-Indian Express opinion poll telecast Monday night projects the NDA falling short of majority mark of 272 seats with a tally of 245-265 seats, Congress

and allies are likely to get 180-200 seats and others 95-115.

However, the opinion polls conducted by Star News in association with two leading newspapers and a marketing research agency

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