



## Anjuman Ara passes away

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Noted vocalist Anjuman Ara Begum died of pneumonia at Bangladesh Medical College Hospital in the city at 7:15am yesterday. She was 62.

She left behind her husband retired secretary Masud Alam Siddique, son Tariq Masur, sub-editor of The Daily Star, daughter Umana Anjalin, lecturer of Asia-Pacific University, a host of relatives and admirers to mourn her death.

Her namaj-e-janaza was held at

# Power crisis set to scale up

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The severe power crisis, which gripped the country since last week with the shutdown of two private-run power plants, is set to worsen further.

The operators are unlikely to put the plants -- Haripur and Meghnaghat -- back into operation before June 5, Power Development Board (PDB) sources said.

The present electricity shortfall of 500 megawatts in the 3550-megawatt demand may shoot up to 810mw in the process, they feared.

Some of the PDB power plants were also generating power far below their capacity due to the present poor gas supply before the 360mw Haripur Power Plant was shut down for maintenance.

PDB observed that the crisis was still manageable then.

But the real crisis began when the Meghnaghat operator closed down the 450mw plant all of a sudden, giving no explanation to PDB.

The plant authorities gave no explanation for the shutdown but said that the plant will resume its operation from June 5. Experts from India are said to have been fixing some problems at the unit.

The British investment company CDC runs both Meghnaghat and Haripur plants after it bought the ownership from the American company AES a few months back.

APDB official meanwhile blamed poor CDC management for the power crisis. "Both Meghnaghat and Haripur plants are supervised technically by only one person.

Whereas each of the PDB plants are technically looked after by at least five persons."

The Meghnaghat plant remained shut for more than a week in March after the CDC takeover for no good reason.

"The CDC is also reluctant to seek technical expertise from PDB. The problems could be fixed in a short time had they sought our help," a PDB source observed.

PDB has increased power generation at its Ghorashal and Kaptai plants to make up for the shortfall.

Earlier, the Ghorashal plant halved its production for poor gas supply. But the plant is now producing

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Members of Manabik, an anti-smoking organisation, yesterday lit candles in memory of people who died from smoking ahead of World No Tobacco Day tomorrow.

## Talk out water sharing issue

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The trans-boundary water sharing issue between Bangladesh and India has been getting too politicised and it can be resolved regionally through bilateral discussions as the new Indian government has a more democratic approach.

Kuldip Nayar, renowned journalist and former member of Rajya Sabha, expressed this view at a seminar on 'People's Initiative for Trans-boundary River Basins Management' in Dhaka yesterday.

Referring to India's proposed river-linking project, he said people of India are also concerned over the project and they opposed it.

"Other International forums or



Tangled rods and building materials kept on the stretch of road near Baitul Mukarram National Mosque opposite the National Sports Council in Purana Paltan yesterday speak of the developer's apathy to obstruction to public movement.

## Court decides on charge-framing against Morshed, others on June 5

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

The Special Court for Dhaka Division will decide on June 5 on charge-framing against Foreign Minister and former chairman of Arab Bangladesh (AB) Bank Ltd. M. Morshed Khan and five others in a graft case.

Judge Rezaul Karim Khan yesterday issued the order on hearing a discharge petition.

The others are Abdur Rahim Chowdhury, former managing director of AB Bank Ltd., M. Faizur Rahman, managing director of Asian Surveyors Ltd., Harun Ferdousi, proprietor of Marshal Services Ltd., Abdullah Al Mamun,

# Guantanamo experts set Iraq prison abuse

**REPORTERS, New York**

Interrogation experts from the Guantanamo Bay naval base were sent to Iraq last fall and played a major role in training US intelligence teams at the Abu Ghraib prison, The New York Times reported yesterday.

Citing senior military intelligence officials, the Times reported the teams from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, operated there with broad latitude in questioning "enemy combatants" from the US war on terror and then played a central role at Abu Ghraib through December, when the worst abuses of prisoners were occurring there.

Photographs shown around the world of naked prisoners stacked in a pyramid or positioned to simulate sex acts at the prison near Baghdad have shocked Americans and posed a serious setback to US efforts to stabilise Iraq.

The Times said the teams were sent to Iraq for 90-day tours at the urging of Maj. Gen. Geoffrey Miller, then head of detention operations at Guantanamo. According to a defence official, Miller, the newly appointed head of Abu Ghraib, was sent to Iraq last summer to recommend improvements in intelligence gathering and detention operations there.

The Times said the involvement of the Guantanamo teams had not previously been disclosed and, according to US military officials,

# Pre-paid meter on cards to stop power pilferage in Dhaka

**SABRINA KARIM MURSHED**

Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (Desa) is going to introduce modernised prepaid electric metering to the capital to curb acute pilferage and misuse of electricity.

Sources said the energy ministry at a recent meeting decided to install prepaid electric meters to cut persisting misuse and pilferage of power by commercial and domestic consumers in collaboration with a section of corrupt officials.

At present, the Power

Development Board (PDB) and Desa are suffering 30 to 35 percent systems loss on average. Moreover, Desa failed to collect electricity bills amounting to Tk 35,000 crore from its consumers over the years and it owes at least Tk 50,000 crore to the PDB in power purchase bills.

Desa sources said initially at least 2,500 prepaid meters will be installed under a pilot project. The decision followed successful implementation of a similar pilot project in Chittagong by the PDB.

Desa had earlier invited tender

for the project and received bids till May 18. It will take two months to evaluate the bids, said a senior official of Desa.

Implementation of the project is likely to be complete in about one and a half years, he hoped.

Initially, prepaid meters will be installed in areas like Mirpur and Gulshan, which are covered by Dhaka Electric Supply Company. There will be 2,200 'single phase' meters and 300 'high tension' meters for household consumers.

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## Outlaws kill three in Chuadanga

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia**

Outlaws on Friday night killed three people, including a father and a son, in Kutubpur village in Chuadanga for not paying them toll.

The victims are Afzal Mondol, 65, a farmer, his son Alam Mondol, 30, and their neighbour Monzer Ali, 40.

Chuadanga police said 15 cadres of Purbo Banglar Communist Party's (PBCP) Janajuddha faction stormed into Afzal's house at around 10:00pm and asked him to pay Tk 50,000 they demanded earlier.

On his failure, the outlaws took Afzal and his son to a nearby field. They picked up Monzer, who also failed to pay them, and killed the three in the field.

Police sent the bodies to Chuadanga General Hospital for autopsy.

Sources said a Janajuddha leader claimed responsibility on behalf of PBCP regional chief Abir Hassan.

## Housewife raped and killed

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra**

Criminals raped and killed a housewife and injured his husband in Junir village under Adamdighi upazila in the early hours of yesterday.

The victim is Papiya Begum, 23, wife of Faruk Hossain Bidyut of Junir.

Bidyut, who is now receiving treatment at Naogaon General Hospital, said the criminals swooped on him when he was going to toilet at around 3:00am. They beat up him and left him on the ground gagged and bound.

The criminals entered his first-floor bedroom, raped and killed her wife and left the house, he added.

Hearing his groans at the time of Fazr prayers, Bidyut's father and neighbours rescued him and found Papiya dead.

Family members alleged some local youths, with whom Bidyut has a rivalry over flying kites, might have killed Papiya.

# Desa given three months to halve systems loss

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

A parliamentary standing committee yesterday gave Desa (Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority) a three-month time to slash its systems loss by 10 percent.

The parliamentary standing committee on public undertakings yesterday warned Desa if it fails to reduce the loss from 20 percent to 10 percent by the stipulated time, the committee will recommend the government to turn the organisation into a private company, Abdul Alim, committee chairman, told reporters after the meeting.

DESA officials said they were striving to reduce the systems loss.

The committee also asked Desa

and Desco (Dhaka Electricity Supply Company) authorities to realise unpaid bills from customers including those government, semi government and non-government organisations.

The officials of Desco appraised the meeting of the steps that the organisation has already initiated to cut systems loss. They claimed Desco to be a profitable organisation now, the press release of the meeting said.

In the meeting, the committee also discussed audit reports of the past. According to those reports, over four thousands audit objections to alleged misappropriation of fund, and other irregularities by the

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## Rise of Bangla Bhai a plot against AL

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday accused the BNP-Jamaat-led coalition of conspiring to eliminate her party men using the dreaded Bangla Bhai and cadres of the Islamist outfit Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh.

Emergence of Bangla Bhai is part of the conspiracy to root out Awami League, said Hasina, also leader of the opposition in parliament.

Addressing the newly elected paurasava chairmen of Netrakona Sadar and Mohanganj at the AL central office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital, Hasina once again wondered if there is any government in the country as religious extremists were 'engaged to maintain law and order'.

She asked if Khaleda Zia is the prime minister, how Bangla Bhai is allowed to root out outlaws in the northern region and kill people

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## New signboard removed from Ctg Ahmadiyya mosque

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**

Unknown people removed the signboard from the Ahmadiyya mosque at Chawkbazaar in the port city Friday night, hours after Islamic bigots erected it during a sit-in programme.

Police suspect Ahmadiyyas might have taken away the signboard placed by religious zealots under the banner of the International Khatme Nabuyat Movement (IKNM) some time in the night.

Ahmadiyyas staying inside the mosque, however, said that they were unaware about any such incident, sources said.

# 6 cops hurt, one dies in gunfire with outlaws

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

An armed encounter between police and outlaws on Friday night at No 1 Customs Ghat area under Khulna Police Station left a policeman killed and six policemen including four sub-inspectors (SI) injured.

The dead was identified as Abdur Rahman alias Ponir, 30, an alleged armed cadre of Janajuddha faction of Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP).

The injured SIs of Khulna Police Station, Arman Ali, Koushik Ahmed, Shafiqul Islam and Shamim-ur-Reza, are undergoing treatment for bomb injuries.

Officer-in-Charge of Khulna

Police Station Mosharef Hossain said the incident took place when police with Ponir, an outlaw arrested earlier on the same night from Rupsha Strand Road, went to No 1 Customs Ghat area to recover arms. The armed cadres of PBCP (Janajuddha), already hiding in the dark, hurled bombs and opened fire at the policemen in an attempt to snatch Ponir. Police fired 17 rounds in retaliation in which Ponir died, said the OC.

He said Ponir was one of those who threw two powerful hand bombs on a police patrol pick-up on Wednesday night only a few yards off the house of city Mayor Shaikh

DU CORRESPONDENT

The South Asian People's Union against Fundamentalism and Communalism yesterday protested the change of signboard of Ahmadiyya community's 90-year-old Baitul Baset Mosque by police following demands of 'extreme fundamentalist force'.

A statement signed by the organisation's President Prof Kabir Chowdhury and Member Prof Muntasir Mamun said the BNP-Jamaat alliance government is patronising the Islamist outfit, International Khatme Nabuyat Movement (IKNM), like the Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh led by its operations commander Bangla Bhai, trampling human rights and democracy.

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Prime Minister Khaleda Zia presides over the meeting of the National Economic Council (NEC) at the NEC Conference Center in Dhaka yesterday.

## Pakistan test fires N-capable missile

**REUTERS, Islamabad**

Pakistan successfully test-fired yesterday a ballistic missile capable of carrying nuclear warheads, as part of its efforts to boost defences in its rivalry with India.

"It can carry all types of warheads," Maj. Gen. Shaukat Sultan told Reuters, adding that it has a range of up to 930 miles.

The test of the Ghauri (Hatf V) missile came a week after a new government took office in India and pledged to continue a peace process with Pakistan but postponed talks aimed at easing nuclear tensions, saying it needed time to settle in.

There was no immediate reaction from India but an Indian defence ministry official told Reuters the test had been expected.

Pakistan says its weapons programme is a response to that of

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