



Smoke billows from a dental surgery in Dhanmondi as an explosion shattered its windowpanes and injured five people, setting the second floor of the building on fire yesterday.

PM for talks to resolve bilateral issues with neighbours

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has said Bangladesh wants to resolve all bilateral issues with its neighbours, including India, through dialogue.

"We feel it is essential to establish bilateral and regional cooperation on the basis of peaceful co-existence, non-interference in each other's internal affairs and mutual respect," she told parliament yesterday.

The government attaches priority

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Blast in surgery injures five

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A vicious explosion at a dental surgery in Dhanmondi yesterday afternoon injured five and triggered a raging fire.

The blast occurred at about 5:15pm at Ortho Dental, a private dental clinic on the second floor of Mamtaj Tower at the Mirpur Road-end of Dhanmondi Road No. 4. It shattered the building's windowpanes, blowing deadly shreds of glass several metres away from the spot severely injuring a rickshaw-puller.

The four other injured are dental surgeons Zubair Shams and Poly and Poly's daughter Sanjeeda and a patient named Babul Choudhury. They were rushed to nearby Central Hospital on Green Road.

The rickshaw-puller, who was taking rest beside the road, below the surgery's windows, was critically wounded and was taken to a different hospital. His identity could not

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BB declares Dhaka Bank board illegal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The central bank yesterday declared the board of directors of Dhaka Bank illegal and asked the bank to form a new board in line with the Bank Company Act and a Bangladesh Bank circular.

Sources said Dhaka Bank formed a 12-member board at its Annual General Meeting last month, although 11 of the members have been on the board for more than nine years in a row.

The banking law restricts anyone from becoming a board member

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CPD live netcast of budget briefing on Daily Star website

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) will netcast live a press briefing to be held tomorrow giving its analytical view on the national budget for FY 2004-2005.

The independent civil society think-tank will share its analysis on the budget, to be placed in the Jatiya Sangsad by Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman today, with journalists at 10:30am at its office.

Viewers in Bangladesh and overseas will be able for the first time to listen to the voice and watch the video image of the press briefing

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Prayer Timing		
June 10		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-45	6-50
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

20 housing firms grab 561 acres of public land

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Jatiya Sangsad (JS) body yesterday disclosed the names of 20 real estate companies that reportedly have grabbed over 561 acres of public land.

The parliamentary standing committee on land ministry however believes the actual area of public land occupied by the housing firms is probably much higher than what is quantified in the report submitted by district administrations of Dhaka and Gazipur.

A meeting of the JS body yesterday found the list partial and asked Rajdhani Unnayan Katrapaksha (Rajuk) and the district administrations to conduct fresh survey to accurately identify the area of public lands grabbed by different housing companies including the 20 mentioned above.

"We have asked to start with conducting survey on 53 housing companies, most of which have

grabbed public lands. Other companies will be surveyed later," committee chairman Mahbubur Rahman told newsmen after the meeting held at JS Bhaban.

Chief Conservator of Forest M Anwarul Islam informed the meeting that over 6,000 acres of land under the forest department in Gazipur and Savar areas are also illegally occupied.

About the accused 20 companies, the chairman said, "The area of grabbed land will increase [in the fresh survey], as the list submitted to the committee is preliminary and partial."

The accused companies and the area of public land in their illegal occupation are: Eastern Housing 55.50 acres, Samatat Housing 13.80 acres, Amin Mohammad Foundation 152.73 acres, Metro Makers and Developers Ltd 24.28 acres, Jamuna Builders Ltd 19.26 acres, Sharif Housing Ltd 8.36

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Hathazari militant camp operating for 2 months

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK, from Hathazari

Police hunt a cousin of a state minister, as he is believed to have set up a secret arms training camp busted deep into a Hathazari jungle in Chittagong on June 1.

Blamed for training over 60 militants, Mir Mohammad Anis, also principal of a local women's madrasa, is among the five accused in a case police filed six days after seizing 24 wooden dummy AK-47 rifles, tents, spears and binoculars from the training centre.

"The camp was set up two months ago and three groups of up to 22 each have so far trained in arms," a police official said, referring to intelligence from two arrestees -- Mohammad Iskander and Enamul Huq.

"A new group was likely to go there for training before the raid was launched," he said, adding police have no information about its identity.

Anis who employed two trainers

for the militants, most of them madrasa students, fled under cover of dark before the police raid.

The Daily Star correspondent visited Anis' Mirerkhil home on Tuesday and his cousin Mir Abdul Halim said Anis stayed at the AL Huda Women's Madrasa, where he worked.

"He (Anis) is a victim of conspiracy," Halim said, denying his cousin's militant link.

Other madrasa teachers said Anis stopped staying at the workplace, fearing police harassment after reports were published on his roles in running the militant training centre in the outlying village of Alipur.

But other locals alleged he had links with different Islamist political parties that assisted him in running his activities.

Denying Anis' involvement with the camp, Mansurul Alam, teacher's secretary of the madrasa, said: "He always remained busy with his

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Spurious alcohol kills 4

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Four people have died and at least 50 others fallen sick in Kushtia town after taking local alcoholic beverage since Monday.

At least 11 people were admitted to Kushtia General Hospital at about 11:00pm Monday as they fell sick drinking liquor from a vendor in Mazampur area, locals said.

Physicians took them as cardiac patients as most drinkers felt pain in their chest during admission, hospital staff said.

As Samar Nath, 40, and Manik, 42, died within three hours after arrival, doctors became suspicious and examined the patients and found alcohol in the blood.

On Tuesday night, another 20 people became sick drinking beverage from the same vendor. Of them, Ali Akbar, 45, and Gheo Babu, 36, died at the same hospital yesterday morning, sources said.

Different hospital sources said 21 more people were undergoing treatment in various hospitals and

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Two gunned down in city

Woman's body retrieved

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Assailants gunned down a Jatiya Shechchhasebok Party (JSP) leader and a security guard while the body of an unidentified woman was found in the capital yesterday.

Helaluddin Helal, 45, member secretary of the JSP and Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority contractor, was supervising cleansing work in

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PSC detects faults in ACR writing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Public Service Commission (PSC) has detected irregularities in the annual confidential report (ACR) of the public servants under different ministries and departments, which is used for their promotion.

The PSC, a constitutional body, in its annual report on 2003 submitted to parliament yesterday identified

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Nurul Islam victim of rivals' campaign, say BNP leaders

STAR REPORT

AHM Nurul Islam, who was forced into retirement as the acting secretary to the prime minister on charge of leaking secret state information, was not involved in the 'Janatar Mancha' to dislodge the previous BNP government.

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Budget session to run till July 14

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The budget session of the Jatiya Sangsad that began yesterday amid the absence of the main opposition Awami League (AL) will run till July 14, according to a decision of the Business Advisory Committee (Bac).

Speaker Jamir Uddin Sircar, welcoming the lawmakers to the session, urged all opposition lawmakers to join the budget session and enrich the budget for new 2004-2005 fiscal year by putting their suggestions in the budget discussion.

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman places the budget proposal to parliament today.

Bac yesterday at a meeting with the speaker in the chair allocated 40 hours for discussion on the proposed budget, which will be passed on June 30. The session will adjourn for three days after the passage of the budget before resuming on July 4.

The supplementary budget will

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Guerillas kill 12 Iraqi security men

REUTERS, Falluja

Rebels killed 12 members of an Iraqi security force in a mortar attack in the flashpoint town of Falluja Wednesday, the force said.

It was the first time guerillas have attacked General Mohammed Latif's Falluja Brigade since it set out to pacify Iraq's most rebellious town west of Baghdad last month following fierce fighting between US troops and insurgents.

Officers in the force told Reuters 10 people were wounded in the attack.

Witnesses said the mortar attack hit a camp housing security forces. They said Latif was not in the area at the time and no US forces could be seen.

Fiercely anti-American Falluja has been relatively calm since Latif and other generals offered to help tame the area where roadside bombs and ambushes have dogged

American troops in the area.

The US wants Latif to rein in guerrillas, help capture or kill foreign fighters and collect weapons from rebels. He describes Falluja as a town of peace-loving people and believes US troops should go home.

The attack will put Latif's security forces through their first major test and raise questions over whether the Americans will re-deploy their positions closer to the town.

US troops are still within striking distance of Falluja but the American military has tried to keep a low profile to give attempts to calm Falluja an Iraqi face.

Members of the force said a joint patrol with American troops had been scheduled to pass through Falluja at the time of the attack.

US troops launched an offensive on the town after four US

contractors were killed by guerillas and then mutilated and dragged through the streets by residents on March 31.

After weeks of fierce fighting between the Americans and guerillas which killed hundreds of Iraqis and scores of US troops, the US military struck a deal with Latif, a former general in Saddam Hussein's army.

Set up under a peace agreement to end the clashes, the 2,000-strong Falluja Brigade is composed mainly of Baathists who served in Saddam's army, which was disbanded by US forces.

Pacifying Falluja, a volatile mix of Saddam loyalists, Muslim militants and tribes, has been one of the biggest challenges facing American troops.

Eleven Iraqis, including women and children, were killed on Tuesday in clashes between US forces and insurgents near Falluja, hospital sources said.

2 cops, 4 robbers bullet-hit in shootout

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two policemen and four robbers were bullet-hit in a shootout in Tejgaon yesterday morning as the robbers opened fire on the cops to escape arrest.

The injured robbers -- Javed, 22, Biplob, 21, Jamal, 30, and Quddus, 27 -- and police constable Alam, 40, of Gulshan are receiving treatment at National Institute of Traumatology & Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (Nitor).

A five-member civil team of Gulshan police led by Havilder Abdul Qader challenged an aimlessly moving white car (Dhaka Metro Ka 03-9240) at Kakali bus stand in Gulshan at 4:00am. Ignoring the cops' signal, the driver with four passengers drove away to Mahakhali.

Police chased them in a microbus and ran into a hail of

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Ramna unit of the ruling alliance leader BNP holds a rally yesterday, occupying a vital roadway in front of Matsya Bhaban in Dhaka in blunt indifference to traffic troubles.

