

CTG ARMS HAUL
CID presses charges against 39
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday pressed charges against 39 people in Chittagong for their alleged roles in the largest ever arms seizure in Bangladesh, 59 workdays into its investigation with key suspects yet to be traced.

Among the 39, 21 including prime suspects Hafizur Rahman, Din Mohammad, Sobhan Haji, A b u

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Schoolboy abducted in Jhenidah
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushiya

Armed criminals abducted a schoolboy from Shaikakupa upazila in Jhenidah on Saturday.

A gang of 12 stormed into the Jadabpur village house of Bhajan Biswas at about 9:30pm and picked up his son Rudra Biswas, 15, at gunpoint, family sources said.

The abductors demanded Tk 3 lakh for his release. They also threatened to kill the class ten student of Mailmari High School if police were informed of the incident or family members failed to pay the ransom within 48 hours, Bhajan told local journalists.

Shaikakupa police, however, said they were unaware of any such incident as none filed any complaint with them.

Trader shot dead
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Robbers yesterday gunned down a trader at his rice wholesale shop in Norda in Gulshan and looted money from the cash drawer.

Witnesses said Abbas Ali, 40, tried to resist four robbers from looting cash when one of them shot him in his forehead point blank.

Critically wounded Abbas, owner of Mohammad Ali Market that housed his shop Haji Enterprise, died on way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

"Four robbers in a black taxicab appeared at about 12:30pm. Three of them entered the shop and started looting wads of notes. As my uncle tried to resist them, one s h o t

Iraqi sovereignty to top agenda

OIC diplomats meet in Turkey today

AFP, Istanbul
Democracy and economic development in Iraq is to take center stage as foreign ministers and top diplomats from the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) gather today in Turkey for a ministerial conference, delegates said.

With the handover of power to the Iraqi people from the US-led coalition looming in less than three weeks, top diplomats from 57 Islamic countries will meet for three days in Istanbul to debate Iraq, the Israeli-Palestinian crisis and the status of Turkish northern Cyprus.

"Iraq is a full member of the OIC. The principal question this conference will examine will be development and progress in Iraq," interim Iraqi foreign minister Hoshar Zebari told AFP.

One of the OIC's priorities was to assist the Iraqis so they could democratically decide their own f u t u r e

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Govt stops grain ration to CHT hills people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has slashed grain allocation in emergency fund from the FY2004-2005 budget that apparently reduces the financial power of the lone minister from indigenous communities.

Over the years, the government has allocated about 9,000 tonnes of grains worth Tk 9 crore in emergency fund that the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs earmarked for different projects w i t h

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WOMEN, CHILDREN TRAFFICKING 10,000 taken across border a year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 7,000 to 10,000 women and children are trafficked from Bangladesh every year on average, advocate Salma Ali of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association said citing a study of her organisation covering 300 villages.

While talking to The Daily Star yesterday she said that, according to the US State Department report,

the figure is between 10,000 and 20,000.

She said routes for trafficking are ever changing and a tripartite agreement among Bangladesh and India and Pakistan is crucially important in combating trafficking from Bangladesh.

Women and Children Affairs Minister Khurshid Zahan Haque, however, differed on the number when she, referring to home ministry and district administration

record, said a total of 708 women and children have been trafficked from Bangladesh since 2000 till April this year.

She was speaking at the publication ceremony of Counter Trafficking Framework Report at a city hotel yesterday.

She also said that 40 lakh women and children have so far been trafficked across the world a c c o r d i n g

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Portugal dwell on defeat

REUTERS, Alcochete, Portugal

When Portugal coach Luiz Felipe Scolari spends most of the second half sitting quietly on the team bench, something is badly wrong.

The Brazilian World Cup winner, known in his homeland as "Big Phil", usually puts on his own private show as he rants and gesticulates incessantly on the touchline.

But on Saturday, Scolari remained glumly in his seat for most of the time, occasionally opening his arms in utter exasperation as the Euro 2004 hosts lost 2-1 to outsiders Greece in the tournament's opening match.

It was easy to understand his frustration.

On a man-to-man basis, Portugal appeared to have one of the most talented squads in the competition.

A line-up that includes Real Madrid forward Luis Figo, the core of the Porto side which won the



Authorities have dug up the road between Bangladesh Secretariat and Dhaka Electric Supply Authority office for installation of gas pipes only a few days after it was carpeted.

Mahi takes oath as MP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) leader Mahi B Chowdhury, elected from Munshiganj-1, was yesterday sworn in as a member of parliament.

At a simple ceremony at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, Speaker Jamiruddin Sirker conducted the oath-taking programme at 2:45pm, said a press release.

Among others, former president and BDB chief AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury and party General Secretary Abdul Mannan were present on the occasion, it added.

INTERCONNECTION DEARTH Pvt firms may get the job

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

The telecoms watchdog Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) is considering to allow infrastructure companies in the private sector to get rid of the nagging interconnection problem.

"The commission is contemplating to award licence to one or two independent interconnection operators in the private sector," BTRC Chairman Syed Marghub

Murshed told The Daily Star yesterday.

Interconnection is a facility that enables one operator to communicate with another. About 90 per cent of country's 2.75 million cellular phones cannot connect with the fixed-line telephone system provided by state-owned Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB).

The problem prompted the four private cell-phone operators to invest around \$2 million to

increase interconnection capacity of the BTTB through a tandem exchange.

Murshed said interconnection was crucial before Bangladesh presses more cell-phone and fixed-line operators into service. The BTRC has already awarded nine licences to companies to run fixed-line phone network in the private sector.

The telecoms operators currently

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Indian trying to sell nuke secrets held

AFP, Dubai

An Indian national has been arrested for trying to sell nuclear secrets to Arab embassies in the United Arab Emirates, the Wam official news agency reported Saturday citing police.

Police arrested Akhtar Hussein Qoth Ahmed following close surveillance of his activities, Dubai police commandant general Dhahi Khalfan Tamim told the Emirates news agency.

Ahmed, a businessman who has been based in the Emirates for

several years, offered to sell information from his brother, a nuclear specialist in India, said Tamim.

"Akhtar contacted Arab diplomatic missions in the Emirates and offered to sell nuclear secrets, but they informed the authorities and he was arrested and handed back to India," he said.

Tamim said Ahmed had no sensitive information and admitted during interrogations he couldn't obtain the nuclear secrets he offered to the embassies.

PTI adds: Central intelligence

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Prayer Timing June 14

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-50	6-55
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

