

# Targeted US firms

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sister institution across the street, the International Monetary Fund, swept the underside of cars with detecting devices as they entered the garage.

Police were more visible, although not in large numbers, in a capital that has already fortified key buildings against terrorism. "I'm concerned but we have to carry on as normal," said Shirley Davies of Britain, who has worked at the IMF for seven years. The bank and the fund are among largest employers in Washington, with more than 10,000 people in both buildings, two blocks from the White House.

Along with the international institutions, authorities placed the Citigroup Center building in New York, the New York Stock Exchange and Prudential Financial Inc.'s headquarters in Newark, N.J., under heavy scrutiny after unusually detailed information identified those buildings as terrorism targets, and prompted the government to raise its terrorism alert.

New York police closed several streets in midtown Manhattan and banned trucks from bridges and tunnels leading to Wall Street. Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Gov. George Pataki rang the opening bell at the stock exchange in a show of confidence in the city's precautions.

In Newark, Prudential employees threaded through police and concrete barriers into their offices. "I'm a little nervous given the 9/11 situation, but I'm confident Prudential's doing everything they can to ensure our safety," said Tracy Swistak, 27, an analyst in the international finance department.

A heavy contingent of officers checked identification and bags at the 59-story Citigroup Center, midtown Manhattan's third largest building.

"It's definitely a scary building to be working in when we're a big target," said Chip Persons, 35, who works on the 24th floor.

Officials acted on intelligence that Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge called alarmingly specific, but he said officials could not tell whether an attack might be imminent and he encouraged people to go about their business.

"We have to go on being America," he said on ABC's "Good Morning America." "We can't button up and be what we're not."

A cache of recently obtained information -- including photos, drawings and written documents -- indicates that al-Qaeda operatives have undertaken meticulous preparations to case the five specific buildings.

Ridge on Sunday raised the terror threat level for financial institutions in the three cities to orange, or high alert, the second highest level on the government's five-point spectrum. Elsewhere, he said, the alert would remain at yellow, or elevated.

"Iconic economic targets are at the heart (of the terrorists') interest," Ridge said.

There was no obvious boost in security at the White House, where defenses were stiffened after the Sept. 11 attacks. Pennsylvania Avenue, the street in front of the White House, has been closed for months because of a huge construction project to turn the roadway into a pedestrian boulevard. On the west side of the White House, truck traffic has been barred for some time along 17th Street.

The fresh intelligence did not give crucial details about when, where or how

## Two killed in Narayanganj incidents

BSS, N'ganj

Two persons were shot dead and two others injured with bullets in separate incidents in the district in the early hours yesterday.

According to police and witnesses, Din Islam, a night guard of Laxmi Narayan Cotton Mills at Siddhirganj, was shot dead allegedly by a gang of criminals belonging to 'Rekmat Bahini' at about 1:30am.

Hearing the gunshot, locals chased the criminals and caught five of them named Bazlu, Soheli, Mazharul, and Muklesh.

Locals beat the criminals up and handed them over to the police. They were first admitted to Khanpur 200-bed hospital and then shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Police recovered Din Islam's body and sent it to Narayanganj General Hospital for autopsy.

A case was filed with Siddhirganj police.

In another incident, housewife Montmaz Begum, 55, was gunned down and her younger daughter Nurunnahar, 23, and tenant Mazhar were injured with bullets in an armed attack by a gang of criminals at about 3:00am.

Police and locals said a gang of five raided the house of Montmaz Begum at Lamapara under Fatullah Police Station and sprayed bullets on her while she was asleep. Her daughter and the tenant received bullet injuries as they were trying to resist the hoodlums.

The criminals led the scene after the incident. The body sent to Narayanganj General Hospital for autopsy, while the injured were released after first aid from Khanpur Hospital.

A case was filed with Fatullah Police Station.

## Santosh Gupta

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Father of two sons and a daughter, Santosh was born on January 9, 1925 at Runshi village in Jhalokathi district. He started journalism in 1957 with the then Daily Azad and worked the Daily Purbakon before joining the Daily Sangbad in 1965.

He actively participated in the Liberation War. He was the assistant secretary of the Information Department of the then Bangladesh government in exile.

## Malaria strikes

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mosquitoes that transmit malaria in a place like Dhaka city is quite an unusual affair. But we must remember epidemics of malaria in Araihaazar and Raigonj.

Experts mentioned malaria parasite enters the bloodstream and travels straight to the liver, where it replicates itself thousands of times while staying safe from any attack by the body's own defence mechanisms. Then they are released back into the bloodstream in a form that invade red blood cells. Once inside the red blood cell, they mature into a form that develops a tricky defence against the body's immune system.

In the red blood cell, the parasites feed on haemoglobin and multiply. After every 48 hours, the cell ruptures and new parasites invade more red blood cells and repeat the cycle.

Malaria kills about 3,000 children a day globally and the parasite that causes the disease is becoming harder to treat as it develops resistance to more and more drugs, a WHO study said.

## Khaleda

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efforts to extend cooperation to Bangladesh for developing a permanent and lasting flood management system. He also showed his government's intention to participate in post-flood rehabilitation programme in Bangladesh.

The prime minister urged the Dutch entrepreneurs to come up with investment and joint ventures in Bangladesh and also to enhance trade relations between the two countries.

The Dutch envoy praised the quality of a number of Bangladeshi products including ceramics, leather, garments and processed food.

He also appreciated the successes of Bangladesh in the field of education, especially female education and women empowerment.

Khaleda recalled her visit to the Netherlands with late president Ziaur Rahman in 1979.

During the meeting, they described the relations between Bangladesh and the Netherlands as very cordial and expressed the hope that it would further enhance in the years to come.

## PM reiterates

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The prime minister, however, assured that the government would start massive post-flood rehabilitation work immediately after the flood waters recede.

She said rationing on VGF cards and other supports of the government to the flood-affected areas would continue until the flood victims rebuild their homes and harvest new crops.

She said the government would provide farmers with seedlings free of cost and fertilisers at reduced rates along with other necessary supports so that they can recoup the losses.

The prime minister said there was no reason to worry as BNP and the coalition government would come up with whatever needed.

The prime minister thanked the affluent people as well as organisations for donating to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for the flood victims.

She distributed relief among the flood victims at Jhaupara and Safar Ali Government College. She also visited some affected areas of Araihaazar.

Water Resources Minister Maj (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed, also minister in charge of Narayanganj, State Minister for Liberation War Rezaul Karim, local MP Aatur Rahman Khan, Giasuddin Ahmed MP and Narayanganj BNP General Secretary Taimur Alam Khondokar, among others, also spoke and accompanied the prime minister during relief distribution.

## Prime suspect

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Inspector Mohiuddin Ahmed said the arrestee admitted during interrogation at the police station that he is Khorha (lame) Liton and was involved in the murder of Balu on June 27.

The IO said Liton hurled a powerful bomb at Balu in front of his office. Lalon Shaikh, another outlaw who was arrested Wednesday from Sathkira Road in Daulatpur in Khulna, gave Liton's name and whereabouts, he added.

Liton, a professional bomb maker, is accused of several criminal charges including those for murders, police said. He was brought to Khulna yesterday.

Deputy Commissioner (South) Akbar Ali said the arrest of Liton is a major breakthrough in the probe into Balu murder case, as now the arrestee is likely to admit who had hired him for the killing.



PHOTO: STAT

Flood victims scramble for water supplied by Pran Beverage Company Limited at Mugda Stadium in Dhaka yesterday, as the water crisis looms.

# Abdullah Abu Sayeed

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Biswa Shahityo Kendro or World Literature Centre, has been picked for the award for "his cultivating in the youth of Bangladesh a love for literature and its humanizing values through exposure to the great books of Bengal and the world", says the board of trustees in the citation.

Seven individuals from the Philippines, China, Thailand, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan will receive Asia's most prestigious prize, also known as Asian Nobel Prize.

The seven 2004 Magsaysay awardees join 236 other laureates who have received Asia's highest honour to date. The award will be formally conferred on them during the presentation ceremonies to be held on August 31, 2004 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Tahrunesa Abdullah, Fazle Hasan Abed, Zafrullah Chowdhury, Angela Gomes, Father Richard William Timm, Mohammad Yasmin and Muhammad Yunus are the Bangladeshis to have received the coveted award earlier for their contributions in respective fields.

Sayeed was born in 1939 in Calcutta, where his father was a teacher and a well-known playwright. After partition, he attended university in East Pakistan. As a young man, Sayeed wrote poetry and fiction and led a vibrant literary movement of the 1960s.

As editor of the magazine Kanthashar, he drifted into the new medium of television and hosted a succession of popular shows. All the

while, for some 25 years, he taught literature at Dhaka College.

Observing the decline of intellectual life in Bangladeshi society, Sayeed founded the Kendro in 1978 to restore interest in reading among the youth and to "enlighten human beings," in his own words. Under Sayeed's tutelage, 25 university students began reading and discussing great works of literature in an Enrichment Program that soon grew to include high school and college students.

Currently, the Kendro has 500 branches in 54 districts and the programme has hundreds of thousands of graduates. Its well-stocked bookmobiles today make stops at 250 locations in four cities across the country.

Sayeed developed the Kendro itself as a library, serving hundreds of readers a day and also as a publishing house. Sales of its 225 volumes of verse and prose and translations provide financial support for the Kendro's activities.

Responding to the woeful lack of public lending libraries in Bangladesh, Sayeed launched a nationwide library programme in 1998. Versatile and charismatic, Sayeed devotes himself to the Kendro and its programmes and also to urgent environmental concerns. Sayeed dreams of a new generation of enlightened Bangladeshi citizens whose values have been enriched by reading.

# Imam rapes

FROM PAGE 1

after end of such lessons, Zohurul did not let the girl go home. Instead, he lured her by a mango to stay there. And when the other kids left the mosque, he raped the baby girl at about 4.15 pm. As the girl cried for help, locals rushed to the scene and rescued her. They took her to local health complex. Later as her condition worsened, she was shifted to Kushtia General Hospital. Local people captured the rapist and confined him to the mosque. Later police arrested him the same day. A case was filed with Mirpur Police Station.

In Jhenidah, another five-year-old girl was raped at village Bhatoy in Saikupa upazila.

Police said one Russel, 22, son of Sirazul Islam, raped the girl when she went to cut grass at a field nearby her house at about 11:00am on Sunday.

Family sources said on hearing the girl's report for help they went to the field and found her lying there with her dress blood stained. The rapist, however,

managed to escape the capture. Police took the girl to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital and completed her medical test. The father of the victim has filed a case against the rapist and his father Sirazul Islam with Saikupa Police Station. Police could not arrest the rapist, but picked up his father for interrogation.

## Rab and police

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yesterday and seized a US-made pistol with two magazines and 13 bullets and a German-made revolver with seven bullets.

Earlier, the same team raided a scrap shop rear of the Uttara Bank in Motijheel and recovered a pipe gun and two bullets.

The Cobra, meanwhile, arrested Kala Jahangir's associates Shawkat and Babla from Kafrul in the city at around 2:00pm. Following their confessional information, the team later arrested Mamun from Parbata in Senpara in Mirpur and recovered a 9mm pistol with two bullets.

# Fair polls possible

FROM PAGE 1

It was bent on retaining the seat after party lawmaker Abdul Mannan resigned from the BNP and parliament to join the Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh founded by former president AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury.

Mannan questioned the validity of the polls for violation of the High Court order and a contempt of court case is now pending with the court.

The main opposition Awami League is holding the Gazipur 2 seat since 1996 general elections and the common man were shocked at the assassination of popular lawmaker Ahsanullah Master.

The ruling coalition did not interfere with the polls fearing the same level of backlash that swept the constituency in the wake of the assassination and realising that Ahsanullah's son Zahid Ahsan Russell rode on a sympathy wave.

Russell swept the polls with a wide margin of 47,933 votes and polled 13,

500 more votes than his father in 2001 ballot.

The EC under Acting Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Safur Rahman also played an active role to conduct the polls free and fair.

It directed stern action against violators of the code of conduct and even asked BNP-led ruling coalition candidate MA Mannan to come up with an undertaking stating that he would not violate the code of conduct. He also asked the AL, BNP and the Jatiya Party of upholding electoral rules during campaigning.

The AL boycotted 15 parliamentary by-elections of the Eighth Jatiya Sangsad after alleging rigging in Netrakona-3 by-polls held in August 21, 2003.

The Gazipur 2 by-polls will encourage the main opposition party to participate in Netrakona-2 by-polls. The seat fell vacant at the death of veteran AL lawmaker Abdul Momin.

# US in search of new intelligence czar

AP, Washington

US President George Bush yesterday endorsed creation of a national intelligence czar and counterterrorism center-- his first steps in revamping the nation's intelligence-gathering system to help prevent a repeat of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"We are a nation in danger," Bush said as he announced his position during an appearance with top administration national security figures in the White House Rose Garden.

Bush then embraced, with some changes, two key recommendations of the Sept. 11 commission, which outlined lapses in intelligence that left America vulnerable to the attacks.

The bipartisan panel's most overarching recommendations in a 567-page report were for creation of a counterterrorism center, which the commission envisions as a joint operational planning and intelligence center staffed by personnel from all the spy agencies, and a national intelligence czar.

The chairman of the Sept. 11 commission, former New Jersey Gov. Thomas Kean, and former Rep. Lee Hamilton have

insisted that the center and the national intelligence director position be placed in the executive office of the president to give the White House clout in dealing with all the nation's intelligence agencies. Bush said he wants them set up outside the White House.

"I don't think the person should be a member of my Cabinet," Bush said. "I will hire the person and I can fire the person.... I don't think that the office should be in the White House, however, I think it should be a stand-alone group to better coordinate."

Intelligence reforms to help thwart a repeat of the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001 took on special urgency with the announcement Sunday by authorities that they had uncovered a plot by the al-Qaeda terror network to attack five prominent financial institutions in New York City, Washington and Newark, N.J.

"The work of security in this vast nation is not done," Bush said. "The elevation of the threat level in New York, New Jersey and Washington, D.C., is a serious reminder a solemn reminder of the threat we continue to face."

# Unicef launches

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and nutrition, water and environmental sanitation, child protection, and education, the press release continued.

A large number of children and women, who have taken refuge in makeshift shelters, are dangerously exposed to risks of diseases and death as floodwaters continued to slowly recede across the country.

According to latest reports, nearly 30 million people in 259 upazilas under 43 districts have been affected by the floods. Unions hit by floods numbered 2,306 covering an area of 26,529 square miles. Government has opened 4,830 flood shelters where 2, 88,079 people have taken refuge. Primary schools affected by floods add up to 26,866.

Unicef in support of the government has been providing assistance in cash and kind. Its response has been focused on ensuring the provision of safe drinking water, some sanitation facilities for the affected population

and essential healthcare to the affected children and women.

To help the government respond to devastating floods, Unicef has provided a package of essential supplies such as water purifying tablets, intravenous fluid, oral re-hydration salt, safe drinking water containers and bleaching powder to flood shelters and health centres.

Unicef feels the relief supplies worth US\$ 200,000 that it has provided so far is inadequate considering the magnitude of the problem, Naseem-ur-Rahman, chief of information and advocacy section of Unicef Bangladesh told The Daily Star yesterday referring to the rationale behind the global appeal.

Rahman said, "We're here dealing with the issue of survival of children and reports we're receiving from flood shelters are somewhat disturbing particularly those on the health condition of the children."

# Turkish hostage

FROM PAGE 12

claimed responsibility for many major car bombings in Iraq since Saddam Hussein was ousted last year and also the killing of several foreign hostages among dozens seized in recent months.

**TURK EXECUTED**

In the videotape of the Turk's execution, a masked man shot the hostage while he was seated in a chair. When he fell to the ground, the gunman shot him twice more with a pistol while shouting "God is Greatest."

The Turkish captive, dressed in a shirt and trousers, earlier identified himself on the tape as Murat Yuce from Corum.

Before being shot, he urged Turkish firms to leave Iraq.

"I saw American oppression in Iraq with my own eyes. But I stayed here to earn a bit of money," he said.

It was not clear when or where Yuce was kidnapped.

Meanwhile, negotiations to secure the release of three Indian hostages held in Iraq resumed yesterday after their employer Kuwaiti company re-established contacts with Iraqi negotiator Sheikh Hisham Al Dulaimi and the "outlook" to free them "remains positive".

"We have been informed through our embassies in Baghdad and Kuwait that contact has been maintained between Sheikh Al-Dulaimi and the KGL company (that has employed the three Indians) and negotiations are continuing this morning," Minister of State for External Affairs E.Ahamed told reporters after a meeting of the Crisis Management Group.

Dulaimi was on Sunday quoted as having stated that he was pulling out of the negotiations as he had failed to reach an agreement with KGL.

"We remain hopeful that these negotiations will come to a successful

conclusion but we have to remain patient. The Government is continuing with all its efforts to seek the early release of the hostages and their safe return. The outlook remains positive," Ahamed said.

The minister also reiterated the government's advice to Indian citizens to refrain from travelling to Iraq and said New Delhi was in touch with the governments of Kuwait and Jordan to prevent this.

"We have already contacted the embassies in Kuwait and Jordan in Delhi to seek their cooperation in preventing the movement of Indian nationals across their borders to Iraq," he said. (REUTERS, PTI, AFP)

## UN calls donors

FROM PAGE 1

of canals and wetlands in and around the city and solid waste overwhelmed the drainage system -- the major cause of waterlogging.

According to Wasa, city dwellers use about 150 crore litres water that produces about 100 crore litres of wastewater in addition to waste from several hundred tubewells and industrial waste. The quantity of wastewater is much more than the capacity of Wasa pumping machines.

The floods swamped much of the capital, mostly rushing in through its eastern fringe unprotected by any flood control dam, the Wasa official said, describing an embankment there as essential to preventing the floodwaters coming in.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre yesterday said the rivers and canals around the city fill a couple of centimetres on average, although they are still flowing above danger marks.

(AFP and BSS contributed to this report)

# Nasa satellite may find

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and principal scientist for the Messenger mission. Both long exposure to solar winds or some giant impact might account for that, he said.

"What are the processes that contributed to the inner planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars) turning out so differently? To understand that "we really have to study the most extreme of those outcomes, and that's Mercury," Solomon said.

Messenger will be the first satellite to visit Mercury since Mariner 10 a generation ago. It photographed about 45 percent of the planet's surface during three fly-bys in 1974 and 1975.

But Mariner was traveling too quickly to enter orbit around Mercury, where MESSENGER will spend at least a year.

To do that, Messenger will be forced onto a long, meandering path, 15 times around the sun, flying past Earth once, Venus twice and Mercury

itself three times, using planetary gravity to slow the craft with each pass.

Finally, it will enter Mercury's orbit in 2011, almost seven years after liftoff.

A direct flight would take just three months, Nasa said, but it would also take more fuel for braking maneuvers, which would have required a bigger rocket than the Delta 2 and a higher mission price tag.

Messenger bristles with seven complex sensor systems. Beside cameras, there are spectrometers for remote chemical analysis, magnetometers to study Mercury's strong magnetic field and a laser altimeter to map the planet's topography.

Protecting the equipment from the sun is a curved, rectangular screen that will always face the sun. Sometime in 2012 or 2013, when its fuel is depleted, Messenger is likely to crash onto the planet's surface.